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Case Study: The Crucial Role of Governance in Ecosystem Management -
Results and Conclusions of the
Selous Conservation Programme/Tanzania 1987–2003
by
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Summary

Between 1987 and 2003 the Tanzanian and German Governments jointly implemented the Selous Conservation Programme (SCP), an ecosystem centred development cooperation programme for the long-term conservation and sustainable use of the natural resources, in particular wildlife, in the Selous Game Reserve and environs. Its direct objectives were to rehabilitate the Selous Game Reserve (SGR) and to involve the communities in the buffer zones and allow them to manage wildlife and benefit from the sustainable use of natural resources on village land. It was planned, executed and financed in partnership between the Wildlife Division (WD), Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ), District administrations and villages around the Selous and other donors.

At the end of the Programme in 2003 the results as far as the Selous are concerned were excellent: Overall level of management was satisfactory, trophy poaching was insignificant and an adequate, secure and long term financial basis was in place (2.8 million US\$ retention per year). Community involvement was well developed and practised around the Selous, however, only on a pilot basis. The paradigm shift had been accepted and further developed by the central Government as a national programme, called Community Based Conservation (CBC), for conservation outside protected areas and for poverty alleviation within the Poverty Reduction Strategy. Nevertheless its implementation beyond pilot status was delayed by the Wildlife Division by administrative measures, as it would have meant a sharing power and revenue with the communities.

The major problem for the Selous during the time of the SCP was not to raise the reserve's management to satisfactory levels, but rather that many relevant decisions, e.g. on hunting quotas, allocation of hunting blocks and tourist lodge sites and on the reserve's budget remained with the Ministry. These important decisions were taken without consent or even involvement of the Selous administration and other stakeholders like the districts and communities concerned. Upon the request of the Government of Tanzania and financed from Germany a major reform of the technical administration (database, computerisation) of tourist hunting was prepared and put in place during the time of the SCP, but was never used. Equally an officially accepted Hunting Policy of 1995 was never implemented.

Only two and a half years after the end of the SCP the picture for the Selous is already turning increasingly bleak and the long term sustainability of the SGR is in jeopardy due to decisions at the top Wildlife Division level. In violation of the Cooperation Agreement between the Tanzanian and German Governments the retention budget (50 % of all reserve revenue) of the Selous has been cut by nearly two thirds in the first year. The budget was increased again in the financial year 2005/2006 after the Ministry had been reminded of the existing agreements, but it still suffers from a cut of 30 %. The funds at this stage are simply not sufficient any more for a proper operation of the reserve. Trophy poaching has consequently shown a strong upward trend and the effectiveness of management is in jeopardy. The situation is further aggravated by a number of planned environmentally doubtful projects. There is a danger that the Selous might slowly deteriorate again in the future.

CBC continues to be delayed despite a strong central Government commitment. Whether the involvement of communities and their receiving benefits from wildlife use on their land will in the long run maintain the survival of wildlife outside the protected areas is unknown. However, without an approach which takes the needs and rights of the communities in the wildlife areas into account, wildlife certainly does not have much of a future. There are strong indications that the top wildlife bureaucracy would prefer to return to their traditional "fences-and-fines-approach", which has failed in the past, but serves their own individual economic interests well.

At the core of the problem lies the administration of the wildlife revenue which comes primarily from hunting (90 %) in the Selous. All central decisions (quotas, allocation of blocks, revenues) are taken by the Director of Wildlife. There is a severe case of Bad Governance and no tender or similar procedures are followed for the allocation of hunting blocks. All efforts to induce transparency and initiate some debate towards introducing reform within the industry have been blocked in recent years. This action is supported by the major actors in the hunting industry, as they thrive with the present system. The chairman of the Tanzania Hunting Operators Association has leased approx. half of the Selous area for more than thirty years now without ever having been required to compete for these blocks in a public tender. Instead, hunting blocks with an estimated market value of 80,000 to 150,000 US\$ continue to be allocated at the discretion of the Director of Wildlife for an official annual fee of 7,500 US\$ (common sense and witness reports indicate the existence of additional unknown payments: there is "nothing like a free lunch"). The hunting industry as voiced out by its association and chairman is unanimously in opposition to grant the communities any decision making powers or rights to the wildlife on their village lands. This opposition has been one of the main stumbling factors which have lead to the slow progress and limited success in community involvement.

The analysis of the SCP and its long term results proves that a proper and successful ecological, social and economic management of a large ecosystem can be installed, but that its long term survival and its sustainability is finally dependent upon the existing Governance. The deep crisis of the Selous in the eighties was mainly the result of what is nowadays called "Bad Governance". If "Good Governance" cannot be quickly installed into the management of the natural resource base and in particular the hunting industry in Tanzania the Selous could soon fall back to where it was in the eighties.

The Tanzanian wildlife system has received significant support from foreign Governments and non-governmental organizations in recent years. The donors have engaged themselves in a constructive policy dialogue with the Ministry and the Wildlife Department over years. This resulted in many agreements, policies and promises, but in very little practical action on the side of the Government and no tangible improvement in Governance. During the last decade and after encouraging beginnings, the top Wildlife Division has succeeded in using various donors' financial support mainly for endless and mostly useless participatory meetings (useless in the sense that the proposals and recommendations of the target groups were never implemented), conferences, evaluations and studies which were helpful to spend the money and prove "ownership" and a "participatory approach", but which were probably never intended to bring about any change. The donors – and the communities - were always promised, even by the Minister herself, that the agreed reforms would be implemented, but to no avail. The donors have meanwhile summed up their disappointment in a critical public statement and propose reform along the lines of this paper.

Nevertheless, the danger prevails that this disappointment will lead to little change. Tanzania increasingly receives aid in the form of budget support. It is hoped that the regulatory framework around new forms of aid delivery will increase the pressure for Governance improvement, but this hope might render fruitless. There is broad agreement that the most important single aspect of Governance in Africa is corruption. There is also a general agreement that the financial transfers to Africa during the last four decades have achieved very little towards self-sustaining economic growth and development and that Governance is one of the roots of the malaise. Nevertheless there is little agreement how the urgently needed improvements can be induced.

Those who advocate the prime importance of capital transfer for poverty alleviation and the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals like Jeffery Sachs might therefore prevail, although they propose the failed recipes of yesterday. The pressure to spend public development budgets coupled with the obvious lack of Governance improvement and at the same time persisting hopes and illusions on the side of the donors reward those in Africa who benefit from bad Governance and punishes those who want to reform. Bad Governance – or should I better say corruption - pays after all!

Some Facts on the Selous Game Reserve

110 years ago, in the year 1896, the German Governor von Wissmann created a game reserve between the Mgeta and Rufiji Rivers in the South of what was German East Africa at that time. The area became the nucleus of what is now the SGR and was later enlarged to its present size. This makes it Africa's oldest protected area. The present size is approx. 48,000 km².

It is basically a "miombo" dry-forest ecosystem, but it contains many other landscapes like savannahs, riverine forests and wetlands. Wildlife populations are of

major international significance, e.g. elephant, lion, leopard, wild dog, crocodile, hippo, Roosevelt sable, Nyasa wildebeest and many others.

The ecosystem extends beyond the borders of the reserve. Presently communities south of the reserve have started to create their own wildlife protected areas. Thus a kind of ecological corridor will be created between the Selous and the Niassa Game Reserve in Mozambique. An ecosystem of approx. 110,000 km² could thus come eventually under coordinated conservation management.

The main problems in the Selous remain poaching, an insecure financial basis and insufficient community involvement in the management of the buffer-zones.

Selous as Part of the Protected Areas' System



Start of SCP in 1987: Selous in Crisis

In the aftermath of a failed experiment of "African Socialism" the wildlife sector in Tanzania deteriorated as shown by high poaching and drastically declining wildlife numbers. The Selous elephant declined from approx. 110,000 in the early seventies to around 55,000 in 1986 and to less than 30,000 in 1989. The rhino was poached during the same period from over 3,000 to less than a hundred.

The management system of the reserve had more or less broken down. There were two Landrovers operational and the annual budget amounted to approx. 3 US\$ per km² in 1987.

Governance was at the core of the problems. More than half of the poaching originated from the official wildlife staff, and it was often done on orders of superiors, higher authorities and politicians. With very few exceptions nobody responsible was ever taken to court.

Why SCP?

The Tanzanian Government finally decided to take action in order to stop complete destruction of a World Heritage Site. A request was made to the Federal Republic of Germany under development cooperation after other donors had expressed no interest in the Selous.

The reasons for Germany to get involved in this new sector:

- bio-diversity became a new development objective in a process which later led to the Rio-Conference.
- wildlife was recognized as a natural resource which allows sustainable use for poverty alleviation.
- the role of communities in nature conservation was increasingly stressed.

Some Characteristics of SCP

The SCP from the very beginning followed a "hands-on" approach. It was based on conservation partnerships between the Wildlife Division, the communities in the buffer-zones and the district administrations. The initial donors were GTZ (management, infrastructure and communities), Frankfurt Zoological Society (plane), WWF (rhino and elephant expert) and African Wildlife Foundation (mechanic).

At a later stage the following donors did also contribute: KfW-German Development Bank (roads, boundary demarcation), European Union (rhino), African Development Bank (construction, CBC), Belgium (CBC) and USAID (CBC at Ministry level)

Activity 1: Rehabilitation of the Reserve

The main activities were:

- anti-poaching
- training and equipment of scouts
- payment increases and new structures, incentives, discipline
- infrastructure: roads (from 1,700 km to 15,000 km), airstrips, communication, transport, housing, 2,000 km boundary demarcation
- management planning, organization, development of professionalism

Activity 2: Creating Financial Sustainability

Two options are open for the managers of protected areas:

- 1) Attain financial self sufficiency in order to maintain minimum core functions (doing the necessary with available public funding and own money) or
- 2) Secure permanent external finance in order to afford comprehensive management (doing more than what is necessary for survival and donor funds closing the finance gap)

SCP opted for 1). It was calculated that tourism (hunting and photographic) could generate sufficient revenue for management and allowing at the same time payments to central Government and districts.

After difficult negotiations a retention scheme of 50 % was agreed with the Treasury by which the reserve was allowed to retain at least half of all its income for management starting in 1994. In addition the Government paid basic salaries. The management of the hunting industry (90 % of reserve income) incl. quota setting and block allocation remained, however, with the Ministry (Wildlife Division) and did not allow the Selous administration much influence.

Revenue collection from tourism, retention income Selous GR (Source: SGR statistics)

Year	Number of Tourists	Number of Hunters	Tourist Revenue '000 US\$	Hunting Revenue '000 US\$	Hunting Retention '000 US\$	Total Income remaining in SGR '000 US\$
1991	1,150	115	22	1,245		22
1992	1,784	163	40	1,655		40
1993	2,135	198	53	1,831		53
1994	2,415	174	100	1,656	828	928
1995	3,473	168	160	1,706	853	1,013
1996	4,661	325	209	2,674	1,337	1,546
1997	5,455	346	249	2,909	1,454	1,703
1998	4,596	436	285	3,541	1,770	2,055
1999	5,501	343	303	2,718	1,359	1,662
2000	5,267	431	320	3,245	1,623	1,943
2001	4,802	482	299	3,621	1,811	2,110
2003	6,000	600	380	5,200	2,600	2,800

Activity 3: Involving the Communities

The Tanzanian Government had always followed the “fines and fences” or “fortress” approach, as this was the “state of the art”. Wildlife was to be protected by the state and local people had no right to utilize it unless they bought a hunting licence. At the same time, however, the Government had never the capacity to protect the resource and often it also did not have the political will to do so. At most times the official law enforcement agencies were the main violators.

At the beginning of the SCP in 1987 the only community involvement in wildlife management was poaching. Community management of forests and wildlife has a long and successful tradition in many parts of the world including Germany, and SCP included from the very beginning “Community Based Natural Resources Management” into its concept. The objective was to share power and benefits with the communities, let them have a word in the management of natural resources on their own land and use the material benefits as an incentive for the long term conservation of the resource. Sustainable use of wildlife was regarded as one of the few options left to maintain wildlife outside the protected areas. It is widely accepted today that this paradigm shift represents the new conservation thinking.

In the case of the Selous the concept was not in the form of “community outreach” programmes, where communities are given benefits like social services. Instead they were to become the managers of the resource on their own land. Management and wildlife use inside the Selous was to remain with the Wildlife Division and not to be shared.

The SCP-concept was summed up as follows:

From **Conservation against the People**
via **Conservation for the People**
to **Conservation by the People**

In a speech on development and conservation the then President Ali Hassan Mwinyi propagated this concept as the new Tanzanian policy. It was then applied and implemented in a pragmatic process of trial and error and with involvement of the communities.

Around the Selous a good number of villages received user rights on a pilot basis and their chosen representatives (village game scouts) were at the same time recognized as Authorized Officers to protect the wildlife against illegal uses in their provisional “Wildlife Management Areas” (WMA). The following map shows the five areas in the Selous buffer-zone where such WMA were created by village initiatives with limited outside support. South of these areas a wildlife corridor on the basis of WMA is being established by the villages and with some outside assistance under GEF/UNDP. It will create biodiversity connectivity between the Selous and the Niassa Game Reserve in Mozambique.

Map of the SGR and Village Wildlife Management Areas



Government Made CBC a Cornerstone of Policy

The Tanzanian Government further developed the concept and made it a national programme under the name “Community based Conservation” (CBC). It became a major pillar of the Wildlife Policy of 1998. It saw countrywide application in 16 pilot areas. In order to facilitate the programme CBC Guidelines were developed in a countrywide process of popular participation between 1999 and 2003. Thereafter a revised and modernized draft of a new Wildlife Act was prepared, which also contained the CBC concept. This draft is still with Parliamentary Committees.

Some Results at the End of SCP (2003)

The SCP as a joint Tanzanian-German initiative came to a planned end in December 2003. Some major results can be summed up as follows:

CBC:

- from 15 (1990) to 51 villages; more would join, if they were allowed
- 8,600 km² under village management
- 300 village game scouts on duty
- functioning self-administration at village level
- a wildlife corridor to Mozambique in the making

Game Reserve:

- tourism turnover significantly increased, mainly sustainable
- Selous income around 5.6 m. US\$ out of which 2.8 m. were channelled back into the reserve as "retention"; additionally salaries were paid from the budget
- expenditure per km² was 65 US\$ (up from 2 US\$)
- reserve finance is sustainable, if retention scheme stays and if it remains well administered
- scout force declining and too small (1 scout/160 km²)
- management plan/system in place
- infrastructure developed and satisfactory, maintenance good
- performance of sector management and game scout force satisfactory, but in danger of declining

Biodiversity:

- elephant poaching from > 3,000/year in the 1980s to < 50 in 2002/3
- elephant numbers: > 60,000
- rhinos breed, numbers remain very low and vulnerable
- other wildlife populations at natural levels, mainly on the high side; natural fluctuations; protection in buffer-zones greatly increased
- other natural resources (forests and rivers) fully protected inside the reserve (only)
- fish: illegal use going on, but mainly sustainable
- biodiversity in general reconstituted and maintained

Reality Check

- Governance issues remain the problem No. 1
- communities, donors and many observers agree: all CBC implementation has been delayed by administrative procedures (perhaps it has even been stalled?)
- in order to block the progressing empowerment of communities the Director even prohibited the distribution of the Swahili printed version of the official Tanzania Government "Wildlife Policy"
- all WMA secondary legislation too complicated in order to delay/avoid implementation
- first villages only registered as WMA in 2006
- privileges granted to villages withdrawn after 2000

- WMA leased as hunting blocks without agreement/against the will of villages and districts
- hunting industry grossly mismanaged (see Baldus/Cauldwell 2004)
- overhunting in certain areas and for certain species
- many main actors of the private hunting industry actively involved in mismanagement
- Hunting Policy of 1995 signed, but never implemented
- upon request of the Director of Wildlife the administration of the hunting industry was analyzed, reorganized and computerized with assistance of a donor between 1996 and 1998; the necessary hard- and software was put in place; Ministry recognized results as in line with terms of reference, but never applied the system and continued instead with the non-transparent procedures which allow many abuses to happen and go undetected
- widespread corruption in the administration of wildlife use
- village forests depleted before new community based forest act becomes operational

Conclusion of Donors

Development Partners Group: “Unfortunately the wildlife industry is characterised by an inefficient system of allocating hunting concessions and problems with quota management, poor rates of recovery of revenue, and only limited participation of communities in the direction of management of the hunting sector ... and there is strong resistance to reform of the sector by those who profit from the current situation.”

It is proposed: “Effective market-based competition for hunting concessions should be introduced, as suggested in 1993, with appropriate qualification criteria for outfitters to meet before bidding and size limits for trophy species must be strictly adhered to and monitoring should be rigorous;

Hunting must not be allowed to deplete wildlife resources and so an improved data-set on resource status and hunting activity needs to be available. There is a need therefore for an improved monitoring system to be designed and implemented with adequate data management facilities; and,

The Ministry of Finance (and TRA) should be supported in undertaking a review of the hunting sector including taxation-rates and procedures, and a review of the financial status and management of the Wildlife Division. Transparent accounting systems and computerisation must be introduced.”

Benchmarking CBC

The following criteria are crucial for successful Community Based Natural Resource Management. The table tries to give a rough summary of how the major stakeholders, namely the communities and the top Wildlife Division, have internalized them during the last 15 or so years.

<u>Criteria</u>	<u>Communities</u>	<u>Wildlife Division</u>
Ownership	yes	no
Commitment for Reform	yes	mixed
Capacity to Change	yes	no
Accountability	yes, but deficits	no
Empowerment	yes	no

Handing over more ownership of wildlife from the Government to the communities would result in the sharing of power and money. As very little has been achieved after a process of nearly 20 years the conclusion is obvious that the Wildlife Division does not intend to share.

Nevertheless, the empowerment of communities is well advanced. It will be difficult in the long run to withhold the reforms of the wildlife sector, as they have been promised by high Government authorities too often and as they are part of the official Poverty Reduction Strategy despite the blockade efforts by the wildlife administration.

Outlook 2006

- WMA and CBNRM - unknown future
- lodge sites approved in violation of Selous management plan
- financial base weakening
- retention scheme in danger (all figures Selous statistics):

2003/4:	2.8 m. US\$
2004/5:	1 " "
2005/6	1.8 " "
- poaching: strong upward trend
- hunting: reform rejected again by Director of Wildlife after elections
- Government has granted mineral prospecting licenses for Selous despite international agreement that there must be no mining in World Heritage Sites
- Kidunda Dam project at north-eastern corner of reserve goes ahead despite negative technical and environmental studies and expert agreement that project is not feasible: will lead to major ecological damage in northern (tourist) sector of Selous and to destruction of neighbouring WMA.

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All quoted publications plus additional articles and sources on the Selous, SCP, CBC, tourist hunting etc. can be found in: <http://www.wildlife-baldus.com>

Disclaimer: The author worked as coordinator of the SCP from 1987 to 1993 and as Government Advisor in the Wildlife Division between 1998 and 2005. All views and opinions expressed are, however, solely his own and not necessarily those of his former or present employers. They are also not necessarily those of the conference organizers.