

Green Global Policy Assemblages: The Evolution of Community-Based Natural Resource Management in Response to Climate Change in Namibia

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Abstract

Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) has emerged in southern Africa as a form of resource governance that is intended to devolve control of natural resources to local populations. CBNRM has produced demonstrable benefits in attaining its three goals of economic development, environmental conservation, and community empowerment, however, over time success has seemingly dwindled which has been documented in the literature. Many scholars argue that it is the third goal of community empowerment that most often fails to be realized. Beyond that, one of the major gaps that exists in the literature is an analysis of the impact of climate change on the CBNRM programs. This dissertation will analyze the challenges and opportunities of climate change while further analyzing to what degree local communities benefit as a result. It builds on existing global assemblage work to develop a composite theoretical approach that analyzes CBNRM as green global policy assemblage in order to account for the evolution of CBNRM in response to climate change. This approach is necessary as CBNRM is highly political and the resultant developing power relations are rearticulating global environmental governance and traditional levels of analysis. What emerges from the case study of Namibia is a policy assemblage that results in power being distributed and enacted in ways that traditional theories of International Relations cannot adequately account for within their state-centric ontology. This dissertation is based on fieldwork conducted in Namibia, a country that is generally recognized as a global leader in CBNRM. My conclusions suggest that CBNRM cannot be viewed as an empowering of Namibian communities and corresponding weakening of the state. Instead, the state maintains its sovereign power however at a distance and it is exercised in a less direct fashion than would have traditionally been the case. Furthermore, by devolving power the state enables NGOs to exert their influence on the ground in assisting communities. However, the actions of NGOs have important political effects based on the complex relations they have with other countries, multilateral institutions, as well as novel hybrid organizations that are increasingly empowered to engage in development actions throughout the Global South. While this proliferation of actors has resulted in continued funding streams for important development initiatives, it also continues the dependence of African communities on global actors. In some ways this is making communities less autonomous and more reliant on others, rather than self-sufficient as CBNRM entails.

Keywords: Community-Based Natural Resource Management; Climate Change; Green Global Policy Assemblages; Global Environmental Governance; Namibia.

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They say that completing a PhD is one of the most individual endeavours one can embark on, and that one should be prepared for years of solitary plodding through the seemingly endless process that is the dissertation. While there can be said to be some truth to this, I have been extremely fortunate over the past five years and have been surrounded by a support network that has constantly kept me motivated, on track, and simply kept me happy and enjoying what I have been doing. Throughout the endless professionalization workshops and ‘how to’ guides for academics, one point that is constantly raised is the importance of a healthy working relationship with a strong and caring supervisor and I can honestly say I am not sure I would be where I am today without the endless support I received from mine.

Rita Abrahamsen was my supervisor for my master’s as well as my PhD and has consistently provided invaluable guidance, instilled an endless wealth of knowledge, and most importantly always pushed me to do the best work I possibly could. There are any number of easier pathways I could have taken along my academic journey, and when I was tempted to do so, either speaking with her directly, or simply knowing what she would recommend more often than not led me to making the right – if not always the easiest – decision. Whether in the classroom, at conferences, at CIPS events, PhD workshops she would organize, or in the countless meetings we had, Rita has gone above and beyond the ‘ideal supervisor’ that is so often discussed abstractly. Despite being the busiest, as well as one of the most successful people I know, Rita always finds time for students, whether they be her doctoral candidates, undergraduate students, or anywhere in between – she is truly dedicated to the development of knowledge and the improvement of the academe and I aspire to be half the academic and person she is one day.

I am also endlessly grateful for my committee members Jacqueline Best and Ryan Katz-Rosene. I have had a strong and ongoing working relationship with both of them throughout the entirety of the PhD and they have enriched both my experience in the program as well as contributed to positive outcomes in numerous ways. Despite having extremely full plates of their own, both Jacquie and Ryan have always been extremely accessible, and have always responded positively to my endless requests, whether this be for reference letters, comments on drafts, or simply input and advice on directions to take in life, they have provided me so much. I will both be forever grateful for the assistance and mentorship they have both provided me to this point, as well as also look forward to continuing to collaborate with them for years to come. Jacquie and Ryan are both role models for any aspiring academic, as well as any person in general. I am also deeply grateful for Chris Huggins and Larry Swatuk for having agreed to serve as my internal and external examiners respectively as well as the invaluable comments they have both provided on my initial dissertation draft, as well as through the viva, adding to the endless workloads they both have. Their input and contributions have been essential in pushing the dissertation to the final product.

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One of the things that can make the many years it takes to complete a PhD a solitary experience, is that it is such a unique undertaking that for most of us it becomes difficult to discuss what exactly we are doing with our friends and family. Again, I was supremely fortunate to have very early on, in my major seminar on International Relations found two close colleagues who I am proud to now call friends. Over the past five years Michael Murphy, Robert Lumack, and myself have had an ongoing virtual chat that rarely lays dormant for an hour, let alone an entire day. Despite residing in three separate cities, and barely seeing one another since the onset of the pandemic, we have maintained open lines of communication on everything from the PhD program, to fieldwork, to the dissertation writing process and defence, to the submission of progress reports, teaching positions, teaching assistantships, research opportunities, and even endless banter (and at times more contentious debate) about politics, policy, and sports. To say that these relationships were helpful during this program would be a vast understatement and I am forever grateful to call these two friends. The same goes for a number of other colleagues I have had throughout the entire program who have all contributed to it being a successful and enjoyable process but who are too many to name here.

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it may have seemed to many like I was happy being locked in my office in Ottawa, working endless hours alone at my computer, without your love and support none of it would mean anything and I would not be where I am today. I cannot promise what I will do next, but it appears my days as a student at least are numbered, and someday soon you will be able to say that your son, brother, grandson, or friend is gainfully employed – at least hopefully!

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Table of Acronyms

Acronym	Meaning
AGM	Annual General Meeting
CBNRM	Community-Based Natural Resource Management
COP	Conference of the Parties
CSO	Civil Society Organization
EU	European Union
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
EFIN	Environmental Investment Fund of Namibia
GGPA	Green Global Policy Assemblage
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
IRDNC	Integrated Rural Development Nature Conservation
MCA	Millennium Challenge Account
MET	Ministry of Environment and Tourism
NACSO	Namibian Association of CBNRM Support Organizations
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
SWAPO	Southwest Africa People's Organization
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNESCO	United Nations Economic Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization
US	United States
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

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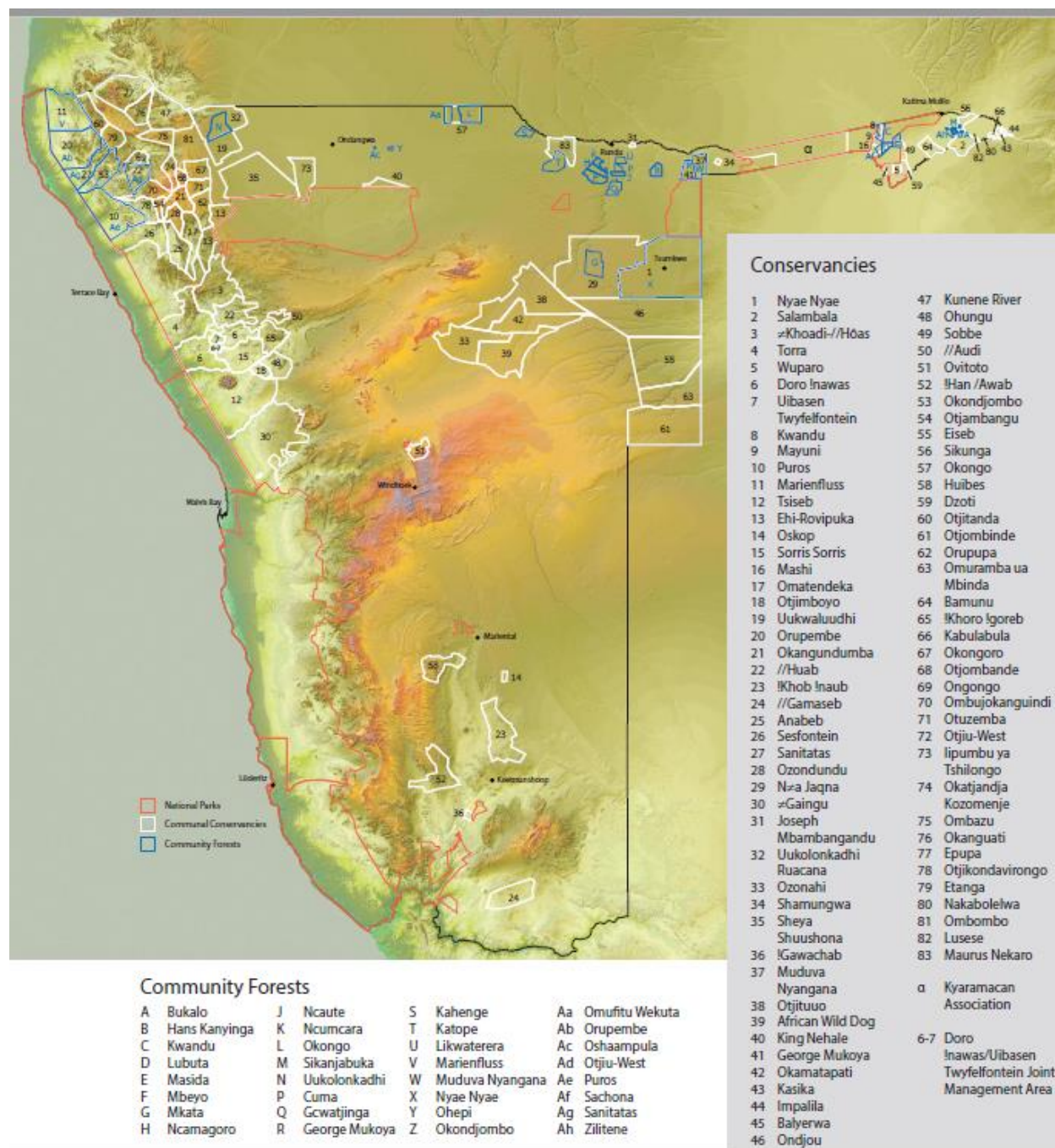


Figure 1: Map of Conservancies in Namibia¹

¹ NACSO “The State of Community Conservation in Namibia” Annual Report 2020.

Chapter 1: Introduction

“Here people do not have the luxury of not believing in the science. Climate change is all around us, it is undeniable, and it is threatening our way of life in the immediate...”²

Having lived in the harsh, dry conditions of the Erongo Region of Namibia for generations, Eric Xaineb and his family have always been farmers. “We are farmers” he says, “traditional farmers, historically farmers, we are farmers.”³ For Eric and other subsistence farmers in the area, life has always been challenging; the soils of the Erongo Region are not known for their productivity, and Namibia is the driest country in sub-Saharan Africa.⁴ While these environmental challenges have existed for generations, the independence of Namibia in 1990 brought renewed hope for the communities of the Erongo Region. Freed from the shackles of Apartheid rule, there was optimism that land would be more fairly distributed, and Namibians would be able to prosper from it and its natural resources. In 1996, the Nature Conservation Amendment Act was passed, which created the program known as Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM)—a form of resource governance that devolves control of resources from central governments to local communities. Many Namibians welcomed the change as they saw an opportunity to exploit one of their key natural resources — wildlife — by managing their populations sustainably in order to benefit economically through ecotourism.⁵ While CBNRM can consist of a broad set of policies and practices, Larry Swatuk summarizes it by outlining that “in theory, CBNRM is a rather elegant idea that rural livelihoods and key ecosystems in the Third World can be improved and maintained

² Interview, Maxi Pia Louis, Director, Namibia Association of CBNRM Support Organizations, January 14, 2020.

³ Interview, Eric Xaneb, Chairman, Tsiseb Conservancy, January 27, 2020

⁴ Jarkko Saarinen, *Political Ecologies and Economies of Tourism Development in Kaokoland, North-West Namibia, Political Ecology of Tourism* (Routledge, 2016).

⁵ Julie Richardson, “Wildlife Utilization and Biodiversity Conservation in Namibia: Conflicting or Complementary Objectives?,” *Biodiversity & Conservation* 7, no. 4 (1998): 549–59.

through the sustainable utilization of natural resources by states and (global) civil society.”⁶ Neighbouring countries such as Zimbabwe, Botswana, and Zambia were already having successes with CBNRM, and many activists, academics, governmental and non-government organizations (NGOs) believed Namibian communities could experience similar benefits.⁷

For Eric and other farmers across the country, despite sounding attractive in theory, CBNRM also presented a number of concerns. The program establishes conservancies which protect wildlife populations and their habitat to increase numbers, in order to encourage wealthy foreign tourists to travel to Namibia in hopes of experiencing Africa’s charismatic megafauna and breathtaking landscapes. However, this shift in land use, also means that any growth in CBNRM results in less new acreage available for farming, and increased wildlife numbers means greater threat to crops, livestock, and important water infrastructure. While many Namibians came to see the potential for CBNRM, and the program was widely adopted—to the point that Namibia came to be seen as a world leader in CBNRM⁸—Eric and many of his neighbours could not ignore the increased challenges as a result of this developing industry. Over time however, the program came to provide benefits for many who were directly employed through the program, as well as in many communities broader benefits were created for members not directly employed including for farmers in the form of compensation for any losses they incurred due to wildlife.

Eventually Eric himself became directly implicated in managing his CBNRM conservancy through a local democratic election and since that time has been a major proponent of the program

⁶ Larry A. Swatuk, “From ‘Project’ to ‘Context’: Community Based Natural Resource Management in Botswana,” *Global Environmental Politics*, Global Environmental Politics, 5, no. 3 (2005): 95.

⁷ Fikret Berkes, Gary P. Kofinas, and F. Stuart Chapin, “Conservation, Community, and Livelihoods: Sustaining, Renewing, and Adapting Cultural Connections to the Land,” in *Principles of Ecosystem Stewardship: Resilience-Based Natural Resource Management in a Changing World*, ed. Carl Folke, Gary P. Kofinas, and F. Stuart Chapin (New York, NY: Springer New York, 2009), 129–47.

⁸ Dilys Roe, Fred Nelson, and Chris Sandbrook, *Community Management of Natural Resources in Africa: Impacts, Experiences and Future Directions* (London, UK: International Institute for Environment and Development, 2009).

and its benefits. However, these benefits which were growing steadily and contributing to community development for years have more recently slowed. At the same time as growing wildlife populations, increased numbers of tourists, and greater areas of land being protected for the conservancy program were causing issues to farmers in some regions of the country, an entirely new and more sinister threat was posing even greater challenges – climate change. The people of Tsiseb Conservancy had long realized the climate was changing, rainfall was diminishing and becoming more erratic, and crop yields were declining. For the better part of the past decade, Namibia has been experiencing the longest and most severe drought in living memory. The drought, Eric is certain, is a result of climate change, and the type of threat that he realizes will increasingly compound existing challenges moving forward. The changing climate has made farming almost impossible in a region where it had historically been challenging to begin with.⁹ While for those whose livelihoods have consisted of nothing but farming, this was a painful reality to cope with, for many – especially younger generations such as Eric’s daughter – the need for a shift has presented welcomed opportunities.

Eric suggests that, since independence, there has been a growing desire for modernization and for many, like his daughter, this means wanting livelihoods outside of farming. With the increasing number of constraints to subsistence farming in the area, these desires are quickly also becoming necessities. While at one time various forms of farming contributed in some way to everyone’s livelihood in the Erongo region, Eric reports that as the drought stretches on, aside from mining, CBNRM-related tourism revenue is virtually all that is left for the people of Tsiseb Conservancy. The drought has left their land infertile and the incomes from tourism as well as its many offshoots have become what communities are subsisting from. Eric’s position in relation to

⁹ Interview, Eric Xaneb, Chairman, Tsiseb Conservancy, January 27, 2020

CBNRM is a complex one, and one that has similarly shifted over time. While he initially had interest in the program as well as optimism for its success, he also realized that success could negatively impact his people's ability to generate livelihoods as they traditionally had from the land. As environmental pressures have continuously limited this ability, Eric's initial optimism about CBNRM has been renewed and he has become a fervent supporter of the program. Eric's story connects to many others in his community and in similar communities across southern Africa, revealing a complex set of relationships between land and livelihood, environment and economics, nature and culture. How we seek to understand the situation as a whole—and particularly the complex effects of climate change within it—has a lot to do with the physical imaginary underlying our worldview as well as our relationship with various actors who compose CBNRM programs across southern Africa.

While much of the early literature on CBNRM approached it as a somewhat apolitical domestic policy tool or technical fix for conservation, more recent scholarship has pointed to the complex partnerships that witness the actions of a number of local and global actors coalesce which can produce unexpected results. My research aims to build on these more recent studies, and I suggest that CBNRM cannot be adequately understood outside of global power relations.¹⁰ CBNRM, like many development initiatives, is highly political and it is highly complex. First, the legislation for these policies is often drafted in concert with NGOs, international institutions, as well as consultants, and each of these receive funding from a variety of actors stemming predominantly from the West. Once implemented, CBNRM programs that result from the policies, are enabled through direct support by a network of NGOs on the ground which are both domestic

¹⁰ Andrew Heffernan, "The Globality of Community-Based Conservation in Namibia – Centre for International Policy Studies," 2020.

and international. The funding streams for these NGOs and international NGOs (INGOs) have become increasingly opaque as a variety of new development actors have emerged and traditional bi-lateral relationships have decreased. A parallel development has transpired with evidence suggesting that many NGOs are becoming increasingly politicized and beholden to their funders, rather than to more apolitical and altruistic goals.¹¹ As funding streams have narrowed, this has often led to increasingly targeted approaches to development and conservation in which rather than providing core funding for broad approaches or policies, donors – and hence the NGOs their funds are channeled through – pick certain projects, groups, communities, and individuals based on the activities they are engaged in. This dissertation unpacks the way these shifts are leading to an erosion of democratic and transparent decision making with certain types of development flows, which is resulting in certain winners emerging based on politics, rather than evidence-based policy outcomes.

One of the major gaps in the existing literature is the failure to adequately account for the impacts of climate change on CBNRM as will be demonstrated in Chapter 2. This omission occurs as CBNRM is often framed as an issue of domestic conservation that is separate from the broader issues of global climate change. However, climate change is posing major challenges to CBNRM program success and as such, ought to be central to any analysis of it in order for policies to evolve to account for these shifting realities. Therefore, this dissertation seeks to answer the following research questions: 1) How has CBNRM evolved to respond to the challenges of climate change? and 2) To what extent do changes and adaptations benefit local people?

¹¹ Stefan Toepler et al., “The Changing Space for NGOs: Civil Society in Authoritarian and Hybrid Regimes,” *Voluntas (Manchester, England)* 31, no. 4 (2020): 649–62.

In order to answer these questions, it is necessary to understand the complexities of CBNRM and its place within global power relations. Drawing on recent literature on global assemblages,¹² I analyze CBNRM as a green global policy assemblage (GGPA) in which the policy results in a complex layering of governance that both enables and requires a multitude of heterogeneous actors to contribute to the implementation of certain types of policies. As a result, although the state remains one of my components of inquiry, it is not central to my analysis and instead plays varying roles, in diverse ways at different times and in a sense will seem to come and go as the argument unfolds. Instead, what is central to the present inquiry is the actors which constitute CBNRM and the relations between them as well as the ways in which these are central to environmental governance and environmental politics in Africa. This will lead me to my central argument, that the assembled nature of CBNRM enables it to adapt to both exogenous and endogenous pressures and challenges. However, due to power imbalances program evolution in many ways sees a continuation of business as usual, which means that often communities are not empowered and do not benefit in the way the policy entails. Furthermore, although the predominant literature on CBNRM has omitted climate change from ongoing debates, those on the ground are actively engaged in adapting to and mitigating its harmful effects. While climate change poses some of the greatest challenges to CBNRM, it is also providing certain opportunities that are enabling the programs to take part in a necessary evolution in order to remain relevant and continue garnering success in achieving sustainable development goals. To be sure, I am not arguing that climate change provides net benefits to the program, but opportunities in this context

¹² Rita Abrahamsen and Michael C. Williams, *Security beyond the State: Private Security in International Politics* (Cambridge, UK ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011); Michele Acuto and Simon Curtis, "Assemblage Thinking and International Relations," in *Reassembling International Theory: Assemblage Thinking and International Relations*, ed. Michele Acuto and Simon Curtis (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2014), 1–15; Glenn C. Savage, "What Is Policy Assemblage?," *Territory, Politics, Governance* 8, no. 3 (2019): 1–17.

do not necessarily connote something intrinsically positive. Instead, I analyze opportunities that indicate how adaptation and necessary responses to climate change provide avenues for some actors to adopt new strategies for profitable enterprises and survival. While the CBNRM program is evolving in important ways in response to climate change and becoming more sustainable, climate change has also resulted in a proliferation of local and global partnerships which are resulting in tensions that have led to continued challenges in attaining the degree of community empowerment that CBNRM initially promised. As such, there are ways that CBNRM might better be referred to as ‘International’ Community-Based Natural Resource *Governance*, as it is best understood as an iteration of global environmental governance, rather than a domestic policy for conservation. While some existing work points to important global dynamics, this dissertation will employ a GGPA approach to demonstrate the ways in which this complex assemblage evolves in response to the impacts of climate change in novel ways.

My main contributions with this dissertation are to inform both academic and practitioner communities in order to mobilize knowledge on the increasing impacts of climate change on CBNRM, as well as to analyze the complex network of actors that impact the evolution of this form of resource governance in response to these proliferating challenges. This will enable scholars to build on the existing literature to continue to better understand CBNRM and the ways in which it rearticulates power between actors from the local to the global levels. It will also provide empirical results that practitioners can leverage in order for them to continue to make informed decisions with practical policy relevance in light of developing challenges and opportunities. One of the key contributions of this dissertation is the development of Green Global Policy Assemblages as my theoretical framework. I see the GGPA as building on the best of many existing approaches to put together a more complete analysis of CBNRM and its evolution in

response to emerging challenges such as climate change. While a plethora of development studies scholars have forwarded a wealth of literature on analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of CBNRM as a means for conservation and sustainable development, as well as many having looked specifically at the impact of global organizations on CBNRM, many of these to remain too locked within specific confines, paying less attention to power and politics and to the wealth of heterogeneous actors that not only impact CBNRM, but that actually led to its very genesis, as well as contribute to its ongoing management and evolution which is key to my project.

In order to analyze this multitude of actors and their social relations, I draw on recent assemblage thinking in IR.¹³ The GGPA approaches CBNRM with a flattened ontology, which means I first and foremost do not engage with the subject assuming it is a policy that is passed by the Namibian government and then flows down to its subjects as is often traditionally understood of many policies. Instead the flattened ontology that is part of the GGPA approach sees me trace the developments of this policy through historical analysis, and then builds through to discourse analysis of secondary sources, grey literature, and interviews in order to piece together the heterogeneous and often disparate actors whose efforts and interests combined in cooperative and often simultaneously competitive relations to result in the unofficial beginning of CBNRM prior to independence. CBNRM in Namibia was eventually codified in the 1996 Nature Conservation Amendment Act, and over the past 25 years has continued to evolve in response to challenges and events. But the legislation does not keep evolving in the halls of government and instead this evolution is a result of the social relations of the actors that are traced in the dissertation. The dissertation will analyze the power relations that emerge from this governance assemblage and

¹³ Abrahamsen and Williams, *Security beyond the State*; Saskia Sassen, *Territory, Authority, Rights: From Medieval to Global Assemblages* (Princeton University Press, 2006); Acuto and Curtis, "Assemblage Thinking and International Relations."

build on Foucauldian conceptualizations of power to analyze productive power as elaborated by Barnett and Duval in order to unpack ways in which various actors are able to achieve their ends.¹⁴ While actor network theory, political ecology, transnational networks, and other theoretical approaches each do parts of this, and have contributed to the further development of global assemblages as an approach, each does only a part of what the GGPA does for me in this dissertation which suggests that CBNRM is not a domestic policy for conservation that is then influenced by global power relations, but instead it is a policy assemblage that emerges through a confluence of global and local, public and private social relations and that it cannot be understood outside of these. Below I will further unpack some of the complexities of CBNRM as a form of resource governance in order to contextualize the chapters to come.

The Local/Global Nature of Wildlife Governance

A key example of the complexities of the interconnections that both produce and enable CBNRM is with the various relationships heterogeneous actors have with wildlife. The charismatic megafauna of southern Africa are some of the most majestic and alluring species on earth. As children, many play with toy elephants, lions, rhinos, giraffes, and cheetahs, while these same animals occupy popular tv shows and movies. Africa becomes a place of great intrigue to children in much of the world as the unknown, far off, almost mythical home of these great beasts. As adults, these beautiful creatures often adorn walls as art, and are consumed through documentaries extolling their wisdom, serenity, and power. Many dream of perhaps one day travelling to the continent where so many of the earth's unique and rare wildlife reside. Those lucky enough to

possess the means to do so might even travel the thousands of kilometres to submerge themselves in nature and realize their dream of going on safari to experience these rare animals firsthand.

While for the vast majority of the world's population – especially in the West where most safari goers stem from – seeing Africa's wildlife firsthand will never become a reality, virtually everyone would agree that protecting them is a desirable end. Beyond the beauty of the wildlife themselves and the travesty that would be losing such species to extinction, their survival is inherently linked to the maintenance of healthy and functioning ecosystems. Among the World Wildlife Fund's (WWF) list of endangered, vulnerable, and threatened species are those named above, as well as many more that both we and our children can most likely easily name.¹⁵ Unfortunately, it is those which most capture the human imagination and wonder that are similarly facing the greatest threat. This is no accident, as by now it will come as no surprise that it is humans and human activities that have directly caused the gradual decline of wildlife populations around the globe, beginning with the colonial era and the Industrial Revolution.

Since the beginning of the twentieth century, most of Africa's charismatic megafauna have been experiencing drastic declines brought on by a variety of human activities. This has included the destruction of habitat for the construction of settlements, farming activities, and use for fuel.¹⁶ It has also tragically been exacerbated by the slaughter of huge numbers of animals for parts such as ivory, rhino horns, furs, and skins to be sold on the black market. Initially many of these items were desired across the colonial world as luxury and decorative goods. Eventually this black market also proliferated in Yemen as a result of the influx of capital from neighbouring Saudi Arabia in the 1970s which led to a substantial – and for rhinos deadly – increase in demand for

¹⁵ WWF, "Species List | Endangered, Vulnerable, and Threatened Animals | WWF," World Wildlife Fund, n.d.

¹⁶ David Hulme and Marshall Murphree, *African Wildlife and Livelihoods: The Promise and Performance of Community Conservation* (Great Britain: Woolnough, Irthlingborough, 2001).

djambias (daggers worn as a status symbol by wealthy Yemeni men) made from rhino horn.¹⁷ Today, the traffic of these illicit goods continues largely in Asian markets as people continue to falsely believe in their medicinal properties.¹⁸

A further and growing threat to wildlife is climate change. Scientists have warned that we are on the brink of a sixth mass extinction, and it is clear that this is already well underway.¹⁹ Many regions of Africa are experiencing greater effects from climate change than the global average and this is drastically altering precipitation and migration patterns while forever altering ecosystems that are key to sustaining healthy flora and fauna.²⁰ Thus, while the challenge of conserving wildlife is often framed as a depoliticized issue in that ‘we all agree they must be saved’, the issue remains highly political and there is much less agreement on *how* this ought to be accomplished as well as importantly *who* ought to be responsible for doing so.

In response to the negative impacts of climate change the CBNRM program has begun to evolve. While certain actors that were key components of the program during the early years of CBNRM have dissipated, others have joined with a renewed fervour. Actors like the Green Climate Fund (GCF) have partnered with the Environmental Investment Fund of Namibia (EFIN) and various conservancies in order to procure global funds to help make the program more sustainable. In some cases, this has resulted in the building of solar power plants for high-end lodges, the retrofitting of buildings to make them easier to keep cool, more efficiently providing freshwater, or for the harnessing greywater. These activities demonstrate innovative ways in which

¹⁷ Garth Owen-Smith, *An Arid Eden*, Illustrated edition (Johannesburg: Ball Jonathan Pub, 2011), 392.

¹⁸ Alfian A. Rija et al., “Global Extent and Drivers of Mammal Population Declines in Protected Areas under Illegal Hunting Pressure,” *PloS One* 15, no. 8 (2020): e0227163–e0227163.

¹⁹ Gerardo Ceballos, Paul R. Ehrlich, and Peter H. Raven, “Vertebrates on the Brink as Indicators of Biological Annihilation and the Sixth Mass Extinction,” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 117, no. 24 (June 16, 2020): 13596–602.

²⁰ Walter Leal Filho, *Experiences of Climate Change Adaptation in Africa*, Climate Change Management (Springer Berlin Heidelberg, 2011).

the international community continues to partner with local communities in order to ensure that CBNRM can adapt to and mitigate the harmful effects of climate change. These can be positively pointed to as benefits derived from novel partnerships that have emerged in response to climate change. However, these partnerships are highly political and can lead to an increased foothold for international actors that are increasingly divorced from democratic decision making. The resultant social interactions often result in power imbalances that must be carefully analyzed in order to understand how decision making takes place and whose interests are being realized.

The question of how to protect biodiversity in general, and charismatic megafauna in particular, is almost as old as the problem itself. Even in the early days of imperialism and European encroachment onto the African continent, many colonial administrators understood the beauty of these beasts and took official actions in order to ensure their preservation. While these same colonial regimes provided the catalyst for the major decline in wildlife populations over the twentieth century, many also began developing various approaches to conservation. Today, this legacy remains largely in the form of many of Africa's major national parks which provide refuge for species whose natural habitat continues to disappear at alarming rates in some places.²¹

This type of approach that walls off and limits human use and at times even interaction with wildlife has come to be known as fortress conservation. For many, this offers the most effective solution to protect wildlife. By limiting the ability of local human populations to encroach on habitat and by offering a strong layer of protection against poaching, it is argued wildlife will be secured.²² In theory, this approach is sound, and in practice it has provided some measure of

²¹ Mirja Stoldt et al., "Transfrontier Conservation Areas and Human-Wildlife Conflict: The Case of the Namibian Component of the Kavango-Zambezi (KAZA) TFCA," *Scientific Reports* 10, no. 1 (May 14, 2020): 7964.

²² David Hulme and Marshall Murphree, "Communities, Wildlife and the 'New Conservation' in Africa," *Journal of International Development* 11, no. 2 (1999): 277–85.

success. However, despite decades of increased efforts at various forms of fortress conservation, wildlife populations continued to dwindle across the continent and this tragedy has been paralleled by protracted underdevelopment for local human populations.²³ In response to these failures, over time, the predominant thinking in academic circles as well as development discourse came to focus on harmonizing the sustainable development of human populations alongside local natural resources including wildlife.

These issues are by no means limited to wildlife populations, and there are a number of other natural resources which are simultaneously key to sustainable development for human populations as well as to ecological health and well being, such as freshwater resources, and forests and forest products. In order to treat the dual issue of unsustainable resource extraction mixed with protracted underdevelopment that has been experienced under the fortress conservation paradigm, CBNRM has developed across much of southern Africa as a key resource governance technique. CBNRM consists of a broad set of policies and practices and can take a variety of distinct forms. Such differences aside, it generally involves a devolution of control of certain natural resources from national governments into the care and control of local communities. The idea being that those who reside close to resources will manage them more sustainably as the necessity for conservation for their own future will be more clearly linked and they will also be held to account by family, friends, and neighbours, rather than by distant governments.²⁴ In Africa it has not been unusual for relations between national governments and rural communities to be fraught and the state is often viewed as a purveyor of insecurity rather than security, and a plunderer of resources,

²³ Amity A. Doolittle, "Fortress Conservation," in *Encyclopedia of Environment and Society*, 5 vols. (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2007), 705–705.

²⁴ Russell Taylor, "Community Based Natural Resource Management in Zimbabwe: The Experience of CAMPFIRE," *Biodiversity and Conservation* 18, no. 10 (2009): 2563–83.

rather than a provider of services.²⁵ This is in part why decades of fortress conservation witnessed control over natural resources centralized under the purview of the state, while limiting any meaningful input or decision making from those residing in close proximity to the resources.

CBNRM developed as a response to fortress conservation which came to be perceived as a neocolonial approach to ecological preservation. While CBNRM evolved as a form of global environmental governance broadly, it also did so in highly localized and particular ways in various settings.²⁶ CBNRM is intended to devolve power from the state to local communities.²⁷ This form of resource governance has a long history and evolved over time before growing in popularity in the 1980s and 1990s when dominant thinking in development and global environmental governance came to focus on community empowerment, partnership, and ownership.²⁸ This was a time of a marked shift in which neoliberalism can be said to have won out across much of the world as the dominant ideology.

For CBNRM, western involvement entailed the allocation of donor funding through a proliferating network of NGOs as well as private interests across southern Africa to invest in projects that were intended to promote sustainable development. In many cases this involved devolving the rights to certain natural resources – such as wildlife – to local populations who would become responsible for both the costs associated with managing resources, as well as possible benefits that could be accrued from doing so responsibly and sustainably. Benefits were generally derived from the commoditization of resources through a number of industries based on various

²⁵ Michael Bratton and Nicholas van de Walle, “Chapter 2: Neopatrimonial Rule in Africa,” in *Democratic Experiments in Africa Regime Transitions in Comparative Perspective* (Cambridge University Press, 1997).

²⁶ Owen-Smith, *An Arid Eden*.

²⁷ Brian Jones and Marshall Murphree, “The Evolution of Policy on Community Conservation in Namibia and Zimbabwe,” *African Wildlife and Livelihoods: The Promise and Performance of Community Conservation*, 2001, 38–58.

²⁸ Martin Sjöstedt, “Aid Effectiveness and the Paris Declaration: A Mismatch between Ownership and Results-Based Management?,” *Public Administration and Development* 33, no. 2 (2013): 143–55.

forms of ecotourism.²⁹ Often local communities would engage in joint-venture agreements with private tourism companies who would build lodges, campsites, infrastructure for safaris, as well as the vast economies that support tourism industries including restaurants, guided hikes and tours, national and world heritage sites, local craft and ware shops, museums, beaches, and more. This development was based on wealthy tourists travelling to experience the African savannah and its rare and majestic wildlife.³⁰ One of the key factors for success is that the savannah must remain natural, and the wildlife must remain healthy and abundant. Thus, the more successfully any country or community protected its wildlife and their habitat, the more economic development they could enjoy – resulting in an intended win-win scenario. This win-win scenario is precisely what Elinor Ostrom based her seminal work *Governing the Commons* on, as a way to prevent collective resource issues from degenerating into tragedies of the commons.³¹ The ‘tragedy of the commons’ is the term first used by ecologist Garret Hardin to describe what he suggested was an inevitable collapse in common pool resources due to competitive overuse and extraction, or market failures in economics terms.³² Managing resources in order to profit from them long term is generally seen as sustainable and is intended to be both broad-based and equitable as jobs can be created and incomes can be reinvested in communities through infrastructure projects, education, as well as cash and in-kind benefits that can be distributed to community members.

This form of sustainable development is also intended to consist of a third important aspect beyond environmental conservation and economic development, which is community

²⁹ Sheona Shackleton and Bruce Campbell, *Devolution in Natural Resource Management: Institutional Arrangements and Power Shifts: A Synthesis of Case Studies from Southern Africa* (CIFOR, 2001).

³⁰ C. Fabricius and S. Collins, “Community-Based Natural Resource Management: Governing the Commons,” *Water Policy* 9, no. S2 (November 2007): 83–97.

³¹ Elinor Ostrom, *Governing the Commons: The Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action*, The Political Economy of Institutions and Decisions (r: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

³² Garrett Hardin, “The Tragedy of the Commons,” *Science* 162, no. 3859 (1968): 1243–48.

empowerment – creating a triumvirate of goals. These goals in turn importantly form the three pillars of CBNRM.³³ CBNRM is intended to devolve power to communities so they can develop local democratic governance mechanisms. This institutional development is intended to provide communities and their members a voice in their own development in order to achieve the ‘ownership’ and ‘participation’ on which CBNRM was based.³⁴ Many scholars have pointed to this third aspect of CBNRM as the most important, as ownership and participation are intended to engender long-term sustainable development that evolves beyond resource management.³⁵ Despite the importance of community empowerment, these are the least well explored dynamics within the existing literature.³⁶ This is due in part to it being the most abstract and difficult to quantify of the three pillars of CBNRM, while simultaneously the hardest to achieve.

These are some of the complexities this dissertation will analyze including the ways in which the CBNRM program is adapting and evolving in response to the impacts of climate change, as well as how various actors are driving such responses. It will place a specific focus on the politics involved in the complex governance arrangements that emerges as well as analyze to what degree communities benefit, are empowered, and those most marginalized within communities are impacted. The next section outlines how the dissertation will unfold.

³³ Andrew Heffernan, “Development, Conservation, Empowerment: The Trilemma of Community-Based Natural Resource Management in Namibia,” *Environmental Management*, 2022.

³⁴ Louise Fortmann, Emery Roe, and Michel van Eeten, “At the Threshold between Governance and Management: Community-based Natural Resource Management in Southern Africa,” *Public Administration and Development* 21, no. 2 (2001): 171–85.

³⁵ Brian Child, “The Practice and Principles of Community-Based Wildlife Management in Zimbabwe: The CAMPFIRE Programme,” *Biodiversity & Conservation* 5, no. 3 (1996): 369–98.

³⁶ Karol Boudreaux, “A New Call of the Wild: Community-Based Natural Resource Management in Namibia Essay,” *Georgetown International Environmental Law Review* 20 (2008): 297–336.

Chapter Overview

To set the scene for CBNRM as a form of global governance Chapter 2 begins by discussing a brief history of the shifts that occurred in the global political economy, highlighted by the complexification of society and limitations faced by the state. The chapter also discusses the end of bi-polarity and the resultant effects on the international order. These changes are key to understanding the shift from fortress conservation toward community-based forms of conservation. These shifts occurred not only in order to empower communities, but also as a response to a broad realization that in many cases the state could not effectively govern every aspect of society. As a result, various techniques of governing at a distance emerged and this included efforts to rebound society's challenges back onto it, in order for society to become implicated directly in developing solutions. Part of what this has resulted in is shifts in the type of power that is exercised as well as the types of actors involved in governance. Thus, Chapter 2 will next turn to analyzing power and its polymorphous character. This includes conceptualizations of power beyond a traditional understanding of coercive power that is wielded by sovereign decree. Increasingly scholars have posited that power is more diffuse and produced by a variety of actors based on their social interactions. Following this brief macro level analysis, the chapter looks more closely at the literature on CBNRM specifically that unpacks what this form of resource governance is, what its goals are, and how it is intended to accomplish these. It also briefly explores the history of CBNRM. I then review the literature on CBNRM in Namibia and identify three loosely temporally organized groups of scholars which I deem panaceans, utilitarians, and skeptics. Each of these groups hold different views on the relative success of CBNRM. These groupings will be employed to demonstrate how the outlook on CBNRM has shifted over time. While each group points to various reasons for this, climate change has yet to be analyzed which my research

suggests is the binding constraint that has contributed to decreased success over time. The chapter also discusses why existing approaches have yet to explain the evolution of CBNRM in response to climate change. Ultimately, it will outline key gaps in the literature which include analyses of climate change and the evolution of the program in order to adapt to these realities as well as the degree to which these evolutions serve to benefit local communities.

In Chapter 3, I outline my theoretical framework, drawing on recent International Relations literature on global assemblages. I provide a brief overview of the more philosophical foundations of assemblage thinking, prior to discussing some of the ways it has evolved, specifically within the discipline of IR as well as ways it has been employed to understand various complex policy formations in the social world. The chapter unpacks policy assemblage which builds on the work of prior assemblage theorists to outline more concerted and deliberate governance arrangements which have emerged and must be understood beyond a sovereign policy decree. The chapter then turns to outlining green global policy assemblages as my composite theoretical framework and discusses how it is an effective tool for tracing the actors involved in enabling CBNRM. The chapter goes on to discuss the ways scholars have developed global assemblages beyond a traditional theoretical framework and ontology, to also serve as a methodological approach for unpacking and analyzing complex phenomenon. This methodology section will include an elaboration of Namibia as my case study, my approach to fieldwork, as well as process of data analysis and triangulation. Namibia was chosen for this study as the crucial case design as it is recognized as a global leader in CBNRM due to having devoted the highest percentage of land to this form of resource governance on earth, as well as having a recently drafted and progressive constitution with stipulations for environmental conservation written throughout its sections.

Next the dissertation turns to the empirical chapters with Chapter 4 outlining the genesis of CBNRM in Namibia which will include a brief history from the colonial period, through to the Apartheid era, and onto independence in 1990. This history will include key relevant background on the politics of the country including its de facto one-party state system that has emerged since independence. It will discuss how, why, and as a result of whose actions CBNRM developed in the country, how it grew in popularity, as well as what form it took on and what its main activities consisted of. This will incorporate a discussion of conservation activities occurring in the country prior to independence with a number of activists, academics, and development workers on the ground. These actors coalesced through the changes brought on by independence and the parallel shift in the international system in 1990 which afforded them a wealth of new opportunities. These new opportunities led to the formation of a network of NGOs that worked with consultants and a broad array of international donors in order to not only draft Namibia's CBNRM legislation, but also implement it with their own influence in various regions across the country. Through the genesis of CBNRM, this chapter begins unpacking the ways in which this form of resource governance is about much more than a straightforward devolution of state power to local communities. Beyond this, the chapter discusses questions of local level corruption which are key to understanding the degree to which communities benefit from CBNRM. This form of resource governance was intended to circumvent the type of neopatrimonial practices and large-scale corruption that has often been seen at the state level in Africa.

In Chapter 5, I outline the impacts of climate change on Namibia in general, and on the CBNRM program in particular. This begins with discussion of the changing climate and how it affects livelihoods, tourism, wildlife, their natural habitat, and the many ways climate change is exacerbating almost every previously existing challenge to CBNRM in Namibia while also

outlining the ways this has largely been ignored, or at least not been connected to CBNRM and program outcomes. Namibia has been experiencing a severe and protracted drought for the better part of a decade and while droughts are a normal part of the hydrological cycle, their severity, duration, and frequency are all increasing which is threatening Namibians as well as the flora and fauna across the country. Decreasing precipitation patterns are making life more challenging for everyone and have begun to severely impact the ability of the CBNRM program to produce benefits that had been enjoyed in the first fifteen years of its implementation. The chapter will discuss widespread losses in livestock, veld food for both domesticated livestock as well as wildlife, and the increasing pressure this all places on humans and wildlife living in close proximity – this being the essence of CBNRM. The chapter then turns to discuss opportunities that are being provided by some of the very same challenges discussed above. Despite its absence from much of the literature, the chapter demonstrates that people on the ground are acutely aware of the impacts of climate change and are active in efforts to both adapt to and mitigate further harmful effects. This has resulted in novel partnerships which have witnessed new actors amalgamate into the GGPA as others have dissipated over time. New global actors have joined and are channeling funds to make various parts of the program more sustainable, however, the question remains who these funds are being directed to benefit and whether those the programs espoused to help are left better off at all. Many of these actors such as the Green Climate Fund are both new partners to the program as well as new *types* of actors that have emerged on the global stage. They are being empowered with increasing legitimacy by the international community and being supported with ever more funding and decision-making autonomy regarding development activities which is having important effects on how and where funding is allocated. In many cases this is leading to a disembedding of development from democracy which can mean funding goes to those who are

connected to powerful state and global actors, rather than where it is needed most or might contribute to greatest results.

In the penultimate chapter, I discuss the ways in which CBNRM is able to adapt to a variety of forces and who benefits as a result of these evolutions. Chapter 6 unpacks the actors that are key in driving the evolutions which are integral to understanding why, how, and in reaction to what the programs adapt. In order to understand this, we must analyze power imbalances that exist between a variety of actors and specifically between local communities and more powerful global actors who are often able to realize their interests. These powerful global actors often have interests that shift over time in response to changing global fashions regarding interests in specific types of conservation, development, and even tourist locations. These include new ecotourism destinations which shift over time, the growing aversion to trophy hunting as an approach for conservation income, as well as the shift from national parks to more integrated conservation approaches. These shifting fashions that emerge within the international community end up having substantial impacts on the ground regarding what types of activities are favoured and hence funded. It becomes clear that going local is not sufficient in itself to prevent corruption and as a result, politics and power relations must be analyzed from both the global and local levels.

Finally, Chapter 7 outlines my conclusions regarding the evolution of CBNRM and the GGPA in response to climate change. While it is clear is that climate change has presented a number of challenges to the CBNRM program, it has also presented a number of opportunities which are being harnessed by certain actors within the GGPA. This is presenting renewed avenues for actors to join the GGPA in order to pursue their own interests, while at times also contributing to congruous goals of those who have long been involved in CBNRM. Despite this, goals are often divergent, and have also continued to contribute to ongoing tensions as actors vie to realize their

aims and objections. Beyond ecological concerns, major questions persist about the degree to which local communities are empowered, and beyond that the degree to which those most marginalized in these communities are provided any kind of voice or are at all better off. It is clear that CBNRM produces some benefits – specifically wildlife conservation and a degree of economic development – and that it has and continues to realize important and demonstrable goals. However, equally clear is that it does not accomplish all the goals its proponents suggest – specifically community empowerment and broad-based equitable economic growth – and that these issues are only being further exacerbated by the impacts of the changing climate. Climate change is both challenging the viability of the program itself while also creating avenues for new types of actors such as the Green Climate Fund who are afforded legitimacy and funding by the international community, but who do not function in the same way as traditional multilateral organizations. This is enabling avenues for these novel hybrid actors to exert their power and influence in development contexts to pick winners based on their own criteria which in some ways is continuing the same type of approaches to development that have been tried, tested, and failed. Thus, long after communities were supposed to have become self-sufficient, what we are seeing is a proliferation of actors involved, a growing GGPA, and a failure for communities to attain autonomous self-governance. As a result, CBNRM might best be described as *International Community-Based Natural Resource Governance* in which a complex GGPA governs resources at the local level. While in some ways, ground continues to be gained on this path, in others, this autonomy seems to be a distant goal that will remain unachieved.

Chapter 2

Governance, Power, and Elephants

*In terms of governance, the world is too disaggregated for grand logics that postulate a measure of global coherence.*³⁷

While much of the literature on CBNRM approaches it as a domestic policy tool for conservation I place it firmly within transformations in global environmental governance. This chapter provides a conceptual and theoretical understanding of CBNRM from its emergence within global environmental governance and development discourse, through to its implementation and evolution over several decades. It starts by discussing some of the key shifts within global politics that have been reflected in the literature on global environmental governance. This includes a shift away from *government* to increasing approaches to *governance*. These shifts in governance mean that increasingly governments are outsourcing or devolving functions traditionally administered directly by the state apparatus. Resultantly, beginning in the 1970s and accelerating through the 1980s and 1990s there has been a push by many within government and without, to decrease coercive approaches to exercising power by extending rights to govern a number of aspects of life. The overt impetus for doing so is to responsibilize various groups and communities so that they are directly implicated in developing solutions to issues they face. Beyond simply shifting responsibilities however, these evolutions in governance have led to a reconfiguration of the way power and power relations manifest. This includes who wields power, what types of actors are able to do so effectively, as well as a proliferation of the types of power that are produced beyond

³⁷ James N. Rosenau, "Governance in the Twenty-First Century," *Global Governance* 1, no. 1 (1995): 16.

traditional conceptions of coercive power. As a result, scholars have increasingly analyzed various forms of power including sovereign, disciplinary, and productive power.³⁸

Situating CBNRM within the literature on global environmental governance and unpacking these forms of power is integral for analyzing the way the programs are operationalized, as well as the ways in which they are able to adapt and evolve in response to the changing world around them. CBNRM must be understood as more than an apolitical domestic technical policy tool for environmental conservation, and instead is best understood as a form of resource governance that is inextricably connected to a multitude of global actors. It is also intimately connected to the international community as its ethos is centered around the protection of endangered species that much of the world feels are a global good which must be protected at all costs. As a result, the plethora of global actors involved in CBNRM activities on the ground are afforded a specific degree of power and legitimacy based on global populations who see their efforts to protect wildlife as an unquestioned good in many respects. Beyond these conservation aspects, CBNRM is specifically intended to engender sustainable development for local communities, and as a result their interests are inherently tied up in program success as well. All of this creates a complex phenomenon that has been produced in part as a result of the evolutions in global environmental governance which are discussed in this chapter.

Contemporary Evolutions in Global Environmental Governance

Transformations in global politics have led to increased debates on, and interest in, global governance as a concept that quickly developed following the end of the bi-polar era of the Cold

³⁸ Michel Foucault, "The Subject and Power," *Critical Inquiry* 8, no. 4 (1982): 777–95.

War. The 1995 UN Commission on Global Governance defines governance as including the formal institutions and regimes empowered to enforce compliance, as well as the informal arrangements that people or institutions have agreed on or perceive to be in their interest.³⁹ Global governance includes traditional types of bureaucratic government but also goes far beyond these in an attempt to account for the broad networks and social interactions made possible by the forces of globalization. These networks lead to both the need for, and also the possibility of, governance outside traditional state means. Rather than simply shifting from a bi-polar order to a post-war unipolar system, global governance assumes that a more multicentric and globalized world emerged at the beginning of the 1990s ushering in a similarly complex and dynamic new global politics.⁴⁰ Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink discuss these evolutions as the emergence of transnational networks in an excerpt that is worth quoting at some length here;

World politics at the end of the twentieth century involves, alongside states, many nonstate actors that interact with each other, with states, and with international organizations. These interactions are structured in terms of networks, and transnational networks are increasingly visible in international politics. Some involve economic actors and firms. Some are networks of scientists and experts whose professional ties and shared causal ideas underpin their efforts to influence policy. Others are networks of activists, distinguishable largely by the centrality of principled ideas or values in motivating their formation.”⁴¹

In particular, this has demonstrated the inadequacy of traditional frameworks that place utmost emphasis on state to state relations based on territoriality and instead on the growing importance

³⁹ Commission on Global Governance, *Our Global Neighbourhood: The Report of the Commission on Global Governance* (Oxford ; New York: Oxford Paperbacks, 1995).

⁴⁰ Rosaleen Duffy, “Global Environmental Governance and the Challenge of Shadow States: The Impact of Illicit Sapphire Mining in Madagascar,” *Development and Change* 36, no. 5 (2005): 825–43.

⁴¹ Margaret E. Keck, *Activists beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1998), 1.

of complex networks of actors involved in global politics that are simultaneously public and private, global and local.⁴² The increasing interest in global governance can be seen as a shift toward the acceptance that with any issue in global politics, there is a multitude of actors and networks that operate in intricate and novel ways to exercise various forms of power and influence outcomes. Examples of this include the proliferation of global multilateral institutions, the rise of multinational corporations, the ever-growing importance of global financial flows, and even the rise of terrorist groups such as ISIS, Boko Haram, and Al-Shabaab.

This multiplication of actors in global governance has led to what some deem public-private governance networks which are

composed of public actors, private firms, interest organizations (e.g. user group associations, small-scale farmers, trade associations, etc.). In this arrangement policies do not emerge from concerted and programmed actions at government level, but rather from interactions between these actors.⁴³

These types of public-private governance networks have become ubiquitous and formulate an important part of how global politics now functions at all levels. As a result, scholars have argued that the state is experiencing an erosion of sovereignty.⁴⁴ Many conceptualize this as an erosion in the state's capacity to exercise authority over its own interests – at least in the way it was once able to.⁴⁵ In an early account of these developments, Hall and Biersteker posit “this confronts

⁴² James Rosenau, “Governance in the Twenty-First Century,” *Global Governance* 1, no. 1 (January 1, 1995): 13–43.

⁴³ Albertina Ndeinoma, K. Freerk Wiersum, and Bas Arts, “The Governance of Indigenous Natural Products in Namibia: A Policy Network Analysis,” *Environmental Management* 62, no. 1 (July 1, 2018): 31.

⁴⁴ Siba N. Grovogui, “Regimes of Sovereignty: International Morality and the African Condition,” *European Journal of International Relations* 8, no. 3 (2002): 315–38.

⁴⁵ Jens Bartelson, “Three Concepts of Globalization,” *International Sociology* 15, no. 2 (2000): 180–96; Jacqueline Best, “Why the Economy Is Often the Exception to Politics as Usual,” *Theory* 24, no. 4 (2007): 87–109; Stuart Elden, “Missing the Point: Globalization, Deterritorialization and the Space of the World,” *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 30, no. 1 (2005): 8–19.

national governments with a trade-off between efficiency and autonomy, and it appears that most national governments are opting for the former.”⁴⁶ They explain that power and authority are closely related, but while power enables one to exercise one’s will and achieve ends, authority embodies a degree of legitimacy.

Global environmental governance is a specific issue area in which we can very clearly see this multiplicity of actors and how the resultant disaggregation of power plays out. Rosaleen Duffy argues “the increasing interest in global governance within debates about the nature of international relations, development, and environmental management can be regarded as part of a fundamental shift away from thinking about states as the most important political actors in the global system.”⁴⁷ From this, the environment has proven to be one of the most compelling examples of these evolutions in global politics as it is an issue that knows no territorial bounds as well as being one that has proven to not be effectively treated at the state level alone. Instead, environmental governance is enacted through a complex network of institutions and authorities at all levels. Examples of this include endangered wildlife populations, which are governed through the Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species, as well as forests, which fall under the International Timber Trade Council. Another useful example for understanding the way environmental governance is often operationalized either outside of, or in the absence of the state is with the 2017 declaration by then President Donald Trump that the United States would pull out of the Paris Agreement alleging it had ‘damaged’ the US economy.⁴⁸ Despite this reversal of national policy, as well as the announcement of the ‘America First Energy Plan’ that would see an

⁴⁶ Rodney Bruce Hall and Thomas J. Biersteker, eds., *The Emergence of Private Authority in Global Governance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 10.

⁴⁷ Rosaleen Duffy, “The Potential and Pitfalls of Global Environmental Governance: The Politics of Transfrontier Conservation Areas in Southern Africa,” *Political Geography* 25, no. 1 (2006): 825.

⁴⁸ Manfred B. Steger, *Globalization: A Very Short Introduction*, Fifth edition., Fully updated new edition., Very Short Introductions 86 (Oxford: University Press, 2020), 108.

increase in oil drilling, coal mining, as well as a plethora of other environmentally damaging policies, action to fight climate change did not halt within the US. Instead, actors at the state, county, and municipal levels coalesced in order to develop effective solutions on a local scale. Furthermore, they partnered with other global actors and organizations in order to continue to engage in agreements that would benefit planetary ecological health. These specific examples demonstrate the ways in which states no longer necessarily govern every aspect of their territorial boundaries, as actors – at least for those who sign on – follow the agreed upon rules set out in these types of global agreements. These agreements emerge from complex negotiations in an attempt to treat many of the growing global challenges. It has been accepted that without decisive and effective collective action on certain issues – such as the environment – all, or at least most, will be less well off as a result. This importance is also what is seeing an increase in environmental actors simultaneously being afforded expanding power and legitimacy. This proliferation of actors contributes to the increasingly networked public-private character of global environmental governance as this major global challenge must be treated simultaneously at the sub-state and supra-state levels while also doing so in a system that remains state-centric in a number of ways.

These examples allow us better analytical understanding of the ways global environmental governance has been and continues to evolve. For a plethora of reasons, states cannot tackle these issues alone, nor have they been able to do so effectively for some time, as seen with the widespread global failures to adequately protect our environments and fight climate change. This has led to an increase in actions ascribing authority to govern to actors previously thought unimportant as well as new types of actors altogether.⁴⁹ This authority develops in various and

⁴⁹ Dan Brockington and Katherine Scholfield, “Expenditure by Conservation Nongovernmental Organizations in Sub-Saharan Africa,” *Conservation Letters* 3, no. 2 (2010): 106–13.

complex ways. It can be realized through a direct devolution of power from traditional centralized forms of government to new political units. It can also emerge from informal interactions by various actors which is in some cases legitimized through their existing actions and ongoing social relations. Duffy argues that these complex networks of actors constitute real challenges to global environmental governance, as simply understanding who exercises any degree of power or authority in any particular social relationship becomes difficult to untangle and thus operationalize.⁵⁰ The very same networks however, themselves constitute global environmental governance making clear analysis and understanding of their relationships difficult to develop. Duffy suggests “global environmental governance is closely bound up with the new networks of transnational groupings of consultants, academics and single-issue pressure groups of NGOs that constitute international epistemic communities.”⁵¹ Increasing scholarship has begun to demonstrate the way these networks and actors in conservation are expanding at a rapid pace around the world, but perhaps most of all in sub-Saharan Africa where conservation is so often intimately linked with development resources.⁵²

What these shifts away from government and toward governance have meant specifically for global environmental governance in many cases, is a variety of forms of community-based conservation. Similar to community watches for local security, or community food banks for food security, community-based conservation has emerged as an approach geared toward responsabilizing residents for their local natural resources and environmental sustainability. This phenomenon realizes goals for various actors, and proponents suggest it is a way to empower communities to manage certain issues more effectively. For the state, this often consists of an

⁵⁰ Duffy, “Global Environmental Governance and the Challenge of Shadow States.”

⁵¹ Duffy, 93.

⁵² Brockington and Scholfield, “Expenditure by Conservation Nongovernmental Organizations in Sub-Saharan Africa.”

outsourcing and devolution of control over resources or the management of certain environmental functions, alleviating the state of the costs associated with managing these. These costs are thus downloaded to communities, however, in many cases local residents can also benefit from these arrangements as well. Proponents suggest this is an effective way to avoid tragedies of the commons and suggest collective action can be more effective when it is conducted on a small/local scale.⁵³ However, the process of devolution to the local level is not a simple one to one ratio of a subtraction of state power which is then added to the community in an equal and opposite empowerment. Instead, as has been discussed, public-private networks emerge in order to collaboratively enact governance and provide the types of services and efforts traditionally performed by central governments. Ryan Katz-Rosene and Matthew Paterson argue that networks of governance now include trade, finance, production, interstate competition, globalization, inequalities, and the governance of all these.⁵⁴ The proliferation of networks of actors involved in governance are also seen with the evolutions of CBNRM in response to climate change and the new complex partnerships that emerge as a result.

As this proliferation of actors involved in governance has occurred and both the quantity and type of actors have proliferated, new layers of environmental governance have emerged. The layering of governance that has ensued from the shifts discussed above led to ongoing political and academic debates that centre around the degree to which human activity and use of natural resources and the environment should be limited. This includes whether the state should strictly manage the conservation of environment and natural resources, or whether more integrated approaches might prove more fruitful. However, this led to debates about how conservation ought

⁵³ Ernst Friedrich Schumacher, *Small Is Beautiful: Economics as If People Mattered* (New York: Harper and Row, 1979).

⁵⁴ Ryan Katz-Rosene and Matthew Paterson, *Thinking Ecologically about the Global Political Economy* (London: Routledge, 2018).

to take place, and whether restricting human use and interaction of nature in various forms of protected spaces and national parks was best or whether new approaches were needed. It is clear that by simply removing all human activity in what Brockington and Igoe refer to as ‘fortress conservation’ resources and natural landscapes would be protected. However, many argue that this is not only undesirable in many cases, but also doomed to fail as human populations must have a means of survival and well-being.⁵⁵ This has led to the debate as outlined by Lorraine Moore between preservationists – who advocate the preservation and non-use of resources – and utilisationists – who believe resources are best protected by being regulated through neoclassical economics and market-based approaches to conservation.⁵⁶ These two approaches also link back to the shifts in global governance as a preservationist paradigm would see central governments protect vast tracts of land and resources through sovereign decrees. On the other hand, the utilisationist approach is intended to result in devolved control responsabilizing local residents to effectively and sustainably manage resources. For utilisationists;

The notion of natural resources, including wildlife, paying their way for conservation gained popularity in the 1980s. This model of conservation, also known as ‘sustainable utilisation’ or ‘market based approaches to conservation’ is informed by the need for people to understand the value of their environment in order for them to conserve it.⁵⁷

This was a definitive break from the past as governments attempted to move people off land – by force if necessary – in order to create national parks and similar entities that limited human use. Instead, the utilisationist approach functioned with developments in global governance that sought

⁵⁵ Doolittle, “Fortress Conservation.”

⁵⁶ Lorraine Moore, “The Neoliberal Elephant: Exploring the Impacts of the Trade Ban in Ivory on the Commodification and Neoliberalisation of Elephants,” *Geoforum* 42, no. 1 (2011): 51–60.

⁵⁷ Moore, 51.

to increase the influence of non-state actors and increasingly to empower communities and local level actors to give them responsibility for costs as well as benefits associated with environmental protection. While from a global perspective this shift can be seen to have been broadly occurring, this was only as a result of the agency of people on the ground. The efforts of local people and communities contributed to these shifts in highly localized ways and led to initiatives such as the Parks for People movement, transfrontier conservation areas (TFCAs) and other approaches that would see communities and resources living integrated lives. These integrated approaches also led to increased efforts to govern these regional approaches including the Convention of Biodiversity, The Convention on the Protection and use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes, and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Protocol on Trade. As the former approaches to conservation led to a proliferation of actors involved in global environmental governance, the latter initiatives emerged in order to ensure increasingly globalized resources and territories were governed effectively.

Duffy et al. demonstrate the way this proliferation of actors working towards these goals can also have more sinister outcomes.⁵⁸ These scholars, as well as Brockington and Igoe, argue that far too often marginalized people in rural sub-Saharan Africa are forced off their land or away from their traditional ways of living in the name of conservation.⁵⁹ This raises serious questions about power and authority and who should have say over how conservation is carried out. The political questions raised create deep tensions as the goals of many within the environmental movement globally would see protection of environments – including wildlife populations and their habitat – as necessary and worthwhile even at great costs. However, if this includes forcing

⁵⁸ Rosaleen Duffy et al., “Why We Must Question the Militarisation of Conservation,” *Biological Conservation* 232, no. Complete (2019): 66–73.

⁵⁹ Daniel Brockington and James Igoe, “Eviction for Conservation: A Global Overview,” *Conservation and Society* 4, no. 3 (July 1, 2006): 424.

marginalized populations off their land, serious issues can arise. This critique builds on the work of scholars such as Thomas Pogge that have outlined patterns that began emerging following the end of the Cold War and into the 2000s in the international and supranational governance architecture where contradictions of interests and imbalances of power often – and perhaps increasingly – pit the interests of the Global South and Global North against one another. Often these tensions and issues exacerbate underlying power imbalances which lead to a muddying of already complex phenomena. As a result, it becomes important to discuss the parallel evolution of power alongside the shifts in global environmental governance discussed above.

Power's Polymorphous Character

Whether government or governance, questions of how we order society centre around notions of power. How it is exercised, in what ways it manifests, who is able to leverage power vis a vis whom, and to what end? All these questions are integral to understanding the shifts that emerged within global governance in the latter part of the 20th century. Here, I will begin by outlining some of the ways in which power has been conceptualized, in order to provide a framework for latter empirical chapters that demonstrates the ways in which CBNRM reorganizes and rearticulates power between the state and a variety of other actors including local communities, NGOs, international institutions, foreign governments, and non-state actors. Power and governance have always been complex, however, due to a number of phenomena associated with the many processes of globalization, shifts in the global political economy have increased the rate of complexification of society. As a result of this complexity, traditional notions of power and similar concepts within the social sciences have been outstripped in a number of ways. While Robert Dahl's elaboration of power was frequently cited for several decades, scholars have for a number

of years theorized beyond his conception.⁶⁰ According to Dahl “A has power over B to the extent that he can get B to do something that B would not otherwise do.”⁶¹ Dahl gives the example of a professor who has power over a student to the extent that a failing grade could compel the student to study over the holidays when the student would otherwise choose not to. In a case like this, the degree of power held by the professor is measured by the difference between the probability the student would have studied versus the fear they have of failing the course. Michel Foucault is one key scholar who has since expanded on this understanding of power which is generally referred to as coercive power.⁶² This type of power is that which is most obvious when we think of the state in its physical forms. This includes its passing and enforcing of laws through either force or the threat of force, as well as the inflicting of punishment for infringements of state laws.

While this conceptualization of power provides a clear outline, it is most likely to provide analytical use prior to the proliferation of the plethora of competing sets of voices and actors that influence decision making. Foucault explains what he calls absolutist and monarchical power by outlining punishment in the form of public torture in the 18th century. This form of power was intended to have society publicly and collectively bear witness to the absolute power of the sovereign and as a result, employ fear and coercion as a means to make subjects obey.⁶³ This notion of coercive power made sense to a degree when the state was seen as the preeminent actor in global politics and where power was exercised from the centre with sovereign decrees emanating toward the periphery.

⁶⁰ Barnett and Duvall, *Power in Global Governance*; Michel Foucault, *Discipline and punish: the birth of the prison*, Social theory, 2nd edition (New York: Vintage Books, 1979); Pierre Bourdieu, “The Forms of Capital,” in *Readings in Economic Sociology* (John Wiley & Sons, Ltd, 2008), 280–91.

⁶¹ Robert A. Dahl, “The Concept of Power,” *Behavioral Science* 2, no. 3 (1957): 202–3.

⁶² Foucault, *Discipline and punish*.

⁶³ Foucault, *Discipline and punish*.

Due to shifts in global governance that can be attributed to the neoliberalization of society, states' abilities have been squeezed and they have had to simultaneously do more, with less resources at their disposal. This pressure, among a confluence of other factors have led scholars to posit that states are no longer the sole or in some cases even the principal actors in global politics.⁶⁴ Over time, states as a result began to outsource and devolve many of the governance functions traditionally performed directly by central government apparatuses. Rita Abrahamsen argues that

One characteristic of this mode of governance is an increasing decentralisation and pluralisation of power and decision-making centres, away from the state and towards various quasi-autonomous non-governmental organisations and institutions, so that today the 'conduct of conduct' increasingly obtains in sites 'at a distance' from the state itself.⁶⁵

The 'conduct of conduct' as discussed here is described by Foucault as the central problem of modern government. For him, the very idea of liberal government is paradoxical as liberalism asserts the sovereignty of the free individual yet governing requires a regulation and moderation of the behaviour of individuals.⁶⁶ The conduct of conduct refers to the power to act on the actions of others. Decentralisation and pluralisation are intended to work within this logic and have meant increasingly that the state cannot be understood as the paramount actor in global politics. Mitchell Dean has argued that in "most social and political narratives, sovereign power is being undermined, decentred, flattened, de-territorialized, pluralized, and conceptually displaced."⁶⁷ This shift away from the state as the pre-eminent actor and referent object has a number of important

⁶⁴ Hall, *Emergence of Private Authority in Global Governance*, Cambridge Studies in International Relations ; 85 (Cambridge, Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

⁶⁵ Rita Abrahamsen, "The Power of Partnerships in Global Governance," *Third World Quarterly* 25, no. 8 (September 1, 2004): 1459.

⁶⁶ Foucault, "The Subject and Power."

⁶⁷ Mitchell Dean, *Governing Societies: Political Perspectives on Domestic and International Rule*, Issues in Society (Maidenhead, England ; Open University Press, 2007), 133.

impacts on understandings of International Relations. This is because traditionally most theories and concepts in the social sciences have been developed with a state-centric ontology that sees the state as the central player in the system who wields sovereign and ultimate power. While it is important to analyze these shifts, it is similarly important to acknowledge that in many cases the state still maintains and exercises a high degree of sovereign control and thus Dean and others suggest underestimating this power can present a number of risks.⁶⁸

What this shift in power means is that the state-centric ontology with which many theories in the social sciences were developed ceases to keep pace with the modern complexities of society. Prior to the 1970s, this state-centric ontology developed alongside world events that were marked by catalysts such as the World Wars and the Cold War – a time when this approach and the accompanying vertical stack of levels with the global on top of the national on top of the local made more analytical sense. As the era of embedded liberalism passed, however, and the period that came to be marked by neoliberal forms of governance took hold, this has ceased to be the case. Frederick Cooper outlines the fact that history is ‘lumpy’ and uneven.⁶⁹ This refers to the way the state and its structures have disaggregated, and some social relations have become denser while others increasingly diffuse. Cooper argues that concepts such as globalization or neoliberalism serve to smooth out this lumpiness but resultantly fail to account for a great deal.

In the contemporary period, Foucault’s conception of power evolved beyond traditional understandings of sovereign power to further encapsulate disciplinary as well as biopower/governmentality⁷⁰ which were later summarized by Barnett and Duval as productive

⁶⁸ Dean, *Governing Societies*.

⁶⁹ Frederick Cooper, “What Is the Concept of Globalization Good for? An African Historians Perspective,” *African Affairs* 100, no. 399 (2001): 189–213.

⁷⁰ Michel Foucault, “Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings,” Penguin Random House Canada, 1977.

power.⁷¹ These types of productive power are best understood in the Foucauldian sense as being diffuse and embodied in discourse and constantly created and enacted by the very interactions of actors.⁷² For Foucault, power is not simply wielded by actors by way of episodic or sovereign acts of domination or coercion. It is instead dispersed and pervasive. It is therefore relational and uneven.⁷³ In relation to my project, power cannot simply be seen as something that resides within the sovereign control of the state that is theirs to delegate or outsource as they see fit, but instead a much more complex set of processes and relations. Barnett and Duval posit that power works in various expressions and therefore cannot be captured in a single formulation. They suggest there are four types of power: compulsory, institutional, structural, and productive.⁷⁴ These understandings of multiple expressions of power and the way it can be produced and leveraged to achieve ends are central to my analysis. In the context of CBNRM, my project analyzes the ways in which power relations between various actors contribute to certain outcomes over others. These expressions of power can be produced by various actors in complex ways and are greatly influenced by developments in global environmental governance.

By relying only on traditional definitions of power, based on understandings of states as coherent and paramount structures within the international, we fail to account for a great deal. Instead Barnett and Duvall argue a “healthy recognition of power’s polymorphous character, and a willingness to look for connections between these different forms enhances and deepens our understanding of international politics.”⁷⁵ Cooper calls for ‘lumpier’ understandings of difficult

⁷¹ Barnett and Duvall, *Power in Global Governance*.

⁷² Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977*, 1st ed. (New York: Vintage, 1980).

⁷³ Michel Foucault, “*Society Must Be Defended*”: *Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975-76*, 1st Picador pbk. ed.. (New York: Picador, 2003), 43.

⁷⁴ Barnett and Duvall, *Power in Global Governance*.

⁷⁵ Barnett and Duvall, *Power in Global Governance*, 4.

concepts such as globalization that attempt to smooth over a great deal of complexity, while Larner and Walters similarly claim that we must accept ‘messier’ analyses that simultaneously provide more in the way of accuracy.⁷⁶

As these moves away from notions of sovereign power have proliferated and become increasingly accepted, there has been a shift toward productive power. Along with the shift in conceptions of power, not only do the key actors shift – away from the state – but also the forms of power evolve away from instrumentalism and towards more relational and productive forms of power. This dissertation and the GGPA approach are developed specifically in order to analyze this diversification of actors as well as the transformation in forms of power. Coercive power has necessary limits and demands a great deal of resources as it is intimate and must involve a certain degree of physical connection between ruler and subject. Unlike sovereign or coercive power, productive power is not

The brute fact of the domination of the one over the many, or of one group over another, but the multiple forms of domination that can be exercised in society; so not the king in his central position, but subjects in their reciprocal relations; not sovereignty in its one edifice, but the multiple subjugations that take place and function within the social body.⁷⁷

Exercising sovereign power effectively becomes impractical, if not impossible as societies grow, and thus, Foucault discusses the shift to disciplinary power through his discussion of Jeremy Bentham’s Panopticon. The Panopticon is described as a central tower staffed by prison guards who watch over all prisoners whose cells face inward toward the guard tower knowing their every move *can* be seen, yet never knowing for sure if at any moment they *are* being watched. Foucault

⁷⁶ Wendy Larner and William Walters, “Globalization as Governmentality,” *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political* 29, no. 5 (2004): 495–514.

⁷⁷ Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, 27.

describes this as how power is increasingly exercised, as the every action of social beings within a society cannot be effectively policed. Instead, the sovereign passes laws, and creates a dense web of rules and regulations by which people must operate within their everyday life as well as almost every action. This power becomes productive as people fear the threat that their ability to operate relatively freely within this societal set of rules can be taken away and their physical bodies subject to a removal of any number of freedoms through the penal system – generally referring to prison in its different forms.⁷⁸ Foucault's conception of power evolved over time and his earlier work we only see sovereign and disciplinary power while later he introduces a third category of power which is even subtler. This form of power which is variously referred to as biopower, governmentality, and/or security is that which sees power exercised in perhaps its most capillary and relational like way and is that which is furthest from direct sovereign actions.⁷⁹ This form of power is also productive like disciplinary power but is more subtle, pervasive, and operationalized based on the social relations of subjects within society, rather than through hierarchical relations.⁸⁰ For Foucault, governmentality refers to the conduct of conduct, which in its simplest form entails the control of how people conduct themselves. This is something that he explored from smaller institutions right up to the governance of large modern societies and the various and limitless power relations that exist within them and enable them to function. He looked deep into the way governments function, the activities they pursue and how their actions are experienced by those in society. His analysis of this form of power includes questions around who can govern, who can be governed, and what governing is or can consist of.⁸¹ It is this form of power which is built on

⁷⁸ Foucault, *Discipline and punish*.

⁷⁹ Michel Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1977-78* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire ; Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).

⁸⁰ Foucault, *Power/Knowledge*.

⁸¹ Foucault.

by a number of scholars later on that is most prevalent in many studies of global governance and a key form of power interrogated in this dissertation.

While Foucault generally writes on sovereign, disciplinary and biopower/governmentality, both disciplinary and biopower/governmentality are productive forms of power which are usefully conceptualized later by Barnett and Duvall as productive power.⁸² It is these forms of productive power that are subtle and often indirect which this dissertation will focus on predominantly in the empirical chapters.⁸³ Importantly, productive power is about much more than preventing subjects from committing crime, and is intended to be useful, productive, and effective in responsabilizing citizens for their own well-being. Going back to our discussion of Dahl, the example of a professor getting a student to study proves a useful example. Professors are – at least rarely – seen as tyrannical authoritarians who exercise their will through coercive force and domination. Instead, the relationship between teacher and student is more often seen as one where the teacher has a legitimate claim to power based on their knowledge and experience gained through education, university degrees, and their position as professor. Students generally accept this power as legitimate, and as a result are incentivized to complete their work, or study over a holiday as a result of the potential for punishment or award (in the form of good or bad grades) the teacher will offer in response to the results achieved through the student's work. Evolutions in global governance have resulted in a similar process with the ways in which power is produced more broadly in society between the state and its subjects. This shift away from sovereign or coercive

⁸² Barnett and Duvall, *Power in Global Governance*.

⁸³ Barnett and Duvall.

forms power leads scholars to argue that the state is no longer the sole, or in many cases even the principle, source of authority in either the domestic or the international arenas.⁸⁴

While sovereign power is exercised in a direct top-down fashion, productive power or governmentality works “at a distance” and in relationships between individuals within society as they form various relationships across multiple contexts.⁸⁵ This occurs in virtually every facet of society as the knowledge or discourses of medicine, education, and punishment permeate hospitals, schools, and prisons as a way to discipline and structure those within them.⁸⁶ Importantly for Foucault, while society has and continues to evolve alongside these forms of power, as productive power has become more pervasive, it has not simply displaced other forms of sovereign power. Instead, productive power “infiltrated the others, sometimes undermining them, but serving as an intermediary between them, linking them together, extending them and above all making it possible to bring the effects of power to the most minute and distant elements.”⁸⁷ While they have always done so to some degree, especially since the end of the Cold War, states increasingly rely on and work to develop forms of productive power to permeate society in order to conduct conduct with the use of limited resources.⁸⁸ The next section will detail what these various forms of community conservation can look like while placing a specific focus on CBNRM as one method of doing so.

⁸⁴ Wendy Larner, “Neo-Liberalism: Policy, Ideology, Governmentality,” *Studies in Political Economy*, no. 63 (2000): 5–25; Rosenau, “Governance in the Twenty-First Century,” January 1, 1995; William Walters, “Some Critical Notes on ‘Governance,’” *Studies in Political Economy* 73 (April 1, 2004): 27–46.

⁸⁵ Foucault, *Discipline and punish*, 146.

⁸⁶ Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, 241.

⁸⁷ Foucault, *Discipline and punish*, 216.

⁸⁸ Barnett and Duvall, *Power in Global Governance*.

Community-Based Natural Resource Management

CBNRM as a product of the shifts in global environmental governance must be understood in the context of Africa's history of poor resource governance and the challenges of sustainable development. It traces its origins within development thinking in the 1980s when dominant discourse came to focus on participation, ownership, and empowerment. These shifts in both discourse and approaches to conservation were intended to prevent large-scale corruption and ensure inclusive socio-economic development for local populations.⁸⁹ Beginning in the 1980s, the shift from a preservationist conservation paradigm to a more integrated approach began to recognize the importance and necessity for the promotion and empowerment of communities. The paradigm shift suggested that this empowerment could be accomplished by linking economic and social development to natural resource management and local environmental entitlements.⁹⁰ Together, scholars and practitioners have come to develop the groundwork for participatory and community-based approaches that have proliferated in recent years. For many, "community-based management has become the rallying call of green politics, indeed is held as a prerequisite for environmental sustainability."⁹¹ This ethos also coincides with a general trend in rural conservation and development studies that suggests communities should be included in decisions that affect them, especially as it is these communities who best understand local nuances. It is from these developments that emerged community-based conservation approaches as well as initiatives such as the Parks and People Program and TFCAs as outlined above. While these various approaches

⁸⁹ Fabricius and Collins, "Community-Based Natural Resource Management."

⁹⁰ Melissa Leach, Robin Mearns, and Ian Scoones, "Environmental Entitlements: Dynamics and Institutions in Community-Based Natural Resource Management," *World Development* 27, no. 2 (1999): 225–47.

⁹¹ Michael J. Watts, "Antinomies of Community: Some Thoughts on Geography, Resources and Empire," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 29, no. 2 (2004): 196.

to conservation emerged within the same paradigm and overlap in many ways, this dissertation will focus squarely on CBNRM as one specific example that emerges from these many approaches.

Academic discussions and theories of development must be understood as intimately intertwined with the practices of global environmental governance. One necessarily impacts the other and shifts in one create reactions and outcomes in the next. Academia and the social and political world do not exist in silos similarly to how the private and public sector cannot be understood as heterologous. Thus, as the complexification of society led to the proliferation of actors and the outsourcing of state functions, development discourse was similarly evolving and came to theorize these shifts; in turn reifying them and contributing to a move away from state-centricity. This is key to understanding the emergence of CBNRM within these shifts in global politics and development discourse.

While CBNRM has a long history, it emerged in a systematic fashion and grew in popularity as dominant thinking in international development came to focus on community empowerment as the key principles in development discourse shifted focus toward participation and ownership.⁹² Swatuk argued at the time that “tantamount to a new “truth” of development, “participation” is a political cross-conditionality in current North-South inter-state relations.”⁹³ After decades of failed natural resource governance, these ideas entered the mainstream, suggesting that effective conservation solutions demanded widespread participation of local people and communities throughout the entire planning, implementation, and ongoing management phase of strategies.⁹⁴ Madhusree Sekhar summarized this by arguing “participatory

⁹² Aram Ziai, *Development Discourse and Global History: From Colonialism to the Sustainable Development Goals* (Routledge, 2015).

⁹³ Swatuk, “From ‘Project’ to ‘Context,’” 99.

⁹⁴ Claire Mercer, “Performing Partnership: Civil Society and the Illusions of Good Governance in Tanzania,” *Political Geography* 22, no. 7 (2003): 741–63.

natural resources management has become the new catchphrase in tackling environmental problems, particularly those arising from the use of common property resources.”⁹⁵.

Not only was the practice of participation seen as necessary, but eventually also ownership so that communities could be empowered and they would importantly feel a vested interest in their success.⁹⁶ CBNRM emerged with these two principles of participation and ownership at its core.⁹⁷ These two concepts aimed to place those that development initiatives were intended to help at the centre of efforts at solutions. The idea was that this would eliminate the type of cookie cutter approaches to development that had contributed to decades of failure, and which saw the international community decide what would be best to achieve development – which was also defined in a particular way – and then implement similar programs in diverse locations. Participation aimed to shift this paradigm in order to insert development recipients into the process of planning and implementation itself. This paradigm further evolved to include ownership, so that local populations could take on a central role in projects and eventually have full managerial decision-making capacity so that they were implicated in their own developmental success or failure.⁹⁸ CBNRM is intended to achieve these concepts by empowering local residents, to give them a stake in the protection of their natural resources. However, Andrea Cornwall and Karen Brock argue that

In the fast-moving world of development policy, buzzwords play an important part in framing solutions. Today’s development orthodoxies are captured in a seductive mix of

⁹⁵ Bhaskar Vira and Roger Jeffery, “Analytical Issues in Participatory Natural Resource Management,” *Global Issues Series* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire ; Palgrave, 2001), 87.

⁹⁶ Joseph E. Stiglitz, *Senior Vice President and Chief Economist*, 1998.

⁹⁷ Masumi Owa, “Revisiting the Paris Declaration Agenda – an Inclusive, Realistic Orientation for Aid Effectiveness,” *Development in Practice* 21, no. 7 (2011): 987–98.

⁹⁸ Aram Ziai, *Development Discourse and Global History: From Colonialism to the Sustainable Development Goals* (Routledge, 2015).

such words... [Cornwall and Brock] show how words that once spoke of politics and power have come to be reconfigured in the service of today's one-size-fits-all development recipes, spun into an apoliticised form that everyone can agree with.⁹⁹

As a result, it becomes important to unpack both what these concepts are employed to achieve as well as what they are intended to gloss over.

Community-based forms of conservation stem from the increasingly popular notion that conservation and economic development can, and for some must, be achieved simultaneously. This shift contrasts with traditional forms of development and resource management, which have often been in direct conflict with environmental conservation and sustainability. Community conservation seeks to reformulate these traditionally antagonistic relationships by placing an emphasis on the role of local residents in decision making regarding natural resources. These forms of resource governance emphasize conservation by, for, and with the local community.¹⁰⁰

CBNRM has become one of the most prolific and established forms of community conservation. It intends to transfer

administrative rights over wildlife, forests and water sources to agents at the local level with three aims: (a) to ensure sustainable management of natural resources in rural areas, (b) to democratize decision-making in rural communities, and (c) to ensure that the benefits of natural resources can be harvested at the local level.¹⁰¹

⁹⁹ Andrea Cornwall and Karen Brock, "What Do Buzzwords Do for Development Policy? A Critical Look at 'Participation', 'Empowerment' and 'Poverty Reduction,'" *Third World Quarterly* 26, no. 7 (October 1, 2005): 1043.

¹⁰⁰ Arthur Frederick Hoole, "Place-Power-Prognosis: Community-Based Conservation, Partnerships, and Ecotourism Enterprises in Namibia," *International Journal of the Commons* 4, no. 1 (2009): 78–99.

¹⁰¹ Michael Bollig and Diego Menestrey Schwieger, "Fragmentation, Cooperation and Power: Institutional Dynamics in Natural Resource Governance in North-Western Namibia," *Human Ecology* 42, no. 2 (2014): 167.

Its intended ethos is that humans and nature can coexist peacefully, and prosperity can be a result of a healthy relationship between the two.¹⁰² This ethos varies from other forms of conservation that seek to limit human impact on the natural environment, as it suggests people must be empowered to achieve economic self-sufficiency in a way of their own choosing. In developing regions in general, and in Africa in particular, this has been an exigent point as expanding population pressures mixed with the progressing detrimental effects of climate change have increasingly strained land and local environments. With over sixty per cent of the African continent engaging in some form of subsistence agriculture as a means of survival, any approach that seeks to limit the ability of people to prosper from the land is certain to provoke resentment and discontent.¹⁰³

CBNRM and similar forms of community-based conservation are not only intended to engender economically sustainable environmental conservation, but are also touted by many most specifically for their community empowerment through local institutional development.¹⁰⁴ Several studies suggest that “since development and poverty reduction are multidimensional, perhaps the greatest value of CBNRM is political transformation through democratization, equity, transparency and accountability.”¹⁰⁵ Commons scholarship has long been developed by leading scholars such as Elinor Ostrom that seeks to deal with common-pool resources such as lakes, oceans, irrigation systems, fishing grounds, forests, the internet, the stratosphere, and wildlife populations.¹⁰⁶ Commons dilemmas arise when one person’s consumption of a given resource

¹⁰² Jonathan Otto et al., *Natural Connections: Perspectives In Community-Based Conservation*, ed. David Western and Michael Wright, 2 edition (Washington, D.C: Island Press, 1994).

¹⁰³ Makhtar Diop, “Foresight Africa 2016: Banking on Agriculture for Africa’s Future,” *Brookings* (blog), 2016.

¹⁰⁴ Adam Cruise and Sasada Izzy, “Investigation into the Efficacy of Namibia’s Wildlife Conservation Model as It Relates to African Elephants (*Loxodonta Africana*),” 2021.

¹⁰⁵ Brian Child and Grenville Barnes, “The Conceptual Evolution and Practice of Community-Based Natural Resource Management in Southern Africa: Past, Present and Future,” *Environmental Conservation* 37, no. 3 (2010): 284.

¹⁰⁶ Ostrom, *Governing the Commons*.

limits the ability of others to consume the same resource. Leading commons scholarship has stressed that local levels of collective action – such as with the responsible management of local resources – are necessarily linked to more effective levels of social and political organization in the highly globalized world.¹⁰⁷

As Michael Bollig suggests, rather than attempting to remedy the political issues discussed above through privatization or extended state control, it was through determined efforts to reorganize resource governance that various forms of community-based conservation were developed.¹⁰⁸ Brian Child and Grenville Barnes previously argued that CBNRM served to marketize valuable commons resources “so that CBNRM’s comparative economic advantage is reflected in landholder and community incentives.”¹⁰⁹ Bollig further unpacks CBNRM by positing;

The argument was simple: once natural resources were valorized people would take care to manage them rationally to ensure continuous returns; valorization, commoditization and an opening up to emergent markets would ensure increased local incomes and a diversification of livelihoods. Two measures were necessary to achieve this: local institutions needed to be efficiently organized in order to ensure governance and surveillance of natural resources and a gearing between private sector investors and communities needed to be organized to facilitate marketization and income generation.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁷ Fikret Berkes, “Commons in a Multi-Level World,” *International Journal of the Commons* 2, no. 1 (November 1, 2007): 1–6; D. Cash et al., “Scale and Cross-Scale Dynamics: Governance and Information in a Multilevel World,” *Ecology and Society* 11, no. 2 (2006).

¹⁰⁸ Michael Bollig, “Towards an Arid Eden? Boundary Making, Governance and Benefit Sharing and the Political Ecology of the ‘New Commons’ of Kunene Region, Northern Namibia,” *International Journal of the Commons* 10, no. 2 (2016): 771–99.

¹⁰⁹ Child and Barnes, “The Conceptual Evolution and Practice of Community-Based Natural Resource Management in Southern Africa,” 283.

¹¹⁰ Bollig, “Towards an Arid Eden?,” 772.

To do so communities would have to manage resources sustainably in order to ensure continuous returns rather than engaging in short-term consumptive uses that provide far less in net benefits. By valorizing resources, proponents argue, commoditization would occur, leading to an opening up of multiple market areas that could lead to positive economic offshoots and a continued impetus for long term sustainable management.¹¹¹ Louise Fortmann, Emery Roe, and Michel van Eeten suggest CBNRM is based on four assumptions: 1) local people are reasonably knowledgeable about local ecosystems, indeed often more knowledgeable than most outside ‘experts’ are likely to be; 2) a benefits flow can be created from management activities that significantly outweighs the costs of coexisting with the resource or the benefits foregone from other uses or management strategies; 3) a group capable of implementing management strategies exists; and 4) control over the resources will be devolved to the community.¹¹²

CBNRM involves the collective use and management of natural resources in rural areas by a group of individuals who self-identify as a defined and distinct social entity with a specific identity using communally owned and operated facilities. Programs are intended to be flexible and designed for voluntary participation by self-identified communities.¹¹³ Benefits can take many forms but generally include direct financial gain from the sale of resources, ecotourism, manifold employment opportunities, and the development of related local entrepreneurial activities. Programs are generally enabled through the provision of technical and financial resources and

¹¹¹ Arun Agrawal and Clark C. Gibson, “Enchantment and Disenchantment: The Role of Community in Natural Resource Conservation,” *World Development* 27, no. 4 (1999): 629–49; Fortmann, Roe, and van Eeten, “At the Threshold between Governance and Management”; Leach, Mearns, and Scoones, “Environmental Entitlements”; Diego A. Menestrey Schwiager, “An Ethnographic Analysis of the Role of Power in Institutional Arrangements: Borehole Cost Recovery within a Pastoral Community in North-Western Namibia,” *Environmental Policy and Governance* 25, no. 4 (2015): 258–69; Ostrom, *Governing the Commons*; Arne Rückert, “Producing Neoliberal Hegemony? A Neo-Gramscian Analysis of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) in Nicaragua,” *Studies in Political Economy* 79, no. 79 (2007); Michael Schnegg, “Lost in Translation: State Policies and Micro-Politics of Water Governance in Namibia,” *Human Ecology* 44, no. 2 (April 1, 2016): 245–55.

¹¹² Fortmann, Roe, and van Eeten, “At the Threshold between Governance and Management,” 171.

¹¹³ Boudreaux, “A New Call of the Wild.”

assistance to communities mainly by an assemblage of NGOs that seek to participate in order to maximize opportunities for success. While CBNRM can take many forms, ecotourism has become the most prolific model across southern Africa. It is suggested that “ecotourism is promoted by governments of the North and South, international lending institutions, and private business, as an ideal development strategy that combines economic growth with environmental conservation.”¹¹⁴ While CBNRM was developed to deal with many commons resource use issues, it has predominantly taken the form of wildlife management through ecotourism ventures. CBNRM in general, and wildlife conservation specifically, make sense in the southern African context as

wildlife, and particularly the more charismatic megafauna of Africa, is Africa’s global comparative competitive advantage over the rest of the planet. While virtually every country on Earth has cattle, sheep, and goats, only the continent of Africa has the variety and spectacle of wildlife that makes it stand out on the global landscape.”¹¹⁵

This is to say that wildlife in Africa is more valuable than in many other places. Furthermore, land in many other settings is more agriculturally productive, as well as being better situated to have access to lucrative markets, making agriculture generally more productive than wildlife management in many other regions with the inverse being true in the arid climates of southern Africa.

Ecotourism in this context generally involves the drafting of national legislation that lays the framework for the responsible devolution of resources from national governments to local communities who must effectively organize to develop local-level institutional capacity, and resource sharing strategies. From there, communities must develop defined conservancies in which

¹¹⁴ Duffy, “Global Environmental Governance and the Challenge of Shadow States,” 96.

¹¹⁵ Chris Brown, “Opinion: Ecologist Responds to Guardian Newspaper Article against Trophy Hunting,” *Africa Geographic* (blog), January 2, 2019, 2.

they are intended to have decision-making capacity and control over wildlife and their habitat while placing a focus on local employment and entrepreneurial activities.¹¹⁶ This can take the form of

Lodges [that] provide hundreds of full and part-time jobs in areas where there are few employment options other than subsistence farming. Joint venture agreements require lodge operators to employ and train local people whenever possible... Each helps some local people develop skills and abilities that expand their possibilities of employment and their abilities to run businesses and manage wildlife as business opportunities expand, the local economy improves.¹¹⁷

Joint venture operations are set up with local and international NGOs as well as various private sector enterprises to agree on leases to operate in the conservancy and draw in international tourists. The ecotourism industry aims to attract international ‘up-market’ clientele. Revenues from tourists are intended to fund conservancy operations as well as the many offshoots international tourism creates, such as within the food and service industry, local artisanal shops and wares as well as increased traffic for local enterprises.¹¹⁸ As tourists are attracted based on the stunning wildlife, habitat, and scenery it then becomes a major focus of conservancies to effectively organize to protect and promote these natural endowments.

While attractive for conservationists, there are also potential limitations associated with these foundational principles. Some scholars have denounced these ideals as simply the newest buzzwords in development discourse which seek to be so all-encompassing as to mean very little

¹¹⁶ Michael Schnegg, “Institutional Multiplexity: Social Networks and Community-Based Natural Resource Management,” *Sustainability Science* 13, no. 4 (July 1, 2018): 1017–30.

¹¹⁷ Boudreaux, “A New Call of the Wild,” 315.

¹¹⁸ Child, “The Practice and Principles of Community-Based Wildlife Management in Zimbabwe.”

at all.¹¹⁹ It has also been similarly argued that the concept of participation serves only to gloss over the latest version of neocolonialism.¹²⁰ After decades of failed development interventions in which the Global North seemed to be continuing its domination and oppressive tactics this shift to community empowerment has been seen skeptically. While the ethos of CBNRM intends for the empowerment of communities, there is also the ongoing overarching presence of both domestic and foreign state powers as well as a number of international actors who oversee the projects and activities. This has led to continued caution for many as there have been fears this could become the most recent iteration of neocolonial policies that results in little change in practice, despite the fancy rhetoric.

Part of these fears emerge as participation can prove to be a challenging piece of the puzzle to effectively integrate. Abrahamsen argues that efforts at participation often lead to what can be viewed as consultation, as actors arrive with ideas that become difficult not to instil in development efforts on the ground.¹²¹ Consultation might see people informed about pre-determined plans, and perhaps offer some input in the development phase of a project, but fundamentally be removed from influencing the course of events or strategies chosen as will be seen below with the case study of Namibia. This is indeed where politics itself resides, within deliberation, difference of opinions, and struggles for power and resources. Put another way then, politics cannot be removed from a situation and politics and power struggles influence so many pieces of every conservation puzzle. The next section will explore the literature on CBNRM in Namibia as well as its evolution since its inception.

¹¹⁹ James Fairhead, Melissa Leach, and Ian Scoones, *Green Grabbing: A New Appropriation of Nature*, Critical Agrarian Studies (London: Routledge, 2013).

¹²⁰ Bill Cooke and Uma Kothari, *Participation: The New Tyranny?* (Zed Books, 2001).

¹²¹ Abrahamsen, "The Power of Partnerships in Global Governance"; Mercer, "Performing Partnership"; Stiglitz, *Senior Vice President and Chief Economist*.

Panaceans, Utilitarians, and Skeptics: A Review of Two Decades of CBNRM Literature

The literature on CBNRM in Southern Africa, as well as other community-based forms of resource conservation, management, and governance has proliferated in recent decades. As it has grown in scope its internal debates have similarly broadened and while at one time the literature presented CBNRM as a virtual panacea for sustainable development, increasingly critical scholarship has called into question the degree to which it attains its purported goals. As such, the literature can be usefully divided into the three broad groupings of panaceans, utilitarians, and skeptics.¹²²

The panaceans developed their research predominantly in the decade following the drafting of the 1996 Nature Conservation Amendment Act which provided the legislative framework for CBNRM to develop in Namibia and some of their work spans into 2012. Across southern Africa during this period there was fervent support for CBNRM which was said to achieve the three broad goals of 1) economic development; 2) environmental conservation; and 3) community empowerment.¹²³ The panaceans largely viewed the initial success Namibians were experiencing with the program in a positive light and their work reflected this, generally reporting that CBNRM provided a means by which to achieve sustainable development goals.¹²⁴ After an initial decade of marked success and optimism, the outlook on CBNRM began to temper somewhat, as it became clear some goals were being achieved but perhaps to a lesser degree than initially envisioned. The utilitarians published between 1999 and 2015 and their research generally suggests that CBNRM produces benefits and contributes toward some sustainable development goals.¹²⁵ The utilitarians further outline that due to a number of issues with the policy, its implementation, and specifically

¹²² Andrew Heffernan, “Panaceans, Utilitarians, and Skeptics: A Review of Three Decades of Community-Based Natural Resource Management in Namibia,” *Journal of Namibian Studies*, 2022.

¹²³ Hulme and Murphree, “Communities, Wildlife and the ‘New Conservation’ in Africa.”

¹²⁴ Brian TB Jones, *Community-Based Natural Resource Management in Botswana and Namibia: An Inventory and Preliminary Analysis of Progress* (IIED, 1999).

¹²⁵ Boudreaux, “A New Call of the Wild.”

a lack of effective government devolution, the third goal of community empowerment fails to be achieved to the degree that was hoped.¹²⁶ While they tout the environmental benefits derived from the program, the utilitarians see economic development as modest, and the community empowerment pillar remains wanting.¹²⁷ Since 2015, much of the literature on CBNRM in Namibia has adopted a much more critical outlook and scholars have begun to call into question to what degree it produces any benefits for rural populations.¹²⁸ This group – which I refer to as the skeptics – suggests that at best communities fail to benefit at all, and at worst, CBNRM amounts to marginalized rural Africans subsidizing the tourism of the Global North.¹²⁹

I will note that the divisions between the groupings are artificial and as a result there are no hard and fast divides. As seen in Table 1 below, there is some temporal overlap – particularly between the panaceans and utilitarians – but what is most evident is that in 2015 the literature shifts more starkly as it reflects diminishing levels of reported success for the program across Namibia. This shift coincides with a severe and ongoing drought which set in around 2012 and its effects began to be felt in the following years as will be discussed further in later chapters.

Panaceans (1996-2014)	Utilitarians (1999-2015)	Skeptics (2015-2021)
Akama et al. (1996)	Fortman et al. (2001)	Bollig (2016)
Child (1996)	Swatuk (2005)	Schnegg et al. (2016)
Neumann (1997)	Zips and Zip-Mairitsch (2007)	Schnegg (2016)
Richardson (1998)	Boudreaux (2008)	Schnegg & Kiaka (2018)
Agrawal & Gibson (1999)	Bartley et al. (2008)	Ndeionoma et al. (2018)
Corbett and Jones (2000)	Hoole (2010)	Mannetti et al. (2019)

¹²⁶ Marshall W. Murphree, “The Strategic Pillars of Communal Natural Resource Management: Benefit, Empowerment and Conservation,” 2009.

¹²⁷ Hoole, “Place-Power-Prognosis.”

¹²⁸ Bollig, “Towards an Arid Eden?”

¹²⁹ Michael Schnegg and Richard Dimba Kiaka, “Subsidized Elephants: Community-Based Resource Governance and Environmental (in)Justice in Namibia,” *Geoforum* 93, no. Complete (2018): 105–15.

Ashley (2000)	Collomb et al. (2010)	Galvin et al. (2020)
Jones (2001)	Fletcher (2010)	
Jones & Murphree (2001)	Jones (2012)	
Shackleton et al. (2002)	Silva & Mosimane (2014)	
Child (2003)	Bollig et al. (2014)	
Jones (2004)	Dyer et al. (2014)	
Kiss (2004)	Bollig & Shwieger (2014)	
Fabricius and Collins (2007)		
Snively (2008)		
Frost and Bond (2008)		
Berkes et al. (2009)		
Taylor (2009)		
Child and Barnes (2010)		
Brown and Bird (2011)		
Rantala et al. (2012)		
Barnes and Jones (2012)		
Robinson et al. (2013)		

Table 1: *Panaceans, Utilitarians, and Skeptics*

The panaceans were the first to analyse CBNRM programs across southern Africa, starting when the programs were in their infancy in Namibia. As a result, much of this literature analyzes neighbouring countries to point to examples of benefits CBNRM can produce, while others provide a more forward-looking approach outlining the benefits that this form of resource governance *ought* to realize based on the thinking behind it. One of the examples pointed to most by the panaceans is the Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE) in Zimbabwe. Along “with its innovative wildlife department, effective national natural resources movement and strong university, Zimbabwe’s well documented CAMPFIRE programme made the early running in the evolution of CBNRM” and as a result much of this first

group of literature builds on this example.¹³⁰ Studies by Child,¹³¹ Frost and Bond,¹³² and Taylor¹³³ discuss the development of CBNRM in Zimbabwe while presenting real, measurable benefits, as well as the future potentials for the program. CAMPFIRE became one of the main examples from which other programs developed in neighbouring countries. This led to studies on various natural resources besides wildlife, in Tanzania,¹³⁴ Kenya,¹³⁵ and southern Africa¹³⁶ more broadly that continued a fervent push for this form of resource governance as a potentially effective way forward.

Building on this growing scholarly evidence that pointed to potential for communities in need, studies on CBNRM in Namibia began to materialize. Following the drafting of the 1996 Nature Conservation Amendment Act, scholars have credited Namibia with being one of the most successful examples of CBNRM in the world.¹³⁷ Snively discusses the legal realities in the country, exploring how “at independence it adopted what is considered by many to be one of the most progressive constitutions in the world” as well as being “the first country in Africa to provide for environmental protection in its constitution.”¹³⁸ The panaceans point to Namibia’s progressive constitution and the way it was able to develop its legislative framework effectively thanks in part

¹³⁰ Child and Barnes, “The Conceptual Evolution and Practice of Community-Based Natural Resource Management in Southern Africa,” 287.

¹³¹ Child, “The Practice and Principles of Community-Based Wildlife Management in Zimbabwe.”

¹³² Peter G. H. Frost and Ivan Bond, “The CAMPFIRE Programme in Zimbabwe: Payments for Wildlife Services,” *Ecological Economics* 65, no. 4 (2008): 776–87.

¹³³ Taylor, “Community Based Natural Resource Management in Zimbabwe.”

¹³⁴ Salla Rantala et al., “Community-Based Forest Management: What Scope for Conservation and Livelihood Co-Benefits? Experience from the East Usambara Mountains, Tanzania,” *Journal of Sustainable Forestry* 31, no. 8 (2012): 777–97; Elizabeth J. Z. Robinson et al., “Implementing REDD through Community-based Forest Management: Lessons from Tanzania,” *Natural Resources Forum* 37, no. 3 (2013): 141–52.

¹³⁵ John S. Akama, Christopher L. Lant, and G. Wesley Burnett, “A Political-Ecology Approach to Wildlife Conservation in Kenya,” *Environmental Values* 5, no. 4 (1996): 335–47.

¹³⁶ Fabricius and Collins, “Community-Based Natural Resource Management”; Shackleton and Campbell, *Devolution in Natural Resource Management*.

¹³⁷ Brian Jones, “The Evolution of a Community-Based Approach to Wildlife Management at Kunene, Namibia,” *African Wildlife and Livelihoods: The Promise and Performance of Community Conservation*, 2001, 160–76.

¹³⁸ Stephen W. Snively, “Environmental Laws of Namibia: Constitutions, Conservation, and Cheetahs,” *Probate & Property* 26, no. 3 (2012): 45.

to lessons learned from neighbouring countries and CBNRM programs. It was suggested that with independence being won in 1990, this new constitution would remove many of the historical constraints Namibia had faced in shifting land use from agriculture toward more favourable land use patterns for wildlife.¹³⁹ The panaceans argue “wildlife utilization strategies potentially yield significantly higher economic returns to these traditional land uses.”¹⁴⁰ Many build on these arguments, suggesting not only that wildlife conservation can be more economically productive, while conserving local environments, but that the community-based part of it both empowers local residents while also more effectively protecting wildlife against poaching and other issues.¹⁴¹ The idea is that those who reside close to resources will manage them more sustainably as the necessity for conservation for their own future will be visible and they will also be held to account by family, friends, and neighbours, rather than by distant governments.¹⁴² In Namibia, prior to independence, relations between the state and the people were historically fraught and governments – whether colonial or Apartheid – were purveyors of insecurity rather than security, and plunderers of resources, rather than providers of services.¹⁴³

The panaceans point most markedly to rebounding wildlife populations that were quickly disappearing prior to this shift in governance.¹⁴⁴ Jones et al. demonstrate that

¹³⁹ Brian Jones, “Synthesis of the Current Status of CBNRM Policy and Legislation in Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe,” *Harare: WWF Southern African Regional Programme Office*, 2004.

¹⁴⁰ Richardson, “Wildlife Utilization and Biodiversity Conservation in Namibia,” 258.

¹⁴¹ Jon Barnes and Brian Jones, “Game Ranching in Namibia,” in *Evolution and Innovation in Wildlife Conservation* (Routledge, 2012), 131–44; Fortmann, Roe, and van Eeten, “At the Threshold between Governance and Management”; Jones, “The Evolution of a Community-Based Approach to Wildlife Management at Kunene, Namibia.”

¹⁴² Andrew Corbett and Brian TB Jones, “The Legal Aspects of Governance in CBNRM in Namibia,” 2000; Sheona Shackleton et al., *Devolution and Community-Based Natural Resource Management: Creating Space for Local People to Participate and Benefit?* (Overseas Development Institute London, UK, 2002).

¹⁴³ Jones and Murphree, “The Evolution of Policy on Community Conservation in Namibia and Zimbabwe.”

¹⁴⁴ Agrawal and Gibson, “Enchantment and Disenchantment.”

Wildlife is increasing in many Namibian conservancies, particularly those in the northwest and the north-east (NACSO, 2010). Springbok, for example, in the north-west have increased from a few thousand in the early 1980s (a period of severe drought and heavy poaching) to around 160,000. Similar increases have taken place with Hartmann's Mountain Zebra and oryx. Elephant and black rhino have more than doubled in number, and black rhino are being re-introduced by government into some conservancies in Kunene Region. The increase in wildlife stocks represents a significant increase in natural capital which is an asset that communities can use to diversify livelihoods and provide meat and jobs. Increasing wildlife numbers also provide a solid foundation for the further development of tourism in conservancies.¹⁴⁵

Scholars from this group argue that the development of ecotourism destinations has sparked economic growth,¹⁴⁶ as well as the coming together of communities to develop local governance apparatuses and sharing agreements for continued and widespread success.¹⁴⁷ During the temporal period of the panaceans it is demonstrated there was a great deal of success in many cases, as wildlife populations were rebounding and evidence of economic growth coupled with decreasing poverty rates were being achieved.¹⁴⁸ Caroline Ashley argues that “one of the most important ways in which tourism supports other activities is that it strengthens households’ productive capacity by increasing skills and providing cash for investment (i.e. by boosting their asset base).”¹⁴⁹ The

¹⁴⁵ Brian T. B. Jones et al., “Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) and Reducing Poverty in Namibia,” in *Biodiversity Conservation and Poverty Alleviation: Exploring the Evidence for a Link* (John Wiley & Sons, Ltd, 2012), 198.

¹⁴⁶ Agnes Kiss, “Is Community-Based Ecotourism a Good Use of Biodiversity Conservation Funds?,” *Trends in Ecology & Evolution* 19, no. 5 (2004): 232–37.

¹⁴⁷ Shackleton et al., *Devolution and Community-Based Natural Resource Management*.

¹⁴⁸ Jessica Brown and Neil Bird, “Sustainable Natural Resource Management in Namibia,” *Development Progress*, 2011.

¹⁴⁹ Caroline Ashley, “The Impacts of Tourism on Rural Livelihoods: Namibia’s Experience” (Overseas Development Institute London, UK, February 2000), 18.

panaceans' work was largely intended to demonstrate how the shift to community-based conservation had marked a definitive break from the failures of structural adjustment, the large scale plundering of natural resources by corrupt state governments, and continued undermining of empowerment of Africans and their communities.¹⁵⁰ They claimed this break was being accomplished alongside evolutions in global environmental governance that saw states devolving responsibilities for conservation and development by delegating authority to communities. It is in this sense that the work of the panaceans serves to depoliticize CBNRM, as it is largely presented as an unquestioned good. While they do not suggest it is a perfect form of resource governance void of challenges, they do suggest a win-win-win in which this approach benefits all and should be maximized wherever possible to achieve greater success.

Presenting CBNRM as an unquestioned good has a number of important implications. It is presented in this way in order to stymie opposition to this form of resource governance in order to maximize support in both public opinion and with attracting resources to conduct conservation activities. The depoliticizing affect serves to focus attention on the win-win-win benefits produced for all, rather than on questions of the increased power and influence of certain actors. Joel Wainwright and Geoff Mann outline that depoliticization consists of the

removal of the very possibility of even raising domination at the heart of the so-called public sphere. It makes the political in our sense impossible—first by radically narrowing the political realm and separating it cleanly from the messiness of material concerns like distribution and preproduction, and then by formulating a discourse or language in which domination is unspeakable and therefore erased.¹⁵¹

¹⁵⁰ Leach, Mearns, and Scoones, "Environmental Entitlements."

¹⁵¹ Geoff Mann and Joel Wainwright, *Climate Leviathan: A Political Theory of Our Planetary Future* (Verso Books, 2020).

These power dynamics which are largely glossed over or omitted entirely by the panaceans will be further unpacked in the coming chapters of this dissertation.

As CBNRM and similar forms of community-based conservation emerged within evolutions in global environmental governance, and through development discourse, the panaceas see the research of scholars broadly coalesce to support this emerging form of resource governance. During this period there was a virtual consensus among many within the international community emerging that community empowerment and responsabilization would be the key to a successful sustainable development paradigm. However, no approach to sustainable development is perfect and there were questions as to whether CBNRM was the most effective way forward.¹⁵² The work of the panaceans tried to alleviate opposition and reservation to this emerging paradigm by demonstrating this win-win-win in which economic growth, wildlife conservation, and community empowerment were all realized. These goals were said to benefit both African states and their communities, as well as the broader global community who generally shared similar sustainable development goals.¹⁵³

The outlook for CBNRM begins to be tempered by the second group which spans roughly the period from 2007 to 2015. This was part of a broader conversation that more critically questioned the degree to which sustainable development, outlined in the Millennium Development Goals, had been, or was being attained.¹⁵⁴ Boudreaux argues that

¹⁵² Sian Sullivan, "Elephant in the Room? Problematising 'New' (Neoliberal) Biodiversity Conservation," *Forum for Development Studies* 33, no. 1 (2006): 105–35.

¹⁵³ Robert Fletcher, "Neoliberal Environmentalism: Towards a Poststructuralist Political Ecology of the Conservation Debate," *Conservation and Society* 8, no. 3 (2010): 171–81.

¹⁵⁴ Wendy Harcourt, "The Millennium Development Goals: A Missed Opportunity?," *Development* 48, no. 1 (March 1, 2005): 1–4.

a related benefit of CBNRM programs is that they reduce the costs of protecting natural environments. The incentives CBNRM programs create on the local level reduce the need for large-scale government protection of wildlife, increasing the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of environmental protection within a country.¹⁵⁵

It was beginning to become clear, however, that this was not always the case. The utilitarians began moderating expectations for CBNRM. Rather than presenting it in the somewhat depoliticized framework that much of the panaceans provided, the utilitarians developed more critical approaches that sought to take a step back to analyze the disaggregated impacts of CBNRM on various groups involved.¹⁵⁶ They also begin to unpack some of the complexity and power relations that are involved between a number of actors beyond the state, communities, and NGOs.

The utilitarians maintain that CBNRM has three main pillars including ecological conservation, economic development, and community empowerment. This group of scholars, however, suggests that success in turning “the frequent lose-lose position into the highly acclaimed, but seldom attained win-win situation” is quite difficult in practice.¹⁵⁷ This lose-lose scenario referring to the way resources had been unsustainably extracted in much of southern Africa for decades while simultaneously failing to provide prosperity to local populations. The win-win would realize the oft-espoused harmonization of economic growth alongside environmental protection. Arthur Frederick Hoole¹⁵⁸ and Roderick Neuman¹⁵⁹ empirically

¹⁵⁵ Boudreaux, “A New Call of the Wild,” 310.

¹⁵⁶ Tim Bartley et al., “The Contribution of Institutional Theories to Explaining Decentralization of Natural Resource Governance,” *Society & Natural Resources* 21, no. 2 (2008): 160–74.

¹⁵⁷ Werner Zips and Manuela Zips-Mairitsch, “Lost in Transition? The Politics of Conservation, Indigenous Land Rights and Community-Based Resource Management in Southern Africa,” *The Journal of Legal Pluralism and Unofficial Law* 39, no. 55 (2007): 66.

¹⁵⁸ Hoole, “Place-Power-Prognosis.”

¹⁵⁹ Roderick Neumann, “Primitive Ideas: Protected Area Buffer Zones and the Politics of Land in Africa,” *Development and Change* 28, no. 3 (1997): 559–82.

demonstrate many of the benefits CBNRM can, and has provided, while further analyzing local political struggles that exist within the community. They argue community-level tensions result due to the propagation of local elites who capture certain benefits and prop themselves up vis-a-vis their neighbours to maintain their status. This contrasts with the depoliticized accounts presented by the panaceans as we begin to see the tensions that exist both at the local level, and between the local level and other actors. These politics and tensions within communities had previously been largely overlooked. These findings lead Hoole to conclude “that there can also be more sinister consequences for communities in these arrangements.”¹⁶⁰ In his research in the Torra conservancy, which builds on prior fieldwork conducted by Karol Boudreaux, Hoole found that 88 per cent of community members reported being no more well off than prior to the implementation of CBNRM. This is based on semi-structured interviews including forty respondents. This issue of local level elite capture is further exacerbated as benefits derived from the program had already begun to diminish in many cases during this period which often muddled the water as to who or what was precisely to blame for decreases in benefits being received by conservancy members.

Elite capture is a key concern raised by a number of utilitarians.¹⁶¹ It is an integral point as CBNRM is intended to create broad-based benefits and equitable growth, specifically to assist communities in need and particularly those already most marginalized within those communities. In many cases however, research has demonstrated that while communities are gaining demonstrable benefits, often these remain with the few, leaving many no more well off than before. The ‘few’ in most cases, who are generally referred to as local elites, tend to be village head men

¹⁶⁰ Hoole, “Place-Power-Prognosis,” 79.

¹⁶¹ Julie A. Silva and Alfons Mosimane, “‘How Could I Live Here and Not Be a Member?’: Economic Versus Social Drivers of Participation in Namibian Conservation Programs,” *Human Ecology* 42, no. 2 (2014): 183–97; Bollig and Menestrey Schwieger, “Fragmentation, Cooperation and Power.”

who held power and wealth prior to the implementation of CBNRM. In many cases this will be someone whose family has historically held land, power, and wealth, and as a result have been able to leverage these in order to become gatekeepers of sorts.¹⁶² Existing elites are often those approached by NGOs in order to develop a foothold and legitimacy in the community to implement CBNRM and allocate resources. They often also seek out NGO or government resources with the overt intent of building up community capacity. Data suggests however that often it is the capacity, wealth, and status of these existing elites that are shored up rather than those of the community more broadly.¹⁶³

Boudreaux and Marshall Murphree take into account the local level politics mentioned above and develop more nuanced accounts of CBNRM than the panaceans, each uncovering aspects of the resource governance model that has failed to play out as hoped or suggested. These include only partial devolution occurring which undermines the community empowerment aspect to some degree. They also show how this leads to benefits of CBNRM often failing to remain within the community.¹⁶⁴ This partial devolution occurs as conservancies are granted rights only to manage certain natural resources, and even within this ‘management’ only certain rights are afforded. While much of the research by the panaceans seems to suggest that conservancies are granted full control over their territory and decision-making power over their resources, the utilitarians dig deeper to demonstrate a more complex picture. Research from several utilitarians demonstrates that conservancies are empowered with the ability to manage wildlife, but they do not legally own the resource, the land upon which they reside, nor the surrounding forest and habitat which all remain under the purview of the Ministry of Agriculture, Water, and Forestry.

¹⁶² Hoole, “Place-Power-Prognosis.”

¹⁶³ Hoole.

¹⁶⁴ Boudreaux, “A New Call of the Wild.”

Furthermore, the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) also strictly regulates hunting permits which means that they closely control and regulate wildlife populations.

The panaceans suggest CBNRM consist of a devolution of control over resources to communities that empowers them to manage resources how they see fit. But as the utilitarians argue that only a partial devolution occurs, it appears that communities are much more limited in the decisions they can make. While this is not inherently problematic, and likely a necessary limitation to avoid the types of tragedies of the commons that CBNRM was developed to prevent, it is important for analyses to explicitly state these limitations and to factor them into discussions of politics and policy making. Thus, in many senses communities are tasked with the responsibilities of wildlife management, as well as awarded the ability to benefit from sustainably doing so, but only in certain ways and within strict parameters. As a result, rather than a zero-sum devolution that sees the community take on the power that is devolved from the state in an equal one to one ratio as much of work of the panaceans suggest, the utilitarians paint a much more complex picture.

Despite these issues, this round of scholarship remained broadly optimistic for the future of CBNRM. Werner Zips and Manuela Zips-Mairitsch suggest that whenever policies that are meant to shift lose-lose scenarios to win-win there will likely be a catch.¹⁶⁵ For CBNRM, it is more like trying to shift the lose-lose-lose reality of wildlife management that existed prior to 1990 to a win-win-win – in this scenario adding the important pillar of community empowerment and local institutional development. The majority of utilitarians argue that in many cases at least a win-win-lose scenario is possible that sees overall net benefits and hence greater utility achieved.

¹⁶⁵ Zips and Zips-Mairitsch, “Lost in Transition?”

Generally, the utilitarians explore various CBNRM projects since its inception and attempt to assess relative strengths and weaknesses. Boudreaux argues “CBNRM efforts recognize that in cases where local people enjoy property rights over these resources, are directly involved in decision making regarding the resources, and directly benefit from natural resources, they can be effective stewards of the resources.”¹⁶⁶ She concludes that

despite all the good that has occurred in Namibia through the CBNRM program, barriers constrain the program’s growth. The major barriers include: an unclear and insecure land tenure environment; a need to develop more rights to manage wildlife and other resources to local groups; a need to improve the institutional environment for doing business in Namibia; and a continuing need to build local capacity to govern in an accountable and transparent fashion and to manage local enterprises.¹⁶⁷

These types of conclusions are echoed by others who list one or two technical fixes for improving the implementation of existing programs they generally see as overall beneficial and worthwhile.¹⁶⁸ Boudreaux’s main conclusion is that “the Namibian state should extend the conservancies’ legal rights in order to create a more vibrant institutional environment”¹⁶⁹, suggesting along with others that incomplete devolution is a major limiting factor to program success. For Boudreaux and others, an important challenge that remains with CBNRM is the fact that the government devolves the rights to manage wildlife populations, however, they are not given rights to the land on which they live. Furthermore, while conservancies are granted rights to ‘manage’ wildlife, the government maintains control over the issuing of permits for trophy hunting and can completely

¹⁶⁶ Boudreaux, “A New Call of the Wild,” 304.

¹⁶⁷ Boudreaux, 335.

¹⁶⁸ Jones et al., “Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) and Reducing Poverty in Namibia.”

¹⁶⁹ Boudreaux, “A New Call of the Wild,” 297.

interdict hunting of any sort in certain regions as they deem fit.¹⁷⁰ As the body granting gazetteement to conservancies, the Namibian government also maintains the ability to revoke permissions at any time, or step in as they see fit to force changes or override decisions being taken.¹⁷¹

Collomb et al.,¹⁷² Child and Barnes,¹⁷³ and Hoole¹⁷⁴ argue poor performance is a result of local political struggles stemming from power imbalances between the network of NGOs and other international partners operating in the conservancies. Hoole's conclusions are based on a growing body of scholarly work that suggests community-based forms of conservation alone are not panaceas for sustainable development and natural resource conservation in sub-Saharan Africa. Instead, he and other scholars suggest "commons institutions for conservation operate in a multilevel world and necessarily link with different scales and levels of organization."¹⁷⁵ This multilevel world that he points to, is further developed by scholars in the next group and it is on these analyses which I will further expand in the subsequent chapters of this dissertation. The utilitarians generally agree that "despite generating income from high value wildlife resources and tourism, CBNRM has fallen short of delivering household benefits to local communities."¹⁷⁶ These shortcomings are further explored below.

The final group of literature concerning CBNRM in Namibia – writing from 2014 to 2021 – builds on the arguments espoused by the utilitarians but takes a step back to re-evaluate these

¹⁷⁰ Bollig and Menestrey Schwiager, "Fragmentation, Cooperation and Power."

¹⁷¹ Silva and Mosimane, "'How Could I Live Here and Not Be a Member?'"

¹⁷² Jean-Gael E. Collomb et al., "Integrating Governance and Socioeconomic Indicators to Assess the Performance of Community-Based Natural Resources Management in Caprivi (Namibia)," *Environmental Conservation* 37, no. 3 (2010): 303–9.

¹⁷³ Child and Barnes, "The Conceptual Evolution and Practice of Community-Based Natural Resource Management in Southern Africa."

¹⁷⁴ Hoole, "Place-Power-Prognosis."

¹⁷⁵ Hoole, 79.

¹⁷⁶ Collomb et al., "Integrating Governance and Socioeconomic Indicators to Assess the Performance of Community-Based Natural Resources Management in Caprivi (Namibia)," 303.

supposed ‘evolutions’ in governance. At the centre of the skeptics’ inquiries are questions that begin to uncover a much more complex picture of power and politics than the suggested devolution of control from state to communities.¹⁷⁷ The work of this group of scholars points to the fact that far too often, previous studies attempted to discern the relative strengths and weaknesses of CBNRM as a form of resource governance without properly analyzing what its purported goals are, which of these are realized, and more importantly how they are achieved as well as through whose impetus – specifically, with regard to who benefits and how power is reorganized as a result.¹⁷⁸

The research from the skeptics suggests the goals of good governance are rarely achieved as a result of CBNRM.¹⁷⁹ Rather, as Michael Schnegg and Richard Kiaka illustrate in a study of freshwater conservation through CBNRM, “ultimately, in many communities the poor not only subsidize the water consumption of those who are economically better off, but also pay for water for elephant conservation and thus also for tourism.”¹⁸⁰ These authors demonstrate how residents initially agreed to CBNRM projects that would limit elephant populations that are seen locally as dangerous and destructive. However, as elephants are more effectively commoditized on international markets than other more locally desirable wildlife, their valorization has been pivotal to bottom lines, and hence the voices of the community are often drowned out by what Albertina Ndeinoma et al. refer to as the public-private-governance network.¹⁸¹ This network they argue “is composed of public actors, private firms, interest organizations (e.g. user group associations,

¹⁷⁷ Jen Dyer et al., “Assessing Participatory Practices in Community-Based Natural Resource Management: Experiences in Community Engagement from Southern Africa,” *Journal of Environmental Management* 137, no. Complete (2014): 137–45.

¹⁷⁸ Schnegg and Kiaka, “Subsidized Elephants.”

¹⁷⁹ Kathleen A. Galvin et al., “African Community-Based Conservancies: Innovative Governance for Whom?,” in *Nomad-State Relationships in International Relations*, ed. Jamie Levin (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2020), 147–72.

¹⁸⁰ Schnegg and Kiaka, “Subsidized Elephants,” 113.

¹⁸¹ Ndeinoma, Wiersum, and Arts, “The Governance of Indigenous Natural Products in Namibia.”

small-scale farmers, trade associations, etc.)”¹⁸² Certain actors within this network exercise a vast degree of control over the projects and begin to demonstrate that CBNRM is a much more complex phenomenon than often presented at face value. Part of my research question aims to further unpack which among these actors has power and authority, over what, and how this is impacted by the network within which they operate.

The research of the skeptics suggests partial devolution often occurs, but that from both a formal and informal standpoint, various other actors often maintain control. For Schnegg and Kiaka, it is exogenous actors to communities who maintain the greatest degree of control.¹⁸³ This includes NGOs, private interests, and those who support their operations from the international community. For several others however, the state remains the paramount player in the field.¹⁸⁴ These authors demonstrate the many ways this continued control undermines the ability of conservancies to make effective decisions that would enable success of the projects.¹⁸⁵ This leads me to question to what degree communities benefit as a result of CBNRM’s evolution. As full devolution is not extended to the community, the conservancies’ ability to enforce their regulations to protect wildlife is undermined, resource sharing oversight is maintained at the national level, and as a result democratic decision making often breaks down. Bollig suggests this is due to “partially contradictory discourses on decentralization, political participation, economic empowerment, and neo-liberally inspired commoditization of natural resources.”¹⁸⁶ Several skeptics point to this as being more than a minor issue as the nature of CBNRM intends for

¹⁸² Ndeinoma, Wiersum, and Arts, 31.

¹⁸³ Schnegg and Kiaka, “Subsidized Elephants.”

¹⁸⁴ Lelani M. Mannetti et al., “Identifying and Categorizing Stakeholders for Protected Area Expansion around a National Park in Namibia,” *Ecology and Society* 24, no. 2 (July 1, 2019): 5.

¹⁸⁵ Michael Schnegg, Michael Bollig, and Theresa Linke, “Moral Equality and Success of Common-Pool Water Governance in Namibia,” *Ambio* 45, no. 5 (2016): 581–90.

¹⁸⁶ Bollig, “Towards an Arid Eden?,” 771.

communities to have the responsibilities of quasi-sovereign actors, but they are not afforded the tools sovereignty usually entails.¹⁸⁷ These are the types of discourses alluded to in the previous citation from Bollig, as CBNRM is often inherently contradictory in nature by intending to devolve control to communities, but doing so by extending power and authority also to various global actors. This links directly to the shifts in global environmental governance discussed earlier in this chapter that demonstrate the ways in which CBNRM has emerged as a product of, and been enabled by, this proliferation of actors in the realm that was traditionally largely filled by the state. These are the type of contradictions that have emerged within this new paradigm as argued by Peck and Tickell as they suggest “in the asymmetrical scale politics of neoliberalism, local institutions and actors were being given responsibility without power, while international institutions and actors were gaining power without responsibility.”¹⁸⁸ Rather than being a zero sum equation that sees communities empowered, the skeptics demonstrate the way functions are instead downloaded by the state in a way that enables a number of actors to exercise their will to achieve certain ends. This occurs through the network of NGOs that have manifested throughout the country whose interests are not always transparent, nor their practices transparent and democratic.

The skeptics maintain that environmental conservation as well as economic development are often achieved as a result of CBNRM. However, they begin to discover “revenues largely remain with the national and international safari operators and investors.”¹⁸⁹ One of the major criticisms that stems from this literature

¹⁸⁷ Lelani M. Mannetti et al., “Expanding the Protected Area Network in Namibia: An Institutional Analysis,” *Ecosystem Services* 28, no. Part B (2017): 207–18.

¹⁸⁸ Jamie Peck and Adam Tickell, “Neoliberalizing Space,” *Antipode* 34, no. 3 (2002): 380–404.

¹⁸⁹ Schnegg and Kiaka, “Subsidized Elephants,” 113.

is that far from being a force for decentralisation, in effect it allows for a greater degree of centralisation of power and authority. [CBNRM] can be regarded as a means by which global actors can realise control over resources and people from the global level and concentrate power in the hands of a narrow network of international NGOs, international financial institutions, global consultants on tourism/community conservation and bilateral donors.¹⁹⁰

This group of scholars suggests that at best, community empowerment fails to materialize at all, and at worst communities become embroiled with tensions and internal battles as local elites vie for power and resources vis-a-vis one another.¹⁹¹

The skeptics argue that often residents remain more or less unaware of the decisions being taken on their behalf, or when they attempt to have their voices heard they are ignored.¹⁹² While scholars from both the panaceans¹⁹³ and utilitarians¹⁹⁴ point to the skillfully crafted legislation they suggest is developed by the state, several skeptics report that this important national legislation, as well as local level rules, were drafted in close consultation with the international community including NGOs, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and the World Bank.¹⁹⁵ This fact, mixed with the way in which the skeptics begin to make clear that it is certain goals of the global environmental movement that are realized, and that economic benefits that accrue seldom remain in the communities, lead some skeptics to wonder to what degree

¹⁹⁰ Duffy, "The Potential and Pitfalls of Global Environmental Governance," 101.

¹⁹¹ Dyer et al., "Assessing Participatory Practices in Community-Based Natural Resource Management."

¹⁹² Schnegg, "Lost in Translation."

¹⁹³ Chetan Kumar, "Revisiting 'Community' in Community-Based Natural Resource Management," *Community Development Journal* 40, no. 3 (2005): 275–85; James Mccarthy, "Devolution in the Woods: Community Forestry as Hybrid Neoliberalism," *Environment and Planning A* 37, no. 6 (2005): 995–1014.

¹⁹⁴ Brockington and Scholfield, "Expenditure by Conservation Nongovernmental Organizations in Sub-Saharan Africa"; Collomb et al., "Integrating Governance and Socioeconomic Indicators to Assess the Performance of Community-Based Natural Resources Management in Caprivi (Namibia)."

¹⁹⁵ Mannetti et al., "Expanding the Protected Area Network in Namibia."

CBNRM is ‘community-based’ at all? Beyond goals being realized, there are also unintended consequences which result in negative externalities that at times are broadly deleterious, whereas at others they disproportionately impact certain actors or groups. In fact, Hoole suggests “the community role is mainly relegated to providing local labour and land tenure for the tourism enterprise development.”¹⁹⁶ While not all projects are tourism based, this excerpt alludes to the way in which the public-private-governance networks may provide opportunities for outside actors to gain footholds at the community level. This entails a power imbalance that can create the types of situations skeptics argue lead to a failure of CBNRM to improve the lives of local residents.

Gaps and Disputes

This chapter has situated CBNRM within transformations in global governance and demonstrated how it is an articulation of more decentred, public-private, global-local forms of rule and policymaking. It has also unpacked the evolving debates about CBNRM and has revealed the various causes and consequences scholars have pointed to for diminished success in recent years. Moreover, the chapter has unpacked questions of politics and the local-global relations involved in CBNRM. A complex picture emerges that demonstrates that success in some senses has been waning, however, it seems that to some degree success has also been judged differently over time. While there is evidence that suggests success in attaining the espoused goals of CBNRM has been ebbing, it becomes clear that it is specifically many within rural communities who have failed to gain the benefits they felt they were promised. Analyzing the literature as three groups as I have

¹⁹⁶ Hoole, “Place-Power-Prognosis,” 94.

done here demonstrates the way the scholarly outlook on CBNRM has shifted over time as well as begins to point to a number of reasons this is the case.

Since its inception in the 1990s, CBNRM has contributed to a number of sustainable development goals for Namibia. The panaceans point to successes in neighbouring countries across southern Africa as well as rebounding wildlife populations, increased economic benefits, and perceived community empowerment. The utilitarians begin to discuss issues at the community level as local elites are said to have emerged, as well as existing ones further advanced and kept resources for themselves. Skeptics, expand on these concerns and further posit that power imbalances between local and global actors result in benefits being enjoyed predominantly outside communities, at times at the expense of rural African people.

Whether panacean, utilitarian, or skeptic, each suggests real potential for CBNRM as a technique of resource governance in southern Africa. However, it is clear that the programs have fallen short of their intended goals in a number of ways. These findings are important as they outline challenges facing the CBNRM program but analyzed together, a clear omission is discussion of the detrimental effects climate change is having on the programs. This thesis seeks to fill this gap by having the impacts of climate change as central to the analysis in order to understand the ways in which it influences and effects the governance of CBNRM while arguing that further policies must be crafted to acknowledge these changing realities.

Beyond climate change as an important gap in the literature, scholars widely agree that CBNRM works best where devolution occurs in more than just name and where small communities are placed at the heart of resource governance.¹⁹⁷ There is consensus in the literature

¹⁹⁷ Hulme and Murphree, *African Wildlife and Livelihoods*; Brian Jones and L. Chris Weaver, "CBNRM in Namibia: Growth, Trends, Lessons and Constraints," in *Evolution and Innovation in Wildlife Conservation* (Routledge, 2008).

that community empowerment is key for success, but it differentiates on the degree to which this important goal is attained.¹⁹⁸ Several studies point to the way the state maintains control and, despite outsourcing some power to communities, the government maintains final say over the direction of developments in the conservancies.¹⁹⁹ Many argue that communities often remain unheard and unable to effectively exercise agency however, and it is unclear to what degree this is an accurate portrayal of the politics involved.²⁰⁰

Scholars have further pointed to the many partnerships, resources, and the training necessary to launch these projects and to continue engaging in efforts at attaining success.²⁰¹ Ndeinoma, Wiersum, and Arts refer to this as the public-private governance network,²⁰² while most other studies relating to CBNRM discuss the influence the network of NGOs and other international actors maintain on the projects from implementation onward.²⁰³ Interestingly, it is only mentioned in some of the most recent work by Schnegg and Schnegg and Kiaka that NGOs and other international partners had a substantial role in the drafting of the initial legislation that provided the legal framework for CBNRM in Namibia.²⁰⁴ Ongoing NGO participation and partnership in CBNRM remains understudied and is imperative to understanding and analyzing how governance is impacted. While some scholars point to these power dynamics and some of the intricacies of these relationships,²⁰⁵ there has yet to be analysis developed that provides adequate understanding of the politics involved from the local to the global levels. By adopting a different

¹⁹⁸ Boudreaux, "A New Call of the Wild"; Mannetti et al., "Expanding the Protected Area Network in Namibia"; Schnegg and Kiaka, "Subsidized Elephants."

¹⁹⁹ Boudreaux, "A New Call of the Wild"; Dyer et al., "Assessing Participatory Practices in Community-Based Natural Resource Management."

²⁰⁰ Schnegg and Kiaka, "Subsidized Elephants."

²⁰¹ Galvin et al., "African Community-Based Conservancies."

²⁰² Ndeinoma, Wiersum, and Arts, "The Governance of Indigenous Natural Products in Namibia."

²⁰³ Schnegg and Kiaka, "Subsidized Elephants."

²⁰⁴ Schnegg, "Lost in Translation"; Schnegg and Kiaka, "Subsidized Elephants."

²⁰⁵ Schnegg, Bollig, and Linke, "Moral Equality and Success of Common-Pool Water Governance in Namibia."

theoretical approach, I seek to further our understanding of these complex politics and power relations. As NGOs play a central role in CBNRM projects it becomes essential to understand where they procure their funding and how they produce power and legitimacy as well as what degree of control these funders maintain on NGO activities. These webs of connectivity that link the local to the global have important – if not always obvious – effects on the way conservation can play out on the ground. Existing studies mention some of the roles NGOs and other international actors play,²⁰⁶ but further analysis into the social relationships, power asymmetries, and political motives of these actors is required for unpacking the complexities of this form of resource governance. More analysis is needed to determine where these various NGOs and outside actors emerge from and the further layer of political influence that exists.

There has yet to be adequate attention in the literature regarding the politics of CBNRM and the way it is given rise to by transformations in global environmental governance. These transformations as described in this chapter, restructure power, and CBNRM is an expression of these evolutions in governance. These gaps are partly a result of the nature of existing approaches as many of the early studies on CBNRM tended to approach it as an apolitical policy shift. However, as has begun to be demonstrated by the skeptics, but which is also alluded to by the panaceans and utilitarians, there is always a strong global dynamic in these projects. I build on these to develop my analysis in this dissertation. To analyze this form of community-based conservation that I argue cannot be adequately understood outside global power relations, the tools of International Relations can capture new dimensions that account for the increasing interconnectedness of politics. CBNRM must be adequately analyzed beyond a policy prescription and its enabling mechanisms traced in order to begin to comprehend and conceptualize the extent

²⁰⁶ Duffy, “The Potential and Pitfalls of Global Environmental Governance.”

of it in relation to broader questions of global environmental governance. Only in doing so can we begin to uncover the ways in which CBNRM has evolved in response to climate change and account for which actors are driving the change and decision making. The next chapter will outline how a global assemblage approach can be applied to further our understanding of CBNRM as an expression of global environmental governance.

Chapter 3

Green Global Policy Assemblages

Global processes also take place at subnational levels, hereby disrupting the notion of mutually exclusive domains for the national and global.²⁰⁷

Evolutions in global governance have created a need to abandon dichotomies of old, yet in doing so we must be left with tools for useful and rigorous analysis. CBNRM is one expression of the re-ordering of power between various actors as well as what were previously understood as the local, national, and global and public and private spheres. The results are a number of complex multi-scalar connections and understanding these emerging phenomena requires analytical tools and theoretical approaches that outstrip many traditional theories within the social sciences. Evolutions in global governance have also meant that power has become even more dispersed and pervasive than before – though it has likely always been more diffuse than traditionally understood. Rather than natural resources managed directly by the state, CBNRM provides a vehicle for power to be devolved to communities who interact with a number of actors resulting in complex and layered governance arrangements. As power is devolved from central governments, a variety of both sub-state and non-state actors take on new roles and, in many cases, begin to perform state-like practices. The result is that decision making and authority are constantly shifting based on the social interactions of competing and often heterogeneous actors. Understanding the ways in which their complex interactions have resulted in evolutions to the program becomes important as it is

²⁰⁷ Saskia Sassen, “When National Territory Is Home to the Global: Old Borders to Novel Borderings,” *New Political Economy* 10, no. 4 (2005): 523.

clear they do not act within silos. Developing tools and approaches to analyze these evolving power relations is key and this chapter will lay out my theoretical approach for doing so.

Assemblage thinking is one approach that enables scholars to analyze changes in global governance over time by unpacking foundational concepts of the discipline of International Relations such as state, sovereignty, and borders, as well as to move beyond the traditional levels of analysis approach. Moving beyond the predominant theories in the social sciences which have been developed with state – and often western—centric ontologies enables us to engage with complex phenomena with a flattened ontology. This theoretical framework serves to prevent much of the reification that traditional theories can lead to and allows us to enter the field without pre-determined notions of what we expect or seek to find. Building on global assemblage thinking from scholars of International Relations, global policy assemblage literature provides a particularly salient approach for analyzing CBNRM and the way it adapts to changing realities over time.

Assemblage thinking as a means of analysis

Global assemblages as an approach has been employed to understand the complexities of a range of modern phenomena. These include more abstract or big picture issues such as the formation of cities,²⁰⁸ international relations,²⁰⁹ global security assemblages,²¹⁰ as well as various other global assemblages.²¹¹ It also includes policy formations such as the practices of pig farming in the

²⁰⁸ Eugene McCann and Kevin Ward, *Mobile Urbanism: Cities and Policymaking in the Global Age* (U of Minnesota Press, 2011).

²⁰⁹ Acuto and Curtis, “Assemblage Thinking and International Relations.”

²¹⁰ Rita Abrahamsen and Michael C. Williams, “Security Privatization and Global Security Assemblages,” *The Brown Journal of World Affairs* 18, no. 1 (2011): 171–80.

²¹¹ Stephen J. Collier, “Assemblages and the Conduct of Inquiry,” in *Reassembling International Theory: Assemblage Thinking and International Relations*, ed. Michele Acuto and Simon Curtis (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2014), 32–38.

European Union,²¹² land-use planning in Tanzania,²¹³ Indonesian forest management,²¹⁴ policies on creative industries in New Zealand,²¹⁵ and even the Paralympics.²¹⁶ Jane Bennett has also contributed an operationalized account of an assemblage approach in her discussion of the 2003 North American blackout, providing an empirical analysis of the way in which complex arrangements of both human and non-human entities assemble to create functioning – or in the case she presents, failing – complex systems.²¹⁷

A global assemblage approach serves to open up key concepts to the realities of the world rather than attempt to sew up neat and tidy understandings. Abrahamsen argues that

when studying the global, the nation-state is generally approached as a unit that contains society, which in turn is separate from the unit of the international or the global. Assemblage thinking rejects such fixed and stable ontologies, and replaces essentialism and reification with a flat ontology.²¹⁸

Increasingly the issues in global governance scholars are treating cannot be limited to territorially bounded entities and, as the gaps in the literature on CBNRM demonstrate, this proves equally to be the case with issues in global environmental governance.²¹⁹

²¹² Elizabeth C. Dunn, “Standards and Person-Making in East Central Europe,” in *Global Assemblages* (John Wiley & Sons, Ltd, 2008), 173–93.

²¹³ Chris Huggins, “Land-Use Planning, Digital Technologies, and Environmental Conservation in Tanzania,” *The Journal of Environment & Development* 27, no. 2 (June 1, 2018): 210–35.

²¹⁴ Tania Murray Li, “Practices of Assemblage and Community Forest Management,” *Economy and Society* 36, no. 2 (May 1, 2007): 263–93.

²¹⁵ Russell Prince, “Policy Transfer as Policy Assemblage: Making Policy for the Creative Industries in New Zealand,” *Environment and Planning A*, Environment and Planning A, 42, no. 1 (2010): 169–86.

²¹⁶ Andrew Heffernan, “Paralympic Assemblages Globalizing International Relations: An Autoethnographic Account of Global Politics at the Paralympic Games,” *Sport in Society* 0, no. 0 (June 5, 2020): 1–14.

²¹⁷ Jane Bennett, “The Agency of Assemblages and the North American Blackout,” *Public Culture* 17, no. 3 (September 1, 2005): 445–66.

²¹⁸ Rita Abrahamsen, “Security Privatisation, the State, and Development in the Global South,” in *The Palgrave Handbook of International Development*, ed. Jean Grugel and Daniel Hammett (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2016), 2.

²¹⁹ Elden, “Missing the Point.”

Assemblage thinking as an approach proves to be one useful way to overcome many of the ontological restraints that have limited previous studies. As the pace and complexity of global politics has increased, our vocabulary often lags behind.²²⁰ For this project, concepts like state, society, legitimacy, and sovereignty still hold important analytical and descriptive value but an assemblage approach will be used to excise them from the straitjacket-like hold they usually maintain as foundational concepts in International Relations theory. Having been developed alongside the progression of international relations during a time when state-centricity made more analytical sense, these concepts largely concretized and resultantly failed to evolve alongside developments in world politics.

Abrahamsen posits “as a way of studying the global, assemblages are particularly attractive as they draw attention to new and emerging multi-scalar connections, abandoning strict dichotomies between the global and the local, the international and the domestic.”²²¹ For assemblage thinking what is at the centre of analysis is relationships between elements, rather than the elements themselves. This is important in enabling scholars to focus on provisionally and historically contingent relations between both human and non-human elements alike, rather than totalities and reified units of analysis.²²² Building on this Paul Rabinow argues, an assemblage “is not a pre-existing thing of the world with pre-given properties”, but instead “brings together entities in the world into a proximity in which they establish relations between and among themselves while remaining external to each other and thereby retaining their original properties.”²²³ Assemblage thinking allows us to unstack the usual vertical approach that sees the

²²⁰ Rita Abrahamsen, “Assemblages,” Routledge Handbook of International Political Sociology, December 1, 2016.

²²¹ Abrahamsen, 4.

²²² Acuto and Curtis, “Assemblage Thinking and International Relations.”

²²³ Paul Rabinow, *Anthropos today: reflections on modern equipment*, In-formation series (Princeton, NJ, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2003), 206.

global on top of the national, on top of the local in a hierarchical dynamic that artificially divides each realm.²²⁴ As has been pointed to, this levels of analysis approach ceases to provide analytical clarity to complex phenomena such as CBNRM that rearticulates power and those whose relations produce it.

Assemblages involve complex aggregate parts that can operate at once locally and globally while simultaneously affecting and being affected by their constituent parts that can be almost limitless. These parts can be synergistic but can also be conflictual and competitive. Assemblage thinking is about the multitude of actors who influence the daily transactions whether political, economic, social, or otherwise across time and space that in intricate ways constantly create and recreate power and power relations.²²⁵ They are key to unveiling and analyzing social relations that blur traditional distinctions such as social/material, subject/object, human/nature, global/local, and structure/agency. These are the numerous actors that compose CBNRM as well as enable it which require a disaggregation and in-depth analysis in order to understand their interactions with one another and what these result in.

Assemblage thinking is one way in which we might step outside of our usual tried, tested, and failed existing approaches. By engaging issues with many of our traditional ontological approaches ‘knowing’ what power states do or do not wield as a means of governing resources “might blind us to the different processes through which social and political (dis)order are assembled.”²²⁶ In order to avoid these potential issues, assemblage thinking has evolved into a tactic for developing a flattened ontology that moves away from reifying totalities and beyond the strict anthropocentrism and state centrality of so many existing theories. This approach emerges

²²⁴ Abrahamsen and Williams, *Security beyond the State*.

²²⁵ Sassen, *Territory, Authority, Rights*.

²²⁶ Abrahamsen, “Assemblages,” 6.

in order to analyze complex and diverse issues without pre-determined notions that seek to uncover certain types of explanations. A flattened ontology can be useful as it enables approaches to complex governance arrangements without preconceived notions of what constitutes an actor, how an actor may or may not wield power, and what types of power they might wield. With difficult issues, especially in places like Africa where a strictly defined Weberian state has likely never existed, it is this kind of humble approach that can produce some of the most accurate – though perhaps not the simplest – analyses. Developing this kind of analysis can then allow for a better understanding of the politics of CBNRM as well as the manifold actors exerting various forms of power in ways that go well beyond technical policy shifts.

Theoretically a flat ontology would suggest that all subjects or objects have the same degree of being-ness and that none of these units of analysis are superior or more central or more important than any others. Methodologically this would suggest that one enters the field not knowing what they expect to find – however, this of course brings with it a certain degree of methodological challenges as well. In order to prevent some of these challenges the GGPA is intended to have a *flattened* ontology, yet not one that is entirely flat which would be both impractical in a number of ways as well as likely impossible as we know there is no view from nowhere. Approaching an issue such as CBNRM with a flattened ontology precludes some of the pre-determined assumptions that come from many theories that bring the baggage of state centrality with them. A flattened ontology allows us to engage with the subject and those related to it in order to find what is there and analyze how it operates, rather than seeking to find specific outcomes and reify existing approaches. This reification can serve to depoliticize issues and mask power imbalances that gloss over the ways in which certain endeavours such as wildlife conservation which is so often presented as an unquestioned ‘good’ but which might actually serve

the interest of those most powerful, while either failing to benefit marginalized populations, or in some cases, actually further marginalizing them or leading to them incurring costs associated with the conservation of certain wildlife species. Thus, despite the methodological challenges and the complexities of a global assemblage approach and the associated flattened ontology, it also brings important opportunities to change perspectives and question established wisdoms and understandings. The notion of a flattened ontology also builds on work by Foucault who argued for methodological approaches that do not focus on pre-given universals but instead started from a position of examining how these categories are assembled through concrete practices – which is what I do with the empirical chapters of this dissertation.²²⁷

Green Global Policy Assemblages

One of the critiques of assemblage thinking over the years has been that assemblages can be almost anything and as a result cease to really be anything at all.²²⁸ There also exists the concern that this type of approach can become descriptive, rather than analytical.²²⁹ Policy assemblages, however, are much more concerted in their organization and governance than many earlier iterations of assemblage thinking that were more philosophical and abstract. For Glen Savage, “rather than being an *assortment*, therefore, a policy assemblage can be understood as an *arrangement* of components in particular ways with the aim of governing conduct.”²³⁰ He argues

it is crucial to note that despite being heterogeneous and synthetic in form, assemblages are not simply random assortments of things. Assemblages, are not, therefore, akin to a

²²⁷ Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*.

²²⁸ Michael Storper and Allen J Scott, “Current Debates in Urban Theory: A Critical Assessment,” *Urban Studies* 53, no. 6 (May 1, 2016): 1114–36.

²²⁹ Paul Haynes, “What Is Policy Assemblage?” (Ingenion Working Paper Series, 2010).

²³⁰ Glenn C. Savage, “What Is Policy Assemblage?,” *Territory, Politics, Governance* 8, no. 3 (2019): 325.

junk drawer of bits and pieces that happen to exist together... Therefore, for example, while within a nation there exists multifarious policy and governance components, the mere existence of these components does not make an assemblage. Instead, an assemblage refers to cases where components have been strategically arranged with the view to forming an apparatus for governing.²³¹

Thus, anywhere one looks in society, there will always be assortments of actors and a multitude of entities they interact with, however, only in certain situations will these actors compose a deliberate arrangement for the purposes of enacting governance. This is a result of the concerted actions of a number of actors who operate synergistically – though not always harmoniously. This builds on work by Sebastian Ureta who asserts that policy assemblages consist of heterogeneous actors that come together in deliberate, particular, and strategic ways to accomplish specific governance outcomes. These ‘modes of ordering’ as he describes them “are heterogeneous and variable but always include the search for strategic effects, that aim to transform an existing situation in a certain predetermined way through the establishment of particular sets of relations between new and existing entities.”²³² It is in this way that the deliberate actions of many actors have synergized in order to enact policies crafted by governments, as well as to oversee their evolution over time as power is increasingly produced at a distance from the centre.

In not attempting to smooth over complexities and lumpiness, what a policy assemblage approach offers is a more complex analysis of policy processes as various types of actors are unpacked along with their social interactions and the ways they are able to exert their will. This makes a global policy assemblage a particularly useful lens for exploring conservation and

²³¹ Savage, 325.

²³² Sebastián Ureta, *Assembling Policy: Transantiago, Human Devices, and the Dream of a World-Class Society, Infrastructures* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, MIT Press, 2015), 12.

governance “in complex and fragile environments where the centrality of the state cannot be taken for granted, and where plurality of... actors is nothing new but where the context and conditions of their existence are changing and interacting with novel, global dynamics.”²³³ This plurality of actors with the state but one among a number of important players is specifically what we see with CBNRM which is why an assemblage approach is particularly salient in this case.

Savage argues that rarely are policies something that develop at the source of implementation.²³⁴ Instead, he sees policy development, evolution, and implementation as an assemblage in itself. This is similar to much work from Diane Stone who writes extensively of global public policy.²³⁵ She argues policies are constantly borrowed, recycled, and in some situations, they might be pressured upon governments either directly or indirectly through a variety of actors. They almost always occur through the actions of a multitude of actors and as a result of various forms of power developing from their social interactions. In this sense, policy – which is so often treated as a technical-managerial phenomenon – cannot be adequately understood outside both local and global politics.

For the purposes of this dissertation, I understand policy assemblages as a type of practical governance arrangement that is specifically policy focused. I develop a green global policy assemblage (GGPA) approach which is a specific type of assemblage whose constituent actors exercise distinct forms of coercive and productive power that are expanding both within and between states while simultaneously blurring these distinctions. The GGPA is a composite

²³³ Rita Abrahamsen and Michael Williams, “Golden Assemblages: Security and Development in Tanzania’s Gold Mines,” in *Private Security in Africa: From the Global Assemblage to the Everyday*, ed. Paul Higate and Mats Utas (London: Zed Books, 2017), 15.

²³⁴ Savage, “What Is Policy Assemblage?,” 2019.

²³⁵ See Diane Stone, “Transfer Agents and Global Networks in the ‘Transnationalization’ of Policy,” *Journal of European Public Policy* 11, no. 3 (2004): 545–66; Diane Stone, “Making Global Policy,” *Elements in Public Policy* (Cambridge University Press, November 2019). among others.

theoretical framework drawing on global public policy and policy assemblage work from environmental and policy studies, but primarily informed by the work of assemblage theorists in International Relations. The GGPA is both a theoretical approach for thinking about complex governance arrangements dealing specifically with environmental issues as will be further elaborated here, as well as a methodological approach as will be discussed in the subsequent section. As a theoretical tool, the GGPA is employed to trace the key actors involved in governance. It does so specifically by looking beyond traditional power structures and hierarchies in order to disaggregate the types of structures that many traditional theories end up simply reifying. This mapping includes who these actors are, what they seek to produce and what brings them together. The units of analysis thus become everyone and everything that has a bearing on this assemblage.

The GGPA is a specific type of policy assemblage that is focused on environmental governance, based on the proliferation of actors involved in environmental action and the increasing legitimacy they are being afforded within global politics more broadly and within CBNRM specifically. This specificity is a result of the distinct nature environmental issues have taken on which are becoming increasingly understood as existential and are simultaneously the epitome of what constitutes a global issue. While the economy and pandemics for example, are global issues in the sense that they can affect the interconnected world in similarly negative ways, their effects can still be closed off through decisive actions – even if these might be radical, such as the imposition of protectionist and isolationist measures or the closure of borders. While climate change can be mitigated through collective action and effective global environmental governance, once greenhouse gas emissions are released, borders become anachronistic. It is the combination of this globality, long timescales, distributive justice, collective action, and a number of other

issues bundled into one perfect storm that has created exceptionalism for the environmental movement. As a result of what many have called ‘the greatest challenge of our generation’, environmental actors have proliferated at the sub-state, state, and supra-state levels.²³⁶ These actors often blur these traditional levels of analysis as well as operate at once within the public and private sectors and resultantly the environmental policies on which these many actors coalesce to enact must be understood beyond sovereign decrees. Wildlife also offer a particular salient case study for this theoretical approach as they migrate and are a de facto regional or transnational issue.

While increasingly complex governance arrangements have emerged over time and continue to evolve, climate change is posing a specific set of novel challenges to sustainable development initiatives. As state governments have either been unwilling or unable to effectively treat these types of complex global issues, networks of actors have emerged to form complex governance arrangements to vie for resources in order to realize their goals. As a result, environmental policies as one specific example are increasingly complex, and are both realized and enacted by dense networks of connectivities. It is these networks of actors and the forms of power produced by their social relations which are most effectively analyzed by the GGPA approach.

The increasing importance with which the world is perceiving environmental issues is key to the politics of CBNRM. Particularly with endangered wildlife species that are seen by many to be a global good, many view their protection as an existential issue for – barring the advancement of controversial scientific research that aims to bring back extinct species²³⁷ – once they are gone, we have lost them forever. This is one salient example among many, of the particular importance

²³⁶ Carl Death, *The Green State in Africa*, Yale Agrarian Studies (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016).

²³⁷ David Shultz, “Bringing Extinct Species Back from the Dead Could Hurt—Not Help—Conservation Efforts,” *Science*, 2017.

various iterations of environmental governance are commanding which in many cases affords them an increasingly central role in society beyond simply their ecological aspects. Instead, as we see with CBNRM, environmental issues are becoming central to the broader politics of the state and increasingly seeing a proliferation of actors taking interest in these issues. Along with these actors comes new resource streams, social relations, and the tensions that inevitably ensue from these developments.

For the purposes of my analysis, there are a plethora of units of analysis that the GGPA consists of. Below I will briefly describe some of the key elements that relate to CBNRM in Namibia individually, but central to the analysis is that none of them can exist on their own or in a vacuum and instead must be understood within the assemblage that emerges from their ceaseless interactions with one another as well as the interactions with many other assemblages in broader society. After briefly describing seven key units of analysis, I will then outline some of the ways their relations can be understood through the GGPA approach.

Communities in Namibia in relation to CBNRM are generally understood as small groups of people ranging in size of roughly 50-250 people. The Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) purposely leaves the definition of a community broad and open-ended so that groups of people can decide for themselves who and what constitutes a community. Many communities have a specific tree that is central to their loose political organization, and it is where they have traditionally come together to gain respite from the hot African sun in order to join together with level heads and make sound collective decisions based on consensus. Namibians have traditionally understood rural communities as being groups that are small enough that they can all sit together at one time under a tree in order to realize this consensus to govern communally and equally as

demonstrated below in Figure 2.²³⁸ It is in this way that Namibian communities are so closely tied to the natural environment around them. Communities may also have recognized themselves as one group, within a certain boundary prior to the emergence of CBNRM, but with the passing of the Nature Conservation Amendment Act, may have changed their human and geographical boundaries to become a conservancy – in this way CBNRM presents a new realm of possibilities for who communities see themselves as, as well as how they interact with the world around them.



*Figure 2: Community Meeting Under a Tree*²³⁹

²³⁸ Conrad Steenkamp and Jana Uhr, “The Makulele Land Claim: Power Relations and Community-Based Natural Resource Management,” 2000, 28.

²³⁹ MET/NACSO, “The State of Community Conservation in Namibia: Annual Report 2019: A Review of Communal Conservancies, Community Forests and Other CBNRM Initiatives” (Ministry of Environment and Tourism, 2021).

Conservancies are legal entities which are gazetted by the MET and consist of any groups of persons living on communal land who amongst themselves agree on a list of people who are members of the proposed conservancy, a statement setting out defined boundaries of the conservancy, formulate a conservancy committee, draft a constitution for the democratic elections of said committee as well as resource sharing arrangements. Once gazetted rights over certain resources are devolved from the central government to the conservancy which becomes responsible for the costs, as well as potential benefits of managing said resources. This is an example of a unit of analysis that did not exist prior to CBNRM and which the legislation made possible, thus expanding the future possibilities for these entities. Conservancies, as opposed to communities, are empowered with the legal rights over their resources and as such are more directly tied into a broader set of global power relations.

Farmers is a broad term used to describe individuals who engage in some form of agriculture, livestock herding, pastoralism, and other similar endeavours which can consist of all or part of their livelihoods and incomes for them and their families. In Namibia, farming activities vary a great deal, with many of the northern areas able to sustain certain crops, while much of the central and southern parts of the country are less hospitable for food crops and various forms of communal livestock grazing are more prevalent. Prior to CBNRM various forms of farming were the predominant livelihood most Namibians engaged in and which the vast majority of productive land was used for. While various forms of subsistence farming still contribute to the livelihoods of over half Namibians, CBNRM has created competition for land and debate over whether certain areas are more productive for traditional farming practices, or instead for managing wildlife for the purposes of ecotourism. CBNRM has resulted in a substantial number of Namibians shifting their views to favour wildlife management, which many farmers have similarly agreed with, while

others yet have developed increased resistance to the program. This is because large wildlife populations and an increased percentage of land devoted to wildlife conservation means less land for farmers and more wildlife which can threaten livestock and important infrastructure. Farmers can be active members of both conservancies, and communities, but can also be more withdrawn from local populations and politics and not consider themselves members of either.

NGOs are a broad set of actors that are both international, domestic, and often a mix of both – perhaps having their head offices in Windhoek, but primarily receiving their funding from outside of Namibia. Some NGOs operate across the country in a number of CBNRM projects and conservancies, while others are more regional in their approach, operating within a specific region or a handful of conservancies. Many NGOs have specific geographic areas in which they operate whereas others tend to be tied to the protection of certain wildlife species, or conservation activities. These actors serve conservancies in order to help them realize sustainable development goals, but are also highly influenced by global forces, whether political, economic, social, environmental, geographical or otherwise, and these forces tend to translate into their activities on the ground. Their centrality as actors in CBNRM thus results in global forces permeating decision making and outcomes on the ground in intricate – if not always conspicuous – ways. NGOs have existed in a number of iterations for many years, but CBNRM provided a specific foothold for them in Namibia which indirectly allows for actors from the international community to work towards realizing their own ends on the ground within the country. This is done by funding NGOs who favour certain activities within specific regions which enables them to support the efforts of local people and conservancies while also providing resources for the types of conservation activities they choose. While the international community has become increasingly averse to being

seen to be exercising their will through development efforts, CBNRM in a sense, through NGOs opens avenues for program adaptation through the indirect provision of targeted support.

The Namibian state is headquartered in Windhoek where its multiparty parliamentary democracy is most visible. This is also where it maintains closest control of the main functions of governing and where its provision of services is most visible. The country is extremely sparsely populated as seen in Figure 3 below, and it lacks resources which means the state is often much less visible in rural areas which make up most conservancies, though there are a number of satellite government offices in some of the more populous settlements outside the capital. The state itself is geographically bounded and has delineated land and resources which it governs. CBNRM is supposed to entail a devolution of power from the state to local communities. In practice however, this is far from a zero-sum equation and what is seen instead in some instances is an increasing ability for the state to project its power, though through less coercive and hence less costly measures. CBNRM is often implemented in countries where the state has not been able to effectively project its power, and instead this form of resource governance serves to empower a number of actors who in many cases provide the types of services traditionally expected of the state. This can include private tourism operations paving local roads, offering health care services, lodging, food, and freshwater, as well as supplementing local education budgets. In this way CBNRM results in the proliferation of power among a number of actors which sees certain goals of the state realized but at a distance, and in places it likely had been previously either unable or unwilling to provide these.

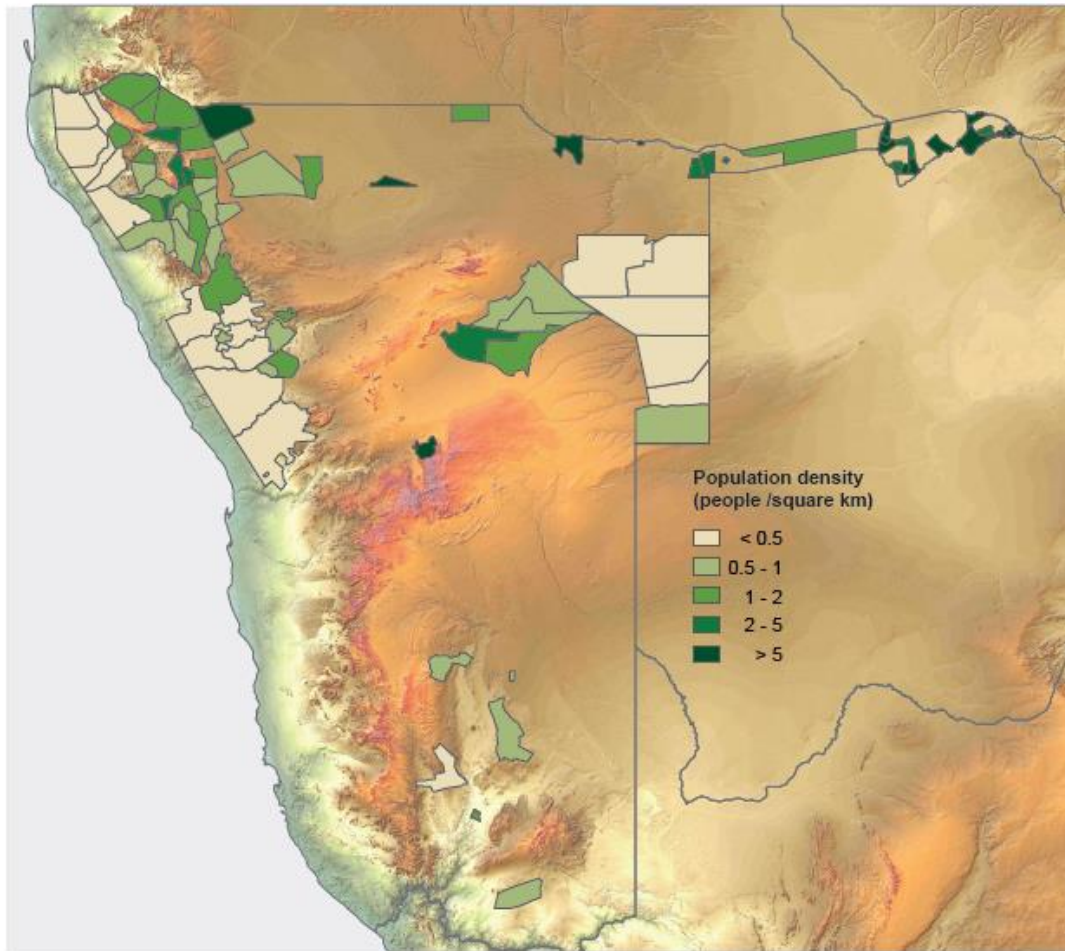


Figure 3: Conservancy Population Densities²⁴⁰

Megafauna and particularly Namibia's charismatic megafauna – defined as such because they are beautiful, impressive, and endangered – are central elements to CBNRM both in Namibia, and across southern Africa. CBNRM has become virtually synonymous with ecotourism based on the conservation and management of these wildlife populations and as such they hold a specific type of power that is amplified by the programs as well as through the web of connectivity that links wildlife in rural Africa, to people at home in their living rooms elsewhere across the globe.

²⁴⁰ NACSO 2020 State of the Conservancy Report: Figure 09. People in conservancies.

While at one time they were viewed predominantly for their value as food, or through the illicit sales of their rare parts, they have had a new value inscribed on their life and the proliferation of their populations. Traditionally wildlife had largely been held under the purview of the state which led to a decrease in all of Africa's key wildlife species at an alarming rate for decades. Often the relationship between central governments and distant rural communities is one that is at best absent, and at worst fraught and conflictual. As a result, when wildlife were seen as a possession of the state, people felt little responsibility to protect them and those in need would engage in poaching activities. As many countries in Africa lack effective state control throughout their territory this was extremely difficult to police, especially in the sparsely populated communal areas seen above in Figure 3. By extending rights over wildlife to communities themselves, wildlife were prescribed a new value to communities residing within close proximity to them, and they have developed vastly different relationships with a number of other key units of analysis in society.

Climate change is unit of analysis that is increasingly being understood as an existential threat globally, and even more so in Namibia which is experiencing its harmful effects more than elsewhere in the world while simultaneously being one of the least well-positioned to mitigate and adapt to its harmful effects. While climate change has a diverse set of impacts in various regions, Namibia is experiencing those most often associated with it – consisting of increasingly hot temperatures and more severe and protracted droughts in what is already the driest country in Africa South of the Sahara. The effects of climate change can be seen to induce deleterious outcomes on the natural environment, which in turn has a broad set of impacts on social life for Namibians. While it is possible for these effects to be beneficial, predominantly they are negative. This includes making all forms of conservation more challenging, and resultantly less

economically productive, which in turn creates social tensions as people try to cope with these complex changing realities.

Any changes to one of the above units of analysis will in turn have a multitude of impacts on all the rest, and as others are impacted those units will experience further cascading effects, thus resulting also in impacts on the initial unit itself. In this sense any changes in society whether minor or more substantial will set off waves of change which can simultaneously be positive and negative for other units. Climate change is an example of a substantial shift that has highly consequential and complex impacts on the units outlined above as well as many more. Analyzing these various components of CBNRM as units of analysis of the GGPA proves to be a useful way for accounting for these complex and ceaselessly changing interactions.

The GGPA framework will be employed in order to account for the increasingly disaggregated nature of the state and the way policies are similarly becoming de-territorialized. Existing approaches that remain locked in a state-centric and territorial ontology tend to analyze government policies as sovereign decrees emanating from the top and percolating down through society. However, this is no longer a sufficient way to understand a number of policies and analyzing approaches to environmental conservation in particular, need to account for the many competing sets of voices and multifarious actors who operate and exercise productive power, all the while in interaction with the sovereign forms of power which continue to exist in a very real – albeit different – form.

The GGPA approach serves many of the same functions as the global assemblage approaches employed by scholars of International Relations to understand the proliferation of non-

state security actors as outlined by Abrahamsen and Williams for instance.²⁴¹ However, in their case the phenomenon results as more of a by-product or side effect of the shifting nature of global governance, as well as a response to many of the changes that result. The rise of ‘security beyond the state’ emerges largely through the independent actions of a number of heterogeneous actors that are not inherently related and does not occur as a concerted response to any specific set of policy actions. In relations to the present case, I borrow from this approach to trace the actors involved in CBNRM by analyzing them through the lens of policy assemblage as here we see a much more concerted set of efforts that emerge from, and in ways are both enabled and empowered by a specific policy. However, the units of analysis discussed whose social relations enable CBNRM are not empowered equally, and some have their voices heard over others. As a result, the interests of certain groups are realized sometimes at the expense of others. The GGPA is employed as a tool for unpacking these units, their relations, interests, and achievement of ends.

The GGPA will be used as an analytical device through which to trace the actors, practices, processes, and power relations that serve to make up the politics of CBNRM. This theoretical approach will enable me to unpack the complexities of CBNRM and analyze it beyond a policy prescription emanating from the state downwards toward communities. Instead, it will serve to open up discussion of the multitude of heterogeneous actors that emerge as a result of this policy assemblage and which each serve in part to enact the policy, but each in unique ways. As a result, the ‘policy’ of CBNRM unfolds differently and produces diverse outcomes in distinct settings. As mentioned, with this type of theoretical approach there has been the critique that the research ends up being descriptive rather than analytical. However, as Barnett and Finnemore posit

²⁴¹ Abrahamsen and Williams, *Security beyond the State*.

This approach does not make our explanation ‘mere description,’ since understanding the constitution of things does essential work in explaining how those things behave and what causes outcomes. Just as understanding how the double-helix DNA molecule is constituted materially makes possible causal arguments about genetics, disease, and other biological processes, so understanding how bureaucracies are constituted socially allows us to hypothesize about the behavior of IOs [International Organizations] and the effects this social form might have in world politics.²⁴²

Similarly, as they write about bureaucracies and IOs, understanding the constitution of CBNRM as an iteration of contemporary global environmental governance is a key step in allowing us to draw conclusions about how governance functions as well as toward improved policy outcomes. To do so the GGPA enables us to move past traditional concepts such as sovereignty, borders, levels of analysis as well as the state centrality which comes with so many existing theories in order to develop a flattened ontology and analyze the phenomenon as it is, rather than as we might expect it to be.

While there are existing scholarly inquiries that employ competing theoretical frameworks such as Duffy’s in her analysis of TFCAs²⁴³ or the challenge of shadow states,²⁴⁴ or the wealth of development studies literature on the impact of INGOs on development outcomes, actor network theory (ANT), or transnational networks for example, the GGPA provides more fruitful avenues for analysis as – perhaps somewhat ambitiously – it builds on the strengths of many of these approaches in order to put together a more complete analysis of CBNRM and its evolution in

²⁴² Michael N. Barnett and Martha Finnemore, “The Politics, Power, and Pathologies of International Organizations,” *International Organization* 53, no. 4 (1999): 701.

²⁴³ Duffy, “The Potential and Pitfalls of Global Environmental Governance.”

²⁴⁴ Duffy, “Global Environmental Governance and the Challenge of Shadow States.”

response to emerging challenges such as climate change. While a plethora of development studies scholars have forwarded a wealth of literature on analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of CBNRM as a means for conservation and sustainable development,²⁴⁵ as well as many having looked specifically at the impact of global organizations on CBNRM,²⁴⁶ many of these remain too locked within specific confines such as the state, territoriality, and traditional hierarchical notions of various types of actors and their relative strength vis a vis one another. These confines can be problematic, as these assumptions tend to see scholars enter the field looking to find certain power structures, hierarchies, and specific actors and as a result end up reifying existing structures, rather than analyzing what is actually there. Furthermore, many of these existing approaches see these confines as more or less static, or at least capturable in a specific moment or time. I think this leaves them paying less attention to power and politics and to the wealth of ever-changing and heterogeneous actors that not only impact CBNRM, but that actually led to its very genesis as will be further discussed in the next chapter, as well as contribute to its ongoing management and evolution which is key to this project. The GGPA does not assume a specific set of actors or distribution of power and authority, but instead sets out to discover this empirically.

Often these hard and fast disciplinary and theoretical divides are largely imagined and there are a great deal of similarities and overlap between some of these competing frameworks and approaches. For example, the use of the term “network” is very similar to rhizomes, and Latour has even remarked – likely partly jokingly – that he would have no objection to renaming Actor network theory “actor-rhizome ontology” if it only had sounded better, which hints at Latour’s uneasiness with the word “theory”. Actor-network theory sees the networks and their associations

²⁴⁵ Ziai, *Development Discourse and Global History*, 2015.

²⁴⁶ Brockington and Scholfield, “Expenditure by Conservation Nongovernmental Organizations in Sub-Saharan Africa.”

as key to everything and that there is nothing outside these relations, whereas assemblage thinking sees heterogeneous and individual actors and the relations between them that compose an assemblage as their own entities that exist outside of any given assemblage and which are simultaneously part of other assemblages and will serve different roles and take on different forms depending on a given situation and context.²⁴⁷ This is perhaps the most important difference as well, as ANT sees these networks as something that are more concrete and thus, ANT scholars set out to map out the entirety of the networks, whereas assemblages reflect emergent systems of connection, and thus it is something of an impossibility to do so. This is also in part an important limitation to acknowledge with assemblages, as while I do trace many of the key units of analysis and their connections, these are in some ways limitless and ever changing which necessarily limits the utility of trying to demonstrate its entirety in any given moment on a single sheet of paper. As a result, ANT can perhaps be said to be more operationalizable for empirical studies, and in this sense, many would likely find it would have a clearer or more direct application to my case here. This could also improve or alleviate some of the questions of generalizability, but my ontological approach suggests that the GGPA is necessary so that in any given case or specific assemblage we should not enter the field assuming what actors we will find and what types of power they will exercise, as these will inevitably always be different in every assemblage. Thus, some of ANT's stricter/more concrete boundaries which can be useful, can also be limiting in a number of ways which I aim to avoid with the flattened ontology that comes with the less constraining methodological and theoretical apparatus of assemblage theory.

²⁴⁷ Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory*, Clarendon Lectures in Management Studies (Oxford, Oxford ; New York: OUP Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2005).

While not all assemblages are understood in the same way, policy assemblages are heterogeneous, comprised of a multiplicity of component parts that have been arranged toward particular strategic ends. The GGPA is a way to analyze iterations of global environmental governance that enables scholars to understand how policies move, mutate and manifest in increasingly transnational contexts. The GGPA is comprised of heterogeneous and emergent component parts that are arranged together toward accomplishing governance, in particular times and spaces that allows us to do certain things and think in certain ways that were not possible with previous approaches. The concept of assemblage reflects a distinctive understanding of the relationship between parts and wholes, which is frequently articulated through what has been termed ‘relations of exteriority’ which stress that the nature of systems can only be understood with reference to how their constituent parts relate and generate emergent features.²⁴⁸ For this project, this means not understanding the 1996 Nature Conservation Amendment Act as a unitary policy that is a coherent thing or as definable as the sum of its constituent parts, but what is important is understanding the nature of the interactions between components and the capacities components exhibit when arranged in various ways. This is necessary for understanding this type of global environmental governance as policies like this can increasingly be seen as transnational policy mobilities that cut across political territories in new ways.

I therefore analyze CBNRM as a GGPA in order to trace the policy development and evolution as a result of a diverse number of component parts that were strongly informed by transnational flows of policy actors, ideas, and practices, which have manifested in place-specific ways. With CBNRM we see the way policy ideas, practices, and forms of influence are strongly informed by transnational flows such as the desire of some to curb trophy hunting, omit climate

²⁴⁸ Haynes, “What Is Policy Assemblage?”

change from the discussion, or seek to improve the sustainability of photographic tourism, but the conditions of possibility for such policies depend largely on local conditions and actors to enable them. Thus, while the policy itself seeks to engender certain effects, the extent to which it does or does not can perhaps only rarely be attributed solely to the policy itself. This is the way assemblages are characterized by relations of exteriority in which a component part of an assemblage may be detached from it and plugged into a different assemblage in which its interactions are different. Therefore, rather than relations between components parts being understood as logically *necessary* to make the whole what it is, relations in an assemblage are seen as only contingently obligatory.²⁴⁹ An example that is given by Savage is a bicycle for which the component parts including chain, gears, pedal etc., serve a strategic function in ways that are logically necessary to make the whole what it is. Relations in a policy assemblage also serve strategic functions but are comprised of contingently obligatory relations that are always evolving in form. In this sense a given NGO such as WWF serves a specific role globally as a leader in wildlife protection, however its various sub-branches which exist in many countries each serve specific but different functions in each setting as they are individually influenced by the realities of the components and settings around them. Thus, WWF does not only exist as an actor within Namibia or in relation to the country's CBNRM program but exists simultaneously beyond that specific assemblage as well as within it, leading to various and distinct effects in each setting similarly to the way the tires on a bicycle might serve similar and quite different functions in diverse settings. In this sense the GGPA comes with what can be described as an ontology of movement, which basically assumes society and its various forms are always in motion.

²⁴⁹ Bennett, "The Agency of Assemblages and the North American Blackout."

By approaching CBNRM with a flattened ontology, I first and foremost do not engage with the subject assuming it is a policy that is passed by the Namibian state which then flows down to its subjects as is often traditionally understood of many policies. Instead, the flattened ontology that is part of the GGPA approach sees the research trace the developments of this policy through historical analysis, and then builds through to discourse analysis of secondary sources, grey literature and interviews in order to piece together the heterogeneous and often disparate actors whose efforts and interests combine in cooperative and often simultaneously competitive relations. These relations resulted in the unofficial genesis of CBNRM prior to independence, which was eventually codified in the 1996 Nature Conservation Amendment Act, and over the past 25 years has continued to evolve in response to challenges and events. But the legislation does not keep evolving in the halls of government and instead is a result of the social relations of the actors that are traced in this inquiry. While actor-network theory, political ecology, transnational networks, and other theoretical approaches can each do parts of this, and have contributed to the further development of global assemblages as an approach, each does only part of what the GGPA does in this dissertation. The GGPA suggests that CBNRM is not a domestic policy for conservation that is then influenced by global power relations, but instead it is actually a policy assemblage that emerges through a confluence of global and local, public and private social relations and that it cannot be understood outside of these and is specifically an example of global environmental governance at work. As discussed above, assemblage thinking is more than a traditional theoretical framework, but is also a methodological approach for engaging with these diverse units of analysis as the next section will further explore.

Methodology

My method of inquiry began as more a strategy than a plan as assemblage work aims to move beyond some of the reification implicit with traditional theories, methods, and approaches. This strategy was partly to enable me to avoid the type of reifying approaches that assemblage thinking attempts to move beyond by not entering with fixed ontological assumptions ‘knowing’ which actors will be of particular importance and what forms of power they might exert.²⁵⁰ I set out to study social relations and observe how they enact CBNRM in Namibia. As argued by Vrasti;

The answers to our research questions rarely await us in the field. Often we return home more confused than we were in the first place. This is where ethnography comes in handy: [...] ethnography can afford to travel back and forth between the part and the whole, experience the text fieldwork and theory, certainty and epiphany in ways that other methods cannot and which, in the end, can only add to the credibility and authenticity of this genre.²⁵¹

Explained this way, ethnography in many ways mirrors the methodological aspects of assemblage thinking and is part of what allows for the accumulation of data while attempting to avoid some of the reification that comes with the fixed ontological assumptions of other methods and theories. While the timeline for my fieldwork limited the depth of this data collection that was possible, I utilized traditional social science methods that mirror some of the key parts of ethnography in order to study the components of the subject matter in a synergistic approach with other methods of observation in order to triangulate data and draw useful conclusions.

²⁵⁰ Acuto and Curtis, “Assemblage Thinking and International Relations.”

²⁵¹ Wanda Vrasti, “Travelling with Ethnography,” *Research Methods in Critical Security Studies*, April 3, 2013, 61.

The fieldwork for this dissertation consisted of a two-month study in Namibia between January and February 2020. Further trips were prevented due to the COVID-19 global pandemic which limited my data collection and the depth of analysis I am able to pursue on certain issues. However, while further trips might have been useful, I have sufficient data to perform the necessary analysis to answer my research questions and contribute to the ongoing scholarly debate. Furthermore, in order to account for these limitations, I have adapted my methodological approach and placed more weight on secondary sources as well as ongoing email exchanges with key interview respondents in Namibia. I have also had the opportunity to continue ongoing dialogue with some of my key interlocutors in Namibia via email in order to follow up with renewed questions as they emerged through the research and writing process.

This dissertation examines CBNRM in Namibia in order to analyze its evolution in response to climate change. Namibia represents the crucial case for the study of CBNRM given its recently drafted and progressive constitution, its abundance of wildlife, and sparse human populations. It has also transferred more rights through the CBNRM program to communities than any other country.²⁵² As indicated in Chapter 2, Namibia has also seen a higher percentage of its land devoted to CBNRM than any other country likely in the world.²⁵³ Its program is also praised for being more locally driven than those of neighbouring countries as well as having more complete devolution – broadly accepted within the literature as a key component for success.²⁵⁴ As a result, Namibia has been touted by the international community as one of the greatest successes of CBNRM and as an example to be emulated and repeated elsewhere.²⁵⁵ Crucial case studies are based on most likely or least likely designs based on the assumption that some cases can have more

²⁵² Bollig and Menestrey Schwieger, “Fragmentation, Cooperation and Power.”

²⁵³ Roe, Nelson, and Sandbrook, *Community Management of Natural Resources in Africa*.

²⁵⁴ Boudreaux, “A New Call of the Wild.”

²⁵⁵ Hoole, “Place-Power-Prognosis.”

or less value for testing theories than others. For least likely case design it is based on what Levy refers to as the ‘Sinatra inference’ – being that if the case can work in this least likely scenario, it can work anywhere.²⁵⁶ For my project I will employ the inverse of this with a most likely case; the logic being if CBNRM does not accomplish its purported goals even in Namibia it likely will not anywhere.

A crucial case study analysis is optimal for my project because of the scope and complexity of the environmental assemblage that enables CBNRM which will make this single case study of relatively *more* value rather than several cases. The global environmental assemblage is disparate, far reaching, and ever-changing. As such, in utilizing the crucial case of Namibia, my research will take me beyond the borders of Namibia as my dissertation posits that CBNRM is inherently internationally oriented. This is seen by the web of NGOs, International Financial Institutions and foreign governments that provide resources for the projects. But it is also seen through the assemblage of environmental activists, conservationists, and ecotourists whose activities and agencies influence environmental governance on the ground in Namibia in numerous and novel ways. By attempting to narrow the dissertation’s focus with a single case study, it will actually be able to provide a more complete analysis to unpack the depth and breadth of the global environmental assemblage. While I argue that due to their complexity, reach, and ever-changing nature, the entirety of any assemblage is likely impossible to unveil, by looking more deeply at a single case study, a more accurate and useful analysis of CBNRM will be developed than has been offered to date.

²⁵⁶ Jack S. Levy, “Case Studies: Types, Designs, and Logics of Inference,” *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 25, no. 1 (February 2008): 1–18.

Part of Namibia's relative success with regards to CBNRM is attributable to its late independence – won only in 1990 – which resulted in it having one of the most recently drafted and progressive constitutions in the world.²⁵⁷ This constitution has environmental conservation written directly into it which creates a legislative framework through which to effectively devolve power over natural resources to communities.²⁵⁸ Namibia was able to learn from neighbouring countries in the drafting of legislation in order to attempt to ensure its best chance at success.²⁵⁹ These realities make Namibia an interesting and analytically useful case for manifold reasons. The international community and the broad network of NGOs and INGOs have had a great deal of influence on CBNRM from drafting legislation to project implementation, and ongoing management, which provides a compelling example of the GGPA. This policy assemblage has yet to be adequately analyzed and it has important effects in relation to developments in global environmental governance and hence the way power is reconfigured and rearticulated.

Namibia was also chosen as it is one of the countries that has contributed the least to climate change yet is one of those being hardest hit by its deleterious effects. With a population of only approximately 2.5 million it is a small country with many of its people remaining relatively poor, and as a result both historically and presently contributes fewer GHG emissions than the global average measured on both a gross and per capita basis. Despite this, Namibia is expected to see substantial decreases in precipitation in the coming decades as well as an increase in mean temperature of three degree Celsius – well above the global average.²⁶⁰ These climactic changes are wreaking havoc on Namibia and Namibians in general, and in particular on the CBNRM

²⁵⁷ Snively, "Environmental Laws of Namibia."

²⁵⁸ Snively.

²⁵⁹ Schnegg and Kiaka, "Subsidized Elephants."

²⁶⁰ Kevin Coldrey and Jane Turpie, "Climate Change Risk Assessment for Namibia's Communal Conservancies," 2020.

program as it relies directly on healthy and stable environments for success. The detrimental impacts of climate change, which are extremely pronounced in the harsh conditions of Namibia, are directly correlated to benefits that can be derived from the program, and hence the support it receives both locally and globally. CBNRM is a central component of the lives of so many Namibians that variations in program implementation have a sizeable and measurable impact on the population and on the economy.²⁶¹ Similarly, policy shifts in one area, or targeted investments in individual projects can produce results that further policy developments can build on. Therefore, analyzing a country that is being affected in the same way much of the region will be in the coming years can prove a useful case study from which more generalizable conclusions can be drawn for other countries and studies to learn from. While research has shown that all regions of the world will be increasingly impacted by climate change, understanding these more substantial and deleterious effects in Namibia can help us develop solutions that might, in time, be exportable to other countries. This can be particularly useful for CBNRM programs in other countries across southern Africa but can also prove useful for other policies relating to sustainable development both on the African continent and elsewhere.

Within Namibia I have two main foci. First, I analyze CBNRM in the country as a whole, studying the policies put forth by the national government and unpacking what these mean for the country, how they are implemented, and how these interact with the international community. Second, at the community level my research focuses on conservancies in the Kunene region. The Kunene region is home to 35 conservancies – the most of any of Namibia’s 13 political regions – as well as many of the oldest conservancies and lodges as well as some of the newest.²⁶² The region

²⁶¹ Coldrey and Turpie.

²⁶² Brian T. B. Jones, “Policy Lessons from the Evolution of a Community-Based Approach to Wildlife Management, Kunene Region, Namibia,” *Journal of International Development* 11, no. 2 (1999): 295–304.

is rich in wildlife and also has one of the more diverse geographies and environments of the country. There is also useful existing research on CBNRM in Kunene, which allowed me to develop thicker analyses by building on prior work.²⁶³ While I could have chosen a region that has been studied less in an effort to maximize originality, I see the work that has already been done as useful and unnecessary to duplicate. The existing work on the Kunene region forms the framework from which I begin to put together the pieces of CBNRM as a GGPA to better understand how climate change has impacted the programs and how actors are evolving in response to these constraints.

A note to add on climate change, is that it did not factor into my initial proposal or dissertation/research plan which was more centered around the politics and power relations involved in CBNRM. However, once the fieldwork began virtually every interview quickly led to discussions of climate change and the drought that was being experienced without me asking questions about it. This was a situation that continued throughout the data collection and something I distinctly witnessed throughout my experiences on the ground. As a result, the research itself pointed me to the centrality of climate change and the many ways in which actors were at work contributing to evolutions of the program in response to the increasing challenges brought on by the changing environment. This also demonstrates one of the ways in which the GGPA is an effective approach as the flattened ontological approach led me to what awaited in the field rather than finding what I expected there to be.

²⁶³ Jones, “The Evolution of a Community-Based Approach to Wildlife Management at Kunene, Namibia.”; Bollig, “Towards an Arid Eden?”

Assembling Methods of Observation

Methods of observation included semi-structured key informant and elite interviews, focus groups, participant observation, and multi-level policy and documentary analysis. In addition, I examined secondary sources as well as grey literature including data on finances, wildlife, and governance from conservancies, policy documents, and conservancy reports. Combining these methodological approaches is effective as focus groups risk having certain voices heard above others yet allow for the observation of a number of voices coming together to formulate a consensus, or to demonstrate disagreement.²⁶⁴ Participant observation enabled me to study various groups interacting and the types of power that can be exhibited with as little of my interaction as possible.²⁶⁵ However, neither of these approaches provided the richness and depth of discussion as semi-structured interviews.²⁶⁶ As a result, each of these approaches has several strengths as well as certain limitations. Layering each together allowed me to triangulate a wider breadth of data to draw more substantive conclusions than would be possible with a narrower approach.

My fieldwork yielded 75 semi-structured formal or informal interviews²⁶⁷, four informal focus group discussions, as well as several opportunities for participant observation in a range of diverse settings. I spoke with government officials ranging from local level officers to the Minister of Environment and Tourism, staff from a variety of domestic and international NGOs, academics, consultants, tourism companies, tourism company employees and managers, farmers, mine workers, rural villagers with diverse livelihoods, as well as conservancy staff, elected officials, game guards, and police. In order to obtain a high number of carefully selected participants for

²⁶⁴ Jenny Kitzinger, “The Methodology of Focus Groups: The Importance of Interaction between Research Participants,” *Sociology of Health & Illness* 16, no. 1 (1994): 103–21.

²⁶⁵ Susan Kang, “What the Documents Can’t Tell You: Participant Observation in International Relations,” *PS: Political Science & Politics* 50, no. 1 (January 2017): 121–25.

²⁶⁶ Nicholas Clifford et al., *Key Methods in Geography* (SAGE, 2016).

²⁶⁷ A full list of interviews can be found in Appendix A.

interviews I used a snowball approach that built on my initial more formal process of recruitment.²⁶⁸ These formal means began prior to travelling to Namibia and included emailing and calling a number of relevant contacts produced from the websites of government ministries, post-secondary institutions, NGOs, and tourism enterprises. One of the most useful of these websites was the Namibian Association of CBNRM Support Organizations (NACSO) which is an umbrella organization that facilitates coordination between the network of NGOs and other actors that contribute to CBNRM in Namibia. The NACSO website has a list of all its major partners which are key actors for CBNRM in Namibia, and this provided me with a useful base of contacts that I developed in the months leading up to departure.²⁶⁹

Often these formal avenues helped secure interviews with high-level government and NGO officials which were especially useful in gaining insight into decision making, policy formulation, and broad overviews of the program. They also provided valuable insight about the influence of international actors as well as major challenges and benefits these partnerships provide to the program. These more formally procured participants were also pivotal in ‘getting the snowball rolling’ as these respondents often provided me with a list of contacts or further avenues to pursue. From there, I was able to continue to successfully find carefully selected contacts. This avenue led me down a path which could yield a biased sample – those who already support CBNRM and have a stake in its perceived success. To mitigate such biases, I balanced suggested interviews with contacts made on my own through a variety of methods, including cold calling people over the phone, emailing, as well as knocking on doors and meeting people in the streets and villages. In engaging with respondents that had been suggested to me I also asked questions and analyzed the

²⁶⁸ Julian Kirchherr and Katrina Charles, “Enhancing the Sample Diversity of Snowball Samples: Recommendations from a Research Project on Anti-Dam Movements in Southeast Asia,” *PLOS ONE* 13, no. 8 (August 22, 2018): e0201710.

²⁶⁹ NACSO, “Members,” NACSO, 2015.

responses understanding that they are inserted in a particular way into the politics of CBNRM and would be responding as such.²⁷⁰

The interlocutors contacted through formal methods offered rich and knowledgeable insight into the details of the program and form an important base of my research. However, those I interviewed as a result of snowballing provided a more granular level of detail than the high-level interviews – the kind which is much more difficult, or in many cases impossible, to find online or in existing literature. Beyond this, employing the snowball method proved a critical part of my data collection as it demonstrated the social and political makeup of CBNRM in Namibia. This provided invaluable experience to analyze various dynamics in order to see how these actors engage in decision making, resolve differences, cooperate, and in many cases gain firsthand insight into how they feel about one another in less formal settings. These relationships are understudied and are often presented as working more or less in harmony toward congruent goals of conservation and sustainable development by some.²⁷¹ While the goals of these actors are often analogous, there remain important political dynamics and power struggles that have meaningful effects on outcomes. Mapping these diverse actors through both formal and informal processes at a number of distinct levels provided key insight into the politics of CBNRM beyond simply a policy for domestic conservation. While the list of interviews which can be found in Annex I might leave some wondering how ‘global’ this GGPA in fact is, as many of those interviewed might seem more ‘local’, assemblage thinking does away with this type of strict differentiation and place becomes less important for understanding various types of actors. An assemblage approach does away with the levels of analysis and hierarchical understandings of the global on top of the national

²⁷⁰ Kirchherr and Charles, “Enhancing the Sample Diversity of Snowball Samples.”

²⁷¹ Brian Child, “Origins and Efficacy of Modern Community Based Natural Resources Management (CBNRM) Practices in the Southern African Region,” *Snively*, 2003; Snively, “Environmental Laws of Namibia.”

which is on top of the local and which generally understands the UN and World Bank as being key global actors, while an NGO operating in Namibia's Kunene region as a local actor. However, place becomes less important than connections with the assemblage and as a result my ontological approach sees even local seeming actors as inherently global in the way they are connected to broader power relations and actors around the globe. As a result, I allowed the research to lead me down a path that was not pre-determined and I did not go search for specific actors whether they be 'global' or 'local'.

The research strategy employed led me to a number of interconnected sites which allowed me to draw useful data. This began in the capital, Windhoek, where many government offices and NGO headquarters are located. One of the most informative of these informal connections was an invitation I received to a full day workshop with the NACSO members as well as a number of other affiliates and stakeholders. This workshop supplied a wealth of information as well as a useful opportunity to analyze some of the high-level politics and deliberation that goes on between key decision-making actors in CBNRM.

Following this stage of the research, heading to the Kunene region there were many people, places, and projects I was suggested to visit which led me to the ten key conservancies studied in this dissertation: Tsiseb, Sorris Sorris, Doro !nawas, Uisbasen/Twyfelfontein, Torra, Palmwag, Sesfontein, Anabeb, Purros, and #Khoadi- //Hoas. Spreading the research across ten conservancies inevitably constituted a trade off between depth vis a vis breadth of knowledge, and this was a decision I consciously made in order to study potential variations within the region. Each conservancy supplied an interesting and important piece of the puzzle unpacking CBNRM and the complex politics of the GGPA. It also continuously demonstrated the global involvement at the local level that is often difficult to ascertain from the literature alone. Here the snowballing

technique led to the unveiling of a new solar plant at the Sorris Sorris Lodge in Sorris Sorris Conservancy which proved to be perhaps the single most useful snapshot of the GGPA. This was a large and elegant affair with a number of officials from multiple levels of government including the Minister of Environment and Tourism. There were also traditional authorities, elected conservancy leaders, NGOs, and representatives from key international organizations which had partnered with the conservancy to make the solar plant possible.

The solar plant unveiling included a full day of presentations, speeches, meetings, discussions, meals, and performances from local children's choirs, as well as a large red ribbon cutting – all of which elucidated the importance with which this major development was viewed. At this event I was introduced to the manager of one of the nearby conservancies I had planned to travel to soon after and she informed me that I would be there during the annual audit of their conservancy which I was welcome to observe. This again proved to be a rich source of data as I not only camped with the auditing team that travels to conservancies to perform audits which allowed me to interview a number of its members, but then also spent the next day observing the auditing process. The audit team is composed of members of the government as well as both domestic and international NGO staff in order to ensure reporting is fair and accurate and thus this proved another key piece to my research puzzle.

Having made the connections I did in Windhoek through my initial formal approach, these interview respondents helped me develop key contacts along the way and thus when I would arrive at each conservancy they would be expecting me and proved extremely open and helpful with the research. In some conservancies this consisted of an hour-long conversation with the conservancy manager or chairperson, and in others it was a meeting lasting the better part of a day with several members of the conservancy council, traditional authorities, and local conservancy members.

These were very useful in hearing from a number of voices from diverse backgrounds to provide rich information to begin to effectively triangulate the data in order to draw meaningful conclusions. Following these initial meetings, I would receive blessing from either conservancy leaders or traditional authorities to branch out on my own – or with an interpreter in one community – and begin exploring local communities and villages to approach various people and request interviews. Everyone I approached was open to speaking to me once they found out who I was and what I was there for. This informal snowball technique proved useful for gaining rich insight from a variety of Namibians who were not specifically tied to any organization and resultantly were likely to speak more freely and honestly as they did not stand to benefit or incur punishment as a result of particularly positive or negative outlooks on the program.

In Namibia there are a number of languages and dialects that are predominant in various regions across the country, however, the official language is English and as such, the majority of people have at least some level of English competencies.²⁷² It is possible that those who do not speak English may have been less willing to agree to be respondents, however, I approached a wide variety of people and they were generally open to responding and sufficiently able to converse in English. While this may have excluded certain voices, the relatively large number of respondents would be likely to minimize potential sample biases. English competencies are also continuously improving as CBNRM has developed and as tourism continues to be a growing part of the Namibian economy.²⁷³ Only in Anabeb Conservancy was there a generally lower level of English spoken and as such Godlieb, the conservancy office manager offered his services to join me following the official morning meeting with the conservancy council and traditional authorities

²⁷² Godfrey Mwakikagile, *Namibia: Conquest to Independence: Formation of a Nation*, 1st edition (Dar es Salaam: New Africa Press, 2015).

²⁷³ Mwakikagile.

to act as an interpreter in the community. For this part of the research, I chose who to speak to and each respondent spoke a minimal level of English so they generally had an idea of what I was asking and at times would offer responses in English. Thus, while it is possible that having the conservancy office manager present and acting as an interpreter could have led to certain biases in the reporting of responses, these were generally mitigated and only in one of the ten conservancies I was active in.

With the nature of this research, it is integral to explicitly engage with the fact that there are inherent power differentials built into the research between interviewees and the interviewer. In their most basic form, these consist of me being a white, male researcher from the Global North, with a certain level of post-secondary education as well as a particular socio-economic background. While there is no way to eliminate these imbalances which can lead to biases in research samples and data collection, acknowledging these is a necessary starting point in order to mitigate their impact on the research. Assemblage thinking as methodology serves to assist in this endeavour as it attempts to approach complex phenomenon by looking beyond traditional power structures and hierarchies in order to disaggregate the types of structures that exist in society. While accomplishing this is likely an impossible endeavour, it is necessary for researchers to enter the field knowing they are positioned in a certain way vis a vis their units of analysis and develop approaches to account for this in their actions. This is something I worked to accomplish each day and through each interview, by selecting a diverse pool of interview respondents, and by adhering to the principles of the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans. To further maximize the likelihood of receiving honest answers and mitigating potential biases, I have kept all rural respondents anonymous and informed them I would do so in gaining their consent to participate in the interviews. This option was chosen as interviews were based on

their lived experiences and their specific titles provided no further weight to their interviews in the way a government official or NGO Director would. I also chose this approach to help ensure that they would not fear backlash from the community or government for speaking ill about the programs or leadership. Alternatively, I did not want them to feel incentivized to speak particularly positive about the program in hopes of being rewarded should this news get back to someone in a leadership position.

In order to analyze the data collected I employed both historical and discourse analysis as a method for unpacking various actors' understandings of CBNRM within their specific sociopolitical and institutional contexts. This method of data analysis is effective for understanding data that stems from interviews as it excavates ways in which interview respondents rely on a specific framing of the issue at hand as well as the complex and multiple social outcomes of that framing. Therefore, I examined explicit and implicit patterns and regularities that emerged from their understandings as well as how various functions of CBNRM are practiced across the research sites. Thus, I closely analyzed responses to see where various actors seemed to share similar talking points, where they agreed, where and in what ways they disagreed, as well as ways in which their interpretations might be conflictual at times, even when overtly they display relations of cooperation and harmony. In order to triangulate data, I balanced grey and secondary literature, with interviews, and personal experiences/participant observation. My own experience of driving through dry riverbeds, or seeing many riverbeds dry throughout my fieldwork is of course not sufficient evidence in itself, therefore this was triangulated with adding in discussion of the fact that I was there throughout the rainy season and that the many people I spoke with said the rivers had been dry for years. With the interviews leveraged I wanted both to indicate the experience and perceptions of the people in the conservancies, as well as to analyse the manner in which CBNRM

adapted to climate change. In other words, there is triangulation of evidence when I seek to establish who influences the policy, but also an attempt to account for how the program is perceived and experienced by the target population.

Finally for this chapter, a note on the limitations of assemblage thinking specifically with respect to generalizability. As discussed, Namibia is the driest country in sub-Saharan Africa, and it is one of the countries being hardest hit by climate change. While we know that climate change does not impact all countries and regions the same or even in the same ways, we do know that the entire world is already experiencing impacts of climate change, and that these will only be exacerbated in the years to come. Furthermore, as CBNRM is a form of resource governance that relies specifically on healthy and functioning ecosystems and natural resources, a changing climate will impact CBNRM activities and its viability everywhere. While we cannot say precisely how the rest of southern Africa will be impacted by climate change in comparison to Namibia, research has clearly demonstrated the rest of the region will similarly be impacted by rising temperatures, along with ever-decreasing precipitation and increasingly erratic rainfall patterns.²⁷⁴ Meaning, to some degree or another the rest of southern Africa will face similar worsening environmental and ecological challenges, and thus, so will their CBNRM programs, as well as other sustainable development initiatives that rely on healthy and functioning ecosystems – which is basically all of them. This is demonstrated by research from Pierre van Rensburg and Cecilia Tortajada who illustrate that

like in other parts of the world, there is a substantial increase in concurrent droughts and heat waves in Southern Africa. The 2015-2016 flash drought (droughts with a rapid onset

²⁷⁴ NASA Earth Observatory, “Drought Threatens Millions in Southern Africa,” Text.Article (NASA Earth Observatory, December 16, 2019).

and short duration but with high intensity and devastating impacts) that affected the region was characterized by severe heat waves and soil moisture deficit, the highest since 1948. Flash droughts have increased by 220% from 1961 to 2016, and they are likely to further increase in the future.²⁷⁵

The NASA Earth Observatory considered this event to have been unprecedented as the combination of decreased and delayed precipitation as well as increasingly rising temperatures threatened the food security, fresh water supply, and energy needs of millions of people.²⁷⁶ For the city of Cape Town the drought amounted to what was considered a once in 590 year event based on historical rainfall records. The impact of this event on people and local and national economies was severe and exacerbated by a failure to adequately plan for and manage such an event.²⁷⁷ As a result, if we can understand these challenges in one region, as well as their impacts and ways in which they are both successfully and less successfully overcome, we can learn from this and generalize across other countries and programs.

That being said, with an assemblage approach being empirically informed, generalizations, as laid out above, are possible, but specificity remains an issue as each really seeks to dig into the depth and breadth of the specificity of any context which is itself always changing and will always be different than any other. The ontology of the GGPA suggests that CBNRM policy in Namibia might contain certain components that are arranged in particular ways and operate with positive impacts in that context, does not mean these components will have the same positive or negative effects in Botswana or Zimbabwe. This is because when the components are assembled in a new

²⁷⁵ Pierre van Rensburg and Cecilia Tortajada, “An Assessment of the 2015–2017 Drought in Windhoek,” *Frontiers in Climate* 3 (2021): 1.

²⁷⁶ NASA Earth Observatory, “Drought Threatens Millions in Southern Africa.”

²⁷⁷ City of Cape Town, “Our Shared Water Future. Cape Town’s Water Strategy.” 2019.

context, the components themselves will be controlled by numerous context-dependent factors or conditions of possibility which will render the components place specific and result in new relations being established and maintained between these components and existing components in the new environment. This study and the implications for its generalizability are for several reasons limited to southern Africa specifically. Within southern Africa, there are indeed a number of forms of CBNRM, however, the vast majority of CBNRM programs across the continent consist of some form of wildlife conservation for the purposes of trophy hunting or ecotourism, similar to what is described in this dissertation. Of course, there is variability, and this study will mean less to a CBNRM program in Tanzania based on community fisheries for example, but these programs are much more rare, and as such my project aims to understand the predominant form of CBNRM and to build generalizability for the region for that specific approach. Nonetheless there are clear limitations built into this approach as it depends crucially on how societies are organized, as well as the various actors involved and the nature of the state. The GGPA approach is developed to theorize from the ground up and thus while I do so with an eye to generalizability, over-generalizing undermines the notion of a flattened ontology and returns to assuming what actors are involved and how power relations operate between them. Thus, each case can build from mine however each would require its own nuance and some degree of empirical findings of its own.

Chapter 4

The Genesis of CBNRM as GGPA in Namibia

*It is both futile and an insult to the poor to tell them that they must remain in poverty to protect the environment.*²⁷⁸

This chapter discusses the genesis of CBNRM and the Namibian history that led to the policy as well as how this history impacts ongoing resource governance in the country. Understanding this history is key in analyzing the formation of Namibia's green global policy assemblage which enables CBNRM and enacts its evolution over time. Part of this history begins with the need to briefly explore Namibia's colonial occupation and subsequent oppression under South Africa's Apartheid regime. Together these governance structures exploited Namibia and its people for over a century which created harmful and lasting power imbalances that remain meaningful and evident today. Independence was won only in 1990 after a protracted and violent struggle which set the stage for a new approach to land management and conservation in the country. However, conservation efforts and the shift to community-based management were also underway prior to independence. All of this is integral to understanding how the policy emerged as well as the GGPA which contributed to the development of CBNRM and its ongoing evolution today.

The policy framework for CBNRM in Namibia was laid out with the 1996 Nature Conservation Amendment Act. This legislation enables communities to form governance entities known as conservancies, to which the central government would then devolve control over natural resources in order for them to be managed sustainably at the local level. This chapter discusses the

²⁷⁸ World Commission on Environment and Development, *Our Common Future* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1987).

formation of Namibia's GGPA by outlining the CBNRM policy formulation and the shifting assemblage that it has consisted of over time. It is important to analyze the assemblage of actors who contributed to both the development and implementation of the policy in order to further unpack the politics of this form of resource governance in the subsequent chapters. Understanding the political maneuvering that led to the development of CBNRM is key to analyzing the evolution of the policy assemblage in response to climate change.

From Colonial Occupation to Apartheid Rule

The purpose of this section is not to offer a comprehensive political history of Namibia, but instead to provide the necessary historical background for understanding key issues related to CBNRM. Namibia has a colonial history that has had an ongoing impact on present day politics. The same can be said for many countries in sub-Saharan Africa but for Namibia, its recent independence – gained only in 1990 – presented it with a particular set of opportunities as well as significant and ongoing challenges.²⁷⁹ In order to understand CBNRM or any other recent political developments in the country it is essential to understand this history. The territory currently known as Namibia – like the rest of the African continent – has a long and rich history that pre-dates the colonial era and stretches back well before Europeans first began activities in the region. Although this history is important and should not be ignored, for the purposes of this study it is far too extensive to address at length. Suffice it to say that what we now call Namibia and Namibians have their own rich and diverse history that existed prior to colonial occupation.

²⁷⁹ Snively, "Environmental Laws of Namibia."

Beginning in 1884 following the Berlin Conference which kicked off the ‘Scramble for Africa’, German forces occupied what became German South West Africa, which I will henceforth refer to as Namibia (although it did not become that until 1990).²⁸⁰ For the next thirty years German colonial forces solidified their presence in the area, building forts, extracting resources, and basing much of their power on the violent enforcement of oppressive colonial force much like across most of the rest of the continent. This included a genocide in the early 20th century in which up to 100,000 Herero, 10,000 Nama, and an unknown number of the San people were slaughtered by German colonial forces.²⁸¹ Beyond the violence employed against human populations, colonial rulers in Namibia also established much of their regime around the control of wildlife.²⁸² Wildlife and land are inextricably linked, and Namibians past and present are similarly connected to both wildlife and the land on which it resides.²⁸³ During the early colonial period, many Namibian societies were still largely nomadic hunter-gatherers and thus their livelihoods depended on access to wildlife populations for food, tools, clothing, and more. Many also depended on wildlife for these purposes on top of relying on various forms of farming – usually in the form of pastoralism and the raising of livestock on open communal land.²⁸⁴ Thus, limiting access to wildlife or land was one of the most direct ways for colonial authorities to exercise their will over African populations by undermining their power and means for sustenance.

Namibia’s colonial legacy is important for underlining the degree to which colonial authorities attempted to subjugate African states in order to benefit from them and their natural

²⁸⁰ Muriel Evelyn Chamberlain, *The Scramble for Africa*, 3rd ed., Seminar Studies (Oxfordshire, England: Routledge, 2009).

²⁸¹ Mwakikagile, *Namibia*.

²⁸² Schnegg and Kiaka, “Subsidized Elephants.”

²⁸³ Interview, Uatirohange Tjiuoro, Ministry of Environment and Tourism: Directorate of National Parks and Wildlife, January 20, 2020.

²⁸⁴ Interview, Eric Xaneb, Chairman, Tsiseb Conservancy, January 27, 2020

resources. This process was demonstrated following Germany's losses in World War I, as the League of Nations commissioned the Union of South Africa to administer the territory under a Class C Mandate.²⁸⁵ For Namibia, this amounted to an arbitrary shift in political control that began a new colonial period which would last another forty years until the Union of South Africa collapsed toward the end of the 1950s. This then led to the formation of the Republic of South Africa which soon after began to establish its Apartheid rule.

Under the C mandate of the League of Nations, which entrusted South Africa with the administration of South West Africa/Namibia on behalf of the British crown South Africa was allowed to extend its judicial system of South West Africa/Namibia, which it did until Namibia's independence. Inexorably, the extension of South Africa's legal system to Namibia was co-extensive with the introduction of apartheid laws and policies in Namibia in 1948.²⁸⁶

This was a period marked by brutal, racist, and oppressive laws and systems of governing. Apartheid and its legacy had nothing but extremely detrimental effects on Namibia and its people and these effects continue to be vividly evident today.²⁸⁷ The impacts of this oppressive regime similarly have meaningful effects on how wildlife is managed, land is distributed, and the political economy of conservation plays out in the country. The 1996 Nature Conservation Amendment Act was drafted

To amend the Nature Conservation Ordinance, 1975, so as to provide for an economically based system of sustainable management and utilisation of game in communal areas; to

²⁸⁵ Schnegg and Kiaka, "Subsidized Elephants."

²⁸⁶ Mwakikagile, *Namibia*, 88.

²⁸⁷ Brian Jones, "The Evolution of Namibia's Communal Conservancies," in *Community Rights, Conservation and Contested Land* (Routledge, 2010), 119–33.

delete references to representative authorities and to provide for matters incidental thereto.²⁸⁸

The 1975 Nature Ordinance had been the previously established colonial environmental legislation that had been oppressive, ineffective, and racist.²⁸⁹ This is demonstrated as, at independence

Privately owned freehold land, amounting to 48 per cent of the territory, remained in the hands of less than 5,000 mainly white farmers, while over 70 per cent of the population remained directly or indirectly dependent upon the 35 per cent of available communal land (the remaining 17 per cent is state-owned and largely nature reserves).²⁹⁰

This left black populations with small and unproductive territories for communal farming, ensuring they were kept in a situation of poverty and void of power.²⁹¹

Apartheid was more than anything about power, and in many ways, Apartheid rulers sought to empower themselves by undermining the relative power of those they controlled rather than by actually strengthening their own means.²⁹² This unfolded by continuing the colonial legacy that deprived basic rights and legal protections of black and coloured people, including rights to land and wildlife. However, these efforts also went further to actively restrict any ability to benefit from local natural resources which limited the capacity of local populations to develop effective livelihoods. Furthermore, the Apartheid regime ensured that those they wished to disempower

²⁸⁸ MET, “Nature Conservation Amendment Act,” 1996, 2.

²⁸⁹ Richardson, “Wildlife Utilization and Biodiversity Conservation in Namibia.”

²⁹⁰ Henning Melber, “Colonialism, Land, Ethnicity, and Class: Namibia after the Second National Land Conference,” *Africa Spectrum* 54, no. 1 (April 1, 2019): 73–86.

²⁹¹ Brown and Bird, “Sustainable Natural Resource Management in Namibia.”

²⁹² Frederick Cooper, *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).

remained undereducated, undernourished, and underdeveloped – thereby limiting their abilities to effectively exercise any form of power and these effects continue to be felt today.²⁹³

Over time the international community came to view South Africa's Apartheid system for the racist and oppressive regime that it was and eventually came to condemn it. The UN ceased to recognize Namibia as a mandate of South Africa, but this was not enough to free Namibia from the grasps of Apartheid Rule. By 1968 the UN and the Organization for African Unity (OAU) formally announced that Southwest Africa would henceforth be known as Namibia, but it would only be after a long and bloody war that Namibia would finally win its freedom.²⁹⁴

From the beginning of colonial occupation and through to the present day, conservation and particularly wildlife have been intimately enmeshed in Namibian politics. To accomplish their goals, first German colonial authorities and subsequently the Apartheid system, enacted oppressive and draconian environmental regulations to harness conservation and extract natural resources to increase their power and wealth. The history of conservation in the country is complex. While often laws and decrees that were enacted in the name of conservation served to oppress and exclude local populations, they also in some cases served important conservation functions. Though despite including important conservation goals, they were nothing but harmful and oppressive to local human populations. While colonial regimes ultimately had detrimental impacts on wildlife populations, their creation of national parks also served as sanctuaries for many species to be protected.²⁹⁵ One of the clearest examples of this is Etosha Park in northern Namibia which is Namibia's crown jewel in conservation. Etosha was first established in 1907 as an official game

²⁹³ Boudreaux, "A New Call of the Wild."

²⁹⁴ Mwakikagile, *Namibia*.

²⁹⁵ Interview, Willie Boonzaaier, Programme Director, Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation, January 24, 2020.

reserve by German colonial authority Dr. F von Lindqvist who felt it was necessary to protect the area's charismatic megafauna – though certainly his and similar colonial motives were far from altruistic.²⁹⁶ Today covering approximately thirteen per cent of terrestrial Namibia (ranking ninth in the world among land protected through parks), national park politics remain contentious, and these parks serve largely to attract foreign tourists who travel to experience Namibia's wildlife populations firsthand.²⁹⁷ Local residents however, were also initially moved from the land designated for parks and continue to be largely kept from the land and from benefitting from its resources – including wildlife populations. This is one way colonial sovereign power has continued through the Namibia state which has maintained these fortress approaches to conservation in a coercive fashion. As discussed however, increasingly during this time power was becoming dispersed and did not always reside within the state or at the centre. As Foucault writes, where there is power, there is always opposition,²⁹⁸ and this opposition to the exclusion of land and natural resources is precisely one of the issues that arose beginning in the 1980s and which translated into the CBNRM program following independence in the 1990s which the next section will outline.

New Opportunities for Local and Global Sustainable Development

During the 1980s the Communal Areas Management Program for Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE) was developed in Zimbabwe and was eventually followed by similar programs in Zambia, Botswana, and Tanzania. From these, Namibia began to borrow parts of policies and work

²⁹⁶ "Etosha History," Etosha National Park, accessed February 29, 2020.

²⁹⁷ Luregn Lenggenhager, *Ruling Nature, Controlling People: Nature Conservation, Development and War in North-Eastern Namibia since the 1920s* (African Books Collective, 2018).

²⁹⁸ Michel Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1977-78* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire : Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).

with actors in formulating similar policy plans of its own.²⁹⁹ This process in-part demonstrates the transnational nature of these projects. While each CBNRM program is unique to each country and set out by state legislation, the policies emerged through the actions and conversations of a multitude of actors spanning these countries. CBNRM as a specific type of approach that sought to link local populations with natural resources to have them co-exist was also similar to the Parks and People programs and Transfrontier Conservation Areas. These and other similar types of conservation approaches all share similarities in governing wildlife as wildlife populations migrate, but people must observe borders which means that even CBNRM like the other approaches mentioned above are inherently regional policy issues which is one of the integral points in suggesting CBNRM must be analyzed as a global policy assemblage rather than a domestic policy tool for conservation.

The 1980s, which saw a rise in these transnational approaches to conservation, were also marked in Namibia by the violent struggles for independence and this meant the proliferation of armed groups stationed throughout the country.³⁰⁰ Often wildlife were innocent casualties of war, their habitat was wiped out from fighting, they were hunted to feed troops, or were simply slaughtered to prevent Namibians from feeding themselves and their fighting forces. Moreover, poaching was a growing issue as wildlife were illegally hunted for their parts to be sold on the black market.³⁰¹ There was also a severe and protracted drought through the first half of the 1980s.³⁰² These combined forces led to a steep decline of wildlife populations that had already been

²⁹⁹ Berkes, Kofinas, and Chapin, "Conservation, Community, and Livelihoods"; Fabricius and Collins, "Community-Based Natural Resource Management"; Leach, Mearns, and Scoones, "Environmental Entitlements."

³⁰⁰ Interview, Pohamba Shifeta, Minister of Environment and Tourism, January 29 2020.

³⁰¹ Interview, Uatirohange Tjiuro, Ministry of Environment and Tourism: Directorate of National Parks and Wildlife, January 20, 2020.

³⁰² Karine Nuulimba and Julie J. Taylor, "25 Years of CBNRM in Namibia: A Retrospective on Accomplishments, Contestation and Contemporary Challenges," *Journal of Namibian Studies : History Politics Culture* 18 (December 16, 2015): 89–110.

facing immense pressures since the beginning of the colonial period and the explosion of demand for animal products in Europe and Asia. It becomes important to break down the long policy development process to understand who the actors were within the region. There were various conservation activists, nascent NGOs, local governance structures headed by traditional authorities, as well as communities across the country who were noticing a drastic drop in wildlife populations.

In response, various actors began working independently to set up community-based conservation programs throughout Namibia. As these actions materialized from various places and actors with different goals and priorities there is no clear consensus on what the initial impetus was for the CBNRM program. This also demonstrates ways in which we see power being exercised through a variety of practices which together can be said to form the state, rather than the state acting in a quasi top-down fashion that contains society. These practices are key to understand in analyzing CBNRM as a policy assemblage emerging from the independent actions of a numbers of actors, rather than as a policy decree from the state. Some interview respondents – especially those with purely conservation backgrounds and foci – suggest that CBNRM came about as a direct response to declining wildlife populations in the 1980s and for the inherent need to protect these.³⁰³ Several interviewees however, dispute this as they indicate they did not see the value in wildlife beyond the ability to put meat on the table to feed their families. They saw wildlife as a resource that they could benefit from economically, but only if they were managed sustainably. As a result, they began to realize conservation was important for economic purposes.³⁰⁴ Others,

³⁰³ Interview, Michael Knight, Transboundary Leader for KAZA, WWF, January 23, 2020; Richard Diggle, Business/CBNRM Specialist, WWF, January 24, 2020; Dr. Margaret Jacobson, co-founder IRDNC, co-director, trustee, mentor, Conservancy Safaris Namibia, Swakopmund, February 17, 2020.

³⁰⁴ Interview, Joglinde, Manager, Uisbasen/Twyfelfontein Conservancy, January 30, 2020; Emil, Manager, Torra Conservancy, February 2, 2020.

such as government officials, international organizations, and NGOs that focus on issues of governance suggest that CBNRM policy emerged as a way to empower local communities and to provide them with the legislative tools necessary in order to develop local democratic institutional and governance capacity.³⁰⁵ This camp views wildlife and natural resources as the catalyst for CBNRM but sees the development of organizational capacity as the main impetus for the program which could grow beyond wildlife and resource management into the future. Ultimately, these various impetuses pointed to became the three pillars of CBNRM and are largely understood as its three main goals.³⁰⁶ It is this set of heterogeneous actors and their social interactions that led to the formation of a global assemblage that would begin to implement community-based conservation activities which continue today – albeit in a much different and ever-evolving form. The key takeaway here is that the actions of a diverse set of actors were underway working toward largely congruous goals prior to independence and CBNRM legislation.

What can be referred to as the earliest example of CBNRM projects – though they were not yet called this – began in the 1980s in the Zambezi region in the far Northeast of Namibia. These activities were the brainchild of Garth Owen-Smith, a local academic, activist, and environmentalist who was eventually awarded the Global Environmental Prize for his efforts in 1993 jointly with Dr. Margaret Jacobson.³⁰⁷ Owen-Smith sought a way to utilize the conservation of wildlife in order to benefit local populations and remedy some of the ongoing issues of inequality, oppression, and underdevelopment facing black Namibians. Dr. Jacobson joined him

³⁰⁵ Interview, Uatirohange Tjiuoro, Ministry of Environment and Tourism: Directorate of National Parks and Wildlife, January 20, 2020.

³⁰⁶ Heffernan, “Development, Conservation, Empowerment: The Trilemma of Community-Based Natural Resource Management in Namibia.”

³⁰⁷ Interview, Dr. Ekkehard Klingelhoef, Head of Department – Wildlife Management and Ecotourism, University of Namibia, January 13, 2020; Interview, Michael Knight, Transboundary Leader for KAZA, WWF, January 23, 2020; Interview, Willie Boonzaaier, Programme Director, Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation, January 24, 2020; Interview, Brian Jones, Environment and Development Consultant (Helped draft 1996 Nature Conservation Act), Windhoek, February 20, 2020.

in his endeavours, and they ultimately formed Integrated Rural Development Nature Conservation (IRDNC) – one of Namibia’s first conservation NGOs which, today with a team of sixty employees³⁰⁸ continues to be pointed to as one of its most active, successful, and powerful actors in sustainable development in the country.³⁰⁹ As IRDNC began to experience some successes helping communities to manage wildlife and habitat more sustainably with the backing of the power of international capital from a proliferating assemblage of donors, the notion of community-based conservation began slowly gaining traction and others began joining the movement and developing further organizations to work on similar initiatives around the country. IRDNC began to be a central actor with legitimacy afforded to it by its position as an inroad for the international community at the local level into Namibian communities. For their part, many communities welcomed the resources becoming available to them and began working to benefit however they could from proliferating conservation efforts in the country.³¹⁰ While power imbalances that had been exacerbated by the colonial era as laid out above limited the ability of local communities to achieve certain ends, they also were being afforded increased power based on them as perceived protectors of their local wildlife populations seen as a global good. As the importance of wildlife and the global environmental movement more broadly gain traction, so too did the ability of local African populations to leverage global capital to realize sustainable development goals in their communities.

³⁰⁸ “Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation - Our Team,” accessed November 22, 2021.

³⁰⁹ Interview, Maxi Pia Louis, Director, Namibia Association of CBNRM Support Organizations, January 14, 2020; Interview, John Hazam, Senior Technical Advisor: Namibia Nature Foundation, January 23, 2020; Interview, Manager, Palmwag Lodge, February 5 2020.

³¹⁰ Interview, Uisa, Manager, Sesfontein Conservancy, February 6, 2020; Joglinde Touros, Manager, Uisbasen/Twyfelfontein Conservancy, January 30, 2020; Emil Roman, Manager, Torra Conservancy, February 2, 2020.

Namibia gained its independence only in 1990 after a protracted and violent fight for freedom. For the country this meant a chance at a new beginning and a new constitutional backing from which to attempt to correct the indecencies of the colonial and apartheid legacies. Independence presented development actors and the people of Namibia with a real opportunity as they would write a new constitution that could provide a legal framework from which to achieve the goals of sustainable development and community empowerment through wildlife conservation. As discussed in the previous section, prior to independence land in Namibia was extremely unfairly distributed along with the resources on that land and laws largely favoured white commercial farmers.³¹¹

With these injustices in mind, and partly thanks to the many lessons of history, Namibia's constitution became recognized as one of the most progressive in the world specifically for its legal requirements for environmental conservation tied to each of its major components.³¹² The constitution has sections throughout outlining the need for environmental conservation which laid the legal foundation for the 1996 Nature Conservation Amendment Act that would be the formal legislation drafted to enable the CBNRM program.³¹³ This legislation was written by the newly elected Southwest Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) government, but rather than being formulated entirely by the state bureaucracy the government did so in consultation with civil society, NGOs, a small army of consultants, and with input from international institutions and foreign governments.³¹⁴ While a variety of actors contributed to the process, multiple scholars point to USAID as being a key player, both providing the financing required for the process as well as a

³¹¹ Richardson, "Wildlife Utilization and Biodiversity Conservation in Namibia."

³¹² Snively, "Environmental Laws of Namibia."

³¹³ Hoole, "Place-Power-Prognosis."

³¹⁴ Mannetti et al., "Identifying and Categorizing Stakeholders for Protected Area Expansion around a National Park in Namibia."

great deal in the way of technical and legal input on the development of this legislation.³¹⁵ USAID worked with the Namibian Government, as well as consultants and some of the NGOs which had already emerged on the ground such as IRDNC, in order to consult with communities to determine what form the law should take and how this reallocation of land and resources ought to be operationalized as well as how the restructuring of power should materialize. The new legislation also codified much of what was already in place in practice as there were a number of existing laws concerning conservation. However, existing laws consisted of a patchwork of local regulations which the Conservancy Act codified into a single set of laws that could be uniformly applied across the country to become more effective and more easily enforceable.³¹⁶ This confluence of previously individual actions coalesced into a concerted set of actions which led to this first concrete outcome for the GGPA.



Figure 4: Benefits Flows in Conservancies³¹⁷

³¹⁵ Jones, "Policy Lessons from the Evolution of a Community-Based Approach to Wildlife Management, Kunene Region, Namibia," 1999; Nuulimba and Taylor, "25 Years of CBNRM in Namibia"; Boudreaux, "A New Call of the Wild."

³¹⁶ Interview, Uatirohange Tjiuoro, Ministry of Environment and Tourism: Directorate of National Parks and Wildlife, January 20, 2020.

³¹⁷ MET/NACSO, "The State of Community Conservation in Namibia: Annual Report 2019: A Review of Communal Conservancies, Community Forests and Other CBNRM Initiatives."

The legislation provided a legal means for communities to voluntarily come together to agree on a delineated territory, group size, constitution, and benefits distribution plan which can be seen above in Figure 4. From there they could be gazetted by the MET to be officially deemed a conservancy. The MET is the main government ministry with direct oversight of CBNRM in Namibia, though it does work closely with a number of other ministries on relevant issue areas. The MET employs over 1,000 staff members across the country, 900 of whom will be out in the field at any given time.³¹⁸ Conservancies were then intended to become sub-state political entities with quasi-sovereign control over wildlife within their boundaries. They were also intended to enable a democratization of resource governance so that local level institutional capacity could emerge to bring more broad-based and equitable benefits than had traditionally been the case.³¹⁹ Tourism had long been an important industry in Namibia; however, it had always been limited to certain areas and benefits remained with the few. CBNRM was intended to make the industry more prolific, while also generating additional benefits and opportunities for those traditionally most marginalized in society such as women, those less well off socioeconomically, under-educated people, or those lacking English proficiency. These are also goals that filtered in from the international community as domestic conservation was increasingly being realized through global partnerships and the ideologies of the international community began to materialize in development initiatives and discipline the actions of communities. One example of this was described by an MET official who said “Namibia didn’t use to care about gender issues but these became big internationally so important donor funds began being tied to gender so CBNRM has

³¹⁸ Interview, Uatirohange Tjiuoro, Ministry of Environment and Tourism: Directorate of National Parks and Wildlife, January 20, 2020.

³¹⁹ Taylor, “Community Based Natural Resource Management in Zimbabwe.”

developed with a strong gender component.”³²⁰ This demonstrates the disciplinary power the international community exercised over the program and local actors through its very genesis, as the provision of resources was either directly or indirectly tied to certain development activities and outcomes. However, in order to accomplish the broader goals of CBNRM a diverse assemblage of actors were empowered which resulted in a confluence of interests beyond rural marginalized Namibia populations.

Above, it was discussed that in some ways the newly formed Namibia state continued to exert sovereign power by maintaining the fortress conservation approaches implemented in the form of national parks. However, as shifts in global environmental governance as discussed in Chapter 2 increasingly called for participation and ownership, the key actors in developing CBNRM legislation in Namibia demonstrated the productive power that could be achieved by offering specific routes through which communities and citizens could become implicated in the responses to their own challenges. This was in contradiction to the previous approaches to governing that so often saw state-led approaches to conservation as well as broader issue-areas. While, as is laid out above, it was an entirely voluntary process by which communities could become gazetted to become formal conservancies, there was increasing pressure as well as incentives for doing so as will be further unpacked in the next section.

Assembling Legislation for Sustainable Development

This section will further analyze the formation of the GGPA as well as the ways in which its constituent parts govern following the drafting of the 1996 legislation. The Nature Conservation

³²⁰ Interview, Uatirohange Tjiuro, Ministry of Environment and Tourism: Directorate of National Parks and Wildlife, January 20, 2020.

Amendment Act formalized the CBNRM program and enabled its proliferation throughout the country. As mentioned, there is disagreement on which of the three pillars CBNRM was initially created to realize depending on what type of actors one asks. This results in a varying degree of emphasis being placed on each goal in various regions of the country based on the individual interpretation of actors within the policy assemblage in individual conservancies. The figure below provides an idea of some of the key NGO partners, the services they provide and the regions in which their operations focus. One of the earliest and most useful ways to outline CBNRM in Namibia as a GGPA is through the actual drafting of the Act. This legislation was drafted by the federal government, as is all national legislation in this democratic state. However, in this case the process was more complex than usual.³²¹ As the legislation was intended to empower communities, the government engaged in broad consultation with civil society in order to understand the needs and desires of rural Namibians.³²²

This consultation was one of the first official examples of the state and its partners seeking to exercise disciplinary power by ‘educating’ communities about the ways in which they ought to be implicated in wildlife conservation in order to realize their own sustainable development. Doing so would see global partners realize their goals of wildlife conservation, while also enabling the state to point to results in order to garner more global standing and the resultant funding, while it was suggested communities would also be the main winners through the ethos of ecotourism. While this notion of consulting rural farmers and villagers is both honourable and necessary for success, one of the issues that continues to arise is a lack of education as well as both inadequate formal and informal training and experience in dealing with financial matters or management of

³²¹ Brian TB Jones, “Policy Lessons from the Evolution of a Community-Based Approach to Wildlife Management, Kunene Region, Namibia,” *Journal of International Development: The Journal of the Development Studies Association* 11, no. 2 (1999): 295–304.

³²² Interview, Pohamba Shifeta, Minister of Environment and Tourism, January 29 2020.

economies beyond the household or village. Thus, as development workers and NGOs spent months and at times years consulting with communities about their needs and how best to develop CBNRM legislation, much of this time was spent discussing the logistics of the shift to CBNRM and the benefits that could be derived.³²³ Rather than the state leveraging its coercive power to enforce conservancies on rural Namibians – which through fortress conservation had demonstrated ongoing failure – the state partnered with NGOs, consultants, private tourism companies, foreign governments, and domestic environmental activities and practitioners to discipline these populations through the promise of sustainable income, development, and power for some. John Hazam explained that for some of the earliest conservancies beginning in 1994, consultation was a two-to-three-year process and in most cases led a virtual consensus within the communities as this was largely how decision making took place – through deliberation and consensus building.³²⁴ Despite consensus building being a key part to decision making in traditional Namibia communities, they also have Traditional Authorities who hold power based on generational lineages and these leaders were often inroads for consultants and NGO staff to work with in order to garner community support.³²⁵ A wealth of research from Kalvelage et al. outlines how the rule of traditional authorities in Namibia can vary as for example,

the traditional authority is always specified in Zambezi [the Northeast of Namibia] whereas in Kunene, the tapestry of traditional authorities is less hierarchical... In Kunene Region, there are approximately 40 to 70 traditional authorities, some of whom compete for influence and territory. Occasionally, there are two or even more competing traditional authorities in a conservancy. This has led to the breakaway conservancies under competing

³²³ Jones, “The Evolution of a Community-Based Approach to Wildlife Management at Kunene, Namibia.”

³²⁴ Interview, John Hazam, Senior Technical Advisor: Namibia Nature Foundation, January 23, 2020.

³²⁵ Nuulimba and Taylor, “25 Years of CBNRM in Namibia.”

chiefs in a few instances. Similar to the pre-independence period, the boundary-making process is closely entangled with the political interest of traditional authorities.³²⁶

Thus, we can see that neither the formation of conservancies nor their ongoing management was apolitical. Traditional authorities collaborated with NGOs in order to develop boundaries and form conservancies and have since continued these partnerships for ongoing capacity development as seen in Figure 5 below. This is seen as a process that not only benefits local communities, but which can also solidify the power and authority of traditional authorities.

³²⁶ Linus Kalvelage et al., “Territorialising Conservation: Community-Based Approaches in Kenya and Namibia,” *Conservation and Society* 19, no. 4 (2021): 285.

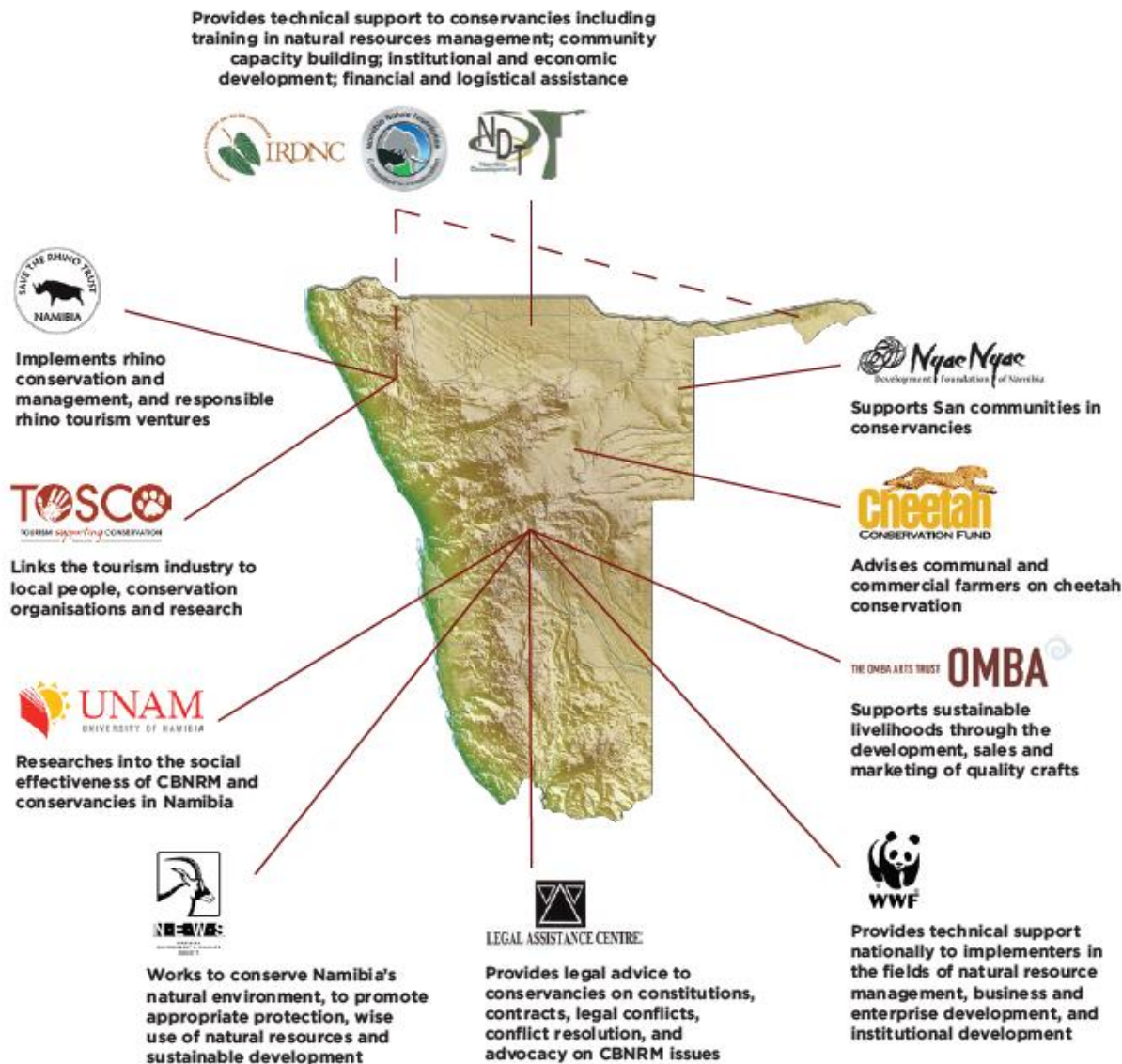


Figure 5: Geographic breakdown of NGO Regions³²⁷

To aid with the technical knowledge required to move from community consensus to gazetted conservancy, a broad array of consultants were engaged to help with the consultations as well as the actual drafting of the legislation.³²⁸ These consultants were hired by the Namibian government but with core funding and input provided from USAID who made an initial ten year

³²⁷ MET/NACSO, "The State of Community Conservation in Namibia: Annual Report 2019: A Review of Communal Conservancies, Community Forests and Other CBNRM Initiatives."

³²⁸ Jones, "The Evolution of Namibia's Communal Conservancies."

investment in the program, the World Bank, the WWF, as well as from a wealth of other NGOs, private donors, and many EU nations.³²⁹ This was a time when the US was in the process of establishing its place as global hegemon, while trying to do so within the ethos of neoliberalism and moving away from direct coercive action. As a result, it leveraged its financial might to employ actors seen generally as neutral, legitimate, and in some senses depoliticized to work with partners on the ground to realize global conservation and development goals while in some ways indirectly furthering western interests and reach. Resources were being funneled to the Global South to realize a variety of development goals including sustainability, conservation, and good governance. Namibia was one of the benefactors as it was seen to be particularly well situated for success as a nascent democracy with a small population and large natural resource wealth. One of the key organizations to emerge from this coalescence of resources and activity was the Namibian Association of CBNRM Support Organizations (NACSO) in 1998. Today NACSO forms an umbrella organization composed of nine full members,³³⁰ seven associate members,³³¹ and five individual members,³³² that are key actors in CBNRM management across Namibia. NACSO is not intended to be a central decision-making body but instead a secretariat for coordination across the many actors involved. NACSO itself, as well as its members, receive their funding from private donors, EU nations (predominantly Germany, Netherlands, Belgium, Sweden, and Norway), USAID, the UK, the UNDP, the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA), and the WWF who is

³²⁹ “Funding Partners,” NACSO, October 11, 2015.

³³⁰ The full list members include: Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF), Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation (IRDNC), Legal Assistance Centre (LAC), Namibia Development Trust (NDT), Namibia Nature Foundation (NNF), Nyae Nyae Development Foundation of Namibia (NNDNF), Omba Arts Trust (OAT), Save the Rhino Trust (SRT), and the University of Namibia’s Multi-disciplinary Research Centre and Consultancy (MRCC-UNAM).

³³¹ Associate members include: Namibian Environment and Wildlife Society (NEWS), Southern Kunene Regional Association (SKRA), Tourism Supporting Conservation (TOSCO), World Wildlife Fund in Namibia (WWF in Namibia), Kavango Regional Conservancy Association (KRCA), Kunene Regional Community Conservancy Association (KCCA), and Otjozondjupa Regional Conservancy Association (ORCA).

³³² Individual members include: Anna Davis, Annie Symonds, Brian Jones, Carol Murphy, and Dhyani Berger

their predominant funder as well as a non-voting member of NACSO.³³³ This is one of the clearest ways we can see global influence taking an increasing foothold in local conservation with this global capital empowering NACSO as a national Namibian body that serves to flatten the previous divide between local and global actors.

This donor aid was initially allocated during a period when the international community was attempting to enact policies that could avoid centralized state action and develop novel approaches that would leverage NGOs to deliver programs. As a result, rather than administering resources through direct channels and bilateral engagements – as would have traditionally been the case – there quickly emerged an entire network of NGOs that carved out their own geographic and issue-area spaces in Namibia.³³⁴ This network of NGOs went to work attempting to realize development through the conservation of natural resources for Namibians and supposedly by Namibians. The NGOs worked with the Namibian government, procured funding internationally, and began to develop relationships with Namibian communities in order to gain legitimacy in the eyes of donors, all levels of government, as well as the communities themselves.

Beyond the technical knowledge and support that was needed to draft the initial legislation as outlined above, communities required ongoing support to get projects up and running. Due to persistent elevated poverty rates, many Namibians, especially in rural areas, did not possess the means to invest the time, energy, and resources in these types of conservation initiatives. High levels of inequality meant the majority of rural communities were struggling for basic subsistence

³³³ Interview, Maxi Pia Louis, Director, Namibia Association of CBNRM Support Organizations, January 14, 2020.

³³⁴ Interview, Dr. Ekkehard Klingelhoef, Head of Department – Wildlife Management and Ecotourism, University of Namibia, January 13, 2020; Interview, Maxi Pia Louis, Director, Namibia Association of CBNRM Support Organizations, January 14, 2020; Interview, Uatirohange Tjiuro, Ministry of Environment and Tourism: Directorate of National Parks and Wildlife, January 20, 2020; Interview, Richard Diggie, Business/CBNRM Specialist, WWF, January 24, 2020; Interview, Brian Jones, Environment and Development Consultant, February 20, 2020.

during this period and could not afford to take time from their farming activities to put into something else and had no spare resources with which to invest in the development of these projects.³³⁵ This lack of resources is one of the key contributors to power imbalances between communities and larger actors such as foreign governments, NGOs, and private companies who could offer resources as a way to demonstrate the benefits that could be gained through new ways of thinking such as wildlife conservation for ecotourism purposes. CBNRM is a system of resource governance that is not as resource intensive as the building of large infrastructure projects for instance. However, it still takes a minimum amount of resources including financial and technical expertise, infrastructure, and equipment to get started. For this reason, the network of NGOs that fanned out across the country partnered with individual conservancies to provide education and assistance to help get conservancies started from the outset. Often this was a long and slow process as many within the community had little understanding of capitalistic modes of production and ordering. Thus, for many, the commoditization of wildlife was unclear and they remained skeptical, as the wildlife had always been seen predominantly as either a source of food or a source of threat.³³⁶ The first task for the NGOs then was to engage with communities and determine what long-term impacts investments in the CBNRM program could have.³³⁷ In some cases, this took years, and in 1998 the first conservancies agreed and began to organize to become formally gazetted.

The consultation process was lengthy and complex. NGOs were working to achieve the goals of the global environmental movement as well as broader sustainable development goals. They were doing so through resources supplied by the international community which in this case

³³⁵ Caroline Ashley et al., “Using Resource Economics for Natural Resource Management: Namibia’s Experience.,” 1997.

³³⁶ Interview, John Hazam, Senior Technical Advisor: Namibia Nature Foundation, January 23, 2020.

³³⁷ Margaret Jacobsohn, *Life Is Like a Kudu Horn: A Memoir* (Jacana Media, 2019).

predominantly meant the West. NGOs began to cultivate relationships with communities in order to work with them to decide how best they could benefit from CBNRM in order to harmonize local and global interests. At first, many within the communities were uninterested as they did not agree with the logic of CBNRM and ecotourism. However, as many of their neighbours grew interested, community leaders emerged that began assisting in spreading the perceived merits of this form of resource governance that was novel to Namibia.³³⁸ In many cases these were local traditional authorities who had been entrusted with power for generations through lineage lines, while in others they were various forms of big men, or community leaders who had developed respect and good standing in communities for a variety of reasons. With the proposal of CBNRM along with economic and community development through conservation, there was also the promise of new political power that could emerge through the development of conservancy councils. With these would come resources including paid jobs, conservancy offices, housing, vehicles, and more. In this way, NGOs with their own conservation aspirations procured funding from the global community with promises to realize their goals of sustainable development, while doing so through communities who themselves worked with one another in order to garner resources to realize these development initiatives. This is the way productive power functions; through bringing subjects on board in order for them to become central to their own governance by responsabilizing their actions through the capillary like processes and practices that together formulate the state and more broadly global environmental governance. Once communities began to engage with this new ethos of wildlife conservation over several years of engagement in most cases, the process required continued partnership from these various groups to realize next steps.³³⁹

³³⁸ Brown and Bird, "Sustainable Natural Resource Management in Namibia."

³³⁹ Ibid.

This lengthy process took ongoing resources and support from NGOs as the legislation outlined that conservancies must have a clear boundary, group size, and formal written constitution. Conservancies became such once officially gazetted by the MET. As it was left up to the people to decide on their own membership and geographic boundaries, they collectively decided who would formulate a conservancy – though this was also impacted to a degree by NGO influence who leveraged their expertise and capital in order to influence outcomes. This is not however to say that they did so inherently in any sort of nefarious sense, as some, and perhaps even most likely had altruistic motives. Instead, it is to begin to analyze the way existing power imbalances can lead to certain interests being realized over others. For conservancies, one could consist of a small community of 200 people, while others might span a larger geographic area and include numerous communities which could total up to a several thousand conservancy members. Once formally gazetted, conservancies would become legal sub-national entities similar to a municipality, however their revenues are raised only through conservancy—predominantly ecotourism—activities. Conservancies could consist of what we might think of as a single village/township, or an amalgamation of several similar such entities. NGOs worked with communities to write a constitution that detailed a resource sharing strategy, plans for AGMs and other meetings to discuss priorities, plans, and news, as well as importantly when and how elections would be held to decide on a conservancy council.³⁴⁰ Due in no small part to the years of Apartheid rule, these were all things community members had very little experience with. Thus, in this early stage we begin to see the way the CBNRM program emerged in a fashion that necessitated partnerships between complex assemblages of actors in order to plan, consult, fund, operationalize, and execute the projects. While the actors involved in developing CBNRM were

³⁴⁰ Interview, Dr. Margaret Jacobson, co-founder IRDNC, co-director, trustee, mentor, Conservancy Safaris Namibia, February 17, 2020

clear that they wanted to empower populations for their own development, it was similarly clear that these same actors saw themselves as integral for the process, and that said process ought to unfold and take shape in particular ways. In this sense, community-based initiatives demonstrate a marked improvement on previously failed cookie-cutter solutions to development, yet also remain constrained by some of the approaches that see outside actors as central to the development puzzle.

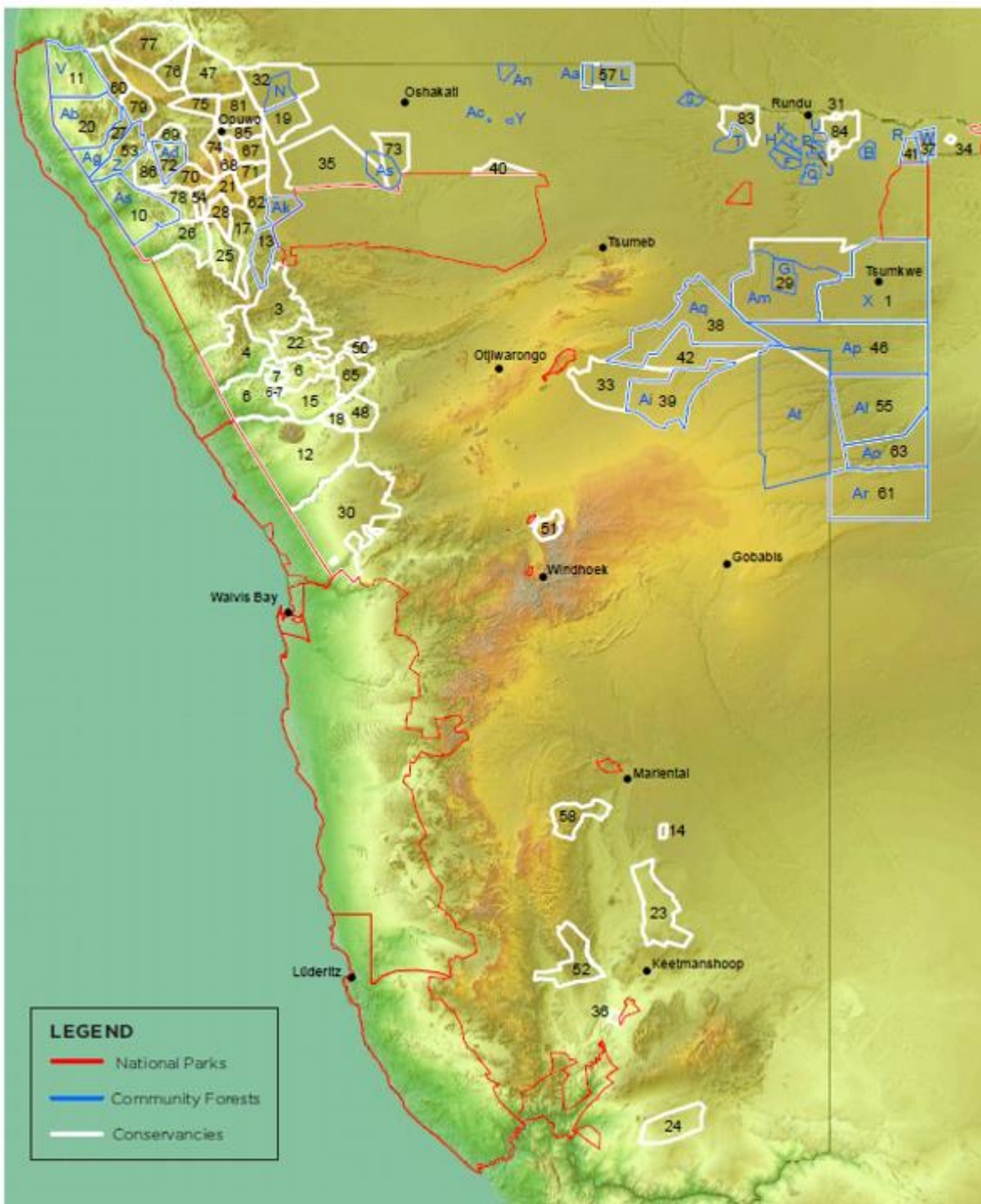




Figure 6: Map of Communal Conservancies³⁴¹

³⁴¹ MET/NACSO, “The State of Community Conservation in Namibia: Annual Report 2019: A Review of Communal Conservancies, Community Forests and Other CBNRM Initiatives.”

REGISTERED CONSERVANCIES

MAP NO.	NAME	APPROX. PEOPLE	REG. DATE	CONTACT
36	!Gawachab	200	Jun-05	081-552 6657
52	!Han /Awab	614	May-08	081-302 4554
23	!Khob Inaub	2137	Jul-03	081-662 2386
65	!Khoru !goreb	1811	Sep-11	081-692-6373
30	#Gaingu	2911	Mar-04	081-752 9003
3	#Khoadi-//Hoas	5079	Jun-98	081-395-3988
50	//Audi	853	Oct-06	0813789129
24	//Gamaseb	1647	Jul-03	081-231 1543
22	//Huab	1381	Jul-03	081-670-7500
39	African Wild Dog	4617	Sep-05	081-261 5539
25	Anabeb	1495	Jul-03	081-468 4699
45	Balyerwa	1307	Oct-06	081-379-7127
64	Bamunu	2304	Mar-11	081-214-4357
6	Doro !nawas	1472	Dec-99	081-240 3125
59	Dzoti	2023	Oct-09	081-271-0554
13	Ehi-Rovipuka	1432	Jan-01	081-297 0311
55	Eiseb	1567	Mar-09	081-284 9859
77	Epupa	4871	Oct-12	081-326 6900
79	Etanga	1780	Mar-13	081-311 1584
41	George Mukoya	1109	Sep-05	081-430 1911
58	Huibes	750	Oct-09	0816026703
73	!ipumbu ya Tshilongo	2460	May-12	081-256-0894
44	Impalila	966	Dec-05	081-355 7321
31	Joseph Mbambangandu	1801	Mar-04	081-371 3548
66	Kabulabula	457	Nov-11	081-439 8464
84	Kapinga kaMwalye	3746	Aug-18	081-625-3029
43	Kasika	1097	Dec-05	081-887-5212
40	King Nehale	5089	Sep-05	081-289-0017
47	Kunene River	6901	Oct-06	081-347 1624
8	Kwandu	3866	Dec-99	081-645 6933
82	Lusese	1195	Oct-14	081-364 4462
11	Marienfluss	340	Jan-01	081-836 0950
16	Mashi	2433	Mar-03	081-221 6778
83	Maurus Nekaro	12787	Aug-17	081-203 9578
9	Mayuni	2594	Dec-99	081-855 0777
37	Muduva Nyangana	1737	Sep-05	081-353 9749
29	N!fa Jaqna	3891	Jul-03	081-627 9846
80	Nakabolelwa	802	Oct-14	081-656 7378
1	Nyae Nyae	3143	Feb-98	081-311 7621
48	Ohungu	1315	Oct-06	081-747 9382
42	Okamatapati	1996	Sep-05	081-672 0563
76	Okanguati	2338	May-12	081-230 8007
21	Okangundumba	2129	Jul-03	081-228 7708
74	Okatjandja Kozomenje	1898	May-12	081-699 0220
53	Okondjombo	100	Aug-08	081-336 3985
57	Okongo	2918	Aug-09	081-437 7541
67	Okongoro	1870	Feb-12	081-215 3069

MAP NO.	NAME	APPROX. PEOPLE	REG. DATE	CONTACT
17	Omatendeka	2539	Mar-03	081-283 7564
75	Ombazu	3207	May-12	081-431 6825
81	Ombombo-Masitu	2962	Oct-14	081-419 9982
70	Ombujokanguindi	701	Feb-12	081-349 5376
63	Omuramba ua Mbinda	513	Mar-11	081-298 7150
46	Ondjou	2969	Oct-06	081-229 2587
69	Ongongo	881	Feb-12	081-632 9117
20	Orupembe	187	Jul-03	081-722 8590
62	Orupupa	1494	Mar-11	081-246 8197
14	Oskop	75	Feb-01	081-314 2420
54	Otjambangu	1872	Mar-09	081-353 2935
78	Otijkondavirongo	3669	Mar-13	081-565 4765
86	Otijkongo	210	Aug-18	081-434 2270
18	Otjimboyoy	323	Mar-03	081-658 6055
85	Otjindjere	2062	Aug-18	081-472 3411
60	Otjitanda	575	Mar-11	081-283 9550
38	Otjituuo	5921	Sep-05	081-229 2587
72	Otjiu-West	831	May-12	065-685 160
68	Otjombande	1633	Feb-12	081-260 4556
61	Otjombinde	4782	Mar-11	081-322 4923
71	Otuzemba	457	Feb-12	081-565 2855
51	Ovitoto	4495	May-08	081-224 4721
33	Ozonahi	11381	Sep-05	081-749 1466
28	Ozondundu	395	Jul-03	081-459 0310
10	Puros	1163	May-00	081-664 2020
2	Salambala	8923	Jun-98	081-824 8399
27	Sanitatas	148	Jul-03	081-740 3987
26	Sesfontein	1839	Jul-03	085-657 8118
34	Shamungwa	140	Sep-05	081-692 0035
35	Sheya Shuushona	3542	Sep-05	065 25 2088
56	Sikunga	2476	Jul-09	081-252 0968
49	Sobbe	1085	Oct-06	081-321 5917
15	Sorris Sorris	950	Oct-01	081-397 1340
4	Torra	1330	Jun-98	081-759 8470
12	Tsiseb	2645	Jan-01	081-231 1371
7	Uibasen Twyfelfontein	230	Dec-99	067-68 7047/8
32	Uukolonkadhi Ruacana	35958	Sep-05	081-347 6455
19	Uukwaluudhi	983	Mar-03	081-485 1784
5	Wuparo	1027	Dec-99	081-580 6344
7	Uibasen Twyfelfontein	230	Dec-99	081-703 9530

Table 2: List of Communal Conservancies³⁴²

As conservancies began to be gazetted as demonstrated above in Figure 6 and table 2, resources continued to be channelled into the country based on early signs of success and were distributed by NGOs who would assist conservancy councils in building offices and paying staff

³⁴² MET/NACSO.

salaries as well as those of community game guards.³⁴³ NGOs themselves were granted no specific legal right or status, but through a recognition of their knowledge and experience, they were afforded the tools, resources, and legitimacy needed to work with conservancies to realize shared goals. NGOs found those who were well-positioned within communities which tended to be those best educated or stemming from the most money, as well as those who simply spoke the best English. As a result, those traditionally most marginalized in society tended to remain as such and their voices were heard from very little during this transition process.³⁴⁴ Marginalized populations include certain minority ethnic groups in some conservancies, women, those lacking English language skills, people socio-economically disadvantaged in any number of ways, and especially intersectional people identifying with more than one of these groups.

Once conservancies had their formal structures in place, the next set of challenges would turn toward becoming self-sustaining and eventually profitable. This is where resource management enters and specifically the commoditization of wildlife. The 1996 Nature Conservation Act outlines provisions for conservancies to engage in joint venture agreements with private tourism companies to build lodges, camps, and conduct tourism activities in the area.³⁴⁵ The logic for this was simple – the more wildlife any conservancy had, the more valuable tourism would be in their area and thus, the more they could benefit financially. In conducting interviews one of the major limitations almost every respondent pointed to was the lack of financial literacy at the community level which placed them at a difficult position for relative bargaining power. This lack of financial literacy therefore, led to the next role played by the growing network of

³⁴³ Interview, Lara Diez, Nyae Nyae Development Foundation of Namibia, January 10 2020; Interview, John Hazam, Senior Technical Advisor: Namibia Nature Foundation, January 23, 2020; Interview, Brian Jones, Environment and Development Consultant, February 20, 2020.

³⁴⁴ Hoole, “Place-Power-Prognosis.”

³⁴⁵ “Nature_Conservation_Amendment_Act.Pdf,” accessed March 18, 2020.

NGOs representing global interests which was to oversee the crafting of joint-venture agreements.³⁴⁶

The way these agreements work is that a private tourism operator – which can be either domestic or international – will approach a given conservancy with a plan for development in their area. As legal entities, conservancies are granted rights to engage in these agreements and make decisions about CBNRM activities within their borders. While in practice this right is generally respected by all levels of government, in theory state authorities maintain veto power over development decisions on the land and while communities are empowered in many ways, the state maintains the ability to exercise sovereign power should it deem necessary to do so. For joint-venture agreements, private enterprises present a proposed plan for the size of the operation along with number of beds, plans for the sourcing of food and water, transportation, as well as planned overall income.³⁴⁷ Sarah Roos, Manager of the Brandberg White Lady Lodge in Tsiseb Conservancy reported “all our decisions go through Tsiseb Conservancy council like when deciding to expand, build tree houses, anything that could negatively impact the environment.”³⁴⁸ From there it is up to the conservancy to make a deal for what their share of the profits will be. This usually takes the form of either a monthly flat fee paid, a bed levy based on number of nights stayed by tourists at the lodges or campsites, or a percentage of overall profits.³⁴⁹ The agreements usually have stipulations also for the percentage of local people that must be employed as well as outlining the number of years the agreement lasts before it must be renegotiated. While, as pointed to by Roos, decision making goes through conservancies, companies like the one she works for

³⁴⁶ Interview, Maxi Pia Louis, Director, Namibia Association of CBNRM Support Organizations, January 14, 2020.

³⁴⁷ Interview, Manager, Palmwag Lodge, February 5 2020.

³⁴⁸ Interview, Sarah Roos, Manager, Brandberg White Lady Lodge, January 28, 2020

³⁴⁹ Interview, Uatirohange Tjiuoro, Ministry of Environment and Tourism: Directorate of National Parks and Wildlife, January 20, 2020; Interview, Manager, Okahirongo Elephant Lodge, February 8, 2020; Interview, Christine, Manager, Anabeb Conservancy, February 7, 2020

have in some cases become the predominant source of income for many communities. As a result, as seen globally with large corporations, increasingly private interests can dictate outcomes due to the importance of the jobs and GDP that come with their presence in a given community, country, or even region.³⁵⁰

These agreements are often complex, and a great deal of costs and benefits must be weighed when making decisions during the negotiation process. Ashley argues that

A wide range of costs and benefits need to be taken into account. In particular, it is as important to address negative impacts as to maximise positive ones. And to address impacts on people's assets and existing activities, not just direct contributions to household income and security."³⁵¹

She develops research based on a livelihoods approach that when analyzing CBNRM benefits broadly, and in conservancies engaging in joint-venture agreements specifically, it is important to look at much more than simply 'jobs and cash.' Her research suggests it is integral to also look at a much broader range of impacts that are key to inclusive and sustainable livelihoods for local populations.

As the CBNRM program is built around the ethos of conservation, and communities are intended to realize development based on the responsible management of local wildlife and habitat, it becomes integral as well to have strict limits written into these agreements regarding what tourism companies can build, how they can do so, how they will source materials as well as when

³⁵⁰ Philip G. Cerny, "Paradoxes of the Competition State: The Dynamics of Political Globalization," *Government and Opposition* 32, no. 2 (1997): 251–74.

³⁵¹ Ashley, "The Impacts of Tourism on Rural Livelihoods: Namibia's Experience," 6.

and how they can expand future operations.³⁵² All of this adds up to very long and complex agreements that many Namibian community leaders possess inadequate knowledge and skills to fairly engage in with private companies with years of experience. This is one of the issues that devolution can create. States generally have ministries, a diplomatic corps, and a specialized bureaucracy to staff these agencies and negotiate trade deals, as well as agreements with private firms – whether small scale enterprises or mega transnational conglomerates – rural communities will not have the same ability to bargain, nor the human resources needed to effectively do so. This exacerbates existing power imbalances and while the legislation is intended to place full control in the hands of conservancies represented by their elected councils, they can only accomplish their ends, by way of partnership with private interests.³⁵³ Often what this results in is international capital being able to negotiate deals that are favourable to its backers, and less so to local communities – even when legislation is intended to favour their empowerment. While there are power imbalances between communities and private tourism organizations, as well as conservancies and NGOs, conservancies remain at the centre of CBNRM and are legally provided the mandate over wildlife. As a result, these groups – and indirectly the international community – require local communities to become effective conservancies in order to partner with them for the protection of wildlife. Some of the indicators used for measuring this are displayed below in Table 3. In this sense, CBNRM policy provides a legal framework for the empowerment of communities, yet in order for them to do so they must paradoxically enlist the support of external actors to realize their individual goals, in what at times can be synergistic – though of course it is not always so. This demonstrates not only how the policy assemblage develops, but also why it is

³⁵² Interview, Joglinde, Manager, Uisbasen/Twyfelfontein Conservancy, January 30, 2020; Interview, Emil, Manager, Torra Conservancy, February 2 2020; Interview, Dr. Margaret Jacobson, co-founder IRDNC, co-director, trustee, mentor, Conservancy Safaris Namibia, February 17, 2020.

³⁵³ Mercer, “Performing Partnership.”

necessary in many ways. It also further elucidates the many forces that are simultaneously competing and working together to realize various goals through these supposedly community-based projects.

CAT. OR SUB-CAT.	CATEGORY (N = NUMBER REPORTING IN 2019)	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE OF CATEGORY
1	Registered conservancies (incl. Kyaramacan assoc.) (N = 87)	87	100%
2	Conservancies generating returns (N = 87)	65	75%
2a	-> covering operational costs from own income (N = 54)	30	56%
2b	-> distributing cash or in-kind benefits to members, or investing in community projects (N = 54)	43	80%
3	Conservancy management committee members (N = 82)	975	100%
3a	-> female management committee members (N = 82)	320	33%
3b	-> female chairpersons (N = 82)	11	13%
3c	-> female treasurers/financial managers (N = 82)	35	43%
4	Conservancy staff members (N = 82)	964	100%
4a	-> female staff members (N = 82)	232	24%
5	Conservancies management plans (N = 82)	57	70%
5a	-> sustainable business and financial plans (N = 82)	27	33%
6	Conservancy AGMs held (N = 82)	67	82%
6a	-> financial reports presented at AGM (N = 82)	53	65%
6b	-> financial reports approved at AGM (N = 82)	50	61%
6c	-> budgets approved at AGM (N = 82)	49	60%

Table 3: Governance Indicators for Conservancies³⁵⁴

Assembling Conservancies

As discussed thus far in this chapter, the Nature Conservation Amendment Act was developed with input from a wide assemblage of actors in order to build from the best of neighbouring examples and also to learn from their mistakes.³⁵⁵ The most important of these lessons was to realize devolution to the lowest level possible which did not occur in neighbouring countries and which scholars from both the utilitarians and skeptics point to as a reason for their relative lack of success.³⁵⁶ Therefore, Namibia's version sought to empower communities to the maximum extent.

³⁵⁴ MET/NACSO, "The State of Community Conservation in Namibia: Annual Report 2019: A Review of Communal Conservancies, Community Forests and Other CBNRM Initiatives."

³⁵⁵ Jones, *Community-Based Natural Resource Management in Botswana and Namibia*.

³⁵⁶ Boudreaux, "A New Call of the Wild"; Schnegg, "Lost in Translation."

As such, the legislation lays out stringent requirements conservancies must meet before they can be gazetted. The legislation states that

any group of persons residing on communal land and which desires to have the area which they inhabit, or any part thereof, to be declared a conservancy, shall apply therefor to the Minister [of Environment and Tourism] in the prescribed manner, and such application shall be accompanied by: (a) a list of the names of the persons who are members of a committee established for the purpose of being recognized by the minister under subsection (2)(ii) as the conservancy committee for the conservancy applied for; (b) the constitution of such committee; (c) a statement setting out the boundaries of the geographic area in respect of which the application is made; and (d) such other documents or information as the Minister may require.”³⁵⁷

As part of this they must meet the requirements discussed in the previous section and an important part of this is the holding of AGMs and regular elections. As they are responsible for writing their own constitutions, these processes and the make up of conservancy leadership varies from conservancy to conservancy. However, generally conservancy councils consist of a manager who will be a full-time staff member employed by the conservancy and tasked with managing the day-to-day activities, representing the conservancy, and managing the team. In most cases conservancy staff will also include a chairperson, treasurer, office manager, head of game guards/wildlife, as well as other positions depending on level of revenue and need. In Eric’s conservancy, Tsiseb as one example, the conservancy council consists of nine members, none of whom outside the manager receive a salary and instead they receive N\$250 per month as per diem assistance and a small travel allowance. Tsiseb, like many others, also has regulations for regional representation.

³⁵⁷ MET, “Nature Conservation Amendment Act,” 3.

The conservancy is made up of four regions and of the nine members, there are requirements for representation from each region.³⁵⁸ Conservancies consist of between 200 and as many as 5,000 members. Each conservancy however, consists of a larger population than its voting members. Who constitutes a member and how membership can be attained varies based on each conservancy constitution, but generally the requirements are that members are at least eighteen years of age and have lived in the conservancy for a minimum of five years. These requirements are put in place to avoid people switching conservancies when one is doing better than the next and might be providing more in the way of benefits for its people. The percentage of the population that are voting members ranges from as low as forty per cent to as high as eighty per cent, with the average falling somewhere in the middle. Full conservancy members are afforded the right to vote, as well as access to any benefits derived through the conservancy. Non-members are excluded from both of these rights and thus, membership is generally highly sought after which has also led to growing populations in most conservancies.³⁵⁹

Elections vary among conservancies, occurring every three to five years and with most constitutions limiting conservancy leaders to a maximum of two or three consecutive terms in office, though in some there are no term limits. AGMs are an important and necessary component of each constitution. At AGMs elections occur, but also annually the conservancy council must present a benefits distribution plan to the people who must vote on whether to accept it or not. In this sense it is similar to a government's annual budget process in which the council lays out their financial situation regarding their bank account, previous year's income and spending, as well as the next year's expected revenue and spending plans. This is intended to provide conservancy

³⁵⁸ Interview, Eric Xaneb, Chairman, Tsiseb Conservancy, January 27, 2020

³⁵⁹ Silva and Mosimane, "'How Could I Live Here and Not Be a Member?'"

members with a clear idea of governance priorities and if a majority votes against the year's resource sharing plan, the council must consult with them in order to develop a new plan which they must subsequently present and hold another vote to pass.³⁶⁰ AGMs are also where plans for new joint venture agreements or modifications to existing ones will be presented and again a majority of conservancy members present must vote in support of any changes in order for them to be approved. This democratic process was key for many respondents suggesting they felt a sense of ownership over their own conservation and development. The Anabeb Conservancy manager asserted "no one tells us what to do. Neither NGOs nor government. They just come to hear and take notes on what conservancies say they're going to do."³⁶¹ Although the degree to which conservancy members feel their voices are heard varies both within and between conservancies, this development of democratic processes and institutions is a key component of CBNRM governance and in seeing communities effectively develop empowerment. It is also however, a key example of the productive power of the state enabling communities to manage their local wildlife, but only if they first meet a stringent set of requirements including democratic processes and the ordering and structuring of local populations through publicly recorded memberships. In Namibia with such a small population spread out across a vast territory, these are functions the state has traditionally not been able to effectively enforce. CBNRM, however, enables the state to work with global partners to incentivize rural communities to in a sense project the state's power from a distance and to perform state-like functions sans state resources.

This shift in local, national, and global power relations shifts responsibilities for governance to communities which can produce benefits locally but also maintains required

³⁶⁰ Interview, Emil Roman, Manager, Torra Conservancy, February 2, 2020.

³⁶¹ Interview, Christine, Manager, Anabeb Conservancy, February 7, 2020

solutions to challenges and associated costs locally as well. While both cash and in-kind benefits have decreased significantly for many, conservancies have evolved and continue to invest in important ways in communities and their people. The MET has sought to push for this type of investment as Pohamba Penomwenyo Shifeta, the current Minister implemented a new mandate in 2018 that at least fifty per cent of conservancy revenues must be re-invested into the community. This mandate has had the effect of putting a cap on what conservancies can spend on overhead and designating a higher percentage of revenues directed to community benefits for conservancy members.³⁶² While this has been controversial, as many conservancies with low incomes have suggested they cannot afford to maintain staff and keep the lights on at these levels, for others, it has pushed them to increase investments in important ways. A focus group in Sesfontein Conservancy, 150 km Northwest of Torra Conservancy had conservancy members repeatedly pointing to investments that include improvements in freshwater, power, food, ambulances, funeral costs, medical care, primary education, scholarships, and more.³⁶³ One MET official suggested this was one of the problems that took time to shift attitudes, as it is easy for someone to link cash being handed to them to a positive outlook toward the conservancy.³⁶⁴ However, when one wakes up every day and is able to turn on the light and has sufficient drinking water, or when they are injured or become ill and need to be taken several hundred kilometres to the nearest hospital and an ambulance is available to do so, these benefits are much more easily taken for granted. Conservancies also work closely together in many cases pooling resources in order to make investments. Torra, Anabeb, and Sesfontein are known as the ‘Big Three’ and together purchased

³⁶² Interview, Uatirohange Tjiuoro, Ministry of Environment and Tourism: Directorate of National Parks and Wildlife, January 20, 2020.

³⁶³ Focus group 4, Anabeb Conservancy, February 7, 2020

³⁶⁴ Interview, Uatirohange Tjiuoro, Ministry of Environment and Tourism: Directorate of National Parks and Wildlife, January 20, 2020.

an ambulance which was pointed to with pride repeatedly during interviews. This included one man in a focus group who proudly proclaimed

The Big Three split on it and surprised the Ministry of Health with it. It can take people from three conservancies to the health centres, or to Opuwo [the closest city] if they need the hospital instead of an ambulance having to drive three hours each way to pick sick people up and take them back. It is saving lives and something we are very proud of.³⁶⁵

Thus, conservancies have in many ways taken a positive step toward investing in these important services for long term success and development – as seen in Figure 7 below – despite the fact that these benefits may not always be associated with the program. Importantly, this is also an example of conservancies working with a number of partners to benefit economically from wildlife conservation – highly sought globally – and from these benefits providing local community members with the types of services normally associated with the state.

³⁶⁵ Focus group 3, Anabeb Conservancy, February 7, 2020.



Figure 7: Community Conservation at a Glance³⁶⁶

When people come together into some form of political unit, they tie their futures and outcomes to one another in important ways and this also means a degree of collective decision making. While many favour longer term investments, there will always be some who will prefer

³⁶⁶ MET/NACSO, "The State of Community Conservation in Namibia: Annual Report 2019: A Review of Communal Conservancies, Community Forests and Other CBNRM Initiatives."

the immediate reward of cash in hand. Several respondents in fact suggested that this would be a useful way to quell some of the discontent regarding allegations of corruption by presenting the incomes of conservancies in the way of actual cash on the table at AGMs so that people can see what is theirs. In an interview, Brian Jones suggested that by physically placing conservancy incomes in the form of cash on a table at AGMs, it could from there be divvied up evenly so that everyone gets a chance to hold it in their hand, and feel what is rightfully theirs, prior to then paying into the types of overhead costs that exist as well as investments that conservancies might collectively decide on.³⁶⁷ While this poses potential to remedy certain issues, it is not clear that this would be an efficient form of governance and would be fraught with challenges of its own. On the other hand, Anabeb Conservancy, 12 km east of Sesfontein is one conservancy that has been distributing very little in the way of cash remittances, but its members reported very positively on the conservancy and the many non-cash benefits they enjoy. These were seen largely in the form of local-level investments, the type which many would agree amount to sustainable development initiatives. Investments include improvements to infrastructure for procuring freshwater, medical services, funeral payments, and old age subsidies among many others.

These types of difficult resource allocation and governance decisions are at the heart of conservancy politics in Namibia and are largely determined by the systems discussed above. Conservancy councils are democratically elected by conservancy members on a regular basis. Those who wish to run for election will outline their priorities and present a platform of sorts and people vote in part based on that, though also largely on popularity and relations with the individuals. Thus, if a council's spending priorities align with the interests of members, in theory

³⁶⁷ Interview, Brian Jones, Environment and Development Consultant (Helped draft 1996 Nature Conservation Act), Windhoek, February 20, 2020.

they will stand a good chance of re-election. Those who are seen to be mismanaging conservancy funds can be voted out. A police officer near Bersig reported that

there have been political issues with the conservancy like anywhere else, but they are not that bad, and we were able to vote for a new council in December [2019] which makes us at least feel like our voices are heard. If we cannot vote for a good council at some point, it is a reflection on us, not a fault with the program.³⁶⁸

There are a plethora of variables that determine what one conservancy chooses to spend its income on versus another, however, at the heart of decision making, is a democratic process that would be recognizable to many.

It is this type of debate that has been at the heart of CBNRM politics for years and it is one that has been taking time to shift opinions. It was also in an effort to ensure broad-based support for the program continued that the fifty per cent community benefit policy was implemented by the Minister of Environment and Tourism, based also on input from a number of global partners. While there has been opposition to this shift, there is evidence that the push to invest more tourism incomes back into communities has contributed to the types of demonstrable benefits outlined above.³⁶⁹ These are many of the same questions that NGOs, as well as charitable and non-profit organizations struggle with more broadly, as donors want reassurance their funds are going directly to helping people or a given cause, yet there is always a level of overhead needed in order to pay staff salaries, rent office space, as well as to fund travel, meetings, per diems, and many other (less sexy) expenses that come with development initiatives.

³⁶⁸ Interview, Police officer, Bersig, Torra Conservancy, February 4, 2020

³⁶⁹ Interview, Pohamba Shifeta, Minister of Environment and Tourism, January 29 2020.

For conservancies specifically, overhead encompasses maintaining office space which includes hydro, internet, and office supplies, staff salaries for the conservancy council as well as game guards, and in some of the wealthier conservancies vehicles to provide important transportation for conservancy activities through the vast and rugged terrain.³⁷⁰ These are the type of struggles which continue with many development projects, international agencies, NGOs, and even with private firms across the world. Paradoxically it seems that it has taken the existential challenges posed by climate change to convince broad sections of conservancy members to begin to shift to seeing investment in more long-term projects as preferable to shorter term remittances. As NGOs and their partners leverage their resources, education, and experience in order leverage productive power to try to convince populations that these are beneficial and in their own interests, they are able to point to the deleterious impacts of climate change as a necessary reason for doing so. Dr. Chris Brown, CEO of the Namibian Chamber of Environment and one of the architects of CBNRM in Namibia, openly stated at a workshop with the NACSO partners that “climate change and the related ongoing drought has served as a much needed learning experience and kick in the ass to us and to the conservancies.”³⁷¹ He suggests that efforts that have been underway to fight climate change have been linked to further social uplift specifically with regards to health, electricity, and water and that these efforts must be redoubled to ensure the program continues to become more inclusive as they seek to make it more sustainable. As elaborated in research from the skeptics, while there was growing disillusionment toward the program since 2014, as the drought has continued it seems for some there has been a reversal in the trend. Rather than blaming CBNRM for no longer providing the benefits it once did, one game officer reported

³⁷⁰ Interview, Albert Kroses, Head of Environmental Services, #Khoadi !Hoas Conservancy, February 10, 2020

³⁷¹ Interview, Dr. Chris Brown, CEO Namibia Chamber of Environment, January 24, 2020.

CBNRM is good. I am employed and I can see it [CBNRM] bringing jobs and giving us a say. People vote, we are not without our troubles but with everything there are challenges and things are in some ways getting better... The drought is very challenging but without CBNRM it would wipe us off the map. Instead with CBNRM we are coming onto the map.³⁷²

This game officer felt that as tourism increases as seen in Figures 8 and 9 below, income was being provided in places where farming was virtually no longer possible. Moreover, he stated that even where we were standing could be found on Google Maps which was previously not the case. More and more this is becoming the norm and he thinks this is important, so that the world knows they are there.

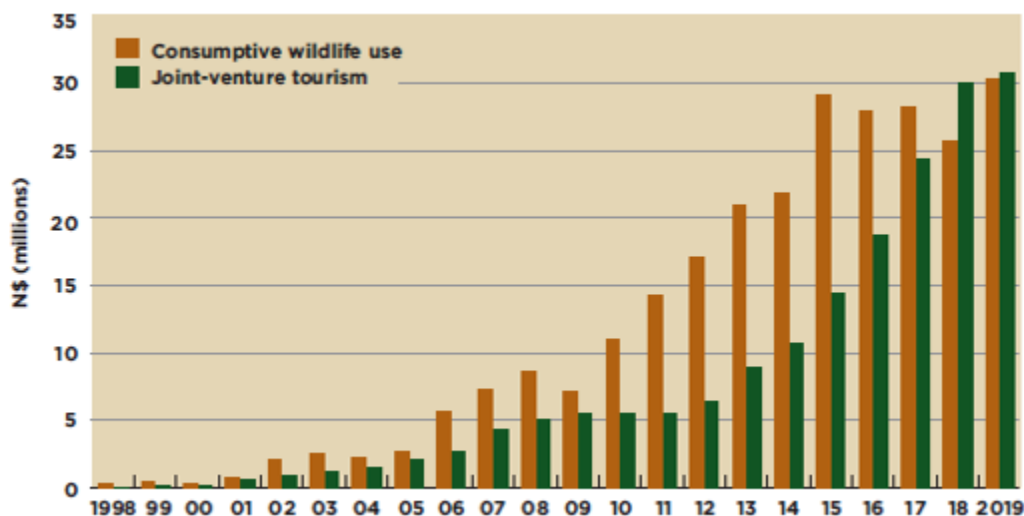


Figure 8: Cash Revenues from Tourism Operations³⁷³

³⁷² Interview, Game officer, Torra Conservancy, February 2, 2020

³⁷³ MET/NACSO, "The State of Community Conservation in Namibia: Annual Report 2019: A Review of Communal Conservancies, Community Forests and Other CBNRM Initiatives."

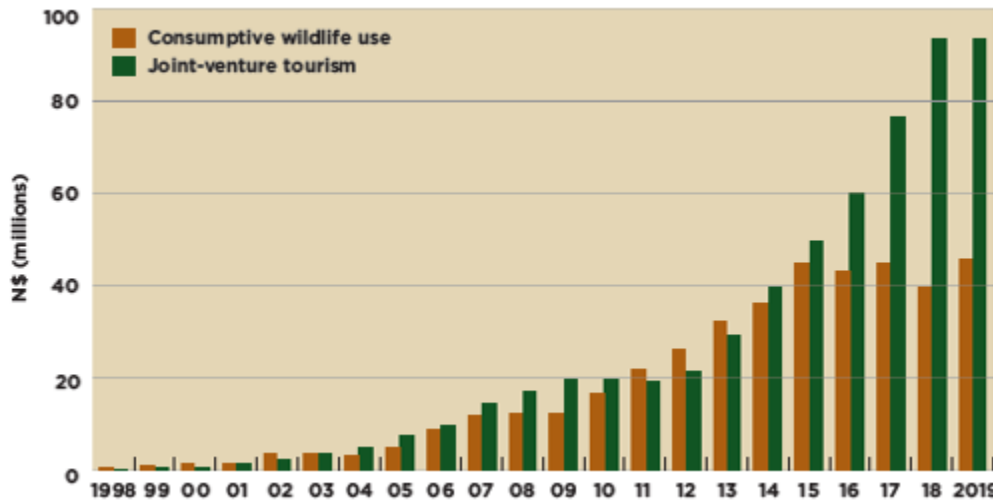


Figure 9: Growth in Non-Consumptive Tourism³⁷⁴

These sentiments were echoed by a rhino game guard from Torra Conservancy employed by Save the Rhino Trust, one of NACSO's key affiliates, who said

The last council was not too bad but there were issues. Because of the drought we had to stop hunting and trophy hunting was our main source of income, so people stopped getting meat and direct cash so then they blamed the council for corruption. But the program has helped with medical care, police funding, and giving the people a place to speak their voices and vent frustration. This is probably a good healthy release valve in tough times of drought.³⁷⁵

Again, this sentiment that CBNRM was continuing to bring benefits during the drought was echoed by several voices in a focus group in Anabeb Conservancy. One young woman replied that "Health care is better. We used to get food which we don't anymore because of the drought, but at least

³⁷⁴ MET/NACSO.

³⁷⁵ Interview, Rhino game guard, Torra Conservancy, February 4, 2020

health care is better.” This quote importantly demonstrates the way at least some conservancy members have begun to internalize these challenges in a sense, and rather than blaming others, or looking to the state, or donors for help they have been responsabilized to feel empowerment and ownership of their developmental challenges as well as the achievements which are outlined below in Figure 10. The person next to her then said “Yes and one of the important things we get is conservation. Before no one cared about it and the animals were disappearing and their habitat being destroyed. Now people take pride in protecting them and we all do it together as a community.” After a general agreement from the group, a middle-aged man added, “Conservation is ours and we make things happen, others do not tell us what to do. Tourism has been huge for us. With the drought tourism is everything and we get incomes from the lodges and our wives can make crafts and sell it to tourists. We very much like tourists.”³⁷⁶ These sentiments were further echoed by a rural respondent from Torra who reported

We receive benefits like water, medical treatment, education for kids. We like the program, and it is helping the community grow and get better. There are ups and downs and times are tough now but will improve. Our community are communal farmers but also sell crafts and goods out on the roads to tourists so women and children can benefit financially directly from tourism more than anything.³⁷⁷

These findings build on prior research by Ashley and LaFranchi that found

Grass-sellers, craftmakers, fisherfolk, casual labourers and others sell their products or labour to tourists and tourism enterprises (and to neighbours earning wages from tourism jobs). They each earn much smaller amounts from these casual sales than is earned by those

³⁷⁶ Interview, Focus Group 1, Anabeb Conservancy, February 7, 2020

³⁷⁷ Interview, Village respondent 4, Torra Conservancy, February 1, 2020

in waged employment (tens or hundreds of Namibian dollars each per year). But these additional earning opportunities are likely to benefit a higher percentage of local households than the full-time jobs and are most important for the poorer people who have few other options for earning cash.³⁷⁸

While much of this data points to a significant sentiment of empowerment in the community, the next section will wade through some of the tensions that continue to result in ongoing challenges.

³⁷⁸ C. LaFranchi and C. Ashley, "Livelihood Strategies of Rural Households in Caprivi: Implications for Conservancies and Natural Resource Management," Working Paper (Directorate of Environmental Affairs Ministry of Environment and Tourism, Windhoek, Namibië, 1997), 20.

WHAT'S BEING ACHIEVED Community conservation

Covers

180,083 km²

which is about

58.7% of all communal land,

with an estimated

227,802 residents

(6,526 residents supported by the Kyaramacan Association live in Bwabwata National Park)

Of this area, conservancies manage **166,179 km²** which comprises **20.2%** of Namibia

3 registered community forests cover,

85,192 km² 84% of which overlaps with conservancies

Namibia's elephant population grew from around

7,500 to around **22,800**

between 1995 and 2016 according to aerial survey data*

Namibia has the

largest free-roaming

population of **black rhinos in the world**

From the beginning of **1990** to the end of **2019**,

community conservation contributed an estimated

N\$ 9.743 billion to Namibia's **net national income**

Community conservation facilitated

5,178 jobs in **2019**

61 conservancies hosted a total of

170 enterprises based on **natural resources**

Conservancy residents earned a total cash income of

N\$ 85,097,978

from wages, of which:

N\$ 53,620,557 was from **joint-venture tourism**

N\$ 21,949,245 from **conservancies**

N\$ 3,354,376 from **conservation hunting**

N\$ 6,173,800 from **SMEs**

Conservancies generated

N\$ 155,656,833

in returns during 2019, of which:

Tourism (including craft sales) generated **N\$ 105,565,821**

Conservation hunting generated **N\$ 34,586,452** and **473,956 kg**

of **meat distributed** to conservancy residents valued at **N\$ 11,374,944**

Indigenous plant products generated **N\$ 2,155,377**

Miscellaneous income (including items such as interest) **N\$ 1,974,239**

Conservancy residents earned cash income of:

N\$ 1,609,253

from **indigenous plants**

N\$ 1,420,496

from **crafts**

N\$ 17,649,480

was **distributed to residents** and used to support community projects by conservancies

*The African Elephant Status Report for 2016, published by the IUCN

Figure 10: Benefits Derived from CBNRM³⁷⁹

Assemblages and Charges of Corruption

Despite a widespread sense of satisfaction with the program there remains a number of concerns with local level governance. This section turns to discuss allegations of corruption at the

³⁷⁹ MET/NACSO, "The State of Community Conservation in Namibia: Annual Report 2019: A Review of Communal Conservancies, Community Forests and Other CBNRM Initiatives."

conservancy level, which contributes to addressing my second research question regarding the degree to which communities benefit as a result of CBNRM. Analyzing allegations of corruption also further elucidates the layered nature of this complex policy governance assemblage. As with any system of governing CBNRM is far from perfect. Compounding challenges inherent to governing are that it is a relatively nascent and ever-evolving system of governance, with new conservancies continuing to be gazetted regularly, the lack of education and experience, and the layered approach to governance that marks this GGPA and there is an inherent potential for mismanagement. While going local is suggested by some³⁸⁰ to circumvent the corruption that has been experienced by the state with resource management across much of southern Africa, ample research has made it clear that devolution in itself is far from a panacea.³⁸¹ Dr. Ekkehard Klingelhooffer reports that with CBNRM “there is corruption and mismanagement everywhere. You try to turn these projects over to the communities, but they are not educated in financial matters and business management.”³⁸² There is however, a difference between mismanagement and corruption, and while it seems that both are present within Namibia’s CBNRM program, accusations of both have also increased with the onset of the drought. John Hazam suggests that mismanagement often occurs simply as a result of poor bookkeeping due to a lack of financial literacy which is why NGOs serve an important role in providing ongoing technical assistance. Transparency International defines corruption as the misuse of power for private gain and Hazam sees this as separate from mismanagement, but also a present concern.³⁸³ Corruption, he argues,

³⁸⁰ Elinor Ostrom, “Coping with the Tragedy of the Commons,” 1999; Schumacher, *Small Is Beautiful*.

³⁸¹ See for example: Duffy, “The Potential and Pitfalls of Global Environmental Governance”; Brockington and Igoe, “Eviction for Conservation”; Agrawal and Gibson, “Enchantment and Disenchantment.”

³⁸² Interview, Dr. Ekkehard Klingelhooffer, Head of Department – Wildlife Management and Ecotourism, University of Namibia, January 13, 2020.

³⁸³ Transparency International, “Transparency International Report (2006) Africa,” 2006.

consists of actual theft of conservancy funds and the use of public resources for private gain and he suggests this has also been occurring and continues to go unpunished.³⁸⁴

Allegations of corruption within certain well-known conservancies are prevalent and were openly discussed by many respondents building on similar reports of elite capture within the literature.³⁸⁵ Torra Conservancy is widely known as one of the country's greatest success stories, but is also quietly referred to by some as CBNRM's problem child,³⁸⁶ as well as it being suggested that it struggles with governance.³⁸⁷ Torra is one of the longest running and highest earning conservancies in Namibia. While at one time the conservancy was providing a great deal for its members in the way of services and N\$550 per year in cash payments to each member, the provision of services has slowed, as had the payments over a number of years, and by 2020 they had halted altogether. This has been paralleled by a direct violation of their constitution as AGMs had not been held since 2018. The first village respondent I interviewed in Bersig, the main village in Torra, said "I am a conservancy member, I go, I vote and I like it [the program] but don't like corruption. Some people just talk and talk and don't do any of the stuff that needs fixing."³⁸⁸ On this subject, Emil Roman, the Conservancy Manager lamented "Money is war. You work very hard to get it but when it comes, it's war. Now you are eating the money of the community. No one trusts anyone else; you only trust your money in the bank and even then, you don't like the interest rate and move it elsewhere." He continued by saying that "we make monthly budgets and

³⁸⁴ Interview, John Hazam, Senior Technical Advisor: Namibia Nature Foundation, January 23, 2020

³⁸⁵ Schnegg, Bollig, and Linke, "Moral Equality and Success of Common-Pool Water Governance in Namibia"; Boudreaux, "A New Call of the Wild"; Hoole, "Place-Power-Prognosis."

³⁸⁶ Interview, Marina Tavolaro, PhD candidate in Biological Sciences at University of Cape Town, January 15, 2020.

³⁸⁷ Interview, Uatirohange Tjiuoro, Ministry of Environment and Tourism: Directorate of National Parks and Wildlife, January 20, 2020.

³⁸⁸ Interview, Village respondent 4, Torra Conservancy, February 1, 2020

members must approve annual budgets. Whenever we overspend budget lines we ask members, but I won't lie we are not doing this right now and it is something we must improve."³⁸⁹

Emil attributes blame for this lack of consultation and the constitutional violations by ceasing to hold AGMs on climate change and the conservancy council. He says as a result of the ongoing drought which has been caused by climate change, conservancy incomes have dwindled, while the membership has increased and he says the council wanted to pause AGMs as they knew the people would be unhappy with the lack of cash benefits and thus wanted to wait until they had funds to distribute once again.³⁹⁰ One interview respondent from just outside of Bersig suggested the council "canceled the meeting because of the drought so now it's hard for our voices to get heard. In one sense it is good because we voted for them, but now if they won't even hold meetings because of drought issues what is the point?"³⁹¹ This sentiment was put more bluntly by another interviewee while also accepting some of the onus as voters stating "if snake bites you once, it happens. If he bites you again, it will be much deeper and more serious. Everyone knows who they are, so they have to be got rid of. But we know they are just one snake and that doesn't mean the program is the one biting people."³⁹² While members of Torra Conservancy seemed concerned about the possible embezzlement of funds and these sentiments were echoed by many in Windhoek, interestingly enough some members of local conservancies still view Torra as the goal based on its history of high incomes and broad member benefits.

Prior to arriving in Torra I met a tour guide from Uisbasen/Twyfelfontein Conservancy who asked to be referred to only as Barnabas, who reported

³⁸⁹ Interview, Emil Roman, Manager, Torra Conservancy, February 2, 2020.

³⁹⁰ Interview, Emil Roman, Manager, Torra Conservancy, February 2, 2020.

³⁹¹ Interview, Village respondent 5, Torra Conservancy, February 1, 2020

³⁹² Interview, Village Respondent 6, Torra Conservancy, February 2, 2020

I like the conservancy program and I am an official member and I generally attend meetings and vote. But all our conservancy committee does is just talks talks talks, ya, ya, ya, ya and that's all they do without benefitting anyone except for their families and friends. But most people don't benefit because they don't make good decisions for everyone. I hope this will change but I am not sure why we have not found a solution or voted for a better leader. Torra is very well run and does things really well, everyone benefits. I hope we can be more like Torra.³⁹³

One of the issues with these conflicting accounts is that the accusations of corruption remain largely hearsay and there have not been adequate official investigations into the allegations. Critics suggest this is because CBNRM has become a global calling card of sorts for Namibia and with being deemed a global leader in this form of resource governance, comes the pressure for it to continue to appear outwardly as successful as possible.³⁹⁴ In this sense it is important for the Namibian state for the program to appear outwardly successful to continue to garner global resources, support, and continue growing its tourism industry, while it is similarly seen as integral for conservancies to be viewed as successful and well run for the same reasons. Hazam reports that this is evident as there are Standard Operating Procedures that he personally worked on which are built into the CBNRM legislation that conservancies must follow. If they fail to do so, it is within the power of the MET to de-gazette them. However, he suggests this is an important tool that has never been used nor even threatened and as a result corruption is allowed to continue. Due to the nature of conservancies which are supposed to be quasi-sovereign entities, the MET is hesitant to step in regarding issues of governance which it appears in some cases has enabled

³⁹³ Interview, Barnabas, tour guide, Petrified Forest, Uisbasen/Twyfelfontein, January 31, 2020

³⁹⁴ Interview, John Hazam, Senior Technical Advisor: Namibia Nature Foundation, January 23, 2020; Interview, Marina Tavoraro, PhD candidate in Biological Sciences at University of Cape Town, January 15, 2020.

traditional gatekeepers to maintain or increase their position as local elites and slowly seize control of power.³⁹⁵ This also demonstrates the limits of concepts such as sovereignty as well as how a policy assemblage approach enables us to look beyond these sort of binaries and reification to instead analyze the complexities of global environmental governance rather than seeing conservancies as either sovereign entities or not. Richard Diggle echoed Hazam's sentiments suggesting

There needs to be a series of checks and balances and steps to get reported to the Ministry [of Environment and Tourism] but it's always warnings and long timelines to avoid real punishment. There needs to be strict legislation with enforcement mechanisms that lay out if you do or do not do this or that you will get X fine and Y imprisonment. The Ministry has it for poachers but not for community issues. Individuals have been held accountable but there has been no punishment so then others do it. The Ministry just asks for more oversight over the whole program which creates a whole blanket problem for all conservancies without providing the capacities to fulfill them which just drains resources.

CBNRM is a set of rights that needs an effective set of responsibilities to go with them.³⁹⁶

This sentiment was not only shared by NGO officials but even some conservancy managers themselves who pointed to a lack of effective oversight that allowed for corruption by some to result in negative impacts for them all. As was discussed in Chapter 2, while disciplinary and productive power are intended to alleviate the state from governing the every move of its subjects, it does so partly with the threat of coercive power as a persistent possibility. Here we see the tensions these power relations can pose to competing actors which further elucidates some of the

³⁹⁵ Bollig, "Towards an Arid Eden?," 784.

³⁹⁶ Interview, Richard Diggle, Business/CBNRM Specialist, WWF, January 24, 2020.

complexities of these layered governance arrangements as well as the tensions and contradictions that can result. Conservancy councils/managers are more or less unanimous in wanting a more complete devolution of control over management and resources and land with less oversight and more autonomy. However, many of these same leaders point to allegations of corruption in neighbouring conservancies and call for stricter regulations to prevent these instances from happening which places the entire CBNRN program in a negative light. Eric Xaineb bluntly stated

I could easily just take all the money and leave. Nothing is stopping me. In many cases people who have never comprehended N\$100,000 or in some cases much more, and all of the sudden they are in charge of managing it effectively. This is a problem, and the government must strengthen laws and provide additional support and training.³⁹⁷

The Minister of Environment and Tourism spoke openly of local corruption and conservancy governance issues as well as the need to mitigate these. While he suggests they have been working hard to implement solutions, more work remains to be done.³⁹⁸ While not voiding the state of blame, devolution also enables the MET to distance itself from the allegations and serve as an apparent neutral party seeking only to help. This is further reflected by key literature suggesting that CBNRM governance in Namibia takes the form of all carrot, with no stick.³⁹⁹ As core funding has dried up, and an increasing number of NGOs and conservancies vie for an ever-shrinking donor pie, there are fears that damage to any one component of the country's broader program, will reflect negatively on all involved. Beyond concerns of the CBNRM program being viewed in a negative light, if there is mismanagement of conservancy funds – whether due to illicit intent or not – it is community members who are most harmed and potential benefits they can receive

³⁹⁷ Interview, Eric Xaneb, Chairman, Tsiseb Conservancy, January 27, 2020

³⁹⁸ Interview, Pohamba Shifeta, Minister of Environment and Tourism, January 29 2020.

³⁹⁹ Boudreaux, "A New Call of the Wild."

through the program are minimized. This is particularly problematic for marginalized populations who often rely on these benefits for their very survival. However, it is also deeply concerning as devolution enables communities to benefit from resources, but also places responsibility for the costs incurred for doing so on them. The result being that in some cases communities will be incurring the costs of conservation without enjoying the subsequent rewards.

One of the ways in which CBNRM was intended to prevent corruption and mismanagement was through the decentralization of governance by having conservancies be small so that people would be connected on some level of personal relationship. While this can and has been demonstrated to have positive effects, it can also be problematic, specifically when it comes to the reporting of crime or corruption. As many conservancy leaders have been in power for an increasingly long time and were in many cases village leaders prior to the program, some suggest they are extremely well connected within their communities, and often dole out resources within their own localized neopatrimonial webs.⁴⁰⁰ This serves to keep those close to them happy which, mixed with the ties those within communities or families feel towards one another, may be preventing reporting what to some is obvious mismanagement at best, and blatant corruption at worst.⁴⁰¹

While there is sufficient evidence to suggest that some level of mismanagement has been occurring in Torra Conservancy as well as suggestions of mismanagement to a lesser degree in other conservancies, these same interview respondents suggested that these issues are really in one

⁴⁰⁰ Child and Barnes, "The Conceptual Evolution and Practice of Community-Based Natural Resource Management in Southern Africa," 292.

⁴⁰¹ Schnegg, "Institutional Multiplexity."

specific case or only in a small percentage of conservancies, and that it is not a systemic issue.⁴⁰²

Like with any system of governance anywhere in the world

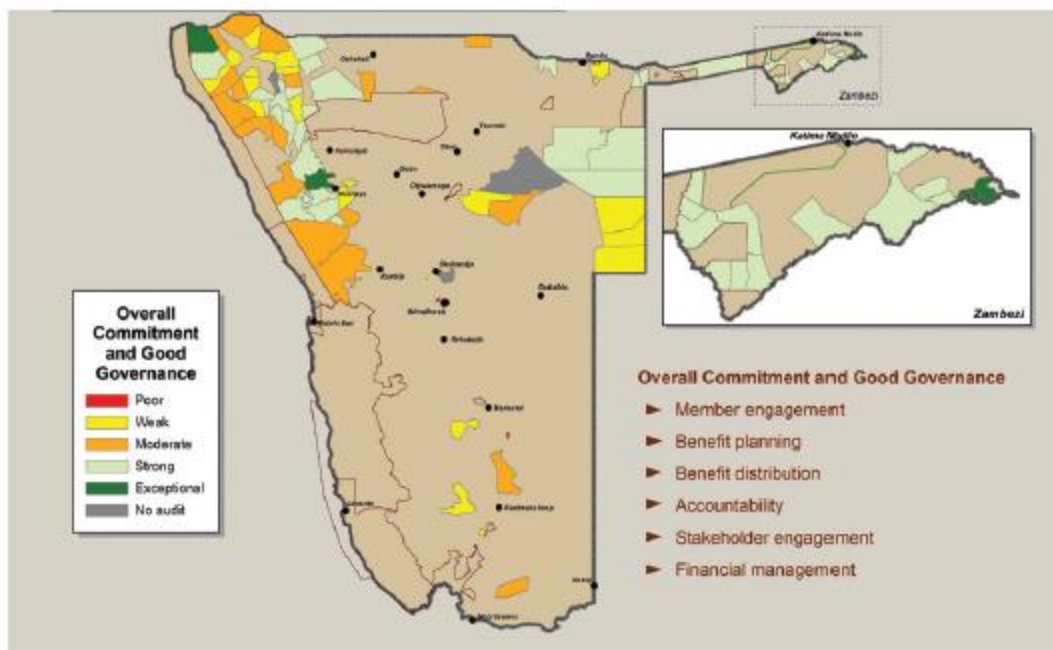
There are good leaders and bad, just like with anything else so management can wax and wane, corruption can occur, but better management can also happen and is more prevalent... There are instances of mismanagement, but the MET works to help communities remedy this themselves and we [the MET] step in where we must.⁴⁰³

Thus, these unproven allegations are not to suggest that CBNRM as a system of governance is problematic or that a substantial overhaul of the system is needed. Instead, it is to suggest that where governance arrangements exist and the oversight of various forms of public funds are managed by individuals or groups, there always remains the possibility for mismanagement and this must be carefully overseen by the state enacting its sovereign power and enforcing mechanisms built into the Nature Conservation Amendment Act with a stringent system of checks and balances. These should be exercised in step with NGOs and global partners to ensure transparency and accountability to accomplish good governance and institutional compliance as outlined below in Figures 11. Failing to do so can harm those most in need in society and undermine program success.

⁴⁰² Interview, Marina Tavoraro, PhD candidate in Biological Sciences at University of Cape Town, January 15, 2020

⁴⁰³ Interview, Uatirohange Tjiuro, Ministry of Environment and Tourism: Directorate of National Parks and Wildlife, January 20, 2020.

OVERALL COMMITMENT AND GOOD GOVERNANCE 2019



OVERALL INSTITUTIONAL COMPLIANCE 2019

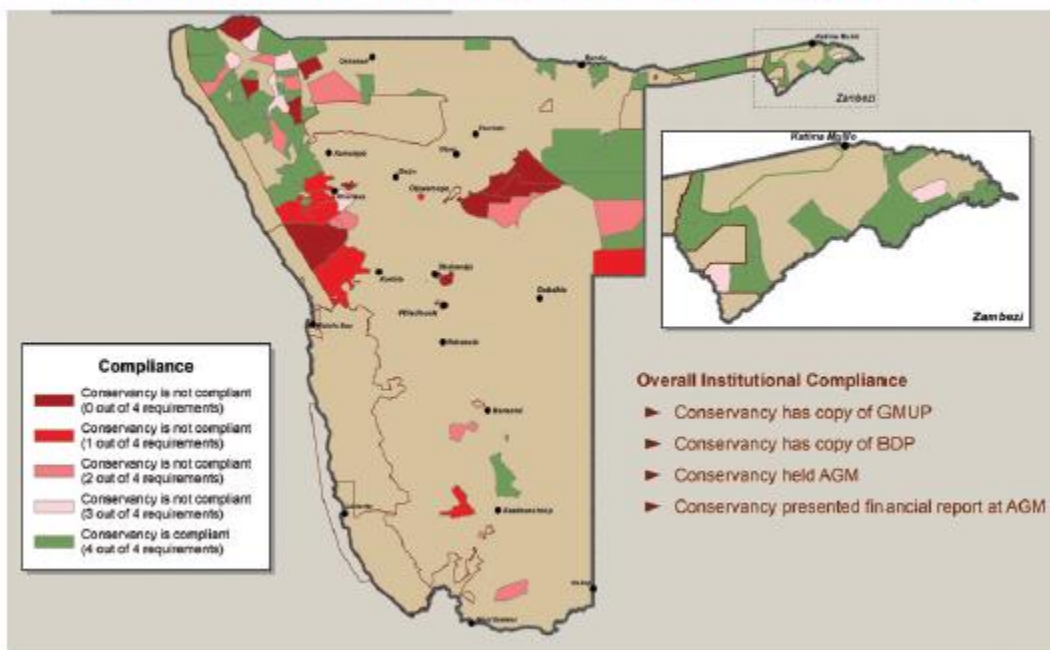


Figure 11: Good Governance and Institutional Compliance⁴⁰⁴

⁴⁰⁴ MET/NACSO, “The State of Community Conservation in Namibia: Annual Report 2019: A Review of Communal Conservancies, Community Forests and Other CBNRM Initiatives.”

This discussion of allegations of corruption at the local level also demonstrates another way in which CBNRM is best understood as a GGPA. As some of the accounts from Torra described, many of these issues were attributed to climate change, which demonstrates the way the drought has important cascading impacts on the assemblage of actors involved. Moreover, it elucidates the way in which local politics are indivisible from national and global politics in this layered governance arrangement, rather than the community being its own unit of analysis separate from the others. Instead, what we see is the way in which rules and forms of power that exist relationally between actors are indivisible and simultaneously key to determining outcomes for this policy assemblage as will be further unpacked below.

Towards an Empowered Community?

This chapter has unpacked the complex genesis of CBNRM as well as the manifold relations between a multitude of entities and the power that is produced among actors as control is outsourced by the state. Namibia's CBNRM legislation outlines the provision for a devolution of power from the central government to local communities. In this sense communities are able to organize to manage local resources and benefit financially, which often leads to varying degrees of empowerment of local organizations.⁴⁰⁵ There is a corresponding degree of authority that is devolved by the government which no longer maintains direct control over the management of these resources or their benefits. This relationship, however, is much more complex as while conservancies are granted rights to manage certain resources, they are not granted full legal authority over the land itself which is a key piece to the puzzle of wildlife conservation.⁴⁰⁶ The

⁴⁰⁵ Hoole, "Place-Power-Prognosis."

⁴⁰⁶ Brian Jones, Environment and Development Consultant, February 20, 2020.

success of wildlife is inextricably linked to the effective management of the habitat within which they dwell, and as such managing one without having control over another can result in a number of contradictions for decision making. Thus, communities are given the responsibility of managing resources, downloading costs normally incurred by the state, yet the state maintains mechanisms to exert sovereign power. Furthermore, the Namibian state maintains a number of ongoing oversight mechanisms over the conservancies. The state suggests this is intended to prevent local level corruption which has and continues to be seen as discussed above, but in practice this coercive oversight also limits conservancies in which activities they can choose to pursue, thus limiting the key pillar of ownership and empowerment.⁴⁰⁷ Activities that are limited include the types and quantities of wildlife that can be extracted in a given period which will be further discussed later in the dissertation, what certain areas and types of land may be used for, as well as how resources on that land can be utilized or who will benefit from them including minerals, forests, and freshwater resources. In order to conduct any of these activities or implement changes impacting certain areas, conservancies must apply for and have their request approved by the relevant ministry which can be costly, time consuming, and difficult to achieve.

While conservancies control the rights to ‘manage’ wildlife this is a bit misleading as the government maintains control over it and issues permits for any form of hunting to be undertaken.⁴⁰⁸ This has proven to be controversial as local populations often rely on hunting for meat. Furthermore, in most conservancies trophy hunting has formed the backbone of their tourism operations and can count for well over half of conservancy revenues, while in some as much as eighty to ninety per cent of revenue at one point was derived from various forms of trophy hunting

⁴⁰⁷ Interview, Pohamba Shifeta, Minister of Environment and Tourism, January 29 2020.

⁴⁰⁸ Boudreaux, “A New Call of the Wild.”

as seen below in Table 4.⁴⁰⁹ Thus, in times of protracted drought – as Namibia has now been experiencing for almost a decade – far fewer permits are granted and communities’ ways of life as well as the viability of the CBNRM programs become increasingly under stress. Nonetheless, this is likely an important and necessary check on power to ensure wildlife populations remain stable and maintain the sustainability of the tourism sector. By devolving power, the state can overcome its inability to govern certain areas and communities are granted the freedom to govern themselves if they do so in a way deemed responsibly by the assemblage of actors involved.⁴¹⁰ In this sense, conservancies are given the responsibilities of quasi-sovereign actors without being afforded many of the tools that often come with sovereignty. This paradox is pointed to either directly or indirectly by much of the literature on CBNRM as well as within the vast majority of the interviews conducted during the fieldwork for this dissertation.⁴¹¹

YEAR	SOURCE OF CASH INCOME AND IN-KIND BENEFITS TO CONSERVANCIES AND MEMBERS	VALUE IN N\$	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL
2019	Joint-venture tourism (includes all cash income to conservancies and members)	93 486 012	61.3
2019	Conservation hunting (includes all cash income and meat to conservancies and members)	39 480 595	25.9
2019	Community-based tourism	7 569 429	5.0
2019	Game harvesting for meat, conflict animals and live sales	6 363 201	4.2
2019	Indigenous plant products	2 155 377	1.4
2019	Miscellaneous (e.g. interest)	1 974 239	1.3
2019	Crafts	1 420 496	0.9
		152 449 349	100

Table 4: Sources of Returns to Conservancy Members⁴¹²

⁴⁰⁹ Interview, Willie Boonzaaier, Programme Director, Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation, January 24, 2020.

⁴¹⁰ Abrahamsen, “The Power of Partnerships in Global Governance.”

⁴¹¹ Schnegg, “Institutional Multiplexity”; Cruise and Izzy, “Investigation into the Efficacy of Namibia’s Wildlife Conservation Model as It Relates to African Elephants (*Loxodonta Africana*)”; Stasja Koot, Paul Hebinck, and Sian Sullivan, “Science for Success—A Conflict of Interest? Researcher Position and Reflexivity in Socio-Ecological Research for CBNRM in Namibia,” *Society & Natural Resources* 0, no. 0 (May 21, 2020): 1–18.

⁴¹² MET/NACSO, “The State of Community Conservation in Namibia: Annual Report 2019: A Review of Communal Conservancies, Community Forests and Other CBNRM Initiatives.”

NGOs provide a similarly complex notion of power at the local level. They generally purport to be there to provide resources and technical support and training in order to help communities realize their own goals. Communities, for their part, have become imbricated in the policy assemblage that is CBNRM and conservancy council leaders, staff, as well as conservancy members in general largely responded that they have been empowered by CBNRM and that they maintain decision making power.⁴¹³ While they acknowledge that there are a number of actors who benefit, as well as control and delegate resources within the conservancy, there was a widespread sentiment that CBNRM was supported and managed within the community and that benefits at least partially remained with conservancy members.⁴¹⁴ However, questions remain regarding ongoing activities as individual NGOs have varying priorities which can be seen in the way CBNRM programs are operationalized in various communities. It becomes difficult to unpack which are local community priorities and which might be indirect spillovers from the will of certain actors within the international community. This is one of the ways analyzing this iteration of global environmental governance as a GGPA enables us to examine the degree to which CBNRM activities are developed around creating benefits for local residents in the form of sustainable growth, versus being geared toward achieving the goals of certain global actors such as the environmental movement in the form of the protection of certain wildlife species.

Knowing where decision making stems from can be difficult as NGOs are dependent on international donors. While many of Namibia's NGOs are 'domestic', almost all receive funding from a variety of international donors. While this is often provided by USAID and similar organizations – supposedly at arm's length to mitigate the need of governments to administer it

⁴¹³ Focus group 4, Anabeb Conservancy, February 7, 2020

⁴¹⁴ Interview, Village respondent 3, Uisbasen/Twyfelfontein, January 30, 2020; Farmer 3, #Khoadi !Hoas Conservancy, February 10, 2020; Employee: Grootberg Lodge, #Khoadi !Hoas Conservancy, February 10, 2020.

directly – the interests of donors are shown to impact the types of activities NGOs favour and resultantly discipline the types of conservation activities that take place in various conservancies.⁴¹⁵

The influence of actors who hold the power of global capital can materialize with notions of what conservation should look like, how it ought to be conducted, or even what ‘good governance’ entails. The current partners providing funding and support for IRDNC as one example, include: the Big Lottery Fund, Brot für die Welt, the Conservation Travel Foundation, the Embassy of Finland in Namibia, the Environmental Investment Fund of Namibia, the Global Environment Facility, the German Agency for International Cooperation, the Goldman Environmental Prize, the Houston Zoo, the Minnesota Zoo Foundation, the Namibia Chamber of Environment, Namibia Tours and Safaris, the Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa, TRAFFIC, TUSK, the Umsizi Foundation, the University of Cape Town, the Southern Africa Regional Environmental Programme, the United States Agency for International Development, the Wildlife Conservation Network, the World Wildlife Fund, Mai Family, and the Morby Family Charitable Foundation.⁴¹⁶ Willie Boonzaaier, program Director for IRDNC suggests NGOs have been struggling due to core funding being ignored which results in having to spend more time and resources working to procure smaller donations from an increased number of donors.⁴¹⁷ Dr. Margaret Jacobson, one of the founders of IRDNC echoed this sentiment lamenting that

Initially those who began the program largely worked for free and were in the business of humanitarianism, but now it has become big business and increasingly resources go toward procuring resources just to keep the organizations running and their people employed, with

⁴¹⁵ Boudreaux, “A New Call of the Wild.”

⁴¹⁶ “Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation - Partners,” accessed November 22, 2021.

⁴¹⁷ Interview, Willie Boonzaaier, Programme Director, Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation, January 24, 2020.

less going toward actual conservation initiatives. This has resulted in too much NGO power, to the point where some organizations see themselves as the program.⁴¹⁸

The increasing power of NGOs is another one of the key contradictions of CBNRM, as NGOs are so central to its successful operation that community members at times seem tangential to decision making processes. NGOs are often staffed with technical experts and well-educated officials whose preconceived notions become difficult not to instill in the management and evolution of projects. Boonzaaier builds on this technocratic rise suggesting that there is an important community empowerment aspect to the program, but also acknowledges that he sees those NGOs who control funding, having the greatest say and the ability to exert their own will within partnerships. I asked each of the thirteen officials I interviewed from various NGOs to what degree their decision making is autonomous from the will of their donors, and each unsurprisingly reported that they make decisions internally within their organizations based on realizing the goals of the CBNRM program. However, each pointed to the increasingly squeezed nature of funding streams they are constantly in pursuit of, as well as the perpetual requirement to appease both current and prospective donors for their very survival. None of these organizations can exist without donors, and without donors they would not be able to provide services or realize any goals. Beyond the need to endlessly pursue funding streams Cecilia Tortajada argues

Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) were once considered as altruistic groups which aim was to impartially influence public policy with no vested interests. Nevertheless, this perception has changed. They are increasingly perceived as groups that prioritize their own

⁴¹⁸ Interview, Dr. Margaret Jacobson, co-founder IRDNC, co-director, trustee, mentor, Conservancy Safaris Namibia, Swakopmund, February 17, 2020.

ideologies or that respond to the interest of their donors, patrons, and members rather than to those of the groups they represent.⁴¹⁹

As a result, compromises must be made and rarely do these compromises favour rural African communities. These social and power relations between donor, government, NGO, and community result in a push and pull as these actors all work to further their interests though largely working toward similar goals. These complex relationships and negotiations have important impacts on how governance functions, and it is these power relations that the subsequent chapters of this dissertation will further unpack.

Conclusions

This chapter contributes to the discussion of the genesis of CBNRM in Namibia. In it I have built on existing studies that pointed to some of the complex power relations and political maneuvering involved in the policy that enabled CBNRM. I have outlined the ways in which CBNRM results from a confluence of the concerted actions of a number of heterogeneous actors who are able to exercise their will within the governance arrangement that CBNRM enables. From there, they procure funds from a number of international actors in order to realize certain goals on the ground. As a result, the goals of many are realized at times synergistically, while at others they are in competition with one another, and the interests of certain actors win out over others. This is demonstrated in the activities that occur on the ground and the types of conservation that takes place. In order to better understand CBNRM as a form of resource governance and offer

⁴¹⁹ Cecilia Tortajada, "Nongovernmental Organizations and Influence on Global Public Policy," *Asia & the Pacific Policy Studies* 3, no. 2 (2016): 266.

meaningful analysis as to its merits for sustainable development and community empowerment it is first important to understand the history that led to its development.

In many cases, the government has been unwilling or unable to provide important services which are in some instances now being provided by conservancies to ensure the health and well being of local populations, and so that communities remain safe and accessible for tourists. This is perhaps the quintessential example of the Namibian state and the assemblage of actors using the productive levers of CBNRM to steer subjects in order to provide for themselves the types of services normally provided by government, while realizing important local, national, and global goals. In Namibia there is both public health care and education for example, but both important services are subsidized where possible from conservancy benefits accrued through incomes provided indirectly through tourism. Moreover, local tourism operators often contribute directly to public works such as road signs, infrastructure, transportation, and healthcare. In rural areas far from the capital, public investment in these areas is often ineffective at best, or completely absent at worst. As such, tourism companies will invest in these areas in order to improve community welfare, but also always with their bottom lines at forefront of mind. Without adequate healthcare they cannot staff their enterprises and without proper roads and signage tourists cannot access their locations or will not want to if the commute is too uncomfortable or precarious.⁴²⁰ The next Chapter will begin examining climate change as a key factor and its impacts on the evolution of this global policy assemblage as well as discuss the challenges it is posing CBNRM in Namibia.

⁴²⁰ Interview, Manager, Palmwag Lodge, February 5 2020.

Chapter 5

Climate Change: Local Challenges, Global Opportunities?

“Wildlife populations were rebounding all along and they have been hurting the last few years, but it’s just because of the drought, not the conservancies.”⁴²¹

CBNRM has been widely studied for its potential benefits as a domestic policy for conservation, sustainable development, and community empowerment. What existing studies have yet to adequately account for however, is how the impacts of climate change affect CBNRM programs and their outcomes. As CBNRM is intended to give rights to communities to sustainably manage their local resources in order to commoditize them and benefit economically, any major environmental changes have a direct impact on both the ability to conserve resources and to engage in sustainable livelihoods. While we know the effects of climate change will be felt asymmetrically across the globe, one of the starkest examples of this is Namibia. Namibia is the second most sparsely populated country on earth, with just over 2.6 million people spread across an area of almost 830,000 sq km.⁴²² To put this into perspective, neighbouring South Africa’s land mass is approximately fifty per cent larger than Namibia’s but has a population of about sixty million people – roughly 24 times the population of Namibia. While Namibia is one of the wealthiest countries per capita in Africa, many of its people remain quite poor and with such a small population, it has contributed only a small fraction of the historical global GHG emissions. This discrepancy between a relatively high GDP per capita yet persistent high rates of poverty are a result of Namibia being one of the world’s most unequal countries with a Gini coefficient of 59.1,

⁴²¹ Interview, Brian Jones, Environment and Development Consultant, Windhoek, February 20, 2020.

⁴²² CIA World Factbook, “Africa :: Namibia — The World Factbook - Central Intelligence Agency,” 2020.

ranking second behind only South Africa according to the World Bank.⁴²³ The fragile climate mixed with high rates of inequality and poverty have important impacts on development initiatives, and CBNRM is no exception. This chapter outlines how environmental impacts are affecting the viability of the CBNRM program. It also discusses how omission of climate change within policy debates has been detrimental to developmental outcomes as the policies, people, and programs must evolve and adapt to changing realities in order to continue to garner success. Beyond this, the chapter outlines ways in which climate change has begun to enter into the discussions and activities on the ground – despite being mentioned only rarely in the literature – and certain opportunities have begun being exploited as a result.

The first few years of the current drought resulted in increased discontent with the program. As the drought has dragged on year after year however, and as the epigraph from Chapter 1 outlines, many Namibians have come to accept that climate change is a very real crisis they will continue to face and that their actions must account for this new reality at every turn.⁴²⁴ This has materialized in new partnerships at the local, national, and global levels in order to pursue novel funding mechanisms to develop approaches for climate change adaptation and mitigation that can be realized through the governance framework of the CBNRM program. These partnerships have expanded the types of activities conservancies take part in. They have evolved beyond traditional forms of wildlife management for ecotourism ventures, to now seek to compete to be as green as possible. Conservancies are increasingly working with farmers to develop more sustainable farming techniques, while also finding solutions to protect their livestock and provide water for them, all the while ensuring space, water, and food for the wildlife on which much of their

⁴²³ World Bank, “Gini Index (World Bank Estimate) | Data,” accessed January 21, 2022.

⁴²⁴ Interview, Maxi Pia Louis, Director, Namibia Association of CBNRM Support Organizations, January 14, 2020.

economic well being is predicated.⁴²⁵ The CBNRM program has been evolving in a number of ways that has produced benefits in certain conservancies which have been enjoyed by some members, however, in many cases these evolutions stem from outside the communities as well as outside Namibia. Interestingly as partnerships have proliferated, the language of climate change has too. As mentioned in Chapter 3, I did not travel to Namibia with the intentions of seeking climate change as a key object of study, but as the research unfolded, discussions of the changing environment factored into virtually every interview and conversation I had. This demonstrates one of the many strengths of the assembled approach to both data collection and analysis, as it enables us to find what awaits in the field rather than entering with a strictly defined plan and developing analyses to support pre-determined conclusions. These unexpected conversations mirrored many of the activities on the ground that have shifted to fighting climate change, these efforts and the resources that go into them are at times allocated based on who is most well connected to the right players and where the international community will most benefit as a result. The exogenous nature of these evolutions and the issues they can create for local communities will be further unpacked in this chapter.

In some ways these evolutions of CBNRM in response to climate change have resulted in a renewed outlook on the program as people have shifted from blaming others for newfound challenges and instead have begun to accept their new reality, and act to adapt to it while also working to mitigate further harmful effects. In many cases what these renewed partnerships, activities, and outlooks have resulted in are novel opportunities for CBNRM in Namibia that are slowly leading to diversification, though the degree to which they are becoming successful in developing the third important pillar of CBNRM – community empowerment remains less clear.

⁴²⁵ Interview, Pohamba Shifeta, Minister of Environment and Tourism, January 29 2020.

Climate change is presenting opportunities for communities as well as the assemblage of actors involved in CBNRM. Opportunities in this sense does not necessarily connote something intrinsically positive, but indicates how adaptation and necessary responses to climate change do provide avenues for some actors to adopt new strategies for profitable enterprises, survival, and pursuing certain interests. Opportunities are presenting themselves in the form of partnerships which are leading to novel activities intended to make the CBNRM program and the ecotourism activities on which it is based increasingly environmentally sustainable. This includes by developing renewable energy systems to power lodges, innovative systems for trapping and reusing grey water, as well as installing solar systems for mitigating human wildlife conservation. These opportunities bring new actors into the assemblage who come with new funding streams as well as the backing of powerful global organizations. Analyzing CBNRM as GGPA enables us to account for this constantly shifting set of components as well as their interactions and the outcomes that result. While these evolutions have created important and measurable benefits for the CBNRM program, it also results in a proliferation of partnerships and a continuing reliance on the will of the international community. This chapter further unpacks these developments in order to better understand the way CBNRM programs have reacted to their greatest challenge by taking advantage of the opportunities climate change has presented them with. It places a specific focus on the evolution of the GGPA, the new endeavours being pursued by actors within it, as well as importantly unpacks who in fact is winning and losing as a result of these newfound opportunities.

A changing climate in a fragile environment

In his 2015 State of the Union Address, then US President Barack Obama, proclaimed that climate change is the greatest threat to future generations. Since then, this has become an increasingly

incontrovertible statement. Climate change continues to consistently worsen at an increasingly alarming pace. There is ongoing debate as to whether it is being accepted and acknowledged as an existential threat, and for good reason – as collectively the world is continuing to fail to adequately treat it as such. While year after year, improvements are made, and increasing resources and energies are targeted towards important adaptation and mitigation efforts, these remain too few and at far too slow a pace – especially in the Global South. The world is currently on pace to surpass the goal of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels set out by the Paris Declaration in 2015, and it seems all but assured we will even pass the higher 2 degree increase that was agreed upon by the Conference of the Parties. Already the effects of climate change are being felt in near-catastrophic ways around the globe, though in asymmetric and perverse ways. This asymmetry is explained by Robert Keohane in asking us to

Imagine two maps of the world. One displays the relative severity of environmental problems—air pollution, soil and water degradation, desertification, destruction of habitat—and therefore biodiversity. The other map shows the capabilities that governments have to cope with these problems: the material resources at their disposal, the level of education of their people, the competence and honesty of their governments. Juxtaposing these maps would graphically reveal that environmental problems are most serious in those parts of the world with least capacity to deal autonomously with them.⁴²⁶

While it might be assumed this would call for greater immediacy to action, one of the problems is that the world's biggest polluters – both historically and present – are those which are generally

⁴²⁶ Robert O. Keohane and Marc A. Levy, *Institutions for Environmental Aid: Pitfalls and Promise*, Global Environmental Accords. Strategies for Sustainability (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1996), 6.

set to experience some of the least severe effects of climate change, while simultaneously being in the best position to mitigate these harmful effects.

Sadly, not all countries have this relative luxury, and it is many of the world's poorest countries which are experiencing the impacts of climate change more severely than the global average. This is true for southern Africa generally, and particularly for Namibia as the driest country in Africa South of the Sahara.⁴²⁷ Joel Wainwright and Geoff Mann summarize this paradox positing,

the oft-noted scandal of climate change is that those who caused it will not live to see its full consequences, and those who are suffering or will suffer worst did not cause the problem. This dynamic has a distinct spatial and temporal distribution, through which the living rich enjoy extraordinary privilege relative to the poor and yet to be born.⁴²⁸

For Namibia this has resulted in an already dry country becoming increasingly arid year after year and making questions of climate change's existentialism quickly evaporate. The people of Namibia as well as its flora and fauna have spent generations adapting to a harsh environment marked by periodic droughts. However, droughts have been increasing in frequency, severity, and duration for a number of decades compounding the difficulties they must face.⁴²⁹ Currently they have been experiencing a severe drought that has lasted almost a decade and it is putting increased pressure on virtually every aspect of life in the country. Van Rensburg and Tortajada outline that

Namibia is the most arid country in Sub-Saharan Africa. In Windhoek, the capital city, accelerated population growth and expanding economic activities, coupled with highly

⁴²⁷ Jarkko Saarinen, *Political Ecologies and Economies of Tourism Development in Kaokoland, North-West Namibia* (Routledge, 2016).

⁴²⁸ Mann and Wainwright, *Climate Leviathan*, 72.

⁴²⁹ Kevin Coldrey and Jane Turpie, "Climate Change Risk Assessment for Namibia's Communal Conservancies," 2020.

variable rainfall and multiyear droughts, have jeopardized water security and put enormous stress on socioeconomic development.⁴³⁰

This has resulted in a plethora of new challenges as well as exacerbated almost every existing issue. For the CBNRM program – which intimately ties the well being of people, to their resources, and thus to local ecological health – these challenges have become starkly evident.⁴³¹

The threat climate change is posing CBNRM became sufficiently concerning that a report was commissioned by NACSO partners to outline the challenges facing the conservancy program as well as to provide recommendations for moving forward sustainably. WWF-Norway partnered with other WWF offices including Namibia's to produce research that would help communal conservancies in Namibia adapt to and mitigate the harmful effects of climate change. The report, issued by Anchor Environmental, found that conservancies are experiencing higher population growth rates than the rest of the country and high demands on land mixed with increasingly fragile environments are compounding an already difficult situation. This population growth is predominantly a result of a number of years of difficult financial times for the country, and the hope of benefitting from the services and payments offered by conservancies. Satellite data has identified that large parts of the Northwest region of Namibia – largely the most CBNRM intensive – especially within conservancy boundaries there has been considerable declines in the productivity of land over the past 17 years. Of the various types of land use however, wildlife designated zones tend to be increasing in productivity. This is leading to worries as “there is also increasing concerns that wildlife areas are being reduced through fencing off land for agriculture

⁴³⁰ van Rensburg and Tortajada, “An Assessment of the 2015–2017 Drought in Windhoek,” 1.

⁴³¹ Andrew Heffernan, “Accounting for Climate Change in CBNRM: Reflections on Wildlife Conservation in Namibia,” *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 2022.

as well as through invasion by cattle.”⁴³² Thus, the one type of land use that is being demonstrated as environmentally beneficial – wildlife zones – are being encroached upon and reduced by environmentally harmful land use practices – livestock farming. Furthermore, 200 hectares of forest coverage has been lost on average per year since 2001 across northern Namibian conservancies. Forest cover is being lost due to removal for agricultural purposes, use in building and as fuel, as well as through drier conditions that are leading to increased forest fires. Core wildlife zones of conservancies have seen 556 hectares of forest lost and 2209 hectares from multiple use zones between 2001 and 2018.

While it is difficult to isolate exact causes of both land degradation and loss in forest cover, Research demonstrates that it is in part due to human population pressures/activities and changes in the climate. The report by Anchor Environmental uses forecasting tools based on historical averages and suggests total precipitation across Namibia will decrease by nearly nine per cent for the period between 2040 and 2060 relative to historical (1960 to 1990) precipitation. This amounts to expected rainfall decreases of twenty per cent in the dry season and eight per cent in the rainy season. While these patterns are not uniform across the country, mean annual temperature is expected to increase by three degrees Celsius (fifteen per cent) – well in excess of the Paris Agreement’s goal of 1.5 degrees Celsius or even the fallback target of two degrees Celsius.⁴³³ These increases in temperature and decreases in rainfall are expected in an already extremely hot and dry region where people rely heavily on their local environments for livelihoods and subsistence. As a result of the changing climate, conservancies are being confronted with a number of challenges that are compounding previously existing issues. The findings by Anchor

⁴³² Coldrey and Turpie, “Climate Change Risk Assessment for Namibia’s Communal Conservancies,” 2020, vi.

⁴³³ Coldrey and Turpie, vi.

Environmental are corroborated by findings by van Rensburg and Tortajada who present an assessment of the 2015-17 drought in Windhoek. They outline the severity of the drought which began to be painfully felt by the residents of Windhoek as well as much of the rest of Namibia during this time, but they argue that

looking back at the data, it is clear that the drought really started with the poor rain and runoff of 2012/2013, yet the effects online became fully visible due to the continuous below average precipitation. Most recently, 2019 saw the lowest recorded rainfall in Windhoek since 1891 and the worst in the last 90 years in Namibia.⁴³⁴

This is further outlined in Figure 12 below that shows historical rainfall patterns for Namibia. This data demonstrates three severe droughts over the past fifty years which are usually understood to be approximately two-year events. However, as the data demonstrates and as the authors outline above, the precipitation patterns that lead to these serious drought events usually set in well before their effects begin to be felt and last well after, as has been the case with the current drought.

⁴³⁴ van Rensburg and Tortajada, “An Assessment of the 2015–2017 Drought in Windhoek,” 2.

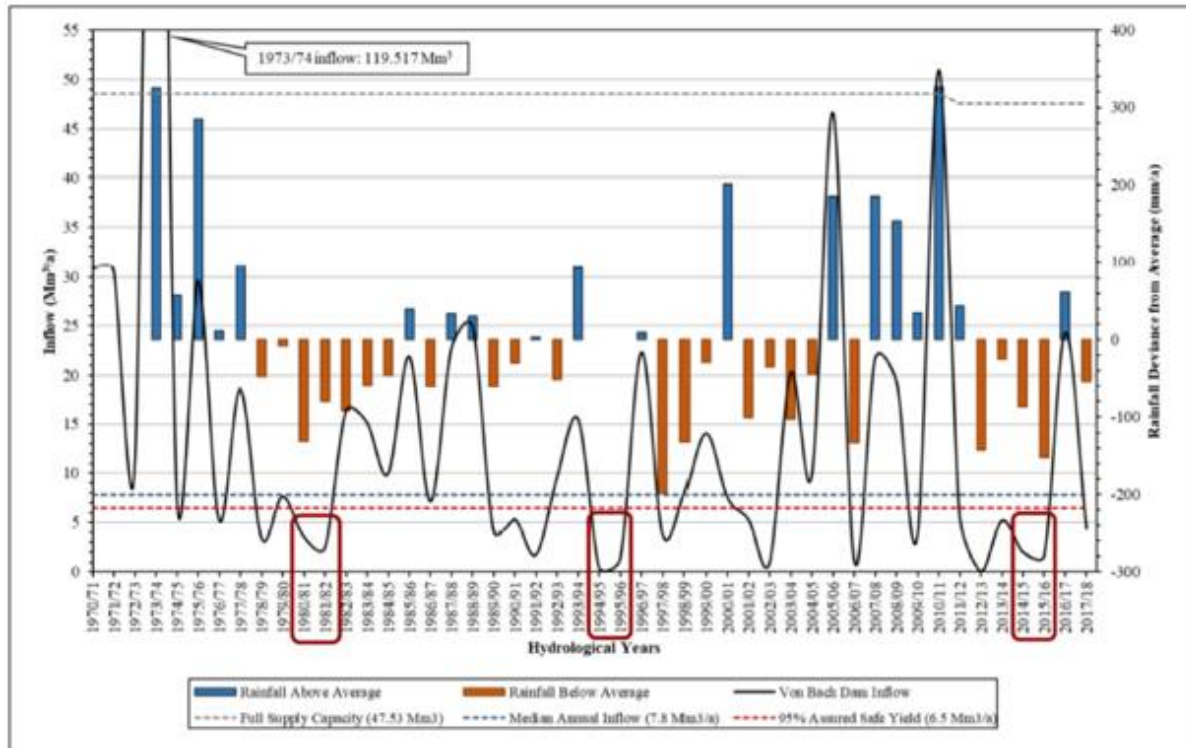


Figure 12: Rainfall Variability in Windhoek⁴³⁵

As a result of this stark reality, climate change has become a part of our daily lexicon. It is a phenomenon that factors into almost every academic conference, policy strategy, or NGO platform and is pervasive on the global agenda. For Namibians, climate change has become a chronic challenge that is slowly changing the very nature of their landscape and threatening their way of life. This is primarily for two reasons. First, Namibia has been experiencing increasingly erratic climate variability which has demonstrated trends of hotter temperatures and decreasing precipitation levels in what is already the driest country in sub-Saharan Africa.⁴³⁶ Second, as with much of the rest of the African continent over sixty per cent of Namibians rely on the land to some degree for their livelihoods, and thus shifts in the climate do not simply cause acute disasters, but

⁴³⁵ Tortajada, "Nongovernmental Organizations and Influence on Global Public Policy."

⁴³⁶ World Bank, "Overview," Text/HTML, World Bank, 2021.

also chronically limit their ability to feed themselves or to obtain sufficient freshwater.⁴³⁷ This poses existential challenges as we know “water is a determinant of health and health forms the very basis of human well-being. Water, like health, forms the very basis of human survival and thus the right to life. In many instances water is both a solution and a threat to human life.”⁴³⁸ For Namibia this has historically been true as its flora and fauna have spent millennia evolving in order to adapt to the dry conditions. However, in recent years water – and specifically its increasing scarcity – has become a growing threat to all forms of life.

In Namibia, discussions of climate change quickly lose their abstract nature and become not only a part of almost every conversation but also enmeshed in most people’s every action. The country has been experiencing a severe drought for the better part of a decade and this is widely visible across its landscapes. While droughts are part of the normal hydrological cycle, dozens of interview respondents reported that their severity, frequency, and duration have been increasing in recent decades. These interviews are shored up by stark scientific data that demonstrate how the current drought is beginning to pose existential challenges to some of the regions of the country hardest hit and further disproportionately impacting marginalized populations that are already least well off.⁴³⁹

The Namibian landscape is generally a mix of savanna and semi-arid desert with some areas being fully desert.⁴⁴⁰ As of 2020 the country was still in the grips of one of the most severe

⁴³⁷ Schnegg and Kiaka, “Subsidized Elephants.”

⁴³⁸ Ashlea Webber et al., “Water as Threat and Solution: Improving Health Outcomes in Developing Country Contexts,” in *Water, Energy, Food and People Across the Global South: ‘The Nexus’ in an Era of Climate Change*, ed. Larry A. Swatuk and Corrine Cash, International Political Economy Series (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2018), 187–206.

⁴³⁹ FAO, “Namibia at a Glance | FAO in Namibia | Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations,” accessed May 7, 2020.

⁴⁴⁰ FAO.

and protracted droughts in recent history.⁴⁴¹ One of the places that presents the starkest example of the drought is in the region that is home to one of the country's UNESCO World Heritage Sites – the 'White Lady' Paintings at Brandberg Mountain in Tsiseb Conservancy in the Kunene region. These paintings are estimated to be approximately 5,000 years old, and their interest have led to a small village developing nearby where tour guides and their families live.⁴⁴² This area, however, has not received rain in over four years which is severely affecting the ability of this village to survive as they dig deeper and deeper boreholes which continuously produce less water. Furthermore, the water is increasingly salinized despite it being approximately 100 kilometres from the coast as the salt seeps into the groundwater once bore holes go deep enough.⁴⁴³

Nearby, also in Tsiseb Conservancy, is the Brandberg White Lady Lodge – one of the country's most well-known tourist lodges. This lodge provides up to eighty per cent of the conservancy's revenue when it is operating at peak capacity.⁴⁴⁴ It is a beautiful lodge nestled at the bottom of the Brandberg Mountain where two rivers – the Uis and Ugab – meet. This confluence of rivers serves an important function for tourism as both the lodge and the campsites overlook this area and during the dry season when water runs short elsewhere elephants, giraffes, oryx, kudu, and other wildlife can usually be seen where these two ephemeral rivers join. However due to the ongoing drought, the rivers which usually flow for several weeks a year, have been dry now for years and the tourism operators and local communities are unsure where the local resident elephants are as they do not know where there are any remaining sources of water available.⁴⁴⁵ The lodge was built specifically for these topographic features, but has in recent years been re-branding

⁴⁴¹ World Bank, "World Bank Climate Change Knowledge Portal," 2020.

⁴⁴² Owen-Smith, *An Arid Eden*.

⁴⁴³ Interview, Hiking guide, Brandberg 'White Lady' paintings, January 28, 2020

⁴⁴⁴ Interview, David Eiseb, manager, Sorris Sorris Conservancy, January 29, 2020

⁴⁴⁵ Interview, Sarah Roos, Manager, Brandberg White Lady Lodge, January 28, 2020

increasingly towards the nearby ‘White Lady’ paintings as the rivers have remained dry with no end in sight.⁴⁴⁶ This has become a major part of the ongoing struggle in Namibia as riverbeds are key to life. Particularly during the rainy season when even ephemeral rivers are flowing, it is where communities can procure much of their water, where wildlife spend much of their time, where farmers water their livestock, as well as an important – and at times treacherous – part of transportation in the country.

This key aspect to life for Namibians however, has increasingly been under threat as as early as 2007 the IPCC was already warning that the impacts of climate change would be more pronounced in the near future than previously thought and research by Rosemary Shikangalah and Benjamin Mapani have found that

these impacts will have a direct impact on the quantity of water available for domestic and agricultural use as well as induce a systematic decimation of the biophysical environment central to the economic survival of marginal populations living in semi-arid and arid regions of Namibia. The gathering of social economic indicators from both the Namibia Statistics Agency (NSA) and the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform (MAWLR) sheds light on the vulnerability of these marginal populations. This data has been combined together to show how urgent and necessary it is to adapt new management policies so as to sustain populations supported by these ephemeral river systems.⁴⁴⁷

The overall decrease in rainfall demonstrated below in Table 5 that has been experienced in Namibia as well as the prolonged drought have increasingly become the norm and ephemeral rivers

⁴⁴⁶ Interview, Sarah Roos, Manager, Brandberg White Lady Lodge, January 28, 2020

⁴⁴⁷ Rosemary N. Shikangalah and Benjamin Mapani, “Ephemeral River Systems and Their Ecosystem Provisions to the Local Populations: A Review of the Huab and Ugab Rivers, Namibia” 14 (May 7, 2021): 47–48.

which supply large percentages of the population lie in areas with some of the lowest annual rainfall levels.⁴⁴⁸

Year	Khorixas (Station 16)	Konop Pos (Station 20)	Mopanie (Station 26)
2019	57.2	102.7	52.5
2018	117.3	141.9	178.3
2017	119.6	166.3	250.8
2016	Incomplete data	Incomplete data	Incomplete data

Table 5: Trends in Rainfall 2016-2019⁴⁴⁹

As climate change has asymmetric impacts between states, it has similar disproportionate effects within them. Outside of the major cities of Namibia there has been insufficient investments to build bridges and as a result, roads tend to traverse riverbeds. When rivers are flowing people generally assess their depth and the strength of the flow of water and – if deemed sufficiently safe – drive through them with their 4x4 vehicles. These rivers normally pose one of the major challenges to transportation in the country and one of the considerable dangers – especially to tourists who are less familiar with their strength and depth. However, recent years have increasingly seen dry riverbeds, and while this has facilitated land travel for those who can afford vehicles, it is compounding a number of issues for the remaining majority. Predominantly this means society's most marginalized are those who are disproportionately impacted. On the other hand, a lack of rain (up to a point) can perversely benefit wealthy tourists as it makes transportation easier which I experienced firsthand.

With the fieldwork for this dissertation taking place throughout the heart of the rainy season, one of the major and repeated warnings that was offered many times prior to setting out from Windhoek was to exercise extreme caution when driving through riverbed crossings as they

⁴⁴⁸ P. J. Jacobson and K. M. Jacobson, "Hydrologic Controls of Physical and Ecological Processes in Namib Desert Ephemeral Rivers: Implications for Conservation and Management," *Journal of Arid Environments*, Deserts of the World: Namib Desert: 50 years of research in a hyperarid desert, 93 (June 1, 2013): 80–93.

⁴⁴⁹ Tortajada, "Nongovernmental Organizations and Influence on Global Public Policy."

can be deeper, have a swifter current, or less solid footing than it might appear. However, throughout the roughly 8,000 km covered throughout the research process it was only in Purros Conservancy in the far Northwest of the country that I came across the Hoarusib which was the only river that was actually flowing throughout my time in the country. The dozens of ephemeral riverbeds I either saw or traversed were utterly dry and I was informed most had been for several years now. A further benefit to tourists, is that a lack of water makes finding wildlife easier, as they are forced to congregate at the fewer and fewer watering holes. Thus, again while wealthy tourists are more easily able to seek out Namibia's charismatic megafauna for photographic tourism to their delight, this is paralleled by an increasing threat to the lives and livelihoods of local Namibians. To be sure, in areas where the drought has persisted for too long with too much severity, this eventually ceases to be beneficial even for photographic tourism.

For most Namibians, rather than a nuisance for transportation – as the vast majority of Namibians do not own or have access to vehicles – rivers are treated like gold. This was made clear when the Chairperson of Sorris Sorris Conservancy which neighbours Tsiseb to the North, proclaimed “if river floods, we are rich” at an event unveiling a new solar plant at the Sorris Sorris Lodge.⁴⁵⁰ At this same event one of the area's traditional authorities addressing the crowd half-joked that “the area we are in used to be semi-desert, semi-arid. Now it is desert-desert or arid-arid.”⁴⁵¹ This has become less of a joke and instead more an uncomfortable reality for most Namibians. Even in driving to the event at Sorris Sorris Lodge, I was cautioned that the roadway was very winding, rough, and long, but that due to the drought I could instead easily drive through the riverbed for about fifteen km, and it would bring me from The Brandberg White Lady Lodge

⁴⁵⁰ Interview, Chairperson, Sorris Sorris Conservancy, January 29, 2020

⁴⁵¹ Interview, Traditional Authority, Sorris Sorris Conservancy, January 29, 2020

to Sorris Sorris Lodge, without much difficulty, which proved to be the case. Despite the convenience, it was nonetheless an uncomfortable reality knowing that I was driving through what would have been their gold, and the key to life.

Adolph Thaniseb, the chairperson of Uisbasen/Twyfelfontein Conservancy, slightly further north again from Sorris Sorris, reported that his conservancy has been particularly hard hit and that the “grass here has no energy left in it, so the livestock struggle.”⁴⁵² The Sorris Sorris Conservancy manager, David Eiseb says the country has lost 48,000 livestock due to the drought.⁴⁵³ This is further corroborated by a Food and Agriculture Organization report that shows findings that as of the first quarter of 2020 “over 59,000 livestock have died due to the ongoing drought situation in Namibia, disrupting the livelihoods of those dependent on livestock and related farming enterprises.”⁴⁵⁴ David says that they know Namibia is being particularly hard hit by climate change and within Namibia it is the Kunene region that is experiencing the worst of the effects.⁴⁵⁵ In similarly asking many rural farmers what the greatest challenges were to the CBNRM program many agreed with one farmer who responded “the main issue is drought, so cattle die or lions bite cows and they die. There is a compensation program set up for this, but the government doesn’t give the conservancies enough to dole out, so people are left uncompensated.”⁴⁵⁶ This quote reporting the fact that livestock are dying as a result of dehydration, while predators are increasingly driven to attack livestock, as the drought has limited their own ability to hunt more traditional prey.

⁴⁵² Interview, Adolph Thaniseb, Chairperson, Uisbased/Twyfelfontein, January 30, 2020

⁴⁵³ Interview, David Eiseb, manager, Sorris Sorris Conservancy, January 29, 2020

⁴⁵⁴ Simone (OCCP) Morini, “FAO Namibia Newsletter, 1st Semester 2020 - Issue #1,” 2020, 10.

⁴⁵⁵ Interview, David Eiseb, manager, Sorris Sorris Conservancy, January 29, 2020

⁴⁵⁶ Interview, Village respondent 1, Uisbasen/Twyfelfontein, January 30, 2020

Reading these types of statistics in reports and on websites is always one thing but getting a sense of it firsthand is really something different. When livestock fall dead in a field, they can be useful for a number of purposes and Namibians are careful to quickly process them in order to prevent wasting any possible useful materials from them. As a result, I did not witness dead livestock throughout the fieldwork. Zebras however, are being similarly hard hit by the drought, and I had the unfortunate experience of seeing what I would estimate to be approximately 75 dead zebra carcasses throughout my time in Namibia. At first, I assumed there must surely be a parasite or disease being passed through the population or that predators were killing them in large numbers. However, like with so many other tragedies in Namibia during the ongoing drought, it was repeatedly confirmed to me that they were dying off due to dehydration. While there have been a number of ongoing efforts between many of the actors involved in CBNRM to develop infrastructure to provide water for wildlife in the field, their efforts are not able to keep up and a number of species are struggling as a result of the impacts of climate change. While it never became easier seeing the seemingly endless carcasses throughout the research, it did in some ways begin to be less surprising. For the first couple weeks of this, I found it hard to wrap my head around the fact that these animals which have evolved over thousands of years in these harsh environments were simply not able to find sufficient water to survive. This is despite the fact that Namibia is home to a specific type of zebra known as Hartman's Mountain Zebra which have evolved to be smaller, require less food and water, and are able to cover more ground than regular zebras. Research conducted by Garth Owen-Smith also found that these zebras can go days and, in some cases, possibly even weeks without drinking water as long as they had access to green vegetation and specific perennial wild greases on which to graze, making their inability to survive

all the more astonishing.⁴⁵⁷ However, as the weeks passed and I covered thousands of kilometers, the one thing that remained constant, was a complete and utter lack of visible freshwater sources. Thus, I began to understand their plight, and the depth of the interconnected challenges facing both wildlife and human populations.

Local Challenges for Conservancies

As discussions of climate change emerged from the research process, I became interested to find out what people thought about climate change in Namibia. Across the world there are climate deniers as well as those who remain generally unconcerned with the growing threat to global ecological stability and biodiversity. I put this question to Maxi Pia Louis, Director of NACSO and she responded “here people do not have the luxury of not believing in the science. Climate change is all around us, it is undeniable, and it is threatening our way of life in the immediate...”⁴⁵⁸ As the research progressed, almost every conversation or interview would turn toward climate change, water, and/or the environment. Climate change has direct and deleterious impacts on almost every other component involved in this governance arrangement. Below I will outline some of the ways it is impacting the CBNRM program as it is having complex and interconnected impacts on the very way governing is able to occur.

The general consensus of my interlocutors was that the most serious specific challenge for the CBNRM program consists of mitigating issues relating to human-wildlife conflict. These conflicts can stem from increased numbers of wildlife, spreading human settlements that encroach on natural habitat, or by changes in the availability of water and/or food sources for animals. While

⁴⁵⁷ Owen-Smith, *An Arid Eden*.

⁴⁵⁸ Interview, Maxi Pia Louis, Director, Namibia Association of CBNRM Support Organizations, January 14, 2020.

Africa's charismatic megafauna are beautiful for tourists to observe from the comfort of their lodges or Land Cruisers, many of them are dangerous and destructive for local communities and farmers. In certain instances, predators including lions, leopards, cheetahs, jackals, and hyenas kill livestock, while elephants can stampede through towns and constantly cause costly damage to infrastructure – especially in search of water.⁴⁵⁹ This search for water also compounds problems as it makes tracking wildlife easier for those who might wish to do them harm. While poaching has been drastically reduced in recent years as a result of the CBNRM program, drought increases both the likelihood that people will choose to poach, as well as their potential for success.⁴⁶⁰ Eric Xaneb, Chairman of Tsiseb Conservancy says simply “elephants are generally good for tourists, bad for farmers, which is what everyone around here does” (referring to farming).⁴⁶¹ While CBNRM reduces some of the tensions between farmers and wildlife management, it does not resolve them entirely. This is specifically the case as certain species – such as those named above – are those which are most sought after by tourists and simultaneously those most threatening to the livelihoods of farmers. Figure 14 below shows trends in sightings of various wildlife populations and Figure 15 below that outlines the number of related incidents caused by these. This was one of the major concerns pointed to by some of the skeptics, as many communities initially agreed to implementing CBNRM with the vision of promoting more locally desirable wildlife – specifically regarding safety – such as kudu, oryx, springbok, gemsbok, black faced impala, giraffes, and zebras some of which can be seen in Figure 13 below.⁴⁶² However, what has predominantly occurred is the power of global capital wins out and wildlife that are less locally desirable are often

⁴⁵⁹ Interview, Michael Knight, Transboundary Leader for KAZA, WWF, January 23, 2020; Interview, Richard Diggle, Business/CBNRM Specialist, WWF, January 24, 2020; Interview, David Eiseb, manager, Sorris Sorris Conservancy, January 29, 2020; Interview, Uisa, Manager, Sesfontein Conservancy, February 6, 2020.

⁴⁶⁰ Interview, Maxi Pia Louis, Director, Namibia Association of CBNRM Support Organizations, January 14, 2020.

⁴⁶¹ Interview, Eric Xaneb, Chairman, Tsiseb Conservancy, January 27, 2020.

⁴⁶² Schnegg and Kiaka, “Subsidized Elephants.”

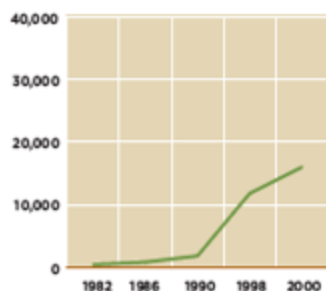
favoured in conservation activities over others. Shikangalah and Mapani demonstrate the types of issues this can lead to as,

Climate change will also have a direct effect on increasing human-wildlife conflict. With decreasing water resources, lions and elephants tend to access water points in human settlements. While the elephants are usually problematic in the Ugab, in the Huab Catchment, lions have been reported to be problematic (Desert Lion Conservation, 2018). When lions do not find their natural prey (wildlife), they target livestock and as the drought wears on, they become habitual livestock killers (Namibian Association of CBNRM Support Organisations, 2012; Tourism Supporting Conservancy, 2012). In 2018, the lions were reported to have been roaming in the Ugab catchment and caused problems associated with killing of livestock (aggressive behaviour) (Desert Lion Conservation, 2018). Preying on livestock is a disadvantage to the local populations, fuelling the human-wildlife conflicts. As such climate change is a major issue that should alert us to adopt methods of protecting these fragile ephemeral river systems for both human and wildlife survival, especially with regard to the abstraction volumes.⁴⁶³

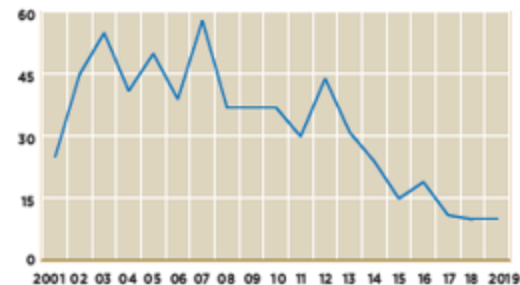
⁴⁶³ Shikangalah and Mapani, "Ephemeral River Systems and Their Ecosystem Provisions to the Local Populations," 47–48.

Gemsbok

Total population estimate

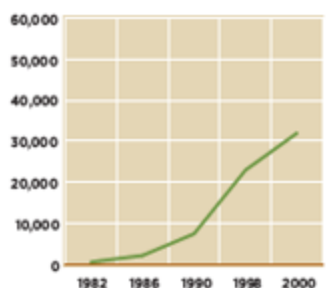


Number of animals per 100km driven

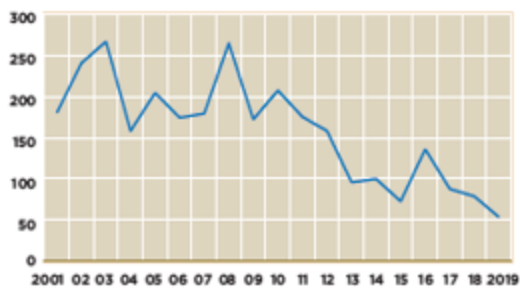


Springbok

Total population estimate

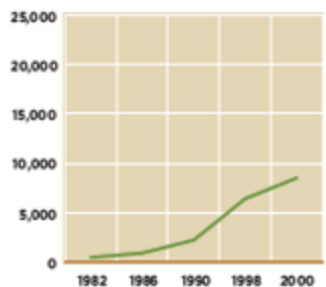


Number of animals per 100km driven



Hartmann's Mountain Zebra

Total population estimate



Number of animals per 100km driven

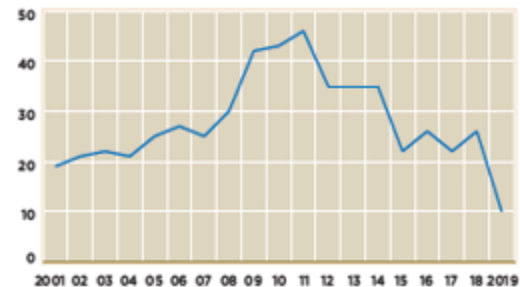


Figure 13: Wildlife Population Trends⁴⁶⁴

⁴⁶⁴ MET/NACSO, "The State of Community Conservation in Namibia: Annual Report 2019: A Review of Communal Conservancies, Community Forests and Other CBNRM Initiatives."

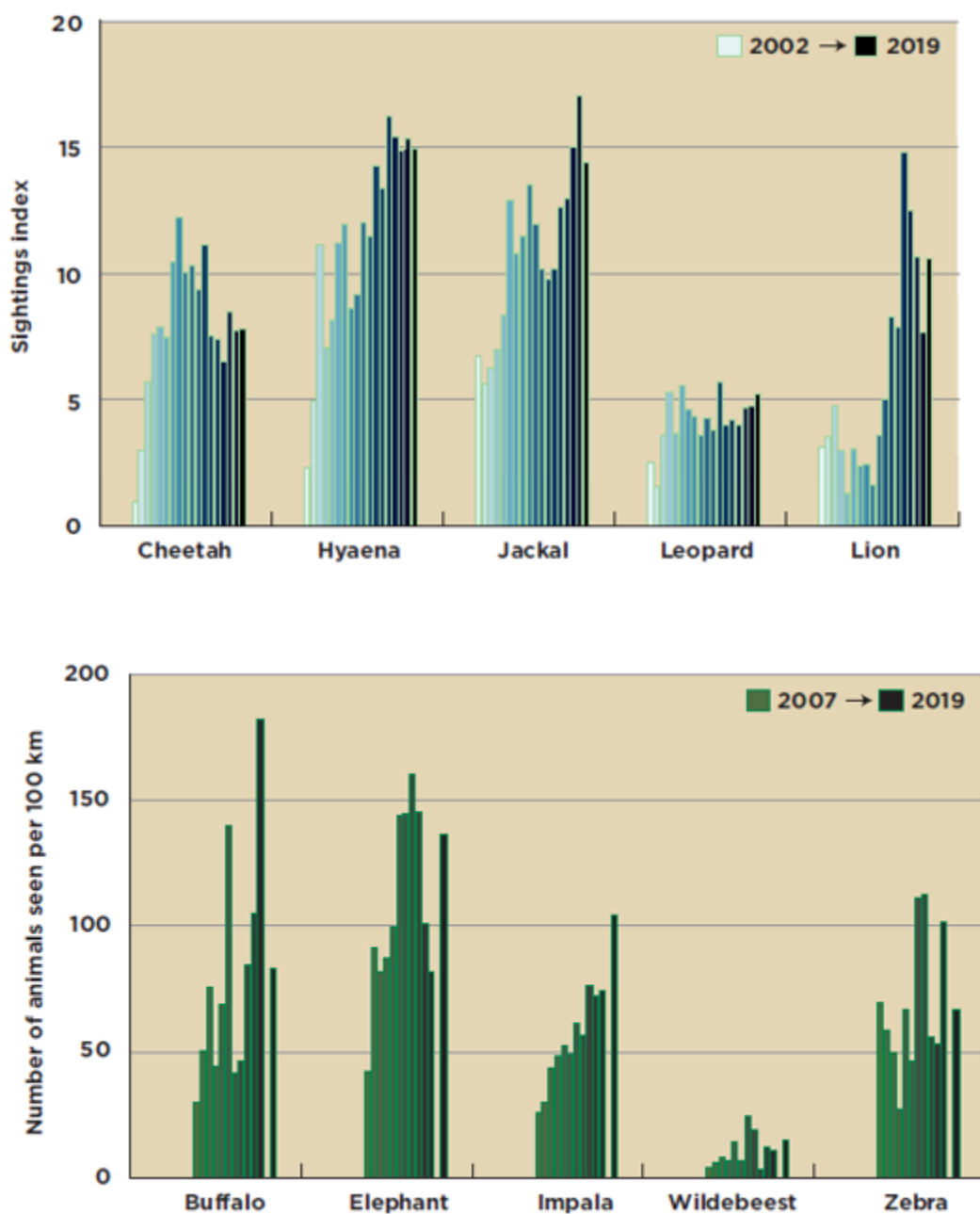


Figure 14: Wildlife Sighting Trends 2007-2019⁴⁶⁵

Thus, wildlife that are favoured by tourists which can be problematic for communities lead to issues which are aggravated by climate change and the increasing temperatures and subsequent

⁴⁶⁵ MET/NACSO.

decreasing levels of moisture in the country. Predators are left with less prey to hunt which forces them closer to human settlements they would normally prefer to avoid. One farmer from #Khoadi !Hoas stated “the biggest challenge we face is drought and because of that we have increased human-wildlife conflict issues so sometimes the wildlife is an issue but it is not because of conservation it is because of drought.”⁴⁶⁶ Similarly, as elephants fail to find water in the dry riverbeds, they seek out water points meant for either humans or livestock and will rip pipes right out of the ground, both doing costly damage and depleting valuable and increasingly rare freshwater resources.⁴⁶⁷ Next to climate change and the drought, human-wildlife conflict is the subject that comes up in almost every discussion of CBNRM and it is a topic that the many actors involved in programs are well versed in.

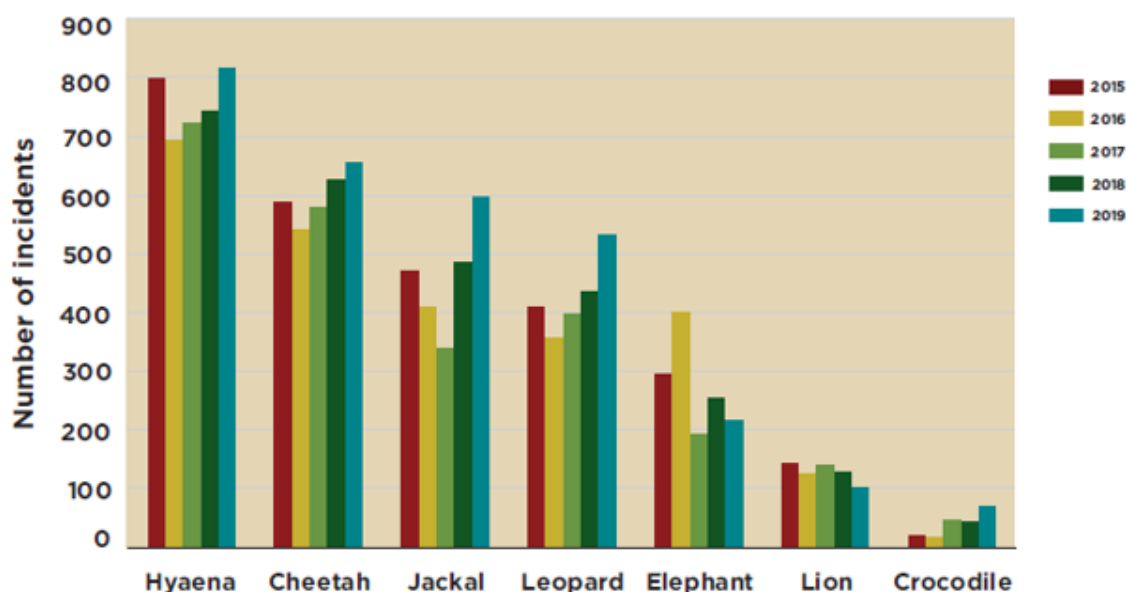


Figure 15: Recorded Human-Wildlife Incidents⁴⁶⁸

⁴⁶⁶ Interview, Farmer 2, #Khoadi !Hoas Conservancy, February 10, 2020

⁴⁶⁷ Sem M. Shilongo, Morrie Sam, and Amos Simuela, “Using Incentives as Mitigation Measure for Human Wildlife Conflict Management in Namibia,” *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications (IJSRP)* 8, no. 11 (November 24, 2018).

⁴⁶⁸ MET/NACSO, “The State of Community Conservation in Namibia: Annual Report 2019: A Review of Communal Conservancies, Community Forests and Other CBNRM Initiatives.”

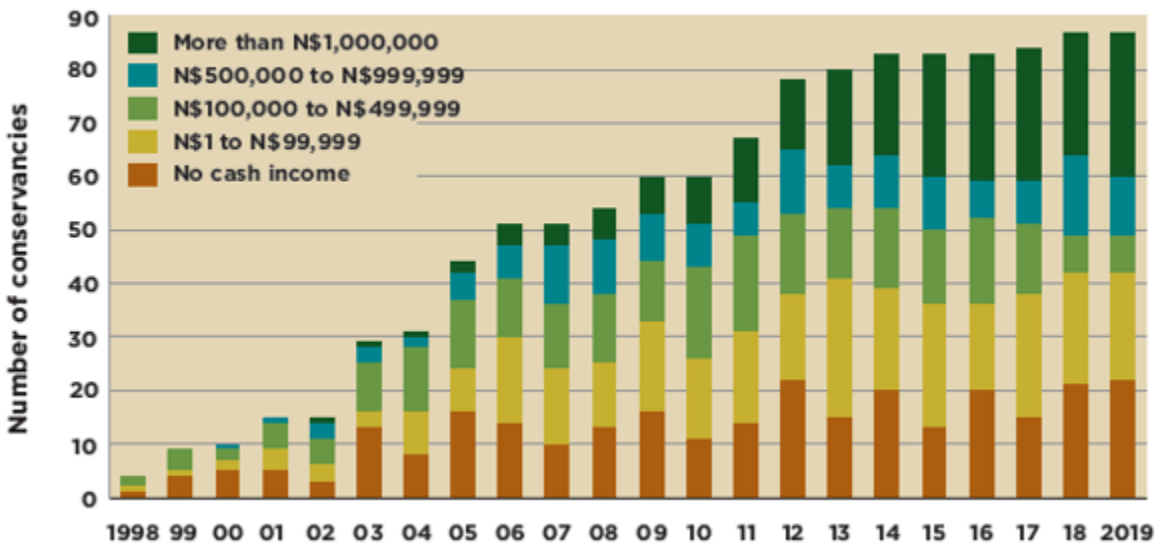


Figure 16: Conservancy Cash Incomes⁴⁶⁹

The impacts of climate change are also paradoxical, as decreasing wildlife populations are being paralleled by a rise in human-wildlife conflict. Furthermore, conservancies and their members are experiencing acute economic issues caused by a confluence of factors, but all exacerbated by the effects of climate change. While Namibians increasingly point to conservation as a necessary activity in and of itself, CBNRM has predominantly gained broad support as a result of the financial returns it creates for local residents which can be seen above in Figure 16 as well as below in Figure 17.⁴⁷⁰ One MET official with the Directorate of National Parks and Wildlife, Uatirohange Tjiuoro, suggested “drought is the greatest threat to the program as it makes it seem like its success is diminishing.”⁴⁷¹ While exact figures vary a great deal, many respondents point to decreases in direct benefits paid out to conservancy members which has been paralleled by

⁴⁶⁹ MET/NACSO.

⁴⁷⁰ Stoldt et al., “Transfrontier Conservation Areas and Human-Wildlife Conflict.”

⁴⁷¹ Interview, Uatirohange Tjiuoro, Ministry of Environment and Tourism: Directorate of National Parks and Wildlife, January 20, 2020.

decreasing support of the programs. While at one time many conservancies were providing each member N\$500 per year (approximately \$50 USD), in many cases this has decreased to between N\$50 and N\$100, while in other cases payments have stopped all together.⁴⁷²

⁴⁷² Schnegg and Kiaka, “Subsidized Elephants.”

LEVEL OF INCOME AND BENEFIT DISTRIBUTION IN 2019

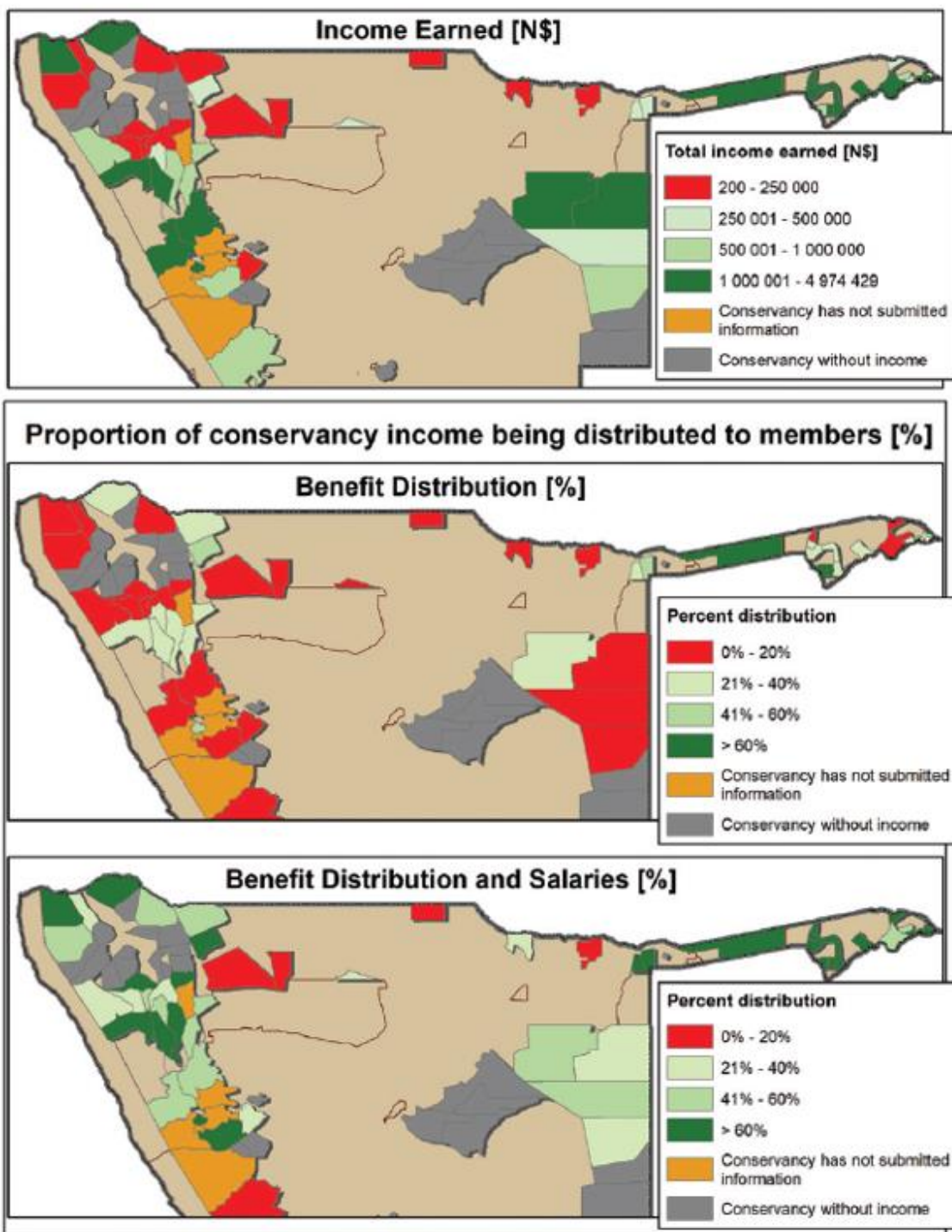


Figure 17: Current State of Conservancy Incomes⁴⁷³

⁴⁷³ MET/NACSO, "The State of Community Conservation in Namibia: Annual Report 2019: A Review of Communal Conservancies, Community Forests and Other CBNRM Initiatives."

The challenges discussed above are also leading to broader economic issues which have further implications for governance as well. CBNRM developed and has been sustained almost solely around the management of wildlife populations for the purposes of ecotourism.⁴⁷⁴ However, since around 2012 there have been a plethora of challenges exacerbated by the ongoing drought that have contributed to these positive results diminishing. While one could argue that *ceteris paribus*, without climate change the program might still be thriving and be set to do so for years to come, such counterfactuals provide little in the way of analytical value. Climate change, as well as every other difficult reality and challenge facing the program are here, and – at least in the case of climate change – are here for the foreseeable future as well as certain to get worse. As such, a system of governance based predominantly on a single resource model that is already so widely threatened and simultaneously difficult to protect, poses a number of challenges to any long-term success.⁴⁷⁵

⁴⁷⁴ Interview, Lara Diez, Nyae Nyae Development Foundation of Namibia, January 10 2020.

⁴⁷⁵ Interview, Willie Boonzaaier, Programme Director, Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation, January 24, 2020.

Multiplier effects of industries related to CBNRM include:

- Airlines, hotels and car rental companies;
- Private sector tourism and hunting operations related to conservancies;
- Rental and taxes;
- Further spending generated by the additional income above.

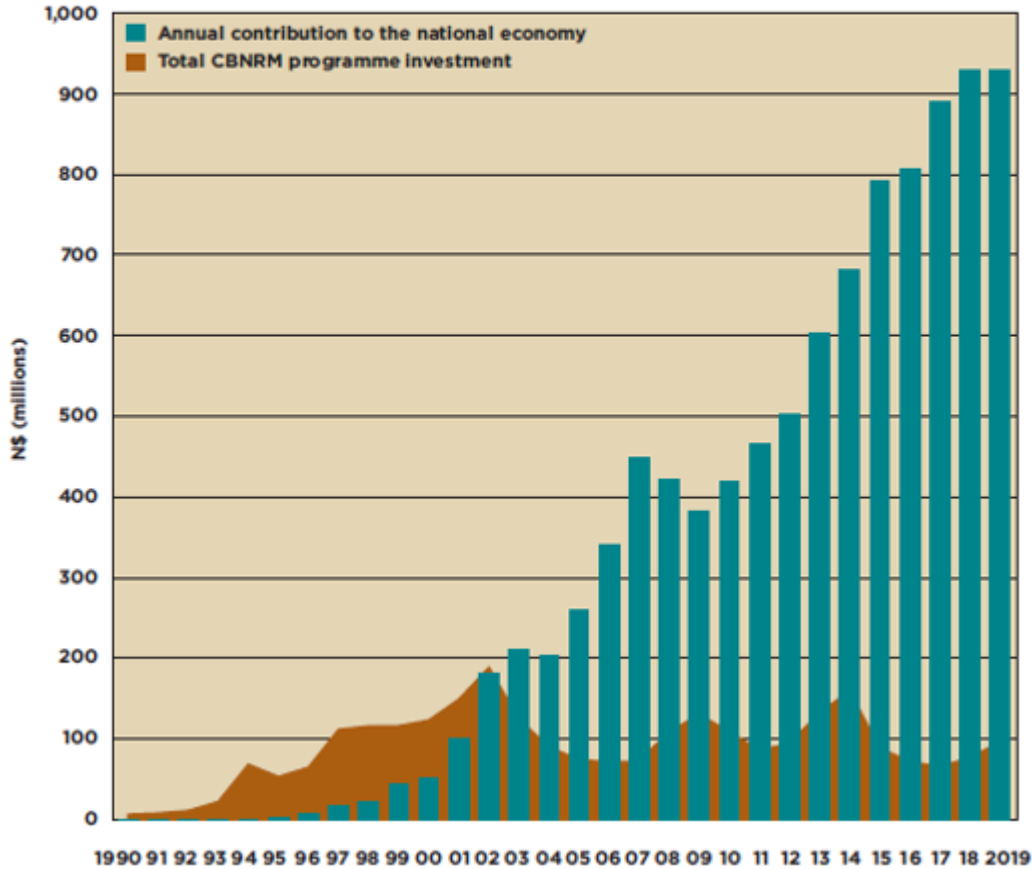


Figure 18: CBNRM National Economic Returns⁴⁷⁶

Over time, as Namibia experienced greater and greater success focusing on wildlife conservation as demonstrated in figure 18 above, the program continuously narrowed in to focus almost solely on that single resource while simultaneously expanding ceaselessly across the country.⁴⁷⁷ In this sense more and more of the country's economy and its people's livelihoods have become predicated on an industry based on the governance of a natural resource that is particularly

⁴⁷⁶ MET/NACSO, "The State of Community Conservation in Namibia: Annual Report 2019: A Review of Communal Conservancies, Community Forests and Other CBNRM Initiatives."

⁴⁷⁷ Interview, John Hazam, Senior Technical Advisor: Namibia Nature Foundation, January 23, 2020.

complex and challenging to manage sustainably. In 2020 the tourism sector and related broader economy including indirect effects, contributed to over 123,000 jobs (16.4 per cent of total employment) as well as over 11.7 per cent of GDP.⁴⁷⁸ This industry being one of the more precarious as it depends first on the global economy and on international tourism which are both subject to volatility,⁴⁷⁹ and second it relies on the well being of wildlife which in turn depend on a plethora of both human and environmental factors. In this sense while CBNRM continues to contribute to certain forms of sustainable development for many Namibians, a growing portion of the economy has also become more dependent on an industry largely predicated on a single resource.

This is understandable as most economies that are able to create consistent revenue streams focusing on the exploitation of a single resource tend to focus their energies most forcefully on it.⁴⁸⁰ While CBNRM is only one of many contributors to Namibia's economy, it remains a large and growing one. This has in some ways limited diversification of the Namibian economy and has resulted in structural weaknesses that have been laid bare by the effects of climate change and resultant exacerbation of almost every other existing challenge.⁴⁸¹ A similar process has been experienced more acutely since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic which Lendelvo, Pinto, and Sullivan argue amounts to a perfect storm that is drastically exacerbating almost every previously existing issue facing the CBNRM program.⁴⁸² The protracted drought has led to less grazing land and veld food, less available freshwater, less prey that is also harder to find, increased human-

⁴⁷⁸ Namibia Tourism Board, "Namibia Tourism Satellite Account," 2021.

⁴⁷⁹ Andrew Heffernan, "El discurso oficial de las autoridades marroquíes y sus aliados en la ecologización de sus políticas públicas: modernización del autoritarismo, inserción internacional y lucha contra el cambio climático," *Relaciones Internacionales* 0, no. 42 (September 30, 2019): 157–73.

⁴⁸⁰ Macartan Humphreys, Jeffrey Sachs, and Joseph E. Stiglitz, *Escaping the Resource Curse* (Columbia University Press, 2007).

⁴⁸¹ Interview, Lara Diez, Nyae Nyae Development Foundation of Namibia, January 10 2020.

⁴⁸² S. M. Lendelvo, M. Pinto, and S. Sullivan, "A Perfect Storm? The Impact of COVID-19 on Community-Based Conservation in Namibia," *Namibian Journal of the Environment* 4 B (July 1, 2020): 1–15.

wildlife conflict, a less hospitable environment for tourists, and lower wildlife populations. All of this has resulted in eroding economic incomes, which has led to a slow erosion of popular support for CBNRM as was demonstrated in much of the work by the skeptics.⁴⁸³ This existing research was further shored up through a number of my interviews. As John Pallet, Director of the Namibian Environment and Wildlife Society (NEWS), suggested however, “drought is an opportunity for education and evolution.”⁴⁸⁴ The chapter will now turn to analyze the ways Namibia in general, and the CBNRM program in particular, are exploiting these opportunities in order to continue to experience success and attempt to build more resilient communities.

Evolving Global Policy Assemblages

The challenges of climate change are demanding novel approaches to conservation in Namibia and new actors have been seizing the opportunity in order to implicate themselves in the governance arrangement that is ever changing. Analyzing CBNRM as a GGPA enables us to account for this dynamic and the proliferating assemblage of actors as well as the ways in which their layered interests and actions contribute to evolutions in global environmental governance. As a sort of cousin to NACSO, the Environmental Investment Fund of Namibia (EIFN) has emerged to help promote green initiatives across the country. The EIFN developed from the Namibian State’s National Development Plan 1 (NDP1) in 1995 with the mandate to “complement but not substitute for government protection of the environment.”⁴⁸⁵ The EIFN “was to become a tool for national economic development while securing resources to protect Namibia’s fragile environment.”⁴⁸⁶

⁴⁸³ Schnegg and Kiaka, “Subsidized Elephants”; Bollig, “Towards an Arid Eden?”

⁴⁸⁴ Interview, John Pallet, Director, Namibia Environment and Wildlife Society, Windhoek, February 21, 2020

⁴⁸⁵ EIFN, “Our History: EIF Through the Years,” n.d.

⁴⁸⁶ EIFN.

Among others, it has established partnerships with the Government of Namibia, the Development Bank of Namibia, the Development Bank of South Africa, the Green Climate Fund, the SADC Centre for Renewable Energy & Energy Efficiency, the Southern African Service Centre for Climate Change and Adaptive Land Management, the Sustainable Development Advisory Council, Namibia Wildlife Resorts, the Global Sustainable Finance Network, the United Nations Development Program, the Green Fund, South South North, the Desert Research Foundation of Namibia, and the Namibia Energy Institute.⁴⁸⁷ These are just the major players, but this list alone demonstrates the political capital behind this network as the key development, environmental, and governance entities in Namibia are linked to a number of the most powerful similar such entities on the global stage with the EIFN as the arm of the state which serves as an interlocutor to this assemblage of actors. Duffy argues these are part of a growing and powerful complex global network of governments, international organizations, and environmental NGOs that has been taking conservation out of the hands of certain states – predominantly those in the Global South – and placing it into the hands of non-state entities and complex non-territorial networks of governance.⁴⁸⁸ Resultantly there are clear connections that are established in order to work toward achieving sustainable development goals.

The energies of these organizations are more comprehensively focused on climate and the environment and have further disciplined efforts that were already underway domestically to improve the sustainability of CBNRM programs. As the Namibian organizations listed above have realized opportunities to acquire funding from their global counterparts, they have sought to work with conservancies in order to maximize greening efforts to become increasingly appealing for

⁴⁸⁷ EIFN, “Partners,” accessed November 23, 2021.

⁴⁸⁸ Duffy, “The Potential and Pitfalls of Global Environmental Governance,” 98.

donor funding. This is part of the strengths of the way CBNRM has emerged in Namibia as it is a system for managing wildlife, but at its core it is a system for democratic governance, and the many actors that enable it can work synergically toward conservation and resource management activities. While some point to the increased layer of governance that can simply result in another cumbersome bureaucratic institution,⁴⁸⁹ conservancy councils have provided a form of democratic representation at the local level which did not previously exist in some cases, or enshrines the territory's governance by traditional authorities in others.⁴⁹⁰ This representation has helped enable the realization of a number of positive outcomes in conservancies. The recent partnerships that these councils have been engaging in can also demonstrate that global conservation schemes are highly political interventions that produce new forms of conflict centered on control of and access to natural resources.⁴⁹¹ This conflict can occur as the Namibian state devolves control over wildlife to communities, yet maintains oversight over them as well as control over land use allocations. Africa's rare charismatic megafauna are considered a global good by many and thus many outside of Namibia feel it is within global public interests to protect them, while others also wish to travel to see them. All of this creates a complex picture of tensions and interests which generally desire to see the protection of this important natural resource, but each pursuing their individual interests and leading to forms of competition. It is these interests that can be competing and simultaneously synergistic that are also ever-changing which the GGPA enables us to analyze and unpack.

For Namibian conservancies, these competing interests results in complex and largely divergent outcomes. While virtually every conservancy member I spoke to suggested the CBNRM program had resulted in improved representation and being given a voice where previously they

⁴⁸⁹ Cruise and Izzy, "Investigation into the Efficacy of Namibia's Wildlife Conservation Model as It Relates to African Elephants (*Loxodonta Africana*)."

⁴⁹⁰ Kalvelage et al., "Territorialising Conservation."

⁴⁹¹ Duffy, "The Potential and Pitfalls of Global Environmental Governance."

had largely not had one, it is clear that having a voice does not always mean being able to affect outcomes. Conservancy members feel they are given voice as the CBNRM program as a system of political organization has enabled the democratic election of councils to represent their people. While these systems of governance are not simply filling a space which had previously been a vacuum, the existing systems had been far more informal, less democratic, and had limited connectivity to outside actors than conservancy councils have become.⁴⁹² As the program is already so prolific throughout the country it has become an effective inroad for the delivery of new initiatives. Previously outside actors were not connecting with traditional authorities who held power in rural Namibian communities, nor did these leaders have an effective avenue for seeking this type of funding. The CBNRM program has provided these types of avenues, as NGOs have partnered with conservancies and conservancy councils have become enmeshed in an increasingly dense network of actors working toward sustainable development goals.

Above I have discussed some of the ways in which some of the energy had been dissipating from the CBNRM program over the years. This was something that was reported in a number of interviews and something I could visibly see at times. Joglinde Touros, the manager of Twyfelfontein/Uisbasen Conservancy made this sentiment abundantly clear during the conservancy's official annual audit when the floor was opened for comments, and she stated

So many of us have lost why the conservancy program was established. There is nothing happening outside of the offices... Sure it is good to learn governance, but land is going, water is going, trees are dying, but we are not talking enough about these things that matter.⁴⁹³

⁴⁹² "Traditional Authorities Act 25 of 2000 - Namibia Legal Database," 2000.

⁴⁹³ Interview, Joglinde Touros, Manager, Uisbasen/Twyfelfontein Conservancy, January 30, 2020.

Part of this loss of energy seems attributable to the natural progression of a program that has been around for a long time, that becomes ingrained in the system and partially taken for granted. While novel development initiatives which promise grand outcomes can garner a great deal of resources and ambitious people, if expectations fail to be met often resources and energy will dissipate over time. Part of this dissipation is evident in the very people who formulate integral parts of the GGPA. During the 1980s when the call for sustainable development based on conservation grew partly as a result of the work of Garth Owen-Smith who is widely credited with ‘founding’ the CBNRM program in Namibia, many young, energetic people gravitated toward the cause and poured themselves into it while getting very little in return. Over time as CBNRM developed as an important national industry, remuneration improved, and an entire network of NGO staff and officials emerged predominantly in Windhoek. Now thirty years on, the program seems at a precipice where most of the same people are heading toward the tail ends of their careers, which means that most of those leading NGOs and distributing resources and providing training to conservancies tend to no longer be young and have naturally lost some of their youthful energy and idealism. Sadly, this transition phase seems to have been symbolized with the unfortunate passing of Garth Owen Smith in April 2020 shortly after the fieldwork for this dissertation was conducted.⁴⁹⁴

Namibia’s CBNRM program must now begin to deal with the tough questions of needing to replace its founding generation, while much of the next generation lacks education, training, and experience as well as the institutional capabilities for effectively managing certain areas of the program.⁴⁹⁵ These issues are compounding the challenges posed by climate change which have

⁴⁹⁴ IRDNC, “Tribute to Garth Owen-Smith, African Conservationist (Commentary),” Mongabay Environmental News, 2020.

⁴⁹⁵ Dr. Ekkehard Klingelhoefter, Head of Department – Wildlife Management and Ecotourism, University of Namibia, January 13, 2020.

been elaborated above. Several interviewees pointed to this as being a growing issue while also suggesting a sort of changing of the guard was slowly occurring in which the older white people who had largely founded the program were being replaced by young, black Namibians.⁴⁹⁶ This provides both challenges and opportunities and this transition will be key to the future success of the program. While ownership – as mentioned several times throughout this dissertation – has always been a central pillar to the program and most involved desire to see young black Namibians take over, they are not always formally educated or as experienced as those who came before them. A lack of formal education and experience was one of the key limiting factors pointed to in almost all of my interviews regarding the program.⁴⁹⁷ Professor Ekkehard Klingelhoefter, head of the department of Wildlife Management and Ecotourism at the University of Namibia further suggested that this was one of the biggest challenges of the program, as NGOs want to turn the projects over to local people but that they are not sufficiently educated in financial matters and business management.⁴⁹⁸ This was discussed in Chapter 4 due to the compound lasting effects of both colonialism and Apartheid Rule that undermined every aspect of development for Namibians for decades. While a great deal has been achieved over thirty years of independence, the scars of colonialism run deep, and inequality and poverty remain persistent problems. Interestingly, the challenges of climate change are creating opportunities that are assisting in providing new initiatives which are helping with this transition. As the impacts of climate change have worsened, many of the efforts of CBNRM have shifted to developing innovative practices to increase the

⁴⁹⁶ Interview, Dr. Margaret Jacobson, co-founder IRDNC, co-director, trustee, mentor, Conservancy Safaris Namibia, Swakopmund, February 17, 2020; Interview, John Hazam, Senior Technical Advisor: Namibia Nature Foundation, January 23, 2020; Interview, John Pallet, Director, Namibia Environment and Wildlife Society, Windhoek, February 21, 2020

⁴⁹⁷ Interview, Uatirohange Tjiuoro, Ministry of Environment and Tourism: Directorate of National Parks and Wildlife, January 20, 2020.

⁴⁹⁸ Interview, Dr. Ekkehard Klingelhoefter, Head of Department – Wildlife Management and Ecotourism, University of Namibia, January 13, 2020

sustainability of the program which at times have served to simultaneously treat some of Africa's ongoing long-term challenges.

One of these challenges that Africa faces as a continent is access to reliable, clean power.⁴⁹⁹ This is a particularly difficult challenge for a country like Namibia that has both a small, as well as an extremely sparse, population. The small population means that total GDP and hence investment and purchasing power are low. Having a sparse population compounds this as any investment that is made in infrastructure – such as for power generation – is spread out across fewer people and greater distances, vastly increasing both gross as well as per capita costs. Namibia is home to vast expanses of territory with extremely low-density populations. With settlements spread out like this it is difficult to develop power generating stations that are economical and transporting that power so far, for so few, becomes a complex and costly challenge. With the economy developing around an industry like tourism, having a reliable power source becomes essential.

Beyond CBNRM and ecotourism, scholars have long posited the importance of reliable, sustainable power as a necessary cornerstone for effective development for Africa.⁵⁰⁰ However, as many rural Namibians do not have such infrastructure in place, many towns, tourist lodges, and campgrounds have procured diesel generators to ensure that there is a consistent source of power. Even for those who are on the electricity grid where it exists, generators are often a necessity as these tourist venues can use a substantial amount of power, and tourists paying top dollar do not

⁴⁹⁹ Kristine Bos, Duncan Chaplin, and Arif Mamun, "Benefits and Challenges of Expanding Grid Electricity in Africa: A Review of Rigorous Evidence on Household Impacts in Developing Countries," *Energy for Sustainable Development* 44 (June 1, 2018): 64–77.

⁵⁰⁰ Helene Ahlborg et al., "Provision of Electricity to African Households: The Importance of Democracy and Institutional Quality," *Energy Policy* 87 (December 1, 2015): 125–35.

take well to outages.⁵⁰¹ Generally this means that people either got by without power at times or invest in expensive generators that ceaselessly burn costly and dirty diesel fuel. This is far from an ideal solution as diesel is both expensive and difficult to transport to remote areas and generators are prone to breakdowns and produce a great deal of GHG emissions as well as noise – not a welcome addition to a vacation in the serene Namibian savannah.⁵⁰²

To treat this issue, one of the major efforts that has been underway across the country is to harness the one resource that Namibia has a relentless wealth of – sunlight. Although investing in solar energy may seem like an obvious approach for a country like Namibia, it is not such a simple equation. Even in locations where the sun burns bright most days of the year, the investment costs can be prohibitive – especially with a GDP as small as Namibia's.⁵⁰³ Between issues of cost, infrastructure, transportation, and others, solar power has not widely been harnessed in Namibia as well as many other countries in the Global South. As the realities of climate change have increasingly brought the world to action however, and as its effects have been continuously impacting Namibia, the network of actors discussed in the previous section have been working to develop solar generating capacity in targeted areas across the country.

One particular example of this occurred on January 29, 2020 when Sorris Sorris held the official launch event for one example of what these partnerships can accomplish in working with the CBNRM program. Sorris Sorris is approximately 350 km Northwest of Windhoek and has about 345 registered members. It is one of the original conservancies, having been gazetted in 1998. Sorris Sorris translates to something like ‘sun and sand’ which is very evident by the

⁵⁰¹ Heffernan, “El discurso oficial de las autoridades marroquíes y sus aliados en la ecologización de sus políticas públicas.”

⁵⁰² Interview, Benedict Libanda, CEO, Environmental Investment fund of Namibia, January 29, 2020

⁵⁰³ Heffernan, “El discurso oficial de las autoridades marroquíes y sus aliados en la ecologización de sus políticas públicas.”

landscapes and topography as it is a particularly dry, desertic region of the country.⁵⁰⁴ The conservancy's main tourist attraction, Sorris Sorris Lodge, is a breathtakingly beautiful upscale lodge that costs an average of around \$700 USD per person per night – though it can go well upward of this depending on the type of package. This lodge is extremely remote and there are no towns in close proximity. As such, it is completely off the power grid and since the time it was built in the late 1990s has run on a large diesel generator. This generator has been burning on average 40,000 litres of diesel per month which cut into profits that are shared between the lodge owners and the conservancy. Over the past two decades it has also contributed a great deal in the way of GHG emissions, further compounding the environmental problems facing CBNRM, Namibians, as well as the broader planet. Through a complex assemblage of partnerships however, the EIFN worked closely with Sorris Sorris Conservancy and the owner of the lodge to procure funds from the Green Climate Fund donated by 49 countries, regions, and cities globally to invest in a solar plant that will power the entire lodge at peak capacity.⁵⁰⁵ This project resulted from roughly three years of planning and two years of construction. Materials were sourced locally when possible and brought in slowly by 4x4 vehicle to navigate the extremely rugged terrain to get to the lodge.

Most importantly the new solar plant immediately prevents a great deal of carbon being burned into the atmosphere. This point was made central at the ceremony for the unveiling of the power plant, when David, the conservancy manager, paused his speech and slowly and powerfully stated “No more diesel... No more diesel!”⁵⁰⁶ Beyond this, the partnership procured the funds to build the solar plant specifically for the Sorris Sorris Conservancy and it is thus entirely owned by

⁵⁰⁴ Interview, Benedict Libanda, CEO, Environmental Investment fund of Namibia, January 29, 2020

⁵⁰⁵ Green Climate Fund, “Initial Resource Mobilisation,” Text, Green Climate Fund (Green Climate Fund, October 26, 2021).

⁵⁰⁶ Interview, David, manager, Sorris Sorris Conservancy, January 29, 2020

the conservancy members. Therefore, the lodge now purchases the power from the conservancy and the funds go directly into conservancy activities and toward benefits for local residents in surrounding communities that are located approximately within a twenty and seventy km radius. This creates a constant flow of much needed cash to support local communities while also providing the lodge with a quieter source of reliable renewable energy.

The conservancy members I spoke with suggested this means much more than money in their pocket in the short term. Instead, they spoke predominantly of the long-term goals this investment would allow them to achieve. Up until this point a great deal of medium- to high-skilled positions within CBNRM had been filled by NGO staff who often came from elsewhere and were predominantly white. One of the major efforts in Namibia, however, has been to educate and train its black populations so they are able to take over the management of CBNRM activities. David stated that beyond realizing important climate goals, the funds from the ongoing sale of power to the lodge would enable the conservancy to create a scholarship fund to send young girls off to the University of Namibia to become educated in fields of study such as wildlife conservation and solar power installation and maintenance so that in the future, they would not need to rely on this type of international partnership to achieve their sustainable development goals.⁵⁰⁷ This is one of the ways that climate change is also producing opportunities for a number of actors within the assemblage. It is enabling the GCF and its donors to point to both climate and sustainable development results, while the Namibian state can also claim similar victories while having served more as a middle-man rather than having provided any of the resources or services required to achieve these ends.

⁵⁰⁷ Interview, David, manager, Sorris Sorris Conservancy, January 29, 2020

Beyond these immediate economic and climate benefits, the solar plant is expected to serve as an extra draw to tourists, as many wealthy people from the West travel to Namibia as ‘ecotourists’ and have increasingly been seeking out the most sustainable lodges and tourist activities. It is easy to see why this would provide Sorris Sorris Lodge with a competitive advantage, as the solar plant has a particular beauty all its own – especially for the environmentally minded. Besides its visual intrigue, the story behind the network that procured its funding as well as the technology and innovation that went into building this high-tech system in such a remote location in the desert that is not even serviced by what most would consider a road is a considerable success. One can therefore easily imagine that when tourists are choosing between the many lodges in the Kunene region this solar plant would likely give Sorris Sorris Lodge a leg up on the competition. This is being increasingly reflected as lodges compete against one another to become ever greener. One of the oldest, most luxurious and well-known lodges in Namibia is the Damaraland Camp in Torra Conservancy and its manager reported that the entire lodge can be removed in two days and leave absolutely minimal footprint behind.⁵⁰⁸ This fact has served as an important marketing mechanism for the lodge for years and it remains one of the most profitable in the country. It also contributed to it being nominated in 1998 by the British Guild of Travel Writers as one of the top three ecotourism destinations on the planet.⁵⁰⁹ Therefore, investments like the solar plant at Sorris Sorris Lodge can have many positive economic offshoots beyond the obvious and important climate benefits.

Beyond the potential benefits for sustainable development the solar plant can bring to Sorris Sorris, the politics of it are both interesting and simultaneously remain opaque. As

⁵⁰⁸ Interview, Manager, Damaraland Camp, February 2, 2020

⁵⁰⁹ Owen-Smith, *An Arid Eden*, 533.

elaborated above, being awarded this type of funding to build such a solar plant would generally be desired by all conservancies – both in Namibia and elsewhere. So how is it Sorris Sorris came to be awarded such an endowment? The answer to this question remains somewhat muddled, but it appears that Sorris Sorris had the right mix of having one of the higher end lodges in the country, owned by a well-connected investor, being geographically situated close enough to Windhoek, as well as several of the country's more famous tourist sites. Furthermore, both the conservancy leader, and council, as well as the area's traditional authority are well connected within the right circles. The conservancy manager for instance previously worked with the Director of NACSO, Maxi Pia Louis, who also previously sat on the EIFN board with its current CEO, Benedict Libanda.⁵¹⁰ Maxi Pia Louis also has a close relationship with the Minister of Environment and Tourism that began prior to independence as the two were closely involved in the, at times violent, resistance to Apartheid South Africa. They have since continued to work closely together on CBNRM as two of its central figures in the country.⁵¹¹ This group of actors, worked with the EIFN and its partners, NACSO and its affiliate NGOs, as well as with all levels of government in Namibia to put forth the successful application to the GCF to be awarded the resources for the solar plant. While it might seem obvious that the more well-connected will garner greater success in these types of endeavours, it is nonetheless important to acknowledge these political realities so that questions are asked as to whether this is the most efficient or effective allocation of scarce development resources.

Libanda is a key cog in the application process for this type of funding and believes appealing the global community is integral to success in attaining grants. For Sorris Sorris, at least

⁵¹⁰ Interview, Maxi Pia Louis, Director, Namibia Association of CBNRM Support Organizations, January 14, 2020.

⁵¹¹ Interview, Pohamba Shifeta, Minister of Environment and Tourism, January 29 2020.

one part of this appears to be the fact that the conservancy has made a conscious and public decision to interdict trophy hunting.⁵¹² This unveils an interesting way politicking occurs in relation to CBNRM as certain global actors allocate rewards based in part on the types of activities they support or avoid – in this case trophy hunting as will be further unpacked in the next chapter. This is also a way in which productive power can be seen throughout the CBNRM program, as western science regarding climate change, conservation, and wildlife populations is presented as truth, and those who abide by it, and by the desires of the West tend to be rewarded – albeit often indirectly – for their actions. However, in discussing the issue further with David Eiseb, he reports that one of the main reasons Sorris Sorris Conservancy is not a proponent of hunting is because as their conservancy is so desertic, they have modest wildlife populations to begin with and hunting would neither be particularly lucrative for them, nor would it be sustainable. Thus, unlike some other conservancies they must do all they can to protect the limited wildlife numbers that do reside within their boundaries.⁵¹³

Even the structure of the assemblage of actors provides an interesting example of the way these types of partnerships have evolved. While at one time aid tended to be channeled through bilateral government to government relationships, or via global multilateral institutions and NGOs, increasingly we are seeing the proliferation of private and hybrid foundations and funds that are changing the development landscape. This has resulted in a proliferation of donors, and more types of donors that are not constrained by the usual types of democratic and bureaucratic processes which can be cumbersome, but which are also integral to effective governance. It continues to remain unclear what precisely the long-term outcomes of these shifts will be, but in the short-term

⁵¹² Interview, Benedict Libanda, CEO, Environmental Investment fund of Namibia, January 29, 2020

⁵¹³ Interview, David Eiseb, manager, Sorris Sorris Conservancy, January 29, 2020

what we have seen is a disembedding of sorts of aid from democracy. Jean-Michel Severino and Olivier Ray suggest this de-democratization of aid has been proliferating over the past several decades as there has been a marked shift away from official development assistance, to various forms of aid provided by a variety of non-state actors.⁵¹⁴ For them and others, this has served to mitigate certain previously existing issues, while simultaneously opening a number of avenues for funding to be more effectively targeted to where it is needed. In some ways however, it has also removed some of the politics of development funding which can lead to questions of transparency and how decision making takes place. What is seen in practice however, with organizations such as the GCF is a more complex, opaque, and technocratic process that leads to the many critiques discussed above. While most states are held to account by their citizens, and – at least in theory – must account for where, how, and why funds are allocated, private interests do not have this same level of responsibility. This is because it is most often shareholders and stakeholders they are primarily beholden to rather than through transparent, public, and democratic decision-making processes. As a result, private interests tend to work only for their own bottom line, rather than for broader social uplift as is at least the rhetoric of most democratic state public development efforts. As public and private become increasingly blurred, and as governance is devolved by the state through initiatives such as CBNRM, this can often result in private interests developing an increasing foothold in governance which provides them with a growing degree of influence.

The solar plant application for Sorris Sorris was years in the making and took specialized technical skills and political connections in order to be successful, as well as a baseline level of knowledge, skill, and resources from the conservancy council and its members in order to

⁵¹⁴ Jean-Michel Severino and Olivier Ray, “The End of ODA: Death and Rebirth of a Global Public Policy - Working Paper 167,” Center For Global Development, 2009.

demonstrate their deserving of the grant. Sorris Sorris was one of the earliest conservancies established and as an actor had developed the types of capacities needed, in order to maneuver within the GGPA to ply resources from the international community to contribute to its welfare. These capacities were developed in part by the conservancy being gazetted early, quickly becoming economically self-sufficient and producing community benefits that among other things contributed to scholarships to send their young residents to attain post-secondary educations. These are ways in which the conservancy was conditioned along certain lines in order to become increasingly responsabilized for its own outcomes – though outcomes that followed a largely pre-determined path.

In and of itself, it is not inherently problematic that those most well-connected or conservancies who interdict trophy hunting are awarded in this way by the international community. However, it begs the question as to whether funding is being allocated based on where it is most needed and/or will have the most beneficial impact. Furthermore, it risks leveraging existing power imbalances in order to see the power of global capital sway conservancies down a particular development trajectory which creates prospects for continuing the same type of neocolonial cookie cutter solutions to development which have long track records of demonstrated failure. Favouring one conservancy's approach to conservation activities over another risks ignoring factors such as what type and quantity of wildlife they might possess which can also be the case with any other type of resource. This is not to argue for a re-centralization of governance, but instead to acknowledge the heterogeneity of communities in all its forms. This means accounting for ethnic, cultural, political, historic, and natural differences (i.e. accounting for the local environment and natural resources). Natural endowments greatly impact the types of conservation that are possible, as well as resources that can be sustainably profitable. These are

the types of considerations that ought to be carefully analyzed in awarding development funding. However, it seems that one potential consequence of the aforementioned disembedding of development assistance from more traditional forms of Weberian democracy is that there is often less transparency and accountability as to how funds are allocated than through more traditional public channels. Instead, what emerges, are novel democratic processes that occur outside of the traditional state halls of power. Since the failures of structural adjustment in the 1980s and 1990s development scholars and practitioners have long posited the need to move away from cookie cutter solutions in order to account for local nuances. CBNRM provides for additional autonomy for conservancies to make their own decisions based on local realities, and both these decisions as well as factors that are accounted for in the decision-making process ought to be accounted for when reacting to them and allocating resources as a result.

These are the types of social relations that the CBNRM program both creates and enables through the devolution of power. The outcome is often an arena in which space emerges for a multitude of actors to engage in efforts to pursue their own interests and attempt to realize their own ends. While the example of the Sorris Sorris power plant can be said to be a success story, there also remains difficult questions around who these funds are intended to benefit and who in fact is made better off as a result. While here I argue that the power plant has resulted in a number of winners in the sense that the lodge becomes more sustainable and profitable, the global community benefits from less GHG emissions, the tourism of wealthy westerners becomes more sustainable, and local communities also benefit from cleaner air and sustainable profits from the power produced, this seems to create a number of benefits in one of the conservancies which was already most successful which does little to benefit those in other communities. These tensions will be further unpacked in the next chapter.

Among the new partners outlined at the beginning of this section, the Green Climate Fund is perhaps the most prolific, interesting, and simultaneously one of the more controversial of the organizations. The GCF was conceived of at the 2009 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conference of the Parties (COP) 15 in Copenhagen with the promises to channel \$100 billion annually to scale innovation and counter climate change with a “paradigm shift towards low-carbon and climate resilient development pathways.”⁵¹⁵ Its purpose is to join environmental and development policies to realize these global goals synergistically. The GCF was intended to entail a paradigm shift that would “grant or lend to both the public and private sector simultaneously; while also generating funds from both.”⁵¹⁶ However, critics suggest the GCF which, generally promotes itself as a multilateral organization, functions in ways more like a multinational corporation that continues outdated development practices which leverage the power of global capital to provide communities what they are told they require, rather than empowering them to engender ownership of their own development. Chris Methmann builds on this critique arguing that the way the GCF and similar emergent organizations operate opens political avenues that enable organizations and the countries who fund them – and thus to varying degrees influence their actions – to “claim to be in favour of climate protection and stick to business as usual at the same time.”⁵¹⁷ This de-democratization of aid can lead to what Jacqueline Best describes as technocratic exceptionalism, as these types of supra-national entities “operate, on a day-to-day basis, in political spaces exempt from many of the norms of liberal democratic politics and yet have the power to define and constrain them.”⁵¹⁸ While Best is writing more specifically about

⁵¹⁵ Green Climate Fund, “Governing Instrument for the Green Climate Fund,” 2012, 2.

⁵¹⁶ Sarah Bracking, “The Anti-Politics of Climate Finance: The Creation and Performativity of the Green Climate Fund: The Anti-Politics of Climate Finance,” *Antipode* 47, no. 2 (2015): 285.

⁵¹⁷ Chris Paul Methmann, “‘Climate Protection’ as Empty Signifier: A Discourse Theoretical Perspective on Climate Mainstreaming in World Politics,” *Millennium* 39, no. 2 (2010): 345.

⁵¹⁸ Jacqueline Best, “Technocratic Exceptionalism: Monetary Policy and the Fear of Democracy,” *International Political Sociology* 12, no. 4 (December 1, 2018): 328.

central bankers and border guards, here I argue that a similar set of processes is occurring as actors like the GCF gain increasing power and autonomy within the international realm while operating in arenas that are often characterized by a lack of state capacity. Sarah Bracking among others⁵¹⁹ has criticized these types of global institutions that are overly technocratic and resultantly become increasingly undemocratic.

This critique builds on the work of scholars such as Thomas Pogge that have outlined patterns that began emerging following the end of the Cold War and into the 2000s in the international and supranational governance architecture where contradictions of interests and imbalances of power often – and perhaps increasingly – pit the interests of the Global South and Global North against one another. While this can be seen in a multitude of examples within global environmental governance – for the GCF as a specific example – this is most evident with powerful countries in the Global North providing most of the funding, and resultantly holding a high degree of decision-making power. On the other side of the coin, countries within the Global South are predominantly those in need of capital and assistance and resultantly the traditional donor-recipient relationship remains largely unchanged. The GCF is staffed by increasingly technocratic experts who have overseen the development of complex technical engagements which have made the process from application to partnership, to program implementation, and ongoing management continuously more arduous. This technocratization also demonstrates the disciplinary power with which large organizations staffed with experts can leverage global capital flows in order to discipline the actions of developing communities in diverse and dynamic settings. While this can

⁵¹⁹ See for example: Bram Buscher, “Anti-Politics as Political Strategy: Neoliberalism and Transfrontier Conservation in Southern Africa,” *Development and Change* 41, no. 1 (2010): 29–51; Aihwa Ong, *Neoliberalism as Exception Mutations in Citizenship and Sovereignty* (Durham [N.C.: Duke University Press, 2006).

be seen to be productive in some instances, this process has served to exclude many who would otherwise be optimal candidates for funding.⁵²⁰ Bracking argues that

this is reflected in the little reflection by CSOs [civil society organizations] on what constitutes ‘expert technical authority’, or on how the ‘calculative entities’ and ‘framings’ that experts produce constitute knowledge, despite the role of these actors and processes in producing ‘anti-politics’, that is, rendering the process technical and thereby limiting open political and democratic deliberation.⁵²¹

Those who work for the GCF are suggested to be experts, and thus their knowledge to be treated as gospel and their authority to not be questioned. As the GCF chooses partners to implement projects this then filters down from the top, leaving little space for local nuance, indigenous knowledge, or effective partnership with local communities. While the GCF has undeniably contributed to many demonstrable benefits in countries and communities across the Global South, it has also seemingly done so in part through a continuation of certain neocolonial practices that have long been widely criticized within development discourse – though not always reflected in practice.

One example of the politics of such arrangements is with the awarding of grants by the GCF for sustainable development initiatives in the Global South. The process to apply for and be awarded a grant from the GCF is highly complex and requires a great deal of technical expertise and collaboration between a number of parties. The GCF does not implement projects itself directly, but instead works through partnerships with accredited entities. Accredited entities are responsible for presenting funding applications to the GCF and then overseeing, supervising,

⁵²⁰ Jim Igoe, “Consume, Connect, Conserve: Consumer Spectacle and the Technical Mediation of Neoliberal Conservation’s Aesthetic of Redemption and Repair,” *Human Geography* 6, no. 1 (March 1, 2013): 16–28.

⁵²¹ Bracking, “The Anti-Politics of Climate Finance,” 288–89.

managing, and monitoring projects once they are approved. The process of becoming an accredited entity in itself is long, complex, and takes a great deal of time and expertise. Once accredited, these entities work in close consultation with national development agencies and/or sub-national entities based on the various climate needs of individual developing countries and communities.⁵²² For Namibia this meant predominantly working with the EIFN as the main agent for the state along with the MET and involvement from other ministries as well as sub-national government input. The EIFN is also one of the main interlocutors that has cultivated a number of global partnerships to develop the types of technical expertise needed to put forth a successful proposal for such a grant. In so doing they must work closely with the CBNRM program which means NGOs involved in a given region, local conservancy councils, and tourism organizations operating in the area.

CBNRM offers a number of potential benefits to various groups but can also create a number of concerns – similar to other approaches to sustainable governance – specifically regarding who benefits. For garnering funding through organizations and mechanisms such as the GCF, CBNRM broadly, and conservancies specifically, serve as an important channel through which to apply for and receive development aid. This is a result of CBNRM having been developed within development discourse and having emerged within recent evolutions in global governance. As there are already a number of global players working closely with conservancies, they become seen as both an effective inroad and in ways the path of least resistance for targeted funds to realize demonstrable goals that can be pointed to as successes for local communities as well as for the GCF itself and hence its donors (these donors predominantly being the wealthiest and more powerful countries). This type of ‘success’ tends to beget success as, in a world of increasingly squeezed national coffers, states are hesitant to donate aid unless it is tied to specific outcomes.

⁵²² Green Climate Fund, “Project Lifecycle,” Text, Green Climate Fund (Green Climate Fund, March 18, 2020).

While none of this is surprising, nor inherently problematic, it can lead to unintended consequences that create issues for recipient nations and their people. For the specific case here, it has resulted in CBNRM becoming a program that is in some ways ‘too big to fail.’ What this means is that as Namibia has been deemed a global leader in this form of resource governance, it has created a positive feedback loop of sorts where the more success they can point to the more funding, tourists, and support they can attract. This cycle has created a more or less stable revenue stream that has kept the programs functioning, though it also prevents it from evolving in order to achieve community autonomy and empowerment. These ideals are difficult to achieve as communities are disciplined to achieve certain outcomes in certain ways in order to receive benefits, without affording them the leeway that would be necessary for effective ownership to be engendered. There is so much interest tied up in CBNRM in its current and most well-known form remaining as such and continuing to function smoothly, that difficult questions about policy changes, political tensions, and power imbalances rarely get effectively discussed and issues are allowed to fester.

While making the CBNRM program more environmentally sustainable is an important and necessary endeavour, deciding how this is accomplished remains a contentious issue. Partnerships that have emerged have led to measurable positive benefits, however they have also created blinders of sorts and what some argue has led to a virtual strait jacketing of development efforts on the ground. Lara Diez suggests issues occur as the ‘C’ in CBNRM has come to refer more to *conservancy* rather than *community* and in the process

forgetting the complexities and many needs/challenges of communities. Once conservancies are installed, they become a calling card and an end goal in themselves

which ignores so many major issues. But resources go into conservancy activities because it is the buzzword for funding and then that's all that gets thought of.⁵²³

Here Diez is referring to conservancies themselves becoming an end, rather than a means to other ends – in this case, sustainable development goals. As a result, over the past two decades communities across Namibia have become disciplined to develop conservancies of their own and become gazetted. In some cases, this has made sense and many conservancies have become financially self-sufficient, with many even generating reasonable profits. However, for other communities, becoming a conservancy makes little sense and can in fact have negative implications. Hazam builds on Diez's point suggesting that many communities have applied for conservancy status and the MET grants it to them in order to point to their ever-growing numbers of conservancies as well as increasing percentage of land protected under communal spaces, but that often there are no local resources to manage. With much of Namibia consisting of the Namib desert, many of the newest conservancies consist of territories that boast little or no natural endowments to be conserved or managed, and as a result a bureaucratic layer of governance is installed with no means by which to support it economically and little reason or impetus for doing so.⁵²⁴ Nonetheless, the success of some lead communities to seek to emulate that success and apply for gazettelement which is generally approved when the legislative requirements are met. This leaves these conservancies in a sort of limbo where they have a new system of governance, but with no meaningful way to staff or organize it and deriving no measurable benefits from the program. In order to keep many of these going, NGOs and the Namibian government provide some degree of support and thus they drain important and scarce resources that could be allocated elsewhere much

⁵²³ Interview, Lara Diez, Nyae Nyae Development Foundation of Namibia, January 10 2020.

⁵²⁴ Interview, John Hazam, Senior Technical Advisor: Namibia Nature Foundation, January 23, 2020.

more efficiently. Therefore, conservancies ought to be seen only as one potential means to an end, rather than an end in themselves, and in a sense as a spoke with which to connect the local to the wheel of global funding streams.

The Sorris Sorris solar installation funded largely by the GCF is one example of a targeted project with heavy initial investment realized through partnerships between the conservancy, the lodge owner, NACSO, the EIFN, the MET, and the GFC itself. An example of another activity that is taking place to simultaneously combat climate change and mitigate human-wildlife conflict through the CBNRM program is with an NGO called Lightforce. Based in France, this small NGO has grown over the years, and it provides opportunities for individuals who want to volunteer and get involved in fighting climate change and contributing to sustainable development in the Global South.⁵²⁵ As part of its broader efforts, Lightforce sent a team to Namibia for three weeks between January and February 2020 in order to head to certain locations that had been determined would most benefit from small solar light installations being set up around livestock enclosures.⁵²⁶ These decisions were made through collective deliberation between Lightforce, NACSO, the Ministry of Environment and Tourism, and through consultation with individual conservancy councils and members. As assemblages are ever-changing, in this instance Lightforce thus becomes a part of Namibia's GGPA and imbricated in the governance of the CBNRM program as well as its outcomes. Lightforce is an individual component on its own but simultaneously takes on a new role in this time and space which subsequently has cascading impacts on all other components of the assemblage contributing to another evolution in response to climate change. As discussed previously, one of the major threats to CBNRM is human-wildlife conflict, as climate change has

⁵²⁵ More information on Lightforce can be found on its website at the following link:
<https://www.lightforceproject.com/>

⁵²⁶ Interview, Team lead, NGO Team from France, February 3, 2020

been pushing predators toward attacking livestock which, in-turn has led to farmers retaliating and killing wildlife.⁵²⁷ Research has shown these solar light installations to be effective in decreasing the likelihood of predator attacks on livestock. They keep enclosures lit up throughout the night and can be set to flash the lights at various rhythms in order to mimic the presence of a human – suggesting danger to potential predators.⁵²⁸ Thus, Lightforce members travel to Windhoek, procure as many of the materials as they can locally to support the domestic economy, while importing whatever they must, and from there head to rural areas in order to begin their work. While the activities of Lightforce are much more straightforward and standard NGO activities than the complex and costly dealings involved in the solar plant at Sorris Sorris Lodge, the novelty comes from the fact that the efforts of many of the actors in the GGPA have shifted to both countering the impacts of climate change while simultaneously treating issues exacerbated by it such as an increase in human-wildlife conflict.

Lightforce could have conducted their operations in the absence of conservancies, however, conservancies serve as legal governance entities and key actors that are empowered through denser connectivities to both Windhoek, and the global community than rural communities traditionally had been prior to CBNRM. This served as an effective system for organization and communication by which Lightforce could work with other NGOs operating on the ground as well as conservancy councils in order to efficiently determine where the light installations were most needed and would provide the most benefit. In this sense as Kalvelage et al. argue, “conservation as a global strategy of environmental governance not only established new territories by commodifying landscape and wildlife, but also brings about new processes of territorialization.”⁵²⁹

⁵²⁷ Interview, Uatirohange Tjiuoro, Ministry of Environment and Tourism: Directorate of National Parks and Wildlife, January 20, 2020.

⁵²⁸ Interview, Team lead, NGO Team from France, February 3, 2020

⁵²⁹ Kalvelage et al., “Territorialising Conservation,” 284.

This territorialization occurs by ordering and connecting these rural areas that were previously seen to be largely disconnected from the global, and instead codifies the territory and creates governing apparatuses in the image of western Weberian states which are seen as more effective vehicles for developing partnerships for various purposes. The conservancies in this case are seen as pivotal in working with farmers to develop and improve the technology to ensure it realizes its goals of warding off predators and protecting important livestock populations.

While on a much smaller scale than the Sorris Sorris Lodge solar plant, the work of Lightforce has been positively received by conservancy members who see these activities as being a newfound benefit of the conservancy program and a welcome green investment in their livelihoods and well being. One farmer from just outside of the town of Bersig (Torra Conservancy), approximately 150 km Northwest of Sorris Sorris, reported that members used to

get good benefits from the CBNRM program except now with the drought we no longer get meat and also get less water. I grow some vegetables but it's very hard without enough water – same for livestock. The solar installations by the French team give us renewed hope and remind us of the good conservancies can bring and help save the few livestock I have left.⁵³⁰

While I was met with similar sentiments from a number of interview respondents, there remains the risk that so many rural Namibians are increasingly relying on the will of international actors, leaving them vulnerable to a loss of interest or to the next shift in approaches to development that might see efforts turned elsewhere. As a result, it is integral that conservancies coalesce behind the type of longer-term investments that were mentioned above by David, and that they educate their

⁵³⁰ Interview, Farmer 1, Torra Conservancy, February 2, 2020

children – especially girls – in order to develop the types of internal capacities needed to develop ownership over future development initiatives.

As climate change has continued impacting the assemblage, the need for these initiatives has become stark and the program has thus embraced these partners who have in turn welcomed the program and the GGPA as a governance arrangement that can be useful for realizing both local and global goals. There remains a number of important questions however, regarding how resources are allocated, who chooses the types of projects that will be funded, and whether winners are being picked based on local needs and potential results, or they are being chosen as a result of their connections and/or what will most benefit the international community.

These partnerships do not simply fall into place haphazardly, but instead are the result of a complex set of decisions made by a multitude of actors whose efforts have coalesced. This can be beneficial and productive, but it can also lead to institutional and bureaucratic competition for scarce resources. It is for this reason that it is imperative to analyze the kinds of socio-ecological processes that were outlined in the previous section, and which are threatening the CBNRM program. These processes are integral to understanding shifts in the components that make up the GGPA.⁵³¹ While CBNRM is intended to empower communities, Duffy demonstrates that the monetization of resources can lead to resource abundance rather than scarcity leading to conflicts, and can actually make stronger, not weaker states.⁵³² This is seen with a concerted set of state actions being taken in the years following independence, with the NDP1 in 1995 that led to the creation of the EIFN, and subsequently the Nature Conservation Amendment Act being passed in 1996. This coalescence has occurred not by some miraculous feat of consensus in global politics,

⁵³¹ Katz-Rosene and Paterson, *Thinking Ecologically about the Global Political Economy*.

⁵³² Duffy, "The Potential and Pitfalls of Global Environmental Governance," 100.

but instead is a result of endless negotiations and careful maneuvering that goes into these types of highly political governance arrangements.

Novel Outlooks and Opportunities

As Chapter 2 outlined, the outlook on CBNRM has grown less optimistic over the years. Within the country itself, the program remains popular and while many people acknowledge that it is far from perfect, the majority of those I spoke to reported that their lives are better as a result of this form of resource governance.⁵³³ It is not, however, without its critics whose voices have been strong in opposing the conservancy program. CBNRM is far reaching and has become politically and economically engrained in the country. Despite this, its foundations are not as solid as some might desire and this type of political opposition can lead to cracks that can, and in ways have, eroded this foundation.⁵³⁴ Increasingly however, as the drought has stretched on year after year people have realized that many of the challenges they are being faced with are a result of the effects of climate change which is presenting them with a new normal that they must adapt to. This has led to shifting outlooks on the program that have begun seeing it in a newfound light.

⁵³³ Focus Group 2, Anabeb Conservancy, February 7, 2020

⁵³⁴ Interview, Lara Diez, Nyae Nyae Development Foundation of Namibia, January 10 2020.



Figure 19: Tourism is Drought Resistant⁵³⁵

While many respondents from conservancies acknowledge the hardships faced and the fact that things are not as easy as they once were, they similarly suggest that what they still have is largely thanks to economic opportunities and systems developed from tourism incomes as demonstrated in Figure 19 above.⁵³⁶ During an interview one respondent asserted that “conservation is very important; it is all we have left until we get rain. Without it we would have nothing, so we need to conserve for the future.”⁵³⁷ This was a sentiment that was shared by many throughout the dry fragile landscapes of the conservancies. For many, any sort of farming has become virtually impossible. Where some forms of agriculture had once been manageable, what they have left has been dying. Where sizeable herds of livestock once thrived, tens of thousands have died off as the land’s carrying capacity dwindles by the year.⁵³⁸ For rural populations who

⁵³⁵ MET/NACSO, “The State of Community Conservation in Namibia: Annual Report 2019: A Review of Communal Conservancies, Community Forests and Other CBNRM Initiatives.”

⁵³⁶ Focus group 3, Anabeb Conservancy, February 7, 2020

⁵³⁷ Focus group 2, Anabeb Conservancy, February 7, 2020

⁵³⁸ Interview, Benedict Libanda, CEO, Environmental Investment fund of Namibia, January 29, 2020.

were never wealthy to begin with, it is difficult to communicate how hard it is to feed communities that have been experiencing population growth on land that is simultaneously able to produce ever-less. While the new partnerships that have been forming and the activities that have been developing in response to the challenges of climate change are not necessarily providing solutions to these complex problems faced by communities, they are providing opportunities that are helping to give a new outlook on conservation in the country. Many Namibians have long believed that conservation is key to a sustainable future, but the drought has made it clearer than ever. They realize that what is lost today might not be able to be recovered tomorrow and collectively they are deliberately working with the assemblage of actors in order to invest in their future.

One of the keys to understand and that bears repeating again is just how vast Namibia is and how sparse its populations are. As a result of this, much of its populations live in extremely rural landscapes which can make any type of development extremely challenging. This chapter, however, has outlined some ways in which novel partnerships are leading to activities that are contributing to realizing certain sustainable development goals. As mentioned from the outset of this chapter, climate change as well as other challenges have made CBNRM based solely on wildlife management and ecotourism a precarious industry subject to volatility. Over the years however, conservancies have evolved beyond simply managing wildlife and attracting tourism and have become local-level governance entities that connect rural Namibian communities more intimately to the broader international political economy. Conservancies each have councils which bring organization and a platform for local communities to have a voice. In this sense communities are also able to exercise productive power based on both their geographic, and historical relationship to wildlife which the paradigm of community-based conservation sees as central to effective development. While the level of organization varies across conservancies, each is

required to write a constitution and present a resource sharing plan to be gazetted. Thus, even in the most nascent, smallest conservancies whose governance capacities are least well developed, there are mechanisms for democratic decision making and a platform for members to be heard. It is through this voice that resources are able to be directed to community benefits and efforts combined to enact change and move in necessary directions to ensure a sustainable future in light of whatever challenges might come their way.

While it is certain that benefits do not always materialize in an equitable and inclusive manner, the democratic mechanisms for resource sharing plans as outlined in Chapter 4 do provide at least some means of transparency and accountability to conservancy members. CBNRM has in some ways quite literally put many of these places on the map. Previously, it would have been impossible for outsiders to find many of these communities through any of the online tools we have all come to rely on. However, now they have lodges and conservancy offices, and the local beauty and rich culture is increasingly accessible to global markets which can benefit local economies, but also has a disciplinary function as conservancies seek to fit the molds of international capitalistic modes of ordering. While this increasing connectivity brings its own set of complex challenges and concerns, it is also enabling the types of partnerships outlined in this chapter. These partnerships can encourage the joining of Indigenous knowledge, with modern science in order to develop sustainable solutions that are enabling people to continue to reside in their homelands, even as climate change threatens their traditional livelihoods. Eric Xaineab argues that

Indigenous knowledge is better than scientific knowledge. Indigenous knowledge is human knowledge and human knowledge created scientific knowledge. Scientific knowledge

should be brought in to supplement Indigenous knowledge, not replace it – especially in these harsh, distant climates that are each so unique.⁵³⁹

While scientific and Indigenous knowledge ought not to be pitted against one another in any sort of competition, nor are their joining a simple or always fruitful process, acknowledging the benefits both can bring and the foundations upon which they have developed are at the very least an important starting point from which to seek to develop effective solutions. Each form of knowledge is also highly politicized and is afforded particular forms of power.

While western scientific knowledge has long been dominant within global environmental governance, the shift to community-based conservation has added the necessity of local Indigenous knowledge and practices. This has enabled local populations to exercise power as managers of valuable wildlife populations seen as a global good which inserts communities as key actors in the assemblage. While this does not erase power imbalances, it ensures that their voices remain central to development puzzles to some degree. Eric raises an important point that is in many ways central to the ethos of CBNRM. Part of the importance of the community empowerment pillar that puts local residents at the centre of development initiatives, is intended to move away from the failures of cookie cutter development initiatives that the international community pursued for decades. CBNRM is intended to enable global actors to partner with local ones in order to provide training and share technical knowledge but only to supplement their own existing approaches. CBNRM serves to erase some of these divides however, and analyzing it as a policy assemblage enables us to move away from these distinctions and levels in order to understand the way actors operate at various levels and within diverse realms simultaneously. In this sense, communities which are so often understood as ‘local’ and divided from the global, are indeed both at once as they meld their

⁵³⁹ Interview, Eric Xaneb, Chairman, Tsiseb Conservancy, January 27, 2020

knowledge with other global partners and the two pressure one another into hybrid outcomes. This Indigenous knowledge has emerged from centuries, and in many cases, millennia of experience with the local geographical, social, political, and historical realities which are all key to meaningful and successful development initiatives. Hassan Kaya and Yonah Seleti argue that many approaches to education in Africa are “still too academic and distant from the developmental challenges of African local communities.”⁵⁴⁰ There are endless important lessons that have been learned about conservation and sustainable ecosystem approaches that have been learned in Africa since the dawn of mankind and it becomes necessary to leverage these approaches and triangulate them against lessons learned from western science and research to create positive outcomes. While marrying the two sounds good in theory, in practice we know this is both difficult to accomplish and leads to tensions and power imbalances. Nonetheless this joining of the local and global, the scientific and Indigenous, are important pieces to every development puzzle and global assemblages provide the analytical tools required for understanding this complexity.

Conservancies have spread like a web of sub-national governance across the country in a way that did not previously exist. There had previously been local traditional authorities and there are regional governments, but conservancies have developed somewhere in between these two and have served as an important inroad to make development initiatives increasingly sustainable. CBNRM has created a foundation from which the tourism industry has been able to proliferate. As the tourism industry has experienced and acknowledged the impacts of climate change on itself as well as its impacts on climate change, the assemblage of actors involved have begun working to evolve in response, in order to mitigate and adapt to these challenges. This has provided an

⁵⁴⁰ Hassan O Kaya and Yonah N Seleti, “African Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Relevance of Higher Education in South Africa,” *The International Education Journal: Comparative Perspectives* 12, no. 1 (2013): 30.

effective inroad for renewed global partnerships that have provided resources for a number of development initiatives that are creating real and demonstrable benefits on the ground. Despite these opportunities however, it is clear that these development initiatives do not serve to empower communities in the way proponents initially espoused, or that the panaceans suggested.

Conclusions

Eric suggests that “it is tough for people to not feel like the program is always progressing, similar to the demand for eternal growth everywhere.”⁵⁴¹ Many have questioned the notion of limitless growth on which the global capitalistic economy is based and there must certainly be limits to the growth of CBNRM in Namibia.⁵⁴² However, this does not mean that the program is failing or doomed, but rather that it will continue to experience challenges that the GGPA must adapt to. Similarly, Maxi Pia Louis suggests that “drought is like any other financial type of crisis when people blame existing systems; in this case the conservancies and they say they don’t work.”⁵⁴³ While drought might not be similar to every other financial crisis, her argument that when people struggle financially they often point to the system of governance which oversaw that financial hardship is a sound one. Economic struggles can be the result of poor governance, but can also occur when good governance is present but exogenous factors lead to economic downturns or prevent development. For the case of Namibia, climate change appears to be compounding every existing challenge to the CBNRM program. While this might not be directly linked to every governance challenge, various existing issues have all been exacerbated by environmental

⁵⁴¹ Interview, Eric Xaneb, Chairman, Tsiseb Conservancy, January 27, 2020

⁵⁴² Donella Meadows, Jorgen Randers, and Dennis Meadows, *Limits to Growth: The 30-Year Update* (Chelsea Green Publishing, 2004).

⁵⁴³ Interview, Maxi Pia Louis, Director, Namibia Association of CBNRM Support Organizations, January 14, 2020.

changes. However, as was pointed out by several of my interview respondents it has also become an important learning experience and a necessary “kick in the ass” as suggested by the director of IRDNC at a full day workshop on impacts of climate change on the CBNRM program.

This chapter has outlined many of the challenges faced by the CBNRM program and the way these are all exacerbated by the impacts of climate change. The chapter, however, also turned from these challenges to analyze some of the opportunities that have been presented to Namibia’s CBNRM program in the face of a changing climate and its many impacts. As the international community has increasingly turned its efforts toward fighting global climate change, the actors involved in CBNRM have similarly been shifting much of their focus to greening their ecotourism activities. This has resulted in a number of opportunities for local, national, and global actors to develop novel partnerships in order to realize projects that contribute to the realization of sustainable development goals. These partnerships have produced fruitful outcomes such as the solar power plant at Sorris Sorris Lodge, and human-wildlife conflict mitigating solar lighting installed by Lightforce. One of the most interesting impacts climate change has been having is that as its effects provide inroads for new actors to join the assemblage and the broader CBNRM program evolves, it is leading to productive power relations that are contributing to an increasing prevalence of the language of climate change which is simultaneously beginning to flow through their every action. While I did not go looking for climate change, it quickly found me and it has become a central theme that is inescapable in Namibia in general, and within CBNRM in particular. This has led existing actors to open up to novel partnerships in order to procure resources for initiatives to re-green ecotourism activities in order to remain competitive to continue attracting global capital. However, this disciplinary ethos of climate change has also led to a continuation, and in some ways perhaps an exacerbation of power imbalances that have important

effects on the degree to which communities benefit from CBNRM which the next chapter will now turn to.

Chapter 6

Assembled Governance from the Local to the Global Community

“CBNRM is actually more about community organizing than anything. Not specifically about money or wildlife but empowering the communities to make long-term development for themselves.”⁵⁴⁴

More than anything the threat of climate change has resulted in a shift to make the CBNRM program greener in all its various facets. These efforts are important as the type of tourism that takes place has not traditionally been sufficiently eco-friendly to be considered sustainable at any kind of scale. While efforts to reduce the negative environmental impacts of the program have been successful, they also call into question the reliance on development funding to improve the stay of wealthy tourists in southern Africa, when nearby populations continue to struggle for subsistence in many cases.

As with any policy, CBNRM is not without its controversy nor without its critics. For a long time many Namibians were skeptical of this form of resource governance viewing it as simply the newest version of neocolonialism and as a way for foreign interests to control resources and subsequently local communities.⁵⁴⁵ This skepticism was understandable given the violent and oppressive histories of colonialism and Apartheid and the country’s long and bloody struggle for independence.⁵⁴⁶ Over time as the programs thrived, these attitudes shifted and CBNRM became

⁵⁴⁴ Interview, Uatirohange Tjiuro, Ministry of Environment and Tourism: Directorate of National Parks and Wildlife, January 20, 2020.

⁵⁴⁵ Interview, Dr. Margaret Jacobson, co-founder IRDNC, co-director, trustee, mentor, Conservancy Safaris Namibia, Swakopmund, February 17, 2020; Interview, Brian Jones, Environment and Development Consultant, Windhoek, February 20, 2020.

⁵⁴⁶ Interview, Pohamba Shifeta, Minister of Environment and Tourism, January 29 2020.

favourably viewed by many Namibians which was evident throughout the interview process. Even those who admitted they were once skeptics, now reported they believe CBNRM to be largely beneficial for the country.⁵⁴⁷ There was also a number of interviewees who voiced some discontent with the way conservancy affairs were being managed but remained positive about the program as a whole.⁵⁴⁸ As the pressures of climate change have diminished many of the measurable returns from the program however, there has been a renewed uncertainty about CBNRM.

John Hazam, the Senior Technical Advisor of the Namibia Nature Foundation suggested that this starts at the top as conservancy leaders were paid by NGOs early on but since then, as conservancies have been pushed to become financially self-sufficient, these salaries have had to decrease a great deal. Initially NGOs might have paid conservancy managers N\$2,400 per month (roughly USD \$240) but in many cases that might have been an entire conservancy budget. As NGO funding has tightened and conservancy manager and staff salaries have had to shift to be largely paid through tourism incomes, many have had to take sizeable pay cuts of up to 75 per cent. This has been one of the major challenges facing conservancies, as they are intended to emerge with the direct technical and financial assistance of donors and NGOs but are supposed to become entirely self-sufficient and eventually profit making. While approximately 25 per cent of conservancies have made this transition successfully, it remains a difficult goal to realize, and the process remains complex and contentious especially as incomes have leveled off in recent years as shown below in figure 20, despite growing populations and challenges to deal with.⁵⁴⁹ People generally are not willing to continue doing the same work for less pay, Hazam suggests, especially

⁵⁴⁷ Focus Group 2, Anabeb Conservancy, February 7, 2020.

⁵⁴⁸ Interview, Barnabas, tour guide, Petrified Forest, Uisbasen/Twyfelfontein, January 31, 2020; Interview, Village respondent 1, Uisbasen/Twyfelfontein, January 30, 2020.

⁵⁴⁹ MET/NACSO, "The State of Community Conservation in Namibia: Annual Report 2019: A Review of Communal Conservancies, Community Forests and Other CBNRM Initiatives."

in a world where the cost of living continues to rise.⁵⁵⁰ Inflation has been a growing issue in Namibia – like with much of the rest of the world – and its causes are a combination of the growth in Namibia’s money supply, aggregate demand and the rising cost of food and fuel as well as supply chain issues which are exacerbated by relying on pass-through of South Africa for most of its goods.⁵⁵¹ All of these components are exacerbated by the large tourism sector, as wealthy tourists provide a steady flow of foreign capital, and many enterprises raise prices in order to capitalize on this. This is something I experienced firsthand as the majority of the food, and especially the fuel, that I purchased throughout my fieldwork were more costly than they would have been in many countries in the West. As a result, every purchase I made left me wondering how average Namibians are able to participate in the economy when the country’s GDP per capita was approximately USD \$4,100 in 2021, while also knowing that this is far above the income of the preponderance of rural Namibians due to the extremely high rates of inequality. While the majority of Namibians living on the subsistence or part-subsistence economy would not have eaten the same food as I did, these prices would make the cost of living a significant challenge for many.

⁵⁵⁰ Interview, John Hazam, Senior Technical Advisor: Namibia Nature Foundation, January 23, 2020

⁵⁵¹ Kaula Nhongo, “Namibia Hikes Key Rate by Most in 15 Years to Temper Inflation - BNN Bloomberg,” BNN, June 15, 2022.

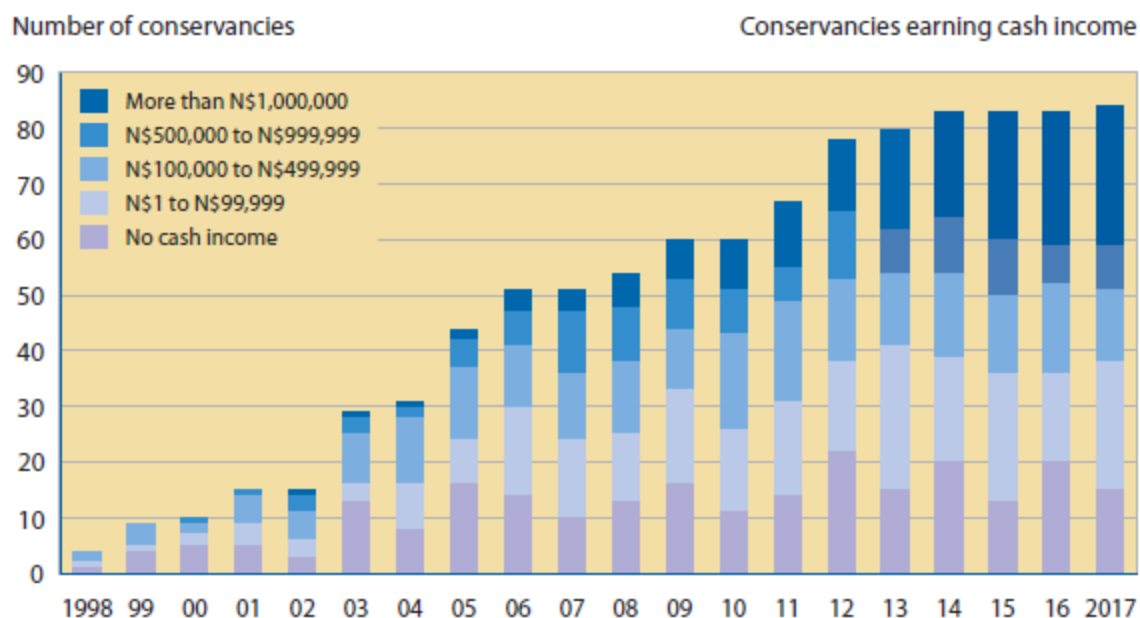


Figure 20: Conservancy Revenue 1998-2017⁵⁵²

Beyond conservancy staff, members in general have been enjoying diminished benefits in recent years as well. It is important to note that there are 92 conservancies across the country and the benefits and the way these are distributed vary greatly amongst them. Such differences aside, interview respondents regularly reported that many conservancies had seen these decline in recent years. One example from Torra Conservancy was that where conservancy members used to receive N\$500 per year, recently it had decreased to N\$50 or sometimes nothing at all.⁵⁵³ Similarly, meat from game had been widely distributed but now was only being sent to the elderly or sick in the best cases. Hazam makes a key point in stating that when people's economic outlook declines, a desire for change of some sort often ensues. As a result, many are becoming increasingly unhappy with the program. Blame has been put on the NGOs, the international community, the West, the

⁵⁵² MET/NACSO, "The State of Community Conservation in Namibia: Annual Report 2019: A Review of Communal Conservancies, Community Forests and Other CBNRM Initiatives."

⁵⁵³ Interview, Village respondent 4, Torra Conservancy, February 1, 2020

Namibian government, and much has been made about local corruption at the conservancy level. This chapter will further unpack the complexities of these challenges facing the CBNRM program in Namibia and how they are impacted by global power relations.

Shifting Fads, Fashions, Funding, and Futures

Early successes for CBNRM witnessed wildlife populations rebound and across the country marked increases were being achieved in a number of species including lions, black rhinos, giraffes, zebras, elephants, springbok, gemsbok, and others.⁵⁵⁴ Along with this came increased revenues to conservancies through trophy hunting and ecotourism activities. Beginning around 2011 however, these revenues have slowed and general benefits from the CBNRM program began decreasing and have continued to do so in most cases ever since.⁵⁵⁵ There are several factors that have contributed to this decrease in both wildlife populations and in subsequent conservancy revenues. In the first few years of these declines, community residents largely blamed a mix of local governance apparatuses, the national government, and the international community. These sentiments are discussed by the research of the skeptics as outlined in Chapter 2. It is the skeptics who point to this layered governance as a concern, as government-issued quotas for trophy hunting began to decrease over these years. Challenges with this cumbersome, and at times problematic, layering of governance was shored up by data from several interview respondents who suggested their dealings with the Namibian government alone consist of the Ministry of Environment and Tourism, the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry, the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine

⁵⁵⁴ Boudreaux, “A New Call of the Wild.”

⁵⁵⁵ Interview, Maxi Pia Louis, Director, Namibia Association of CBNRM Support Organizations, January 14, 2020; Interview, Marina Tavolaro, PhD candidate in Biological Sciences at University of Cape Town, January 15, 2020; Interview, Uatirohange. Tjiuoro, Ministry of Environment and Tourism: Directorate of National Parks and Wildlife, January 20, 2020.

Resources, and the Ministry of Land Reform as well as a number of regional governments. Beyond these layers of government bureaucracy are local governments, traditional authorities, and now conservancies.⁵⁵⁶ This already cumbersome state bureaucracy must further govern in collaboration with a number of other non-state and supra-state actors for the effective functioning of CBNRM. This includes the network of NGOs, international multilateral organizations, the private sector, as well as new hybrid actors such as the Green Climate Fund. This has resulted in a complex governance arrangement in which these various actors work together toward supposedly synergistic goals, however, there are often disagreements about what these goals should be as well as more importantly how they ought to be attained. Moreover, even when agreement is achieved there are always winners and losers as a result of choices made and actions taken. This leads to various entities jockeying for position to realize benefits, yet when it comes to responsibility for costs there is often a void.

As Chapter 4 discussed, conservancies remain dependent on the assistance of NGOs as well as funding that is funnelled through them by international organizations and foreign governments. Due to evolutions in global environmental governance, international financial flows have largely shifted from a core funding approach to capital being targeted at ever-more specific issues and geographic regions.⁵⁵⁷ Catherine Corson argues that

The 1980s and 1990s rise of neoliberalism laid the conditions for the formation of a dynamic alliance among representatives of the US Congress, the US Agency for International Development, environmental NGOs and the private sector around

⁵⁵⁶ Interview, Lara Diez, Nyae Nyae Development Foundation of Namibia, January 10 2020; Interview, John Hazam, Senior Technical Advisor: Namibia Nature Foundation, January 23, 2020; Interview, Dr. Ekkehard Klingelhoefter, Head of Department – Wildlife Management and Ecotourism, University of Namibia, January 13, 2020.

⁵⁵⁷ Toepler et al., “The Changing Space for NGOs.”

biodiversity conservation. In this alliance, idealized visions of NGOs as civil society and a countering force to corporations have underpinned their influence, despite their contemporary corporate partnerships. Furthermore, by focusing on *international* biodiversity conservation, the group has attracted a broad spectrum of political and corporate support to shape public policy and in the process create new spaces for capital expansion.⁵⁵⁸

With USAID being one of the central donors to Namibia's CBNRM program from the outset, it was this coalescence of actors within the US that served as a major impetus for the program's initial success. Over time however, funding priorities have shifted, voices of opposition particularly in the US have grown louder, and this American environmental coalition as well as many like it elsewhere have seen an increase in roadblocks to them achieving their ends. Thomas Parks argues that this results in NGOs experiencing

fluctuations in funding because of the constantly shifting priorities of their international donors. Without domestic sources... NGOs are forced to re-align their priorities with donor interests in order to compete for funding... The resulting asymmetry in donor-grantee relations often leads to a crisis of legitimacy and deteriorating effectiveness for the NGO.⁵⁵⁹

People, and subsequently organizations, want their money to go to saving a specific type of rhino in a particular area, or for protecting habitat for desert elephants in one region for example, rather than for broadly funding 'CBNRM in Namibia' as used to be the case.⁵⁶⁰ Willie Boonzaaier, reported that "you can see this with the increasingly activist nature of people in this age. They fly

⁵⁵⁸ Catherine Corson, "Shifting Environmental Governance in a Neoliberal World: US AID for Conservation," *Antipode* 42, no. 3 (2010): 576.

⁵⁵⁹ Thomas Parks, "The Rise and Fall of Donor Funding for Advocacy NGOs: Understanding the Impact," *Development in Practice* 18, no. 2 (April 1, 2008): 213.

⁵⁶⁰ Interview, Andrew Malherbe, COO, Save the Rhino Trust, Swakopmund, February 18, 2020

one specific flag and try to ensure it is held higher than all the rest.”⁵⁶¹ One of the ways these politics have played out is with the issue of trophy hunting which provides a useful empirical example of the ways in which donor funding and the position of NGOs within it impact development efforts on the ground.

The changes in the fortunes of CBNRM can be partly attributed to climate change, as outlined in the previous chapter. However, they are also heavily influenced by shifts in global financial flows based on approaches to conservation, referent objects to be conserved, or specific geographic regions, countries, and locations that are in fashion in any given moment. One illustration of the way CBNRM is intimately connected to the global political economy is with the way in which these shifting fashions have had a substantial impact on trophy hunting. This has materialized as with an ever-sharper gaze over where and how funds are being allocated and how they are being deployed as well as with an ever-more watchful and activist civil society, organizations are increasingly hesitant to fund any activity that might be linked to trophy hunting which is worth unpacking in some depth here.⁵⁶²

At one point trophy hunting contributed to over half the revenue for the CBNRM program across the country with some conservancies having received eighty to ninety per cent of their income from hunting related activities.⁵⁶³ Thus, in lowering quotas, conservancies have been able to distribute less benefits in-cash and in-kind and are able to reinvest less into various social services in local communities.⁵⁶⁴ Trophy hunting is one of the more complex issues related to

⁵⁶¹ Interview, Willie Boonzaaier, Programme Director, Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation, January 24, 2020.

⁵⁶² Interview, Michael Knight, Transboundary Leader for KAZA, WWF, January 23, 2020; Interview, Richard Diggle, Business/CBNRM Specialist, WWF, January 24, 2020.

⁵⁶³ Interview, Willie Boonzaaier, Programme Director, Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation, January 24, 2020.

⁵⁶⁴ NACSO, “Resources & Publications: State of Community Conservation,” NACSO, accessed May 7, 2020.

CBNRM as well as one that effectively demonstrates the way the local is inherently linked to the global which impacts decisions on the ground in this GGPA. While, in general, quotas for the hunting of wildlife are issued by the state to conservancies based on an analysis of game numbers and approaches to sustainable harvesting, in practice the equation is not so simple nor is it apolitical. The Namibian Government engages the help of WWF Norway to survey wildlife numbers and from this data calculates what they see as sustainable quotas. This creates discontent among some as many within local communities feel they are being unfairly robbed of their ability to obtain livelihoods as a result of distant government decrees that are supposedly based on numbers developed by European agencies. Thus, rather than the productive approach to power that CBNRM predominantly entails, hunting quotas demonstrates the state's persistent sovereign power which leads to sentiments of contradictions among some community members who felt they had been empowered through devolution. Rodgers Lubilo and Paul Hebinck unpack some of the ways many Namibians feel this amounts to national and global actors exercising their will at the community level, limiting the empowerment that may have been achieved.⁵⁶⁵ Beyond this however, as trophy hunting is a highly controversial activity internationally, the actions of conservancies at the local level can often be determined by global financial flows which are highly politicized. Prior to unpacking these complex global political economy issues however, I will briefly discuss the issue of trophy hunting specifically as it pertains to CBNRM.

CBNRM generally consists of the sustainable management of wildlife in order to commoditize it for various tourism purposes. These generally fall under consumptive and non-consumptive use activities.⁵⁶⁶ Non-consumptive use activities are what most of us picture when we

⁵⁶⁵ Rodgers Lubilo and Paul Hebinck, "'Local Hunting' and Community-Based Natural Resource Management in Namibia: Contestations and Livelihoods," *Geoforum* 101 (2019): 62–75.

⁵⁶⁶ Pascal Tremblay, "Wildlife Tourism Consumption: Consumptive or Non-consumptive?," *International Journal of Tourism Research* 3, no. 1 (2001): 81–86.

think of this type of resource management which involves protecting wildlife populations for ecotourists to engage in a sustainable form of travel that involves taking safari excursions to see animals, take photographs, and experience the rugged, rural Namibian terrain. The Nature Conservation Amendment Act suggests “‘non-consumptive use’ means use not entailing the permanent removal of individual game, but use for recreational, educational, research, cultural, or aesthetic purposes.”⁵⁶⁷ On the other hand, the Act suggests that “‘consumptive use’ means the utilisation of individual game by its permanent removal, or removal of its parts, from within an area.”⁵⁶⁸ Consumptive-use activities predominantly consist of various forms of hunting, where a different kind of tourist can pay substantial amounts of money to be issued a quota legally and be taken by a guide to track and shoot a specific wild animal. Until around 2010, for most conservancies trophy hunting made up the majority of their income and as a result it was one of the more popular activities.⁵⁶⁹ While the vast majority of quotas issued are for various types of antelope rather than more charismatic megafauna such as the Big Five, “Hunting trips to shoot elephants (*Loxodonta Africana*) and buffaloes (*Syncerus caffer*) fetch high prices (USD 10,000–40,000) and account for most of the revenues generated from trophy hunting.”⁵⁷⁰ It is particularly the hunting of The Big Five which has led to trophy hunting becoming increasingly condemned by many within the global environmental movement. This condemnation in turn, has led to donors targeting funding away from these activities as well as tourists choosing to spend their money at lodges in conservancies that focus on what are framed as, and hence what many accept as, less

⁵⁶⁷ MET, “Nature Conservation Amendment Act,” 3.

⁵⁶⁸ MET, 2.

⁵⁶⁹ Robin Naidoo et al., “Complementary benefits of tourism and hunting to communal conservancies in Namibia,” *Conservation Biology* 30, no. 3 (2016): 628–38.

⁵⁷⁰ Kalvelage et al., “Territorialising Conservation,” 287.

consumptive uses. While some might consider the killing of any animal for sport unjust, for Namibians it is a much more complex issue.

The shift in public opinion in the Global North in opposition to trophy hunting in southern Africa has been exacerbated by extensive and disproportionate coverage of ‘canned hunts’ in which wildlife are bred in large, enclosed areas for the purposes of trophy hunting.⁵⁷¹ Specific events such as the killing of ‘Cecil the Lion’ in Zimbabwe by an American dentist poured fuel on these movements which have accelerated as a result. While condemning the killing of Cecil is one thing, this increasing awareness and resultant outcry of many in the West, has also had severe impacts that threaten to undermine the commodified forms of wildlife conservation which have become key to the sustainable development of many African communities.⁵⁷² Tremblay outlines the way in which trophy hunting has been deemed in the negative sense a consumptive use form of conservation as each person’s ‘use’ of individual wildlife species directly decreases the quantity of that resource.⁵⁷³ This is an understandable, clear, and straightforward argument that speaks especially to those outside Africa who generally experience the beauty of the continent’s charismatic megafauna from their smart phones and condemn the thought of someone shooting these animals for sport. As a result, this framing of trophy hunting has been gradually gaining salience and NGOs are finding their funding increasingly targeted to specific measures in what results in various external actors, disciplining decision making within African communities which can be problematic for at least two specific reasons.⁵⁷⁴

⁵⁷¹ Heffernan, “Accounting for Climate Change in CBNRM: Reflections on Wildlife Conservation in Namibia.”

⁵⁷² Nicoli Nattrass, “Conservation and the Commodification of Wildlife in the Anthropocene: A Southern African History,” *South African Historical Journal* 0, no. 0 (April 20, 2021): 1–22.

⁵⁷³ Tremblay, “Wildlife Tourism Consumption.”

⁵⁷⁴ Brockington and Scholfield, “Expenditure by Conservation Nongovernmental Organizations in Sub-Saharan Africa.”

First, when trophy hunting occurs it does so legally through the issuing of quotas that are developed based on scientific data in order to ensure populations are managed sustainably.⁵⁷⁵ While it may seem counter-intuitive to kill any of a species of animal that might be endangered, sometimes there can be a problem animal or over-population in a given location and removing that animal or a small number of a herd from the area might be overall beneficial to the remaining population.⁵⁷⁶ The essence of the CBNRM program is for people and wildlife to coexist peacefully side by side and thus, if a particular animal is causing destruction to livestock or posing a threat to human populations it may be better to remove it than to have people rebel and kill many of the animals. While there are many avenues that could be pursued for removing a problem animal or mitigating the issues it might be causing, issuing a permit for a trophy hunter to remove it offers a way to infuse money into both the national and local economies, as well as to provide meat for local communities. Furthermore, while rebellion and the killing of multiple animals is far from a certain outcome, this has been experienced in many cases which is seen in both the literature and further emerged from my interviews.⁵⁷⁷

Second, while it can sometimes be necessary to remove a problem animal, doing so can also provide many benefits that can be put back into conservation programs. If a wealthy hunter from a foreign country pays \$20,000 USD to shoot a lion, that money can be re-invested in the community and in conservation programs aimed at protecting the rest of the lion population.⁵⁷⁸ Stasja Koot demonstrates the way that revenue from trophy hunting is not always enjoyed equally

⁵⁷⁵ Stasja Koot, “The Limits of Economic Benefits: Adding Social Affordances to the Analysis of Trophy Hunting of the Khwe and Ju/’hoansi in Namibian Community-Based Natural Resource Management,” *Society & Natural Resources* 32, no. 4 (April 3, 2019): 417–33.

⁵⁷⁶ Jennifer Jacquet and Nicolas Delon, “The Values behind Calculating the Value of Trophy Hunting: The Values Behind Trophy Hunting,” *Conservation Biology* 30, no. 4 (August 2016): 910–11.

⁵⁷⁷ Lubilo and Hebinck, “‘Local Hunting’ and Community-Based Natural Resource Management in Namibia.” ; Interview, Employee, Wereldsend research outpost, February 3, 2020; Interview, Andrew Malherbe, COO, Save the Rhino Trust, Swakopmund, February 18, 2020.

⁵⁷⁸ Interview, Ruben Portas, Cheetah Research Project. Windhoek, January 14, 2020.

among conservancy members as well as points to the many critiques that government siphons off many of the funds before they ever reach the conservancy. As a result, \$20,000 USD can seemingly quickly evaporate. However, revenue from trophy hunting, as with photographic tourism does find its way to conservancies, has benefitted government coffers, and has continued to directly fund a number of important conservation services and entities across the country.⁵⁷⁹

Mike Knight, WWF Transboundary Leader: Kaza, suggests, that trophy hunting amounts to sacrificing the few for the benefit of the overall population.⁵⁸⁰ Local conservancy leaders at times expressed similar opinions that equally outlined the complexity of the issues. If wildlife limit the ability of humans to create sustainable livelihoods, history has demonstrated that in many cases – though not all – humans will turn to poaching as a means of survival and program success will be threatened. The Chairperson of Uisbasen/Twyfelfontein Conservancy suggested that

If it's an increase of elephants there is an increase of consumptions, damages, food consumption and problems then it's good to reduce the number for where there are residents. [Elephants] consume a lot of water, take whole trees. They damage environment. They are like kids who want to try everything.⁵⁸¹

Uatirohange Tjiuoro from the MET went so far as to claim that it is unfortunate, they cannot sell ivory.⁵⁸² He explained that any country with elephants will always end up with a certain amount of ivory through elephants dying for a variety of reasons and at times even through legal trophy hunting. To not take advantage of this economically is unfortunate he argues, despite

⁵⁷⁹ Koot, "The Limits of Economic Benefits."

⁵⁸⁰ Interview, Michael Knight, Transboundary Leader for KAZA, WWF, January 23, 2020.

⁵⁸¹ Interview, Adolph Thaniseb, Uisbased/Twyfelfontein, January 30, 2020

⁵⁸² Interview, Uatirohange Tjiuoro, Ministry of Environment and Tourism: Directorate of National Parks and Wildlife, January 20, 2020.

understanding the need for the ban on the sale of certain animal products as a result of the international political economy of illicit animal products.

Lara Diez, Director of the Nyae Nyae Development Foundation of Namibia links the need to limit the consumptive use of wildlife populations to a type of climate injustice as she says “the North did all the polluting, but the South pays. The North also did a lot of poaching but now the South must save the animals.”⁵⁸³ While many NGOs officials operating in the Global South would share this position which carries with it some merit, it is clear that neither the case of combating climate change nor wildlife conservation are this simple. Specifically with the case of conservation, Africans have been heavily implicated in the over-exploitation of their resources as well as degradation of their local environments and pitting South versus North in these complex issues is neither entirely accurate nor productive. Instead, it is imperative to understand the trade offs which must be made with challenging issues regarding wildlife conservation and sustainable development. In Namibia, hunting has always been a way of life with some forms of hunting being sustainable while others were not. Figure 22 below also shows the profitability that can come with such forms of sustainable trophy hunting. Several of the interview respondents from this research pointed out that trophy hunting is no different than the quotas that are issued sustainably in Western countries to hunt for deer, moose, bear or other wildlife that reside there.⁵⁸⁴ While there remains debates about this form of hunting as well in the Global North, hunting remains carefully regulated and through the continuing issuance of quotas people continue to possess the legal right to hunt.

⁵⁸³ Interview, Lara Diez, Nyae Nyae Development Foundation of Namibia, January 10 2020.

⁵⁸⁴ Interview, Christine, Manager, Anabeb Conservancy, February 7, 2020

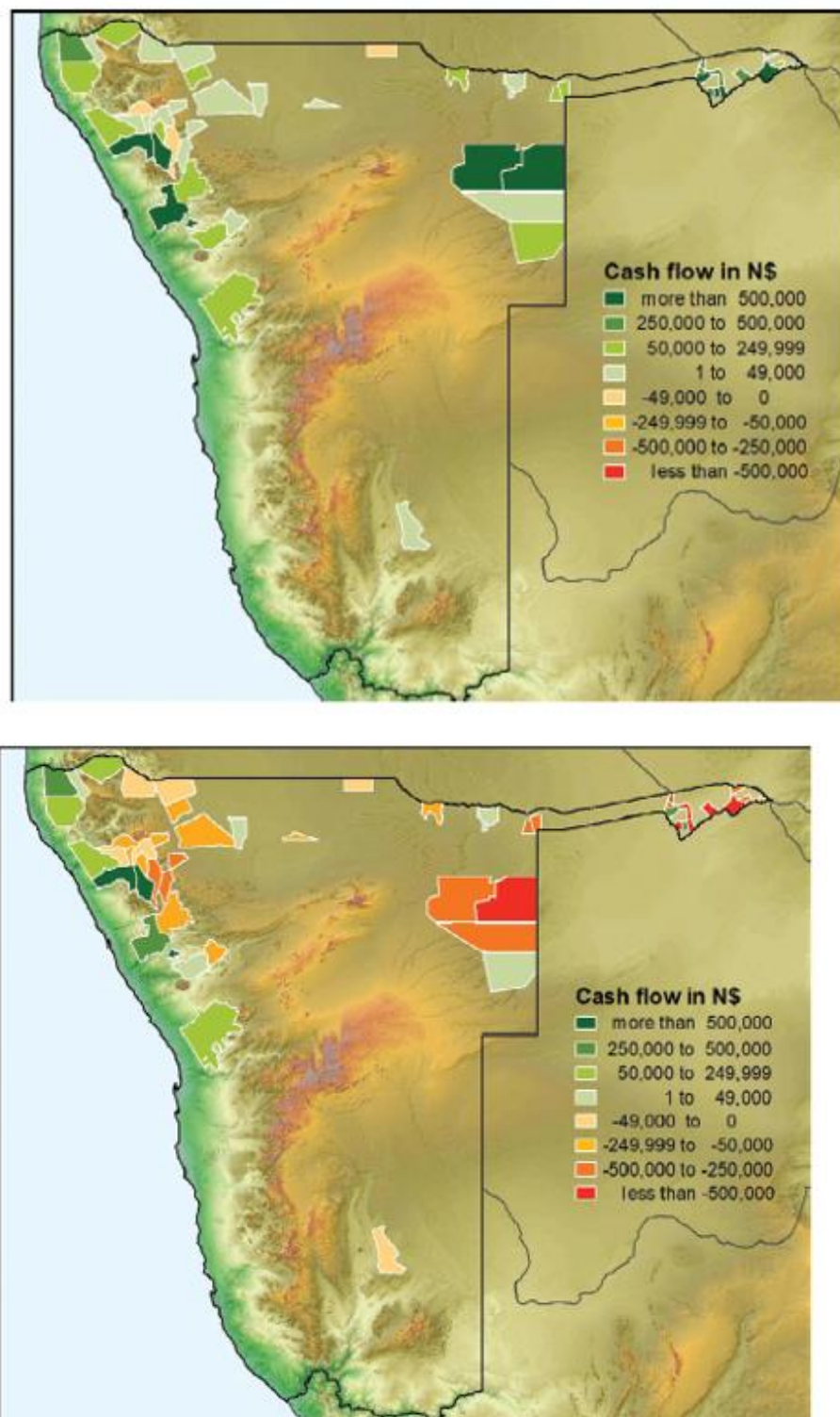


Figure 21: Cash Flows from Hunting and Photographic Tourism⁵⁸⁵

⁵⁸⁵ MET/NACSO, “The State of Community Conservation in Namibia: Annual Report 2019: A Review of Communal Conservancies, Community Forests and Other CBNRM Initiatives.”

On the other side of the coin is non-consumptive use conservation, generally consisting of various forms of photographic tourism. Photographic tourism consists of travelling to remote locations in order to experience African culture, its landscapes, and take pictures of its majestic wildlife and their habitat. Of course, this is not consumptive in the same way as trophy hunting, as hundreds of tourists can take photos of a lion without it being detracted from the resource pool. Knight, however, argues that everything is a consumptive use and that carbon footprint, GHG emissions, water and other resource use, waste produced, and infrastructure development must all be factored in when analyzing various forms of conservation.⁵⁸⁶ Tourism is an industry with a large footprint – both carbon and otherwise.⁵⁸⁷ In factoring this footprint in, even the most eco-friendly version of tourism that sees people travel from the Global North to southern Africa, this ‘non-consumptive’ use form of conservation begins to appear quite consumptive in its own ways. To be sure, trophy hunters produce similar footprints as they too fly, drive, eat, and drink, however, an individual hunter can provide up to fifty times the income for a conservancy as a photographic tourist.⁵⁸⁸ There is a limit to the number of permits that can be issued based on annual wildlife population censuses and hence this form of conservation has strict revenue limitations build into it based on wildlife populations. However, these limitations are not entirely different from those that exist with photographic tourism as the tourist lodges in Namibia each have limitations on beds and thus the number of tourists any conservancy can welcome at a given time.

To further unpack the argument of Knight, it is worth taking a deeper look at tourism and its relationship with resource governance and sustainable development. Since the early 1990s, tourism in general and ecotourism in particular, have exploded as global industries. The United

⁵⁸⁶ Interview, Michael Knight, Transboundary Leader for KAZA, WWF, January 23, 2020.

²³ Heffernan, “El discurso oficial de las autoridades marroquíes y sus aliados en la ecologización de sus políticas públicas.”

⁵⁸⁸ Jacquet and Delon, “The Values behind Calculating the Value of Trophy Hunting.”

Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) reports that 1.5 billion international tourist arrivals were recorded in 2019. This marked a four per cent increase from 2018 and the same growth was predicted for 2020 and 2021 prior to the COVID-19 global pandemic that has rocked the industry. Pandemic aside, the UNWTO confirmed “tourism is a leading and resilient economic sector, especially in view of current uncertainties.”⁵⁸⁹ The UNWTO’s first comprehensive report on global tourism numbers and trends, the World Tourism Barometer, confirmed that 2019 marked the tenth consecutive year of growth, a year in which all regions saw a rise in international arrivals. Prior to the pandemic UNWTO Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili stated that “in these times of uncertainty and volatility, tourism remains a reliable economic sector.” While in hindsight COVID-19 has demonstrated a previously unimagined volatility in the industry and undermined the validity of this statement, it is highly likely the industry will rebound and will continue to grow for years and likely decades to come. Already the live air traffic website FlightRadar24 saw June 15, 2022 set an all time record with 232,483 flights that day, and they report we are on pace to continue breaking that record.⁵⁹⁰ Despite uncertain global economic perspectives, various geopolitical uncertainties, trade tensions and social unrest, Pololikashvili affirmed the tourism “sector keeps outpacing the world economy and call[ed] upon [it] to not only grow but to grow better.”⁵⁹¹ Growing better is key as the strength of tourism has often had it placed at the centre of development plans and with 2020 kicking off the decade of action to achieve the sustainable development goals by 2030, the time for better is now. This is the same deadline that the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) gave in 2018 when issuing a grave warning that the global community had a window of twelve years in which to cut GHG emissions by 45

⁵⁸⁹ UNWTO, “International Tourism Growth Continues to Outpace the Global Economy | UNWTO,” 2020.

⁵⁹⁰ Flightradar24, “Live Flight Tracker - Real-Time Flight Tracker Map,” Flightradar24, 2022.

⁵⁹¹ UNWTO, “International Tourism Growth Continues to Outpace the Global Economy | UNWTO.”

per cent in order to prevent the rise in global temperature from exceeding the 1.5 degrees Celsius agreed to in the Paris Declaration.⁵⁹² Thus, while tourism can be an effective component of development, it must be ensured that it is done in as sustainable a fashion as possible, which is precisely what the evolving GGPA aims for CBNRM to become.

One of the concerns about CBNRM stems from all aspects of sustainability not being factored into various development activities. There is a rich body of literature that outlines the positive impacts tourism, and specifically ecotourism, can have for achieving sustainable development goals.⁵⁹³ It is suggested by many from this camp that “ecotourism is promoted by governments of the North and South, international lending institutions, and private business, as an ideal development strategy that combines economic growth with environmental conservation.”⁵⁹⁴ Most of this is true. CBNRM can and has provided much in the way of economic development for a variety of countries across the Global South. Furthermore, CBNRM provides opportunities to empower local communities in order for them to realize development, as well as ownership which is a key component of sustainable development. However, for development to be sustainable, it must also be ecologically viable over the long term. In this, the impacts of ecotourism can become a quite complex phenomenon that requires careful analysis to understand the many costs associated with it as well as *who* benefits. CBNRM in Namibia has contributed in many ways to ecological conservation goals – specifically regarding the protection of wildlife and their habitat as has been demonstrated with wildlife population recovery as well as the improvements to land quality in areas that have been designated for wildlife mixed-use zones outlined in the previous chapter.⁵⁹⁵

⁵⁹² IPCC, “Summary for Policymakers — Global Warming of 1.5 °C,” 2018.

⁵⁹³ Richardson, “Wildlife Utilization and Biodiversity Conservation in Namibia”; Jarkko Saarinen, *Sustainable Tourism in Southern Africa: Local Communities and Natural Resources in Transition* (Channel View Publications, 2009).

⁵⁹⁴ Duffy, “Global Environmental Governance and the Challenge of Shadow States,” 96.

⁵⁹⁵ Coldrey and Turpie, “Climate Change Risk Assessment for Namibia’s Communal Conservancies,” 2020.

These are the many benefits often pointed to which have seen proponents argue that ecotourism activities are sustainable and synergistic with ecological goals. However, global environmental governance is a complex issue with manifold interacting actors which is also why the world has largely failed to act effectively to this point in mitigating environmental degradation and global climate change.

Even the most eco-friendly excursions that take place across southern Africa tend to be GHG and resource intensive. Tourists arrive almost solely from the Global North, contributing a great deal in the way of aviation emissions. Once there, they generally rent large 4x4 vehicles or have one hired with a driver and spend a great deal of time traversing long distances in high powered diesel trucks through the African savannah in search of various ecological wonders. Tourists stay in hotels or upscale lodges, and research has widely demonstrated that people use more water and power, eat more, drink more, and generally live in excess when on vacation.⁵⁹⁶ As such, it is imperative that scholars analyze the entirety of the costs associated with CBNRM including environmental impacts, in order to understand the effects CBNRM has on climate change, as well as the impacts the changing climate has on CBNRM. This is an exigent example of where analyzing CBNRM as GGPA becomes necessary in order to understand the complex relationship between actors and their cascading and ever-changing impacts on one another as well as each other component of the governance arrangement which in turn impacts them. There is already a great deal of efforts on the ground being targeted toward improving the sustainability of ecotourism activities and these form a number of the important opportunities climate change is presenting CBNRM.

⁵⁹⁶ Saarinen, *Sustainable Tourism in Southern Africa*.

It is undeniable that the killing of wildlife is consumptive in a way that taking a picture is not. However, as argued by the director of NACSO, the ethos of CBNRM rests on the peaceful and prosperous coexistence of both humans and wildlife, and at times the killing of the few, can be overall beneficial for the broader population of that species, as well as the ecological well being of a given location.⁵⁹⁷ While the question of overpopulation can be subjective, there are situations when it becomes clear to local people that issues are emerging based on a growing number of a given species such as lack of territory, veld food, water, and ongoing incursion into human settlements. In such a situation the local conservancy council or other forms of community leadership can apply to the MET for a permit for the removal of a particular animal or subsection of a larger population based on evidence which they must present. The MET will work with its partners to analyze the information from the application against data from wildlife censuses and conservancy audits and from there make evidence-based decisions. Allowing a limited number of people who pay significant amounts of money which can be reinvested into conservation activities in the community can in some cases also have positive effects for the wildlife themselves.⁵⁹⁸

One example of such a situation was recounted to me by Ruben Portas, a researcher on the Cheetah Research Project who recounted that in 2019 an overpopulation of approximately 75 giraffes had developed in one area which was exceeding the geographic area's environmental carrying capacity. As a result, all of the giraffes as well as other wildlife and local human populations were being negatively impacted. The local community's traditional authority worked with the MET to procure five quotas which were in turn sold to private hunting outfits who in turn sold them to foreign customers who each paid \$5,000 USD per quota. These hunters traveled to

⁵⁹⁷ Interview, Maxi Pia Louis, Director, Namibia Association of CBNRM Support Organizations, January 14, 2020.

⁵⁹⁸ Heffernan, "Accounting for Climate Change in CBNRM: Reflections on Wildlife Conservation in Namibia."

Namibia spending a great deal more on accommodations and other tourist necessities bringing economic benefits to the local economies. Beyond this, once the giraffes had been killed, a truck was hired to bring local village men to the carcasses to butcher them and return a substantial amount of meat to local communities who benefited a great deal.⁵⁹⁹ While to many the killing of such animals will seem unsavoury, this specific instance produced a number of benefits to local wildlife, people, and to the broader CBNRM program. The complexities of this type of case however, can be difficult to communicate and often these type of nuances are often lost in translation. This anecdote summarized in Figure 22 below, also demonstrates the same logic that is employed for hunters in the West, whose activities are strictly regulated by ministries of natural resources and environment who issue quotas based on science and data targeted at ensuring healthy and sustainable wildlife populations that can peacefully coexist with nearby communities. By relying on global capital flows however, the agency of communities and the NGOs with which they partner can be limited as productive power relations ply them to pursue certain forms of conservation more globally desirable, in order to continue to receive important resources and support.

⁵⁹⁹ Ruben Portas, Cheetah Research Project. Windhoek, January 14, 2020.



Figure 22: Benefits of Hunting⁶⁰⁰

What this discussion of trophy hunting can tell us is that NGOs and communities which are reliant on volatile and unstable funding streams, are increasingly adaptive and responsive to the will of donors. In some ways this might be viewed in a positive light, as they could be seen as more nimble and adaptable to changes in the will of the global community. In other ways however, it means that NGOs might be pulled from their roots and drawn toward interests that could have little to do with their core *raison d'être* as well as at times toward activities they might not even support. Kelly Krawczyk outlines an empirical case that demonstrates the way this has taken place in Liberia with civil society organizations (CSOs) upon which the country is highly dependent. As funding patterns ebb and flow, and as aid is increasingly targeted at the next global fashion, she

⁶⁰⁰ MET/NACSO, “The State of Community Conservation in Namibia: Annual Report 2019: A Review of Communal Conservancies, Community Forests and Other CBNRM Initiatives.”

argues CSOs – and resultantly much of the country – are faced with a great deal of volatility. This volatility makes it difficult for entrepreneurs to confidently engage in specific markets and as a result, certain industries in the country have experienced difficulties realizing success due to lack of consistency from a variety of angles.⁶⁰¹ Krawczyk outlines the important place donor funding can have on development, and the same can be seen with trophy hunting as a specific example as funding can ebb and flow based on a conservancy's decision to allow trophy hunting or not, as well as other choices made at the local level.

I want to be clear that the point of this discussion of consumptive versus non-consumptive use of natural resources has not been to argue in favour of trophy hunting over photographic tourism, nor to support claims that it might in fact be less consumptive. Instead, the discussion is intended to outline the way global financial flows can have a direct impact on disciplining NGO activity and hence development practices on the ground. Furthermore, global financial flows are heavily impacted by shifts in global sentiments which results in productive power that determines what type of conservation in which specific region will be favoured in a given period. These 'fashions' can last a few years or even decades, but they are always changing and the lives of those in recipient nations are continuously impacted. What I am arguing with this section is that as new destinations, specific endangered species, or even the killing of a particular lion by an American dentist gain traction on the world stage, their importance can expand and see large swings in where capital is targeted as well as development efforts and tourist dollars and interest. It is this ability of actors from all over the world, including those in their living rooms in the West, their governments, NGOs, international financial institutions, and a plethora of actors in the

⁶⁰¹ Kelly Krawczyk, "The Relationship Between Liberian CSOs and International Donor Funding: Boon or Bane?," *VOLUNTAS: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations* 29, no. 2 (April 1, 2018): 296–309.

environmental movement to exercise productive forms of power and influence decision making and activities on the ground – though to different and varying degrees – that this discussion of trophy hunting sheds light on. What this means also is that conservation decisions should be made based on evidence and data, rather than politics and the next global fashion. While separating politics from policy does not happen in practice, acknowledging the politics involved in policy making, including the allocation of funding, is an important step in maximizing its impact and minimizing the risks of unintended consequences. What is at stake here is power, knowledge and the ability of competing actors to realize their interests, rather than finding the neutral truth.

As power is reorganized through CBNRM, rather than resulting in a subtraction of power from the state and an equal and opposite empowerment of communities, power becomes increasingly dispersed through a layering of governance across a network of actors who often have synergistic interests, while at other times they are disharmonious. What this results in is a complex situation where stagnating wildlife populations are leading to decreased quotas being issued, which are further gaining downward pressure from the international community. This is resulting in conservancies being hesitant to engage in trophy hunting activities even when quotas can be obtained. While it can be inferred that this is partially attributed to the CBNRM program adapting to the changing climactic realities in Namibia as laid out in the previous chapter, some of the literature on global environmental governance suggests that this is also partly a result of these communities being intimately tied into the broader global power relations that develop based on the social interactions of countless actors across the international community.⁶⁰² It is also an illustration of democratic politics and the aim of the GGPA to prevent the tragedy of the commons.

⁶⁰² Duffy, “Global Environmental Governance and the Challenge of Shadow States”; Duffy et al., “Why We Must Question the Militarisation of Conservation.”

If each community had full sovereignty and power over their local resources, there would be the risk that some would extract them unsustainably which could lead to a depletion of wildlife as well as other important resources. While not everyone would agree, the environmental argument would suggest that this wildlife belongs to the planet and future generations and thus their importance goes well beyond the immediate community.

Conservation in general, and particularly in the context of development, is highly political. There is hard science that says we need to conserve now in order to protect our natural environments for the future, but there remains a great deal of debate about how this ought best to be accomplished. While at one time the consensus favoured fortress conservation, this paradigm eventually shifted to community-based activities that saw local populations integrate resource management into sustainable livelihoods.⁶⁰³ As various community-based approaches have proliferated and eventually emerged as a virtual consensus within development discourse, subsequent questions have emerged about the degree to which communities should have autonomous decision making power over their resources and land.⁶⁰⁴ One key example of this is discussed above regarding the complexities of trophy hunting. While community empowerment is integral to CBNRM, devolution comes with its own risks and could result in a tragedy of the commons in which communities over-extract wildlife populations. As a result, a difficult balance must be achieved between local autonomy and national and global priorities. This question led to classifications of consumptive vs. non-consumptive use activities, which is a specific type of framing that serves to bring into view the politics of the issue and creates ‘right’ and ‘wrong’ approaches to conservation. Thus, a new consensus developed in the literature that was clear that

⁶⁰³ Kathleen Galvin, Tyler Beeton, and Matthew Luizza, “African Community-Based Conservation: A Systematic Review of Social and Ecological Outcomes,” *Ecology and Society* 23, no. 3 (September 11, 2018).

⁶⁰⁴ Heffernan, “Accounting for Climate Change in CBNRM: Reflections on Wildlife Conservation in Namibia.”

when attempting to enact ‘conservation’ something ‘consumptive’ must surely be undesirable and counter-productive.⁶⁰⁵ For many, this designation makes sense.⁶⁰⁶ For with consumptive use forms of management such as trophy hunting, each animal killed limits the ability of others to travel to southern Africa to enjoy that animal’s beauty. As the academy remains largely western-centric in its theories, institutions, and its scholars,⁶⁰⁷ this framing largely dominates the literature, and a focus has been placed on photographic tourism while trophy hunting has been increasingly squeezed out over time.⁶⁰⁸

As discussed, CBNRM success has begun to wane over the past decade and the framing of consumptive versus non-consumptive conservation has led to questions about how and why this becomes such an important factor. Trophy hunting remains one of the leading causes pointed to, which is also often associated with poaching – despite these being two very different activities. However, trophy hunting has been demonstrated to be able to take place sustainably through limited quotas based on scientific research of wildlife populations.⁶⁰⁹ This framing ignores African history and culture, as well as the real and present challenges that living with these often dangerous and destructive animals presents. Furthermore, as mentioned trophy hunting is often associated with poaching despite the fact that poaching remains illegal and increasing efforts have gained marked success in recent years to eliminate poaching entirely in some conservancies in Namibia.⁶¹⁰ Estimates vary, but most studies suggest only one to two per cent of key wildlife populations are killed by poaching every year in Namibia which does not pose great threat to most species.⁶¹¹ While

⁶⁰⁵ Tremblay, “Wildlife Tourism Consumption.”

⁶⁰⁶ Richardson, “Wildlife Utilization and Biodiversity Conservation in Namibia.”

⁶⁰⁷ Arlene B. Tickner, “Core, Periphery and (Neo)Imperialist International Relations,” *European Journal of International Relations* 19, no. 3 (2013): 627–46.

⁶⁰⁸ Koot, “The Limits of Economic Benefits.”

⁶⁰⁹ Naidoo et al., “Complementary benefits of tourism and hunting to communal conservancies in Namibia.”

⁶¹⁰ Lubilo and Hebinck, “‘Local Hunting’ and Community-Based Natural Resource Management in Namibia.”

⁶¹¹ Jones, “Policy Lessons from the Evolution of a Community-Based Approach to Wildlife Management, Kunene Region, Namibia,” 1999.

it would of course be preferable to eliminate any form of poaching entirely, these numbers demonstrate a vast improvement over years past and do not pose a great threat to wildlife populations. It is also important to analyze these numbers relative to if the program was not in place, as it is likely these numbers would be much higher.⁶¹² Nonetheless, there are those who frame the recent declines in CBNRM success as a result of continued poaching and over-hunting of wildlife populations which simply is not the case.⁶¹³

Conclusions

While it is clear that CBNRM has adapted in response to the impacts of climate change in a number of ways which have been both positive and negative, evidence suggests that it is local communities which most often experience the greatest of the negative impacts. Economic benefits often fail to remain in the community, and it is simultaneously communities that most often experience unintended consequences in the form of environmental degradation, costs associated with wildlife conservation, and an undermining of their local level governance capacities. These negative outcomes consist of certain wildlife populations that are locally less desirable, being favoured over others, autonomy in decision making over conservation activities being limited, economic benefits failing to materialize within the community to the degree expected, as well as a general deficiency in the level of empowerment enjoyed. These outcomes are a result of the power asymmetries that are built into the GGPA which results in global actors exerting a disproportionate degree of productive power in relation to local actors and thus seeing their interests win out over others.

⁶¹² Interview, Marina Tavolaro, PhD candidate in Biological Sciences at University of Cape Town, January 15, 2020

⁶¹³ Ikanyeng Gaodirelwe, Moseki Ronald Motsholapheko, and Gaseitsiwe Smollie Masunga, "Community Perceptions of Wildlife Management Strategies and Subsistence Poaching in the Okavango Delta, Botswana," *Human Dimensions of Wildlife* 25, no. 3 (May 3, 2020): 232–49.

Analyzing this complex assemblage of actors as well as their competing interests from the position of a flattened ontology enables us to see the ways in which various issues are politicized and put on the agenda – such as trophy hunting and ‘consumptive use’ approaches to conservation. It also enables us to see the way ‘non-consumptive use’ approaches are depoliticized, and their ecological and climactic impacts kept off the agenda. Each is pursued in order to benefit certain groups, with the predominant voices in the West and the global environmental movement generally winning out, and as a result trophy hunting – which is generally locally desirable – being squeezed out in favour of photographic tourism. As discussed in the chapter, this is not inherently problematic, however it raises difficult questions about the degree to which this form of global environmental governance is truly community-based, as well as who its benefactors are, which seem to be western tourists as often as not.

Chapter 7

Development, Climate Change, and Green Global Policy Assemblages

“Like democracy, CBNRM is both an idealistic theoretical goal and an imperfect practical struggle towards this goal.”⁶¹⁴

Eric Xaineb’s family have been subsistence farmers for generations but due to racist and oppressive land laws, mixed with a hot, dry climate, and unproductive soils, life had always been difficult for them. However, following independence there was renewed hope that Namibians could finally take ownership of their own governance and part of this would be realized through a redistribution of land and its resources to be shared communally through conservancies.⁶¹⁵ With this came the CBNRM program and an energy and fervour developed along with the promise of sustainable development that would be locally owned and operated in partnership with a number of actors who would work towards congruous goals. Initially the program experienced marked success as what would be recognized by most as economic development was achieved, wildlife populations increased, and some form of local level empowerment was attained.⁶¹⁶ For Eric, this provided him with a relatively good paying, stable job as Manager for Tsiseb Conservancy. He is both honoured to have been elected to this position by his neighbours and fellow conservancy members, as well as grateful for having the opportunity to work toward conservation for the future. Regarding the future, he also holds out hope that his daughter might have prospects for a decent livelihood close to home. For years, many of Namibia’s youth have been leaving rural areas such

⁶¹⁴ Child and Barnes, “The Conceptual Evolution and Practice of Community-Based Natural Resource Management in Southern Africa,” 284.

⁶¹⁵ Brown and Bird, “Sustainable Natural Resource Management in Namibia.”

⁶¹⁶ Collomb et al., “Integrating Governance and Socioeconomic Indicators to Assess the Performance of Community-Based Natural Resources Management in Caprivi (Namibia).”

as the Erongo Region in search of employment outside of farming and they have been migrating to larger cities such as Windhoek, Swakopmund, or Walvis Bay in search of what they see as a better life and more modern forms of employment. Eric and many like him, see CBNRM as a means to attaining sustainable development goals, and ensuring natural resources will remain abundant for years to come, and that their natural environments will continue to remain ecologically stable.

For over two decades people like Eric benefited in a number of ways from CBNRM. However, the program was not the panacea many of its supporters espoused and a number of challenges emerged over time. These issues were then exacerbated by the ongoing drought which has exposed many of the weaknesses of CBNRM while placing a great deal of strain on the program itself. In short, the effects of the changing climate have resulted in less rain and hotter temperatures which are leading to less veld food available for livestock as well as wildlife.⁶¹⁷ This means less prey for predators who are increasingly driven toward human settlements they would normally prefer to avoid and an increase in attacks on livestock that are already dying in large numbers due to a lack of water and food.⁶¹⁸ Less wildlife also means less tourism and thus as the program itself is distributing fewer resources to conservancy members, it is simultaneously losing support from farmers who blame the wildlife for livestock losses.⁶¹⁹ For Eric, this creates a multitude of challenges. Eric and his family still grow what food they can and continue to practice pastoralism as a way of raising livestock. However, both of these activities have become increasingly challenging over the years, and as the drought has worn on, farming has become almost impossible throughout much of the Erongo Region as well as throughout much of the rest

⁶¹⁷ Coldrey and Turpie, "Climate Change Risk Assessment for Namibia's Communal Conservancies," 2020.

⁶¹⁸ World Bank, "Overview," Text/HTML, World Bank, 2021.

⁶¹⁹ Interview, John Pallet, Director, Namibia Environment and Wildlife Society, Windhoek, February 21, 2020.

of the country. As conservancy manager, challenges are also increased as he must govern a growing conservancy, with decreasing revenues which must simultaneously be stretched further in order to compensate for livestock losses, and continuously develop infrastructure to procure water in innovative ways.⁶²⁰ The challenges go on and on and have been discussed at length in Chapter 5 but it bears re-iterating here the extent of the strain posed by climate change which many Namibians recognize as an existential threat.

While the challenges are almost limitless, and while no one would argue that climate change is providing any sort of net benefits to Namibia, it is and has been providing, a number of opportunities which are important to analyze. It is relevant to note that opportunities in this context do not necessarily connote something intrinsically positive, but instead indicate how climate adaptation and necessary responses to climate change do provide avenues for some actors to adopt new strategies for profitable enterprises and survival. Namibia's version of CBNRM emerged almost solely around the conservation of wildlife for the purposes of ecotourism. Over time, Namibia has become host to 92 conservancies which cover over twenty per cent of its territory (166,045 square km) and over fifteen per cent of its population (227,941).⁶²¹ Beyond that, almost every part of the economy has become linked in one way or another with the program, as CBNRM is so much more than the tourism industry but instead a political economic system of governance and organization that has spread out to encompass much of the country. The emergence of this system of governance was largely productive over time, but it also created weaknesses, as it became such an important pillar for the economy but was based almost solely around the management of a specific resource which has both long been threatened and which is highly mobile

⁶²⁰ Interview, Eric Xaneb, Chairman, Tsiseb Conservancy, January 27, 2020.

⁶²¹ "Registered Communal Conservancies," NACSO, 2019.

and often transnational in nature. The challenges of climate change have pushed the assemblage of actors involved in CBNRM to adapt in a number of important ways. Not only have they sought to evolve economically but in political ways as well. Stemming from these evolutions, this dissertation has provided answers to the questions of how CBNRM has evolved to respond to the challenges of climate change and to what extent these changes benefit local people? Outlining the ways in which the program is able to adapt to issues related to climate change is a key part of the response to my first research question which I will further unpack here prior to discussing how these evolutions occur, as well as to what degree communities benefit as a result.

Efforts at economic diversification have meant developing novel revenue streams through new kinds of tourism beyond photographic wildlife tourism and the more traditional trophy hunting incomes. This has included developing various types of tourism activities aimed at broader demographics. Part of these efforts at diversification have consisted of the emergence of a developing industry for tourists to learn more about and submerge themselves in the many Namibian cultures of both past and present. Living museums have emerged over the past decade which enable tourists to see how the many different peoples lived over centuries on the land now called Namibia. Increasingly diverse food and drink are offered as part of these experiences as well as crafts and wares that can be purchased at more and more stops along the extremely remote roads of the Namibian savannah as shown below in Figure 23.



Figure 23: *The Sale of Artisanal Crafts and Wares*⁶²²

These might sound like subtle changes but due to their nature, have created livelihoods for more people than would previously have been possible as traditional CBNRM tourist activities create only a limited number of jobs working at lodges, safaris, and campsites. These emerging industries, however, have created the ability for many Namibians to derive some sort of income – albeit in many cases limited – as a result of the program. Enabling more people to benefit from these programs is key, as one of the binding constraints to program success that has been pointed to in the existing literature is that while CBNRM has produced economic development opportunities, these remain limited to the few.⁶²³

Often, opportunities have been harnessed by those who were already most well connected in their communities, who had the highest levels of education, and importantly those with sufficient levels of English proficiency. As a result, those most marginalized in society tend to be precluded from benefiting in any meaningful way. For instance, Joni Seager, professor of Global

⁶²² MET/NACSO, “The State of Community Conservation in Namibia: Annual Report 2019: A Review of Communal Conservancies, Community Forests and Other CBNRM Initiatives.”

⁶²³ Hoole, “Place-Power-Prognosis.”

Studies at Bentley University who works closely with practitioners on the ground in Namibia, reported that while these types of partnerships often result in benefits, these might be in the form of compensation for agricultural plots that are destroyed by wildlife. However, compensation only pertains to ‘official plots’ of over one hectare, and thus those less well off – specifically women – who tend to have plots much smaller than this, and are those who need the compensation most, receive none.⁶²⁴ While these new opportunities have not lifted Namibia’s marginalized populations from poverty, they are providing some with the ability to develop new skills and create various livelihoods.

Beyond new forms of economic income, climate change has also pushed the more traditional side of CBNRM to evolve in order to become greener, which has resulted in increased business for those who do so successfully. A great deal of tourism cannot be said to be sustainable as a result of long flights, time spent in vehicles, resource consumption, and the creation of waste. However, ecotourism aims to minimize the footprints of tourists while investing incomes derived from them back into important conservation priorities. Thus, in order to cater to environmentally conscientious tourists, CBNRM tourism operators have collaborated with a number of partners in order to green the services they offer. One of the most effective ways they are doing so is with the greening of the lodges themselves. One of the more obvious examples of this is with the solar plant developed at Sorris Sorris Lodge that was discussed in Chapter 5, which saw the efforts of a large number of actors that compose the GGPA coalesce in order to build this source of renewable power. Beyond the solar plant, the lodge itself was designed and built with predominantly locally sourced materials and person power and was engineered in a way to consume as little power as possible. The lodge and its bunkhouses are high on a hill overlooking a vast plain which results in

⁶²⁴ Interview, Joni Seager, Professor of Global Studies, Bentley University, January 24, 2020

brehtaking views and an effective way to view wildlife, but also results in extremely hot sun beating down on the buildings for many hours of the day. Thus, the bunk houses themselves were constructed of a special kind of stone and made very thick, as well as partially sunken into the hilltop in order to leverage the natural landscape to minimize both heating and cooling demands of guests.

Other lodges have been taking the initiative to innovate in a similar way often at smaller scales but at their own costs. Okahirongo Elephant Lodge in Purros in the far Northwest of the country built their own solar plant which provides most of the power they need, and the rest is supplied by a backup generator. Similarly, Palmwag lodge which is owned and operated by the Gondwana Collective – a domestic company – has also been scaling up its solar generating capacities, though still relies heavily on their diesel generator as the lodge itself continues to expand and demand ever-more power. In recent years, the entire Palmwag compound has also been retrofitted with a new greywater collection system in order to ensure that water demands are met without tapping into valuable and scarce drinking water sources. As the greywater collection system demonstrated success, its technology and implementation were easily transferable throughout the conservancies and was quickly implemented, first at many of the tourist lodges and since then various versions have increasingly been installed throughout the country at both tourist and non-tourist operations, buildings, and dwellings alike. As it has proliferated, the systems have improved as so many within the GGPA have contributed various innovations to them, the country is now collecting more and more greywater for sustainable reuse. This form of drought proofing is both increasingly essential, and prior to supplementary income derived from the CBNRM program, was not possible on any kind of broad basis as

Poor households are, by definition insecure, and in Namibia all rural households are vulnerable to drought, as rainfall is highly variable (particularly low and unreliable in the west). Therefore drought-proofing is an important way of reducing vulnerability. The cash income generated by tourism can be particularly useful for this for two reasons: first, timing: it does not slump when drought comes (although it is likely to slump according to market cycles rather than rainfall). Second: who earns it. Tourism can be one of the few sources of collective income, which can be usefully spent on helping members cope with drought.⁶²⁵

While these innovations might seem like an obvious response to drought, as well as transference of an emerging technology, the initial system would likely not have been developed without the CBNRM program and without the pressures of climate change. Furthermore, it would not have continued to be improved nor proliferated as quickly without both the conservancies as well as the many partners they work with.

Beyond lodges, climate change has seen new opportunities for partnerships with actors who seek to support the conservation efforts of Namibians, while also contributing to development and fighting climate change. An example of this is with the NGO Lightforce who installs small solar lights at farms to deter predators in the night.⁶²⁶ The Head of Environmental Services of #Khoadi !Hoas Conservancy pointed specifically to these installations as having provided a measurable impact that has been well received by their conservancy members and which were making a noticeable difference in human-wildlife conflict.⁶²⁷ While a seemingly small endeavour, this organization has made specific use of the governance network and the many partners involved

⁶²⁵ LaFranchi and Ashley, “Livelihood Strategies of Rural Households in Caprivi,” 21.

⁶²⁶ Interview, Team lead, Lightforce, February 3, 2020

⁶²⁷ Interview, Albert Kroses, Head of Environmental Services, #Khoadi !Hoas Conservancy, February 10, 2020

in CBNRM in order to determine where these lights are most needed, how they would get to them, where the team would stay, as well as where the best places to source materials locally was. While climate change has exacerbated issues of human-wildlife conflict, it has also pushed people to develop innovative solutions that have helped to improve a problem that has existed for centuries.

These efforts to increase the sustainability of ecotourism link directly back to the impact global politics have on the types of conservation activities that are favoured as elaborated by the discussion of trophy hunting in Chapter 6. As outlined, the purpose of this discussion is not to argue in favour of one or the other types of conservation. The contribution is instead to discuss the complexities of both trophy hunting and photographic tourism in order to analyze them as part of the GGPA and global political debates. While much of the world was rightly outraged at the killing of Cecil the Lion in Zimbabwe, that does not mean that all forms of hunting should be eliminated in Namibia, or across southern Africa, or even that doing so would be beneficial for either human or wildlife populations. Instead, all forms of hunting should be carefully regulated based on scientific data of the sustainability of wildlife populations, carrying capacity of certain geographic regions, as well as the difficult balance that must be struck between people and animals living in close proximity and relying of the same healthy ecosystems. In this sense, I argue there is a place for limited trophy hunting in certain instances, as doing so can contribute to the overall health of wildlife populations while also creating revenue to be invested in conservation programs and community benefits. While proponents of CBNRM report that these types of decisions continue to be made locally, and autonomously from outside interference, in employing the GGPA framework we instead see the ways in which global fashions can diffuse into local politics. This results in productive power that is exercised through the social relations that emerge through CBNRM and which globalize decision making based on the competing and at times

simultaneously harmonious interests of heterogeneous actors. For this specific case, this means that western donors, the environmental movement, and governments channel funding to programs, conservancies, and conservation activities that favour non-consumptive-use forms of conservation and as a result inadvertently punish those who continue trophy hunting.

Similarly, regarding photographic tourism, my intention is not to suggest that this form of ‘non-consumptive use’ conservation ought to be eliminated or curtailed in any significant way. My aim is to point to the fact that it is consumptive in its own way, and that the negative environmental impacts of this form of tourism must be part of every ongoing discussion in order to minimize their impacts. Instead, what has predominantly occurred is those whose interests align with ecotourism have seen their voices win out, and questions of climate change and the consumptive nature of photographic tourism have remained off the agenda. Despite the consumptive nature of it, ‘eco’ tourism has been broadly deemed non-consumptive, and in the same breath has been depoliticized and is largely presented as an unquestioned good. Analyzing these forms of conservation are key to unpacking ways in which the program is evolving in response to climate change as well as demonstrating how actors within the assemblage are impacted and in ways produced by others and in turn how this influences outcomes. While discussion of climate change has been largely omitted from the literature on CBNRM, actors involved in the GGPA have long been coalescing in order to develop innovative solutions to lessen the impact of tourists on both fragile local environments as well as the broader challenges of global climate change.

Environmental Policy as Global Assemblage

Understanding power in a Foucauldian sense is integral in the way that he says that we should be attentive to the varied and capillary forms of state action, and this is of particular relevance with

contemporary global environmental governance, and specifically in Africa. Rather than seeing the state exercise sovereign power and other actors exert various forms of power, in this dissertation I understood power as pervasive and enacted by the relations of these many actors and not within any specific state confines, boundaries, or known hierarchical manner. Foucault advised focusing on micro-level practices and technologies of governance, and seeking to account for the ways in which binaries such as public and private, state and civil society, national and international are produced, reified, transgressed, eroded and reformed.⁶²⁸ Productive power is that which is most prevalent in this dissertation as it is the kind of power we exercise over ourselves based on our knowledge of how we fit into society. We discipline ourselves on the basis of messages we get from society – and CBNRM changes these messages. We try to be normal by disciplining ourselves in the absence of threats or punishment – however those threats remain. With CBNRM we see specifically with several discussions of corruption that the MET is very hesitant to step in, and while it maintains its oversight role to exert productive power from a distance, rarely, or perhaps never does it enact its sovereign ability to punish through the penal system or de-gazetting conservancies as was suggested would actually be good by several of my interlocutors. Unlike sovereign power, which is exercised through physical punishments and reward, Foucault tells us productive forms of power are exercised through surveillance and knowledge which we see with the development of the thick CBNRM net composed of community members, conservancy councils, game guards, NGOs, and more. They form a surveillance assemblage which produces knowledge that can be used in a variety of ways – in this sense CBNRM as a GGPA can be said to perform some of the same duties as the panopticon – providing a gaze that has people know they could be being watched and thus regulate their own self-discipline. Knowledge is also used

⁶²⁸ Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*.

to produce power by dissemination of academic and professional/expert knowledge on wildlife conservation and the benefits that can come from incurring the costs that come with living alongside wildlife populations

While power, and its forms are central to existing global assemblage approaches in International Relations, one substantial divergence of my approach is the policy-oriented nature of it. Power remains important, but the many ways it has been theorized by scholars over the years are less important than understanding how this complex policy which I suggest is an iteration of global environmental governance came together, what actions of which actors led to its emergence, and how has it shifted over time. As discussed, policies never exist as one complete thing time immemorial, but instead are always subject to multiple evolving interpretations, enactments, and very often reforms or discontinuation which is where we see power enacted by various actors within the GGPA. For my project I examine who has the ability to agenda set, and what impacts this agenda has on others involved. Moreover, who has the capacity to keep certain things off the agenda whether this be climate change, or various forms of hunting vs. photographic tourism. In my dissertation the GGPA framework enables me to analyze how this played out in relation to CBNRM in a number of ways. One of the most obvious of these is with the types of wildlife that are conserved. While predators and elephants are the most dangerous and destructive for local human populations, they tend to be those most highly desired by tourists and global wildlife conservation movements and as a result their conservation takes precedence over other more locally desirable animals which demonstrates the productive power of those in the Global North/predominantly the West to have their interests realized over local populations.

This was also demonstrated with the types of conservation that took place, specifically as outlined in the discussion of consumptive vs non-consumptive conservation which sees ecotourism

win out as well over trophy hunting which can be preferred by many on the ground as more revenue can be garnered with less overhead, resources, and infrastructure needed. I also see the way climate change discussions have largely been left out of the debate serve to benefit ecotourists and those who benefit from them, as that form of conservation is deemed non-consumptive while ignoring the many ways ecotourism can negatively impacts the environment and thus keeping these discussions off the agenda is accomplished by those whose interests it is in to do so.

These examples all show the ways in which the bargaining power of foreign capital often outweighs the public power of the state or local communities. At the same time the state is enlisting various actors in order to provide them with a means by which to exert governmental power in order to make decisions affecting public interests in various regions which drives policies in certain directions. Often this foreign capital creates productive power in which NGOs and organizations such as the GCF are able to accomplish effective action within conservancies, often with little oversight. As a result, NGOs are often both an effect of productive power that is enabled by CBNRM, and at the same time producers of this productive power. Often then we see these actors in some ways produce public power and govern through the ability to channel global capital and in ways enhance the compulsory or sovereign power of the state while at the same time in some ways limiting it.

Global assemblage approaches aim to analyze the politics involved in complex global phenomena, and generally do not lend themselves to policy discussions or prescriptions. However, while the GGPA framework focuses on analyzing CBNRM in many of the same ways as a more traditional global assemblages approach, it has the added policy lens and the nature of the research questions I sought to unpack, come with a relative requirement for some discussion of policy relevance. Furthermore, as my intended audience are both academic and practitioner communities,

I draw conclusions to further our theoretical understanding of CBNRM as an iteration of global environmental governance, as well as analyze its impact on power and politics. I also further unpack how these politics and the social interactions of actors impact policy frameworks as well as the need to at times wade through the politics to make policy decisions that will best realize the three pillars of CBNRM.

Much of the recent literature on CBNRM points to the many partnerships and the network of actors that have enabled this form of resource governance.⁶²⁹ Many of these scholars however, view the process of devolution and corresponding inroads for a number of actors at the community level largely as negative.⁶³⁰ CBNRM was intended to empower communities, and partners were supposed to work with conservancies up to the point where they could become fully self-sustaining. While many conservancies have now become financially independent, and in that sense are self-sustaining, the nature of CBNRM means that Namibian communities are intimately imbricated in broader global power relations and cannot be understood outside of them. As such, they also rely on ongoing partnership at a variety of levels to ensure not only continued success, but importantly evolve in response to new challenges. Climate change has proven to be the biggest ongoing challenge and it is through novel partnerships the programs have been able to respond in order to continue to adapt and evolve.

Many existing studies have negatively viewed the ongoing power that foreign actors are able to exercise on the ground whether through funding to NGOs,⁶³¹ supporting of certain conservation activities in specific conservancies,⁶³² or by providing resources for certain groups or

⁶²⁹ Ndeinoma, Wiersum, and Arts, "The Governance of Indigenous Natural Products in Namibia."

⁶³⁰ Duffy et al., "Why We Must Question the Militarisation of Conservation"; Schnegg and Kiaka, "Subsidized Elephants"; Schnegg, Bollig, and Linke, "Moral Equality and Success of Common-Pool Water Governance in Namibia."

⁶³¹ Stoldt et al., "Transfrontier Conservation Areas and Human-Wildlife Conflict."

⁶³² Ndeinoma, Wiersum, and Arts, "The Governance of Indigenous Natural Products in Namibia."

regions based on desires emanating from outside the country.⁶³³ While it can be assumed that all involved in the GGPA do not have altruistic motives, part of the benefit of the way CBNRM has developed is that actors seeking to realize their own goals can, and often do, contribute to synergistic outcomes. Thus, the GGPA has contributed to a necessary evolution of the program over several decades. As we know that actors involved do not all share similar interests, CBNRM must be understood as a product of evolutions in global environmental governance that is composed of a GGPA rather than a domestic policy prescription.

As has been discussed in this dissertation, rather than conservancies increasingly becoming self-sufficient and thus decreasing the need for partnerships and the number of actors involved in CBNRM, climate change has actually contributed to a proliferation of actors and the partnerships these entail. Thus, while communities continue to work to educate and train their populations and expand their ability to realize certain interests, they do so alongside a growing and constantly changing assemblage of actors which includes NGOs, multilateral organizations, private interests, as well as a number of emerging hybrid entities such as the Green Climate Fund. Inevitably, powerful international actors who command global financing streams and who are most often supported by large parts of the international community are able to exercise their will and it is most often their goals which are realized. This is not to say there are not spillover effects where communities benefit, or that at times goals are not synergistic. However, it is to say that as climate change has increasingly threatened CBNRM, rather than communities gaining autonomy and becoming empowered, what we are often witnessing is more of the same. In this case, business as usual means communities who were intended to gain increased rights and responsibilities, are often

⁶³³ Duffy, "The Potential and Pitfalls of Global Environmental Governance"; Brockington and Scholfield, "Expenditure by Conservation Nongovernmental Organizations in Sub-Saharan Africa."

limited by the will of the international community which can hinge on volatile financial flows and shifting fashions. This is not to say communities do not possess agency, and in many cases even increased agency as a result of CBNRM. However, the agency and autonomy of communities are limited in their need to work with global partners who exert productive power in order to seek to responsabilize said communities to pursue certain conservation and developmental pathways in order to earn rewards as well as to avoid penalties.

Analyzing CBNRM as a GGPA and understanding that it is a much more complex set of processes than a devolution of power from the central government to local communities becomes integral in order to account for these competing sets of interests and desires that can be divergent but can also be synergistic and productive. In general, all actors involved share the goals of fighting climate change, achieving sustainable development, and protecting wildlife and their habitats. Thus, working toward these broad program goals is what is discussed and espoused by key actors involved. However, increased populations of certain wildlife species can be dangerous and destructive for local communities. While communities might support the conservation of giraffe, zebras, and various types of antelope, these are rarely the types of species most sought after by tourists as well as not those which global conservation actors seek to protect most. Furthermore, while building a solar power plant in one conservancy can produce a wealth of benefits for one conservancy and can be pointed to as a measurable win for the international community and even the Namibia state, other communities around Namibia will likely experience no benefit at all, and may even see their own revenues decline if tourism shifts to greener lodges. These are just a few examples of the ways in which achieving certain goals can benefit a number of actors but might simultaneously impede the realization of other alternative and for other actors. This complexity

makes the GGPA an essential approach for analyzing the constantly shifting nature of this governance arrangement and its multifarious actors.

While I have outlined many of the benefits that ongoing partnerships can and have entailed, it is clear that these benefits are not always enjoyed by African communities. However, acknowledging ongoing power relations is a pivotal starting point in order to adapt policies to ensure communities remain at the centre of resource governance, and to ensure that they are increasingly central in decision making processes. Beyond this, it is integral to ensure that no individual, or small group from any one community is heard above the rest, but instead that decision making is conducted through a democratic process. While the democratic process generally tailors outcomes to the will of the majority, it is important to develop a robust system of checks and balances in order to avoid the tyranny of the majority as cautioned by Alexis de Toqueville.⁶³⁴ For conservancies this means ensuring consistent, free, and fair elections for conservancy councils based on the constitutions laid out and agreed to by each conservancy. It also means that any revenue sharing plan must remain transparent and adhered to. In order to ensure this, regular AGMs must be held as outlined in the 1996 Nature Conservation Amendment Act, and if these are ignored by any conservancy council, action should be taken against them. While CBNRM is an example of the state exercising productive power in order to rule from a distance, its coercive functions remain ever-present and remain important oversight mechanisms to prevent mismanagement and corruption. In order for communities to be empowered and to be at the centre of development, politics must be analyzed both within communities as well as between communities and other actors. Failure to do so will result in the same type of ongoing

⁶³⁴ Alexis de Tocqueville, "Tyranny of the Majority," in *Democracy in America* (New York: Saunders and Otley, 1835), 255–68.

failure that has been seen for decades with regards to development efforts in general, and resource governance in particular, in many southern African countries.

International Community-Based Natural Resource Governance?

The aim of this dissertation is to inform both academic and practitioner-oriented communities. For academics, analyzing CBNRM as a GGPA enables us to better comprehend the way power is re-organized in a multitude of complex ways. For a number of years scholars have analyzed evolutions in global governance that have seen a disaggregation of the state and a proliferation of sub-state, supra-state, and non-state actors. Death argues that “over the past three decades the lure of the state has also been challenged by transnational networks, sub- and supranational institutions, private actors, and civil society groups.”⁶³⁵ As a result, the state is no longer the sole or preeminent actor in international relations and CBNRM provides an effective empirical example of the way in which these processes continue to develop. The state has taken a step back to take a less direct/coercive approach to governing resources, however it continues to exercise control as the sovereign over its subjects in a number of important ways. The implementation of the Nature Conservation Amendment Act was intended to responsabilize and discipline citizens for the sustainable management of their local resources, as well as their own development and governance. With this has come a confluence of partnerships with actors that have continued to proliferate, resulting in a complex governance arrangement. The GGPA enables us to account for and unpack this multitude of heterogeneous actors and their relation to communities, climate change, and wildlife among a plethora of other units of analysis. It does so by approaching this

⁶³⁵ Death, *The Green State in Africa*, 21.

phenomenon with a flattened ontology to allow us to account for these novel approaches to governance which exceed the limits of traditional state-centric theories. This approach provides the tools required to analyze and unpack the multi-scalar connections that emerge between units of analysis as well as to understand how power is produced between them.

While this dissertation has unpacked the complexities of the GGPA to dig through the multitude of constituent parts that compose this policy assemblage, this approach also has limitations as the entirety of any assemblage cannot be caught in any single analysis or time. Instead, I have traced the power flows that enable the implementation and ongoing management of Namibia's CBNRM policy. Analyzing forms of global environmental governance as a GGPA enables us to account for the ever-evolving nature of policies and practices as well as the ways in which they are operationalized and materialize in unique ways in diverse settings. This occurs as power is devolved from the state, and then employed in various regions by a different set of actors who are operating under unique and ever-changing circumstances. Thus, the policy cannot be said to have X outcome, and Y impact on Namibia, or on the people of the Kunene region. Instead, like the state itself, CBNRM is a set of policies and practices that are continuously changing and being impacted by diverse forces and events, while also simultaneously impacting everything around it.

For practitioner communities the question is often some version of, *is CBNRM effective, and how can it be improved?* There is no simple answer to this, but my research has demonstrated that this form of resource governance has undeniably provided a number of important benefits to Namibians and can continue to do so. These benefits however, must be understood alongside the ongoing challenges that come with it as well. Specifically, in relation to the nature of CBNRM as GGPA which enables a foothold in the country for outside actors to realize their goals within communities. While the CBNRM program was intended to for communities to become self-

sustaining, a multitude of complex challenges – of which climate change is central – have contributed to a constantly renewing situation in which ongoing partnerships are engaged in. Thus, rather than CBNRM serving to empower communities and provide them with ownership over their own development, communities continue to be ever reliant on the will of the international community as well as to fluctuations in developing academic trends and discourse. As a result, CBNRM might better be referred to as *International Community-Based Natural Resource Governance*, as this form of resource governance is indivisible from global environmental governance and is also an important layer of governance beyond resource management. This is seen with the increasing aversion to trophy hunting globally, as well as to renewed efforts to fight climate change which has led to an expansion in partnerships to provide solar power generation capacities for some conservancies. It is also seen with the way Namibians have become produced through the discourse of climate change as it now infiltrates their almost every conversation and action. This is certainly not an apolitical phenomenon but one that has infiltrated through their renewed connectivities to global actors. While in and of itself, neither of these are inherently problematic, it means that conservancies risk being constantly subject to shifts in funding streams and priorities as a result of changing global fashions. Beyond that, there remains the greater risk that CBNRM in general, and Namibia in particular, might lose their appeal within development discourse as well as as a form of, and popular region for, ecotourism. COVID-19 has already demonstrated the severity with which exogenous shocks can impact the viability of the program. While the pandemic is sure to subside and tourism levels are already increasing once again, it is far from certain the industry will remain viable long term for the people of Namibia – particularly in the face of growing climate challenges.

All of this is not to say that ongoing partnerships are nefarious, or that they are not creating some good, as certainly they are, and I have outlined many of the positive benefits created from CBNRM throughout this dissertation. However, it is clear that the lack of community empowerment that was pointed to by many of the skeptics has continued – albeit in different ways. We see ways CBNRM has evolved as many of the interview respondents from the research for this dissertation were quick to assert that they make their own decisions and have ownership over local conservation and development initiatives. Nonetheless, they remain locked in a pattern of seeking technical assistance and resources from global partners who increasingly allocate these based on the types of initiatives they favour on the ground which undermines the autonomy of communities and their decision making while demonstrating the ongoing productive power of global capital.

As benefits derived from CBNRM and managed through conservancy councils decreased throughout the 2010s there was a parallel contraction in support for the programs⁶³⁶ as well as increasing accusations of local-level corruption,⁶³⁷ and suggestions that communities were being used to prop up the tourism industry for foreign travellers.⁶³⁸ These sentiments mixed with increases in human-wildlife conflict were leading to decreasing political support for the program which had once held widespread backing.⁶³⁹ As the drought has stretched on year after year however, and as many traditional ways of life – largely consisting of various forms of subsistence farming for over sixty per cent of Namibians – have become increasingly difficult for many, and nearly impossible for some, there has been a renewed sense of the necessity of conservation among

⁶³⁶ Shilongo, Sam, and Simuela, “Using Incentives as Mitigation Measure for Human Wildlife Conflict Management in Namibia.”

⁶³⁷ Hoole, “Place-Power-Prognosis.”

⁶³⁸ Schnegg and Kiaka, “Subsidized Elephants.”

⁶³⁹ Shilongo, Sam, and Simuela, “Using Incentives as Mitigation Measure for Human Wildlife Conflict Management in Namibia.”

many.⁶⁴⁰ These sentiments were outlined by one police officer from the town of Bersig in the Torra Conservancy who said;

There have always been political issues with the conservancy like anywhere else, but they are not bad, and we were able to vote for a new council in December [2019] which makes us at least feel like our voices are heard. If we cannot vote for a good council at some point, it is a reflection on us, not a fault with the program. Conservation now is important especially with the drought, even though the drought makes it more difficult.⁶⁴¹

His sentiments encompass many of the ongoing challenges facing the program, but also acknowledge that now more than ever conservation is important, as their land and resources are all they have left in some cases.

These kinds of sentiments were echoed by many throughout Kunene Region in a number of conservancies as people first discussed the hardships faced by the drought, but then re-iterated the ongoing need to continue working for conservation. One interview respondent posited “one of the most important things we get is conservation. Before no one cared about it and the animals were disappearing and their habitat being destroyed. Now people take pride in protecting them and we all do it together as a community.”⁶⁴² While none of the interlocutors I spoke with suggested that CBNRM was any sort of panacea, even several farmers acknowledged that while wildlife conservation can result in attacks on their livestock, overall the program was beneficial, and if rain does not come, tourism incomes based on wildlife might be all they have left.⁶⁴³

⁶⁴⁰ Mwakikagile, *Namibia*.

⁶⁴¹ Interview, Police officer, Bersig, Torra Conservancy, February 4, 2020

⁶⁴² Focus Group 1, Anabeb Conservancy, February 7, 2020

⁶⁴³ Interview, Farmer 2, #Khoadi !Hoas Conservancy, February 10, 2020

Child and Barnes in referring to Charles Tilly write “The conditions for democracy are similarly onerous, and the history of mankind shows how rarely these conditions have been met (Tilly 2007):⁶⁴⁴ the light of democracy flickering briefly around the times of Greek and Roman civilization, but democracy only emerging more generally in the last two centuries.”⁶⁴⁵ While western democracies have been forged over centuries of conflict and social development, African states have not followed the same trajectory.⁶⁴⁶ Instead, electoral democracy in the Weberian state is something that was implanted by departing colonial regimes who left a period of oppression, conflict, and challenges in their wake. As a result, democracy is often pointed to as something that has failed to succeed in many African contexts. CBNRM has attempted to establish democratic systems at the local level on extremely short timelines. As such, this form of resource governance has met a great deal of challenges across southern Africa and has failed to realize many of its intended goals. However, by focusing on the continued development of local-level democratic institutional development and community empowerment, attaining the three pillars of CBNRM remains possible even in the face of growing climate challenges.

⁶⁴⁴ Charles Tilly, *Democracy* (Cambridge University Press, 2007).

⁶⁴⁵ Child and Barnes, “The Conceptual Evolution and Practice of Community-Based Natural Resource Management in Southern Africa,” 284.

⁶⁴⁶ William Reno, *Warlord Politics and African States* (Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1998).

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Annex I: Interviews Cited

- 1: Lara Diez, Nyae Nyae Development Foundation of Namibia, January 10 2020.
- 2: Dr. Ekkehard Klingelhoefter, Head of Department – Wildlife Management and Ecotourism, University of Namibia, January 13, 2020.
- 3: Maxi Pia Louis, Director, Namibia Association of CBNRM Support Organizations, January 14, 2020.
- 4- Marina Tavolaro, PhD candidate in Biological Sciences at University of Cape Town, January 15, 2020
- 5: Uatirohange Tjiuoro, Ministry of Environment and Tourism: Directorate of National Parks and Wildlife, January 20, 2020.
- 6: Michael Knight, Transboundary Leader for KAZA, WWF, January 23, 2020.
- 7: John Hazam, Senior Technical Advisor: Namibia Nature Foundation, January 23, 2020
- 8: Joni Seager, Professor of Global Studies, Bentley University, January 24, 2020
- 9: Kevin Coldrey, Environmental and climate change economist for Environmental-Economics Policy Research Unit & Anchor Environmental, January 24, 2020
- 10: Dr. Chris Brown, CEO Namibia Chamber of Environment, January 24, 2020.
- 11: Richard Diggle, Business/CBNRM Specialist, WWF, January 24, 2020.
- 12: Willie Boonzaaier, Programme Director, Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation, January 24, 2020.
- 13: Eric Xaneb, Chairman, Tsiseb Conservancy, January 27, 2020
- 14: Hiking guide, Branberg ‘White Lady’ paintings, January 28, 2020
- 15: Sarah Roos, Manager, Brandberg White Lady Lodge, January 28, 2020
- 16: David Eiseb, manager, Sorris Sorris Conservancy, January 29, 2020
- 17: Benedict Libanda, CEO, Environmental Investment fund of Namibia, January 29, 2020
- 18: Traditional Authority, Sorris Sorris Conservancy, January 29, 2020
- 19: Chairperson, Sorris Sorris Conservancy, January 29, 2020
- 20: Pohamba Shifeta, Minister of Environment and Tourism, January 29 2020.
- 21: Adolph Thaniseb, Uisbased/Twyfelfontein, January 30, 2020
- 22: Joglinde Touros, Manager, Uisbasen/Twyfelfontein Conservancy, January 30, 2020.
- 23: Hiking guide, Twyfelfontein engravings (UNESCO World Heritage Site), January 30, 2020
- 24: Guide, Damara Living Museum, twyfelfontein, January 30, 2020
- 25: Village respondent 1, Uisbasen/Twyfelfontein, January 30, 2020
- 26: Village respondent 2, Uisbasen/Twyfelfontein, January 30, 2020
- 27: Village respondent 3, Uisbasen/Twyfelfontein, January 30, 2020

28: Barnabas, tour guide, Petrified Forest, Uisbasen/Twyfelfontein, January 31, 2020

29: Mine worker, Bersig, February 1, 2020

30: Village respondent 4, Torra Conservancy, February 1, 2020

31 : Village respondent 5, Torra Conservancy, February 1, 2020

32: Emil Roman, Manager, Torra Conservancy, February 2, 2020.

33: Village Respondent 6, Torra Conservancy, February 2, 2020

34: Village Respondent 7, Torra Conservancy, February 2, 2020

35: Farmer 1, Torra Conservancy, February 2, 2020

36: Game officer, Torra Conservancy, February 2, 2020

37: Village Respondent 8, Torra Conservancy, February 2, 2020

38: Village Respondent 9, Torra Conservancy, February 2, 2020

39: Manager, Damaraland Camp, February 2, 2020

40: Anna Carizzoni, Tour guide, Matiti tours, February 3, 2020

41: Manager, Wereldsend research outpost, February 3, 2020

42: Employee, Wereldsend research outpost, February 3, 2020

43: Team lead, NGO Team from France, February 3, 2020

44: Rhino game guard, Torra Conservancy, February 4, 2020

45: Police officer, Bersig, Torra Conservancy, February 4, 2020

46: Manager, Palmwag Lodge, February 5 2020.

47: Uisa, Manager, Sesfontein Conservancy, February 6, 2020

48: Traditional authority, Sesfontein Conservancy, February 6, 2020

49: Game Guard, Sesfontein Conservancy, February 6, 2020

50: Tour guide, Sesfontein Conservancy, February 6, 2020

50: Head Lady, Sesfontein Conservancy, February 6, 2020

51: Official, Ministry of Rural Economic Development, February 6, 2020

52: Christine Awaras, Manager, Anabeb Conservancy, February 7, 2020

53: Godlieb, Office Manager, Anabeb Conservancy, February 7, 2020

54: Traditional Authority 1, Anabeb Conservancy, February 7, 2020

55: Traditional authority 2: Anabeb Conservancy, February 7, 2020

56: Focus Group 1, Anabeb Conservancy, February 7, 2020

57: Focus Group 2, Anabeb Conservancy, February 7, 2020

58: Focus group 3, Anabeb Conservancy, February 7, 2020

59: Focus group 4, Anabeb Conservancy, February 7, 2020

- 60: Manager, Okahirongo Elephant Lodge, February 8, 2020
- 61: Secretary, #Khoadi !Hoas Conservancy, February 10, 2020
- 62: Andrew Naopina, treasurer, #Khoadi !Hoas Conservancy, February 10, 2020
- 63: Albert Kroses, Head of Environmental Services, #Khoadi !Hoas Conservancy, February 10, 2020
- 64: Landina, Office Assistant, #Khoadi !Hoas Conservancy, February 10, 2020
- 65: Manager, Grootberg Lodge, #Khoadi !Hoas Conservancy, February 10, 2020
- 66: Manager, Hoada Campsite, #Khoadi !Hoas Conservancy, February 10, 2020
- 67: Farmer 2, #Khoadi !Hoas Conservancy, February 10, 2020
- 68: Farmer 3, #Khoadi !Hoas Conservancy, February 10, 2020
- 69: Employee: Grootberg Lodge, #Khoadi !Hoas Conservancy, February 10, 2020
- 70: Employee: Hoada campsite, #Khoadi !Hoas Conservancy, February 10, 2020
- 71: Etosha Park Warden, Ministry of Environment and Tourism satellite office, February 12, 2020
- 72: Lauren Pfeiffer, Assistant to Director of the Cheetah Conservation Fund, February 13, 2020
- 73: Dr. Margaret Jacobson, co-founder IRDNC, co-director, trustee, mentor, Conservancy Safaris Namibia, Swakopmund, February 17, 2020
- 74: Andrew Malherbe, COO, Save the Rhino Trust, Swakopmund, February 18, 2020
- 75: Official, Ministry of Environment and Tourism, Swakopmund, February 19, 2020
- 76: Gitta Paetzold, CEO, Hospitality Association of Namibia, Swakopmund, February 19, 2020
- 77: Brian Jones, Environment and Development Consultant, Windhoek, February 20, 2020.
- 78: John Pallet, Director, Namibia Environment and Wildlife Society, Windhoek, February 21, 2020
- 79: Ruben Portas, Cheetah Research Project. Windhoek, January 14, 2020.