



Annex 1. Case Studies of Community-based Conservation in Africa¹

Traditional Sacred Sites: Forests, Groves, Waters, and Fauna in the Casamance, Senegal

Sacred Natural Sites (SNS) abound in Senegal, including water-edge mangroves and local waters. Bliss-Kasssa and Kawawana within two southern communes along the Casamance River are examples. Together, these boast 51 SNS, whose origins possibly date back to the settlement of the Diola people in this area during the first century AD. Most of the sites are along the Casamance River and its interconnected tributaries as water-edge havens for rituals and havens for chosen totem fauna (sharks, whales, crocodiles, hippos or manatee). The family of the founding ancestor of the settlement or its religious leader maintains rules which exclude fishing, and only one of the 51 sites permits shellfish harvesting. Since the Diola are the majority tribe in the area, mystical beacons are understood and feared, deterring misuse even though non-Diola do not necessarily believe in these beacons. Use of motorized piroques is also problematic, scaring off species and damaging marine biodiversity.

Sourced from Victor Botton (2023).

Resources

Diatta, C.S., M. Diouf, C. Karibuhoye, and A. Sow. 2017. Sacred Natural Sites and the Conservation of Marine and Coastal Resources in the Traditional Jola Environment: Example of Bliss-Kassa and the Indigenous Peoples' Land Community Conserved Territories and Areas in Senegal. *Revue d'ethnoecologie*, 11. doi:10.4000/ethnoecologie.2900.

Diatta, C.D, M. Diouf, A. Sow, and C. Karibuhoye. 2020. The Joola Civilization and the Management of Mangroves in Lower Casamance, Senegal. *Revue d'ethnoecologie*, 17. doi:10.4000/ethnoecologie.5855.

Bafoussam Sacred Forest, Cameroon

The Bafoussam Sacred Forest (210 hectares) is an ancestral site belonging to the Bamileke Chiefdoms in the western region of Cameroon. It is used for rites of passage, ceremonies, and a royal festival which can be traced back to the 13th century. The forest was declared protected in the 1930s and registered as a cultural heritage site after independence. It is jointly managed by the Ministry of Arts and Culture, the local chiefdoms, and religious societies. The area was demarcated along with many other sacred sites in Cameroon in 2012. The chiefdom is seeking legal recognition of customary ownership to better enforce the application of Bafoussam Customary Rules, which were updated in 2022. These updates include obligatory collection of seeds and wildlings for the forest's restoration. Prince Koagne Clovis, Coordinator of FIDEPE, the Cameroon focal point for Territories of Life, identifies 940 similar sacred forests in Cameroon.

¹ While additional information and resources have been added with the permission of the authors, the primary information comes from working papers submitted to RRI, where each case study is more fully elaborated: Botton, Victor. 2023. Review of Community-based and -led Conservation for Francophone West Africa; Beyan, Mina. 2023. Review of Community-based and -led Conservation for Anglophone West Africa; Fonji, Tanya. 2023. Review of Community-based and -led Conservation for Central Africa; Langa, Malidadi. 2023. Review of Community-based and -led Conservation for Southern Africa; and Warinwa, Fiesta. 2023. Review of Community-based and -led Conservation for Eastern and the Horn of Africa.



Sourced from Tanya Fonji (2023).

Resources

- Nchoji, P., and F. Merwe. 1997. Occupation, Use and Perceptions of the Bafoussam Sacred Forest. *Journal for the Study of Religion* 10(1): 79–94.
- Defo, L. 2010. Contemporary Shifts in Forest Resource Management in Cameroon: The Case of the Kilum-Ijim Protected Area. *Environmental Management* 45(1): 154–164.
- Lekealem, J., Tchatat, M., and D. Njomo. 2012. The Values of the Bafoussam Sacred Wood Forests (West Cameroon). *International Journal of Biodiversity Science, Ecosystem Services & Management* 8(1–2): 168–177.
- Clovis Koagne, Prince. 2023. Personal communication.

Boabeng-Fiema Monkey Sanctuary, Ghana

Boabeng Fiema Monkey Sanctuary in Nkoranza of the Bono East Region of Ghana protects two species of sacred monkeys. The monkeys live happily among people who treat them well due to their sacred status, an example of how traditional beliefs can help conserve biodiversity. While Christianity has weakened some customs, many Ghanaians, including those in Boabeng and Fiema, sustain traditional beliefs, values, and customs. Monkey protection derives from 1827 when the Chief of Boabeng asked the Chief of Sesedom to provide land for the Fiema community to settle on. He found the Fetish Daworo surrounded by two Mona and Black and White colobus monkeys who followed him. It was decided that the monkeys were the children of the fetish and should not be harmed. Even today, when a monkey dies, it is given a ritual burial by the Fetish Priest of Daworo. The Sanctuary is governed by an eight-member Board of Directors. Revenue is generally low but contributes to community activities. The current Chief of Boabeng is concerned that jobless youth may find no purpose in living among monkeys on lands they prefer to cultivate for income. He is seeking assistance to train youth and women in tourism and arts and crafts to relieve the situation.

Sourced from Mina Beyan (2023), based on information provided by Nana Owusu Damoah Ameyaw III, Chief of Boabeng and Samuel Amponsah, Wildlife Division, Forestry Commission.

Sacred Kaya Forests, Kenya

Sacred Forests (*Kaya*) were a norm among the Mijikenda coastal tribes. The remaining 39 *Kaya* have origins as fortified settlements when clans arrived. They range between two and 200 hectares. The 39 *Kaya* were registered as National Monuments in the 1990s (11 on the World Heritage List). Kaya Kinondo is the main *Kaya* for the Digo-Mijikenda community, governed by elders under customary rules and supported by the Kaya Kinondo Conservation and Development Group since 2000. In addition, seven women's and other self-help groups assist. Their main enterprise is ecotourism, and passing on traditional knowledge to youth, including the study of medicinal plants and remedies. The condition of the *Kaya* is often poor, with some exceptions. A tourist visiting Kaya Kinondo recorded: *"The real beauty of the forest lies in the trees and their stories. Endlessly branching Ficus create fascinating passages and twists and turns between lianas and natural hammocks.... Each younger plant is a living pharmacy. We breathe in antibiotic leaves, antihistamine roots, essential resins and barks which can become remedies.... All of this is experienced while wandering around."* Still, invasive species and illegal activities visibly plague Kaya Kinondo despite it being the first *Kaya* to welcome ecotourism and become a learning site.



Sourced from Edmund Barrow (2023).

Resources

Githitho, A. 2006. "The Sacred Mijikenda Kayas of Coastal Kenya: Evolving Management Principles and Guidelines." In Schaaf, T. and Lee, C. (eds.). 2006. *Conserving Cultural and Biological Diversity: The Role of Sacred Natural Sites and Cultural Landscapes*. UNESCO, Paris, 152–157.

Nyamweru C., S. Kibet, M. Pakia, and J. Cooke. 2008. "The Kaya Forests of Coastal Kenya." In Sheridan, M.J. and Nyamweru, C. (eds.). 2008. *African Sacred Groves: Ecological Dynamics and Social Change*. James Currey, Oxford, 62–86.

Curatolo, F. 2021. *Kaya Kinondo: Nature, History and Magic: The Sacred Forest of the Digo is a living pharmacy*.

Barrow, Edmund. 2023. "Legitimizing and Respecting Sacred Groves: Important for Human Rights and Important for Conservation." In Borde, R., Ormsby, A., Awoyemi, S., and A. Gosler (eds.). 2023. *Religion and Nature Conservation: Global Case Studies*. Routledge, London and New York, 89–102.

Community Protection of Crocodiles, Burkina Faso

Customary designation of animal species as protected totems is common in Burkina Faso. Bazoulé village is 18.5 miles (30 kilometres) north of Ouagadougou where crocodiles have been protected and habituated over centuries. Today, they live in an artificial pond dug with foreign aid. According to local legend, crocodile paths led women to a surviving waterhole during a fierce drought 570 years ago; others claim it dates back many more centuries to when the family settled. Either way, crocodiles enjoy protected status, and villagers enjoy the protection their presence offers. An annual festival is held in their honor, and each crocodile death is accompanied by a ritual funeral. In recent decades, they have also become a source of tourism. However, protection brings its own problems: overpopulation of crocodiles and the pond almost drying up completely for several months a year. The community seeks assistance.

Sourced from Victor Boton (2023).

Resources

Ouedraogo, I., Oueda, A., Malika-Kangoye, N., Thiam, M., Kabore, J., and G. Kabre. 2020. Traditional Beliefs and Conservation of *Crocodylus Suchus* in the Sacred Pools of Bazoulé and Sabou (Burkina Faso). *European Scientific Journal ESJ*, 16(6): 16.

Le Faso Net. 2021. "Burkina Faso: The Sacred Crocodile Pond of Bazoulé is Dying." 14 April. Available at: <https://lefaso.net/spip.php?article104009>.

Le Faso Net. 2022. "Burkina Faso: The Sacred Crocodile Pond is Still Waiting for Help." 22 November. Available at: <https://lefaso.net/spip.php?article117559>.

Sacred Forests Linking Traditional Religion and Belief with Conservation, Togo

It is common in West Africa for each community to designate a totem species and an area exclusively for ritual and religious use. This results in numerous small groves which remain undisturbed over generations. For example, in Togo, the Kabyè of the Kara region protect around 142 such sacred groves. There is often an instinctive link between knowledge that the flora or fauna needing protection from overuse and the assignment of spirits, including those of one's ancestors, to protect these special groves. The Kabyè assign these spirits a role in protecting the community and its lands. They regard the groves as sacred points of contact with spirits to ward off ills and seek out assistance and comfort. It is prohibited to remove a stone,



tree, flower or animal, collect dry wood, or light a fire in these groves. Anyone who violates these prohibitions has to make sacrifices based on the requirements of the deity who is housed there. This integrated ethological and ethnobotanical knowledge is passed on from generation to generation. A 2018 study found that sacred forests continue to play an important role in conserving biodiversity. However, a 2021 research study found that 57 percent of sacred forests in Northern Togo are degraded and identified ritual fires and woodcutting as the primary cause. The researchers expressed concern that respect and related regimes for the protection of sacred groves was declining.

Sourced from Victor Boton (2023).

Resources

Daugey, M. 2016. Sacred Woods and Ritual Practices in Kabyè Country (Togo). *Géoconfluences*.

Lynch, L., K. Kokou, and S. Todd. 2018. Comparison of the Ecological Value of Sacred and Nonsacred Community Forests in Ksboli, Togo. *Tropical Conservation Science* 11: 1–11.

Kossi, A., K. Mazalo, S. Novinyo and K. Kouami. 2021. Impacts of Traditional Practices on Biodiversity and Structural Characteristics of Sacred Groves in Northern Togo, West Africa. *Acta Oeologica* 110: 103680.

Community-based Water and Soil Conservation, Mali

The plateaus of the Bandiagara cliffs covering nearly 4,000 square miles (10,000 square kilometres) are occupied by the Dogon who were fleeing wars for territorial conquest in Guinea during the 12th century. Ancestrally, the Dogon give value to water, wetlands, and plants. They have ritual ceremonies to trigger rain as well as to launch and close activities such as collective fishing. They have farming knowledge rich in techniques for water management, soil creation, and fertility maintenance. They have developed and refined water-saving systems for run-off from escarpments, terraces, and basins to build up soil and ration water for farming with care. Management is assigned to the local customary *hogan*, who have political and religious powers. Rules have strong cultural underpinnings; for example, water points are the homes of genies that are also considered masters of speech able to deprive misusers of water. As widely acknowledged since the early 1990s, the technically ingenious and practical Dogon soil and water conserving traditions have made agriculture sustainable in a harsh environment and allowed numerous indigenous plant species which would otherwise also have been lost to flourish. However, this customary regime has been threatened by tourism, especially since the cliffs and plateau are key attractions in Mali. Additionally, there are ongoing challenges from traditional authority and beliefs by Islam, and coercive decision-making by politicians, officials, and—at times—water experts. Laws decentralizing authority over water, land, and resources in the 1990s helped empower traditional knowledge and customs. The advent of the Salfist jihadist movement and widespread violence and conflict resulting in the military coup in 2021 has made it difficult to know how Dogon communities and their practices will fare in the future.

Sourced from Victor Boton (2023).

Resources

Kassougé, A., J. Dolot and T. Ponsioen. 1990. Traditional Soils and Water Conservation on the Dogon Plateau, Mali. Dryland Series No 23. IIED, London. Available at: <https://www.iied.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/migrate/7272IIED.pdf>.



Sajaloli, B. 2016. Water Engineering and Wetland Protection in Dogon Country, Mali. Geoconfluences. Available at: <http://geoconfluences.ens-lyon.fr/informations-scientifiques/dossiers-thematiques/fait-religieux-et-construction-de-l-espace/corpus-documentaire/genies-de-leau-et-protection-des-zones-humides-en-pays-dogon-mali>.

Making Lake Azili a Sacred Place to Protect, Benin

Lake Azili (200 hectares) in the village of Agonvè is the largest wetland in southeastern Benin. During the dry season, it acts as a reservoir, circulating water from the lake to the river. The communities who use this lake live on the island of Agonvè, located in the middle of the lake. The communities occupy an area of 60 hectares, with an estimated population of around 2,000. Social norms strictly govern access to and use of fishery resources. According to myth, Lake Azili was the reward for hospitality offered by a leper to the village founder, and who found a thread of water which became the lake of present times. This myth protects the lake by making it sacred and limits its use to the people of Agonvè Island. This includes banning nets that might damage fish breeding grounds and practices that might impair the transparency of the water. Two lineages co-manage the lake as descendants from the ancestor, following a well-established calendar of permissible fishing and practices by the seasons. Nevertheless, these rules have proven not to be enough to halt the steady degradation of the lake and the island's resources. In the 2000s, an NGO helped resolve a mounting problem of poor sanitation and surplus of plastic waste, and, since 2008, another NGO has helped the community to tackle resource degradation. Since then, Agonvè has become part of a wider RAMSAR site as a unique small wetland with rich faunal and floral diversity. Villagers run a museum, a small biodiversity reserve on 50 hectares of the island's land mass, and manage tourism, including a watchtower to better see the lake and wetland and its natural wealth. Boton confirms that the area remains fully operational as a conserved wetland as of 2023.

Sourced from Victor Boton (2023).

Resources

PPI. n.d. Strengthening the Sustainable Management of Agonvè Ecosystems. Available at: <https://www.programmeppi.org/projects/renforcement-de-la-gestion-durable-des-ecosystemes-dagonve/>.

Tossounon, A. 2012. The Island of Agonvè in the Commune of Zagnanado. Available at: https://www.podcastjournal.net/L-ile-d-Agonve-dans-la-commune-de-Zagnanado-Un-patrimoine-naturel-encore-meconnu-du-monde_a12511.html.

PART II. FORMALIZED COMMUNITY PROTECTED FORESTS OR GRASSLANDS ON COMMUNITY LANDS

Suledo Village Land Forest Reserve, Tanzania

The 167,400-hectare Suledo Village Land Forest Reserve (VLFR) jointly belongs to nine (now 13) villages in Kiteto District in Manyara Region. Suledo was among the first VLFR piloted in the 1990s, along with eight communities dividing Duru-Haitemba Forest in Babati District into eight VLFR and five communities dividing their forest also long customary lines establishing five VLFR out of Mgori Forest in Singida Region (1993–1998). The trigger for this was government attempts in 1993 to turn these three local forests into Central Government Forest Reserves, hotly protested in Duru Haitemba where the traditional community owners responded by felling the most valuable trees and expanding farming into the forest “before it is taken from us.” Piloting of



community conservation began as an alternative. While the 13 communities of Duru-Haitemba and Mgori chose to divide the forests into distinct community protected reserves and rigorously banned felling and all other unsustainable uses of the slow-growing miombo, Suledo communities built their rules around taking over harvesting and revenue from their famed blackwood (*Dalbergia melanoxylon*) from commercial and illegal loggers. They chose to own and manage the forest jointly under a Zonal Environmental Committee (ZEC), a decision that triggered inter-village disputes, including logging rights and revenue distribution. By 2010, violations of Village Forest By-Laws were rife, prompting intervention. By 2013, most conflicts were around grazing rights and fewer over logging and revenue sharing. A 2021 study recorded improvements and concluded that Suledo was almost ready to join 17 other communities which have obtained certification from the Forest Stewardship Council, considered the most stringent in setting standards for international sales. However, it also noted a new settlement had appeared in the Reserve as well as illegal logging, an unsustainable sawmill, and unreliable governance.

Of note is that piloting of community-owned and -managed forest conservation expanded rapidly to other districts, eventually entrenching what it designated as VLFRs in the Forest Act as the primary route to expanding forest protection. This included stipulations that no new State Forest may be declared on village lands unless it is concluded from independent investigation that no local community is willing to take this on; a rare occurrence. Today, around 1,600 VLFRs exist covering 2.6 million hectares of woodlands within the village land sector; this constitutes nearly 60 percent of mainland Tanzania's area, composed of a mosaic of 12,371 independently registered community land areas as of 2023, all governed by the Village Land Act, 1999. While ultimate ownership of all land belongs to the nation held in trust by the President, the exclusive right to occupy and use the land is owned in common by its members in perpetuity and regulated by the community, including customary norms, where and when relevant. As elected governments, each council may issue bylaws, subject to district council approval. The Village Forest Bylaws of 1995 were the first to be developed by the community instead of issued for them by state agencies. Joint Forest Management (JFM) by communities with the Tanzania Forest Authority manage another 5 million hectares, although the government acknowledges declining community enthusiasm for this model due to lack of community ownership, equitable government-community decision-making, and declining benefits for their efforts. In 2021, the government committed to multiply VLFRs to cover another 4 million hectares of forests and woodlands on village lands by 2031.

Despite recognized success between 1995 and 2015, governance problems have begun to accrue, particularly where communities like Suledo have permitted logging and generated revenue. This is exacerbated by a declining commitment to conservation by village leaders and elites in favor of exploiting opportunities for personal income accumulation. Collusion with corrupt officials and loggers is often recorded, discouraging the majority of village members to bother following the rules themselves or to contribute to guarding. Pushback by the Ministry and the Tanzania Forest Authority has also seen the clawing back of powers empowering communities under the law, delivered in attempts to take over faltering VLFRs, especially where revenue is generated issuing new regulations such as enabling district foresters to once again issue logging permits on unreserved village lands, modified only with pressure from NGOs to at least require the agreement of the elected Village Council.

Sourced from Fiesta Warinwa (2023).



Resources

UNDP. 2012. Suledo Forest Community, Tanzania. Equator Initiative Case Study Series. UNDP, New York.

Magessa, K, G. Mbeyale G., Kajembe G., and J. Katani. 2013. Power Struggles in the Management and Utilization of Suledo Village Land Forest Reserve, Kiteto District, Tanzania. Tanzania Journal of Forestry and Nature Conservation, 82(2).

Mpingo Conservation and Development Initiative. 2021. Needs and Resources Assessment for CBFM Value Chain in the FORVAC Tanga Cluster. MCDI, Dar es Salaam.

Meshack C., Njaidi, R., Makala J. and Z. Faustin. 2022. Policy Note: Evidence of the Negative Effect of Regulatory Changes, Including GN417, on Community-based Forest Management. Tanzania Forest Conservation Group, Dar es Salaam.

Kisimbosa Cha Makasa and Ikulua Loleke Community Forests, DRC

Kisimbosa Forest is 5,572 hectares and customarily owned by four Bambuti Babuluko Pygmy communities in North Kivu Province. Through the issuance of a forest concession, they now have the legal right and responsibility to protect this small mountainous tropical forest. This arose originally out of “Slow Food,” an NGO initiative promoting knowledge and traditional food practices of the Indigenous Peoples of Walikale. Local resource awareness was also raised following mass displacements during armed conflicts. With restored flora and protection by each of the four villages, wildlife is returning to the forest, including several groups of chimpanzees.

Ikulua Loleke Forest is 40,507 hectares and is another example of how the forest is now lawfully owned and managed by the Pygmy hunter-gatherers living in seven settlements in Pendjwa in Maindombe Province. They were assisted by the NGO ANAPAC to seek and secure a concession. This followed extensive consultation, FPIC, training on procedures, participatory mapping, the establishment of active connections with provincial authorities, as well as successful public inquiries and site inspections. The community's simple management plan is under implementation and the forest considered well conserved.

These are only two of more than 130 instances where Community Forestry Concessions covering more than 3 million hectares in the DRC have been issued since the passing of a Ministerial Order setting out the procedures for community forests in 2016, following a decree in 2014 under the Forest Code of 2002. This development enables each community to secure exclusive rights in perpetuity to up 50,000 hectares of forestland for multipurpose use. Logging is permitted only with community consensus and issuance of special permits. Around 70 percent of concessions allocated so far are for conservation. This initiative is globally applauded as critical due to the critical role the Congo Basin plays in climate change mitigation. It is especially popular with customary communities since it is the only legal route currently available to secure community lands, pending enactment of the drafted Land Code which includes a provision for community land identification and registration, although with concerns that an imposed ceiling on hectareage may not sufficiently encompass each domain. There are also queries as to whether community lands issued under the new Land Code will integrate the concessions issued under the Forest Law.

Sourced from Tanya Fonji (2023).

Resources



Rainforest Foundation UK. n.d. "Introducing the Community Forest Database in DRC." Storymaps. RFUK, London.
Available at: <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/a34ed14e36a848e1bf131da02e9f6e6c><https://arcg.is/081uj>.

Buma Bo Pkode Community Forest of Nomedjoh, Cameroon

As of 2023, there is an estimated 600 Community Forests in Cameroon. The vast majority are concessions issued to registered associations of interest groups from communities seeking the right to log their local forests. In accordance with the 1994 law and a Manual of Procedures (2001), allocations are limited to 5,000 hectares for a maximum of 25 years, and subject to a management and harvesting plan. Conservation routinely takes a back seat.

However, some Community Forests are sought and granted only for conservation. Buma Bo Pkode Community Forest, located in Lomié in eastern Cameroon, is an example. It was established in 2005 through a participatory process led by the Baka community and facilitated by the Center for Environment and Development (CED), with participating state and civil society actors. The forest (1,950 hectares) is within the ancestral territory of a Baka community (less than 1,000 persons), much of which is no longer available to them, and who hold the forest in high regards with sociocultural significance in addition to being an intact site for sustainable hunting, gathering, and fishing, as well as a place to generate income from the sale of non-timber forest products. In 2009, a project called the Community Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES) aimed to assist the community in earning additional income from the sale of carbon credits in return for keeping the forest intact. Crop yields have also risen, along with agroforestry and some ecotourism. However, conflicts with non-Baka communities, the threat of expanding logging and farming, and especially the absence of secure ownership threaten the forest and community.

Sourced from Tanya Fonji (2023).

Resources

Chia, E., Somorin, O., Sonwa D. and A. Tiani. 2013. Local Vulnerability, Forest Communities and Forest Carbon Conservation: The Case of Southern Cameroon. *International Journal of Biodiversity and Conservation* 5: 498–507.

Ekuri Community Forest, Nigeria

Ekuri is located in Cross River State bordering Cameroon. Two villages jointly own 33,600 hectares of community forest named *Lerang oreh Nkpen* (Forest is Life). It covers 95 percent of the community's lands and is a source of food, water, employment, income, health, wellbeing, and socio-ritual activities. Conservation awareness grew between 1986 and 1990 in the process of building a 25-mile (40-kilometer) road into the remote community domain. This included clarifying that all natural trees and resources are communal property, and a ban of the sale of timber. The Ekuri Initiative was established in 1992 to harvest selected trees to pay the medical bills of the poor, provide scholarships, and create a micro-credit scheme. Governance issues, including disagreement over a chief's invitation to log the forest, led to jail sentences for protestors. Other difficulties led to the replacement of the registered Ekuri Initiative by the Worthy Association for Tackling Environmental Ruins (WATER) in 2019. The Community Assembly is the ultimate decision-maker. Men, women, youth, and various age groups have representatives in WATER. Land use planning has reduced encroachment and earmarked protected forests. While state and local park authorities have assisted the community at different times, illegally approved permits to log and



farm within the acknowledged lands of the community, and threatened destruction by a planned 12.5-mile (20-kilometer) highway, have been problematic and discouraging, held at bay only by court submissions. However, accountability, especially of financial accounting for income and external support received, is still poor.

Sourced from Mina Beyan (2023), with contributions from Chief Edwin E. Ogar, Ekuri community.

Resources

Unah L. 2019. "Ekuri Initiative: Inside a Nigerian Community's Battle to Keep its Forest." Mongabay, 15 August. Available at: <https://news.mongabay.com/2019/08/ekuri-initiative-inside-a-nigerian-communitys-battle-to-keep-its-forest/>.

WRM. 2013. Nigeria: A Unique Example of Community-based Forest Management at Ekuri. Bulletin 195, 31 October. Available at: <https://www.wrm.org.uy/bulletin-articles/nigera-a-unique-example-of-community-based-forest-management-at-the-ekuri-community>.

ICCA. n.d. "Case Study, Ekuri." Available at: <https://www.iccaregistry.org/en/explore/nigeria/ekuri-icca>.

UNDP. 2012. Ekuri Initiative, Nigeria. Equator Initiative Case Study Series. UNDP, New York.

Balang-Kalep Community Forest, Nigeria

Balang Kalep is both a community land area and a community managed forest. It is located in the north of Plateau State and is 45,000 hectares. The community is recognized as a model village, and the active chief received a provincial award on World Wildlife Day in 2021 after at least a decade of community conservation. Under his direction, the community recognized that fuelwood, shade, wildlife, useful trees, medicinal plants, and edible fruit and leaves were disappearing, and proactive remedies were needed. Today, key species are protected; drywood collected for fuel, live branches harvested once per year under supervision, and requests to fell a live tree is subject to the permission of the 15-member Traditional Council. Rules, updated as needed, continue to be passed on orally. Youth plant trees and serve as eco-guards, including to stop outsiders encroaching on or using the community's resources. No civil society or state agency has directly assisted this initiative. Funds are short, and the community is considering developing the eco-tourism potential of the area.

Sourced from Mina Beyan (2023), from information provided by Andrew Niagwan, SPECTAGRO Nature Conservation Initiative, and Isaac Sando, member of the Way Fairer Hiking Club in Jos.

Gba Community Forest, Liberia

Gba Community Forest covers 10,823 hectares. It was approved in 2011 following the passage of the Community Forest Rights Law (2009) and Regulations (2011). These enabled communities to apply to control specific forestlands in their traditional domains for conservation or other purposes, including timber harvesting. In this instance, the community had a long history of using its forest for hunting, collecting timber for construction, using a wide range of non-timber forest products, and as a reserve for shifting cultivation, widely practised in Liberia. Cultural sites were also important. As a State Forest prior to 2009, private actors had been permitted to log some of the forest. In 2007, a mining company was granted exclusive rights to prospect for and develop iron ore and other exploitable minerals found over a vast area, including Gba's forests. With the help of an USAID project and the Forest Development Authority, the community agreed with the concessionaire to exclude an area for conservation. Sources indicate that the company assented



mainly because they also needed to implement an environmental offset program to mitigate the environmental impacts of mining. A revenue-sharing agreement was also reached with the concessionaire, guided by the law, and some portion of which aims to sustain conservation of the forest.

Community-based conservation has proceeded. The forest includes different zones, with different rules of access and use, approved by the Community Assembly (all adults). In line with the CFRL 2009, rules are developed by the community, and management is devolved to a Community Forestry Management Body (CFMB). Twenty Community Forest Guards protect the forest. The Land Rights Act (2018) reinforced the CFRL. It encourages communities to set aside forests for protection, and the community's prior and informed consent is required for governments to establish State Protected Areas such as National Parks and Reserves. All protected areas within a community's customary land are to be vested in the community (Article 42).

Although the Gba community forest governance capacities have been built by a number of organizations to help them become more transparent and accountable, an incident of financial malpractice occurred; this concerned the misuse of US\$150,000 received by the CFMB in 2015 to be used for conservation and related income-generating developments. The Committee was suspended by the Community Assembly in 2019, the culprits taken to court, found guilty, and gaoled, but released after 18 months due to ill-health. This incident prompted a rethink of local management, still under testing. The community also suffers from encroachment into the forest, and villagers lack understanding of rules and legal requirements.

However, the main issues around community forest rights have arisen in cases where communities have sought and been issued rights to commercially harvest their forests. Already in 2018 problems were rife. Global Witness reported secret deals between commercial loggers and elites diverting income from communities and degrading the forest. In 2019, the Forest Development Authority suspended applications for new Community Forests, partly to address a backlog of 120 applications. FDA and CFMB Union records in 2023 list 53 approved Community Forests. Most are seeking rights to harvest the forest. Authorized Forest Communities may enter contracts with logging companies, each of which pays a mere US\$1.25 per hectare annually to the community. In 2021, the World Resources Institute concluded from a sample of 48 Community Forests that most of those losing canopy cover were where logging contracts had been made. However, an unspecified number of Community Forests are dedicated specifically to conservation.

Sourced from Mina Beyan (2023), based on information contributed by: Samuel G. Johnson, Interim CFMB Chief Officer of Gba Community Forest, and Nyan Flomo, Interim EC Chair of Gba Community Forest.

Resources

SDI and Tropenbos International. 2020. Community Forest Management in Liberia, Recommendations for CSOs. SDI, Monrovia.

Global Witness. 2018. "Community Forests Being Hijacked by Global Logging Companies Increasing Risk of Future Conflicts." Global Witness, London. Available at: <https://www.globalwitness.org/en/press-releases/community-forestry-being-hijacked-global-logging-companies-liberia-increasing-risk-future-conflict>.

Walaka, B. 2023. Context of Liberia Forest Management. National Union of Community Forest Management Body, Duarzon.



Veit P. and K. Reyta. 2021. Forest Cover Change in Community Forests: An Assessment of Outcomes in Five African Countries. Africa Biodiversity Collaborative Group and USAID.

2023. Technical Manager of Community Forests, personal communication. Forest Development Authority, Monrovia.

Ibola Dja Ban Ba Massaha Community Conserved Area, Gabon

The Kota peoples have lived in the forested area of northeastern Gabon for generations, where they have maintained their cultural practices closely linked to the forest: performing ceremonies, hunting, fishing, and harvesting medicinal plants. However, much of the landscape is currently attributed as logging concessions. In a first for the country, in August 2020, the community of Massaha made a formal request to the government to declassify 11,400 hectares of a logging concession granted to a Chinese company (Transport Bois Négoce International) from their ancestral forest, about 4,000–5000 hectares of which had never been industrially logged before (rare in Gabon), and reclassify it as a community protected and conserved area. The village named their forest Ibola Dja Bana Ba Massaha, meaning “the reserve of all Massaha’s children.”

No rural community has secure tenure under Gabonese law, and land titles are available only for homesteads and farms in registered roadside villages. “Community Forests” enable communities to relegate logging to limited areas and are not relevant to community conservation. Since their original request was submitted, the community of Massaha has continued to seek legal recognition of their customary rights to sustainably govern and manage their forest, and has requested the Ministry of Environment to consider entering a new construct into law specifically for community conserved areas. The community has developed a self-determined management plan for the area and expressed willingness to collaborate with the government and other collaborators. Government engagement was initially low, and the company began logging (including many illegal practices), destroying many of Massaha’s ancestral villages and sacred sites. However, government support increased in 2022 with the community’s continued lobbying, supported by Gabonese journalism and international attention. Yet ongoing logging upheld by delays and obstacles from the government and company persist, destroying much of the proposed area that the community seeks to conserve for sustainable hunting and many other uses, including protecting sacred groves. This is despite promises made by the Environment Minister of Gabon in March 2022 who ordered the logging company to leave and requested further land mapping to confirm the extent and cultural heritage of the community’s ancestral forest (11,700 hectares, with over 30 biocultural sites documented as of September 2023). Less than 1,200 hectares of the Massaha’s originally unlogged forest remains intact, and the community continues to wait to have their rights and future assured.

Sourced from Tanya Fonji (2023).

Resources

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The Guassa Community Conservation Area, Ethiopia

The communities of Guassa Area of Menz are being assisted to reintroduce their indigenous land use system to safeguard biodiversity and livelihoods. This 42-square mile (110-square kilometer) grassland is part of one of the world's largest biodiversity hotspots. Guassa grass is key to local grazing and a cash crop. The indigenous Qero regime practiced for 400 years involved periodic closures of Guassa areas for 3–5 years at a time. This collapsed after the nationalization of unfarmed lands in the 1970s and entry and overharvesting by outsiders. In 2003, international conservation agencies helped the villages appoint a Guassa Conservation Council, which immediately reinstated a three-year ban on harvesting Guassa. Community scouts and trained ecological monitors keep track of use, ecological health, and wolf and other wildlife recovery in the Guassa Conservation Area. Community by-laws are enforced. Around 9,800 hectares are under effective protection. Increase in farming of fodder and fuelwood, medicinal plant collection, and off-farm income projects complement conservation, along with regulated use of Guassa during droughts. The Council was formally recognized as a community-based organization in 2008 and accepted by the Amhara National Regional State as Ethiopia's first Community Conserved Area (CCA) in 2010. Vigilance is required; the Council has already halted two attempts to establish commercial sheep-farming in the conservation area.

The Guassa model is beginning to be replicated in seven other areas, the largest of which is the 197,000-hectare Tama Community Conservation Area in the Lower Omo Region. This rich woodland and grassland area is the ancestral home of four agro-pastoral communities who have suffered land loss and displacement through the construction of the Gilgel Gibe III Dam and issuance of other lands to commercial sugar companies. The Regional State Government of Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region (SNNPR) supports the INGO-funded project as providing a corridor between two National Parks. Hunting is not permitted, but agriculture and grazing is. Neither CCA appears to be founded under Communal Holding Rights, remaining national land.

Sourced from Fiesta Warinwa (2023).

Resources

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PART III. FORMALIZED COMMUNITY PROTECTION OF MULTIPLE RESOURCES ON COMMUNITY LANDS

Bambako Island Protected Area, The Gambia

Although there is only one Community Wildlife Protected Area (Bolong Fenyo), 13 Community Protected Areas were created in The Gambia by 2014. Bambako Village ICCA is one example. It is an island of 1,032 hectares on the edge of a mangrove creek. Once a settlement site of the ancestors, the area's 600 villages now live off the island, which they have dedicated to conservation efforts because of its rich complex of forest, river, mangrove, wetland, and hill topography, as well as a sacred site and cultivation area, rare flora species, and warthog, baboon, monkey, leopard, crocodile, jackal, and clawless otter presence. The community depends on the mangrove entangled island for rice cultivation, building and fencing materials, fuel, medicine (traditional herbs), and fishing, gardening and oyster culture. The first Management Plan was implemented in 2015 and clarified rights, responsibilities, and sanctions for breaking rules. The community aims to develop eco-tourism.

Community Forests were developed in The Gambia in the 1990s, rooted in a commitment to devolve forest management to villages. This was triggered by the recognition that the 81 percent forest cover which had existed in The Gambia in 1946 had shrunk to just 28 percent of country's area. The first 141 Community Forests were registered by 2005, with numbers increasing since. The Forestry Plan of 2018–2028 aims to double the area under community regulation and management by revitalizing systems developed in the 1990s, investing significantly in local income enterprises to counter evident pressures from rising population and livelihood demands, and slackening good governance after several decades of effort. Communities also manage or co-manage a number of State Forests (also known as Community Controlled State Forests). They benefit from the higher capitalization of this sector, including improved road access and community infrastructure, forest access and use, and help with wells and seed stores. Community Forests are generally small and managed for sustainable use. A number of them have been set aside as Community Protected Areas.

Sourced from Mina Beyan (2023), based on information provided by Abdoullie Sawo, Wildlife Officer, Department of Parks and Wildlife Management, and contributions on community forests by Liz Alden Wily.

Resources

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Baibokoum Community Landscape Restoration, Lake Chad, Chad

The indigenous population of Baibokoum in southern Chad (Kanuri, Hausa, Fulani, and Baggara) traditionally rely on Lake Chad for fishing and its surrounding savannah and desert for farming and livestock rearing. Rules are customary, including rotational grazing, agreed by each community, and in recent decades reforestation to repair degradation caused by population growth, external pressures and civil conflict. The Association des Femmes peuples et Peuples Autochtones du Tchad (AFAPT) set up a project with the Baibokoum communities to accelerate these initiatives in face of the drying out lake and related problems. Grants from 2010 to 2013 focused on priority trees to protect and boosted community-based decision-making and actions to reopen transhumance corridors and resolving conflicts between farmers and herders in the Lake Chad and East Mayo Kebbi regions. Due to continuing conflicts including civil war and most recently a coup putting a military council in power an update of community life and conservation initiatives around Lake Chad couldn't be obtained.

Sourced from Victor Botton (2023).

Resources

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Amansuri Community Nature Reserve, Ghana

This Reserve is a unique freshwater wetland on the western coast of Ghana, within the traditional territories of East and West Nzema. The Reserve is part of a larger wetland and catchment of over 100,000 hectares, also under preservation. The 8,039-hectare Community Reserve was declared by the Nzema Traditional Council in 2000 and held in trust by chiefs and elders for the six owning communities, as is customary in Ghana. The Reserve is particularly valuable to them as their ancestral area of 600 years, with rich flora and fauna among its swamp forest, sacred lake, and floodplains. The area has enjoyed centuries of customary conservation rules, now refined as the Amansuri Community Nature Reserve and Wetland Ecosystem Bylaws (2002). Local court decisions are made on the basis of Bylaws. The Ghana Wildlife Society has been a partner from the outset with the Western Nzema Traditional Council (WNTC). Today, it provides technical help, including with thriving eco-tourism, small-scale enterprise development, capacity building, conservation education, ecological surveys, and monitoring. Revenue is shared among traditional authorities, the district government, WNTC, villages, and an Apex Fund supporting staff salaries and infrastructure developments. Shares are stipulated in a Memorandum of Understanding. External financial audits are conducted annually.

Sourced from Mina Beyan (2023), based on information provided by Mr. James M. Parker, former staff of Ghana Wildlife Society.



Resources

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PART IV. WILDLIFE-CENTRED PROTECTION AREAS ON COMMUNITY LANDS

Makame Wildlife Management Area, Tanzania

The Makame Wildlife Management Area (WMA) is comprised of five villages in north Kiteto District, southeast of Tarangire National Park. With resident and migratory wildlife, the WMA covers 379,362 hectares, the largest WMA in Tanzania. It is a critical dispersal area for wildlife in the Tarangire–Manyara Ecosystem. The residents are mostly Maasai. But the presence of non-pastoralists has led to an increasing demand for land and has become a source of conflict in the region leading to violence over land rights and land use. The establishment of the WMA helped protect the area from agricultural encroachment and degradation. Communities embraced the WMA proposal as a way to protect their lands from outsiders looking to acquire land and convert it to farmland.

Despite encountering challenges in its formative years, Makame WMA has become a successful Community Conserved Area. Over 1,000 of Tarangire's 4,500 elephants migrate to Makame WMA seasonally, highlighting its importance to the national park and biodiversity conservation. It is also the only WMA in Tanzania financed by carbon offsetting, serving as an example to achieving financial sustainability and independence. For example, between April and December 2022, the WMA made approximately US\$243,655 dollars in revenue. A Honey Guide Foundation report shows that by the end of 2023 the WMA was projected to earn US\$500,000 in annual revenue: US\$265,000 from its 30-year contract with Carbon Tanzania and US\$235,000 from hunting tourism. However, how this revenue is distributed among landowners, the five villages, companies, and state agencies is unclear.

The WMA construct derives from state policy in 1998 seeking to involve communities in protecting wildlife on their lands by securing use rights. In due course between 2002 and 2016, regulations extended to sharing a share of income from hunting and tourism conducted on their lands. One of the most problematic aspects in state directives is that although elected Village Councils exist, the law requires villages to establish a CBO which, on approval, becomes an Authorized Association (AA). Especially in light of WMA embracing the lands of a number of villages, elected Councils feel they lose control over the land they are authorized to manage, and that wildlife-driven interests suborn other land uses making it difficult for communities to collect dry wood, harvest traditional plants, or remove wildlife from their farms. Additionally, villages cannot negotiate directly with tourism or hunting authorities, and they have no role in establishing hunting block allocations. Revenue sharing with communities is also not transparently regulated, having been removed from the Council to the AA to the Department of Wildlife. The AA is responsible for delivering benefits in kind to villages, but is regularly reported as not doing so. Villages that wish to withdraw from the dictatorial relationship with the Wildlife Division find it difficult to do so, receiving threats that their village lands will be turned into a Game Reserve or Hunting Block. Field research published in 2018, 2021, and 2022 present a worrying picture of the 38 WMAs covering vast areas of community property, some visibly earning an adequate share of tourism and hunting to suspend doubts about losses of authority and rights, while perhaps the



larger group of WMA exhibit too many cases of communities wishing they had never consented to overlay of WMA on their lands. The operating model raises questions as to whether this can be classified as community-based conservation.

Sourced from Fiesta Warinwa (2023).

Resources

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Sikunga Wildlife Conservancy, Namibia

Sikunga Wildlife Conservancy is one of 86 Community Conservancies covering 16.9 million hectares, one-fifth of Namibia's land area. These are located on communal lands as compared to private or state lands. Communal lands are vested in the state but administered by Traditional Authorities whose allocations are vetted by Communal Land Boards. Allocations thus far are for private homestead titles and commercial leases for larger-scale livestock holdings, regularly— if unlawfully fenced—excluding traditional users. While long promised, and detailed guidelines prepared, provisions for villages or wards to secure collective land has not yet happened other than for commercial purposes. While conservancies are not landowners, their existence does help limit the private ranches by encompassing vast areas of natural grasslands and woodlands defined on the basis of wildlife ecosystems. The largest conservancies visibly handicap inclusion of village populations within their boundaries. Conservancies are also run by membership associations which, in practice, may include a minority of village members. Nevertheless, these Associations are legally bound to share income from trophy hunting and tourism developments, provide some training and employment opportunities, and support local health and education services. Free meat from trophy hunting is also distributed.

Sikunga Conservancy is located in the wildlife-rich Zambezi floodplain and next to the fish-rich Zambezi River. It relies on trophy hunting and exploitation of devil's claw for income, but the Conservancy is now attempting to diversify into ecotourism as trophy hunting declines due to pressures from Western states. Conservancy revenue is split equally to cover management costs and fund community services and projects. However, the allure of urban life and jobs attract youth, eroding transfer of traditional knowledge and cultural heritage.

Sourced from Malidadi Langa (2023).

Resources

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Community Conservation of Bonobos, DRC

Nkala and six other villages have set aside parts of their adjoining customary forests as Community Conservation Areas. This is to protect bonobos (*Pan paniscus*), a threatened great ape species which lives only along the south bank of the Congo River in the DRC. The NGO, Mbou-Mon-Tour (MMT), has assisted communities to set up eight monitoring stations to monitor bonobos and small apes. The communities gain from assistance in recovering forest cover, alternative income generation projects, and some income from visiting researchers.

Sourced from Bihini Won wa Musitu in Tanya Fonji (2023).

Resources

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PART V. RESTITUTION OF STATE PROTECTED AREAS

Ogiek Conservation on Mount Elgon, Kenya

The Ogiek and other hunter-gatherer societies in Kenya (Sengwer, Yaaku, Aweer, and Sanye) lost their ancestral territories to European settlement from colonialism onwards. Their land was given to farming tribes, settlement schemes, and for logging and hunting reserves, most of which were converted into protected areas from the 1930s onwards. The Ogiek of Mau and Mount Elgon are the first to resecure some of these protected areas; the Mau Ogiek through judgments of the African Court of Human and Peoples Rights (2017, 2022) and Elgon Ogiek through a decision of the High Court in Kenya (2022). However, the Ogiek of Mount Elgon lost another case concerning another protected area on their ancestral lands. Along with other hunter-gatherers, the Ogiek of Mount Elgon submitted land claims for other areas to the National Land Commission in 2021, which is constitutionally mandated to investigate these, but its recommendations have yet to be announced.

Elgon Ogiek leader, Peter Kitelo, reports that their troubles began in earnest in the 1930s when the Mount Elgon Forest Reserve was created, resulting in the eviction of a number of Ogiek households onto a "Native reserve" (Chepkitale). In 1968, the Mount Elgon National Park was founded as well as two forest reserves and a game reserve. Traditional hunter-gatherer rights and uses were excluded. In 2000, the Chepkitale Indigenous People Development Project (CIPDP)



began advocacy against forced evictions. The community formalized its customary rules and community bylaws and mapped its ancestral lands and the history of each part. It filed a case challenging the decision of the Mont Elgon County Council in 2000 to convert their moorland living area into Chepkitala National Wildlife Reserve. The High Court ruled this conversion was unconstitutional in 2022, being the acknowledged trust land of the Elgon Ogiek. The Court also heard evidence that the Elgon Ogiek were playing a critical role in protecting elephants and other species, as well as protecting and restoring their Indigenous forest. *"We have a good relationship with Kenya Wildlife Service and because elephants spend up to 80 percent of their time on areas occupied by communities, we have common enemies: poachers. If poachers do not get elephants or buffalo, they will come for our cows,"* said Peter Kitelo. Nevertheless, like the Mau Ogiek, government application of court decisions is proving unduly slow.

Sourced from Fiesta Warinwa (2023), in conversation with Peter Kitelo.

Resources

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Makuleke Community Property Association, South Africa

Restitution of unjustly taken lands was embedded in the Interim and new Constitutions (1993, 1996) with application framed under the Restitution of Land Rights Act, 1994. Community claims for restoration of ownership of specific protected areas were among thousands of claims submitted. The Land Claims Commission reported in 2012 that 58 claims to protected areas were settled, 121 under investigation, and only seven seeking compensation and other reparation in lieu of return of the land. Restitution of protected areas is always subject to sustained conservation and protection. Arrangements vary, and many require communities to lease the land back to state agencies to manage, co-manage the land, or to manage the protected area under contract. Either Trusts or Communal Property Associations (CPA) must be established as the legal party representing the owner community. Both have proven onerous bureaucracies for communities to manage and CPA were recommended by the 2019 High Level Panel on Land Reform to be reviewed.

Makuleke Contractual National Park (an expansion area of the Kruger National Park) was among the first cases of restitution, and provided a working model for many subsequent cases. It is also one of few communities to have secured its title deed for the land. Under its restitution agreement in 1998, the 26,500-hectare area remains attached to Kruger National Park and subject to rigorous protection. The CPA shares governance with South Africa National Parks (SANP). It takes responsibility for governance and ecotourism while SANP regulates, manages, and monitors the environment, including critical wildlife habitats. Habitation, farming, and mining are banned. Hunting, medicinal plant collection, and sustainable utilization of wood and non-wood products are permitted. Gate fees and rental from lodges accrue to the CPA. Income was US\$1.2 million in 2020. Makuleke women and youth participate actively in environmental education and anti-poaching activities; employment opportunities benefit most directly from improved infrastructure for health, education, and related services, mostly paid for by CPA income. Makuleke youth also participate in a special technical training to develop Indigenous Peoples' capacity in conservation and ecotourism. Nevertheless, co-management arrangements between state, private, and



community actors are often contested and progress has waned resulting from the parties not meeting their agreed obligations. This also affects Makuleke; in 2018, it was reported that the community was still unable to pay its share of conservation costs, encouraging SANP to focus on its own agenda excluding community interests.

Sourced from Malidadi Langa (2023), with contributions from Liz Alden Wily.

Resources

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Chaderopa C. 2018. "Co-management of Natural Resources in Protected Areas in 'Post-Colonial' Africa." In Mostafanez, M., Norum R., Selthon E., and Thompson-Carr (Eds). *Political Ecology of Tourism: Community, Power and the Environment*, 70–91. Available at: <https://www.routledge.com/Political-Ecology-of-Tourism-Community-power-and-the-environment/Mostafanezhad-Norum-Shelton-Thompson-Carr/p/book/9781138592483>.

PART VI. COMMUNITY "CO-MANAGEMENT" OF STATE PROTECTED AREAS

Andoni Elephant Sanctuary/Sacred Mangrove Forest, Nigeria

At one time, the oil-rich Niger Delta in southern Nigeria was the home of a large population of forest elephants. Only 30 or so remain today, having found sanctuary on Andoni Island in the Delta. Andoni Island comprises a mix of mangroves, freshwater swamp forest, and tidal floodplain and is also the home of 22 villages. In 1988, the Rivers State Government designated the island as an Elephant Sanctuary/Game Reserve due to its ecological importance, including a high number of rare and endemic flora and fauna, in addition to its elephants.

Communities have added to its conservation, most specifically by reclaiming mangroves, which have historical meaning as sacred. Local folklore recalls a longstanding saying that "if you cut one mangrove, one of your family members will die and if you cut two, two of your family members will die," a strong caution against overharvesting. In 2010, a community-based organization, the Save Andoni Forest Elephants and Ecosystem Initiative, initiated the planting of mangroves on Andoni Island. It is estimated that this planting stretches 50 miles (80 kilometres). But at present, there is still over exploitation from the 22 communities living on the island. In 2021, the CDCs developed bylaws against illegal logging, hunting, and fishing. Rules include rewarding fishermen with fuel subsidies when they successfully release sea turtles, and the Initiative gives out awards of excellence to those communities who sustain local forests without destruction.

Sourced from Mina Beyan (2023), with information provided by Abel Gogo Ujile, Save Andoni Forest Elephants Initiative, and Grace Alawa, Sanctions for Nature.



Khwe San and Government Co-management of Bwabwata National Park, Namibia

Namibian forest and wildlife laws have provisions for tribal communities to own wildlife and forests on the one-third of the country classified as Communal Lands. Community-state co-ownership of national parks and reserves covering 17 percent of the country is not provided for. In 1968, Khwe San were permitted to remain on their ancestral land in the Caprivi Strip when the Caprivi Game Park was declared, later converted into Bwabwata National Park. At this time, the Kyaramacan Association was created to represent their interests, but dominated by Mbukushu settlers and cattle farmers who settled on Khwe lands. While referred to as co-management, and the Association is consulted, a main role of Khwe San is as paid community game guards and trackers. They also benefit from health, education, and water services and are permitted to use the Park for subsistence purposes, but not to hunt, a source of grievance for the hunter-gatherers. In addition, the Association receives a small share of Park income from trophy hunting, ecotourism, and the sale of Devil's Claw, but which is lower than communities within Community Conservancies on Communal Lands receive. Youth in particular report difficulty meeting livelihood needs. The community feels handicapped by not having its own Traditional Authority (TA) to lobby for them; this is because TA are limited to Communal Lands, not State Lands. However, this may not be a sufficient solution, as the Hai//om San found when the courts rejected their claim for recognition as the ancestral owners of Etosha National Park (2018–2022), mainly on the grounds that the local Traditional Authority was not petitioning on their behalf. The Hai//om had not sought his aid as “too close to government.” Awareness of obligations to respect the land rights of Indigenous Peoples is growing in Namibia, including a strong recommendation in 2021 by a Presidential Commission to review claims, but this has yet to be taken up by the government.

Sourced from Malidadi Langa (2023).

Resources

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PART VII. LARGE-SCALE RESOURCE PROTECTION BY COMMUNITY, STATE, AND EXTERNAL PARTIES

Tchuma Tchato Large-Scale Resource Management, Mozambique

Located in the mopane forest ecosystem of Tete province, the Tchuma Tchato (“Our Wealth”) program started in 1995 to enable the local community to benefit from trophy hunting, influenced



by the CAMPFIRE model in Zimbabwe. The model was adopted as a response to the exclusion of local communities from the vast Niassa National Park. A decree stipulated that 33 percent of taxes collected by the government from wildlife or forest use countrywide was to be shared with the communities living within the Tchuma Tchato area. In 2002, while the revenue was reduced to 20 percent, Tchuma Tchato remained an exception. By 2004, 68 Community-based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) projects were operating, including a diverse mix of poverty alleviation and conservation measures, and improvement in community representation on committees. Tchuma-Tchato was replicated in two other areas, making the target area 3.9 million hectares. This gigantism, as it has been described, multiplied unmonitored expenditure and evidence of corruption as difficult partnerships with private and state actors emerged, and, by 2014, was visibly faltering to the point of collapse. Donors began to withdraw and promised contributions from government fell to 3 percent of state wildlife and forest revenue. Poaching, illegal logging, and forest fires increased. By 2013, communities were actively complaining that the eight or so safari companies which continued operations were benefitting from their lands without assisting them. Neither local poverty alleviation nor conservation were achieved. Meanwhile, community demand to respect local communities as legally acknowledged owners of their lands and resources grew, exacerbated by the gazettelement of the Niassa National Reserve (4.2 million hectares), co-opting a chunk of Tchuma Tchato and related CBNRM areas, primarily to meet international conservation agencies lobbying for a corridor linking the 5.5 million-hectares Selous Game Reserve in Tanzania to the coastal Quirimbas National Park in Mozambique for ecological protection purposes. Since 2017, The World Bank's Forest Investment Project has included projects to improve these practices and the enabling environment needed for forest and land management in targeted landscapes in Mozambique, including parts of Tchumo Tchato.

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Resources

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