



FACULTY OF ENGINEERING AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE AND PLANNING

Exploring the Impact of Land Reforms on Community-based Ecotourism Initiatives. A Case Study of Masera Community in Beitbridge District, Zimbabwe.

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*Dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Science in Town and Regional Planning*

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DECLARATION

I, Mtulisi Moyo, do hereby declare that the work contained in this dissertation is entirely my own work, submitted for the Degree of Master of Science in Town and Regional Planning in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. This dissertation has not been previously submitted for a degree at this or any other university and all reference material contained therein has been duly acknowledged.

Signature.....

Date

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ABSTRACT

Zimbabwe has for the past three decades prioritised land reform as its broad and long term strategy to reduce poverty and inequality among its citizens. However, during the Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP) in 2000, national parks and forest reserves, (the principal habitats for Zimbabwe's biodiversity in plant, tree and wildlife species) were acquired and re-allocated under 'A1' and 'A2' farming models. In terms of its approach, the FTLRP was predominantly guided by agricultural considerations, despite the latter's dwindling contribution to the Zimbabwe's Gross Domestic Product. The interaction of land reforms with other land-based economic activities like community-based ecotourism and wildlife management has been overlooked or neglected by land reform authorities in the country.

The aim of the study is to explore the impact of the FTLRP on community-based ecotourism initiatives, with particular reference to the Masera community in Beitbridge district, located in south eastern Zimbabwe. The Beitbridge district is a dry region and potential for agriculture is very limited. Prior to the FTLRP, this district had substantial commercial farms engaged in various wildlife protection programmes. The acquisition and re-allocation of these farms under small-holder agriculture threatened these programmes that were in place to protect biodiversity and endangered species.

The Masera community was purposively identified as a case study area because of the beneficiaries' initiative to protect natural resources under their jurisdiction and at the same time benefitting from their use. Many land reform beneficiary communities have not achieved the same degree of organisation and cohesion and land reform initiatives and natural resources in their areas have suffered irreparable damage. The study sought to describe and assess the current status of this initiative where community-based ecotourism is being promoted as a development strategy. The study is intended to enhance the capacity of community-based ecotourism as an important development strategy for balancing economic growth and conservation and thus contribute to the sustainable development of the region.

The study concludes that community-based ecotourism is seen as a way of bringing financial benefits for households as well as biodiversity conservation, although economic growth for the community has been very limited. Both

beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries interviewed at the study site support the initiative for conservation and are optimistic that ecotourism benefits will meet intended results once proper planning mechanisms are put in place.

Recommendations are proposed based on the study findings and the literature on land reform, sustainable development and ecotourism. Results and recommendations could inform planning and management processes, and thus enhance the capacity of ecotourism to generate benefits at least at the study site and possibly elsewhere around the region.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

BRDC	Beitbridge Rural District Council
CAMPFIRE	Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources
CESVI	Cooperazione E Sviluppo (Italian non- Governmental Organisation on Nature Conservation)
DWNP	Department of Wildlife and National Parks Zimbabwe
FTLRP	Fast Track Land Reform Programme
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MDC- M	Movement for Democratic Change-Mutambara
MDC- T	Movement for Democratic Change- Tswangirai
NGO	Non- Governmental Organisation
PPF	Peace Park Foundation
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
RDC	Rural District Council
RRA	Rapid Rural Appraisal
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VET	Department of Veterinary Services
WCED	World Commission on Environment and Development
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature
ZANU PF	Zimbabwe National African Union-Patriotic Front

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Land ownership and rights of use of land have been a central issue for many countries throughout history and for many they are still part of national debates (Bowyer-Bower and Stoneman, 2000). Land ownership and access to it, has an impact upon the livelihoods of rural people and can play a crucial role in socio-economic development of communities. Zimbabwe, like South Africa and Namibia, has in the past three decades prioritized land reforms as part of its broad and long-term strategy to reduce poverty and improve the welfare of its citizens.

The colonial agrarian structure in Zimbabwe promoted landlessness and marginalization of poor black people (Watkins, 1995). At its independence in 1980, Zimbabwe had 6000 white commercial farmers owning 45% of the agricultural land. More than half of this lay in the high rainfall regions where agricultural potential was very high and, only 5% of the land was owned by 8500 small scale black farmers. The remaining 50% of the land was owned by 2 million black peasant farmers in communal areas (Government of Zimbabwe, 1998). The communal areas faced a wide range of problems such as land degradation, land fragmentation, overstocking and low productivity (ibid).

In terms of both policy and practice, post-independent Zimbabwe has witnessed three phases of land reform programmes, with each programme having its unique characteristics. The first phase was implemented between 1980 and 1990. This initial phase was shaped by the Lancaster House Constitution which ushered in Zimbabwe's independence in 1980 (Moyo, et al., 2008). The second phase was implemented between 1990 and 2000 after the expiry of the Lancaster House constitution. In this phase the Land Acquisition Act was amended, bringing a social justice-driven land acquisition programme.

The third phase, which forms the basis of this research, was implemented in 2000, where the government facilitated compulsory acquisition of land from predominantly white commercial farmers, with little or partial compensation (Moyo, *et al.*, 2008). Under this phase, 10 million hectares of land was

procured for resettlement of over two hundred and twenty five thousand (225 000) families (Moyo, 2011). This phase was later termed the Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP). The implementation of the FTLRP programme was characterized by widespread human rights violations, such as displacement of farm workers and harassment of white commercial farmers, thus putting the diplomatic and donor communities on edge (Wolmer *et al.*, 2003:6).

The FTLRP aims to reduce poverty through crop cultivation and cattle ranching. In terms of its approach, the FTLRP was predominantly guided by agricultural considerations, despite the latter's dwindling contribution to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (Reid, 1999). The preference for small-holder agriculture as a land use option during the FTLRP prevented communities from drier parts of the country from undertaking other potential livelihood strategies such as wildlife management and ecotourism. The Lowveld region, where Beitbridge is located has potential for thriving ecotourism initiatives because of its rich flora and fauna and its scenic nature. The resettlement process in Beitbridge district created a human/wildlife conflict with its agrarian focus. Resettlement of people on pristine land reduced the habitat for wildlife, thus threatening the latter's existence. This study examines and tries to bring together the elements of community-based ecotourism and land reform and to offer this integration as a vehicle for economic development, poverty alleviation and biodiversity conservation.

The study will use a case study approach with Sentinel Ranch in Masera community purposively identified to holistically explore the potential of ecotourism development as a sustainable land use and economic development option in Zimbabwe's drier regions. Ceballo-Lascurian (1996:34) defined community based ecotourism as "the travelling to relatively undisturbed or uncontaminated natural areas with the specific objective of studying, admiring and enjoying its scenery, wild plants and animals as well as any existing cultural manifestations found in these areas". For the purpose of this study, community-based ecotourism and ecotourism will be treated as synonymous, as both development approaches advocate for community empowerment in the management of natural resources and tourism development.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Zimbabwe has implemented land reform programmes for the past three decades. In the majority of cases parks and conservancies have been acquired and re-allocated for small-holder agriculture. The failure to include community-based ecotourism as a land use option in agricultural marginal areas negatively affected rural livelihoods in Zimbabwe's drier regions (Moyo, 2004; Mutangi, 2010).

Several scholars have assessed the linkages between poverty reduction and land reforms as part of a rural development strategy in the developing world (Chambers, 2003; Mabhena, 2009; Moyo *et al.*, 2000 and Scoones *et al.*, 2009). In the majority of cases, scholars and researchers tend to focus on the impact of land cultivation (crop farming) and livestock rearing (animal husbandry) on improving rural livelihoods.

However, the interaction of land reforms with other land-based economic activities like community-based ecotourism and wildlife management have been overlooked or neglected. Although Zimbabwe is known to have significant experience with the Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE) concept, no known studies have been conducted to assess or explore the relationship between recent land reforms and community-based ecotourism initiatives in the country. This research will be undertaken in Masera community in Beitbridge district in Zimbabwe, where land reform beneficiaries opted to utilize their farm as an ecotourism project from 2004 to 2011.

Taylor (2009) concedes that community-based ecotourism is a long-term programmatic approach to rural development that uses wildlife and other natural resources for promoting devolved rural institutions and improved governance and livelihoods. This study intends to describe how the ecotourism project has changed the livelihood of land reform beneficiaries in Masera community.

Zimbabwe has diverse agro-ecological regions; therefore livelihood portfolios differ from one region to another. Narrowly focused agriculturally based land reforms will mean that some regions will benefit while others will not as large tracts of land will be cleared for unproductive cropping, thereby destroying

pastures for both livestock and wildlife. The Matabeleland region where Beitbridge lies is naturally a drier region, with average annual rainfall of less than 600mm per year (Institute of Environmental Studies, 1999). Agricultural practice is very risky, rainfall is highly unreliable and recurring droughts severely limit the production of important subsistence crops such as maize, millet and sorghum (ibid). Although livestock production forms part of the economic activity of the region, it is difficult to depend on this sector, given the conditions of recurring droughts and unfavourable market conditions (Scoones, *et al.*, 2009).

This research contends that economic development in agricultural marginal areas could be better achieved through integrated land use planning models and effective implementation. Community-based ecotourism is one such model that can foster rural economic development without affecting other livelihood strategies such as crop cultivation and cattle ranching (Honey, 1999). The attraction of community-based ecotourism is the prospect of linking nature conservation, local livelihoods and preserving biodiversity, whilst simultaneously reducing rural poverty (Reid, 1999).

1.3 PURPOSE STATEMENT

The purpose of this research is to describe how the ecotourism initiative in Masera community has affected the livelihoods of land reform beneficiaries.

1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The proposed study shall be guided by the following objectives:

- To explore the relevance of community-based ecotourism initiative in the era of land reforms in Beitbridge district.
- To determine the extent to which community-based ecotourism programme affected livelihoods of land reform beneficiaries in Masera community.
- To determine the motivation of the community to preserve wildlife and other natural resources at the destination.

- To recommend policy and programmatic options for improving rural livelihoods in marginal agricultural areas.

1.5 KEY RESEARCH AIMS AND QUESTIONS

The fundamental aim of the study is to explore the impact of the FTLRP on community-based ecotourism initiatives in Beitbridge district and provide integrated planning guidelines for successful land reforms in the region. This dissertation will focus on what has been promoted as ecotourism in Masera community in Beitbridge district and its implications for the livelihood of the local community. The study aims to draw lessons to inform sound policy options in the search for lasting solutions to the transformation of land use and rural development. Furthermore, the case study approach has the capacity not only to produce specific recommendations for the area under investigation but also to generate possible applicable results and strategies which will allow other communities elsewhere to improve their capacity to benefit from similar ecotourism initiatives.

The following questions shall guide the proposed study:

1. How was the ecotourism project adopted as a development strategy?
2. Did the ecotourism project in Masera community benefit the local community? If so, how?
3. What are the costs and benefits of adopting community-based ecotourism?
4. What infrastructure, facilities, programmes and attractions exist at the study site?
5. What impacts did the land reform programme have on wildlife and other natural resources in Beitbridge district?

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study is envisaged to be valuable to a variety of institutions, such as the central government, land policy-makers, land use and other planners, environmental awareness groups, civic organizations, researchers and tourism operators. It shall be significant in the development arena as it integrates the following development themes: poverty reduction, local governance, environmental management, sustainable development, community-based ecotourism, land reform and rural development. Findings and recommendations are expected to be utilized in reviewing and re-thinking land reform and rural development approaches in Zimbabwe' s agricultural marginal areas.

CHAPTER TWO

ASSESSMENT OF LAND REFORM AND DISTRIBUTION IN ZIMBABWE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides contextual information on land reform and its implementation in the Zimbabwean context. The chapter primarily focuses on the historical background of land reform programmes in Zimbabwe. Particular attention is focused on the implementation of the FTLRP, tracing its economic, social and environmental impacts.

2.2 LAND REFORM AND RURAL LIVELIHOODS

‘A livelihoods perspective on development has influenced policy advocacy in relation to land reform, as well as the framing of many donor policies on land. The emphasis is on reducing the vulnerability of the rural poor by securing their access to productive assets and resources’ (Cousins and Scoones, 2009:9).

Land is a form of natural capital. It supports various human activities for sustenance such as construction and agriculture. Its ownership and access has the potential of increasing and improving income distribution as well as reducing poverty. Most people in the world live in farming households and depend on the productive use of the land for their livelihoods (Deininger, 2006). Land therefore is a fundamental asset for the rural poor, since shelter, food production and other livelihoods depend on it.

Land ownership is seen as key to successful rural development because secure access to land provides the basis for investment in better livelihoods and improving living conditions of poor people in communal areas (Deininger, 2006). Human use of the land has impacts on soils, geology, hydrology and ecosystems. Some land areas have superior value to agricultural activity, while some areas are susceptible to geological hazards due to slope, instability, subsidence, or seismic activity. And certain land areas have important ecological features, including productive wildlife habitats and ecosystem services and valued aesthetic values (ibid). Proper planning of land use is therefore a prerequisite to avoid construction and damage costs and to protect

productive and valued natural ecosystems for the benefit of both present and future generations (Steiner *et al.*, 2000).

2.3 LAND REFORM IN CONTEXT

Land reform is often viewed in moral and political terms as a necessary means by which land may be redistributed, for example to the landless and rural poor to help alleviate poverty and foster economic development of poor communities (Hall, 2007). There are opportunities for land reform to benefit poor households, especially if they are given better quality land than they have at present and have the necessary inputs and support. However, to be successful, land reform programmes should not only consider social and economic viability, but environmental protection as well. Bowyer-Bower and Stoneman (2000), view land reform as a change of land ownership and occupation rights with the aim of changing the distribution of income, social status and political power. Land reform is undertaken to secure equitable and efficient land use and promote pro-poor economic growth (Cousins and Scoones, 2009).

The key element that impacts on the way land reform is approached, according to De Villiers (2003), is whether land reform is market driven, non-market driven or whether it is a combination of both approaches. Market-driven land reform entails a situation whereby the state or tenants acquire land on a willing-buyer willing-seller basis, with prices determined by prevailing market forces. On the other hand, non-market driven land reform is a situation whereby the state opts for a policy of expropriation and land is acquired with or without adequate compensation for redistribution (*ibid*).

Land reform programmes must not only be a simple product of land use planning systems, but must reflect social organization and traditions of the people concerned (Deininger, 2006). It is therefore imperative that successful land reform programmes must have a bearing on the livelihood of the target group, rather than merely as a mechanism of addressing land ownership imbalances.

This project tries to present a picture of what could have happened in Zimbabwe's land reforms had the land reform programmes been handled

according to the natural factor endowment of regions. A case study approach is employed in this study as a way of presenting a picture on how successful land reform programmes could be implemented in regions with low rainfall patterns. As this dissertation seeks to argue, well planned and executed land reforms can play an important role in poverty reduction and biodiversity conservation.

2.4 TYPES OF LAND REFORM

2.4.1 Tenure reform

This type of land reform is concerned with title to land and terms of land holding which reflects a transition from traditional way of land ownership to a formal and contractual land holding system. Insecurity of tenure inhibits investment in soil conservation and other developments, which will help to sustain the long term survival of agricultural systems (Adams *et al.*, 1999).

Implementation of this type of land reform, according to De Villiers (2003), involves property surveys, recording of titles and provisions to free the land holder from restrictions imposed by traditions. Property surveys are conducted whenever land is held by a tribe or whether the allocation of cultivatable land follows traditional norms and beliefs. The right of disposal of land normally belongs to a tribe and not an individual (Adams *et al.*, 1999).

Land reform in this instance seeks to increase security of tenure, reorganising the system of inheritance in favour of the offspring of the landholder and bringing the land to the market so that land transactions become possible. Benefits of land tenure reform include enhanced investment incentives, reduced potential for conflict and the use of land as collateral when accessing funding.

2.4.2 Restitution

The land restitution programme aims to redress past colonial and racially discriminatory legislation and policies. It involves restoration of land rights back to previous land owners (Cousins, 2009). This type of land reform also involves the redistribution of land rights from one sector to another, for example by privatising state land or taking land from large land holders and

gives it to the people who are landless. It aims to re-compensate people who were victims of a racially skewed land ownership process. According to De Villiers (2003), the land restitution process is undertaken in a manner that provides and supports reconciliation, economic development, and justice and fairness.

2.4.3 Redistribution

Land redistribution aims to address the racially skewed system of land ownership that was inherited during the colonial period. The primary aim of land redistribution exercise is to reduce overcrowding in communal areas and improve grazing space for communal farmers (Cousins, 2009). The aim is to improve their livelihood and access to land.

The land redistribution exercise has three sub-components which are:

- Giving access to land for agricultural purposes
- Providing land for resettlement process; and
- Making land available for non-agricultural land enterprises (Cousins, 2009).

2.5 LAND REFORM IN ZIMBABWE: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

When Zimbabwe attained independence in 1980 she inherited a racially skewed land ownership structure. Colonial agrarian policies limited the black population to what was called “native reserves”, where soils were poor and rainfall erratic (Kwashirai, 2010). The white minority occupied best agro-ecological zones where soils were good and rainfall adequate for intensive farming.

The birth of Zimbabwe in 1980 saw the birth of the need to embark on land reforms to meet the following objectives:

- To address land ownership imbalances created by the colonial government;
- To decongest communal areas and empower the landless black majority;
- To improve the agricultural base by supporting potential peasant farmers through individual household and cooperative farming;

- To improve living standards of the rural poor as well as distributing services and infrastructure in neglected rural areas; and
- To bring the under-utilised land into full production (Moyo *et al.*, 2000).

The initiation of the land reform programmes in Zimbabwe was based on the compelling national economic and social imperatives of poverty eradication and economic development. Land reform was viewed as an engine for economic growth and poverty alleviation since the country's economy was particularly agriculturally based (Moyo, 2004).

In practice the 1979 Lancaster House agreement jump-started Zimbabwe's land reform programme. In terms of the constitutional agreement, the following arrangements were agreed and were to remain in operation for 10 years:

- The right to property was guaranteed; only underutilized land was to be acquired under the willing-buyer willing-seller concept through prevailing market forces;
- Proper notification was to be given to inform land owners of the state's intention to acquire their land; payment was to be prompt and adequate and was to be remitted in any country of the owner's choice; and
- The constitutional guarantees had a life span of 10 years and could be changed only after the expiry of the 10 years, with consensus of all members of parliament (De Villiers, 2003).

The constitution obligated the government to acquire land on a willing-buyer willing-seller basis and compensation for land was to be paid in foreign currency. Expropriation of land was allowed only in the case of underutilized land with compensation at full market value (Dube and Midgley, 2008). Under these stringent conditions no meaningful land reform programme could take place.

During this initial land reform phase, 3 million hectares of land were purchased by the Zimbabwean government at market value and 52000 families were resettled (Bowyer-Bower and Stoneman, 2000). Kwashirai (2010) argues that the land which was offered to the government by white commercial farmers was expensive and marginal and occurred in pockets around the country,

making it difficult to implement a systematic and well managed land reform. Due to severe budgetary constraints and limited options for government to purchase more land, the acquisition programme did very little to relieve population pressure in communal areas.

The expiry of the Lancaster House Agreement in 1990 presented the Zimbabwean government with another opportunity to accelerate the land redistribution process. As a result, the government legislated the introduction of its new land reform policy in two phases. The first phase was by amending the constitution and the second phase was by legislation in terms of the constitution (Moyo, *et al.*, 2008). In terms of these arrangements, land was to be acquired for redistribution, with fair compensation being payable within a reasonable period of time. Moreover, a provision of the Lancaster House constitution, of willing-buyer willing-seller basis through market forces was abolished (De Villiers, 2003).

The Land Acquisition Act of 1992 acted as a vehicle for the acquisition of more land under this phase. The legal instrument was freeing the government from acquiring land through the willing-buyer willing-seller clause. In terms of the constitutional arrangement, the President was empowered to acquire land compulsorily and set out the procedure in accordance with which that acquisition took place. The Minister of Agriculture also had the absolute power to acquire land compulsorily and discretion to designate any land that was to be compulsorily acquired in the public interest (Dube and Midgley, 2008). During the period of such designation, an owner was not allowed to sell the land without the minister's permission (De Villiers, 2003). There was fierce resistance to this from the white land owners. For example, in 1997 the government designated 1471 farms for compulsory acquisition. A total of 1393 objections were received by the Zimbabwean government from white commercial farmers and only 510 were upheld (Kwashirai, 2010). During this land acquisition phase the government acquired 3.5 million hectares and resettled 71 000 households (*ibid*).

In his critique of the failure of this land reform phase, Makumbe, cited in Moyo, *et al.* (2008), argues that there was too much political meddling during this phase and most beneficiaries were the politically connected and not the

abject poor and landless. The taking and allocation of land was riddled with corruption and political clientelism (De Villiers, 2003).

Despite the milestones which were achieved through this process, the strategy failed to quench the landless hungry majority. The communal areas still remained congested, overstocked and overgrazed (Government of Zimbabwe, 1998). This scenario meant that pressure remained very high for the government to accelerate its land reform programme agenda.

2.6 THE FAST TRACK LAND REFORM PROGRAMME

In an endeavour to speed up the land reform process, the government implemented another resettlement phase in 2000. The constitution was further amended. The principal aim of these amendments was to oblige Britain (the former colonizer) to pay compensation for agricultural land compulsorily acquired and simultaneously to relieve Zimbabwe from paying compensation for such land (De Villiers, 2003).

The amendment also provided that, should Britain fail to provide a compensation fund, compensation by the government of Zimbabwe would be on the basis of improvements made on the land and not the value of the land itself (Moyo *et al.*, 2008; De Villiers, 2003). Britain had back tracked on its earlier compensation commitment in 1997 in which the then British Minister for International Development stated: 'I should make it clear that we do not accept that Britain has a special responsibility to meet the costs of land purchase in Zimbabwe. We are a government from diverse backgrounds without links to the former colonial interests. My own origins are Irish and as you know we were colonised not colonisers' (Thomas, 2003:708). This unprecedented stance by the British government marked the beginning of sour relationships between the two governments (*ibid*).

A Land Donor Conference was held in 1998 between the government of Zimbabwe, international donors and 48 countries, under the auspices of the United Nations, as a measure of coming up with a solution to Zimbabwe's land reform agenda (Kwashirai, 2010). Basic principles and the framework for international assistance for funding the land reform programme were discussed and agreed upon. The failure of the donor community and Britain to

fulfil the obligations of the conference to sponsor the land reform programme obligated the Zimbabwean government to compulsorily acquire white owned land without compensation (Kwashirai, 2010). This acquisition process was accompanied by extensive land occupations led by war veterans with the support of the landless black majority. Under this approach, priority was given to compulsory land acquisition, demarcation and settler emplacement.

The following were the characteristics of the FTLRP.

- Speeding up the identification for compulsory acquisition of not less than 5 million hectares of land for acquisition;
- Accelerating the planning and demarcation of acquired land and settler emplacement of this land;
- The provision of limited basic infrastructure (such as boreholes, access roads and dip tanks) and farmer support services;
- Simultaneous resettlement in all provinces to ensure that the reform programme was comprehensive and evenly implemented; and
- The provision of secondary infrastructure such as schools, clinics and rural service centres was to be done as soon as resources became available (Moyo, 2004).

The Fast Track Land Reform Programme in Zimbabwe created an expanded number of small, medium and large scale farms and effectively transferred land ownership from the white minority to new black indigenous farmers (Moyo, 2004). According to Moyo (2011), the official government of Zimbabwe data indicate that 225 000 new settlers benefited from the redistribution of about ten million hectares of land. The government of Zimbabwe split the 10 million hectares of land into A1 and A2 land resettlement models across all the provinces in the country (See table 2. 1).

The A1 model is based on allocation of individual arable plots and communal grazing. The A2 model is based on a small-scale commercial production unit with farm and business plans (Chaumba *et al.*, 2003). The data in table 2.1 suggest that 52 percent of the resettled land was allocated to A1 resettlement model while 48 percent was allocated to A2 resettlement model. Both land use models favoured ranching and dry land cropping through small scale farmers, as opposed to wildlife and forestry management as alternative land uses.

The national parks and forest reserves, the principal habitats for Zimbabwe's biodiversity in plant, tree and wildlife species were acquired and re-allocated under these models (A1 and A2) for subsistence cropping and ranching.

A study conducted by Scoones in Masvingo province pointed out a significant improvement in the livelihood of FTLRP beneficiaries (Scoones, 2010). His study, (conducted from 2000-2010), revealed an improvement in agricultural output and asset base of resettled farmers, compared to communal farmers. Much of the discussion on the research has focused on land reform programme's total impact on agricultural output on the other hand and incidences of poverty on the other hand. Scoones's analysis shows that the impact of land reforms on agricultural output is positive. He noted that resettled farmers are most able to produce higher output and income levels than those households in communal areas. This study will challenge this narrow focus of the overall impact of the FTLRP as it was only undertaken in a region with better agricultural potential.

Zimbabwe is divided into five agro-ecological zones, based on soil type and rainfall characteristics, from the more fertile lands of relatively lesser hectareage per farm in the highlands region, to the less fertile lands of extensive cropping and livestock/ wildlife management in the lowveld region (Moyo *et al.*, 2008). Ironically, Masvingo is located in a relatively wetter region with higher agricultural potential.

The homogeneous approach of the FTLRP in the implementation of land use models as presented above, across the country's agro-ecological zones seriously undermined the potential of land reform beneficiaries in drier regions from undertaking other economically viable land based initiatives. The opening up of protected areas in the Matabeleland region for cultivation has threatened the viability and survival of many species, including those that are protected such as the *Hoodia currorri lugardii* (Chaumba *et al.*, 2003; GMTFCA, 2010). Ultimately this undermined the attractiveness of these protected areas to support other land based activities that has the potential of improving rural livelihoods.

In terms of both the A1 and A2 resettlement models, it is very clear that forests and wildlife management were not explicitly identified as distinct land use

systems. Across the design characteristics of the FTLRP, there are no readily available samples of land use models for the management of natural resources and to suit different combinations of natural resource utilization objectives. All the farms acquired around the country were redistributed under the two models (A1 and A2 resettlement models). This is evidence that effective and optimal utilization of natural resources were not being achieved during the implementation of the programme. Some natural resources in the resettled areas are being over-exploited as evidenced by rampant wildlife poaching and tree cutting for cropping and commercial wood fuel.

The A2 type farmers in agricultural marginal areas could well be involved in conventional existing natural resources enterprises such as forestry, ecotourism, wildlife management and fishing. A1 farmers could have been modeled in the form of CAMPFIRE, where communities who live with wildlife partner with Rural District Councils and benefit through hunting and ecotourism. This potential is not being realized. Furthermore, the Government of Zimbabwe's policy on natural resources utilization does not specify how it could increase the number of indigenous participants in natural resource enterprises (Chavunduka and Bromley, 2012). The policy does not address the productivity of wildlife, forest and woodlands, or measures to protect biodiversity and endangered species in resettlement areas. The FTLRP was summarized by Kwashirai (2010) as too hasty, incoherent, haphazard, unsystematic, chaotic and lacking in rigour.

Table 2.1: Allocation patterns and take-up rates of redistributed land per province in Zimbabwe

Province	Model A1		Model A2		No. of households/ beneficiaries		%Take up rates	
	No. of farms	hectares	No. of farms	hectares	A1	A2	A1	A2
Midlands	306	513,672 (12%)	106	181,966 (8%)	16,169 (13%)	229 (3%)	90	48
Masvingo	211	686,612 (16%)	170	753,300 (34%)	22,670 (18%)	773 (11%)	95	79
Manicaland	246	195,644 (5%)	138	77,533 (4%)	11,019 (9%)	463 (6%)	92	42
Mat. South	226	683,140 (16%)	65	191,697 (9%)	8,923 (7%)	271 (4%)	100	100
Mat. North	258	543,793 (13%)	65	142,519 (6%)	9,901 (8%)	191 (3%)	120	94
Mash. East	382	302,511 (7%)	319	250,930 (11%)	16,702 (13%)	1,646 (23%)	93	45
Mash. West	670	792,513 (19%)	568	369,995 (17%)	27,052 (21%)	2,003 (28%)	97	50
Mash. Central	353	513,195 (12%)	241	230,874 (10%)	14,756 (12%)	1,684 (23%)	89	73
Total	2,652	4,231, 080	1,672	2,198,814	127,192	7,260	97	66

Source: Moyo, 2004

2.6.1 Land reform in Matabeleland South Province

The government of Zimbabwe has distributed more than one million hectares of land in Matabeleland South province, with identified beneficiaries gaining access to agricultural land, primarily for dry land cropping and livestock ranching. The province had a total of 886 large scale commercial farms, with a total area of 2170 925.42 hectares before the commencement of the FTLRP in 2000 (MLLR, 2006). Table 5.1 illustrates the land distribution in 7 districts of

the province. The major reason for undertaking land reform in the province was the existence of high disparities in the ownership of land between the indigenous black majority and the white minority, decongestion of communal areas and economic empowerment of the landless black majority (Government of Zimbabwe, 1998).

Table 2.2: Land reform in Matabeleland South province

DISTRICT	Commercial farms before FTLRP		Acquired farms for resettlement		Number of beneficiaries settled	
	No of farms	Total hectarage	No of farms	Total hectarage	A1	A2
Beitbridge	36	536 417.49	24	486 040.66	956	35
Bulilima	107	123.330.12	39	79 713.66	817	70
Gwanda	145	510 411.90	97	474 371.68	1721	359
Insiza	226	524 778.59	124	467 229.82	1841	456
Mangwe	120	199 567.09	67	143 166.00	715	81
Matobo	159	195 494.87	44	88 065.31	807	34
Umzingwane	93	110 492.45	59	92 097.22	1474	131
TOTAL	886	2 170 945.42	454	1 830 684.3	8331	1166

Source: MLLRR, 2006. (A1 is a villagised model with common grazing while A2 is a small scale commercial farming model)

From the table above it can be noted that Beitbridge district had the least number of farms before the FTLRP, compared to other districts in the province. But in terms of the total size of farms, it has the biggest hectarage. This is because most of the farms in the district were under wildlife management (as wildlife management needs more space than any other agricultural land use, such as cropping and ranching).

2.6.2 Impacts of the Fast Track Land Reform Programme

The implementation of the FTLRP in Zimbabwe brought a variation of impacts across all the provinces and districts in the country on rural livelihoods, agricultural production, markets and the economy, farm workers and employment, environment, institutions and governance arrangements. Generally, these impacts can be grouped into economic, social and environmental.

2.6.2.1 Economic impacts

A major production shift occurred in the production of agricultural commodities particularly staple foods (maize, sorghum and millet) and cash crops (tobacco, soya beans and cotton) (Mutangi, 2010). This led to the shortage of cooking oil on the market and broader based food insecurity in the country. Moyo (2004) argues that the small holder farmers produced very little despite the marginal increase of the area under cultivation. The decrease in the volume of produce by the smallholder farmers was due to lack of inputs and draught power. Scoones (2000) asserts that poor agricultural production in the former commercial farms was exacerbated by largely resource poor farmers from the communal areas.

The national population of beef cattle also declined as a result of beef cattle slaughtering, mostly by large scale commercial farmers who had their land taken and farm sizes reduced (Mutangi, 2010). These changes affected the domestic and export beef supply, leading to shortages of direct foreign exchange from beef production (ibid).

2.6.2.2 Social impacts

Prior to the FTLRP, farm workers on the large scale commercial farms formed a significant portion of the country's labour force, constituting 26% of formal employment, as agriculture was the mainstay of the Zimbabwean economy (Moyo *et al.*, 2008; Chavunduka and Bromley, 2012). Most of these farm workers were resident at their places of employment (farms) and their security of tenure was guaranteed by the continued extension of their contract of employment with their employers (white land owners). Although salaries of most farm workers were poor, large scale commercial farmers allocated them

garden plots of between 0, 5 to 1 hectare, in order to augment access to food (Mutangi, 2010).

The implementation of the FTLRP has had numerous effects on the residential status of former farm workers who had resided on their employer's property for the greater part of their life. Most former farm workers have been forced to move off the farms to pave the way for the new settlers under both the A1 and A2 resettlement models (Moyo, 2004; Mutangi, 2010). The removal of the former farm workers from the acquired farms resulted in most of them without access to land and employment, impacting greatly on their livelihoods. To make matters worse, most farm workers who had lost their jobs were not absorbed into the land reform programme, and only less than 5 percent of them were considered for resettlement (Kwashirai, 2010; Mutangi, 2010).

2.6.3.3 Environmental impacts

According to Kwashirai (2010), Zimbabwe is home to 40 amphibian, 661 bird, 222 mammal and 180 reptile species. The total wildlife diversity is thus 1103 species; including 10 endemic species and 24 threatened ones (ibid). The tourism industry in Zimbabwe has been largely based on the national parks and wildlife estates with a combined total of over 5 million hectares constituting 13.1% of the total size of the country (Frost and Bond, 2008). With their flourishing variety of game, national parks and game reserves have been important to the Zimbabwean economy in generating tourist revenue and stimulating wildlife protection programmes (Frost and Bond, 2008). Law enforcement was vigorous in deterring rampant wildlife poaching and unnecessary cutting down of trees (Wolmer et al., 2003).

Prior to the FTLRP, Zimbabwe used to have a solid reputation as possessing one of the finest national parks infrastructures on the African continent (Kwashirai, 2010). In the late 1990s the country had 276 ranches covering 37 000 km² that engaged in various economic activities that include sport hunting, photographic safaris, game viewing, game cropping for venison and live animal sales (Frost and Bond, 2008). Most of these conservancies were located in the drier areas particularly in Matabeleland South and North provinces, where wildlife production was financially and economically more rewarding than livestock production and crop farming (Jansen *et al.*, 1992). The

FTLRP severely undermined these projects that were in place to protect endangered species. The conversion of parks and ranches into mixed subsistence farming under both A1 and A2 farming models seriously affected the habitat for wildlife and their reproduction patterns. Poaching became the order of the day as the new farmers had little knowledge about the economic value of wildlife. The number of tourists to wildlife zones dramatically plummeted owing to the disappearance of wildlife in most areas that had large wildlife populations. The dwindling number of tourists visiting the country was exacerbated by negative publicity of the country as a result of its human rights record following the implementation of the FTLRP (Wolmer et al., 2003).

The new farmers lacked training and experience in modern methods of conservation farming environments. Most of the new farmers became pre-occupied with collection of dead wood and cutting down of mature trees for firewood for sale in the lucrative urban markets where people experience widespread load shedding (Moyo, 2004).

Tobacco farmers, particularly in Mashonaland provinces, have played a major role in deforestation in the country by cutting down trees to use as wood fuel for curing tobacco (Moyo, 2004). Mutangi (2010) noted that small and large scale tobacco farmers were compelled to use wood fuel, due to shortages of coal and the collapse of the railway system in the country. The combined impact of unregulated multiple domestic energy requirements; firewood traders, wood carvers and tobacco farmers seriously threatened and endangered the survival of the woodlots in the former commercial farming areas.

2.7 LAND REFORM AND SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS

The concept of livelihoods framework is an attempt to go beyond the conventional definitions and approaches to poverty reduction. The framework acknowledges that in rural economies people gain their livelihood through multiple activities, rather than through one formal job. According to Chambers and Conway (1992), the sustainable livelihoods framework is a people-centred paradigm which emphasizes people's inherent capacities and knowledge and is focused on community level actions. A livelihood involves the capabilities, assets and activities required for a means of living (Knutsson, 2006). A

livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks and thus maintain and enhance its capacities and assets both now and in the future, without undermining the natural resource base (Chambers and Conway, 1998). The framework emphasises on livelihood security and focuses on people with the resources that they currently control and the knowledge and skills that they already have (Chambers, 1988). The framework involves the development of short-term coping mechanisms and longer term adoptive capacities that enhance the abilities of individuals and communities to deal with changing circumstances (Chambers and Conway, 1992). The two main ideas of the framework approach are adaptive strategies and participation and empowerment. An adaptive strategy defines the changes and adjustments people make in their livelihood systems in order to cope under difficult circumstances (Scoones, 1998). Understanding the current livelihoods activities assets and entitlements of a community or individual naturally provides the best guide to how their livelihoods can be made more productive and more sustainable. The sustainable framework analysis draws to the attention that livelihoods not only improve as a result of policy interventions, but that they improve in a sustainable manner (Hall, 2007). The framework is useful when considering options for change and their likely impact on people's asset value. The tool is designed to improve our understanding of rural livelihoods and development issues. The sustainable livelihoods framework can help to promote sustainability in its broadest sense because it aims to understand livelihood systems and to promote the essential characteristics of sustainability.

The framework involves linking holistically, the variety ways by which rural poor manage to make a living within the context in which they operate (Scoones, 2000). The framework considers livelihood context (vulnerability context), assets, policies and institutions, strategies and eventual outcomes as its core elements (Carney, 1998; Scoones, 2000; Knutsson, 2006). (See figure 2.1). It should be noted that the suitability of the sustainable livelihood framework lies in its ability to go beyond conventional measures. The concept inherently reveals the multi-sector character of real life, so that development work is better able to address problems as they exist at village level. By drawing attention to the multiplicity of assets that people make use of when

constructing their livelihoods, the livelihoods framework produces a more holistic view on what combination of resources are important to the poor.

In relation to land reform, the sustainable livelihoods framework approach suggests that successful land reform programmes must have sustainable livelihoods outcomes which are indicated by the following:

- Increased regularity of income (marketable agricultural produce and improved employment opportunities);
- Increased wellbeing (improved access to clean water, improved housing and ownership of household assets);
- Reduced vulnerability (improved access to social infrastructure such as schools and clinics);
- Improved food security (improved access to food with balanced nutritional value); and
- Improved sustainable use of the natural resources (Hall, 2007).

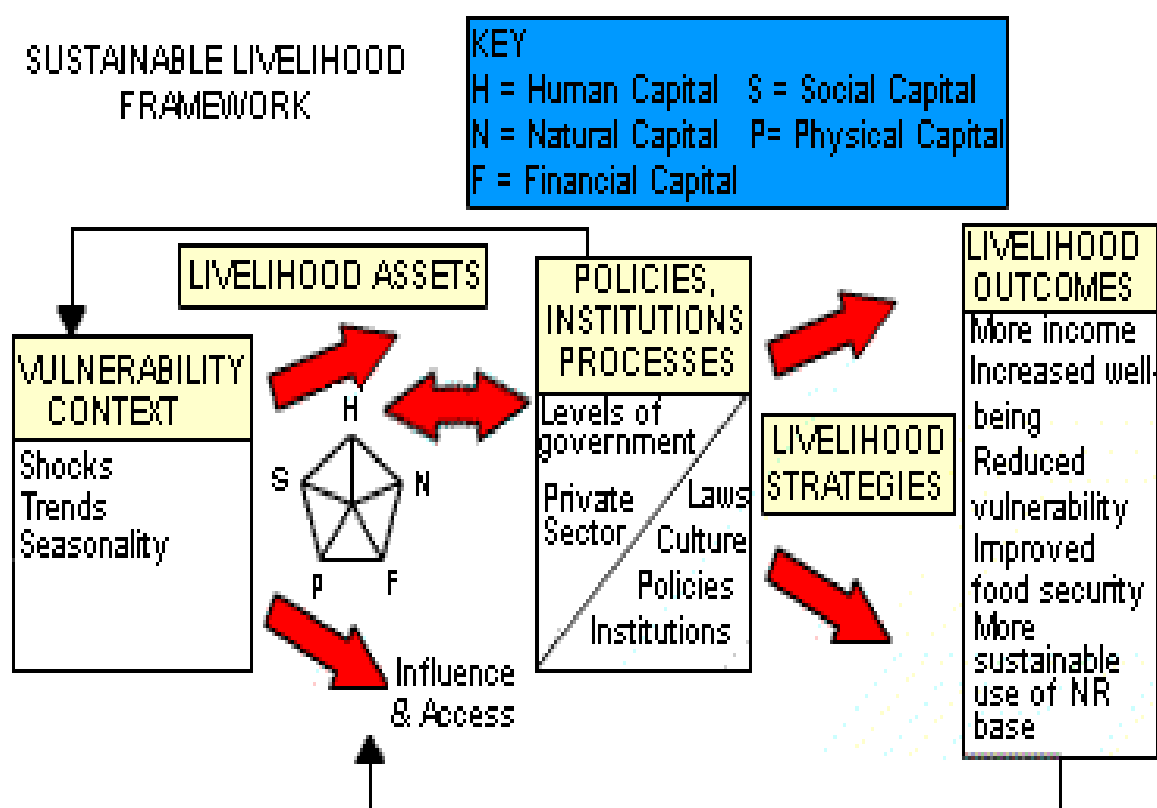


Figure 2.1: The Sustainable Livelihoods Framework

Adopted from Carney, 1998:5

Despite its relevance as a contemporary development tool, the sustainable livelihood framework fails to deal with the issue of how to identify the poor people that the concept tries to assist. Moreover, sustainability can be a difficult concept to agree on in practice, even among experts. There might be significant differences of judgement between local practitioners and external experts over what practices or which livelihood combinations are sustainable. According to Krantz (2001), the significant constraint of the sustainable framework approach is that the framework tends to take the household as the basic unit of analysis. Thus, most of the attention is on how different categories of households relate to, inter alia different types of assets, to the vulnerability context, to markets, organisation and policies. In reality there is a risk that intra household inequality, control, interests, opportunities and decision making power which often has gender as a basis, are given insufficient attention. Thus, women might figure among the poor only when they are heads of households, and not when they are vulnerable, subordinate members of prosperous households.

In rural economies, land is seen as a basic livelihood asset, the principal form of natural capital from which people produce food and earn a living (Adams, 2004). Land provides the commercial backdrop in which poor people pursue their livelihood strategies.

Land reform intends to enhance the land rights and improve access to land of disadvantaged people to improve their livelihood (Hall, 2007). The redistribution of land to landless and land-poor rural families can be a very effective way to improve rural livelihoods and maintain environmental quality (ibid). When the poor hold secure land rights, they tend to be better environmental stewards, protecting soil fertility, water quality and biodiversity (Boyce et al., 2005).

The implementation of land reform programmes in Zimbabwe since 1980 was seen as a vehicle to address problems of inequality and poverty alleviation through secure land ownership. Successful land reform programmes has the capacity to trigger broad-based economic development by including the poor in economic development (Hall, 2007). The central problem in assessing the impact of land reform on livelihoods is the paucity of post settlement evaluation studies. Even where there have been studies, impact evaluation is

hampered by the absence of baseline data on the socio-economic status of beneficiaries entering the programme (Hall, 2007).

Evaluation of land reform programmes internationally, shows that a positive impact on livelihoods can be guaranteed (Hall, 2007). But in order to improve the livelihood of land reform beneficiaries there must be a comprehensive interaction between the beneficiaries themselves and those who support services (Moyo, 2004). The provision of adequate social services and infrastructure has proven to be a prerequisite in the implementation of successful land reform programmes (Kwashirai, 2010).

According to Moyo (2004), the implementation of the FTLRP in Zimbabwe has seen many land reform beneficiaries in agricultural marginal areas diversifying their livelihoods, shifting to non-agricultural income sources, and questioning the viability of agricultural based land reforms in drier regions as poverty alleviation strategies. The Masera community land reform beneficiaries where this study was undertaken is an example of a community which preferred to conserve its natural resources and benefit from their use through hunting and ecotourism ventures. The beneficiaries' engagement into ecotourism was the assumption that cropping and ranching were highly unsuitable to the offered piece of land. Understanding human needs and requirements is however critical to designing projects and programmes that will secure livelihoods based on stable productive and profitable use of natural resources.

2.8 TOOLS FOR PROPER LAND USE PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

Efficient and thoughtful use of the land is an important step in managing and developing an area. Land use planning is a process to describe where land use activities may take place (Steiner and Cohen, 2000). It provides direction for the manner in which land based activities should take place at the same time protecting valued natural resources (Steiner *et al.*, 2000). Land use planning contributes to a more prosperous, healthy and sustainable utilization of natural resources for the benefit of the present and future generations (Randolph, 2004; Hopkins, 1997). Land use planning provides clarity and certainty about how and where economic developments such as mining, forestry and wildlife management may take place. Plans will be developed respecting traditional and other existing land uses including tourism and mineral exploration activities (Steiner and Cohen, 2000). The plans will identify areas to be protected as well as consider the capability of the lands and

resources to support tourism, agriculture and or mining (Steiner and Cohen, 2000). This is important for the well-being of people and sustainability of natural resources. Unsuitable areas are those that have severe limitations that inhibit or prohibit a particular land use (Steiner *et al.*, 2000). There are three main landuse planning tools and these are environmental land inventory, land suitability analysis and human carrying capacity (Randolph, 2004)

2.8.1 Environmental land inventory

Examination of appropriate development objectives for an area and possible development implications is an important first step in planning land use developments that sustain human welfare without compromising ecological issues (Randolph, 2004). Environmental land inventory involves gathering and usually mapping a number of natural and often socio-economic factors that have a bearing on land use (*ibid*). The inventory information can be displayed on hand drawn maps or be entered into a computer data set of a GIS for analysis (Randolph, 2004).

2.8.2 Land suitability analysis

Land suitability analysis is the process of determining the fitness of a given piece of land for a defined use (Hopkins, 1997; Steiner, 1983). Suitability analysis techniques integrate three factors of an area: location, development process and biophysical/environmental processes (Miller *et al.*, 1998). These techniques enables land use planners to make effective decisions and establish policies regarding utilization of particular pieces of land. Land characteristics such as soil type, slope, floodplains, and scenic nature and wildlife habitats *inter alia* are grouped as attributes (Randolph, 2004). Once identified, the attributes are weighed in determining the suitability of a given area to support a defined land use (Steiner *et al.*, 2000). Weights are based on sound factual information for what the land is or is not intrinsically capable of supporting. The method combines inventory information to produce composite maps that display the relative suitability for a specific use (House, 1973). Suitability analysis can be used for compliance with land use plans. A goal for suitability analysis is to explicitly identify constraints and opportunities for future land conservation and development (Steiner *et al.*, 2000).

2.8.3 Human carrying capacity

Human carrying capacity refers to the maximum level of exploitation of a renewable resource, imposing limits on a specific type of land use without causing irreversible land degradation within a given area (Steiner *et al.*, 2000). The main purpose is to maintain the ecosystem productivity and resilience. An analysis is made on the impact of human population that an area can support based on natural and socio-economic factors (Steiner *et al.*, 2000). According to Randolph (2004), environmental impact assessment can be used to focus the impact of human activity on identified land for development. The human carrying capacity model is based on a sustainable supply of natural resources and on resilience threshold of the ecosystem (ibid). Comparing human carrying capacity levels with current exploitation rates of natural resources provides a useful framework to consider ecological aspects of sustainable land use (Steiner *et al.*, 2000). Factors in an area that can be limiting in supporting a particular land use include food, climate, space, habitat and protection, extent of the ecological niche and water. Human carrying capacity allows the comparison of distinct regions with respect to their potential to sustain human populations on the basis of the sustainable supply of natural resources limiting land uses (Randolph, 2004). The framework enhances our understanding of ecological limitations to land use and our capacity to identify interventions that meet ecological sustainability criteria (Steiner *et al.*, 2000). Maintaining human population below carrying capacity is an important step in achieving balance between development and biodiversity protection. Important parameters to assess human carrying capacity include agricultural production levels, nutrient and water use efficiencies, technologies applied and human energy and protein requirements (Steiner *et al.*, 2000).

CHAPTER THREE

ECOTOURISM AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT DEBATE

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter outlines debates and discussions in relation to tourism and sustainable development. This section focuses on defining the concept of ecotourism, tracing its origins as well as its perceived impact on the environment and on local communities and their cultures.

The chapter also traces the implementation of the ecotourism programme in Zimbabwe (CAMPFIRE), outlining its contribution to nature conservation and local community development. The overall aim of the chapter is to present an argument on how nature conservation programmes impact on sustainability and economic development. The argument is presented on how land reform programmes in Zimbabwe could have included or considered nature conservation as a land use option in agriculturally marginal areas.

3.2 EVOLUTION OF THE ECOTOURISM CONCEPT

Tourism is an industry that primarily focuses on attracting visitors to a product or series of products (The Mountain Institute, 2000). These products are based around economic, socio-cultural and physical characteristics, such as scenery of natural features, ecological diversity and cultural features and events *inter alia* (ibid). Through efficient development of tourism a country can earn multiple benefits for the wellbeing of its citizens. The most striking benefit is its significance as an earner of foreign exchange, employment creation and generation of government revenues from taxes (Ouma, 1970).

The rapid growth of mass tourism globally has been facilitated by the ease and availability of modern transport and communications (Reid, 1999). This led to an increase in number of people travelling to remote and pristine areas, consequently damaging some of the world's most popular destinations (Mowforth and Munt, 1998). Parks and other forms of protected areas has been some of the world's most common tourism destination areas (Eagles, 1997; Ceballo-Lascurian, 1996). Lack of control on the movement of people and carrying capacities of destinations have led to some scholars criticizing

mass tourism as having brought overdevelopment and uneven development, environmental pollution, and invasion by cultural insensitive and economically disruptive foreigners in developing countries (Reid, 1999). Dahles and Bas (1999) criticized mass tourism as not being effective in increasing foreign exchange earnings and job opportunities in developing countries. This is because of significant economic leakage due to the purchase of foreign supplies and labour from developed countries and channeling of profits out of developing countries (ibid).

According to Reid (1999), most tourism enterprises in developing countries are owned and managed by western transnational companies. These companies earn handsome profits by charging various management fees and in return make very little direct development to the host countries. The large outflows of benefits to developed countries put into question the viability of mass tourism as a development strategy in developing countries.

Reid (ibid: 59), exhorts that “local communities in mass tourism development are often in the frontline in terms of service provision but last line when it comes to benefits of development”. Fennell (2008:4) vilified mass tourism as a “beast, a monstrosity which has few redeeming qualities for the destination region, their people and their natural base”. The problem with mass tourism development was the belief that natural resources were in danger of being depleted or their quality being compromised to an extent that threatens human wellbeing (Drexhage and Murphy, 2010). The continuous criticism of mass tourism as a development strategy has led to an increasing level of frustration and disenchantment among different groups promoting mass tourism as a development strategy (Membratu, 1998).

Responding to the growing criticism of mass tourism, scholars and practitioners argued for a more proactive, equitable and participatory approach to tourism development (Drexhage and Murphy, 2010; Honey, 1999; Reid, 1999). In his contribution to the tourism debate, Murphy (1985) advocated for a community based approach to tourism development, in which there would be a shift from an expert driven technocratic process to a more small-scale, humanistic approach. His ideas were a formalization of the growing awareness that the tourism industry was very much dependent on

host communities, and that there was a need for greater integration in planning at national, regional and local levels (Drexhage and Murphy, 2010).

3.3 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT DEBATE

The growing criticism of mass tourism as an economic development tool induced the World Bank, in association with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to sponsor a conference in 1976 on the environmental, cultural and social impacts of tourism (Reid, 1999). There was growing understanding among guests that the natural resource base on which tourism depends must be protected if these sites are to last for a long time (ibid).

Within the theory of tourism development, Weaver and Lawton (2002) pointed out that natural resource base consists of topography, water, wildlife, protected natural areas, climate and vegetation resources. The natural environment is seen as a key economic resource and critical to the attractiveness of a tourist destination and provides the commercial backdrop to service areas and recreational sites (Frost and Bond, 2008). Development had come at a cost to the planet earth with such problems as global warming (climate change), ozone depletion, loss of biodiversity, air and water pollution all these problems had wide ranging impacts on the human wellbeing.

Since the environment plays a crucial role in tourism development, it became necessary to integrate tourism development with site carrying capacities and conservation efforts (Alexander and McGregor, 2000). It is within this reasoning that the concept of sustainability and the need for environmental protection was embraced and popularized by the World Commission on Environment and Development in 1987, in a report '*Our Common Future*', also known as the Brundtland Commission (Epler Wood, 1996; Drexhage and Murphy, 2010). Following the publication of '*Our Common Future*', several definitions and interpretations of sustainable development emerged, but its broad aim is to describe a process of economic growth without environmental side effects (Banerjee, 2003).

Chaired by Gro Harlem Brundtland (the then Norwegian Prime Minister), the Brundtland commission issued a call to recalibrate institutional mechanisms at

global, national and local level to promote economic development that will guarantee the security, well being and the survival of the planet earth (WCED, 1987).

The Brundtland definition of sustainable development is well documented. It defined sustainable development as the development that 'meets the goals of the present generation without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs' (WCED, 1987:43). Honey (1999) endorses this definition and further emphasises that under sustainable development economic, environmental and social objectives are simultaneously addressed and balanced and the choices for today must have regard to the consequences of the future. This implies the management of economic systems in a way that achieve the rate of growth in per capita real incomes, with minimal levels of depletion to the environmental (Turner, 1988). The main concepts of sustainable development as interpreted by the Brundtland Commission are to:

- Revive growth
- Change quality of growth
- Meet basic needs
- Stabilise population
- Conserve and enhance resources
- Reorient technology and manage risks
- Put environment into economics.

The WCED definition of sustainable development has been highly instrumental in developing a global sustainable thinking and practice with respect to our planet's future (Mebratu, 1998). According to the Brundtland Commission, sustainable development must rest on political will of governments as critical economic, environmental and social decisions are made. There are three key broad aims of sustainable development and these are:

- Economic development—maximising income while maintaining a constant or increasing stock of capital
- Ecological integrity- maintaining resilience and robustness of biological and physical systems

- Social equity- maintaining stability of social and cultural systems (Rogers, 2007).

The Brundtland commission provided a landmark global decision to convene a series of international conferences to chart the way forward on sustainable development. The most notable were the 1992 Rio Earth Summit/ United Nations Conference on Environment in Brazil, 1997 Earth Summit in New York and the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in South Africa (Drexhage and Murphy, 2010). The major theme of the conferences was the reform of national government policies and institutions to reflect sustainable development goals and directing much greater levels of funding towards environmental assessment and monitoring (Rogers et al., 2007; Drexhage and Murphy, 2010). The conferences embraced sustainable development as a concept that enjoys widespread endorsement by international institutions, governments, businesses and civil society (Drexhage and Murphy, 2010).

The process has played a major role in opening up new spaces for advancing widely shared social and ecological goals. Sustainable development remains the most tenable principle of collective action for resolving the twin crisis for environment and development (Berke, 2002). The link between land reform and sustainable development is important. Therefore conforming to sustainable land use practices can help to maintain nature's wealth for the betterment of human welfare.

The discussion above has revealed that sustainable development is a key development paradigm that has been internationally accepted as a guiding principle in the utilisation of natural resources. However, in reality the concept has remained elusive and implementation has proved difficult. Most of the UN summits as presented above has only achieved in spreading paper documents, policies and goals while avoiding concrete discussion about how to shift to a more sustainable, low carbon world economy (Drexhage and Murphy, 2010).

According to Banerjee (2003), unsustainable development trends are continuing and sustainable development has not yet found the political goodwill to make real progress. As a result, natural resources are in imminent danger of being exhausted and their quality being compromised to an extent

that threatens current biodiversity and natural resources. Addressing this challenge needs a commitment of financial resources and unanimous dialogue and cooperation between developed and developing countries.

3.4 ALTERNATIVE FORMS OF TOURISM

The idea to integrate economic, environmental and socio-cultural issues in development circles was supported by international financial institutions (World Bank, IMF etc), global environmental organizations, global tourism businesses, national governments, local communities as well as academics (Drexhage and Murphy, 2010). The increasing interest in environmental protection and the growing need for alternative forms of tourism led to the emergence of specialised tourism activities such as ecotourism, adventure tourism, nature-based tourism and cultural tourism (Reid, 1999). These forms of tourism advocate for an approach different to conventional mass tourism and more emphasis is placed on the environment and considerations of the local communities (ibid). These approaches seek to sustain tourism as an agent for socio-cultural, environmental and economic development. The variation of these alternative forms of mass tourism is in accordance with the market in which they are being targeted (The Mountain Institute, 2000).

3.4.1 *Nature tourism*

Nature tourism involves experiencing the natural environment typically through outdoor activities that are sustainable in terms of their impact on the environment (Honey, 1999). Nature based tourism is a broad concept that includes subcategories like ecotourism and adventure tourism (ibid). It also includes captive tourism, referring to zoological parks and botanical gardens and consumptive tourism meaning hunting and fishing (The Mountain Institute, 2000).

3.4.2 *Cultural tourism*

Cultural tourism involves travelling to experience historic and cultural attractions to learn about a community's heritage in an enjoyable and educational way (Hamley, 2008). Tourists are attracted by people's traditional lifestyles, cultural practices and economic activities, among other aspects of community living. Visitors may participate in dance and music, festivals, buying local archaeological artefacts and shooting photos (May, 2009).

3.4.3 Wildlife tourism

Wildlife tourism involves travelling to observe wildlife in their natural environments and preferably their native environment (GMTFCA, 2010). This type of tourism can normally involve wild and non-domesticated animals and can encompass free ranging and captive circumstances (The Mountain Institute, 2000). Wildlife tourism encompasses the chance to encounter fauna in terrestrial, aquatic/marine and aerial settings in order to gain an understanding of a variety of species. This activity is basically undertaken in a manner that does not disturb the natural setting of the wildlife habitat. The activities include appreciating interaction with the wildlife, photographing and observing wildlife (Honey, 1999). Wildlife tourism also includes consumptive activities such as trophy hunting and fishing (ibid).

3.5 ECOTOURISM/COMMUNITY BASED ECOTOURISM

Ecotourism developed within the womb of the environmental movement, which took shape in the early 1970s and gained ascendancy in the 1980s, following the falling standards of the management of national parks and the surrounding communities (Reid, 1999). The concept was coined by Ceballos-Lascurian in 1983, although some experts say it was Kenton Millers in 1978 (Honey, 1999).

According to Reid (1999), ecotourism has been hailed internationally as a vehicle to adequately respond to the need for sustainable development and at the same time capacitating local communities as decision makers and economic benefiteres. The ecotourism concept places the natural and cultural resources at the forefront of planning and development, rather than as an afterthought (Fennel, 2008). By stressing local community involvement, ecotourism, hopes to increase multiplier and spread effects within the host communities and avoid problems of excessive foreign currency leakage (Dahles and Bas, 1999).

Studies have revealed that, ecotourism development and active community involvement in the ownership and operation of tourism facilities helps to solve problems of declining economies, resource depletion and environmental degradation (Reid, 1999; Kamphorst, Koopmanschap and Oudwater, 1997).

According to Puff (2008) in ecotourism development host communities are packed and commodified for consumption by eco-tourists where these communities offer the pristine and the primitive environment in terms of cultural and ecological diversity.

Honey (1999) exhorts that, ecotourism is often depicted as the most rapidly expanding form of tourism, however when its growth is measured it is often lumped up with nature, wildlife and adventure tourism that encompass its diversity. Community-based ecotourism is therefore that part of tourism in which local residents (the rural poor and the economically marginalized) invite tourists to visit their communities to experience their culture and environment, with the provision of overnight accommodation (May, 2009). The local residents will in return earn income as land managers, entrepreneurs, service and produce providers as well as employees. May (ibid) also asserts that community-based ecotourism includes protection of the natural environment and cultural heritage, contributing to conservation and community development in developing countries. Ceballo-Lascurian (1996:34) defined community-based ecotourism as “the travelling to relatively undisturbed or uncontaminated natural areas with the specific objective of studying, admiring and enjoying its scenery, wild plants and animals as well as any existing cultural manifestations found in these areas”.

Honey (1999) expanded the definition to include not only financial benefits for conserving environment by the local people, but also support for human rights and democratic movements. Many definitions of ecotourism have emerged since the term was ‘coined in 1983’. In 1991 the Ecotourism Society defined ecotourism as “a responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and sustains the well being of the local people” (Cited in Reid, 1999:42).

Expanding on this definition, the International Ecotourism Society (cited in Epler Wood, 1996) views ecotourism as that which:

- avoids negative impacts that can damage or destroy the integrated or character of the natural or cultural environment being visited;
- educates the traveller about the importance of conservation;

- directs revenues to the conservation of natural areas and the management of protected areas;
- brings economic benefits to local communities and directs revenues to local people living adjacent to protected areas;
- emphasizes the need for planning sustainable growth of the tourism industry and seeks to ensure that tourism development does not exceed the social and environmental carrying capacity; and
- retains a high percentage of revenues in the host country by stressing the use of locally owned facilities and services in harmony with the environment, minimizing the use of fossil fuels, conserving local plant and wildlife.

Tisdell (2003) states that ideally, ecotourism creates local incentives for conserving natural areas by generating income through operations that are sustainable, have low environmental impacts and locally owned. The local communities involved are often remote from the main centres of economic activities in most nations and have limited economic opportunities (ibid).

In terms of these definitions it is safe to conclude that community-based ecotourism is different from mass tourism in the sense that it seeks to conserve the environment and provide economic benefits to the local population. On the other hand, mass tourism does not place emphasis on the environment but is more focused on the traveller and the ability of that environment to fulfil the expectations of that traveller (Reid, 1999).

3.5.1 Potential Benefits of ecotourism development

Properly implemented ecotourism programmes can integrate conservation and rural economic development. The programmes can help to protect valuable natural resources at the same time stimulating economic development through tourism expenditures and providing markets for local goods as well as creating jobs for host communities (May, 2009). France (2002) asserts that ecotourism has the potential to stimulate development both at the local and national level through job creation, taxes on imported goods, park entrance fees, use of local hotels, concessions and domestic content on local purchases. Ecotourism development can also lead to foreign currency inflows from foreign visitor expenditure in host communities.

Eagles *et al.* (2001) provide a number of case studies in which ecotourism has helped to generate conservation and community benefits. Examples in Africa include Ngorongoro in Tanzania, Makulele in South Africa and Masaai in Kenya. Community participation could guarantee local support for conservation and sustainable natural resource use (Reid, 1999). Table 2.3 below, presents a summary of ecotourism benefits.

Table 3.1: Economic Benefits of ecotourism

SECTOR	BENEFITS
Financial	Foreign exchange earnings; GNP; state taxes; income for businesses and for individuals
Employment	Job creation for locals (tour guides, clears, porters, caretakers, game scouts)
Developmental	Broadens economic base; multiplier effects; entrepreneurial activity; infrastructural provision; improvement of social services; promotes regional development in remote areas.
Environmental	Protects wildlife and endangered species protects forestry and woodlands.

Source: Reid, 1999

3.5.2 Potential problems of ecotourism development

Although there are success stories of ecotourism development to date, more stories of ecotourism failing to fulfil its intended purpose have been reviewed in literature. Such problems of ecotourism development can be classified in terms of environmental, social and economic problems.

3.5.2.1 Environmental problems

Ecotourists, like conventional tourists, need restaurants, bars, shops and accommodation. Because ecotourism often takes place in relatively small and

remote areas, the effect of building a small restaurant or hotel can have the same effects of building a large hotel in a town or city on the environment. The impact of ecotourism varies according to the number and nature of tourists (Reid 1999). The most striking problems associated with tourists are littering, noise pollution and wilful destruction of property at the destination (Duffy, 2009).

Ecotourism as a business has to compete with other businesses; as such it tends to focus on profit rather than environmental conservation (Duffy, 2009). Honey (1999) further argues that there is always a tension between generating significant amounts of foreign exchange and dealing with environmental and social costs. Ecotourism encourages a limited number of tourists who do not exceed the capacity of certain parks, beaches and reserves, yet developing countries need to earn large amounts of foreign exchange. Many scholars argue that this whole process of setting a fixed number of visitors is flawed (Reid, 1999; Honey, 1999).

Most developing countries, according to Honey (1999), have a tendency of encouraging more and more tourists, despite exceeding the carrying capacity of desired destinations. Reid (1999) argues that the increasing number of tourists is not an answer to sustainability of a destination as the effects of a handful of unruly tourists can do far more damage to the environment than would large numbers of environmentally sensitive and carefully managed ecotourists. In practice, the higher the number of tourists the higher the foreign exchange and other benefits obtained and in the long run this implies greater pressure on ecosystems (Duffy, 2009).

3.5.2.2 Economic problems

Ecotourism is designed to promote local enterprises, but with globalisation and free trade, weak national capital often cannot compete with strong foreign companies. The lowering of trade barriers and opening up to unfettered foreign investment undermines the sustainability of small locally owned small ecotourism ventures in developing countries (Reid, 1999).

Large amounts of foreign exchange go to payments of imported goods, management fees, expatriate salaries and import content on local purchases. However, it is unusual for tourism benefits to be channelled back to local

communities or even to the management of the protected area that generated the income (Whelan, 1991).

The World Bank estimates that 55% of ecotourism capital leaks out of developing countries via foreign-owned tour operators, airlines, and hotels and by locally owned operators paying for imported food, drinks, and other supplies to meet the standard requirements of tourists (World Bank, 2009). The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development reported that, on average, import related leakage are between 40% and 50% of gross tourism earnings for small economies and between 10% and 20% for developed economies (United Nations Environment Programme, 2002). Ecotourism development can lead to unintended outcomes as Tisdell (2003) puts it, ecotourism can lead to:

- Exclusion of locals from ecotourist areas with reduction in income, employment and resource availability to locals.
- Loss of control of ecotourist business and resources to outsiders.
- Consequent disruption of the social fabric of the local community.

3.5.2.3 Social problems

It should be noted that the goal of ecotourism is not always environmental conservation and local economic development, but cultural conservation as well. Regions of tourism concentration can have negative impacts on the socio-cultural environment as a result of the interaction with tourists (Honey, 1999). Ecotourism takes place in remote communities which may have unviable livelihood systems. The interaction of such communities with western culture may encourage the community to enter into some kind of patron client relationship to make money or communities trying to escape from their objective material circumstances (Whelan, 1991). Tourists behaviour such as scant dressing, public displays of affection between the sexes always clash with local tradition and culture and may have negative impacts to the local youth at the ecotourism destination in terms its cultural norms (Honey, 1999).

According to Migot-Adhola et.al, quoted in (Reid, 1999) relationships between local communities and tourists range from begging, posing for photographs, and performing dance routines to casual and organised sex, for money. Studies by Sidinga quoted in Reid (1999) in Amboseli in Kenya have indicated

that youths are constantly dropping out of school to engage in anti-social activities such as alcohol consumption, theft, loitering, crime and prostitution. In Tanzania, a study carried out by Charneley in 2005 in Ngorongoro have revealed that tourism had had direct impact on the Maasai community , these include increased prostitution between Maasai girls, woman and tour guards operating along the main road leading to the conservation site (Charneley, 2005).

3.6 COMMUNITY BASED ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN ZIMBABWE

When protected areas were established in Zimbabwe, the British colonial government forcibly moved people away from proposed conservation areas. For the greater part of their history, the local population enjoyed many benefits from these areas, ranging from the collection of forest products (firewood, thatching grass, traditional medicines etc) and hunting game in order to meet their subsistence needs (Alexander and McGregor, 2000). With little or no local input, parks were designated and lines drawn on maps without attention to historical claims and resident cultures (Belsky, 1999). Fines and fences through various ordinances were introduced to keep the local population out of these protected areas. To make things worse, the local communities were not even allowed to visit sacred places in the parks to conduct their rituals (ibid).

The establishment of the 1975 Parks and Wildlife Act in Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) granted private landholders the right to use wildlife on their land for their own benefit, including through safari hunting and the capture and sale of animals (Frost and Bond, 2008). The legislation caused a massive increase in wildlife numbers and species as landholders developed hunting and tourism enterprises (PERC, 2004). The highly visible disparities between extensive ranches stocked with wild animals, protected by electric fence and overpopulated poor communal areas were an obvious source of conflict (Wolmer *et al.*, 2003). The local people often received little or no benefit emanating from wildlife use. This led to deep resentment from the local population who were excluded from lands of religious and economic value and restricted to unproductive areas around the parks (Frost and Bond, 2008).

The local communities perceived conservation methods as a tool of oppression, as they were denied access to land, wildlife and trees and the restriction of the movement of their cattle in areas in which they traditionally had access to (Kamphorst, Koopmanschap and Oudwater, 1997). Poaching, degradation of resources, and local hostility towards the parks and tourism were on the increase (ibid). The natural resource base was seen to be declining partly because of the failure of adequate systems for resource use and protection. Scholars protested that narrow conceptions of nature and an American bias towards wilderness preservation inappropriately dominated international preservation efforts (PERC, 2004; Kamphorst, Koopmanschap and Oudwater, 1997).

Some scientists, conservationists and environmental organizations concerned about this clash between the parks and the people began to rethink the protectionist philosophy guiding park management (Alexander and McGregor, 2000). They began to argue that protected areas and ecosystems would survive only if those people nearest to them benefited from both the parks and tourism (ibid). The popularization of ecotourism initiatives in the 1980s and its pro-poor focus presented as a baseline to the solution of the conflict between the national park authorities and surrounding communities in Zimbabwe.

3.6.1 The CAMPFIRE concept

The development of community based ecotourism in Zimbabwe has been designed in the form of CAMPFIRE (Honey, 1999; Metcalfe, 1994; Kamphorst, Koopmanschap and Oudwater, 1997; Alexander and McGregor, 2000). The CAMPFIRE programme's development was an attempt by the state to disburse wildlife revenue and devolve authority to local communities in the communal areas living adjacent to the national parks. The programme aspires to reduce rural poverty by convincing local communities that wildlife is an economic asset than an impediment to agricultural production (Alexander and McGregor, 2000).

CAMPFIRE approaches wildlife management both as an antidote for rural poverty and a proactive mechanism for redressing negative economic impacts of environmental crisis such as drought (Logan and Moseley, 2002:2). The

programme is guided by three underlying principles to achieve a sustainable wildlife management system and these are:

- Wildlife is an agricultural resource and game management may be perceived as a form of agricultural resource;
- tensions should not persist between arable agriculture and game management since scarce resources are being allocated to the best economic alternative; and
- game management can be a complement to agriculture and therefore there should be no conflict between economic survival of agricultural communities and the foraging needs of wildlife.

The programme makes full use of the local authority structures for the overall governance of communal areas (Alexander and McGregor, 2000). The district is administered through the constituent sub-units of the ward and village development units (Metcalf, 1994). CAMPFIRE accepts these units of social organisation for community based ownership and management of natural resources (ibid).

The development of CAMPFIRE in Zimbabwe began soon after independence in 1980, and encourages local communities to make their own decisions about wildlife management and have control over their natural resources (Alexander and McGregor, 2000). Resident communities were given custody over and responsibility for managing wildlife resources and the right to directly benefit from their use (Frost and Bond, 2008).

The programme seeks to recognize the involvement of the local people in order to achieve a sustainable wildlife management system. The programme, in principle, uses wildlife, woodlands, water and grazing as economic resources (Frost and Bond, 2008). In practice, wildlife use predominated in revenue generation in most CAMPFIRE programmes across the country, principally through safari hunting and ecotourism. According to Alexander and McGregor (2000), the introduction of CAMPFIRE in Zimbabwe was seen as a holistic approach to the conservation and management of wildlife, grazing, forest and water and had the following objectives:

- to initiate a programme for a long term development, management and sustainable utilization of natural resources in the communal areas;
- to achieve management of resources by placing the custody and responsibility with the resident communities;
- to allow communities to benefit directly from the exploitation of natural resources within their areas; and
- to establish the administrative and institutional structures necessary to make the programme work.

CAMPFIRE programmes were implemented in the country's 26 districts which have large wildlife populations (Frost and Bond, 2008; Alexander and McGregor, 2000). The programme specifically seeks to stimulate the long-term development, management and sustainable use of natural resources in Zimbabwe's communal farming areas. It aimed to align land use with natural opportunities and constraints of agriculturally marginal areas. The central thrust in CAMPFIRE is the belief that community based proprietorship is necessary if local institutions and capacities are to be motivated and the need to internalize conservation costs (Metcalf, 1994).

Rural District Councils on behalf of communities on communal land are granted the authority to market access to wildlife in their district to safari operators (Alexander and McGregor, 2000). These in turn sell hunting and photographic safaris to mostly sport hunters and eco-tourists (Frost and Bond, 2008). Safari operators are essentially wholesalers who buy the rights to bring sport hunters and eco-tourists to their concession areas to hunt a set quota of animals, or track, observe and photograph wildlife (ibid). Clients enjoy an experience encompassing notions of wilderness and untamed Africa, accompanied by quality service provision in the form of accommodation, cuisine and companionship (Frost and Bond, 2008:779).

Most of the CAMPFIRE proceeds come from selling hunting processions to professional hunters and safari operators working to set government quotas. Trophy hunting is considered to be the ultimate form of ecotourism, as hunters travel in small groups, demand few amenities, cause minimal damage to the local ecosystem and at the same time provide considerable income to local communities (Alexander and McGregor, 2000). As May (2009) asserts,

CAMPFIRE programmes generate income to the local communities in five ways though:

1. Trophy hunting;
2. Selling live animals;
3. Harvesting natural resources;
4. Tourism (this includes photographic shooting, flora and fauna viewing and accommodation); and
5. Selling wildlife meat.

Between 1989 and 2001, 18 rural district councils earned a total of US\$ 29.29 million from wildlife based activities (Frost and Bond, 2008). Safari hunting produced most of the revenue followed by sales of hides and ivory and then ecotourism see table 2.3 below.

Table 3.2: Incomes earned by Rural District Councils through CAMPFIRE between 1989 and 2001.

Activity	Safari hunting	Ecotourism	Sales of Hides and Ivory	Other	Total
Income by activity (US\$ million)	18.15	0.46	1.17	0.51	20.29
% of income by activity	89.5	2.3	5.7	2.5	100

Source, (Khumalo 2003, in Frost and Bond, 2008)

CAMPFIRE benefits are shared between various participants that include communities, Rural District Councils (RDC), safari operators and CAMPFIRE Association (Frost and Bond, 2008; Metcalfe, 1994). Economic benefits from CAMPFIRE act as incentives for participants to conserve the natural and cultural environment in which income generation depends (Alexander and McGregor, 2000). The CAMPFIRE concept in Zimbabwe was internationally renowned as the most famous exemplar of community based natural resource management and established a powerful constituency of researchers and

practitioners (Wolmer, et al., 2003:5). It received generous donor support and generated countless workshops, conferences and publications (ibid). The CAMPFIRE concept resulted in hunting and game viewing in conjunction with cultural tourism being promoted as the most lucrative land uses in the country's arid regions where dry land agriculture was perceived to be a waste of time (Alexander and McGregor, 2000).

3.6.2.1 Role of the community under campfire

The community is to be involved in all stages of the programme from planning to implementation. The community also play an important role in an agreement not to harass or hunt wildlife, cutting down of trees and limiting grazing to an agreed zone (Murphree, 1996). Anyone who is discovered cutting down trees, cultivating stream banks or causing veld fires is to be reported to the police. In some cases the community is confined to a specified zone for human settlement and to limit the size of land under cultivation to make more habitats for wildlife available (Metcalf, 1994).

3.6.2.2 Problems associated with community based ecotourism development in Zimbabwe (CAMPFIRE)

The CAMPFIRE programme advocates for active community involvement and decision making in resource management and utilisation. In practice though, decision making has been the sole responsibility of the Rural District Councils (Metcalf, 1994). Most RDCs implementing CAMPFIRE are hesitant to delegate decision making autonomy to lower level structures such as the wards because these programmes have become major revenue generators for the RDCs (ibid).

Much of the debate and dispute in CAMPFIRE has been related to participation and managing benefits from resource utilisation. Local community involvement has only been limited to assessing and responding to wildlife costs related to crop damage, problem animal control and compensation issues (Alexander and McGregor, 2000). Most communities under CAMPFIRE hardly make decisions and are often subjected to decisions made by Rural District Councils. According to Wolmer *et al.* (2003) most communities are not involved in the sale of hunting rights and are always suspicious of misappropriation of funds and corruption by the RDC under their jurisdiction.

The other shortcoming regarding active participation of the community is its heterogeneity. Villagers might have different interests and perceptions about their environment and their organisation of livelihood strategies. These interests might be overlapping, corresponding or conflicting with each other, making the concept difficult to operationalize (Alexander and McGregor, 2000). In some cases, some community members might not be interested in wildlife conservation, preferring game meat and protection of their crops and grazing space for their livestock (Metcalf, 1994).

Murphree (1996) argues that wildlife revenue has become an important source of income for cash strapped local authorities. Devolving responsibilities to lower level structures will have a negative impact on their financial position. As such, the Councils are not willing to give up such an important source of income. For example, in Chiredzi Rural District Council the Chief Executive Officer was charged in 1999 after diverting CAMPFIRE proceeds paying striking council workers (Wolmer *et al.*, 2003).

The reality in CAMPFIRE is that Rural District Councils received the proprietorship and responsibilities from the central government, at the expense of the local communities who are living with wildlife (Frost and Bond, 2008).

There has always been a clash on how to use the benefits between district and local community authorities. According to Alexander and McGregor (2000), the differences exist where development objectives of local communities do not tally with that of local administrators. In most cases the local administrators advocate that benefits go into community social services or income generating projects, while the community want free choice on how to utilise the benefits. Metcalfe (1994) argues that most local authorities implementing CAMPFIRE are reluctant to devolve either management or benefits much below the district level.

CAMPFIRE asks why people should be motivated to conserve environment and ask: Who benefits from it? Who pays the costs? Who manages it? Who has authority over resources? It argues strongly that authority and management, production and benefits must all primarily be the responsibility of the local communities (Frost and Bond, 2008:781). In practice high financial values have

been realised by joint ventures between the District Councils and safari operators, with the latter paying high rents for resource marketing. However the biggest share remains with the Rural District Councils. This has left most of the communal people receiving meagre benefits (Frost and Bond, 2008).

3.7 CONCLUSION

Ecotourism development has become a contemporary development tool because of its ability to protect natural resources and at the same time uplifting livelihoods of communities living adjacent to protected areas. Initial conservation efforts prioritised the protection of flora and fauna without paying attention to local communities who live adjacent to the protected areas. Involvement of the local community has become a catalyst for sustainable use of the natural resources and at the same time economically empowering the producer communities. It is however ideal for land reform programmes to consider the need for protecting natural resources to achieve sustainability and economic development of communities. Land reform must be built on a thorough understanding of the livelihood strategies of intended beneficiaries. During its evolution the CAMPFIRE model in Zimbabwe has proved to be versatile and robust and has encouraged local entrepreneurship as well as partnerships with private sector players. The CAMPFIRE programme has also shown that natural resources are better conserved when communities are involved in planning and management of these resources within their jurisdiction.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter outlines the methodological framework that was adopted when undertaking this research. The objective of this chapter is to develop clear and concise research methods to obtain clear answers to the research questions.

4.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

The main purpose of this study is to assess how the ecotourism development initiative in Masera community benefitted land reform beneficiaries. Particular attention will also be focused on the effects of the project on the rest of the community members who did not benefit from the project. Qualitative analysis was deemed the most appropriate, given the exploratory and evaluative nature of the research.

Basically, there are two major types of research: qualitative and quantitative research. Qualitative research is explanatory and subjective while quantitative research is descriptive and objective (Greenstein, 2003). In order to investigate the central question of this research, qualitative methodology was considered the most ideal. According to Creswell (1994) a qualitative methodology is a broad approach in social research which is aimed at understanding a particular social situation, event, role, group or interaction.

The method involves the collection and analysis of in-depth information on a smaller group of respondents. The purpose of using this approach is to find in-depth information about the effects of the community based ecotourism project on the livelihoods of land reform beneficiaries in Masera community. In addition, the study is descriptive, in that it seeks to provide the researcher with a deeper understanding of the effects of community based ecotourism initiatives on the livelihoods of the same community. Basic quantitative analysis will be used in terms of aiding in the presentation and interpretation of interview results.

4.3 RESEARCH METHODS

This section details the approach which was used when undertaking this research. The selection of a case study approach is justified and all the sampling procedures used are explained.

4.3.1 *Case study approach*

A case study approach was used in this research in order to capture detailed information on the development of an ecotourism project in Masera community during the FRLRP. De Vaus (1991), views a case study approach as an important tool for unearthing intricate dynamics of the case under study to offer theoretical generalizations. The case study methodology was ideal for this research because of its strength and appropriateness in capturing context specific detail (Yin, 2003). Yin (ibid:33) also asserts that the case study method helps to investigate contemporary phenomena within their real life context and also address a situation in which boundaries between phenomena and context are not clearly evident. According to De Vaus (1999), a case study can generate insight into specific social dynamics and developments that are at play within a particular context.

The main aim of the study is to explore how the FTLRP as undertaken in Zimbabwe, particularly in Beitbridge district, has affected community based ecotourism initiatives in the district, with Masera community ecotourism initiative being used as a yardstick. The project was specifically chosen because of the community's organization and innovation in terms of conserving their natural resources and at the same time benefitting from their use. Secondly, the land use model at the project site as implemented by the beneficiaries suits the natural factor endowment of the region in terms of the area's scenic beauty and biological diversity. The researcher hopes that the success of the ecotourism initiative under study will be used as an example in rethinking current and future land use planning models in the region.

The major limitation of this study is that control is very minimal. The current political setting in Zimbabwe around land reform limits the researcher to determine and influence activities in the field. Most of the decisions around land reform in the country are currently influenced by political factors rather than economic consideration.

4.3.2 Sampling

Sampling is a technique of selecting independently a suitable representative part of a population for the purpose of determining parameters or characteristics of the whole population (Marshall, 1996:522). Because of the time factor, twenty one beneficiaries were interviewed from the 150 who benefited from the land reform programme on Sentinel Ranch in Masera community. These were randomly sampled from the list of all the beneficiaries. The strategy involved obtaining a list of the beneficiaries from land reform offices located in Beitbridge town. The beneficiaries' names were numbered and the numbers put in a hat, the twenty one drawn numbers (names) became the representative population. Authority to carry the interview process was sought and granted from the district administrator's office through a written statement. The district administrator's office also informed headmen from all wards (ward 7, ward 8 and ward 9) about the research.

Twenty one more interviewees were drawn from the community members who did not benefit from the programme. Participants were identified by purposive sampling. To ensure diverse and equal representation, seven participants were drawn from each of the three wards in the community, with the help of respective headmen. However, the researcher made sure that both men and women are represented as participants. Interviews were carried out at the homesteads of the participants.

4.4 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Multiple data collection methods were used in undertaking this research in order to achieve methodological triangulation. A combination of observation, semi-structured interviews, focus group discussion and document review were employed to assist the researcher to verify and cross check findings from the field. Voce (2005) asserts that triangulation (using different data types) increases the validity and reliability of the research, as the strength of one approach can compensate for the weakness of another approach. For instance I was able to verify the amount of money given to the beneficiaries from 2009 - 2010 with the official documents at the Rural District Council.

4.4.1 *Semi-structured interviews*

Local community inputs comprise the major focus of this research and, as such, local residents at each ward in the community had a significant information provision to play. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with land reform beneficiaries and community members in Masera who live adjacent to the park. While both groups are in fact community residents, different questions were asked to get the most out of each group. Interviews were designed to be relatively short and typically lasted between 5 to 15 minutes depending on the interviewee. The interview schedules for both beneficiaries and non beneficiaries are provided in Annexure A. An effort was made to make sure both males and females were involved in the interview process. Table 4.1 below shows a breakdown of respondents according to wards and gender. Among the land reform beneficiaries more males were interviewed than females, because of the nature of the land reform beneficiaries who happened to be mostly males. A total of 42 individual interviews were completed. In order to protect the anonymity of informants, the specific sources of information will not be identified.

Table 4.1: Interview of land reform beneficiaries and non- beneficiaries

Community group	Total interviewed	Ward 7		Ward 8		Ward 9	
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Beneficiaries	21	5	2	6	1	6	1
Non beneficiaries	21	3	4	3	4	4	3
TOTAL	42	8	6	9	5	10	4

Interviews were conducted in a fairly open framework which allowed a focused, conversational two way communication. Unlike the questionnaire framework where detailed questions are formulated ahead of time, in employing semi-structured interviews I started with more general questions. The questionnaire covered a variety of topics that include reasons for the establishment of the project, sources of income, stakeholder relations, ecotourism benefits and problems encountered among other questions (see Annexure A).

Some of the questions were created during the interviewing process following particular responses from the interviewees, for example, one respondent claimed political intervention over the management of project proceeds, leading to the researcher to probe more questions about sharing of benefits. I found this method to be ideal and more appropriate for this particular research as more issues came up allowing me to probe further for more details.

Participants were informed that the purpose of this study was for academic purpose only. All interviews were conducted in private and in venues agreed upon with the interviewee to maintain confidentiality of responses from the respondents. All respondents were informed that participation was absolutely voluntary, and that they were free not to answer any question(s) they felt uncomfortable with, during the course of the interview. The environment, given the sensitivity of the land reform in Zimbabwe, gave the interviewee confidence to give me more detailed information.

4.4.2 Key informant interviews

Key informants were representatives from the Ministry of Local Government, District Lands office, Beitbridge Rural District Council, Department of Environmental Agency, Department of National Parks, AGRITEX, Forestry Commission, the safari operator (former owner) and CESVI a local NGO. The reason for the inclusion of key informants from the government departments is their involvement in land reform issues. The method involved preparation of interview questions which acted as a guideline to make sure that all relevant topics were covered during the interview (See Annexure A). The purpose of interviewing key government departments was to gather information on the establishment of the ecotourism project including its successes and failures.

The interviews with the key land reform stakeholders provided the researcher with information on the circumstances on the establishment of the park and the overall impacts of the land reform programme on wildlife and other natural resources in the district. The findings from the interviews and information gathered from literature review were incorporated in the formulation of a set of recommendations to improve the project.

Input from the tourism operator and the manager from the Department of National parks was sought in order to acquire specific details about wildlife management and to gain insight into the current state of resources and ecotourism development at the study site. In-depth interview questionnaire schedules covered a variety of topics related to park operations, management plans, tourism attractions at the site and conservation issues inter alia (See Annexure A).

4.4.3 Focus group discussions

Three focus group discussions were conducted with community members from all the three wards in Masera community. All focus group discussions included both males and females. Numbers for each focus group discussion were limited to 15 to make the discussion more controllable and it included participants from beneficiaries and non beneficiaries of the ecotourism programme in order to come up with representative responses. The exception was in ward 8 where all the participants were non-land reform beneficiaries. There was difficulty on accessing the homesteads of the invited participants after it was noted that the invitation was poorly communicated by the policeman who was sent by the headman. In-depth interview questionnaire schedules also covered a variety of topics related to park operations, impact on livelihoods, project income, tourists attractions, and conservation issues inter alia (see Annexure A).

Responses were grouped into themes and analyzed paying into particular attention to context and discourse. According to Voce (2005), in a focus group discussion participants get to hear each other's responses and make additional comments as they hear what other people have to say on the subject. Participants were identified using purposive and convenient sampling with the help of respective Headmen in each ward. Participants were explained the aim and purpose of the study and agreed to participate after repeated efforts to explain that the purpose of the interviews were purely academic and there was no political agenda towards its finalisation.

4.4.3 Observation

To complement the interview process, field observations were conducted with the help of the safari operator. The process involved exploring the park in an

open Land Rover truck viewing the park, its attractions and facilities. I was able to see thatched chalets, rock paintings, herd of elephant and the general condition of the farm in terms of resource use and protection. Exploration of the park was done on the 23rd of February 2012. The operator alluded that this year was likely to experience severe drought because by late February no significant rains had fallen in the area.

According to Adler and Adler, (1998) observation involves noting a phenomenon, often with instruments, and recording it for scientific use and other purposes. The process basically consists of gathering impressions of the surroundings through seeing, smelling, touching and tasting.

4.4.4 Document collection and review

Various documents related to land reform and ecotourism development were collected and reviewed. These include official documents from the Ministry of lands, Department of Wildlife and National Parks, newspaper articles, thesis, safari operator advertising documents, books, academic journals and previous research related to the subject. Extensive literature related to the subject was reviewed relating to a variety of topics and this included, but was not limited to land reform, sustainable development, community-based ecotourism and tourism, land use planning and sustainable livelihoods.

4.5 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Research can involve a great deal of co-operation and co-ordination among many different people in different disciplines and institutions. Many different institutions and professions have set standards for norms and behaviour that suit their particular aims and goals. These norms also help members of the disciplines to coordinate their actions or activities and to establish the public trust of the institution (Babbie and Mouton, 2001).

In undertaking this research, I adhered to the ethical guidelines of the University of the Witwatersrand. As such, application for ethical clearance at the Human Research Ethics Committee was made on the 29th of June 2011. The clearance was processed on the 7th of July 2011, giving the researcher the green light to undertake the research under the adherence of its guidelines.

Respondents were made aware that the purpose of this research was for the fulfilment of a Master of Science Degree Programme in Town and Regional Planning at the University of the Witwatersrand. In line with Creswell's (1994) guidelines on research ethics and conduct, I explicitly respected the rights, needs, values and desires of interviewees. Confidentiality was maintained throughout the duration of the study by conducting interviews at a private venue agreed with the respondents. Assurance was made to interviewees that the information given will not be made available to anyone who is not directly involved in this study and that they could terminate the interview at anytime.

4.6 PLANNING AND CONSULTATION

Prior to undertaking this research, clearance was sought from the District administrator. I explained to him the purpose of the study and emphasized that anonymity and confidentiality will be maintained as land reform was a very sensitive issue in Zimbabwe. My first task was to approach relevant land reform and wildlife management stakeholders and these included the Beitbridge Rural District Council, Ministry of Lands, AGRITEX, Department of National Parks and Wildlife, Environmental Management Agency, Forestry Commission and the Department of Tourism.

The researcher was invited to a meeting in Masera community organized by the GMTFCA and the Institute of Rural Technologies (17 January, 2012) on their periodic consultation with the community about Wildlife management. At the meeting, the chairperson informed the community about my intended study and requested for their cooperation if they are approached. I was able to meet the headman after the meeting, to whom, I explained that the purpose of the research was for academic purposes and that it might influence those in authority to consider some review of some of the policies regarding land reform and wildlife management in Zimbabwe.

CHAPTER FIVE

DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY AREA

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides detailed information on the case study area by introducing its geographical location, climatic conditions, settlement patterns and livelihood strategies adopted by the local community. The chapter also explains the rationale for selecting the study area.

5.2 THE CASE STUDY AREA

Zimbabwe is divided into ten administrative provinces. Each province is divided into districts, the number of districts in a province varies according to the size of the province (see figure 3.1). Beitbridge district is located in the southern part of the country in Matabeleland South province. The province is divided into seven administrative districts and lies in agriculturally marginal and drought prone agro- ecological region V. The greater part of the province has fragile soils which cannot support crop production without massive investment in irrigation. The province is home to extensive national parks as commercial wildlife management is the most economically and ecologically sustainable form of land use (Wolmer *et al.*, 2003).



Figure 3.1: Zimbabwe map showing the location of Matabeleland South province

Source: www.mapsofafrica.com

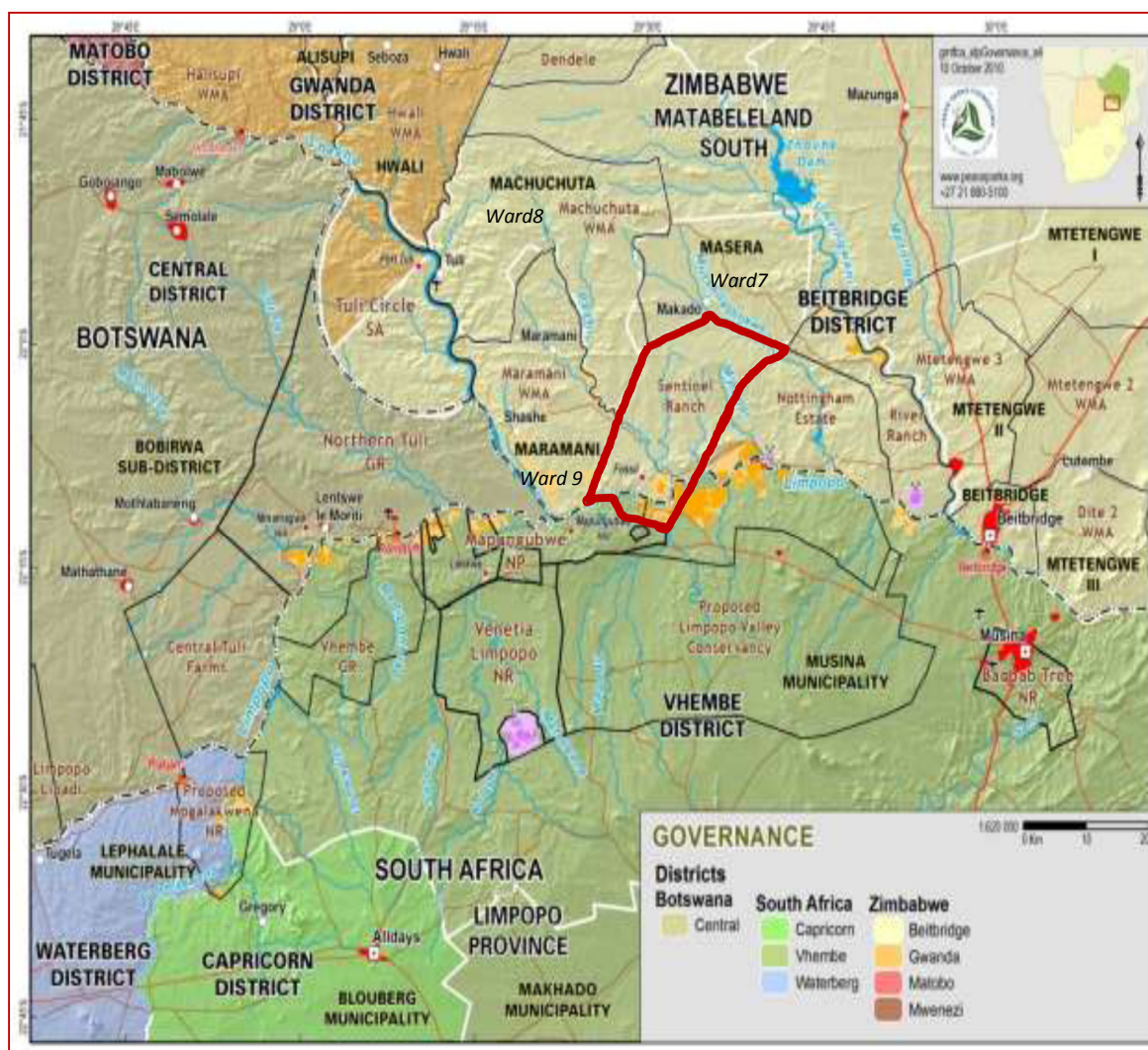


Figure 3.2: Map showing Sentinel Ranch and Masera community (Ward 7,8 9)

Source: GMTFCA, 2010

The study was conducted in Masera community in Beitbridge district, which is located in Matabeleland South province in the southern part of the country. The district is under the jurisdiction of Beitbridge Rural District Council (BRDC), which is the local authority that creates an enabling environment for development of the district and its people. Masera community is located 60km west of Beitbridge town, which is the administrative centre of the district, near the Limpopo River (see figure 3.2). Masera community is a place where ecotourism can flourish. The area has beautiful natural landscape, diverse African wildlife species and rich archaeological resources, making the area's ecological and cultural resources exceptional. The remarkably beautiful landscape includes stunning red- and –gold sandstone hills (GMTFCA, 2010).

The community consists of three wards (7, 8 and 9) and 1300 households with a total population of approximately 11000 people (Beitbridge Development Plan, 2010). The community is predominantly a Venda speaking society with a few Sotho speaking people who migrated from the west in Gwanda district. The community was offered Sentinel Ranch farm (measuring 34 000 hectares) which borders the community, during the FTLRP. The rationale of the Government of Zimbabwe was to increase the grazing space for the villagers, as cattle rearing forms the major livelihood activity. The farm is located on the northern bank of the Limpopo River in south western Zimbabwe with a 17km frontage of the river with thick riparian woodlands of enormous sycamore figs, nyalaberry and fever trees (Institute of Rural Technologies, 2011).

Prior to the FTLRP, the farm was used as a private game park. Hence, the farm contains a substantial number of wild animal species, including commercially viable species such as the elephant, buffalo, leopard and rhinoceros. As per the government's land reform strategy, 150 beneficiaries were identified from the adjacent Masera community to utilize the farm for grazing purposes under a three tier model. The model allows beneficiary household the right to grazing and thus increasing communal herd (Government of Zimbabwe, 1998). The main aim was to improve the livelihoods of the beneficiaries through livestock production.

The beneficiaries lost most of their livestock after moving them to the farm due to diseases from the wild animals such as foot and mouth, anthrax, black leg and bovine tuberculosis. To make matters worse, leopards and cheetahs preyed on their cattle and other small livestock.

According to the CAMPFIRE officer from BRDC, unfavourable farming conditions for both crop farming and grazing facilitated the community to re-think the land use pattern proposed by the local government officials from the district. The community realised the potential of the land as a tourist attraction destination and thus use this as a vehicle for economic development and income generation. The beneficiaries made an agreement with the former owner to preserve the status quo of the farm and ensure its conservation status. The Department of Wildlife and National Parks (DWNP) and the Beitbridge Rural District Council played a major role in facilitating this process.

With the help of the former owner, the community engaged into or promoted ecotourism with wildlife as the main attraction for tourists. The former owner became the safari operator for the new land owners and used his experience in the field to market the 'ecotourism' venture to international tourists, most of whom were visiting the Kruger National Park and other private game parks across the Limpopo River in South Africa. The BRDC played a role of overseeing the implementation of this agreement. The park currently receives relatively few tourists but it is being promoted and developed as an ecotourism destination.

The beneficiaries operate under a constitution under which they have agreed to control poaching activities and maintain the fence to control game from straying into the community. In terms of its constitution, a committee comprising seven members is chosen and act as representatives of the beneficiaries. The committee runs for a period of five years, upon which new representatives will be chosen into office. The committee members become the eyes and ears of the rest of the beneficiaries who will however, be based in the community. The seven committee members chosen are based in an old farm house destroyed during farm invasions in 2000.

Grazing is prohibited in the park. The park is only available for grazing only as a temporary relief when there is shortage of grazing in the community or during the times of drought. During severe droughts like the one in 2008, the farm is available for relief grazing. Each of the 150 beneficiaries is allowed to bring not more than 10 herds of cattle to avoid overgrazing the area. During relief grazing period, livestock will be controlled through existing paddocks in the park to avoid livestock/wildlife interface. When pastures improve in the community mainly during the start of the rain season, livestock is moved back to communal grazing areas outside the park. (CAMPFIRE officer, interview).

Beneficiaries are given adequate access to the land and the rights to extract firewood and other natural resources (medicinal plants, wild fruits, and harvesting mopane worms) under the control of the management committee.

The beneficiaries are also allowed to have access to the carcasses of the game quota. The meat is shared among the beneficiaries and part of it is sold to generate revenue. When there is excess meat, specifically during the hunting

season, some of it is given to the rest of the community members. The revenue generated from this programme is meant to finance development projects within the community, such as building and upgrading of schools, clinics, dip tanks and drilling boreholes.

The major water system in the park/farm is the Limpopo River, with a 17km frontage which forms the boundary of the farm to the south and also the boundary between Zimbabwe and South Africa. The Limpopo is an annual river, characterized by a wide, sandy river bed with several large pans on its flood plain. During summer, the river may flow a kilometre wide and spill over its banks to deposit large pans on the flood plain which hold water well into the dry season (De Villiers, 1999). The large seasonal pans create important water bird habitat and also serve as a stopover for migratory water birds (De Villiers, 1999).

5.2.1 Case study selection rationale

The motivation to undertake a research of this nature and in this area is to investigate how the project developed under circumstances of widespread wildlife poaching during the implementation of the FTLRP. The study area was purposively chosen, because of the beneficiaries' choice to preserve wildlife and other natural resources at their disposal. Masera community is a good example of a well organised community capable of articulating their demands in shaping their resource utilisation objectives. Many communities have not achieved the same degree of organisation and cohesion and land reform initiatives and natural resources in their areas have suffered irreparable damage. What remains to be seen in the next chapters is how ecotourism development in the study area has benefited the land reform beneficiaries and the adjacent community at large.

In light of the definition of ecotourism adopted in this study and its focus on community involvement, the study area would ideally provide a relatively remote wilderness setting, adjacent to an underdeveloped community. It is hoped that the findings from this study could be judiciously extrapolated to other areas with similar wildlife populations and other resources of economic value.

5.2.2 Climate and Physical characteristics in study area

The landscape in Masera is diverse and consists of high ridges that are well wooded and a relatively flat terrain that is characterized by large expanses of Mopane woodland. The diversity of the landscape helps to support a variety of flora and fauna and thus the area is a habitat for a variety of wildlife. The diversity of the ecosystem in the area has caught the attention of conservation groups, particularly the Peace Parks Foundation and the much publicized Greater Mapungubwe Transfrontier Conservation Area (GMTFCA), which seeks to integrate national parks and areas of high conservation status between Zimbabwe, South Africa and Botswana (Tangawamira, 2008).

When the GMTFCA is officially promulgated, Sentinel Ranch will be designated part of the GMTFCA because of its abundant wildlife and geological diversity. The Peace Park Foundation (PPF) initiative is helping to conserve the rich biodiversity of this pristine African wilderness for future generations through international cooperation, scientific collaboration and goodwill (GMTFCA, 2010).

Climatic conditions in the area vary, from hot and humid during the summer season to mild and dry during the winter season, experiencing hot and sometimes humid summers with temperatures ranging from 18-45 degrees Celsius during the day. The rainy season starts in November and ends in April. The cold season starts in May and ends in July, and the hot season starts in August and ends in April. The mean annual rainfall ranges from 400-600 mm and is highly variable in terms of both time and space. The low and unpredictable rainfall pattern renders the area less valuable for both cattle ranching and crop farming. The soils are shallow and unsuitable for cultivation (Institute of Rural Technologies, 2011).

5.2.3 Settlement pattern of the community

Masera community has a long history. The earliest archaeological sites date back more than 500 years with evidence of earlier Stone Age tools made by ancestors of modern humans. Archaeological research between the 1930s and the present have provided much evidence for the most significant period of human settlement (Institute of Environmental Studies, 1999).

The settlement is nucleated and this is attributed to the need for people to cluster around scarce resources and amenities. Gardening takes place around the homesteads. The principal sources of water for drinking, washing and watering livestock are boreholes and shallow wells on river beds. Boreholes are generally unreliable, since they constantly break down and in most cases borehole water is too salty to drink.

The villages in the community are divided into wards, each ward comprising of a number of households related through blood or marriage. Wards vary in size from around 800–4000 people (Institute of Environmental Studies, 1999). Each ward is a distinct social and administrative unit under the authority of a headman, who in turn owes allegiance to the Chief. There are three wards in the area namely Masera/7, Machuchta/8 and Maramani/9. However the common umbrella term for the whole community is Masera community. For the greater part of their history the community have settled around Sentinel Ranch enduring many problems associated with staying near wildlife protected areas (Institute of Environmental Studies, 1999).

5.3 MASERA COMMUNITY LIVELIHOOD STRATEGIES

Most of the community members in Masera community depend on agriculture for their livelihood. The mixed crops/livestock farming system is the most practised form of agriculture. The people of Masera community are amongst the poorest in Zimbabwe and infrastructure and service provision is poorly developed (Institute of Environmental Studies, 1999).

5.3.1 Cropping

Traditionally, crop cultivation has been of little importance relative to livestock rearing. Most families grow a variety of crops as a form of food security strategy. Crops are mainly grown for subsistence and these include maize, sorghum, millet, cowpeas, groundnuts, round nuts, pumpkin and watermelon. Maize and sorghum are the main crops. Maize is favoured for taste and millet for drought resistance.

Crop cultivation is mainly done between November and January when the rainy season begins, but the yields are limited because of the arid nature of the area. Donkeys are the main source of draught power. The majority of the

households rely on hand- hoeing, thus limiting the area they can cultivate. An average household grows eight crops, as a risk strategy reduction to cope with erratic rainfall patterns. Maize, although technically unsuitable, is grown by about 80% of the households, with crop failure very common.

The extended drought periods common in this area contribute significantly towards low production, hence most households rely on food aid from humanitarian organisations such as the World Vision and Care International. Both men and women (including children) are involved in agriculture. Women tend to be more involved in cultivation and collecting firewood, as well as other onerous household tasks, while men are responsible for looking after the cattle herd and other small livestock.

5.3.2 Livestock rearing

Cattle ranching forms the major livelihood strategy for the community. Herd management is characterised by traditional methods of management, where animals depend on extensive grazing with no supplementary feeding. The cattle are sent out to graze over a wide area, normally near a source of water such as a river or borehole. In the evening the cattle are kraaled near the village to keep them from straying or from being stolen by cattle rustlers. Annual fluctuations in livestock population and productivity occur as a result of drought and diseases (Institute of Environmental Studies, 1999).

Grazing areas are extensive and when there is drought the area becomes overstocked, owing to limited vegetation growth and greater concentration of the herd on the available land. The quality of grazing land is very poor, meaning that the available land is insufficient. People complain that wildlife competes with their livestock for grazing and deliberately allow their cattle to stray onto the neighbouring Sentinel ranch under study (Institute of Environmental Studies, 1999). Small stock is kept by most farmers and these include donkeys, goats, sheep and chicken.

Livestock ownership is skewed. A few members of the community own most animals, while the majority of the people have very little or no livestock. Livestock disease control is the mandate of the Department of Veterinary Services (VET). The department provides regular dipping services in order to reduce livestock lose from the tick-borne diseases.

5.3.4 Remittances

With limited employment opportunities and limited income from agriculture, most young people from the community cross the Limpopo River into South Africa or Botswana either legal or illegal in search of greener pastures. Upon securing employment, the migrants send money and other goods to their relatives back home. The goods and services that these people send back to their original communities are called remittances. Remittances from migrant workers working in South Africa constitute a large proportion of household incomes and have a significant impact on the livelihood of the community (Institute of Rural Technologies, 2011). Remittances are sent in the form of cash and or goods such as groceries, bicycles, radios, sofas among others. Money is the usual and most desirable form of remittance.

5.3.5 Other sources of livelihood

The community also strive to find other sources of livelihood, particularly through income generating projects and savings. For example, women brew traditional beer, exchange for money and sometimes pottery, while men are involved in hunting and blacksmithing. Another important source of income undertaken by a few households is the buying and selling of dried fish. Other families make a living by selling labour to other families in exchange for goods and services.

CHAPTER SIX

CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPACTS OF THE ECOTOURISM PROJECT IN MASERA COMMUNITY

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The objective of this chapter is to present the results of interviews undertaken with community members in Masera community (both beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries of the farm under study) and authorities who are involved in the land reform and wildlife management in Beitbridge district. The chapter will undertake a comparative analysis of the strengths and weakness of the land reform programme in the district, in order to ascertain the effectiveness of ecotourism based land reform models in the district, as has been implemented in Masera community.

The chapter also undertakes an overview of land reform in Beitbridge district. Challenges and opportunities of the project under study are presented to ascertain the relevance of community based ecotourism as a development strategy. The chapter also synthesizes the results of the field work and secondary data sources in an endeavor to come up with guidelines for the successful implementation of land reform programmes in the district or in any other agriculturally marginal areas in the country or elsewhere around the world. Aspirations of the local community, prevailing constraints and further research needs are identified for future development options.

6.2 LAND USE PATTERNS IN BEITBRIDGE DISTRICT

Beitbridge district is divided into communal areas, commercial farming areas and state owned land. The arid nature of the area makes it difficult for conventional development based on farming. Dry land cropping is highly unreliable because of low rainfall patterns. The only real farming potential is through irrigated farming of pockets of alluvial soils along the district's major rivers of Shashe and Limpopo River (Institute of Rural Technologies, 2011). There are small scale communal irrigation schemes dotted around the district, but these operate at a subsistence level (ibid).

Livestock farming is also marginal, but forms the major livelihood activity. The overall sustainable stocking rate is estimated at about 30 hectares per livestock unit (Institute of Environmental Studies, 1999). The majority of commercial farmers in the district engages in wildlife management, citrus production and irrigated cropping. Most commercial farmers replaced livestock production with game ranching as this was assumed to be more rewarding and demanded less labour and operating capital and that wildlife was more resistant to droughts than cattle and other small livestock (Chaumba et al., 2003).

6.3 LAND REFORM IN BEITBRIDGE DISTRICT

Prior to the implementation of the FTLRP in 2000, Beitbridge district had a total of 36 farms engaging in various agricultural activities which include citrus fruit production, ranching and wildlife management. All 36 farms were gazetted for compulsory acquisition (MLLRR, 2006).

In accordance with the national land reform policy, suitability reports were done for all farms based on crop production and livestock rearing (MLLRR, 2003). Although the reports indicated lack of agricultural potential, 17 farms were allocated under the A1 model, 9 farms under the A2 model and 3 farms under the 3-tier model (including Sentinel ranch under study in Masera community). The total amount of land acquired from the white commercial farmers amount to 80% of the total commercial farms in the district (MLLRR, 2011).

Seven white-owned farms involved in intensive citrus fruit production were not acquired, following a government directive not to acquire citrus and dairy farms as these were assumed to be the mainstay of the Zimbabwean economy (MLLRR, 2006). The overall total size of the land taken by 2011 was 486 040.66 hectares (MLLRR, 2011). Most of the farms were demarcated and allocated under both A1 and A2 farming models, and only those allocated under the 3-tier model were not demarcated. The primary aim of land reform was to empower the landless black majority through small scale agriculture and ranching. It was also assumed that many households in the district owned many livestock and needed grazing space for their animals (AGRITEX, interviews). The overall livestock population in the district was assumed to

exceed the carrying capacity of most communal lands. Therefore land reform was seen as a necessity to decongest these communal areas.

According to the local AGRITEX official, all farms had extensive wildlife populations, as most white farmers were engaging in wildlife management to augment cattle production income. The overall number of game ranches in the district was very high due to the flourishing ecotourism and trophy hunting industries. The demarcation of these farms during the FTLRP reduced wildlife habitat on most of the farms, thereby creating a conflict between humans and wildlife. Erection of boundary fences and human activity on the farms disturbed the behaviour and reproduction patterns of most wildlife species in the former commercial farms (Kwashirai, 2010). Clearance of the land for dry land cropping and cutting and burning of bushes in the process also affected many wildlife species. An officer from the Forestry Commission reiterated that opening up of land for dry land cropping has destroyed mature indigenous trees which have been in existence for over 100 years.

The National Parks officer argued that hunting was not controlled in most of the acquired farms. This allowed poachers to take advantage of the situation leading to indiscriminate snaring, affecting both livestock and wild animals.

The consideration of the acquired farms for agricultural purposes prevented some communities from one source of livelihood that has the potential to improve their economic well-being. According to the Parks officer, for the greater part of their history, the communities in Beitbridge has been relying on part time employment as wildlife wardens in former commercial farms and poaching for their livelihood. The consideration of most of the farms for human settlement adversely affected their livelihoods.

An interview with an officer from AGRITEX revealed that wildlife was not initially considered as a land use option by the government of Zimbabwe, directives were coming from Land Reform offices in Harare to resettle as many people as possible to be on a par with other provinces. He also added that although at local level there was concern for wildlife in the farms, it was difficult at that time to propose wildlife based resettlement models, as the politics of the time favoured resettling as many families as land reform was turned into a political gimmick.

An array of problems bewildered most resettled farmers such as lack of schools, lack of basic services and infrastructure, lack of tenure security, erratic rains, lack of safe drinking water and animal diseases (Moyo,2011). Wolmer (2002) concludes that most of the farms in south eastern Zimbabwe should not have been resettled but instead wildlife management should have been explored as a possible land use option. Poverty and lack of livelihood are characteristics of most of the resettled farmers to date in the district (Moyo, 2004). Moyo *et al.* (2008) show that most A1 beneficiaries in south eastern Zimbabwe including Beitbridge returned to their homes due to poor texture of the soils, lack of basic infrastructure such as schools, clinics and shops and lack of financial support from the central government.

6.4 TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN BEITBRIDGE DISTRICT

The Zimbabwean tourism market has for the past decade been strongly affected by the negative publicity of the country following the implementation of the land reform programme. On the other hand, economic recession that took place between 1998 and 2008 before the implementation of the Global Political Agreement (GPA) between three leading political parties (ZANU-PF, MDC-N and MDC-T) also had a negative impact on the tourist inflows (Institute of Rural Technologies, 2011). Likewise, tourism inflows in Beitbridge district were also affected.

Wildlife tourism across private and National Parks has always been the key tourist attraction in Zimbabwe (Frost and Bond, 2008). The Department of Tourism in the district emphasized that tourism development in the district is linked to biodiversity and the vibrant cultural heritage of the Venda and Sotho tribes. Tourism activities in the district picks up in May – August, particularly during the hunting season. The border post in the district is the key entry point for tourists in the country but statistics for the local market have not been recorded (Institute of Rural Technologies, 2011).

To tap its tourist locational advantage, the Beitbridge district council has crafted a local tourism development strategy. The main objective of this initiative was to make sure that all ecotourism development opportunities are fully exploited. The district boasts the Bubiana conservancy that is over 300 000 hectares (about the size of Swaziland) and Zhobe dam that is

approximately 20 km and is a hive of activity for bass fishing and water sport enthusiasts (Beitbridge Development Plan, 2010). Other attractions include ancient sites, artifacts, historical sites and cultural attractions of the Sotho and Venda tribes (ibid). The *Tour de Tuli* annual bicycle race has begun to draw considerable interest in recent years in 2011, 400 cyclists participated in the race. The race starts in Botswana (1-day), then into Zimbabwe, Masera/Sentinel Ranch (3-days) and then finally into South Africa (2-days) (Institute of Rural Technologies, 2011). At the end of the race some bikers remain in the district admiring various tourist attracting activities that include game viewing, bird watching and enjoying local cultural activities (ibid).

6.5 WILDLIFE AND CAMPFIRE PROGRAMMES IN THE DISTRICT

The first CAMPFIRE programme in the district was implemented in 1986 in Chikwarakwara community east of Beitbridge Town. The RDC, National Parks and Zimbabwe Trust played a major role in the implementation of the initiative (Institute of Environmental Studies, 1999). In Tuli area, east of Beitbridge, the CAMPFIRE project was implemented in 1991. To date, CAMPFIRE programmes operate in five communal areas in the district namely Shashe, Limpopo, Tuli, Masera and Chikwarakwara (Institute of Environmental Studies, 1999). Community members were highly suspicious of the CAMPFIRE programmes, fearing that they would lose their land to the safari operators and the Beitbridge Rural District Council (GMTFCA, 2010). According to a study carried out by the Institute of Environmental Studies in 1999, most people in CAMPFIRE programmes have become more unsettled with the programme, since remittances have been decreasing in the last decade following economic recession and negative publicity of the country.

Proceeds from CAMPFIRE are meagre if benefits are compared at household level. As such, most communities under CAMPFIRE complain that the remittances received from the project do not compensate for losses associated with wildlife. They believe that losses from wildlife outweigh benefits from trophy hunting and that wildlife competes for grazing with their livestock (Alexander and McGregor, 2000).

The sharing of benefits is the major problem facing the operation of CAMPFIRE programmes in the district. Most communities are unhappy with the 48%

taken by RDC. They believe that the council takes more than necessary, considering their input in the management of the projects. In principle, the RDC should keep only 15% for administrative expenses and spend the remaining 33% on local wildlife management (Institute of Environmental Studies, 1999), but this is rarely done by the RDC. Most communities around Beitbridge district appear to be poorly informed about the workings of CAMPFIRE and believe that they have little or no control over the programme, which they see as an RDC project. The programme largely operates as a top-down operation rather than via community consensus.

6.6 DEMOGRAPHIC DATA IN MASERA COMMUNITY

Approximately 1300 households live in Masera community, of whom 150 were direct beneficiaries of Sentinel ranch in 2000. An additional 100 people were resettled under the A1 model elsewhere in the district. Twenty one people who were interviewed are direct beneficiaries of the land reform programme on the farm and were either directly or indirectly involved in the project. Twenty one more interviewees are ordinary community members who did not benefit from the farm during the FTLRP. The participants were informed that the purpose of the study was to gain knowledge on the development of the project and to find out how the project has influenced their livelihoods. The community was well informed that the findings from the study will help to develop planning guidelines on the successful implementation of land reform programmes and exploitation of natural resources in the country or elsewhere in the world.

6.7 ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PARK

Following the implementation of the FTLRP, Sentinel Ranch measuring 34 000 hectares was identified for compulsory acquisition. The farm was then earmarked for a 3-tier model, where 150 residents of Masera community were identified to benefit for grazing on the farm. The beneficiary household moved their livestock into the farm in 2000 during the onset of the FTLRP. Unfortunately, most of their livestock died after moving them to the farm due to diseases from wild animals such as foot and mouth, anthrax, black leg and bovine tuberculosis (Department of Veterinary services, interviews). The Department of Veterinary Services cited *bovine malignant catarrh* fever (a

disease transmitted by wildebeest to livestock) as the major disease that caused the death of the livestock.

Unfavourable conditions for both crop farming and grazing prompted the beneficiaries to re-think the land use pattern proposed by the local government officials from the district. Some of the beneficiaries interviewed argued that the farm that they were allocated was hilly and rocky. As a result, pastures were poor and could not sustain meaningful livestock production. Others argued that farming conditions on the farm were not good because of the lack of access to water and poor infrastructure. There are also droughts that are associated with the area that exacerbated the situation. In summary, climatic conditions in the area meant that significant livelihoods could not be built on livestock production income. As a result, the community realised the potential of the land as a tourist attraction destination and thus used this as a vehicle for economic development and income generation.

The committee of seven approached the land authorities in the district for advice on the change of land use model from 3-tier farming model to wildlife management and eventually, ecotourism. According to the interviews, several meetings and consultations were held on the change of land use with the BRDC, Department of National Parks and CESVI (a local NGO). The resolution was concluded in 2004 leading to an agreement between beneficiaries and the former owner to implement new conservation policies in respect to the bilateral agreement.

According to the focus group discussion held in ward 8, the former owner (now private operator) played a significant role in introducing ideas for the joint management of the project. Both economic and ecological arguments were considered to justify the change of land use model proposed by the local government officials. The main ecological arguments were that wildlife management enabled a higher carrying capacity and hence was more productive, and that wildlife species were evolutionary adapted to dry land environments and thus more resilient in times of drought. The economic arguments centered on foreign exchange raising potential of flora and fauna through hunting and ecotourism opportunities.

Most community members interviewed who did not benefit from the farm cited the project as a noble idea that had the potential to reduce poverty. However, they contested that part of the benefits must also target community projects to achieve total conservation support from the rest of the community.

6.8 MANAGEMENT OF THE ECOTOURISM PROJECT

Questions were asked about the management of the project to gain an understanding of whether the beneficiaries were really involved in decision making. It was noted that there are three partners involved in the management of the park namely, the 150 beneficiaries, RDC and the private operator. Although in reality the 150 beneficiaries were represented by a committee of seven chosen from among the beneficiaries.

6.8.1 Beneficiaries

One hundred and fifty beneficiaries are regarded as the owners of the farm and all the natural resources in it. Seven beneficiaries interviewed professed ignorance regarding the running of the park, citing pressing community work load which involves looking after livestock and tilling the land. Little knowledge about what is going on including the potential benefits from ecotourism project affected the decision of these beneficiaries from not involving themselves on the project.

According to the CAMPFIRE officer the beneficiaries are groomed under the CAMPFIRE concept. The beneficiaries have elected a management committee of seven people who are membership of the project and are over eighteen years of age. The structure of the management committee is composed of the Chairman, Vice chairman, Secretary, Vice secretary, Treasurer and two non-portfolio committee members. The management committee has developed a constitution that serves as an operational guideline on the day to day management of the park. According to the CAMPFIRE officer, working with a defined number of beneficiaries has an advantage as this reduces arguments, as evidenced by other CAMPFIRE projects elsewhere in the district that involves the whole community. This justifies the smooth running of the project, as disagreements were minimal.

6.8.1.1 Summary of roles played by beneficiaries

- Provision of social and human capital;
- Conservation of local resources;
- Creating a conducive visitor environment; and
- Service provision.

6.8.1.2 Role played by the management committee

The main role of the management committee is to assist in the management of the project, maintaining fences and controlling poaching. The committee is also vested with powers to enter into contracts and negotiations with other stakeholders on matters concerning the day to day running of the project. The committee decides on what projects to invest in through a meeting in which members vote for the various development projects. Management committee duties and roles are summarized as follows:

- Receiving and banking money from all transactions of the project;
- Arranging for annual and other meetings;
- Arranging the terms on which the business transactions of the project shall be conducted and ensuring the safe custody of all the property and assets of the project;
- Handling all contracts and legal matters on behalf of all the beneficiaries;
- keeping the register of all members correct and up to date;
- Financial management;
- Conducting game counts;
- Providing communication link between rest of beneficiaries and RDC; and
- Assisting in organizing the operations of the safari operator.

6.8.2 Rural District Council

The BRDC is the local planning authority in the area and oversees all development initiatives. The council's involvement on the project is based on the perception that the beneficiaries lack sufficient conservation expertise and manpower to manage the ecotourism venture without assistance. It was noted that the RDC will be involved for a short time and when communities develop

enough expertise and institutional capacity to run the project, the RDC will pull out of the project. However, this sounds farfetched, as this project has become a cash cow for the cash strapped RDC.

6.8.2.1 Summary of roles played by council

- Ensures support for both the private investor and the community;
- Training of beneficiaries on nature conservation, management, and tour guiding;
- Providing manpower to support the process whenever needed;
- Ensures sound physical infrastructure is there;
- Maintains an account of funds obtained from safari hunting;
- Reacts to problems especially where it concerns problem animal control; and
- Mobilizing the beneficiaries.

6.8.3 Private operator

The private operator has a management contract renewable after every five years and plays the responsibility for linking the site to the international markets. All financing on advertisement and hunting quota application is done by the operator as part of the lease agreement. Part of the lease agreement includes maintaining hunting tracks, waterholes and game viewing points. The operator alluded that the relationship with the beneficiaries is cordially and there are few incidences that can threaten the smooth running of the project.

6.8.3.1 Summary of Roles played by the operator

- Links the project to external markets;
- Assists in skills development for the beneficiaries;
- Provides employment opportunities;
- Engages in social responsibility programmes for the rest of the community; and
- Maintains access roads within the conservation site.

6.9 TRAINING AND MANAGEMENT OF BENEFICIARIES

Periodic training workshops are held with the management committee, beneficiaries and the rest of the community on anti-poaching and natural resource management. In 2009 the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) held a workshop with the management committee and trained them to handle people who were found poaching in the farm. In 2010, CESVI and the RDC also trained the management committee regarding environmental laws and conservation issues. According to an officer from CESVI, the majority of members involved in the project are over 35 years of age and semi literate, hence traditional methods of training and skills development will not be adequate. In December 2010 the RDC facilitated travelling of six beneficiaries for a 'look and see' tour around Botswana's most successful ecotourism destinations in order to encourage them about the benefits of conservation.

6.10 REVENUE FROM THE PROJECT

Both consumptive and non-consumptive uses of wildlife are undertaken and form the major revenue generation from the park (see table 5.2 below). Non-consumptive use of wildlife involves viewing and photographing wildlife, while consumptive use of wildlife involves hunting and fishing (Tisdell, 2003). The farm is ecologically rich and is home to a wide variety of flora and fauna, including four of the "big five" (Elephant, leopard, rhinoceros and the buffalo). The presence of four of the big five has resulted in the promotion of sustainable trophy hunting and marketability of the ecotourism venture.

To raise revenue from trophy hunting, the community, under the auspices of the RDC, partnered with a private safari operator, who advertises, organizes and manages hunting and other ecotourism activities in the park. Most of the revenue from the project is generated from safari hunting and camping fees. Other activities that generate revenue include photographic safaris, sale of animal meat, ecotourism and live animal sale (see table 5.2).

Table 6.1: Total revenue generated from the project

Activity	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Safari hunting	-	-	-	17 375	22 508,33	30 105	44 459,17
Live animal sales	-	-	3 200	5 000	3 200	6600	6600
Photographic safaris	-	-	-	-	-	4000	5000
Sale of animal meat	-	-	1017.44	1518.51	2409.11	3033.78	3545.83
Ecotourism	-	-	-		7000	8000	9000
Camping fees	-	-	7000	8000	9000	9000	10000
Total			11 217.44	31 893.51	44 117.44	60 738.78	78 605

In 2005-2007, although hunting was taking place, the benefits were meager, as all transactions in foreign currency were prohibited (Frost and Bond, 2008). All benefits were paid in Zimbabwean dollars and no meaningful income accrued to the beneficiaries as inflation was over one million percent. At one time the Consumer Council of Zimbabwe (CCZ) estimated inflation to be 1 500 000%, whereas independent organizations estimated inflation to be at 1 billion percent in December 2008 (Institute of Rural Technologies, 2011). Proceeds from the project were recorded in trillion Zimbabwean dollars and it's difficult to ascertain the value of the proceeds at the present moment. The exception was in 2007 where beneficiaries clandestinely sold game meat in foreign currency against government regulations not to sale in foreign currency. The harsh economic environment prevailing in the country at that time threatened the viability of the project.

According to the CAMPFIRE officer, normal operations of the project started in 2008 after the dollarization of the Zimbabwean economy, following the

implementation of the Global Political Agreement (GPA) between three leading political parties in the country. From the figures in table 5.2 above, it can be noted that total revenue from the project increased every year. The total revenue from all project operations was US\$31 893.51 in 2008, US\$44 117.44 in 2009, US\$60 738.78 in 2010 and US\$78 605 in 2011. Figure 5.1 shows how the total revenue from the project improved on a yearly basis since 2008.

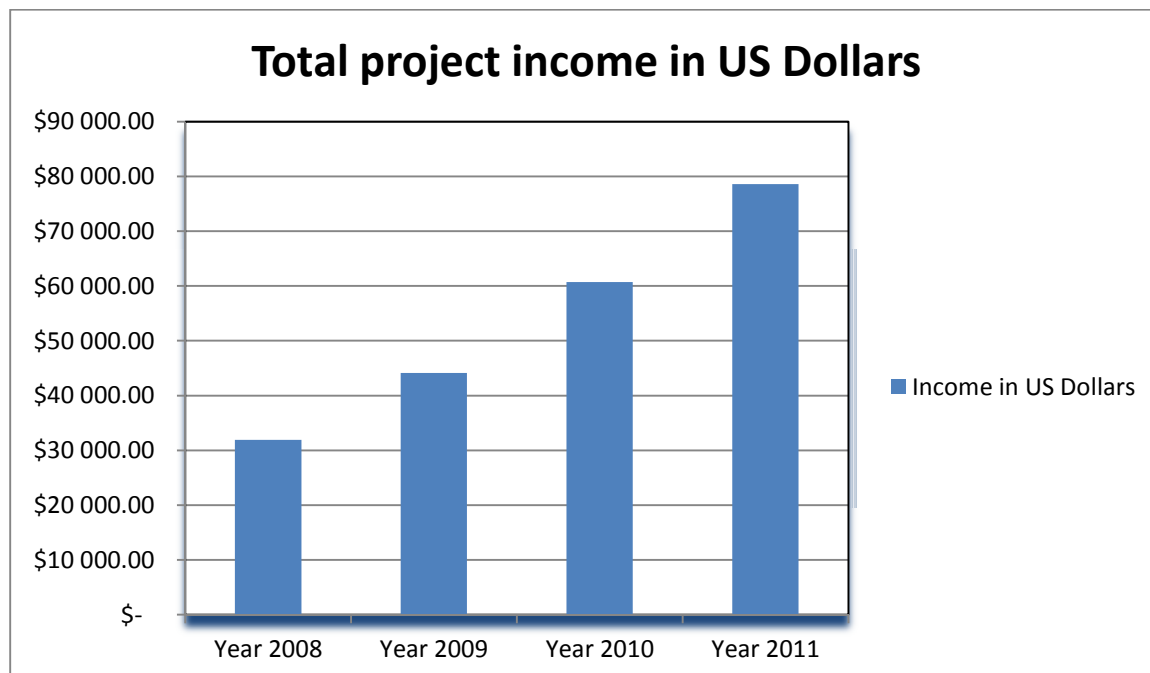


Figure 6.1: Total Revenue inflows

Source: Beitbridge Rural District Council, 2011

The CAMPFIRE officer emphasized that the year on year increase of revenues is related to the improving awareness of the project and the initiation of the GMTFCA. The officer also credited the improvement of revenues to the general improvement of macro economic conditions in the country and conservation expertise of the operator. He further emphasized that the safari operator speaks fluent Venda and this has helped the local community to develop trust in him.

6.11 DISBURSEMENT OF PROJECT REVENUE

The council handles all the proceeds from safari hunting and these are disbursed at the end of the hunting season, mainly in October of each year. Figure 5.2 shows that 48% of the total hunting package per season is received by the RDC while 4% is received by the CAMPFIRE association. The remaining 48% is received by the beneficiaries.

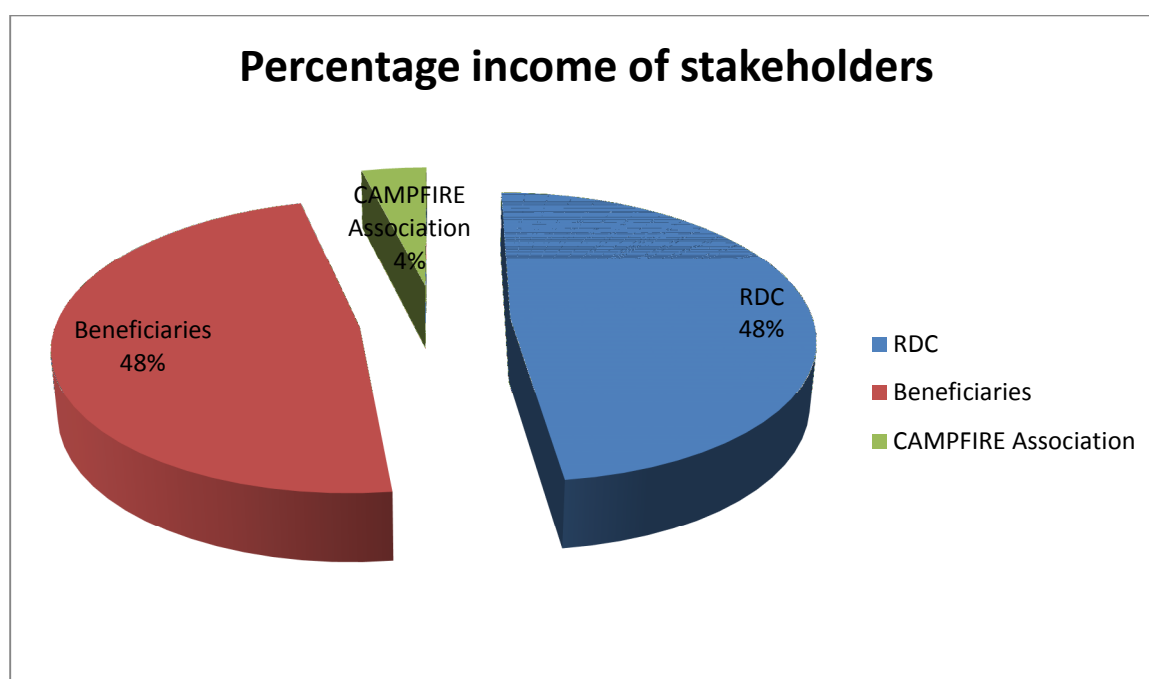


Figure 6.2: Sharing of revenue among project stakeholders

Source: Institute of Environmental Studies, 1999

From table 5.3 below, it can be noted that in 2008 the beneficiaries received US\$ 8 300, in 2009 US\$10 804, in 2010 US\$14 450 and in 2011 US\$21 340.40 directly from safari hunting. Benefits increase on a yearly basis as people get to understand the concept of conservation and benefits of natural resource management.

Apart from safari hunting revenue, the beneficiaries also receive all the proceeds from the sale of game meat and ecotourism. Proceeds from the sale of game meat are handled directly by the beneficiaries, whereas those from ecotourism are handled by the operator and are disbursed directly to the beneficiaries without involvement of the RDC. The total value of all proceeds in 2007 was US\$3 017.44, in 2008 US\$10 858.51, in 2009 US\$17 031.11, in 2010 US\$22 784.18 and in 2011 US\$29 986.23. From table 5.2 and table 5.3, it can

be noted that the average annual benefit from the total revenue for the beneficiaries is 38%. The rest of the total income goes to the operator, RDC and the CAMPFIRE association.

It is not clear how the 150 beneficiaries share the proceeds amongst themselves. Interviews with one of the management committee revealed that the rest of the beneficiaries besides the management are paid through their involvement on the project. Those who do not participate on the day to day running of the project will only benefit through community projects, like the rest of the community members. Independent investigations done by this researcher revealed that the management committee and a few literate beneficiaries are the prime beneficiaries of the project.

Upon completion of the negotiations of the change of land use to wildlife management and ecotourism, each of the 150 beneficiaries was asked to pay a US\$50 joining fee. The money was designed to kick start the project and rehabilitate infrastructure that was destroyed during farm invasions in 2000. However most of the beneficiaries failed to raise the required amount and it is not clear how many beneficiaries managed to raise the required amount. There is no monitoring of the money when it is disbursed from the RDC to the beneficiaries and from the operator to the beneficiaries. The council maintains that all the 150 beneficiaries, benefit from the project through annual handouts after the hunting season. Only 5 beneficiaries interviewed not involved in project management said they received \$150 dollars in 2010 and 2011 after they participated in fence maintenance and other onerous tasks of the project. When asked about the expenditure accounts, the three management committee members interviewed referred the question to the treasurer, who was however not available during the course of data collection process. It appears the management committee is not interested in responding to questions regarding the use of the project income apart from community projects.

The private operator does not get anything directly from safari hunting. Interviews with the CAMPFIRE officer revealed that the operator works on a fixed price of trophies set by the Department of Wildlife and National Parks. The operator then can charge extra charges from the clients for his own

benefit. According to the arrangement, all the proceeds from live animal sale, photographic safaris and camping fees are for the operator.

Table 6.2: Total revenue for the beneficiaries

Activity in US\$	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Safari hunting	-	-	-	8 340	10 804	14 450.40	21 340.40
Live animal sale	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Photographic safaris	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sale of animal meat	-	-	3017.44	2518.51	3409.11	5033.78	5545.83
ecotourism	-	-	-	-	2800	3300	3100
Camping fees	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	0	0	3017.44	10 858.51	17 013.11	22 784.18	29 986.23

6.12 BENEFITS OF THE PROJECT

The project has become an eye-opener and the envy of most community members who did not benefit from the farm. Involvement of part of the community members in the management of natural resources has resulted in improved responsibility and custodianship, leading to sustainable utilization of the natural resources. A number of factors have contributed to the success of the ecotourism project, and these include, communal organization and social cohesiveness. The community's benefit of the farm and proprietorship over its natural resources provided the instrumental incentive for the broader set of land and resources use planning initiatives.

6.12.1 Employment opportunities

Most adult respondents applauded the project for creating employment opportunities for their children. Some of the community members have been employed as tour guides, game scouts and domestic staff (see table 5. 4). In

total, 41 community members were employed on various activities in the farm, and only 3 employees are from outside the community. The RDC employed 4 permanent workers who are stationed in the community. The operator employed the largest number of employees, with 24 males and 6 females who are serving as domestic workers and doubles as caretakers of the tourists. Interviews with the operator revealed that most males double as tour guides and cultivating a 20 hectare irrigation scheme in the adjacent farm owned by the operator.

Table 6.3: Number of people employed by the project

Employer	Female	Male	Total
Council	1	3	4
Safari operator	6	24	30
Beneficiaries	1	6	7
Total	8	33	41

6.12.2 Social development projects

Revenues from the project were used wisely in developing a number of community projects and reinvesting revenues to build material assets. The most striking benefit from this ecotourism initiative is the development of infrastructure, improved health sanitation and an improved learning environment for the school children. Projects developed since the inception of the programme include the construction of a classroom block in Limpopo primary school and the furnishing of Masera primary school. In 2009, the management committee bought 25 desks for Masera primary school and text books at a cost of US\$ 1000. During the same year the management committee also bought a deep freeze at a cost of US\$700 for easy storage of carcasses of game meat.

In 2010, the community dug a 105 meter borehole, rehabilitated a dip tank and built two teacher houses in Masera secondary school at a total cost of

US\$5500. In 2011 the management committee bought 50 bags of cement and 10 000 bricks at a cost of US\$2 500 for the construction of a classroom block in Limpopo primary school in ward 8 community. According to the interviewees, consultations and negotiations for funding community projects from the 2011 income were still underway.

These projects have contributed to the improvement of the general welfare in the community and the quality of the learning environment of school children. Most of the respondents appreciate the benefits when they target community projects such as rehabilitation of dip tanks, schools and clinics. It appears the ecotourism venture has a sustainable future and is more profitable than livestock ranching. However, general cash income from the project has proved not to be significant at household level, but can be substantial at community level.

Table 6.4: Summary of community projects funded from project revenue since 2008

ACTIVITY	AMOUNT SPENT IN US\$
School furniture and books	US\$1500
Deep freeze (fridge)	US\$700
Motor bikes (2)	US\$5000
Rehabilitation of dip tank,	US\$500
Completing a clinic	US\$1200
Bricks and Cement	US\$2500
Borehole drilling	US\$3000
TOTAL	US14400

6.12.3 Benefits to the environment

The beneficiaries' preference for natural resource conservation has led to the sustainable exploitation of flora and fauna in the study area. The wife of the

safari operator asserts that “Without these pristine wilderness areas, the world will be a much sadder place. If we lose the battle for conservation there will be nothing left for everybody”.

The ecotourism project in Masera community gives the land reform beneficiaries custody and responsibility in managing wildlife and tourism activities in the area. The project brought a varying degree of benefits to the project stakeholders including financial, social and environmental. Ecological benefits include the reduction of poaching activities in the area. The local people began to see the park as a reservoir of wealth and became protective of their newly found natural asset. The CAMPFIRE officer reiterated that the farm is well conserved, as evidenced by the increasing number of wild animals on the farm. The officer emphasized that the major reason for the increase of wildlife in the area is the settlement of people in major wildlife farms around the district. The settlement of people in former wildlife farms has increased human/wildlife conflict and consequently wildlife has found its way to the study area where there is little human interference. The CAMPFIRE officer also emphasized that the Department of National Parks and Wildlife has recommended culling of the impala population to maintain the carrying capacity of the farm.

Most of the beneficiaries interviewed indicated that they have learnt a lot about trophy hunting and benefits of living in harmony with wildlife. Some of the interviewees indicated that the benefits that they are receiving from the ecotourism project are better compared to livestock ranching, where only those individuals with large herd of cattle benefit from grazing compared to those who do not have cattle. Revenues from ecotourism ensure that the whole community benefits through community social development projects.

The project is an important driver for rural development in the country and can serve as an example to other community based ecotourism initiatives in the country. Most beneficiaries interviewed expressed interest in ecotourism development and wildlife management.

6.13 SUMMARY OF BENEFITS OF PROJECT BENEFITS

The study has revealed that the ecotourism venture in Masera community has benefitted the land reform beneficiaries and the local community in a number of ways which include:

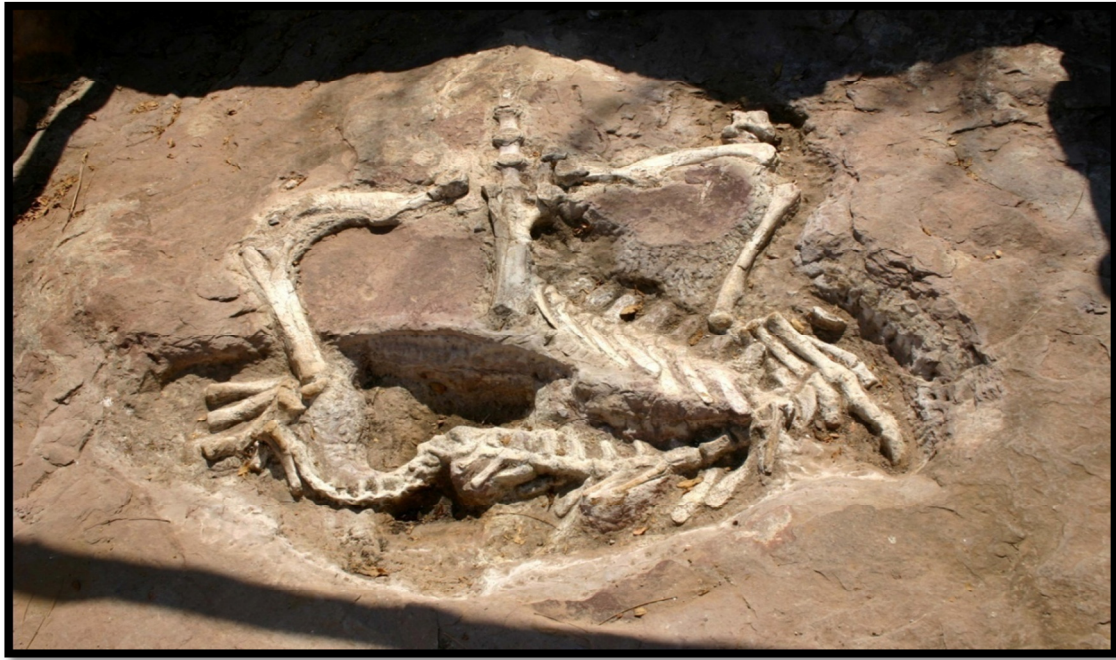
- Increased local employment creation and income generation;
- Greater diversification of economic activities;
- Conservation of flora and fauna in the area;
- Training of beneficiaries on conservation issues; and
- Improved local skills on conservation and natural resources management.
- Increased funding of local community projects

6.14 ECOTOURISM ACTIVITIES AT THE DESTINATION

The farm is located directly across the Limpopo River from the Mapungubwe National Park in South Africa, a UNESCO World heritage site of great Southern African cultural, historical and archeological importance. It is hoped that the world heritage site status will be extended to Sentinel Ranch once the GMTFCA is officially promulgated (Institute of Rural Technologies, 2011).

6.14.1 Historical features

There are numerous Mapungubwe archeological sites that have caught the interest of the ecotourists, particularly historians (Safari operator, interview). The area is bursting with fossil dinosaur sites dating back to 240-210 million years ago (see photograph 1). One fossil site in particular is considered of huge paleontological importance in the Southern African fossil record (Institute of Rural Technologies, 2011). There are also numerous Stone Age paintings dotted around the farm (see photograph 2).



Picture 1: Dinosaur fossil: Picture by Vanessa Bristow.



Picture 2: Stone Age Rock paintings: Picture by Vanessa Bristow.

6.14.2 Diverse vegetation communities

The varied geology, rugged landscape and low rainfall produce a fascinating botanical diversity from the Mopani trees to fig trees and nyala berry along the Limpopo valley.

There are also protected species in the area particularly the *Hoodia currorri lugardii* and the giant baobab tree (see photograph 4 and 5). The *Hoodia currorri lugardii* tree is a protected species in Masera community and is believed to be a medicinal plant that has the potential to suppress effects of HIV and Aids.



Picture 3: Hoodia currorri lugardii: Picture by Vanessa Bristow.



Picture 4: Baobab trees: Picture by Vanessa Bristow.

6.14.3 Photographic safaris

Sentinel ranch offers a family adventure holiday in one of the most beautiful safari areas available to Southern African ecotourism. The study site features photographing wildlife, clients will be travelling with an experienced photographer (son of the operator), experiencing wildlife in their natural habitat and there is variety of wildlife to photograph (see photographs of some of wild animals found in the farm below).

Birding is a big part of enjoyment of ecotourists on Sentinel Ranch where close to 400 species have been recorded. Bird watching is wonderful at anytime of the year, but most migratory birds visit the locality during summer that include the secretive Olive tree Warbler and the ubiquitous summer Siren (Safari operator, Interview).



Picture 5: The Zebra family: Picture by Vanessa Bristow.



Picture 6: The Eland bull: Picture by Vanessa Bristow.



Picture 7: Lappet faced Vulture: Picture by Vanessa Bristow.



Picture 8: Impala family: Picture by Vanessa Bristow.



Picture 9: The Baboon family: Picture by Vanessa Bristow.



Picture 10: Part of the elephant herd: Picture by Vanessa Bristow.

6.14.4 Cultural heritage

The Masera rural community around Sentinel Ranch is a vibrant microcosm of rural life. African cultural customs and traditions are alive and well. Visitors to the farm often experience an eye opening experience of undisturbed rural village environment. There are cultural attractions which are available in the community including local dances, storytelling and rain making ceremonies. The safari operator asserts that most tourists who visit the area sample the Venda culture in terms of food and traditional dances (see photograph 5).

There are also ancient Venda caves in the area that harbour secrets of the Venda tribe. The Venda tribe gathers at the caves for rain making ceremonies mainly in October during the onset of the rain season (GMTFCA, 2010).



Picture 11: Venda woman dances in traditional attire for the tourists: Picture by Vanessa Bristow.

6.14.5 Accommodation

Visitors are accommodated in a stone and thatch camp that blends aesthetically into its surroundings amongst towering baobabs and giant boulders at the foot of sandstone cliffs. The camping site accommodates a total of 8 people in four thatched chalets (one double, three sharing). The chalets are all equipped with a bathroom en-suite with hot and cold running

water and a shared veranda. The chalets are electrified and there is a generator on standby for the occasional load shading that is occasional experienced in the country.



Picture 12: Thatched chalets: Picture by Vanessa Bristow.



Picture 13: One of the bedrooms: Picture by Vanessa Bristow.

6.14.6 Other attractions

The area hosts the *Tour de Tuli* that has become an annual event in the international cycling calendar. The cycling event dates back to history as it was a creation of the Pioneer column (Institute of Rural Technologies, 2011).



Picture 14: 2010 Tour de Tuli biking event: Picture by Vanessa Bristow.

6.15 IMPACT OF THE PROJECT ON LIVELIHOODS

In the analysis of the existing economic activities, it was noted that the ecotourism project had varied effects on the livelihood activity of some of the beneficiaries. The evaluation of success or failure varied among stakeholders, most beneficiaries outside the management say they are fed up, they are not seeing benefits and would like to graze their animals, but the management committee says the development is highly successful.

At household level the project has only partly benefitted the management committee through payment of their services. According to the interviewees the management committee receives a substantial amount of money at the end of the hunting season as payment of their services that include fence maintenance and controlling poachers. Three beneficiaries interviewed who are members of the management committee indicated improvement of their livelihood as a result of the project. The respondents pointed out that they managed to send their children to school using the proceeds from the project.

One of the respondents outside the management argued that the initiative has the potential of improving livelihoods only at the community level, but benefits at household level are meager as dividends after sharing are too little.

At communal level, the community directly benefitted in many ways from the project's operations. The project has assisted various local schools in a variety of ways that include electrification, water reticulation, toilets (operator), desks, books and teacher accommodation (beneficiaries). The project through the operator has also created a Floating Trophy for Best Conservation Awareness for Beitbridge district high schools, to encourage awareness of relevant conservation issues in the district.

6.16 CHALLENGES FACING THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROJECT

Benefits of the project are seasonal and beneficiaries receive reasonable income at the end of the hunting season in October. When the hunting season is over between November and April there will be very little income from the project.

Sharing of benefits is the major problem threatening the smooth running of the project. The beneficiaries have no faith in the management committee and claim that the management committee appropriates the proceeds for their own use. In most cases, as the other beneficiaries argue, the management committee, donate as little as US\$1700 per season to schools and clinics. The rest of the money is diverted for their own use under the pretext of meeting other operational costs and payment of their services. For instance, in 2009 the focus group discussion in Machuchuta (ward 8) revealed that the rest of the beneficiaries were not consulted when the management committee donated US\$1000 for the construction of a classroom block in Limpopo primary school and buying of a deep freeze at a total cost of US\$1700. The remaining US\$15313.11 was said to having been used to pay salaries of the management committee and meeting other operational costs. Such petty politics between the management and the rest of the beneficiaries affects the smooth running of the project.

The major challenge that threatens the sustainability of the project is that very few people from the community benefited from the ownership of this farm,

whereas the burden associated with living with wildlife is faced by the whole community. There has always been some discontent from the non-beneficiaries claiming indirect involvement in wildlife protection. One of the community members claimed that he contacted the police at his own expense after seeing two buffalos that strayed in the community. The buffalos were rescued. "It is therefore ideal that since the project has taken the form of natural resource conservation, the whole community must benefit to achieve total natural resource protection" he explained.

The gravel road network leading to the farm is very poor. This is seen as a barrier to effective tourism development in the area, however integrated planning can provide solutions to these problems.

The other challenge is the appropriate level of authority. The beneficiaries of the farm appear not to be having full rights of proprietorship. Most beneficiaries kept on referring questions to the RDC. For instance, when asked about future development plans, the beneficiaries had little knowledge about the GMTFCA, but the RDC officer and the operator claimed negotiations are at an advanced stage.

Hunting proceeds are handled by the RDC who will then disburse them to the beneficiaries at the end of the hunting season. The district council takes the same percentage (48%) of benefits with the beneficiaries claiming that it provides roads and other forms of infrastructure to the community. Surprisingly, these developments according to the interviewees are not implemented. Three participants who were part of the management committee complained that most of the work is done by themselves and the operator, especially when it comes to fence maintenance and controlling poachers. There is little input from the council justifying the huge percentage that they demand at the end of the hunting season. The focus group discussion in ward 9 stressed that the community must be the main beneficiaries from the project and criticized the equal sharing of the proceeds with the council, arguing that the RDC has little input on the project. They suggested that 48% taken by the RDC must be donated to various community projects on an annual basis and the beneficiaries to receive 48% percent in order to meet operational costs. This clearly indicates that revenue sharing is a difficult task. Alternatively, the percentage levied by the RDC needs to be reduced so that

more benefits accrue to the beneficiaries and the community through community development projects such as drilling boreholes and buying furniture for schools and clinics.

The other major problem is that wildlife management was not initially considered as a land use option during the implementation of the FTLRP. As a result, the project is often viewed as a clandestine arrangement by some sections of the society, particularly politicians who have little knowledge about wildlife and natural resources management.

The community lacks sufficient knowledge regarding the management of the park, although efforts have been made to train the management committee. The level of illiteracy is very high, for instance most of the beneficiaries interviewed had primary level education. This threatens the improvement of the necessary expertise needed for the community to run the project without the assistance of the council.

Indigenous and local knowledge are not tapped for greater diversification of cultural products. Cultural sites are not well documented and thus cannot be well packaged and marketed. Table 5.6 below summarizes some of the challenges and opportunities facing the development of the project.

Zimbabwe as a whole seems to be having a problem with its international image, due to the way the country implemented its land reform programme and its human rights record (Institute of Rural Technologies, 2011). Therefore the full potential of the project is not being realized due to limited tourists visiting the country. The number of tourists compared with the 1990s before the implementation of the FTLRP has drastically reduced around the country (GMTFCA, 2010).

There are also other problems facing the development of the project, such as a poor road network, limited ecotourism activities, limited funds for tourism development and uncoordinated marketing and development strategies. Opportunities and threats pertaining to ecotourism development are summarized in table 5.6 below.

Reducing damage done by wild animals and improving people's attitude to wildlife is a key challenge in developing a well coordinated wildlife

management system. There is no clear policy for compensation as a result of crop damage by wild animals. When it comes to compensation issues, the beneficiaries argue that compensation money must come from the RDC, while the RDC says it should come from the beneficiaries. Such petty politics derail the smooth running of the project.

Table: 6.5: SWOT analysis of the Masera ecotourism project

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
▪ The farm is well position for ecotourism development ▪ Unique flora and fauna ▪ Unique Venda and Sotho cultures ▪ Abundant wildlife species ▪ Existence of archeological sites ▪ Existence of 4 by 4 trial routes	▪ Limited funds to develop a coordinated ecotourism plan ▪ Limited packages offered to tourists ▪ Poor state of the road ▪ Poor infrastructure on the farm ▪ Minimal to no improvements on the livelihood of beneficiaries ▪ Too many stakeholders involved in disbursement of project benefits
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
▪ Support from the local planning authority (RDC) ▪ Linked to GMTFCA tourism development initiatives ▪ Complements national policy to support wildlife utilization ▪ Existence of a vibrant trophy hunting industry in the country	▪ High taxation from the RDC ▪ Dwindling number of tourists inflow in the country ▪ Loss of investor confidence in the country ▪ Poor rainfall patterns in the area ▪ Existence of wildlife poachers within the community ▪ Too many petty politics involving RDC, community, beneficiaries and the politicians

6.17 FUTURE DEVELOPMENT PLANS

Sentinel Ranch occupies a highly strategic location in relation to the proposed GMTFCA. Therefore plans to incorporate the farm into the GMTFCA are at an advanced stage. The inclusion of the farm under the GMTFCA will act as a key economic driver that will present an opportunity to enhance livelihoods of the

community through improved tourist inflows between Zimbabwe, South Africa and Botswana. The GMTFCA comprises 4 872 km² of land from Botswana, South Africa and Zimbabwe. When the project is officially promulgated, all internal fences within its boundaries will be removed to allow free movement of wildlife (GMTFCA, 2010)

The GMTFCA has proposed setting aside 10 000 hectares of land in Sentinel Ranch to enclose about 300 buffaloes. The buffaloes are the transmitters of foot and mouth diseases, their enclosure will minimize livestock diseases in the neighboring community. Livestock farmers across the borders have been consulted about this initiative to reduce the spread of foot and mouth disease within the GMTFCA zone (CAMPFIRE Officer, interview). The proposal will increase game viewing and photographic safaris in the area.

There is also a proposal to open an air strip in the area for the easy movement of tourists between the three GMTFCA countries.

There is also a proposal to integrate a new photographic safari operation in the eco-designated area of Sentinel Ranch designed to make the area more productive, see the application (ANNEXTURE B). The application was lodged to the BRDC and is waiting for approval by a full council meeting.

6.18 CONCLUSION

The majority of the respondents rate ecotourism as an important land use in the district, compared to cropping and livestock rearing. The management committee noted that not all members of the community could benefit from the ecotourism venture. Such realities could be communicated to the rest of the community. From the interviews carried out with the RDC and the National Parks and Wildlife it was noted that the success of the project depends on the following strategies:

- Active participation of all the beneficiaries in planning and decision making
- More community training
- Proceeds to target community projects for the benefit of all community members
- Access to credit and other extension services

- Transparency in benefit sharing
- Reduction of percentage income taken by council from 48% to 15%.
- Compensation for damage by wild animals
- Reduced poaching.
- Intensification of irrigation development to support livelihoods.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter makes recommendations for the study findings based on the literature review on land reform and community based ecotourism as well as the investigations carried out in Masera community ecotourism project. The chapter concludes with some possible areas for further research.

7.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

Undoubtedly, extensive damage has been done to Zimbabwe's natural resources especially wildlife, forestry and the land itself, due to uncoordinated implementation of the FTLRP. Despite this set-back, the primary concern must now be focused on how to serve the remaining natural resources and the livelihoods of the people who depend on these natural resources. According to Kwashirai (2010), the land reform programme cannot be reversed but a way forward can be mapped to protect the remaining natural resources. Wormer (2003) suggests that there is a need for land reform programmes to be implemented transparently and through an orderly process to lobby for an inclusion of environmental criteria to be enshrined into the land laws to safeguard the environment and promote community based proprietorship of natural resources.

It is never too late to revisit land reform models and policies to ensure protection of our natural resources for the benefit of the present and future generations. It is never too late to advocate for the reconstitution of a common property and lobby to ensure that land reform programmes and policies recognize and promote sustainable community based natural resources management (Liversage, 2010).

Based on my review of land reform and ecotourism literature and my analysis of the ecotourism project in Masera community, recommendations are proposed as priority areas for contributing to a sustainable land reform programme in a post crisis recovery for Zimbabwe. Although some of the

recommendations will be based on circumstances at Sentinel Ranch and the Masera community, my reading of literature suggests that they may have broader implications as well, if the national and local contexts of ecotourism development are considered.

Investigations on the project in Masera community revealed that adequate financial benefits from ecotourism are not transparently transferred to local communities. This is the area of concern that threatens the motive to reconcile land reform and community based ecotourism development. The study revealed that the RDC is entitled to 48% of the project proceeds, the CAMPFIRE association 4% and land reform beneficiaries 48%. This clearly indicates that wildlife management has a lot of stakeholders involved and benefits must be shared among all the stakeholders. Proposals must be made for the RDC to reduce their percentage income to ensure beneficiaries receive adequate economic returns from ecotourism activity, which ultimately might encourage them to modify their overall behaviour towards wildlife. Moreover, systems of checks and balances must be promoted and accounting of various project incomes must be monitored and integrated, ultimately, the provision of benefits from ecotourism to local communities can be guaranteed.

As the cases in Masera community illustrate, perceived future benefits, representations and issues of identity trigger numerous conflicts. Conflict often arises due to the inherently unequal power relations between local people and government and conservation agencies engaged in joint decision making. Recommendations are proposed that the beneficiaries of the farm under study be empowered to directly negotiate with safari operators and other private sector partners for direct payments of hunting and ecotourism revenues. Under this direct payment system the 48% allocated to the council might be used for ward level management costs, community projects or a revolving fund.

Ecotourism development has the potential to harm local cultures and environments of the destination that they are visiting. Preparations to understand the cultural, environmental and economic situations of the areas to be visited can allow for appropriate and respectful interactions to take place between locals and visitors. There must be culturally appropriate opportunities for local residents to engage in ecotourism related activities. Otherwise the

local residents may not have skills, flexibility which will limit the benefits they will receive.

There needs to be an organized awareness programme that will explain the objectives of the ecotourism initiative and the general project objectives to the local communities and to educate the communities on what to expect about the benefits of the programme. The beneficiaries must be judiciously trained in terms of natural resource management and be empowered to enter into contracts with private sector players in tourism enterprises. Training must also be extended to the whole community in order to capacitate them with skills on biodiversity conservation. Environmental education and awareness programmes will allow for an increased understanding by communities of what they should expect from ecotourism projects so that they can plan accordingly.

In light of the disagreements between beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries over compensation issues as experienced in Masera community, recommendations are proposed based on adequate compensation from the project funds resulting from conflicts between wildlife and people (particularly in the form of damage to crops and livestock). There must be clear policy on compensation issues and a fund from project proceeds must be set up to serve the same purpose. Otherwise such petty issues may derail the commitment to conservation. An executive management structure for the project needs to be set-up that has day to day operational responsibilities for monitoring and co-ordinating project objectives and dealing with compensation issues.

Regarding the re-organization of the land reform programmes, there is still a possibility that people who were settled under the A1 model during the FTLRP in Matabeleland farms, particularly in conservancies, be relocated and the farms reverted to wildlife management. If the current land uses are allowed to continue in these farms, there will be serious land degradation which will affect livelihoods of the future generations. Since agricultural production has proved to be less rewarding in these areas, the government and the donor community must support expansion and rehabilitation of irrigation schemes to help limit unsustainable dry land cropping which consumes a lot of space and destruction of natural resources. On the other hand, irrigation schemes will help to support livelihoods of the relocated beneficiaries and reduce over dependency on natural resources. The community must also be trained

regarding proper livestock management skills to safeguard their livelihoods and as compensation for the lost land if they are relocated.

The fundamental objective of the FTLRP was to decongest communal grazing areas. It can be argued that most communal lands in Beitbridge district are sparsely located because of the poor rains and poor soils (Institute of Environmental Studies, 1999). There was therefore no need to propose the A1 resettlement model, but instead the intrinsic biodiversity value of the acquired farms should have been considered in order to combine the objectives of the land reform with conservation and sustainable use of natural resources.

Beneficiaries resettled under A2 models must make robust efforts to manage natural resources within their plots. A2 beneficiaries who were allocated farms with better natural resource endowment must be made aware of the value of wildlife and other natural resources to ensure maximum support on conservation efforts. Proposals must be made among A2 beneficiaries to integrate their land uses to ensure compatibility with wildlife and other natural resource use conservation. A proposal can be made not to erect fences on their plots to ensure free movement of wildlife and maintain the pristine nature of the environment.

A closer look at Zimbabwe's land laws shows that the country has no official document that outlines the agreed broader intentions and aspirations on the environment (Liversage, 2010). There has been little attention on reconciling land reform, conservation and economic development. The Environmental Management Agency (EMA) in Zimbabwe needs to be re-launched with a new vision and engagement with some of the emerging policy discourses especially the climate change agenda (Moyo, 2011). The vision of the environmental policy must address sustainable environmental management through strengthening of environmental laws. The environmental laws must provide the sustainable management of the resources and protection of the environment and environmental degradation. These environmental laws must embrace most aspects of sustainable development. It is suggested that improvement of environmental policy should include encouraging the new settlers to engage in various natural resource enterprises, including ecotourism. The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) is even more explicit, arguing for wildlife based model for affirmative action and community

participation that will enhance Zimbabwe international image on conservation and attract donor support (Liversage, 2010). As such, land reform programmes will be more in common with international acclaimed South African model of contractual national parks resulting from land restitution claims in conservation areas. The best known example is that of the Makuleke community who has had their ancestral land in the Kruger National Park returned to them on condition that they maintain it as a wildlife conservation area (Steenkamp and Uhr, 2000). Finally, land reform approaches in Zimbabwe must adopt methods such as PRA (participatory rural appraisal) or RRA (rapid rural appraisal) in which the community can define their priorities on the land uses of the acquired pieces of land.

7.3 POSSIBLE AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The study focused on ecotourism development within the context of land reform to provide a framework to enhance and sustain rural development for communities in marginal areas. The study has focused on developing guidelines on how successful land reform programmes can be implemented in Matabeleland South province in general and Beitbridge district in particular. The study offered a multidisciplinary approach to ecotourism development by focusing on land reform beneficiaries in agricultural marginal areas. The study could aid land use planners and policy makers from the department of Land Reform and Resettlement, local authorities, Environmental Management Agency and Department of Tourism in finding long lasting solutions on how to protect and benefit from our natural resources.

From a review of the literature on ecotourism and land reform it is important to note that agriculturally-based land reform models cannot achieve sustainability and improvement on local livelihoods in agriculturally marginal areas without investment on irrigation schemes.

All farms in Beitbridge district with large wild life populations must be studied further to determine the perceptions of beneficiaries on wildlife management. Possibly, a sustainable land distribution process can be achieved through incorporating perceptions of the target population when making decisions. If these proposals are considered, along with other many factors that go into

ecotourism development, then ecotourism can become an improved means of achieving conservation for sustainable rural development.

7.4 CONCLUSIONS

The Masera community conservation is a clear case of the potential for biodiversity conservation, providing sustainable benefits for land reform beneficiaries. However, the Masera case also points to several barriers that must be overcome in order to achieve socio-economic benefits associated with ecotourism development as well as to foster environmental conservation. The study has revealed that there has been some improvement in reconciling land reform, biodiversity conservation and economic development. From the study findings, there has been some improvements in the development of community projects as a result of the project income, although at household level income from the project has not been significant. The project has also improved individual employment opportunities, but at the same time internal conflict within the beneficiaries has increased resulting in instability in local governance and decision making. On the other hand the study has revealed that land reform programmes as conducted elsewhere in Beitbridge district have not managed to bring an end to poverty in its many manifestations.

The primary aim of the study was to describe how the ecotourism project as was implemented by beneficiaries of Sentinel Ranch from Masera community changed the livelihoods of the beneficiaries concerned. The beneficiaries interviewed considered the project as a welcome development as it possesses the potential to improve livelihoods and at the same time protecting their valued natural resources. The Masera community conservation initiative illustrates the importance of local community perceptions in rural economic development initiatives. The shifting of the land use model to natural resource conservation permitted conservation of large tracts of indigenous vegetation, wildlife and the soils at the same time financially benefitting the local community.

It has emerged that the ecotourism project positively benefited the beneficiaries, as well as the local community, through funding of a number of community programmes such as schools, clinics, dip tanks and boreholes.

I hope the findings from this study will be extrapolated to other farms in the region with similar climatic characteristics after careful consideration of the values and aspirations of the target population. The majority of beneficiaries interviewed stressed the need for decision making autonomy and empowerment to enter into contracts with private sector ecotourism enterprises without involvement of the RDC. In this way tourism revenue will be directly accruing to the beneficiaries and the local community. Such increased responsibilities for communities in financial management, and decision making, might enhance the commitment to conservation.

Not all beneficiaries had a positive perspective on ecotourism development. The revenue sharing mechanism needs careful planning. The proceeds from the project must benefit all the beneficiaries to ensure maximum cooperation. There was concern among some of the interviewed beneficiaries that proceeds from the project are benefitting few families. From the author's observation, most beneficiaries who are illiterate seem to have little knowledge of the proceeds and think that developments made in their community emanate from the RDC coffers. Awareness of the project's operations must be extended to all the beneficiaries, so as to ensure transparency and equitable sharing of resources.

The ecotourism project initiative in Masera community, as the study revealed, managed to foster community support for conservation, sustainable exploitation of natural resources as well as economically benefiting the local community. As a result this project presents as a perfect opportunity model for integrating land reform, conservation and rural development objectives. The experience of community based ecotourism development illustrate the potential of community based ecotourism to improve rural livelihoods and conservation while local communities remain firmly relying on dry land farming and cattle ranching. Ultimately, ecotourism development contributes an important and growing source of diversification.

It is important to note that the literature on community based ecotourism development and land reform interacts with the notion of sustainable development. It is therefore mandatory that the implementation of these development discourses take the cognizance of the local livelihoods and

regional natural factor endowment to achieve local economic development in agricultural marginal areas.

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LIST OF ANNEXURES

ANNEXURE A

SEMI STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

Introduction

This research is being carried out in partial fulfilment of a Master of Science degree in Town and Regional Planning at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa. The scope of the research is to find out how the ecotourism project in Masera community has influenced the livelihoods of the people who benefited on the farm. Twenty beneficiaries from the people who benefited from the farm will be randomly selected as well as 21 more community members who did not benefit on the farm. Participation in this research will be voluntary; no direct or indirect benefits will accrue as result of participating in this research. Participants are free not to answer any questions they are not comfortable with and they are free to terminate the interview process at any time. Strict measures will be made to ensure confidentiality and information given will not be shared to anyone outside this study. Information gathered for this study will only be used for academic purposes only.

Title

Exploring the Impact of Land Reforms on Community Based Ecotourism Initiatives. A Case Study of Masera Community in Beitbridge district: Zimbabwe

Key informant interview guide (Local Government, District Land Office, Beitbridge Rural District Council and Environmental Management Agency).

NAME -----

DATE-----

ORGANISATION-----

POSITION-----

- How were you involved in the implementation of the FTLRP? Please Explain.

- What land use planning models were the most dominant in Beitbridge district? Please explain.

- In your knowledge what impacts did the FTLRP had on wildlife and other natural resources in Beitbridge district?

- Why were community based ecotourism initiatives not considered during the implementation of the FTLRP in Beitbridge district?

- In your own opinion how was the ecotourism programme in Masera community initiated?

- How did the ecotourism programme change livelihoods of the beneficiaries and the community at large in relationship to:

Factors	Improvement	No improvement
Farming e.g. increase in livestock, cropping		
Access to clean water		
Education of children		
Food		
Clothing		
Income		
Farming implements		
Other (specify)		

- In your opinion was it proper to include conservation programmes during the FTLRP? Please explain.

- What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages of community based ecotourism?

Key Informant Interview guide: Tourism Operator, Department of National Parks and focus group discussion).

- How was the park established?
- Who are the major players in the park?
- Who is responsible for management? Does the management plan exist?
- What is the park's mandate/goal/vision?
- What problems are encountered during day to day management of the park?
- What tourism activities are practiced in this farm?

ACTIVITY	TICK IF APPLICABLE
Bird watching	
Game viewing	
fishing	
Trophy hunting	
Other (specify)	

- Are hunting concessions offered at the park? What type of animals do you offer to the market?
- Do you keep records of animals hunted per year? If not give estimates over a year.
- Are there any endangered species in this park?
- Are visitor statistics kept? If not can you estimate the number of visitors received annually?
- What is the park's budget and funding sources? Does it operate at a loss or profit?

- Are funds specifically put towards conservation or monitoring activities?
- What are the accommodation options for tourists? Are they private or park operated?
- What tourism infrastructure exists on this farm?
- What effects did the FTLRP had on wildlife and other natural resources?
- Are there any other activities about the park that you would like to tell me?

Dear Sir\ Madam

My name is Mtulisi Moyo I am a student at the University of the Witwatersrand. I am conducting a research on ecotourism over the following two months. The purpose of my research is for the fulfilment of a Master of Science degree in Town and Regional planning at the University of the Witwatersrand. In particular I am interested to find out how the ecotourism project in your community impacts on your livelihoods. As a member of this community your cooperation in answering some questions will be most appreciated. The questions should take between 15 to 30 minutes. Your participation is absolutely voluntary, and you are free not to answer any question(s) you are not comfortable with or to terminate the interview during the course of the interview.

Thank you for your cooperation

Mtulisi Moyo

Land Reform Beneficiaries: Interview guide

Name of researcherMTULISI MOYO.....

Date

Village

Name of interviewee

Age

Gender.....

Occupation.....

- How long have you been living in this area?
- What were the past activities on this farm?
- How was the relationship between the former owner and the community before land reform?
- Does this project satisfy your intentions? Why?
- Please list your sources of income outside the project

Sources of income per year	Value in US\$
Farming e.g. cropping, no. of cattle, goats, sheep	
Formal sector employment e.g. mining, public service	
Government pension	
Remittances	
Informal sector e.g. selling home brewed beer, clothes	
Other (specify)	

Questions after land reform and project implementation.

- When were you allocated this farm?

- What model was it allocated for?
- What were the major reasons that led to the change of the model?
- What is your overall view of the land use planning models in the district?
- What have you learnt from the current activities on the farm?
- Why do you think is necessary to have this type of land use on this farm?
- Has your involvement in the project establishment impacted your livelihoods in a positive and/or negative way?

positive	negative
----------	----------

- What changes in livelihood have you experienced as a result of your involvement in this project in relationship to:

Factors	Improvement (Please explain)	No improvement (Please explain)
Farming e.g. increase in livestock, cropping		
Access to clean water		
Education of children		
Food		
Clothing		
income		
Farming implements		
Other (specify)		

- What benefit has this programme brought to the community?
- What problems do you experience in this farm?
- What do you think should be done to address these problems?
- How is the project managed?
- How often do you hold communal meetings?
- What are the main issues that you discuss during meetings?
- Who are your partners in the project?
- Do you get assistance from the government and other organizations?
- What is the nature of benefits in this project?
- How do you share these benefits among yourselves?
- How do the rest of the community benefit from this initiative
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of engaging into wildlife management?

Questions to community members outside the project

Name of interviewer..... MTULISI MOYO.....

Date

Village

Name of interviewee

Age

Gender.....

Occupation.....

- How long have you been living in this area?

- What are your sources of income :

Sources of income per annum	Value in US\$
Farming e.g. cropping, no. of cattle, goats, sheep	
Formal sector employment e.g. mining, public service	
Government pension	
Remittances	
Informal sector e.g. selling home brewed beer, clothes	
Other (specify)	

- Are you aware that a park exists near your community
- What do you think are the reasons for designing this farm as a park
- What is the nature of farming activities are you involved?
- Are your farming activities satisfying your intentions?
- What is the nature of the farming activity in Sentinel ranch?
- How does this farming activity affect you?
- Is there any benefit that you get from this farming activity?
- What do you think should be done in this farm?
- Do you think similar projects should have been done during land reform?
- Is the protection of natural resources important to you? Explain why?

ANNEXURE B

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SENTINEL LIMPOPO
S · A · F · A · R · I · S

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
BEITBRIDGE RURAL DISTRICT
COUNCIL
26 JAN 2011
P.O. BOX 22 BEITBRIDGE
0-2404/2508/2453/3363
FAX: 086-2489

P.O. BOX 45, BEIT BRIDGE, ZIMBABWE TEL/FAX +263 (290) 22296 CELL: +27 83 260 1910 / +37 83 260 0064 EMAIL: office@sentinel.co.zw
HOP 0101

The Chief Executive Officer
Beit Bridge Rural District Council
BEIT BRIDGE

12 January 2011

Dear Sir

SENTINEL RANCH - PHOTOGRAPHIC SAFARI PROPOSAL

To fit in with the aspirations of the proposed Greater Mapungubwe Transfrontier Conservation Area and to protect our national heritage resources of dinosaurs, archaeology and wildlife, we are submitting a proposal to rebuild the Sentinel Ranch River Camp (commonly known as the Butcher) to a standard that can accommodate foreign and local Photographic Safari Clients.

As an active utilisation area for the camp to conduct Photographic Safaris on Sentinel Ranch, we are requesting to utilise the area west of the Ipayi River to the Maramani boundary and along the Limpopo River - an area of approximately 20 000 acres.

We are offering the farm beneficiaries (under the management of the Rural District Council and CAMPFIRE) the following:

- A concession fee of US\$1 per hectare that is been utilised
- A 5% levy on all bed nights sold
- An annual field day for the four high school children(west of Beit Bridge) as defined and agreed with the RDC and operator for education and awareness in wildlife and the sustainable benefits of protecting natural resources
- To offer the surrounding communities employment opportunities within the project
- To encourage the Shashi Irrigation farmers to contract grow market garden vegetables for consumption within the lodge
- To assist and harmonize with the local communities in tourist related activities that will generate supplementary income such as curios and cultural village exposure to interested foreign clients.

Because the rebuilding of the camp requires substantial capitalisation and marketing and for a relationship to develop between the operator, farm beneficiaries and local communities we are asking for a tenureship period of fifteen years.

Yours faithfully

Colin Bristow
PP Digby Bristow