

Beyond Boundaries:

Transboundary Natural Resource Management in Sub-Saharan Africa

2001

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ACTS	African Centre for Technology Studies
Algiers Convention	African Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources
AWF	African Wildlife Foundation
BSP	Biodiversity Support Program
CAEMC	Central African Economic and Monetary Community
CAR	Central African Republic
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CBNRM	Community-Based Natural Resource Management
CCD	Convention to Combat Desertification
CEFDHAC	Conference on Central African Moist Forest Ecosystems
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
EAC	East African Community
ECOWAS	The Economic Community of West African States
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
FFI	Fauna and Flora International
GEF	Global Environment Facility
HQ	Headquarters
IGAD	Intergovernmental Agency for Development
IGCP	International Gorilla Conservation Programme
IUCN	The World Conservation Union
MAB	Man and Biosphere (program of UNESCO)
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
NP	National Park
NR	Natural Resource
NRM	Natural Resource Management

NRMP	Natural Resource Management Programme (USAID funded)
PPF	Peace Parks Foundation
Ramsar	Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, especially as Waterfowl Habitat
RCSA	Regional Center for Southern Africa (USAID)
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SARPO	Southern Africa Regional Programme Office (World Wide Fund for Nature)
SASUSG	Southern African Sustainable Use Specialist Group (IUCN/SSC)
SSC	Species Survival Commission (IUCN)
SUSG	Sustainable Use Specialist Group (IUCN/SSC)
TBCA	Transboundary Conservation Area
TBNRM	Transboundary Natural Resource Management
TBNRMA	Transboundary Natural Resource Management Area
TBPA	Transboundary Protected Area
TBR	Transboundary Biosphere Reserve
TFCA	Transfrontier Conservation Area
TFP	Transfrontier Project
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WCPA	World Commission on Protected Areas (IUCN)
WCS	Wildlife Conservation Society
WRI	World Resources Institute
WTO	World Trade Organization
WWF	World Wildlife Fund (in other parts of the world, World Wide Fund for Nature)

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Africa for the promotion of sustainable livelihoods through conservation and wise use of transboundary natural resources.

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Preface

Interest is rapidly growing in transboundary natural resource management (TBNRM) as a way to improve natural resource management and biodiversity conservation, and promote regional economic development. Many different TBNRM approaches are being undertaken in Africa, producing a rich and extensive body of experience. The purpose of this publication is to present the results of an analysis undertaken by the Biodiversity Support Program (BSP) on current TBNRM developments in sub-Saharan Africa. Results are presented in the form of a framework for TBNRM, covering a wide range of TBNRM approaches. The publication provides general guidance about when (and when not) to work across boundaries, what TBNRM involves, what its limitations are, and pitfalls to avoid. Since each TBNRM situation has its own unique set of circumstances, there is no fixed blueprint approach. Findings and lessons are drawn from practical experience, and case studies are used to illustrate and expand many of the points.

This publication does not give all the answers (they are not all known yet!), but aims to help people to think through what best to do in a particular situation. It reflects the current state of TBNRM in sub-Saharan Africa, and we hope that it will encourage more TBNRM development where appropriate. It should also be seen as a step in a longer-term process of developing this approach and understanding both its potential and limitations. Our intent with this work is to contribute to stimulating discussions, practices and analyses to further the TBNRM process.

Is This Publication for You?

This publication is written both for people who are considering embarking on TBNRM for the first time, and for people who have many years of experience in TBNRM. It also covers a wide range of TBNRM situations, from transboundary protected areas to natural resource management integrated in regional development. Different sections are relevant for different situations and levels of experience, so we suggest that you select those parts that are most useful to you. We provide guidance on this in the next section and the start of Chapters 2, 3 and 4.

The main audiences are African practitioners and decision makers active in natural resource management and biodiversity conservation who have an interest in TBNRM. This includes:

- Senior technical staff in natural resources and environment government ministries;
- Senior staff in natural resource government departments and parastatals;
- Park wardens and community project managers;
- Senior conservation staff of national and international nongovernmental organizations (NGOs);
- Teachers and students at natural resource colleges and university departments; and
- Donors with an interest in natural resource management and biodiversity conservation.

Purpose, Scope and Overview of This Publication

This publication aims to present a framework for TBNRM including general concepts, the transboundary process, and lessons learned, based on a review and analysis of TBNRM experiences to date in sub-Saharan Africa.

There is currently great interest in TBNRM. As with any new process that has yet to be fully tried and tested, there is a high learning curve as successes and failures occur. TBNRM may not always be the most effective or appropriate approach. We hope that this publication will help to share lessons from the wealth of knowledge and experience that has accumulated so far, and assist those who are currently thinking about embarking on TBNRM to use approaches that have worked elsewhere, and avoid some of the pitfalls that others have encountered. For those already involved in TBNRM, the publication may provide new insights and ideas, help them to analyze their own situations holistically, and find some solutions to current problems.

Chapter 1 provides an overview of TBNRM. Chapter 2 outlines key elements of TBNRM. These elements are building blocks for the TBNRM process, which is described later. All these key elements are similar to those of natural resource management (NRM) within a country, but they are reviewed in a specific transboundary context. The chapter covers stakeholders and their interests, and the different roles people play in the TBNRM process. Levels in the TBNRM process are outlined, followed by a review of the need for and types of agreements in TBNRM. Capacity and communication needs are reviewed, and finally constraints and enabling conditions are listed.

Chapter 3 describes the process of scoping and analysis to help assess whether or not it makes sense to apply this approach in a particular situation. This also helps to distinguish objectives that can be achieved effectively by working collaboratively across borders and those where internal actions alone would suffice. The chapter then covers the need for

the development of a joint vision, and planning and design of the initiative. The first part of Chapter 3 is most relevant to those considering whether to adopt a transboundary approach, and those in the early stages of planning and developing transboundary initiatives. The final section on monitoring, evaluation and adaptive management is relevant for people already working in TBNRM.

Finally Chapter 4 outlines major findings and conclusions from the project, and reviews gaps and future needs.

Background on the TBNRM Project

BSP's TBNRM project was initiated in 1998 with a study on the opportunities and constraints for TBNRM in Southern Africa, at the request of USAID's Regional Center for Southern Africa (RCSA). The second phase of the project expanded to include West, Central and Eastern Africa; BSP commissioned regional overviews and case studies in each region, and undertook a pan-African analysis. Findings from all four regions were used as basis for a preliminary analysis. A workshop was then organized in Zimbabwe in April 2001 with practitioners from all four regions in sub-Saharan Africa, for in-depth discussions on the current thinking on and understanding of TBNRM. A small writing team of BSP staff and consultants incorporated the project findings in this publication. The first phase was managed by Judy Oglethorpe and the second phase by Harry van der Linde.

Reports upon which this publication is based are listed before the reference section, and more detailed information on individual regions or areas can be found in those reports. They are also posted on our Web site, at www.BSPonline.org. Some of these publications are available in more than one language (English, French and one in Portuguese). They include the following:

Southern Africa: Biodiversity Support Program (1999), Cumming (1999), Griffin *et al.* (1999), Metcalfe (1999) and Singh (1999)

West Africa: Lycklama à Nijeholt *et al.* (2001) and Magha *et al.* (2001)

Central Africa: Lanjouw *et al.* (2001), Steel and Curran (2001) and Wilkie *et al.* (2001)

Eastern Africa: Muruthi and Frohardt (2001), Rodgers *et al.* (2001a) and Rodgers *et al.* (2001b)

Bibliography: van der Linde, Zbicz, and Stevens (2001)

The focus of the analysis was mainly on wildlife, forestry and protected areas. Time and financial constraints meant that not all transboundary natural resources could be given equal coverage. Water, aquatic and marine resources, and rangeland for livestock are not covered in depth although we recognize that they are extremely important transboundary resources in many African regions.

Executive Summary

Background and Context

Interest in transboundary natural resource management (TBNRM) is growing rapidly in Africa and the rest of the world. TBNRM is seen as an important new tool in broad landscape approaches to sustainable natural resource management and biodiversity conservation; a way to promote regional economic development, reunite divided communities and bring peace to troubled regions; and a way to fulfill many other opportunities. Large investments are being made in it.

The Biodiversity Support Program's transboundary project aimed to review current TBNRM developments in sub-Saharan Africa; analyze the process involved; and identify opportunities, constraints and enabling conditions to see how effective the TBNRM approach is. The analysis was based on reviews of TBNRM development in Southern, Eastern, Central and West Africa; a series of case studies with a wildlife, forestry and protected areas focus; and results from workshops and consultations over the past three years.

TBNRM is defined in this publication as *any process of collaboration across boundaries that increases the effectiveness of attaining natural resource management or biodiversity conservation goal(s)*. (Note that the countries sharing resources that are candidates for transboundary management do not have to be neighbors.) The approach covers a wide continuum of TBNRM initiatives and activities ranging from transboundary community-based natural resource management and transboundary protected areas (TBPAs) management to large-scale natural resource management integrated in regional economic development.

Ecological opportunities include maintaining or restoring linkages in ecological landscapes that cross borders, and reducing transboundary threats to promote sustainable use of natural resources. Social and cultural opportunities include renewal of cooperation and cultural ties among communities severed by borders, and increased welfare and development opportunities for populations. Economic opportunities include the development of regional economic opportunities such as tourism, and economies of working on a larger

scale. Political opportunities include improved security in border areas and enhanced transparency and accountability in the use of natural resources. There are also many constraints to TBNRM. These are documented in the publication and many are outlined in the conclusions below.

TBNRM Elements and Process

The key elements of TBNRM are similar to those of in-country natural resource management (NRM); this publication reviews them in a specific transboundary context. They are as follows: stakeholders and their interests, the different roles in the TBNRM process, levels in the TBNRM process, the need for and types of TBNRM agreements, capacity and communication needs, and constraints and enabling conditions.

Scoping and analysis tools are presented, to help decide whether or not to embark on transboundary management in a particular situation. These tools also help to distinguish those objectives within an initiative that can be achieved more effectively by working collaboratively across borders from those where internal actions alone would suffice. The process continues with the development of a joint vision, and the planning and design of a TBNRM initiative. The importance of monitoring and evaluation is outlined to enable learning from successes and failures and adaptive management. The whole process is illustrated in a TBNRM cycle.

General Conclusions

The analysis concludes that TBNRM can be an effective approach for natural resource management and biodiversity conservation, where shared cross-border threats can be tackled jointly and/or mutual benefits can be gained collaboratively across a border. TBNRM is not, however, a universal panacea for management of natural resources on borders. In some cases it is more effective for countries to manage their shared resources independently because there is little net gain from collaboration.

TBNRM should not replace NRM within each country involved, but should be an extension of it. TBNRM will not succeed if internal NRM does not work. Many of the requirements for collaboration called for by TBNRM are similar to those for internal NRM. Since each TBNRM situation has its own unique set of circumstances, there is no blueprint for the approach; it needs to be planned, implemented, evaluated and adapted around the specific circumstances of each situation.

The few existing formal TBNRM agreements among countries have only recently been negotiated and as yet are not yet broadly tested and proven. The formal approach appears to take considerable time and larger amounts of funding before showing any results in terms of improved resource management or better conservation on the ground.

Conclusions on the TBNRM Process

Since TBNRM is costly and time-consuming it is crucial to undertake an adequate assessment of TBNRM feasibility before embarking on transboundary collaboration. It is best to work at the lowest transboundary level(s) possible. A bottom-up approach has the greatest chance of resulting in participation, buy-in and ownership of the process at the local level where the resources are managed. Involvement of higher levels can change over time, and as needed. It is important not to wait for all the enabling conditions to be in place before starting, but to take a pragmatic approach and start in areas where there are feasible opportunities, even if these are limited.

TBNRM must be built on trust and partnerships. Trust takes time and patience to establish and cannot be rushed. TBNRM should be a flexible process evolving on the basis of real need. It is important to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of this collaboration frequently, and adapt as appropriate. Learning should be done both internally and jointly across the border, which requires transparent sharing of information. Learning is also important across different TBNRM areas.

Conclusions on Social, Economic, Political and Institutional Aspects

Cooperating across borders increases the complexity of stakeholders. Diversity of interests can be very high, covering ecological, sociocultural, economic, institutional and political issues. Ensuring adequate stakeholder participation and seeking win-win situations take time but are essential for success.

TBNRM must increase the efficiency of natural resource management in order to be worthwhile. Synergism is essential for successful TBNRM: *the whole must be greater than the sum of the parts, otherwise individual countries are better off managing their resources independently*. In the right situations TBNRM can increase the efficiency of managing and monitoring natural resources through avoiding or reducing duplication of effort, creating economies of scale, and enhancing economic opportunities such as

increased tourism. However, TBNRM requires additional investments of money and time. Funding for TBNRM should be incremental, and not at the cost of internal NRM.

Political will and long-term commitment are essential for successful TBNRM. Good international political relations can facilitate TBNRM; sovereignty and security issues can constrain it. Collaboration can resolve local-level cross-border conflict by finding common ground and shared objectives. It can help to increase security and control over resources in border areas. Its potential role in larger-scale peace processes among countries, however, was less clear from this study.

TBNRM at a formal scale tends to increase the involvement of upper government levels, with a risk that these levels will exert influence and control that is not in the best interests of local levels. Good governance within a country is therefore essential for successful TBNRM, including subsidiarity and two-way transparency and accountability between higher and lower levels in control of land and resources.

Harmonization of relevant policies and legislation across boundaries can be an important enabling condition for TBNRM. Despite their good potential to facilitate TBNRM, some of the international environmental conventions are not currently playing a strong role. Certain regional economic agreements (e.g., SADC) seem to be playing a larger facilitating role.

TBNRM should work through existing organizations where possible. Capacity is frequently a constraint, and weak national structures cannot create strong TBNRM. Outside facilitators may be able to help build capacity. TBNRM is sometimes constrained by governments' narrow NRM approach—i.e., through isolated treatment of single resources/land uses—which does not facilitate multiple resource use.

Gaps and Future Needs

TBNRM's potential role in economic development needs to be further promoted. Greater collaboration across sectors and disciplines is needed to enhance the effectiveness of TBNRM, and it should be mainstreamed in regional and international forums. Financing is an issue that requires addressing. Capacity building will be a need for many years to come.

As new experiences are gained, they need to be analyzed and the existing understanding of TBNRM expanded. Further studies are recommended on how TBNRM is influenced by political relations, and more specifically on the potential role of TBNRM in

peace building between nations. The role environmental conventions can play in promoting TBNRM merits further investigation. New techniques for economic valuation of TBNRM are urgently required, with cost/benefit analysis tools for practitioners.

TBNRM results and lessons should be disseminated widely in Africa and indeed globally. To promote the exchange of experiences and learning, mechanisms for information sharing and networking need to be created or enhanced. These measures will help to ensure the most effective management of natural resources in transboundary areas.

