

**Institutions, actors and natural resource
governance: the case of Kgalagadi Transfrontier
Park and the neighbouring San (Bushmen) and
Mier communities.**

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Background

- Parks and surrounds - home to local and indigenous communities, important for livelihoods.
- Co- and community-based ownership sometimes legally recognised.
- Institutions - regulate access to NRs.
- Limited success in co- management and community-based conservation projects.
- Less focus on local level implications.
- Challenges of NR governance remain complex, multi-stranded and salient (Blomquist, 2009).

Objectives and significance

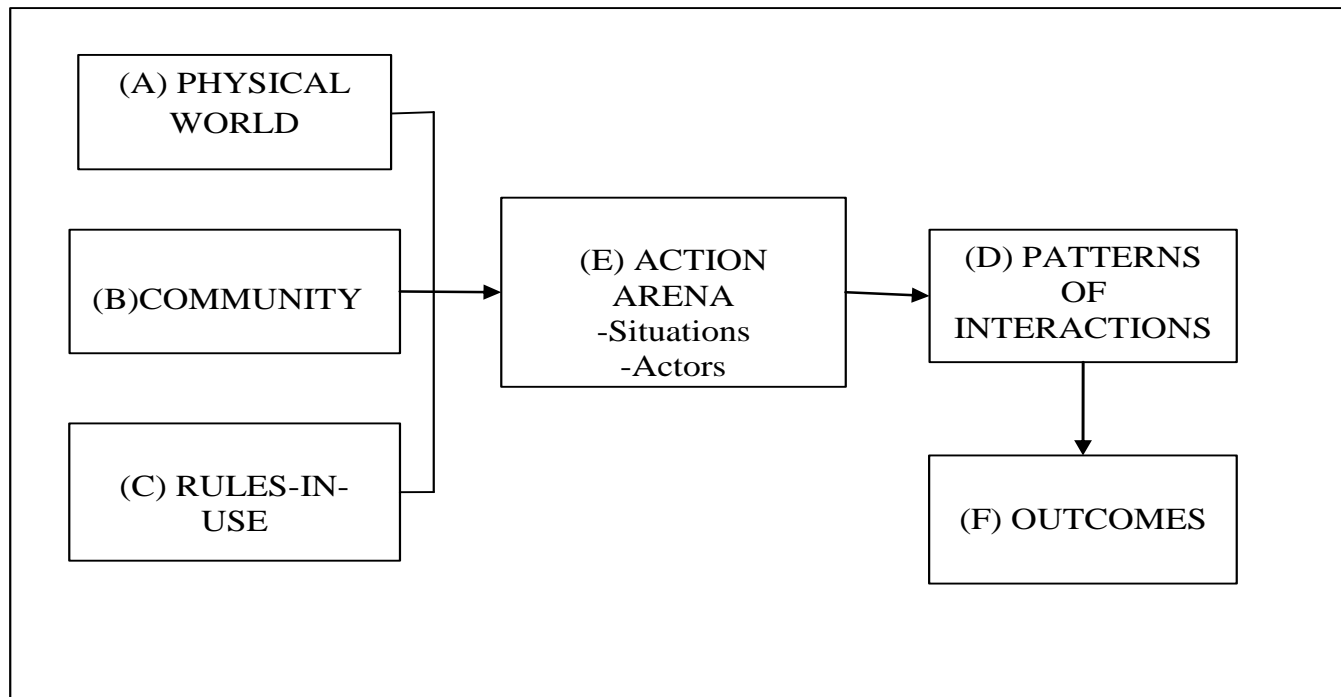
- Identify institutions and actors in the KTP and surrounding farms.
- Analyse the interactions and power dynamics among these actors.
- Provide lessons and propose core strategies for improving governance of NRs.
- Provide empirical evidence and intellectual arguments to advance theories on natural resource management.
- Significant advances in NR governance knowledge, insights of interest or value to the research community.

Definitions

- Institutions.... *“the prescriptions that humans use to organise all forms of repetitive and structured interactions, including institutionalised cultural values as well as formal organisations”* (Ostrom, 2005:1).
- Rules of the game (North 1990), stipulate permitted, forbidden or required actions.
- Organisations emerge as actors – protect certain values, rules, goals, etc.
- NR governance: the act or manner of governing - is about power, relationships and accountability (Borrini-Feyerabend et al. 2004).

Frameworks

- Institutional Analysis and Development (IAD) framework (Ostrom, 1994).
- Everything is connected to everything else.



Continued....

- Political Ecology – power relations in NR management (Robbins, 2004).
- Common property resources theory (Ostrom, 1990).
 - subtractibility and joint use.

Methods and study area

Primary data sources :

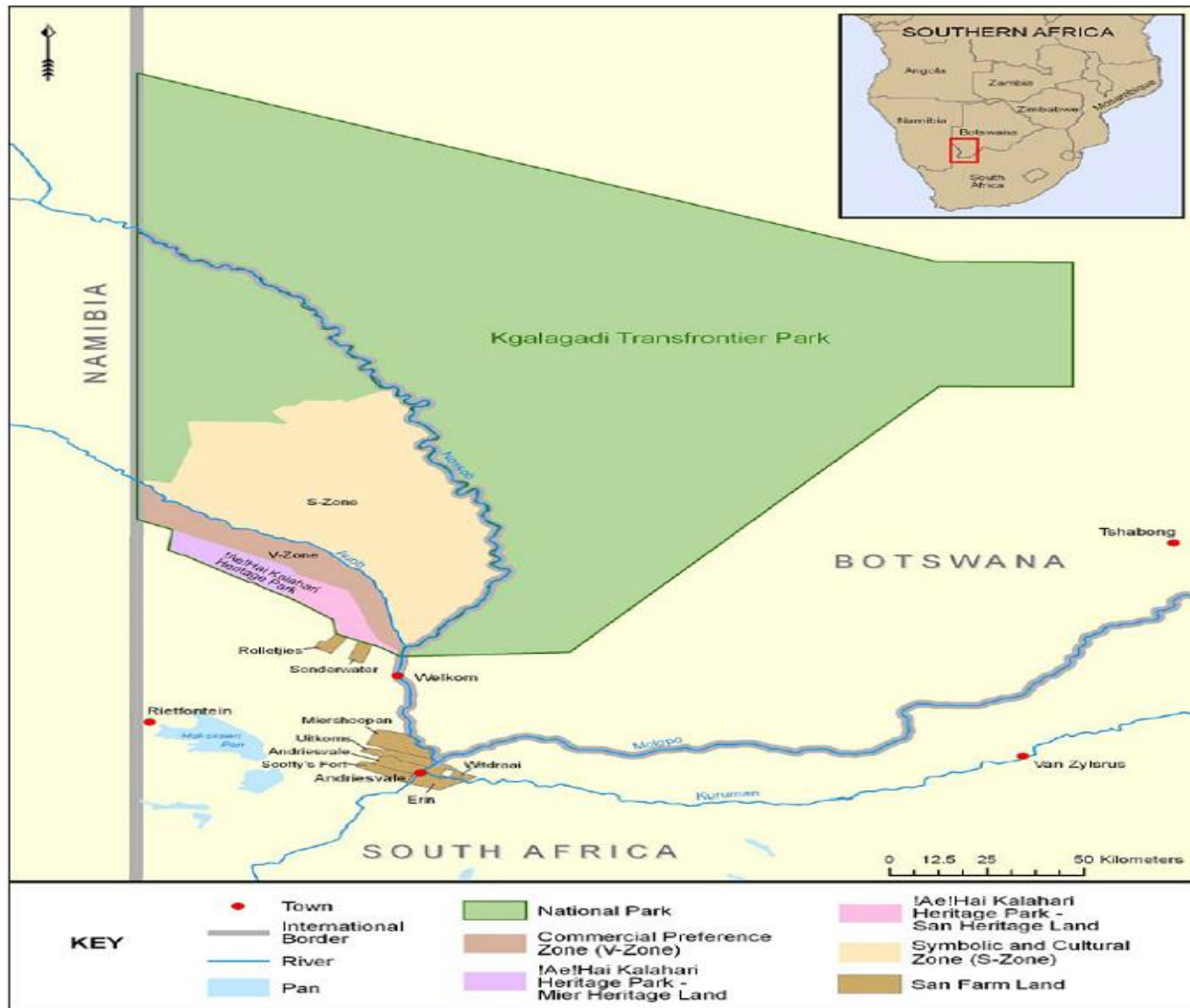
- HH surveys
- Captured indicators of good governance (e.g. participation, decision making, attitudes towards leaders and accountability) and socioeconomic benefits (Collomb et al.2010)
- Key informant interviews –
 - (local actors, who and what they represent and what they actually do).

Secondary data sources

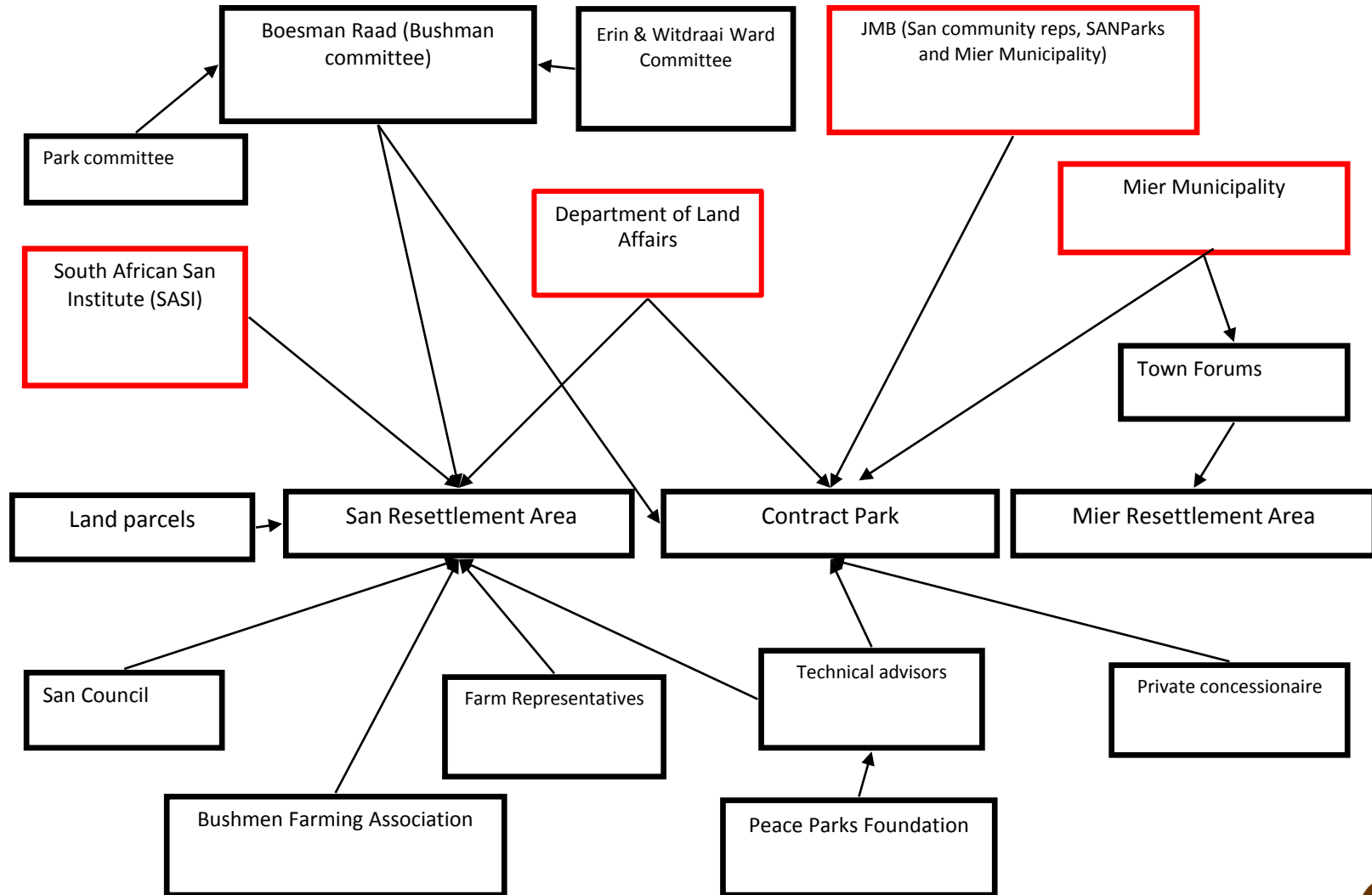
San and Mier communities

- San – earliest inhabitants of southern Africa.
- Mier – originated from the Western Cape.
- Displaced forcibly after June 1913 (Natives Land Act, Native Trust and Land Act).
- After 1994 – lodged a land claim in the park.
- Awarded approx. 50 000 ha and 80 000 ha inside and outside the park (i.e. Resettlement farms).
- Complex arrangement of land tenure and use rights.

Study site



Results...Nested actors



Interactions among actors in the park





- Joint Management Board (KTPM, San and Mier).
- Park primary objective is conservation.
- Traditional narrative used for resource management.
- Plans to grow medicinal plants in the farms.
- Threat - overuse of NRs by local communities.
- Normal rules with regard to access to rest of the park apply.
- Historical view of resource management in parks (separatist).

External actors (NGOs)

- Interested in cultural restoration and preservation.
- Linguistic and traditional conservation aspects.
- Traditional guiding and tracking.
- Traditional-related conservation attracts more funds.
- NGOs work with specific social groups (co-option of local members).
- Blind eye on a modernising and heterogenous communities –cause and deepen internal conflicts.

Accountability and benefit perceptions

Knowledge on different land parcels (Mier)

Respondents	Land parcel	
	Contract Park	Game Farm
% respondents with knowledge of the existence of community land parcels	29 	25 
% respondents with knowledge land parcel management responsibility	10	11
% respondents who attended or have knowledge of feedback meetings	0	0
% respondents with knowledge of income raised annually from Contract Park and game farms	0 	0 

Benefits perception

General perceptions of benefit from park and farms

Benefit perception	% respondents (n=100)
No comments, do not know if we are supposed to benefit in any way	41
Empty promises, nothing has changed, no benefits at all	31
Benefitted but not satisfied, still need improvement	16
Land restitution improved lives (has access to land and livestock)	4
Only benefitted a few individuals	4
Benefitted but conflicts are drawing us back	3
No money is getting to the community	1

Conflicting interests and heterogeneity

- San: traditionalist-modernist conflict.
- Mier: conflicts relate to how land is leased (communal vs. commercial farmers & communal farmers vs. landless people)(reports of corruption, nepotism, influence by the rich).
- Disagreements between San and Mier on what resources can offer.
- Value socially negotiated and contested.

Some outcomes

- Institutions somewhat vague and multi-layered.
- Overlapping responsibilities, interests.
- Government tardiness and negligence.
- Lack of collective behaviour, poor attendance of meetings, lack of interest (CPR).
- Selling of grazing rights to third party livestock owners.
- Free riding, commercialisation of regulated genetic tree species (e.g. *Acacia arioloba*).

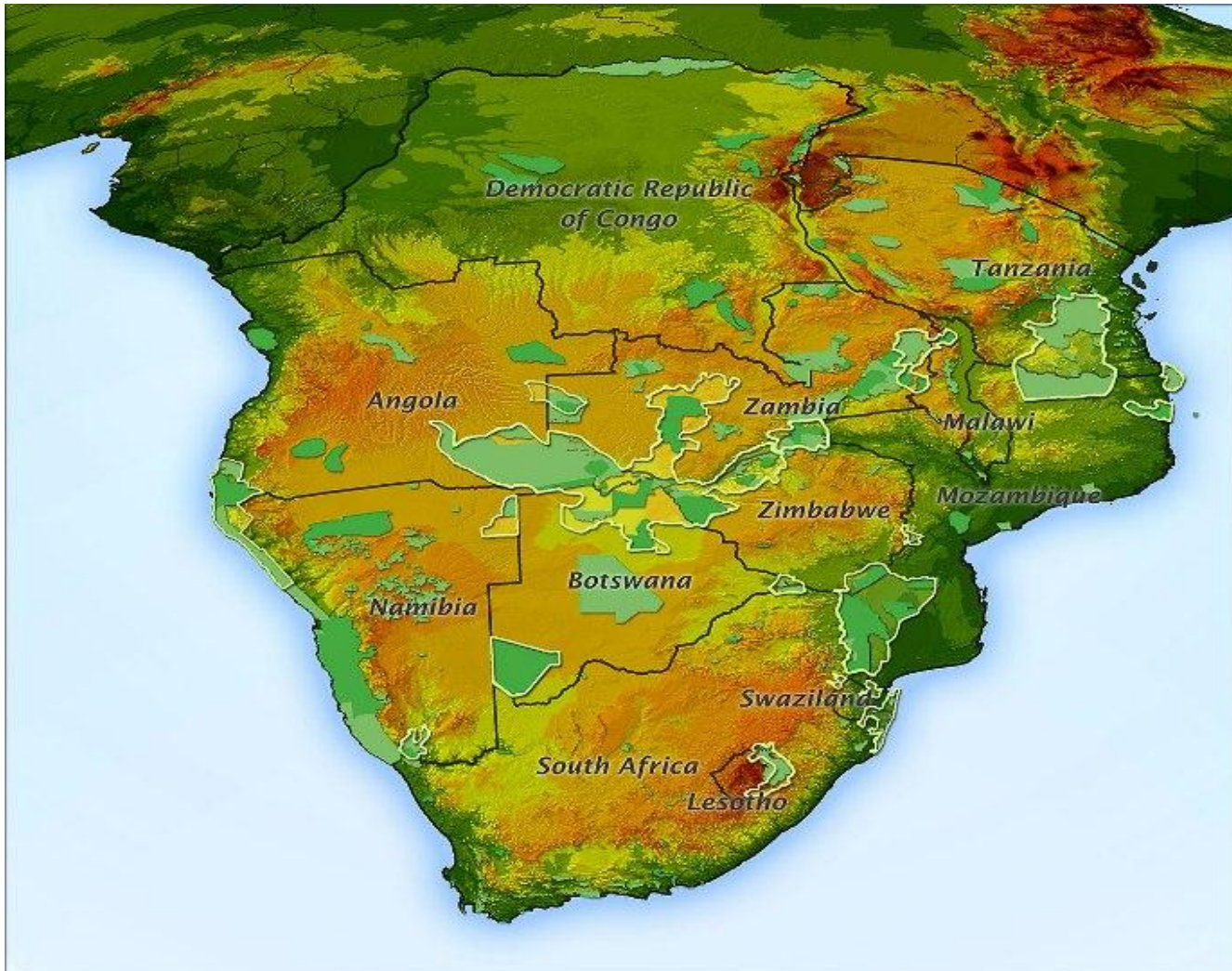
What the findings imply...

- Communities autonomous entities but not independent.
- Staged definition of community in conservation.
- Illustration of asymmetrical power relations.
- Externally–initiated interventions may culminate in disorganisation.
- Land - not just about ownership rights but about who dictates land use rules (see Ramutsindela, 1998,2002).
- Delinking conservation from local needs counter-productive.

Key questions arising from the findings?

- Is co-management successful in the Contract Park?
- Is CBNRM working as expected in the farms?
- Cautious Yes: emerging park and farm opportunities.
- Partly No: heightened conflicts and challenges.

Map of Transfrontier parks in Southern Africa



(www.peaceparks.org)

The future?!

Challenges may include:

- Lack of capacity by local communities.
- Misleading policy on benefit-sharing.
- Internal community conflicts, leadership squabbles
- Opposing values and perceptions.
- “This land is your land, this land is my land policy” (Hall, 2011).

Concluding remarks

- The concept of co-management (at least in SA) remains little more than an idea on paper, an aspiration plagued by challenges.
- The whole picture/idea sometimes look very messy and idealistic.
- Multiple objectives and actors, operate at different and multiple levels.
- Partnerships and inclusive approaches to link conservation objectives and local development needs.
- (Re) shifting/imagining definition of a community.

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