

Wildlife and Development Series No 4

THE LEGACY OF DUALISM IN DECISION-MAKING WITHIN CAMPFIRE

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IIED

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The **CAMPFIRE**
Collaborative
Group

Preface

The first eight papers in this series are a linked set which focus on Zimbabwe's *CAMPFIRE* programme. The views presented are those of the authors, not of IIED.

The Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources (*CAMPFIRE*) is an exploration of rural development and conservation in Africa. It seeks to restructure the control of Zimbabwe's countryside, giving people alternative ways of using their natural resources. A wholly African initiative, *CAMPFIRE* emerged in the mid-1980s with the recognition that, as long as wildlife remained the property of the state, no one would invest in it as a resource. Since 1975, Zimbabwe has allowed private property holders to claim ownership of wildlife on their land and to benefit from its use. Under *CAMPFIRE*, people living on Zimbabwe's impoverished communal lands, which represent 42% of the country, claim the same right of proprietorship. Conceptually, *CAMPFIRE* includes all natural resources, but its focus has been wildlife management in communal areas, particularly those adjacent to National Parks, where people and animals compete for scarce resources. Since its official inception in 1989, *CAMPFIRE* has engaged more than a quarter of a million people in the practice of managing wildlife and reaping the benefits of using wild lands.

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Introduction

The original Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE) document anticipated that the programme would involve forestry, grazing, water and wildlife. However, wildlife has subsequently come to dominate its agenda. This is hardly surprising since wildlife is the resource with the greatest potential for generating significant financial returns. The perception that wildlife represents a value to local communities has been slow to evolve. When researchers of the University of Zimbabwe asked villagers in Chapato Ward of Guruve District whether wildlife had any perceived value for their households, nearly 85 per cent of the respondents indicated that wildlife had no value whatsoever.

The management of wildlife is complex, more so than with other resources. It is a fugitive resource, some species having a wider range than others. This suggests that problems may arise firstly, in assessing the resource base and hence its sustainability, and secondly, in the potential for overlapping political jurisdictions. It is, in particular, the fugitive nature of wildlife, moving across

locally accepted jurisdictional boundaries as well as international borders, which creates constraints and conflicts in considering institutional arrangements for its management. For example, how does one define a "producer community" in considering the allocation of benefits from wildlife?

In order to assess the prospects for successful local institutions within CAMPFIRE, this paper looks at the historical development of the communal areas, the demographic and cultural consequences of their establishment, and their socio-political environment. The institutional framework for development introduced by the present government in 1984 and the legislation impinging on CAMPFIRE are then summarised.

The success of CAMPFIRE will hinge on the will of central government to decentralise full control over wildlife resources to local communities, and the willingness and capacity of rural communities to adopt and further this concept of devolution. The legitimacy of the local institutional arrangements which develop will be critical to this success.

History of Wildlife Management

Natural resource use, prior to the imposition of colonialism, was regulated by forms of traditional management. Effective management regimes must, of necessity, be responsive to the dynamics of the particular resource. However, traditional systems certainly did not manage resources according to modern notions of "sustainability". Management of resources in the nineteenth century reflected a more holistic and less technical approach in line with the principle that people living in a particular area shared the land and resources with all the other inhabitants living in the same area. This meant, among other things, that the inhabitants acknowledged common duties in respect of a shared environment. Communities whose philosophy was based on a logic of this kind generally formed part of a wider organisation which, to varying degrees, established links between neighbouring communities, not; thus providing a network of interlocking interests which formed a basis for wide ecological co-operation.

At the time of colonisation in the late nineteenth century, the Ndebele people had extended their influence across much of what is now known as Zimbabwe. These communities, with a basically carbohydrate diet, were in constant search of protein supplement. There is ample evidence that hunting was an annual activity in many African societies. Hunting frequently involved the deployment of large forces under chiefly control. The great annual elephant hunts of the Ndebele under Mzilikazi and his son, Lobengula, were celebrated events. Traditional African hunting, however, was relatively inefficient.

The advent of European hunting, with the introduction of firearms, changed this situation dramatically. The period 1850 to 1875 witnessed a staggering destruction of elephants for the export of ivory. The remaining elephant populations were restricted to remote areas. Other forms of game, notably buffalo, antelope and zebra, were then ruthlessly exploited during the last two decades of the century.

At this time, both Mzilikazi and Lobengula tried to limit the entry of European hunters into their kingdom, but with little success. At the beginning of his reign, Lobengula issued hunting regulations restricting European hunters to a particular route and charged a licence fee. These hunters were confined to the outer regions of the kingdom in an effort to protect Ndebele hunters from competition. He also forbade hunters, African and European, to shoot cow elephants or take ostrich eggs. In 1883, he fined the hunters Selous and Martin for shooting hippopotamus against his wishes. Lobengula's efforts to control hunting were in response to a significant decline in the abundance of game which must have been very apparent in the last decades of the Ndebele kingdom. Ndebele hunters found that they had to move further and further from the heartland of their state in order to secure game of any sort. It is a paradox that the management of any resource tends to increase as numbers are diminished.

The effect of the rinderpest pandemic of 1896-97 on cattle has been well documented. It was no less devastating in its impact on the cloven-hoofed game populations. The buffalo population was

reduced to a few remnant herds. Elephant were immune, but European hunting had reduced the population to one which probably numbered less than 4,000 in Zimbabwe at the turn of the century. This in turn led to the imposition of colonial laws to control the hunting of game. In 1901, the British South Africa Company, which had administered the territory since its occupation in 1890, enacted legislation which introduced the ancient European concept of the king's game. First the Company and later the crown assumed ownership and control of wildlife on all the land.

This was coupled with the movement of people to what were called Native Reserves, resource-poor areas set aside by the colonial government for exclusive African occupation on the basis of traditional subsistence farming. This had the potential to generate problems of an open access nature. Initially the problems were slow to materialise because of the new dispensation on the ground which included a paucity of game in some areas

and restrictions on ownership of guns by Africans.

Despite game control measures introduced in 1919 to eradicate the tsetse fly, the vector of trypanosomiasis, game populations boomed with the end of the rinderpest pandemic. The use of wildlife by rural people also boomed, although this time around there were no traditional controls. Wildlife had become an open access resource with all that implies for over-exploitation.

Consequently, in the 1950's and 1960's, serious concern was expressed that wildlife was disappearing outside state-protected areas. It was being eradicated largely through uncontrolled illegal exploitation because it had no legal value. New legislation in 1960 and 1975 sought to reverse this destructive trend by introducing limited legal utilisation of the resource. CAMPFIRE, a progression from this earlier legislation, supposes that communities would have a vested interest in wildlife conservation when they can obtain benefits from its management.

Land and People

Zimbabwe is divided into five agro-ecological regions which form the basis for land use planning and analysis (Table 1). Regions I and II represent the most fertile areas with rainfall exceeding 750 mm a year. These regions are classified by government as suitable for intensive systems of farming based on crops and/or livestock production. They cover only 17 per cent of the country.

Regions III, IV, and V receive less than 800 mm of rainfall a year and are recognised by government as marginal for maize, tobacco, and cotton production or for enterprises based on crop production alone. The communal areas represent 42 per cent of the total land area of 390,760 sq. km. More than 90 per cent of communal lands, where the majority of Zimbabweans live, is located within Natural Regions III, IV, and V, and some 76 per cent of the rural population now live within these regions (Table 2).

The majority of the population came to find themselves in these marginal areas as a result of the divisive land legislation introduced by the colonial administration. The failure to find a "Second Rand", the mining Eldorado

which had motivated early settlement, meant that by 1907 settlers were encouraged to take up farming instead. This necessitated the alienation of large tracts of land from the Shona and Ndebele people. In 1901, when the African population numbered 800,000, the average population density was 1.8 persons per sq. km and European settlers often identified the most fertile land for expropriation by the higher population density of local cultivators. This suggests very large areas of the country, those unsuitable for dryland agriculture, were only scarcely inhabited at the turn of the century.

The Land Apportionment Act of 1930 consolidated the expropriation of 198,539 sq. km, or 51 per cent of the land by the settler community. Native Reserves, amounting to 30 per cent of the poorer grade, marginal land, were set aside for Africans who, at that time, represented 96 per cent of the population. In addition, a new category of land, Native Purchase Areas, was established for African commercial agriculture. The remaining land was reserved for national parks, forestry, and crown [later state] land.

The intention of such legislation, or at

Table 1: Land Distribution by Natural Region

	Natural Region					Total
	I	II	III	IV	V	
% Total land area	1.8	15.0	18.7	37.8	26.7	100.0
% Total land area designated as communal lands	0.3	3.7	7.2	19.9	10.8	41.9
% Communal areas	0.7	8.7	17.5	47.6	25.9	100.4

least the result, was to undermine the viability of African agriculture, providing a source of cheap wage labour for the mines and farms of settlers. In this way, Native Reserves effectively became labour reserves, although it would be

either to others in the communal areas or to the settlers. Secondly, it was linked increasingly to the Land Apportionment Act which had legalised the expropriation of so much land to the settler community. The Native Land Husbandry Act failed

Table 2: Communal Land Population Distribution and Density by Natural Region-1982

	Natural Region					
	I	II	III	IV	V	Total/Average
Distribution (%)	2.4	20.7	30.0	33.9	13.0	100.0
Density (note 1)	99.5	60.0	46.5	18.1	12.5	25.5
Note 1: Communal area population density (ppkm ²) related to communal land area totalling 163,350km ² .						

incorrect to assume the general demise of peasant agriculture. Indeed, increased population pressure led to an intensification of agricultural production in some areas.

The Native Land Husbandry Act of 1951 had as its stated objective "to provide for the control of the utilisation and allocation of land occupied by Natives [within the Reserves], and to ensure its efficient use for agricultural purposes; and to require Natives to perform labour for conserving natural resources and for promoting good husbandry." The legislation sought to confer individual tenure rights to a specified parcel of grazing or arable land which contradicted the customary basis of African land tenure, that land and its resources belonged to the community of which every full member had an inalienable right of avail. Reaction to this legislation was hostile for two reasons. Firstly, it increased the insecurity of those who felt they might lose their rights,

largely because of sustained popular opposition. Land allocation by the Native Affairs Department was suspended in 1962 and this function reverted to traditional leaders.

The intent and effect of the colonial legislation was to concentrate the African population into the more marginal areas of Zimbabwe. Less obvious, perhaps, was the impact this must have had on traditional social relationships where strong emotional bonds exist between individuals and the territory of their ancestors. The translocation of the majority of the African population from their traditional homelands to "foreign" territories must have been traumatic. Those people moved in this way would have been expected to make a formal act of submission to the local territorial cult. However, the assimilation with a new clan identity and, hence, a closer association with the new territory, is a process which is only likely to occur over

a very long period of time. Prior to the arrival of the settlers in 1890, it is reasonable to assume relatively homogeneous communities existed, although this assumption is rejected by some observers who believe stratification and inequality existed long before the colonial era. Whatever situation did exist, the effect of colonial land alienation was to create, or significantly increase, the heterogeneity of communities.

Following the Unilateral Declaration of Independence in 1965, a "community development" approach to the communal areas was adopted. This approach was less authoritarian and relied heavily on the co-operation of the chiefs, headmen and kraal heads. The Tribal Trust Land Authorities Act of 1967 and the Land Tenure Act of 1969 restored to these traditional leaders the right to allocate land. This reversal of authority can be seen as an attempt to head off African nationalism by strengthening tribal government which was perceived as malleable and capable of acting as a buffer against grassroots opposition. Government was also seeking to keep costs low by administering Africans through traditional institutions, including customary law. The credibility this may have given the traditional leadership was undermined significantly with the advent of civil war, as co-operation with the government in any form was seen as collaboration.

The extraordinary alliance between the guerrillas and the spirit mediums during the war for independence, in which the guerrillas achieved legitimacy as representatives of ancestors, provided the opportunity for a great deal of consciousness-raising. By the time of Independence in 1980 a rapidly developed capability for local political organisation, rule-making and enforcement existed.

The land issue was central to the debate on post-Independence transition. The newly elected government introduced its Transitional National Development Plan in 1982, a major objective of which was the "acceptable and fair distribution of land ownership and use". This was to be achieved through a programme of resettlement. Ambitious targets were set for the programme, the intention being to resettle 162,000 families [1,296,000 persons] by 1984. However, by the middle of 1989, a total of only 52,000 families [416,000 persons] had been resettled, most of the land being acquired in Natural Regions III and IV.

The 1980s closed without the land issue being resolved. In practice, there had been little major change in the overall patterns of land use, production, and environmental impacts compared with earlier decades. If anything, there had simply been more of the same.

Framework for Development

Independence in 1980 brought with it an understandable air of optimism and expectations of change. The Transitional National Development Plan of 1982 declared a "democratic, egalitarian, and socialist society" to be a primary objective. In 1984, the Prime Minister issued a directive which outlined the institutional framework for development in Zimbabwe. The declared objective of this directive was to *"define the administrative structures at provincial and district level and the relationships and channels of communication between all participants in development at provincial and district level in order to achieve the co-ordinated development of provinces and districts in Zimbabwe."*

An ancillary objective of this policy of decentralisation was to increase the involvement of local communities in the planning and development of their communities. The rhetoric emphasised the grassroots, "bottom-up" rationale of the new structures. In retrospect, it was naive to expect a rapid and universal understanding of the essence of Independence after 90 years of subjugation and dependency. New institutional structures appeared novel at first given the historical absence of local administrative structures outside urban centres. Participation was inevitably slow and gradual until people developed an understanding of how local government worked.

Village Development Committees [VIDCOs] were designated as the fundamental planning units of rural development. It was envisaged that each VIDCO would represent 100 households [approximately 1,000 people]. The

VIDCO would submit plans on an annual basis to the Ward Development Committee [WADCO]. The WADCO, representing six villages [approximately 6,000 people] would co-ordinate the plans from all VIDCOs in its jurisdiction. It would then submit this ward plan to the District Development Committee. The District Development Committee would incorporate ward plans into an integrated district plan for approval by the District Council.

The District Council, it should be noted, only approved plans co-ordinated by the District Development Committee which was composed entirely of district heads of central government ministries and departments, and therefore had no popular representation. Originally, it was envisaged that wards should submit their annual plans direct to the District Council, which would then refer matters to any of its technical committees if necessary. This would have enabled the ward to follow the progress of its activities through its chairperson, an arrangement which would appear more appropriate than that which prevailed. The district plan, once approved by the District Council, was submitted to the Provincial Development Committee (see Figure 1).

A notable exclusion from this institutional structure for development was any representation by traditional leadership. Moreover, VIDCO and WADCO boundaries were not necessarily been aligned with legal boundaries between communal lands, thereby creating uncertainties over institutional jurisdiction (Note 1). Predictably, the transition from traditional and chiefly authority [local, hereditary, and long-standing] to elected

and bureaucratic authority [transient and possibly immigrant] has been a source of conflict.

The extent to which the new structures may be judged to have been a success can be measured by a 1989 statement from the Minister of Local Government, Rural and Urban Development: *"What is disturbing is that in some areas there is an unacceptable level of participation in the planning process by residents at the village and ward levels. Reports reaching my ministry suggest that people are not sufficiently involved or active in the village and ward development committees. They are not being effectively mobilised to actively participate in development committees in order for them to identify, prepare, and plan their development needs."* (Emphasis added)

There are many reasons why the rural population has responded with such apathy. Firstly, as noted, much of the legislation enacted since Independence has been seen to remove, rather than to empower, traditional leadership. The chiefs, sub-chiefs, headmen, and kraal heads in effect constituted the communal lands administrative and legal institutions, with historically-defined areas and sets of rules and regulations clearly understood by the rural people. New legislation has not only removed their authority over communal land

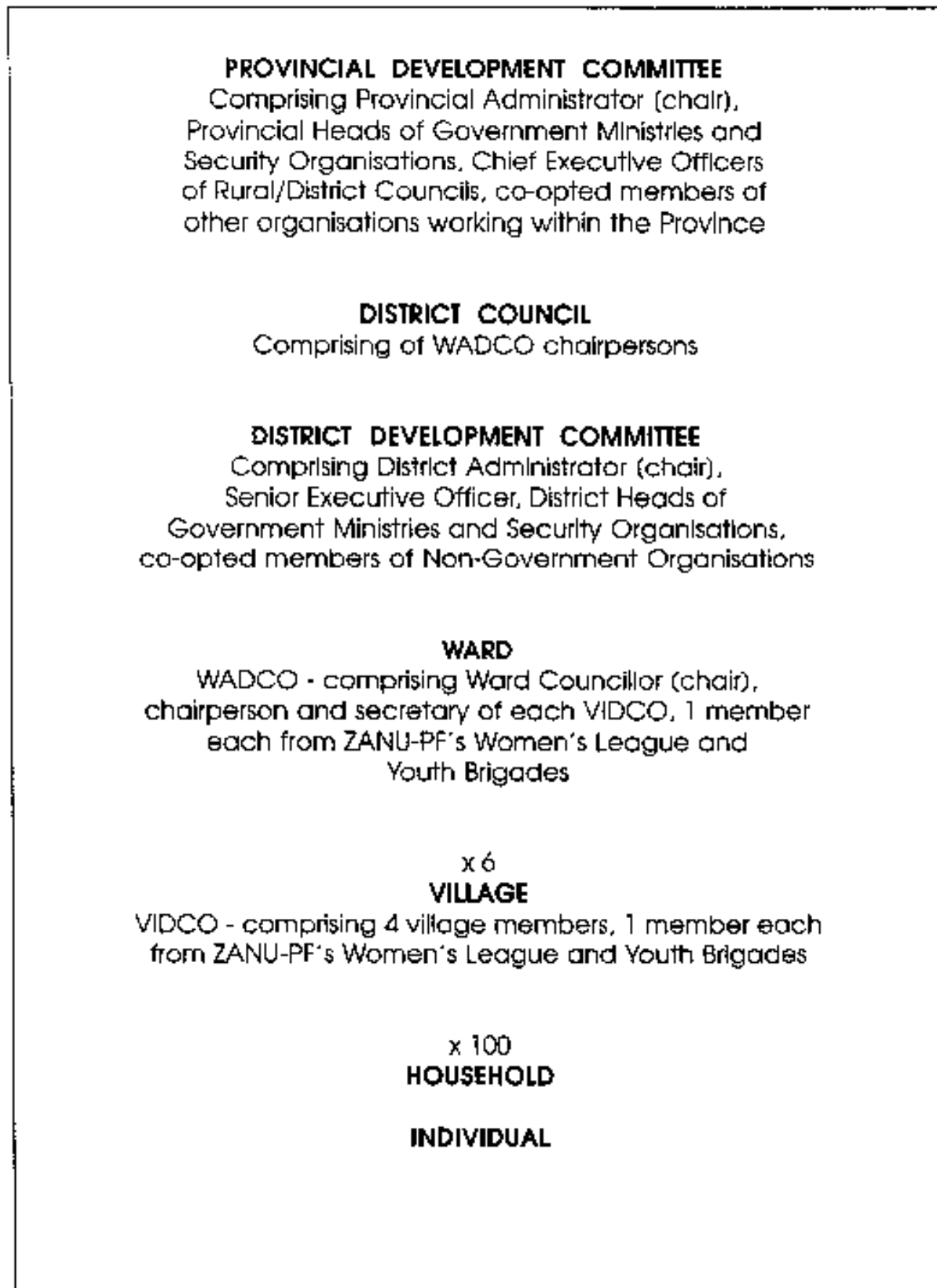
resources, it has also sought to alter their jurisdictional boundaries to accommodate the new administrative structures.

VIDCOs and WADCOs, then, were perceived as instruments of local administration. Ostensibly representative of the rural populace, having been democratically elected to represent them, they were essentially implementation units for plans that continued to be developed in a top-down fashion.

Despite the radical restructuring of local government introduced in 1984, administrative structures within many communal lands remained a confused scenario, at least from the perspective of the inhabitants. Government's intention to train VIDCOs and WADCOs in administrative skills has proved over-ambitious; not least because of a lack of sufficient financial and human resources. VIDCOs and WADCOs have tended to operate, if at all, in a vacuum, without the wherewithal to enable them to function effectively and with no real mandate from their constituency. Rural people have had little option other than to get on with their lives, much as they did before Independence. The air of optimism which introduced the 1980s has given way to an air of resignation. It is within this institutional context that CAMPFIRE is being promoted.

Note 1: This situation was further complicated with the amalgamation of Rural and District Councils in 1993/94 when some wards were merged into one whilst others were sub-divided.

Figure 1: Hierarchical Institutional Structure for Planning within Communal Lands



Legislative Context

A number of Acts of Parliament affect the structure, operation, and ultimately, the success of CAMPFIRE.

The Parks and Wildlife Act 1975

It was through a 1982 Amendment to the Parks and Wildlife Act that provision was made for the Ministry of Environment and Tourism to designate District Councils as the "appropriate authority" for wildlife on lands under their responsibility. This Amendment redressed the previously discriminatory nature of the Parks and Wildlife Act which had been targeted at the mainly European "owners and occupiers of alienated land". District Councils, almost wholly comprising communal lands, were now granted the same rights and responsibilities accorded to European farmers and ranchers.

Natural Resources Act 1941

The Natural Resources Act was introduced in 1941 to "make provision for the conservation and improvement of the natural resources of Rhodesia". Sections 50 and 51 of the Act allowed for the appointment and composition of "conservation committees" for areas of land designated "intensive conservation areas". The functions of such voluntary committees were generally:

- to preserve, protect and improve the natural resources in its area; and
- to inaugurate and undertake works for the conservation and improvement of soil and water resources in the area.

This piece of legislation, enacted during

the colonial era, was directed at owners of land and, hence, by definition the holders of alienated land (Note 2). However, the District Councils Act [as amended in 1980] enabled the Minister of Local Government to "confer upon a council in respect of its whole area...all or any of the powers conferred upon a conservation committee under the Natural Resources Act...". A notice gazetted in 1980 conferred upon all District Councils this power. Thus, a Natural Resources Committee was a statutory requirement in each District Council. Its composition was determined by Section 36 A of the District Councils Act which stated that the minister responsible for the administration of the Natural Resources Act should:

- i. determine the number of members to be appointed;
- ii. appoint half of the members [the other half shall be councillors appointed by the council]; and
- iii. approve the terms and conditions upon which the committee may appoint sub-committees.

Section 36 provided "that a council shall not delegate to a committee any power to make by-laws..." The Natural Resources Committee was obviously intended to be a technical body by virtue of its composition. It was not empowered to deal with matters pertaining to the expenditure of revenues, whether these were derived from the exploitation of natural resources or not. However, it would be the appropriate body to consider questions relating to the sustainable use

of the wildlife resource and, for example, the issuing of hunting permits.

Communal Land Act 1982 and the Communal Land Amendment Act 1985

The Communal Land Act 1982 and the Communal Land Amendment Act 1985 laid the foundations for rural development in communal areas. The 1982 legislation transferred legal authority over land allocation from traditional leaders to District Councils. The 1985 Amendment enabled District Councils to levy charges, or rates, "for any services, amenities, or facilities provided by the state...whether...such service is used or not." These enactments facilitated the underlying intention of the government to introduce the demarcation of arable and grazing lands, and areas for rural housing construction. For many local people this was reminiscent of the series of land Acts which supported the colonial government's divisive land policy between 1930 and 1960.

While the Prime Minister's 1984 directive sought to promote grassroots development, the Communal Land [Model] [Land Use and Conservation] By-Laws 1985 authorised District Councils to prepare and adopt development plans of their own volition. In preparing any plan, the council was to seek the advice of those regional officers of government ministries tasked with land use planning. No mention was made of consultation with local people, other than the fact that when a plan had been prepared and approved by the council, a copy should be sent to the chairman of every affected VIDCO who was given 30

days to consult local inhabitants and report back any objections to the plan to council, together with the identity of the objectors.

Section 6 of the By-Laws stipulated the "Contents of a Plan". This covered grazing areas, cultivation plots, and "measures appropriate for the conservation and proper use of any wildlife in any grazing area". Unfortunately, the rather autocratic nature of these By-Laws tended to preclude their potential to allow rural people to make their own land use plans.

Rural District Councils Act 1988

The Rural District Councils Act of 1988 provided for the amalgamation of rural councils (which were responsible for commercial farming areas and their service towns) with district councils (responsible for communal areas). The Rural District Council emerging from this amalgamation was empowered to be a Natural Resources Conservation Committee for the whole or any part of its area which was declared an Intensive Conservation Area by the minister responsible for the administration of the Natural Resources Act. The Rural District Councils Act further allowed for the formation of sub-committees within one or more wards within the council area, to which all or any of the functions of the conservation committee may be delegated. The chairman of such a sub-committee was to be the councillor for the ward, or one of them; and the chairman of the Rural District Council was to be an ex-officio member of every such committee.

Section 88 allowed Rural District Councils to make by-laws in relation to

any matter specified in a schedule of the Act. The schedule made specific reference to the protection of common property, the prevention of damage to property where the inhabitants have a common right, and the conservation of natural resources.

The legislation impinging upon CAMPFIRE is ambiguous and certain Acts contradict each other, particularly in regard to resource use. However, in reality little reference is made to these official precepts.

Note 2: With the amalgamation of Rural and District Councils under the Rural District Councils Act 1988, the District Councils Act was repealed. Under the new Act any part of a Rural District Council (RDC) area may now be legally designated an Intensive Conservation Area (ICA) for which the RDC becomes the conservation committee. Implicit in this change is a shift in the voluntary status of ICAs to a statutory one which would appear to recentralise rather than decentralise resource management.

Common Resource Management

The strategies adopted by individual participants in CAMPFIRE will depend upon their perception that the costs incurred in "producing" wildlife are more than offset by the benefits received in return. Patterns of interaction involve not only individuals' behaviour in relation to one another but also their collective behaviour in relation to the resource. Some of this thinking has found its way into official policy. Two government statements on wildlife utilisation issued in 1989 represent the official view as to what was to happen in communal lands:

1. *"Residents of communal lands will be encouraged to manage wildlife for their own direct benefit and government will actively promote the appropriate institutions to achieve this"*
2. *"Wherever possible, alternative strategies to reduce conflict between people and wildlife will be explored. This may include...the development of appropriate institutions in communal lands so that individual farmers affected by problem animals become the main beneficiaries of revenue earned from wildlife and part of the decision-making process."*

But whatever the intention, the dichotomous nature of much of Zimbabwe's institutional development, fashioned by the political and economic inheritance of the past, has imposed significant constraints upon the promotion of what the legislation termed an "appropriate institution".

Here it is necessary to identify two

distinct forms of public institution. Local administration is usually accountable to bureaucratic superiors and is represented by staff of central government ministries. By contrast, local government is accountable to its constituency. Local government institutions are elected or appointed and have authority to deal with the development and regulatory tasks. Traditionally, chiefs held this position, having been appointed by virtue of their lineage. Subsequently, District Councils assumed this role together with VIDCOs and WADCOs. Their overall effectiveness in this respect has already been questioned. When local authorities have little financial or operational autonomy they function for all practical purposes as units of local administration, that is, as branches of central government.

Limitations on effective grassroots participation in institutional decision-making is compounded by problems of jurisdictional definition arising from the character of the resource. Academics have made the point that each natural resource has different local institutional requirements because of the ways in which resources and those who use and manage them interact. This is a result of the technical and physical nature of each resource; the characteristics of the users, and the way in which their legal and political environment can affect decision-making arrangements; and the subsequent patterns of interaction. For example, fish are classified as a "fugitive renewable" resource. Their fugitive nature has unique implications for the

development of appropriate management institutions. Researchers have noted that if open access is to be converted to an effective common property regime, then the existence of properly defined resource boundaries, manageable resource size and scope, and reliable data about the condition of the resource are essential.

In the Zimbabwean context, wildlife comprises some species which reside within a single jurisdiction [the term "producer community" has been coined although its relevance to existing jurisdictional boundaries is ambiguous]; other species may range across the jurisdiction of two or more producer communities; and still others such as

elephant may roam across international boundaries. The implications for collection of reliable data adequate for the sustainable utilisation of the resource seem obvious. However, it has been argued that local management has a comparative advantage over centrally managed systems in this respect.

The characteristics of the users is another critical factor affecting the outcome of common property resource management. It is generally accepted that successful community resource management will be facilitated in those instances in which the size of the user group is small, the users are reasonably homogeneous, and live close to the resource.

Social Organisation

This leads to consideration of appropriate social organisation in wildlife management. One of the distinguishing features of collective action is that it is "self-managed", involving voluntary membership, government by agreement, and social control by peer pressure. Such organisations have the potential to become recognised institutions but, paradoxically, lack the legitimacy and authority accorded to local administrations or local government for resolving conflicts. There is an urgent need to enable such organisations to be able to draw up rules which effectively institutionalise the resolution of conflicts.

Moreover, membership organisations have no recognised legal status. Communities wishing to engage in enterprises have to enter into agreements regulating the rights and obligations of members which, in effect, means forming an association recognised by law. Co-operatives are attractive in this respect and may be the only form of association available to rural communities to satisfy this need. It is unfortunate that the performance to date of co-operative societies in Zimbabwe has been uninspiring and this tends to be, with some notable exceptions, a world-wide phenomenon. The potential of co-operatives has been undermined by the very feature which makes them more

appropriate than membership organisations as institutions - recognition by the state. As the state penetrates the countryside, there is a potential for conflict as the centralising tendency of government collides with traditional attachment to local autonomy.

It is questionable whether the criterion that users live in close proximity to the resource has any heuristic value when discussing fugitive resources such as wildlife. Where common property resources are static there is, at least, some chance that the underlying boundary conditions determined by nature will concur with the jurisdictional boundaries determining the legitimacy of the decision-making body. Wildlife is a multi-jurisdictional resource. As such, whilst the underlying boundary conditions may be definable in technical terms of species composition and numbers, the physical nature of the animal is to ignore jurisdictional boundaries. Consequently, wildlife as a resource affects, and is affected by, a variety of user groups. One or more of these user groups may be small and reasonably homogeneous while others, because of the nature of the resource, will be larger and more heterogeneous. These overlapping jurisdictions lead to complex management problems which in turn require innovative solutions.

Institutional Restructuring

The complexity of the management problem is exacerbated by the historical development of the legal and political environment in which the users reside. When the European settlers moved into the country, the resident Shona were organised under fragmented polities or chiefdoms; the Ndebele were under more centralised rule. The boundaries of the various polities and the sub-divisions within them were contiguous and constituted defined jurisdictions. Changes in land distribution wrought by the colonial government destroyed much of this institutional structure and critically undermined the autonomy of traditional leadership. Subsequently, the provisions of the Native Councils Act 1937 and the African Councils Act 1957 sought to integrate traditional leadership within the bureaucracy of the settler administration. However, the appointment of the Native Commissioner [later, the District Commissioner] as the secretary to all such councils ensured strong representation of, and control by, central government.

The "community development" approach, introduced in the 1960s as an attempt to divert attention away from growing African nationalism, encouraged the development of African Councils. Government provided small grants to facilitate minor infrastructural development. The power of chiefs to allocate land and preside over community courts was returned to them. However, the councils and the restored power of the chiefs only marginally reduced the power of the District Commissioners who continued to

dominate decision-making. This alternating empowerment and emasculation of traditional authority has played a significant role in the confusion surrounding subsequent institutional arrangements.

Independence provided the opportunity to redefine and rename administrative and political jurisdictions. The 174 Tribal Trust Lands were renamed Communal Lands whilst the 242 African Councils were abolished and replaced by 55 District Councils. District Councils comprise the elected chairpersons from the WADCOs within each council area, but they did not become autonomous local government entities. The role of the District Administrator [DA] was pivotal in this respect and closely paralleled that of the District Commissioner in the former African Councils. The DA was the chief executive officer of the council and was appointed by the Ministry of Local Government. Whilst they were expected to play an advisory role, DAs were accountable only to the ministry that appointed them.

In terms of the District Councils Act, a council was required to delegate all administrative and executive duties to its staff whilst it dealt with matters of policy and fulfilled deliberative and legislative functions. The potential for conflict was great. On the one hand, DAs were to implement government policy, whilst on the other hand they were expected to act in an advisory capacity, "guiding the hand of council".

The role of traditional leaders was undermined yet again with the creation of District Councils. Powers to allocate

land and to deal with other aspects of resource management were vested in the District Council. The imposition of VIDCO and WADCO structures led in many cases to the exclusion of traditional leaders from the planning and decision-making process which was, and remains, a source of conflict. Although ostensibly democratically elected, the legitimacy of the new leaders has yet to be sanctioned by their constituency. This will remain the case while the new structures continue to be seen as instruments of local administration. This is a critical constraint affecting the evolution of effective organisational or institutional arrangements and it is aggravated by the multi-jurisdictional nature of the resource. Successful common property resource management requires some form of organisation recognised by the community of users as legitimate to effect rules and regulations that determine who decides what in relation to whom.

The potential for appropriate institutional development at the local level is constrained further by decisions which originate from outside the community of users. External influence threatens the homogeneity of local institutions. Where such influence is domineering, it undermines local government and replaces it with local administration which is unlikely to receive popular support.

For example, in Zimbabwe, the state continues to determine the sustainability of consumptive uses of wildlife resources in communal areas although producer communities are being encouraged to determine their own annual offtakes with the guidance of the Wild Life Department. Previously, revenues from safari hunting in communal lands accrued to central government on the principle that such

revenues would be returned to District Councils to finance development projects planned by them and approved by the Ministry of Local Government and the Wild Life Department. These revenues had the potential to form a significant part of District Council income. For example, the budgeted wildlife revenues for Nyaminyami District Council, the first district to receive appropriate authority status in November 1988, represented 63 per cent and 59 per cent of its total budgeted revenues in the fiscal years 1984/5 and 1985/6 respectively. In practice, less than 50 per cent of wildlife revenues found their way back to producer districts.

As we have seen, District Councils were responsible for approving annual development plans co-ordinated by the District Development Committee and, progressively, were expected to generate their own revenue to effect these plans. Ministry policy was to phase out the grant awarded to District Councils to cover recurrent expenditure. This fact, coupled with the significant contribution wildlife revenues make to District Council income, constituted a disincentive for District Councils to devolve these revenues to lower-tier structures such as producer communities.

The potential for District Councils to be coerced by their executive [the DAs] to capture the revenue from wildlife for budgetary purposes was recognised prior to the implementation of the programme. In response, discussions between the Ministry of Environment and Tourism and the Ministry of Local Government culminated in the issue of a government circular to all District Councils with appropriate authority status. This stated:

"It is generally agreed that of the total [wildlife] revenues received, 15 per cent should meet central administrative costs, 35 per cent for management, that is, for the provision of roads, fencing, water points, law enforcement etc., and that the remaining 50 per cent goes direct to the local community. These percentages are, however, only a guide as each council should determine such spending on its own local circumstances" (Note 3).

Local community was defined as the community where wildlife is resident and protected. The manner in which benefits would go direct to the local community was not further elaborated.

In the initial stages of CAMPFIRE little, if any, effort was made to secure the co-operation of the Ministry of Local Government. This is not unusual in Zimbabwe. There tends to be a lack of co-

ordination between, and even within ministries, not least because of the number of conflicts which arise between the various administrative divisions and levels. The Ministry of Local Government is the ministry responsible for District Councils whilst the Ministry of Environment and Tourism is the ministry responsible for the administration of the Parks and Wildlife Act under which appropriate authority is granted to District Councils. Within the Ministry of Environment and Tourism are two departments: the Wild Life Department, and the Natural Resources Board, which plays a significant role in determining the composition of the District Council's Natural Resources Committee responsible for the technical aspects of natural resources management. What is immediately striking is the lack of any liaison between these two departments.

Note 3: These guidelines were redefined in 1994 when Councils were expected to retain no more than 20% of wildlife revenues of which a maximum 5% was to support Council administration costs and up to 15% to manage the central functions of the Council's CAMPFIRE programme - training, auditing, marketing.

Wild Life Department Guidelines

An attempt to address the problem of poor co-ordination has been made with the appointment of CAMPFIRE liaison officers within the Ministry of Environment and Tourism and the Ministry of Local Government. Recently, the Wild Life Department was asked by the Ministry of Local Government to provide a set of guidelines as a preface to a Ministry of Local Government handbook for District Councils with appropriate authority.

Understandably, these guidelines embodied a number of principles clearly written from the perspective of the Wild Life Department and were contentious from the point of view of the Ministry of Local Government. The first principle was that benefits should be returned to producer communities - councils being required to return at least 50 per cent (but see Note 3) of the gross revenue from wildlife to the community which produced it - usually meaning where it was shot. The need to avoid an autocratic approach, whilst at the same time wishing to forestall the potential for District Councils to act in the role of local administration, is an obvious dilemma for the implementing agencies.

The second principle stipulated by the guidelines is that producer communities should be small and homogeneous. Senior Wild Life Department officials have suggested that the ideal size for a producer community is 100 to 200 households because this is large enough for a wildlife programme, and small enough for all households to be involved

in the programme and accountable for it. The original CAMPFIRE plan proposed communal resource areas with clearly defined boundaries. Such theoretical suggestions satisfy some of the criteria for successful common property resource management, but they are at variance with the currently accepted view that the existing ward or village be the relevant unit of management. A ward has been defined by government as a sub-division of a district representing six villages, each comprising approximately 100 households. Any suggestion of further fragmenting or aggregating the jurisdictional boundaries will simply add to the bemusement of the people living in those areas.

A third principle was that producer communities must be given the full choice of how to spend their money, including both projects and cash payments. Where communities value cash above projects, they should be allowed cash. It is enlightening to note the approach of the Ministry of Local Government to this matter. Closing the first AGM of the CAMPFIRE Association, an association of District Councils with appropriate authority, the Minister of Local Government said:

"The producer communities {must} decide for themselves how to allocate these benefits. Here they must be allowed a full choice of options whose aim is to improve the well-being of the people by providing direct benefits: through improved social services like schools, clinics; infrastructural projects like water, grinding mills etc.; or by paying

cash dividends where this is felt extremely necessary. Councils must assist the producer communities in identifying projects that address their felt needs so that this source of new wealth is not put to waste." (Emphasis added)

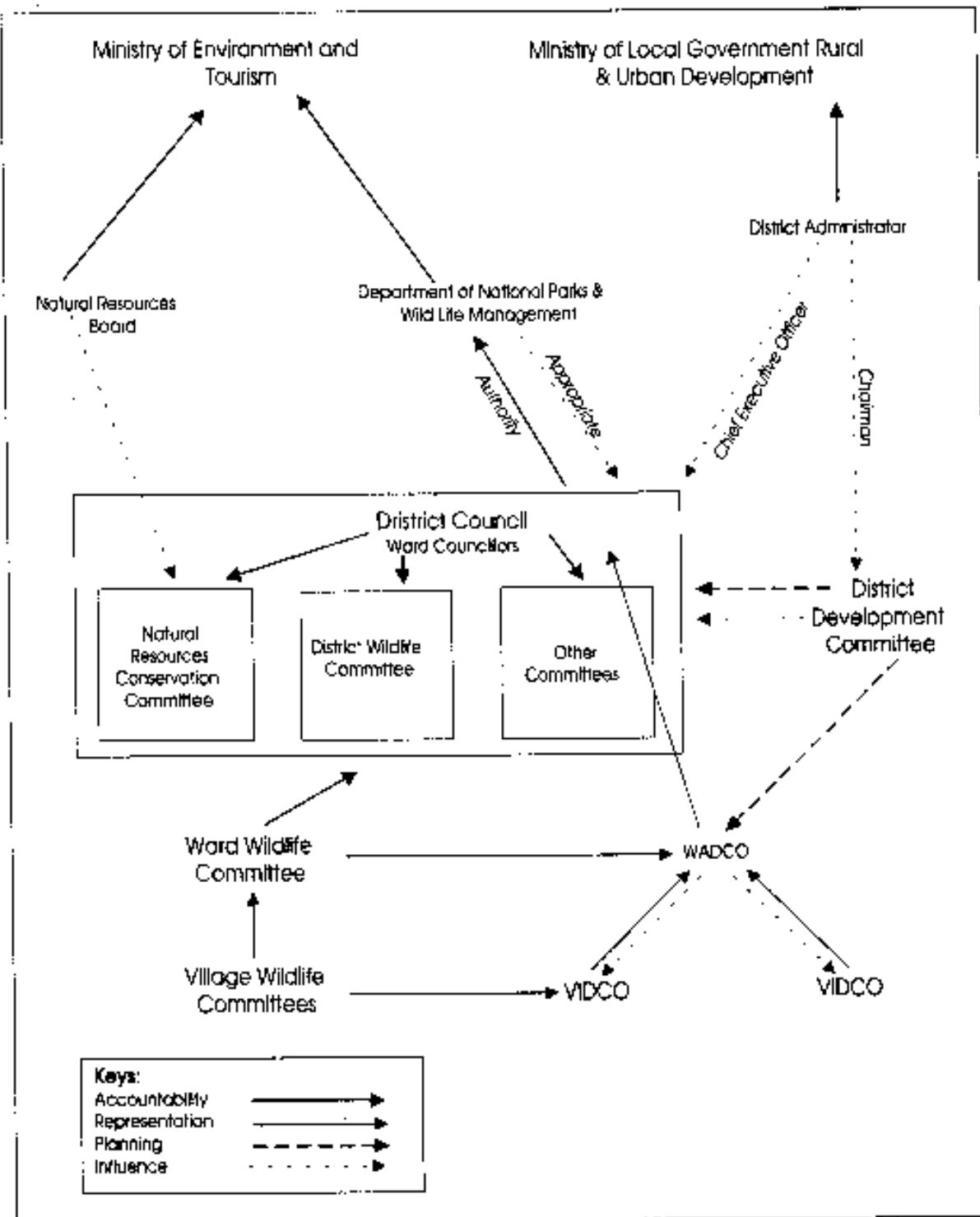
It is acknowledged that significant inroads have been made towards a common understanding of the nature of CAMPFIRE, but the definition of "direct benefits" is likely to remain a contentious issue. Ultimately, the success of CAMPFIRE will depend upon the communities affected by the resources, those incurring the direct costs becoming the decision-makers. A complex institutional structure for CAMPFIRE appears to be unfolding in the districts (see Figure 2).

The evolution of institutions in districts with appropriate authority status has tended to parallel the institutional framework introduced in 1984. A notable exception, however, is that the composition of village and ward wildlife committees has generally included traditional leaders alongside the new leaders. In some areas these new committees are sub-committees of the existing VIDCOs and WADCOs. In other

areas they are independent bodies, either because of the conflicts noted elsewhere or, more usually, because effective VIDCO or WADCO organisation does not exist. In any event, Ward Wildlife Committees are invariably sub-committees of newly-established committees of council, generally known as District Wildlife Committees.

This raises the question of whether or not District Wildlife Committees are synonymous with the statutory Natural Resource Conservation Committees. The Ministry of Local Government certainly sees the statutory committees as the representative bodies for the promotion of CAMPFIRE and has referred to the Village Wildlife Committees and the Ward Wildlife Committees as "the already established local government structures". As already noted, in terms of existing legislation the Natural Resources Conservation Committee is a purely technical body and has no authority to determine the expenditure of revenues. The potential for conflict between the District Wildlife Committee/Natural Resources Conservation Committee and the District Council, who have the authority to determine revenue expenditure, is obvious.

Figure 2: Current institutional structures developing in 'CAMPFIRE'



Future Prospects

The replication of committees in the villages and wards of CAMPFIRE districts appears to be counter-productive. It could be argued that resources would be used more efficiently if the participating agencies concentrated their efforts in supporting VIDCOs and WADCOs, the developmental committees introduced in 1984. It is important to realise, however, that the 1984 directive was issued at a time when the ideology of the one-party state was convincing; at a time when the rhetoric inferred the people and the party were synonymous. A clear indication of this belief was the automatic inclusion of one member from each of the ruling party's Youth Brigades and Women's League in the VIDCO. An implicit acknowledgement of the failure of the Marxist-Leninist doctrine under which Zimbabwe was ostensibly ruled for the first 10 years after Independence is apparent in the subsequent adoption of an economic structural adjustment programme facilitating a free market economy. At a time when rural communities are being urged to form economic institutions, and not to wait for government handouts, VIDCOs and WADCOs may increasingly be perceived as obsolete "political" bodies.

It is argued here that formation of Village Wildlife Committees and Ward Wildlife Committees as economic institutions is consonant with the current political and economic climate. A growing awareness of the economic nature of these institutions, which implies the sharing of costs and benefits, will lead inevitably to the realisation by people of their participatory rights. Elected representatives will have a mandate from their constituents, which they will have to exercise if they wish to

retain office. This is the important process of empowerment, and it can only come from below. Previously, VIDCOs have been elected by communities which had no clear understanding of their function. In any event, such committees had little or no resources to enable them to function. Consequently, elected representatives were regarded as politically expedient requirements of central government, ineffective messengers in a largely one-way, top-down process imposed upon rural communities. The advent of economic institutions is likely to see communities demand accountable representation.

A fundamental requirement of an effective institution is a set of rules which establishes an authority structure whose legitimacy is recognised and accepted, both by those governed by the rules and by the state. The Rural District Councils Act of 1988 allows Rural District Councils to make by-laws for any part of the council area. It is argued that an essential element for institutions successfully managing common property resource programmes is to have their rights to organise recognised by central government. However, it would be difficult for local appropriators to sustain a rule-governed common property resource programme over the long-term if central government officials presume that only they can set the rules. What is required then, is for Rural District Councils to be allowed to adopt, or give at least minimal recognition to, by-laws originated by producer communities. This would provide the context within which local institutions could realise their autonomy and confer legitimacy upon local leadership.

The Wildlife and Development Series is produced by the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) to highlight key topics in the field of sustainable wildlife use. The Series is aimed at policy makers, researchers, planners and extension workers in government and non-government organisations world-wide. This Series arises from two sources. First by invitation of IIED to others working in this field. Secondly from IIED's own work.

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Please note that:

- With the introduction of the Rural District Councils Act in 1988, all Rural Councils and District Councils in Zimbabwe were amalgamated to form Rural District Councils. The two terms are interchangeable in the CAMPFIRE papers.
- The Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management has been referred to as the Wild Life Department in this series of papers.

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