



Universiteit
Leiden
The Netherlands

Private wildlife conservation in Zimbabwe: joint ventures and reciprocity

Wels, H.

Citation

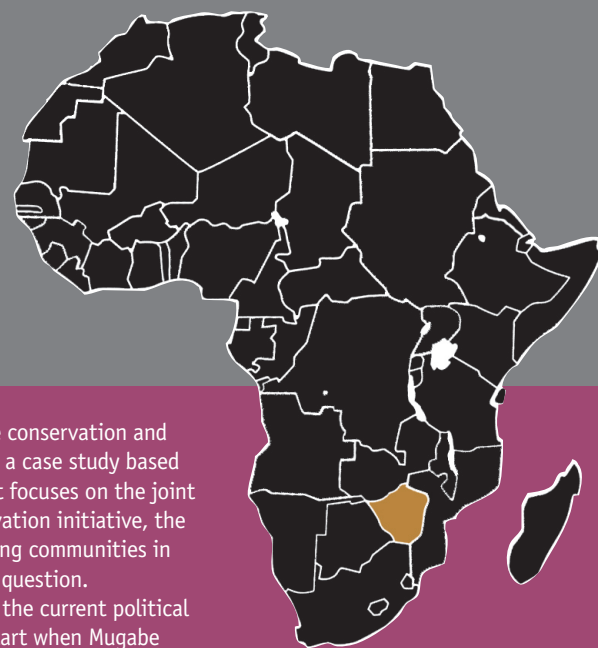
Wels, H. (2003). *Private wildlife conservation in Zimbabwe: joint ventures and reciprocity*. Leiden: Brill. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/12899>

Version: Not Applicable (or Unknown)

License: [Leiden University Non-exclusive license](#)

Downloaded from: <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/12899>

Note: To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).



Harry Wels

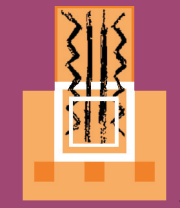
Private Wildlife Conservation in Zimbabwe

Joint Ventures and Reciprocity

AFRIKA-STUDIECENTRUM SERIES

This book is the first about private wildlife conservation and community involvement in Zimbabwe. It is a case study based on ethnographic fieldwork done in 1998. It focuses on the joint venture between a private wildlife conservation initiative, the Save Valley Conservancy, and its surrounding communities in terms of reciprocal exchange and the land question. It makes clear, amongst other things, that the current political tragedy in Zimbabwe about land did not start when Mugabe lost the referendum in February 2000. The book tries to offer an explanation for the unforgiving route that Mugabe has obviously taken in the land question, despite his words of reconciliation when he came to power in 1980. This book is of particular interest to students, practitioners and academics in the fields of (private) wildlife conservation, community participation and organisational co-operation.

Harry Wels
Ph.D. (2000) in Organisational Anthropology, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, is Associate Professor at the Department of Culture, Organisation and Management, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, the Netherlands. He has published broadly on issues of organisational co-operation in southern Africa, including *Trust and Co-operation*.



Afrika
Studie
centrum
African Studies Centre
Centre d'Etudes Africaines

Private Wildlife Conservation in Zimbabwe

AFRIKA-STUDIECENTRUM SERIES



Harry Wels

BRILL

www.brill.nl
ISSN 1570-9310

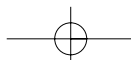
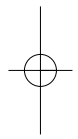
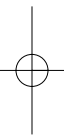


BRILL

BRILL



Private Wildlife Conservation in Zimbabwe



Afrika-Studiecentrum Series

Editorial Board

Prof. Nicolas van de Walle (Michigan State University, USA)

Prof. Deborah Posel (Director WISER, South Africa)

Dr Ruth Watson (University of London, UK)

Dr Paul Mathieu (FAO, Rome)

Dr Piet Konings (African Studies Centre)

VOLUME 2

Private Wildlife Conservation in Zimbabwe

Joint Ventures and Reciprocity

by

Harry Wels



BRILL
LEIDEN · BOSTON
2003

This book is printed on acid-free paper.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Wels, Harry, 1961-

Private wildlife conservation in Zimbabwe / by Harry Wels.

p. cm. — (Afrika-Studiecentrum series, ISSN 1570-9310 ; v. 2)

Includes bibliographical references (p.) and index.

ISBN 90-04-13697-5 (pb. : alk. paper)

1. Wildlife conservation—Zimbabwe. I. Title. II. Series.

QL84.6.Z55W46 2003

339.95'16'096891—dc22

2003065216

ISSN 1570-9310
ISBN 90 04 13697 5

© **Copyright 2003 by Koninklijke Brill NV, Leiden, The Netherlands**

Cover photo: The fence of the Savé Valley Conservancy (photo by the author)

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, translated, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior written permission from the publisher.

Authorization to photocopy items for internal or personal use is granted by Brill provided that the appropriate fees are paid directly to The Copyright Clearance Center, 222 Rosewood Drive, Suite 910 Danvers, MA 01923, USA.
Fees are subject to change.

PRINTED IN THE NETHERLANDS

To Marianne

Contents

| | |
|--|------------|
| List of maps | <i>ix</i> |
| List of figures | <i>ix</i> |
| List of tables | <i>ix</i> |
| Abbreviations and acronyms | <i>x</i> |
| Acknowledgements | <i>xii</i> |
| INTRODUCTION | <i>1</i> |
| Theoretical framework | <i>7</i> |
| On methodology | <i>15</i> |
| Structure of the book | <i>16</i> |
| 1 PRIVATE WILDLIFE CONSERVANCIES: EARLY DAYS IN SOUTH AFRICA | <i>18</i> |
| Private wildlife conservancies in South Africa | <i>20</i> |
| Game guards and poaching: relations between conservancies and neighbouring communities | <i>28</i> |
| Towards wildlife utilisation in conservancies | <i>32</i> |
| 2 PRIVATE WILDLIFE CONSERVANCIES IN ZIMBABWE AND THE LAND QUESTION | <i>42</i> |
| The physical features of present-day Zimbabwe | <i>44</i> |
| The Land Question in Zimbabwe, 1890-1980 | <i>47</i> |
| Annexation of the Lowveld | <i>51</i> |
| Further land alienation and African responses | <i>57</i> |
| Acts of legitimation | <i>63</i> |
| The land question after independence, 1980-1992 | <i>66</i> |
| New attempt to redistribute the land, 1992-1998 | <i>72</i> |
| 3 THE SAVÉ VALLEY CONSERVANCY: GENESIS AND THE LONGING FOR BUFFALO | <i>86</i> |
| Introduction | <i>86</i> |
| The 'inevitability' of the SVC | <i>89</i> |
| Description and formal organisation of the Savé Valley Conservancy | <i>105</i> |
| Main themes within the SVC related to organisational co-operation with neighbouring communities | <i>116</i> |
| The fence | <i>118</i> |
| The SVC fence and the urge to hunt | <i>123</i> |
| The buffalo as a symbol of economic prosperity | <i>132</i> |

| | | |
|---|--|-----|
| 4 | THE SAVÉ VALLEY CONSERVANCY AND ITS NEIGHBOURING COMMUNITIES: CASES OF RECIPROCAL EXCHANGE | 152 |
| | The development of the SVC trust | 154 |
| | Cases of reciprocal exchange between SVC (members) and communities | 159 |
| | More examples of interaction between SVC (members) and communities | 190 |
| | The further development of the joint venture between SVC and SVCT | 198 |
| 5 | THE POLITICS OF GIFT GIVING: JOINT VENTURES, RECIPROCITY AND CONTEXT | 216 |
| | References | 229 |
| | Index | 241 |

List of maps

- 1 Zimbabwe and the location of the Savé Valley Conservancy *xiii*
- 2 Physiographical division of Zimbabwe in four zones *45*
- 3 Categorisation of Natural Regions in Zimbabwe *46*
- 4 SVC and surrounding districts *107*
- 5 SVC and individual properties, 1998 *108*

List of figures

- 1 Conservancy road sign in South Africa *27*
- 2 Cartoon about financial situation Zimbabwe, 1998 *82*
- 3 Organogram SVC *113*
- 4 Organogram joint venture SVC and neighbouring communities *139*
- 5 Organogram joint venture SVC and neighbouring communities for IFC application *142*
- 6 Organogram Joint Committee of RDC's *199*
- 7 Organisational structure of SVCT *206*

List of tables

- 1 Average trophy fees 1995-1997 in South Africa (PHASA) *36-37*
- 2 Average prices for wildlife at wildlife auctions in South Africa, 1997 *38*
- 3 SVC list of properties, owners, operations and area (ha) *109*
- 4 Number of African Buffalo on private land, present and projected *134*
- 5 Average trophy fees of the four key species in CAMPFIRE areas (US\$) *134*

Abbreviations and acronyms

| | |
|----------|--|
| AA | Appropriate Authority |
| AGM | Annual General Meeting |
| AGRITEX | Agricultural and Extension Services |
| ARDA | Agricultural and Rural Development Authority |
| BSAC | British South Africa Company |
| CA | Communal Areas |
| CAMPFIRE | Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources |
| CASS | Centre for Applied Social Sciences |
| CCM | Conservancy Committee Meeting |
| CEO | Chief Executive Officer |
| CFU | Commercial Farmers Union |
| CITES | Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species |
| CPA | Cattle Producers Association |
| CSC | Cold Storage Commission |
| DA | District Administrator |
| DNPWLM | Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management |
| DVS | Department of Veterinary Services |
| E(E)C | European (Economic) Community |
| EIA | Environmental Impact Assessment |
| FMD | Foot and Mouth Disease |
| GEF | Global Environmental Fund |
| ICA | Intensive Conservation Area |
| ICFU | Indigenous Commercial Farmers Union |
| IFC | International Finance Corporation |
| IPZ | Intensive Protection Zone |
| IUCN | International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources |
| IWL | In With Labour |
| MDC | Movement for Democratic Change |
| MLGH | Ministry of Local Government and Housing |
| MoU | Memorandum of Understanding |
| NCA | Natal Conservancy Association |

| | |
|---------|---|
| NPB | Natal Parks Board |
| NRM | Natural Resouce Management |
| PG | Provincial Governor |
| PHASA | Professional Hunters Association of South Africa |
| PS | Permanent Secretary |
| RDC | Rural District Council |
| SANP | South African National Parks |
| SVC | Savé Valley Conservancy |
| SVCT | Savé Valley Conservancy Trust |
| SVWSL | Savé Valley Wildlife Services Ltd |
| TTL | Tribal Trust Land |
| WPA | Wildlife Producers Association |
| WWF | World Wide Fund for Nature / World Wildlife Fund |
| ZANU-PF | Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front |
| ZBC | Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation |
| ZDF | Zimbabwe Development Fund |
| ZFU | Zimbabwe Farmers Union |
| ZRP | Zimbabwe Republican Police |
| ZTA | Zimbabwe Tobacco Association |
| ZTA | Zimbabwe Tourism Association |

Acknowledgements

This book, based on my Ph.D. thesis, would not have been written without the co-operation in 1998 of the landowners and managers in the Savé Valley Conservancy (SVC) and the communities surrounding the SVC, organised in the Savé Valley Conservancy Trust (SVCT). They all endured and (usually) answered what to them must have sometimes seemed stupid questions. They made me feel welcome in their midst. I am particularly grateful to Clive Stockil, Graham and Chantal Connear and especially to Bonafice Shumba who, as Liaison Officer of the SVC, served as my guide and interpreter in the communities in many instances and was himself an important source of information and insight.

At the household level we are indebted to Marc and Beryl Fraser who helped us wherever they could to make our place a home for the time being and Judith Kashere for keeping our household running.

I also owe a lot to the willingness of the Centre for Applied Social Sciences (CASS) at the University of Zimbabwe for granting me a Visiting Fellowship. Isaac Malasha was my main liaison at CASS. He helped me through all the bureaucracy involved in planning and actually doing fieldwork in Zimbabwe.

In the Netherlands I owe much to my colleagues at the Department of Culture, Organisation and Management, *Vrije Universiteit* Amsterdam, and to Wim Koot in particular. Dick Foeken at the African Studies Centre in Leiden patiently helped and guided me in preparing this publication. Vupenyu Dzingirai, Postdoctoral Fellow, Program in Agrarian Studies, Yale University, contributed invaluable constructive criticism to an earlier version of the manuscript. The early layout and countless other smaller and bigger issues concerning this publication were professionally dealt with by Saskia Stehouwer. The co-operation with Brill Publishers was smooth and stimulating. None of these people are responsible for any errors of fact or interpretation in the book. Some will probably even disagree with some aspects of my argument and interpretation.

Map 1: Zimbabwe and the location of the Savé Valley Conservancy

Introduction

‘11.15 a.m. and the white landowner, the district administrator, the ward councillor and three representatives of Chief Gudo gather under a tree on the extensive property of the landowner for a discussion about mutual concerns. Although the landowner has invited them to come to his newly developed safari camp bordering a beautiful natural pan and discuss matters over a drink, they insist on discussing the issue under a tree with a view of the new clearing on the property, intended for future irrigation to grow paprika for the export market. After a few introductory remarks, the Gudo people tell the landowner that the traditional burial sites of their chiefs, vaguely indicated to be some of the nearby kopjes, and their ceremonial natural pools are located on his property, more specifically beside his new safari camp, and they claim the land to be theirs. The landowner explains that he can show his title deeds to anybody interested to prove legally which land is his and that he knows nothing of burial sites on his property. However, he insists that access to the burial sites and the ritual pools can always be negotiated and arranged. But the ward councillor refuses and says in an aggressive tone that he cannot present his people with a compromise. He says he cannot go back to them with a message that he has negotiated a deal whereby so many people are allowed access to their burial and ritual sites for so many minutes. The two parties part without having reached a solution or a mutual understanding.’¹

The land issue and control over natural resources have always divided black and white in Zimbabwe in general and around wildlife areas in particular.² The result has often been a process of outright negative reciprocity. Even after Southern Rhodesia became independent Zimbabwe in 1980 this process did not stop despite words of reconciliation from Robert Mugabe.³ Unequal land

¹ Fieldnotes, 27 May 1998.

² Duffy, R. (2000), *Killing for Conservation. Wildlife Policy in Zimbabwe*, The International African Institute in association with Oxford: James Currey; Bloomington, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press; Duffy, R. (September 1997), The Environmental Challenge to the Nation State: Superparks and National Parks Policy in Zimbabwe, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 23 (3).

³ De Waal, V. (1990), *The Politics of Reconciliation. Zimbabwe's First Decade*, London: Hurst & Company; Cape Town: David Philip.

distribution and a process of negative reciprocity persisted and matters escalated after February 2000 when Mugabe lost a crucial constitutional referendum.⁴

Group-based competition over natural resources and community conservation in Africa has attracted a great deal of solid scholarly attention in general⁵ and by Zimbabwean scholars in Zimbabwe in particular.⁶ This book stands in and builds on this tradition and contributes to it an ethnographic case study on a joint venture in the specific field of *private* wildlife conservation, since this has been a major gap in the literature on community conservation in (southern)

⁴ Blair, D. (2002), *Degress in Violence. Robert Mugabe and the Struggle for Power in Zimbabwe*. London, New York: Continuum.

⁵ See for instance: Marks, S.A. (1984), *The Imperial lion. Human Dimensions of Wildlife Management in Central Africa*. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press; McNeely, J. & Pitt, D. (eds) (1985), *Culture and Conservation: the Human Dimension in Wildlife Planning*. London: Croon Helm; Bell, R.H.V. (1987), Conservation with a human face, in: Anderson D. & Grove R. (eds), *Conservation in Africa. People, Policies and Practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 79-101; Adams, Th. & McShane, J. (1996)[1992], *The Myth of Wild Africa. Conservation Without Illusion*. Los Angeles, London: University of California Press; Bonner, R. (1993), *At the Hand of Man. Peril and Hope for Africa's Wildlife*. New York: Vintage Books; Western, D. & Wright, R.M. (eds) (1994), *Natural Connections: Perspectives in Community-Based Conservation*. New York: Island Press; Gibson, C.C. & Marks, S.A. (1995), Transforming Rural Hunters into Conservationists: an Assessment of Community-Based Wildlife Management Programs in Africa. *World Development*, vol. 23, no. 6, 941-957; Gibson, C.C. (1999), *Politicians and Poachers. The Political Economy of Wildlife Policy in Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Hulme, D. & Murphree, M. (eds)(2001), *African Wildlife & Livelihoods. The Promise and Performance of Community Conservation*. Oxford: James Currey.

⁶ See for instance: Murombedzi, J. (1992), *Decentralisation or Recentralisation? Implementing CAMPFIRE in Omay Communal Lands of the Nyaminyani District*. Harare: CASS, University of Zimbabwe, Working Paper no. 2; Madzudzo, E. & Dzingirai, V. (1995), A Comparative Study of the Implications of Ethnicity on CAMPFIRE in Bulilimangwe and Binga Districts in Zimbabwe, *Zambezia*, vol. 22, no. 1, 25-41; Child, G. (1995), *Wildlife and People: the Zimbabwean Success*. Harare: Wisdom Institute; Madzudzo, E. (1998), *Community-Based Natural Resource Management in Zimbabwe: Opportunities and Constraints*. Harare: CASS, University of Zimbabwe, NRM Series, CASS Working Paper; Dzingirai, V. & Madzudzo, E. (1999), Big Men and CAMPFIRE: a Comparative Study of the Role of External Actors in Conflicts over Local Resources, in: *Zambezia*, vol. 26, no. 1, 77-92; Hughes, D. (2001), Cadastral Politics: the Making of Community-Based Resource Management in Zimbabwe and Mozambique. *Development and Change* 32 (4), 741-768.

Africa.⁷ The case study is conceptually framed along the lines of identifying processes of *reciprocal exchange* between the joint venture partners, in this case a private wildlife conservancy and its neighbouring communities. In the specific literature on joint ventures, this conceptual field, which in a sense seems so obvious because the explicit choice of organisational co-operation is always based on a trade-off between what you have to put into it and what you expect to get out of it, has seldom been explicitly explored.⁸

In this book I focus on an initiative in the southeast Lowveld of Zimbabwe (see Map 1), where 24 local cattle farmers pooled their land and sold their cattle to create a private wildlife conservancy, the Savé Valley Conservancy (SVC). All, save one parastatal, were white landowners. The SVC is part of and surrounded by five heavily populated districts desperately in need of land. From the many environmentally degraded and overpopulated communal lands in the districts, the lush Lowveld flora and fauna of the SVC were seen as a land of milk and honey. But a double and electrified buffalo fence separated the communal farmers from this land of abundance. A structural process of negative reciprocity, expressed mainly through poaching and fence cutting by the (black) communal farmers and communities and through an ever-tightening 'fines and fences' approach by the (white) commercial farmers of the SVC, seemed to be cast in iron. The SVC devised a mechanism to move towards a more positive type of reciprocity, which could also serve as a political answer in the context of a deteriorating political climate concerning land issues in relation to private wildlife conservancies in the second half of the 1990s. A gift to the communities was considered a good starting point, a gift of reconciliation to mark and signify the start of a process of mutual beneficial give and take between the SVC and its neighbouring communities, a gift that would trigger the transition from a negative to a more positive form of reciprocity and a gift that was expected to stimulate a fitting return gift, of approximate equivalence, from the communities.

The SVC gift consisted of the creation of a community trust, the Savé Valley Conservancy Trust (SVCT). The communities would be represented through this trust and the SVCT would function as the legal entity through which the SVC could relate to the communities in a structure of organisational co-opera-

⁷ Pp. 294-295, Hulme, D. & Murphree, M. (2001), Community Conservation as Policy. Promise and Performance, in: Hulme, D. & Murphree, M. (eds), *African Wildlife & Livelihoods. The Promise and Performance of Community Conservation*. Oxford: James Currey.

⁸ One of the few exceptions is: Kogut, B. (December 1989), The Stability of Joint Ventures: Reciprocity and Competitive Rivalry. *The Journal of Industrial Economics*, XXXVIII, 182-198.

tion. In other words, through the SVCT, the SVC was able to create a joint venture with the communities and through this joint venture the SVC would be able to redistribute some of the economic benefits from its wildlife utilisation programme according to the distribution of shares in the joint venture. It was considered the ideal gift to the communities: the surrounding communities would be given an opportunity to participate in the (white-dominated) wildlife tourism industry and in return the communities would repay the gift by respecting the boundaries of the SVC through less poaching and less fence cutting. In terms of reciprocity, the gift would turn a relation based on negative reciprocity into one of more balanced reciprocity and would turn a relationship based on mistrust into one of guarded trust.⁹

Private wildlife conservancies have no statutory definition in Zimbabwe but at the same time there are several of them in the country and in the 1990s they became an ever more popular land-use option. This led to questions being asked in parliament in 1996 by Mr. Mudariki who requested clarification from the Minister of Environment and Tourism on the government's general policy and regulations towards conservancies: how many communal farmers were benefiting from conservancies and how were the conservancies acquiring their wildlife. These questions came after an exposé in which Mr. Mudariki emphasised a context in which the 'mushrooming' conservancies in the country were said to be disadvantaging Zimbabwe's farming industry by using prime farmland for wildlife. They were also inconveniencing the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management (DNPWLM) by stealing wildlife from national parks. The Minister answered that, although rules and regulations were not yet in place, proposals were being considered through which conservancies would be restricted to some of the drier parts of the country to avoid disrupting conventional agriculture. With regard to the second question, he answered that conservancies would only be given government approval and a licence if there were 'a formal and meaningful relationship between the particular conservancy and the surrounding communities'. The answer to the last question about the acquisition of wildlife by conservancies stated, and this is especially interesting because of the choice of words and the image it evokes, that there had been 'several cases of illegal dealings and thefts, especially from National Parks estate' and that the government was doing its utmost to curb 'these sinister activities'.¹⁰ These answers led the SVC to understand that its particular land-use in the Lowveld would not create any immediate problems because the

⁹ Pp. 16-17, Misztal, B.A. (1996), *Trust in Modern Societies*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

¹⁰ *Hansard 14th February 1996*, Written answer to questions, pp. 3967-3971.

Lowveld is one of the driest regions in Zimbabwe.¹¹ But apart from ecological concerns its governmental approval and licence would also depend on its relationship with neighbouring communities. In November 1998, the SVC and the SVCT did join hands in a joint venture at a formal and ceremonial meeting, and starting capital was promised. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was to be signed in a later and separate ceremony. Despite enormous (historical) differences in almost all fields, be they socio-economic, socio-political or socio-cultural and related to land, a form of organisational co-operation had been established between (white) commercial farmers and (black) communal farmers.

It should be explicitly noted that the land issue in Zimbabwe is not simply a matter of antagonistic relations between black and white over land, nor that black and white are mutually exclusive and independent entities in Zimbabwe. There is much more interdependence between the two than perhaps either of them would sometimes like to acknowledge. It is also not true that struggles related to land only started with the advance of the whites in Zimbabwe and that the black Zimbabweans had lived in a kind of natural harmony with each other regarding control over land until that time. Spierenburg and others, for instance, have made it abundantly clear that communities also fought and still fight among themselves for control over natural resources, including land.¹² It has also become clear that black Zimbabweans used many of the same strategies the whites (would) use (later on), like the manipulation of history and relational power play, to try and reach this goal of control over land. But at the same time, it cannot be denied that land is, and always has been, an important issue between black and white in Zimbabwe, especially when considering initiatives concerning the preservation and conservation of nature and natural resources

¹¹ Pp. 14 & 25, Moyo, S., Robinson, P., Katerere, Y., Stevenson, S. & Davison, G. (1991), *Zimbabwe's Environmental Dilemma. Balancing Resource Inequities*, Harare: Natprint.

¹² Spierenburg, M. (2003) *Strangers, Spirits and Land. The Struggle for Control over Land in Dande, Northern Zimbabwe*. Ph.D. Thesis, University of Amsterdam. See also Spierenburg, M. (2001) Moving into Another Spirit Province, Immigrants and the Mhondoro Cult in Northern Zimbabwe, in: Bruijn, M. de, H. van Dijk, D. Foeken (eds) *Mobile Africa, Changing Patterns of Movement in Africa and Beyond*. Leiden, Brill; Dzingirai, V. (1995), *Take Back your CAMPFIRE*, unpublished paper, Harare: CASS, University of Zimbabwe; Nabane, N. (1994), *A Gender Sensitive Analysis of a Community Based Wildlife Utilization Initiative in Zimbabwe's Zambezi Valley*, Harare: CASS, University of Zimbabwe, NRM Occasional Papers Series; Naban, N., Dzingirai, V. & Madzudzo, E. (1994), *Membership in Common Property Regimes. A Case Study of Guruve, Binga, Tsholotsho and Balilimamangwe CAMPFIRE Programmes*, Harare: CASS, University of Zimbabwe, NRM Occasional Papers Series

through the installation of exclusive wildlife areas. Especially in the context of creating wildlife areas in southern Africa, black and white were, and often still are, diametrically opposed. In this specific case in the Lowveld of Zimbabwe, it has turned out that the two parties contesting and co-operating in a private wildlife conservancy are organisationally divided along the lines of a white-dominated SVC and a black-dominated SVCT. It therefore fits very well into southern Africa's long history of interaction between wildlife areas managed by whites but surrounded by black communities.

This might give the impression that the labels 'good' and 'bad' have already been assigned from the outset of this book, as quite a few interpretations of Zimbabwean history regarding land and nature conservation almost automatically appear to see the whites as relentless imperialist brutes only (see for bibliographical details Chapter 1). Whites are, in this line of interpretation, the 'bad guys' and the black Zimbabweans who have had to experience all this white imperialism and Romantic ideology on nature conservation, but have also vehemently protested against it, are naturally the 'good guys'.

Neumann also makes use of the distinction between 'good' and 'bad' to describe the relationship between nature and community conservation.¹³ According to him, local African communities tend, in the perception of interventionist nature conservation organisations dominated by Western capital, to be divided into 'good' and 'bad' natives depending on how close they are to nature. The closer they are, the 'better' they are and the more right they have to stay in the area and enjoy the financial privileges of Western donor attention. The more 'modern' they are or have become, the more they should be restricted, that is, they should be removed from these conservation areas. It is often assumed that it is up to the nature conservation agencies to 'teach' the communities how to behave as 'good natives'. Analysis of the empirical data on the joint venture between the SVC and SVCT shows that neither of the partners in the joint venture deserves only one of the labels. The situation is far more complicated and interwoven. The same holds for more general levels of interaction between black and white in Zimbabwe over the issue of land. A strict division between 'good' and 'bad' does not even apply after the political and related economic disasters following the lost referendum in February 2000. It would be far too easy to blame only one party and applaud the other.

¹³ Neumann, R.P. (2000), Primitive Ideas: Protected Area Buffer Zones and the Politics of Land in Africa, in: Broch-Due, V. & Schroeder, A. *Producing Nature and Poverty in Africa*, Stockholm: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 220-242.

Theoretical framework

Reciprocity (and related to that trust and imagery) is the central concept in this book. Van Baal defines reciprocity as ‘doing or rendering something in return for a good received, an act committed, or an evil inflicted. Involved is an exchange in which the term has connotations of approximate equivalence and equality.’¹⁴ Reciprocal relations should be seen as a ‘system of social exchange rather than a series of unilateral and discontinuous acts’. Subjects ‘are caught in a crossfire of rights and obligations, debts and claims, that punctuate their existence’.¹⁵ Writers usually introduce the theme of reciprocity by providing examples of various material gifts that are exchanged in particular situations. It should be realised though, especially within the context of (co-operating) organisations, that ‘it is words [and text!] first and foremost, sentences and arguments, that humans produce and exchange with others’.¹⁶ This makes it clear right from the start that the reciprocal process between organisations is about material but also, and in the first stages of reaching a form of co-operation probably even more about immaterial exchange¹⁷ and furthermore that the ‘rules’¹⁸ are largely implicit.¹⁹

Reciprocity is an inherently ambivalent concept in which affective and effective aspects are intertwined. The ratio has to be judged by the actors involved in every transaction but even a final judgement can never be based on complete knowledge and will therefore always contain a certain amount of uncertainty. Trust is needed to handle this uncertainty, although it can never eliminate the uncertainty because the concept suffers from the same ambivalence as reciprocity. Trust can be given or might be withheld for reasons of perceived images of the Other. It is given easily and almost unhesitatingly to people with a trustworthy reputation. But if their identity is not perceived as trustworthy, trust will be withheld and justify ‘indifference’.²⁰ Without trust, a reciprocal relationship

¹⁴ Pp. 11, Van Baal, J. (1975), *Reciprocity and the Position of Women*, Assen: Van Gorcum.

¹⁵ Pp. 16, 137-138, Godbout, J.T., in collaboration with Caillé, A. (1998), *The World of the Gift*, London, Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press.

¹⁶ Ibid: 12.

¹⁷ Haas, D.H. & Deseran, F.A. (1981), Trust and Symbolic Exchange, *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 44 (1): 3-13.

¹⁸ The word rules is consciously put between inverted commas because I definitely do not want to suggest that reciprocal processes are governed by rigid, mechanical and law-like rules, like a predictable mechanism (although I also use the word mechanism sometimes to refer to reciprocal processes) or machinery.

¹⁹ Godbout 1998: 186-190.

²⁰ Misztal 1996: 137

is difficult, if not impossible, to start. But a situation may change over time. Images can alter, trust can be built up and a reciprocal relationship can be started²¹ but the timing is crucial. When does one give and when does one withhold? When does one repay a reciprocal obligation and when not? To whom should one give and who should be excluded? All these are questions related to time and context.

The theoretical foundations of the gift in anthropological discourse were established by Marcel Mauss in his *Essay sur le Don* in 1925 but only published in 1950, the year of his death. It marked a major theoretical breakthrough in the concept. Mauss asks himself a central question: '(i)n primitive or archaic types of society what is the principle whereby the gift has to be repaid? What force is there in the thing given which compels the recipient to make a return?'²² He makes a distinction between three obligations: giving, receiving and repaying,²³ and answers his central question by referring to the vague and mystic power of the *hau*, a Maori concept of a power which 'travels with' the gift and always wants to return to its initial giver in the form of and mediated by a return gift. This *hau* motivates and forces the recipient to feel a moral obligation towards the giver and to make a return gesture. The *hau*, then, can be interpreted as the 'spirit of the gift'²⁴ and would essentially function as 'an instrument used to cement inter-community relationships'.²⁵

But if a spirit is an explanation for the moral obligation to repay, it does not answer the question as to why anything is given in the first place. What is it that obliges people to give? In relation to the *potlatch*,²⁶ Mauss explains that a chief has an obligation to give in an excessive way, to keep his subjects 'in the shadow of his name'.²⁷ Otherwise he will lose his rank. In essence, the obligation to give stems from the obligations it creates in others, that is, a matter of

²¹ Axelrod, R. (1984), *The Evolution of Co-operation*. London: Penguin Books.

²² Pp. 1, Mauss, M. (1966)[1950], *The Gift*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

²³ Ibid: 37.

²⁴ Ibid: 8-9.

²⁵ Pp. 36, Kayango, K. (1987), *Reciprocity and Interdependence: the Rise and Fall of the Kololo Empire in Southern Africa in the 19th Century*, Lund: Almqvist & Wiksell International.

²⁶ The *potlatch* of the Kwakiutl of the Northwest coast of America (that is, northern Vancouver Island and the adjacent British Columbia coast) is described in an introductory book to anthropology as '(...) ceremonial feasts featuring displays of wealth, ostentatious destruction of personal property, and lavish gift giving – all of these designed to enhance the host's fame and social standing and to challenge the invited guests to reciprocity that might bring them to economic ruin and social disgrace' (pp. 118, Pi-Sunyer, O. & Salzmann, Z. (1978), *Humanity and Culture. An Introduction to Anthropology*, London, Dallas: Houghton Mifflin Company.

²⁷ Mauss 1966: 38.

creating, sustaining or challenging power relations. This seems a rather unvarnished strategic consideration for giving and one far removed from the mythical *hau*. The fact that the giving should be excessive suggests strategic, and thus power-related, considerations. Giving seems to serve two goals at once. It is a way of decreasing social distance, in the sense of sharing and on the other hand it creates, or even invests in, power distance because the recipient is now indebted to the giver. If, on top of this, the giving is excessive, the ambivalence of gifts and giving becomes crystal clear: gifts might be interpreted as generosity but can at the same time be viewed as an act of violence and humiliation by the recipient who might not be able to repay his debt.²⁸ In the same vein, the obligation to receive is saturated with strategic power considerations. To accept a gift in a *potlatch* is to accept a challenge, the challenge of repayment. Not taking up that challenge marks an early defeat. But refusing from a politically powerful position is perceived as a political act of strength and counter-challenge.²⁹ In the context of the American *potlatch*, the obligation to return a gift is mandatory. If not, one has forever lost face and the subsequent disgrace is immense. The same loss of face also exists in Maori culture if they are not able to repay a gift, where gift giving, according to Mauss, also has overtones of competitiveness.³⁰ But, in the Maori context, the strict political interpretation of reciprocal exchange in the *potlatch* is abandoned by introducing the *hau* as the apparently ultimate explanation of the obligation to repay.

This mystification and semi-religious interpretation of reciprocal processes by Mauss has been criticised from many sides. Firth, for instance, claimed that Mauss had reified the concept of the *hau* as having active potential.³¹ Lévi Strauss went further and accused Mauss of ‘going native’ without recognising that such a culturally specific explanation could not be generalised as such. He expressed his disapproval in strong terms: ‘Are we not dealing with a mystification, an effect quite often produced in the minds of ethnographers by indigenous people? (...) In the case in point, instead of applying his principles consistently from start to finish, Mauss discards them in favour of a New Zealand theory – one that is immensely valuable as an ethnographical document yet is nothing more than a theory. The fact that Maori sages were the first people to pose certain questions and to resolve them in an interesting but strikingly unsatisfactory manner does not oblige us to bow to their interpretation. *Hau is*

²⁸ Pp. 12, Godelier, M. (1999), *The Enigma of the Gift*, Cambridge: Polity Press (Translation from French, *L'Énigme du don*, 1996).

²⁹ Mauss 1966: 39-40.

³⁰ Ibid: 6, especially notes 8 and 9.

³¹ Pp. 419-420, Firth, R. (1959), *Economics of the Zealand Maori*, Wellington: Government Printer.

not the ultimate explanation for exchange; it is the conscious form whereby men of a given society, in which the problem had particular importance, apprehended an unconscious necessity whose explanation lies elsewhere.³² Lévi Strauss's solution was to look for the fundamental structure underlying all three aspects of the exchange relation – giving-receiving-returning – instead of focusing on the separate parts as Mauss had done. '(...) Mauss seems – rightly – to have been controlled by a logical certainty, namely, that exchange is the common denominator of a large number of apparently heterogeneous social activities. But exchange is not something he can perceive at the level of facts. Empirical observation finds not exchange but only, as Mauss himself says, 'three obligations: giving, receiving, returning. The whole theory calls for the existence of a structure, only fragments of which are delivered by experience (...). But instead (...) Mauss strives to reconstruct a whole out of parts.'³³

The demystification and secularisation of the concept of reciprocity was complete when Sahlins criticised Mauss for not mentioning the relevance of the principle of reciprocity in economic life and confining it to kinship relations and related societies (that is, non-Western lineage economies) alone.³⁴ Sahlins introduced an almost bookkeeping-like approach to reciprocity, conceptualised in his typology of three types of reciprocal relations:³⁵ generalised reciprocity that refers to transactions that are altruistic in nature, in which 'the counter is not stipulated by time, quantity, or quality: the expectation of reciprocity is indefinite'. Examples of this type of reciprocity are found in tightly knit social groups like families and kinsmen. It refers to a solidary community. Balanced reciprocity, as the term indicates, has to do with the direct exchange of things material or immaterial of approximately the same value, in which reciprocation is direct and without delay. This type of reciprocity is less personal and tends to be more economic in nature, although the social aspect of the mechanism remains important. The main examples of this type are trade and buying-selling relations. Finally negative reciprocity is characterised by 'an attempt to get something for nothing' by whatever means possible: the pursuit of self-interest in its purest anti-social form. Examples are theft, chicanery and haggling. The distinction between the three types runs parallel to the increase in social distance and changing patterns of power relations between actors involved in

³² Pp. 47-48, Lévi Strauss, C. (1987), *Introduction to the Work of Marcel Mauss*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul. Italics added.

³³ Ibid: 45-47.

³⁴ Pp. 186, Sahlins, M.D. (1972), *Stone Age Economics*, New York: Aldine de Gruyter.

³⁵ Pp. 31-33, Sahlins, M.D., (1996), On the Sociology of Primitive Exchange, in: Komter, A.E. (ed.), *The Gift. An Interdisciplinary Approach*, Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

the reciprocal mechanism. Together with this increasing social distance between actors and changing power relations comes the decreasing level of trust. In generalised reciprocity there is a situation of almost blind trust. In balanced reciprocity it is about guarded trust to ensure that neither party in the transaction cheats the other. In negative reciprocity mistrust is central and neither party dares nor is able to trust the other.

A similar typological approach is taken by Van Baal³⁶ who discerns four types of reciprocal relations in which he indicates the increasing strategic and power play aspects of a reciprocal relationship in relation to increasing social distance more explicitly than Sahlins. The first two types, gift exchange and the give-and-take that typifies interaction between the members of small groups, are the most personal of the four. Exchange takes place between people who are socially close and know each other informally and who show a willingness to co-operate as partners. In the third type, trade, and the fourth that is negative reciprocity, people see each other not as partners as such but increasingly as parties in exchange who have to challenge each other in the arena of power play. According to Van Baal, the reciprocal relation is constantly tending towards balance as the parties perceive each other as equals and negotiate, implicitly as in negative reciprocity or explicitly as in trade, for a balanced account for both ‘without any soft-heartedness’³⁷ on either side. The word ‘balance’, however, has a particular meaning in the case of negative reciprocity. If, for instance, someone is murdered, the injured party will never get that person back no matter what punishment is meted out to the murderer or however much compensation is demanded. Nevertheless, a sense of balance is reached through the atonement of the wrongdoer(s).³⁸ So from the perspective of (re)payment, the relationship is not at all balanced. However it is in the perception of the parties through atonement on one side but also through the ‘feeling’ of the injured party that the other ‘has paid’ for its crime and that a balance has been reached: they feel compensated. This typology in effect implies, as Sahlins says, that the reciprocal process is increasingly seen and used instrumentally and strategically in power relations as we follow the types from gift-exchange to negative reciprocity. Strategy and instrumentality are implemented, often implicitly and indirectly, through bargaining and negotiations. The stranger the exchange partner becomes, as in negative reciprocity, the more calculation and

³⁶ Pp. 94-107, Van Baal, J. (1981), *Man's Quest for Partnership: the Anthropological Foundations of Ethics and Religion*, Assen: Van Gorcum.

³⁷ Ibid: 95.

³⁸ Ibid: 105. Compare also Caplan, P. (ed.), (1995), *Understanding Disputes. The Politics of Argument*, Oxford Providence: Berg.

less trust are allowed and even openly revealed (that is, the greater the social distance).³⁹

One can easily imagine that in processes of organisational co-operation Sahlins's 'generalised reciprocity' or Van Baal's 'gift exchange' and 'give-and-take' are not usually at stake because these types of reciprocity are at the solidary extreme, found in close-knit families and the like. Organisational structures of co-operation are usually not to be found on the solidary extreme.⁴⁰ This means that for analysing processes of organisational co-operation we should primarily focus on Sahlins's types of 'balanced and negative reciprocity' or on Van Baal's typology, 'trade' and 'negative reciprocity', in relation to trust and imagery and its implications for power play. Balanced reciprocity is the more ideal type in which both partners win – the so-called win-win scenario. Negative reciprocity occurs when partners in a joint venture only treat, trust and see each other as parties, that is, getting as much out of the deal as possible and not trusting the intentions of the other. Both types can be considered as the extreme ends of a continuum. In the case of the joint venture of the SVC and the SVCT, it is obvious that the initial relations between the SVC and its neighbouring communities, predating the joint venture, could be characterised in terms of full-fledged negative reciprocity based on an unequal power balance between black and white. The gift of the joint venture was meant to create a more balanced and positive reciprocity; to move towards a win-win situation.

This book describes the tribulations and (temporary) triumphs of the process up to 1999, with the SVC trying to win over the hearts of its neighbouring communities by offering them the SVCT as a gift. It is a case study on reciprocal processes and not a study of blacks and whites in Zimbabwe, although they constitute the two partners in the joint venture. Of course the interaction between black and white in relation to land is of prime importance in this book but only in so far as it influences their reciprocal relationship as partners and parties in the joint venture. It is a case study, based on anthropological fieldwork done in 1998, with extensive and detailed empirical description focusing on the SVC. This case study in its (historical) context shows that the so-called 'escalation of political violence' after February 2000 certainly did not come out

³⁹ Pp. 207, Bourdieu, P. (1997), Selections from *The Logic of Practice*, in: Schriff, A.D. (ed.), *The Logic of the Gift. Towards an Ethic of Generosity*, London, New York, Routledge; see also Cronk, L. (1994), Reciprocity and the Power of Giving, in: Spradley, J.P. & McCurdy, D.W. (eds), *Conformity and Conflict. Readings in Cultural Anthropology*, Harper Collins, (8th Edition), pp. 161-167.

⁴⁰ Actually the majority of the (international) joint ventures are established between straightforward competitors. Morris, D. & Hergert, M. (1987), Trends in collaborative agreements, *Columbia Journal of World Business*, Summer.

of the blue. It had been anticipated for a long time, going back in fact to the arrival of the first white people in southern Africa after Van Riebeeck who later went on to arrive in what is now known as Zimbabwe with the Pioneer Column in 1890. The book also demonstrates that it is too simplistic only to blame Mugabe and his political rhetoric for the revival of sentiments of the struggle for independence about land and the resulting increase in violence by so-called War Veterans after February 2000. In the strict terms of negative reciprocity alone it could even be argued that Mugabe is settling the score in much the same way as the whites treated blacks after arriving in the region.

But there is equally another side to the coin as my case study indicates something about later developments in Zimbabwe. Having done my fieldwork in 1998, just prior to when issues about land redistribution really started to hit the headlines in the Western media, it would be rather pompous to present the case in a somewhat prophetic light. I remember that when in April-May 2000 I sent my Ph.D. thesis to several people professionally involved in wildlife conservation and utilisation programmes in southern Africa, one of them wrote back asking me if the developments in Zimbabwe after 1998 filled me with a sense of 'gloomy satisfaction'. Although many things in my thesis already hinted at the danger of an unresolved Land Question for a joint venture between commercial and communal farmers, and although I suggested in my appendix on recommendations that the SVC would have done better if it had given the neighbouring communities, that is the SVCT, a stake *in* the land instead of *of* the land,⁴¹ it would be rather cheap to indicate, with the advantage of hindsight, the issues encountered in 1998 as inevitably leading to the events that occurred later on. That matters having turned out this way is to a large extent coincidence, in the sense of a possibility – a possible but not necessary or inevitable outcome. Coincidence in the sense that for the same reasons (that is, the situation in 1998), things could have turned out differently.⁴² What can be seen from the empirical material presented here though is that many elements which escalated later were already 'in the air' in 1998; that later developments were not sudden nor did they come as a complete surprise; that there is a historical context to the process which could not have predicted later developments but which nevertheless provides a more informed perspective on these developments. For the same reasons, I have not tried to 'complement' or 'complete' my material from

⁴¹ Pp. 393-395, Wels, H. (2000), *Fighting over Fences. Organisational Co-operation and Reciprocal Exchange between the Savé Valley Conservancy and its Neighbouring Communities in Zimbabwe*. Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam.

⁴² Pp. 18-13, De Mul, J. (1994), *Toeval* (translation: Coincidence), Rotterdam: Erasmus Universiteit.

1998 with material from 1999 onwards so as to bridge the gap to later developments. Therefore this book is first and foremost an extensive case study on the developments of the joint venture between the SVC and SVCT up until 1999. Firstly and mainly this is because I was not in a position to do such extensive fieldwork in 1999-2000 as I had done in 1998. Therefore the material after 1998 would have been far less in-depth in comparison to the 1998 empirical data, which would have given a certain imbalance to the case presented. As a result, the case study is predominantly presented on the basis of empirical material from my 1998 fieldwork.

Secondly, there is the assumption about ‘complementarity’ and ‘completeness’ that a social reality can be finished or ‘done with’ in its description and analysis; as if it can be captured as a whole. This does not fit into my interpretation of an ethnographic orientation to processes of organisational co-operation as I use it in this case study. Like Richards, by ethnographic orientation I mean that ‘it is mainly an attempt to *contextualize some of the data* (...) via description and analysis of concrete situations, events and discourses. But no ethnographic account is ever “pure fact”. It may help readers to *point out some of the main theoretical assumptions and influences that have shaped my own understanding* of the materials at my disposal.’⁴³ The emphasis on the word ‘some’ indicates that any claim to completeness is not deemed possible and would only imply misguided intellectual arrogance. Related to my first point, it means that I have primarily stuck to my 1998 material, which is as comprehensive as I could accomplish in one year.

Following this ethnographic approach, a fair amount of attention has been paid to an extensive description and analysis of the specific (historical) contexts of this initiative in organisational co-operation by the SVC. The ethnographic orientation is focused on the SVC case study and the route and process of their gift giving in setting up the SVCT and the joint venture. Although I pay extensive attention to the neighbouring communities, this is mainly directed through the formal organisational setting of the SVC. Finally my explicit choice for an ethnographic orientation, that is (historical) contextualisation of data through description and analysis, also means that I have used a predominantly qualitative approach in research methodology.

⁴³ Pp. xx-xxi, Richards, P. (1996), *Fighting for the Rainforest. War, Youth and Resources in Sierra Leone*, The International African Institute, in association with Oxford: James Currey; Portsmouth (N.H.): Heinemann. Italics and emphasis added.

On methodology

To understand my methodological point of view it is necessary to point out my perspective on social reality in general and the specific role of a social scientist doing research in this field. I consider social reality to be highly complex and without boundaries, a rhizome and universe of complexities.⁴⁴ As a scientist you scrape a slice of social reality out of that universe and combine it with your theoretical composition; you glue social reality to a conceptual framework through the process of operationalisation of theoretical concepts; that is, you actively construct social reality. This particular composition forms one's line of consistency 'not in a sense of homogeneity, but as a holding together of disparate elements'.⁴⁵ A mode of composition forms '(...) a fuzzy aggregate, a synthesis of disparate elements (...) defined only by a degree of consistency that makes it possible to distinguish the disparate elements constituting the aggregate'.⁴⁶ In other words, concepts highlight certain aspects of social reality and leave other aspects of it in the dark. 'Constructionists are deeply committed to the contrary view that what we take to be objective knowledge and truth are created, not discovered by mind'.⁴⁷ The niche is presented within a relevant context. But even within contexts social complexity remains immense as a result of the inherent dynamism and fluidity of the perpetual social constructionist process. Every perspective on or description or representation of this social reality, in whatever theoretical conceptualisation or combination, is therefore necessarily a highly reductionist selection. This selection can only be made consistent through a thorough theoretical conceptualisation by the author.

Two important methodological consequences can be drawn from this social constructivist stance. In the first place, although I want to convince the reader that the outcome of my research is plausible, at the same time it is one outcome amongst (literally) countless other possible outcomes, that is, other possible conceptual constructions and interpretations on the basis of the (constructed) data from the field. Secondly and following on from the first, a researcher should always be extremely modest about considering him or herself 'an authority' on the case. Every claim in that direction can be interpreted with

⁴⁴ Pp. 3, Deleuze, G. & Guattari, F. (1987), *A Thousand Plateaus. Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. The Athlone Press.

⁴⁵ Ibid: xiv.

⁴⁶ Ibid: 344.

⁴⁷ Gergen in Schwandt, T.A. (1994), Constructivists, Interpretivist Approaches to Human Inquiry, in: Denzin, N.K. & Lincoln, Y.S. (eds), *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, London, New Delhi: Sage Publications, pp. 118-137.

Clough as ‘symptomatic of its will to scientificity’.⁴⁸ For ethnographic research and science the will to strive towards scientificity implies that the final ethnographic text ‘correlates to the subject’s own desired wholeness’ and at the same time establishes the ethnographer’s authority as ‘the authorized subject of a complete or empirically adequate knowledge’.⁴⁹ From a constructivist perspective every claim to this type of empirical completeness is looked upon with suspicion and even with disdain.

Before reading the rest of this book it is therefore important to know about the ‘incompleteness’ of the empirical data on which this book is based. The research was done on the SVC and its joint venture with the neighbouring communities through the SVCT. As a researcher I did not live among the communities but among the SVC community. I went to the communities often and spoke to them and interviewed them extensively on several issues related to the joint venture and the SVC, frequently through an interpreter from the SVC. Conceptually my aim in this book is primarily to try and understand the motives and context of the gift of the SVC to the communities in terms of reciprocity.

All this should not prevent me, however, from trying to come to firmly formulated conclusions within my own conceptual and empirical framework in order to attempt to challenge the reader to disagree and bring forward other stimulating conceptual and empirical interpretations.

Structure of the book

The book has a straightforward structure. In Chapter 1 I start by describing the emergence of private wildlife conservancies in South Africa in the 1970s. Their later spread and development in Zimbabwe against the historical background of the issue of land in what would become Southern Rhodesia, is the subject of Chapter 2. In Chapter 3 I introduce the origin and main themes in the creation of the SVC. This chapter is basically intended as a historical context of organisational and management development and its consequences and explanatory value for the later development of the joint venture with the SVCT. As a chronological follow up, Chapter 4 is devoted to exploring and analysing the reciprocal relations between the constituents of the SVC, the white commercial farmers, and the SVCT, the black communal farmers and communities. It is a chapter about cases in reciprocal interaction between white landowners and

⁴⁸ Pp. xxv, Clough, P.T. (1998), *The End(s) of Ethnography. From Realism to Social Criticism*, New York, Berlin: Peter Lang (second edition).

⁴⁹ Ibid: 3.

black landless peasants. It describes the actual balance sheet in terms of reciprocity between black and white in and around the joint venture. Finally, in Chapter 5, I summarise the main conclusions about the ethnographic description of the joint venture in terms of my conceptual framework.

Private wildlife conservancies: Early days in South Africa

The conservancy concept on private land was initiated in the province of Natal (now KwaZulu Natal) in South Africa in the 1970s. The basic idea was to curb and prevent poaching on co-operating commercial farms, called a conservancy, through the installation of game guards. By employing game guards commercial farmers, predominantly white, took a further step towards securing the border between the combined private properties and the neighbouring communities. In the 1980s the conservancy concept evolved under the influence of the advisory status of the Natal Parks Board (NPB), towards more wildlife utilisation, in particular commercial hunting, in an attempt to let the conservancy pay for itself. That it was hunting particularly which was deemed most suitable to utilise the wildlife has to do with the imperial tradition and social identity of whites in southern Africa in which hunting always played an important and dominant role.¹ But most hunting areas require fencing for safety reasons and for keeping the valuable trophies on the property. Added to the already existing system of game guards, the border between conservancies and neighbouring

¹ MacKenzie, J.M. (1987), Chivalry, Social Darwinism and Ritualised Killing: the Hunting Ethos in Central Africa up to 1914, in: Anderson, D. & Grove, R. (eds), *Conservation in Africa. People, Policies and Practice*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press; MacKenzie, J.M. (1988), *The empire of nature: hunting, Conservation and British Imperialism*, Manchester: Manchester University Press.

communities was becoming even more rigid and sealed. This ongoing process created, on top of a national history in which segregation between black and white was already a prominent feature, more mutual distrust, stereotyped ideas about each other's identities and 'normal' behaviour, which in conjunction with each other prevented the two groups from initiating or even considering any form of positive reciprocal exchange.

In the 1990s, in spite of the gap between conservancies and communities, the call for community relations and the exchange of benefits between formally protected wildlife areas and surrounding communities was heard loud and clear all over the world. In the report on the IVth World Congress on National Parks and Protected Areas it is stated that '(t) relationship between people and land have too often been ignored and even destroyed well-intentioned but insensitive resource conservation and management initiatives. The congress called for community participation and equality in decision-making processes, together with mutual respect among cultures to be achieved urgently.² This message, originating from government-related conservation efforts in national parks and other protected areas, also had its effects on the informal conservation efforts on private land, that is, private wildlife conservancies, although to date it has never been as institutionalised or outspoken as in the formal conservation sector. Up till 1994, the year of the first general democratic elections, in South Africa the government has always been dominated by white people and was based on the ideology of apartheid. And also after 1994 'all the bureaucrats in central government responsible for bio-diversity protection [remained at first] members of the old guard, with transformation occurring only from 1998 onwards.

Within the SANP [South African National Parks], key officials, whether in the parks or in head office, were from the former white-ruled establishment, and continued to reflect similar values after democratisation'.³ For this reason nature conservation policies in South Africa cannot be seen in isolation from the broader political context of (post-)apartheid with a corresponding negative attitude of the majority of the black people towards them. When (white) private wildlife conservancies emerged on the conservation scene in the second half of the 1970s, it was only to be expected that in first instance they would choose for a 'splendid isolation' from the neighbouring (black) communities in line with the apartheid thinking at the time. Inevitably the attitudes of communities

² Pp. 7, McNeely, J.A. (ed.)(1992), *Parks for Life. Report of the IVth World Congress on National Parks and Protected Areas*. Gland: IUCN.

³ Pp. 3, Cock, J. & Fig, D. (1999), From Colonial to Community-Based Conservation: Environmental Justice and the National Parks of South Africa, paper presented at the conference *African Environments: Past and Present*, 5-8 July, St. Anthony's College, Oxford.

towards conservancies has to a large extent been shaped by this political context. In the 1990s conservancies had to begin to fight the shadows of a history of increasing segregation and related perceptions of communities towards it. In this Chapter I shall describe the development of private wildlife conservancies in South Africa and the national context in Zimbabwe in which the SVC tried to realise its plans with the neighbouring communities. This contextualisation is necessary to understand the fundamental and even diametrical differences between white and black relations and attitudes towards land in Zimbabwe and its consequences for the processes between the SVC and its neighbouring communities in the joint venture.

Private wildlife conservancies in South Africa

In South Africa as a whole around 80%⁴ of the land is privately owned by (mainly white) farmers and in the province of Natal (now KwaZulu-Natal) that figure is 60%, whereas the whites only constitute 12.8% of the population.⁵ These figures indicate a huge imbalance in land distribution between black and white in South Africa. This goes back to the very beginning of white occupancy and colonisation in southern Africa, but the present Government recognises the Natives Land Act of 1913 in which rights to own or to rent land were made dependent on a person's racial classification as a formal starting point for their current restructuring and reform of the land policy.⁶ Be that as it may, 'past legislation indicates that the South African government had a marked disregard

⁴ Pp. 1, Markham, R.W. (1988), *Nature Conservation on Private Land: the Conservancy Concept*, unpublished paper, Natal Parks Board. Minnaar indicates that '(i)n 1990 about 77.000 white farmers (inclusive of absentee landlords) owned approximately 77 million hectares or 63 per cent of a total of 122 million hectares. (...) In contrast the total area of the ten homelands is 17 million hectares or just under 14 per cent of the total' pp. 28-29, Minnaar, A. (1994), *The Dynamics of Land in Rural Areas: 1990 and onwards*, in: Minnaar, A. (ed.)(1994), *Access to and Affordability of Land in South Africa: the Challenge of Land Reform in the 1990s*, Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council.

⁵ Pp. 1, Bourquin, O., Markham, R.W., Mathias, I., Steele, N.A. and Wright, C.W. (1985), *A New Approach to Conservation – Wildlife Conservancies in Natal*, unpublished paper, Natal Parks Board. Population figure (1994) taken from *Britannica Book of the Year 1996*.

⁶ Pp. 9 and 54, Department of Land Affairs (1997), *White Paper on South African Land Policy*. See also pp. 79-90, Nauta, W. (2001), *The Implications of Freedom. The Changing Role of Land Sector NGOs in a transforming South Africa*. Unpublished Ph.D. thesis Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam.

for the land rights of indigenous people dating back to the first settlements'.⁷ Between 1960 and 1980 some 3.5 million people were removed from rural and urban areas. 'It was only in 1978, with the introduction of the 99-year leasehold system and in the mid-1980s with the abolition of influx control, that the state acknowledged that black people should have permanent land rights in urban areas. Yet land rights in rural areas have remained tenuous'.⁸ From 1994 onward land in South Africa is considered the cornerstone of its reconstruction and development and recognised as the basis of their social identity.⁹ This implies amongst other matters that the Government is willing to recognise long-term historical ownership to land, even if it is not formally recognised by law.¹⁰ There is also recognition that especially in the predominantly white commercial farming areas a crisis is severe in that '(e)vications have reached endemic proportions' which are still mainly based on a bias in the law system towards right of owners.¹¹ Some of the evictions can be specifically attributed to 'white farmers switching from crop and cattle farming to game farming or forestry'.¹² The laws governing land-use planning also tend to favour commercial farmers to the detriment of blacks.¹³ After the 1994 elections especially, everybody began to claim to own the land. 'One group may claim ownership because they have traditionally owned the land for generations, another because Pretoria awarded the land to them and gave them documents to this effect. In other situations, there are people who were accepted within tenure systems as 'refugees' 60 years ago who now claim independent rights to stay there, while the 'host' owners want to use the land for agricultural purposes to which they have always aspired'.¹⁴ Also before the 1994 elections there were struggles over land in South Africa, but these have mostly been ignored by the mainstream historians. The active role of blacks in the struggle over land was put 'away in the locations', escaping official notice by government and scholarship. A study in the Transkeian Territories from around the turn of the century shows that '(p)eople clung tenaciously to their rural identities and productive resources, and questions of land and livestock continued to dominate their political

⁷ Pp. 21, Torres, S. (1994), *Land, a Question of Historical Inheritance or Legal Right*, in: Minnaar 1994.

⁸ Department of Land Affairs 1997: 11.

⁹ Ibid: 7 'Land does not only form the basis of our wealth, but also our security, pride and history'.

¹⁰ Ibid: 61.

¹¹ Ibid: 31 and 64.

¹² Minnaar 1994: 49.

¹³ Department of Land Affairs 1997: 77.

¹⁴ Ibid: 31.266

responses'.¹⁵ This should not come as a surprise because 'African people claim land as their birthright which extends to ancestral rights'.¹⁶ If an individual was an accepted member of the community, he or she could always claim and was entitled to share in the land of the community and its natural resources, but strict individual tenure was not an option. This is where African and European perspectives on land are diametrically opposed. In European capitalist development land had increasingly been designated absolute property, a form of capital, and with that transition had become part of a market and thus exchangeable. 'Purchase of a commodity on the market confers absolute right of property over that commodity to the individual. The right of property is enshrined in law and the value of property determined in the process of exchange without reference to its actual or potential use'.¹⁷ Originating from the Romantic ideas of landscape as being in control of the land, it now became just another dimension of control over capital and with it came a sense of being in control of the 'very processes of nature'¹⁸ and of taming the wilderness.¹⁹

Amidst the abundance of private land ownership in South Africa, the NPB (now KZN Wildlife), part of South African Government, falling under the Ministry of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, has carried out its conservation work since its official inception in 1947, in the formally protected areas which comprised only some 6% of the land surface of Natal.²⁰ The only times it ever ventured beyond these confines was when it had to deal with 'problem animals', wildlife which had strayed from the protected area and was causing problems in areas with human habitation, and for fisheries. The division between NPB and private landowners was substantial. The two parties were virtually at war with each other because to most farmers wildlife represented more of a threat to their operations than that it was something to conserve. The NPB was the controlling

¹⁵ Pp. 1 and 3, Beinart, W. & Bundy, C. (eds) (1987), *Hidden Struggles in Rural South Africa. Politics and Popular Movements in the Transkei & Eastern Cape 1890-1930*, London: James Currey; Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press; Johannesburg: Ravan Press.

¹⁶ Torres 1994: 23. Or in the words of Toren about the similar Fijian notion of land, 'people are the land's very substance (which) does not allow one to alienate it'. Land contains their personal identity, pp. 164 & 171-173, Toren, T (1995), *Seeing the ancestral sites: transformations in Fijian notions of the land*, in: Hirsch, E. & O'Hanlon, M. (eds), *The Anthropology of Landscape. Perspectives on Place and Space*, Oxford: Clarendon Press.

¹⁷ Pp. 63, 199 & quotation 43-44, Cosgrove, D.E. (1984), *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape*, London, Sydney: Croom Helm.

¹⁸ Ibid: 236.

¹⁹ Ibid: 170.

²⁰ Bourquin a.o. 1985: 1.

body which came with the law in its hand to tell them what to do or not to do with wildlife on their own property. The nickname in Afrikaans of the *Nasionale Parkeraad* (National Parks Board) was the *Nasionale Varkeraad* (National Pigs Board).²¹ A game ranger in Natal was seen as a 'social pariah'.²² Farmers were not the only ones who did not like the game rangers. The latter were in equal odium with the black communities. 'The apartheid system in many cases fostered animosity and bitterness between conservation organisations and the black community'.²³ With respect to private land the NPB suspected that there was still a wealth of wildlife and flora outside their protected areas, but they could not even make a soundly based estimate.²⁴ There were some changes at the beginning of the 1960s, more requests were made to the NPB to assist private landowners in matters related to wildlife on their properties, ranging from problem animals to advice about game-birds and in 1965 the NPB started an advisory section involving a farm game biologist and a technician.²⁵ Over the years requests for advice mounted and in 1971 the NPB decided to 'zone' the province in to nine zones of an average of 5,220 km², each zone having its own two conservation officers.²⁶ In their zones the conservation officers were still confronted with many individual private landowners, whom they had to try to reach with their campaigns for environmental awareness and the like. However, these two officers did not have the time, the resources or the physical possibilities to visit, control or patrol all these farmers separately on a regular basis. If they could persuade farmers to work together or pool their resources, it was possible for them to visit combined farmers which would make life more easy for the NPB.²⁷ Many of the problems of individual farmers were the same everywhere. Control of poaching on their property was perceived as the number one problem. For that reason, to stimulate co-operation between farmers the first activity of the NPB, in the person of Nick Steele, was to draw up a Farm Patrol Plan in 1975, in which landowners were advised 'of ways of

²¹ Interview with Conservancy Officer of the NPB, 23 March 1998.

²² Pp. 4, Player in Draper, M. (December 1998), *Zen and the Art of Garden Province Maintenance – the Soft Intimacy of Hard Men in the Wilderness of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa (1952-1997)*, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 24 (4).

²³ Pp. 68, Pretorius, S. (1994), *Conservation and Resource Allocation: Parks and People*. In: Minnaar 1994.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Bourquin i.a. 1985: 2.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Interview with Conservancy Officer of the NPB, 23 March 1998.

combating poaching and conserving wildlife in a co-operative manner with their neighbours'.²⁸

The plan did not meet with the unanimous enthusiasm of the private land-owners straightaway. The turning point only came in 1978 when farmers in the Balgowan area in Natal did join hands to curb poaching as 'snaring had become common and local labourers often hunted with packs of dogs'²⁹ and formed the first conservancy, the Balgowan Conservancy on the 14 August 1978, by jointly applying the recommendations formulated in the Farm Patrol Plan. Since then the conservancy idea has caught on like a house on fire all over Natal, and has also spread to other provinces in South Africa and other countries in southern Africa. In 1994 there were a recorded 168 conservancies in Natal, comprising 1.4 million hectares of land.³⁰ In an interview with the Conservancy Officer of the Natal Parks Board in 1998, he mentioned that there were approximately 380 conservancies around the country, most of them, 220, still in KwaZulu-Natal.³¹ The concept is also applied in Namibia and Zimbabwe, but not to the extent it has caught on in South Africa.

A private wildlife conservancy (from now on called 'conservancy') may be defined as 'a voluntary, co-operative environmental management of an area by that community and its users group'.³² This rather abstract and academic definition is brought down to earth for farmers in a brochure issued by the NPB in which it gives recommendations on wildlife management to farmers and in which the conservancy concept is described as 'a group of farms on which neighbouring landowners have pooled some of their resources for the purpose of conserving wildlife on their combined property'.³³ After this definition

²⁸ Pp. 1, Markham, R.W. (November 1986), Establishing a Wildlife Conservancy. In: *Wildlife Management. Technical Guides for Farmers*, no. 18. Pietermaritzburg, Natal Parks Board. 'Neighbours' in this quotation, to make it perfectly plain, are neighbouring commercial farmers and it does certainly not refer to neighbouring communities of communal farmers.

²⁹ Pp. 22, Kotzé, S. (1993), *Conservancies in Natal. The Origins and Application of a Component in Informal Wildlife Conservation*. Unpublished BA Thesis, University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg.

³⁰ Davies, G. (1994), Editorial, *The Guinea-fowl*: Natal Conservancies Association, no. 2.

³¹ Interview with Conservancy Officer of the NPB, 4 March 1998.

³² Pp. 1, Natal Parks Board (1993), *Guidelines for the Formation of a Conservancy*, Pietermaritzburg: Natal Parks Board. This definition does not confine conservancies to rural areas alone. Nowadays there are also urban and even industrial conservancies based on the concept of co-operative environmental management by a community. When I speak of conservancies in this book though, I confine myself to the rural ones.

³³ Markham. November 1986: 1.

launched in the brochure, it is unequivocal that employing game guards by the co-operating farmers to try and stop poaching activities is very central to the conservancy concept. Landowners actually link up in a conservancy only to be able to hire and pay for the services of game guards together. This was the reason for the founding of the first conservancy, the Balgowan Conservancy in 1978, based on the recommendations of the Farm Patrol Plan by the NPB. The agricultural activities on the different properties, and not wildlife utilisation as such, had in first instance to pay for the conservation effort.

The Balgowan Conservancy owes its existence mainly to one particular landowner, Tony Kerr,³⁴ who tried to motivate and convince his neighbour landowners to join him in his effort to curb poaching on their land.³⁵ This took him quite some time, from 1975 to the official inauguration of the Balgowan Conservancy on 14 August 1978. It was when one of his neighbours, a professional lawyer, Colonel Francis, took a keen interest in Kerr's proposal and contacted the NPB, in December 1977, to see if it would support the idea, that it started to gain momentum. The NPB reacted favourably and suggested they have a look at the Farm Patrol Plan, which was in fact the first document to suggest conservation on private land in South Africa. The attractiveness of the plan to farmers was that it did not interrupt their normal farming activities or take up much of their time, while it could bring them the advantage of 'reduced poaching, stock theft, arson, trespassing, vandalism, and theft of crops, timber and fencing (...)'. At the same time flora and fauna would be protected, 'and that's what 'in it' for the conservation authorities'.³⁶ By introducing his Farm Patrol Plan to Kerr and Francis, Steele is rightly seen as one of the main architects of the conservancy concept.³⁷ At the inauguration of the Balgowan

³⁴ Tony Kerr received the *Conservationist of the Year* award from the Natal Branch of the *Wildlife Society of South Africa* in 1986, 'because of his insight and hard work in assisting to get conservancies off the ground in Natal', *The Natal Wildlife Conservancies Association Newsletter*, 1986, no. 4. It was named *The Guinea-fowl* in 1994.

³⁵ This section is based on Kotzé 1993: 18-28.

³⁶ Pp. 23, Gosling, M. (1984), Self-help conservation, *Farmer's Weekly*, 28 September 1984.

³⁷ Pp. 3, Astrup, M. (1997), A tribute to Malamba, *News from the Natal Parks Board*, no. 42. Nick Steele died, age 63, on 3 June 1997. In the obituary he is mentioned not only for his role in the development of conservancies but also for his strong belief in the role of field rangers 'who worked at the coal face of conservation (...)'. In the obituary in the *Guinea-fowl* (pp. 12-13), the newsletter of the *Natal Conservancy Association*, he is also remembered for his 'policy of sharing' which he wrote when he was director of the *Bureau of Natural Resources* (now *Department of Nature Conservation*) 'which allows local communities access to proclaimed conservation areas to harvest natural resources' (*The Guinea-fowl, Newsletter of the Natal Conservancies Association*, no. 3 of 1997). This was obviously at a later stage in his

Conservancy Steele represented the NPB and was asked to give a presentation about how the Conservancy would proceed from there on. He basically put forward his ideas, formulated in his Farm Patrol Plan with which the Balgowan Conservancy carried on, and this marked the beginning of the rapid spread of conservancies first in Natal and later in other provinces in South Africa, and then in other countries in southern Africa.

In 1978 conservancies began to flourish in Natal and in 1982 the NPB initiated and launched a representative and facilitating body: the Natal Wildlife Conservancy Association, which right from the outset produced a Newsletter. The Newsletter began with some eight to ten A4 pages held together by one staple in the top left corner. It has grown more luxurious over time. A bit later, a second staple was added and now the Newsletter was held together by two staples in the left side of the pages. In the first issue of 1985 a gracious duiker featured on the front page. Since 1988 every newsletter has been decorated with the special South African conservancy logo, the guinea-fowl. In 1986 the NCA started a logo competition. The Roads Department in Natal was approached and they were willing to place standard conservancy road signs at the entrances of all conservancies in Natal. The word 'conservancy' would not appear on the signboard, but only the logo with perhaps the name of the conservancy (this latter did not come to pass). The winning logo design would earn R200,-. One of the requirements was that the design should be 'simple and clear' and the use of colour was not necessary. They gave a few examples on the page, all of them silhouettes of animals, like a rhino head, a kudu head (looks too much like the kudu logo of Kruger National Park) and a guinea-fowl which later on wins the competition (see Figure 1).

Obviously there have been no better entries than the ones they showed as an example.³⁸ In 1988 road signs with the logo are put in place at the various location around Natal and one conservancy member relates in a newsletter how it went with their conservancy. 'I want to share a small discussion I had with the local (...) Roads Department foreman. This department is, at the moment, straightening and widening our district road. The discussion went something like this. Foreman to me, while waiting for a roadside meeting with engineers, surveyors etc. right down to the roads superintendent. 'You know Mr. Green, these guinea-fowl warning signs have arrived at the depot and my boss says he can't remember where the complaints came from to put them up. He suggests we drive around the district and where we see a lot of guinea-fowl near the

career, because when he advocated the establishment of conservancies, he argued that farmers should primarily start working together to keep local communities at bay.

³⁸ Information in this section based on *NCA Newsletter*, no. 5, 1986.

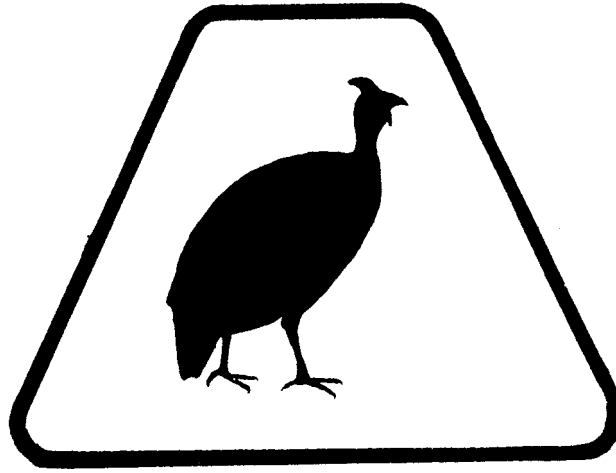


Figure 1: Conservancy road sign in South Africa

road, we erect the signboards. If they are not in the correct position the public will soon complain again'. (...) I replied 'Aren't they conservancy signs'? 'What is a conservancy'?³⁹

In April 1989 the NCA registered the 100th conservancy, after which the editorial at the beginning of the newsletter noted that, 'My gut feeling is that conservancies have started off in a rather humble way – but will become a real force in nature conservation'.⁴⁰ In 1993 the newsletter became a more professional looking A5 size. From the third issue in 1997 the newsletter was sponsored by a commercial forestry firm, Sappi, which made it possible to improve on the quality of the paper drastically and to work with a colour. The professionalisation of the newsletter can be used as a metaphor of the professionalisation of conservancies itself. It started as an initiative to curb poaching and protect wildlife by joining hands to hire game guards. The operation was paid for by the core agricultural activities of the landowner. Gradually the idea shifted towards letting the wildlife pay for itself, mainly through hunting. Texts about promoting hunting activities in conservancies began to appear in the newsletter from 1985 onwards. In the first issue of the newsletter in 1985 the editorial on the first page starts with stating that '(t)he hunting season is with us once again. Many hunters will be out shooting the various species of game

³⁹ Information in this section based on *NCA Newsletter*, no. 5, 1988.

⁴⁰ *NCA Newsletter*, no. 1, 1989.

animals available to them. Now is the time for conservancies to utilise their resource in a wise manner, for instance, by putting some monetary value to game. The money so earned can help pay for an individual's conservancy fees or it can be pooled in the conservancy central fund. By doing the latter the conservancy will start paying for itself rather than having agriculture pay for conservation. Hunting should be viewed as a management tool aiding the aims of conservation'.⁴¹

To become a sustainable force in nature conservation in the socio-political context of South Africa it is important that the conservancy idea, which is almost exclusively a white men's affair,⁴² should also become politically acceptable to and appreciated by the black majority living around these conservancies. But the two core elements and developments in conservancies in South Africa in the 1970s and the 1980s are actually not conducive at all to realising this potential. The first core issue in the development of conservancies in South Africa is their emphasis on the role of game guards as suggested in the Farm Patrol Plan, which obviously matched with a need felt among private land-owners at the time that they had to do something about poaching on their land. The second is the later development of hunting as a form to make conservancies economically feasible and sustainable. Both developments in the first instance only detached conservancies further from the surrounding communities. They exacerbated to a general and persistent image of conservancies as bastions of white power, based on segregation and splendid isolation. Game guards play an important role in this.

Game guards and poaching:

Relations between conservancies and neighbouring communities

Journalist Clarke Gittens wrote an article in the *Farmers Weekly* in 1987, extolling the benefits to farmers of starting conservancies which opens by reiterating what is considered the *raison d'être* of conservancies: 'Do you fancy a marked drop in your crop and/or stock theft? Continuous control over fencing and water troughs? A way of discouraging vagrants on seldom-used sections of the farm?'⁴³ The answer seems to be to set up a conservancy which makes game guards the 'framework or skeleton for conservancy life' as the NCA Newsletter

⁴¹ *NCA Newsletter*, no.1, 1985.

⁴² It was only in the last issue of *The Guinea-fowl* in 1998 that the 'establishment of the first all black managed' conservancy could be announced.

⁴³ Pp. 22, Gittens, C. (1987), The Benefits of Conservancies, *Farmer's Weekly*, 23 January 1987.

puts it.⁴⁴ The early years of conservancies are marked by an almost obsessive attention for game guards, their numbers, their training, their activities and their effectiveness in curbing poaching on the properties. The first NCA Newsletter is almost completely devoted to game guards.⁴⁵ When the number of conservancies began to be mentioned on page 3 in 1978, the following details are given: number of conservancies, number of landowners involved and, even before the size in hectares is given, the number of guards. In 1978 the Balgowan Conservancy started with one game guard. In 1981, there were already sixty-three conservancies in Natal, which employed some 172 game guards. The rest of the newsletter is devoted to subjects related to game guards like their work contracts, training by the NPB on page 4, progress report on their training on page 6, and an article by Nick Steele about game guard administration on pages 7 and 8. The remainder of the Newsletter is occupied by reports from different conservancies which all talk about game guard activities. Mr. Barry Raw, for instance, reports on the Kamberg Conservancy in which he writes about their satisfaction with the game guards who are doing such an excellent job. The conservancy has been in operation for eighteen months and he summarises what the guards have already achieved during that period. They have arrested several people in relation to thefts of maize, potato, cabbage, and fertilizer. In addition they have reported on broken fences on thirty occasions and removed 242 snares, some of them with decomposing animals still in them. Now that they have proved themselves worthy of such a step, the conservancy has decided to arm the two game guards. One with a single barrel shotgun and the other with an assegai (traditional short Zulu spear). These weapons are more than simply a reward for their achievement as guards, they are also 'to prove their status and hopefully stop the threats against them when patrolling near the black farms at Tendele and also to control the number of predators (...)'. This quotation pinpoints two things. In the first place, the surrounding communities are not happy with the game guards and that the relation between the landowner and the surrounding communities is tense, certainly not one dominated by mutual trust or positive reciprocal give-and-take. Secondly that the game guards seem to be first of all 'people guards' and only after that do they also have something to do with wildlife. The argument about the predators seems almost only a kind of afterthought by way of legitimising that the gun is not only meant as a deterrent towards the communities.

The communities do not seem to be hostile towards the game guards only in this particular conservancy, but in general. In Steele's article about game guard

⁴⁴ *NCA Newsletter*, no. 3, 1987.

⁴⁵ *NCA Newsletter*, no. 1, 1982. All the information in this section is taken from that first newsletter.

administration he warns the Conservancy Warden in charge of the game guards not to take corrective measures against game guards too easily after complaints made by the communities. 'There are always people who are prepared to fabricate stories to cause trouble. Their aim being to get rid of an irritating source of trouble to their own illegal acts like snaring and shebeens'. This makes crystal clear why his Farm Patrol Plan hit the nail on the head in relation to experiences and perceptions of the landowners. It also betrays at least as clearly that the relations between landowners gathered in a conservancy and surrounding communities is (already) seriously distorted and that game guards may be a solution in one respect but there was a strong possibility they would aggravate the grievances and put the relation under extra strain, while no structural improvements are made in actually reducing poaching figures as often is the case (see also the case of the SVC later). Parallels can be seen in this respect with Gibson's observations, who, after studying ADMADE and LIRD- programmes in Zambia, which also made extensive use of game guards to contain poaching, concludes that '(...) ADMADE and LIRD have not stopped illegal hunting'.⁴⁶ But this interpretation is never mentioned or even considered in any conservancy Newsletter. The opposite is true. In the fourth newsletter, one and a half page is devoted to the 'Conservancy record relating to anti-poaching work for 1982'. In general four categories are used to present the records: arrests made, convictions, hunting dogs shot, and snares removed. Dewdrop Conservancy, for instance, is recorded to have arrested four people, shot eleven dogs and removed 200 snares. Similar figures can be found for other conservancies.⁴⁷ All these figures and records seem to indicate that the game guards were being put under severe pressure by the communities through their normal activities and search for natural resources on private farmland. Not only the outside communities but also the farm labourers on the properties themselves were 'suspicious of the guards'. The latter maybe for the same reasons as the communities. As a solution some conservancies launched an educational programme for their farm labourers to inform them about and make them aware of nature conservation. On days specifically organised for the 'labour-gang supervisors' or *indunas*, farm labourers were especially invited to attend, first and foremost to receive The Message, but also because after the meeting they were offered a well-prepared bushbuck. They were admonished by the speaker who told them that 'the bushbuck would not have been there for

⁴⁶ Gibson 1999: 140

⁴⁷ Pp. 4-5, *NCA Newsletter*, no. 2, 1983. See also records of the Mooi River Valley Conservancy which indicates arrests being made between April and August 1983, mainly for hunting with dogs on the private property, pp. 5-6, *NCA Newsletter*, no. 3, 1983.

them to eat, had it not been for their co-operation in the conservancy system'.⁴⁸ Concealed behind this last formulation seems to be the vested threat that the farmworkers themselves are also suspected of and known for their taking part in the illegal activities which the game guards are hired to stop them from pursuing such an ill-advised course. In the Warden's Annual Report of 1983-1984 of the Seaview Conservancy,⁴⁹ it is said without any hesitation that '(t)he guards proved most unpopular amongst the farm labourers, who had had the run of the area for years'. It is mentioned that the guards caught 170 labourers for trespass on the farms, that they 'confiscated seventeen dangerous weapons' from them and that they 'minimised labour fighting over weekends and at nights'. Although the report says that things have changed for the better through a public relations offensive of 'talking and explaining', the relations between game guards and farm labourers remained sensitive. In a nutshell, game guards were and are put under pressure from the inside by farm labourers and from the outside by neighbouring communities. It can be concluded with Gibson that '(...) the law enforcement responsibilities of a wildlife scout often over-shadow the positive features of scout-villager interactions, producing a frequently tense – and sometimes overtly hostile relationship'.⁵⁰ Basically, '(...) locals fear and distrust scouts (...)'.⁵¹

Seen from this perspective, it is no wonder that many conservancies reported that a high proportion of their newly posted game guards, after having being trained at NPB, were absconding. This amounted to 17% and the main reasons were said to be a 'lack of job satisfaction and working conditions'. In the next newsletter it was mentioned that the 'wastage of trained game guards' was even as high as 25%.⁵² Instead of putting the problem in a broader context and relating this percentage to the social pressures and the bad relationship with the surrounding communities, or even suggesting that there might be a correlation, they state with conviction that they 'feel that with a standardised wage, improved uniform and better accommodation conditions (...) this figure will drop'.⁵³ If not, then conservancies will 'run the risk of acquiring a reputation as bad employers and the Natal Parks Board cannot incur the cost of training for a 25% wastage'.⁵⁴ As a solution to the problem they offer all tangible incentives,

⁴⁸ Pp. 43, Wait, A. (1986), Farm Workers Given Conservation Message, *Farmers's Weekly*, 28 March 1986.

⁴⁹ Included in *NCA Newsletter*, no.2, 1984, pp. 8-9.

⁵⁰ Gibson 1999: 125

⁵¹ Ibid: 126

⁵² Pp. 6, *NCA Newsletter*, no.1, 1983.

⁵³ Pp. 3, *NCA Newsletter*, no. 2, 1982.

⁵⁴ Pp. 6, *NCA Newsletter*, no.1, 1983.

perhaps because of lack of insight, without placing the problem in a broader context of relations between communal and commercial farmers. And at a later stage, in the 1990s, several conservancies exchanged game guards for security firms, a move which further hardened the positions and relations between conservancies and neighbouring communities. This wider context of the development of conservancies in relation to their neighbours is never made explicit. In the second newsletter the then director of the NPB, Geddes Page, also writes nothing about the broader context in which conservancies seem to operate in South Africa but only mentions that the growth in the number of conservancies indicates that 'the need for better wildlife management on private land was overdue'. Furthermore, he notes that the understanding between the private sector and the NPB has improved which has not always been the case, as I already mentioned in the introduction of this section, and which he thinks is worthwhile. A complete inner-circle perspective only; a policy in the 'best' tradition of the fines and fences approach in nature conservation.

Towards wildlife utilisation in conservancies

The trend towards devoting large sections of the NCA Newsletter to issues related to game guards gradually declines after 1983 and attention begins to turn towards other subjects related to running a successful conservancy. Two main subjects that make their debut in the Newsletter are the series of the NPB of Wildlife Management Technical Guides for farmers and the attention paid to possibilities of commercial hunting in conservancies.⁵⁵ In the Technical Guides we can see the gradual shift from strictly agricultural land use with game guards who are employed as a sideline to curb illegal activities on the property, towards a more wildlife-oriented land use. In the years between 1982 and 1985 sixteen of these approximately sixty-two pages documents were prepared, fourteen of them between July 1984 and November 1985. The first was written for the Balgowan Conservancy in 1982 and the second for the Mooi River West Conservancy in July 1983, both by Price and Collinson.⁵⁶ The fourteen Guides produced between July 1984 and November 1985 were all the work of Rob

⁵⁵ Ibid: 2.

⁵⁶ Written by Price, M.A. and published Pietermaritzburg: NPB, Game and Fish Preservation Board, *The Eston-Beaumont Conservancy Management Guidelines* (October 1982); written by Price, M.A. & Collinson, R.H.F. and published Pietermaritzburg: NPB, Game and Fish Preservation Board, *The Balgowan Conservancy Management Guidelines* (October 1982); *Mooi River West Conservancy Management Guidelines* (July 1983).

Markham who was Conservancy Officer of the NPB at the time.⁵⁷ This rapid production was made possible because the Guides were all written in the same format with minor variations depending on the particular conservancy. All of them contain chapters on the management of wildlife categories, like game mammals, game birds, problem animals and carnivores. Attention is also paid to categories of flora and how to manage, for instance, grasslands, forests and in some instances how to cope with alien species of vegetation as in the Guidelines of the Bester Conservancy.

In eight of the Guidelines, a separate leaflet about the possibility of commercial hunting in the conservancy is included.⁵⁸ This is not surprising considering the history of white men hunting in South Africa. Farmers live in that tradition and '(f)or thousands of farmers, hunting is a favourite pastime, even a part of their traditional and cultural way of life'.⁵⁹ As early as the third newsletter in 1983 there is cautious mention of the possibilities of commercial hunting in conservancies. In the minutes of a Conservancy Liaison Committee Meeting of 5 October 1984, held at NPB Headquarters at Queen Elizabeth Park in Pietermaritzburg, Markham writes cautiously: 'What are your views on hunting by recreational hunters on private land in Natal, especially within conservancies? Do you agree with having paying hunters being given the chance of taking off surplus game?'⁶⁰ Hunting at that time was mostly taking place on commercial game ranches and attracted mainly overseas clients. It was recognised that some trophies clients want to shoot either not occur on game ranches (grey rhebuck and oribi) or were not abundant enough to be harvested by hunting (common reedbuck and mountain reedbuck). These particular animals do occur in some

⁵⁷ Written by Markham, R.W. and published Pietermaritzburg: NPB, Game and Fish Preservation Board Lowland East Conservancy Management Guidelines (October 1983); Upper Umvoti Conservancy Management Guidelines (May 1984); Caversham Conservancy Management Guidelines (July 1984); Mid Illova Conservancy Management Guidelines (August 1984); Mooi River Valley Conservancy Game Mammal Management Guidelines (January 1985); Seaview Conservancy Management Guidelines (February 1985); Dargle Conservancy Management Guidelines (May 1985); Baynesfield Wildlife Conservancy Management Guidelines (vol. 1) (October 1985); Besters Conservancy Management Guidelines (vol. 1) (October 1985); Ripplemead Conservancy Management Guidelines (vol. 1) (October 1985); Paddock Plains Conservancy Management Guidelines (vol. 1) (November 1985); Umgenyane Conservancy Management Guidelines (vol. 1) (November 1985); Boston Conservancy Management Guidelines (Not Dated).

⁵⁸ Besters Conservancy, Baynesfield Wildlife Conservancy, Boston Conservancy, Mid Illova Conservancy, Umgenyane Conservancy, Ripplemead Conservancy, Paddock Plains Conservancy, Dargle Conservancy and Mooi River Valley Conservancy.

⁵⁹ Pp. 10, *NCA Newsletter*, no. 5, 1987.

⁶⁰ Included in *NCA Newsletter*, no. 5, 1984, pp. 2-3.

conservancies in sufficiently large numbers to be harvested, and because they were highly sought-after, overseas clients were prepared to pay high prices to be able to hunt them. This could lead to significant financial gains for the conservancy. The less well-heeled local hunter could also be seen as a potential client whose wishes could be accommodated in conservancies. Therefore it is advised that conservancies who want to harvest their wildlife in this way register their game with the co-ordinating body for these activities, which is the NPB again.⁶¹

The leaflet in the Guidelines also gives an indication of prices for trophies and accommodation. It is interesting to note the differences in prices paid for trophies by local hunters and overseas clients. For the same blesbok, a local hunter pays R150,- while an overseas client pays R600,- for a male. For a grey duiker a local hunter pays R45,- while an overseas client is expected to pay R200,-. On average an overseas client is expected to pay three to four times as much for the same trophy. This indicated that developing commercial hunting in conservancies for overseas clients could be a lucrative activity. In the Newsletters of the NCA after 1984, hunting is increasingly advocated. In the second Newsletter of the NCA in 1984 Ian Goss, of the Goss Estates in the Magudu area suggests conservancies seriously consider hunting on their property, based on his own seven years' experiences with commercially hunting bushbuck, grey duiker and impala. Although these are nothing more than simply plains game, there is already indication in the text of suggesting more specialised packages of animals with real trophy value. At first he had just offered the wildlife which happened to roam his property, but now he seemed as if he was considering managing a more specific wildlife population with a nicely balanced mixture that people come and hunt for specific trophies and not just for the sport of hunting down any kind of animal. 'Bushbuck are of course the most sought-after game in the area, as the hunter's patience and skill are really put to the test. The bushbuck in the hunting area are very acceptable as trophy animals, having on average 355 mm (...) horns'. He suggests that 'some conservancies could follow the example'.⁶² It might be interpreted symbolically in this respect that the first Newsletter in 1985 is decorated with a grey duiker. Not surprisingly the logical consequence is that it is precisely in this Newsletter as well that the Editorial on the first page is completely devoted to advocating commercial hunting in conservancies. Hunting is legitimised in the last sentence which says that '(h)unting should be viewed as a management tool aiding the aims of conservation'.⁶³ What they mean is that commercial hunting earns money hand over first which could be devoted to conservation. Since then hunting has

⁶¹ Pp. 3, *NCA Newsletter*, no. 1, 1983.

⁶² Pp. 10, *NCA Newsletter*, no. 2, 1984.

⁶³ Pp. 1, *NCA Newsletter*, no. 1, 1985.

become a regular and obviously accepted topic in the Newsletter. In a Newsletter in 1986, again symbolically, on the same page that Tony Kerr, who was behind the inception of the Balgowan Conservancy, is honoured for having received the Conservationist of the Year Award from the Wildlife Society of South Africa, there is an advertisement for 'A hunter's handbook' which is said to be 'a must for conservancies that need information on hunting'.⁶⁴ The hunting business is becoming ever more serious and not something which is done at random, but which is well-managed and demands large investments of money and time in terms of (re)stocking the conservancy with huntable wildlife. The focal point of further conservancy development seems to have become to integrate commercial hunting into the operation. In 1989 it is said in the Newsletter that '(g)ame auctions have recently become a part of farmers life (judging by the increased frequency of these events), just as supermarkets are part of modern shoppers' life. Both game auctions and supermarkets make it easier for buyers and sellers in that the wares are viewed choices are made (...). Farmers have counted their domestic stock, but not their game for over a century in South Africa. Domestic stock has always had an economic value attached to it whereas game has not! For instance, if a farmer knew that he could get R50,- for every daisy shot on his farm – the farmer would sooner, rather than later, want to know how many R50,-s were running on his property and whether or not the population was viable (...) remember it [game HW] now has an aesthetic as well as an economic value attached to it'.⁶⁵ The hunting frenzy continues in a Newsletter in 1994, which is now called the Guinea-fowl, where the Editorial tells that the Conservancy Officer has been to two international hunting conventions, Safari Club International and Dallas Safari Club, which are portrayed as probably the biggest in the United States of America.⁶⁶

The Professional Hunters Association of South Africa (PHASA) has been keeping records of average trophy fees since 1995. This is quite a difficult task to accomplish because not all of the hunting businesses are willing to say what prices they ask for trophies. Some will only give them for some common species, but not for the more rare species because those prices are more subject to negotiation between hunting operator and client than are the general trophies. For that reason, prices can vary and since 1996 they simply indicate the range in between which the prices fall. Some animals are included in one list and not in the other. For instance lion trophy prices are included in the figures for 1995 but

⁶⁴ Pp. 5, *NCA Newsletter*, no. 4, 1986.

⁶⁵ Pp. 1, *NCA Newsletter*, no. 3, 1989.

⁶⁶ Pp. 2, *The Guinea-fowl*, no. 1, 1994.

Table 1
Average trophy fees 1995-1997 in South Africa (PHASA), in US\$

| Species | Avg. trophy fee 1995 (low) | Avg. trophy fee 1996 (high) | Avg. trophy fee 1996 | Range trophy fee 1996 (low) | Avg. trophy fee 1997 (high) | Avg. trophy fee 1997 | Range trophy fee 1997 |
|--------------------|--|---|-------------------------------|---|---|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Baboon | 80 | 55 | 105 | 50-125 | 65 | 100 | 50-115 |
| Blesbok | 285 | 230 | 330 | 150-400 | 25 | 420 | 200-450 |
| Blesbok, White | 550 | 565 | 750 | 400-950 | 595 | 670 | 580-700 |
| Bontebok | 1250 | 1185 | 1575 | 1000-1700 | 870 | 1400 | 750-1600 |
| Buffalo | 4500 | 3250 | 5400 | 3000-6000 | 3000 | 6450 | 2500-6995 |
| Bushbuck | 485 | 480 | 600 | 380-750 | 505 | 665 | 450-750 |
| Bushpig | 290 | 220 | 320 | 110-400 | 250 | 395 | 180-500 |
| Caracal | 225 | 150 | 240 | 150-280 | | | |
| Cheetah | 2750 | | | | | | |
| Civet | 210 | 145 | 375 | 140-400 | | | |
| Deer, Fallow | 385 | 365 | 600 | 250-795 | 345 | 500 | 300-500 |
| Duiker, Blue | 550 | 625 | 730 | 475-800 | 575 | 800 | 480-850 |
| Duiker, Grey | 165 | 120 | 220 | 100-275 | 150 | 220 | 100-275 |
| Duiker, Red | 660 | 600 | 775 | 400-800 | 515 | 785 | 450-800 |
| Eland | 1465 | 1260 | 1650 | 1150-2000 | 1400 | 1750 | 1200-1995 |
| Gemsbok | 840 | 780 | 1025 | 600-1300 | 785 | 950 | 700-1300 |
| Genet | | 75 | 175 | 50-200 | | | |
| Giraffe | 2500 | 2425 | 3115 | 2500-3400 | 1595 | 3150 | 1200-4000 |
| Grysbok, Cape | 610 | 545 | 935 | 400-1000 | 565 | 740 | 470-850 |
| Grysbok, Sharp's | 565 | 350 | 500 | 350-500 | 485 | 700 | 470-700 |
| Hartebeest, Red | 740 | 695 | 1075 | 550-1250 | 725 | 880 | 645-1100 |
| Hyena | 430 | | | | | | |
| Impala | 210 | 210 | 310 | 135-350 | 215 | 315 | 135-350 |
| Jackal | 60 | 50 | 105 | 50-150 | 50 | 105 | 50-150 |
| Klipspringer | 500 | 515 | 650 | 350-700 | 490 | 650 | 400-700 |
| Kudu, Eastern Cape | 815 | 715 | 950 | 695-1100 | 825 | 980 | 800-1200 |
| Kudu, Greater | 880 | 875 | 985 | 600-1250 | 905 | 1150 | 875-1250 |
| Lechwe, Red | 1380 | 1210 | 1565 | 1000-1600 | 1215 | 1450 | 1200-1600 |
| Leopard | 2880 | 1450 | 3075 | 2000-3500 | 2250 | 3300 | 2000-3800 |
| Lion | | 3750 | 6000 | 3000-6000 | | | |
| Nyala (male) | 1270 | 1265 | 1585 | 1050-1700 | 1265 | 1585 | 1100-1700 |
| Oribi | 725 | 825 | 1000 | 750-1000 | 645 | 1285 | 570-1500 |
| Ostrich | 700 | 600 | 1375 | 350-1700 | 485 | 1050 | 300-1250 |
| Reedbuck, Common | 480 | 490 | 645 | 400-745 | 450 | 625 | 350-700 |
| Reedbuck, Mountain | 360 | 375 | 515 | 300-570 | 340 | 485 | 250-600 |
| Rhebok, Vaal | 645 | 590 | 790 | 500-850 | 635 | 800 | 570-850 |
| Roan | 6825 | | | | | | |
| Sable | 5385 | 3500 | 5165 | 3500-5500 | 3250 | 4500 | 3000-5500 |

cont.>>

Table 1, cont.

Average trophy fees 1995-1997 in South Africa (PHASA), in US\$

| Species | Avg. trophy fee 1995 (low) | Avg. trophy fee 1996 (high) | Avg. trophy fee 1996 | Range trophy fee 1996 (low) | Avg. trophy fee 1997 (high) | Avg. trophy fee 1997 | Range trophy fee 1997 |
|--------------------|--|---|-------------------------------|---|---|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Springbok | 225 | 230 | 325 | 200-375 | 210 | 325 | 150-375 |
| Springbok, Black | 435 | 340 | 580 | 250-700 | 420 | 535 | 350-600 |
| Springbok, White | 475 | 355 | 585 | 350-650 | 450 | 600 | 400-650 |
| Steinbok | 175 | 200 | 285 | 125-375 | 185 | 250 | 100-275 |
| Suni, Livingstones | 790 | 725 | 1050 | 675-1200 | 730 | 950 | 600-1000 |
| Tsessebe | 1720 | | | | | | |
| Warthog | 200 | 150 | 225 | 110-275 | 200 | 260 | 150-350 |
| Waterbuck, Common | 1235 | 1210 | 1450 | 1000-1650 | 1250 | 1545 | 1000-1800 |
| Wildebeest, Black | 695 | 635 | 865 | 500-1050 | 710 | 845 | 600-950 |
| Wildebeest, Blue | 725 | 675 | 875 | 550-1050 | 700 | 875 | 570-1100 |
| Zebra, Burchell's | 820 | 775 | 1100 | 600-1250 | 795 | 940 | 700-1000 |
| Zebra, Hartmann's | 1050 | | | | | | |

not for 1996 or 1997. The caracal is included in 1995 and 1996, but not in 1997. See Table 1 for comparative details.

Brenda Crook, an American biologist from Colorado State University, in a paper in 1995, comes to the conclusion that 'recreational hunting and culling' are the 'most obvious' ways of earning revenues in conservancies and which is encouraged and facilitated by the NPB.⁶⁷ In 1997 the Deputy Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, also explicitly supported the role of hunting in South Africa by saying that 'hunting in SA was making a real contribution to the protection of ecosystems and wildlife' and that the draft policy on conservation contained a sentence which read '(g)overnment ... will continue to support programmes that utilise indigenous wildlife sustainably for subsistence purposes and commercial gain'.⁶⁸ One of the ways the NPB stimulates conservancies to develop hunting activities, apart from advice and the like, is giving discounts, of about 15-20% at wildlife auctions.⁶⁹ Table 2 shows what

⁶⁷ Pp. 5, Crook, B. (May 1995), *The Conservancy Concept, with Special Emphasis on Natal, South Africa*. Unpublished paper, Department of Wildlife Biology, Colorado State University.

⁶⁸ *Bushcraft Mag-e-Zine Archive News Article*, courtesy of the Business Day, Government support for role of hunting in SA, 16 April 1997, taken from Internet: <http://www.wildnetafrica.co.za/bushcraft>.

⁶⁹ Interview with Conservancy Officer of the NPB, 4 March 1998.

the prices were for the several species in South Africa in 1997.⁷⁰ Through this close co-operation between the NPB and conservancies, the latter have been able to develop at a much higher pace than would otherwise have been possible. The first has been able to extend its influence on wildlife management in the

Table 2

Average prices for wildlife at wildlife auctions in South Africa, 1997

| Species | Average price in Rand* | Highest price in Rand* | Lowest price in Rand* |
|--------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Blesbok | 613 | 1,020 | 380 |
| Blesbok (yellow) | 1,556 | 1,600 | 1,520 |
| Blesbok (white) | 793 | 1,250 | 550 |
| Bontebok | 2,450 | 2,450 | 2,450 |
| Buffalo (FMD free) | 73,854 | 150,000 | 26,000 |
| Bushpig | 1,250 | 1,250 | 1,250 |
| Duiker (grey) | 724 | 1,100 | 400 |
| Eland | 4,025 | 7,800 | 2,400 |
| Gemsbok | 2,635 | 4,600 | 1,800 |
| Giraffe | 9,323 | 13,000 | 6,000 |
| Impala | 627 | 1,850 | 425 |
| Klipspringer | 4,363 | 6,000 | 3,200 |
| Kudu | 1,889 | 4,400 | 1,400 |
| Lechwe | 3,500 | 3,600 | 3,450 |
| Nyala | 3,129 | 6,300 | 3,100 |
| Ostrich | 913 | 3,000 | 180 |
| Red Hartebeest | 2,485 | 3,750 | 1,500 |
| Reedbuck | 2,315 | 3,100 | 2,000 |
| Reedbuck | 1,301 | 3,000 | 375 |
| Rhinoceros (white) | 74,309 | 160,000 | 41,000 |
| Roan | 26,400 | 38,000 | 15,000 |
| Sable | 24,892 | 36,000 | 13,000 |
| Springbok | 403 | 700 | 220 |
| Springbok (black) | 629 | 1,500 | 500 |
| Springbok (white) | 1,371 | 1,875 | 770 |
| Steinbok | 1,107 | 1,700 | 657 |
| Warthog | 500 | 500 | 500 |
| Waterbuck | 3,358 | 5,700 | 2,000 |
| Wildebeest (black) | 2,219 | 3,200 | 2,000 |
| Wildebeest (blue) | 2,226 | 5,800 | 1,800 |
| Zebra (hartman) | 2,388 | 3,500 | 2,000 |

* 1 Rand average 1997= 0,217 US\$

⁷⁰ Based on *Game & Hunt*, January - February 1997, vol. 4/1, pp. 11.

province outside the sphere of formally protected areas considerably. Both could be happy with this outcome.

One message that came across loud and clear was that local communities surrounding these conservancies were not 'part of the deal'. In fact, the widening of the gap between conservancy and neighbouring communities seems to form the baseline of conservancy development. In the first place by the employment of game guards who tried to prevent the communities from poaching and in the process, tried to seal the borders between the two. Later, in the 1980s, when hunting was being increasingly promoted and considered a lucrative economic activity for conservancies to pay their way, the separation became even more visible and rigorous through the erection of fences around hunting areas to prevent wildlife causing trouble in neighbouring communities, to keep the 'walking monetary value' on your property, but also to prevent people from coming in. Commercial hunting and the involvement of communities seemed fairly antithetical developments. According to a NPB officer working on the programme of Community Conservation 'a fence is the bottom line for conservationists and for the communities'. In the particular context of KwaZulu-Natal there is an interesting connotation to fences in relation to the Zulu language. In Zulu the word for fence is *icingu*, which means the material the fence is made of. *Shaya icingu* means 'hit the wire' and figuratively means making a phone call. A conservancy fence is in this context thus a very potent way for the communities to communicate their message to the other side of the fence; communities talk back through fences. This officer told the story of how the NPB had created Forums to be used as a platform to talk about problems and other issues of communities. In the Forums NPB Officers as well as community representatives participate. The NPB thought that the community was setting the agenda for a particular meeting. So the NPB was satisfied about the progress these Forums made and also thought that the communities 'were happy'. All the while these communities were damaging fences and fence material was stolen. In the end it came out that this was their way of indicating that they wanted a more senior NPB representative to attend the Forum to speak with.⁷¹ In the domain of formal conservation there was an increasingly louder, international call during the second half of the 1980s urging local communities in wildlife management directly, or at least grant them some of the economic benefits from the activities of wildlife utilisation by way of indirect involvement.⁷² The underlying assumption was that if they were involved in this way

⁷¹ Interview with NPB Officer, 18 March 1998.

⁷² See for instance IIED (July 1994), *Whose Eden? An Overview of Community Approaches to Wildlife Management*, London: IIED; Wells, M. & Brandon, K. (with Hannah, L.) (1992), *People and Parks. Linking Protected Area Management with*

they would sense the monetary value of wildlife and as a result feel the necessity to protect this valuable asset. In the process they would develop a more positive conservation ethos. In the formally protected areas this knowledge has resulted in all kinds of formal and structural programmes to involve neighbouring communities, one way or the other, in the process of wildlife management. In August 1994 the National Parks Board of South Africa inaugurated a Social Ecology Section.⁷³ The Board said it recognise(s) that poverty is the greatest threat to bio-diversity and environmental integrity. *For that reason* a policy has been formulated which will integrate the human needs and aspirations of national parks' neighbours in its conservation mandate'.⁷⁴ Obviously not the people as such who are the prime reason but their being a threat to the Board's conservation principles. No such or any other programme has been developed so far in the context of private wildlife conservancies. There are individual conservancies which embark on similar programmes, but there is no official policy regarding neighbouring communities at the level of the NCA for instance. The subject is also never writ large in the Newsletter. One conservancy in KwaZulu-Natal thought it wise to engage someone to start a community-relations programme so they attracted an employee for that job and sent him to all kinds of courses to learn the 'tricks of the trade'. After he had finished all that and had been working only three weeks, he was found dead, shot, with his two assistants in his brand new 4X4. They never found out who exactly did it or for what reason, but the fact remains that a community-relations officer was murdered.⁷⁵

The conservancy concept was taken over from South Africa by Namibia and Zimbabwe. Namibia will not be dealt with in the context of this book because the conservancy concept is mainly applied to *communal* conservancies by the government.⁷⁶ A description and analysis of the developments in Zimbabwe

Local Communities, Washington D.C.: The World Bank, The World Wildlife Fund, USAID; Western, D. & Pearl, M.C. (eds)(1989), *Conservation for the Twenty-Fist Century*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

⁷³ Pp. 31, *National Parks Board of South Africa*, Annual Report 1993-1994.

⁷⁴ Pp. 49, *National Parks Board of South Africa*, Annual Report 1994-1995. Italics added.

⁷⁵ Personal communication with Conservancy Officer NPB, 2 November 1998.

⁷⁶ Jones, B.T.B. (1995), *Wildlife Management, Utilization and Tourism in Communal Areas: Benefits to Communities and Improved Resource Management*, Windhoek: Directorate of Environmental Affairs, Ministry of Environment and Tourism, Research Discussion Paper, no. 5; Jones, B.T.B. (2001), The Evolution of a Community-Based Approach to Wildlife Management at Kunene, Namibia, in: Hulme, D. & Murphree, M. (eds), *African Wildlife & Livelihoods. The Promise & Performance of Community Conservation*, Cape Town: David Philip, Harare:

with regard to the development of conservancies in relation to the history of the Land Question is the topic of the next chapter.

Private wildlife conservancies and the Land Question in Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe has much in common with South Africa. They have shared much common history throughout the twentieth century. Both were granted effective independence from Britain under white minority rule, South Africa in 1910 and Southern Rhodesia in 1923. Both countries experienced a war as a result of responses to black liberation movements, and international sanctions in support of these movements, to remove the white minority from political power. Many of the early radical ideas of black resistance in Zimbabwe, going back to the first half of the twentieth century, came from South Africa through Zimbabwean men who worked in the mines or who went to South Africa for education.¹ In both countries whites were forced out of political power, but their economic power remained largely intact.² Much of that power is vested in the unequal land distribution between black and white in these countries. The resulting imbalance in land ownership and possession was further aggravated by unequal

¹ Pp. 139, 143, 144, Ranger, T.O. (1999), *Voices from the Rocks. Nature, Culture & History in the Matopos Hills of Zimbabwe*, Harare: Baobab; Bloomington, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press; Oxford: James Currey.

² Pp. 90-91, Stoneman, C. (1998), Lessons Unlearned: South Africa's One-Way Relationship with Zimbabwe, in: Simon, D., *South Africa in Southern Africa: Reconfiguring the Region*, Oxford: James Currey; Athens (USA): Ohio University Press; Cape Town: David Philip Publishers. In Zimbabwe at least till 2002.

access to support services. Economic and institutional support favoured the white above black farmers.³ In both countries the relations between black and white have always been dominated by their struggle for the possession and use of land.⁴

Here I want to relate the development of conservancies in Zimbabwe in the 1990s to the historical developments of the Land Question in Zimbabwe primarily till 1999. It also serves as an exploration of the rival identities of black and white related to land in the particular context of Zimbabwe. After a short description of the physical features of Zimbabwe, I shall commence my description and analysis on the day the first white people arrived in this part of southern Africa in 1890 with the Pioneer Column⁵ and started a process of land appropriation. Black farmers made vociferous protests about this process. In first instance mainly locally, but the process grew out into a national and more or less united struggle over land in the 1970s in the struggle for independence.⁶ In 1980 a black majority government took over and I shall describe what happened in relation to land policy in the 1980s, up till 1992 when the radical Land Acquisition Act was installed. I shall end this chapter by describing and analysing the impact of this latter Act for the development of conservancies in Zimbabwe in the period between 1992 and 1999.

³ Pp. 98, Keith, T. (1994), *Lessons from Southern Africa*, In: Minnaar, A. (ed.)(1994).

⁴ Pp. 128, Denoon, D. (1972), *Southern Africa since 1800*, London: Longman.

⁵ Pp. 214-221, Thomas, A. (1996), *Rhodes. The Race for Africa*, Harare: African Publishing Group.

⁶ It should be noted though that despite the word 'Independence', Southern Rhodesia in fact never was a 'full' colony of Great Britain, like New Zealand or Australia, but power to rule the area was only delegated to white settlers when they achieved 'responsible government' in 1923. Southern Rhodesia never achieved the Dominion Status, which would have meant that they would be really 'autonomous communities within the British Empire, equal in status in both their domestic and external affairs but united by a common allegiance to the Crown, and freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations'. Great Britain remained the final lawful authority. This was contested in the *Unilateral Declaration of Independence* [UDI] by Ian Smith's *Rhodesian Front Party* in 1965'. But this lack of ultimate and formal sovereignty meant that Great Britain was heavily involved again in the negotiations in Lancaster House at the end of the 1970s to become the independent state of Zimbabwe in 1980. Pp. 390, 391, note 8, 9, Mutambara, J.G. (1981), *Africans and Land Policies: British Colonial Policy in Zimbabwe, 1890-1965*. Ph.D. Thesis, University of Cincinnati.

The physical features of present-day Zimbabwe

An understanding of the physical aspects of Zimbabwe is essential because they have a direct bearing on the answer to the question of whether a wildlife conservancy is tolerated and accepted by the government as form of land use or not. In particular parts of Zimbabwe, conservancies were not allowed because it was considered good land for agriculture in particular cash crops for food or export. This is an upshot of a conjunction of the soil conditions and the climatic circumstances in particular parts of the country. Zimbabwe is a landlocked country with no direct access to the sea. The shortest distance to the sea by rail or road, 287 km, is via Beira in Mozambique.⁷ Zimbabwe is dominated by a plateau at 600-1300 m. above sea level. The gentle undulating landscape is often broken by bornhardts, enormous, usually upstanding, bare rocks and smaller kopjes, isolated granite hills, which makes cultivation difficult. This typical aspect of the country is most common in the two provinces in which the SVC is located, Masvingo and Manicaland Provinces.⁸ The country is physiographically divided into four zones, based on the criterion of altitude: Highveld, 1200-1500 metres; Middleveld 600-1200 metres; Lowveld, below 600 metres and a separate category for the Eastern Highlands, which raise above 1500 metres (see Map 2).⁹

Zimbabwe's climate is moderate because of its altitude and dominated by three seasons:

- A hot dry season, from mid-August till the onset of the rains between the end of October and January;
- The warm to hot wet season which can last till March or April, temporarily interrupted by a dry spell in February;
- Cool to warm dry season from April till August with cool nights and warm sunny days.¹⁰

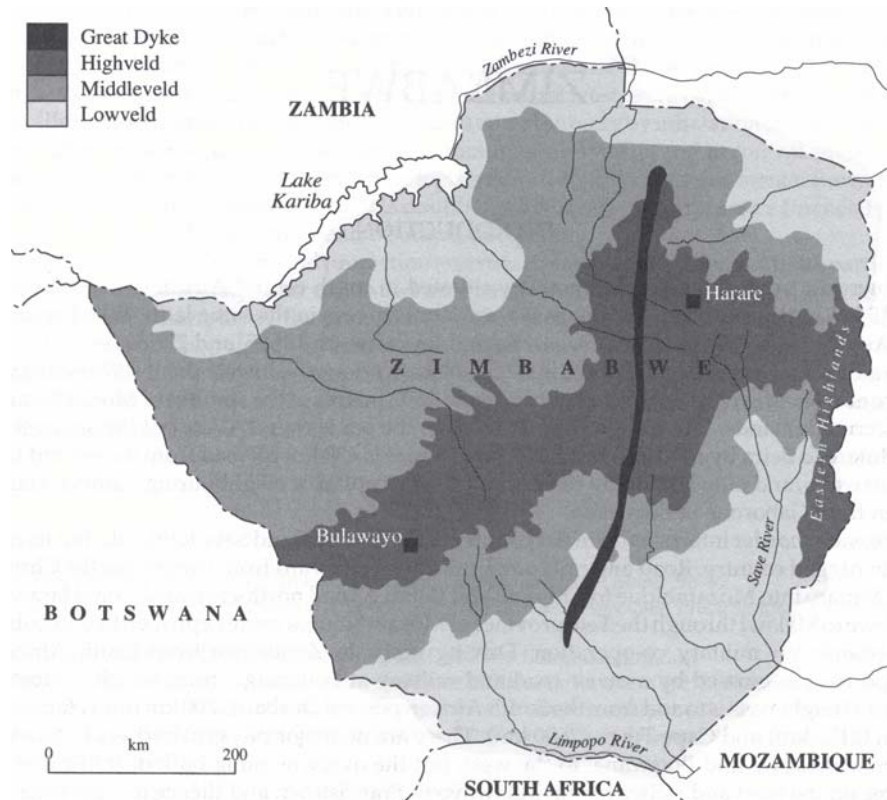
Without going into detail of soil types, slopes, percentages of rainfall and the like it is important for my argument to remember that Zimbabwe is mapped and divided into five Regions, I to V, which are in fact agro-ecological zones. The Regions correspond to a large extent to the physiographical areas mentioned above. Only the Lowveld is subdivided into two regions. The categorisation into Natural Regions is used as a basis for land-use planning, including land designation and resettlement schemes.

⁷ Moyo a.o. 1991: 21.

⁸ Ibid: 23.

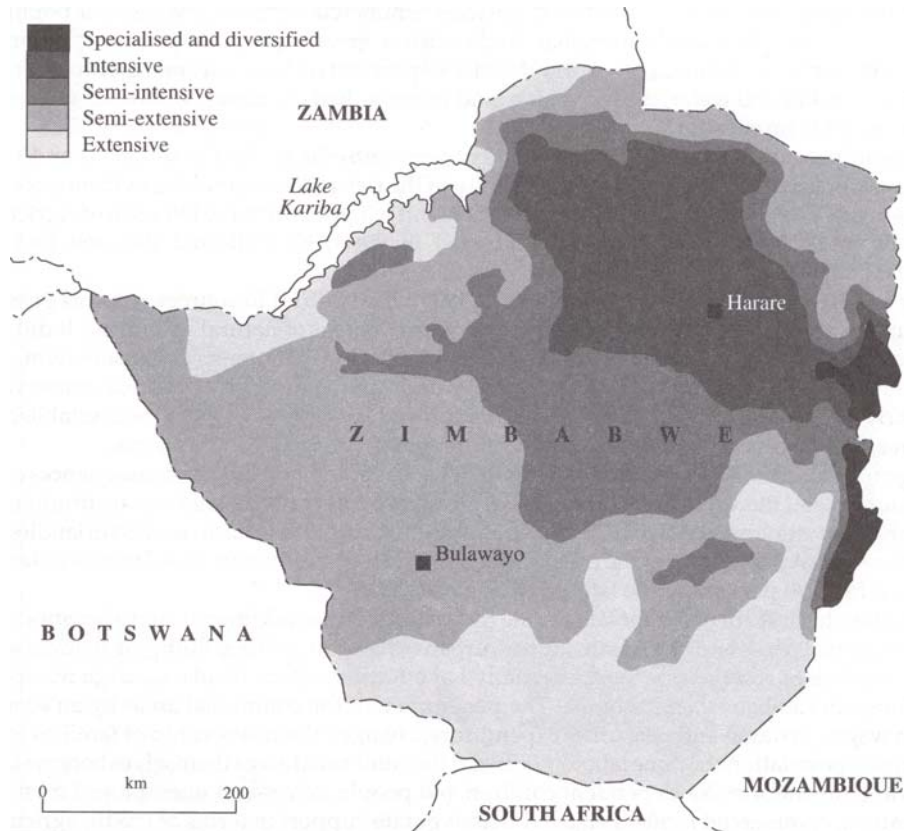
⁹ Pp. 304, Moyo, S., O'Keefe, P. & Sill, M. (1993), *The Southern African Environment. Profiles of the SADC Countries*, London: Earthscan Publications.

¹⁰ Ibid: 305.



Map 2: Physiographical division of Zimbabwe in four zones
(Source: see footnote 85)

- Natural Region I: Characterised by high altitude, cool temperatures and high, reliable rainfall of over 1000 mm. It comprises 5835 km², being the Eastern Highlands in Manica Province, bordering Mozambique;
- Natural Region II: This is the region where most large-scale commercial farmers are to be found with an average rainfall between 700-1000 mm. annually. Here most maize and tobacco farmers are to be found. It comprises 72,745 km² mainly in the northeast of the country around the capital Harare;
- Natural Region III: This region contains a high proportion of communal land. Rainfall is between 650-800 annually, but usually comes in infrequent heavy storms. The area comprises 67,690 km²;
- Natural Region IV: Rainfall is between 450-650 mm. per annum. The Region forms the transition area between the middleveld and lowveld. The area is prone to seasonal droughts. Together with Region V this area was particularly hard-hit by the 1982-1984 drought and the drought in the early 1990s. The area comprises of 128,370 km² with a high proportion of Communal Land;



Map 3: Categorisation of Natural Regions in Zimbabwe
(Source: see footnote 85)

- Natural Region V: This final category is reserved for the low-lying zone of the lowveld with an annual rainfall of less than 450 mm., which is on top of that also unreliable. Without irrigation only extensive animal husbandry is possible. And even that proved not to be a viable economic option in the long run. Apart from agricultural crops like sugar-cane, based on extensive irrigation, wildlife utilisation, for example through tourism of all sorts, is today considered one of the most economically viable options for this region. The area covers 112,810 km² (see Map 3).¹¹

¹¹ Ibid: 306. Droughts occur(ed) regularly in southern Africa. An overview since 1800 for instance shows that there were (severe) droughts almost every twenty years. 1820-1830 was a severe drought period. Not only for southern Africa, but for the whole continent. 1844-1849 were five consecutive drought years. Over the period between 1875-1919 rainfall gradually decreased in southern Africa, ending with a severe drought in 1910. 1921-1930 saw severe droughts in the area. From 1930 to

The Land Question in Zimbabwe, 1890-1980

First contact

In 1889 the British South Africa Company (BSAC) was granted a Royal Charter by the British government. Under this charter the company was authorised to enter and exploit territories north of the Limpopo River, but no further than the Zambezi River. The BSAC, that is, Cecil John Rhodes, expected to find great mineral wealth in the area designated by the charter, just as they had found diamonds in Kimberly and gold in Witwatersrand.¹²

This Royal Charter illuminates the location of the south and north boundary of present day Zimbabwe, namely the Limpopo River in the south and the Zambezi River in the north. In the east it was necessary to deal and negotiate with the Portuguese who were also a signatory to the Treaty of Berlin and who ruled over Portuguese East Africa.¹³ In the west the charter was bounded by the British Protectorate of Bechuanaland or 'the road to the north' as it was called.¹⁴ These were all 'European' constraints. Rhodes also had to deal with the African population which in the west of the chartered area was comprised of the Ndebele, led by their king, Lobengula.¹⁵ He is described as an impressive man

the second half of the 1960s rainfall was pretty good with an occasional bad year. From 1967 till 1973 the region was fairly dry again. Finally in the 1980s and early 1990s there were many droughts: 1981-1982; 1982; 1983; 1986-1987 and finally in 1991-1992 the worst drought in living memory (pp. 91, Southern African Research & Documentation Centre (SARDC), IUCN & SADC (1994), *State of the Environment in Southern Africa*, Harare: SARDC.

¹² Thomas 1996: resp. 154-160 & 161-163.

¹³ Pp. 425-430, Best, J. & Zinyama, L.M. (1985), The Evolution of the National Boundary of Zimbabwe, *Journal of Historical Geography*, 11 (4): 419-432.

¹⁴ Pp. 348, Wesseling, H.L. (1992), *Verdeel en heers. De deling van Afrika, 1880-1914* (translation: Divide and Rule. The Partition of Africa, 1880-1914), Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Bert Bakker. The British, or rather Rhodes', expansion in southern Africa from south to north, especially north of the Zambezi, former Northern Rhodesia, now Zambia, brought him into conflict with the Portuguese who had envisioned a 'contra-costa' empire in southern Africa connecting Mozambique in the east with Angola in the west. Rhodes's march and annexation literally bisected the Portuguese ambitions (ibid: 370-371).

¹⁵ Pp. 2, note 5, it is important to differentiate between the Transvaal Ndebele and the followers of Mzilikazi, who eventually settled in present-day Zimbabwe. Lobengula was the son of Mzilikazi. The Transvaal Ndebele live in KwaNdebele in South Africa, Paton, E.M. (1999), Population pressure and land degradation: historical perspectives on population and resources in KwaNdebele, paper presented at the conference *African Environments, Past and Present*, 5-8 July, St. Anthony's College, Oxford.

who was considered ‘every inch a king’.¹⁶ As a king he owned ‘absolutely land, subjects, cattle and grain’.¹⁷ So, if the BSAC planned to launch any exploration in the north, it had to negotiate a deal with Lobengula. In 1888 Lobengula was visited by a delegation from Rhodes, headed by one of Rhodes’s trusted companions, Charles Rudd. After long days of negotiations, he was eventually able to press Lobengula to sign a favourable concession¹⁸ in which they were granted ‘complete and exclusive charge of over all metals and minerals situated and contained in my [Lobengula HW] Kingdom, Principalities and Dominions, together with full power to do all things that they may deem necessary to win and procure the same...’.¹⁹ In exchange for these favours they paid Lobengula with a 1000 Martini-Henry rifles, 100,000 rounds of ammunition and a steamboat to be delivered on the Zambezi River. Over and above this, Lobengula would receive a stipend of £100 a month.²⁰ ‘The Rudd Concession is considered the modest beginning of the Land Question in Zimbabwe’.²¹ although in actual fact it was not a grant in land but a concession of mineral rights. In other words, it was a grant in a particular form of exploitative land use; land became, contrary to African notions of land, an exchangeable commodity. Rhodes thought that he had reached a historic deal opening up all the land of the Ndebele and of their tributaries, the Shona falling under them, who were living in the east of present-day Zimbabwe. He thought he had covered the whole area in one deal with Lobengula. But that was in fact not true at all.

Rudd’s party and Rhodes had taken Lobengula’s rhetoric in which he claimed that he was the ‘undisputed ruler over Matabele land and Mashonaland’ at face value. But, although Lobengula raided the Shona and extracted tribute from them, he did not rule them. In fact, his kingdom did not extend any further

¹⁶ Rotberg in Wesseling 1992: 366.

¹⁷ Mutambara 1981: 144.

¹⁸ Although the negotiations were not what we would call ‘fair’, Two people played an important role in ‘convincing’ Lobengula, a missionary by the name of Helm, who was a trusted interpreter of Lobengula, and the Imperial Deputy-Commissioner of the British Protectorate of Bechuanaland, Shippard. The first deceived Lobengula with verbal promises, which were never put into the concession document. The second assured Lobengula that England would only like to see a peaceful and friendly relationship with the king, while in actual fact he wanted the Ndebele kingdom destroyed, which would come to pass a few years later (Thomas 1996: 192-195) See also the beautiful narrative account of this period by Zimbabwean writer Samkange, S. (1966) *On Trial for my Country*, Oxford: Heinemann.

¹⁹ Known as ‘The Rudd Concession’, 30 October 1888, pp. 262, Rotberg, R.I. (1988), *The Founder. Cecil Rhodes and the Pursuit of Power*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

²⁰ Thomas 1996: 196.

²¹ Mutambara 1981: 154.

than a sixty-mile radius around Bulawayo.²² It is said that Rhodes and Rudd's party went along with the king's rhetoric for strategic advantage of having to deal with only one authority covering the whole area.²³ There is also a possibility that it might also have been an authentic belief of Rhodes and those with him consonant in line with the observation that the British were far more sympathetic to warrior states like the Ndebele, than to peasant states like the Shona. In historiography scholars have paid more attention to the heroic warrior state of the Ndebele than to the peasant and sedentary Shona.²⁴ From this perspective it was considered only 'natural' that the Ndebele ruled the Shona and that if the negotiators agreed on a deal with Lobengula, that this would also imply the inclusion of Shona territory. This tendency was reinforced and reproduced later in history when 'it was part of the Rhodesian mythology that the Shona were a miserable, cowardly lot who had only been saved from extinction at the hands of the Ndebele by the coming of colonial rule, for which they were remarkably ungrateful'.²⁵

Parallel to Rhodes's initiative, at the beginning of 1889, between 1500 and 2000 Boers decided to migrate from Zoutpansberg (South Africa) and settle in Shona domain across the Limpopo River. Louis P. Bowler claimed that he received permission from a Shona Chief for this. Frederick Courtenay Selous, the famous white hunter, also claimed that he was granted a concession by two Shona chiefs for exclusive mineral rights in a large chunk of land in their country. When he heard about the Rudd Concession, he began to write articles in newspapers claiming that Lobengula had no claim on Mashonaland at all and that consequently Rhodes had no legal claims to that area.²⁶ In other words, Selous contested Rhodes's claims. What complicated the matter even further for Rhodes was that Selous was invited, he was fluent in Ndebele and very popular in Britain on the strength of his 1880 book *A hunter's wanderings in Africa*, when two of Lobengula's *indunas* (generals) visited Queen Victoria to consult her about the white men entering his country. Because of Selous's presence, the official interpreter, Colenbrander, had no other option than to translate correctly without being able to favour Rhodes's cause through selective or twisted translation.²⁷ This resulted in a situation in which the Queen gave a written answer to Lobengula which his two *indunas* had to deliver to him personally. In

²² Ibid: 42, note 71.

²³ Thomas 1996: 197.

²⁴ Pp. 11, Beach, D. (1994), *The Shona and their Neighbours*, Oxford, Cambridge (USA): Blackwell.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Thomas 1996: 202.

²⁷ Ibid: 204-205.

it she made clear that the negotiations had not been carried out with the Queen's authority and that Lobengula should not exclude other willing and deserving men from deals with him. 'A King gives a stranger an ox, not his whole herd of cattle, otherwise what would other strangers arriving have to eat ...?'²⁸ This opened the doors wide for Rhodes's competitors and was lethal to his own plans in the area. He countered this danger by opening a diplomatic offensive on the key-players in Great Britain in this scramble, by offering them money or shares in the BSAC and a place in his encompassing vision and scheme to rule Africa, if only they would support his cause. Aware of every trick, he took care that the Queen's letter to Lobengula was only delivered much later. By that time the major players in London were all firmly behind Rhodes's plans (that is, bought) and whatever the Queen's letter advised Lobengula could not have undermined Rhodes's plans anymore. It became a 'major victory' for Rhodes²⁹ in terms of his enormous capabilities of winning, persuading and buying people to adopt his course and vision, although it would turn out not to be a victory for the African people.³⁰ These developments also made it perfectly clear to Rhodes and the British government that they had to make haste with settling people in Ndebele and Shonaland. Rhodes ordered Johnson to recruit a group of pioneers, and especially to select a large enough group of people from influential, largely English-speaking families. If Lobengula then decided to attack them or cut them off, the prominent fathers of the pioneers would demand assistance and imperial forces could come to the rescue. But who could be best approached to guide them through the still unknown land? Who knew the country best? Unfortunately for Rhodes it was Selous. He was familiar with that part of Africa. He even shot his first elephant there, although Selous was not the first white hunter to wander through Lobengula's country. That 'honour' has to be accorded to William Finaughty who preceded Selous by several years and who also went into Mashonaland, north of Lobengula's territory. Rhodes had to convince Selous to guide the pioneer group into Matabeleland.

Characteristically he also 'sold him out' for '£2000,- in cash, a hundred De Beers shares, of which he was chairman and through which company in gold and diamonds he amassed great financial fortune, a grant of 21,000 acres in Mashonaland and a salary of £2 5s a day'.³¹ Selous promised not to write any more damaging stories and his concession with Chief Mappedera was 'folded into the Company'.³² To be prepared should Lobengula decide to attack them, as

²⁸ Ibid: 206.

²⁹ Ibid: 206-207.

³⁰ Ibid: 206-212.

³¹ Thomas 1996: 217.

³² Rotberg 1988: 295.

Selous and Jameson had warned Rhodes,³³ the column was fitted out with ‘all the paraphernalia of modern warfare’,³⁴ like machine-guns, Martini-Henry rifles, searchlights, rocket launchers and the like, all loaded on 117 wagons. In this fashion they could leave on the 26 June 1890, in a Pioneer Column which stretched for two and a half miles³⁵ to go ‘up-country’³⁶ for the ultimate goal of finding gold, just like in South Africa in Witwatersrand. The consummation which they expected on the high plateau of Mashonaland.³⁷ All the people on the column were promised they would be allowed ‘to peg out fifteen mining claims each’³⁸ after the demobilisation when they had reached their goal. In actual fact they were promised land. From that perspective the Rudd Concession can indeed be interpreted as the beginning of the Land Question in Zimbabwe.

Annexation of the Lowveld

The first resting place of the Pioneer Column was Fort Victoria³⁹ (now Bulawayo). From there on a group moved further north in the direction of Fort Hampden (now Harare). A small contingent of the Column stayed in Fort

³³ Their warning was based on the rage of the Ndebele and Lobengula’s *indunas* about the deal their king had struck with Rhodes. To vindicate himself before his people, Lobengula condemned his personal advisor on the Rudd deal, Lotshe, to death, together with all his family and descendants, which was directly and literally executed (Thomas 1996: 212).

³⁴ Rotberg 1988: 299.

³⁵ Thomas 1996: 218-219.

³⁶ ‘There’s magic in these words for all old South Africans. (...) “Up-country” will bring back to the Pioneer of the ‘nineties a recollection of the creaking wagon; the patient, straining bullocks; the unearthly scream of a hyena breaking in on the soft silence of the veld at night; the camp fire at the outspan, and the cool, early trek when the morning star is paling before the grey-green dawn. (...) Only the pleasant experiences are remembered. The discomforts are forgotten, or merely recalled with a grin.’, pp. 7, Marshall Hole, H. (1928), *Old Rhodesian Days*, London, MacMillan and Co., Ltd.

³⁷ Rotberg 1988: 295.

³⁸ Ibid: 300.

³⁹ Pp. 22, note 1, The appendage ‘Fort’ was soon dropped, but in 1921 it was officially renamed Fort Victoria. ‘Notice 270 in the Government Gazette No. 1392 read that ‘it is hereby notified His Honour the Administrator has approved of the alteration of the name of the town to ‘Fort Victoria’ by which name it shall be known for all official purposes as from 1st July 1921’. It appears that the reason for this change was that for some time there had been a muddle in the mail whereby post for Victoria, Rhodesia, was being sent to Victoria, Australia, and vice versa.’ Sayce, K. (1978), *A Town Called Victoria*, Bulawayo: Books of Rhodesia.

Victoria prompted to do so by an ‘unshakeable faith in the mineral wealth of the district, a belief no doubt fostered by the evidence of the gold-mining activity of the ancient in the precincts of the nearby Zimbabwe Ruins’.⁴⁰ The ruins were the first target in the pioneer’s endeavours to try and find gold. Under the guise of doing archaeological research and excavations, a company, called Rhodesia Ancient Ruins Ltd., acquired a concession to dig at the site. But, instead of laying bare the remains of an African civilisation, they ‘dug the ground, sifted the gold they found thereby and assigned it to the melting pot’.⁴¹ The largest company looking for mineral wealth in the area was the Consolidated African Copper Trust, a company which not only had concessions in Matabelland but, by 1905, also ‘held most of the Sabi [Mashonaland] copper claims, including the original Bradley’s Coper, which was renamed Umkondo in 1903’.⁴² This is interesting to note because the remains of the Umkondo claim now form part of the SVC. Although the expectations were sky-high, not many minerals were found. The exception was Umkondo, where there was copper in sufficient quantities but transport difficulties ‘caused work to decline slowly till the mine was compelled to shut down in 1910’.⁴³

In 1893 and 1896, the Matabele rose in revolt in protest about unfair white claims to the land, which resulted in violent clashes between the Matabele and the white imperialists. Selous was still active in helping Rhodes and helped to suppress the two Matabele uprisings. Superior firepower secured and consolidated Rhodes’s power in Rhodesia, battering the warrior state of the Matabele into subjugation.⁴⁴ As a result, the BSAC jurisdiction over Matabeleland was confirmed by Order in Council on 18 July 1894, which authorised Jameson, Rhodes’s aide in Rhodesia, to allot farmland and gold claims. The Order of Council set the boundaries for the new state of Southern Rhodesia, encompassing Matabele and Shonaland and Manica.⁴⁵ Rhodes could be satisfied with these developments as ‘Rhodesia was ... to him (...) as her first-born (...) to a

⁴⁰ Sayce 1978: text on dustcover.

⁴¹ Ibid: 64. In fact Rhodes’s dream that he would find a ‘second Witwatersrand’ had already been shattered in 1894 when a survey concluded that Rhodesia contained various mineral resources like nickel, copper and coal, but only some (very) modest supplies of gold (Thomas 1996: 279).

⁴² Sayce 1978: 92.

⁴³ Ibid: 102.

⁴⁴ Rotberg 1988: 418-449 & 551-580; Thomas 1996: 234-260.

⁴⁵ Thomas 1996: 259. By 1893 there were some 3000 Europeans in what would become Southern Rhodesia (pp. 39, Yudelman, M. (1964), *Africans on the Land*, Cambridge (Massachusetts): Harvard University Press; London: Oxford University Press).

woman'.⁴⁶ More important than Rhodes's sentiments is the fact that the white invaders 'brought with them new ideas and technology, most importantly the notions of exclusive access to land and the concept of fixed boundaries (...)'.⁴⁷ What Scoones has called 'the politics of straight lines' in colonial Zimbabwe.⁴⁸ These straight lines had been translated in South Africa in the 1880s into the erection of fences, following the introduction of fencing in many other parts of the Western world.⁴⁹ At the first agricultural census in 1918 the Cape Province alone lists 15,000 farms completely fenced and 13,000 partly fenced on a total of 31,000 farms. For the Union of South Africa the figures were respectively 38,000 and 30,000 in a total of 76,000 farms.⁵⁰ The material for the fencing was imported mainly from the United States of America. After 1922 barbed wire became popular and was imported in much larger quantities than smooth fencing wire.⁵¹ Just like in America, wire fences were made to 'keep things apart'. The effect of wire fences in a country already segregated in terms of black and white can be easily guessed. It follows as the night the day that wire was used with great enthusiasm for fencing National Parks. In Kruger National Park there was a 'steely desire for hard edges'. In the apartheid years a fence came to be seen as of 'National importance, given the fact that it will form the boundary between White and Bantu districts'.⁵² In Zimbabwe, as in Botswana, fencing assumed great importance as a control measure for the periodic outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD), when these countries started to export beef to the European Economic Commission (EEC) in the 1950s and

⁴⁶ Stent in Rotberg 1988: 555.

⁴⁷ Pp. 5, Mitchell, L.J. (1999), Land and ASocial Constructions on the Cedarberg frontier. Contested Resource Use in Colonial South Africa, c. 1725-1795, paper presented at the conference *African Environments, Past and Present*, 5-8 July, St. Anthony's College, Oxford.

⁴⁸ Pp. 44, Scoones, I. (1996), Range Management Science and Policy. Politics, Polemics and Pasture in Southern Africa, in: Leach, M. & Mearns, R. (eds), *The Lie of the Land. Challenging Received Wisdom on the African Environment*, London: The International African Institute in association with Oxford: James Currey and Portsmouth (N.H.) Heinemann.

⁴⁹ Pp. 5, Archer, S. (1999), Technology and Ecology in the Karoo: a Century of Windmills, Wire and Changing Farm Practice, paper presented at the conference *African Environments, Past and Present*, 5-8 July, St. Anthony's College, Oxford. There were pioneers who already experienced with wire fencing in South Africa in the 1870s (ibid: 7).

⁵⁰ Ibid: 7.

⁵¹ Ibid: 8.

⁵² Pp. 31-32, Bunn, D. (1999), An Unnatural State: Tourism, Water, and Wildlife Photography in the Early Kruger National Park, paper presented at the conference *African Environments, Past and Present*, 5-8 July, St. Anthony's College, Oxford.

1960s. The European Commission (EC) refused to accept unspecified meat and blocked its export when there was even the slightest indication or fear of a possible contamination by FMD.⁵³ In order to control the disease the Departments of Veterinary Services used an extensive fencing systems, with no room for negotiation and manoeuvring. A fixed boundary in the form of a barbed wire fence then becomes a statement in itself.⁵⁴

The whites in Africa introduced these fixed boundaries and later, to combat FMD and poaching, fencing became a common practice throughout southern Africa, accompanied by a rising tide of protest against the practice. The fence came to symbolise the segregation of black and white on either side of the frontier it represented. It also became a symbol of the written and fixed boundary of the fence by whites versus the especially oral and flexible boundary of the Africans.⁵⁵ The fence became the white 'signature' on the land.⁵⁶

Right from the start white pioneers in present-day Zimbabwe claimed and demarcated territory (not straightaway with fences but eventually this was the case), which was also the primary incentive for joining the Column in the first place. From their first point of arrival at Fort Victoria, they spread out further inland claiming land, setting boundaries and 'writing' them into the land. Already by 1893 a group of people had moved on from Fort Victoria to the east where a group of white farmers had been settled across the Sabi River in the northern Chipinga Hills since 1891. That first group endured many hardships to reach their destination, a story recounted in a book about the village of Melsetter in Chipinga District. The group, headed by Dunbar Moodie, reached the Sabi River on the 5th February 1891. 'No kraal, no boats, no food, damn all', recorded Dunbar, who then rode downstream and eventually found a native canoe which they used to ferry their possessions across. For another fortnight they struggled through barren deserted Lowveld, their horses and carriers completely exhausted and they themselves desperately ill with malaria. Eventually, forty-four days after leaving Penhalonga [South Africa], they reached

⁵³ Pp. 301, Owens, M. & Owens, D. (1985), *Cry of the Kalahari*, London: Collins.

⁵⁴ A poem by W.H. Auden puts it as follows: 'Between two hills, two villages, two trees, two friends

The barbed wire runs which neither argues nor explains'. Cited in 'The Wiring of America', pp. 74-76, *The Economist*, 19th December 1998.

⁵⁵ Pp. 59-77, Chapter 3, 'The spoken word and the barbed wire' in Hofmeyr, I. (1993), *"We spend our years as a tale that is told"*. *Oral Historical Narrative in a South African Chieftdom*, Portsmouth, (N.H.): Heinemann; Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press; London: James Currey.

⁵⁶ Compare also Coetzee, C. (December 2001), 'They never wept, the men of my race': Antjie Krog's *Country of my Skull* and the White South African Signature. *Journal of Southern African Studies*, vol. 27, no.4, 685-696.

Manhlagazi'.⁵⁷ They were followed in 1893 by a group of fourteen men, four women and three children, who left Fort Victoria in seven wagons. Again the Sabi had to be crossed with a great deal of effort. They also traversed the Lowveld to settle finally in the healthier area in the Chipinga Hills, close to what is now the Eastern Highlands, north east of where the SVC is located.

Afflicted by endemic malaria the area of the Lowveld, and more specifically the Sabi Valley, was long considered 'unsuitable for white settlement' which was printed in red capital letters on the Government map of Southern Rhodesia, at the time.⁵⁸ Nowadays, when one drives from Bulawayo to Chiredzi in the Lowveld and takes the turn off at Ngundu, there is still a corroded sign saying 'Malaria Area' with a drawing of a malarial mosquito to make things even more clear. But this was precisely the reason that in 1919 Lucas and Despard Bridges, sons of missionaries in Tierra del Fuego, South America, wanted to settle there, because of an 'old longing to blaze new trails and to reclaim unused land [sic]'.⁵⁹ After an initial exploratory journey with an experienced hunter and transport driver, Albert Hamman, Lucas 'quickly made arrangements with the British South Africa Company to acquire the land [where the Devuli and Sabi Rivers join], and had cabled his cousin John Yeoman to proceed to this spot under the guidance of Ally Hamman and start constructing the camp'.⁶⁰ The two brothers Bridges are considered the '1920 settlers of the Rhodesian lowveld, (...) who pioneered European settlement in the Sabi River valley and (were) responsible for opening up a large area that had been considered uninhabitable'.⁶¹ Devuli Ranch, as it was called, comprised some one million acres of land in the Lowveld. Despard Bridges and his wife are buried on the land of the former headquarters of Devuli Ranch, which is now part of the SVC, and was bought by a former General Manager of the Devuli Ranch, Derek Henning, who renamed the property Chishakwe. After the Liberation Struggle, in 1981, the

⁵⁷ Pp. 16, Sinclair, S. (1971), *The Story of Melssetter*, Salisbury: M.O. Collins (pvt.) Ltd.

⁵⁸ Pp. 513, Bridges, E.L. (1948), *Uttermost Part of the Earth*, London: Hodder & Stroughton. This is the autobiography of Lucas Bridges.

⁵⁹ Pp. 190, Tschiffely, A.F. (1953), *The Man from Woodpecker Creek*, London: Hodder and Stroughton Ltd. This book is based on the autobiography of Lucas Bridges mentioned in the previous note and additional notes and stories. 'Woodpecker Creek' refers to the name the Indians gave him while he was living with his parents in Fireland, *Lanooshwaia*, meaning 'Man from Woodpecker Creek' (pp. 19).

⁶⁰ Pp. 55, Sommerville, D.M. (1976), *My Life was a Ranch*, Salisbury: Kailani Books (edited by his daughter Veronica Sommerville). D.M. Sommerville was the General Manager of Devuli Ranch for 30 years, 1935-1965.

⁶¹ Ibid: 63.

western part of the Devuli Ranch, 78,434 ha, was purchased by the government for resettlement. 'It was the biggest single property purchased by the government for peasant resettlement'.⁶² The southern boundary of Devuli Ranch was formed by the Turwi, or Turgwe, River. An earlier general manager of Devuli, Sommerville, bought a large piece of land laying south of the Turwi River, in partnership with someone who followed in the early Bridges' footsteps, James Whittall, and created Humani Ranch.⁶³ Whittall was descendant of the famous British merchant family of Whittall in Turkey.⁶⁴ They bought a 17,000 acres ranch with 900 head of cattle.⁶⁵ Later on, around 1958-1959, Sommerville was bought out by the brother of James Whittall's mother, Hingston, after which Humani became the sole property of Whittall. Cattle and trading were there main economic activities in those early years.⁶⁶ The contours and boundaries of Devuli and Humani together cover most of the area, which has become the SVC in the 1990s.

Much more will be said about developments at the micro-level in relation to land appropriation in the Sabi Valley in the next chapter when I discuss the origins of the SVC. What is important for this chapter is to note that the land in the Sabi Valley was appropriated by white settlers through arrangements with the BSAC of Rhodes only in the 1920s, because before that time endemic malaria had frightened them off. White settlement in the area is thus relatively recent. Nowadays you can still speak to the children of the first settlers, but the land surrounding the Valley was already taken by settlers, in the wake of and soon after the Pioneer Column reached Fort Victoria in 1890.

Through his judicious mixture of initiatives and plotting, Rhodes was the central figure in all these developments. He was able to energise and stimulate people to help him realise his plans. Once again returning to the little town of Melsetter on the east side of the Sabi River, it is remarkable to note how they describe a visit of Rhodes to this small outpost: 'Rhodes was very pleased with his visit; he found the settler contented and thriving and bravely determined to face and overcome all difficulties. He encouraged them to come to his camp and tell him their troubles but found they had very few. He had a knack of making

⁶² Pp. 363, Zinyama, M., Campbell, D.J. & Matiza, T. (1990), Land Policy and Access to Land in Zimbabwe: The Dewure Resettlement Scheme, *Geoforum*, 21 (3): 359-370.

⁶³ Sommerville 1976: 98.

⁶⁴ Pp. 118-119, Whittall, J.W. (1901) *Frederick the Great on Kingcraft*, London, New York, Bombay: Longmans, Green and Co.

⁶⁵ Pp. 64, Anonymous, not dated, *The Whittalls of Turkey, 1809-1973*, Great Britain: Faith Press.

⁶⁶ Interview with landowner Humani, 10 September 1998.

people feel at home, and arranged for coffee, cigars and cigarettes to be passed round while he chatted with them for hours. (The settlers) told Rhodes that they looked upon them as a father. (...) His visit was a great excitement for the children as he brought the first toys they had ever received seen from a shop (...).⁶⁷ Even many years after his death in 1902, Rhodes's reputation and example seemed to be able to inspire people to devote their lives to his ideals which is aptly demonstrated by the description of the General Manager of Devuli Ranch when he saw Rhodes's statue for the first time in Cape Town in 1920: 'Near the top of the Gardens, I came to a large bronze statue on a massive granite plinth, in the middle of the pathway. It was of Cecil John Rhodes, the founder of Rhodesia. I had read and heard so much of him, but felt I knew so little. This was, in fact, the first likeness I had seen of the man who was at one time Prime Minister of the Cape Colony. I stared intently at the bareheaded bronze figure, square and stocky with a fine strong face. As I stood there in the quietness of the Gardens, I began to understand something of this visionary who, in life, had led the way North, and in death continued to encourage others to do the same. My eyes travelled down the granite plinth in which one smooth slab bore the lettering:

Cecil John Rhodes

1853-1902

'Your Hinterland is there'. [pointing north]

Just that simple wording and no more, but it gave me a genuine thrill of pleasure and set me tingling with excitement. Here surely was a message for me personally. I wondered what forces had guided me so directly to this spot (...) today it seemed that the message was intended for me especially. I felt that I was being offered part of a great heritage'.⁶⁸

Further land alienation and African responses

It was a heritage that proved to be a double-edged sword one, which turned directly at the heart of the imperialist dreams developed and cherished by the white settlers. To a large extent this was because the land, its very soil is considered sacred to the Africans and is therefore indelible part of their social

⁶⁷ Sinclair 1971: 45.

⁶⁸ Sommerville 1976: 19.

identity.⁶⁹ Right from the start, white decisions about land distribution and land use have been contested and protested about through African spirit mediums. They were speaking on behalf of the ancestors who were considered to have the ultimate authority over the land. Mwari was seen ‘as the final authority behind their ancestors. (...) Mwari was believed to control the fertility of Shona occupied country, to give rain in times of drought and advice on the course of action in times of national crisis’.⁷⁰ The Mwari cult therefore played an important role in the 1896-1897 rebellions.⁷¹ It continued to be a paramount influence in the resistance to white domination of the land ever after, culminating in the Liberation Struggle in the 1970s.⁷² ‘Given the belief in the power of the spirits of the ancestors to influence natural events related to land, it follows that conquest must set up an ambiguous relationship between the victors and the vanquished since the victors have no direct communication with the spirits of the ancestors of the autochthons. The very weakness of the vanquished in a sense becomes their strength. *The consequence of this is that these beliefs provide the mechanism through which the formerly hostile groups may be linked together in a common society*’.⁷³ If only the conquerors would be willing to recognise and respect the spiritual ownership of the land as vested in the ancestors and High God, then a situation could emerge in which political and secular authority over land would have resided in the hands of the dominant group, but the spiritual authority and ownership of the land in the hands of the autochthonous population.

This seems to have been the usual pattern in much of southern Africa. The Ndebele entering what is now Zimbabwe, recognized Mwari of the Matopo

⁶⁹ What Roosens (1998: 11) calls ‘primordial autochtony’. ‘Dit principe kent aan individuen en groepen ten aanzien van een bepaald territorium een bijzondere kwalificatie toe omdat ze afstammen van ouders en voorouders die als ‘eersten’ op deze grond hebben gewoond’ (translation: This principle accords a special qualification to individuals or groups in relation to a certain territory, because they descend from parents and grandparents who were the ‘first’ to have lived on that land. Roosens, E. (1998), *Eigen grond eerst? Primordiale autochtonie. Dilemma van de multiculturele samenleving* (translation: Own Soil First? Primordial Autochtony. Dilemma of the Multicultural Society), Leuven, Amersfoort: Acco.

⁷⁰ Pp. 15, Daneel, M.L. (1970), *The God of the Matopo Hills. An Essay on the Mwari Cult in Rhodesia*, The Hague, Paris: Mouton.

⁷¹ Ranger, T.O. (1967), *Revolt in Southern Rhodesia, 1896-7*, London: Heineman.

⁷² Ranger, T.O. (1985), *Peasant Consciousness and Guerrilla War*, London: James Currey. See also Lan, D. (1985), *Guns and Rain. Guerrillas and Spirit Mediums in Zimbabwe*, London: James Currey.

⁷³ Pp. 8, Mitchell in Schoffeleers, J.M. (1992), *River of Blood. The Genesis of a Martyr Cult in Southern Malawi, c.A.D. 1600*, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press. Italics added.

Hills as the ultimate owner of the land, despite the fact that they ruthlessly subdued the Shona people.⁷⁴ This was obviously also an option open to the new white conquerors. Mwari recognized them as 'His white sons' and some of them have even paid tribute to him, in the sense that they actually sent him gifts to his most important shrine in the Matopo Hills, Matonjeni.⁷⁵ But that was certainly not standard procedure, which made Mwari highly critical of European settlers because they were 'always 'fighting with the land''.⁷⁶ Not only did they not pay sufficient respect to the owners of the land and recognise his authority, they insulted and violated this authority quite blatantly. With the commencement of white settlement in the area, aggravated by their definite sense of cultural superiority and disregard for and ignorance of local cultural norms, it could only lead to antagonistic and rivalling identities, coinciding with a racial divide between black and white related to the land: the whites relating to landscape and Africans relating to the soil. The inescapable conclusion was that the African people would protest and rebel against this state of affairs. How rival identities related to land and socio-political developments shape(d) history in Zimbabwe is beautifully described in a book by Ranger. I want to draw upon this book in more detail, because many parallels can be drawn between his historical case study, starting in 1897 and rich in personal detail, of the relationships in terms of social identities between black and white in and around the Matopos Hills and my case study of the SVC in the 1990s. They follow, and to a certain extent complement, each other in time. His study ends by the end of the 1980s. He describes the first half of the 1990s as a rough sketch. The SVC was officially inaugurated in 1991. The parallels and similarities in the two case studies suggest that the processes described within the particular contexts of each of them carry the potential for some broader generalisations, both theoretically as well as empirically.

The Matopos Hills have a very idiosyncratic landscape. 'It contains some of the most majestic granite scenery in the world. The landscape has been carved out from an almost flat surface of granite by millions of years of weathering, resulting in great 'whalebacks' and domes, and castle-like formations. Mzilikazi, king of the Matabele, who led his people here from Zululand,⁷⁷ was so

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Daneel 1970: 73.

⁷⁶ Ibid: 83.

⁷⁷ Mzilikazi was the father of Lobengula and 'chief of the House of Khumalo, a minor Zulu clan'. He had abandoned the famous Zulu king, Shaka, after a quarrel over the distribution of loot and had taken 300 of his followers to the north. After being pushed further north by the Great Trek of the Boers in 1837, they finally settled in Mashonaland. The Sotho tribes he defeated on his way called his warriors

impressed that he gave them the name Matabo, which means ‘bald heads’.⁷⁸ There are many Mwali or Mwari shrines in the area and ‘the cult came to express the essence of their extraordinary landscape. (...) The great rocks [Bald Heads] stand for Mwali’s authority (...) and Mwali (...) speaks from the rock itself’.⁷⁹ Hence the title of Ranger’s book, *Voices from the Rocks*. Mwali fused nature and society, because the Rocks were not only considered to be his voice, but were also held responsible for giving (or withholding for that matter) water. Water is considered ‘a gift from the rock’⁸⁰ with which agriculture can be developed. Mwali is not only about landscape or nature or natural features, but also about the people living in that nature as a society who have to seek for their livelihood. Mwali merged nature with culture. When the whites entered on the scene, under the leadership of Rhodes, they began straightaway to create frontiers between different parts of the Matopos and separate nature from culture by mapping the area in general and the mapping out of future farms in particular.⁸¹ Part of the mapping consisted of designating a certain part of the Matopos for the creation of a national park, which became fact on 19 November 1926,⁸² when the Rhodesian government proclaimed an area of 224,000 acres of the Matopos the first national park in Rhodesia. Culture and nature were forcefully separated. Although it had been a human habitation and under cultivation for generations, it was described and (re)imagined by the whites as ‘African wilderness’ and (re)made accordingly. Because at that time there was not yet a government department for national parks, that only came in 1949,⁸³ it was put under the custodianship of the Forestry Department.⁸⁴ The materialisation of the different types of land-use planning was the fencing off of the areas and thus their physical demarcation from each other. These sharp and visible boundaries

Amandebele (that is, ‘people of the long shields’). It became anglicised as ‘Matabele’. Their capital became Gubulawayo, ‘The Place of the Killing’ because there, people were sacrificed for rain (Thomas 1996: 182-184).

⁷⁸ Text from a brochure produced by the Matabeleland Branch of the Wildlife Society of Zimbabwe, ‘Matabo National Park’.

⁷⁹ Ranger 1999: 21.

⁸⁰ Ibid: 25. Notice the beautiful parallel with the Biblical story about Moses who smote a rock from which water instantly sprang to nurture the thirsty people of Israel wandering around in the desert.

⁸¹ Ibid: 42.

⁸² Matopos National Park was the first game sanctuary in the country. By 1933, there were already four areas devoted to game, Wankie, Victoria Falls, Kazuma Pan Game Reserve and Matopos National Park (pp. 259, Mutwira, R. (January 1989), *Southern Rhodesian Wildlife Policy (1890-1953): a Question of Condoning Game Slaughter?* *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 15 (2).

⁸³ Ibid: 260.

⁸⁴ Ranger 1999: 62.

were simultaneously an acute expression of segregation; demarcating land claims as much as rival identities on either side of them. The ideology surrounding Mwali had stressed man's co-existence and reciprocal relationship with the environment. These reciprocal ties were broken in the process of creating (white) boundaries.⁸⁵

After the proclamation of the first national park in 1926, more areas followed. In the southeast Lowveld suggestions were put forward for the creation of a game reserve in the Chipinda Pools area. The idea failed to gain the support of the Chief Entomologist because the creation of the reserve would interfere with land use by European ranchers and with the Matibi No. 2 Native Reserve. There was another attempt in 1933. 'The major constraint to the proposal was [again] that a total of 1500 people would have to be moved from the area earmarked for the new game reserve'. The Fort Victoria Publicity Association campaigned especially hard the cause of this game reserve and was supported in its effort by the Umtali (present-day Mutare) Publicity Association. The latter tended to stress the potential for tourists coming to Umtali after having visited the reserve. The Minister for Commerce and Transport also began to support the idea and in 1934 the Gona-Re-Zhou Game Reserve was established by Proclamation Number 3.⁸⁶ In the second half of the 1930s, the potential for tourism became an important argument and part of the discourse arguing for the creation of game reserves and national parks. In 1938 the Minister of Agriculture and Lands formulated the matter as follows and the words proved to be prophetic: 'I think that the game of the Colony in the future is going to be not only a great attraction but also a valuable asset to the Colony'.⁸⁷

⁸⁵ See for another parallel example of this process of separating nature and culture by white boundary creation, Moore's description of the process of the establishment of Nyanga National Park in the Eastern Highlands in Zimbabwe. In this example, the local chief, Tangwena, also claimed that a particular piece of land within the park boundaries, Kaerezi, was inalienable his peoples, which is underpinned with cultural practices like 'propitiating ancestral spirits, recognizing sacred features of the land scape [compare with Matopos], and enforcing "respect for the land" (*kuremekedza nyika*)' (pp. 135, Moore, D.S. (1996), *Marxism, Culture, and Political Ecology. Environmental Struggles in Zimbabwe's Eastern Highlands*. In: Peet, R. & Watts, M. (eds), *Liberation Ecologies. Environment, Development, Social Movements*, London, New York: Routledge.

⁸⁶ Pp. 76-77, Masona, T. (1987), *Colonial Game Policy: a Case Study of the Origin and Administration of Game Policy in Southern Rhodesia - 1890 to 1945*. Unpublished MA Thesis, University of Zimbabwe.

⁸⁷ Ibid: 79.

In association with emergence of game reserves and national parks came the state regulation of hunting. The general rule was that requests to kill game to feed Africans were refused.⁸⁸ Only in rare instances were these stringent laws suspended.⁸⁹ The reason for this strict state monopoly on hunting had to do with a fear for the economic depletion of wildlife resources but also, and maybe even more importantly, with the political reason that the 'Government was reluctant to pass the skill of the use of guns to Africans (...) Many of them who kept guns had old muzzle loaders bought before colonialism from Portuguese traders'. One of the main reasons economic depletion was not considered paramount in this respect is that much of the game was shot in large numbers anyway in an attempt to eradicate and control the tsetse fly. In the early 1920s the government thought that, in order to eradicate the tsetse fly, they had to accompany the process of eradicating game with intensive settlement. Europeans were sceptical about this development because they dreaded the idea that Africans would settle in areas in which the whites would prefer to settle. This led to a situation in which large areas of marginal land were completely fenced, after which the area was cleared of any game. Only after this operation had taken place were Africans allowed to move into the reserve.⁹⁰ It is therefore not astonishing that '(t)he criminal records in the Zimbabwe National Archives are full of cases of Africans imprisoned for hunting with dogs or for setting traps on European land [and that] African opposition to government policy was widespread'.⁹¹ While all this was happening private farmers were pressing for more freedom to hunt game on their own land without restrictions. In 1914 the wildlife law was amended to include the proviso that '(t)he owner of any land or the occupier thereof with the consent of the owner or any holder of land under Permit of Occupation from the British South Africa Company or any European person duly authorised by such owner or holder, may take or kill game upon such land at any time'. The game licence cost £1 and did not put any restriction on the number of game that could be killed at any time.⁹² In 1917 there could be no shadow of doubt that landowners were making the most out of their freedom to the extent of the extermination of nearly all wildlife on their land, not so much

⁸⁸ Although certainly not all the game was protected under the Ordinance. All fish, crocodiles, baboons, lions, cheetahs, leopards, wild dogs, hyenas and a few others did not fall under the Ordinance. They were considered vermin, and there was a reward for their extermination (Mutwira 1989: 253). But most of these animals are not considered edible by Africans, like impala, kudu, reedbuck and the like are. But these were all protected!

⁸⁹ Ibid: 259.

⁹⁰ Ibid: 258.

⁹¹ Ibid: 257 & 261.

⁹² Ibid: 255-256.

because of their own occasional sport hunting but by contracting private hunters to supply for structural trade in biltong and hides. This was an unfavourable development from the perspective of the preservation of species and the government tried 'to prevent people from being employed to shoot game for the purpose of trade. But (it was) maintained that certain latitude should be given to owners of cultivated land and to persons who had put up fences'.⁹³ This liberal attitude contrasted strongly with the difficulties Africans experienced in obtaining licences to hunt. One could conclude with Masona that 'the licenses and permits given to whites were so liberal that one had to be extremely extravagant to breach the law. For the non-white, the story was completely different'.⁹⁴

Acts of legitimation

The Government played an important role in legitimising the land appropriation by white settlers through the formulation and implementation of different Acts. The most important in this respect are the Land Apportionment Act of 1930, the Native Land Husbandry Act of 1951 and the Land Tenure Act of 1969. The Land Apportionment Act of 1930, which was preceded by a study of the Morris Carter Land Commission, can be seen as the legal document legitimising the land segregation at the time. All three Acts are to be regarded as an ex post formalisation of already existing practices. Before the Land Apportionment Act of 1930, Africans had already been living separately from white settlers in African reserves since 1902, a situation ratified by the Imperial Government in 1908.⁹⁵ The Act though was not about the African Reserves, but about the remaining land which was classified into four types: European Area, Native Area, Undetermined Area and the Unassigned Area. In a Native Area, other than in the Reserves, the African could buy land himself. The European Area was strictly reserved for Europeans and Africans were only allowed to occupy portions of it were they to supply labour in return. Whites, on the other hand, were allowed to settle in African areas for all matters 'deemed beneficial to the Africans', like trading, education or religious matters.⁹⁶ When land in the Undetermined Area passed into African hands, it became part of the Native Area. The Unassigned Area could be assigned to either African or white after which the land would become either part of the European or the African Area.

⁹³ Masona 1987:93.

⁹⁴ Ibid: 97.

⁹⁵ Mutambara 1982: 310.

⁹⁶ Ibid: 456.

With the legal backing of the Act, Africans were ordered to leave the European Areas for the African Reserves within a period of six years. But the Reserves could not absorb all the Africans evicted from European land. To tackle the problem the Government decided to extend the deadline from 1936 to 1941.⁹⁷ This did not help very much and many Africans began to look for other opportunities in urban and mining areas and a process of land alienation got underway, which created a willing labour pool for the sake of the capital accumulation of the few. The subsequent migrations themselves then created problems for urban and industrial areas. The implementation of the Act caused major problems not only because it was difficult to find additional land, but also it was virtually impossible to find the combination of 'suitable arable and pastoral land with permanent water for persons and livestock'.⁹⁸ Despite its problems, and every successive Rhodesian Government has had to struggle with it ever since 1930, the Act did institutionalise the division between black and white land, a heritage which still exists and is contested right up to today.⁹⁹

The Native Land Husbandry Act of 1951 was intended to be a (white) conservation measure to curb environmental problems in the Native Areas caused by overgrazing in particular and in general by African farming methods. Instead of apportioning any blame to the unequal land distribution in the territory which caused the overcrowding of the Reserves, the Rhodesian government made the Africans culpable because of their 'shifting cultivation and other practices which are not conducive to profitable farming', claiming this was the root cause of environmental degradation.¹⁰⁰ The Act contained five parts. The first formulated what were considered 'good farming methods' like the construction of contour ridges and destocking of cattle. The second dealt with grazing rights for various classes of Africans. Part Three was meant to put

⁹⁷ In that same year an entirely new Land Apportionment Act appeared containing the two Amendments to the 1930 Act in 1936 and 1937. The 1941 Act was based on the same principles as the 1930 Act. For that reason it is better concentrate on the 1930 Act in the main text. In an Amendment to the 1941 Land Apportionment Act, the category Native Land was renamed as Native Purchase Area.

⁹⁸ Mutambara 1982: 480.

⁹⁹ See for a more in detail description of the consequences of the Land Apportionment Act of 1930, *ibid*: 453-489. See also pp. 16, Maposa, I. (1995), *Land Reform in Zimbabwe. An Inquiry into the Land Acquisition Act (1992) Combined with a Case Study Analysis of the Resettlement Programme*, Harare: Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe: 'It is this piece of colonial legislation (that is, the Land Apportionment Act) that entrenched and institutionalized land alienation as we know it today'.

¹⁰⁰ Pp. 131, Moyana, H.V. (1984), *The Political Economy of Land in Zimbabwe*, Harare: Mambo Press.

an end to part-time farming, whereby Africans farmed only during the planting season after which they moved to urban areas to seek employment, only to return the next planting season. The fourth part made provision for the establishment of rural townships and businesses on the Reserve, where it was thought the landless could reside. The fifth and final part contained regulations for the compulsory use of African labour in the Reserve for the construction of roads and the like.¹⁰¹ As a whole the Act 'sought to:

- Provide for good husbandry farming and protecting of natural resources by all Africans wherever they farmed.
- Provide security of tenure to the good farmer.
- Limit the number of stock in any area to its carrying capacity and as far as practicable to relate the stock to the arable land available.
- Allocate the arable and grazing ground as far as possible in economic units.
- All land outside the arable land was held communally not individually.
- Provide for the setting aside of land for towns and business centres in the Reserves'.¹⁰²

It is hardly surprising that the land-use reorganisation under this Act led to even further insecurity of land tenure within communal areas.¹⁰³ Although the Land Husbandry Act promised security of tenure, it was tied to 'good farming practices'. Within the rigid boundaries of the Land Apportionment Act described above, the increasing population of the reserves could never live up to the requirements of 'good farming' laid down in the Native Land Husbandry Act, even had they wished. Plots were too small for sound agricultural practices and land would only be allocated to people who actually worked the land at the time of implementation. Those who were working in urban areas were left out. When they looked across their narrowly defined boundary in the reserve they could see the enormous stretches of empty and often under-utilised European land. National protest was building up and racial tension and political agitation were inexorably linked.¹⁰⁴ By 1958 49% of the land in Southern Rhodesia was alienated or reserved for Europeans, while they constituted only 7.1% of the total population.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰¹ Ibid: 134-135.

¹⁰² Ibid: 132-133.

¹⁰³ Pp. 83, Moyo, S. (1995), *The Land Question in Zimbabwe*, Harare: SAPES Books.

¹⁰⁴ Blanckenburg formulates it rather undiplomatically: 'Even the Native Land Husbandry Act of 1951 which, viewed with today's concern for environmental issues, appears future-oriented in many parts, was refused by black farmers, largely because some conservation measures, such as contour ploughing, were put through by force' (italics added), pp. 17, Von Blanckenburg, P. (1994), *Large Commercial Farmers and Land Reform in Africa. The Case of Zimbabwe*, Aldershot, Singapore: Avebury.

¹⁰⁵ Yudelman 1964: 19.

Finally the Land Tenure Act of 1969 should be noted in this context of favouring white appropriation of the (best parts of the) land. This Act replaced the Land Apportionment Act of 1931 and was primarily aimed to secure separate developments for black and white. The total acreage of land would be classified and divided in two, although the whites only constituted some 5% of the population at the time. In the 1969 Constitution of Rhodesia, European land was fixed at 18.1 million ha while the Native Areas, which were renamed Tribal Trust Lands (TTL),¹⁰⁶ contained 18.2 million ha.¹⁰⁷ 74.2% of this land was located in Natural Regions IV and V, with the poorest and most unreliable rainfall in Zimbabwe.¹⁰⁸ Prime (European) farmland was approximately 75% of Region I and 66% of Region II.¹⁰⁹

The Land Question after independence, 1980 –1992

Let us briefly return again to the case of the Matopos as described by Ranger. The examples mentioned above and the formulation of the different Acts make it abundantly clear, that in order to allow the different plans of white land use to materialise, it was necessary to move Africans around constantly to places not claimed by whites for farming or national parks. In effect black people had to be placed somewhere outside the fenced white areas, which was either white commercial land or National Park. This resulted in a structural sense of insecurity of land tenure among the Africans. The interest groups, which developed in the Matopos to protest this state of affairs, like Sofasihamba and Sofasonke, were all related to the shrines of Mwali and developed a strong social identity as their foundation, which almost seems in reverse proportional to the insecurity of the land tenure. The more insecure, the stronger their identity and sense of unity. Protests were centred on the Matopos National Park. Many of the protests were expressed by the cutting of fences and by poaching,¹¹⁰ not only these of the National Park, but also of the white farmers.¹¹¹ When protests had turned into a full-fledged Liberation Struggle in the 1970s, ‘guerrillas promised that the

¹⁰⁶ TTL was renamed Communal Land after Independence in 1980.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid: 18-19.

¹⁰⁸ Moyo 1995: 83.

¹⁰⁹ Pp. 17, Copestake, J.G. (1993), Zimbabwe. Country Overview, in: Wellard, K. & Copestake, J.G. (eds), *Non-Governmental Organizations and the State in Africa. Rethinking Roles in Sustainable Agricultural Development*, London, New York: Routledge.

¹¹⁰ Ranger 1999: 186-187, 192.

¹¹¹ Ibid: 236.

National Park fences would be torn down and the animals in the Game Park barbecued'.¹¹² In 1980 it seemed as if the fight had been won by the Africans with the help of Mwali. They said that '(t)he power to fight (...) came from the mhondoro spirits together with Mwari. That is why we won the land! The people saw it was the truth'.¹¹³

But in the Matopos National Park nothing much changed in relation to the Land Question under the new black majority government, partly as a result of the environmentalists' appeal to the international conservation and wildlife organisations in the world. When the new constitution was drawn up at Lancaster House, the British negotiators saw to it that National Parks were entrenched in it in the same sense as under the white minority regime. Another reason why time has virtually stood still is because the new government, just like the Rhodesian government, 'recognizes [only Western] property boundaries as they are written in title deeds and demarcated with beacons placed by the office of the surveyor general, not as they are remembered in oral tradition'.¹¹⁴ Even when land was taken over by the Mugabe administration because white farmers left their property, 'there was no question of allowing peasant cattle on to the land. (...) The Mugabe government was as much at loggerheads with the people of the Matopos as the Rhodesians had ever been'.¹¹⁵ In other words, strict and fixed boundaries of land-use (a white invention), National Parks and private wildlife areas in particular, demarcated by fences, remained the cutting edge.

¹¹² Ibid: 230.

¹¹³ Daneel in ibid: 241. Although the unanimity of the black people in the struggle should not be exaggerated as Kriger makes clear (Kriger, N.J. (1992), *Zimbabwe's guerrilla war. Peasant voices*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press). Much of the 'popular support' was given because the peasants were threatened and beaten up by the guerrillas in efforts to meet their logistical need and support their cause. 'Peasant voices in the Zimbabwe study support the compatibility of revolutionary success and lack of popular support (...) Peasants had their own ideas and agendas and saw the guerrillas as potential allies or susceptible to manipulation to further their own goals' (pp. 19). The coercion of that period resulted in a structural fear for the party after the victory, 'because local party representatives often continued to coerce peasants after the war' (pp. 8). With regard to the unanimity of the popular support Andersson argues for a more 'regionally differentiated view of popular protest against the colonial state and the support for this struggle in rural areas' as not all Africans lived in areas where they had direct confrontations with white settlers. Pp. 42, Andersson, J.A. (2002), *Going Places, Staying Home. Rural-Urban Connections and the Significance of Land in Buhera District, Zimbabwe*. Ph.D. Thesis Agricultural University Wageningen.

¹¹⁴ Moore 1996: 135. It should be noted that the ruling party also wanted to protect export-oriented agriculture and thus spared white farms.

¹¹⁵ Ranger 1999: 244.

National Parks and the ecology-conscious white farmers share a common interest in conservation and tourism, and display a general negligence towards local communities. 'At Shumba Shaba Lodge, for example, [Ranger formulates rather rhetorically], I picked up Valerie Gargett's *The Black Eagle*, a book which celebrates birds of prey rather than human beings'. In 1996 the Mugabe government decided on the construction of a dam in the Mtshabezi River in the eastern part of the Matopos. Ranger relates that when he visited the dam site in August 1996 'it soon became clear that the technological project of the dam had overridden local cultural considerations'.¹¹⁶ White colonial and black governments in Southern Rhodesia, respectively Zimbabwe, seem to share sudden characteristics. Ranger ends his study by wryly noting that in conservation circles nowadays it is increasingly recognised that communities should be included in conservation efforts. This also holds true for the Matopos National Park. 'The Park's survival in the present climate depends upon the Communal people obtaining substantial benefit from its existence'. To stress the ideological shift in the conservation scene Ranger calls the spokespersons of this line of thinking 'born-again' environmentalists.¹¹⁷ The first half of the 1990s is where Ranger's book ends and where I pick it up with my case study on the process of the SVC in trying to initiate a form of organisational co-operation with its communal neighbours. Will history repeat itself, like the Zimbabwean government repeated aspects of Rhodesian government? Or will things turn out differently this time? Is government's role different in terms of compassion, empathy or any other way towards 'its own' people from that of the much demonised colonial government? One must not forget, following Ranger's argument above, 'that the current government, when it was a guerrilla movement, opposed the wildlife industry as a whole'.¹¹⁸

This section shows inevitably that the issue of land has been very important in the relations between black and white in Zimbabwe ever since the Rudd Concession. Protests from Africans about the way land was handled and used by the white settlers in first instance and later the colonial government was present all along. The struggle for land did not commence with the Liberation Struggle in the 1970s but it was one of its main themes because it has been the main theme in black and white relations dating back to their very first contacts. Locally, as I showed earlier, war raged over this issue before the formal start of the Liberation Struggle. At the national level the 1970s are reserved for the

¹¹⁶ Ibid: 275.

¹¹⁷ Both quotations *ibid*: 286.

¹¹⁸ Pp. 227, Hill, K.A. (1994), Politicians, Farmers, and Ecologists. Commercial Wildlife Ranching and the Politics of Land in Zimbabwe, *Journal of African and Asian Studies* XXIX.

‘real’ political struggle over land. When Southern Rhodesia turned into present-day Zimbabwe in 1980, expectations were sky-high that at long last the land issue would be settled in a just way, restoring the reciprocal relationship between the soil and the people. But as Ranger’s analysis of the Matopos Hills illustrates nothing much happened. It would appear that the reverse was the case. It seemed as if nothing had changed, only the colour of the government. Especially in relation to wilderness areas like national parks and game reserves, the government prolonged a policy in which people were not allowed to live within the boundaries of the park. A chief in the Eastern Highlands of Zimbabwe, cited by Moore, puts it as follows: ‘The National Park wants to burn huts in my area. We thought the whites had returned’.¹¹⁹ Especially in relation to this type of land use, land remained a stumbling block between African peasants and government.

The post-independence government inherited a land tenure system which basically comprised three forms of tenure.¹²⁰

- National (or State) land, which comprised mainly national parks and state forests;
- Communal Areas (CA), which were formerly known as the Tribal Trust Lands (TTLs);
- Commercial land, which consists of large-scale commercial farms, mainly white, and small-scale commercial farms, mainly black and formerly known as African Purchase Area.

Considering that land was the major motivation for the Liberation Struggle, not much seemed to happen in this field after Independence in the 1980s. Despite the rhetoric not as many people as expected were resettled and not that much land was expropriated from the former colonisers. This can be partly attributed to the Lancaster House Agreement which marked the transition from colonial domination to political independence. The Agreement, which would be valid for a period of ten years, till 1990, ‘tended to reflect a result less than that which might have been expected of a national liberation movement had it won an outright victory on the battlefield’.¹²¹ ‘Zimbabwe’s Lancaster House Constitution resulted in a major compromise by the liberation movements’.¹²² The Lancaster House Agreement of 1979 contained two important stipulations which hindered a radical land programme after 1980. The first was that ‘all land

¹¹⁹ Moore 1996: 135.

¹²⁰ Moyo 1991: 57.

¹²¹ Pp. 2, Mandaza, I. (1986), Introduction: the Political Economy of Transition, In: CODESRIA, *Zimbabwe: the Political Economy of Transition 1980-1986*, Dakar: CODESRIA.

¹²² Moyo 1995: 104.

acquired by the government be purchased on a 'willing seller-willing buyer' basis, and secondly that owners of any land seized by the government must be compensated in foreign currency'.¹²³ The Agreement signified the political strength of the white commercial farmers, which was to a large extent built on their economic power vested in freehold land tenure. In 1991 '(t)he large commercial farm sub sector contributes to the market delivery of maize, cotton and groundnut about 40%, to that of wheat, soybean, tobacco, coffee, tea and sugar cane 90 to 100%. 80% of all commercial beef sales through the Cold Storage Commission [CSC] and virtually all milk deliveries to the Dairy Marketing Board originate from large commercial farms'.¹²⁴ But the position of whites in Zimbabwe was also secured through the Lancaster House Agreement because of more geo-political considerations. The United States especially was afraid that Zimbabwe would be driven into the arms of the Russians. For that reason Kissinger insisted that Zimbabwe should be (financially) assisted by the USA and UK in its transition to black majority rule, on the promise that they would not expel the white minority.¹²⁵ The 'Kissinger Billion' was to '(...) provide for Governmental purchase and redistribution of large white owned holdings of fertile farmland, an essential component of national reconstruction in a country where the white, 4% of the population, occupied most of the commercially viable land'.¹²⁶ 'Thus the Lancaster House constitution was instrumental in restraining land acquisition throughout the decade',¹²⁷ not only constitutionally but also financially.

¹²³ Pp. 42, Herbst, J. (1990), *State Politics in Zimbabwe*, Los Angeles: University of California Press. The specific restrictions on land reform were written down in Chapter 3 of Zimbabwe's constitution, Section 16, Moyo 1995: 107.

¹²⁴ Blanckenburg 1994: 27.

¹²⁵ At one stage there seemed to have been a plan to evacuate all Rhodesians to Bolivia, Moyo 1995: 106.

¹²⁶ Rossiter in Moyo 1995: 106. The actual name was the Zimbabwe Development Fund (ZDF) into which Britain agreed in the mid-1970s to put in £ 75 million. The fund was meant to buy out white farmers. This carrot was put on the negotiating table. When at last though, in 1979, the different parties sat down at Lancaster House to formulate the Constitution of the new Zimbabwe, there had been a change of Government in Britain, with Mrs. Thatcher now Prime Minister. She 'dangled' the ZDF before the noses to coax a favourable outcome in the negotiations, but when this was reached according to Britain, the Fund was shelved. Zimbabwe objected and accused Britain of chicanery but to no avail (pp. 165-166, Palmer, R. (1990), *Land Reform in Zimbabwe, 1980-1990*, *African Affairs*, 89 (355): 163-181).

¹²⁷ Moyo 1995: 109.

Despite these institutional constraints the new government was undeterred and set up an ambitious resettlement programme.¹²⁸ It developed three resettlement models:

- Model A: individual smallholder arable production with communal grazing;
- Model B: cooperative farming with communal living;
- Model C: individual smallholder production with a centralized estate¹²⁹.

Its first target in 1980 was set to resettle 18,000 families on 1.1 million ha. of acquired commercial farmland over a period of three years. In 1982 a more ambitious figure was laid down in the Transitional National Development Plan of 162,000 families on 9 million ha. of land. This adjusted, optimistic figure was probably derived from the fact that in the first years after Independence the government was able to buy all the whole white farms which had been abandoned during the war or were sold just before or after Independence at very low prices, by people fearing the policies of the new black government.¹³⁰ The new target implied that commercial farmers would have to give up 60 % of their total land of 15 million ha. but in 1985 only 36,000 people were resettled on 2.46 million ha. of land. In 1991, some 53,000 people were allocated land and the government had acquired 3.3 million ha. 'The pace of land acquisition increased from year to year, whereas that of the actual resettlement decreased'.¹³¹ In the period between 1981 and 1991 a yearly average of 4800 settlers started farming, which is only about one-third of the target of 15,000 a year, set in 1985.¹³² In 1988 the Government reduced its land acquisition budget by more than 50%, from Z\$ 11 million in 1987 to Z\$ 4 million in 1988.¹³³ At the end of the 1980s the whole land resettlement programme had lost much of its reputation. The principal reason was that, although the Government acquired

¹²⁸ Although 'the government has never formally computed the actual demand for land, in terms of numbers of households requiring land for different uses, including residential, arable or grazing lands, in different regions of the country' (ibid: 119). The fact was that in 1980 42% of the country belonged to 6000 white farmers (Palmer 1990: 169).

¹²⁹ Blanckenburg 1994: 31. According to Blanckenburg Model A has been the most successful. Until 1991, 92% (44,000) of the 48,000 settlers' families were Model A settlers (ibid: 31).

¹³⁰ Palmer 1990: 169-170. In the period 1980-1983 the Government was able to buy 2,063,317 ha of land for an average price of Z\$ 20.02 per ha. In the period from 1983-1988 they bought only 474,945 ha for an average price per ha of Z\$48.18.

¹³¹ Blanckenburg 1994: 30.

¹³² Ibid: 30-31. Moyo's (1995: 118) figures and years differ slightly from Blanckenburg's. Moyo argues that in 1981, 18,000 people were scheduled to be resettled on 1.5 million ha. over five years. In 1983 this was scaled up to 165,000 people on 5 million ha.

¹³³ Moyo 1995: 116.

land and resettled people, it did not give the resettled farmers any security of tenure. The state retained ownership of the land and controlled it by monopolising the issuing of permits for usufruct.¹³⁴ Actually, the 'resettlement areas were often characterized by a degree of bureaucratic control which was all too reminiscent of past colonial schemes'.¹³⁵ In 1990 the Lancaster House Agreement expired and a time, untrammelled by the constraints and excuses of the Agreement, could begin. The Government introduced a new land policy programme in which they adopted the concept of land designation. Land could now be acquired by the government on a compulsory basis. The programme was aimed especially at Regions II and III, which cover the better soils and climatic conditions and in which large-scale commercial farmers have an over proportional share.¹³⁶ A complication which mired the prospects in comparison with the situation in 1980 was that now several black powerful politicians, government ministers, had become large landowners in their own right and had joined the powerful representative body of the commercial farmers, the Commercial Farmers Union (CFU).¹³⁷ 'For some members of government, indeed, land redistribution might now signify taking land from themselves, rather than giving it to peasants'.¹³⁸

New attempt to redistribute the land, 1992-1998

By now it will have become incontrovertible that the land issue has been a dominating theme under the Rhodesian government and that it remained one of the most important issues after Independence. At first, ambitions had to be restrained for institutional reasons like the Lancaster House Agreement and financial considerations following it. Hopes were high that after the Lancaster House Agreement expired in 1990, new opportunities could be created to try and attempt to redistribute the land in Zimbabwe more equally. Whatever the outcome realisation will also have dawned that not all the blame can be put on the constraints of the Lancaster House Agreement. Land resettlement was just not a first priority on the national political agenda. One possible explanation for this state of affairs was, at least till February 2000 when Mugabe lost the crucial

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ Palmer 1990: 172.

¹³⁶ Blanckenburg 1994: 34.

¹³⁷ The CFU was established in 1942 as the Rhodesia National Farmers Union (Hill 1994: 232).

¹³⁸ Palmer 1990: 175.

referendum, that the commercial landowners (majority white¹³⁹) contribute considerably to export earnings¹⁴⁰ and were consequently major taxpayers, which made the Zimbabwean government in the earlier years reluctant to pursue their course too radically in terms of implementation and execution. (Political rhetoric about the issue is, as we have seen, another matter all together.) In 1983 the budget of the Minister of Lands was cut by 53%, which was the largest cut for any ministry that year. In 1986 the Ministry of Lands was abolished as a separate ministry and put under the Ministry of Agriculture. Only around general elections did the issue of land redistribution resurface. In 1985, there was a weak attempt to revive the land issue on the national agenda through the formulation of the Land Acquisition Act which stated that all land in Zimbabwe put up for sale should be offered to the Government first. Only after it had refused the offer could any other interested buyer be approached. Furthermore the Act stated that the government could seize derelict land and, importantly for the 1990s, identify under-used land for involuntary appropriation.¹⁴¹ This latter aspect proved to be the upbeat for the controversial Land Acquisition Act of 1992.

The Act is presented as ‘An Act to empower the President and other authorities to acquire land and other immovable property compulsorily in certain circumstances; to provide for the designation of rural land; to provide for the establishment of the Derelict Land Board; to provide for the declaration and acquisition of derelict land; and to provide for matters connected with or incidental to the foregoing’.¹⁴² It is the part on ‘compulsorily designation’ especially that is important in the context of my argument, because conservancies are co-operative structures between several landowners. In the case of the SVC, twenty-four landowners all together. This means that if one or more properties were designated, this would have implications for the whole SVC and not only for the individual landowner. In Part II, Section 3 of the Act the acquisition of land is described as follows, which seems like a mirror image of Rhodesian formulations on the matter: ‘Subject to this Act, the President may compulsorily acquire

- (a) any land, where the acquisition is reasonably necessary in the interest of defence, public safety, public order, public morality, public health, town

¹³⁹ In 1992, according to Blanckenburg (1994: 21), 400 out of 4500 commercial farmers (that is, 9%) were ‘indigenous farmers’.

¹⁴⁰ 50% in a normal year when there is no drought. Tobacco is Zimbabwe’s main export product (ibid: 27-28).

¹⁴¹ Maposa 1994: 19-20.

¹⁴² Pp. 450, Land Acquisition Act, Chapter 20:10 (1996, revised edition).

- and country planning or the utilization of that or any other property for a purpose beneficial to the public generally or to any section of the public;
- (b) any rural land, where the acquisition is reasonably necessary for the utilization of that or any other land –
- (i) for settlement for agricultural or other purposes; or
 - (ii) for purposes of land reorganization, forestry, environmental conservation or the utilization of wildlife or other natural resources; or
 - (iii) for the relocation of persons dispossessed in consequence of the utilization of land for a purpose referred to in subparagraphs (i) and (ii).¹⁴³

On top of that the Act ‘provides for the following [if compared with the Lancaster House Agreement]:

1. Payment for land acquired is to be in local currency only.
2. Government can now compulsorily acquire land which is being fully utilized whereas before in the amendment of the Zimbabwe Constitution in 1990 only ‘under utilized’ land could be acquired.
3. Government can now pay a ‘fair price’ within a ‘reasonable period’ instead of ‘adequate’ compensation ‘promptly’.
4. Compensation is to be assessed by a ‘compensation committee’ made up of six people.
5. Where there is a dispute as to the amount of compensation, the parties can appeal to the Administrative Court for arbitration. However, the Administrative Court may not set aside an assessment on the basis that compensation is not ‘fair’.
6. It does away with the willing-seller/willing-buyer principle. (...)’.¹⁴⁴

The long and short of it is that it seems anything could happen. The Act makes provisions for (nearly) every possible acquisition of land without allowing the proper possibility of appealing to any court. This particular aspect of the Act comes to the fore when the Land Acquisition Act is related to the Constitutional Amendment no. 11, 1990. This amendment was thought necessary after the Lancaster House Constitution had expired and removed the restrictions imposed on the government under Section 16 of that Constitution¹⁴⁵ especially in relation to the possibility of appeal over matters of ‘fair compensation’. According to Maposa, the main contention in amendment No. 11 in relation to the above mentioned points is that:

¹⁴³ Ibid: 451.

¹⁴⁴ Maposa 1994: 73.

¹⁴⁵ Pp. 48, Stiles, M. (July 1994), Zimbabwe’s Land Reform: What’s Goin’ on? *Southern Africa Report*, pp. 48-51.

1. 'Any land can be acquired ... even if it is properly utilized.
2. The legislator can set right provisions for assessing compensation and these will be applied without regard to the particular circumstances of each case.
3. The removal of the right of the court to assess whether the compensation is fair. (...)' ¹⁴⁶

His analysis brings Maposa to the conclusion that the Land Acquisition Act (1992) is 'bad law' and a 'gross violation of individual rights', as it denies people 'the most basic natural principle of law', to recourse to courts of appeal if disputes over the fairness over matters of compensation should arise.¹⁴⁷

Although the Act generated a maelstrom of political turmoil, strangely enough not much happened afterwards in terms of grand-scale acquisitions. In the period between 1992 and 1997 only some hundred farms have been designated, including some wildlife ranches.¹⁴⁸ Some of the farmers complained that they had not received a fair compensation in terms of the real market value of the property.¹⁴⁹ Nevertheless, the fact is that it made perfectly clear that the Land Acquisition Act of 1992 was a major threat to wildlife ranches in general and conservancies in particular, because the government could 'simply step in and seize any farm it wishes'.¹⁵⁰ Conservancies might expect to be specifically targeted in this operation because the Ministry of Lands claimed that 'some farmers were diversifying into game ranching to escape designation. Presumably, the Ministry of Lands thinks that farmers perceive they will be 'politically covered' by the Department of National Parks, whose conservation philosophy encourages private wildlife ranching'.¹⁵¹ In the political rhetoric surrounding the Act, another edge became paramount (again): the racial aspect of the Land Question: 'there is a tendency on both sides to see the issue in, quite literally, black and white terms'.¹⁵² It has been this theme which has mainly dominated the popular discussion about the land designation process since 1992. This is of particular relevance to my argument. Although the discussion is a gross simplification of the process¹⁵³ in which many more factors and processes are at

¹⁴⁶ Maposa 1994: 73.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid: 73-74.

¹⁴⁸ Hill 1994: 234.

¹⁴⁹ Editorial, Zimbabwe: Government to Seize White Farms, *Southscan*, 12 (1): 8.

¹⁵⁰ Hill 1994: 241.

¹⁵¹ Ibid: 241. I shall come back to this specific aspect of the political battle over land in the next chapters, because the relation between the SVC and the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management (DNPWLM) is and has indeed been of particular importance to the development of the SVC.

¹⁵² Stiles 1994: 51.

¹⁵³ To mention just one aspect of the increasing complexity of the land issue: after Independence a new black elite emerged which 'acquired the same vested interests

play and intermingle, it does make clear that in terms of identification and identity construction, the colour divide is and remains a powerful force, uniting the respective sides and at the same time separating the two parties on either side of the racial divide. A division which is symbolically demarcated by the colour of skin, but physically by fences separating commercial and communal land. Despite its racial overtones, care has to be observed not to equate the division immediately with blatant racism on each side. One of the consequences of the division on either side of the fence was that it ‘perpetuate[d] the social distance between the races, thereby limiting the opportunities for Whites to understand both the ambition for advancement and the fact of its occurring’.¹⁵⁴ It is to be expected that from their side of the fence the whites could only imagine how the black people were living, rather than by knowing it from interaction or being among them. The only blacks with whom they actually interacted (that is, giving orders) were their servants or employees. According to Godwin and Hancock, there was also no genuine interest in knowing more about the black people. ‘Consequently, social distance bred and fed upon dislike and ignorance, and encouraged a polite amusement or bewilderment’.¹⁵⁵ The things they did know only reinforced the stereotyped images of the black people. Everybody could reproduce and reiterate the stories that ‘THEY smelt’, were too noisy, demanded hand-outs, breast-fed their children in public, created long queues in the Post Office, never said ‘Thank You’, or never showed any practical gratitude’.¹⁵⁶ Godwin and Hancock therefore come to the conclusion that ‘ignorance born of distance rather than of an innate racism or idiocy – was [a] mark of Rhodesian-ness’.¹⁵⁷ Nevertheless Godwin and Hancock note that the discourse on race was the bonding factor for Rhodesians and used to invent an identity and a tradition.¹⁵⁸ Despite their discourse there was a widely-held and sincere belief, that ‘most Africans benefited from, and even preferred, the forms

as the old [white] elite (stripped of its political relevance but still powerful economically’, pp. 27, King, A. (July 1997), *Settler Society in Perspective, The Zimbabwean Review*. The vested interests of the black elite seem to be have grown even more in the land designation programmes following the lost referendum in February 2000.

¹⁵⁴ Pp. 47, Godwin, P. & Hancock, I. (1997)[1993], *Rhodesians never Die*. *The Impact of War and Political Change on White Rhodesia, c. 1970-1980*, Harare: Baobab Books.

¹⁵⁵ Godwin & Hancock 1997: 48.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid: 48.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid: 49.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid: 7 & 14.

of segregation and discrimination which did exist; and that Rhodesia continued to have the best race relations in the world'.¹⁵⁹

In November 1997 the Zimbabwean government took a next step towards the realisation of (some of) its rhetoric about land redistribution based on the Land Acquisition Act of 1992. It published a list of 1471 farms to be designated in the Government Gazette on 28 November 1997. The government used five criteria to identify land for designation: if it was derelict, under-utilised, multiple-owned, foreign-owned, or contiguous to communal areas.¹⁶⁰ Mugabe's step was hailed by some and abhorred by others. At a ZANU PF ceremony to celebrate National Unity Day in Harare Province in November of that same year, the speech which was published in *The Herald* said: 'On Land Acquisition: We hail the Patriotic stance taken by His Excellency the President and his People's Government on the land designation and acquisition programme. We must never listen to the shrieks and cries of settler white farmers and their lame excuses for hanging on to the best land whilst our heroic people are packed like live termites in the tribal trust lands-poverty zones (...) Instead of extending a reciprocal hand of reconciliation our white farmers are trying to amputate the extended hand by: (...) Trying to turn the whole land issue into a black and white confrontation. We urge the Government never ever, to spare the so-called conservancies which are just white enclaves in this exercise which must be ongoing'.¹⁶¹ Which directly links this political exercise to the (further) development of private wildlife conservancies in Zimbabwe. Mugabe added to the upheaval in his speech to the Fourth National People's Conference, which took place on 5 December 1997 in Mutare, by stating that '(t)he recent designation of 1488 [?] farms on some 4 million hectares of land is only the beginning of a process that is meant to completely reverse an unacceptable colonial legacy'.¹⁶²

In the SVC, three properties were to be found on the list.¹⁶³ During the weeks and months following the publication of *The List*, all stakeholders in the process gave vent to strong opinions about the subject which were reflected in the news-

¹⁵⁹ Ibid: 307.

¹⁶⁰ *The Farmer*, 17 September 1998, Criteria for identifying land. For the SVC, as I shall show in the next chapters, it was important that later on different categories of farms were again delisted, including those which were foreign-owned. It was decided that foreign-owned farms which were bought through the Zimbabwean Investment Centre and had an according permit would be delisted (*The Herald*, 6 March 1998, Five categories of farms to be delisted: Kangai).

¹⁶¹ *The Herald*, 22 November 1997, ZANU PF Harare Province Hails National Unity Day.

¹⁶² *The Herald*, 6 December 1997, More Farms to be Designated: Mugabe.

¹⁶³ *The Farmer*, 4 December 1997, numbers 45, 46 and 1102, referring respectively to Makore, Humani and Mkwazine Ranches.

papers. The government, headed by Mugabe, reiterated time and again that there was no question of going back on anything and that the time for negotiation was over,¹⁶⁴ especially claiming sovereignty *vis à vis* Great Britain.¹⁶⁵ Individual farmers and their powerful representative body, the CFU, tried to persuade the government to come back to the negotiating table and try to solve the land issue in a more combined effort.¹⁶⁶ Wildlife ranches, including private wildlife conservancies are also part of the CFU, through the Wildlife Producers Association (WPA) which had over 400 members in 1994.¹⁶⁷ In Zimbabwe, unlike in South Africa, there is no separate representative interest association for conservancies. The economically important subgroup of tobacco farmers also reacted strongly to the plans of the government by stating that the tobacco farms included in the list¹⁶⁸ did not fall under the official criteria of being under-utilised or being unproductive land.¹⁶⁹ The commercial farmers who were on the list, were given thirty days to appeal against their compulsory acquisition.¹⁷⁰ By the end of 1997, the Land Secretary, Dr Takavarasha, indicated that of the 1471

¹⁶⁴ *The Farmer*, 11 December 1997, Mugabe Says Courts Have no Role in Land Reform; *The Herald*, 16 December 1997, State Won't Go Back to Negotiating Table on Land Issue: Mugabe; *The Herald*, 12 January 1998, Mugabe Dismisses Criticism against Land Reform; *The Herald*, 21 January 1998, Land reform to go ahead.

¹⁶⁵ During a German tour in March 1998, Mugabe said in a speech to German captains of industry 'that Britain was against the land reform programme because it wanted to perpetuate its colonisation of Zimbabwe which he said would not be allowed to happen', *The Herald*, 25 March 1998, President Defiant: Land Issue Goes Ahead.

¹⁶⁶ *The Herald*, 29 November 1997, Designated Commercial Farms List Rile CFU Boss; *Zimbabwe Independent*, 5 December, Smith [former Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia] Dismisses Mugabe's Land Grab as Politicking; *Sunday Mail*, 14 December 1997, Campaign to Fight Land Acquisition; *The Farmer*, 5 February 1998, CFU unveils plan to implement successful land reform.

¹⁶⁷ Hill 1994: 226.

¹⁶⁸ *The Herald*, 24 December 1997, Farm Designation Upsets Top Tobacco Grower, 'He [Mr. Webb, President of the Zimbabwe Tobacco Association, ZTA] said at least 775 of the more than 1400 farms that were designated were in the tobacco-growing belt while about 550 have been put on the compulsory acquisition list'. There are an estimated 1700 large scale commercial tobacco growers in Zimbabwe. It was estimated that the tobacco farmer contributed some 25% to the forex earning of Zimbabwe, being US\$ 2,5 billion. If half of their land would be designated, so would their contribution to the forex earnings. This would affect 'the already shaky investor confidence in Zimbabwe', *Zimbabwe Independent*, 9 January 1998, Farm Designation to Cost Foreign Currency.

¹⁶⁹ *The Herald*, 5 December 1997, Land Acquisition 'Anomalies' Worries ZTA.

¹⁷⁰ *Weekly Telegraph*, 10-16 December 1997, Zimbabwe Farmers Told to Move out.

farmers on The List only sixty did not appeal against their acquisition.¹⁷¹ One interesting detail in relation to the racial divide in land tenure is that of the 1471 farms on the list, it was said that 240 belonged to indigenous (that is, black) commercial farmers. Their representative organisation, the Indigenous Commercial Farmers Union (ICFU), said that 'it failed to understand why farms owned by black farmers were designated alongside those belonging to white commercial farmers'.¹⁷² The President of the ICFU, Mr. Nherera said that, even if these black farmers were under-utilising their land, it was because they were not given the same support as white farmers. If they were given similar support, he added, they would have even surpassed the productive levels of the white commercial farmers.¹⁷³ Right from the start the international community, crucial to financing the programme, failed to respond favourably to the plans. The rich donor countries especially warned Mugabe to handle the land acquisition process with the utmost transparency, a characteristic which they thought had been lacking so far.¹⁷⁴

The hopes of the black Zimbabweans were raised to a considerable height by political rhetoric and expectations that matters would turn out for the better in terms of land distribution in 1998 were paramount. Some villagers even seemed to feel that at long last it would become pay-back time and a moment to settle scores with neighbouring (white), large-scale commercial farmers. The rhetorical Sunday Mail paid special attention to the relationship between landowner and the neighbouring communities in the context of the designation programme. This relationship became very important for the landowner because, if the surrounding communities were to testify that they benefited from the economic

¹⁷¹ *The Farmer*, 8 January 1998, Report on Compulsory Acquisition Objections Complete this Week, Says Top Ministry Official.

¹⁷² *The Herald*, 19 December 1997, Don't Designate Farms Belonging to Blacks.

¹⁷³ *The Herald*, 23 December 1997, You Should Have Us in Land Acquisition: ICFU. In March 1998 *Minister of Lands*, Kumbira Kangai, declared five categories of farms to be delisted, amongst which 'farms owned by indigenous persons' (*The Herald*, 6 March 1998, Five Categories of Farms to be Delisted: Kangai).

¹⁷⁴ *Zimbabwe Independent*, 28 November 1997, Danish Government Calls for Transparency; *Zimbabwe Independent*, 5 December 1997, South Africa Chides Zimbabwe on Land Issue; *Zimbabwe Independent*, 9 January 1998, Zimbabwe Land Acquisition Contravenes Accord: UK; *Zimbabwe Independent*, 16 January 1998, EU Stresses Openness in Land Redistribution. The tone of an important foreign newspaper like the *New York Times* was unvarnishedly cynical: 'No farm belonging to a high Government official is on the list. But a white-owned one near Mr. Mugabe's country estate, -a farm he has already tried to seize three times-, is' (*New York Times*, 24 December 1997, A Showdown for Zimbabwe on Unfinished Issue of Land). Only France took a somewhat different stance, *The Herald*, 16 March 1998, Land Reform an Internal Matter, Says France.

activities on the farm, that would make a strong point in an appeal against the designation and a pro for delisting.¹⁷⁵ In two consecutive weeks it ran an article on the subject. The first article emphasised the spiritual relationship between Africans and their land, which made them wary of co-operating with the landowner. In the second article, it was the particular relationship between landowner and community that stood in the way of co-operation. I shall quote both articles at length to allow the tone of the article speak for itself.¹⁷⁶ ‘Scores of commercial farmers in Mashonaland Central whose farms were listed for designation are now frantically lobbying for support from chiefs in a desperate and rare attempt to have their farms exempted from designation. The farmers (...) reportedly spent the whole week driving up and down to Chiefs’ homesteads presenting their grievances and appeals against the stand taken by the government. Chief Coria Chiweshe said: ‘They [that is, white farmers] have become so generous. One of them approached me and said I should, at the party congress in Mutare, tell the ruling party that he is a good man who lives well with the local communities. But he is forgetting that he is the same man who has punished my people for a long time’. ‘Villagers have had their livestock confiscated and asked to pay a fine for letting their cattle stray on his farm. He has been refusing the locals to fetch water or fish in the dam on his farm and even had some of the villagers arrested and fined for doing so. Now he needs my support. I cannot be seen betraying my people. We want land and this is what people have been waiting for’. Chief Anke Chitsinede Negomo said the Chiweshe area had been robbed of land which belonged to the highly respected spirit medium of this country, Mbuya Nehanda, when whites arrived in Zimbabwe’.¹⁷⁷ The second article, one week later went on in the same tone: ‘Some white commercial farmers whose farms had been listed for designation in Hurungwe were reportedly (...) lobbying for support from neighbouring villages to have the decision reversed, according to the Zimbabwe Information Service [ZIS]. Villagers of Kasimure in Hurungwe told ZIS that a farmer from Kuti

¹⁷⁵ The tone of the articles is particularly relevant in relation to the stance taken by the government towards conservancies where the stress is put on the stipulation that they are only allowed to exist, despite the fact that they have no statutory definition, if they establish a ‘formal and meaningful relationship’ with the neighbouring communities.

¹⁷⁶ It should be noted of course that these are newspaper stories of a very government-minded newspaper in Zimbabwe. As in all newspapers we can never be completely sure about the authenticity or level of verification of the words or issues mentioned in the articles. But in terms of indicating the general politicised atmosphere surrounding these issues the articles are good examples.

¹⁷⁷ *Sunday Mail*, 7 December 1997, Farmers in Desperate Attempt to Have Farms Exempted from Acquisition.

Estates in Lomagundi district had approached them with papers to sign objecting to the Government's intention to acquire his three farms. The villagers, whose relation with the farmer have always been tense, refused to cooperate, reminding him of longstanding disputes. The villagers refuted the contents of the letter of appeal which said they enjoyed benefits from the farmer. Other farmers were allegedly forcing their employees to sign their letters of appeal against, despite deplorable living conditions they were being subjected to by the farmer, including poor housing and wages'.¹⁷⁸

More than half a year later the same newspaper came up with yet another story in which neighbourly relations between landowner and communities were put forward as hidden but extremely powerful criteria for designation; essential even if the official criteria did not readily apply. 'Member of Parliament for Beitbridge, Cde Kembo Mohadi has urged the Government to acquire all farms it recently delisted in the district before disgruntled landless peasants illegally resettle themselves on the properties. (...) He said of grave concern was the fact that most of the delisted farms belong to cruel landlords who had over the years impounded livestock from neighbouring communal areas for straying into their land, demanding heavy fines. (...) 'One of them for instance is impounding livestock from the communal areas and charging a fine of [Z]\$85. This man is a bad neighbour. How can they delist his farm?' asked Cde Mohadi'.¹⁷⁹ It was these kinds of stories which led the *Zimbabwe Independent* to conclude that '(t)he perception remained that the government had used land to punish its critics, both black and white, and to reward its favourites'.¹⁸⁰ The articles are exactly in line with the political rhetoric of Mugabe who 'raised the peasants' expectations with his speeches on the land issue. During his country-wide tour [in 1997 HW], he assured peasants he would have acquired the land by last December [1997 HW] and resettlement would have gathered momentum by the beginning of [1998' HW].¹⁸¹ The racial card was skilfully manipulated by Mugabe who 'has made it clear that Britain should take responsibility for compensating 'its white children''.¹⁸² In Mugabe's view, whites will obviously never be considered Zimbabweans.

Oral rhetoric was no problem, but the government found its hands tied as far as words and statements went in 1998 and it was hamstrung by financial

¹⁷⁸ *Sunday Mail*, 14 December 1997, Campaign to Fight Land Acquisition.

¹⁷⁹ *Sunday Mail*, 5 July 1998, MP not Amused with Delisting of Farms.

¹⁸⁰ *Zimbabwe Independent*, 21-27 November 1997, Designated Farms List Out.

¹⁸¹ *Zimbabwe Independent*, 18 September 1998, Donors Demand Transparency Before Funding.

¹⁸² *Zimbabwe Independent*, 9 January 1998, Zimbabwe Land Acquisition Contravenes Accord: UK.

constraints. The Zimbabwean Government had already found itself in gigantic financial difficulties, quite apart from the complicated land issue. In the first place these stemmed from promises Mugabe had to make in 1997 to war veterans after violent demonstrations in which they demanded financial compensation and appreciation for their contributions to the Liberation Struggle, which resulted in 'them receiving Z\$ 50,000 each in gratuities and Z\$ 2000 a month each as pension'. Over and above this 'they were promised 20% of the acquired farms'.¹⁸³ A second reason for Zimbabwe's financial problems was because of his involvement in the war in former Zaire, now the Republique Democratique de Congo (RDC), probably, and maybe only, for reasons of personal gain and to help a nephew with commercial interests in the Congo as some suggest. This involvement is costing him an estimated US\$ 400,000 a day.¹⁸⁴ A cartoon in the Zimbabwe Independent summarised the financial situation in Zimbabwe as shown in Figure 2.¹⁸⁵

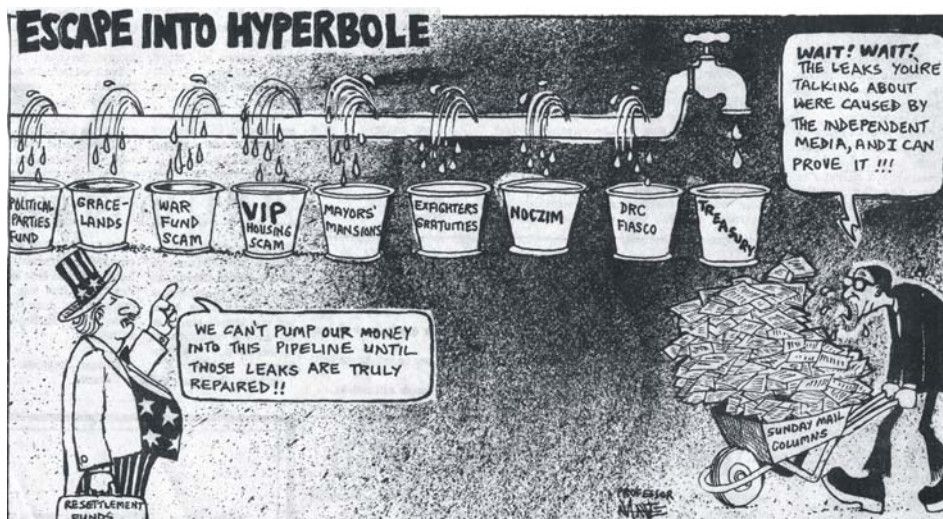


Figure 2 Cartoon about financial situation Zimbabwe
(Source: see footnote 185)

¹⁸³ Pp. 38, *African Business*, May 1998, Mugabe Sinking in Land Quagmire.

¹⁸⁴ Pp. 14, *New African*, October 1998, An African World War?

¹⁸⁵ *Zimbabwe Independent*, 18 September 1998.

The Zimbabwean economy was already not in good shape and had been depreciating for years, but it finally crashed as a result of these combined problems in the second half of 1998.¹⁸⁶

In this context the Mugabe government was not in a position to do anything to materialise the high expectations raised by the land designation and resettlement programme. This meant that despite the fact that he boasted of his independence of former colonisers and international public opinion, he had to come back to both of them for financial support. In order to finance the programme, the government organised a donor conference in September 1998. But before the conference began, communal farmers in Svosve seemed to become so impatient that they started to invade private farms before official designation procedures had taken their course.¹⁸⁷ Racial overtones were never far away as a quote from an article in *The Herald* makes clear: 'About 70 angry villagers from Svosve communal lands in Marondera, Mashonaland East, stormed nearby Topsland Farm on Thursday protesting against racial utterances by the owner, who alleged that her sheep had died because some 'Africans from surrounding villages and compounds' were relieving themselves on the farm (...). She made the derogatory comments at her farm last week when she was answering the Governor of Mashonaland, Cde David Karimanzira, and other delegates to the recent international donors' conference on land (...)'.¹⁸⁸ The example from Svosve was soon followed by other farmers in other parts of Zimbabwe, including properties in the SVC, especially Angus Ranch, Mukazi and Mukwazi Ranch.¹⁸⁹ In the Svosve case, President Mugabe ordered the protesters to move, which they refused to do, unless the government speeded up the resettlement programme and resettled them on the invaded farms later. Mugabe glibly made promises and at the same time ruled out the use of police force against the invaders.¹⁹⁰ This implied that the police would not remove the invading people from private property or prosecute them, although they were openly and intentionally trespassing. Maybe Mugabe thought that 'impatient' black farmers would put the donors under pressure to support the Zimbabwean land programme financially. There were even rumours that the farm invasions

¹⁸⁶ Pp. 27, *New African*, October 1998, Zimbabwe Economy on the Rocks.

¹⁸⁷ *The Herald*, 11 June 1998, Peasants Get Impatient over Land.

¹⁸⁸ *The Herald*, 19 September 1998, Farmer's Racist Remarks Rile Svosve Villagers.

¹⁸⁹ *The Herald*, 4 July 1998, War Vets in Masvingo Occupy Delisted Farm; *The Farmer*, 16 July 1998, Another Attempt at Illegal Resettlement; *The Herald*, 12 August 1998, Another Farm Invaded; *The Farmer*, 22 October 1998, Walk-Ons.

¹⁹⁰ Pp. 24 *New African*, October 1998, Land War.

had been orchestrated by the government itself for this reason.¹⁹¹ But the donor conference, which took place on three days in September 1998,¹⁹² was a disappointment in terms of financial promises by donor countries and of the expected Z\$ 21,6 billion which was hoped for and expected to be raised for a total of Z\$ 40 billion to finance the total land reform programme, only Z\$ 17 million was realised.¹⁹³ The donors reasons for withholding their bounty primarily boiled down to their earlier criticism that the whole process of land designation was not 'transparent'¹⁹⁴ and a United Nations Development Programme Report concluded that the designation programme was 'biased'.¹⁹⁵

The donor conference was much more than a disappointment, first and foremost it was a definite set back for the Zimbabwean government. It seemed that it would have to abandon its high flight of its rhetoric and initial intentions to satisfy international donors and allow the latter far more say in the whole process than it would have liked them to have. This would have been an expectation though based on the usual narrow and one-dimensional economic assumption often (mis)taken in the West when analysing international relations and national agendas in Africa, that Mugabe and its government would take the further economic development of Zimbabwe as a whole as a prime motivation to guide their decisions. Seen from that perspective they could not risk losing donor aid and the approval of the international community for their land programme, in order to keep their national economy more or less up to standards. But in this case the Zimbabwean government seems to have turned to a mixture of elements of the earlier white minority governments in Rhodesia with some rhetorical 'leftovers' from the Liberation Struggle. In the first place it challenged and blatantly provoked the international community, especially after Mugabe lost the constitutional referendum in February 2000. They did this by forcefully and violently trying to drive the white commercial farmers off their land through organising land invasions by 'war veterans' (and at the same time try to re-strengthen their own political position and hold over the local population and intimidate the political opposition, the Movement for Democratic

¹⁹¹ Pp. 72, *The Economist*, 27 June 1998, Zimbabwe Peasants' Revolt; *New African*, October 1998, Zimbabwe: Land War.

¹⁹² *The Herald*, 9 September 1998, Donors' Conference on Land Opens Today.

¹⁹³ Pp. 13, *The Farmer*, 17 September 1998; *Zimbabwe Independent*, 11 September 1998, Land Reform in Financial Trouble.

¹⁹⁴ *Zimbabwe Independent*, 11 September 1998, International Donors Insist on Transparency and Fairness on Controversial Land Reforms; *Zimbabwe Independent*, 18 September 1998, Donors Demand Transparency Before Funding; *The Financial Gazette*, 10 September 1998, Donors Insist on Full Compensation for Farms.

¹⁹⁵ *Zimbabwe Independent*, 25 September 1998, Land Designation Biased – UNDP Report.

Change (MDC)). Actually Mugabe does what early settlers and white minority regimes in Southern Rhodesia did with the black Africans, that is, force them off the land. Secondly the Mugabe government legitimises their actions by adopting national legislation, that is, sanctioning their actions juridically *ex post*, as the Acts did I described earlier, sanctioned white land appropriation. During my fieldwork in 1998, when the debate between white economic power and black political power was heating up again, the SVC had to prove to the government, through its programme of organisational co-operation with its neighbouring communities, primarily one thing: that the enormous buffalo fence that separated them from their neighbouring communities was only a physical barrier to keep the wildlife in and not meant to keep people out or to stand as a symbolic reminder of land segregation. If the SVC wanted to survive this political turmoil about land, it would have to satisfy the wish of the minister that in 1998 they were heading for a 'formal and meaningful relationship' with their neighbours. In the next chapter I will describe the genesis and main themes in the development of the SVC and analyse what can be derived from that to suggest an answer to the question how 'formal and meaningful' the relationship with the communities could become. I will show in the next two chapters that it was definitely and undeniably formal, but that the core of what could have made the relationship truly meaningful for the communities was lacking from the start and even before it officially started.

The Savé Valley Conservancy: Genesis and the longing for buffalo

Introduction

As I described in the previous chapter the appropriation of the Sabi Valley by white settlers occurred fairly late in history, because of its endemic malaria and tsetse fly. It was indicated that the Sabi Valley was ‘unsuitable for white habitation’. The first white settlers entered the stage only in 1923 when the Bridges family obtained land from the BSAC which would become Devuli Ranch, named after the river which formed its northern boundary and joins the Sabi River.¹ In the 1930s, a second tract of land, south of Devuli Ranch became white land, bought by the General Manager of Devuli, Sommerville, later in conjunction with James Whittall, who had come to Africa drawn by the example and writings of the most famous white hunter in Africa, Frederick Selous. Whittall, like Selous a generation earlier, went to Rugby School in Britain, and was also an avid hunter. Later the Whittalls bought Sommerville out and became the sole owners of what became Humani Ranch.² The main economic activity, right from the start until the end of the 1980s was extensive

¹ Tschiffely 1953: 190.

² Sommerville 1976: 98.

cattle farming. Only in the 1960s did the production of sugar and citrus begin in the Lowveld under a new irrigation programme, running parallel to cattle farming.³ It was mainly one of the sons of James Whittall, Roger, who kept up the white hunting tradition and who set aside parts of Humani for wildlife utilisation.⁴ It was only when in the 1980s it finally became clear that cattle farming was not a viable economic activity in the area (anymore) because of its unreliable rainfall and when the Devuli Ranch was carved up and sold to different and new (white) owners that the idea of starting a joint operation on wildlife utilisation took root and finally led to the formation of the Savé Valley Conservancy (SVC) in 1991.

The official formation of the SVC should not be seen as a point in time, before which there was nothing related to SVC type activities. Nor that at the time of formation there was a fully organisationally developed conservancy structure or wildlife utilisation scheme. In June 1991 a group of landowners signed the constitution of the SVC, but even that constitution was a temporary one which was amended in the time following the signing.⁵ The establishment of the SVC is more of a particular moment in an ongoing process, which had already begun years before its official installation, for instance on Humani, and has continued afterwards. It actually went on, especially in efforts to find a way to relate to the neighbouring communities as I shall describe in the next chapter. The year 1991 is a 'beacon-date' for the history books only and should not be interpreted as indicating any stage of finality. At best its installation should be seen as a symbolic expression of the consensus amongst the landowners that they should opt for wildlife utilisation as a land-use alternative in this part of the Lowveld. This interpretation also implies that chronology cannot tell the story of the birth of the SVC exactly. Things have happened since the inauguration of the SVC, which can still explain parts of the process leading up to its formation in the first place in earlier years. Things that were anticipated and came true. The drought of 1991-1992, for instance, actually coincided with this period and after the strict formation date of the SVC. Even so, this drought has explanatory value as it strengthened, and in a way confirmed and proved, the earlier consensus amongst the landowners to go into wildlife utilisation through a conservancy structure. The same holds true for the parts of land sold by Devuli after the inauguration of the SVC in the first half of the 1990s. It followed the trend, set in the southern part of the SVC on Senuko and other properties before 1991,

³ Yudelman 1964: 31; pp. 69-70, Haw, R.C. (1966), *Rhodesia. The Jewel of Africa*, Salisbury: Flame Lily Books.

⁴ Interview with landowners Humani, 8 October 1998.

⁵ The latest updated copy I could get at the Conservancy Office during my year of fieldwork in Zimbabwe was dated, 28 January 1997.

of attracting buyers who were not planning to go into cattle, but to pursue commercial interests through tourism, thereby making the conservancy structure more opportune.

The basic idea of the SVC was to restore the environmentally degraded area after years of cattle farming, restock it with wildlife which had been thoroughly eradicated for the purpose of cattle ranching in the previous period, over and above the black rhino for which they were already providing a safe haven on their properties. They wanted to let conservation pay for itself and make a financial profit through wildlife utilisation, primarily by launching hunting operations, which are referred to as 'consumptive tourism'.⁶ The buffalo is the most sought-after, and therefore the most economically profitable, hunting trophy in Africa. For that reason the SVC wanted to restock the conservancy with buffalo, alongside many other forms of wildlife like giraffe, wildebeest, kudu, sable, waterbuck, zebra and the like. One of the strict requirements imposed by the DNPWLM in Harare was that in order to buy and later on hunt buffalo, the area first had to be fenced off by a double electrified fence, in co-operation with the DVS, with a stretch of seven metres of cleared land in between, to prevent buffalo of contaminating cattle outside the conservancy with the much dreaded FMD.⁷ The erection and maintenance of the fence and the pursuit of buffalo to restock the conservancy are the dominating themes of the SVC in the 1990s. The influence of these two issues is not confined to the SVC alone, but has even more serious and severe consequences for the relations between the SVC and the surrounding communities. Firstly the huge fence denies the communities access to the natural resources they were used to exploiting inside the SVC when it were still separate cattle farms, like thatching grass, firewood, building poles and the like. Secondly, they fear the contagion of FMD for their own cattle, as they are the closest neighbours of the SVC. Thirdly, the fence seems to symbolise and to mark the relationship of exclusion between black and white social identities in the Save Valley.

In this chapter I shall describe the conservation record and tradition of wildlife utilisation in the Lowveld of Zimbabwe and its almost inevitable continuity in the formation of the SVC. On the basis of this historical description, I shall describe in detail the issues of the fence and the buffalo as they are not only essential to understanding the development of the SVC itself, but seem even more important for its paradoxical consequences on the reciprocal

⁶ Consumptive tourism refers to an activity whereby wildlife is taken and 'consumed' through hunting or culling / harvesting, as opposed to non-consumptive forms of tourism whereby the wildlife is not taken but where people for instance look at and photograph the animals on photographic safaris.

⁷ Pp. 29-31, Du Toit, J. (1998), Taking Back the Land, *Keeping Track*, April/May.

exchange relationship with the neighbouring communities. On the one hand it seems clear that, in order to be able to invest financially in community relations, the SVC needs to earn money, which is done most successfully by offering hunting operations, especially buffalo, to tourists. For that reason it seems only logical and natural that the SVC should erect a fence in order to be formally allowed to pursue that most favourable economic opportunity.

On the other hand the fence and the buffalo mean that the white landowners of the SVC and the black members of the neighbouring communities are physically separated from each other, making the fence seem to become a fatal symbol of the general history of black and white relations, in the context of land, in Zimbabwe. In a way the fence could be said to block and facilitate the development of a reciprocal relation between the SVC and the surrounding communities simultaneously.

The 'inevitability' of the SVC

The first development was that already at an early stage the Rhodesian Government initiated the formation of Intensive Conservation Areas (ICA), which divided all commercial, read white, land into ICA's. The ICA was there, living up to its name, to promote conservation on commercial land. As the ICA was especially created to discuss matters about natural resources on commercial land, game was a regular item on the agenda, for example if a landowner was overshooting. The mandate of the ICA also implied that 'poaching' was always on the agenda. Ranch by ranch there was a report of what poaching they had experienced and what they had done about it. In the Lowveld they formed the Sabi Valley ICA, which included land on both sides of the Sabi River, including Devuli Ranch, Humani Ranch, Sabi Tanganda and Sabi Experimental Station. Even before the Liberation Struggle began in the 1970s, the ICA had split up into two, with the Sabi River forming the boundary. The west side of the river kept the name of Sabi Valley ICA, while the east side became to be known as the Mid-Sabi ICA. The northern boundary of the Sabi Valley ICA was formed by Birchenough Bridge and in the south by the Mkwesine River. The main reason for the split was that on the west side of the river the focus was on cattle ranching, while the east side was primarily devoted to agriculture. Another consideration was that the distances between east and west, with only a few official crossings at Birchenough Bridge and the J. Quinton Bridge on the Ngundu-Tanganda road, were too long for effective communication. The Sabi Valley ICA at the time was dominated by representatives from the big ranches in the area like Devuli and Humani, whose general managers or owners, in the case of Humani, often acted as chairmen of the body. During the time that the

ideas about the SVC began to take root, Derek Henning, managing director of Devuli Ranch, was chairman of the ICA and because of that also became the first chairman of the SVC-to-be.⁸ The ICA met every month.

During the years of the Liberation Struggle, or 'The War' as it is (often) referred to by whites, it only held meetings every second month. In those years it was not easy to travel around freely and the ICA meetings became one of the very few occasions on which people from the white community could actually meet and socialise. For this reason the ICA meetings took on the connotation of a social event and of being a strong medium for social bonding and (re)confirmation of white social identity, rather than running the business of a strict conservation body. Members planned the meeting for a particular day and then took lunches with them and the day was mainly used for socialising. The ICA meetings consolidated as a very strong medium for a sense of belonging among the white community in the Sabi Valley: 'that was what kept us together' as one prominent member formulated it pointedly. During the peak years of the Liberation Struggle they had to drive to the meetings in cars armoured with steel plates attached to the bottom of the car in case they should drive over a land-mine and they always travelled in armed convoys in order to prevent to be ambushed. Despite these hindrances they were eagerly prepared to make these sacrifices to visit and attend the ICA meetings simply to be able to meet and socialise with other people. In the memory of Anne Whittall,⁹ the ICA played a very important role in the conception of the idea to form a conservancy. She told me the story that she still clearly remembers, standing out like a kind of beacon in her memory, how at one ICA meeting on Angus in 1989-1990, Jeremy Baldwin, then co-owner of Masapas stood up, saying with Pete Henning (no family relation with Derek Henning), 'we are sitting on a goldmine' and related how people in South Africa made good money out of wildlife and proposed to 'go gamewise', especially because they, that is, the ICA, had people 'like Roger [Whittall] doing safaris'. Baldwin was, according to Anne, referring to MalaMala and Londolozi game parks in South Africa. It proved to be a spark, but one which was fanned into a flame a 'few days after that meeting' when Raoul DuToit from WWF/DNPWLM came in and brought them the idea about putting black rhino on their private land in order to protect them from poaching. I shall come back to this proposal of the WWF later in this chapter. It was the co-owner of Masapas, Pete Henning, who later contacted the Conservancy Officer of the NPB in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa, asking it to

⁸ Derek Henning was Director on the Board of Directors of Devuli Ranch from 1970 to 1980 and its Managing Director from 1980-1995. Information based on interview with landowner Chishakwe, 14 October 1998.

⁹ Interview with wife of landowner of Humani, 12 August 1998.

send someone to come over to Zimbabwe and advise the SVC on the formulation of their constitution. Henning himself is a farmer from Louis Trichardt in South Africa, and the officer's report on his trip to the SVC mentions that Henning made 'numerous phone calls asking about detailed aspects of our conservancy work'. At a later stage the WWF officer in charge of the Rhino Conservation Project, also contacted South Africa, Sabi Sands in the eastern Transvaal in particular, to ask the people there if they could send a copy of their constitution to the SVC-to-be, which could be used as a guideline for their efforts. For the further development of the argument in this chapter about the main themes within the SVC, interesting to note that the Sabi Sands constitution was considered too restrictive to landowners with regard to fencing. 'Much time has been spent (...) trying to soften the Sabi Sands's constitution and thus making it more acceptable to the Zimbabwean group of farmers'.¹⁰ The upshot is that the SVC stands very much in the tradition of the South African conservancy movement and that the people who were trying to get the SVC off the ground in the first place actively sought to learn from, and also follow the example of, South African conservancies. It could be added that where I argued that the South African conservancies strengthened the boundaries between the (white) conservancy and the neighbouring (black) communities, the SVC was, in first instance at least, even more strongly attracted to the idea of creating a fenced-in island of wilderness, in the midst of communal lands. Or in the words of Neumann in his study on Arusha National Park in relation to its neighbouring communities in Tanzania, right from the start the landowners were 'imposing wilderness' on an island in between densely populated districts.¹¹

In the 1990s, the ICA was subsumed into the Natural Resources Subcommittee, which became part of local government, Rural District Council (RDC), and was chaired by the District Administrator (DA). The Subcommittee is answerable to the Provincial Natural Resources Officer who in turn reports to the Natural Resources Board headquarters in Harare. The restructuring was meant to enhance the power of RDCs, including their say about commercial land. But, according to one source, the 'structure collapsed. Maybe not all over Zimbabwe, but anyway, here it is non-existent'. The Subcommittee eventually also encompassed Communal Land, which 'wasn't the idea of the ICA in the first place'. The new structure is considered 'not as relevant anymore, but they have the legal authority'. The Sub Committee is

¹⁰ Pp. 4, Report Markham on his visit to the SVC, 20 to 25 April 1991. What a nice symbolic coincidence that they especially asked the *Sabi Sands* for an example of their constitution, as Sabi used to be the name of the Save River!

¹¹ Neumann, R.P. (1998), *Imposing Wilderness. Struggles over Livelihood and Nature Preservation in Africa*, London, Berkeley: University of California Press.

considered 'relevant only when there is a proper problem'.¹² The ICA and later the Sub-Committee were running parallel with the development of the inception of the SVC. The agendas for the different meetings all contained more or less the same structural points and areas of attention, which is not astonishing considering they were all about the same topic related to the same region with most of the same people involved: conservation in the Save Valley. Later, when the SVC was finally established, it simply seems to have 'taken over' the function of the ICA¹³ as a white platform for conservation issues on private land and the later day Natural Resources Sub-Committee, although it has remained member of the Sub-Committee. 'The objectives of the ICA and SVC are identical' as one interviewee answered my question about this issue.¹⁴ In effect, it could be said that the SVC became the ICA New Style, concentrating on private land only, and for that reason, especially in the Lowveld, dominated by whites.¹⁵

What is the status of the Land Question in the Save Valley as the second relevant development in the establishment of the SVC? The largest part of what is now the SVC was appropriated by whites in the 1920s and 1930s, the Bridges and James Whittall of Devuli and Humani Ranch respectively. Devuli Ranch used to own all the land within the SVC north of the Turwi River. And south of the Turwi River it owned Masapas and Angus, which by then also included Mukazi and Mukwazi.¹⁶ Humani later bought Bedford Block north of the Turwi. This covers the north nicely but leaves part of the southern half of the SVC unexplained, to wit Senuko, Levanga, Mkwazine, Potential, Hammond and Impala. Up till 1973 this was State Land / Crown Land. At that time it was not sold as commercial land, because the soil was considered unproductive. So it was only in the 1970s and early 1980s that this part of the present-day SVC became commercial land.¹⁷ It is interesting to note the reason the State Land was

¹² Interview with landowner of Chishakwe, 14 October 1998.

¹³ Only the property Impala, located on the southern side of the Mkwazine River never formed part of the Sabi Valley ICA. In 1998 it was part of the SVC. Information from interview with Chairman of the SVC, 8 July 1998.

¹⁴ Interview with landowner Chishakwe, 14 October 1998.

¹⁵ Information in this section based on interviews with wives of landowners of Humani, 12 August 1998, and landowner Humani, 10 September 1998, unless indicated otherwise.

¹⁶ Devuli purchased Angus in 1944, Sommerville 1976: 189.

¹⁷ In how far also more political reasons were active in selling this State Land at the level of the old white government in 1973 I do not know and my interviewees were very evasive in their answer or response to questions probing into this subject. As they were equally evasive about all questions related to their role and position in the

sold: it was considered unproductive. This meant that the people who bought the land did not buy it directly in order to make it productive and economically viable through cattle or agriculture. The sale attracted people with other interests in the land, for investment reasons (absentee landowners), or with the idea of creating tourism opportunities. Senuko, Hammond and Impala were all finally sold to people who wanted to make a tourism destination out of them, with either a strong undercurrent of hunting or even with this as the primary aim. The landowner of Senuko¹⁸ is deeply immersed in eco-tourism, but did do some serious hunting in his early years in Gonarezhou as Honorary Officer of the DNPWLM,¹⁹ and in 1998 he did send in his request for a hunting quota on his property. Hammond was finally bought by an old American hunting client of Roger Whittall, a former high-ranking manager at Sara Lee/DE. Impala was bought by Naudé, a local farmer and business entrepreneur as part of an investment strategy, betting on the tourism potential of the SVC. Even if buyers did not buy properties right away to fulfil their own ambitions in the tourism industry, with or without hunting, they certainly bought them as an investment taking a gamble on the tourism potential they are trying to build within the SVC.

This process of attracting certain buyers to the land was accelerated when Devuli Ranch began to sell off its property in bits and pieces after realisation had dawned after the drought in the 1980s and beginning of the 1990s that cattle would be hard to sustain in the Lowveld.²⁰ Devuli had already taken a serious beating during the Liberation Struggle, which only reached its peak in and after 1976 when '(...) the Lowveld became the new and bitterly-contested 'sharp end' of the war'.²¹ At the beginning of the Liberation Struggle, Devuli began with a herd of 28,000 head of cattle. There were only some 6000 left at Independence in 1980. Some cattle had been sold, but the large majority had been stolen.²² The

Liberation Struggle. The information on this aspect of the land falling under the SVC is derived from an interview with Chairman of the SVC, 8 July 1998.

¹⁸ Son of one of the 'sugar-pioneers' in the Lowveld, Sir Ray Stockil, who with people like MacDougall took the initiative in the 1940 to grow sugarcane in the region (Haw 1966: 69-70). See also Saunders, C. (2001), 'Great Characters of the Lowveld – The Triangle 'Guinea Pigs''. *Heritage of Zimbabwe*, no. 20, 39-60.

¹⁹ An Honorary Officer is specifically asked by National Parks to become an officer because of a certain expertise. It is a non-paid job and voluntary. The Chairman of the SVC was Honorary Officer from the 1970s onward till 1985.

²⁰ Information in this section is from two interviews with landowner of Chishakwe, 18 June and 14 October 1998 and personal observations, unless otherwise indicated.

²¹ Godwin & Hancock 1997: 156.

²² Compared to Humani, Devuli lost far more cattle during the Armed Struggle. Humani lost 'only' an estimated 10% of cattle. Humani had certain advantages over

reason for this grand scale action was that the Freedom Fighters wanted to break the economic power base of the white community. To really hit the heart of economic power in the Sabi Valley meant to hit the cattle. So the Freedom Fighters ordered the local population to have fresh meat in their house at all times that the soldiers might ask them for meat, that is, checking them. And 'all times' meant 'all times', day and night. If this was found not to be the case, the people involved were severely punished. This resulted in constant pressure on the cattle farmers. The problem for Devuli Ranch was particularly severe at Angus, which borders a large stretch of Tribal Trust Land, now Matsai Communal Land. In this particular context of the Liberation Struggle this created a huge problem and within a short period of time all 3000 head of cattle were stolen from Angus, plus all the wire from the fences and the water pipes. The bordering TTL was known as a 'no-go area' for whites as there was no white habitation, which allowed the freedom fighters to use it as a 'rest and re-group area'. This proximity of a rest and re-group area probably also contributed to the fact that cattle theft was so intense here. The assistant manager of Angus was ambushed and killed after he had been dipping his cattle. Later, the homestead was destroyed as well.²³ From there on it was no longer useful to keep Angus occupied and so the other managers were withdrawn to Devuli Head Quarters, present-day Chishakwe, and left Angus abandoned, only to return and reclaim it in 1982-1983.

In 1998 Devuli Headquarters exudes an atmosphere of days gone by. You reach it quite simply by driving along the Humani Road to the north and at a certain stage you catch sight of buildings on your left hand, visible from the road. The main entrance is guarded by and decorated with two silver-plated / painted spoked wheels on either side of the gate. The story behind the wheels

Devuli. On the east side Angus (Devuli) formed the border. On the west side there was the Sabi River. The eastern border especially meant that Humani people could pursue cattle thieves over a far greater distance than Devuli people who had to stop at the border with the TTL. Humani could also follow them onto Devuli property. In this fashion many of the Humani cattle were retrieved. Humani patrolled the fences from the ground and from the air, using game scouts and managers. When cattle thieves were seen from the air they threw hand grenades at them. When found on the ground thieves were shot, as nobody wanted live witnesses to tell others who had caught them as they were fearful of reprisals. Furthermore the policies between the two ranches differed with regard to cattle theft: Devuli hired mercenaries during the Armed Struggle to protect it and its cattle, but they always stopped the pursuit at the border of the TTL and went after compensation from the government. One source estimated that they only got a meagre 30% compensation for all their losses. Humani was far more set on catching the thieves and less concerned about compensation, according to this source.

²³ Interview with landowner of Mukwazi, 11 August 1998.

is that they are the wheels, gun-carriage wheels used in World War I, that were on the ox wagon which arrived in this area in 1915. The office is decorated with old wooden furniture, including a huge rectangular desk; an old grey safe stands in one corner. The outside wall of the office is covered with faded maps of the old Devuli Ranch, showing the markings of the more recent split up. On one wall of the office is a large, that is, approximately 1.2 metres, rectangular black and white photograph, placed in a wooden frame behind broken glass. It is a picture of the Sabi River at the spot where they would later build Birchenough Bridge in 1934. Remarkably the Sabi River then looked like a majestic stream, while nowadays it seems only full of sand.²⁴ The pioneers of Devuli Ranch, Despard Bridges and his wife, are buried just outside the gate of HQ. At the gate you turn straight to the left and follow the fence for some 500 metres and there the graves are to the left of the road. The graves lay within a typical 'English type' wooden fence, which is in a state of collapse at some points. The graves are not well kept; the text on the grave is by now difficult to read. He died on 4 February 1935 and the text says: 'God keep his vision clear in our hearts through the dark day[s] unti[l] the da[y] breaks'. Some letters, as you can read, have fallen off the tomb stone.

Straight after the Liberation Struggle in 1980, Devuli set to work to try to rebuild its herd, beginning with Head Quarters and leaving the other properties lying idle for the time being. A large chunk of land, 200,000 ha., was sold to the Government in 1982. This is now known as the Devuli Resettlement Scheme, situated to the east of the northern part of the SVC. In the second half of the 1980s and beginning of the 1990s Devuli was subdivided even more and sold off.²⁵ The process began in the south with Masapas on 9 July 1986. Angus, which was divided in three, followed in 1988. Lot 1 (Mukwazi) was sold to Rob Cunningham (and later sold again to an Italian family who are also vivid hunters), Lot 2 (Mukazi) was sold to Pete Wenham, and Angus proper was sold by and to Derek Henning himself. Later on he sold it to the Hunters' Association of Zimbabwe, who in turn sold half of Angus to Barrie Duckworth, a tough hunter in the same tradition as Roger Whittall, who had bought Mokore (originally known as Ouse) on 1 October 1992. On that same day Humani

²⁴ *Sunday Mail*, 12 October 1997, An environmental disaster, 'In its current state, the Save River (...) has been converted from a surface water source to virtually a groundwater system. Here and there, there are patches of what once was a mighty river but which has since been choked to 'death' but tonnes of silt. The Save has simply become the sand river, existing more in name than in reality'; see also *The Herald*, 14 October 1998, Siltation..., presenting a picture of the Save River at Birchenough Bridge where a man is digging a trench in the sand to reach the water.

²⁵ All information from an interview with landowner Chishakwe, 18 June 1998.

bought Bedford Block. On 31 March 1989 three lots were sold in the north. Lot 2, which is now Matandere, Lot 3, now Gunundwe, and Lot 4, now Mapari. On 15 April 1989, these lots were followed by Lot 5, now Msaize, Lot 6, now Chishakwe, which Derek Henning bought himself, and finally Lot 7, now Chanurwe. In 1991, Lots 8 and 9, Chapungu and Sabi River, were sold. These were again sold on 19 January 1994 to a German industrialist and hunting enthusiast, Willy Pabst, who also bought Musawezi. He renamed the combined property Sango. Savuli was sold on 1 February 1992 to a group of buyers, a combination of a local farmer and people in the tourist business in Harare. Umkondo is a former mine, see Chapter 1, and formally belongs to the Zimbabwean Government. Willy Pabst has made a bid for that property, but he has other competitors who want to buy or lease Umkondo. I shall return back to this particular issue in the next chapter. This list demonstrates unequivocally that the new landowners in the valley cannot be regarded as successors in the cattle business. There has been a definite shift towards owners interested in hunting and the related field of tourism. Even when the properties were bought after the date of the official inauguration of the SVC, the scenario reinforces the idea that it is mainly hunters and tourist operators who are interested in buying land in the Save Valley. The money earned with the splitting up and selling of Devuli Ranch was primarily used to pay shareholders in Devuli Ranch, who had not seen any returns for years. The name Devuli Ranch still exists but now operates as an investment company. The Bridges family still has some shares in the company but nothing major or significant.

A third, but far less controllable or predictable issue which made the creation of one or another kind of organisational structure for wildlife utilisation in the Save Valley virtually inevitable at the end of the 1980s and beginning of the 1990s, was the droughts which wiped out every hope of ever recovering a serious and viable cattle business in the Lowveld. In 1982-1983 a severe drought hit Zimbabwe. Once again, the writing was on the wall: it is impossible to make cattle farming economically viable in Regions IV and V. Struggling against environmental degradation, that is, that 'the vegetation could no longer sustain viable stocking rates', the beef profits declined.²⁶ Or in the words of the Chairman of the SVC, in a discussion organised by the Centre for Private Conservation in Washington (U.S.A.): 'We saw soil erosion. We saw over-grazing. We saw the loss of perennial grasses. And *we were forced*, by the end of the 1980s to sit down and really think about what our future was. Where were we headed? It was absolutely certain that we were headed for an economic

²⁶ Pp. 255, Goodwin, H.J., Kent, I.J., Parker, K.T. & Walpole, M.J. (1997), *Tourism, Conservation & Sustainable Development: Volume IV, The South-East Lowveld, Zimbabwe*. Unpublished report.

disaster, let alone an ecological disaster. (...) And (...) when the better quality grasses disappeared, our carrying capacity started taking a knock, and you could carry less stock on the land. At the same time, the viability of cattle production was on the decline. The returns per head were less (...). They compensated by putting more stock on which exacerbated the problem even more and soil erosion was the inevitable result.²⁷ One of the consequences was that the cattle farmers had to seriously consider destocking their ranches. But in order to destock there must be an alternative to make the land productive. The final 'incentive' came when another drought hit them in 1991-1992. It was 'one of [the] worst droughts in living memory. The rainy season, that normally lasts between November and March, almost completely failed and the rains were patchy and unpredictable (...) rivers and lakes dried up and many trees died'.²⁸ The farmers had to look for another land use option, and (very) quickly. Ranches, which were solely dependent on cattle and did not have any agriculture alongside it to compensate for the loss of cattle through the drought, especially faced severe problems. The droughts rode roughshod over the farmers, forcing them to act willy-nilly. The drought accelerated the process of finding an alternative land-use option. One particular option had already been suggested by WWF/DNPWLM and was in operation on a few properties in the Save Valley: wildlife, in particular the rhino, which forms a fourth development on the road to creating the SVC.

Black and white rhino are indigenous species to Zimbabwe.²⁹ The white rhino had already become extinct earlier in the twentieth century, but was later redeveloped from South African stock in smaller recreational parks like Kyle and the Matopos. The black rhino was kept in the large wildlife areas, such as the Zambezi Valley. This area was very accessible from neighbouring countries like Zambia. In the second half of the 1980s and beginning of the 1990s there was an enormous increase in commercial rhino poaching, especially in the National Parks which had low staffing levels and this allied with the easy access of the Parks made them easy prey to poachers who could retreat quickly over the border after their 'hunting' expeditions. Why there was such an upturn in

²⁷ Pp. 7, Centre for Private Conservation, *Conservation through Commerce. A Roundtable Discussion*, Washington: Centre for Private Conservation, January 1999, italics added.

²⁸ Pp. 2, Brown, J., Cooke, E., Smith, R., & Stelfox, H. (1992), Devure 1992. *A Study of the Effects of Drought on the Large Mammals of Devure Ranch, Zimbabwe*, Oxford University Expedition Report, unpublished. Driving through the SVC in 1998, one could still see the many silent witnesses, that is, dead trees, to this drought.

²⁹ Information in this section from: Backgrounder Black Rhino, (undated), *The Zambezi Society*, 6 pp.

the 1980s, virtually to disappear again after 1993, is difficult to explain. ‘Many questions remain unanswered, in particular concerning the international trade in rhino horn’.³⁰ Nevertheless, the problem was acute in the 1980s and the DNPWLM launched Operation Stronghold to protect the rhino in the National Parks better by raising personnel numbers plus better intelligence, awareness and education. But it never received the funding it needed for the project and the black rhino continued to decline. Inexorably it emerged that the DNPWLM could not protect the black rhino in its own sanctuaries because of a shortage of funding. In 1989 it put forward the Black Rhino Conservation Strategy in which it proposed, among other ideas, the creation of eight Intensive Protection Zones (IPZs), where extra protection could be guaranteed. Secondly, and most importantly for the development and creation of the SVC, was the decision for ‘(t)he development of translocated breeding nuclei else where in Zimbabwe – that is, on private land, and particularly where groups of landholders were prepared to establish co-operative ‘Conservancies’ – as a second-line insurance policy’.

The project leader of the Rhino Conservation Project, whose task it was to sell the idea to private landowners is, as I already mentioned above, Raoul du Toit.³¹ His official title is Project Executant Rhino Conservation Project. In 1998 he worked full-time for the WWF Zimbabwe again, but used to be seconded to the DNPWLM.³² The WWF offices in Harare are situated in a quarter where the majority of the embassies are located as well as several offices from multilateral organisations like the IUCN. The office is conveniently placed on the corner where Lanark Road debauches on busy, four-lane Second Street. The office itself is housed in a stately old home with parking space in front of it, often full with landrovers and other four-wheel drive vehicles with the familiar and world famous panda-logo on their doors. A visitor entering the building through the main entrance comes face to face with a big wooden bookcase with glass doors, largely filled with written documents held together by plastic spirals, indicating its report status, even before the reception counter in the left corner of the hall is discerned. Because these houses were originally not designed for efficiency or to be divided in offices in an orderly and mathematical manner, it is not easy to find the way to a particular office. To find Du Toit’s office, I went into the building on ground floor and then had to go out again, go along a tiny corridor in order to enter his cramped office with orderly registered files piling up against every wall. In 1989, in line with the Rhino Conservation Strategy, he

³⁰ Ibid: 1.

³¹ This section of the text is based on an interview, 25 June 1998, with the project leader of the Rhino Conservation Project and personal observations.

³² Markham 1991: 4.

was looking for private land on which to house 'his' rhino. The spot had to be sufficiently far away, geographically, from the Zambian border where it was believed the poachers came in. The Lowveld seemed to fit this criterion and luckily the climatic conditions were close to those in the Zambezi Valley. Finally, as the Lowveld is in Region IV and V, it is gazetted for wildlife as a form of land use. The Lowveld was an ideal spot for creating a safe haven for rhino. That same year, 1989, he was also, strictly coincidentally, asked by the landowner of Senuko to evaluate Senuko to assess its wildlife production potential. There was immediate rapport between these two men which 'did the trick'. The landowner of Senuko suggested that they might breed rhino on Senuko. Then they remembered there were also rhino on Humani. This naturally led to the idea of joining Humani and Senuko and using this combination to try to convince other property owners to join them as well. Roger Whittall especially deserves 'conservation credits' for his role in this process. A domino effect of landowners joining the initiative was the result. Du Toit could arrange a grant from the Beit Trust to finance the necessary fence, management and anti-poaching unit. Z\$ 1,000,000 was granted for the fence. The funding was made conditional in the sense that the conservancy would repay the grant by spending an equal amount of money on restocking the SVC. So their 'repayment' of the grant was made productive through restocking. An extra Z\$ 320,000 was granted for the management and anti-poaching unit.³³ Twenty-four rhino were brought in at that time. With the SVC, two other conservancies were created for the same purpose: the Chiredzi River Conservancy, located close to the SVC near Chiredzi, and the Bubiana Conservancy, located near West Nicholson on the right side of the road to the border-crossing at Beitbridge.

Now there was a Rhino Conservation Strategy and there were safe havens to put them in, but the ratification of the Rhino Conservation Strategy first had to go through the Department's Directorate and the Parks Advisory Board.³⁴ After that it had to be approved by the Ministry of Environment and Tourism, which took another two years. The WWF did not wait until the Strategy was officially recognised, but went ahead and translocated black rhino to the above-mentioned conservancies. This was sheer piece of good luck for the rhinos because the DNPWLM continued to face huge problems in trying to protect the rhinos in its

³³ Savé Valley Conservancy – Financial obligations of members, 22 April 1991. Attachment to Report Markham 1991. See also: WWF, Multispecies Animal Production Systems Project. Funding policy for Beit Trust/WWF conservancy project, 31 March 1991. Here it also said that '(i)t is envisaged that the Beit Trust / WWF support for the overall conservancy project will extend until the end of 1995'.

³⁴ This section is, again, based on information from the 'Backgrounder Black Rhino', including the citations, unless indicated otherwise.

reserves, hampered by financial constraints and 'bureaucratic obstructiveness that resulted largely from the faction fighting that has plagued the Department [NPWLM]'. 'In contrast to the dismal scenario within the public Parks estate, the major rhino Conservancies were becoming well established, and represented the only really secure nuclei of black rhino in the country'. Despite this success, or maybe because of it, the (white) conservancies got a very bad (black) press. It was said that 'the Parks estate has been stripped of its rhino populations in favour of private Conservancies'. It was also suggested that the conservancies were making large financial profits, money which should have gone to the State, mainly from the presence of the rhino. This circuit of gossiping and make-believe produced an atmosphere of 'suspicion and distrust, and have given rise to all kinds of 'conspiracy theories [around the conservancies] (...) Particularly saddening has been the way in which the 'race card' is being played, by some NGOs as well as by individuals within government'. In other words the stereotyped image of white identity in southern Africa once more came up trumps. The subsequent interaction between black and white was contaminated in the sense that the image stood in the way of trust building, taking first steps in a reciprocal relationship and thus co-operation. Image as the basis for exclusion between black and white, and simultaneously for inclusion of people of the same social identity, of the ones belonging to 'us'. There is also a time factor at work in this development. In negative reciprocity, as in generalised reciprocity, there is no stipulated time for repayment. Repayment depends on strategic opportunity. The Land Issue simmered on between black and white for most of the 1980s, but now the establishment of conservancies offered an opportunity to demand the appropriated land back. The Backgrounder concludes that it 'is the communal lands that currently represent the 'missing link' in rhino management'. By that conclusion it was already suggesting that some form of co-operation between private and communal land might be necessary to secure the political and social acceptability of conservancies and with this the long-term survival of the rhino in safe havens. But the quotations just cited already indicate that it will probably be an uphill battle to generate that co-operation. The next chapter is entirely devoted to the reciprocal-exchange-road of trials and errors negotiated by the SVC to try and create that missing link. In conclusion, all conservancies were born of the idea of stopping further rhino poaching. This focus and *raison d'être* for conservancies in Zimbabwe, their links with and guidance from South African conservancies and their being on (white) commercial land and corresponding to white social identity make them highly susceptible to the idea that they are nothing more than a continuation of bygone colonial days and will almost inevitably arouse a storm of protest for that reason.

There is yet one more fifth argument to put forward to explain why the SVC almost had to be created, inexorably like a force of destiny. The argument is the development of international tourism in Zimbabwe until 2000, the underdevelopment of the Lowveld in this respect, and the related upsurge in wildlife utilisation on private land throughout the region of southern Africa. It is also an argument which again seems only to add to the national and local suspicion of this conservancy movement, on top of the ones mentioned above, as the tourism sector in Zimbabwe is dominated by whites.³⁵ Tourism contributed an estimated 5% to Zimbabwe's GNP in 1992 and provides jobs for some 50,000 people, both directly and indirectly.³⁶ The Economist Intelligence Unit Country Report Zimbabwe stated in 1996 that the number of visitors rose to 1.4 million in 1995, which was 33% higher than the year before. The report also states that the 'potential [of tourism] remains enormous'.³⁷ In 1997 there were 1.7 million tourists visiting Zimbabwe and the Minister of Mines, Environment and Tourism, said in an interview in 1998, he expected more than two million visitors by the turn of the century.³⁸ The Zimbabwe tourism sector has grown at an average of 20% annually since 1990.³⁹ Zimbabwe's share of the African tourism market is 3%-4%.⁴⁰ This was the picture in 1998. In the second half of 2001 the situation has been changed completely due to two major issues which influenced the tourism sector in general and in Zimbabwe in particular. The first is the drop in the number of tourists world wide as a result of the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centre in New York and the Pentagon in Washington on 11 September 2001. Secondly the number of tourists had already taken a heavy beating after the lost constitutional referendum in February in 2000. So in that context the situation in 1998, with its hopes for a bright future with lots of opportunities in the tourism sector has been shattered in 2001.

Tourism in Zimbabwe is primarily based on the Parks and Wild Life Estates, which constitute some 13.1 % of the country. The two government bodies responsible for wildlife tourism are, the DNPWLM and the Zimbabwe Tourism Authority (ZTA), which are both responsible to the Ministry of Environment and Tourism.⁴¹ Conservation and tourism are inextricably linked in Zimbabwe because of this bureaucratic arrangement. Wildlife tourism used to be concen-

³⁵ Goodwin et.al. 1997: 6.

³⁶ Ibid: 5.

³⁷ Pp. 19, *Economist Intelligence Unit Country Report Zimbabwe*, Third Quarter 1996.

³⁸ *Zimbabwe Independent*, 9 October 1998, Tourism Seen as Major Economic Anchor.

³⁹ *The Financial Gazette*, 8 October 1998, Zim Pins Economic Hopes on Fast Growing Tourism Sector.

⁴⁰ Goodwin et al.: 6.

⁴¹ Ibid: 5.

trated in National Parks, like Victoria Falls NP and Hwange NP. Although the tour operators were mainly white,⁴² at least the parks were run by a black governments department. But by the end of the 1980s wildlife utilisation was increasingly advertised as optimum land use for private land (white-dominated) for semi-arid areas in Sub-Saharan Africa in general and for the Lowveld in Zimbabwe in particular. This was actually a process which for Southern Rhodesia/Zimbabwe had already begun in the early 1960s when Dasmann and Mossman were asked to make an assessment of the possibilities of cropping and culling game to be sold to Africans, without harming the wildlife population on the property. They did a case study and experiments to this end on the Doddieburn Ranch and came to the conclusion that wildlife was a more economically viable land use option than cattle in this respect.⁴³ Although the results of Dasmann and Mossman's study and subsequent experiments were positive about wildlife as land use option in the Lowveld, the idea did not take off to any large extent,⁴⁴ albeit the amount of land devoted to wildlife increased steadily in Zimbabwe, especially in the 1970s.

Between 1974 and 1989 the area devoted to wildlife in Zimbabwe increased 62%, from 59,7000 to 97,000 hectares.⁴⁵ In the 1980s new attempts were made to convince farmers that wildlife utilisation was a profitable land use option and in publications it was stressed, again, that wildlife utilisation was a more economically viable land-use option than cattle raising, especially in Regions IV and V.⁴⁶ Everything in the garden seems rosy but the results and conclusions

⁴² In December 1994, only 10% of the tour operators in Zimbabwe were black (called 'indigenous'). At the Zimbabwe Professional Hunters and Guides Association, only 2,5% of its (voluntary) members are indigenous, Goodwin et.al. 1997: 7.

⁴³ Dasmann, R.F. & Mossman, A.S. (1960), The Economic Value of Rhodesian Game, *Rhodesian Farmer*, 30: 17-20; Dasmann, R.F. (1962), Game Ranching in African Land Use Planning, *Bulletin of Epizootic Diseases of Africa*, 10: 13-17; see also chapter 17, Robins, E. (1964), *Afrika's wilde dieren* (translated from the English original: *Africa's Wildlife* (1963)), Baarn: Uitgeverij Bosch & Keuning.

⁴⁴ Pp. 12, Martin, R.B. (1994), Alternative Approaches to Sustainable Use: What Does and Doesn't Work, Paper presented to conference *Conservation Through Sustainable Use of Wildlife*, 8-11 February 1994, Brisbane, Australia.

⁴⁵ Skinner, J.D. (1989), Game Ranching in Southern Africa, in: Hudson, R.J., Drew, K.R. & Baskin, L.M. (eds), *Wildlife Production Systems. Economic Utilisation of Wild Ungulates*, Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press.

⁴⁶ Child, B.A. (1988), *The Role of Wildlife Utilisation in the Sustainable Economic Development of Semi-Arid Rangelands in Zimbabwe*, Unpublished D.Phil. Thesis, University of Oxford; Bond, I. (1992), *The Financial and Economic Returns of Cattle and Wildlife Production Systems in Commercial and Communal Farming Systems in Zimbabwe*. Unpublished Report prepared for the Zimbabwe Wildlife

were not as unequivocal as some want us to believe. In conversations and publications on the subject, the authors often refer to a study by Jansen, Bond and Child of the WWF in Zimbabwe to ‘prove’ their point that wildlife is more economically viable than cattle.⁴⁷ In a conversation they will tell you that ‘research has proven’ that wildlife is economically more profitable than cattle. But Cumming and also Jansen et al. are actually very cautious in their conclusions. In 1990, on the basis of material from Child and Martin from the DNPWLM, Cumming concluded that ‘(t)here is some evidence that greater wealth can be generated from semi-arid rangelands under wildlife than can be generated from livestock’.⁴⁸ Two years later, Jansen et al. state that their ‘results indicate that the answer to the question ‘cattle, wildlife, both or neither’ is far from simple – and not the undisputed ‘wildlife’ that many have advocated (or hoped for). It appears that cattle ranching is economically viable in some areas of Natural Regions IV and V and could be financially rewarding if the negative effects of a number of government policies could be removed. Wildlife, on the other hand, is financially and economically viable in many areas – but *not all areas and not for all activities*’.⁴⁹

Nevertheless these vague indications have had major effects on land-use policy, for both communal and commercial land. The world famous CAMPFIRE was introduced by the government on semi-arid stateland.⁵⁰ On

Management and Environmental Conservation Programme. World Bank/Price Waterhouse.

⁴⁷ Pp. 249, Barnes, J.I. & Kalikawe, M.C. (1992), Game Ranching in Botswana: Constraints and Prospects, in: Van Hoven, W., Ebedes, H. & Conroy, A. (eds), *Wildlife Ranching: a Celebration of Diversity. Proceedings of the Third International Wildlife Ranching Symposium*. Pretoria: Centre for Wildlife Management.

⁴⁸ Pp. 17, Cumming, D.H.M. (1990), Developments in Game Ranching and Wildlife Utilisation in East and Southern Africa, in: Renecker, L.A. & Hudson, R.J. (eds), *Wildlife Production: Conservation and Sustainable Development*, Alaska: University of Alaska Fairbanks. Italics added.

⁴⁹ Pp 42, Jansen, D., Bond, I. & Child, B. (1992), Cattle, Wildlife, both or neither. A Summary of Survey Results for Commercial Ranches in Zimbabwe, *WWF Project Paper no. 31*, italics added.

⁵⁰ Bond, I. (2001) CAMPFIRE & the Incentives for Institutional Change, in Hulme, D. & Murphree, M., *African Wildlife & Livelihoods. The Promise and Performance of Community Conservation*, Cape Town: David Philip, Harare: Weaver, Zomba: Kachere, Nairobi: E.A.E.P., Kampala Fountain Publishers, Portsmouth (N.H.): Heinemann, Oxford: James Currey; Africa Resources Trust & CAMPFIRE Association (1996), *Zimbabwe's CAMPFIRE. Empowering Rural Communities for Conservation and Development*, Harare: Africa Resources Trust; Patel, H. (March 1998), *Sustainable Utilization and African Wildlife Policy. The Case of Zimbabwe's Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE). Rhetoric or Reality?*, Cambridge (USA): Indigenous Environmental Policy Center.

private land in Regions IV and V many farmers turned (partly) to wildlife utilisation schemes. This latter development in particular took off fairly well and the SVC also got off to a promising start. The SVC, three years after its official inauguration as a rhino conservancy in 1991, asked Price Waterhouse for an assessment of the wildlife potential specifically for the SVC, that is, to go beyond only being a safe haven for black rhino.⁵¹ ‘The major conclusion of this land use report (...) was that tourism offered considerably greater economic potential than cattle ranching, and that the conservancies should implement a range of wildlife utilization activities, with an emphasis on high-quality tourism’.⁵² In the Price Waterhouse study it was also concluded that hunting, especially the buffalo, would enhance the viability of the scheme considerably.⁵³ Because so far the SVC had been a cattle area, all buffalo had been previously eradicated to remove contagion of FMD. In order to get permission from Veterinary Services for the re-introduction of buffalo, the ranchers had to get rid of all their cattle, to which the SVC-members decided in 1992. In that sense the Price Waterhouse document only legitimised the course of action and developments later followed by the SVC, but the ongoing developments on commercial land made them a direct competitive threat for the already established wildlife tourism facilities in the country run by the DNPWLM.⁵⁴ This put the relations between the DNPWLM and the private sector under severe strain. I shall come back to this relationship later on in this chapter when I discuss the ‘main

⁵¹ Price Waterhouse et al. (1994), *The Lowveld Conservancies: New Opportunities for Productive and Sustainable Land Use, Save Valley, Bubiana and Chiredzi River Conservancies*. Harare: Price Waterhouse.

⁵² Pp. 18, Attwell, C.A.M. (July 1998), *Environmental Impact Assessment for Loan Application to the IFC for the Restocking of Wildlife Species in the Savé Valley Conservancy*. Unpublished report.

⁵³ Price Waterhouse 1994: 100-105.

⁵⁴ *Sunday Mail*, 11 August 1996, Hotels Lose Tourists to Game Farms, ‘Farm and ranch accommodation has become so popular that an increasing number of tourists are shunning the established hotel system to spend time in private properties, hunting and sightseeing. It was (...) the hunting excursions offered at these properties that are money spinners’. See also *The Herald*, 9 August 1996, Conservancies Set up to Pull Tourists to Lowveld: ‘With one large National Park situated in the extreme south-eastern end of the country, as the only tourist attraction, the region appears to be neglected as far as investments in the hospitality industry was concerned. Several local members have set up conservancies to ‘create tourist attractions’ in the form of game parks, bird sanctuaries, and natural forests (...); *Sunday Mail*, 9 August 1998, Game Farming to Boost Tourism; *The Herald*, 7 April 1997, Chiredzi Gets More Tourists: ‘More tourists are now visiting the south-eastern Lowveld following the establishment of private wildlife conservancies in the area. The Gonarezhou National Park has not been able to attract a lot of tourists’.

themes' of the SVC. For the time being and to raise the level of suspense, it is enough to say that permits from the DNPWLM are a prerequisite for all wildlife activities in Zimbabwe, including buying and translocating buffalo and other species.

In a nutshell it can be said that the SVC did not come 'out of the blue'. There were several inter-related factors which contributed to its almost inevitable birth, further development, and also its concentration on the two 'main themes', which will be introduced later. The continuation of the white hunting tradition in the heartland of the SVC on Humani and the fact that they were already heavily involved in wildlife utilisation, both consumptive and non-consumptive, and restocking wildlife, including black rhino in the area since the 1970s can be considered crucial to the later inception of the SVC. This still gives Humani a *status aparte* within the SVC, not because it wants to be compensated for its years of investment in wildlife, but more because its owners are direct descendants of the first pioneers in the area and are the living history of the area. The other landowners arrived on the scene much later. South of the Turwi this began in the 1970s and 1980s, and north only by the end of the 1980s and beginning of the 1990s when Devuli was split up and sold. Many of the new owners were attracted to the idea of buying property in the area because they were keen on hunting, just like Roger Whittall, and this has strengthened the hunting ethos and white identity construction within the SVC as a dominant force considerably. A potent force, but there were other factors contributing to the formation of the SVC as well, like the droughts, the Rhino Conservation Project, the studies which predict better economic returns in semi-arid lands if they turn to wildlife utilisation schemes and tourism, and, very important, the example of conservancies, both conceptually and in terms of practical examples for drafting constitutions and other technical details, in South Africa. Finally it is fair to say that the creation of the SVC is just a formalisation of a certain stage in its development, of which the organisational climax, potential and maturity has not yet been reached.

Description and formal organisation of the Savé Valley Conservancy

In order to understand the main themes dominating the policy discussions of the SVC right from the start, I need to describe the geographical area, the formal organisational structure and objectives of the SVC, because they directly relate, influence or form a perfect image or metaphor for the dominating policy issues. Let me begin by giving a general impression of the SVC in terms of location within the structure of Zimbabwe's provinces, districts, and wards, geography,

physical features and flora and fauna. Such a description is also essential to understanding the local political struggles between the SVC and neighbouring communities I shall describe later on.

The SVC is situated in the southeast Lowveld of Zimbabwe with its southern boundary approximately forty-five kms northeast of the town of Chiredzi, its eastern boundary being the Save River after which the conservancy is named,⁵⁵ its northern boundary lies not far from to Birchenough Bridge and its western boundary in the northern part of the SVC being formed by a resettlement scheme on land of the former Devuli Ranch and to the south by Matsai Communal Area. Some sixty kilometers to the south of the SVC lies Gonarezhou National Park, the second largest national park in Zimbabwe, bordering Mozambique and South Africa. The SVC is located in two provinces, Masvingo and Manicaland, and two districts, Chiredzi and Bikita and is surrounded by another three districts, Zaka, Buhera and Chipinge District (see Map 4). The SVC is a co-operative structure comprising twenty-four private, individual cattle ranches (see Map 5). They were converted 'into a single co-operatively managed commercial wildlife reserve'⁵⁶ of 3387 km². It is the largest private wildlife area on the African continent. In Table 3⁵⁷ there is a list of properties, related to owners, commercial operations and acreage in 1998.

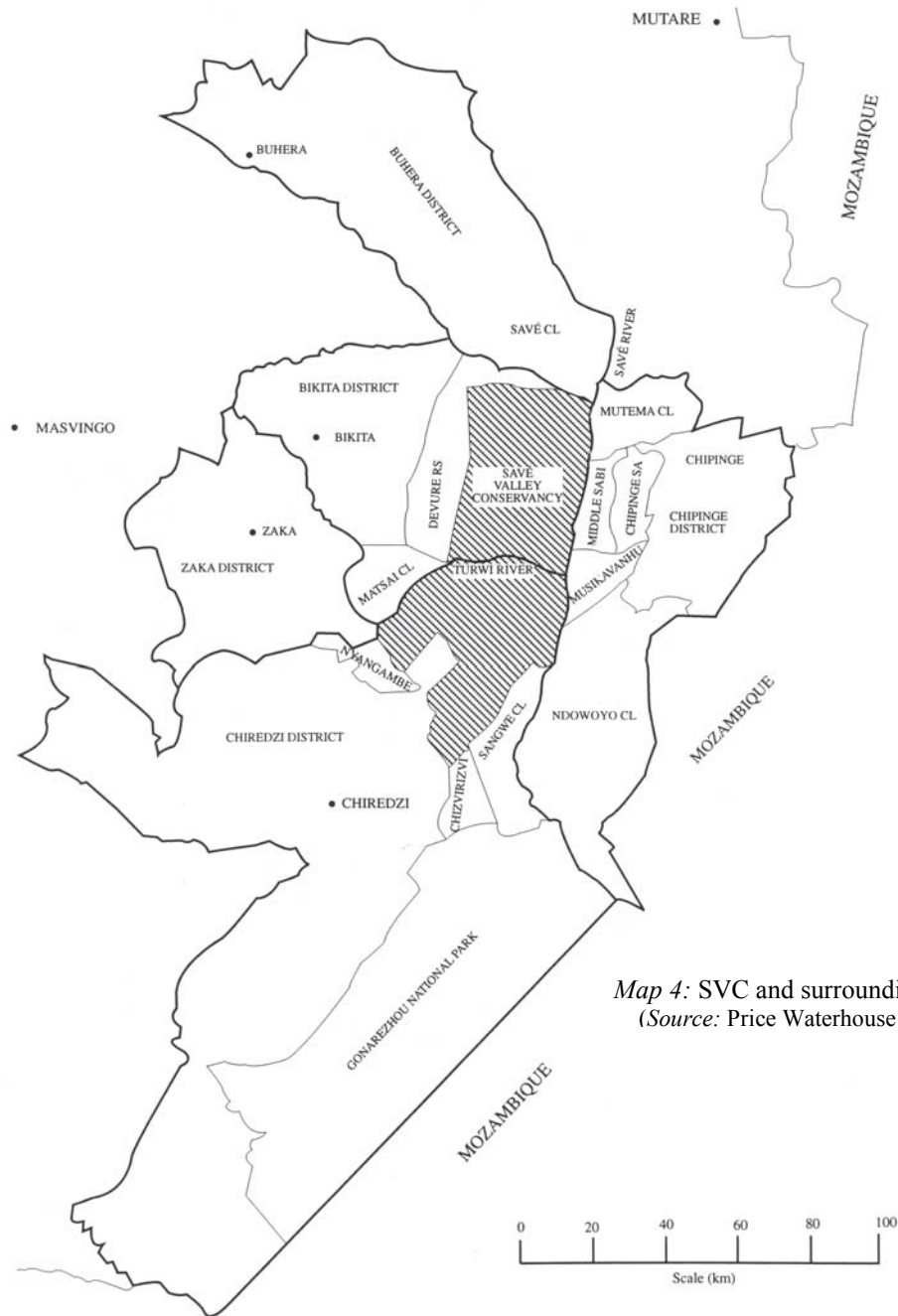
The property owners range from family-owned businesses, like Humani and Levanga for instance, to foreign investors like Pabst Holdings (Germany) and Mid-West Ranching (USA), to large companies like Zimbabwe Sun, part of Delta Corporation, one of the largest firms in Zimbabwe.⁵⁸ The SVC main office

⁵⁵ The river on the eastern boundary of the SVC used to be called the Sabi River. In the 1980s this name was changed to Save River to approximate the pronunciation of the word by the local Africans more closely, using a soft 'v' which sounds like in-between a 'v' and 'w'. The SVC added an accent on the 'e', making it Savé River, for foreign marketing purposes, so that potential clients would not confuse the word Save with the verb 'to save'.

⁵⁶ Attwell 1998: 18.

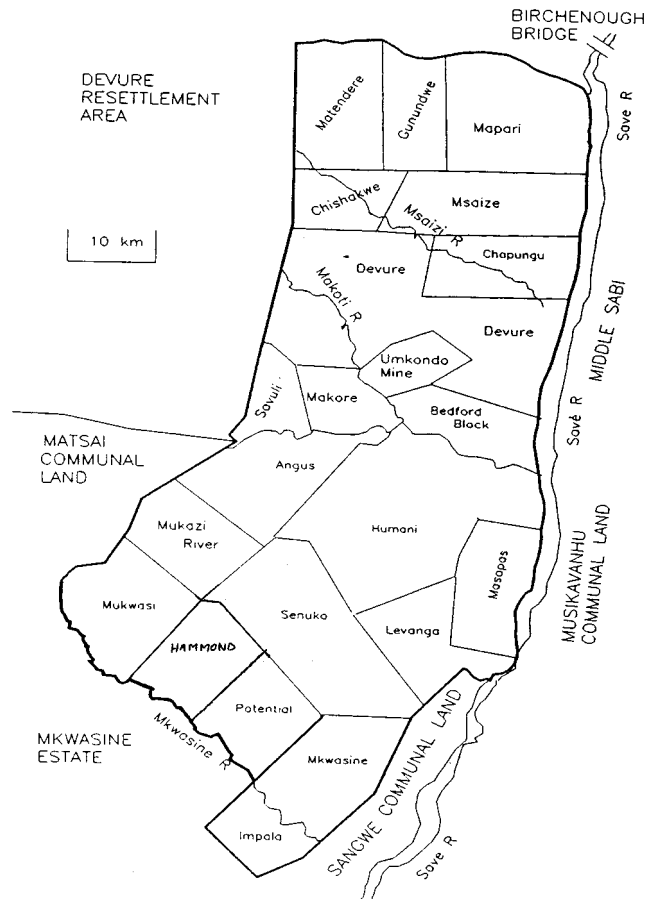
⁵⁷ Goodwin et al 1997: 251, updated August 1999. Of the owners only these of Chishakwe, Humani and Senuko, also live on their property. The rest of the properties is run by their managers. There is not one property owner in the SVC who is solely dependent on the earning from the commercial operations. This means that all owners can see their property in the SVC as an investment opportunity (interview with Conservator, 4 June 1998. Information on 'commercial operations' from interviews with Conservator, 20 April and 7 May 1998).

⁵⁸ In 1998 *Delta Corporation* was ranked the third largest company in Zimbabwe, behind *Zimploy*, a manufacturer of agricultural equipment, *Hippo Valley*, part of *Anglo-American* and a sugarcane growing and milling company, also located in the southeastern Lowveld. *Delta Corporation* is into a wide range of products in the



Map 4: SVC and surrounding districts
(Source: Price Waterhouse 1994: 19)

mass market, like beverages, retail business and tourism (pp. 9-13, Top Companies Survey – Supplement to *The Financial Gazette*, 15 October 1998).



Map 5: SVC and individual properties
(Source: See footnote 51)

in 1998 is an old guardhouse of the Mkwesine Estate Police Force, which they moved into in September 1997.⁵⁹ Mkwesine Estate is a sugarcane plantation bordering the SVC to the south and the SVC office is located in the middle of large paddocks with sugarcane in different stages of maturity and processing.

⁵⁹ Interview with Conservator, 23 April 1998.

Table 3

SVC list of properties, owners, operations and area (ha)

| <u>Ranch</u> | <u>Owner</u> | <u>Operations</u> | <u>Area (ha)</u> |
|---------------|---|--------------------------------------|------------------|
| Matandere | Pioneer Capital Partners/ARDA | Safari camp*/hunting safaris | 13,123 |
| Gunundwe | B.J. Gous | Safari camp | 11,374 |
| Mapari | H.J. Vorster | Safari camp/Stop Inn | 23,153 |
| Chishakwe | Rovambira (Pvt) Ltd | Construct camp/hunting safaris | 9,977 |
| Msaize | Powerlock (Pvt) Ltd | Safari lodge/hunting safaris | 16,340 |
| Chanurwe | Pabst Holdings (Pvt) Ltd | Safari camp/hunting safaris | 44,348 |
| Chapungu | Zimbabwe Sun Ltd | Will be building camp | 12,976 |
| Musawezi | Pabst Holdings (Pvt) Ltd | Directors camp**/hunting safaris | 12,662 |
| Sabi | Pabst Holdings (Pvt) Ltd | Idem | 18,790 |
| Umkondo | 'Leased' to Pabst Holding (Pvt) Ltd? | Idem | 6,627 |
| Savuli | Savuli Property Investments (Pvt) Ltd | Safari camp/hunting safaris | 5,529 |
| Mokore | Mokore Ranch (Pvt) Ltd | Safari camps/hunting safaris | 7,451 |
| Bedford Block | Dunmow (Pvt) Ltd | Idem Humani | 12,215 |
| Angus | Sabi Star Enterprises (Pvt) Ltd | Safari camp/hunting safaris | 15,792 |
| Humani | Humani Estates (Pvt) Ltd | Safari camps/hunting safaris | 41,158 |
| Mukazi River | Mukazi River Ranch (Pvt) Ltd | Safari camp/hunting safaris | 11,457 |
| Senuko | Senuko Ranching (Pvt) Ltd & Savé Lodges (Pvt) Ltd | Safari camp | 24,120 |
| Levanga | Kingsbrook (Pvt) Ltd | Safari camp/hunting safaris | 13,040 |
| Masapas | Bateleurs Peak Farm Holdings (Pvt) Ltd | Building safari camp/hunting safaris | 15,437 |
| Mukwazi | Wenhope (Pvt) Ltd | Safari camps/hunting safaris | 12,549 |
| Hammond | Mid West Ranching Ltd, Nyerzi Safaris | Safari camp/hunting safaris | 12,109 |
| Potential | Agricultural and Rural Development Authority (ARDA) | Safari camp/hunting safaris | 12,146 |
| Mkwasine | Mkwasine Ranching Co. (Pvt) Ltd | Hunting safaris | 12,547 |
| Impala | Fair Range Estates (Pvt) Ltd | Safari camp/hunting safaris | 8,097 |
| Total | | | 373,017 |

* Alongside safari camps there are also often more sober hunting camps available. I have not distinguished between 'camp' and the often more luxurious 'lodge' as the line between them is too arbitrary to be of use in this general description.

** Only for directors, clients and guests of Pabst Holdings.

The physical features of the SVC are dominated by a gently undulating topography with scattered granite kopjes. The altitude varies from around 500 m in the south to around 600 m in the northwest extremity of the SVC. The highest hills and ranges rise up to 250 m above the flats, but most of them are around 100 m high. The vegetation of the SVC is dominated by mopane open woodland. Apart from the distinctive granite kopjes the landscape is characterised by many baobob trees which are a typical feature of the Lowveld.⁶⁰ The biggest baobab in Zimbabwe even seems to be located in the SVC, on Makore. It has a circumference of 27.61 metres and a height of twenty-one metres. It competes for the title of the largest baobab in Zimbabwe with another huge tree of the same species near Victoria Falls, which has to be permanently guarded to prevent tourists from damaging it by carving their names in its trunk. But its circumference is 'only approx 20 mts.'⁶¹ It is quite difficult to describe the landscape of the SVC as one landscape. The area encompasses several landscapes, which makes it such a beautiful place.⁶² There are stretches covered with mopane woods, but also open bushlands where huge termite mounds lend a distinctive character, riverine areas with big trees, natural pans with tall, thin malala palms, together with yellowish fever acacias and hilly countryside. And these types of vegetation are home to all kinds of mammals, many re-introduced in the area after the inception of the SVC, since they had been wiped out during the cattle years, and birds. There are many antelope like kudu, impala, and eland to be seen. There are giraffe, waterbuck, wildebeest, buffalo, zebra, nyala, greysbok, bushbuck, sable, warthogs, hippo, crocodile and of course the rhino to name just the better-known animals. There is also a healthy population of elephants in the SVC. It began with the elephants introduced on Humani. During and after the drought in 1991-1992 a huge group of 510 elephants, 130 in 1992 and 380 in 1993,⁶³ were translocated from nearby, overpopulated Gonarezhou National Park, where they were dying from lack of water.⁶⁴ As the

⁶⁰ It is no wonder that the logo of the SVC contains a baobab and a rhino, against the background of a setting sun.

⁶¹ Pp. 25, Tayler, D. (1992), The Largest Baobab, *The Hartebeest. The Magazine of the Lowveld Natural History Branch of the Wildlife Society of Zimbabwe*, 24th Edition.

⁶² This landscape has probably changed considerably since 1998 due to the political unrest in the country. Landinvasions went together with a lot of destruction of natural resources for instance through the chopping of trees and clearing of the land for buiding accommodation and preparing fields for cultivation (personal communication).

⁶³ Pp. 24, Tayler, D. (1993), Save Valley Happenings, *The Hartebeest. The Magazine of the Lowveld Natural History Branch of the Wildlife Society of Zimbabwe*, 25th Edition.

⁶⁴ Based on information from brochure from Senuko Safari Lodge.

SVC was traditionally land on which cattle were raised and cattle had to be watered daily, the SVC has a far better water development than Gonarezhou. The different properties comprising the SVC have pump stations in the Save and Mkwazine Rivers to deliver water to large water reservoirs, which in turn supply watering points for game all over the SVC.⁶⁵ In 1993 elephants were translocated in complete breeding herds, which was a world first. The SVC paid Z\$1000 per animal, regardless of size. The operation was made financially possible by funds made available by the US Department of Fisheries and Wildlife and Care for the Wild. The operation was carried out by Clem Coetsee of Wildlife Management Services.⁶⁶ His record catch for one day was thirty-two elephants. If everything went smoothly and transport was available, twenty-five could be moved per day.⁶⁷ As we have seen from the examples of rhino translocation to Humani described earlier and elephant translocation to the SVC, the relations between SVC and the DNPWLM were good and co-operative. The SVC also houses some species of predators, although there is no consensus yet among the members, about the species and numbers of predators that should be allowed in the SVC. In 1998 there is a healthy population of leopard, for which the SVC is specifically marketed to potential hunters,⁶⁸ and cheetah and hyena have returned and there is a nucleus of a lion population. Conservation-wise it is important to note that three to four packs of African wild dogs, or painted hunting dogs roam the SVC.⁶⁹ They occur only in Africa and the wild dog is an Appendix I endangered species on the CITES list. There are only some 5000 left on the continent. The SVC has fifty to sixty of them.⁷⁰ If you go to the bar at Senuko Safari Lodge there is a huge, very beautiful drawing of wild dogs by Lin Barrie, hung above the fireplace. Senuko also organised a special wild dog weekend in 1998 when the wild dogs were denning. As well as all this large wildlife there is also an abundance of species of birds, estimates of which range from 200⁷¹ to more than 400⁷² registered species of birds. The most

⁶⁵ Goodwin et al 1997: 248.

⁶⁶ Information taken from pp. 15, Putterill, G. (1993), Elephant Translocation - Gonarezhou, *The Hartebeest. The Magazine of the Lowveld Natural History Branch of the Wildlife Society of Zimbabwe*, 25th Edition. Since 1991 some 1600 animals have been brought into the SVC at a cost of approx. Z\$ 7.000.000 (Goodwin et al 1997: 254).

⁶⁷ Pp. 17, Havnar, P. (1993), Elephants on the Move - 1993 Translocation from Gonarezhou, *The Hartebeest. The Magazine of the Lowveld Natural History Branch of the Wildlife Society of Zimbabwe*, 25th Edition.

⁶⁸ Brochure Savé Valley Safaris & Roger Whittall Safaris.

⁶⁹ Goodwin et al 1997: 253; brochure Senuko Safari Lodge.

⁷⁰ Presentations on wild dogs during Annual General Meeting, 15 May 1998.

⁷¹ Brochure Savuli Safari.

common species to be seen are the southern yellow-billed hornbill and lilac-breasted roller and among the rare(r) birds seen in the SVC belong the Madagascar squacco heron and the bateleur eagle.

It is against this physical landscape and the office in a former police station that the constitution of the SVC describes its three objects:

- ‘To develop and maintain opportunities for the conservation and sustainable utilization of natural resources in the Conservancy area and its environs, through coordinated and mutually supportive action between landowners (...);
- To assist where possible in the attainment of national objectives for wildlife conservation, notably the protection and breeding of endangered species, in the hope that these species shall become components of a sustainable land-use system; however the conservation of endangered species within the Conservancy would not be necessarily dependent upon economic incentives (...);
- To promote bona fide research into ecological and economic aspects of natural resource management (both to guide the development of the Conservancy and to yield information of relevance to land-use in similar areas) and to develop monitoring systems appropriate to the needs of Conservancy management’.⁷³

The organisational structure of the SVC is simple and rather flat (see Figure 3).⁷⁴ The Chairman of the SVC is chosen every year at the Annual General Meeting (AGM), which takes place in May. Clive Stockil is Chairman of the SVC in 1998, a position he has held since May 1992. The first Chairman of the SVC was Derek Henning. The Chairman is mainly responsible for chairing the Conservancy Committee Meetings (CCM) and maintaining external relations with relevant institutions like the DNPWLM and the Veterinary Services in Harare. He is also responsible, if you can describe it that way, for keeping the coalition of landowners who form the SVC together, which is a pretty diplomatic task for there are many sensitive issues at stake about land (use) and decisions with long-term consequences for individual owners. The Conservancy Committee represents the twenty-four members, property owners, who are together forming the SVC. For the year 1998-1999 the Conservancy Committee consists of twelve members. They are chosen on a yearly base, also at the AGM. They have a meeting once a month. These meetings are held on a

⁷² Information sheet Senuko Safari Lodge.

⁷³ Constitution SVC, section 3, version 28 January 1997.

⁷⁴ Drawn for me by the Conservator, 4 June 1998.

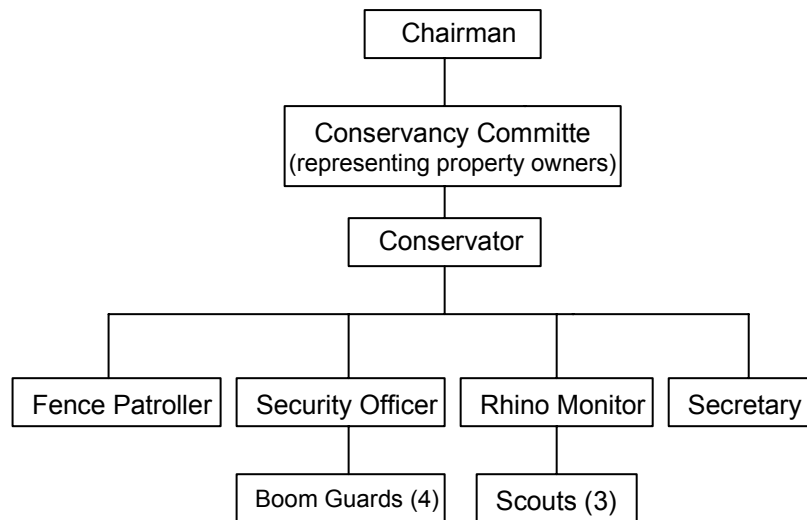


Figure 3: Organogram SVC
(Source: see footnote 74)

rotational base on the different properties in the SVC. Official minutes are taken at the CCM by the SVC Secretary, officially proposed for approval and secondment at the next CCM and thereafter signed by the Chairman, and kept in a minute book at the Conservancy Office. The Conservator is an important function as he represents the oil lubricating the works of the SVC. He is the Executive Official of the SVC.⁷⁵ He is actually the man 'on the spot' and has to arrange a thousand things all at once to keep all the different activities of the SVC on the road. He could be described as the liaison officer between the members of the SVC. His tasks are mainly concerned with the internal operations of the SVC itself. In contrast to the Chairman's responsibilities, he has no major external representational functions. There is no official job description for the Conservator but the present office-holder made one himself. His main tasks involve the inspection and maintenance of the perimeter fence, compiling fence reports through his fence patroller and liaising about the fence (maintenance) with the different property owners or their managers. His main aim is actually to keep the Veterinary Department in Harare satisfied. It sends someone to check on the status of the fence every year. If it ever finds anything wrong with the fence, like low voltage or breakages, the SVC can be in deep trouble,

⁷⁵ In 1998, the SVC had had one Conservator and one Field Co-ordinator since its launch in 1991. The current Conservator started in July 1994. Interview with Conservator, 4 June 1998.

because the Veterinary Department can come into the SVC, for instance, and shoot all the buffalo to prevent FMD from contaminating neighbouring cattle by escaping through a broken or malfunctioning fence. Before the inauguration of the SVC, it had already taken such measures once on Humani. This again was the situation in Zimbabwe in 1998. In 2001 the situation also with respect to this issue has been completely changed as poaching, fence cutting and land invasions have, literally and figuratively speaking, perforated the veterinary system in Zimbabwe almost completely. But in 1998 the situation was as I describe it here. As the SVC is a huge area, the length of the fence is accordingly, 313.5 km in total,⁷⁶ cutting straight through rough bushland and crossing rivers. It is a formidable challenge to keep it up to standard. The Conservator is also responsible for organising the CCMs, which implies sending out notices, compiling reports, taking the minutes and fitting together information that seems relevant to the Committee. He is in charge of the Security Officer and the Boom Guards. Another of his major tasks is related to the wildlife within the SVC. First and foremost working in tandem with his Security Officer he has to run the anti-poaching side of things, while also trying to earn money through wildlife by hunting. And wildlife cannot be just hunted. In order to hunt the different properties first need to be granted a hunting quota. In order to get this hunting quota, the wildlife has first to be counted. That is a tremendous task if one looks at the size of the SVC or even at the size of the different individual properties.

The Conservator does not have to do the game count himself but he assists the property owners in the task, collecting the data from the different owners and compiling these into a document for the yearly Quota Meeting. He has to collect information on hunting, like trophy sizes, numbers and so on, from the different properties to be sent to the DNPWLM for inspection and control. He is the primary liaison person for the WWF Rhino Programme, which also requires regular reporting. The scouts must report all sightings of individual rhinos in the SVC. These sightings must then all be recorded to the SVC Office which then has to enter them into spreadsheets, complete with time, place, condition, and which particular rhino it was. Every six months a report on the rhino monitoring has to be sent in to the DNPWLM. If ever there is a problem with a rhino, for instance causing difficulties with the fence or anything else, he must act to solve it. In between these major responsibilities, many smaller and ad hoc matters crop up. The Fence Patrol Officer, the Security Officer and Rhino Monitor are primarily responsible for gathering information in their specific fields and handle the common incidents themselves. In other cases they have to turn to the

⁷⁶ Information sheet at SVC Office, July 1998.

Conservator. The Secretary is there basically to assist the Conservator. Finally there are the Boom Guards and Scouts. The Boom Guards man and work the two booms of the SVC, Bravo I and Bravo II, in the south and north of the conservancy.⁷⁷ The boom must be operated twenty-four hours a day, which is done in shifts. The scouts are the eyes and ears of the Conservator in the field, especially for issues related to poaching and conservation.

One final aspect, which has to be described before I can start on the main themes dominating the attention of the SVC, is the financial obligations the members have towards the conservancy. There are basically two levies the members have to pay the SVC on a yearly base:

- Annual levy: to pay for the running costs of the SVC, amongst other things to keep the SVC Office going. The SVC tries to keep this levy to an absolute minimum by doing its best to generate profit-making enterprises within the SVC, like the selling of venison and firewood (although in October 1998, neither has worked out);
- Fence maintenance levy: to keep the perimeter fence up to required standard. I shall come back to this specific levy in discussing the main themes of the SVC.

On top of these two annual levies, the AGM can decide to add extra levies, although it is quite reluctant to do that too easily because as long as the SVC is not really making (much) profit, landowners are reluctant to continue and spend money on the SVC in the form of levies. Nevertheless, for the year 1998-1999 they added another three levies to the two mentioned above:

- Game levy: this is a levy paid into a restocking fund, which was established prior to the application for a loan at the International Finance Corporation (IFC) of the World Bank in 1998. It was decided at the Special General Meeting in October 1996 that the members would contribute to this fund on an equal footing. The contribution was set at Z\$ 10,- per acre;⁷⁸
- Fence upgrading levy: made necessary because of requirements from the Veterinary Department, following a FMD outbreak in the southwest corner of the SVC in 1997. The Department required that the SVC add veldspan to the already existing fence over a length of seventy km bordering Matsai Communal Land (see for a detailed account of this case Chapter 3);
- Repayment levy: the SVC applied for a (soft) loan from the IFC of the World Bank for US\$ 1,000,000. They did receive the loan, which they will

⁷⁷ The SVC has twenty-five, mostly locked, gates, excluding the pedestrian entrances. The two Bravos are guarded and opened day and night. Mukwazi and Mapari have a guard on permanent duty during the day. The other entrances are opened on occasions, interview with Conservator, 30 April 1998.

⁷⁸ Chairman's report to the AGM, 15 May 1998.

have to repay. The individual owners pay to the SVC a levy and it will start repaying the loan, because it is the legal entity that applied for it. It would not have been possible for the IFC to give a loan to all individual land-owners.

These disparate types of levies underline what seem to be important issues within the SVC, the restocking of the SVC and the maintenance of the fence. The restocking of the SVC is important because the opportunities of wildlife tourism cannot be fully exploited if the area is not sufficiently stocked with wildlife. 'But some pigs are more equal than others' to cite George Orwell's *Animal Farm*, and the SVC is particularly keen on reintroducing buffalo for hunting purposes, because it is the most wanted trophy among the African Big Five, that is, rhino, elephant, leopard, buffalo and lion, and thus the most financially lucrative option in wildlife tourism. Just to emphasise that the importance of the fence cannot be overestimated let me repeat just once again that to be allowed to keep buffalo, the area has to be securely fenced to prevent the animals from spreading the dreaded FMD. If the Veterinary Service is not satisfied with the fence, which it checks once a year, it is in a position to shoot all the buffalo. For that reason the SVC considers the related issues of fence and restocking (buffalo) to be of prime importance if it is actually to make wildlife a viable land-use option. This again has a direct bearing on possibilities for organisational co-operation with neighbouring communities. On the horns of a dilemma the SVC needs to earn money in order to be able to invest in the organisational co-operation, for which means that the buffalo and the fence are important not only to the SVC, but indirectly also to the neighbouring communities. But the fence is literally and symbolically a major obstacle to the communities in their relationship with the SVC, because it demarcates the appropriation of the land and prevents their utilisation of it. In the next section I shall discuss these two issues of the SVC in more detail.

Main themes within the SVC related to organisational co-operation with neighbouring communities

The main themes of the SVC are primarily derived from a systematic analysis of the minutes of the CCM taken, since it was launched in 1991. During my fieldwork in Zimbabwe in 1998 I was allowed to attend the CCMs for observation. For a general introduction I want to give a short description of the ritual of an at random CCM I attended in 1998. It is a typical example of the way the SVC handles its CCM. The way they organise such meetings has probably not changed since the inception of the SVC as can be concluded from the same words, which are reiterated after every CCM, only the location and thus the

people responsible vary: ‘The Chairman said he would like to thank Mr. And Mrs. Whittall for their excellent lunch and for the use of their facilities (...)’.⁷⁹ Whatever property was chosen to host the CCM, the trip to the property always began by travelling a longer or shorter distance along Humani Road, which stretches right from south to north through the SVC.⁸⁰ Somewhere down the road you then have to turn left or right, depending to which property you have to go, in The North or in The South, in order to reach the homestead or safari camp, where the CCM usually takes place. The CCM always commences at nine o’clock, which means that if the meeting is in The North, people have to set out some one and a half to two hours in advance. At that time usually all sorts of wildlife crosses the road, like impala, kudu, wildebeest, zebra and so on, in a beautiful early sunlight. The CCM is opened at nine o’clock and continues straight away and without interruption for drinks or anything else till the agenda has been gone through, which is usually between twelve and one o’clock. Then lunch is served. Most CCM members stay for lunch, some leave if they have other business to attend to. During the dry season the meetings usually take place in a shaded area in the garden if it is a homestead or under a shelter in a safari camp. This means that there is always a chorus of ‘noise’ from wildlife and/or domesticated animals. When the CCM was held at Savuli Safari Camp, some twenty fruitbats were hanging upside down in a tree just outside the shelter where the meeting took place. On the small but steep hills on the other side of a small pond facing the camp, there was a group of baboons, probably settling some sort of hierarchical dispute, a process which was accompanied by a crescendo of barking and quick charges creating clouds of dust. Let me give a description of a typical CCM against this background. ‘Again a meeting in the north of the SVC, at the same turnoff as the CCM in May. The reception is always nice with tea and coffee and in this case also nice homemade muffins. I was (jokingly) welcomed by the Financial Secretary of the SVC with the words: ‘are you coming again to spy on us’? The setting is the same as the May CCM, with the Chairman and minute-taker sitting behind a table with a table cloth and the members sitting before them like an audience [watching a film]. [Everything outside in the garden]. The atmosphere during the meeting is informal and jovial but they also speak out their minds very straightforwardly and during discussion they do not address each other directly but through the Chairman, officially calling him Mr. Chairman [as if he is a satellite sending the sound waves through to the other members]. This is in

⁷⁹ Minutes CCM, 12 November 1991.

⁸⁰ Humani Road is actually a public road. So, although it runs through private properties, the SVC is not allowed to close it to any ordinary traffic wanting to drive over it. That is also why it must be kept open for twenty-four hours a day.

sharp contrast to the strict informal use of first names right from the moment of being introduced to each other. In conversations between whites they use some typically white Zimbabwean terminology, like the frequent use of 'eeh man' or 'I tell you', or 'I hear what you say, but...'. One of the other 'trademarks' of their conversations is the use of nodding with their head in combination with a slight closing of the eyes, to indicate a place or location elsewhere and far away. In general there is what I would call a masculine atmosphere, with members telling each other male coterie stories about encounters or incidents, which happened to them 'one day'. Many members of the CCM smoke heavily, almost all only cigarettes, mostly Madison. The most common beer brands they drink (in the bar and sometimes during the lunch following the CCM) are Castle, Hunters, Bohlinger or Pilsener. Zambesi ('Zimbabwe's own Larger' as it is advertised) is not often drunk. [The Chairman allows the discussion free to run without much interference or direct manipulations on his part, but gives a clear and good summary at the end linked to a sense of direction for the decision needed]. It is at these meetings that the main themes within the SVC are discussed and take shape.⁸¹

The fence

The SVC and the DNPWLM are well acquainted with each other.⁸² The Chairman of the SVC used to be an active and well-respected Honorary Officer of the Department and the SVC, and Humani in earlier years, who had pioneered successfully in the field of translocation of rhino and elephant. The top management of the DNPWLM, Nduku and Martin, were sympathetic to the idea of rhino conservancies turning into full-time wildlife utilisation. There was a positive exchange between SVC and the DNPWLM. There were also positive relations between the Veterinary Department and the SVC. And the top rungs of these three organisations communicated on a regular basis in the early days of the SVC. One of the meetings in 1991-1992 was of particular importance to the later development of the SVC. Both the directors of the Veterinary Department and of the DNPWLM were present and spoke on behalf of their departments.⁸³ It was an official meeting in Harare and minutes were taken. At that meeting the

⁸¹ Description from fieldnotes 10 June 1998. Between brackets is from fieldnotes from another CCM, 6 May 1998.

⁸² Information in this section is take from interview with the Chairman of the SVC, 8 July 1998.

⁸³ The Veterinary Department does not fall under the DNPWLM, but is a department of its own, under the Ministry of Agriculture.

director of the DNPWLM, Nduku, promised the SVC a 1000 buffalo per year to be available for sale over a period of three years, totalling 3000 buffalo. Conditional for the sale of the buffalo was the erection of a 'buffalo fence' around the SVC. The director of the Veterinary Department, Hargreaves, promised its cooperation in formulating the criteria for the erection of the fence. Although minutes of the meeting were never received at the SVC, they went ahead and began to erect a fence.⁸⁴

The fence had to be a double fence.⁸⁵ An outer fence, which is called a perimeter game fence, and an inner, so-called buffalo fence. The outer fence was funded by the Beit Trust, through the WWF (Z\$ 1.2 million), and the inner fence by the landowners themselves (Z\$ 3 million). A general problem within the SVC is that not all properties are equal in size, especially not in relation to the length of the fence running over their property. Some have large properties but these do not border the outside and so they do not need much fencing. Some properties are small(er), but because of their position within the SVC, adjoining the Communal Lands, need much fencing. To spread the costs of the fence equally the SVC took the then total acreage of the SVC (845,000 acres) and divided it by the complete length of the fence (345 km).⁸⁶ This led to a figure of 0.4 km of fence per acre. Every 10,000 acres had to fund four km of fencing. All landowners could now pay pro rata, that is, per unit, for the erection of the fences. Both fences have to be constructed according to strict specifications from the Veterinary Department.⁸⁷ The game fence must have a minimum height of 1.9 metres and should contain ten strands of wire. The standards (at least fifteen cm Ø) must be twelve metres apart, with droppers (nineteen-twenty-five mm Ø) every metre. There must be two positive and two earth electrified strands situated no less than twenty-five cm above the ground (lower) and one metre (upper) The minimum voltage should be five KV, that is, 5000 volts. The fence must be patrolled on a daily base, and breaks should be repaired immediately. Every twenty km of fence should have one patrol officer. The buffalo fence must have a minimum height of 1.2 meters and should contain six strands of wire (high-tensile steel (2.25 mm of 2.36 mm gauge or barbed wire). The

⁸⁴ Conversation with Chairman of the SVC, 1 October 1998.

⁸⁵ This section is based on interview with Conservator, 23 April 1998.

⁸⁶ This length had to be changed when Hammond joined the SVC. Hammond was bought by Schenk, an American and old hunting client of Roger Whittall. The length of the fence became 313.5 km. The entrance to the conservancy had also to be removed from Senuko to Hammond, just past the bridge over the Mkwazine River. They were in the process of constructing the new boom, with appropriate accommodation for the boom guards, in October 1998.

⁸⁷ Attachment to minutes Fence Meeting, 25 February 1996: Standards of fencing as prescribed by Department of Veterinary Services.

standards must be seven metres apart and sunk 'at least' one metre into the ground, and a dropper (eighteen cm Ø) every half metre. Straining posts to support the fence may not be further apart than 400 metres. The fence must have one electric wire, 800 mm above the ground. The voltage and patrolling are the same requirements as pertaining to the game fence. The buffalo fence should at least be 7,5 meters away from the game fence. The area in between must be kept clear at all times, up to a distance of one metre on the outsides. The SVC employs one fence patrol officer. He circumnavigates the complete fence twice a month on a bicycle and reports to the Conservator on the general condition of the fence, and he pays specific attention to the voltage. The Conservator puts this information in a monthly fence report.⁸⁸ The day-to-day maintenance, repairs and control is the responsibility of the individual properties, which employ fence guards for this purpose. The fence report started in the beginning of 1996 with two patrol officers who reported separately every month, but this actually gave too much information to put on a spreadsheet twice a month. The Conservator himself tries to inspect the complete fence twice a year, but in practice only manages to do so once a year. He does the tour on a motorbike in between the fences, checking voltage and general condition at random. It takes a few days to complete the tour and he camps overnight in a tent. The fence patrol officers have two sheets: one the general 'fence inspection record sheet' in which they fill in the most basic of information about date, position, time and comments about the two fences, especially about their voltage, four wires all together, and the grass under and in between the fences. There is also a more extensive sheet which is called the 'fence breaks and animals seen questionnaire'. It is specifically designed to find out if there are any buffaloes or other wildlife, roaming in the vicinity of the fence and if these caused any damage to the fence, or even worse, if they left the SVC. Should buffaloes escape, this must be reported to the local and provincial Veterinary Officer, within twenty-four hours. It also asks questions about how much livestock from the communal and resettlement areas is seen in the SVC. This is because FMD not only breaks out when wildlife, that is, buffalo, gets out of the SVC, but also when cattle wander into the SVC and having grazed go out again,

⁸⁸ I was never allowed to see any monthly fence report, because they are 'fairly sensitive' the reason being 'some landowners perform better than others'. A few fence reports though slipped through 'the security system' as they were part of material I was given at a Conservancy Committee Meeting. Going through them you can see that voltage and grass under and in between the fences are the major problems. The fence report lists all the properties and reports on the status of their fences and maintenance.

always with the danger that they take FMD with them. To make that perfectly clear, the questionnaire ends by saying: *'The fence guard must be told that:*

1. If the fence is broken so that a buffalo can get out of the Conservancy, this must be closed immediately and reported to the manager/landowner as soon as possible.
2. If buffalo ever get out of the Conservancy this must be reported immediately to the manager/landowner and the Conservancy.
3. If cattle ever come into the Conservancy, this must be reported immediately to the manager/landowner and the Conservancy. The cattle must be driven straight away to the headquarters and put in a secure enclosure.
4. Whenever there is any kind of break in the fence, it must be repaired immediately, if it is not possible to close it because some tools or materials are need then it must be closed with thorn bush and repaired as soon as possible'.⁸⁹

That this fear for FMD is not exaggerated, and that it also has a tremendous influence on the organisational co-operation between SVC and neighbouring communities although not even explicitly mentioned, was proven in 1997, when there was an outbreak of FMD in the southwest corner of the SVC, in the Matsai Communal Area. The outbreak occurred on Mukwazi Ranch in August 1997 and was used by the neighbouring communities as a vehicle to present all the grievances built up over the years, going back to the alienation of their land as 'commercial land'. It is also a case which clearly shows all the major ingredients presented as crucial to understanding the relations between SVC and neighbouring communities in this book, namely hunting, land and fences in a context of reciprocal exchange. As this chapter focuses on the internal affairs and main themes of the SVC, this case will not be presented here but in Chapter 3 in which I describe and analyse the relation between SVC and neighbouring communities in terms of reciprocal exchange.

To control the spread of FMD the Veterinary Department has divided Zimbabwean territory into five zones:

- Clear Zones / EC Offtake Area: cattle from this zone is meant for export to the countries of the EC. They go to specific abattoirs for slaughter and then proceed to Europe;
- Clear Zone / No-Offtake Area: all other clear areas;
- Green or Buffer Zone: the zone between Red and Clear zones. Here cattle is permitted to move within the zone or to the red zone, or to abattoirs of the CSC for slaughter. Cattle here are not vaccinated against FMD. The zone is

⁸⁹ 'Fence breaks and animals seen questionnaire', SVC. Italics in original.

bounded by cattlefences which are patrolled and maintained by the Department of Veterinary Services. No buffalo are allowed in this zone;

- Red Zone or Vaccinated Zone: this zone is in between a Buffer Zone and a wildlife area. Cattle are allowed to move within the zone or to the abattoirs of the CSC. Again no buffalo allowed in the zone;
- Wildlife Zone: the areas falling under the DNPWLM, that is, National Parks and Safari Areas, and Forest Land. Some commercial farms in Masvingo Province and Matabeleland North are also included as is some communal land in the latter;
- If there is a FMD outbreak Veterinary Services can impose three other categories on land: Buffalo Presence Areas, FMD-infected and Quarantined Areas, and FMD Areas.

Over and above this control and division of areas, the DVS also controls the movement of animals. Here they make a distinction between:

- Controlled species which may not be moved without a DVS permit: buffalo, wildebeest, warthog and bushpig;
- Cloven-hoofed animals, including all Artiodactyls not mentioned above;
- Other species, which include elephant, zebra, rhino, hippo, ostriches and other birds, crocodiles and other reptiles.⁹⁰

The DVS has to be very strict about these rules and regulations as export to the EC is at stake and Zimbabwe is a beef exporter. Many cattle farmers who export to the EC are located in Masvingo Province. These farmers were not happy to see a wildlife area of such huge size created next to their cattle operations, and have followed the fencing of the SVC with great care. They even went with the DVS official who came to inspect and control the fence after completion.⁹¹

The SVC itself is categorised as a Red Zone because of the buffalo and is surrounded by several other categories of DVS. On the eastern boundary it borders a Red Zone. In the south the SVC is within a Buffer Zone, because of the proximity of Gonarezhou National Park. To the north and west it borders clear zones, which in turn are the bordering areas of the FMD Free Zones, where cattle are reared for export. Export zones for cattle in Zimbabwe are concentrated in the centre (with an extension to the southern Masvingo Province), north and north east of the country.⁹² The outbreak in 1997 occurred

⁹⁰ Attwell 1998: 30, 32-33.

⁹¹ Minutes CCM, 7 march 1995.

⁹² Information from Veterinary Services Office, Chiredzi, 21 May 1998. One can imagine how this veterinary security system has been broken down in the political turmoil in Zimbabwe as a result of all the farm invasions, fence cutting and poaching.

on the southwestern boundary of the SVC, on a property previously falling under Angus, part of Devuli Ranch, bordering a Clear Zone.

The SVC fence and the urge to hunt

In the previous section the fence featured prominently in its function of preventing the spread of FMD between red and clear zones, in this case corresponding with commercial and communal land. Although the fence was primarily erected for veterinary reasons, the construction has hardly ever been considered in that specific context by the SVC members. The fence was perceived in relation to its ultimate function, first of keeping the rhino in the conservancy by a single perimeter fence, but very soon after that, of making it possible to (re)introduce buffalo which ‘unfortunately’ required a double fence to prevent the spread of FMD in the SVC for hunting purposes. It was their wish to reintroduce buffalo and therefore they had no option but to erect the fence. At that level the SVC had mainly to negotiate with the DVS for the fence and the DNPWLM for the buffalo. So let us return again to the beginning of the SVC in 1991, the year it were formally inaugurated as a rhino conservancy. To be a rhino conservancy it (only) needed a single perimeter fence, with no heavy interference from or control by the DVS. It is interesting to note that none of the members of the SVC at that stage really had clear ideas about how to erect a fence, what materials to use and how to organise the operation. So in the first CCM there was discussion about the materials that should be used for standards and droppers. One point up for discussion, for instance, was that landowners and managers wondered if steel standards would be better for the fence than wooden ones, because the white ants would surely find them (and destroy them) and they needed constant, strict maintenance. But the Rhino Executant said that field trials in Botswana had learned that steel standards are ineffectual as they ‘did not penetrate deep enough into the moist sub-soil to significantly increase the earthing current’.⁹³ And what droppers should you use? Wooden ones need to be replaced fairly often. And what type of wire? Barbed or plain? And if every landowner/manager were to be responsible for building his own fence, would it be according to uniform standards or could everyone decide for himself? When they agreed on the material, the next question was where to order it.⁹⁴ Prices of steel, for instance, rose steep in November 1991, with an estimated increase of 80% to 90%. Who had old prices and what were the

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Minutes CCM 12 November 1991.

delivery conditions? Would it be held in general stock in the SVC or on the different properties? In 1992 the first Conservator of the SVC resigned because he was fed up with the slow progress, first that of the fence but that of the SVC in general. Thwarted by the slow progress he could not see any future in the project and he 'was frustrated over the enormity of the poaching problem' especially in a context in which communication was a major problem.⁹⁵ He was succeeded by a field co-ordinator and work on the fence continued.

It was at this time that the first inklings of making it not just a rhino conservancy but to go beyond this and make wildlife pay for itself began to be mooted. The Chairman told the Committee that 'he had paid a visit to the Sabi Sands Conservancy which borders onto the Kruger National Park in South Africa (...) He said the Sabi Sands area was very similar in its makeup to that of the Save Conservancy. The Sabi Sands Conservancy was founded by a group of private ranchers, who gave up their cattle because of the poor rainfall and veld conditions in the area, and turned to game. He said they were making a vast profit (...) (The Chairman) proposed that the Conservancy be turned into a total wildlife block with all the internal fences removed and to have the big game species brought back into the area'. To make the carrot even more attractive he said that he had heard that 300-500 buffalo would be culled in Gonarezhou and that he preferred them to be brought into the SVC. For that reason he had paid a visit to the DVS, in the company of Roger Whittall, and the DVS had 'stipulated that the cattle had to be removed from the area, and a strong fence along its boundaries'.⁹⁶ If all the landowners could be convinced about this specific future for the SVC, the fencing would become a far stricter project. The final decision about the future of the SVC could be taken at the AGM in May, which was scheduled to be held, where else would be better for symbolic reasons, on Humani. At the next CCM the Chairman could tell the Committee that members both in the north and south of the SVC were supportive of the idea. The next item on the agenda was to order a feasibility study on the project, which was decided upon.⁹⁷ But first it had to be officially decided at the AGM. 7 May 1992, 'all members agreed that if the feasibility study proved that wildlife was more viable than cattle, they were prepared to go into a game-only operation'. The head of DNPWLM was also present at the AGM and said that 'he would give the Conservancy the necessary input of game'.⁹⁸ In anticipation (and expectation) of a positive outcome of the feasibility study, the process of fencing could continue, but now it had to focus on a buffalo fence, which

⁹⁵ Minutes CCM, 14 April 1992.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Minutes CCM 12 November 1991.

⁹⁸ Minutes AGM, 7 May 1992.

implied a plethora of consultation with the DVS, which would be the final institution to approve of the fence. First there were 'smaller' questions to be answered. Would the buffalo be held in a confined area within the SVC or would they roam freely all over the SVC? Would a single buffalo-proof perimeter fence be sufficient? They decided that one well kept and electrified perimeter fence would be sufficient for the SVC.⁹⁹ The buffalo could be bought from the DNPWLM, that is, Gonarezhou for Z\$ 100,-, excluding capture and transport.¹⁰⁰ But unfortunately in January 1993, it was reported that the DVS, in the person of its director, was 'not prepared to consider a standard [single] fence' as perimeter fence for the SVC. The DVS would visit the SVC and would give recommendations 'on a minimum standard of a fence' which became a double fence as described above. While this was underway the CCM considered reaching out to the communities to inform them about the SVC and possible community projects.¹⁰¹ In the meantime the feasibility study was still not finished,¹⁰² but nevertheless the SVC forged on. It was working on the buffalo fence and expected it to be ready by August 1993.¹⁰³ Unfortunately in July it had to be reported to the CCM that, especially in the south of the SVC, they were not going to make the deadline of August and they asked for an alternative plan. Matter of factly it was also reported that the DNPWLM was probably going to be made a parastatal and if it succeeded, they would have 'to manage their resources from an economic point of view'. The far-reaching consequences this would have for the relations between SVC and Parks, and the availability of buffalo, could not yet be envisioned.¹⁰⁴ The fence was not finished in August, five properties had still to do their bit, but the SVC still wanted the buffalo. Therefore they erected bomas to put them in for the time being. But the bomas had to be inspected by the DVS first before they could let the buffalo come in.¹⁰⁵ At that stage no one was under any illusion that the fence would not become a bone of contention between the landowners and the SVC. The SVC could not go ahead if all landowners did not shoulder their part of the work. In November it was stated that once the buffalo were approved a final date would be set for the completion of the fence. If landowners or their managers did not manage to keep the deadline, the SVC would do the job and would charge the

⁹⁹ Minutes CCM, 22 June 1992.

¹⁰⁰ Minutes CCM, 1 July 1992.

¹⁰¹ Minutes CCM, 5 January 1993.

¹⁰² Minutes CCM, 22 February 1993.

¹⁰³ Minutes CCM, 8 June 1993.

¹⁰⁴ Minutes CCM, 1 July 1993.

¹⁰⁵ Minutes CCM, 9 September 1993.

landowner later.¹⁰⁶ By March 1994, the buffalo fence was still not finished in terms of electrification. In the north alone some thirty-six km of electrification had yet to be finished. The game fence was already in place. In the south the situation was not much better. Again the CCM threatened that it would do the fencing if the landowner would not take his responsibility, and bill him afterwards. A firm deadline was decided upon: the fence, both game and buffalo, had to be ready by 31 May 1994!¹⁰⁷ However, in April a representative from the DVS did an initial informal check on the fence and came to the conclusion that he was 'not impressed with the fences in general and got the impression the Conservancy was not serious about getting buffalo'. The permission to be allocated buffalo was postponed (again).¹⁰⁸ In August the CCM reports that the bomas for the buffalo were ready for inspection by the DVS, despite the fact that the perimeter and buffalo fence were still not up to standard.¹⁰⁹

In the minutes of October it is reported that the buffalo had arrived but with regard to the fence, things had still not changed for the better and, rather desperately, the CCM stated that 'all members of the Conservancy who do not have their fences (both game and buffalo) complete by 31 October will be charged for all feed for the buffalo while they are kept in the bomas'.¹¹⁰ But again, in November, the sad conclusion had to be drawn: new deadline of 30 November will not be met, as twelve (!) properties have still not did have the fences erected up to standard nor had all the properties discarded their cattle¹¹¹ and they ended the year with the fence still incomplete.¹¹² In 1995 the struggle continued. Buffaloes were held in bomas but could not be released either because of an incomplete fence and because there were (even) still cattle around on different properties. The Cattle Producers Association (CPA) was following the activities of the SVC with respect to the fencing very closely and undoubtedly heard the rumours about the difficulties with regard to the fence. At the beginning of 1995, it was announced that the DVS would inspect the fence by the end of February and that, a few weeks before that date, the Conservator will do a pre-inspection, which would give the SVC 'time to iron out any problems'.¹¹³ The biggest problem seems to have been to obtain the minimum of five KV on the electrics. Although the fence receives the most attention in

¹⁰⁶ Minutes CCM, 17 November 1993.

¹⁰⁷ Minutes CCM, 15 March 1994.

¹⁰⁸ Minutes CCM, 11 April 1994.

¹⁰⁹ Minutes CCM, 25 August 1994.

¹¹⁰ Minutes CCM, 4 October 1994.

¹¹¹ Minutes CCM, 9 November 1994.

¹¹² Minutes CCM, 13 December 1994.

¹¹³ Minutes CCM, 12 January 1995.

relation to animals, the fact that the government was looking to the SVC to check if it kept its promises with regard to helping the communities was not overlooked.¹¹⁴ By now tension was rising in the SVC, as the final inspection of the DVS was approaching apace. It hired two persons who would do weekly inspections on the state of the fence in the north and in the south of the SVC. In response to the critical questions posed by the government a Liaison Officer was attracted and employed for one month (!) to pay attention to the community relations.¹¹⁵ He was not hired directly by the SVC, but by the Trust which the SVC had created for this purpose. An extensive description of the development of the Trust will be given in the next chapter. Sufficient for now is to note that the creation of the function of Liaison Officer and the creation of the Trust were taking place at the same time that the fence was reaching its completion. This was partly in answer to the critical monitoring of the government, but was also a response to the fact that several communities had already protested about the location and erection of the buffalo fence. Luckily for the SVC the DVS was delayed and announced that it would only be able to come for inspection by mid-March.¹¹⁶ This was also the time, the DNPWLM placed a temporary ban on the movement of buffalo, but the chairman of the SVC declared that the decision was in no way linked to conservancies, 'but purely [had to do with] inhouse fighting at the parks head office' and there was a 'feeling that the issue will resolve sooner rather than later'. The fence inspection finally took place on 30 May and landowners signed agreements about the maintenance of the fence and a statement that all their cattle were off their property. With this in hand the

¹¹⁴ Minutes CCM, 8 February 1995.

¹¹⁵ The Community Liaison Officer was financed with money from the Beit Trust (pp. 10, Du Toit, R. (1998), Case study of policies that support sustainable development in Africa: the Savé valley Conservancy, Zimbabwe, Paper presented at the Scandinavian seminar college workshop on *An African Perspective of Policies which Support Sustainable Development*, Harare, 28-30 September). Later, August 1995, he would be financed with the same money, but this time it went through the Trust, especially created by the SVC to relate to the communities. It is symbolically meaningful to note that the same Beit Trust which helped to separate the SVC from its communities through financing the fence, also financed 'the bridge', that is, Liaison Officer, (also no coincidence, as it also financed Birchenough Bridge!) between the two. Another meaningful observation is that as soon as the Trust was created in August of that same year, the Liaison Officer was attached to the trust and to the SVC. So in fact he is working for the communities, within the context of the SVC. The contrast between two fence patrol officers for 345 km of fences and one Liaison Officer for one month for 119,000 people in the five surrounding districts is a striking one to note in terms of priorities!

¹¹⁶ Minutes CCM, 7 March 1995.

director of the DVS could sign and issue the release for the buffalo.¹¹⁷ This took another two months to complete and only in August 1995 could the DVS say that they had ‘received the fax containing signatures from all landowners saying that all cattle had been removed from the conservancy’. There was a fly in the ointment as by this time the DVS was already expressing its concerns that ‘the agreement entered into by the landowners and the veterinary department would not be adhered to and fences will not be maintained as specified’. It took some quite convincing rhetoric on the part of the chairman to convince the DVS that the fence would be properly maintained. Still the DVS wanted quarterly reports and periodic blood testing to keep records of the developments with regard to FMD. With these assurances ‘the chairman was very pleased to present the official release permit for the buffalo. ALL BUFFALO CAN BE RELEASED AS OF 2nd AUGUST 1995’.¹¹⁸ He did not say that the fence was approved, but implied that by this specific formulation. The fence was seen purely in the light of a function to make the buffalo possible in the SVC. Priorities in this respect are very clear.

Building a fence is one thing, but maintaining it presented the SVC with its own particular problems. It seems that the maintenance remained a struggle, if we are to believe the words of the Conservator that the fence is ‘the bane of my [his] life’.¹¹⁹ No wonder that I was not allowed to see the fence reports. The main problems seem to be the grass growing under and between the fences, areas which should be kept clear according to the regulations, and the voltage. As early as 25 February 1995, a special Fence Meeting was held on Humani to try and sort out the difficulties with the fence and to explain once more the idea of a fence levy introduced at the AGM in 1995. The basic idea was that every property was responsible for its own fence maintenance, but also paid an annual fence levy of Z\$ 0.90 per acre. This levy then created a fund with which the SVC could maintain the fence in case the property not be keeping its fence up to the required veterinary standards. If a landowner maintained his fence properly would be reimbursed at the end of the year per kilometre of fence for which he was responsible. The owners who did not do a proper job on the fence would receive a reimbursement minus the costs of the job done by the SVC. He also informed the members that a ‘risk assessment team’ would visit the SVC, the DVS was obviously still not sure about the fulsome promises of the SVC to ‘access the cost benefits of buffalo in situations such as ours and the possibilities and risks of the spread of Foot and Mouth Disease’. The DVS had warned the SVC about the serious consequences of the team’s findings in the sense that

¹¹⁷ Minutes CCM, 28 June 1995.

¹¹⁸ Minutes CCM, 2 August 1995. Emphasis in original.

¹¹⁹ Conversation with Conservator, 23 September 1998.

if there were problems with the fence, the outcome of the assessment could mean that there never would be any further problems, as, ‘with no buffalo, there will be no need for the buffalo fence’. This special meeting ended with a full report on all the fences.¹²⁰ The risk assessment team came in at the beginning of 1997 and in June the results were received by the CCM, which were ‘better than expected, [but] there was still some concern on the maintenance, monitoring and action thereof’. Rather prophetically there was the observation of the team that maybe impala jumping out of the SVC were a greater risk for spreading FMD than were buffalo.¹²¹ At the same meeting the fence maintenance was discussed once more but ‘this matter was not resolved’.¹²²

In 1998 the fence maintenance costs are estimated on figures from 1996-1997. The figures are based on responses from ranches, asked to give financial details on their fence maintenance.¹²³ The response was not particularly high, and of the total length of approx. 345 km they only received figures representing 116,3 km. Out of these figures came a calculated cost per annum of Z\$ 2210 per kilometre of fence. The costs are structured as follows per km / per annum in Z\$:

| | |
|--|---------------|
| • Labour costs (these include tractor driver, herbicide team (incidental), fence guards (permanent). A fence guard earns approx. Z\$ 510, - per month) : | 1327,- |
| • Tractor costs (to operate between the fences): | 331,- |
| • Herbicides (to keep clear between fences): | 92,- |
| • Material (for reparation of the fences): | 385,- |
| • Other: | 75,- |
| Total: Z\$ | 2210,- |

Despite the special Fence Meeting and the report of the risk assessment team, maintenance of the fences remained a problem. The DVS is constantly threatening the SVC that it will wield ‘the big stick’,¹²⁴ that is, come in and shoot the buffalo if the SVC is not maintaining its fences properly. One of the problems with the conservancy concept in this respect is that it is a voluntary association of landowners which leaves the individual properties a great deal of leeway.

¹²⁰ Minutes Fence Meeting, 25 February 1996.

¹²¹ Conservator’s report, June 1997; compare with outbreak of FMD later in the year on Mukwazi in chapter 3.

¹²² Minutes CCM, 25 June 1997.

¹²³ Interview with Conservator 30 April 1998. The maintenance costs for 1998 were based on reporting on only 82 km of fence.

¹²⁴ Minutes CCM, 12 February 1997.

And the conservancy does not have much, if any real, sanction to force the individual members to live up to their promises. One 'escape' the SVC pursued was that it told the individual landowners and their managers that the DVS had sent it a letter stating that the DVS would hold the SVC, instead of the different properties, responsible for the maintenance of the fence, which would mean too much administrative hassle. Now the SVC, legitimised by the letter of the DVS, could interfere directly in the fence maintenance programme or lack thereof of the individual properties. If such a letter ever really came is a matter of surmise.¹²⁵ The SVC and CCM can only try to persuade the different properties to comply. For the maintenance a single double row of fencing gives problems. The fence levy did not solve the problem because in the end many landowners did not pay it,¹²⁶ because there were those with a large acreage but with a relatively short fence, which meant that they still had to pay a fair amount and could be modestly reimbursed. And visa versa, there are those with small acreage but with a long fence who could expect a healthy sum as reimbursement. At one stage they thought of abandoning the idea of a levy altogether but the DVS was so much on their backs the vice-chairman told the CCM in May 1998, stating that it was 'sick and tired' of the casual attitude of the landowners to the fence,¹²⁷ especially after the outbreak of FMD in 1997. Under the circumstances its only option was to keep up the levy to show its commitment to the fence issue, which it did for the financial year of 1998-1999.¹²⁸ No matter what it did to try and organise it, the fence continued to be a problem right through 1998. In September I went with the Conservator to have a look at the upgrading of the fence on Mukwazi. On our way back, the Conservator made random checks on the voltage of the fences, which was simply not present. We also came across fairly loose hanging wires instead of tight, straight ones, plus brittle droppers and high grass. These observations were revealing, as this is certainly not the most difficult stretch of fence to maintain in the SVC.¹²⁹

All this goes to show ineluctably that the fence is a major issue within the SVC. It is a big issue because there is a strict veterinary requirement about keeping buffalo within bounds. And buffalo it wants, to be able to hunt them.

¹²⁵ Conversation with Conservator, 23 September 1998.

¹²⁶ 'As will be discussed under finances, \$150,000 out of \$ 273,000 of the fence maintenance levy has NOT been paid'. Minutes CCM, 9 April 1997.

¹²⁷ CCM, 6 May 1998.

¹²⁸ Interview with Conservator 30 April 1998.

¹²⁹ Personal observations, 23 September 1998. I had already made similar observations on another occasion in another part of the SVC when I was travelling in the north of the SVC with the Liaison Officer and we, completely at random, visited a stretch of fencing near the Devure River. Here the fence was riddled with large holes, which had been stuffed fairly loosely with some thorny branches, 28 May 1998.

The SVC wants them to hunt because the Price Waterhouse feasibility study indicated (ex-post) that buffalo would make the wildlife operation economically viable. The buffalo forms part of a broader restocking plan of the SVC. So for that reason the fence assume a primary importance for the SVC for the simple reason that it wants to be able to have buffalo to hunt. Although what has just been said could lead one to think that not everybody in the SVC seems serious, determined and fully committed to the project. The reasons for the attitudes of the different properties can only be guessed. It was noticed in the CCM at a certain stage that the landowners had 'different agendas' in relation to the creation of the SVC.¹³⁰ The light-hearted attitude with which some property owners seem to treat the fence issue, and the fact that the seriousness has to be stressed over and over again reinforces this general image. Then it can be observed that the power and authority of the SVC over the landowners is more theoretical, that is, in the constitution, than practical. Although the SVC threatens the landowners it will charge them and so forth, this step has never been taken. Not because there was no inducement, but because it would probably put the coalition in jeopardy. The fence is a perfect illustration of the strengths and weaknesses of the integration of the SVC. Thirdly, the broader context, it can be noted that having committed itself to the financial investment in the fence, the SVC also reached a financial point of no return. Should a property leave the SVC now, it would cost the owner a wad of money to fence itself out in the first place and after that re-fence the property, not only outwardly towards the communal areas, but also in relation to neighbouring properties. Furthermore, he would still have to pay and round off his financial obligations to the SVC for earlier investments, like the restocking levy. So the fence is a strong indication about the internal functioning and operation of the SVC. But as I shall show in the next chapter in describing the reciprocal exchange between SVC and neighbouring communities in several different cases, for the communal farmers the fence means much more than a physical and visible barrier for buffalo only plus being a clinical preventive measure. For communal farmers the fence 'embodies the reality of the boundary and supposedly writes it permanently into the earth',¹³¹ that is, the demarcation between commercial and communal land. The fence is seen 'as a type of demarcation or 'writing' that fixes white authority in the countryside'.¹³² Broadly speaking the

¹³⁰ When I asked the Chairman about this he could not give any clues as to what these different agendas could be, and said it was only 'political bull' as he had explained on several occasions, interview with Chairman SVC, 8 July 1998.

¹³¹ Hofmeyr 1993: 77

¹³² Ibid: 61.

erection of fences is understood as being part ‘of a wider net of white control’.¹³³ In the next chapter I shall show that consequently the organisational co-operation between the SVC and the neighbouring communities can best be described as a ‘war of the fences’.¹³⁴ A war that would later intensify dramatically after Mugabe lost the constitutional referendum in February 2000.¹³⁵ This war is waged within the wider context of a historical line of reciprocal exchange between black and white in the area, related to land and hunting. All that can be noted so far, is that the SVC created an organisational structure to deal with the local communities and employed a Liaison Officer. Nothing in the minutes refers to any other, more personal interaction between the SVC and neighbouring communities, or between individual farmers and their direct neighbours. So, what has been done to reach each other over the fence, Trust, Liaison Officer, meetings and the like, seems more like an exchange of intentions than anything else. Or in the literary words of Farah, they seem more ‘fond of developing a more intimate relationship with rituals than with people’.¹³⁶ In the next chapter I shall delve deeper into describing the formal structure of organisational co-operation within the context of this war of the fences, replete with its acts of domination and resistance. But let me first turn to the other main, but very related issue which has dominated the discussion with the SVC from the early day: the buffalo.

The buffalo as a symbol of economic prosperity

‘Big game hunters have continued to elaborate on the cunning, aggression and almost supernatural strength of the African buffalo for the last hundred years.’¹³⁷ Captured in a formula it reads like ‘B + LS = F’.¹³⁸ This means Buffalo + Lousy Shot = Funeral. Stories of buffalo hunts do not seem to dry up, and in Zimbabwe there are plenty. ‘As you have often said in your “Zimbabwe Hunter Edition” there have been many stories about buffalo hunting, and there will still

¹³³ Ibid: 71.

¹³⁴ Ibid: 73.

¹³⁵ Between June and November 2000 the SVC lost some ‘160 kilometres of six-strand electrified fencing and approximately 160 kilometres of barbed-wire fencing to theft’, Michler, I. (February 2001), Zimbabwe’s Killing Fields. *Africa. Environment & Wildlife*, vol. 9, no.1, pp. 33.

¹³⁶ Pp. 12, Farah, N. (1992), *Gifts*, London: Serif Publishers (in association with Baobab Books, Harare).

¹³⁷ Pp. xvi, Prins, H.H.T. (1996), *Ecology and Behaviour of the African Buffalo. Social Inequality and Decision Making*, London, New York: Chapman & Hall.

¹³⁸ Capstick in Prins 1996: xvi.

be many more to come'.¹³⁹ The buffalo is considered by big game hunters to be the 'epitome of wild Africa'.¹⁴⁰ If, on top of that a feasibility study concludes that a wildlife utilisation programme is economically viable when commercial buffalo hunting is included, it is easy to understand why the SVC was, so obsessed with obtaining buffalo.

In 1985 the number of buffalo in Zimbabwe was estimated at 66,500.¹⁴¹ In 1995 it was estimated that there were (only) some 48,000 buffalo left in Zimbabwe. In the 1950s their numbers had already markedly decreased, mainly as a result of tsetse fly control measures which eliminated buffalo from commercial farming areas, including the SVC area. In the 1960s this was followed by elimination of buffalo because of FMD. In the 1980s and early 1990s their numbers decreased drastically as a result of severe droughts. In Gonarezhou National Park especially, many died during the drought of 1991-1992. Most buffalo are confined to the State protected Parks & Wild Life Land and the adjacent communal lands, especially where the communal lands form part of a CAMPFIRE District. In the 1990s FMD-infected buffalo were allowed on private land, that is, conservancies, after the approval of the DVS had been obtained as the former section on the fencing of the SVC has described (see Table 4).¹⁴²

As I indicated above the buffalo are a key species in safari hunting and therefore it is important to describe their position in Zimbabwe as an essential context to understanding the development of the relations between DNPWLM and the private sector wildlife utilisation industry, of which the SVC also forms part. Especially when marketed together with hunts for dangerous game like elephant, lion and leopard, it forms a highly attractive package for hunters. The buffalo forms the second most valuable species after the elephant. Elephants contribute some 22% to the national trophy fees earned annually, while the

¹³⁹ Pp. 28, Sauzier, C. (September/October 1997), Another Story of Buffalo Hunting, *Zimbabwe Hunter*, 3 (3).

¹⁴⁰ Interview with professional hunter, Managing Director Hunters & Guides Africa, 12 March 1998.

¹⁴¹ The Cape Buffalo was nearly wiped out in east and southern Africa by the turn of the nineteenth century through a 'plague of Biblical proportions', rinderpest, which also affected domesticated cattle in a unprecedented way (Watkin, J. (1997), ... and buffalo?, *Swara*. East African Wildlife Society, July/August, 20: 4). The Maasai of East Africa, lost some 90% of their cattle and called the rinderpest *enkidaaroto*, 'the destruction' (Adams & McShane 1996: 36). The rinderpest spread south and arrived in Zimbabwe in 1896 and wiped out nearly all buffalo (Child 1995: 149).

¹⁴² Pp. 144-147 & 150, Foggin, C.M. & Taylor, R.D. (1996), Management and utilization of the African buffalo in Zimbabwe, In: *Proceedings of a Symposium on the African buffalo as a Game Ranch Animal*, Onderstepoort, 26 October.

buffalo earns some 13%, followed by sable antelope with 11%. In 1993 the revenues from hunting trophies in Zimbabwe were US\$ 12,826,360,-. Between 1986 and 1993, the trophy prices of buffalo rose 62%, from US\$ 654 to US\$ 1084,-.¹⁴³ In CAMPFIRE areas, the average trophy price in 1997 was US\$ 1163,-. See for the development of average prices of trophies of the four key species I already mentioned in CAMPFIRE areas Table 5.¹⁴⁴

Table 4
Number of African Buffalo on private land, present and projected¹⁴⁵

| Property | Area (ha) | Fence length (km) | Projected area (ha) | No. of buffalo present | No. of buffalo projected |
|----------|--------------|----------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Savé | 330,000 | 341 | 330,000 | 384 | 5,000 |
| Chiredzi | 1,200 | 10 | 81,600 | 158 | 1,800 |
| Towla | 20,250 | 59 | 180,000 | 133 | 2,000 |
| Chipimbi | 125 | 17 | 1,250 | 42 | 90 |

Table 5
Average trophy fees of the four key species in CAMPFIRE areas (US\$)

| Species/ year | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 |
|---------------|------|------|------|------|
| Buffalo | 918 | 1052 | 1114 | 1163 |
| Elephant | 6781 | 6796 | 7712 | 7908 |
| Leopard | 1756 | 1980 | 2779 | 1720 |
| Lion | 3000 | 2228 | 2693 | 3200 |

In order to understand the role and impact of the buffalo in the context of the SVC and the consequences for the organisational co-operation between the SVC and its neighbours, it is necessary to describe three related aspects. The first of these is the quota-setting of buffalo for hunting purposes. Only with a sufficiently large herd of buffalo it is possible to realise an economically viable offtake through hunting. The second aspect is the way the SVC tried to finance its restocking operation. This not only applies to buying buffalo, but also other species considered to make the area (more) attractive to potential (hunting) tourists. In all the routes it tried to fund their restocking programme, the organisational co-operation with the neighbouring communities was put forward as an important aspect of the application. Thirdly, and evenly funda-

¹⁴³ Ibid: 152.

¹⁴⁴ Unpublished data WWF Zimbabwe, 1998. Two districts bordering the SVC are CAMPFIRE Districts with Appropriate Authority, Chiredzi and Chipinge.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid: 150.

mental to understanding why the organisational co-operation with the neighbouring communities is considered so crucially important to the sustainability of the SVC, is the relation between the SVC and the DNPWLM in relation to buying buffalo.

The market price for buffalo trophies depends on their quality, which is strongly related to their size. In order to make the hunting business sustainable, it is necessary to set quota for the offtake of animals, to guarantee that 'wildlife populations maintain themselves and continue to survive biologically into the future', so that they may also be hunted in future years and remain economically viable.¹⁴⁶ In order to decide on a quota, base-line data have to be collected. We need to know the growth rate of the population, which for buffalo is typically about 7%. Offtake quotas will always be equal or slightly less than the growth rate. It is also essential to know how large the population is in order to decide on the exact numbers. This can be estimated by various types of game counts. I shall return to this later. And finally it should be known what kind of offtake will take place, trophy hunting or cropping for meat or a mixture of both. Trophy hunters aim specifically at certain age classes of bulls, which is between eight and twelve years of age. In this age class they are mature, with large horns and a hard boss. In other words, trophy hunters are selective. If the buffalo are cropped, they are killed more randomly over different age strata. It is estimated that only 2% males of a buffalo population reaches maturity every year. This means that if the offtake is for hunting purposes only, the hunting quota, is set at 2%. Cropping is non-selective, which would mean that the offtake could be set at 7%. A mixture of both forms of offtake would give figures in between these two extremes. Although the percentages are quite stable indicators, much depends on the estimates of the actual population in the field. There are basically four methods to estimate the numbers of animals in an area:

- Aerial sample surveys;
- Ground based methods;
- Walked transects;
- Road strip counts.

Let me describe all of these briefly. The aerial survey is done in the dry season, because there is not much vegetation and the animals can be readily seen. It can only be used for the larger species like elephant and rhino, which can be seen

¹⁴⁶ Pp. 9, WWF (November 1997), *Quota Setting Manual*, Harare: WWF. The rest of this section is also based on information from this manual, unless otherwise indicated.

from the air. It is a convenient way to cover large areas. Aerial surveys are carried out by trained staff from the DNPWLM, with assistance from the WWF. Ground-based methods can be divided into two. The walked transects 'are lines or strips of people of a limited size that are walked by a person or group of people counting animals as they go'. They can follow either fixed or variable routes. Finally the road strip counts are 'made from the back of a vehicle by counting the animals seen on either side of the road'. This is probably the most difficult one in terms of calculation. 'The average distance from the road in which the animals are seen forms a strip in which all animals are assumed to have been seen. If the length of this strip is known, the area of the strip can be calculated. If we assume that the number of animals is the same inside and outside the strip for the same area, we can then make an estimate of the animals outside the strip'. The best way to estimate population size is to use a triangulation of different methods and compare its outcomes over a series of years. Then it is also possible to see the trends in the population.

The SVC introduced game counts in 1996 in order to decide the offtake. They use (or intend to use) different methods: the road strip count, 'sweep count' (= walked transects), and an aerial count, although the last has so far not been used. They also use two other methods which do not fall strictly into the categorisation described above, the 'Manager's Estimate' and 'Water Point Count'. The first one especially is an interesting in relation to the buffalo. For the sake of comparison I shall describe the game count figures for 1998 of a (very) common species in the SVC, the impala, and a scarce one, the buffalo. For 1998 all the properties gave a manager's estimate of the number of impala on their property, which totalled 77,289 head within the SVC. On top of that, most of the properties did a road strip count, which number totalled 62,566 animals. The difference between the two figures can be (to a certain extent) attributed to the six properties who did not do a road strip count at the time. Although there is a difference in figures, the manager's estimate and the road strip counts roughly coincide. The recommended trophy offtake for impalas is 4% and for cropping the figure is 6%. The final applied percentage of the offtake is based on the managers' estimates and for trophies is 2.15% and for cropping 8.88 %.¹⁴⁷ The interesting thing is to observe that the offtake is based on the managers' estimates. Let us now turn to the same Quota Data Sheet, but this time for the buffalo. The population estimate for this sheet is based solely on the managers' estimates. Seven properties did not produce any figures. The rest together came to a figure of 1005 buffaloes(!). One property also did a

¹⁴⁷ Two properties also did a water point count, which totalled 8428 impalas and finally three properties did a sweep count, totalling 2788 impalas. Information based on *Quota Data Sheet SVC for impala, 1997 Offtake and 1998 Quota Application*.

water point count, which gave a significantly higher number of animals than estimated by the manager (estimate 230, water point count 339). One property did a sweep count, which also resulted in a higher number of animals (estimate 80, sweep count 148). But 1005 buffalo in the SVC is definitely more than I can identify from other sources, mainly the IFC loan application from July 1998 in which appendix 10.4 indicates only some 261 buffalo, being purchased and progeny, to 31 March 1997, Foggin and Taylor's article in 1996 which gave a number of 384 buffalo for the SVC as I indicated above, and the General Quota Meeting of January 1998 which indicates 'around 550 animals'.¹⁴⁸ If Foggin's estimate was accurate for 1996 and with a growth rate of 7% that would mean for 1998, a maximum population of 438.¹⁴⁹ If the IFC Application is what we base our calculations on we would end up with a putative population of buffalo of 279,¹⁵⁰ nothing near the estimate at the General Quota Meeting, let alone the accumulated managers' estimates. Nevertheless, a percentage of 1.69% is recorded on the official Applied Trophy Offtake, which is well under the recommended 2% of trophy offtake. The actual Approved Quota Number of buffalo is seventeen but then whether out of 1005 (1.69%) or out of 279 (6.09%) or 438 (3.88%) or 550 (3.09%) buffaloes makes a huge difference, especially in relation to the age structure of the herd. This gives a strong indication that the buffalo is being overhunted in the SVC if all the buffalo hunts are sold to clients, which in turn indicates the eagerness of the properties to be able to sell profitable buffalo hunts. This goes a long way towards explaining why they tried so hard to find money to restock the SVC with different game species, including the buffalo, which again featured prominently. Although the reasons for applying for funds varied slightly from document to document, the relations with the neighbouring communities were always prominently wielded as a social and political legitimisation, for ultimately attaining economic purposes.

The attempts to find money for restocking the SVC can be divided in three, the 'donor route', the 'shares route' and the 'loan route'.¹⁵¹ The donor route was 'kicked off' in 1995 with a document on the Savé Valley Conservancy Trust, presented in a beautiful brochure, printed on good quality paper. It has a dark green cover, decorated with a full-colour African-style drawing of an African

¹⁴⁸ Minutes General Quota Meeting, 15 January 1998.

¹⁴⁹ An annual increase of 7% on a population of 384 is 26,88. A figure based on 1996 would indicate for 1998 a population of 438 ($2 \times 27 = 54 + 384$).

¹⁵⁰ An annual increase of 7% on a population of 261 is 18,27. A figure based on 1997 would indicate for 1998 a population of 279.

¹⁵¹ Interview with Conservator, 21 May 1998. The donor-route and share-route were tried almost simultaneously.

village in which wildlife seems to be integrated into daily life as a woman with a pot on her head walks beside a cheetah, a giraffe and a bit further on is an elephant which is gently strolling around. The aim of the document was 'to raise the sum of Z\$ 69 million (in 1998 approximately US\$ 7.7 million) over a period of five years for the Savé Valley Conservancy Trust. Z\$ 65 million of the funds raised will be invested in Savé Valley Wildlife Services Limited on behalf of the communities surrounding the Savé Valley Conservancy (...). This company will, utilising these funds, purchase designated species of wildlife to restock the Conservancy (...). In so doing the communities will attain a proprietary participation, together with the owners of the land, in what is arguable the most significant conservation initiative in Africa today'.¹⁵² For this purpose a Trust representing the community was formed on 9 August 1995,¹⁵³ and trustees were chosen on the Board of the Trust. They were selected primarily for their expected ability to bring in the donor money for the Trust. The Chairman of the Trust was a senior manager from Delta Corporation and the Secretary of the Trust was the retired Price Waterhouse consultant who wrote the document in the first place. Both were white. At this stage I shall not go into further detail about the Trust or its relationship with the SVC not to mention the reaction of the people it seemed all about, the communities surrounding the SVC. The next chapter will go into those aspects of the Trust. Here it is enough to explain the basic idea, which was to create a joint venture with the communities through the Trust. This would be achieved through the following organisational structure, see Figure 4.¹⁵⁴

As in any commercial joint venture structure, the two partners would participate in the new company according to what they were bringing into the company. The landowners would bring in their land, which would give them a 36% share in the company. The communities, through the Trust, would have a 64% share, based on the donor money they were supposed to attract. With that money they would buy wildlife and restock the SVC. As the wildlife is ultimately state- owned the landowners would pay a levy to the Trust starting with 2% in year one, and increasing to 5% over a five-year period.¹⁵⁵ With that money the Trust would be able to initiate all kinds of community-based

¹⁵² The Savé Valley Conservancy Trust, (1995), *Proposal to Create an Interdependence between the Surrounding Communities and the Savé Valley Conservancy in the South East Lowveld of Zimbabwe*, Savé Valley Conservancy Trust. The document was written by a retired Price Waterhouse consultant in Harare.

¹⁵³ Ibid: 11.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid: 7.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid: 5-8.

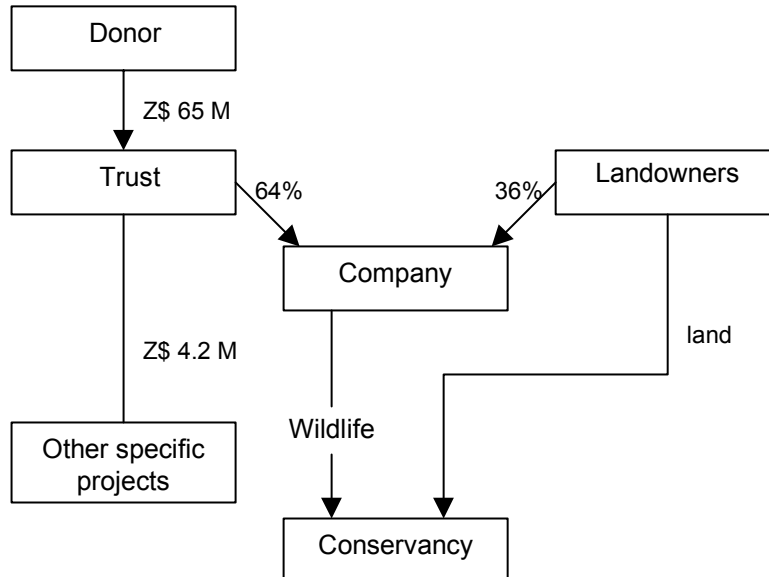


Figure 4 Organogram joint venture SVC and neighbouring communities
(Source: see footnote 152)

development projects in the wards surrounding the SVC. And apart from this direct flow of capital, the surrounding communities would also benefit from ‘increased employment opportunities (...) in both the construction of the various tourist facilities and thereafter in their on-going operations. Indirect employment opportunities will be created in businesses supportive of and complementary to those in the Conservancy’.¹⁵⁶ Before this document was even finished, it had already asked a consultant to look into the possibilities of community-based development projects. This report was finished by October 1994.¹⁵⁷ With this proposal under their arm, the Chairman and the Secretary of the Trust toured the UK to find donors interested in putting money into the project. They came back and reported their findings to a Special General Meeting of the SVC in October 1995. The Secretary told the members that people had reacted enthusiastically to the proposal. When one of the members asked what it was the donors were ‘excited about’, he told them that ‘it was the idea of a living example of

¹⁵⁶ Ibid: 24.

¹⁵⁷ Cunliffe, R.N. (October 1994), *Savé Valley Conservancy Community-Based Projects: Overview and Presentation of Project Concepts*. This unpublished report was prepared for the Beit Trust, WWF and DNPWLM.

sustainable development, something they have been interested in for a long time. They were aware that if the conservancy is successful than the communities around it will prosper and they like that idea'.¹⁵⁸ Their excitement must have remained within bounds as not one single donor was prepared to put any money into the project. The Chairman, whom I interviewed in 1998 about it, said it quite plain that the message of the donors was loud and clear, that it was an 'interesting idea', but because 'you are private sector we cannot sponsor it'.¹⁵⁹ End of Act one.

If the non-profit sector cannot sponsor a project in the private sector, then it should look for an alternative within the private sector itself. It tried this through the 'share route'. A booklet similar to the donor document, but the drawing had been replaced by a photograph of a stately elephant standing under some trees against a beautiful sunset was produced. 'The prospectus seeks to attract investment in the company "Savé Valley Wildlife Services Limited" formed to fund the restocking of the conservancy with the full wildlife spectrum of wildlife indigenous to the area. The company will exist in partnership with owners of the land comprising the Conservancy. (...) This prospectus seeks to raise a sum (...) of Z\$ 69 million (US\$ 8 million) which will be used to fund the restocking of the area with restocking designated indigenous species currently not present'.¹⁶⁰ The emphasis from investing in the SVC through the Trust has been replaced by direct investment in the company. The communities were not entirely forgotten, or left altogether. It mentions the Trust, which was formed, according to this document, 'with the aim of ensuring that the benefits created by the Conservancy flow *beyond the perimeter fence* and include the communities that surround it'. In terms of this offer 3,686 million ordinary "B" shares are being allotted to the Trust against wildlife (...) and perimeter fencing that has been donated to the Conservancy by external donor agencies. It is also the hope of the company that the purchasers of the "B" shares offered in terms of this document will donate some or all of their future dividend flow to the Trust in order to further these aims'.¹⁶¹ Obviously, some aspects of the charitable donor route have left their traces in this commercial enterprise. Tourism, both consumptive and non-consumptive, is considered 'the basis of revenue generation for the area'.¹⁶² However attractively the deal was presented, it also failed to

¹⁵⁸ Minutes Special General Meeting, 11 October 1995.

¹⁵⁹ Interview with Chairman of the SVC Trust, 25 June 1998.

¹⁶⁰ Savé Valley Conservancy, (25 September 1995), *Private Placement Document for Savé Valley Wildlife Services Limited, Savé Valley Conservancy*. Unpublished document.

¹⁶¹ Ibid: 6, italics added.

¹⁶² Ibid: 1.

strike a chord. Although at the AGM in 1995 the Secretary of the Trust said 'that there is a very good chance of success in raising these monies, but needs to get feedback from international companies once they have seen the prospectus. Various local companies have also shown great interest, namely Anglo American, Mobil, BP/Shell, Barclays and Willovale'.¹⁶³ The Chairman and Secretary of the Trust then toured the USA and the UK with the idea and had to come back with the message that it was a 'nice idea', but 'not commercial enough'. Individuals and companies told them that they could consider donating money to the idea on the basis of philanthropy, but would not buy shares on a commercial basis. They were 'caught in between the commercial and donor world'.¹⁶⁴ End of Act two. But their 'in-between'-status fortunately caught the attention of the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the commercial branch of the World Bank, which gives out loans through the funding of the Global Environmental Fund (GEF). It finances projects which fit the SVC case like a glove, being commercial in orientation but with a strong undercurrent of environmental and development issues.

For that reason, the next extensive document produced was the IFC loan application in 1997. Up till then, the Trust had always been presented as an integral part of the SVC. The SVC had created the Trust and it was structurally related to it. In both former attempts to find funding the Trust was central to the operation in the sense that funding or donor money would go through the Trust. With the IFC matters assumed a different course. The IFC loan application had to persuade the IFC in three fields of project sustainability: environmentally/ecologically, economically and socio-politically. Under the latter heading the Trust resurfaced, presented as a 'philanthropic agency for supporting local community development'. This latter was definitely necessary as '(t)he negative political image of the electrified game fencing and upmarket eco-tourism adjacent to over populated communal lands must obviously be converted into a positive context for local communities. However, experience elsewhere in Africa has shown that relationships between rural communities and adjacent wildlife/tourism venture are highly unstable if they are based merely on political appeasement and largesse. The interaction between the commercial and communal sectors must be one of genuine economic symbiosis, rather than a one-way outflow of a token proportion of earnings from the wildlife/tourism industry'.¹⁶⁵ To live up to these statements it applied for a loan of US\$ 1,000,000, of which 50% would be 'debt forgiveness', which meant that 50% of

¹⁶³ Minutes AGM, 26 May 1995.

¹⁶⁴ Interview with Chairman of the Trust, 25 June 1998.

¹⁶⁵ Pp. 3 Loan application, Savé Valley Wildlife Services Limited to IFC/SME Program, 17 June 1997.

the money repaid would go to a project in support of the original project.¹⁶⁶ Further benefits of the loan were considered:

- ‘a 4% grant for administration which comes out of the US\$ 1 million.
- There is a US\$50,000 grant to the WWF for environmental capacity technical assistance’.¹⁶⁷

The organisational structure which was presented in the loan application was the following, linking the communities and the SVC through the Trust, Joint Committee and Working Committee, see Figure 5.¹⁶⁸

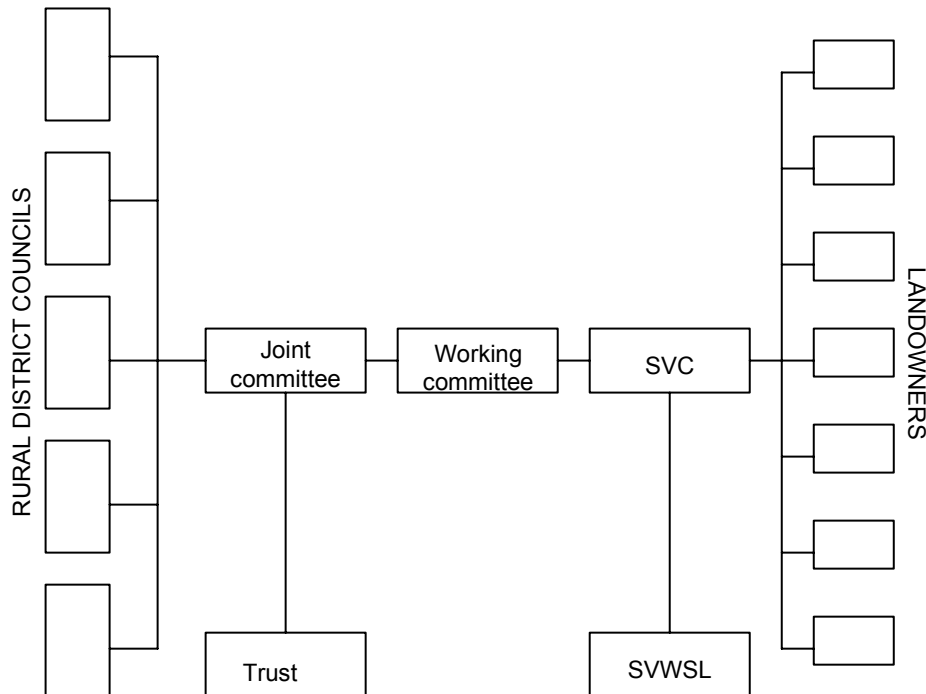


Figure 5: Organogram joint venture SVC and neighbouring communities for IFC application

(Source: see footnote 167)

¹⁶⁶ Ibid: 11; see also minutes CCM, 25 June 1997.

¹⁶⁷ Minutes CCM, 25 June 1998.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid: 4, IFC loan application. The acronym SVWSL stands for Savé Valley Wildlife Services Ltd.

But in their negotiations with the IFC, the latter did not want to get involved with the Trust, because, according to the Chairman of the Trust, a similar project of the IFC in South America ‘went sour’. It adjusted the plan accordingly. The Trust would not receive the 50% debt forgiveness, an amount of approximately Z\$ 10 million at that time, this would now go to the SVC. The SVC would commit two million to the Trust to give them a starting capital to be able to apply for their own GEF funding.¹⁶⁹ With this new development the Trust became far more than it had been before, a separate entity. At least in the organisational structure the Trust and the SVC-Company were no longer allowed to be linked.¹⁷⁰ The Joint Committee and Working Committee were strictly speaking no longer necessary and became superfluous. The idea was now that the Trust, after having found its own funding, could buy wildlife, lease it to the SVC and also receive money for the progeny of that stock. It sounded promising but the financing of the restocking operation which in the donor route had gone entirely through the Trust, had to be abandoned under pressure of the IFC. The charity of the shares-route, through which shares were allotted to the Trust against wildlife and where dividends were meant to go into the Trust, was also abandoned. The Trust was on its own, receiving a starting capital, and then it has to make its own way.¹⁷¹

Besides to the loan application itself, the IFC required an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) to be written. The SVC approached a consultant from Harare, C.A.W. Attwell, who was approved by the IFC.¹⁷² Formally this EIA was not yet necessary in the legal context of Zimbabwe because, although Zimbabwe does have an EIA policy, it has not so far got EIA legislation. But it was a strict IFC requirement. The objectives of the EIA are:

- ‘Highlighting potential negative impacts on both environment and local communities, and
- isolating potential situations under which sustainability of the project may be threatened, viewed in the light of the three “sustainability sectors”, [ecological, economic and socio-political]’.¹⁷³

¹⁶⁹ Minutes CCM, 11 February 1998.

¹⁷⁰ Minutes CCM, 10 June 1998. ‘EIA had to be redrafted, as the SVC Trust and the Company had to be shown as separate, and the original EIA dealt with the Company and the Trust linked’.

¹⁷¹ At the same time, as I shall describe in the next chapter the original (majority white) Trustees were replaced by a new group of (majority black) Trustees.

¹⁷² Minutes General Meeting, 16 October 1997.

¹⁷³ Pp. 27, Attwell, C.A.M. (July 1998), *Environmental Impact Assessment for Loan Application to the IFC for the Restocking of Wildlife Species in the Save Valley Conservancy*. Unpublished report.

The final text of the EIA had to lie on public display for sixty days in Washington. Only then could the final decision about the loan be made by the IFC. The three sustainability factors all had their own particular sensitivities and had to be regarded in the context of the difficult situation in which Zimbabwe (already) found itself at that particular time, in relation to The Land Issue, economically and socio-politically. The three sustainability aspects were all judged by separate divisions within the IFC. The sensitivities on the ecological aspect of the project were strictly on the SVC side, mainly related to the fact that the document had to go through a sixty-day period of public scrutiny in PWashington. It was a form of public exposure of a white commercial initiative in southern Africa in relation to the environment, which could be potentially dangerous if ideologically motivated groups took it into heads to protest about the project publicly. Economically and financially the sensitivity was also a SVC matter, which lay in the fact that the SVWSL,¹⁷⁴ the commercial company of the conservancy, has no assets with which it could guarantee the loan by any means. Luckily for it the Delta Corporation¹⁷⁵ was prepared to 'stand guarantor for the loan', but in order to do that they needed the financial commitment of the individual members and to substantiate the commitment all members had to give a profile of their financial ability to repay the loan in ten years' time. This meant that they had to give Delta 'a letter from the member's auditor or banker indicating that the member has sufficient resources to meet the financial commitment of the loan'.¹⁷⁶ Their commitment would thus imply a point of no return for at least ten years and expose their actual financial capability. The SVC had probably already reached a point of no return after all the investments in the fencing, but with the IFC loan the project would become definite. It was made clear that the SVC was only an option for financially well-to-do landowners, investors who had sufficient amounts of money to wait for a longer period of time to receive a return on investment. Finally the socio-political aspect was of crucial importance, not so much to the SVC, it was in favour of linking the Trust to the loan and organisationally to the SVC, to the IFC. It insisted on a split between the two. This aspect required a great deal of time before it was straightened out and the final text of the EIA could be laid down for public scrutiny.¹⁷⁷ Another aspect of the procedure which absorbed a considerable

¹⁷⁴ The SVWSL would function as a commercial intermediary between IFC and SVC, which was required by the IFC, and would on-lend the IFC-loan to the SVC, Minutes CCM, 25 June 1997.

¹⁷⁵ Also shareholder in Senuko Safari Lodge, the up-market tourism facility of the Chairman of the SVC.

¹⁷⁶ Minutes General Meeting, 16 October 1997.

¹⁷⁷ Minutes CCM, 5 August 1998.

amount of time was that the IFC required a letter from the Minister of Mines, Environment and Tourism in which he endorsed the plans of the SVC. This requirement had come up just when the Zimbabwe government had announced its land designation operation in November 1997. For the IFC it was crucial to know if land in the SVC would be designated and used for resettlement in the near future, that is, within the ten-year period in which the loan had to be repaid. If that were the case, the loan would not be opportune from an environmental and restocking perspective anyway, apart from the equally important question of who would then repay it. The IFC later agreed that a letter from the Permanent Secretary (PS) would also suffice.¹⁷⁸ The Chairman of the Trust would draft a letter and send it to the PS for approval and a signature, after which it could be sent to the IFC. The Project Executant of the Rhino Conservation Project wrote two and a half pages of suggestions for this draft, summing up positive quotes made by the government and other officials in the course of time about conservancies in general and the SVC in particular, indicating that the SVC was observing all requirements laid down by the government in tolerating conservancies.¹⁷⁹ The Chairman of the Trust and the PS also met personally to speak about the issue and the PS had made it clear that the SVC could not expect any definite answer on the land issue, or a letter of total recognition. Guarantees like that could not be given under the present political circumstances. The most it could expect was a letter of endorsement of the specific project. The Chairman of the Trust drafted a letter which he sent to the IFC for approval. The draft letter 'contained the least of the things the IFC wanted to read and the most the PS was prepared to put on paper'.¹⁸⁰ After some delays the letter could be passed on to the IFC and the final approval for the loan was given on 27 September.¹⁸¹ One of the main problems in prising the letter from the PS was, of course, that the government of Zimbabwe, already in 1998, was ambivalent in its position towards the conservancies. It is indubitably very happy to see the revenues from tourism rise, in which the conservancies in the southeast Lowveld in particular are playing an important role. Its problem is that the conservancies, mainly white landowners, seem to stand for a continuation of an unequal land distribution between black and white in Zimbabwe. This

¹⁷⁸ The PS was considered more in favour of conservancies in general in circles within the SVC, than the Minister himself.

¹⁷⁹ Undated notes Project Executant '(...) on the core of a letter to PS (...) to push for official endorsement from him (...) of Savé Valley's World Bank and IFC proposals'.

¹⁸⁰ CCM, 10 June 1998.

¹⁸¹ Minutes CCM, 7 October 1998.

particular ambivalence is most clearly expressed in the relations between the SVC and the DNPWLM.

The relations between the SVC and the DNPWLM were launched in 1991 in the most cordial and co-operative way. No wonder, because the Chairman of the SVC was a highly respected Honorary Officer of the Department with a huge success in community conservation in Mahenya, bordering the Gonarezhou National Park, credited to him. This was considered to be the foundation of the CAMPFIRE programme which was launched so successfully in 1989.¹⁸² It so happened they were also brothers-in-arms in the field of nature conservation. The conservancies saved their black rhino, for instance, which was the foundation for of a broader approach to wildlife utilisation in conservancies. Under the old regime, the DNPWLM also promised the SVC buffalo, if it saw to the erection of a fence of the required specifications of the DVS.¹⁸³ Everything seemed to proceed smoothly and a bright future for the SVC seemed to be on the horizon based on a (very) positive reciprocal exchange between the SVC and the DNPWLM. Since then, positions have shifted and in recent years two developments have put that relationship under (severe) stress. The first is the fact that the director of the DNPWLM, Willie Nduku, and his deputy, Rowan Martin, were suspended in July 1995 and subsequently dismissed on allegations of illegal financial transactions to do with the translocation of elephants. ‘The (12) charges (5 Martin, 7 Nduku) basically relate to authorise the capture, sale and translocation of 200 elephants in Gonarezhou National Park in 1993. The Minister of Environment and Tourism had to authorise the capture of 200 elephants by Wildlife Management Services, their sale to that company and their subsequent export to a national park in South Africa. She asserts that Dr. Nduku, even if he had general delegated authority, did not have the specific authority’.¹⁸⁴ Not only was the translocation of elephants to South Africa mentioned, more harmfully the translocation of elephants to the conservancies was ‘officially denounced as a form of economic sabotage, through the alleged squandering of “state assets” (...)’.¹⁸⁵ But as I already described earlier, they were very sympathetic to the conservancies and had promised to sell them buffalo, after it had erected the required buffalo fence. When they were suspended and the director was replaced by an acting director, Willis Makombe, the new regime told the SVC that it did not have any agreement with the DNPWLM about buffalo, but that Nduku and Martin had only made promises

¹⁸² Independent Traveller, Supplement to *Zimbabwe Independent*, 26 September 1997, Mahenya a Success in Eco Sustenance.

¹⁸³ Conversation with Chairman SVC, 1 October 1998.

¹⁸⁴ *The Herald*, 14 March 1997, Parks in-fighting led to charges.

¹⁸⁵ Du Toit 1998: 9.

‘as persons’, not officially on behalf of DNPWLM.¹⁸⁶ And that was that. Shortly afterwards the DNPWLM instituted a ban on the translocation of live animals, including buffalo from national parks to private property. And because ‘(b)uffalo are not available from private land sources in any significant numbers (owing to the FMD containment strategy)’,¹⁸⁷ this DNPWLM-policy led to a serious setback in the development of the SVC into a fully fledged wildlife utilisation programme. Whereas the DNPWLM relates the ban officially to FMD, informally, many in the field think they are in the know that the ban is for political reasons of arising from the dichotomy of the DNPWLM versus conservancies. Since 1995 no buffalo have been introduced to the SVC, to the utter frustration of the CCM and all members. It came to a point at which one of the foreign investors in the SVC wrote a report in which land designation and the ban on translocation of buffalo were the two issues at stake. He handed the report over to President Mugabe, when the latter was touring Germany in March 1998, and had probably just listened to his speech on land designation in Zimbabwe.¹⁸⁸ One of the three goals and objectives of the report is that ‘(I)t is respectfully requested that the Government of Zimbabwe: (...) instruct the Director of National Parks to issue game catching permits in overstocked National Parks for reintroduction of game in general, but *Cape Buffalo specifically*, into the Save Valley Conservancy’.¹⁸⁹ By the end of 1998, the situation had not improved with regard to the selling of buffalo.

If 1995 was a problematic year because influential sympathisers of the conservancies had to resign their offices at the DNPWLM, the year 1996 added another complication to the relationship between the SVC and the DNPWLM and put an end to a positive reciprocal exchange. This was transformed into a political exchange of accusations, not only with the SVC but with the private wildlife sector in general. In 1996 the DNPWLM was set up as a Statutory Fund,¹⁹⁰ which meant that it had to earn its own money commercially through its

¹⁸⁶ Conversation with Chairman SVC, 1 October 1998.

¹⁸⁷ Du Toit 1998: 9.

¹⁸⁸ *The Herald*, 25 March 1998, President defiant: land issue goes ahead. ‘Addressing a meeting of German’s captains of industry and commerce, Cde. Mugabe said Britain was against the land reform programme because it wanted to perpetuate its colonisation of Zimbabwe (...)’.

¹⁸⁹ Pp. 1, of what is popularly known within the SVC as the ‘Pabst Report’. The other two goals of the report had to do with the designation of three properties within the SVC, which would break the SVC into three. Italics added. The minutes of the CCM, 1 April 1998 state: ‘The Chairman thanked Mr. Pabst for his presentation and for championing the cause of the Conservancy and its members’.

¹⁹⁰ *The Herald*, 8 November 1997, State Suspends Issuing of Leases to Safari Hunters, Operators.

tourism and other operations, and could not any longer count on state subsidy.¹⁹¹ This actually meant that the controlling body of wildlife tourism was also transformed into a commercial competitor at the same time, a move that has led to much criticism and political rivalry between private sector, including the conservancies, and the DNPWLM. As a controlling government body, the DNPWLM's reaction to its new position was twofold: centralisation of authority and close scrutiny of private sector operations in wildlife tourism. The centralisation was essentially focused on the most financially lucrative activity, which was financially crucial to conservancies,¹⁹² of the private wildlife utilisation schemes, trophy hunting. Statutory Instrument 76 of 1998, gazetted on 27 March 1998, introduced strict controls on the export and import of wildlife and trophies. It also authorised 'the Director of National Parks and the Director of Customs and Excise to give trade permits on wildlife and trophies'. Statutory Instrument 26, which became effective on 13 February 1998, brought strict control on hunting and safari operators and 'granted full ownership of wildlife to the Government'. Nick O'Connor, Chairman of the WPA, called the centralisation a 'total disaster' for wildlife conservation in Zimbabwe and the CAMPFIRE Chairman at the time, Jaconia Nare, also said the new regulations gave too much power to the DNPWLM.¹⁹³ The centralisation was seen by the private sector in the context of earlier reports about the malfunctioning of and nepotism within the DNPWLM. As hunting is the most lucrative aspect of wildlife tourism it should come as no surprise that it was exactly on issues to do with the allocation of hunting quotas that the DNPWLM was criticised.

It was particularly the Zimbabwe Independent which reported at length on this particular issue of hunting quota. 'Interference from cabinet ministers in the allocation of hunting quotas to some safari-operators could damage the credibility of National Parks (...) Documents in the possession of the Zimbabwe Independent show that over the last two years Environment and Tourism minister Chen Chimutengwende has overruled the acting director of the DNPWLM, Willis Makombe, and gone against the advice of ecologists in what appears to be a campaign to favour selected concession owners. Major benefici-

¹⁹¹ In the 1996/1997 budget funding of the DNPWLM was cut from Z\$ 90 million to Z\$ 10 million (!), which was not even enough to pay the department's salary bill, pp. 16, *Economist Intelligence Unit Country Report Zimbabwe*, third quarter 1997. See also *The Financial Gazette*, 12 September 1996, Cash-strapped Parks and Wildlife Department faces collapse.

¹⁹² *A Tourist Paradise*, June-July 1996, The Conservancies. 'Hunting for conservation is an essential part of a conservancy: without it cannot survive financially'.

¹⁹³ *The Standard*, 12-18 April 1998, Shaky Period for Tourism; *The Herald*, 14 February 1998, Wildlife Management Regulations Amended.

aries of ministerial intervention are based in the Matatsi and Deka safari areas in the north-west of the country. On August 9 1995, Hwange Safaris headed by Toby Musariri, was advised by Parks that it would be allocated an additional eight buffalo, to make a total of 16, despite the advice that trophy quality in the Deka pool area was 'not particularly good' by Parks ecologist Don Heath in a previous document. However, it was emphasised that the favour would not be repeated in 1996. In 1996 Musariri went ahead and marketed 16 buffalo in the Deka area before appealing to Makombe on March 6 for a doubling of the quota to the amended 1995 level. He also asked for an additional lion and informed the acting director that six bull elephants, six bull buffaloes, three male lions, three leopards, five kudu and two bushbuck had been marketed and deposits taken in anticipation of his quota request being approved in the nearby Hwange C state hunting area. A request for the hunting of a portion of the state land quota in the Deka area in addition was being made on August 7 and was turned down a week later on the grounds that the quotas had been set 'at a safe level at sustainable yield' for each particular area. However, a September 3 communication between the Department and Musariri shows that the Deka quota was 'amended as per minister's request'. Victoria Falls Hunters had their quota upped on Chmutengwende's instructions on January 4 1996. A further abuse of the quota system has manifested itself with the Parks department's instruction on January 24 [1997] that all hunting operators be allocated an additional hunt with a bag of an elephant, buffalo, lion and leopard to raise funds for the CITES meeting [Oh irony!]. In some of the smaller areas this effectively doubled the quota considered sustainable. The Minister of Industry and Commerce, Nathan Shamuyarira, also entered the fray on April 30, 1996, by asking Makombe to meet him in his offices and instructing him to overrun his decision not to allocate a hunt to Austrian businessman, dr. Pisse. When approached by the Independent Makombe said he knew nothing of these matters (...).¹⁹⁴

As a Statutory Fund the DNPWLM was under fire for its commercial activities in wildlife utilisation. As state agency and controlling body, it was itself in turn scrutinising the private sector safari business on more or less exactly the same issue: illegal hunting operations. 'In January [1997], Criminal Investigation Department raided offices of 40 safari operators following allegations that some of them had externalised their earnings (...).'¹⁹⁵ This followed an allegation in 1996 that the state was losing millions of dollars through illegal deals in foreign exchange by safari operators. 'Following the 1991/1992 devastating drought, over 200 commercial farmers in the Matabele-

¹⁹⁴ *Zimbabwe Independent*, 23 May 1997, 'Double Standards' in National Parks Quotas Cause for Concern.

¹⁹⁵ *Zimbabwe Independent*, 25 July 1997, Producers Clash with Parks Over Procedures.

land region who previously reared cattle ventured into lucrative game farming. Since then, they have fortified their ranches, which have become safaris in direct competition with Government-run wildlife tourist attractions'.¹⁹⁶ The accusations flew back and forth between the DNPWLM and the private sector. According to its critics the DNPWLM continued to frustrate the private wildlife sector as one Letter to the Editor in the *Zimbabwe Independent* made very clear: (...) 'they have continued a policy of frustrating all sales and movement of game in order to try to paralyse the development of the private land tourism industry'.¹⁹⁷ In turn DNPWLM continued to look for irregularities in the private sector. And when one was found, *The Herald* made a threatening headline out of it, like 'Bar foreign hunters'. In the end it was about a single incident of a farmer in Matabeleland South who had invited a foreign hunter to shoot an elephant on his property. The farmer had been hiding behind the notion that this elephant had been a 'problem animal'.¹⁹⁸ Sometimes the DNPWLM and the private sector were even caught together as in a case about illegal hunting in 1997: '(t)hirty-five tour and safari operators will soon appear in court for illegal trophy hunting and overhunting involving more than \$80 m. in a scam that is alleged to involve some of the officials of the DNPWLM'.¹⁹⁹ The end result of it all was that the Chairman of the WPA²⁰⁰ at the time, Oosthuizen, could draw no other conclusion than that 'there had been, politically, mistrust and suspicion of the wildlife industry resulting in the suspension of top Parks personnel, centralisation of all permits and the assasination of wildlife exports'. He was quoted to have said that '(...) it is time for Parks to become more friendly and start to realise that we [whites] are also Zimbabwean and indigenous'.²⁰¹

Stereotypes and mistrust, resulting in a spiral of negative reciprocity, seem to be the outcome of the developments described above. Social antagonism is a multi-faceted phenomenon as I have shown above in terms of historical context and socio-political and socio-economic processes. In the context though of studying processes of organisational co-operation in terms of reciprocity, it is worthwhile to focus more explicitly on issues of boundary management in the joint venture. It is especially in negotiating boundaries between the partners that

¹⁹⁶ *The Herald*, 23 September 1996, State Loosing Millions in Illegal Forex Deals.

¹⁹⁷ *Zimbabwe Independent*, 24 January 1997, Letters to the Editor: National Parks Resumé.

¹⁹⁸ *The Herald*, 15 August 1998, Bar Foreign Hunters.

¹⁹⁹ *The Herald*, 20 March 1997, 35 in Alleged \$80 m Hunting Scam.

²⁰⁰ *The Herald*, 1 October 1997, Ethical Sustainable Use of Wildlife. WPA was created in 1985 'to, among other things, promote the ethical conservation and sustainable use of wildlife on privately owned commercial farms and ranches'.

²⁰¹ *Zimbabwe Independent*, 25 July 1997, Producers Clash with Parks over Procedures.

the reciprocal mechanism comes to the fore. In this specific case the boundary between the SVC and the Trust, that is, the communities, is as much physical as it is symbolic. The contested boundary in this case is a formidable fence related to buffalo. The fence seems to be a kind of beacon in battle in this joint venture. In combination the fence and the buffalo seem to function as a magnet attracting all systems of reciprocity between the different stakeholders in the process. They are the alpha and omega of the organisational co-operation and boundary management between the SVC and the Trust. If there were no fence, there would be no buffalo and no need to fund restocking of wildlife and there would be no need to co-operate and exchange with neighbouring communities through the medium of a joint venture. The meaning given to the fence and the buffalo, both by commercial and communal farmers and by DNPWLM can only be understood in the context of the Land Question and the particular type of land use, without doubt one of the most sensitive political subjects in the history of Southern Rhodesia and later Zimbabwe. Understanding the historical context of land is crucial to analysing and understanding how commercial and communal landowners perceive each other in a joint venture related to a particular sort of land use, that is, wildlife utilisation. By describing a host of smaller and bigger affairs, a pattern inexorably emerges which shows that the context on the ground for the organisational co-operation between the Trust and the SVC resembles a circus with countless smaller and bigger rings, which, often indirectly and often only through image-making or sheer hearsay, are related to each other. Such a ring can grow bigger or smaller over time. In the next chapter I shall describe and analyse the process of formal organisational co-operation between the Trust and the SVC in terms of reciprocal exchange mainly taking place around the fence.

The Savé Valley Conservancy and its neighbouring communities: Cases of reciprocal exchange

‘Reports of white-on-black racism abound in the region where sugarproduction, gameranching and hospitality industry pop up all economic activity. Industrial powerhouses Triangle, Hippo Valley and Mkwesine Sugar Estates have since the great drought of 1991-92 been joined by a host of white-led private animal sanctuaries – called conservancies – in creating employment. At most farms racism had become institutionalised (...). Unimpressed by the ethnic composition of the conservancies, Vice-President Cde. Simon Muzenda, recently told the white ranchers to include more blacks into their schemes’.¹ If it were to achieve this, the SVC had two options. The first of these would be to attract black landowners to the Lowveld. The different properties within the area of the SVC which were sold in the 1990s had all to be offered to the government first, which would have given the opportunity to introduce black land ownership into the SVC. But this did not happen and the government signed a document of no-interest in the land, after which the SVC was free to attract other buyers. They all turned out to be white. Apart from ARDA there is no black ownership to date in the SVC. The second option open to the SVC was to create an organisational structure in which it could co-operate with its black neighbours, which it

¹ *Sunday Mail*, 20 October 1996, Lowveld still White Dominated.

did in the form of the SVC Trust (SVCT). In the previous chapter I already introduced and described the Trust as part of the different 'funding-routes' the SVC tried in order to finance its restocking operations. The attention of the SVC was actually drawn to the neighbouring black communities when the Minister answered questions in parliament about the status of conservancies in Zimbabwe and stated that conservancies would only be allowed if they were able to create a 'formal and meaningful relationship' with the neighbouring communities.² This was probably an important reason behind the creation of the SVC Trust. The SVCT was presented to the five neighbouring RDCs at a workshop in Chiredzi in March 1996, based on the Price Waterhouse document. On that occasion the SVCT was more or less window-dressed as the gift of the SVC to the communities; it was presented as a golden opportunity for the neighbouring communities to take the plunge and participate in the (white-dominated) tourism sector in Zimbabwe. It was implicitly expected that the communities would, as a sort of reflex, use the SVCT to relate and communicate with the SVC and use it as a platform for their concerns and protests. The SVCT represented the communities through a Board of Trustees, who were mainly white and based in Harare, which meant that even if the communities wanted to contact them, this would be no easy task. The Trustees, putatively representing the communities, were literally 'out of reach' for them. How the SVC arrived at this specific composition of Trust and Trustees and how this construction developed over time will, amongst other things, be described in this chapter. At the same time, parallel with and in relation to the developments of the Trust, I shall describe how the neighbouring communities did relay their opinions and did exchange ideas about the SVC to the different individual landowners by protesting about the erection and location of the fence and by claiming land in the SVC. In the previous chapter a fair amount of attention was paid to the internal developments of the SVC and its position in relation to the surrounding communities. In this chapter the focus falls specifically on the process of reciprocal exchange between the conservancy and its neighbouring communities. This approach allows more attention to be paid to the position of and opinion of the communities about this proposed organisational co-operation, although my point of departure remains, as in the rest of this book, my ethnographic orientation on the SVC as initiator of this process of organisational co-operation.

² *Hansard*, 14th February 1996, 3971.

The development of the SVC trust

As I described in the previous chapter, the SVC proposed, or ‘offered’ would be a better word in relation to a gift, the construction of a Trust to the communities. The Trust would be a joint venture-like partner of the SVC, its share and influence proportional to the donor money it would be able to attract. The figure, which was visualising the gift of the SVCT to the communities, seemed impressive because the shares were presented as being overwhelmingly in favour of the communities with 64%, and only 36% for the landowners. But the figure for the Trust was a virtual one, based on things hoped for (that is, donor money), while the figure for the landowners was based on the ‘hard currency’ of land. The SVC tried to transform the virtuality of the Trust by appointing Trustees who were considered capable of attracting the necessary donor-money. If only the status of the Trust could be based on solid donor-money, the figure would probably impress the government with the gift of the SVC to its neighbours. So while the Trust was set up to represent the communities, its priority lay in attracting the required donor funds. If donor funding proved slow in coming, the Trust would remain an empty shell and a structure on paper only. The Trustees were selected with this consideration in mind. Nine Trustees were chosen, one representative of each surrounding District and four from Harare. The four from Harare especially were chosen with an eye to attracting donor-funds. A senior manager from Delta Corporation was appointed chairman. He was the one especially charged with working in conjunction with the writer of the ‘Trust-proposal’ charming money out of donor pockets. This was an illusion as I described in my disquisition on the different routes taken to fund the restocking programme in the previous chapter. The chairman of the Trust was very active and energetically he pursued the issue of donor money for the Trust, but he was doomed to disappointment. And despite his indubitable activeness in going after donor-money, the complete Trust of nine members never met in actual fact. This means that, even if the communities would have liked to have communicated with the SVC through their representatives in the Trust, there was never an official opportunity created by the SVC, a lapel which might be considered indicative of the SVC priorities with the Trust. The same could be said for the later structure of organisational co-operation with the neighbouring communities that the SVC presented in its loan application to the IFC, in which it proposed the Joint and Working Committee. Only the Joint Committee met. The Working Committee never did. In this context it is interesting to note that the Joint Committee consisted of RDC members only, without containing any representative from the SVC. These members did come together. The Working

Committee, comprising of representatives from the communities.³ and three members of the SVC, including the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman, never saw each other or spoke to each other in the formal context of a meeting.⁴ Can this state of affairs be explained? As we have seen in the previous chapter there is a veritable sea of official written material from the SVC in which the gift of the Trust takes a prominent place. But is it attention and emphasis on paper only, which never got off the ground in real life? Is the Trust just a token-gift with no commercial promises behind it? Is the Trust no more than a make-believe decoy to put government officials and policy makers in Harare off the scent in an answer to the written answers to the Minister? Is it a form of ritual exchange between the SVC and Harare, mentioning the communities for rhetorical reasons only hoping to get a return gift from DNPWLM in the form of buffalo? Let me return to the inception of the idea of the Trust.

The (proposal to constitute a) Trust was presented to the RDCs at a workshop on 28-29 March 1996.⁵ This was the first time that the RDCs were informed about the initiative. There had been no prior consultation about the Trust with the RDCs. Under the heading of 'The strategic choices for local communities', the paper plunges straight to the heart of the matter saying that 'one strategy for the local communities [would be] to advocate that Government should designate the land occupied by the Savé Conservancy for resettlement by the local communities'. But, after considering this option, Metcalfe comes to the conclusion that neither resettlement nor designation of the land to be used for wildlife by the communities would work out and in conclusion suggests that 'the distinction between private land and communal land remains'. He states that the division can only work out 'if a joint venture is established which binds the two land use systems, through a mutually agreeable arrangement'.⁶ The Land Question, which is so important to the identities of both black and white in Zimbabwe where land is considered inalienably theirs by the Africans, is brusquely brushed aside in this formulation. The solution to the land issue is not redistribution but co-operation, but co-operation on the conditions set by the SVC. It is slightly more nuanced than this and it would be unfair to typify the situation as the whites simply consolidating their power over land. The SVC also gives opportunities to communal landowners, that is, the RDCs, in its

³ Four out of five were the same as those on the Joint Committee, information from interview with Liaison Officer, 22 April 1998.

⁴ Conversation with Liaison Officer, 28 May 1998.

⁵ Metcalfe, S. (1996), *Benefits of the Savé Valley Conservancy to Local People*, Workshop on the Savé Valley Conservancy Trust, 28-29 March. Unpublished proceedings.

⁶ Ibid: 2.

conservancy coalition. RDCs could participate by granting land-use rights to the conservancy while retaining ownership: '(t)he Conservancy would relocate the game fence and the community would join the Conservancy as full members'.⁷ The paper concludes by formulating that '(m)any things may be possible but little will happen without a spirit of trust and genuine commitment to a common vision for the future'.⁸

This first workshop in March 1996 at which the creation of the Trust was explained and rationalised, had a follow-up in April 1996. At this an initial (and as far as I know only) draft of a 'project identification plan' for the RDCs surrounding the SVC, in which Metcalfe formulated the ways in which the communities could benefit from the proposed Trust was tabled.⁹ This follow-up was asked for by the RDCs at the workshop in Chiredzi. The draft contained a range of benefits, like direct and indirect employment opportunities, meat supply, fuel supply, technology transfer, develop managerial capacity and so on, but this April document also already pinpoints constraints laid on the social environment by the project: 'Local communities have recently witnessed the erection of a substantial wildlife fence around the conservancy'. As I explained in the previous chapter, the fence was necessary because of veterinary regulations related to 'foot and mouth' disease and contingent isolation of buffalo, considered essential by the Conservancy, from cattle (essential to communal agriculture). 'The fence symbolises a separation between commercial and communal, black and white ethnic groups, and between livestock and wildlife as a land use. There is minimal social interdependence between the conservancy members and the local communities'.¹⁰ In line with this observation, actually directly after the Introduction it concludes, that '(i)t is the complete contrast between these two communities, the conservancy community and the neighbouring communities, that threatens the stability of the Conservancy's plan [that is, to establish a form of organisational co-operation through the Trust]. The contrast in ethnicity and wealth is obvious. This combustible reality is what puts an imperative on the creation of an interdependency between these two primary stakeholders'.¹¹ A second follow-up was given in May 1996 with a report on the

⁷ Ibid: 5.

⁸ Ibid: 6. Recollect (once again) that the Zimbabwean Government signed a document of 'no-interest' in the different properties in the SVC which were put on the market in the second half of the 1980s and 1990s. With this in mind it seems like a good idea to propose a joint venture instead.

⁹ Metcalfe, S. (April 1996), *Enhancing the Capacity of Neighbouring Communities to Benefit from the Proposed Save Valley Conservancy Trust, Zimbabwe Trust*. Unpublished report.

¹⁰ Metcalfe April 1996: 14

¹¹ Ibid: 4.

responses in the field, that is, of the communities surrounding the SVC, to the establishment of the Trust, written by the same consultant. This report was also specifically prepared for the RDCs, as the appropriate authorities on the communal lands and representing the communities through democratic elections at their request.¹² There are a few issues which are mentioned by nearly all respondents to this fact-finding-mission, and which directly relate to the issues raised in earlier chapters: the (location of the) fence and related to that that ‘this project cannot be seen as separate from the ‘land issue’ but as a progressive response to it’.¹³ This is not to say that they ‘dismissed the SVC proposal out of hand’ but that ‘the process (...) by which the SVC proposal was formulated was flawed [and] (a)lso the conservancy fence lacked diplomacy (...)’.¹⁴ What is striking about this document is its straightforward formulations, both by the local authorities and communities and by the consultant who wrote the report, who dared to write it all down without bothering to wrap it up in diplomatic flummery. At the RDC level, for instance, it is mentioned that the RDCs feel that they ‘have effectively been presented with what appears like a ‘blueprint’ (the proposal [to create the Trust]) e.g.:

- the conservancy is established;
- the fence is sited and situated;
- the SVC Trust is established;
- 5 Trustees (white) are already appointed and apparently others already approached, (whom the RDCs are assured are ‘trustworthy’);
- the SVC Trust proposal is already published in final form;
- the SVC Trust wants to fundraise as soon as possible on behalf of the beneficiaries, who are not well informed of their new status in regard to the SVC’.¹⁵

The RDCs are well aware that what the SVC proposes is in actual fact based ‘on a trade off between economic and political strengths, each party having more of

¹² Metcalfe, S. (May 1996), *Report on Response of Local Authorities and Neighbouring Communities to the Proposal by Save Valley Conservancy to Establish a Community Development Trust, Zimbabwe* Trust. Unpublished report. It should be explicitly noted that RDCs do certainly *not automatically* represent local community interests in general and in conservation issues in particular. The CAMPFIRE experience has made this abundantly clear particularly in relation to the distribution of communal wildlife revenues (Bird, C. & Metcalfe, S. (1995), *Two Views from CAMPFIRES in Zimbabwe’s Hurungwe District. Training and Motivation. Who Benefits and who Doesn’t?* London: IIED, Wildlife and Development Series, no. 5. See also Patel 1998). This means that although the RDC is the official representative body of the communities, and I treat them as such in my writing, I certainly do not mean to see them as synonymous.

¹³ Ibid: 3.

¹⁴ Ibid: 3 & 2.

¹⁵ Ibid: 4.

one than the other'. The commercial farmers have economic power, while the communities have political power. The RDCs feel that they are being seduced with economic incentives by the SVC and they are not sure that the price, that is, the gift of the SVCT, the SVC is prepared to pay is high enough. The way the SVC handled the presentation of the Trust does not seem to indicate that it rated, literally, the communities and local authorities highly. It did not seem to deem it necessary to communicate with the communities in order to ask them what gift they would like for their goodwill. Instead it gave them a 'take-it-or-leave-it' offer, wrapped up, in economic development language. And the SVC did not give the RDCs time to consider their position and for that reason there was no 'courtship ritual' between the partners 'to explore each other's attitudes and motives' on the other side of the fence.¹⁶ At the community level the major issue was the fence and the relationship with their 'farmer next door'. The communities do not really relate to the SVC as one organisation but have to do with the farmer whose boundary they happen to share. And '(n)o amount of Trust supported development will cover up for bad relations on the ground'.¹⁷ Only interaction on the ground will be able to build up a relationship of trust. This seems to be what has happened with Gunundwe, whose management has given five bulls to the neighbouring communities as 'an offer of friendship', not a 'once off' gift, but 'hopefully the start of a 'give and take' relationship. In return, the ranch hopes to be able to work out ways and means to protect the ranch from poaching and general hostility'.¹⁸ Although they were not the only one who considered the SVC creating a Trust as a gift, 'provided the communities respect the boundary and do not poach'.¹⁹ This is how the SVC sees the reciprocal relationship: it offers the gift of the Trust and the return gift from the communities is a priori defined and should consist of respecting boundaries and no poaching. The communities obviously do not want to reject the gift straightaway, but do have a natural suspicion accepting it because they are not sure they want to pay the expected return gift. Especially not because the communities are already paying for the SVC by their denial of access to SVC land and the fence cutting them off from their natural resources. Communities also expressed their concern that if they accepted the gift of the Trust to be like 'manna from heaven', they would cede any possibility of claiming the land for resettlement or other purposes.²⁰ The difference in expectations of what a reciprocal relationship between SVC and communities involves comes

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid: 6.

¹⁸ Ibid: 9 (Appendix I).

¹⁹ Ibid: 16.

²⁰ Ibid: 3 (Appendix I).

specifically to the fore in the border area between Matsai Communal Land and the SVC. The Matsai people already stated at that particular stage of the SVC development that they wanted to settle the local land issue of the seventy-two families first before venturing any further into deeper waters with the Trust. I shall describe this Matsai case in more detail later on. The buffalo fence was generally seen as a 'hard edge' between the parties. Rather prophetically at the time, one participant stated that 'we will see you coming back again' (the business is not over).²¹ It seems obvious that the communities were not very willing to accept the gift and its implications of a return gift straightaway, if at all. Without beating about the bush the report plainly reveals that it is not only the institutional, structural and organisational co-operation which is essential to the success of the interdependency between SVC and communities, but also, and maybe even more so, the relationship between the individual commercial farmer and his direct neighbour in the communal lands. But no matter what the relationship is between farmer and community, there has been a 'general outcry' over the fence line.²² Because relationships on the ground are so important to the communal farmers, and thus for the SVCT representing them, it is worthwhile to 'visiting' the different hotspots around the SVC where fence wars are raging or have been part of the ongoing reciprocal exchange process.

Cases of reciprocal exchange between SVC (members) and communities

The Sango-Maronga case

Bordering Sango, the Maronga people protested about the fence line which was put on the eastern side of the river on the land from the Mid-Sabi Irrigation Scheme fence, because it cut the people off from the important riverine area which supplies all sorts of natural resources like reeds, firewood and water for their animals.²³ But the fence was erected there at the explicit request of and in a formal agreement with the Mid Sabi Irrigation Project.²⁴ According to the DA of

²¹ Ibid: 10 (Appendix I).

²² Ibid: 15 (Appendix I).

²³ Minutes of a meeting held at Makore Camp of Sango Ranch, 19 December 1997: 'The meeting had been prompted by the Maronga peoples complaints about the Sango boundary fence which crosses the Save River and follows a boundary on State Land – former Tongogara Refugee Camp and on ADA land – thus Midle Sabi for about 28 km'.

²⁴ However, nothing seems to have been put down on paper about this agreement and the man who negotiated the deal with them representing the Mid-Sabi Project has been moved to Harare and they have lost track of him. They did try to locate him to

Chipinge, it was for all the small-scale white farmers whose land adjoined Mid-Sabi who put pressure on it to ask the SVC to put up the fence on their side of the river, with the specific idea of preventing the villagers from reaching it and depleting its resources.²⁵ The Liaison Officer tells a somewhat different story saying it was not so much the small-scale farmers as a Zimbabwean NGO, Environment 2000, which put pressure on the project in an effort to save this part of the Save River by erecting a fence.²⁶ Actually the SVC fence does not encroach on the land of the Maronga people themselves. The fence is on the land of the Mid-Sabi Project a little to the north and as such belongs to the latter and not to the Maronga people. The fence crosses the river again at the former Tongogara Refugee camp, where in earlier days refugees from Mozambique were housed, stopping short of entering Maronga Communal Land. Despite this, the DA of Chipinge described the fence as coming 'from across the river', that is, from white commercial farmers, on land which is not theirs. The interpretation is that of white farmers taking their land again. A further complication to the issue is that the Save River also marks the boundary between the Bikita and Chipinge Districts. The fence is therefore seen as a Bikita fence encroaching on Chipinge land.²⁷ The fence once scrawls again its white signature on the land as the Maronga have also complained that their cattle were impounded when they crossed the fence and that they themselves were prosecuted for trespassing when they passed through the fence.²⁸ The landowner of Sango, claims the fence location is exactly on the spot which was agreed with the Mid-Sabi Project. And he is very much in favour of keeping the fence there to rehabilitate the riverine area. In order to convince the RDC Chipinge as well he invited its members on a tour in his helicopter to fly over the area,²⁹ to show them the difference between the fenced-in stretch of land and the riverine land to which the communities have straight access. It is a contrast between lush vegetation and a depleted landscape. Although the difference is striking and obvious, the complaints from the Maronga people have persisted. When the manager of Sango visited the Maronga community to speak to the people about the possibilities of exchange between them and Sango, that is, for instance cheap

ask about any minutes or other formalities relevant to their agreement. Interview with manager Sango, 5 August 1998.

²⁵ Interview with DA Chipinge, 11 September 1998.

²⁶ Conversation with Liaison Officer, 11 September 1998.

²⁷ Interview with DA Chipinge, 11 September 1998.

²⁸ *The Herald*, 30 July 1998, DA Seeks Solution over Row of Save Fencing.

²⁹ The landowner of Sango uses his helicopter in the SVC, as I used a car. When he was in the country and attending a CCM, his helicopter stood parked alongside cars of other landowners.

meat, helping them with the upgrading of the school, providing building poles and thatching grass in exchange for refraining from poaching, the discussion almost inevitably turned to the fence and the debate really heated up, with people starting to shout and make wild gestures at the manager. One of the villagers even had to be taken away by his fellow villagers when his shouting, yelling and gestures began to get out of hand.³⁰ When I left in November 1998, no solution to the problem had yet been found. This is not a problem in the legal sense of the word: nothing about the fence is illegal, but the sensitivity about its location seems almost ineradicable and has to be dealt with one way or the other, because it can add to the already existing political image that conservancies are only about securing land titles and even expanding them through these kind of operations.³¹

The Mapari/Chapungu-Mutema case

A similar case of fence location cutting off peoples' access to the riverine section is where the boundaries of Mapari and Chapungu meet at the Save River, where the people under Chief Mutema live. In earlier days, when both properties were still part of Devuli Ranch, they had cattle on the land and had eradicated all wildlife, except for some impala and the like. Obviously the Save River was important for watering the cattle. The routine was that they brought the cattle to the river every day and let them drink, after which they were brought back within the fences which were roughly one kilometre inland, not closing off the riverine section. Both communal and commercial farmers had access to the river, although legally, that is, in terms of title deeds, the boundary of the property ran through the middle of the river. In the cattle-farming era the communities could water and graze their cattle in the riverine area. When both properties joined in the initiative to form the SVC and 'turned to wildlife', it was no longer possible to bring the animals to the river, let them drink and then bring them back again. Wildlife had to have free access to the river to drink. For that reason, the fence was erected as much as possible in the middle of the river, following their official boundaries. Where there are large sandbanks in the river it proved especially easy to put up a fence. The communities complained about the location of the fence through their chieftainship, the local authorities,

³⁰ Visit and observations at meeting between manager Sango and Maronga people, 7 September 1998.

³¹ Hughes came to similar conclusions for Chimanimani: Hughes, D. (2001), Water as a boundary: national parks rivers, and the politics of demarcation in Chimanimani, Zimbabwe. In: Ingram, H. & Blatter, J. (eds), *Reflections on Water: New Approaches to Transboundary Conflicts and Co-operation*, Cambridge (MA): MIT Press, 267-294.

landowners, their managers and the SVC. They demanded that the fence be re-erected on the old location so that the banks of the river would be free again. But the fence remained where it was. Only some sections were relocated, not because of the complaints of the Mutema people but because they were too easily washed away during the rainy season. When the consultant toured the communities they said to him that '(b)y putting up on the new fence line without local consensus the relationship with the farmer could be said to have taken a step backwards'.³² In 1998 an unfortunate incident happened which exacerbated the situation. In July 1998 Mapari game scouts arrested the councillor and a team of people who were on Mapari Ranch to harvest ilala palm as was the custom. They said they were unaware of the fact that the arrangement had been cancelled by the landowner who 'had been given negative reports on his neighbours'. The people were angry about the arrest because it was considered a 'sign of lack of respect on one of their leaders [which] was very worrying to the community as a whole, especially when (...) the landowner snubbed the Councillor when he made an attempt to meet him after this incident'.³³

The Levanga-Gudo case

Yet another case along the riverside of the SVC is where Levanga borders with the land of the Gudo people. This case has nothing to do with access to the riverine section, but arises from symbolic value of land. Levanga is one of the most inaccessible properties of the SVC, but also very beautifully endowed with natural pans in which hippos and crocodiles reside. It has also most of the elephants in the SVC. The case of the Gudo people basically concerns a protest to do with the signature of the fence on the land. The Gudo people claim that they used to bury their chiefs and perform rituals on certain koppies on Levanga. Levanga also contains particular natural pans at which the Gudo people perform rain rituals at prescribed times. The councillor wrote a letter about the issue to the DA in Chiredzi asking him to intervene and to begin the process of designating the land. It is worth quoting extensively from this letter, because it summarises in a nutshell and in a localised setting the basic clash between black and white identities in Zimbabwe as related to land. 'As you may be well aware, there is a portion of land falling under a Mr Otterson which lies between Save River, Chirovamupande River and Dombo Hills and this land is endowed with the Sadziwe Marshes. You might also be aware that upon Dombo

³² Metcalfe May 1996: 15 (Appendix I). Other information from interview with Liaison Officer, 18 May 1998.

³³ Minutes of a meeting held at Manesa Rest Camp, 24 July 1998.

Hills, is the burial place for the Chiefs of the Gudo people. That land is of devout Cultural importance to the people and I cannot over-emphasise the value placed on it by them. My consultations with elders of the land reveal how worried the people are, with the plan by the current title holder of the Estate, to develop that portion of land into a lucrative sugar plantation. Whilst the people do respect the law and the right to dispose subject, use alienate or conversion of one's land as the owner deems fit, they are afraid the efforts of the whiteman, to put the land under irrigation shall not only spoil the sacredness of the land, but shall pe[r]vert its cultural significance and cut the umbilical cord between their ancestral spirits and themselves. They are afraid and indeed extremely worried, that they are being forgotten irrespective of the fact that, the title-holder of the land forcefully took it away from them the rightful and hereditary sovereigns. It is sad to note that much is not being done to assist the people reclaim their pride and appease their provident ancestors. As a useful reminder, the Gudo people used the Sadziwe Marshes to perform their ritual ceremonies. They held annual cultural ceremonies which included not only a fishing festival but also convened to summon rain (mutoro). They would also gather to thank their Ancestral spirits for providing and protecting them, in the course of the year, and would purge the spirits to continue to provide for them, and to protect them. The holding of these ceremonies is a conspicuous characteristic of the Gudo people, without which they are not unified and identified. It will be a traversity of their loyalty and respect for someone to arrogantly erect a building on top of the graves of their ancestors. It is such a mockery and relentless contempt for a white man to plant sugar on sacred marshes where ritual ceremonies were conducted from time immemorial. It is such immense cruelty to cut the Gudo peoples' ties with their history. It is sad to realize that against such a background of relentless deprivation, no-one has ever attempted to assist the Gudo people to assert their worries and to revert back the established mutual contact with their ancestral spirits'.³⁴ On the basis of these arguments the councillor asks the DA to designate portions of Levanga to be handed over to the Gudo people. In the same month he also took the story to the Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC), which put the item on the radio news, emphasising that a white farmer was destroying a black cultural heritage.³⁵ The latter move seems to represent a similar process to that described by Carruthers in her paper on a comparison between the Aborigines in Australia and the San in South Africa, namely that is that through their claims to land the local people aim 'to

³⁴ Letter Councillor Ward 1, Chiredzi District, to DA Chiredzi, 12 March 1998.

³⁵ Interview with Liaison Officer, 18 May 1998; interview with manager Levanga, 11 June 1998.

recapture their (...) culture'.³⁶ From this perspective it should not even come as a surprise that at first they did not mention the issue at all to the new manager, and only recently have become aware, or (re-)realised the importance of land. 'Land claims may (...) re-open a frontier, which has been closed for a long time', as 'country' brings people into existence, it is integral to their 'being'.³⁷ Through this process though land (once more) assumes the status of 'contested landscapes'.³⁸

Levanga was bought in October 1986. Before that time the property had been without a manager living on it for a period of two to three years. Gudo people could come onto the property at anytime without any interference.³⁹ Before that time, Levanga was stateland used as a bufferzone to the Tribal Trust Lands, which probably also implied that people had free access.⁴⁰ At the hand-over of the property nothing was mentioned about Gudo claims on parts of the land. When the manager, who happens to be the landowner's brother, visited Chief Gudo to inform him about his plans for Levanga, nothing of the like was brought to his attention. Approximately 95% of his labourers are from Gudo, but no one ever told him anything about the issues at stake. They only came up with the claim in 1989. The Liaison Officer, who at that time was still in local government, suggested that they would check on the claims at the Surveyor General's office, which they never did.⁴¹ The manager did notice that people came and went on the property to harvest natural resources, in particular meat. Moonlit nights are especially favourite times for setting and checking snares because they can work without the use of artificial light. They put rows of snares in game tracks and after some two to three days come and check if they have caught anything. If that is the case they take the animal with them and leave the other snares. If an animal is unlucky enough to be caught at a later date by such a snare, it just dies and rots.⁴² In their first year on Levanga they collected some 300-400 snares a month. It was at a time that the fences were still made of plain wire, which is ideal for constructing snares. Consequently the

³⁶ Pp. 3, Carruthers, J. (1999), Past and Future Landscape Ideology. The Kalahari Gemsbok National Park and Uluru – Kata Tjuta National Park Compared, paper presented at the conference *African environments past and present*, Oxford: St. Anthony's College, 5-8 July.

³⁷ Ibid: 4 & 8.

³⁸ Ibid: 12.

³⁹ Interview with manager Levanga, 11 June 1998.

⁴⁰ Liaison Officer at meeting with manager Levanga, the DA Chiredzi, Councillor of Ward 1 and representatives of Chief Gudo, 27 May 1998.

⁴¹ Conversation / interview with Liaison Officer, 14 July 1998.

⁴² Conversation with manager Levanga while visiting him with my Head of Department, 1 July 1998.

fences were cut in order to set snares on the property. The manager began to employ five guards from the Gudo community to whom he offered 5c a snare. It was a productive move, although he said he realised that they would probably not pick up snares of family or relatives. The manager claims that it was precisely at this particular point in time, when he was seriously counter-forcing poaching that the problems with the community commenced. What exacerbated the problem is that on occasions he also caught their cattle, which he found grazing on his property, and sold them back to them for Z\$1 a head. If they were not willing to pay, he threatened them he would 'follow the official procedure', which meant that he would impound the cattle and report the matter to the Veterinary Department. To retrieve their cattle the Gudo people would have to pay the Veterinary Services some Z\$ 10 per head. One day the manager's cattle were found grazing in the maize fields on communal land. The Gudo people caught them and he had to pay Z\$30 per head to get them back. In total he had to pay Z\$1200, Z\$600 for the damage done to the maize field and Z\$600 to get his cattle back.⁴³ According to another source, the official dealing with the issue had said to the manager that 'they were actually not talking about the issue, but about your relationship with your neighbours'.⁴⁴ Or to put in the words of yet another source, 'the manager's reputation followed the case like fire finding its way through dry grass'. Probably a minor reciprocal reckoning amongst the broader reciprocal reckoning about land.

In 1998 two major economic developments on Levanga, the introduction of cash-crops, citrus and paprika, on seventy ha of irrigated land and a newly built safari camp which he has leased to Senuko for five years. It is precisely these two economic centres of the property that are claimed by the Gudo people. His safari camp is built on the borders of the natural pans and his cash-crops seem to be located at the burial sites the Gudo people have mentioned. According to the manager, he tried four times to come to an agreement with the Gudo people about using the natural pans for their rituals. But, according to the manager again, on each occasion they did not keep their part of the bargain. The first time they asked him if they would make use of the pans for ritual purposes in 1989-1990, he granted them full freedom to do so unconditionally. They came in and to his astonishment caught all the fish. The same happened the second and third time. The fourth time they negotiated an access regulation for some three weeks in 1996. An MP was even invited to participate in the talks. The Gudo people wanted to come as a whole group, but the manager refused. The Liaison Officer of the SVCT also joined the talks and the final agreement was

⁴³ Interview with manager Levanga, 11 June 1998.

⁴⁴ Interview with Liaison Officer, 14 July 1998.

that eleven people would be allowed to come, for half a day and to catch eleven to fifteen fish. They would police the activity themselves. Nothing about the agreement was committed to paper. The whole agreement was an oral one. Despite the agreement, they all came in and 'slaughtered his pond'. Another source told me that it was rumoured that, when the ritual was taking place the manager's brother, the landowner, was on his way over from Chipinge. He claimed that when he saw that all the fish had been taken from the pond, he kicked the representative, that symbolically means kicking Chief Gudo, and confiscated the fish, which he later sold himself in Mutare.⁴⁵ The cash-crops were not yet there in 1998, but the manager was then clearing the bush and building the irrigation network. He was planning to plant paprika, which is sold as a cash-crop to the dyeing industry, and oranges.

On 27 May 1998 a meeting was planned with all the stakeholders involved to discuss the issue on Levanga. Present were the councillor of the ward (and the writer of the letter I quoted before at length), the DA Chiredzi, three representatives from Chief Gudo, the liaison officer and the manager. It is with this meeting that I began my introductory chapter right at the beginning of this book, because it so clearly shows the differences in identity between black and white in relation to land in Zimbabwe. When they had finally found the manager on his property, he was working somewhere at the new clearings. He invited them to come over either to his new safari camp or his house to talk over a cool drink. Deaf to all such offers, they insisted that they would hold the meeting under a shady tree on the border of the new clearing. It was around 11.15 hours and the sun was hot, but they did not want to create a situation in which they would have to put pressure on someone whose hospitality they had enjoyed and whose drinks they had drunk. In other words, they did not want the small reciprocal obligations to stand in the way of the bigger reciprocal reckoning over land. So the meeting started with a few opening lines from the liaison officer. The ward councillor was the one who took the lead in the discussion and claimed that in earlier days, the land at present falling under Levanga had been theirs and it had been forcefully taken from them under 'the old regime'. Now they had come to negotiate about that land, in particular the burial places and the natural pans. At first it seemed as if he wanted to discuss access to these places only. The manager replied that he did not know about any burial place, but if they would point them to him he would take care not to disturb them in the process of clearing the land. The councillor explained Shona culture precludes any direct pinpointing of a burial place, because to do so is improper and considered a bad omen. With regard to the pools, the manager

⁴⁵ Conversation with Liaison Officer, 14 July 1998.

told the delegation that he had already once negotiated access to them, which ended up with many people coming onto the property and ‘slaughtering’ the pond. So, access could be discussed but within firm conditions. A trench war loomed. At that stage the DA took over and tried to steer towards a compromise, but the councillor in a manner verging on the aggressive interrupted him. He said that he could not face the Gudo people he represented with a compromise, they would have to obtain the pieces of land claimed in ownership. He said that he could not return with a message that he had negotiated a deal whereby so many people for so many minutes were allowed access to their burial and ritual sites. The manager in his turn said that anyone interested could see his title deeds, which would show the exact boundaries of his property. The councillor said that he had seen ‘another map’ on which the boundaries are not at all clear. Questioned he could not be more specific about it and was also to produce the map. The manager said that he had not expected the Gudo people to claim the land, but to negotiate access only. The councillor replied that he had written a letter concerning their claims to the land to the chairman of the SVC, in the expectation that he in turn would inform the manager of Levanga. Again he could not prove his point by showing the letter. Only later did I find out from the chairman that there was indeed a letter, the letter from which I took that long quote. But obviously that letter has never been communicated to the manager of Levanga as it was not a letter specifically addressed to the Chairman of the SVC, but to the DA Chiredzi. The councillor and the manager did most of the talking, while the DA tried to remain impartial. The representatives of Gudo were consulted in Shona on a few occasions during the meeting but, because the discussion was in English, the manager does not speak Shona, they were not able to participate directly in the discussions. Nor was the discussion in English translated for them by anyone. Despite this hitch in communications it became clear that here were two parties standing opposed to each other with neither prepared to compromise. The Gudo people adhered to their land claim and the manager to his title deeds. After the Liaison Officer explained that what the Gudo people described as their land had probably previously been state land to which they had had free access, so that it seemed as if they owned it. This image of previous ownership is reproduced in the Gudo community over and over again and the double fence reminds them daily that someone else took it. This evokes a strong desire to protest about this state of affairs. After one hour of arguing the two parties split again and went home without any further progress being made. The councillor concluded that the two parties were the victims of cultural misunderstanding: the manager could not understand their

rituals and they did not understand anything about tourism development. What began as a meeting to negotiate access to certain pieces of land ended up with a straightforward land claim.⁴⁶

Nothing was solved at the meeting and the struggle continued.⁴⁷ In September 1998, the Gudo people began to organise systematic cane-cutting on Levanga by youngsters between the age of eight and fifteen at night. They were later seen selling the sugarcane on the Mutare Road. Six of those youngsters were said to come from one family, and their father has one house in Chipinge and one in the Gudo community. Chief Gudo promised the Liaison Officer that he would talk to the father and warning him that if it should happen again, he would be expelled from the community. The trouble was that the cane-cutting was not the only problem to beset Levanga. The Gudo people also caused two veldfires and continued to cut the fences in the cattle section to make snares out of them. Pigs found their way onto the property through the holes in the fence and proceeded forage in the cane fields, uprooting the sugarcane. This continues to happen despite the fact that meetings in which they try to solve this matter have taken place.⁴⁸ For his part the manager seems to try to make a serious effort to build up some kind of relationship with the community by sending the chief meat and supplying the community with building poles, thatching grass and firewood. He also arranged transport to bring it to take it to their villages.⁴⁹ The minutes state that, despite his donations and gifts, the Gudo people 'repay him' by poaching, stealing cane plus the cutting and theft of wire. This is made even worse because there is 'also the lack of co-operation to deal with the lawlessness in the area'. The overwhelming importance of the land as an inalienable possession taken from them long ago still seems to trigger off a spiral of negative reciprocities, despite trials of launching a positive exchange by gifts to and supplying the Gudo people with necessities. The manager considers it a

⁴⁶ It is interesting to note that, on the way back with the Gudo delegation in my car, it came out that they were not a united front as they presented themselves at the meeting. The DA nearly bitterly laughed at the idea, so fiercely defended by the councillor, that near the end of the twentieth century negotiations took place 'about something like a little pond and an ancient burial site'. So where I talk about 'us' and 'them', white and black, I certainly do not want to give the impression that there is only unity and consensus within the groups. In that sense it is an intellectual abstraction to talk about 'us' and 'them'. This holds true for the coalition of land-owners who form the SVC as well as for the surrounding communities.

⁴⁷ Information from Liaison Officer, 6 October 1998.

⁴⁸ Minutes of a meeting held at Dombo Primary School, 21 September 1998.

⁴⁹ Ibid: During the meeting it is mentioned what the manager had already given to his neighbours: 1500 bundles of thatching grass, 224 tons of cane tops, 900 building poles, 1700 cords of firewood and supplied transport.

lack of gratitude and has ordered that if pigs from the neighbouring communities are seen on the property, they will be shot, instead of being caught and returned them to the community, where it is asked whose pigs they are. In October 1998 a group of poachers from Gudo was followed by the game scouts, but all escaped save one. He was being held by the game scouts on Levanga overnight so that they could take him to the police the next day. But, when evening fell, a group of Gudo people came to where he was being held bearing bows, arrows and sticks and intimidated the game scouts to let their fellow poacher go or else... And the game scouts, although armed with rifles, (had to) let him go.⁵⁰

Within the SVC the Gudo people have won themselves a reputation of being 'difficult'. In his annual report 1997-1998 the liaison officer writes that 'Gudo area has since been identified as an area posing the biggest threat to the SVC in terms of illegal hunting, veld fires, thefts etc. It was also discovered that the people in this area work in close collaboration with Chipinge people'.⁵¹ Faced with this obduracy, the chairman and the liaison officer wanted to start a community project aimed especially at co-operation with the Gudo people and in 1996 proposed that they build a traditional village along the route to the SVC. Visitors to the SVC could then be guided through the traditional village, pay an entrance fee and buy locally-made curios. People under Chief Gudo had been the main source of labourers when Senuko was building its lodges. So the chairman wanted especially ask them to be the first to be offered a business opportunity in co-operation with the SVC. Taking due note of their image it was thought that if it could 'crack this nut' other communities would follow suit more easily.⁵² However well intentioned, the plan aroused a storm of protest. The Gudo people were afraid that it was a strategy of the SVC to 'grab land from them', in the same way that the land of Levanga had been taken under the 'old government'.⁵³ The people opposing the plan were assured that nothing like that would happen⁵⁴ in this case and they selected a committee which would be responsible for guiding and organising the erection and building of the tradi-

⁵⁰ Interview with Chairman, SVC 9 October 1998

⁵¹ Yearly Report, April 1997 - March 1998, Liaison Officer.

⁵² Interview with Chairman SVC, 8 July 1998.

⁵³ Although it never was Tribal Trust Land, always Stateland. It never belonged to the Gudo people in that sense.

⁵⁴ More than five meetings were held with all the stakeholders and the chairman and the liaison officer organised a fieldtrip for the chieftainship and the committee members to visit Mahenya in the Chipinge District where there is a similar project, and where they were able to talk to the chairman of the Mahenya committee. Mahenya is also a community project of the chairman of the SVC. After the visit, the Gudo people seemed convinced.

tional village. The committee consisted of the younger brother of the chief and a group of selected and respected elders from the community.⁵⁵ So far so good but, try as they might they could not assemble a labour force. The chairman of the SVC was prepared to lend them Z\$ 5000, interest free and with no set time frame for repayment, in order to hire a crew to do the building for them. On top of the loan, the chairman provided building poles, thatching grass and the necessary transport. These latter extras were all free of charge. No wonder the Gudo people spoke about the project as 'the baby' of the chairman and liaison officer.⁵⁶ They eventually commenced building in May 1996, but progress was really slow. In March 1998 a meeting was held at which it was noted that the building was still not completed and they 'agreed to a deadline of April 30th to complete whatever needed to be done at the village'.⁵⁷ By May 1998 only some 60% of the projected traditional village had been build. Despite support of the councillor for the ward, the community never seems to have become really enthusiastic about the idea. The councillor said that they would borrow no more money from Senuko, but supply the labour from the community itself, if only to show that the project meant something to them. This was a timely decision as by now, building poles and thatching grass were being stolen from the site. They even had to appoint a caretaker who was supposed to keep an eye on things and prevent material from being stolen. But not after long the caretaker was driven away by means by verbal threats that he would be beaten up and by intimidation through witchcraft. So, once again the building site of the traditional village unguarded and the (by now nearly) inevitable happened. In May 1998 the village was burned down. In August 1998 the chairman and the liaison officer set up one last meeting with the Gudo people telling them that they wanted to sell the idea for a traditional village to someone else. The people asked if they could have one last chance, up to 10 September. That request was granted 'but they were warned that by the due date, 10th September 1998, there is no tangible improvement on completion of the project, there was not going to be another consultation meeting and the decision will be upheld. The meeting ended with a prayer'.⁵⁸ In September, at a meeting with the Nyangambe community at the Nyangambe school they proposed that these people build a traditional village, which could be marketed to clients from Mukazi, Mukwazi,

⁵⁵ Minutes of Dombo Traditional Home Committee Meeting at Dombo School, 21 May 1996.

⁵⁶ Conversation with Liaison Officer, 8 May 1998.

⁵⁷ Minutes of a meeting held at Zungudza Primary School, 25 March 1998.

⁵⁸ Minutes of meeting held at the Gudo traditional village, 10 August 1998.

Hammond and Senuko.⁵⁹ Later political and economic developments in Zimbabwe have prevented this to come through.

The Angus-Matsai case

On the west-side of the SVC one case in the south-west between the SVC and neighbouring communities is dominating the scene, that of the Matsai Communal Land. It is a fitting and major case to illustrate all the aspects of reciprocal exchange that I have described and explored in the previous chapters, being matters of different identities, material and immaterial exchange, historical and national context of black and white relations in southern Africa, The Land Issue in Zimbabwe and the symbolic role of the fence and the wish to exploit hunting within the SVC. The incidents I will describe here form part of an ongoing process of hostility between Matsai Communal Land and commercial land, now part of the SVC. It is also the spot, together with Levanga, with the most serious problems with 'war veterans' after Mugabe's lost referendum in February 2000. It can be brought back to the issue of land alienation, which they never accepted and protested and continue to reclaim. In 1997 two major 'vehicles' occurred which could be used separately and in combined cumulative force to (re)write their statement about the land issue once more (the lost referendum probably the final one). The first vehicle was the FMD outbreak on Mukwazi in August 1997 and the second the land designation programme, which was published by the government in November 1997. These incidents also shed light on the particular role of the Trust as mediating body between the communities and the SVC. In this case it will be shown that the Trust was not able, nor the Liaison Officer or Joint Committee for that matter, to play a significant role in representing the communities towards the SVC. Let me start with describing the consequences of the FMD outbreak and its major impact on the relations between SVC and the Matsai community.

After it was suggested, and later verified by laboratory tests, that there was indeed a FMD infection in the SVC, it was up to the DVS in Harare to decide upon further action. The DVS began by stepping up surveillance in the province as well as setting up road blocks in and around the affected areas. Cattle on Mukwazi Ranch, which is fenced out of the SVC, are no longer allowed to be sold on the hoof. They may only be sold to be slaughtered. One thing became clear after the DVS had checked on the SVC fence, namely that the FMD outbreak had not occurred because of a break in the fence.⁶⁰ This meant at least that the SVC could not be attacked on their fence maintenance. Nevertheless the

⁵⁹ Personal observations at meeting with Nyangambe community, 6 September 1998.

⁶⁰ Conservator's report, September 1997.

SVC was ordered to upgrade the fence between the Mkwazine River and the Turwi River (sixty-seventy km) on its western side, by raising the total height to 2.4 metres and adding veldspan to it.⁶¹ The puzzle was, if it were not buffalo getting through the fence, what was the reason of the outbreak? It was suspected that it could have been caused by other cloven-hoofed animals like kudu and impala which are able to jump over the fence. Hence the demand the fence be raised. These cloven-hoofed animals might have been the carriers of FMD, having brought the disease into the communal areas by drinking from the same water as the cattle. To check this suspicion, the SVC was asked to collect and send in blood samples of cloven-hoofed kudu and impala in particular to check if they could be identified as the carriers of the disease.⁶² In the CCM at the time the chairman said that he had spoken to someone from the Cattle Producers Association (CPA) who had said that ‘apart from a few hotheads making allegations and claims, the situation was under control’.⁶³

The DVS decided that all cattle for the communal areas had to be vaccinated, but this would destroy the ‘clear area’. So on second thoughts they decided that, to protect the national herd, all the infected cattle should be slaughtered. The beasts would be replaced with clear and qualitatively slightly better cattle through the CSC. It all seemed clear and above board but the communal farmers in Bikita and Zaka refused the swap, because they doubted that the cattle would be of the same value as the ones being slaughtered.⁶⁴ What they meant to say was that they saw the value of their cattle was not so much in terms of meat prices, as in draught power, for ploughing their fields. If all these animals were to be replaced by new cattle they would lose all their trained animals and it will take years before they could school the new cattle to be used as draught animals.⁶⁵ Now the communities were really angry in the sense that they had to pay for living next to the SVC, without benefiting from it. At the CCM in July 1998, the chairman of the SVC informed the committee that the

⁶¹ CCM 8 July 1998 and interview with Conservator, 5 October 1998.

⁶² This suspicion turned out to be founded as in seven out of thirty samples between 22 March and 5 May 1998, they discovered high titres for FMD ‘ranging in value from 40 to greater than 640 for SATII(...) The Vet Department are concerned about the proportion of positive titres especially with one showing such a high value that it was probably showing symptoms of the disease at the time it was shot’, Conservator’s report, 10 June 1998. Although impala and kudu ‘will clear the disease out of their system after a while’, buffalo contain ‘a maintained infectious system’, Minutes CCM, 4 November 1998.

⁶³ CCM Minutes 3 September 1997.

⁶⁴ *The Herald*, 18 September 1997, Cattle Slaughtering Hits Snag in Zaka, Bikita.

⁶⁵ Interview with landowner of Mukwazi Ranch, 11 August 1998. The landowner said explicitly that he was empathetic to this argument of the communal farmers.

communities see the SVC 'as a burden, loud and clear'. For that reason the chairman, accompanied by representatives from the Zimbabwe Farmers Union (ZFU) and the DVS, went to speak to the communities and explained to them the possibilities of working together with the SVC in a joint venture-like structure, the Trust. The basic idea being that the Trust would buy wildlife by finding its own funds and then leasing the founder stock to the SVC. The SVC would pay the Trust a lease price and also for the progeny of the founder stock. This would create a fund with which the Trust could initiate all kinds of community development projects in the neighbouring communities. According to the chairman, the ZFU, which represents communal farmers in Zimbabwe, was very enthusiastic about the potential of the idea and would have liked to cooperate on it. Teetering on the brink it asked the SVC to give the communities something tangible 'as a token' that the SVC was willing to help and invest in them. That token could consist of cleaning three infected diptanks. The Chairman added that it would be good to work on such a token, as the current situation was not conducive to the whole land designation process and the position of Angus, Mukwazi and Mukazi, formerly undivided as Angus, in the process. None of the three properties was on the official designation list, which seems to have irritated the Provincial Government and there are rumours that it are trying again to get it on the list.⁶⁶ It seems the enthusiasm about delivering a token of goodwill had quickly faded away because at the CCM in October of the same year, the issue resurfaced again with force. The chairman informed the committee that he had been called by Chris Foggin, Principal Research Officer of the DVS,⁶⁷ about the FMD issue. Foggin had warned him that the issue could remove the head of the DVS, Dr Hargreaves, from his post as the whole issue was now 'turning political'. He had asked the chairman to 'do his part on the ground level' and convene a meeting with the Matsai people. The chairman went on to reiterate that this problem could only be solved through the Trust-idea and that the SVC should now devote all its energy to the Trust'. 'If we don't deal with it we will have pressures on our boundaries we have never known before'.⁶⁸

The buffalo and other cloven-hoofed animals were seen as a burden by the Matsai peoples and not these alone. Nor was it first the desire of the SVC to utilise wildlife through commercial hunting in their conservancy, which troubled the communal farmers and for which they felt they had to pay the price. A major concern had to do with the land itself. When Angus was still undivided and belonged to Devuli, it had attracted labour from the Matsai

⁶⁶ CCM, 8 July 1998.

⁶⁷ *The Farmer*, 27 November 1997, Dr. Chris Foggin Wins 1997 Wildlife Oscar.

⁶⁸ CCM, 7 October 1998.

community and, as was the tradition in those days, you ‘didn’t pay them, but you fed them’.⁶⁹ So it gave them a small plot on (combined) Angus land to plough and plant with their food crops. During the Liberation Struggle, Angus was abandoned as I described earlier and left to itself. Seizing the opportunity the people came onto the property, in a sense illegally, and settled down. Even after Independence, Angus was not immediately put back into operation. When operations were finally restarted on Angus, the people refused to leave on the grounds that they were or had been employees of Angus and therefore had the right to live on the property, even after retirement. After Independence the issue was ‘politicised’. In 1983, thirty-three families were evicted from the property by the then DA of Bikita, because it was discovered that they never ‘officially worked for Angus’. Only three families, who had officially been employed on Angus, were allowed to stay and live on the property. The rest of the houses were burned down. The DA who had been in charge of the operation was then transferred to another district and his replacement was ‘a weakling’, so the families began to come back on the property and nothing was done about it. The new DA claimed that he could not find the file on the issue and the process had to begin all over again. The Provincial Governor at Masvingo, who was brought in as an arbitrator, believed the families formerly evicted were right. By now their number had swelled to seventy-two families and this ‘somehow’ became the official figure. The management of Devuli never agreed with that figure but, nevertheless, the seventy-two families were granted the right to live there. In those days Angus was still a cattle ranch and the veterinary fence was situated farther inland than the official boundary of the property indicated. This was done for reasons of convenience as it followed an easier landscape than going up hill and down dale. It enabled the fences to be monitored from by a 4X4. When that veterinary fence was erected inside the legal boundaries of Angus, it was no use of erecting another fence according the boundaries of the title deeds, which would inevitably be situated, relatively close to a well-kept and maintained veterinary fence. This situation persisted as long as Angus remained a cattle ranch and the Matsai people took the veterinary fence for the property fence, going right up to that fence to build their huts and encroaching on the land just behind the veterinary fence. When Angus became part of the SVC and had to join in erecting the buffalo fence, it located the fence on the exact boundary according to the title deeds, which in the meantime had been divided

⁶⁹ From this type of quotations you can read that this story is primarily told from the perspective of the SVC dominated by legal considerations of property and trespassing.

into three and sold.⁷⁰ But the Matsai people started to complain verbally that the fence was now on their land. They said that they knew 'from their forefathers', who could indicate exactly where the boundary was.⁷¹ They have persisted doggedly in this interpretation, even when Angus became part of the SVC. When the SVC presented them with the idea of the Trust, they said that 'the issue of resettling the seventy-two minus families had to be resolved before the Conservancy tries to sell its idea [of the Trust] to them'.⁷² They added that the families 'have very high expectations of getting land from the SVC for resettlement'.⁷³ So the SVC had to come up with a solution.

The initial solution proposed was an idea namely put forward by the former owner of the undivided Angus, Rob Cunningham, and the chairman of the SVC, to let the SVC buy roughly one-third of Mukazi and sell that stretch of land to the Trust, asking it to exploit it for the benefit of the communities: not by living on it but by utilising it for wildlife and in that process create revenue for the people. The provincial governor (PG) also liked the idea. But the SVC proved to be unable to raise the required funding, repeating its failure to raise funds through donors to finance their restocking programme, to buy the land which greatly disappointed all parties involved. Mukazi was then bought by a new owner who said that he would give them a piece of land and when Mukwazi could not solve the problem either they found a 'solution' by erecting the SVC fence and excluding the families. But, although they were now outside the fence, they were still on the property according to the title deeds.

To solve the matter once and for all the SVC asked Agritex experts to come in and do a survey in order to find a more suitable spot for the families. After ground checking they came to the conclusion that '(t)he total area of the marked out area [for the families] is 688 ha of which only 75 ha is potential arable. There is 150 ha (...), which has got very deep soils, but got a slope greater than 12% which reduces it to class 7. This means that this area can only be used for grazing. If this area is to be cultivated then strict conservation measures should be followed to avoid siltation of Mkazi river'. So, in fact, that particular piece of land could not accommodate the seventy-two families. They selected another

⁷⁰ The then owner of Angus first had to ask permission from the government to subdivide the land, which was allowed. Then he had to offer it for sale first to the government. Only when it signed a statement of 'no-interest' was he allowed to try and attract other buyers, which happened.

⁷¹ Interview with landowner Chishakwe, 18 June 1998. The same story of people 'encroaching' on Angus property was also related to me in an interview with the liaison officer of the Trust, interview 18 May 1998 and co-owner of Humani, 10 September 1998.

⁷² Yearly Report Liaison Officer, April 1995 to March 1996, 26 May 1996.

⁷³ Undated monthly Progress Report Liaison Officer, 1996.

area of 500 ha on the property which would be suitable land for the resettlement of the families and they came with land 'of which 300 ha is potential arable, 150 ha is class 8 and 50 ha is class 7'.⁷⁴ On early drawings of the SVC it is even possible to see a piece of Mukazi which is demarcated as 'proposed village area'.⁷⁵ The whole process proved very time-consuming. In May 1996 the DA of Bikita and a representative of Chiredzi District 'unanimously agreed that the alternative area to the south of Mukazi Ranch which is 500 ha in extent was the best option (...)'. It was also agreed that the Conservancy could fence in the area that was fenced out, once a favourable decision had been made about the 500 ha. The families in question were said to be prepared⁷⁶ to give their labour for free to assist in the re-alignment of the fence. '(...) The Chairman reiterated the sentiments of all the officials by indicating that a solution of the Matsai / Angus issue was long overdue and putting it to rest now through a solution acceptable to both sides was likely to have positive effects for both the programme and the people'.⁷⁷ In his monthly report to the SVC the liaison officer states that '(t)he Matsai/Angus issue is now bound to move forward. The officials of Bikita and Chiredzi districts have unanimously agreed to a report by Agritex officials'. It is expected that these developments 'will put this issue to rest before the end of this year 1996'.⁷⁸ It would take longer and in August 1997 a final report was released which seems to confirm that the matter could now be finalised. Land was offered to the affected families by the present landowner of Mukazi and Agritex had chosen a suitable section. Although during the final visits of the Agritex officials to Mukazi the report seems to indicate that the landowners of Mukazi and Mukwazi did not really enthusiastically support the process on the ground. 'The third meeting was scheduled for 30/07/1997 at the lower boundary (Mukazi/Mukwazi) to discuss and agree on the boundary of the 500 hectares potential arable. Agritex and affected farmers walked the boundary and established the 500 ha. The vehicle that we were using had a breakdown and had been taken to Chiredzi for repairs. We were also supposed to meet the land-

⁷⁴ Letter Agritex to DA Chiredzi, 7 December 1995.

⁷⁵ Undated map of the SVC. On the same map are also two cattle areas indicated, on Mukwazi and Mkwasine.

⁷⁶ In minutes of a meeting in October 1996 between the stakeholders it is explicitly mentioned that the families concerned were 'more than ready' to give their labour for free to re-align the fence. Minutes of meeting at Chiremwaremwa Business Centre, 25 October 1996.

⁷⁷ Minutes of meeting at Chiremwaremwa Business Centre, 2 May 1996.

⁷⁸ Monthly Progress Report April 1996. When the Liaison Officer started working for the Trust, but in fact for the SVC, he used to write a report every month and once a year an annual report. But because of the fact that he never got any feedback or any other form of reaction he stopped writing the monthly reports later on.

owner and manager to finalise on the boundary and arrange that they take us back to base. May be due to other commitments they did not turn up and we ended up walking for 24 kms to base. On 31 July 1997 affected farmers, Save Valley Conservancy representation and Agritex went back to the lower boundary hoping to meet the landowners. Due to the bad terrain of the Ranch and the size of our vehicle, we ended up walking for +15 kms to and from the meeting point to where we left the vehicle. (...) The landowners and manager again did not twin up'. The Liaison Officer reported that '(t)he unfortunate behaviour by the owners of Mukazi Ranch made it impossible to finalise the matter. A full report was compiled by the Agritex officers and copies of this report were distributed to all the concerned parties. I think all other concerned parties are looking to the farmer to honour his part of the agreement'.⁷⁹ But despite his attitude to the matter, the 'landowner of Mukazi Ranch (...) finally accepted the recommendation by Agritex Chiredzi'⁸⁰ and the Agritex report concludes with the expectation that 'the affected farmers can actively sit at their new site on or before 31/11/1997 which happens to be the start of the rainy season'.⁸¹ To make absolutely certain a rider that 'agreements made between Save Valley Conservancy and land owners and/or Manager should be in black and white, signed and circulated to other players to remove the element of suspicion' was added.⁸² It was now actually only a matter of Agritex finalising the paperwork. In September 1996 the liaison officer was already anticipating the Agritex paperwork and wrote in his quarterly report: 'I am happy to report that this matter [Angus issue] has been resolved'.⁸³ '(...) (T)he fencing was due to start immediately upon receipt of the relevant documentation from Agritex. This was in August 1997; since then the documentation has not been forthcoming. (...) It has been agreed by all relevant parties that the settlement of the families concerned on this area of land would have resolved the issue completely'.⁸⁴ But in November 1997 the officially announced land designation programme cut right through this solution. By the end of 1998 nothing has been heard or seen from Agritex. A reciprocal reckoning for insults received in the process?

⁷⁹ Progress Report Liaison Officer, May to September 1997, 8 October 1997.

⁸⁰ Monthly Report Liaison Officer, August 1996, 4 September 1996.

⁸¹ Report of Agritex to DA Chiredzi, on visit made to Mukazi Ranch, 6 August 1997.

⁸² Ibid: 3.

⁸³ Quarterly Report Liaison Officer, June 1996 - August 1996, 10 September 1996.

⁸⁴ Information sheet 'Background on Angus Ranch', which I received from the manager of Angus during an interview, 15 June 1998.

After the publication of the land designation programme in November 1997, the protests and claims of the Matsai people began again with renewed fervour⁸⁵ and in August 1998 they started to invade Mukazi, Mukwazi and Angus. At first, at Mukazi and Mukwazi, it all happened fairly peacefully, although the property owner said that there were some '5-6 ex-combattants' and that the group of 150-200 'was behaving like primitive people'. The landowner asked the DA of Chiredzi to come with him and talk to them and the DA had been '100% co-operative'. The police could not attend, because they 'had no transport'. The landowner said that he would provide for transport, after which the policeman said 'just a minute' and 'never came back'.⁸⁶ When he and the DA finally arrived at the spot where the people were invading the property, they were, according to the DA, in a pretty violent mood. When he asked them if they wanted him to address them on the issue, some said yes and some said no and he then decided not to do it, because he thought 'that it needed only a spark' to 'let the situation turn violent'. Although there was no police, on this occasion he was accompanied by his guards. He himself said he had had a firearm in his pocket and if necessary he would 'shoot to kill' and had instructed his guards likewise. This was not necessary and the people later left the property peacefully.⁸⁷ From that date onward the invasions were regular and grew increasingly destructive. The invaders started to cut down trees and threatened people, especially game guards. The Conservator reported all the invasions to the CFU representative in Masvingo by e-mail, emphasising the lack of support the landowners and managers were receiving from the local authorities, specifically the police, which he explains as the outcome of 'instructions from the top'. In the e-mails he also indicated that he did not understand what made the invaders act the way they did. He specifically mentions the fact that the invaders announced that they would begin to disrupt the activities of the labourers working on the upgrading of the fence. 'This type of activities makes no sense at all. Even less than the other activities', like clearing fields on Angus where there is no water or trees for felling.⁸⁸ From the perspective of the underlying inalienability of the land and the symbolic role of fences as the signature of the landowner, the disruption is in fact perfectly logical and obviously the only possible line of action to be adopted. The people want to stop or erase the signature of a white landowner and consider the land theirs. In a last, hand-

⁸⁵ Interview with landowner Masapas, 11 August 1998 and Liaison Officer, 18 May 1998.

⁸⁶ Interview landowner Mukwazi, 11 August 1998.

⁸⁷ Conversation with DA Chiredzi at the DA Canteen, 24 September 1998.

⁸⁸ E-mails Conservator to CFU representative in Masvingo, 13 August and 19 August 1998.

written report on Angus to the CFU representative in Masvingo, the conservator observes, much to his surprise, that when told by the police that they were acting illegally, invaders had said that they were unaware that what they were doing was illegal.⁸⁹ How can you occupy your own land illegally? The invasions were creating intensive radio contact between the properties affected and between properties and the head office of the SVC. And because the radio system is open, it was possible to follow the process by just listening to and noting the communication over the radio. At a certain point the manager of Mukwazi reported that 'they start like chop-chop', indicating that people started to cut down trees and 'they don't think they will stop at Mukwazi'.⁹⁰ Game guards were threatened that the invaders would 'have their arms and legs for supper'.⁹¹ When people later also began to invade Angus they continued with this cutting down of trees. It was done at random and there was no discernible pattern, all at about one metre above the ground. They also stripped pieces of bark from the trees to make their protests known as a kind of 'natural graffiti'. They even started to clear the bush systematically as if preparing their fields for an upcoming agricultural season, and erected temporary huts.⁹²

The role of the DAs in this context is ambiguous to say the least. Unquestionably they are responsible for all the types of land falling under their district, communal and commercial land. They have to represent both. But in the context of the land designation process this is very difficult as they also chair the District Land Acquisition Committee. This committee has to submit ideas and applications on properties they think should be designated to the provincial level. In this case the whole Matsai community, not only the seventy-two families to be accommodated, have applied at the DA's office for the designation of 'the whole of Angus'. So while the DA Chiredzi accompanies the landowner to see the people who are invading his property and urging them to get off the property, at the same time he is applying for its designation in other circles. The landowner is saying that the DA of Chiredzi has been '100% co-operative' takes on an ironic twist from this perspective. From the district level the application for designation goes to the Provincial Land Acquisition Committee, chaired by the PG and finally the application reaches the National

⁸⁹ Undated and hand-written report of Conservator on Angus invasions. Date probably beginning of September, as he mentions the coming visit of the PG on 14 September 1998.

⁹⁰ Radio message 17 August 1998.

⁹¹ Conversation with the person in charge of radio contact on 18 August 1998, when Mukwazi was invaded.

⁹² Tour to see the damage done on the property and interview with manager of Angus, 10 September 1998.

Land Acquisition Committee, which is chaired by Minister Msika. Although there has been an application for the designation of the whole of Angus through this process, they did not receive any reply in 1998, although they were expecting a positive outcome soon.⁹³

The accommodation of the seventy-two families and the land designation programme of November 1997 have considerably delayed the upgrading of the fence as a precaution against future FMD outbreaks and in compliance with orders of the DVS. In the Conservator's report of 1 April 1998 it is said that '(t)he Veterinary Department have indicated serious concern that the upgrading of the fence has not commenced and have requested that the Chairman and myself [that is, the Conservator] meet with the Director of the Department of Veterinary Services and Mr. Bob Swift, the CFU deputy director of commodities to discuss their concerns and issues related to the upgrading of the fences (...) The seriousness with which the Department and the cattle producers view the fence, should not be underestimated and a decision needs to be made at this meeting to proceed immediately with the alterations'.⁹⁴ In his July report he states that '(a)ll materials except one load of poles have been received for the fence upgrade (...) A person to oversee the upgrade exercise has been found and I hope to get this started early next week. The Mukazi fence re-route issue requires sorting out before that fence can be upgraded'.⁹⁵ This last remark was repeated in his August report.⁹⁶ Since Agritex went to 'finalise the paper work' nothing more has been heard. If the solution were accepted and formalised, they would have to take this into account when deciding the exact location of the upgraded fence on Mukazi. In the meantime they had begun to upgrade the fence on Mukwazi. When the upgrading of the fence was finished on Mukwazi, they had to continue the work on Mukazi and needed to know where exactly to erect the fence. There was no joy as the Agritex deal was still not finalised. A final attempt was made to settle the deal, and the liaison officer convened a meeting at Mukazi Ranch on Monday 5 October 1998 with all necessary political stakeholders involved, namely representatives of the Matsai people, that is, two ward councillors, the DAs of Bikita and Chiredzi, and Agritex. But then, in the late afternoon of Friday 2 October 1998, the acting DA of Chiredzi, the DA himself was on leave, called the SVC office, while the liaison officer was out, to say that the 'meeting had to be postponed indefinitely', without giving any further reasons. It later transpired that one ward councillor had refused to attend the meeting, despite the fact that the higher level hierarchy in

⁹³ Interview with Chairman Joint Committee, 7 July 1998.

⁹⁴ Conservator's report, 1 April 1998.

⁹⁵ Conservator's report, 8 July 1998.

⁹⁶ Conservator's report 5 August 1998.

Bikita had asked him to do so. The other ward councillor would have come, although he had not been re-elected at the latest council elections, which meant that at the meeting, strictly speaking, he could no longer be officially considered as representative of his ward. The rumours had it that he was on his way out of local government because he was not elected anymore because he had spoiled his chances of re-election because he was too positive about the SVC. Not for nothing was he the chairman of the Joint Committee of the SVC, mediating between communities and SVC. And that was that, and the message from the communities resounded loud and clear: we are no longer interested in the plans we made earlier, we are after the whole of the Angusses.⁹⁷ End of solution, but not end of story. A few complications have to be added to integrate the case even further.

In the first place it should be made clear why the Matsai people were no longer interested in the plan to peg out a suitable 500 ha of land to be accommodated, before the official designation of Angus was still not decided upon. Why throw away a good opportunity when a new one is not yet assured? Why take the risk? In a meeting between the PG, the DA of Bikita District, the chief of the Matsai people, the chairman of the SVC, its conservator and the liaison officer of the Trust, held on 20 August 1998, the mouth of the chief let drop that the PG himself had said in a meeting with the Matsai people in Mashoko at the beginning of 1998 that 'the whole of Angus' would be designated by June 1998. The Matsai people had waited till the end of July to see if his words would come true. When this was not the case, they began to invade the properties to make clear their point that they were after the land and wanted the PG to live up to his promises. They gave the PG a week to convene a meeting and settle things, otherwise they would move in and start building their villages. The landowners and their managers were also invited to this meeting.⁹⁸ It is interesting to note that they were not speaking about the sub-divided Angus, but of Angus proper, also comprising Mukazi and Mukwazi. History seemed to be repeating itself. It is the Matsai people versus Angus, just as it was during the Liberation Struggle. The PG indeed set up a meeting, although not within a week. The meeting was arranged for 14 September 1998 at the Old Mashoko Mission.⁹⁹ The excuse of the PG for the late meeting was that he had been out of the country, so he could not comply exactly with the demand. Therefore it had to be a fortnight later.

⁹⁷ Participating in conversation at SVC office, 5 October 1998.

⁹⁸ Conversation with Liaison Officer, 27 August 1998.

⁹⁹ Participant observation and conversations with Liaison Officer during the day, 14 September 1998.

‘Coincidentally’, in the meantime, the PG was able to digest the results of the disappointing donor conference (9-11 September 1998) which betrayed the fact that the donors would not support the programme financially and criticised the way the Zimbabwean government was handling the process (see Chapter 2). Be that as it may, the PG was too late with his meeting and the people began to invade again. This time neither Mukazi nor Mukwazi was their goal, but only of Angus. Whereas the invasions on Mukazi and Mukwazi had been fairly peaceful, on Angus they did substantial damage by chopping down trees. It is pregnant with significance that they continued their invasions on Angus, because that property is the name-bearer of the Angus property on which they have inexorably set their sights. So if any location would suit their purpose for conveying their message that they want Angus designated loud and clear, it would be the property still bearing its name. Adding to the plausibility of this symbolic interpretation of their invasions is the irrefutable fact that Angus has no water. The natural water is on Mukazi and Mukwazi, but not on Angus. Angus has to pump water from the Turwi. This explains why, after the sub division, Angus was never asked to accommodate people and these were sent only to Mukazi and Mukwazi. There is simply no water, unless you are able to pay for a pump. Even the dam, which is on Angus, is a strictly artificial one, in which there is only water because it is pumped into the dam to keep ‘the croc happy’.¹⁰⁰ So the people invaded Angus not because they really envisaged living on the property but because its name signifies the historic continuity of their struggle over land.

At last, the meeting with the PG was settled and they gathered at Old Mashoko, which is the traditional and general meeting place if Wards 1,2 and 3 have something to discuss together. It is an open space sheltered by six huge mango trees, which give sufficient shade when the sun burns down mercilessly during the summer. It is the same spot at which the PG made his earlier announcement that Angus would be designated. The PG came along in his chauffeur-driven, air-conditioned Jeep Chrysler to meet the people. While no police had ever showed up at any time during the recent invasions on Angus, now the police from Bikita and Mashoko were present in full uniform and with two cars, Landrovers. Approximately 500 people had gathered, sitting on the ground in the shade of the mango trees, while the PG stood in front of them, addressing them. From a spectator’s point of view to the right of the PG were two lines of chairs for the local leadership, in this case two assistant DAs from Chiredzi (under which the three properties fall) and officials from Bikita (under which the Matsai Area falls), and three ward councillors from Matsai. No-one

¹⁰⁰ Interview with Manager Angus, 10 September 1998.

attending the meeting, mine, before zooming out to the rest of the audience. During the news item they did not mention the three different properties, but referred to them collectively as the 'property, formerly known as Angus'. The people attending the meeting were all presented in the news as former farm workers of Angus, with nowhere to go and desperate for land. With this impression we can leave the news item and return to the meeting. After the PG's speech there was time allowed for questions. One ward councillor, the one who was not re-elected and chairman of the Joint Committee, asked what stance the PG took with respect to the invasions, because that was the reason the people had gathered here in the first place. Before answering the question the PG asked the people to raise their hand if they had participated in the invasions. Nearly all attending the meeting raised their hands. Then the PG continued reiterating the stance taken by the Government during the donor conference that invasions were illegal, that they had to stop, and that next time the police would intervene. 'So please wait so the Government can finish its procedures with respect to the designated properties'. One villager alleged to the PG that the white landowners and their managers had used foul, coarse language to the villagers when they had invaded the properties and had 'called them names', implying words like 'kaffir' and the like. According to the liaison officer, they implied that they had been provoked by the landowners. The same non-re-elected councillor stood up and stated that these allegations did not accord with what really happened, but he was shouted down by the crowd.

The aftermath of the official meeting between the PG and the Matsai people was interesting because it brought the PG into direct face to face contact with the manager of Angus.¹⁰³ The official meeting ended around 12.30 p.m. and then the PG suggested, completely unplanned and unexpectedly, that he wanted to see the damage caused by the invaders of Angus with his own eyes. As the liaison officer was the person best acquainted with the SVC he was asked, or better ordered, to mediate between the PG's wishes and the manager of Angus. The liaison officer tried to radio the manager to explain the situation and ask him to open the gate for the PG and his suite, consisting of two police cars packed with policemen, a car, a Landrover donated by British Aid, with Bikita dignitaries, and a Peugeot station wagon with villagers, all together some twenty to twenty-five people. Try as he might he could not reach the manager over the radio. He was also unable to raise the gate guards. In actual fact the liaison officer was loath to get involved in this visit anyway as he is attached to the Trust and not to the SVC. He does not like being ascribed to the (white) SVC, much preferring to be associated with the (black) surrounding communi-

¹⁰³ Information based on participant observation, 14 September 1998.

ties. Despite this he still did his best to raise the necessary people. The fact that he could not reach them immediately created a situation in which the PG and his entourage had to wait in front of the gate for quite some time. When the liaison officer finally reached the gate himself he asked the PG to follow his car to the house of the manager, but they lost each other, either because the liaison officer drove too fast over the narrow, bumpy bush road and did not look in his rear mirror or because the PG wanted to take another route. The liaison officer again tried to raise the manager on the radio, but once again in vain. Luckily we met the manager with his wife and their child at the turnoff between Angus and Mukazi. There we learned that the battery in his radio is nearly flat and so he turns the radio off to conserve the batteries, only turning it on when he has to radio himself. No wonder the liaison officer could not reach him. His wife takes the car of the liaison officer to the homestead and the liaison officer joins the manager in his Toyota Landcruiser to try and locate the lost PG. The first place, how symbolic, they go to is the dam, where the PG had also said he would go because the area around it had suffered quite severe damage. But no one was there. We drove on to the new safari camp of Angus to see if he was there, but again to no avail. At the camp he turned on his radio to contact his wife and tell her that he could not find the PG. His wife told him that the PG had been at their homestead for more than half an hour. She said she had tried to raise him on the radio several times, but because of that same flat battery, had not been able to reach him. The manager suggested asking the PG to come down to the dam, but the PG replies, with a sense of urgency, that he should come to the homestead straightaway. When we arrived, the manager went straight to the PG to greet him officially. They talk in front of the closed entrance gate, and rather ironically, near the stock of poles and veldspan for the upgrading of the fence which are stored there. The liaison officer suggested to me that I inform the manager to invite the PG and his entourage inside the gate for something to drink. This advice is followed but, because this visit of a large group is completely unexpected, there were not enough drinks in the house. The liaison officer and myself served out some beers, seven, and for the rest of the group we serve chilled water, all to give the manager the opportunity to talk to the PG. In the course of their conversation the manager asked the PG why the government was resettling people in Natural Region V? To which the PG answered that '80% of the people live here, so what choice do we have?'¹⁰⁴ The manager also asked point blank if Angus had already been designated, to which the PG

¹⁰⁴ It is not true that 80% of the Zimbabwean population is living in Region V.

replied, 'no, you were designated, but not gazetted. But Angus will be designated in the next phase'.¹⁰⁵

The week after the PG had addressed the people of Matsai in Old Mashoko, there were no more invasions, but there was an increase in poaching, the work of youngsters who went onto the property with dogs to chase kudus off the property, passing them through the fence onto the communal land, after which they were killed and eaten. In one week they had poached one kudu from Mukwazi and three from Mukazi. But from 28 September 1998, they also began to invade Angus again. The appeal made by the PG had obviously not made a lasting impression. The conservator informed the police who said that they did not have direct orders to do anything about invasions. He also tried to reach the DAs of Chiredzi and Bikita, but could not contact either of them. Then the liaison officer called the PG directly, who said that he would only be informed about this through the DA of Chiredzi and Bikita, and certainly not through the liaison officer.¹⁰⁶ The conservator tried the police again and to his surprise they replied that they would go out to Angus. When the conservator asked them if they were going to arrest anyone for squatting or trespassing, they said that they could not tell him yet as they had to be 'very diplomatic' about the issue. Later it emerged that the police had indeed been on Angus but that they did not do anything and, following their visit, the people remained on the property overnight for the first time. It was rumoured that when the police asked them to move they had threatened the officers saying that if the latter did anything, they would take up arms and defend themselves. The following day, one of the Angus landowners came down from Bulawayo in his plane for the very first time during the invasions and stayed overnight on the property, while his manager was on leave, and met the squatters the next day. He claims¹⁰⁷ he had told them that he was 'the big boss from Bulawayo' and had shaken hands with them, and in order to respond to his gesture many had to put their pangas and axes in their other hand. After that he offered them a drink which they happily accepted. He suggested that the Angus manager had to apply some 'reverse psychology' and offer the ringleaders of the invasion jobs on the property. After this suggestion, there was no further follow-up as far as I can judge and he left for Bulawayo. But the story does not end there. That same day I had the

¹⁰⁵ Although there were rumours that the shareholders of Angus include a high-ranking Minister in Mugabe's government and people from the army. The liaison officer concluded that if that were the case, the PG was only 'buying time'.

¹⁰⁶ When the PG had had to wait on a few occasions while visiting Angus he had said to the liaison officer that he had 'behaved badly'. Later in the text I shall return to the specific position of the liaison officer in this context.

¹⁰⁷ Conversation with owner of Angus, 1 October 1998.

conversation with the owner of Angus the police went to the property again and used three teargas grenades to underline the urgency of their message. They arrested six people and tore down the temporary structures the invaders had put up. The next day I ran into the manager, returned from leave, in Chiredzi town where he told me that the same invaders had now come to him to ask if they could use the thatching grass and poles they had used for their temporary accommodation (!) to which he agreed. On 8 October 1998 they convened a meeting,¹⁰⁸ between the invaders, a group of thirty to forty people, the police, the manager of Angus and a PR Officer of the police, at the place where the invaders had settled on Angus. The message from the police was straight forward, they had their orders from the provincial level which informed them they had to be strict with, that is, arrest and prosecute, any invaders. People had to give the government time to go through all the official procedures to designate a property. The villagers were told: 'it is finished'. Much to everybody's surprise the invaders replied that 'it was not finished' and that they would remain on the property, while the police and the manager went their separate ways. They also told them, that should they want to talk to them again, they could always find them at this same place on Angus. And the police did nothing.

It was not known if these particular group of Matsai people had anything to do with the letter of 6 October 1998, that is, two days earlier, which was sent, and signed only with the 'Bikita farmers', to all ministers and ministries, starting at the President's office right down to the lowest level, stating that the SVC must be held 'fully responsible' for the FMD outbreak the previous year. They also said that they did not like the idea of swapping their infected cattle for 'clean cattle', but saw the necessity of it, so they wanted to go along with the proposal, under two conditions:

1. The SVC must accept and take the complete blame for the outbreak and must pay Z\$ 9000,- compensation per head of infected cattle;
2. The SVC must create a buffer zone of some ten km between the buffalo in the SVC and the cattle of Matsai communal areas.¹⁰⁹

The SVC office diary mentioned on 12 October 1998 '11 squatters, chopping trees + fencing around lands'. 13 October 1998 the police went in again and arrested five people, but the Office diary on 15 October says 'squatters 15 in number'. 16 October I again ran into the manager of Angus in town, where he told me that he had spoken to the police (again). They had told him that the day before they had received 'an instruction' that they were no longer supposed to

¹⁰⁸ Conversation with manager Angus, 9 October 1998.

¹⁰⁹ CCM meeting, 7 October 1998.

arrest any squatters. The manager could not tell me where the instruction had augmented, but the result was that all the people who had been arrested so far (eleven) had been released without further punishment. At the local level this seemed the end of the game. The CFU representative in Masvingo and the chairman, recovered from his malaria, tried to influence the PG in Masvingo. The latter promised to look into it, but that did not remove the invaders. Office diary entry of 26 October: '8 families: cutting trees, digging holes for houses'. On 28 October I saw the manager for the last time during my stay in Zimbabwe. The next day I was due to leave for South Africa to round up the fieldwork with final interviews in Pietermaritzburg. The manager told me that the invaders have 'knocked down some 800 metres of upgraded fence, worth some Z\$ 32.000,-'. It all began with the FMD 'coming through' the fence and it has ended with the tearing down an upgraded fence. The fence seemed the bottom line. Physically it was essential to prevent FMD infecting their cattle. Symbolically they hated it, because it separated them from their land.

Two short and final aspects of this case. The first concerns the role of Humani and the second the position of the liaison officer. The upgrading of the fence is in the interests of everybody in the SVC and therefore everybody has to pay a 'fence upgrade levy'. This seems reasonable but Humani refused to pay, because it claimed that the SVC still owed them money for their financial contribution to the SVC in founder stock and later progeny.¹¹⁰ In fact Humani was asking for recognition of the fact that they had had the vision of utilising wildlife on the property long before the SVC was even considered. Their role is greatly neglected in the mythology about the inception of the SVC. In the myth-forming the chairman and WWF seem to play a far more important role. Now it is repayment time, in a literal sense. The negotiations were tough. An earlier meeting with the Financial Chairman of the SVC led to nothing. For the upgrading of the fence they urgently needed cash in hand to pay for the material,¹¹¹ and Humani had to contribute a goodly sum because it is a large property and the upgrading levy is calculated per acre. Finally the case was temporarily settled when the co-owner of Humani 'said that he would loan the fence upgrade money to the Conservancy to enable it to carry on with the fence upgrade, until the situation had been sorted out. The Committee felt that whilst this was not the ideal response it would be sufficient in the interim'.¹¹² A small reciprocal affair in the midst of a case of a big reciprocal reckoning on the issue of land.

¹¹⁰ Minutes CCM, 7 October 1998.

¹¹¹ Minutes CCM, 5 August 1998.

¹¹² Minutes CCM, 7 October 1998.

Another reciprocal reckoning was afoot, this time to do with the liaison officer in this particular Matsai case. When the squatters on Angus were forcibly removed and their huts burned by the DA of Bikita in 1985-1986, the liaison officer was the one holding and lighting the matches. For that reason it is impossible for him to liase this conflict between the SVC and the Matsai people.¹¹³ When he tried to speak to a group of people on 12 August 1998, just as people started to invade the properties, this was a flop.¹¹⁴ He met them at the gate at Mukazi 2, which is the gate on the border between Angus and Mukazi. When the group caught sight of the liaison officer they exchanged greetings and gathered under a tree near the fence, where they began to dance and chant. The liaison officer approached them with a very polite and respectful greeting. He also introduced me and I greeted them in the same polite way by bowing my head and clapping my hollow hands, not too loud. Again, I was the only white man around. The liaison officer began to talk to them in Shona, telling them that cutting down live trees was not the correct procedure and that they had to protest the government for not fulfilling its promises, instead of blaming the landowners. Scarcely had he uttered a few words when an enormous tumult broke out and they began to shout and yell, waving their pangas and axes and making all kind of angry gestures, pulling angry grimaces. No discussion was possible under the circumstances and the people started to walk to the gate, waving their 'trophies' sieged from Angus, as everybody was carrying something, ranging from building poles, and thatching grass to firewood. The atmosphere grew tenser when they began to yell that tomorrow they would 'burn the grass' and 'we will tear the fence down and cut all the wire'. Addressing the liaison officer they said that this time they 'had cut trees, next time we cut you to pieces'. They also called him a 'traitor', defending the interests of the whites,¹¹⁵ referring to his role as liaison officer for the SVC, considered a white men's world and to his role during the eviction of the families from Angus in the 1980s. When he tried to drive away they not only continued to yell at him, but also banged on his car and even threw a pole at the vehicle hitting it on the boot. Again a reciprocal reckoning influencing someone's attitude and functioning within the organisational setting of the SVC and its related Trust.

This case makes as clear as day the way in which the fence is symbolic of the relationship between the SVC and its neighbouring communities in the matters of the ownership of the land and hunting. The exchange between communities and the SVC takes place via the fence. The fence is constantly

¹¹³ Conversation with Liaison Officer, 24 September 1998.

¹¹⁴ Observations, 12 August 1998.

¹¹⁵ Which was probably part of the reason they took him in the first place, conversation with Conservator, 23 September 1998.

used to make statements in an ongoing exchange about land. An exchange within the context of the ultimate exchange, which they have never accepted, because it would be to acknowledge that their land had been taken. Land which they consider inalienably theirs. Whatever is put forward by the present landowners to try to pacify the relationship over land, it is always treated merely as insufficient compensation for former crimes of land alienation perpetrated by the whites. Everything put forward by the SVC, be this material or immaterial, towards the communities is seen as totally inadequate repayment for a crime committed long ago. Everything a landowner does for the community is part of a recompense, a punishment to be exacted for the crimes of his forefathers. Land is the big exchange that can never be. The minutes of the CCM show the importance of the fence to the SVC as I described in the previous chapter, but for quite other reasons than does obtaining for the communities, namely in terms of making hunting possible. That the communities perceive that same fence in a completely other context means that deep down the SVC cannot understand why communities are not prepared to respect the boundary fences when they are the recipients of so many material advantages and gifts from it. The ultimate highlight of this gift giving from the perspective of the SVC is its founding of the Trust as the symbol of and vehicle for improved and trusting community relations: the Trust as the new image of co-operation between black and white in private conservation in Zimbabwe.

More examples of interaction between SVC (members) and communities

Besides to this major case there are many more smaller incidents which have taken place around the SVC. From the perspective of the communities, many of these basically have to do with the attitude of the landowners towards the communities, which engenders all kinds of behaviour which do not 'bring harmony between races'.¹¹⁶ The liaison officer is often forthright and blunt in his reports on this matter. He formulates his objective of his work for instance as '(t)o resolve differences between neighbours thereby bring common understanding and harmony through change of behaviour and attitude in an environment of opposing and differing cultures and political background'.¹¹⁷ These parties do not interact together easily and the communities often complain to the liaison officer about 'ill treatment of community members by managers/ land-

¹¹⁶ Yearly Report Liaison Officer, April 1995 to March 1996, 26 May 1996.

¹¹⁷ Quarterly Report Liaison Officer, March to May 1996, 10 June 1996.

owners [and] injured and sick employees being sent late to clinics/hospital for treatment (...).¹¹⁸ In order to stimulate the managers and landowners to meet and learn to know and appreciate their neighbours which should build up a relationship between the SVC and communities, the liaison officer sent them a list with the names of the wards and councillors and where they could be contacted for organising meetings. This was all work for nothing and in February 1997 he reported that he 'still await[s] to get some feedback on what progress landowners have made in this respect'.¹¹⁹ Nothing ever happened. He has also never had any feedback from the CCM, its chairman or the AGM on his monthly, quarterly, and yearly reports, which he began to compile when he took on this job.¹²⁰ Starved by a lack of feedback he began to send in fewer, less extensive reports. Most of what has been captured in these reports under the concepts of 'attitudes' and 'behaviour' is what is considered normal behaviour between black and white in this area of the Lowveld. I have never come across any detailed description or examples in any report to what kind of behaviour or attitude in daily life it is actually referring. For that reason, I can only depend on my own observations in this respect. To give an impression I shall describe a few examples of what happened in the interaction between black and white within the context of SVC operations when I was near or present, based on my fieldnotes. Although most of the landowners and their managers will not admit it openly, many consider themselves in a master-servant relationship, that is, a 'command structure', to black Zimbabweans. Some of them are also likely to refer to the Bible for religious legitimation.¹²¹ It is that basic assumption which runs through many, if not all, interaction between black and white. For instance, when I went to the new Research Base that the SVC was building on Levanga, it was interesting to observe the interaction between a SVC-staff member and the builders. We drove up close to where they were building and the conservator inspected what progress was being made. The builders dropped everything they were doing at once and gathered around the conservator. He noted certain things and ordered them to adjust these in a voice of command. The workmen informed him that they had not been delivered certain material with which they could carry on and whether this staff member could take care that he brought this in the next time he passed by. After the inspection we got into the car again and he drove away. After some 50 to 100 metres he realised that he had forgotten to tell them something and stopped the car. Instead of turning to the building site again, he hung out of the car window and yelled. When that did not produce

¹¹⁸ Monthly Progress Report Liaison Officer, May 1996.

¹¹⁹ Monthly Progress Report Liaison Officer, February 1997.

¹²⁰ Interview with Liaison Officer, 18 May 1998.

¹²¹ Interview with a landowner of Savuli, 10 June 1998.

the desired effect he banged on the car door with his hand with some force to attract their attention. When they realised that he was calling them they came running towards the car and waited standing beside the car to hear his next remarks. After he had told them what he had in mind, he left without any further greeting.¹²² Of course, these observations and interpretations can be waved away as being typical for a Dutchman in Zimbabwe. But recognising disrespect is not something particularly Dutch. It also has something to do with a basic attitude in human interaction. Beach notes 'it is quite impossible to quantify the amount of personal insult aimed by Rhodesians [or white Zimbabweans for that matter] at Africans over the years'.¹²³ That is what we are talking about. Everyday life in the SVC is full of incidents like described above which, perceived in themselves, are only minuscule examples of interaction between black and white. Taken together a picture emerges out of them, like a photograph that slowly develops its contrasts. It begins with driving through the SVC with a car. All whites in the SVC drive cars, many 4X4 Toyota Pickups or Landcruisers. In the SVC there are no official transport facilities. There is no bus service. The closest public transport comes is a fifteen to twenty minutes drive before crossing the Mkwazine River. The bus turns left off the main road into the Matsai area. At this point there are always black people waiting for transport opportunities to go into the SVC, to visit relatives, and also because many of them are employed in the SVC, working in the different lodges and workshops. So (most of the) whites drive cars and (most of) the black wait for a lift. The black people waiting for a lift know exactly which white drives which car. So they also know exactly who usually picks in people for a lift and who does not, and this information is rumoured around. Some landowners/ managers have a bad reputation for not giving anyone a lift. The same can be said about speaking Shona or any other local dialect. Only a very few landowners or managers speak Shona fluently. Others do not speak Shona at all or only a few words like greetings and farewell. The chairman of the SVC, for example, is known and reputed for his fluency in Shangaan, and for that reason can communicate with the Gudo people in their own language. Others are notorious for the opposite.¹²⁴

¹²² Fieldnotes, 23 September 1998.

¹²³ Beach 1994: 179

¹²⁴ Conversation with liaison officer, 8 May 1998. Three properties in the SVC have black managers. One of them is the parastatal ARDA. Interestingly enough one of the others is the manager of Mukazi, the property with all the problems with the neighbouring Matsai. When the liaison officer met the invaders on Angus on 12 August 1998, the black manager of Mukazi was escorting the group to the gate in his Toyota Landcruiser. At the gate he stopped the car, got out leaving the engine running and said to me: 'it is easy to make a big mistake'. According to the surrounding communities, black people who work for white initiatives like these

Everyday life in the SVC taught me much about white perspectives on the relationship between SVC and neighbouring communities. Many of them are wrapped up in a joke. On a few occasions when I arrived somewhere in the SVC for the first time and had to introduce myself and say what I was doing, people started to make jokes.¹²⁵ Like asking if I knew the joke about what the blacks had invented. ‘Can you name one thing they have contributed in terms of inventions to mankind?’ ‘Even if they had invented the wheel they would have broken it afterwards’. Roars of laughter. Or when I arrived somewhere and I was introduced to the secretary and the man said that I was doing research ‘on the economic viability of the SVC or something like that’. When I added that I was also interested in neighbour relations he said jokingly, ‘Yeah, what I told you, a waste of time’. Or again on another occasion on which I had to explain what I was doing and some of the people present had already heard my presentation at the AGM and said that I was in the SVC ‘to see if we do it right with our black neighbours’. One of the other people present answered the question and said, ‘the answer is ‘no, we don’t’’. Her sally was greeted with gales of laughter. Stimulated by this oral exchange, one of the other attendants started to imitate a game scout in his dialect, whom she describes as hanging around and drinking in a bar, but pretends to his (white) superior over the radio that he is (very) actively pursuing an animal on a spoor.

One final example from ‘a suitcase full of observations’. There was a meeting taking place with a community. A white landowner from the SVC also participated, but his body language clearly showed his lack of interest in the proceedings. His eyes, for instance, never focused on the speakers nor did he react to anything that was discussed during the meeting. The meeting was chaired for more than one and a half hours by a councillor who was introduced as the chairman for this meeting and who addressed the people gathered, whites included, several times during the meeting. After the meeting this councillor and chairman wanted to ask to this particular landowner something and approached him, but was not recognised and the landowner asked someone standing nearby in an audible voice, readily audible also to the bystanders,

managers do or the liaison officer for that matter, all ‘speak the white language’ (conversation with Liaison Officer, 23 September 1998). It is rumoured about the liaison officer that he ‘belongs’ to the ‘white camp’, which is not a good development for his job as liaison officer. It was even said that the rumours have grown stronger since he drove around a good deal with me, either in my car or his own (conversation with liaison officer, 28 May 1998). So far for my presentation of *not* being a stakeholder in the battle (see note 101).

¹²⁵ The following examples are from various places at which I made my fieldnotes. For reasons of privacy I do not specify them in detail.

‘who,... is that guy the Councillor’? All these are anecdotes and observations of jokes and funny remarks. It would be far too easy to be judgmental about it. In a certain context, things are said which must not be immediately taken to be representing complete social reality, but at least they indicate a certain discourse about black and white relations in the region. An important aspect of white discourse about black communities, which also comprises a plethora of rumours, images and discussion, is poaching.

From the perspective of the SVC a great deal of the interaction between SVC and communities has to do with poaching and the stealing of fence wire. For this purpose, the SVC keeps a confidential Investigation Register. They opened the register under the first conservator. He was an ex-DNPWLM man who had anti-poaching as his first priority because of his upbringing in the Department. He began the register zealously, but he was only with the SVC for a short while as I described in the previous chapter, and the subsequent field co-ordinator and current conservator did not give it as much priority in their work. After a few years the latter tried to update it, but as it is already difficult enough to collect the necessary information on current cases, let alone on cases which are farther removed in time. The police is usually reluctant to give information about anything and is usually not very keen on handing over or showing the forms on which the sentences of cases are noted. They often say that the records are kept elsewhere and that, as a result, it cannot help them any further. This explains why the information that they could get hold of is ‘piecemeal, incomplete and cannot be completely trusted’.¹²⁶ Despite these shortcomings the register gives an indication of poaching incidents in the SVC. It is divided into four major columns: date, place of offence, nature of offence, and final outcome. Browsing through the register gives the impression that the majority of the cases is about snaring, often with wire abstracted from the fences of the SVC, hunting with dogs and fishing without a permit. Many cases have no registered final outcome. The ones that do have a registered final outcome are dominated by monetary fines ranging from Z\$ 50 to Z\$300-400, with an incidental higher fine. Remembering that the minimum salary of a domestic worker is Z\$ 450 per month, it takes no great stretch of the imagination to realise that these are relatively huge fines. If the offender is not in a position to pay, he (or she in some cases) will be sentenced IWL (In With Labour). Usually one month’s IWL average Z\$100.¹²⁷ These are the cases which come up before the police.

¹²⁶ Interview with Conservator, 23 September 1998.

¹²⁷ Parks & Wildlife (Law Enforcement) Investigation Register (Confidential), May 1991-June 1998. The rest of this section is based on conversations and interviews with several people in and around the SVC on the subject. For reasons of privacy I do not specify the person or the date.

Cases in which the police was willing or forced to act. Many cases never reach this stage and are dealt with at a property level. This is not considered an advantageous development, because the SVC is often accused of taking justice into its own hands, arising from the general image that police does not pursue the cases seriously. Many point to how reluctant the police were to act when the land invasions took place and argue that that is its general attitude towards the white community. This leads to a process in which the managers or landowners do take justice into their own hands by beating up a suspect or keeping him in custody just a bit longer without food or drink. The landowners feel that if they do not take action themselves and handed the suspect over to the police, in many cases, they will be released very quickly because the police cites 'incomplete evidence', even though the landowner or his manager is highly confident about the nature of the offence. It is especially in circumstances like these that the landowner or his manager is not eager to hand over the suspect to the police, and makes sure 'that the message comes across'. The mediating role in these exchanges between SVC and communities is played by the game scouts. This is probably why the game scouts are often the targets of complaints. Most grievances from the communities about the game scouts focus either on the fact that they arrest people outside their jurisdiction, that is, outside the SVC, especially women bathing or doing the laundry, or shoot dogs who come too close to the fence and are suspected of being hunting dogs.

For example, Ward 30 in Buhera District formulated allegations against game scouts on Mapari whom they wanted to beat up because the 'game scouts come into the communal area with guns [and] (...) game scouts are taking people's wives [and] the game scouts ill-treated members of the community especially women and children found near the fence'.¹²⁸ Another example of such an incident erupted in the Chibuwe community, bordering Humani. Game scouts had arrested suspected poachers and later ran into them when they were relaxing after duty in a beer hall. A fight broke out. Who knows what exactly happened between the game scouts and the suspected poachers in the light of the above-described context? Are the complaints (completely) fake? Is there

¹²⁸ Minutes of meeting between Ward 30 and Manager of Mapari, 4 October 1996. Similar remarks are made about game scouts in reports of liaison officer about issues brought forward by communities about the SVC: 'unlawful arrests of women and demands for sex from the arrested women by game guards (...)' (Monthly Progress Report Liaison Officer, May 1996). The issue also features prominently in his Annual Report 1995-1996, in which game scouts are alleged to be involved in poaching themselves and 'game guards confiscating communities' properties e.g. "paggas", axes, bows and arrows were cited' (Yearly Report April 1995-March 1996, 26 May 1996).

only ‘a grain of truth’ in them? Whatever the answer, poaching and badly behaved game scouts are part of the daily discourse on interaction between the SVC and surrounding communities.

Usually every incident leads to its own meeting(s) at which the situation is discussed among the different stakeholders. Every one of the five districts surrounding the SVC has its own share of incidents followed by meetings.¹²⁹ In Chipinge District, for instance, they had a meeting in August 1996 about a lion that had come out of the SVC and killed livestock in the communal areas, to wit three donkeys and one cow. The people affected asked for compensation, which was granted, after which they were informed that ‘the neighbours would be expected to reciprocate this understanding move by devising their own methods that would initially reduce and eventually eradicate losses in the Save Valley Conservancy through poaching, theft and vandalism of property’.¹³⁰ The assumption underlying many of the initiatives taken by the SVC towards the neighbouring communities seem to be clarified by this, earlier and later examples, showing that it is prepared and willing to bestow economic and tangible benefits on the surrounding communities, but at a reciprocal price, first and foremost not poaching and for respecting the boundaries. Later, after the announcement of the land designation programme in November 1997, as we have seen in the extensively discussed Matsai case, the SVC asked and basically expected a price in terms of political legitimation of the conservancy concept in Zimbabwe. In the same district the liaison officer also had a meeting in June 1997 about ‘a length of wire which was cut from the fence and stolen’.¹³¹ What’s new? In Buhera District the same types of stories abound. In 1996, for instance, there was a meeting at which the main topic was the issue of the game scouts accused of ‘taking wives’ I described above. This coincided with the stealing of wire and so it was decided that the community and the landowner ‘find time to sit down together and discuss [the fence] matter’.¹³² In Bikita District the Angus vs. Matsai issue dominated the agenda of the different meetings. The other properties have had only minor incidents with their neighbouring communities. In many cases, big and small, the theme that the economic gifts of the SVC or

¹²⁹ These are recorded from the time the liaison officer took up his employment and was asked to play a mediating role in these kind of conflicts. He keeps files on the meetings he has in the different districts. Because I had the opportunity to look into the files freely I have quite a complete overview of the official and minuted meetings between the SVC (members) and neighbouring communities, mediated through the Liaison Officer.

¹³⁰ Minutes of a meeting held in Chibuwe, 30 August 1996.

¹³¹ Minutes of a meeting held at Charuma Primary School, 3 June 1997.

¹³² Minutes of a meeting near Duwure Bridge, 4 October 1996.

the individual properties must be seen as an ongoing process to try and start a positive reciprocal exchange with the surrounding communities recurs. The problem is that only one fitting return gift is expected (and even accepted): respecting the boundary, that is, the fence which also implies no poaching. 'I am also having various lengths of wire stolen from the buffalo fence opposite Villages 26 recently, (and reported to ZRP [Zimbabwe Republican Police]) and Village 31, some time back. I have supplied thatching grass and poles to the people on my south/western boundary this year and I am hoping to do some land preparation during Nov/Dec as I did last year. However I do tend to lose interest when faced with the above incidents'.¹³³ Only a very small part of the territory of Zaka District borders the SVC and I could not find any specific minutes on meetings with stakeholders in this district. To finalise the circle around the SVC, which started with Chipinge District, Chiredzi District has had its fair share of incidents, including the Matsai issue, but it has also experienced some promising beginnings. Another typical example of the problems between communities and SVC, or rather individual properties, is Mkwazine Ranch. In April 1997 there are minutes from a meeting which was set up to 'try and resolve the problems Mkwazine Ranch is facing. (These problems included loss of off sets and other pieces of wire through cutting)'.¹³⁴ Chiredzi District is also the home of an incident in which the fence did not create problems because the landowner and the people from the Nyangambe community decided together where the exact location of the fence would be. It evolved into a process of give and take, which produced mutual respect and satisfaction. One advantage is that the Nyangambe area is not overpopulated, as it is a resettlement scheme and does not carry the heritage of the Armed Struggle, like Matsai.¹³⁵ It is no wonder that this community has now been especially singled out by the chairman of the SVC to be offered the 'golden opportunity' of building a traditional village after the Gudo initiative failed to work out in the end.

From all these cases, large and small, it can be concluded that there is quite some degree of disagreement between the SVC and individual property owners on the one side and the neighbouring communities on the other side. Basically the conflict seems to boil down to a question of the ownership of the land. The signature of the fence is constantly contested. The fence, which can be considered a two-sided symbol for the communities, one of land ownership and exclusion from hunting. No wonder that it is precisely by these two issues that the communities make their protests known: they claim the land verbally or take it physically by invading it, or they hunt, most of the time using snares which

¹³³ Letter of partner Savuli to Bikita RDC, 10 October 1996.

¹³⁴ Minutes of a meeting held at Mareva Primary School, 30 April 1997.

¹³⁵ Conversation with Liaison Officer, 14 July 1998.

are made of the same fence which is meant to exclude them from indulging in that practice. In fact, they write their signature with the same fence, but for other purposes. The wires constituting the fence have an Escherian mirror image in a snare. The paradox of legal correctness in terms of title deeds and fixed boundaries and its inversion by protesting it for social justice is striking in its symmetry. In the context of Zimbabwe in general and of the Lowveld in particular, it has been made as plain as a pikestaff that it is often very difficult, if not impossible, to find out what 'really' happened, because virtually nothing is ever written down and most of the agreements and deals are oral. Versions from different sources are the only possibility of creating any perspective on a case. But, in the light of the paradox I described above, that does not matter or creates a difference in understanding the underlying process, which is crystal clear, despite its paradoxical character. Strangely enough the clarity and symmetry seem to be captured by the paradox, which in turn can only be constructed along the lines of interpreting the different cases in terms of reciprocal exchange. I shall return to the specific theoretical implications of the relationship between the SVC and its neighbouring communities after I have finished my exposé on the development of the specific organisational co-operation between the SVC and the SVCT.

The further development of the joint venture between SVC and SVCT

Despite all these struggles, in September 1996, the major stakeholders in the organisational co-operation, that is, RDCs, the SVC and the SVCT, came together in the Tambuti Lodge Hotel, now a school, 'to forge an 'agreement in principle'.¹³⁶ Although these struggles were ineluctably of particular significance in this ritual, was this meeting only one more step in an ongoing exchange of earlier rituals, which no longer matched or fitted the actual state of affairs like a fictitious play to temporarily escape a harsh reality? A ritual of Neckel's 'functional ego' in which 'empirical subjects already seem to have abandoned the fruitless quest for the real self (...) [and] (i)n place of the small, sickly, constantly endangered ego, a sovereign ego with great pretensions now step forward, a personality who can make the most of its opportunities and is not afraid of being inferior? (...) Egocentric calculation and ceaseless narcissistic desire for gratification come together in seeing the moral claims of interaction

¹³⁶ Pp. 1, Metcalfe, S. (September 1996), *Establishing Interdependence between Rural District Councils, Save Valley Conservancy and Save Valley Conservancy Trust*. Unpublished report on workshop 2-3 September.

as mere obstacles to the pursuit of private interests'.¹³⁷ Or should it be interpreted as positive persistence from the side of the SVC determined to not let go of its initiative despite major opposition and counter-forces trying to undermine it? Whatever the answer, the meeting at the Tambuti Lodge Hotel was based on '(t)he challenge (...) to create a sufficiently robust agreement [for] both side of the SVC fence to coordinate the key stakeholders (communal and commercial farmers) in perpetuity'.¹³⁸ The workshop split into four groups to discuss various issues and give a report on them afterwards in a plenary session. There was a group on general issues, one on the Trust and one on the co-ordination between the SVC and the districts. The most extensive report came from the fourth group on 'issues facing SVC/community interdependency', with the 'boundary/fence' being the first issue to be recommended on: 'Ranch/community SVC fence lines (not the legal boundary) should be revisited & mutually agreed & ratified by the RDC. Historic precedents & pressing needs for land should be addressed'.¹³⁹ The major outcome of the workshop was an extra investment in a ritual exchange within an extended organisational structure in which a Joint Committee, consisting of representatives from the five RDCs, would 'represent beneficiary interests' (see Figure 6¹⁴⁰).

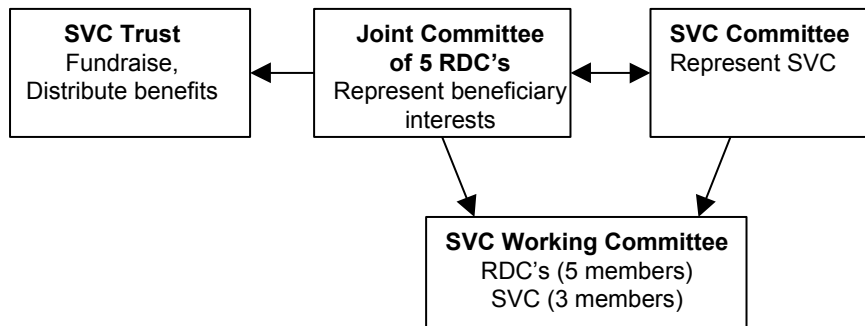


Figure 6 Organogram Joint Committee of RDC's
(Source: see footnote 140)

¹³⁷ Pp. 141-142, Neckel in Berking, H. (1999) *Sociology of Giving*, London, New Delhi: Sage Publications.

¹³⁸ Metcalfe September 1996: 1.

¹³⁹ Ibid: 4.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid: 8.

As can be deduced from Figure 5, the Joint Committee operates like a buffer between the Trust and the SVC. A buffer because, so far, the trustees of the Trust have been chosen primarily by the SVC themselves, with little eye to choosing people who could be considered really representative of the surrounding communities, but who were selected for their expected fund-raising abilities, as I described earlier on. Through the Joint Committee the communities could exercise a more direct influence on the SVC. This development put the Trust on the inactive list as a direct platform for consultation on issues between the SVC and the communities, but it still remained a perfect paper vehicle to display in the shop window of the SVC, indicating that the SVC was establishing community relations. The only active member in the Trust remained the chairman, the Trustee from Delta Corporation. The Joint Committee in turn would not relate to the SVC directly but approach it through a Working Committee in which representatives of the Joint Committee and SVC would be participating. In effect, it seems as if the communities and SVC were being pushed further apart by the creation of extra organisational structures. The profit the Joint Committee enjoyed above the Trust was that the creation of the Joint Committee was a joint decision between the SVC and the RDCs and not a solo initiative undertaken by the SVC alone. Furthermore it was indicated that the SVC Trust 'should be established by consensus between the main stakeholders'. On paper the Joint Committee and the Working Committee could work out a new establishment for the Trust. So far, obviously, the Trust was considered by the communities and RDCs as an initiative of the SVC in which they were not considered as serious partner in the decision-making process. How could the SVC, that is, white landowners, decide properly on who would represent the communities best? Through the setting up of the Joint Committee the initiative for the filling up of the Trust with representatives, that is, Trustees, was effectively taken over from the SVC, which could let its voice heard through the Working Committee, but which would not be directly responsible for choosing people.¹⁴¹ It has to be reported that this organisation structural detour worked in the sense that the Joint Committee did meet. Its first meeting was already in December of the same year. Although that meeting was primar-

¹⁴¹ The New Trust would consist of two representatives from each RDC surrounding the SVC: 5 Districts = 10 representatives. They would in turn choose additional members of the Trust: 1 traditional leader, 2 MPs and 3 influential citizens. For the last they think of people from the SVC team, for instance the (former) chairman of the Trust and the man from the Rhino Project, WWF. Information from interview with Liaison Officer, 21 May 1998.

ily for selecting the Trustees for the Working Committee¹⁴² its very existence indicates progress in the process of coming to a more balanced form of organisational co-operation between SVC and surrounding communities.

The second meeting of the Joint Committee was in February 1997. Two things of interest to do with this meeting are worth mentioning. In the first place by now there seemed on the part of the communities a serious interest about getting involved in the operation of and thus organisational co-operation with the SVC seemed to have developed, as the members expressed their feelings that 'some of the grey areas could be cleared if:

1. copies of the Save Valley Conservancy Constitution could be made available to them (This was agreed to and [the Chairman of the SVC] was going to post these copies to them by Monday the 3rd March.)
2. representatives were to attend meetings of the Save Valley Conservancy'.¹⁴³

The second interesting point to observe about this second Joint Committee Meeting is that Mr. Makunde was selected to chair the Joint Committee for a term of two years. He was a councillor for a ward in the Matsai Communal Area. This development is significant because of the fact that his becoming chairman of this committee meant that he played an important role in the mandate he received from the communal farmers of Matsai in the controversy which developed in 1997-1998, following the FMD outbreak and the Land Designation Programme. As I described above in the Matsai case, he was considered much too pro-SVC which cost him his local goodwill and, as a result, in the following election he also had to forfeit his councillorship because of the lack of popular support. Furthermore, a discussion was held among the members about the specific 5% levy the SVC would pay the Trust annually. Was it a realistic percentage, not too low? The chairman of the Trust, the only active trustee of the Trust, promised that he would present an explanation to the Committee at the next meeting. That next meeting took place in March. He began his presentation by stating that 'the original formula [of the levy] could be flawed because it was designed without the consent of the five (5) Rural District Councils (...) and the RDC's could be forgiven if they perceive it as an

¹⁴² Minutes Joint Committee Meeting, 10 December 1996. All Joint Committee Meetings were held at Mapari Stop Inn, an accommodation of Mapari, part of the SVC in the north. At all meetings representatives from the SVC were present, not as members but 'in attendance'.

¹⁴³ Minutes Joint Committee Meeting, 26 February 1997. The constitution of the SVC was given to the representatives at the next Joint Committee Meeting in March 1997. I have not come across any representative from the Joint Committee ever attending a Conservancy Committee Meeting.

imposition on them'.¹⁴⁴ *Mea culpa*. At the same time it had already become clear that, neither the donor, nor the shares-route would result in any funding of the Trust for restocking purposes. So the whole idea of a levy on donor funds was in jeopardy. The alternative the chairman of the Trust presented was that the SVC would pay a levy to the Trust as a 'biological interest rate on the progeny of designated animals'.¹⁴⁵ The chairman of the Trust promised the Joint Committee he would be able to present details on this proposal by the end of March, after which the next meeting could be convened. The work took a little longer, as the next meeting of the Committee was called only in August. At that time the SVC was in the process of applying for a loan from the IFC and a representative of that organisation was also planning to attend the meeting. At that stage the SVC was still under the impression that it could attract a loan from the IFC with full organisational involvement of the Trust and so the chairman of the Trust explained the situation to the Joint Committee accordingly: '(a) concessionary element is included in the proposal, whereby IFC is being requested to waive repayment of 50% of the loan on condition that this repayment (US\$ 0.5 million) is instead used by the conservancy to bring in wildlife that will be released within the conservancy but will be regarded as an endowment for the SVC Trust. The SVC will then be obliged to buy the progeny of the Trust's animals each year, at the prevailing live-sale market price for these animals. This will result in an annual return of revenue to the Trust, approximating some Z\$ 400 000 per annum'.¹⁴⁶ With this money the Trust could then finance and develop all kinds of community projects which would be put forward by the Joint Committee. The proposed deal was made all the more attractive by adding that the breeding stock that is brought into the SVC by the Trust would remain as 'an endowment in perpetuity'. This means that if it brings in, say, 1000 animals, these 1000 animals will remain to be considered the founder stock of the Trust, despite the natural mortality in the herd. The annual increase of the herd will be a net rate, which means a balance between births and deaths, including poaching losses. Every animal over and above the number of animals that was originally introduced will be bought, maybe 'leased' would be a better

¹⁴⁴ Minutes Emergency Joint Committee Meeting, 11 March 1997. At the same meeting it was revealed on the basis of investigations by the DA of Buhera that the organisational structure of the SVC, company and Trust was 'quite in order' and thus acceptable to them. At the same time, 'they warned that Government was wary of private ownership of wildlife and the political motive by the Conservancies. (...) "Trend carefully on new territory" was the message'.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.* 'Designated species' are species that are specifically chosen by the SVC to be bought to restock the conservancy.

¹⁴⁶ Minutes Joint Committee Meeting, 29 August 1997.

word, by the SVC.¹⁴⁷ The representative of the IFC wanted to know from the Joint Committee, 'if communities will accept a wildlife endowment as a long-term investment. Will they not exploit the wildlife over the short-term?' The reason behind his question was that a tourism development takes many years to mature and begin to make steady financial profits. Nevertheless, one representative replied that 'the RDC working committee and other regulatory mechanisms are well established and there has been much discussion on joint ventures. The need now is for capitalization. Instead of talk there must be action'. Not without reason, the representative of the IFC 'thanked the meeting for the strong assurances he had received regarding the environmental, economic and social sustainability of the proposed restocking project'.¹⁴⁸ By August 1997 all official indicators seemed to show that the SVC and the surrounding communities were slowly approaching each other and had found common ground on which to co-operate organisationally in this venture. This was the last Joint Committee meeting which has been recorded in minutes. Two incidents rudely interfered with this positive developments, the FMD outbreak on Mukwazi and its further consequences for the deteriorating relations with Matsai Communal Area (see case description) and later the official publication of the Land Designation Programme in November 1997.

Despite its setbacks the SVC persevered and stoically continued to get the co-operative structure off the ground and there was a further formal meeting and workshop of the Joint Committee, the SVC and the SVCT in March 1998 to discuss a draft of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the SVC and the Trust. The report was once again written by the same consultant who had also compiled the previous reports on the development of the joint venture between SVC and neighbouring communities, Simon Metcalfe. Again the text is fairly open and honest in its formulation. 'Initially, the SVC took it upon themselves to establish the trust and a core team of trustees (SVC Chairman, Delta Corporation representative and WWF project officer) endeavoured to fundraise. While the intent may have been positive there were several flaws to this. The RDCs were not in command of the trust nor its fundraising (...) The current position is that the Trust Chairman (...) has written to the Chairman of Bikita RDC (...) who is the chairman of the Joint RDCs [Joint Committee] (...) offering to stand down all the trustees in favour of trustees nominated by the RDCs. The trust would then effectively become the fiduciary mechanism (company) of the RDCs, through which they could become a business partner of

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Minutes Joint Committee Meeting, 29 August 1997.

the SVC'.¹⁴⁹ In other words, the organisational structure of co-operation has now entered a phase in which it is increasingly turning into a 'normal' joint venture structure, in which both parties and partners have an independent stake in the process and in deciding which way business should be going as well as in how to follow its own strategy within the organisational structure to ensure economic benefits from it. While this was going on the process of the loan application to the IFC had made it clear that the earlier idea of the SVC of endowing the SVCT with US\$ 0.5 million could not be pursued any further as the IFC wanted the endowment to the Trust separated from their loan to the private sector.¹⁵⁰ So now the Trust is not only organisationally on its own functioning through the RDCs, but also has to find its own funding, although with starting capital from the SVC.¹⁵¹ But, at the time of the workshop, the land designation programme had run right through the cautiously built-up of the process of organisational co-operation and '(i)t was recognised that the land designation issue had confused and destabilised everything for the time being'.¹⁵² In the discussion the participants came to the conclusion that it was not so much the question whether land would be designated, but whether it would be used for resettlement yes or no. If the land were used for resettlement, then the whole idea of a wildlife venture had to be given up. It 'would be a disaster for the conservancy'. If the land were designated, but the pattern of land use remained the same, the RDCs would have the option of participating in the SVC as landowners and investors, on behalf of the communities (I shall look at this aspect of RDC participation later on in this chapter). The coalition of stakeholders in the SVC would change and it would 'accommodate indigenisation and equity policies'. On the basis of these considerations the Joint Committee came to the conclusion that 'in principle the idea of the Trust being an RDC instrument for establishing a joint venture between the RDCs and the SVC was agreeable'.¹⁵³ In the MoU it was stated that the RDCs, as well as the SVC, would have to study it in more detail, 'comb through it', to see if it 'represents the basic intents of the parties and [if] they must feel happy to commit themselves to its spirit and practical purpose'.¹⁵⁴ It was agreed that the Joint Committee would organise and select trustees for

¹⁴⁹ Pp. 2, Metcalfe, S. (March 1998), *Report on a Workshop of the Joint Committee of Rural District Councils to Consider Proposals Related to the Save Valley Conservancy and the Save Valley Conservancy Trust*. Unpublished report.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid: 5.

¹⁵¹ Z\$ 2 million over four years.

¹⁵² Ibid: 9.

¹⁵³ All quotes taken from *ibid*: 10.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid: 9. I will come back to the exact text of the MoU further down in the text of this chapter.

the Trust in June 1998. It was on this date the RDCs and the SVC would give their final response to the MoU. The signing of the MoU and the appointment of the new Trustees would all take place at a ceremonial meeting.¹⁵⁵ The final organisational structure of the Trust would be as presented in Figure 7.¹⁵⁶

My fieldwork seemed to coincide exactly with the climax of the final stages of the organisational co-operation between SVC and the RDCs.

With this bright future as background, it is interesting to see what other options there were open to the RDCs in 1998 in joining the SVC initiative in terms of adding their own land to the conservancy, plus extra options arising from the designation programme. In fact this boils down to two options, one in the north let me start with the lesser known one in the north, the Buhera District. In this development, relocation of people, removal of old buildings and the erection of lodges and other such work. They want to try and find that money through a commercial set-up, by finding a joint venture partner in the private sector, or within National Parks or Government, which would be willing to invest in this business opportunity commercially. Of course other donors would be welcome as well, but the idea was based on commercial principles. According to the Assistant Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Buhera District, who was also a member of the Joint Committee, they had send their proposal to the ZTA for consultation and approval some two years ago, but so far had not received an answer. They wanted to try and follow it up now as people in the Council had begun to ask questions about it. They had targeted the project for March 1998, but now they were looking at December 1998. At that stage the idea was to start out on their own as a communal conservancy and then later join the SVC as the first commercial/communal conservancy in the country. If they were given 'the green light' from the ZTA, they 'can start talking to the communities'. Buhera was also in the process of becoming a full-fledged CAMPFIRE district. They were already considered a CAMPFIRE district but did not yet have Appropriate Authority.¹⁵⁷ The main difference according to the Assistant CEO between CAMPFIRE and their idea of a conservancy was that CAMPFIRE was managed by the local communities themselves, while their

¹⁵⁵ Ibid: 15.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid: 8.

¹⁵⁷ Appropriate Authority in Zimbabwe refers to the Parks and Wildlife Act of 1975 in which the landowner was defined as the appropriate authority for managing wildlife. In 1982 the Parks and Wildlife Act was amended to allow District Councils and later Rural District Councils to be designated as an appropriate authority to manage wildlife (Duffy 2000: 16 & 90).

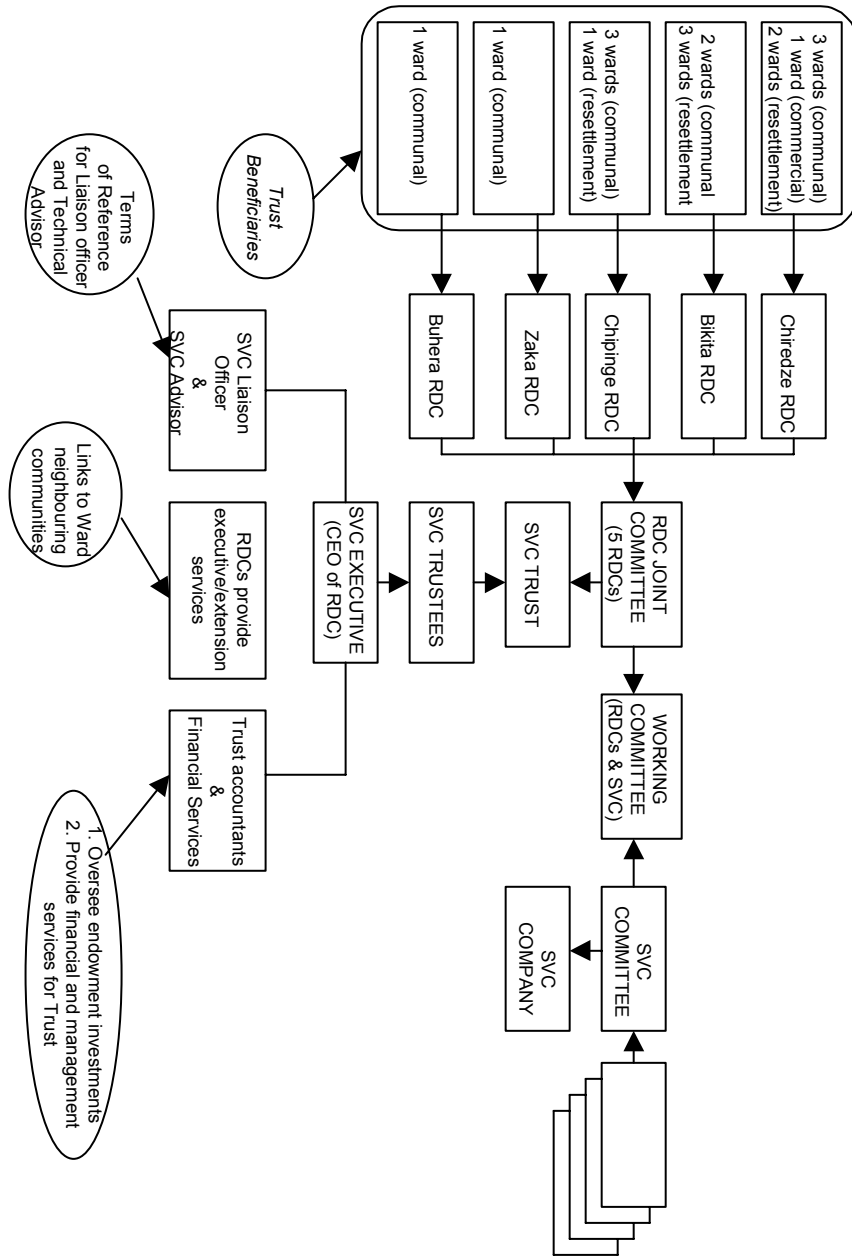


Figure 7: Organisational structure of SVCT
 (Source: see footnote 149)

idea was to create a joint venture in which the communities would participate through the election of Council members into the RDC.¹⁵⁸

Another example of a district willing to step into the boat with the SVC was Bikita District. The same district which was also heavily involved in the Matsai issue, so one wonders what the exact intention of the RDC was. Was it in it for business opportunities or was its action another expression of and episode in the saga of The Land Issue? Let the case provide the answer on this seemingly paradoxical role of the Bikita RDC. It concerned one piece of land in the middle of the northern part of the SVC, Umkondo Mine. I have already mentioned it in Chapter 1 on The Land Issue in Zimbabwe. It is a beautiful piece of land in terms of landscape, although it is full of the left-overs and remains of the copper-mining which had once been exploited there. After the mining activities closed down the mining equipment for which a buyer could be found was sold off and, the rest was left to rot and /or taken over by the bush. At some spots this lends Umkondo Mine the image of a ghost town. Strangely enough this adds to the picturesqueness of the landscape. The mine shafts were not filled in or secured and many metal installations were just left lying around. It was open-cast mining, which means that it created a huge crater-like hole in the ground. The bottom is now filled with water providing home for a crocodile.¹⁵⁹ Umkondo Mine is a piece of State Land, but because it is land-locked within the SVC and economic activity there has ceased, the government was willing to lease the land to whoever is willing to pay the price. The first to clinch a deal was the German landowner of Sango, Mr. Pabst, who launched a leasing process. Having at least taken this step he always thereafter proclaimed that Umkondo Mine was officially his. The Bikita RDC checked on his story, because if Mr. Pabst had indeed leased the property, he also had to pay charges to the Bikita RDC. The investigation led to the conclusion that Mr. Pabst had applied for the lease but it had never yet been finalised and that he had never paid for it.¹⁶⁰ This was confirmed in a letter from the Secretary for Lands and Water Resources which says that 'the agreement of lease has not yet been concluded and no one has, as yet, taken occupation of the piece of land. The reason why the lease agreement has not yet been concluded is that some of the conditions of lease are still under discussion'.¹⁶¹ In the meantime, Mr. Pabst had

¹⁵⁸ Interview with Assistant CEO Buhera District, 15 July 1998.

¹⁵⁹ Observations during visit, 17 May 1998.

¹⁶⁰ Interview with CEO Bikita RDC, 14 July 1998. He told me that the Minister for Lands and Agriculture had told it to him personally that there is no official lease contract between his ministry and Sango.

¹⁶¹ Letter to the CEO, Bikita RDC, by Secretary for Lands and Water Resources, 8 August 1996.

gone ahead and managed Umkondo Mine, considering the mine his, a conviction which was writ large on small aluminium plates all over the property with 'Pabst Holdings' inscribed on them. One reason that he was so confident about the outcome of the discussion around Umkondo Mine was because he knows the Minister of Lands, Minister Kangai, personally.¹⁶² He wants to rehabilitate the mine, beginning by removing all the remains of earlier mining activities, which will cost a mind of money. Mr. Pabst also went to Bikita RDC in his helicopter and showed them how much it costs just to manage the property, let alone rehabilitate it. He claims that this shocked them considerably. Undeterred, they continued their struggle to get AA over Umkondo Mine. If they were to win, they would have to find a suitable joint venture partner with sufficient capital to commence operations. The Bikita RDC and Mr. Pabst were not the only players in the game in which the stake was the lease of the Umkondo Mine. As the mine falls under Bikita, the RDC was also approached by others who were interested in leasing it from them. Among them is another member of the SVC, the landowner of Makore, who approached Bikita RDC in 1997 to apply for a lease of Umkondo Mine, not to rehabilitate it, but solely for trophy hunting. The lease amount would then be proportionate to the available quota. The estimated quota would be, two leopards, two eland, four kudu, four zebra, four wildebeest, 100 impala and four duiker. He added that '(a)s you can see this is not a very big quota and by itself does not constitute an economic or viable operation. Hence the need for an operator who has the back up of other animals and a safari operation to get this lease'.¹⁶³ In order to make his bid more attractive to and opportunistic for the RDC he began a joint venture with a black safari operator, who also wrote a letter to the Bikita RDC in which he announced the joint venture with the words: 'I here let you know that the two of us [Makore and Mjimba] have formed a joint venture safari operations. I hope you are aware that this business has been for one section of our community that is, the whites. Our government is in pain encouraging that we the blacks be in this stream line. We have identified Umkondo state land and the two of us being the two different communities together augers very well to what our government wants or requires'.¹⁶⁴ In fact Makore had two options for Umkondo Mine: it could go into it as a joint venture partner with the Bikita RDC directly,¹⁶⁵ or

¹⁶² Remember that Mr. Pabst was also the man who met President Mugabe during his tour through Germany in March 1998. According to Mr. Pabst, he was able to meet and speak with Mugabe on five occasions, information from interview with landowner Sango, 5 August 1998.

¹⁶³ Letter landowner Makore to Bikita RDC, 8 September 1997.

¹⁶⁴ Letter Mr. Mjimba to Bikita RDC, 27 November 1997.

¹⁶⁵ Letter landowner Makore to Bikita RDC, 20 May 1998.

could obtain a lease to operate the mine under his joint venture with Mjimba. Both options had a similar structure, that Makore did the financing and hunting development on the property and the other delivered the political legitimacy. In May 1998 Mjimba repeated its offer to the Bikita RDC in an extensive letter in which it also mentioned the exact amounts of fees the RDC would receive in US dollars were it to lease Umkondo to it.¹⁶⁶ There is no official paperwork from Sango in the RDC file on the issue. Mr. Pabst only communicated verbally with them and offered to rehabilitate the area for them. At that time the landowner of Makore still thought that Sango had ‘a 60% chance against him 40%’, because Mr. Pabst has ‘connections on the highest political level’, that is, the Minister of Lands himself, which makes his position ‘very strong’.¹⁶⁷ The problem was that as long as the Bikita RDC had no AA, it could not enter into a formal joint venture on the Umkondo Mine. So in June 1998 it tried again to put pressure on the Minister of Lands and Agriculture through a letter from its representative Member of Parliament (MP),¹⁶⁸ urging that a decision be made about Bikita’s application. “Minister, I am given to understand that Bikita Rural District Council has been in touch with your ministry over time in a bid to secure the said piece of land [Umkondo Mine] for the said purpose [AA]. What continues to worry the council is that your ministry is yet to give a definitive position in terms of actually supporting the council in this case. Worse still, there are off-the-record indications to the effect that the very piece of land may already have been leased to somebody else [Mr. Pabst]. Fortunately, on this particular point, you assured me that that was not the case’.¹⁶⁹ This elicited no response. In July a letter was sent to the Minister of Lands and Agriculture to remind him of its earlier letter: ‘could we therefor humbly *implore you*, Cde Minister, to help us – and help us as a matter of urgency’.¹⁷⁰ The last letter in the file on the Umkondo Mine at the Bikita RDC is the reply of the Minister of Land and Agriculture in which he says nothing about the AA approval for Bikita, but does say that ‘the Leasee is agreeable to go into a joint venture with the council (...)’.¹⁷¹ Without

¹⁶⁶ Letter Mr. Mjimba to Bikita RDC, 18 May 1998. Mr Mjimbi knows that Makore is also applying for a direct joint venture with Bikita RDC. Mr. Mjimba and the landowner of Makore are old acquaintances, and have become close friends, who help each other out if necessary.

¹⁶⁷ Interview with landowner Makore, 1 October 1998.

¹⁶⁸ Who coincidentally also happens to be the Minister of Education, Sport and Culture.

¹⁶⁹ Letter Mr. Machinga to Minister of Lands and Agriculture, 16 June 1998.

¹⁷⁰ Letter Mr. Machinga to Minister of Lands and Agriculture, 23 July 1998. Italics in original.

¹⁷¹ He is probably legally also not allowed to say anything about the AA application because the official line to apply for AA seems to be through the Ministry of Local Government and Housing (MLGH). With AA status, the provisions of the Parks Act

an AA this would not lead anywhere in the long run. In 1998 the case remained unfinished. It would be a positive development for the SVC were a black landowner with AA to enter onto the scene of the SVC. It would give a tremendous fillip towards legitimising its position politically. At the same time this 'salvation' could come from the same district, which parallel to its claim on Umkondo Mine, was a key player as district authority in the Matsai case, which was in the process of seriously undermining the SVC initiative. The paradox of being a 'saviour' and 'executioner' at the same time, was made possible in 1998 by the specific national context of land designation and the historical context of contrasting black and white social identities related to land.

Despite the extremely bumpy ride the SVC had experienced in establishing organisational co-operation with the neighbouring communities, in November 1998 things finally seemed to come together in a ceremony at which the Trust of the SVC was taken over and handed over to a new Board of Trustees, all of them black in contrast to the first Board and every Trustee representing some of the neighbouring communities. All, except one businessman from Chipinge, were from local authorities at the district level. As an elected authority it can be considered to represent the local populace surrounding the SVC. The actual ceremony took place on 27 November 1998, at Mapari Stop Inn, where the Joint Committee has always held its meetings. The meeting had been planned much earlier, actually already in June of that year, which can be gleaned from the workshop report in March.¹⁷² Because of the national context of Zimbabwe and the local difficulties, including the Matsai case, the upgrading of the fence and the loan application to the IFC, it had to be postponed time and again. For that reason I was not physically present at the ceremony, which is to be regretted. This means that I cannot give first hand observations, but have to rely on the report, which is written by the liaison officer. It is interesting to note that on the list of those attending the meeting, there was no DA from any of the five districts present. Buhera and Zaka had sent proxies and other representatives had been chosen for the remaining districts. There was a strong delegation from the SVC and its supporters from the WWF, including the chairman of the old Board of Trustees, the chairman of the SVC, the conservator and several people from the WWF. Also in attendance were the two representatives of the oldest white tradition in this part of Zimbabwe, who are also councillors for their respective districts, Humani and Chishakwe, the latter being the former Devuli

take effect immediately. Clearly a matter of an absence of legal clarity which is probably also a problem for peoples at RDCs seeking AA. The new Environmental Bill tries to resolve these difficulties. Thanks are due to Vupenyu Dzingirai who put this matter to my attention.

¹⁷² Metcalfe March 1998: 15.

headquarters. The liaison officer was the facilitator of the meeting. The chairman of the SVC was asked to make the opening remarks and to present the gift from the SVC, the New Trust to the communities through the new Board of Trustees. 'The SVC Chairman heralded this gathering as a historical event that had taken a long journey to materialise'.¹⁷³ Despite the initial route that the SVC had taken to present the communities with the Trust, that is, set up a Trust without prior consultation and choosing its own Trustees, the chairman said that 'the principles on SVC had been discussed openly to allay any fears and suspicions and wished them to adopt the same spirit'. The next speaker was the chairman of the old Trustees, who gave a short historical overview of how the Trust had developed and emphasised that 'the Trust idea was holed to the success of the SVC [that is, politically legitimising it] adding that the SVC's failure will impede progress of the Trust'. He also mentioned that the SVC was borrowing money from the IFC and that the Trust would be granted some Z\$1 million 'seed capital' over four years. This is only half of what it had thought of in the first place.¹⁷⁴ I am rather hazy about the reason for this as it was decided upon after I had already left. Finally he reiterated that it is essential to the success of the Trust that it find its own funding in order to be able to buy and invest wildlife in the SVC. Following these two introductions came the election of the chairman of the Trust, the selection of additional Trustees and the handing-over ceremony. In the structure of the New Trust there was provision, that over and about the representatives from the communities and RDCs, the Trust would complement its membership with five additional Trustees who would be selected for their strategic importance to the SVC. They were selected at this meeting and would be formally approached afterwards. Their declaration as Trustee would of course only be possible after they had accepted the offer of becoming a trustee. They were looking for two members of parliament, two technical advisors and one traditional leader. It is interesting to see who were selected for these posts for strategic reasons. As members of parliament, those two would approach the Minister of Agriculture and therefore be very influential in the Land Question. One was minister Kangai, who played a very important role in launching and frantically defending the land designation programme in 1997. The other member of parliament was the Minister of Education, Sports and Culture, Mr. Machinga, who also happens to be the one who wrote the letters exhorting Kangai to do something about the claim of

¹⁷³ Minutes of inaugural ceremony on the hand-over / take-over of the Savé Valley Conservancy Trust, 27 November 1998. Following quotes in this section are all from this report.

¹⁷⁴ Compared with amount of Z\$ 2 million mentioned in minutes CCM, 11 February 1998.

Bikita RDC to the Umkondo Mine. As technical advisers they selected the former chairman of the Trust and the executant of the Rhino Conservation Strategy from the WWF. The latter who had played such an important role in establishing conservancies in Zimbabwe in the first place. As traditional leader they selected Chief Mutema. This chief had clashed with the landowner of Mapari on several occasions about the exact location of the fence near the river. It seems as if the SVC was offering them a piece of the economic cake, a further gift of the SVC, in order to pacify them and ask of them a return gift in the form of legitimising the SVC and respecting its boundaries. No wonder that at the official hand-over after lunch the former chairman of the Trust presented the new Chairman with a check of Z\$ 10,000 and a copy of the Notarial Deed of the Trust. They ‘shook hands in the process. Delegates there *applauded to this exchange*.’¹⁷⁵ Now the Trust was officially in the hands of the communities, with their own selected Trustees, and it had become an official bridge to structure the co-operation between the SVC and the neighbouring districts. The Memorandum of Understanding, the body and soul of the organisational structure of the Trust, was not on the agenda during the take-over. That issue would be handled and finalised in another meeting. By June 1999 the meeting had still not taken place.¹⁷⁶ Without the formal recognition of the MoU, the Trust is essentially an empty organisational shell, a hollow ritual meeting place. Therefore it is interesting to take a closer look at the draft text of the MoU and see what elements and emphases of my analysis of the process of organisational co-operation between SVC and neighbouring communities turn up again in this text.

I had expected that the key elements of my description and theoretical interpretation of the issues at stake between SVC and surrounding communities would be made clear as presuppositions right at the beginning of the MoU. And I was not disappointed. In the Preamble the following issues, amongst some others, are put forward: firstly that the ‘land use within the SVC is established as *wildlife-based tourism*’.¹⁷⁷ This means that it lays down the possibilities for non-consumptive and consumptive tourism. Hunting is implicated, although (still) hidden, in this formulation. Secondly that the Trust ‘has been established for the promotion and sponsorship of involvement by the rural communities surrounding the area of the Conservancy in the economic and conservation

¹⁷⁵ Italics added.

¹⁷⁶ Personal communication with Conservator.

¹⁷⁷ MoU between the Savé Valley Conservancy and the Rural District Councils of Chiredzi and Bikita (of which it is part) and Chipinge, Zaka, Buhera (of which it is a neighbour), first draft, 30 January 1998. Further quotes in the text without a note are also taken from the preamble of this document. Italics added.

activities of the Conservancy'. This ineluctably betrays that the Trust can be seen as the gift from the SVC to the communities. Implied in the word 'economic' is the hope that the communities may gain material advantages of this co-operation. Implied in the word 'conservation' is the hope that the communities do not poach. But most importantly for the whole argument of this thesis is the final formulation of the preamble, which says 'NOTING that although the Conservancy boundary physically provides a hard edge between it, as private land, and the surrounding communities, as communal land, the intent of this Memorandum of Understanding is to soften that edge through a social and economic partnership aimed at the mutual benefit of the Conservancy and its neighbours'. This formulation seems to say it all: the fixed boundary, which the whites introduced into southern Africa and in the context of the SVC demarcated and symbolised through the buffalo fence, will remain to segregate black and white. In order to sweeten this bitter pill, the SVC offers a reciprocal exchange through the fence, in which the SVC extends economic benefits to the communities in return for respecting the boundary.¹⁷⁸ On the basis of these propositions, the MoU could proceed to describe the objectives of both the SVC and the Trust. In effect the objectives must mean a kind of operationalisation of the presuppositions formulated in the preamble. In this respect the MoU is consistent. In the objectives of the SVC it is noted, amongst other things and building on the presuppositions I quoted above, that tourism must be understood as consisting of 'consumptive (that is, game cropping and safari hunting) and non-consumptive (that is, tourism¹⁷⁹) forms'.¹⁸⁰ The communities return in the objectives of the SVC by stating that the SVC aims at the 'development of a programme *to enhance communication with neighbouring communities* and to stimulate the economic and social advancement of such communities through durable linkages with the Conservancy's wildlife industry'.¹⁸¹ With regard to the issue of the hard-edge boundary, it is stated that the object of the SVC is the 'construction and maintenance of the perimeter game fencing to a specified

¹⁷⁸ The other two points in this preamble are the description of the SVC as 'an amalgamation of 24 private ranches' and a description of the Trust as 'corporate whose function is to act as the fiduciary institution for the Joint Committee of Rural District Councils'.

¹⁷⁹ This probably does not cover what they mean exactly, as safari hunting is also a form of tourism. What they probably mean to say is photographic safaris and the like (for instance horse-riding etc.).

¹⁸⁰ Ibid: 1.4.

¹⁸¹ Ibid: 1.5. It is the only article in the MoU that is presented in a bold letter type. This article probably signifies more than anything else the *raison d'être* of the whole Trust idea. Italics added.

standard'.¹⁸² It is driven home that the fence is there strictly for purposes of wildlife management, and does not refer to anything else. The many boundary disputes I described above speak for themselves in this respect and contrast starkly with the formulation in the MoU. The Trust is formulated as having only one objective: 'to foster co-operation and communication between the Conservancy and its neighbouring communities through beneficial and durable economic relations'.¹⁸³ The rest of the text is devoted to the summing up of all the kinds of projects and activities the Trust could potentially initiate for the communities. The gift of the SVC to the communities is specified in more detail in a section of the MoU, which is summed up under Points 4.1 to 4.9, the 'opportunities' the SVC 'offers' to the Trust. The mutuality of the arrangement is stressed in the section which sums up the opportunities the Trust should ideally offer to the SVC.

The political legitimisation aspect of the Trust-construction is most clearly formulated in the wording of the final opportunity: 'A joint venture partner with whom to collaborate with government agencies *particularly* the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management in terms of translocation of founder stock'.¹⁸⁴ Its legitimising character is underlined further in the section on the obligations of both the SVC and the Trust: 'Publicise the Understanding to other parties *especially* the Government of Zimbabwe and the Zimbabwe public at large'.¹⁸⁵ Finally, the reciprocal exchange returns in two sections of the MoU. Firstly in Point 3, where it is mentioned that 'it is the intent of the Conservancy, through its Committee, and the RDCs through its Trust, to foster a *mutually* beneficial partnership'.¹⁸⁶ The mutuality turn up a second time in the section on the obligations of the Trust and of the SVC, where it is said that 'a positive and dynamic local agenda [is ensured] including, inter alia: the making of rules related to the relationship between the Conservancy and the Wards eg. poaching, fence management, fence alignment, access, transport through Conservancy etc.'¹⁸⁷ That is, from a state of negative reciprocity into one of balanced reciprocity. The door between the two stages being the gift of the SVC. An interesting solution is envisioned in the section on conflict resolution

¹⁸² Ibid: 1.3.

¹⁸³ Ibid: 2.a.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid: 5.5. Here also speaks the ultimate wish to buy buffalo for the SVC through the Trust. Italics added.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid: 6.6, italics added.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid: 3, italics added.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid: 6.4. 'Fence management' in context sounds like a euphemism for respecting the boundary by the communities. Not for nothing is it mentioned directly after the issue of poaching!

between the SVC and the Trust / communities. The SVC, of course, settles its own problems in the CCM. All disputes between SVC and communities or within communities are delegated to, after the local authority has dealt with such matters, either to the Joint Committee (that is, conflicts within communities) or to the Working Committee (that is, conflicts between farmers and specific communities).¹⁸⁸ However elegant the formulation and structure may seem, this obviates the SVC formally from any form of direct involvement and interaction with the communities. In other words, every contact between SVC and even individual farmers and communities is transformed into a mediated contact. In yet other words, by this formal organisational structure of co-operation, the interaction between the SVC and communities is, ritualised and objectified; the joint venture joins and separates simultaneously, replicating any reciprocal exchange relation. The MoU is concluded by some formal formulations about the duration of the memorandum, amendments to the memorandum and finally the agreement which should be undersigned by the Chairman of the SVC and the Chairmen of the RDCs.

With the Trust and new trustees in place, the SVC has created a formal organisational structure for economic co-operation with its neighbouring communities. If the Trust and the SVC undersign the MoU the organisational structure can be 'filled' with some sort of constitution. With the hand-over ceremony finalised, I have described the long and complicated process to come to a form of organisational co-operation between the SVC and the neighbouring communities. It did work out and it did become formalised. But did it also indicate that the gift was accepted and that therefore the communities were willing to repay them with the expected return gift? Based on the material presented in this chapter one would be tempted to answer this question in the negative. But what was the reason that the surrounding communities were not willing to accept this gift? In the next chapter I will relate all this empirical case material and the remaining questions explicitly to the conceptual framework of reciprocity as sketched in the introductory chapter.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid: 7.0.

The politics of gift giving: Joint ventures, reciprocity and context

Following the basic structure of reciprocal exchange as presented by Mauss again, three main questions are relevant to my theoretical framework in the context of my detailed case study on the organisational co-operation between the SVC and its neighbouring communities. The first is: what were the intentions of the gift giver (the SVC) in presenting the communities with a gift (the Trust)? Secondly, how willing were the communities and the RDCs to receive this gift? Thirdly, have the communities presented a fitting return gift? Added to these main points should be added the question of what mix of affect and effect is present in the reciprocal exchange between the SVC and the communities. But before turning to the hermeneutic use of the theoretical framework for interpreting the ethnographic data, let us first see if the data presented in this book shed new light on the theoretical issues surrounding the concept of reciprocity.

Mauss's theoretical exposé on the gift is mainly remembered for the 'spirit of the gift', the *hau*. This notion has been severely attacked and deconstructed by several authors, as described in the introduction to this book. Mauss's theoretical framework has to a large extent been abandoned and has almost sunk into oblivion. It has been replaced by a far more secularised version, a theoretical shift that seems to fit the move towards increasing secularisation in Western society. Theoretically the 'secular' and the 'spiritual' interpretations of the

reciprocal process evolving around gift giving do not often meet. It seems that the spiritual interpretation has lost so much intellectual ground that it should be forgotten about. I would like to argue that this case study of a highly secular structure of organisational co-operation in the commercially oriented private conservation sector in Zimbabwe sheds new light on this discussion. I want to argue that what the secular gift of the SVC to the neighbouring communities, the SVCT, missed was exactly a spirit: it missed the spirit of the gift attached to land! And as we know from Mauss, (see Introduction), it is this particular spirit that motivates and presses the recipient to feel a moral obligation towards the giver to make some return gesture. In the theoretical discussion it was argued that every reciprocal process is inherently ambivalent in terms of a sense of moral obligation on the one hand and strategic consideration on the other. Reciprocal relations are at the same time characterised by affect and effect: figuratively speaking the ambivalence is caused by the wandering spirit of the gift. This means that the deconstruction of Mauss's approach was necessary to be able to apply analyses of reciprocal relations and gift giving to the secular and economic spheres in life too. But this should not mean that Mauss's perspective should be seen as being outdated and of no value. The conclusion of this case study can be that theoretically Mauss's 'spirit of the gift' is definitely in need of repreciation. The economic bookkeeping approach and the spiritual aspect of reciprocal relations go hand in hand in this secular context of a joint venture in private wildlife conservation in Zimbabwe. Let us now turn our attention to the interpretation of the empirical data along the lines of the theoretical framework presented in the Introduction.

On the basis of the material presented in the previous chapters it can be concluded that relations between the SVC and the communities may be characterised as a reciprocal relation. The complexity of this simple observation lies in the fact that the SVC as well as the communities cannot be perceived as single entities but should be considered an amalgamation of different groups and interests with correspondingly different historical and social backgrounds and contexts. This has also led to a specific power configuration between black and white in Zimbabwe. It seems as if the whites were always the more powerful in this relation. This may be true as far as it concerns military power by the end of the nineteenth century, judiciary power as territory under the BSAC and later under white minority rule, and the economic power of whites after Independence. But this power has never been uncontested. In that sense the less powerful black population of Zimbabwe has never agreed to the *status quo* in terms of power relations. Throughout Zimbabwean history the black population has stubbornly protested against the state of affairs by teasing and testing the powerful whites through claiming their land back and taking every opportunity to communicate their complaints by not respecting boundaries between

communal and commercial land and poaching. It is important to take this power aspect into consideration when interpreting the reciprocal exchange between the SVC and the SVCT. Giving, accepting or rejecting and returning gifts all have strong strategic implications as I made clear in the Introduction with the example of the *potlatch*. Did the SVC intend its gift of the SVCT to try and confirm the *status quo* of the economic power relations between the SVC and the communities? If the communities had accepted it whole-heartedly they would have accepted and bowed obediently to the more powerful position of the SVC in this respect. Would they have answered, to paraphrase Mauss, that they are ‘in the shadow of the SVC’? Or would the SVC expect the communities to reject the gift in order to challenge the power of the SVC as a continuation of their protests against the unequal land distribution throughout the history of Southern Rhodesia and Zimbabwe? In the words of Godelier, should the gift of the SVC in the end have been interpreted as an act of generosity, violence or humiliation? It is also important to consider what a possible answer to this question would mean for the rest of the relations in which the SVC and communities engage, that is, the broader context in which the SVC and the communities operate, like ministries, NGOs, donor agencies, etc.

Taken together, this produces different arenas that are also related, not only to each other but also to other levels of interaction with different government departments like the DNPWLM, the Veterinary Department and the Ministry of Agriculture, multilateral institutions like the WWF, and international funding institutions like the IFC. But, as the last chapter showed, the relationship refers not only to higher levels of interaction but also to levels closer to the ground – between individual farmers and directly neighbouring communities; between game scouts and communities; between landowners and the police and through the police with the communities. I could go on specifying all the different levels of reciprocal exchange which together constitute the system of reciprocities I have described in this book surrounding and encapsulating the process of establishing a joint venture. What conclusions can be drawn concerning the level of interaction between the SVC and the neighbouring communities in terms of reciprocity?

Let me answer one by one the three questions with which I opened this chapter. How can the intentions of the SVC in offering the gift of the Trust to the communities be interpreted? It would be (far too) easy to say that there were only strategic considerations at play in the SVC. Of course, such tactics were important in response to the answers of the Minister in Parliament in 1996. And they were definitely important in lobbying for a loan and legitimising the SVC project politically and socially. And of course they were important because nowadays everybody in conservation circles is paying lip-service to the importance of community relations, and in order to play along with this it is virtually

impossible to escape thinking otherwise. Community relations nowadays have similar powers to those of a dominant paradigm in science. Only a conscious heretic would argue otherwise. And naturally conservation is a well-respected ideology that can be used to defend one's property in the context of the threat of land designation. All these factors are undoubtedly at work but not exclusively. There is also a deep commitment to the conservation of the environment that springs from a historically built relationship with it. And not only with their own land but with the landscape in Zimbabwe and southern Africa in general, which naturally implies an awareness of the people populating that land. That commitment might be based on an old-fashioned Romantic and British tradition of Africa as an unspoiled Eden, populated by 'good' and 'bad' natives but it obviously remains a powerful drive urging individuals and institutions to take initiatives. This is the reason why the SVC pays so much attention to conservation awareness programmes and has formulated its conservation goal as the first objective in its constitution. Within the present context of international conservation bodies, this means that communities have to be seen as partners and part of the conservation strategy.

In conclusion, the intentions of the SVC were primarily conservation-oriented, which in the present context suggests that communities have had to become part of the strategy in terms of sustainable development, which implies strategic political considerations. Being a private-sector initiative this meant that they went for an option, a joint venture, which in the end turned out to be commercial in orientation. Earlier attempts to guide it along another route failed. A joint venture is the most common idea put forward to structure wishes of organisational co-operation with a commercial orientation. For that reason, the SVC had to objectify the other party, that is, the communities, as a partner in a legal organisational structure, which became the SVCT. The SVC had to take the initiative because there was no other legal private organisational co-operative structure available to represent the communities on which to build. On top of these primary intentions many issues were at play in the context of the SVC that forced it also to think and act strategically. This is not meant as a moral judgement of any kind but is a plausible conclusion reached on the basis of the empirical material presented in this book. It says that the SVC operated along the lines of a certain logic, which can be deduced from the process of the establishment of the joint venture. This is far from saying that the SVC operated in either a good or a bad way. Viewed from its own perspective, the SVC operated quite consistently towards the communities, guided by trial and error along the way.

The second question is how willing the communities were to receive and accept the gift of the SVC. The answer should provide me with the necessary information to contextualise the operations of the SVC in this field: was its offer

well considered? In other words, did the SVC try (hard enough) to place itself in the 'mind of the receiver' to estimate and calculate their willingness to accept the gift? Did it give (enough) consideration to whether the gift was appropriate under the circumstances? And was the timing of the gift right? The answers to all these questions are relevant in constituting an interpretation of the willingness of the communities to accept the gift with open arms, thus obliging themselves to repay it with a fitting return (and confirming the *status quo*). The answer to this second question has implications for the answer to the third question about a fitting return gift from the communities to the SVC. From the material presented here it can be concluded that the offer was well considered in terms of the ideological climate prevailing within multilateral nature conservation circles in the 1990s. The time was right to head the discourse of community relations with a commercial orientation, especially in Zimbabwe. The CAMPFIRE programme had paved the way for the acceptance of such an attitude and by the time the SVC came up with its idea in 1995-1996, CAMPFIRE was enjoying its heyday of political popularity and it was realistic to think that the idea of the SVC would find fertile soil among the major Western donors and conservation organisations. The gift was also well considered in terms of the increasingly difficult relationship with the DNPWLM. The SVC could hardly deal directly with the DNPWLM any longer following the suspension of its popular support at the top of the DNPWLM. The idea of presenting the DNPWLM with a Trust, representing the communities, and buying wildlife from the DNPWLM for the benefit of the communities seemed a well-balanced strategy. The gift also seemed well thought out in terms of the country's economic situation. Zimbabwe had already begun to slide into a negative economic spiral and the first to suffer from its ill effects were the farmers in the communal areas. To a large extent, this negative economic development could be blamed on the Zimbabwean Government, and so it seemed the perfect situation for the SVC to stand up and offer the communities the gift of the Trust, especially created to generate future economic benefits for the communal farmer. The question of whether the gift was well thought through from the perspective of the SVC and therefore if it might be optimistic about the gift being accepted with open arms can now be answered positively. But things are never what they seem.

There were three inter-related aspects of the complicated context that were not conducive to the chosen approach of the SVC. In the first place there was a general lack of socio-cultural antennae tuned in to the historical role and current context of land in the social identity construction of black Zimbabweans. The whites in the SVC have never seriously wanted to believe or accept that the land they now own and occupy, and which they call their property, is in the eyes of neighbouring black Zimbabweans still their land. The land will remain their

inalienable right and (almost) nothing can obstruct their claim to that land. From their political perspective, virtually no gift in the world, no matter how comprehensive, would ever be able to repay the guilt incurred by alienating their land. Every gift in this context is primarily judged in terms of compensation for earlier 'crimes' of land alienation. And they can only be fully compensated if they get their land back. Community-based natural resource management only has a chance in Zimbabwe if land equity is taken seriously.¹ Secondly, the SVC failed to consider the communicative ritual surrounding every gift exchange and in the context of the Land Question in Zimbabwe it should have been appropriate to aim for a ritual of reconciliation. The SVC just announced the gift to the neighbouring communities without any formal announcement or regard for etiquette and symbolism, or any other communicative expression of reconciliation. For instance, the SVC had never asked what kind of gift the communities would like. It had a gift in mind, not so much to satisfy the wishes of the recipient as to gratify its own wishes, expressed primarily in its expectations of a fitting return gift, namely respect for its boundaries and, by implication, no poaching. These expectations for a return gift were not based on a thorough knowledge, obtained for instance through systematic research into the subject, of why people from the communities actually poach. They assumed, probably without explicitly problematising or researching the matter, that preventing poaching would primarily be a matter of tangible compensation. A rational choice approach: if you give them more than they receive from poaching they will stop poaching. It was only a matter of calculation, enumeration and subtraction. But the communities probably never saw the gift of the SVC as (over-)compensating them for not poaching in the first place. It seems as if the gift was given in view of eliciting a return gift from the communities, rather than with the idea of making the recipient happy. The paradox is that the return gift will not be given if the recipient is not made happy in the first place. Only then will the feeling of moral obligation prompt the offer of a return gift. The SVC learnt from its experiences and it has ritualised the process to a large extent, with appropriate ceremonies and the like. Having made this gesture, the communities were prepared to accept the gift by signing the MoU. If they accept, the gift will be confirmed in the interpretation of their return gift. But the third and last aspect which destroyed the SVC's hope of being able to present an appropriate gift to the communities was the role of the Zimbabwean

¹ Compare Murombedzi, J. (1999), Land Expropriation, Communal Tenure and Common Property Resource Management in Southern Africa. *The Common Property Resource Digest*, 50:1-3. He also concluded that land reform is a prerequisite in community-based natural resource management.

Government, not only in 1998 but especially in the following years. This third aspect relates directly to and activates the first aspect I described. The Zimbabwean Government announced an extensive land designation programme in November 1997, dished up amid a torrent of political rhetoric. This programme cut across all the processes of reciprocal exchange between the SVC and neighbouring communities in 1998 and politically legitimised anew the complaints of black Zimbabweans towards (mainly) white landowners. It was precisely in the immediate aftermath of the land designation programme that I did my fieldwork in Zimbabwe. No wonder that I have been able to present so many cases of disputes between the SVC and its neighbouring communities over land. If the communities ever had a strategic opportunity and were to find a willing ear to their claims, it would be in this political context. The downside of it all is that it could be argued that the Zimbabwean Government launched the programme to stir up old resentments and used it to mask its own incompetence in running the country in an economically successful way and for not having dealt with the Land Question earlier. If the Zimbabwean Government had calculated the costs of the implementation of the programme, it would have seen that it would never be able to finance such a scheme, not even with generous funding from the international community. It lifted the lid off the Pandora's box and its political strategy raised many expectations and generated a stream of broken dreams and promises. The consequences of this political manoeuvring were felt on the ground in and around the SVC, as it was the spark which triggered a process of negative reciprocity between the SVC and the communities, explained in everyday detail in many of the cases presented in the previous chapter. Because of these three neglected aspects, the gift of the SVC was not properly received in the first place and, as a consequence, not wholeheartedly accepted by the communities. In the political context of 1998, it was judged in terms of the level of compensation for the underlying, over-ruling issue, dividing black and white and uniting each side for different reasons: land. And on the issue of land, only negative reciprocity remains, although the system of reciprocities can, at the same time, also contain elements of positive reciprocity. Affect and effect occur simultaneously.

In the light of the previous two answers, the third question to be answered is whether the communities presented the SVC with a fitting return gift. The simplest answer to this question would be 'no', at least not in the sense that the SVC had anticipated and hoped for, that is respect for the boundaries and no poaching in combination with political legitimation at a national level. This is not taken lightly within the SVC. It cannot understand that its gift has only been partly accepted, but that the communities and their leaders, some of them also participating in the SVCT (!), are simultaneously hoping for and working towards their designation. In reciprocal terms, the SVC feels rejected and

considers the communities ungrateful for the offer and gift of the Trust. So in that sense, the gift has perhaps alienated the SVC and neighbouring communities even more, a feeling reinforced by the formal and ritualised character of their interaction through the Trust, Joint Committee and Working Committee, which hardly leaves any room for affect, but plenty for effect in the relationship between them.

The presentation of the different cases has shown quite plainly what has been reciprocated between the SVC and the SVCT or the neighbouring communities. This covers a whole range of things but foremost intangibles. In terms of tangible things, it has to be concluded that there is not so much of an exchange going on but more a one-sided giving on the part of the SVC and individual landowners for which nothing tangible is received in return from the communities. Nor are they in a position to repay the gifts in kind because of their weak economic position, but they are also not expected to repay in a material way. They are expected to repay the gift by respecting the boundary of the property and abstaining from poaching. After the answers given by the minister to questions raised in parliament and the publication of the land designation programme, they are also expected to legitimise the existence of the SVC politically. So there is material giving on the side of the SVC and the landowners for which an immaterial gift is expected in return. The problem with this kind of exchange is that it has the odour of a buying-off operation especially when contextualised by the power relations between black and white in Zimbabwe. This is a premature and over-hasty rejection of this form of exchange with an over-abundance of moral judgement. It is clear that in 1998 the two exchange partners were very much out of balance both in terms of economic possibilities and political goodwill. Both could be satisfied by something the other has. From this perspective, to institutionalise such a form of exchange in the form of organisational co-operation would create a win-win situation. This would probably be the answer given by the rational choice type of approach, which is also basically the approach the SVC has taken towards the surrounding communities. But that leaves out the crucial importance of the broader historical and social context of black and white relations in southern Africa related to land. It is the context that sheds light on the question of why the rational choice option is not considered a true choice for the surrounding communities. The context of black and white identity construction in southern Africa, related to the Land Question in Zimbabwe, that is, its unequal distribution and according power relations, means that the surrounding communities perceive and (e)valuate every gift only as insufficient compensation for their loss of land. A gift might be accepted, but not in terms of creating a (moral) obligation to repay. The situation from November 1997 onwards heightened this perception and aggravated the entrenched suspicion aroused by the gift of the SVC (that is, the

SVCT) because the political rhetoric once more awakened or provided an opportunity to express the sentiments and antagonisms between black and white on this issue and to settle the power score through the reciprocal mechanism once and for all. Because black Africans perceive land as inalienably theirs, they will perceive every gift in terms of (inadequate) compensation. Only if the land itself is part of the exchange are they interested, as I have shown in the Matsai case of the seventy-two families on Angus who would have agreed to accept that piece of land but were stymied by Agritex, which stopped the deal after the bigger opportunity of land designation of the whole property presented itself. The one example of a neat give-and-take decision process on the exact location of the fence, the Nyangambe case, was only made possible because of its specific context and situationality as a sparsely populated resettlement scheme and a progressive American landowner. These exceptions aside, it is clear that land is usually excluded from exchange between black and white in Zimbabwe. What is mostly exchanged between the SVC and the SVCT and the surrounding communities is intangible: suggestions, mutual expectations, intentions, promises, participation in organisational structures, oral exchanges in meetings, ideas, and organisational rituals. Many of the intangible exchanges are hardly ever operationalised, nor do they have a follow-up in material exchanges.

A key symbolic role in the reciprocal process between the SVC and its neighbouring communities is played by the fence in relation to buffalo. The fence can be characterised as paradoxical in different ways, in the first place in terms of economic profit and neighbourly relations. In order to maximise the scheme of wildlife utilisation, the SVC has to offer safari hunting and to offer safari hunting it needs the Big Five, in particular the buffalo as the most important trophy animal. To keep these animals in, it needs a buffalo fence for veterinary reasons. So, to maximise the conservancy operation economically, it cannot avoid erecting a huge fence. Economic profitability is a *sine qua non* for economic neighbourly relations. Only then will the SVC be able to invest in and undertake something with and for the communities. But in terms of social neighbourly relations the fence is an insurmountable physical and symbolic obstacle because it puts the disputed signature of the white owner and his social identity on the land. In that sense, the fence is a symbol of the paradox of economic rationality and social consciousness. Another paradox that the fence signified in 1998 was that of the economic power yet political powerlessness of the white landowners. It was erected on the basis of economic power but has been disputed and vandalised ever since by politically powerful but economically weak communities. Economic power does not constitute a sufficient deterrent to prevent or fight it. A broken fence is a symbol of economic power coupled with political powerlessness. A third and final paradox the fence

represents is that of being a barrier to positive reciprocal exchange and a straightforward issue to usher in a negative reciprocal exchange. Yet at the same time the fence has the potential to become a reason for positive reciprocal exchange in terms of negotiating its location as we have seen with the Nyangambe fence location. This option of communication has not been tested elsewhere in the SVC where the communities have been confronted with the erection of the fence out of the blue, with their protests seen as an inevitable consequence.

As can be judged from the cases presented in this book, the reciprocal relationship between the SVC and the communities is a mixture of strategic considerations and affective relations, although the strategic relations dominated the scene in 1998, strengthened by the evolving national political context on land, which has revived many old sentiments about the unequal distribution of land in Zimbabwe. Strategic relations, as in balanced and negative reciprocity, can be easily recognised in the cases presented in this chapter. Far less obvious are the more affective aspects of the relationship, which paradoxically and even ironically have to do with the attachment to the land of both white and black. Both want to conserve the land for their own reasons of social identity. Whites identify with the landscape and blacks with the soil to which they belong and from which they have sprung. Both are caught up with the other in an endless struggle of negative reciprocal exchange over land. This could only have been ended and turned into a positive exchange if a major 'land gesture' had been made after Independence by the white landowners as an act of reconciliation. This would probably have fulfilled the whites' reciprocal obligation towards Mugabe's gift of reconciliation to them in 1980 in the first place. It could also have provided a fitting answer for all black Zimbabweans to their constant contestation of black and white power relations over land ever since the whites entered the territory at the end of the nineteenth century.

With the risk of touching upon an extremely politicised discussion at this particular moment in Zimbabwe's political development (but I am probably in the middle of it anyway) I would like to end this book by drawing attention to this theme of reconciliation. Reconciliation has been an important theme in Zimbabwe. When Mugabe came to power at Independence in 1980, he said in his first public speech: 'Surely this is now the time to beat our swords into ploughshares so we can attend to the problems of developing our economy and our society...I urge you, whether you are black or white, to join me in a new pledge to forget our grim past, forgive others and forget, join hands in a new amity, and together, as Zimbabweans, trample upon racialism, tribalism and regionalism, and work hard to reconstruct and rehabilitate our society as we

reinvigorate our economic machinery...And that could be achieved only by a policy of national reconciliation.²² Of course one can hardly read this without a sense of irony in the light of recent developments. Nevertheless, one could also interpret this plea for reconciliation within the framework of an ongoing reciprocal relation between black and white in Zimbabwe. One could argue that the national policy of reconciliation was a gesture from the victors of the struggle for independence to the losers that they were willing to work together with the whites for a common Zimbabwe. Black Zimbabweans offered reconciliation after a history of black and white relations in which the whites had taken the best land for themselves for more than 80 years and left the Zimbabweans with only the marginal land. Offering reconciliation after so many years of repression and economic exploitation cannot be interpreted as a strategic move only. It also requires definite moral fibre to dare to offer such a gift after so much humiliation. It was an attempt to cross the boundary from negative to balanced reciprocity. Instead of repaying in negative reciprocity, Mugabe at least tried to find a door to a more positive form of reciprocity between black and white, alongside, for instance, ruthlessly slamming doors in the faces of fellow Zimbabweans in Matabeleland at the same time. (Interaction processes are obviously never 'either-or', always the paradoxical 'and-and' at the same time.) Reconciliation seems to be a door through which one can go from a state of negative reciprocity to a state of balanced reciprocity. Mugabe's speech was a way towards balanced reciprocity and a definite break with past reciprocal exchanges, but it was also a gift requiring a return gift. When the gift of reconciliation was given straight away after the struggle for independence, which was to a large extent motivated by the Land Question, its timing also indicated that the giver probably expected a certain type of return gift. The giver most probably expected a repayment in land. But that did not happen and unequal land distribution remained largely intact as described in earlier chapters, strange though this may seem, partly because of the restrained policy of Mugabe himself. It was certainly not only because the whites were not prepared to give up their land, let alone to use it for a return gift. But however intermingled and interdependent the configuration between black and white in Zimbabwe, the image remains that the gift of reconciliation from Mugabe was not repaid in the eyes of the giver. Consequently, all gifts in later years by whites to black Zimbabweans were always judged by the latter in the light of the earlier absence of an appropriate return gift. Reciprocal relations cannot disregard their exchange history. Therefore, the reconciliation preached and offered by Mugabe to the whites in 1980 could only really have started if the

²² De Waal 1990: 46 & 54.

return gift had been in land. I am not saying that a major gesture in land would have prevented all that is now happening in Zimbabwe or, at the level of the SVC and SVCT, that a gift of land would have solved the fence and related poaching problem. Most probably not. Poaching, for instance, is certainly not mechanically linked to land claims only. But I am convinced that in all scenarios and at all levels of interaction a major levelling effort to correct the land asymmetry between black and white would have constituted a necessary first step along the road to more positive reciprocal relations. When this did not happen, the black communities, triggered and legitimised by Mugabe's government, started to come and collect their imagined return gift themselves. Of course many other factors played a role as well: Mugabe fighting for his own political survival and using every political and rhetorical trick imaginable to hang on to power, the repression of political opposition, the political necessity to keep war veterans satisfied, an economic recession (which only worsened due to Mugabe's land policies), international opposition to Mugabe's land redistribution plans etc. Within the context of my conceptual framework it can be argued that the deeper structure of the argument is based on a frustrated reciprocal relation over land between black and white. No matter how high the transactional costs involved, no matter how ineffective or inefficient the reaction is economically, the deep-felt injustice and humiliation of a frustrated gift will, in the end, always be revenged. In a speech at ZANU-PF headquarters, on 25th October 2000, later broadcast by ZBC news, Mugabe said: 'The national reconciliation policy we adopted in 1980 is threatened, gravely threatened, by the acts of the white settlers in this country and we shall revoke that national reconciliation, we shall revoke it'.³ This applies to black Zimbabweans in terms of the Land Question in general. Therefore it is far too easy to suggest, as the Western press is eager to do when describing the political processes in Zimbabwe after February 2000, that it is only Mugabe's political survival that is at stake. There remains a grain of truth in the rhetoric about land. But what also has to be noticed in this context is that, with all the scapegoating of whites in the Land Question, Mugabe is basically using the same strategies as the whites used in earlier years: violence, intimidation, ex post legislation for legalising land claims and a deaf ear to protests. Political opposition, the MDC under the leadership of Morgan Tsvangirai and consisting mainly of *black* Zimbabweans justly tired of the bad government practices of Mugabe and his ZANU (PF), is being crushed⁴ in the process as are the many black farm labourers on the designated (white) commercial farms because 'Party officials, and war veteran

³ Blair 2002: 186.

⁴ Blair 2002: Chapter 5 entitled 'MDC will be *crushed* forever'. Italics added.

leaders [assume] that farm workers have been tools of the farmers and are ‘foreigners’, [therefore] it is unlikely that farm workers will be officially welcomed onto whatever resettlement schemes result from the invasions’.⁵ Mugabe is settling more than one score at the same time.⁶ This is what is at stake at a national level, while at the local level of the SVC a similar frustration exists regarding their gift to the communities, which has not, in the eyes of the SVC, been appropriately repaid by the recipient. These different levels of reciprocal exchange cannot be seen in isolation as shown in the previous chapters. Together they result in a complex system of reciprocities as described in the case study of the SVC and its joint venture with the neighbouring communities in the Lowveld of Zimbabwe.

⁵ Pp. 250, Rutherford, B. (2001), *Working on the Margins. Black Workers, White Farmers in Postcolonial Zimbabwe*. London: Zed Books and Harare: Weaver Press

⁶ Of course one has to be careful in taking these parallels too far, if only because it requires further research into how local communities respond to the two forms of expropriations and those orchestrating them.

References

- ADAMS, J.S. & MCSHANE T.O. (1996)[1992], *The Myth of Wild Africa. Conservation without Illusion*. Los Angeles, London: University of California Press.
- AFRICA RESOURCES TRUST & CAMPFIRE ASSOCIATION (1996), *Zimbabwe's CAMPFIRE. Empowering Rural Communities for Conservation and Development*. Harare: Africa Resources Trust.
- ANDERSSON, J.A. (2002), *Going Places, Staying Home. Rural-Urban Connections and the Significance of Land in Buhera District, Zimbabwe*. Ph.D. Thesis Agricultural University Wageningen.
- ANONYMOUS (not dated), *The Whittalls of Turkey, 1809-1973*. Great Britain: Faith Press.
- ARCHER, S. (1999), Technology and Ecology in the Karoo: a Century of Windmills, Wire and Changing Farm Practice. Paper presented at the conference *African Environments, Past and Present*, 5-8 July, St. Athony's College, Oxford.
- ASTRUP, M. (1997), A Tribute to Malamba. *News from the Natal Parks Board*, no. 42.
- ATTWELL, C.A.M. (July 1998), *Environmental Impact Assessment for Loan Application to the IFC for the Restocking of Wildlife Species in the Savé Valley Conservancy*. Unpublished report.
- AXELROD, R. (1984), *The Evolution of Co-operation*. London: Penguin Books.
- BARNES, J.I. & KALIKAWA, M.C. (1992), Game Ranching in Botswana: Constraints and Prospects. In: Van Hoven, W., Ebedes, H. & Conroy, A. (eds), *Wildlife Ranching: a Celebration of Diversity. Proceedings of the Third International Wildlife Ranching Symposium*. Pretoria: Centre for Wildlife Management.
- BEACH, D. (1994), *The Shona and their Neighbours*. Oxford, Cambridge (USA): Blackwell.
- BEINART, W. & BUNDY, C. (eds) (1987), *Hidden Struggles in Rural South Africa. Politics and Popular Movements in the Transkei & Eastern Cape 1890-1930*. London: James Currey; Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press; Johannesburg: Ravan Press.
- BELL, R.H.V. (1987), Conservation with a Human Face. In: Anderson D. & Grove R. (eds), *Conservation in Africa. People, Policies and Practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 79-101.
- BERKING, H. (1999), *Sociology of Giving*. London, New Delhi: Sage Publications.
- BEST, J. & ZINYAMA, L.M. (1985), The Evolution of the National Boundary of Zimbabwe. *Journal of Historical Geography*, 11 (4): 419-432.
- BIRD, C. & METCALFE, S. (1995), *Two Views from CAMPFIRES in Zimbabwe's Hurungwe District. Training and Motivation. Who Benefits and Who Doesn't?* London: IIED, Wildlife and Development Series, no. 5.
- BLAIR, D. (2002), *Degress in Violence. Robert Mugabe and the Struggle for Power in Zimbabwe*. London, New York: Continuum.
- BOND, I. (1992), The Financial and Economic Returns of Cattle and Wildlife Production Systems in Commercial and Communal Farming Systems in Zimbabwe. Unpublished report prepared for the *Zimbabwe Wildlife Management and Environmental Conservation Programme*. World Bank/ Price Waterhouse.

- BOND, I. (2001) CAMPFIRE & the Incentives for Institutional Change. In: Hulme, D. & Murphree, M., *African Wildlife & Livelihoods. The Promise and Performance of Community Conservation*. Cape Town: David Philip, Harare: Weaver, Zomba: Kachere, Nairobi: E.A.E.P., Kampala Fountain Publishers, Portsmouth (N.H.): Heinemann, Oxford: James Currey.
- BONNER, R. (1993), *At the Hand of Man. Peril and Hope for Africa's Wildlife*. New York: Vintage Books.
- BOURDIEU, P. (1997), Selections from The Logic of Practice. In: Schrift, A.D. (ed.), *The Logic of the Gift. Towards an Ethic of Generosity*. London, New York, Routledge.
- BOURQUIN, O., MARKHAM, R.W., MATHIAS, I., STEELE, N.A. & WRIGHT, C.W. (1985), *A New Approach to Conservation – Wildlife Conservancies in Natal*. Unpublished paper, Natal Parks Board.
- BRIDGES, E.L. (1948), *Uttermost Part of the Earth*. London: Hodder & Stroughton.
- BROWN, J., COOKE, E., SMITH, R., & STELFOX, H. (1992), DEVURE 1992. *A Study of the Effects of Drought on the Large Mammals of Devure Ranch, Zimbabwe*. Oxford University Expedition Report. Unpublished report.
- BUNN, D. (1999) An Unnatural State: Tourism, Water, and Wildlife Photography in the Early Kruger National Park. Paper presented at the conference *African Environments: Past and Present*, 5-8 July, St. Anthony's College, Oxford University.
- CAPLAN, P. (ed.) (1995), *Understanding Disputes. the Politics of Argument*. Oxford Providence: Berg.
- CAPSTICK, F.C. (January 1999), Wm. Finaughty: Matabele Hunting Ground Pioneer. *Safari Times Africa*.
- CARRUTHERS, J. (1999), Past and Future Landscape Ideology. The Kalahari Gemsbok National Park and Uluru – Kata Tjuta National Park Compared. Paper presented at the conference *African Environments: Past and Present*, 5-8 July, St. Anthony's College, Oxford.
- CENTRE FOR PRIVATE CONSERVATION (January 1999), *Conservation through Commerce. A Roundtable Discussion*. Washington: Centre for Private Conservation.
- CHILD, B.A. (1988), *The Role of Wildlife Utilisation in the Sustainable Economic Development of Semi-Arid Rangelands in Zimbabwe*. Unpublished D.Phil. Thesis, University of Oxford.
- CHILD, G. (1995), *Wildlife and People: the Zimbabwean Success. How the Conflict between Animals and People became Progress for Both*. Harare: Wisdom Institute.
- COCK, J. & FIG, D. (1999), From Colonial to Community-Based Conservation: Environmental Justice and the National Parks of South Africa. Paper presented at the conference *African Environments: Past and Present*, 5-8 July, St. Anthony's College, Oxford.
- COETZEE, C. (December 2001), 'They Never Wept, the Men of my Race': Antjie Krog's *Country of my Skull* and the White South African Signature. *Journal of Southern African Studies*, vol. 27, no.4, 685-696.
- COPESTAKE, J.G. (1993), Zimbabwe. Country Overview. In: Wellard, K. & Copestake, J.G. (eds), *Non-Governmental Organizations and the State in Africa. Rethinking Roles in Sustainable Agricultural Development*. London, New York: Routledge.
- COSGROVE, D.E. (1984), *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape*. London, Sydney: Croom Helm.

- CRONK, L. (1994), Reciprocity and the Power of Giving. In: Spradley, J.P. & McCurdy, D.W. (eds), *Conformity and Conflict. Readings in Cultural Anthropology*. Harper Collins, (8th Edition), 161-167.
- CROOK, B. (May 1995), *The Conservancy Concept, with Special Emphasis on Natal, South Africa*. Unpublished Paper, Department of Wildlife Biology, Colorado State University.
- CUMMING, D.H.M. (1990), Developments in Game Ranching and Wildlife Utilisation in East and Southern Africa. In: Renecker, L.A. & Hudson, R.J. (eds), *Wildlife Production: Conservation and Sustainable Development*. Alaska: University of Alaska Fairbanks.
- CUNLIFFE, R.N. (October 1994), *Savé Valley Conservancy Community-Based Projects: Overview and Presentation of Project Concepts*. Unpublished report.
- DANEEL, M.L. (1970), *The God of the Matopo Hills. An essay on the Mwari Cult in Rhodesia*. The Hague, Paris: Mouton.
- DASMANN, R.F. (1962), Game Ranching in African Land Use Planning. *Bulletin of Epizootic Diseases of Africa*, 10: 13-17.
- DASMANN, R.F. & MOSSMAN, A.S. (1960), The Economic Value of Rhodesian Game. *Rhodesian Farmer*, 30: 17-20.
- DAVIES, G. (1994), Editorial. *The Guinea-fowl: Natal Conservancies Association*, no. 2.
- DELEUZE, G. & GUATTARI, F. (1987), *A Thousand Plateaus. Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. The Athlone Press.
- DE MUL, J. (1994), *Toeval* (translation: Coincidence). Rotterdam: Erasmus Universiteit.
- DENOON, D. (1972), *Southern Africa since 1800*. London: Longman.
- DEPARTMENT OF LAND AFFAIRS (1997), *White Paper on South African Land Policy*.
- DE WAAL, V. (1990) *The Politics of Reconciliation. Zimbabwe's First Decade*. London: Hurst & Company; Cape Town: David Philip.
- DRAPER, M. (December 1998), Zen and the Art of Garden Province Maintenance - the Soft Intimacy of Hard Men in the Wilderness of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa (1952-1997). *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 24 (4).
- DUFFY, R. (2000), *Killing for Conservation. Wildlife Policy in Zimbabwe*. The International African Institute in association with Oxford: James Currey; Bloomington, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.
- DUFFY, R. (September 1997), The Environmental Challenge to the Nation-State: Superparks and National Parks Policy in Zimbabwe. *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 23 (3), 441-451.
- DU TOIT, J. (1998), Taking Back the Land. *Keeping Track*, April/May.
- DU TOIT, R. (1998), Case Study of Policies that Support Sustainable Development in Africa: the Savé Valley Conservancy, Zimbabwe. Paper presented at the Scandinavian seminar college workshop on: *An African Perspective of Policies which Support Sustainable Development*. Harare, 28-30 September.
- DZINGIRAI, V. (1995), *Take Back your CAMPFIRE*. Unpublished paper. Harare: CASS, University of Zimbabwe.
- DZINGIRAI, V. & MADZUDZO, E. (1999), Big Men and CAMPFIRE: a Comparative Study of the Role of External Actors in Conflicts over Local Resources. *Zambezia*, vol. 26, no. 1, 77-92.
- EDITORIAL, Zimbabwe: Government to Seize White Farms. *Southscan*, 12 (1): 8.
- FARAH, N. (1992), *Gifts*. London: Serif Publishers (in association with Harare: Baobab Books).

- FIRTH, R. (1959), *Economics of the Zealand Maori*. Wellington: Government Printer.
- FOGGIN, C.M. & TAYLOR, R.D. (1996), Management and Utilization of the African Buffalo in Zimbabwe. In: *Proceedings of a Symposium on the African Buffalo as a Game Ranch Animal*. Onderstepoort, 26 October.
- GIBSON, C.C. (1999), *Politicians and Poachers. The Political Economy of Wildlife Policy in Africa*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- GIBSON, C.C. & MARKS, S.A. (1995), Transforming Rural Hunters into Conservationists: an Assessment of Community-Based Wildlife Management Programs in Africa. *World Development*, vol. 23, no. 6, 941-957.
- GITTENS, C. (1987), The Benefits of Conservancies. *Farmer's Weekly*, 23 January 1987.
- GODBOUT, J.T., in collaboration with Caillé, A. (1998), *The World of the Gift*. London, Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.
- GODELIER, M. (1999), *The Enigma of the Gift*. Cambridge: Polity Press (Translation from French, *L'Énigme du don*, 1996).
- GODWIN, P. & HANCOCK, I. (1997)[1993], 'Rhodesians Never Die'. *The Impact of War and Political Change on White Rhodesia, c. 1970-1980*. Harare: Baobab Books.
- GOODWIN, H.J., KENT, I.J., PARKER, K.T. & WALPOLE, M.J. (1997), *Tourism, Conservation & Sustainable Development: Volume IV, The South-East Lowveld, Zimbabwe*. Unpublished report.
- GOSLING, M., (1984), Self-Help Conservation. *Farmer's Weekly*, 28 September 1984.
- GOVERNMENT OF ZIMBABWE (1996), *Hansard* 14th February 1996, Written answer to questions, pp. 3967-3971.
- HAAS, D.H. & DESERAN, F.A. (1981), Trust and Symbolic Exchange. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 44 (1): 3-13.
- HAVNAR, P. (1993), Elephants on the Move – 1993 Translocation from Gonarezhou. *The Hartebeest. The Magazine of the Lowveld Natural History Branch of the Wildlife Society of Zimbabwe*, 25th Edition.
- HAW, R.C. (1966), *Rhodesia. The Jewel of Africa*. Salisbury: Flame Lily Books.
- HERBST, J. (1990), *State Politics in Zimbabwe*. Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- HILL, K.A. (1994), Politicians, Farmers, and Ecologists. Commercial Wildlife Ranching and the Politics of Land in Zimbabwe. *Journal of African and Asian Studies* xxix.
- HOFMEYR, I. (1993), "We spend our years as a tale that is told". *Oral Historical Narrative in a South African Chieftdom*. Portsmouth, (N.H.): Heinemann; Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press; London: James Currey.
- HUGHES, D. (2001), Cadastral Politics: the Making of Community-Based Resource Management in Zimbabwe and Mozambique. *Development and Change* 32 (4), 741-768.
- HUGHES, D. (2001), Water as a Boundary: National Parks Rivers, and the Politics of Demarcation in Chimanimani, Zimbabwe. In: Ingram, H. & Blatter, J. (eds), *Reflections on Water: New Approaches to Transboundary Conflicts and Co-operation*, Cambridge (MA): MIT Press, 267-294.
- HULME, D. & MURPHREE, M. (eds) (2001), *African Wildlife & Livelihoods. The Promise and Performance of Community Conservation*. Oxford: James Currey.
- HULME, D. & MURPHREE, M. (2001), Community Conservation as Policy. Promise and Performance. In: Hulme, D. & Murphree, M. (eds), *African Wildlife & Livelihoods. The Promise and Performance of Community Conservation*. Oxford: James Currey.

- INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT (IIED) (July 1994), *Whose Eden? An Overview of Community Approaches to Wildlife Management*. London: IIED.
- JANSEN, D.J., BOND, I. & CHILD, B. (1992), *Cattle, Wildlife, Both or Neither. A Summary of Survey Results for Commercial Ranches in Zimbabwe*. WWF Project Paper no. 31.
- JANSEN, D.J. (not dated), *What is a Joint Venture: Guidelines for District Councils with Appropriate Authority*. Harare: WWF, Project Paper no. 16, WWF Project No. 3749.
- JANSEN, D.J. (November 1989), *Joint Venture Options for Wildlife Utilization in Zimbabwe*. Harare: WWF, Project Paper no. 3, WWF Project No. 3749.
- JONES, B.T.B. (2001), The Evolution of a Community-Based Approach to Wildlife Management at Kunene, Namibi. In: Hulme, D. & Murphree, M. (eds), *African Wildlife & Livelihoods. The Promise & Performance of Community Conservation*. Cape Town: David Philip, Harare: Weaver, Zomba: Kachere, Nairobi: E.A.E.P., Kampala Fountain Publishers, Portsmouth (N.H.): Heinemann, Oxford: James Currey
- JONES, B.T.B. (1995), *Wildlife Management, Utilization and Tourism in Communal Areas: Benefits to Communities and Improved Resource Management*. Windhoek: Directorate of Environmental Affairs, Ministry of Environment and Tourism, Research Discussion Paper, no. 5.
- KAYONGO, K. (1987), *Reciprocity and Interdependence: the Rise and Fall of the Kololo Empire in southern Africa in the 19th Century*. Lund: Almqvist & Wiksell International.
- KEITH, T. (1994), Lessons from Southern Africa, in: Minnaar, A. (ed.), *Access to and Affordability of Land in South Africa: the Challenge of Land Reform in the 1990s*. Pretoria: HSRC Co-operative Programme.
- KING, A. (July 1997), Settler Society in Perspective. *The Zimbabwean Review*.
- KOGUT, B. (December 1989), The Stability of Joint Ventures: Reciprocity and Competitive Rivalry. *The Journal of Industrial Economics*, XXXVIII, 182-198.
- KOTZÉ, S. (1993), *Conservancies in Natal. The Origins and Application of a Component in Informal Wildlife Conservation*. Unpublished BA Thesis, University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg.
- KRIGER, N.J. (1992), *Zimbabwe's Guerrilla War. Peasant Voices*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- LAN, D. (1985), *Guns and Rain. Guerrillas and Spirit Mediums in Zimbabwe*. London: James Currey.
- Land Acquisition Act, 1996, revised edition.
- LÉVI STRAUSS, C. (1987), *Introduction to the Work of Marcel Mauss*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- MACKENZIE, J.M. (1987), Chivalry, Social Darwinism and Ritualised Killing: the Hunting Ethos in Central Africa up to 1914. In: Anderson, D. & Grove, R. (eds.), *Conservation in Africa. People, Policies and Practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- MACKENZIE, J.M. (1988), *The Empire of Nature: Hunting, Conservation and British Imperialism*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- MADZUDZO, E. (1998), *Community-Based Natural Resource Management in Zimbabwe: Opportunities and Constraints*. Harare: CASS, University of Zimbabwe, NRM Series, CASS Working Paper.

- MADZUDZO, E. & DZINGIRAI, V. (1995), A Comparative Study of the Implications of Ethnicity on CAMPFIRE in Bulilimangwe and Binga Districts in Zimbabwe. *Zambezia*, vol. 22, no. 1, 25-41.
- MANDAZA, I. (1986), Introduction: the Political Economy of Transition. In: *Zimbabwe: the Political Economy of Transition 1980-1986*. Dakar: CODESRIA.
- MAPOSA, I. (1995), *Land Reform in Zimbabwe. An Inquiry into the Land Acquisition Act (1992) Combined with a Case Study Analysis of the Resettlement Programme*. Harare: Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe
- MARKHAM, R.W. (1988), *Nature Conservation on Private Land: the Conservancy Concept*. Unpublished paper, Natal Parks Board.
- MARKHAM, R.W. (November 1986), Establishing a Wildlife Conservancy. *Wildlife Management. Technical Guides for Farmers*, no. 18. Pietermaritzburg, Natal Parks Board.
- MARKHAM, R.W. *Game and Fish Preservation Board Lowland East Conservancy Management Guidelines* (October 1983); *Upper Umvoti Conservancy Management Guidelines* (May 1984); *Caversham Conservancy Management Guidelines* (July 1984); *Mid Illova Conservancy Management Guidelines* (August 1984); *Mooi River Valley Conservancy Game Mammal Management Guidelines* (January 1985); *Seaview Conservancy Management Guidelines* (February 1985); *Dargle Conservancy Management Guidelines* (May 1985); *Baynesfield Wildlife Conservancy Management Guidelines* (vol. 1) (October 1985); *Besters Conservancy Management Guidelines* (vol. 1) (October 1985); *Ripplemead Conservancy Management Guidelines* (vol. 1) (October 1985); *Paddock Plains Conservancy Management Guidelines* (vol. 1) (November 1985); *Umgenyane Conservancy Management Guidelines* (vol. 1) (November 1985); *Boston Conservancy Management Guidelines* (Not Dated). Unpublished reports Natal Parks Board.
- MARKS, S.A. (1984), *The Imperial Lion. Human Dimensions of Wildlife Management in Central Africa*. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press.
- MARSHALL HOLE, H. (1928), *Old Rhodesian Days*. London, MacMillan and Co. Ltd.
- MARTIN, R.B. (1994), Alternative Approaches to Sustainable Use: What Does and Doesn't Work. Paper presented at the conference: *Conservation through Sustainable Use of Wildlife*. University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia, 8-11 February.
- MASONA, T. (1987), *Colonial Game Policy: a Case Study of the Origin and Administration of Game Policy in Southern Rhodesia – 1890 to 1945*. Unpublished MA Thesis, University of Zimbabwe.
- MAUSS, M. (1966) [1950], *The Gift*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- MCNEELY, J.A. (ed.) (1992), *Parks for Life. Report of the 10th World Congress on National Parks and Protected Areas*. Gland: IUCN.
- MCNEELY, J.A. & PITT, D. (eds) (1985), *Culture and Conservation: the Human Dimension in Wildlife Planning*. London: Croon Helm.
- METCALFE, S. (1996), *Benefits of the Savé Valley Conservancy to Local People*. Workshop on the Savé Valley Conservancy Trust, 28-29 March. Unpublished proceedings.
- METCALFE, S. (April 1996), *Enhancing the Capacity of Neighbouring Communities to Benefit from the Proposed Save Valley Conservancy Trust*. Zimbabwe Trust. Unpublished report.

- METCALFE, S. (May 1996), *Report on Response of Local Authorities and Neighbouring Communities to the Proposal by Save Valley Conservancy to Establish a Community Development Trust*. Zimbabwe Trust. Unpublished report.
- METCALFE, S. (September 1996), *Establishing Interdependence between Rural District Councils, Save Valley Conservancy and Save Valley Conservancy Trust*. Unpublished report on workshop 2-3 September.
- METCALFE, S. (March 1998), *Report on a Workshop of the Joint Committee of Rural District Councils to Consider Proposals Related to the Save Valley Conservancy and the Save Valley Conservancy Trust*. Unpublished report.
- MICHLER, I. (2001), Zimbabwe's Killing Fields. In: *Africa. Environment & Wildlife*, vol. 9, no.1, February.
- MINNAAR, A. (1994), The Dynamics of Land in Rural Areas: 1990 and Onwards. In: Minnaar, A. (ed.) (1994), *Access to and Affordability of Land in South Africa: the Challenge of Land Reform in the 1990s*. Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council.
- MISZTAL, B.A. (1996), *Trust in Modern Societies*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- MITCHELL, L.J. (1999), Land and Social Construction of the Cedarberg frontier. Contested Resource Use in Colonial South Africa, c. 1725-1795. Paper presented at the conference *African Environments: Past and Present*, 5-8 July, St. Anthony's College, Oxford.
- MOORE, D.S. (1996), Marxism, Culture, and Political Ecology. Environmental Struggles in Zimbabwe's Eastern Highlands. In: Peet, R. & Watts, M. (eds), *Liberation Ecologies. Environment, Development, Social Movements*. London, New York: Routledge.
- MORRIS, D. & HERGERT, M. (1987), Trends in Collaborative Agreements. *Columbia Journal of World Business*, Summer.
- MOYANA, H.V. (1984), *The Political Economy of Land in Zimbabwe*. Harare: Mambo Press.
- MOYO, S. (1995), *The Land Question in Zimbabwe*. Harare: SAPES Books.
- MOYO, S., ROBINSON, P., KATERERE, Y., STEVENSON, S. & DAVISON, G. (1991), *Zimbabwe's Environmental Dilemma. Balancing Resource Inequities*. Harare: Natprint.
- MOYO, S., O'KEEFE, P. & SILL, M. (1993), *The Southern African Environment. Profiles of the SADC Countries*. London: Earthscan Publications.
- MUROMBEDZI, J. (1999), Land Expropriation, Communal Tenure and Common Property Resource Management in Southern Africa. *The Common Property Resource Digest*, 50:1-3.
- MUROMBEDZI, J. (1992), *Decentralisation or Recentralisation? Implementing CAMPFIRE in Omay Communal Lands of the Nyaminyani District*. Harare: CASS, University of Zimbabwe, Working Paper no. 2
- MUTAMBARA, J.G. (1981), *Africans and Land Policies: British Colonial Policy in Zimbabwe, 1890-1965*. Ph.D. Thesis, University of Cincinnati.
- MUTWIRA, R. (January 1989), Southern Rhodesian Wildlife Policy (1890-1953): a Question of Condoning Game Slaughter? *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 15 (2).
- NABANE, N. (1994), *A Gender Sensitive Analysis of a Community Based Wildlife Utilization Initiative in Zimbabwe's Zambezi Valley*, Harare: CASS, University of Zimbabwe, NRM Occasional Papers Series.

- NABANE, N., DZINGIRAI, V. & MADZUDZO, E. (1994), *Membership in Common Property Regimes. A Case Study of Guruve, Binga, Tsholotsho and Balilimamangwe CAMPFIRE programmes*, Harare: CASS, University of Zimbabwe, NRM Occasional Papers Series.
- NATAL PARKS BOARD OF SOUTH AFRICA, *Annual Report 1993-1994*.
- NATAL PARKS BOARD OF SOUTH AFRICA, *Annual Report 1994-1995*.
- NAUTA, W. (2001), *The Implications of Freedom. The Changing Role of Land Sector NGOs in a Transforming South Africa*. Unpublished Ph.D. thesis Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam.
- NEUMANN, R.P. (2000), Primitive Ideas: Protected Area Buffer Zones and the Politics of Land in Africa, in: Broch-Due, V. & Schroeder, A. *Producing Nature and Poverty in Africa*, Stockholm: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 220-242.
- NEUMANN, R.P. (1998), *Imposing Wilderness. Struggles over Livelihood and Nature Preservation in Africa*. London, Berkeley: University of California Press.
- OWENS, M. & OWENS, D. (1985), *Cry of the Kalahari*. London: Collins.
- PALMER, R. (1990), Land Reform in Zimbabwe, 1980-1990. *African Affairs*, 89 (355): 163-181).
- PATEL, H. (March 1998), *Sustainable Utilization and African Wildlife Policy. The Case of Zimbabwe's Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE). Rhetoric or Reality?* Cambridge (USA): Indigenous Environmental Policy Center.
- PATON, E.M. (1999), Population Pressure and Land Degradation: Historical Perspectives on Population and Resources in Kwandabele. Paper presented at the conference *African Environments: Past and Present*, 5-8 July, St. Anthony's College, Oxford.
- PI-SUNYER, O. & SALZMANN, Z. (1978), *Humanity and Culture. An Introduction to Anthropology*. London, Dallas: Houghton Mifflin Company.
- PRETORIUS, S. (1994), Conservation and Resource Allocation: Parks and People. In: Minnaar, A. (ed.), *Access to and Affordability of Land in South Africa: the Challenge of Land Reform in the 1990s*. Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council.
- PRICE WATERHOUSE ET AL. (1994), *The Lowveld Conservancies: New Opportunities for Productive and Sustainable Land Use, Save Valley, Bubiana and Chiredzi River Conservancies*. Harare: Price Waterhouse.
- PRICE, M.A. & COLLINSON, R.H.F., *Game and Fish Preservation Board, The Balgowan Conservancy Management Guidelines* (October 1982); *Mooi River West Conservancy Management Guidelines* (July 1983); *The Eston-Beaumont Conservancy Management Guidelines* (October 1982). Pietermaritzburg: Natal Parks Board. Unpublished reports.
- PRINS, H.H.T. (1996), *Ecology and Behaviour of the African Buffalo. Social Inequality and Decision Making*, London, New York: Chapman & Hall.
- PUTTERILL, G. (1993), Elephant Translocation – Gonarezhou. In: *The Hartebeest. The Magazine of the Lowveld Natural History Branch of the Wildlife Society of Zimbabwe*, 25th edition.
- RANGER, T.O. (1967), *Revolt in Southern Rhodesia, 1896-7*. London: Heineman.
- RANGER, T.O. (1985), *Peasant Consciousness and Guerrilla War*. London: James Currey.

- RANGER, T.O. (1999), *Voices from the Rocks. Nature, Culture & History in the Matopos Hills of Zimbabwe*, Harare: Baobab; Bloomington, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press; Oxford: James Currey.
- RICHARDS, P. (1996), *Fighting for the Rainforest. War, Youth and Resources in Sierra Leone*. The International African Institute, in association with Oxford: James Currey; Portsmouth (N.H.): Heinemann.
- ROBINS, E. (1964), *Afrika's wilde dieren* (translated from the English original: Africa's Wildlife (1963)). Baarn: Uitgeverij Bosch & Keuning.
- ROOSENS, E. (1998), *Eigen grond eerst? Primordiale autochtonie. Dilemma van de multiculturele samenleving* (translation: Own Soil First? Primordial Autochtony. Dilemma of the Multicultural Society). Leuven, Amersfoort: Acco.
- ROTBURG, R.I. (1988), *The Founder. Cecil Rhodes and the Pursuit of Power*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- RUTHERFORD, B. (2001), *Working on the Margins. Black Workers, White Farmers in Postcolonial Zimbabwe*. London: Zed Books and Harare: Weaver Press
- SAHLINS, M.D. (1972), *Stone Age Economics*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter.
- SAHLINS, M.D. (1996), On the Sociology of Primitive Exchange. In: Komter, A.E. (ed.), *The Gift. An Interdisciplinary Approach*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
- SAMKANGE, S. (1966) *On Trial for my Country*. Oxford: Heinemann.
- SAUNDERS, C. (2001), 'Great Characters of the Lowveld' – The Triangle 'Guinea Pigs'. *Heritage of Zimbabwe*, no. 20, 39-60.
- SAUZIER, C. (September/October 1997), Another Story of Buffalo Hunting. *Zimbabwe Hunter*, 3 (3).
- SAVÉ VALLEY CONSERVANCY, (25 September 1995), *Private Placement Document for Savé Valley Wildlife Services Limited*. Savé Valley Conservancy. Unpublished document.
- SAVÉ VALLEY CONSERVANCY TRUST (1995), *Proposal to Create an Interdependence between the Surrounding Communities and the Savé Valley Conservancy in the South East Lowveld of Zimbabwe*. Harare: SVC Trust.
- SAYCE, K. (1978), *A Town Called Victoria*. Bulawayo: Books of Rhodesia.
- SCHOFFELEERS, J.M. (1992), *River of blood. The Genesis of a Martyr Cult in Southern Malawi, c.A.D. 1600*. Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press.
- SCOONES, I. (1996), Range Management Science and Policy. Politics, Polemics and Pasture in Southern Africa. In: Leach, M. & Mearns, R. (eds), *The Lie of the Land. Challenging Received Wisdom on the African Environment*. London: The International African Institute in association with Oxford: James Currey and Portsmouth (N.H.) Heinemann.
- SINCLAIR, S. (1971), *The story of Melssetter*. Salisbury: M.O. Collins (pvt.) Ltd.
- SKINNER, J.D. (1989), Game Ranching in Southern Africa. In: Hudson, R.J., Drew, K.R. & Baskin, L.M. (eds), *Wildlife Production Systems. Economic Utilisation of Wild Ungulates*. Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press.
- SOMMERVILLE, D.M. (1976), *My Life was a Ranch*. Salisbury: Kailani Books (edited by his daughter Veronica Sommerville).
- SOUTHERN AFRICAN RESEARCH & DOCUMENTATION CENTRE (SARDC), IUCN & SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY (SADC) (1994), *State of the Environment in Southern Africa*. Harare: SARDC.

- SPIERENBURG, M. (2001) Moving into Another Spirit Province, Immigrants and the Mhondoro Cult in Northern Zimbabwe. In: Bruijn, M. de, Dijk, van H. & Foeken, D. (eds), *Mobile Africa, Changing Patterns of Movement in Africa and Beyond*. Leiden, Brill.
- SPIERENBURG, M. (2003) *Strangers, Spirits and Land. The Struggle for Control over Land in Dande, Northern Zimbabwe*. Ph.D. thesis, University of Amsterdam.
- STILES, M. (July 1994), Zimbabwe's Land Reform: What's Goin' on? *Southern Africa Report*, 48-51.
- STONEMAN, C. (1998), Lessons Unlearned: South Africa's One-Way Relationship with Zimbabwe. In: Simon, D. (ed.), *South Africa in Southern Africa: Reconfiguring the Region*. Oxford: James Currey; Athens (USA): Ohio University Press; Cape Town: David Philip Publishers.
- TAYLER, D. (1992), The Largest Baobab. *The Hartebeest. The Magazine of the Lowveld Natural History Branch of the Wildlife Society of Zimbabwe*, 24th Edition.
- TAYLER, D. (1993), Save Valley Happenings. *The Hartebeest. The Magazine of the Lowveld Natural History Branch of the Wildlife Society of Zimbabwe*, 25th Edition.
- THOMAS, A. (1996), *Rhodes. The Race for Africa*. Harare: African Publishing Group.
- TOREN, T. (1995), Seeing the Ancestral Sites: Transformations in Fijian Notions of the Land. In: Hirsch, E. & O'Hanlon, M. (eds), *The Anthropology of Landscape. Perspectives on Place and Space*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- TORRES, S. (1994), Land, a Question of Historical Inheritance or Legal Right. In: Minnaar, A. (ed.), *Access to and Affordability of Land in South Africa: the Challenge of Land Reform in the 1990s*. Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council.
- TSCHIFFELY, A.F. (1953), *The Man from Woodpecker Creek*. London: Hodder and Stroughton Ltd.
- VAN BAAL, J. (1981), *Man's Quest for Partnership: the Anthropological Foundations of Ethics and Religion*. Assen: Van Gorcum.
- VAN BAAL, J. (1975), *Reciprocity and the Position of Women*. Assen: Van Gorcum.
- VON BLANCKENBURG, P. (1994), *Large Commercial Farmers and Land Reform in Africa. The Case of Zimbabwe*. Aldershot, Singapore: Avebury.
- WAIT, A. (1986), Farm Workers Given Conservation Message. *Farmers's Weekly*, 28 March 1986.
- WATKIN, J. (1997), ... and Buffalo? *Swara*. July/August, 20: 4
- WELLS, M. & BRANDON, K. (WITH HANNAH, L.) (1992), *People and Parks. Linking Protected Area Management with Local Communities*. Washington D.C.: The World Bank, The World Wildlife Fund, U.S. Agency for International Development.
- WELS, H. (2000), *Fighting over Fences. Organisational Co-operation and Reciprocal Exchange between the Savé Valley Conservancy and its Neighbouring Communities in Zimbabwe*. Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam.
- WESSELING, H.L. (1992), *Verdeel en heers. De deling van Afrika, 1880-1914* (translation: Divide and Rule. The Division of Africa, 1880-1914). Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Bert Bakker.
- WESTERN, D. & PEARL, M.C. (eds.) (1989), *Conservation for the Twenty-First Century*. New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- WESTERN, D. & WRIGHT, R.M. (eds) (1994), *Natural Connections: Perspectives in Community-Based Conservation*. New York: Island Press.

- WHITTALL, J.W. (Sir) (1901), *Frederick the Great on Kingcraft*. London, New York, Bombay: Longmans, Green and Co.
- WWF (November 1997), *Quota Setting Manual*. Harare: World Wildlife Fund.
- YUDELMAN, M. (1964), *Africans on the Land*. Cambridge (Massachusetts): Harvard University Press and London: Oxford University Press.
- ZINYAMA, M, CAMPBELL, D.J. & MATIZA, T. (1990), Land Policy and Access to Land in Zimbabwe: The Dewure Resettlement Scheme. *Geoforum*, 21 (3): 359-370.

Internet site

- Bushcraft Mag-e-Zine Archive News Article, Courtesy of the Business Day, Government support for role of hunting in SA, 16 April 1997, taken from Internet: www.wildnetafrica.co.za/bushcraft.

Newspapers

- The Financial Gazette
The Herald
New York Times
The Standard
Sunday Mail
Weekly Telegraph
Zimbabwe Independent

Magazines

- African Business
The Economist
Economist Intelligence Unit Country Report Zimbabwe
The Farmer
Farmer's Weekly
Game & Hunt
The Hartebeest

Keeping Track
New African
News from the Natal Parks Board
The Natal Wildlife Conservancies Association Newsletter / NCA Newsletter / The
Guinea-fowl
Safari Times Africa
Southscan
Swara. East African Wildlife Society
A Tourist Paradise
The Zambezi Society
Zimbabwe Hunter
The Zimbabwe Review

Other sources

Brochures of SVC members
Constitution SVC
Minutes AGM SVC
Minutes CCM SVC
Minutes Joint Committee Meetings
Parks & Wildlife (Law Enforcement) Investigation Register, May 1991 – June 1998
Reports (various) and Minutes of Meetings of Liaison Officer SVC
Reports of Chairman SVC
Reports of Conservator SVC
SVC Documents / Reports / Memorandum of Understanding
Various Letters
WWF Quota Setting Manual

Index

- Angus-Matsai case · 171
- Appropriate Authority · 134, 205
- British South Africa Company (BSAC) · 47, 48, 50, 52, 55, 56, 62, 86, 217
- buffalo · 3, 85-86, 88-89, 104, 110, 114, 116, 119, 121-124, 126, 128-130, 132-136, 146, 149, 151, 155-156, 159, 172-173, 187, 197, 213-214, 224
- CAMPFIRE · 2, 5, 103, 133-134, 146, 148, 157, 205, 220
- commercial farmers · 3, 5, 16, 18, 21, 24, 32, 45, 70, 71, 73, 78-79, 84, 149, 158, 160-161, 199
- communal farmers · 3-4, 13, 16, 24, 83, 131, 151, 159, 172-173, 201
- Conservancy Committee Meeting (CCM) · 112-113, 116-118, 120, 122-131, 142-145, 147, 160, 172-173, 187-188, 190-191, 201, 211, 215
- Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management (DNPWLM) · 4, 75, 88, 90, 93, 97-99, 101, 103-104, 111-112, 114, 118, 122-124, 127, 133, 135-136, 139, 146-149, 151, 155, 194, 214, 218, 220
- Devuli Ranch · 55, 57, 86, 89-90, 92, 93, 95-96, 106, 123, 161
- Farm Patrol Plan · 23-25, 28, 30
- fence · 3, 4, 39, 53-54, 76, 85, 88-89, 95, 99, 113-130, 140, 146, 151, 153, 156-159, 161-162, 167-168, 171, 174-176, 178, 180, 185-186, 188-189, 194-197, 199, 210, 213-214, 224, 227
- Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) · 38, 53-54, 88, 104, 114-116, 120-123, 128-130, 133, 147, 171-173, 180, 187-188, 201
- game guards · 18, 25, 27-29, 31-32, 39, 178, 195
- gift · 3, 8-9, 11-12, 14, 16, 60, 153-154, 158, 190, 197, 211, 213-216, 218-219, 221-223, 225-226
- imagery · 7, 12
- Intensive Conservation Area (ICA) · 89-92
- International Finance Corporation (IFC) · 104, 115, 137, 141-145, 154, 202, 204, 210, 218
- joint venture · 2, 4-6, 12-14, 16, 20, 138-139, 142, 150, 154-156, 173, 198, 203, 205, 207-209, 214, 217-219, 228
- Lancaster House Agreement · 69, 72, 74
- Land Acquisition Act · 43, 64, 73-75, 77
- Land Apportionment Act · 63-66
- Land Question (The) · 13, 41-43, 47-48, 51, 65-67, 75, 92, 151, 155, 211, 221, 223, 226
- Land Tenure Act · 63, 66
- Levanga-Gudo case · 162
- Liberation Struggle · 55, 58, 66, 68-69, 82, 84, 89-90, 93, 95, 174, 181
- Matopo Hills · 58-59
- Natal Conservancy Association
 Newsletter (NCA Newsletter) · 26-35
- Natal Parks Board (NPB) · 18, 20, 22-26, 29, 31-33, 37, 39-40, 90
- Pioneer Column · 13, 43, 51, 56
- poaching · 227
- private wildlife conservancies · 4, 18, 20, 42
- reciprocity
 - balanced reciprocity · 4, 11, 214, 226
 - generalised reciprocity · 10, 12, 100
 - negative reciprocity · 1, 3-4, 10-13, 100, 150, 214, 222, 225-226
- reconciliation · 1, 3, 77, 221, 225

- resettlement · 44, 56, 71-72, 81, 83,
106, 120, 145, 155, 158, 175-176,
197, 204, 224, 228
- Rhino Conservation Strategy · 98-99,
212
- Rural District Council (RDC) · 82, 91,
154, 157, 160, 197-201, 203-205,
207-209, 212-213
- Sango-Maronga case · 159
- Savé Valley Conservancy (SVC) · 3-4,
6, 12-14, 16, 20, 30, 44, 52, 55-56,
59, 68, 73, 75, 77, 83, 85-93, 95-101,
104-119, 121-124, 126-134, 136-
147, 151-152, 154-162, 167-169,
171-176, 179-181, 183-184, 187-
190, 192-198, 200-203, 205, 207,
210-220, 222-225, 227
- Savé Valley Conservancy Trust
(SVCT) · 3, 5, -6, 12-14, 16, 137-
138, 153-155, 158, 165, 198, 203,
206, 211, 217-219, 222-223, 227
- South Africa · 16, 18-20, 22-28, 32-33,
35-38, 40, 42, 47, 49, 51, 53-54, 78-
79, 90, 97, 100, 105-106, 124, 146,
163, 188
- South African National Parks (SANP) ·
19
- trust · 3, 7, 11-12, 29, 77, 100, 127,
154, 156, 158, 201, 203, 211
- Wildlife Producers Association (WPA)
· 78, 148, 150
- World Wildlife Fund for Nature
(WWF) · 90, 97-99, 103, 114, 119,
134-136, 139, 142, 188, 200, 203,
210, 218

