Exploring future ecosystem services: A Scenario Planning Approach to Uncertainty in South East Lowveld, Zimbabwe

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Overview

- Introduction
- Objectives
- Methodology
- Results and Discussion

Introduction

- Massive power asymmetries and structural conditions in governance of TFCAs
- Empowerment debates – what can we do?
- Sustainable rural development in neighbouring communities (!)
- IDRC Project - Local level Scenario Planning, Iterative Assessment and Adaptive Management Project
- Boundary spanners in forging and creating space for change - agents in improving policy and practice?

Scenario Planning

- Systematic method for creatively analysing complex futures
- Over 20 plus definitions in literature
- Key characteristics from each definition captured
- They are about the future, are descriptive, they present alternative or multiple foresights and a systematic structured process is needed to produce scenarios. Scenarios provide a structure, that is, a framework for participants to explore assumptions about and make sense of the otherwise incomprehensible multiplicity of possible future events.

Broader PhD Study

Gain an understanding on the methods, costs and benefits of facilitating participatory scenario planning and explore how its value in self organisation, learning, empowerment and negotiation processes in the context of the GLTFCA

Objectives

a) Explore key livelihood strategies of Sengwe Communal lands and provide an overview of key TFCA developments likely to affect them.

b) Explore and define the key system processes, drivers and interactions for the future of the Lowveld using participatory scenario planning tools

c) Develop community scenarios and relate them to higher level scenarios developed for the GLTFCA on livestock/veterinary disease control, tourism etc with the aim of understanding the long term alternative futures for the GLTFCA

d) Identify key lessons from scenario planning exercises across selected wards.

Methodology and Study Design

- Five (5) sites located in wards 13, 14 and 15
- Purposive sampling of representative villages
- ✓ Distance from core Park/GLTP (ref: Corridor!)
- ✓ Ethnic composition – Ndebele, Shangaan, Karanga, Venda
- ✓ Accessibility
- ✓ Proximity of villages within ward

Data collection methods

- Literature searches – CESVI Livelihoods Project, understanding the history of the Hlengwe
- Key informant interviews – district to local on-site key informants
- **7** Focus Group Discussions – taking into account age, gender, education, ethnicity etc
- Series of workshops held from Feb 09 – Feb 2010
- Local Assistants – average of 12 meetings per ward
- Lead researchers - average of 4 workshops per ward
- 5 Scenario 'Working Groups' – ca 20 – 25 pax in each site will reps from key stakeholders

Results and Discussion

- Consensus building – process not event
- ✓ Limited agency and locals take time to communicate with outsiders
- ✓ Establishing and building stakeholder confidence takes numerous resources and time
- ✓ Adaptation of project design
- Livelihood diversity – livestock, cropping and off-farm income

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- Futurescoping – exploring the impact and certainty of drivers
- ✓ Focus of our approach was for decision support within the GLTFCA
- ✓ Various domains of drivers explored and discussed with participants
- ✓ Driving forces – difficulties in defining scenario end points
- ✓ Objective was to formulate four alternative scenarios based on agro-ecological conditions, livelihood sources in the area around 2030
- ✓ Assessing the long term impact and certainty of key drivers was difficult for most local farmers
- ✓ Locals concerned more with immediate livelihoods concerns

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Ranking of driving forces

1. Access to improved agric technologies e.g. irrigation, agro-inputs
2. Access to better education (secondary schools, training centres?)
3. Infrastructure – transport and communication, markets for cattle, energy sources
4. Employment opportunities (esp. tourist support services)
5. Migration
6. Wealth distribution (income from ecotourism activities, role of wildlife for income generation?),
7. Climate change (rainfall projections, variability)
8. Health facilities – HIV/AIDS and basic healthcare services
9. National politico-economic outlook – instability?
10. Access to micro-credit facilities

Four scenarios

1. Managing on Margins
2. Tourism Boom
3. Agricultural revolution
4. Patronage vs Devolution

- *Managing on the margins* – also named 'increasing drought' - dry spells/high climatic variability make farm-based livelihoods more difficult. Weak institutional capacity to address the challenges, extractive use of resources and decline in farm productivity over the years, low education still persists, crop damage and livestock predation, high incidence of human and livestock diseases and local dependency on outsiders for support etc
- *Tourism boom* – huge influx of tourists, expansion of local tourism, locals participate in arts and crafts, local shareholding in ecotourism lodges and SMEs , strong local economy, benefits accrue to most households, strong local institutions, living standards greatly improve, high investments in infrastructure e.g. roads and tourist support services

- Agricultural revolution – high climatic variability, reliance on small-scale irrigation with a strong drive from subsistence to market-oriented production systems, commodity trade, local economy grows quickly, markets for livestock improve, more emphasis on small grains

- Patronage vs Devolution - 'Devolution' characterised by locally responsive and devolved decision powers, high transparency and accountability in wildlife programme as CAMPFIRE, networked governance. Contrast Patronage' - characterised by elite domination of political & social systems, locals lack control over key resources, the powerful take control of key resources!

POLITICS, SCALE AND PLANNING
- Communication and cross-scale linkages
- Linkages within the institutional framework for the GLTFCA
- Lessons from project design - is it feasible to link local futures to decision making?
- ✓ Communication tool
- ✓ Integrative capacity

Emerging issues
- Trend over the years has been more on technocratic planning – very centralised planning. Political trend is de-concentration not devolution (?)
- Community planning and community scenarios assumes some enabling environment + power + agency at community scale Does the village scale have interest, motivation or agency to drive scenario developments and use them in planning and implementation??
- What key 'change' options exist that can be used to generate interest, motivation and agency at local scale??
  - Acting as alternative processes, planning systems, promoting community representation in centralised TFCA initiatives (counter-planning) and wildlife management in general Are developments in GLTFCA permissive or supportive of local scale decision making and planning (state, district, TFCA planning and power frameworks?

Hikesile