

HUNTING FOR DEVELOPMENT - People, Land and Wildlife in southern Zimbabwe.
By Per Zachrisson. Doctoral dissertation, Department of Social Anthropology, Göteborg University, Sweden. ISBN 91-628-6329-0

Abstract

Local communities in Africa, particularly southern Africa with its racially divided land pattern, have seen few economic benefits, apart from subsistence ones, from the region's wildlife during the twentieth century. Commercial, tourist and wildlife interests in the West have part in this development. Too often their main question is, how can wildlife survive, not, how can wildlife survive amongst poor people? This study explores how a world-known development programme, CAMPFIRE (Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources) addresses the question of how poor people can survive amongst wildlife in southern Zimbabwe.

The aim of the study is to explore and illuminate the specific contexts of local resource use, survival strategies and discriminatory state interventions into which CAMPFIRE enters and to investigate local peoples' perception of the programme, its idea and practice from their situatedness. The study argues that the fate of the programme is to a large extent decided by local peoples' historically shaped and culturally mediated perception of land, wildlife and development together with their utilitarian calculation of wildlife compared with other natural resources.

The study is divided into three parts. PART ONE problematizes fieldwork amongst disadvantaged people and explores the reasons for this disadvantage, which is particularly a colonial legacy of land and natural resources discrimination. The focus is on how the present-day fractured communities of Sotho, Venda and Ndebele in Gwanda South evolved out of a colonial frontier and how they were able to adjust to the new circumstances. In PART TWO, the focus is on the present people ('inheritors of the land'), in Hwali ward and Patana village targeted for development under the CAMPFIRE programme. The situatedness of their communities on the land, their social networks, socio-economic characteristics, their livelihoods, their leaders and local knowledge and the voices of their inhabitants mirror some of the circumstances of living off the land. PART THREE deals specifically with the impact of colonial rule, Western ideas on African wilderness put into practice and 'development' in the form the CAMPFIRE programme on the population and their livelihoods. Peoples' interactions and views on CAMPFIRE, its conceptualization of wildlife management in order to 'develop' the people and their land are represented with the help of six 'revelatory incidents' and three 'diagnostic events'.

Powerlessness is a problem for the implementation of development. In the concluding Chapter the question of power and empowerment in sustainable natural resource use is focused on. The question of international contestations over the use of African wildlife and what 'globalisation' of indigenous natural resources may entail for the people in Gwanda South are examined. The study ends by pointing out that indigenization of natural resources in Gwanda South, as elsewhere in Africa, is not only about equity and democracy, but it is also about getting rid of a perpetuated colonial legacy of dominant Western interests and views on how to best utilize local African resources for the benefit of outsiders.

Key words: Anthropology, Zimbabwe, Gwanda, land, wildlife, livelihood, CAMPFIRE, development, globalisation