

---

## **Defining Political Community and Rights to Natural Resources in Botswana**

**Amy R. Poteete**

---

### **ABSTRACT**

Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM), once presented as the best way to protect common pool natural resources, now attracts a growing chorus of critiques that either question its underlying assumptions or emphasize problems related to institutional design. These critiques overlook connections between the definition of rights to natural resources and membership in political communities. The potential for competing definitions of political identity and rights across natural resources arises when property rights regimes differ across natural resources and these different systems of rights appeal to alternative definitions of community. In Botswana, the entangling of natural resource policy with identity politics contributed to a partial recentralization of CBNRM in 2007.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Both social identity and identity politics are products of social and political relations (Anderson, 1991; Brass, 1985; Kymlicka, 2004). Brass (1985) conceives of identity as forming and changing through the interaction of conflicts within groups over self-definition and resources, conflicts between groups for rights and resources, and conflicts between the state and various social groups over policies and their distributional consequences. Through the specification of criteria for the allocation of benefits and costs, policies influence the prominence of alternative divisions in society, the relative social status of groups, opportunities for political participation, and the distribution of resources (Ingram et al., 2007; Marx, 1996; Torcal and Mainwaring, 2003). Politicians compete over the definition and salience of politically mobilized groups as they build their own coalitions and seek to splinter those of their rivals. As the intensity of political competition fluctuates, so do opportunities to influence identity politics. Thus, although policies stabilize social

---

I am very grateful for: the Government of Botswana's permission to conduct research in Botswana; financial support from the Fulbright Foundation, the Social Science Research Council, and University of New Orleans; institutional support from the University of Botswana; and help from respondents and friends in Botswana. Comments from Sandra Joireman, Jesse Ribot and three anonymous reviewers enriched the paper; I remain responsible for its limitations.

*Development and Change* 40(2): 281–305 (2009). © Institute of Social Studies 2009. Published by Blackwell Publishing, 9600 Garsington Road, Oxford OX4 2DQ, UK and 350 Main St., Malden, MA 02148, USA

identities to some extent, the dynamism of political competition provides a mechanism for change.

The content of identity politics reflects the social, political and economic context. In agrarian societies, access to agricultural land and other natural resources often depends on and reinforces membership in local communities (Berry, 1993; Peters, 1984). The entanglement of natural resource use and control with social identity makes natural resource policy a particularly powerful arena for identity politics. When politicians transform rights to land and other natural resources, they redefine political identities, redirect political loyalties, and reallocate authority (Boone, 1998, 2003; Migdal, 1988). If political competition influences identity politics, what are the implications for natural resource policies in agrarian societies?

This article delineates the influence of identity politics on natural resource policies in Botswana, where land, minerals and wildlife had been managed as national resources since independence. Following the introduction of community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) in 1989, however, local communities gained rights over wildlife revenues. This inconsistency with other natural resources created an opening for politically charged questions. Are natural resources national resources or resources for local communities? Should revenues from wildlife be pooled and redistributed? Or should control over all natural resources, including diamonds, be decentralized? Despite substantial differences in the management challenges presented by land, minerals and wildlife, differences in management strategies became difficult to defend. As argued below, the rhetorical linking of natural resource policies with political identity helps account for the partial recentralization of wildlife management in the CBNRM Policy of 2007.

The next section reflects on natural resource management, the process of state building, and community-based natural resource management. I then establish the need for nation building and state building in Botswana after independence, describe the political strategies adopted by the governing party, and explain the contribution of natural resource policies. This lays the foundation for an analysis of the politics surrounding CBNRM in Botswana. I argue that the partial recentralization of wildlife management in the CBNRM policy of 2007 represents a political response to identity politics more than a technical response to problems of management. The article draws primarily on archival work and interviews with politicians, civil servants, representatives of civil society, and academics/consultants during 2004–5, but is also informed by research since the mid-1990s on land, minerals and wildlife.<sup>1</sup>

---

1. Earlier fieldwork during 1994–96 concerned privatization of grazing land and dealt with wildlife and minerals only tangentially. Research during 2004–5 addressed all three policy areas through archival work and interviews with ninety-two respondents in Gaborone, Central District and Ngamiland District. Interviews focused mostly on management of land and minerals in 2004 and on minerals and wildlife in 2005.

**NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND POLITICS**

Natural (and other types of) resources can be categorized along two dimensions: the degree to which the resource is subtractible and the difficulty of exclusion. Subtractibility refers to whether resources consumed by one person are available to others. Management of subtractible resources involves regulation of rates of extraction, either to increase inter-temporal returns from non-renewable resources or to enable regeneration of renewable resources. For non-subtractible resources, management focuses on provision, maintenance and issues of quality. The relative viability of strategies for regulating access or extraction hinges on the difficulty of exclusion.

The conventional wisdom in the 1960s and 1970s offered a choice between state or private management of natural resources (Hardin, 1968). Privatization and titling can facilitate management of exhaustible resources for which exclusion is easy. State management can help overcome problems of provision and quality related to non-subtractible public goods. Neither individual property rights nor state management effectively addresses the difficulty of exclusion. These strategies are thus inappropriate for common pool resources, exhaustible resources for which exclusion is extremely difficult (Bromley et al., 1992; McKean, 2000; Ostrom, 1990). For these resources, decentralized management should be more effective because local residents have a greater capacity than central authorities to monitor resource use (Hulme and Murphree, 2001; Seabright, 1993).

CBNRM is a form of decentralization in which local residents receive benefits from adjacent natural resources (Hulme and Murphree, 2001; Western and Wright, 1994). CBNRM follows from an understanding of wildlife and wilderness areas as sources of wealth and poverty, opportunity and loss. In the absence of significant direct benefits, residents have little interest in conservation and may actively seek to reduce or eliminate wildlife populations and habitat that conflict with their livelihood strategies (Alexander and McGregor, 2000; cf. Li, 2002). CBNRM assumes that (1) conservation can be improved by increasing the level of local benefits derived from the natural resources to be conserved; (2) commercial management is the best way to generate tangible benefits; and (3) local benefits should take the form of community benefits.

As experience with CBNRM has accumulated, so have doubts about its underlying premises and common approaches to implementation.<sup>2</sup> But improved management was never the only argument for CBNRM. Proponents also value community-based management as a defence against state expansion and predation (Adams and Hulme, 2001; Guha, 1989; Ostrom, 1990; Western and Wright, 1994). Decentralization has been associated with

---

2. Each assumption has been critiqued at length. See, for examples, Campbell et al. (1999) and Emerton (2001) on the adequacy of tangible benefits; Gibson and Marks (1995) on the structure of incentives; Jutting et al. (2005) and Ribot (2003) on local skills and capacity; and Ribot et al. (2006) and Thakadu (2005) on market participation.

democratization (Crook and Manor, 1998) such that decentralized natural resource management is virtually equated with empowerment of local resource users (Agrawal and Ribot, 1999; Thomas-Slayter, 1994; Western and Wright, 1994).<sup>3</sup> In practice, CBNRM programmes engage local residents in divergent ways (Agarwal, 2001; Barrow et al., 2001; Alden Wily and Mbaya, 2001). At one extreme, community organizations merely receive benefits or are charged with enforcement of government policies. At the other extreme, if all too rarely, CBNRM devolves decision-making authority over at least some aspects of natural resource management to local communities. Even then, the community organizations empowered by CBNRM may not include all local stakeholders or be legitimate representatives of their interests (Agrawal and Gibson, 1999; Western and Wright, 1994).

The international shift from state control to decentralization reframed debates about the management of renewable and especially common pool natural resources.<sup>4</sup> Where normative doubts about the desirability of state building featured prominently in the defence of the commons, the promotion of democratic decentralization of natural resource management suggests that state and nation building has either been accomplished or is irrelevant.<sup>5</sup> Wariness of the state responded to the prevalence of authoritarian regimes and state interventions that dispossessed rural residents or destroyed their livelihoods. Perhaps the state lost some of its negative connotations as multi-party elections and — more ominously — state collapse became more common since the late-1980s. Indeed, decentralization can bolster state building by legitimizing national regulation (Agrawal, 2001; Li, 2002) and extending state-centred patronage networks into more rural areas (Blaikie, 2006).

The rhetoric of improved management obscures the influence of natural resource policy on the definition of political community via the definition of rights to resources. If efficiency is the primary concern, as the management discourse would suggest, then management strategies and property rights should vary with the characteristics of each resource. Because rights to resources depend on and reinforce membership in political communities, the choice of state, community or individual/household management implies a choice among alternative political identities. State management may address the provision of public goods, but it also presents the state as acting on behalf of the nation. Privatization vests rights in individuals or households, but also

- 
3. Of course, decentralization does not guarantee effective empowerment. In the absence of effective empowerment, decentralization consolidates central control (Agrawal, 2001; Li, 2002; Ribot et al., 2006; cf. Mamdani, 1996).
  4. The shift has been neither complete nor unidirectional. For discussions of the persistence of centralized protectionist approaches, see Igoe and Brockington (2007) and Wilhusen et al. (2002).
  5. The international trend toward CBNRM is widely recognized as part of a broader neoliberal movement to limit the scope of states. Generally, anti-statism is seen as the flip-slide of market expansion (Adams and Hulme, 2001; Igoe and Brockington, 2007).

wrests control over resources from local elites. Privatization further affirms the primacy of the national political community when the allocation of individual rights is contingent on citizenship. By contrast, CBNRM defines rights to resources based on membership in a local community of resource users. Depending on their scale and organization, the groups involved in CBNRM reinforce existing sub-national identities or offer new, highly localized alternatives (Manor, 2004; Ribot, 2003). As the case of Botswana illustrates, natural resource policies that appeal to different identities create opportunities for political competition.

### POLITICAL CONSOLIDATION AND NATION BUILDING IN BOTSWANA

When Botswana gained independence in 1966, it was a poor country dependent upon livestock, remittances and foreign aid. Soon after independence, diamonds were discovered and the country embarked on a previously unimagined development trajectory. Botswana has enjoyed political stability, held regular multi-party elections and sustained strong economic growth (Acemoglu et al., 2003; Leith, 2005). Arguably, the electoral dominance of the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) gave the government a long-term perspective that encouraged the adoption of pro-growth policies and institutions (Leith, 2005; Poteete, 2009).

Although the political dominance of the BDP may seem inevitable after several decades in government, it was not. A broad coalition initially formed behind the BDP to block the more radical Bechuanaland (later Botswana) People's Party (BPP). Where the BPP stood for racial nationalism and a complete dismantling of traditional authority, the BDP advocated racial neutrality and modification rather than elimination of traditional institutions (Tlou and Campbell, 1997). The BDP's more conservative platform earned 80 per cent of the vote in the 1965 founding election. The BPP continued to contest elections but never improved on its 14 per cent vote share in 1965. The Botswana National Front (BNF) emerged as a leftist party with ANC connections in 1969 but, until the 1980s, it consistently attracted less than 20 per cent of the vote.

Yet the BDP could not count on sustaining a relatively broad cross-*morafe*<sup>6</sup> coalition beyond the first election (Ramsay and Parsons, 2000). Effective early marginalization of radicals could have prompted splintering of the BDP into rival moderate parties. The Tswana ethno-linguistic category includes several organizationally distinct *merafe* with a history of leadership struggles, division and competition (Peters, 1984; Schapera, 1938/2004;

---

6. In Setswana, *morafe* is the singular noun and *merafe* the plural. Generally translated in Botswana as 'tribe', a *morafe* refers to a chiefdom or pre-colonial polity and can be understood as a nation. Membership in a *morafe* depended on allegiance to its chief, not one's bloodline, language or ethnicity.

Tlou, 1985). The BPP sought to deny any legal standing for these *merafe* and their chiefs. Instead, Botswana's constitution recognizes eight distinct Tswana *merafe*: the BaKgatla, BaKweneng, BamaLete, BamaNgwato, BaNgwaketse, BaRolong, BaTawana and BaTlokwa.

Independent Botswana incorporated the previously autonomous *merafe* into a centralized state. Traditional authorities became subordinate to the state and faced an array of new local authorities, including District Councils, Land Boards and Village Development Committees (Fortmann, 1983; Tordoff, 1973, 1974). Although respect for chiefs persists, the new local authorities siphoned away planning and administrative responsibility for development projects, service delivery and land (Fortmann, 1983; Grant, 1980). Local elections should not be mistaken as evidence of devolution.<sup>7</sup> Central control over financing and personnel effectively constrains the autonomy of local authorities (Egner, 1987; Wunsch, 1998; cf. Tordoff, 1973). Ministerial oversight of District Councils and a hierarchical system of land tribunals established in the late 1990s encourage accountability to the centre (Tordoff, 1973; Werbner, 2004: Ch. 6; Wunsch, 1998).<sup>8</sup> The plethora of agencies fragments local authority, which reduces their capacity to present a unified local front to the central government (Fortmann, 1983).

Meanwhile, the central state expanded tremendously, both in sheer size and the scope of its activities. The government promoted identification with the new nation through its policy of racial and ethnic neutrality and a commitment to broad rural development (Tlou and Campbell, 1997). Official neutrality meant that access to education, health care and public sector jobs all depended upon one's status as a citizen and, in the case of education and jobs, qualifications (Solway, 2002; Werbner, 2004). Discrimination based on communities of language and ethnicity persisted, but official state neutrality reduced their effect (Solway, 1994, 2002). The primacy given to national citizenship over ascriptive characteristics — whether race, ethnicity or gender — promoted a national identity linked to liberal democratic principles. Broad distribution of state resources through public infrastructure, public services, and programmes for rural development demonstrated the value of the nation in tangible ways (Murray and Parsons, 1990; Poteete, 2009).<sup>9</sup>

- 
7. Some members are appointed by the national government, but the proportion has decreased over time.
  8. Accountability to the centre is not unambiguously problematic. The land tribunals, for instance, respond to complaints of favouritism, corruption and arbitrary decision making by Land Boards (Werbner, 2004: Ch. 6). On the *potential* for a progressive role for central authorities, see Heller (2001) and Schneider (2006).
  9. Examples include the Accelerated Rural Development Programme (ARDP), the Communal First Development Areas (CFDA), and the Drought Relief Programme (which employs rural residents in the construction of public works). These programmes are highly popular despite limited success in stimulating development.

## RESOURCES FOR THE NATION AND FOR NATION-BUILDING

Before independence, each chief controlled access to and use of land and subsoil resources on behalf of the *morafe* (Schapera, 1938/2004).<sup>10</sup> After independence, the BDP asserted the priority of the national political community through transformations in the administration of land, privatization of rangeland and centralized management of wildlife. These policies can be understood as part of the broader strategy of state building through centralization and nation building through broad distribution of benefits based on membership in the nation. Inevitably, these efforts generated resistance and were not uniformly successful. A backlash against centralized management helps account for the adoption of CBNRM.

The BDP's pledge to nationalize mineral resources in the 1965 election campaign was an overt effort at nation building (Bechuanaland Democratic Party, 1965). The extent of mineral resources and their spatial distribution were not known at independence, but significant copper-nickel deposits had been discovered in Central district, the historical territory of the BamaNgwato. Retention of traditional land rights would have allowed the BamaNgwato to reap the proceeds for the benefit of Central district. Uneven distribution of valuable minerals would result in uneven economic development that could exacerbate political competition between *merafe*. Seretse Khama, leader of the BDP as well as hereditary chief of the BamaNgwato, campaigned on a promise to use mineral resources for national development instead:

When they discovered copper-nickel, Seretse Khama went around and said: we are very poor. We can use this to develop our nation. It is on tribal land and so it belongs to a specific tribe, but as government we want resources to be shared equally for all people in Botswana. If we discover copper-nickel or gold, it will be used for the whole nation. [Interview 72PO]<sup>11</sup>

The BDP's promise to nationalize mineral resources<sup>12</sup> contributed to coalition building in at least three ways (Poteete, 2009). First, each *morafe* gave up rights over potential resources in its own territory in exchange for assurance that it would benefit from mineral development throughout the country. Second, nationalization usurped authority over a valuable natural resource from traditional chiefs who represented potential rivals to the primacy of the national state. Third, it projected Botswana as a new larger-scale *morafe*, with President Seretse Khama as its 'chief'. The significance of this decision increased sharply after diamond revenues began to flow in the late 1970s.

---

10. Mining concessions required the approval of both the chief and the colonial government (Schapera, 1938/2004: 195)

11. A key to the interviews is provided at the end of this article.

12. Nationalization affects sub-soil resources, not the mining companies. Private firms and public-private partnerships pay concessionary fees to prospect, as well as royalties on mineral earnings.

The BDP government kept its promise to use these resources for national development. It cast networks of roads, schools and clinics across the country that fostered development (Poteete, 2009) and provided visible evidence of the benefits of membership in the nation.

An increasing emphasis on national citizenship as the basis for rights also appears in successive changes in the administration of land. Before independence, the chiefs controlled access to and use of land; rights to land for residences, crop production and grazing depended on status within the *morafe*. The Tribal Land Act of 1968 transferred control over land allocation and administration to Land Boards that were established in 1970. The Land Boards initially included chiefs as non-voting members and depended heavily on traditional authorities for information about past allocations. Amendments to the Tribal Land Act in 1993 completed the transfer of formal authority over land by disqualifying members of the House of Chiefs from serving as Land Board members (Republic of Botswana, 1993). The 1993 amendments also made rights to land contingent on national citizenship rather than status as a ‘tribesman’. Legally, at least, rights to land no longer depend on gender, ethno-linguistic identity, residence or loyalty to local authorities. As with mineral policy, land administration projects the primacy of national over local and especially traditional political identities.

The most dramatic changes in land rights concern rangeland. Government-sponsored privatization began under the Tribal Grazing Lands Policy (TGLP) of 1975, which zoned rangeland for communal use, development of commercial ranches, and areas reserved for future use. The 1991 Agricultural Development Policy introduced a more open-ended process of privatization. Justifications for privatization have shifted over time, from an emphasis on problems of degradation in the 1970s to more recent concerns with disease control, breeding and delivery of extension services (Poteete, 2003). Critics depict privatization as an elite land-grab and an attack on the ordinary people who rely upon communal resources (Peters, 1984; Picard, 1980). A funeral-style campaign song used by the BNF in the 1990s reflects this perspective:

My heart is broken  
 I’m down with sorrow  
 The BDP is going to take our land  
 Through fencing of grazing lands  
 Batswana, stand up and refuse. [Interview 71PO]<sup>13</sup>

The reference here to ‘our land’ appeals both to ordinary folk and sub-national identities. Privatization allocates resources based on national identity (citizenship) and one’s relationship with central authorities. Not only do elites benefit more than ordinary folks, but the policy transfers local natural resources to non-local *national* elites.

---

13. Translated from Setswana by the respondent.

Centralization generated a backlash in wildlife policy as well. Botswana inherited a centralized approach from the British. Conservation was pursued through centralized and exclusionary management of national parks and reserves; hunting was regulated through a centrally administered system of licensing. In practice, limited enforcement meant that quotas did not effectively restrict hunting (Taylor, 2002). Furthermore, exclusionary parks antagonized local residents (Blaikie, 2006). Botswana, like many other countries, learned the limits of centralized management of common pool resources through experience. Politicians also learned the limits of centralization as a nation-building strategy. Although centralized management treats wildlife resources as national resources, it alienates people by associating the nation with burdens and constraints rather than benefits.

Botswana responded to these failures with the introduction of CBNRM as an informal programme in 1989; a formal CBNRM policy was adopted only in 2007. Between 1989 and 2007, ministries, departments and local authorities developed guidelines and regulations that guided implementation. In Botswana as elsewhere, CBNRM confronts significant institutional and managerial problems (Arntzen et al., 2003; Jansen et al., 2000; Rozemeijer, 2000), but the programme is threatened at least as much by its entanglement with identity politics. Critics ask whether natural resources should belong primarily to localities, districts or the nation as a whole. Parliamentarians and the media regularly note that recognition of *community*-based rights deviates from the treatment of other natural resources as *national* resources (for example, *Botswana Daily News*, 2005a; Interviews 72PO, 73PO, 74PO, 76PO). Critics push in opposing directions to resolve the discrepancy: either all natural resources are national resources and CBNRM should be dismantled, or community rights to local resources should be extended to land and especially minerals (Rozemeijer, 2003). As discussed below, the recently adopted formal CBNRM policy involves a partial recentralization compared with the informal policy in place before 2007.

Botswana introduced CBNRM during a period of increasing political competition. The BDP's electoral support had declined steadily, from 77 per cent in 1974, to 68 per cent in 1984 and 55 per cent in 1994. In 1994, the opposition consolidated behind the BNF and its electoral support surged to 37 per cent. Despite an opposition split just before the 1999 elections (Molomo, 2000: 80–1), BDP electoral support continued to decline, to 54 per cent in 1999 and 50 per cent in 2004.<sup>14</sup> The last few years have featured repeated opposition efforts to avoid vote-splitting, as well as open factional competition within the BDP. Appeals to highly concentrated and active voters can make the difference in tightly contested three- or four-way elections, but doubts about the BDP's commitment to the nation as a whole work to erode its support. Even when CBNRM was introduced, some BDP politicians raised

---

14. The first-past-the-post electoral system amplifies the BDP's parliamentary representation.

concerns about deviating from the principle of natural resources as national resources (Interview 73PO). Heightened competition raises the salience of this issue and helps account for the partial recentralization of CBNRM in 2007. The next section looks more closely at Botswana's experience with CBNRM.

#### A CLOSER LOOK AT CBNRM IN BOTSWANA

CBNRM responded to the failures of centralized wildlife management, but also to bureaucratic competition over land. The privatization of land under TGLP fuelled rivalries between the ministries responsible for agriculture, land and wildlife (Picard, 1980; Poteete, 2003).<sup>15</sup> TGLP presented three challenges for wildlife management. First, the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) considers fencing as essential for improved management and the Land Boards require fencing of ranches as evidence of development. Thus, privatization implies fencing, and fencing interferes with wildlife migration.<sup>16</sup> Second, TGLP zoned all rural land in terms of current and future livestock production. With even reserved areas conceptualized as areas for future livestock production, TGLP envisioned no role for wildlife outside national parks. Third, TGLP and the later Agricultural Development Policy of 1991 prioritized market-oriented development over non-commercial and subsistence uses of natural resources. The Department of Wildlife and National Parks (DWNP) considered TGLP to be a land grab by the MOA that was blind to non-pastoral forms of land use and threatened the viability of conservation.

The Wildlife Conservation Policy of 1986, in many respects a defensive response to TGLP, set the stage for CBNRM. The Wildlife Conservation Policy created Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) as an official designation that banned development for livestock production (Cassidy, 2000; Twyman, 2001). WMAs encompassed 39 per cent of the country's land area by 2005 (Swatuk, 2005: 102) and represent a significant constraint on the expansion of livestock production.<sup>17</sup> The Wildlife Conservation Policy echoed TGLP in its promotion of commercial utilization of wildlife, but also recognized the importance of non-commercial resource use and argued for the involvement of local residents in conservation. CBNRM builds on the Wildlife Conservation Policy by involving residents of WMAs in conservation via

- 
15. With the exception of the Ministry of Agriculture, the names of the relevant ministries have changed over time with repeated bureaucratic reorganizations.
  16. Fences for disease control present an even more serious threat. The most controversial are the Buffalo fence constructed around the fringes of the Okavango Delta in 1983 and the network of cordon fences introduced in Ngamiland during the outbreak of Contagious Bovine Pleuro Pneumonia in 1994.
  17. Most WMAs affect reserved zones under TGLP, but some are on State land (Cassidy, 2000).

commercial development of wildlife resources (Cassidy, 2000; Rozemeijer, 2003; Twyman, 2001).

Community-based programmes around the world define ‘community’ in various ways. In Botswana, a legally registered community-based organization (CBO), usually a trust, must be established to represent the community’s interests. CBOs can encompass one or several villages within or adjacent to designated wildlife areas, but are substantially smaller than the traditional *merafe* and post-colonial districts. Representatives from DWNP and other departments identify villages for participation in CBNRM, facilitate the formation of CBOs, and attempt to prevent biased representation through a series of community meetings (Cassidy, 2000; Thakadu, 2005).<sup>18</sup>

Once legally registered, a CBO may lease land from the Land Board and gain legal rights over particular uses of wildlife resources from DWNP (for example, photo safaris, hunting quotas for particular species).<sup>19</sup> The CBO may choose to manage those resources directly, sell or auction access rights to members or non-members, or sub-contract with a joint venture partner to manage and market its wildlife resources. Before it can enter a joint venture partnership (JVP), the CBO must develop a management plan in collaboration with various government departments (Cassidy, 2000; Twyman, 2001). Before adoption of the 2007 policy, revenues flowed directly to the CBOs and were expected to support operations, allow reinvestment in the resource base and tourism infrastructure, and provide direct benefits for members.

The government adopted CBNRM as a pilot programme with support from USAID’s Natural Resource Management Programme (NRMP) in 1989. From the launch of the Chobe Enclave Conservation Trust in 1993, CBNRM expanded to involve 130,000 people in 120 villages by 2003 (Swatuk, 2005: 104).<sup>20</sup> Efforts to organize additional communities are ongoing. CBOs are concentrated in Botswana’s north and northwest, where the Okavango Delta and Chobe River support the highest concentrations of wildlife and attract the most tourists. Since the early 1990s, wildlife-based tourism has expanded dramatically in this region, as have CBO revenues. The *Botswana Financial Statistics* do not report aggregate tourism revenues and incomplete reporting by CBOs makes it impossible to calculate aggregate CBO earnings. According to DWNP (2005), CBOs involved in JVPs generally receive between 1 and 1.5 million Pula per year (US\$ 198,000–297,000).<sup>21</sup> Extrapolation suggests that the fourteen CBOs engaged in JVPs earned between 14 and 21 million Pula (US\$ 2.9–4.3 million) in 2003. These revenues are dwarfed

18. Conflicts over boundary issues and representation with CBOs are nonetheless common.

19. The leases give rights to Controlled Hunting Areas (CHAs) that DWNP has designated for administrative purposes.

20. Botswana had a total population of 1.7 million in 2001 (Republic of Botswana, 2001).

21. Historical exchange rates for CBO earnings are based on annual averages provided by the Oanda Corporation, ‘FXHistory: Historical Currency Exchange Rates. Conversion Table: BWP to USD (Interbank rate)’. Averages for 01/01/00 to 12/31/00 and 01/01/06 to 12/31/06 calculated on 30 April 2007 at <http://www.oanda.com/convert/fxhistory>.

by aggregate export earnings from diamonds (11.707 million Pula or US\$ 2,228 million in 2003) and beef (2,602 million Pula or US\$ 53.7 million in 2003) (Bank of Botswana, 2007). Nonetheless, these are substantial sums for small rural communities with few other commercial opportunities. In addition, CBNRM generates local employment and non-market benefits (such as harvesting for own consumption).

Outside the north and northwest, CBOs lack sources of revenues comparable to wildlife-oriented tourism and struggle with problems of financial self-sufficiency (Swatuk, 2005; Twyman, 2001; Interviews 43DW, 52EN, 61DA). Villages excluded from CBOs, district-level authorities and districts with less valuable natural resources view the revenues of wildlife-rich CBOs jealously. They emphasize problems that afflict community-based programmes around the world: failure to manage benefits in ways that encourage sustainability or enhance local livelihoods (Taylor, 2002; Twyman, 2001); definitions of communities that exacerbate conflict rather than enhance co-operation (Boggs, 2004; Thakadu, 2005), and responsibilities that far exceed local capacity (Jansen et al., 2000; Rozemeijer, 2000). Charges of mismanagement have gained considerable attention (see, for instance, *Botswana Daily News Online*, 2000, 2001, 2005b, 2007a, 2007b; Jansen et al., 2000) and justified proposals for reform (Interviews 05WL1, 11AC1, 20CB; Konopo, 2005). These charges are often paired with criticism of CBNRM's divergence from the principle of natural resources as national resources.

The formal CBNRM policy adopted in 2007 splits wildlife revenues into two streams: CBOs will continue to receive 35 per cent of revenues directly, but 65 per cent will go into a new National Environment Fund (Ndlovu, 2007). The National Environment Fund will disburse money to CBOs throughout the country through an application process. Centralization of wildlife revenues creates new mechanisms for oversight that can limit corruption and catch management problems as they occur. Broad distribution of revenues from the National Environment Fund treats wildlife as a national resource for national development and thus reduces the inconsistency with other government policies. Yet the new policy has serious flaws. Fundamentally, centralized collection and redistribution of wildlife revenues contradicts the logic of CBNRM, weakens incentives for conservation and disempowers the CBOs.<sup>22</sup> The vetting of applications for the National Environment Fund also implies a loss of discretionary authority for CBOs. Rather than set their own priorities — whether the construction of homes for orphans, support for small businesses or development of water sources — CBOs will have to satisfy centrally set priorities. Since a new agency must

---

22. The effectiveness of these incentives is a matter of debate. There is a general sense that poaching has declined under CBNRM (Masego Madzwamuse, quoted by Swatuk, 2005: 107). Taylor (2002) found, however, that illegal hunting continues unabated; people simply take greater care to avoid detection.

be created to administer the fund, centralization can be expected to raise administrative costs and slow the flow of resources into communities (Interview 05WL1). Furthermore, instead of providing mechanisms for capacity building, the policy treats CBOs as conduits for state patronage (cf. Blaikie, 2006).

## **CHALLENGES TO CBNRM**

The CBNRM policy of 2007 does more to transform wildlife into a national resource subject to redistribution than to solve problems of institutional design or local capacity. To make sense of the partial recentralization of wildlife management, the following sections consider the nature and severity of problems of local capacity, district-level claims to wildlife revenues, and the role of identity politics in a competitive political context. Internal conflicts also tap alternative ethno-political allegiances and undermine local support for CBNRM by calling the legitimacy of CBOs into question.<sup>23</sup> Nonetheless, internal conflicts have less resonance in national politics than the challenges discussed below.

### **Problems of Local Capacity**

There is considerable concern about the mismatch between local capacity and the demands of CBNRM in Botswana (Arntzen et al., 2003; Jansen et al., 2000; Rozemeijer, 2000; Thakadu, 2005). CBNRM demands that CBOs develop and implement constitutions, management plans and complex business contracts. CBOs must adhere to these requirements to obtain leases from the Land Board and wildlife quotas from DWNP, even though they do not necessarily enhance natural resource management or local development (Cassidy, 2000; Twyman, 2001). Because CBOs involve people with limited formal education and little prior work experience, they must make huge strides in capacity building within the span of a relatively short-term lease.

CBOs receive some support from NGOs, donor organizations, and government officials. Where NGOs and donors work intensively with a few CBOs, government officials extend intermittent assistance to all CBOs. NGOs and donors have addressed capacity issues with training programmes and sponsorship of community-based facilitators (Rozemeijer, 2000; Thakadu, 2005). Unfortunately, NGOs and donors generally work with only a few communities and operate on short time horizons. Even three to five years of intensive support cannot compensate for limited general education or non-existent specialized training in accounting, management and marketing. The Netherlands Development Organization, SNV, found that even after six years of

---

23. For incisive analyses of internal conflicts see Boggs (2004) and Thakadu (2005).

intensive training, community members lacked the skills required to manage the Dq̄e Qare Game Farm in Ghanzi autonomously (Rozemeijer, 2000).

Each district has a technical advisory committee (TAC) with representation from the various departments involved in CBNRM. TAC members, however, have a number of competing responsibilities. One official asserted that the TAC becomes overtaxed once there are four CBOs in a district (Interview 61DA). There are at least three times that many CBOs in Northwest district (Rozemeijer, 2003). Because the TACs offer CBOs only intermittent attention and contradictory messages, CBOs see them as unreliable and unresponsive (Thakadu, 2005).

No comprehensive system exists to provide the sort of long-term support CBOs need.<sup>24</sup> Many have run into serious problems such as inertia related to organizational difficulties and internal conflicts; problems of wasteful, inefficient and potentially corrupt management; and legal conflicts with JVPs over contractual issues (Arntzen et al., 2003; Boggs, 2004; *Botswana Daily News Online*, 2007a, 2007b; Jansen et al., 2000; Rozemeijer, 2000; Thakadu, 2005). While CBOs learn from each other's mistakes (Interview 16AC), improvements in organizational skills probably occur more rapidly than acquisition of technical skills. Technical capacity building requires a strong foundation of literacy and numeracy. Building that foundation depends on a strong government commitment to rural education . . . and time.

### District-Level Claims to Wildlife Revenues

Organizational and managerial problems provide a nominally non-political justification for calls to substantially reduce the autonomy of CBOs and reallocate wildlife revenues. For years, proposals circulated that would redirect wildlife revenues to either District Councils, other districts or the national government (for example, DWNP, 2005). They suggested that problems of mismanagement could be addressed if revenues from concessions were paid into a fund, which would then make and oversee grants to CBOs for specific purposes (DWNP, 2005; Interviews 05WL1, 22DC). Although the Councils argued for district funds that they would control (Interview 22DC), others favoured a national fund (Interview 05WL1). Ultimately, the 2007 policy opted for a national fund.

Earlier struggles over power echo through district-level reactions to CBNRM. The creation of an array of new local institutions after independence fragmented local authority, as discussed above. Today, the District Councils are the district-level institutions with the greatest formal authority

---

24. The CBNRM Support Programme, established in 1999 with major support from SNV and IUCN, is an important if partial exception (see <http://www.cbnrm.bw/>). It has provided important programmatic support and plays a crucial co-ordinating role. It does not provide facilitators for individual CBOs.

and democratic legitimacy. From their perspective, CBOs represent rivals. The Councils argue that tourism revenues should alleviate constraints on local revenue generation by supplementing their development efforts (Interview 22DC). They view any allocation that does not match their vision of development as mismanagement — even if the CBOs pursue their goals in cost-effective ways and avoid suspicions of corruption. Ideally, these revenues should be collected and disbursed by the Councils. At a minimum, CBOs should be required to adhere to development plans developed by the Councils. The District Councils believe that any autonomy exercised by CBOs should occur within a framework that they have designed, with CBOs subordinate to the Councils (Interview 22DC).

CBNRM in Botswana diverts resources and authority away from local government institutions, as it does wherever special user groups are established to manage natural resources (Manor, 2004; Ribot, 2003; Ribot et al., 2006). Critics argue that accountability to local resource users would be enhanced if authority over natural resources were instead decentralized to general purpose local governments (Ribot, 2003). Whatever its merits in other countries, it is not clear that redirecting authority over wildlife resources and associated revenues to the District Councils would more effectively empower local resource users in Botswana. After all, Councillors explicitly criticize CBOs for setting priorities that differ from those of the Councils. Under the current electoral system, the Councils are more accountable to residents of larger villages than to the people who live most closely with wildlife (cf. Larson, 2002). Should CBNRM be designed to enable political consolidation by district authorities or the empowerment of local communities that often have distinct cultural identities and development goals and are closer to wildlife resources? From a managerial perspective, the local scale is superior. From a political perspective, however, the answer is less obvious.

### **Different Natural Resources, Different Primary Communities**

Competing claims to wildlife resources appeal to alternative definitions of the primary community as national, district or local. Although District Councils emphasize their superior capacity to manage large sums of money and develop technical management plans, they also see CBOs as a challenge to their authority. Resource-poor areas question decentralized control over natural resources, whether by local or district communities. CBNRM is a national programme and Botswana consider wildlife a national resource. Proponents of national redistribution of revenues from wildlife-based activities note that many infrastructure developments and social services depended on the utilization of mineral revenues for national development (*Botswana Daily News Online*, 2005a; Interviews 72PO, 73PO, 74PO). Shouldn't wildlife resources be managed for national benefit as well? Others agree that mineral

and wildlife resources should be treated in a parallel fashion, but would like to see CBNRM as the model (Interviews 72PO, 76PO; Rozemeijer, 2003: 26).<sup>25</sup> Rather than nationalize wildlife, the government should decentralize control over minerals or at least mineral revenues. If local authorities were allowed to raise revenues from local resources, whether wildlife or minerals, those resources might foster the development of local democracy (cf. Crook and Manor, 1998). Of course, local control over mineral resources would also deprive the national government of its main revenue source and reverse the BDP's strategy of building national unity by converting mineral resources into broadly distributed national infrastructure. This is where identity politics enter.

In drawing parallels between the value of wildlife and mineral resources and highlighting divergence in their management, the opposition raises embarrassing questions about the BDP's sincerity in claiming equal status for all Batswana. When asked about CBNRM, BDP politicians made the connection with mineral policy without prompting. Although they sometimes referred to problems of mismanagement, several — all representatives of wildlife-scarce constituencies — emphasized the importance of consistency with the principle of natural resources as resources for the nation:

It is an unfair policy. You give people rights in wildlife, you might as well give rights in diamonds. It is unfair and it is inconsistent with important policies in this country. . . . With wildlife areas, you see a negation of this [mineral] policy. Are we creating a precedent? Are we suggesting to diamond areas and gold areas that you can start agitating for a bigger share of the resources found on your land? [Interview 72PO]

Our stand has always been, when we get resources, we will centralize those resources so we can develop the nation. Just like with mining. It goes into a common kitty and so we can divide from this. We did that again with land. That is why we have this Land Policy where land belongs to all. When we introduced this thing [CBNRM], it looked like it contradicted that because when you are close to resources you benefit from that instead of putting it into a central pool for the country. [Interview 73PO]

It's a contradiction of terms. We are mining diamonds. What we do with diamonds is for the national benefit. We don't have people in Jwaneng [a diamond-mining town] benefiting from diamonds. The level of mismanagement [in CBNRM] is vexing, irritating. I would stand with those who say if you are going to go that way, why not go with diamonds? . . . What about people in Gaborone, Ramotswa and Tlokweng who don't have those natural resources because they are close to Gaborone [the capital]? . . . I think natural resources should be for all Batswana. [Interview 74PO]

These politicians feel that the government should maintain consistency across policies in a manner that clearly prioritizes national over regional or local political identity. This concern gains intensity as uncertainty about the BDP's hold on power increases. The BDP's electoral dominance has eroded steadily over the past two decades and its members are well aware that they

---

25. These calls are bolstered by the example of locally controlled platinum mines in South Africa (Interview 76PO).

may be in the opposition one day. The opposition has taken up the issue, arguing that mining communities should receive at least a share of mineral revenues (Interview 72PO). The idea of decentralizing mineral revenues appeals to the opposition's base of support among miners. The BDP cannot easily co-opt this proposal, since it would mean forfeiting the main source of government revenue. Influential members of the BDP, including current and former cabinet ministers, prefer to treat wildlife resources as national resources, even if it means undermining CBNRM.

Yet, people can be expected to complain bitterly if rights and resources are withdrawn. Opponents of CBNRM within the BDP suggest that the beneficiaries of CBNRM could be convinced that the changes are made for their own good (Interview 73PO). Rural residents might be receptive to changes that circumvent CBOs discredited by mismanagement and conflict. Even if persuasion fails, the CBOs are so few in number, geographically concentrated, and organizationally weak that the BDP can afford to antagonize them (Interview 72PO). The relative paucity of wildlife resources outside the northwest means only a concentrated set of communities in the north and northwest would face direct losses. However, the northwest has long been a region with tight, three-way elections. Considering the BDP's narrow national electoral margin, policies that antagonize voters in tightly contested regions pose a big electoral risk (Interview 71PO). Meanwhile, at least some BDP politicians recognize that the two resources present different management challenges and argue for improving capacity building rather than dismantling the programme (Interview 77PO1).

In various ways, the government has drawn attention to problems of mismanagement to undermine support for the current arrangement and justify the move to a more centralized arrangement. For instance, the Directorate of Corruption and Economic Crime organized a workshop on CBNRM in northwestern Botswana in December 2006 that highlighted economic crimes associated with CBNRM (Ramsden, 2006). This image was reinforced by coverage in the *Botswana Daily News* of a negative audit of Khwai Development Trust in early 2007 (2007a, 2007b). Private media attention to the likely termination of development projects in other communities if the reforms are implemented (such as Ndlovu, 2007) partially balanced these negative reports.

The CBNRM policy of 2007 attempts to strike a balance between pressures for centralization as a response to limited local capacity and identity politics and the risk that centralization will antagonize local communities, prompting an increase in poaching and a decrease in electoral support. Will the new policy effectively counter the rhetorical linkage between wildlife and mineral policies? In a series of articles in a major private newspaper, BDP-backbencher Botsalo Ntuane argued forcefully that the CBNRM policy threatens national unity by giving communities a claim to a share of the revenues generated from wildlife resources (Ntuane, 2007a, 2007b). In Ntuane's view, the new policy 'has the potential to open a Pandora's box

with agitators from communities that live in the midst of resources, but do not enjoy preferential treatment demanding to be granted privileges similar to those enjoyed by communities covered by the policy' (Ntuane, 2007a).

These articles are noteworthy for at least two reasons. First, this open critique of government policy from a member of the BDP reflects the intensity of competition within the party. Public displays of internal divisions may encourage electoral competition, both in primary and general elections. Second, the articles suggest that, despite decreasing the revenues directed to wildlife communities by two-thirds, the new policy failed to sever the rhetorical linkage across natural resource sectors or between rights to natural resources and the definition of political community. If a BDP-backbencher is keeping this critique alive, opposition politicians can be expected to do the same. It seems that CBNRM and the underlying issues of political identity will stay on the political agenda.

## CONCLUSION

Politicians in Botswana link mineral and wildlife policies precisely because they present opposing systems of rights, and because the inconsistency calls into question the ruling party's prioritization of the national over sub-national political communities. The BDP has maintained a broad electoral coalition since 1965 in part by depicting valuable natural resources like minerals as resources for national development and allocating divisible resources like land based on national citizenship. CBNRM violated this principle. As tourism expanded and the BDP's electoral majority narrowed, the opposition jumped on the inconsistent treatment of diamonds and wildlife. Calls for mineral royalties to be paid to mining communities just as wildlife revenues are paid to wildlife communities challenge the government's main source of revenues, raise questions about the sincerity of the BDP's prioritization of the nation over sub-national communities, and threaten the survival of CBNRM. At least some BDP politicians would rather dismantle CBNRM than compromise on mineral policy, despite the risk of antagonizing wildlife communities.

Of course, wildlife and minerals present different management challenges. The difficulty of preventing people from using wildlife and other common pool natural resources makes it next to impossible to manage those resources in a sustainable manner unless local residents co-operate with management efforts.<sup>26</sup> Wildlife is mobile. People can hunt with inexpensive equipment. Even non-hunters can cause significant damage by harvesting plants, digging up sands or littering. None of these activities require expensive equipment and all are difficult to monitor (Taylor, 2002). Major mineral resources in Botswana, on the other hand, take the form of diamond pipes, coal seams

---

26. The alternative of ramping up enforcement efforts can be very costly.

and pools of gas. Access to these resources can be controlled at reasonable cost. Expensive equipment is required to access some of these minerals and achieve economies of scale in extraction. Local control is not necessary for efficient management of mineral resources in the same way that it is for wildlife resources. The difference between *wanting* decentralization of mineral management to enhance local democracy and *needing* decentralization of wildlife resources to prevent their destruction is critical from a management perspective. Politically, differences in management challenges are beside the point. Local claims to mineral resources challenge the national government in general and the BDP in particular. The national government can be expected to defend its most important source of revenue even if the party in government changes. For the BDP, the discrepancy in the treatment of mineral and wildlife resources gains additional priority because it calls into question its coalition building strategy.

CBNRM in Botswana does not link participation in conservation efforts to benefits from wildlife resources strongly enough to fully realize its potential for improving conservation (Blaikie, 2006; cf. Gibson and Marks, 1995). Its effectiveness has been limited further by the creation of multi-village CBOs with little connection to historical patterns of co-operation and low local capacity (Thakadu, 2005). Despite CBNRM's shortcomings, there is a sense that poaching levels have fallen (M. Madzwamuse, quoted in Swatuk, 2005: 107).<sup>27</sup> Supporters believe that, by creating opportunities for rural residents to make collective decisions about shared resources and to hold one another to account, CBNRM has planted the seeds for enhanced local democracy and stronger rural development. The adoption of a reform that recentralizes control over wildlife revenues means that CBNRM is no longer fully community-based. The change may result in increased poaching. Moreover, withdrawal of benefits associated with CBNRM may provoke alienation and anger towards government in a region with a history of close elections.

The new CBNRM policy attempts to strike a compromise, centralizing control over most, but not all, of the tourism revenues associated with CBNRM. This policy rejects claims by District Councils that they have a more legitimate claim than the CBOs to represent the local community in community-based management. It is not surprising that the BDP rejects redefinition of the local community as the district, especially since the districts correspond closely with the historical *merafe*. The decision to treat wildlife resources as resources for the nation is more consistent with past BDP policies and political strategies. Although the changes address the political challenges associated with CBNRM, it is not clear that they effectively redress the design problems that have limited CBNRM's effectiveness. In principle, the National Environment Fund might provide the sort of consistent support

---

27. There is evidence, however, that illegal hunting continues but that levels of detection have fallen (Taylor, 2002).

required to build local capacity. In practice, the creation of an extra administrative layer increases administrative costs and offers new opportunities to create or entrench patronage relationships.

In many cultures, the connection between community membership and rights to natural resources is longstanding (Berry, 1993; Migdal, 1988; Scott 1976). From a historical perspective, it is not surprising that the contemporary politics of nation building and sub-national autonomy influences natural resource and land policy, especially in developing countries. The connection between territory and identity continues to shape policy debates about land use as well as resource distribution in industrialized countries (Schwartz, 2006). Furthermore, implications of competition over the definition and prioritization of alternative political communities extends beyond natural resource policy. Property rights, tax codes and other policies influence the distribution of resources, state–society relations and patterns of domestic co-operation and competition. Such policies lend themselves to political efforts to redefine political, especially national, identities and facilitate the formation of advantageous coalitions. Politicians take considerable interest in policies that create divergent systems of rights because they suggest alternative political identities. Divergent systems of rights increase the scope for political competition over the prioritization of various identities and their interpretation. The framing of debate over CBNRM in Botswana as a choice between national or sub-national rights to all natural resources illustrates this dynamic. An assessment of the prevalence of these sorts of cross-natural resource currents and their association with changing patterns of political competition awaits future research.

## REFERENCES

- Acemoglu, D., S. Johnson and J.A. Robinson (2003) 'An African Success Story: Botswana,' in D. Rodrick (ed.) *In Search of Prosperity: Analytical Narratives on Economic Growth*, pp. 80–122. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Adams, W. and D. Hulme (2001) 'Conservation and Community: Changing Narratives, Policies and Practices in African Conservation', in D. Hulme and M. Murphree (eds) *African Wildlife and Livelihoods: The Promise and Performance of Community Conservation*, pp. 9–23. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Agrawal, A. (2001) 'State Formation in Community Spaces? Decentralization of Control over Forests in the Kumaon Himalaya, India', *Journal of Asian Studies* 60(1): 9–40.
- Agarwal, B. (2001) 'Participatory Exclusions, Community Forestry, and Gender: An Analysis for South Asia and a Conceptual Framework', *World Development* 29(10): 1623–48.
- Agrawal, A. and C.C. Gibson (1999) 'Enchantment and Disenchantment: The Role of Community in Natural Resource Conservation', *World Development* 27(4): 629–49.
- Agrawal, A. and J. Ribot (1999) 'Accountability in Decentralization: A Framework with South Asian and West African Cases', *Journal of Developing Areas* 33(4): 473–502.
- Alden Wily, L. and S. Mbaya (2001) 'Land, People and Forests in Eastern and Southern Africa at the Beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The Impact of Land Relations on the Role of Communities in Forest Future'. Community Involvement in Forest Management in Eastern and Southern Africa. Nairobi: IUCN East Africa Regional Office.

- Alexander, J. and J. McGregor (2000) 'Wildlife and Politics: CAMPFIRE in Zimbabwe', *Development and Change* 31(3): 605–27.
- Anderson, B. (1991) *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. New York: Verso.
- Arntzen, J.W., D.L. Molokomme, E.M. Terry, N. Moleele, O. Tshosa and D. Mazambani (2003) 'Main Findings of the Review of CBNRM in Botswana'. Occasional Paper No 14. Gaborone: IUCN/SNV CBNRM Support Programme.
- Bank of Botswana (2007) *Botswana Financial Statistics* Vol 14, No 4 (April). Gaborone: Bank of Botswana, Research Department. <http://www.bankofbotswana.bw/> (accessed 14 June 2007).
- Barrow, E., H. Gichohi and M. Infield (2001) 'The Evolution of Community Conservation Policy and Practice in East Africa', in D. Hulme and M. Murphree (eds) *African Wildlife and Livelihoods: The Promise and Performance of Community Conservation*, pp. 59–73. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Bechuanaland Democratic Party (1965) *Election Manifesto*. Reprinted in W.J.A. MacCartney *Selected Documents on the Government and Politics of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland*. Roma, Lesotho: UBLS Printing Unit, 1971.
- Berry, S. (1993) *No Condition is Permanent: The Social Dynamics of Agrarian Change in Sub-Saharan Africa*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Blaikie, P. (2006) 'Is Small Really Beautiful? Community-based Natural Resource Management in Malawi and Botswana', *World Development* 34(11): 1942–57.
- Boggs, L.P. (2004) 'Community Based Natural Resource Management in the Okavango Delta', in C. Fabricus, E. Koch, H. Mogome and S. Turner (eds) *Rights, Resources and Rural Development: Community Based Natural Resource Management in Southern Africa*, pp. 147–59. London and Sterling, VA: Earthscan.
- Boone, C. (1998) 'State Building in the African Countryside: Structure and Politics at the Grassroots', *Journal of Development Studies* 34(4): 1–31.
- Boone, C. (2003) *Political Topographies on the African State: Territorial Authority and Institutional Choice*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Botswana Daily News Online* (2000) 'Refrain from Misusing Community Funds', 1 March. <http://www.gov.bw/cgi-bin/news.cgi?d=20000301> (accessed 25 July 2005).
- Botswana Daily News Online* (2001) 'Okavango Trust Funds Should Benefit Everyone', 28 February. <http://www.gov.bw/cgi-bin/news.cgi?d=20010228> (accessed 19 July 2005).
- Botswana Daily News Online* (2005a) 'Royalty Issue Sparks Heated Debate', 2 August. <http://www.gov.bw/cgi-bin/news.cgi?d=20050802> (accessed 16 February 2007).
- Botswana Daily News Online* (2005b) 'Okavango Residents Reap Tourism Benefits', 7 June. <http://www.gov.bw/cgi-bin/news.cgi?d=20050607> (accessed 19 July 2005).
- Botswana Daily News Online* (2007a) 'Audit Report Shows Abuse of Khwai Trust Funds', 27 February. <http://www.gov.bw/cgi-bin/news.cgi?d=20070227> (accessed 27 April 2007).
- Botswana Daily News Online* (2007b) 'Trust Should Benefit Community', 28 February. <http://www.gov.bw/cgi-bin/news.cgi?d=20070228> (accessed 27 April 2007).
- Brass, P.R. (1985) 'Ethnic Groups and the State', in Paul R. Brass (ed.) *Ethnic Groups and the State*, pp. 1–56. London: Croom Helm.
- Bromley, D.W. et al. (eds) (1992) *Making the Commons Work: Theory, Practice, and Policy*. San Francisco, CA: ICS Press.
- Campbell, B., N. Byron, P. Hobane, E. Madzudzo, F. Matose and L. Wily (1999) 'Moving to Local Control of Woodland Resources: Can CAMPFIRE Go Beyond the Mega-Fauna?', *Society and Natural Resources* 12(5): 501–9.
- Cassidy, L. (2000) 'CBNRM and Legal Rights to Resources in Botswana'. Occasional Paper No 4. Gaborone: IUCN/SNV CBNRM Support Programme.
- Crook, R.C. and J. Manor (1998) *Democracy and Decentralisation in South Asia and West Africa: Participation, Accountability and Performance*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

- DWNP (2005) 'Concept Paper: Community Management of Benefits from CBNRM'. Unpublished document. Gaborone, Botswana: Department of Wildlife and National Parks.
- Egner, B. (1987) 'The District Councils and Decentralisation, 1978–1986'. Gaborone, Botswana: Economic Consultancies (Pty) Ltd.
- Emerton, L. (2001) 'The Nature of Benefits and the Benefits of Nature: Why Wildlife Conservation Has Not Economically Benefited Communities in Africa', in D. Hulme and M. Murphree (eds) *African Wildlife and Livelihoods: The Promise and Performance of Community Conservation*, pp. 208–26. Oxford: James Currey.
- Fortmann, L. (1983) 'The Role of Local Institutions in Communal Area Development: A Summary Report'. Gaborone, Botswana: Government of Botswana, Ministry of Local Government and Lands, Applied Research Unit; Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin, Land Tenure Center.
- Gibson, C.C. and S.A. Marks (1995) 'Turning Hunters Into Conservationists: An Assessment of Community-Based Wildlife Programs in Africa', *World Development* 23(6): 941–57.
- Grant, S. (1980) 'Reduced Almost to Nothing? Chieftancy and a Traditional Town. The Case of Linchwe II Kgafela and Mochudi', *Botswana Notes and Records* 12: 89–100.
- Guha, R. (1989) *The Unquiet Woods: Ecological Change and Peasant Resistance in the Himalaya*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Hardin, G. (1968) 'The Tragedy of the Commons', *Science* 162(3859): 1243–8.
- Heller, P. (2001) 'Moving the State: The Politics of Democratic Decentralization in Kerala, South Africa, and Porto Alegre', *Politics & Society* 29(1): 131–63.
- Hulme, D. and M. Murphree (eds) (2001) *African Wildlife and Livelihoods: The Promise and Performance of Community Conservation*. Oxford: James Currey.
- Igoe, J. and D. Brockington (2007) 'Neoliberal Conservation: A Brief Introduction', *Conservation and Society* 5(4): 432–49.
- Ingram, H., A.L. Schneider and P. deLeon (2007) 'Social Construction and Policy Design', in P.A. Sabatier (ed.) *Theories of the Policy Process*, pp. 93–126. Boulder, CO: Westview Press (2<sup>nd</sup> edn).
- Jansen, R., M. Madzwamuse and N. Rozemeijer (2000) *Proceedings of the First National CBNRM Forum Meeting in Botswana, 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> of May 2000, and the CBNRM Status Report 1999/2000*. Gaborone, Botswana: National CBNRM Forum in Botswana.
- Jütting, J. et al. (2005) 'What Makes Decentralisation in Developing Countries Pro-Poor?', *European Journal of Development Research* 17(4): 626–48.
- Konopo, J. (2005) 'CBNRM Threatened by a Lack of Support', *Mmegi Online Business Week* 22(55) 12 April. <http://www.mmegi.bw/2005/April/Tuesday12/5027319131524.html> (accessed 19 July 2005).
- Kymlicka, W. (2004) 'Nation-Building & Minority Rights: Comparing Africa & the West', in B. Berman, D. Eyoh and W. Kymlicka (eds) *Ethnicity & Democracy in Africa*, pp. 54–71. London and Athens, OH: James Currey and Ohio University Press.
- Larson, A.M. (2002) 'Natural Resources and Decentralization in Nicaragua: Are Local Governments Up to the Job?', *World Development* 30(1): 17–31.
- Leith, J.C. (2005) *Why Botswana Prospered*. Montreal & Kingston, London and Ithaca, NY: McGill-Queen's University Press.
- Li, T.M. (2002) 'Engaging Simplifications: Community-Based Resource Management, Market Processes and State Agendas in Upland Southeast Asia', *World Development* 30(2): 265–83.
- Mamdani, M. (1996) *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Manor, J. (2004) 'User Committees: A Potentially Damaging Second Wave of Decentralisation?', *European Journal of Development Research* 16(1): 192–213.
- Marx, A.W. (1996) 'Race-Making and the Nation-State', *World Politics* 48(2): 180–208.
- McKean, M.A. (2000) 'Common Property: What Is It, What Is It Good For, and What Makes It Work', in C.C. Gibson, M.A. McKean and E. Ostrom (eds) *People and Forests: Communities, Institutions, and Governance*, pp. 27–55. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

- Migdal, J.S. (1988) *Strong Societies and Weak States: State–Society Relations and State Capabilities in the Third World*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Molomo, M. (2000) ‘Understanding Government and Opposition Parties in Botswana’, *Journal of Commonwealth and Comparative Politics* 38(1): 65–92.
- Murray, A. and N. Parsons (1990) ‘The Modern Economic History of Botswana’, in Z. Konizacki, J. Parpart and T. Shaw (eds) *Studies in the Economic History of Southern Africa. Vol I: Front-Line States*, pp. 159–99. London: Frank Cass.
- Ndlovu, N. (2007) ‘New Policy May Lead to Job Losses’, *Mmegi Online*, News 24(24) 14 February. <http://www.mmegi.bw/2007/February/Wednesday14/59.php> (accessed 25 April 2007).
- Ntuane, B. (2007a) ‘CBNRM Policy Undermines Mogae’s Ethos of Collective Ownership during its August Sitting, Parliament Endorsed the Community Based Natural Resources Management Policy’, *Mmegi Online* 24(136), Opinions, 10 September. <http://www.mmegi.bw/2007/September/Monday10/57.php> (accessed 2 January 2008).
- Ntuane, B. (2007b) ‘The Good and Bad: 100 Villages versus CBNRM Policy’, *Mmegi Online* 24(144), Opinions, 24 September. <http://www.mmegi.bw/2007/September/Monday24/85.php> (accessed 2 January 2008).
- Ostrom, E. (1990) *Governing the Commons: The Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Peters, P.E. (1984) ‘Struggles over Water, Struggles over Meaning: Cattle, Water and the State in Botswana’, *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute* 54(3): 29–49, 127.
- Picard, L.A. (1980) ‘Bureaucrats, Cattle, and Public Policy: Land Tenure Change in Botswana’, *Comparative Political Studies* 13(3): 313–56.
- Poteete, A.R. (2003) ‘Ideas, Interests, and Institutions: Challenging the Property Rights Paradigm in Botswana’, *Governance* 16(4): 527–57.
- Poteete, A.R. (2009) ‘Is Development Path Dependent or Political? A Reinterpretation of Mineral-Dependent Development in Botswana’, *Journal of Development Studies* 25(4): 544–71.
- Ramsay, J. and N. Parsons (2000) ‘The Emergence of Political Parties in Botswana’, in W.A. Edge and M.H. Lekorwe (eds) *Botswana: Politics and Society*, pp. 134–50. Pretoria: J.L. van Schaik Academic Publisher.
- Ramsden, F.J. (2006) ‘Keynote Address by the Assistant Minister of Works and Transport’. Delivered at the Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) Workshop, Maun, Botswana (8 December). <http://www.mwt.gov.bw/index.php?sectid=193&articleid=1108> (accessed 27 April 2007).
- Republic of Botswana (1993) ‘Tribal Land Amendment Act, 1993’, *Botswana Government Gazette Supplement A*: A63–A69 (10 September).
- Republic of Botswana (2001) ‘2001 Population and Housing Census: Preliminary Results Brief’. Gaborone, Botswana: Republic of Botswana.
- Ribot, J.C. (2003) ‘Democratic Decentralisation of Natural Resources: Institutional Choice and Discretionary Power Transfers in Sub-Saharan Africa’, *Public Administration and Development* 23(1): 53–65.
- Ribot, J.C., A. Agrawal and A.M. Larson (2006) ‘Recentralizing while Decentralizing’, *World Development* 34(11): 1864–86.
- Rozemeijer, N. (ed.) (2000) ‘Community-Based Tourism in Botswana: The SNV Experience in Three Community-Tourism Projects’. SNV/Botswana and SNV Service and Mediation Department in co-operation with SNV Information Department. Available in ECOSURV Library, Kgale, Botswana: SOCI NATU SNV.
- Rozemeijer, N. (comp.) (2003) ‘CBNRM in Botswana 1989–2002: A Select and Annotated Bibliography and Other Stories’. Occasional Paper No 11. Gaborone, Botswana: IUCN/SNV CBNRM Support Programme.
- Schapera, I. (1938/2004) *A Handbook of Tswana Law and Custom*. London: Oxford University Press.

- Schneider, A. (2006) 'Who Gets What from Whom? The Impact of Decentralisation on Tax Capacity and Social Spending', *Commonwealth and Comparative Politics* 44(3): 344–69.
- Schwartz, K.Z.S. (2006) *Nature and National Identity after Communism: Globalizing the Ethnoscape*. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press.
- Scott, J.C. (1976) *The Moral Economy of the Peasant: Rebellion and Subsistence in Southeast Asia*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Seabright, P. (1993) 'Managing Local Commons: Theoretical Issues in Incentive Design', *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 17(4): 113–34.
- Solway, J.S. (1994) 'From Shame to Pride: Politicized Ethnicity in the Kalahari, Botswana', *Canadian Journal of African Studies/Revue Canadienne des Études Africaines* 28(2): 254–74.
- Solway, J.S. (2002) 'Navigating the "Neutral" State: "Minority" Rights in Botswana', *Journal of Southern African Studies* 28(4): 711–29.
- Swatuk, L.A. (2005) 'From "Project" to "Context": Community Based Natural Resource Management in Botswana', *Global Environmental Politics* 5(3): 95–123.
- Taylor, M. (2002) 'The Shaping of San Livelihood Strategies: Government Policy and Popular Values', *Development and Change* 33(3): 467–88.
- Thakadu, O.T. (2005) 'Success Factors in Community Based Natural Resources Management in Northern Botswana: Lessons from Practice', *Natural Resources Forum* 29(3): 199–212.
- Thomas-Slayter, B.P. (1994) 'Structural Change, Power Politics, and Community Organizations in Africa: Challenging the Patterns, Puzzles, and Paradoxes', *World Development* 22(10): 1479–90.
- Tlou, T. (1985) *A History of Ngamiland, 1750–1906: The Formation of an African State*. Gaborone, Botswana: Macmillan Botswana Publishing Co. Pty. Ltd.
- Tlou, T. and A. Campbell (1997) *History of Botswana*. Gaborone, Botswana: Macmillan Botswana Publishing Co. Pty. Ltd.
- Torcal, M. and S. Mainwaring (2003) 'The Political Recrafting of Social Bases of Party Competition: Chile, 1973–95', *British Journal of Political Science* 33(1): 55–84.
- Tordoff, W. (1973) 'Local Administration in Botswana: Part I', *Journal of Administration Overseas* XII(4): 172–83.
- Tordoff, W. (1974) 'Local Administration in Botswana: Part II', *Journal of Administration Overseas* XIII(1): 293–304.
- Twyman, C. (2001) 'Natural Resource Use and Livelihoods in Botswana's Wildlife Management Areas', *Applied Geography* 21(1): 45–68.
- Werbner, R. (2004) *Reasonable Radicals and Citizenship in Botswana: The Public Anthropology of Kalanga Elites*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Western, D. and R.M. Wright (eds) (1994) *Natural Connections: Perspectives in Community-Based Conservation*. Washington, DC: Island Press.
- Wilhusen, P.R., S.R. Brechin, C.L. Fortwangler and P.C. West (2002) 'Reinventing a Square Wheel: Critique of a Resurgent "Protection Paradigm" in International Biodiversity Conservation', *Society and Natural Resources* 15(1): 17–40.
- Wunsch, J. (1998) 'Decentralization, Local Governance and the Democratic Transition in Southern Africa', *Public Administration and Development* 2(1). <http://www.africa.ufl.edu/asq/v2/v2i1a2.htm> (accessed 21 May 2008).

## Interviews

The number assigned to each respondent is according to the sequence of interviews conducted during fieldwork in 2004–5 and is followed by a code indicating the type of respondent (e.g., politician, civil servant in a particular ministry). A number after this code distinguishes among multiple interview dates for the same respondent.

- 05WL1. A DWNP official based at headquarters. Gaborone, Botswana, 25 May 2005.
- 11AC1. An academic with expertise of land and wildlife issues. Maun, Botswana, 30 May 2005.
- 16AC. An academic with expertise of land and wildlife issues. Maun, Botswana, 1 June 2005.
- 20CB. A representative of a trust and former government official. Maun, Botswana, 2 June 2005.
- 22DC. A representative of the Northwest District Council. Maun, Botswana, 3 June 2005.
- 43DW. A district-level officer and member of a technical advisory committee. Serowe, Botswana, 13 June 2005.
- 52EN. A district-level officer and member of a technical advisory committee. Serowe, Botswana, 16 June 2005.
- 61DA. A district-level officer and member of a technical advisory committee. Palapye, Botswana, 21 June 2005.
- 71PO. An opposition MP. Gaborone, Botswana, 5 July 2005.
- 72PO. A BDP MP. Gaborone, Botswana, 5 July 2005.
- 73PO. A BDP MP and former cabinet minister. Gaborone, Botswana, 5 July 2005.
- 74PO. A BDP cabinet minister. 5 July 2005, by telephone.
- 76PO. An opposition MP. Gaborone, Botswana, 7 July 2005.
- 77PO1. A BDP cabinet minister. 14 July 2005, by telephone.

**Amy R. Poteete** is an assistant professor of political science at Concordia University, 1455 de Maisonneuve Blvd, West Montréal, QC, Canada H3G 1M8. Her research explores interactions between political competition, natural resource policies, and the degree of democracy at various scales of political organization.