

Counting Sheep ?

The Comparative Advantages of Livestock and Wildlife –
A community perspective

By

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Let me begin in a small village in the Western
Region of Ghana.....



ALIVE or DEAD? Where is the value?



Incentives and Disincentives for Wildlife:

- Incentives
 - Preferred Meat (some)
 - Often Strong Cultural Sentiment or Religious Significance
 - Sport and Enjoyment for Hunters (often related to culture but not always)
 - May Result in Income or Other Benefit if CBNRM is present
- Disincentives
 - Mobile Resource
 - No Individual Ownership
 - Tenure Community/State
 - Usually requires collective management system
 - Often a threat to other livelihoods
 - Direct use is usually illegal or discouraged

So what's so great about livestock?



Incentives and Disincentives For Livestock

- Incentives
 - Easily Controlled
 - Well defined ownership and tenure
 - Often state support and subsidies
 - Easily traded for cash, goods and services
 - Immediate benefits
 - Can be used for work
- Disincentives
 - Expensive
 - Prone to disease
 - Less resilient to drought
 - Often constrained by competition for grazing
 - Production and grazing rights dominated by local elites

So Where Is CBNRM?



The late 1980's early 1990's witnessed a CBNRM revolution in Southern Africa based on the following principles:

1. Effective management of wildlife is best achieved by giving it focussed value for those who live with it.
2. Differential inputs must result in differential benefits.
3. There must be a correlation between quality of management and magnitude of benefit.
4. The unit of proprietorship should be the unit of production, management and benefit.
5. The unit of proprietorship should be as small as practicable within ecological and socio-political constraints.

(M W Murphree: October 1991)

Argument 1:

- For the most part CBNRM in Southern Africa has spoken to these principles but rarely applied them resulting in livestock retaining a competitive advantage from an individual and community perspective.

Argument 2

- Financial returns from wildlife in CBNRM are (generally) small at individual levels, cumbersome to manage, subject to bureaucratic pilfering and like Christmas come only once a year.

Argument 3

- CBNRM in Southern Africa has relied on “third party” use regimes. Relegating communities to passive participants in wildlife management.

Argument 4

- Southern African governments are comfortable with the status quo and are reluctant to devolve full management rights and responsibilities to communities.
- Retention of management rights by national and sub-national bureaucracies have acted as a disincentive to wildlife especially at an individual level.

Result

- CBNRM in Southern Africa is like a Land Cruiser stuck in the mud – the wheels are spinning but there is little forward movement.

The problem is.....

- This is ultimately a no win solution it does not benefit people, wildlife or livestock
- In its current state CBNRM is only a hand brake on landscape and landuse conversion



The last word....

- Clearly CBNRM approaches in Southern Africa have not gone far enough in respect of their own principles
- Agricultural and veterinary policies have distorted economic and ecological advantage in favour livestock production
- Policy and practice need to be reconciled with governments recognising that the future of wildlife is determined at local levels. And wildlife needs to be recognised as a legitimate component of rural livelihoods – not just a “conservation” issue

So either people just count sheep....or the incentive is created for them to count wildlife too.

