Community Leaders Network of Southern Africa

CLN Namibia Workshop

18–22 October 2021

Summary Report

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Setting the Scene

Welcome and Objectives

Bennett Kahuure, the Director of Parks and Wildlife of the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism in Namibia, officially opened the meeting and welcomed the delegates.

José Monteiro introduced the key objectives for this workshop:

1. To share country-level CBNRM experiences and lessons as a path to building a common vision. Sharing common challenges, success stories and enabling conditions for success.

2. To define and agree on an institutional arrangement for the Community Leaders Network of Southern Africa (CLN). CLN is a movement more than an institution. By the end of this week, we need to have a constitution in place, with a clear governance structure.

3. To define a clear and comprehensive roadmap or action plan for CLN. This includes strategies and programmatic areas that CLN will focus on over the next few years. How do we define success and how do we measure it? We want to define key actions and responsibilities, and further consider the monitoring and information sharing system.

Background

The background of the CLN was outlined, particularly for the benefit of those delegates and partners who may not have been part of the initial discussions. Several current CLN members had met each other at international fora (e.g. CITES) and on learning exchange visits in the past and recognised that their countries and Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) programmes had many common issues and stances. However, without a formal alliance, these meetings were brief and did not result in much interaction between the international events.

In February 2019, a group of CBNRM Thought Leaders, which included several current CLN members, technical support organisations, academics, and other interested parties, convened at the Otjikoto Environmental Centre in Namibia. During this workshop, several common challenges with CBNRM in the region were identified and all agreed that a stronger community voice from southern Africa was needed on international platforms. Plans for a follow-up meeting in June 2020 to formalise a community network were delayed due to COVID-19.

Nonetheless, the group continued to grow (nine countries are now represented in the membership) and started meeting every two weeks to plan activities for the CLN, despite the lack of a formal organisation. The commitment shown during the formative two years was encouraging, and the support of three organisations was essential during this period. Resource Africa (RA) provided extensive technical support and channelled funding to the CLN from Jamma International. The Namibian Association of CBNRM Support Organisations (NACSO) took on the roles of Chairperson and Secretariat. Southern African Trust (SAT) provided training for CLN members on communications and linked the CLN with key contacts within the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

CLN activities prior to this workshop included:
1. Developing partnerships with other key organisations within Africa (e.g. African Civil Society Organisations Biodiversity Alliance – ACBA) and raising the profile of the organisation with potential partners internationally.
2. Advocacy and lobbying regional (SADC) and international governments that are or were planning to implement anti-sustainable use legislation.
3. Attending the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) World Conservation Congress (WCC)
4. Preparing for African Protected Areas Congress (APAC)
5. Preparing for the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Conference of Parties (CoP)

The current membership of CLN includes people from different age groups, which is one of the Network's strengths, as members can teach each other new skills and learn from each other. As a result of the activities above, the CLN has become known internationally, even though it had not yet been formalised. The key objective of this workshop is therefore to formalise the CLN and thus create greater opportunities for formalising partnerships and attracting funds for future activities. This step will also provide greater legitimacy of the CLN as a voice for rural southern African communities.

Sharing lessons learned in CBNRM

Panel Discussion on National CBNRM Programmes

Delegates from seven southern African countries briefly presented the progress, success and challenges faced by the CBNRM programmes in their respective countries. A panel of experts, which included CLN members and guests, responded to these presentations based on their experiences. This exercise provided a useful starting point for the rest of the workshop, as delegates developed a sense of how CBNRM worked in each other's countries.

Mozambique

A CBNRM development timeline in Mozambique to reveal how the programme has grown over time and the challenges it has faced. During 1990-2005, the new government introduced several legislative reforms, most notably by recognising and respecting the customary norms of rural communities. A 20% tax was levied on concessionaires operating in and around National Parks and Reserves that was earmarked for neighbouring communities. Although this was a start, several issues around land rights and benefit-sharing remained.

During 2005-2018, some steps were made towards securing land rights for communities, which involved first delimiting the land that each community claimed and collecting basic information about them. The final cadastral map was used to assign portions of land to particular communities, but there was little consultation within this process and communities still had few or no decision-making powers. Some of these communities nonetheless created their development agendas during this time.

In the final period of 2018-2021, the CBNRM Network was formed to create standards for CBNRM across the country, increase governance capacity within communities and bring them to the point of formal registration as Community Conservation Areas. Issues of governance have been a particular focus during this period. Due to capacity limitations, the Network focuses on supporting communities directly adjacent to state protected areas.

Botswana

The concept of CBNRM has been around since the 1980s in Botswana, and the programme has centred on communities living in or around designated Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs, covering 66,750 km^2) of the country. A further 62,700 km^2 has been proposed for future WMAs. These WMAs were established for two primary purposes: 1) to create wildlife corridors between National Parks and 2) to maintain buffer zones between the Parks and villages to reduce human-wildlife conflict. A CBNRM Act is going to be presented at parliament towards the end of this year and a manual has been developed to help communities establish and govern their Community-Based Organisations (CBOs).

Communities within or neighbouring the WMAs are granted rights to concessions within the WMAs, which are used to negotiate with hunting and/or tourism operators (joint-venture partners). These rights can only be exercised after they have developed an integrated land use plan for the WMA. The income from these activities has been used for numerous purposes, including better housing, water, household income, access to protein, community-owned lodges, transportation to town, and senior citizen subsidies.

The programme has thus far focused only on wildlife-based industries – tourism and hunting enterprises – and has not considered the management and sustainable use of other resources (e.g., plants). One key challenge is that the period for the land lease of the concession area is only 15 years, which discourages long-term investment and hampers business arrangements with joint venture partners. Other challenges include the cost of developing land-use plans that can be prohibitive without external financing (direct access to this funding by communities is limited); improving governance and increasing household-level benefits.

Tanzania

The government started considering the CBNRM approach in the 1990s in response to increased poaching in the country as a result of legislation that excluded local communities from benefiting from natural resources. In 2003, government officials embarked on a southern African fact-finding mission to other countries that had established CBNRM programmes at that time – notably, Namibia, Zimbabwe and Zambia.
As a result of this exercise, 38 Wildlife Management Areas were gazetted on village lands that bordered state-owned protected areas (all such land ownership is vested in the Presidency). Since there is no fencing around the protected areas, the wildlife moves freely through the WMAs, thus functioning as wildlife corridors.

Communities must form authorised associations/consortiums to benefit from wildlife-related industries operating in neighbouring WMAs. At present, 21 such associations are recognised through the Wildlife Act. These CBOs are granted some powers relating to land rights, village infrastructure and wildlife conservation on village lands located outside the WMAs.

The key challenges encountered thus far relate to the government's dealings with these CBOs. While the communities are given rights to these lands and associated resources, provided that they meet government requirements, such rights have been revoked in some instances. WMAs that are particularly promising for photographic tourism have been upgraded to Park/Reserve status, thus effectively taking them away from the communities. Furthermore, income from the WMAs that is supposed to go directly to the CBOs is collected by the government on their behalf and then transmitted to the CBO – there is a lack of transparency in this process.

Zambia

In Zambia, community conservation is associated with 36 Game Management Areas (GMAs) that are located around state protected areas. To benefit from resources located in GMAs, communities have founded over 80 Community Resource Boards (CRBs), 10 community trusts and over 60 community forestry groups. CBNRM thus covers 167,000 km² in Zambia. CBOs are represented at the national level by an Association and CRB Forum, which

allow CBOs to share lessons learned and speak to the government. The concept of community-owned game ranches has emerged recently and these are under development.

This programme has enjoyed relatively high levels of government commitment and donor support, while communities have shown great willingness to participate in the programme. Human-wildlife coexistence has improved and the funds from photographic and hunting tourism have been put to good use.

There remain several challenges, however. First, the Policy regarding CBNRM has yet to be finalised – this might happen by December this year. Donor financing for the programme is uncoordinated, so some CBOs get support from several institutions and others have no funding at all. There is no formal human-wildlife conflict relief or compensation mechanism, and human encroachment on National Parks and GMAs is increasing. The programme is currently over-dependent on donors and not financially self-sustaining. There is also a need to integrate the Association and Forum, along with improving monitoring and evaluation within the programme that could improve research outputs for taking the programme forwards.

Malawi

The dense and growing human population of Malawi is exerting increasing pressure on their natural resources. In the late 2000s, the government created a legal framework that enabled CBNRM in and around protected areas. Following the success of the pilot project near one National Park, the programme is now being scaled up to include more communities. There are now seven CBNRM Associations, which incorporate all of the communities living around each of the seven National Parks.

There are three levels of governance established below the top Association level: 1) District level includes several chiefdoms; 2) Zone Natural Resource Committees are formed at the chiefdom level; 3) Village Natural Resource Committees comprise headmen of 2-3 villages. Each Association has an Executive Committee, which signs a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the government that entitles the Association to 25% of the revenues generated by the neighbouring National Park.

A recent concern emerged with African Parks taking over the management of two National Parks, after which the respective Associations no longer received their share of the revenue. Other challenges include the fragmented way that CBNRM is done –wildlife-related Associations fall under a different government ministry to forestry-related Associations, which means that they operate in silos. The different wildlife-related Associations also do not communicate with each other. As there is no hunting in Malawi, defining what resources communities can access and use has been difficult and

relies solely on the attractiveness of those parks for tourism. There is a need to diversify access to more resources that can be used in more ways.

Namibia

There are 86 communal conservancies in Namibia that cover 20.2% of the country and these are supported through various pieces of legislation that grant communal conservancies conditional ownership rights to wildlife on their land (and in some cases neighbouring concessions). The government has set minimum requirements to form a conservancy (constitution, benefit distribution plan, game management and utilisation plan) and several standard operating procedures (see next section).

The CBNRM programme is supported by the government and several support organisations under the NACSO umbrella. This support is usually in the form of capacity building for management committees, negotiating contracts with joint venture operators, and financial assistance. Although conservancies are usually self-funded through photographic and hunting tourism, financial assistance had to be increased in 2020-21 due to COVID-19 effectively halting international tourism. The programme has resulted in numerous community benefits: employment (in lodges and conservancies), provision of meat from hunting, mitigating human-wildlife conflict, assisting senior citizens in various ways, assisting schools, among others.

Challenges nonetheless remain. Communities still have little influence on the government in terms of formulating policies that affect them. Many conservancies have no income from any source (some received income for the first time through the COVID relief facility) and can therefore not contribute to the livelihoods of people living there. Unemployment and poverty remain high, even within conservancies that are earning a reasonable income. Land rights have not been granted, which leaves conservancies vulnerable to mining interests and the encroachment of farmers from outside their boundaries. Human-wildlife conflict, especially during the recent drought, remains a key challenge.

Zimbabwe

The CAMPFIRE programme is the oldest CRBNRM programme in the region, having started in 1980. CAMPFIRE blocks are associated with Rural Development Boards (RDBs), which is a form of local government, and communities living in these blocks share half the revenues from wildlife with the RDB (most of the revenue is generated from hunting). This income has resulted in rural development in these areas, including building clinics, schools, and hospitals.

The CAMPFIRE Association is a national-level body that represents and assists these communities. One of their key functions is capacity building to

ensure that the elected committees in each CAMPFIRE community understand their roles.

One of the key challenges with the system is the sharing of authority between communities and local government (RDBs), which sometimes results in the community share of revenues not reaching the community. A recent CAMPFIRE review was completed, and among the recommendation was to pass laws that ensure that RDBs share revenue with their respective communities. Community Trusts are also being formed at the District level to improve benefit sharing.

Panel Reflections

Several cross-cutting issues could be identified from the country-specific talks, and it is these issues where the CLN could be most usefully employed:

1. Land rights and cross-sectoral political support. The lack of land rights in all countries leads to encroachment from outsiders onto community lands and reduces economic options available to communities. This issue is also related to land use planning, which often falls under different government sectors to those managing CBNRM (e.g. Agriculture or Land sectors). Having CBNRM recognised at a national level, and not just within a specific Ministry, is, therefore, a step towards tackling the land use issues. The policies and legislation mentioned in the various countries are often not strong enough, which results in land grabs (by the government or others). Some countries are implementing land reform policies, and perhaps this can be used to reform land rights on these lands.

2. Including other SADC countries and external partners. Madagascar and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) are part of SADC, but we have not reached out to them (although recently established a Madagascar contact). While Angola is nominally part of the CLN, we have not fully engaged with that country yet. These two countries and South Africa do not have the same kind of CBNRM programmes as the countries present at the workshop, so CLN could assist them to initiate these programmes based on the knowledge we have gained over time. We also need to consider reaching out beyond SADC boundaries in future.

3. Going beyond wildlife. Many natural resources are under threat in the SADC region – particularly trees and fish resources – yet most of the CBNRM programmes thus far have focused on wildlife. COVID has shown the weakness of wildlife-based industries that rely on international visitors, so we need to focus on other ways of sustaining rural livelihoods. Besides the resources mentioned above, this includes improving agricultural methods and exploring more valuable uses for non-timber forest products, the latter is of special interest to

bioprospectors. Improving agriculture will reduce the pressure on land for wildlife.

4. Increasing the scale of CBNRM. The amount of land and number of communities involved in CBNRM in southern Africa is impressive, but each CBO does not necessarily work with others. This means that the scale of operations remains small and consequently vulnerable to climate change. Ecosystems are also larger than the area covered by individual CBOs, so there is a need for joint management and better cooperation among them. The economic scale must also be considered – the contribution of CBNRM to the national economy must be measured and reported to show the importance of these programmes to their respective governments. Resources and funding are required to scale up these various aspects of CBNRM.

5. Amplifying community voices and capacity building. Communities are often represented by NGOs, rather than speaking for themselves at national and international levels. Capacity-building should include improving their ability to communicate with their governments and building towards visibility on international platforms. The long delay in passing unified CBNRM Acts in several countries shows that more needs to be done to increase the level of priority CBNRM gets within the region. Benefit-sharing mechanisms and transparency remain an issue in many countries, which could be tackled through better community representation at the government level. We need to move away from tokenism, whereby communities get some benefits as a mere token, rather than real recognition of their rights. While individual communities within these countries are unable to bargain with the government, national-level associations with regional support from CLN have a better chance of succeeding.

6. Need peer-to-peer learning between governments. Although the CBNRM programme in one country cannot be copied and pasted to another, there are lessons in terms of policies, legislation and practice that could be exchanged among the different governments. Issues relating to human–wildlife conflict, encroachment on wildlife areas, and community governance (e.g. benefit sharing) are problems in most of the countries, so these issues could benefit from exchanges at the government level, not only at the CLN level. Showing the economic scale of CBNRM, contribution to rural development and livelihoods, and the conservation benefits are required to get more government commitment to these programmes.

7. Measuring progress and moving forwards. There are two ways of measuring progress: 1) to compare where you are now to where you were before CBNRM began; 2) to compare where you are now to where you could have been if you were working at optimal efficiency. The latter way of measuring is a better reflection on the status of a

CBNRM programme and it drives innovation for the future, rather than stagnation. While CBNRM is measured in many ways, one of the most important indicators is often missing – the contribution to rural livelihoods and subsequent poverty reduction. If it is done efficiently, attracts investors and is well-governed, CBNRM can be a major contributor to rural development and poverty alleviation. Professionals should deal with financial accounting and legal negotiations, rather than expecting the communities to do these things on their own – this would lead to improved governance and investor confidence.

8. Modernising CBNRM and addressing the challenges of today. Many of the programmes were started in the 80s and 90s, but new challenges and opportunities are emerging that need to be grasped. Climate change is receiving greater attention globally, and there could be a key opportunity for increasing funding if CLN positions itself and CBNRM generally as a means to increase resilience to climate change. The impact of COVID-19 on traditional sources of revenue must result in different thinking for the future, as communities cannot continue to rely solely on wildlife-based industries.

Lessons from Namibia

As the host country and one with a well-established CBNRM programme, Namibian guests from NACSO organisations provided overviews on several aspects of the CBNRM programme.

Monitoring Systems

The Natural Resource Management Working Group from NACSO presented the Event Book system and annual game counts. Together, these sources of data provide an overview of how wildlife populations are doing in the country and help identify problems within the system that are used for adaptive management purposes.

The Event Book system is better known in the region as Management-Oriented Management System (MOMS) and it has been introduced into several other countries in the past, but these generally lack the systemic support provided in Namibia. Some of the key features of the Namibian system are:

1. The community identifies what indicators they want to monitor based on their own needs. The support team have produced many possible indicators that can be used in the Event Book system, but the community decides which indicators are most relevant to them. This is critical to creating genuine ownership in the system from the beginning.

2. The data are collected and owned by the conservancies. Game guards are the main data collectors and they report their information to their respective conservancy offices at the end of each month. At the end of each year, the data are transferred to annual books and stored in a filing system within each conservancy office. While support organisations assist with annual Event Book auditing and take copies of the data for entry into a national database, the original information never leaves the conservancy.

3. Monitoring must be linked to management. Data can only be useful when used to inform management. The Event Book system is thus part of a larger adaptive management model used in Namibian conservancies. Results are reported back to the conservancies in the form of illustrated posters that are kept at conservancy offices. Added benefits to the system have been community empowerment through better knowledge of what is going on in their areas and improving the stature of conservancies in the eyes of other stakeholders by showing concrete results of their conservation efforts.

4. The system is currently based on pen and paper, but slowly migrating to fully electronic systems. The Event Book system was first implemented in the 1990s, so there was no suitable technology for this purpose at the time. Even today, remote communities often do not have access to computers or the Internet, thus limiting the utility of an electronic platform. Using pen and paper, along with icons rather than words wherever possible (literacy levels were low among game guards) made it easier for game guards and conservancy managers to implement the system. Nonetheless, some pilot projects have started using SMART to collect specific types of data in certain conservancies. This learning process may take several years before it can be adapted and rolled out further.

5. Intensive initial training and long-term support are essential. Emerging and new conservancies are given intensive support for the first two years, whereby a support person visits the area every three months to check on how the system is being implemented and provide extra training to game guards and other officers. Thereafter, each conservancy is visited annually, usually during the Event Book audit. The conservancy officers do the audit themselves, while other stakeholders (government, NGOs) are present as witnesses and/or assistants where necessary.

Besides the Event Book data, game counts are done every year in all Namibian conservancies. This requires extensive support, especially for road counts that require several teams with vehicles. Counts in the eastern part of the country (bushy vegetation) are done by walking transects. Either by road or on foot, transects are fixed routes that are used every year. This

keeps the data comparable over time, thus providing trends. Trends are easier to obtain than accurate population estimates and they are also more useful for management purposes. These counts focus mainly on common herbivore species that are more easily seen, while encounters with predators and rare species are recorded in the Event Books throughout the year.

The data from the Event Books and game counts are all entered into a database called ConInfo, which is used to produce graphs, maps, posters and reports. This information is used at the conservancy level, and also by support organisations and the government. An interactive data portal is currently under development.

Data on natural resources is only one part of the monitoring system in Namibia. Issues of governance are tracked by the Institutional Development Working Group, while economics and livelihoods are tracked by the Business, Enterprises and Livelihoods Working Group within NACSO. All of this information is combined in the annual State of Community Conservation Report (each delegate received a copy of the latest report).

How Conservancies Operate

After legislation changes in 1996, people were granted conditional ownership rights to wildlife on communal lands, provided they establish a conservancy that has a constitution and several other key documents. This allows the conservancy to receive hunting quotas from MEFT, which are sold as part of contracts with hunting outfitters. Each conservancy can also apply for land leases and thus engage with photographic tourism joint ventures. A few conservancies are 100% owners of lodges in their area. Tourism and hunting are thus the main streams of income for conservancies, which are usually self-reliant (external funding was provided during COVID).

There are three pillars of the conservancy system: natural resource management, institutional development (governance) and livelihoods. MEFT has created Standard Operating Procedures to ensure that conservancies comply with five key requirements: 1) Annual General Meeting (AGM) held as per the constitution, 2) management committee elections held as per the constitution, 3) Benefit Distribution Plan, 4) Game Management Utilisation Plan, 5) annual financial statements (audited if required by constitution).

Although MEFT provides oversight and monitors compliance, they do not directly manage conservancies. The members have decision-making power that is exercised during AGMs and GMs and they elect a Conservancy Management Committee (CMC) to oversee the conservancy employees (managers, game guards etc.). The relevant Traditional Authority is usually included in the committee in an *ex officio* capacity. The CMC is responsible for ensuring their conservancy's compliance to MEFT regulations and providing strategic direction through signing agreements with joint venture

partners, employing people, investing the conservancy money, among other duties.

Conservancies may employ people to execute a variety of tasks, but the key employees are managers and game guards. The manager reports directly to the CMC and is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the conservancy. The game guards are responsible for monitoring the natural resources using the event book system, anti-poaching patrols, responding to human-wildlife conflict and participating in annual game counts. A few of these have become specialised rhino or lion rangers that are trained to monitor these species.

Several conservancies have established regional associations and there is a national Chairpersons Forum hosted by MEFT regularly. There is currently no national association for conservancies in Namibia.

Communities and Rhino Conservation

Andrew Malherbe of Save the Rhino Trust (SRT) gave a brief presentation on how communities in north-western Namibia are actively involved in conserving the Critically Endangered black rhino. Including communities in rhino conservation is an unconventional approach that has worked well for Namibia, particularly in comparison with the fortress conservation approach used elsewhere. Maintaining extremely low poaching rates for rhinos on formally unprotected communal lands that cover an area the size of Wales is a major success story. The focal area for these rhinos covers 13 conservancies and two concession areas (people do not live in these areas, but they are financially linked with nearby conservancies).

A key part of SRT's strategy is to empower local communities with skills and knowledge about rhinos and create tangible benefits from the presence of this species. To this end, 64 community game guards have been trained and equipped as rhino rangers. Although they are supported by SRT and other NGOs, they remain conservancy employees who are entrusted to conserve rhinos on behalf of their communities. Rhino tourism activities have been established in some areas whereby tourists are taken on guided walks in conservancy areas to view rhinos with minimal disturbance to the animals. This generates direct revenue from rhinos for participating conservancies.

Other key parts of the strategy are to generate local pride in rhino conservation efforts, create awareness of the threat of poaching, and publicly recognise the role of rhino rangers. In recent years, SRT and its partners in the region (Namibia Nature Foundation (NNF) and Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation (IRDNC)) have held Rhino Pride Campaigns that involve extensive engagement with communities within the rhino range, particularly including the youth through sports events.

The rhino rangers are formally recognised for their work during an annual awards ceremony and are given special "rhino hero" jackets for reaching the milestone of 100 rhino records. SRT has started implementing SMART with all its rangers, which feeds them up-to-date information on the rhino population and is used as a basis for several of the ranger awards (e.g. longest patrol distance in a year). All of these efforts combined ensure that communities are actively involved in rhino conservation.

Formal Establishment of the Community Leaders Network

Legal formalisation

There are three options for non-profit organisations to become legally established, and each option has advantages and disadvantages. Chris Brown of the Namibian Chamber of Environment and the CLN sub-committee formed to investigate these options presented pertinent information to the delegates to determine which option was most suited to the CLN. The following options were discussed for establishing the CLN in Namibia (very similar options to these were found in other countries):

1. A Section 21 not-for-profit company is a formal organisation and the government requirements for establishing and maintaining such a company are rigid.
2. A Trust is established through the Trusts Act (in Namibia) and administered by master high court. While the requirements for a Trust are less stringent than a Section 21 company, all major decisions (e.g. electing or replacing members of a Board of Trustees) must go through the master of the high court.
3. A voluntary association is established under common law and no registration is required with any government agency. It becomes a legal institution when the constitution is signed.

The main options considered were either a Trust or a voluntary association. In the structure of a Trust, the Board holds the power of the organisation and control over its direction is vested in this small group of people. In a voluntary association, the overall direction is determined through AGMs of the association's members, who then delegate the oversight responsibilities to an Executive Committee. The latter structure was considered to be preferable for the CLN because it needs to obtain direction from its broader membership base, rather than from a small Board.

Forming a Trust requires some registration costs and time for registration by the master of the high court, while a voluntary association is instantly established upon signing the constitution with no costs incurred. If deemed necessary at a later date, a voluntary association can easily become registered as a Trust. At this early stage of CLN's establishment when little

funding is available and the Network is still finding its feet, forming a voluntary association would be quicker and easier.

The main advantage of forming a Trust over a voluntary association is that some donors require a registration number when applying for funding. Because an association is not formally registered in Namibia, there is no registration number. If it were established in South Africa or Malawi, it would have to be registered and therefore receive a number. Nonetheless, several voluntary associations registered in Namibia have been able to access funding without a registration number. The key requirement is to show high standards of financial record keeping and to develop a good track record of accountability.

Based on all of the above considerations and deliberations among the workshop delegates, it was decided to establish the CLN as a voluntary association in Namibia.

Key statements for the CLN

The Vision, Mission and Objectives for the CLN were refined during the workshop, as follows:

Vision: Resilient local communities in southern Africa whose rights to manage natural resources on their land are respected nationally and internationally.

Mission: To strengthen national community-based natural resource management programmes such that southern African local communities influence policies and decisions that affect their livelihoods at all levels of governance.

Strategic objective: To amplify the voices of local communities through participation and influencing policy negotiation, development and implementation processes to ensure informed decision-making at national, regional and international levels that reflect the needs and rights of local communities to manage and benefit from their natural resources.

General objectives:
1. Promote effective practices and approaches to CBNRM in the region.
2. Strengthen local CBNRM institutions and national knowledge management systems in the region as a basis for decision making and adaptive management using a regional monitoring and information database.
3. Support development of a regional CBNRM policy through dialogue and implementation of existing and new policies at national and regional levels, which recognise that successful natural resource management depends on people, power and economics.

4. Promote the recognition and enforcement of human rights, including land use and resource rights.
5. Promote economic and social incentives for the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources, thus redefining nature conservation as an inclusive and equitable pillar of growth for local, national and regional economies.
6. Safeguard intellectual property rights and ensure equitable benefit sharing related to the use of natural resources on community lands.

Constitution

Three key issues were deliberated during the workshop regarding the constitution. The main points and outcomes for these are provided in the sections below.

Geographical scope

The main options for scope were to keep CLN membership open only to countries within the Southern African Development Community (SADC) or to expand it to other African countries, or possibly to the rest of the world. Keeping the CLN focused on SADC (at least for the near future) was supported for two main reasons:

1) The SADC countries recognise some form of CBNRM, but each country within SADC implements CBNRM in different ways. There is a need to engage with SADC on these issues and actively assist the CBNRM programmes in each of these countries to meet best practice standards. These are activities that CLN can focus its energies on, at least in the first several years of operations. CLN could be seen as the communities' SADC.

2) The delegates expressed a desire to work more closely with CBNRM organisations in other African countries in future, but this could be achieved by collaborating with them through Africa-wide platforms such as the African Civil Society Organisations Biodiversity Alliance (ACBA). Some intra-African divisions are present that could make working closely with African countries from other regions more difficult. Consequently, CLN can do more within SADC together, as we already share a common understanding of CBNRM and ideas for how we want to move it forwards. But this does not prevent our communicating with CBNRM proponents from other countries.

Membership

The key role of the CLN is to amplify the voices of rural communities, which means working closely with community-based organisations (CBOs) like conservancies in Namibia or CAMPFIRE blocks in Zimbabwe. In practical terms, however, there are hundreds of CBOs in the SADC region, and there

are likely to be more in future. If membership is open to all CBOs, the CLN could quickly become unmanageable and membership meetings would be logistically impossible.

In most countries there exists some kind of representation of groups of CBOs (at national or sub-national levels) and supporting NGOs who work with all of the CBOs within that country (e.g. NACSO in Namibia). These representative and/or support structures will therefore be able to represent the CBOs in their respective countries at the CLN level and report CLN activities back to the CBOs. Where there is no national-level association of CBOs, they should be encouraged to form these. In the meantime, individual CBOs or sub-national CBO associations could be members of CLN.

All members described above have full voting rights at all CLN meetings. To keep the number of delegates to CLN meetings manageable and within realistic funding limits, a maximum of five delegates per country was set, four of which must be CBO (association or individual) representatives and the remaining one a Country Focal Point representative (see Executive Committee section).

Besides CBOs, their associations and national supporting organisations, there are several current and potential partner institutions and individuals who may want to join CLN. These include current partners such as Resource Africa (RA) and Southern Africa Trust, universities and individual researchers, and members of the original CBNRM Thought Leaders group who are involved in various aspects of CBNRM in the region. Many of these institutions and individuals have valuable skills and could provide useful input into CLN, so it was decided to create an Associate membership category to provide for their participation. These members do not have voting rights, and no limits were set on the number of delegates from this membership category (they would bear the costs of attendance).

Executive Committee

The operational structure before the workshop included a chairperson and a group of Country Focal Point (CFP) representatives from eight different countries. This system has worked reasonably well, although the CFP's were not necessarily direct representatives of CBOs or CBO associations. Delegates felt that the CFP group should be elected within their respective countries as representatives of those countries within the Executive Committee (ExCo) of the CLN. This means that CFP members are not elected within the CLN, but within their respective countries.

Each country that puts forward a CFP representative would therefore have a seat on the ExCo, although the specific roles to be played within the ExCo (Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer) would be decided within the ExCo. Provision was made within the Constitution for the addition of four non-CFP members to be co-opted to the ExCo based on recommendations

from the ExCo that are ratified or rejected by voting members. The four other ExCo members could be drawn from any of the CLN members, although those from associate members would not have voting rights at ExCo meetings.

The Constitution was adopted and signed at the end of the workshop, and the following people were announced as the new Executive Committee: Dr Rodgers Lubilo (Chairman, Zambia); Charles Jonga (Vice Chairman, Zimbabwe); Maxi Louis (Secretary, Namibia); Siyoka Simasiku (Treasurer, Botswana); José Monteiro (Mozambique); Malidadi Langa (Malawi); Mohamed Kamuna (Tanzania). The remaining four ExCo members will be decided at a later date.

Charting the way forward – strategies and activities

During the workshop, key strategies and activities for the CLN were discussed. Resource Africa, independent partners, and CLN sub-committees presented the current status and future possibilities on each of these topics for the CLN delegates to consider. Towards the end of the workshop, the delegates created a roadmap of activities that will be priorities for the CLN to implement in the coming two years.

Environmental Rights and Biocultural Community Protocols

Leslé Jansen of Resource Africa presented the concepts of environmental justice and human rights, and how these issues are intertwined with CBNRM. She highlighted UN Declarations and international treaties that recognise the rights of indigenous people and local communities. Many of the provisions within these international laws could be used to support the rights of communities engaging in CBNRM, as the SADC governments have all signed these documents and thus made commitments to uphold these rights.

In particular, people have rights to sustainable use, land tenure, customary use of their resources and equitable benefit sharing. They also have the procedural right of Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) that can be used to prevent external parties from using their resources or knowledge without working with them. One of the legal tools that communities can use to strengthen these rights is by creating a Biocultural Community Protocol (BCP), which is a legal document that defines the community, their land, resources, values, and cultural practices. BCPs can be used in negotiations around equitable benefit sharing and/or during legal proceedings to defend the rights of local communities and protect them from external interests (e.g. mining companies).

The Nagoya Protocol of the Convention on Biological Diversity provides the legal means for Access and Benefit Sharing of key resources, which has been applied to commercially valuable plant resources and traditional knowledge but could also be extended to the sustainable use of wildlife.

Knowing these legal instruments and using them could provide a way forward for southern African communities to tackle the issue of land rights and defend their rights to use their resources.

A CLN sub-committee presented their work on the proposed regional BCP Framework for the CLN to consider implementing. The delegates responded to this presentation with several questions and concerns about how or if a BCP at the regional level would work for communities within each of the SADC countries. The struggle for land rights, for example, is at different stages within the different countries.

It would not be useful to define CLN as a community for the purposes of a BCP, because it is not a defined community living in a particular location, but an institution that links with communities. If CLN were defined as a southern African community, this would mean that it would play a gatekeeper for external engagement with all other communities that fall within the region. This scenario would unrealistic. Instead, CLN could play a facilitating role to identify and assist individual CBOs (or CBO associations) within the region to create their own BCPs and thus defend their rights in this way.

Financial Sustainability

Brian Child presented on the current economics of CBNRM and the potential to grow the financial impact of CBNRM in Africa to alleviate poverty and enhance livelihoods. The history of the conservation movement includes the establishment of exclusionary, state-owned National Parks and the decision to make all wildlife on private lands a public good. This North American model championed by Theodore Roosevelt was exported to the rest of the world, and soon implemented in colonial Africa. CBNRM represents a new model of conservation that is inclusive of people and sets a value on these resources that can be captured by the people on the land. This is the direction we want to move in, but there are several external pressures and resistance within African countries to change the current system.

To win this battle, the inclusive model of conservation needs to be further improved and shown to work by producing measurable Environmental, Socio-economic and Governance (ESG) outcomes. Data from the private sector in Namibia and South Africa reveals that the wildlife economy on communal lands is underperforming and could increase in economic value by 20 times or more if managed correctly. The issues of land rights and lack of good business and investment practices are currently holding the CBNRM model back from reaching its full potential.

Improving governance at local levels is another critical issue, as good governance will increase equitable benefit sharing and reduce the chance of elite capture. Historical trauma experienced by rural Africans has reduced their social capital and trust in local governance, and research has shown that governance in single villages or social units of 150-250 people performs

better than governance at larger scales. One option is to create village companies, whereby the people in the village are shareholders of a company that is run according to business principles.

A second issue is that funding for conservation is currently being captured by conservation NGOs and only small amounts may ever reach the household level. Anti-use NGOs further devalue the wildlife economy by blocking the trade in high-value wildlife products. Funding in the form of impact investment is required to restock wildlife populations where they are depleted and create alternative livelihoods and/or better agricultural practices to reduce the pressure on land. Rectifying land tenure issues would further give the communities better bargaining power and the ability to capture more of the income generated from their resources. With substantial levels of investment and sustainable income from an improved wildlife base, communities could introduce a Universal Basic Income to improve the standard of living at the household level.

The CLN can play the implementation and/or facilitation role within this plan to improve the state of CBNRM. In particular, communities need to be better organised with improved governance systems, have better advocacy on international platforms such as CITES to fight against trade bans, and a system in place to monitor ESG outcomes and report these outcomes to national governments and international decision-makers. Rather than rely on NGOs, African leaders (including CLN members) can build on their experience by attending advanced CBRNM skills courses to incorporate decades of CBNRM research into their work. Building African capacity will wean the CBRNM system off donor dependence and improve the long-term prospects for success.

Advocacy

Liz Rihoy, CLN delegates to the IUCN WCC and Malan Lindeque presented the advocacy achievements of the CLN thus far and workshop delegates discussed the way forward from here. Resource Africa has assisted by creating space and opportunities for CLN representatives to speak, offering advice and building their capacity prior to key events. In this partnership, RA does not speak on behalf of CLN; it only assists to get CLN's message to the right people at the right time by keeping a close watch on international policy developments.

Policies are not based on scientific findings, but rather through politicians listening to particular narratives that are delivered to them at opportune times. For the CLN, framing the issues around human rights is particularly strategic, as this speaks to politicians more powerfully than framing the argument around hunting, which many do not support. The argument needs to focus on rights and livelihoods primarily, and hunting is understood as just one form of wildlife use that supports livelihoods. Community voices

speaking about their rights are far more powerful than other lobby groups speaking about their interests.

Within the overall advocacy strategy, there are several key tactics. These include: 1) building strong partnerships with institutions that have similar objectives; 2) distributing information to key people and partners about what we are trying to achieve; 3) identifying influential people who can become champions for our cause within their circle of influence; and 4) disrupting animal rights campaigns wherever possible. CLN and RA have few resources, so our efforts need to be targeted and timely.

There are four main policy targets for advocacy: 1) Multinational Environmental Agreements (e.g. Convention on Biological Diversity, CITES); 2) Policies of non-African governments that affect CBNRM in some way (e.g. US, UK, EU); 3) African and SADC policies; 4) National policies within SADC. The CLN's activities thus far have focused on the first three, and supported individual CLN members with the fourth target where required (e.g. in South Africa).

At the international level, our current priority is the CBD, where we have joined forces with ACBA and aligned our inputs into the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework. Through these processes, the rights of Indigenous People and Local Communities (IPLCs) have been emphasised in the new Framework, and the CLN will continue to engage in the Open-ended Working Group sessions before the CBD Conference of Parties (CoP).

The recent RA and CLN attendance at the IUCN World Conservation Congress in Marseille was successful. RA engaged with the IUCN regional bodies prior to the WCC to increase African representation as much as possible, as COVID restrictions made it difficult or impossible for many African IUCN members to attend. RA and CLN nominated and supported Brian Child for one of the African councillor positions, and this campaign was successful. RA organised Motion 137 that supports the rights of IPLCs to use their resources, particularly in light of COVID impacts – this motion was ultimately passed. An attempt by anti-use IUCN members to remove sustainable use from an Addendum that covers the next four years was blocked.

The three in-person CLN delegates – Maxi Louis, Malidadi Langa and Bupe Banda – reported on their experience at the WCC. They found the IUCN to be a welcoming platform for local communities and felt that the CLN should become a member in future and also encourage its members to become IUCN members to increase the number of votes at the WCC for local communities. The delegates learned a great deal from the Indigenous People groups who were at the WCC – they had a summit before the congress, had their pavilion where they discussed their issues, and were often part of the highlights for each day of the WCC. African local communities need to become equally organised to have their voices heard on this platform.

One of the highlights for the CLN delegates was their joint presentation at the Reverse the Red pavilion organised by IUCN SuLi, which was well received. They used this opportunity to get in touch with potential funders, and several institutions have expressed interest once CLN is formalised. Bupe Banda was involved in events organised by the Global Biodiversity Youth Network, which inspired her to increase youth involvement in these issues. Sauleha Rajak, Brisetha Hendricks and Liberty Chauke submitted three e-posters, which were shared widely online.

Communications Strategy

Gail Thomson led discussions regarding the new CLN website, the CLN communications strategy and presence on social media. The look of the website needs to be more distinctive and it should focus more on people than on wildlife. We particularly need more good photographs of people using their resources in rural areas to illustrate the site.

The website content should include CLN's plans and objectives, clarifying how it overlays with efforts in different countries. It should include links to the relevant websites produced by the member organisations in their own countries and links to partners and donors. There also needs to be some way for potential new members, partners and donors to contact the CLN through the website. The discussion forum section of the website will be developed at a later date. A blog section would be useful to post articles by members, and this could be linked to the discussion forum.

CLN needs to develop a comprehensive communications strategy in the near future that will further guide how the website is used and how we engage on social media. Some thought must be given to internal communications and strengthening the online presence of CLN members and their organisations. As much as possible, our communications should be proactive and discuss pertinent issues within our respective countries, rather than just reacting to international media all the time. The communications strategy should be closely linked to the overall CLN strategy and speak to each of these overall objectives – e.g. how will communications assist with strengthening national CBNRM programmes?

Regarding the CLN presence on social media – currently, we only have a Twitter account that was set up in preparation for the IUCN World Conservation Congress (WCC). CLN should consider developing a Facebook presence (either as a Page or Group), as more people from the communities CLN members work with are on Facebook. Twitter is more suited to external audiences such as policy makers, partner organisations and potential donors.

The current system of using the CLN Twitter account is fine – anyone can send in photos and captions from their work in communities to be posted on Twitter, but this content must go through one admin. CLN members are

encouraged to post their own tweets, which will be liked/retweeted by the CLN account. The CLN Twitter account should generally avoid online debates, particularly on the topic of hunting, but respond whenever there is a question or comment directly addressed to the CLN.

Monitoring and Information System

Shylock Muyengwa presented current progress and future prospects of the regional Monitoring and Information (M&I) system that will assist CLN to collect relevant data from the community level and feed that up to national and regional levels. The need for data on numerous CBNRM metrics of success was highlighted frequently during the workshop, as this provides a basis for identifying issues that need work/funding, shows our relative success/failure, and feeds information into advocacy and communication efforts.

The M&I concept started when RA wanted to determine the impacts of COVID on communities, but their rapid survey revealed that there was little or no information on key statistics in many CLN member countries. The Event Book system in Namibia (see earlier section) is useful for tracking natural resource data, although other data are also collected by NACSO (e.g. financial, governance) to monitor the conservancy system. In other countries (Botswana, Zambia), a similar system known as Management Oriented Management System (MOMS) was implemented, but it is not being used by all CBOs uniformly, thus compromising the quality of the data. Furthermore, important information on land use, agricultural practices, and livelihoods (amongst others) are not captured through Event Books or MOMS. Consequently, there is a need for one system across the whole region that will capture data that can be used at local levels by the CBOs, at the national and regional CLN level.

During the first year of developing the M&I system, a pilot or proof of concept will be implemented in five CLN countries (excluding Namibia for now, as their system is already operational) that have national CBNRM programmes. Ten communities in each of these countries will be targeted for this first phase, and they will choose from a large number of possible metrics that would be relevant for them to measure. The draft list of metrics has already been established, but this large list will not be relevant to every CBO. CLN is invited to a workshop to be held by RA in November this year to give their input into this list. An electronic data collection method will be developed either using existing software (e.g. SMART) or by developing a new system from scratch. RA will commission a development team to produce a useable prototype within the first three months of the first year.

This system is not just a project – it is an ongoing monitoring programme that must continue indefinitely. Lessons from Namibia and the attempt to implement MOMS through short-term projects reveal the need for long-term, continuous support provided within each target country. Ideally, such a

support team would be based in each country and have their vehicle to reach participating CBOs on a regular basis. Data ownership and utility must be clarified from the start to ensure that the CBOs, CLN and RA all have clear roles and incentives to keep this system going. The CBOs will be collecting the data daily, so they need to see why this is useful for their own management purposes.

Roadmap of future activities

After finalising the Constitution and considering the key topics raised in presentations throughout the workshop, delegates turned their attention to the work that needs to be done in the near and mid-term future. There are several governance and programmatic tasks that must be undertaken soon after the formalisation of CLN to provide concrete guidance for the way forward. While those tasks are being completed, there are several events and advocacy activities that need attention in the next few months. Finally, a 2-year Workplan is needed with detailed activities and persons responsible for those activities – the key themes for this workplan were discussed at the workshop.

Priority tasks for CLN

The following tasks need to be completed soon after the workshop to initiate CLN:

1. Sign the Constitution – completed at the workshop.
2. Elect the Executive Committee – completed at the workshop.
3. Set up the Secretariat.
4. Sign Memoranda of Understanding with partner organisations (particularly RA, SAT and NACSO). These need to clarify each partner's role and expectations on both sides.
5. Develop an overall strategic plan and other strategies that flow from that (e.g. communications). The objectives laid out in the Constitution and strategic plan should guide our work, rather than donor priorities.
6. Mobilise resources and partners for CLN fundraising. RA has identified some opportunities already, particularly with the French Development Agency (AfD). Other opportunities were identified at the WCC, and two organisations indicated that they would be willing to fund CLN once it is formalised (OAK Foundation, Prince Bernhard Nature Fund). Need funding for both governance and programme implementation.

Upcoming Events and Activities

African Protected Areas Congress (APAC)

The first-ever APAC is being held in March 2022 and CLN has been invited to participate in both the planning before APAC and events at the congress. Maxi Louis, Malidadi Langa and Mohamed Kamuna have attended APAC meetings on behalf of CLN already. They are on the sub-committee that is organising the People stream of APAC (one of four streams, the others are Protected Areas, Biodiversity and Climate Change).

APAC is putting out calls for proposals to set up a pavilion at the event where presentations and discussions will be held – this is an opportunity for CLN to have its own pavilion (or joint pavilion with Maliasili as a partner) within the African Pavilion that provides space for its member countries to set up stands and/or give presentations on their work. There are also opportunities to play key roles at APAC by being part of discussion panels, delivering keynote addresses and facilitating discussions – individuals who want to play these roles need to submit profiles to APAC by 31st of October 2021.

To further organise CLN's participation in APAC, three delegates have been invited to Kigali in Rwanda (where the congress will be hosted), but APAC does not have sufficient funding to cover the costs of all three delegates. Malidadi Langa, Maxi Louis, and Mohamed Kamuna will be attending if funding can be sourced before then. Funding is also required for the CLN's pavilion, which might be partly provided by Maliasili.

Multilateral Environmental Agreements

The CBD CoP is in April 2022, and there is an urgent need to engage with the SADC bloc regarding their stance and voting at this event. Our engagement will be primarily through ACBA, which has been working on this for several months. Now that CLN is formalised, membership with ACBA can be formalised.

The United Nations Environmental Assembly (UNEA) is meeting in May 2022. The next CITES CoP is in November 2022. SADC governments will attend all three of these CoPs, so the CLN needs to reach out to the SADC secretariat as soon as possible to introduce the CLN and its work.

Foreign policy advocacy

In early November 2021, three CLN representatives will present evidence at a UK parliamentary hearing regarding the Animals Abroad Bill, which includes clauses preventing the import of hunting trophies into the UK.

Another session will be scheduled soon to present to the EU parliament relating to their policies on sustainable use to counter efforts by anti-use groups to influence EU policies on trophy imports.

Engagement with the German Green Party on their anti-hunting stance is ongoing and needs to continue. Their policies are likely to influence German national policy, as they have done well in recent elections.

Policies on sustainable use in Canada and various States in the USA must be monitored and opportunities used for CLN to provide input whenever possible. Engagement with Canadian policy can only be done through Canadian NGOs, and RA has identified several Canadian partners already for this purpose.

Workplan Themes and Activities

The workshop delegates brainstormed several key themes (numbered) and priority activities (lettered) that need to be included in the 2-year workplan. These are captured below (duplicates were removed):

1. Advocacy and Policy Development
   a. UNEA – May 2022
   b. EU – Join IPLC Platform
   c. Green Party in Germany
   d. The UK – Animals Abroad Bill hearing 2nd November 2021
   e. Canada – monitor and work through Canadian organisations
   f. CBD CoP in Kumming – April 2022 (engage with SADC prior to CoP)
   g. CITES CoP19 – November 2022
   h. US – monitor legislation
   i. SADC Regional Congress for CLN
   j. Start strategizing about how the land rights issues can be tackled
   k. Develop clear positions for each international and regional forum
   l. Connect or familiarise ourselves with SADC, African Union, CITES, UNEP, IUCN
   m. Develop policies on community governance and benefit-sharing
   n. Engage with SADC Secretariat
   o. Start strategizing about how the land rights issues can be tackled
2. Supporting National CBNRM Programmes
   a. Reposition and strengthen national CBNRM to meet new challenges regarding NRM, climate change and improving livelihoods
   b. Reach out to Angola, South Africa and Madagascar to bring them on board

c. Create an integrated cross-sectoral approach (combining wildlife, forestry, fish, agriculture, land)
   d. Build capacity at national levels
   e. Strengthen CBOs and NGOs and set agendas at national levels
   f. Help position CBOs to have greater agency in their countries
   g. Biocultural Community Protocol
   h. Help member countries develop and strengthen CBNRM programmes
   i. Engage governments on CBNRM-related policies
3. Networking and Partnerships
   a. Extend network or form coalitions with similar stakeholders in the Americas etc.
4. Resource mobilisation
   a. Fundraising
   b. Mobilisation strategy
5. Knowledge management
   a. Regional monitoring and information system
   b. Evidence on trophy hunting
   c. Adaptive management
   d. Communication strategy
   e. Regular Training of Trainers on social media and communication issues
6. Youth/Gender mainstreaming and inclusion
   a. Establishment of youth committee within CLN
   b. Inclusion of youth in CLN leadership

Concluding Remarks from Chairperson

As the newly elected chairperson of CLN, Rodgers Lubilo made a few concluding remarks. He expressed thanks to those who are now on the Executive Committee (formerly the Focal Point group) for the work they did before this workshop, to the workshop facilitator Ronny Dempers, the supporting organisations that have helped the CLN thus far (RA, NACSO and SAT), and Jamma International whose funding made the workshop possible. The workshop delegates enjoyed Namibia and he thanked Maxi for hosting them. He further mentioned the CBNRM Thought Leaders group, where the dream of forming the CLN first started.

The CLN's purpose is to serve the communities who live on the land in each of the member countries. The Committee promises good leadership and accountability to their people and governments. The CLN is a saleable product on the international stage, which presents an opportunity that must be taken with both hands.

The first thing we need to do is open the doors for cooperation with our existing and potential future partners through signing MOUs that are mutually beneficial. The remaining four members of the Executive Committee will be proposed within the next couple of weeks after deliberations within

the current Committee. We must reach out to community representatives from other SADC countries so that they are not left behind. CLN is like a shadow SADC that must play a similar role for local communities as SADC does for our governments. The youth are the future of CLN, and we must mobilise resources to support them.

Dr Lubilo formally introduced the Executive Committee and declared the establishment of the Community Leaders Network of Southern Africa.