editorial

Welcome to the 55th issue of *Participatory Learning and Action*. It only seems yesterday that we produced our 50th anniversary issue!

This special theme issue is on **Practical tools for community conservation in southern Africa**. It includes articles on tools for facilitating community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) and lessons learnt from these experiences from countries in the southern Africa region.

This issue began with a concept note back in January 2005 following a meeting between Nicole Kenton (co-editor of PLA) and Ivan Bond of IIED, and Russell Taylor, conservation director of WWF-SARPO.[1]

Russell Taylor played a major role in getting this issue off the ground. He has a strong association with CBNRM through his involvement with Zimbabwe's CAMPFIRE[2] programme before and since its inception and previous employment with the Department of National Parks & Wildlife Management. He was project leader for WWF's Support to CAMPFIRE (SupCamp) project (1994–2000). Recently Russell has been more widely involved regionally with the further development and implementation of CBNRM programmes through WWF's regional CBNRM training and capacity building project.

Why southern Africa?

In southern Africa, a significant proportion of wilderness and wildlife habitat is found outside state managed protected areas. In the mid-1970s, legislative changes in Zimbabwe, South Africa and Namibia allowed private landowners to manage and directly benefit from wildlife resources. Following the success of these reforms, and commencing in the 1980s, various programmes were initiated in southern Africa to grant proprietorship over wildlife and wildlife habitat to communal land farmers. You can find examples of these programmes in the overview to this special issue (article 1).

It was felt that many multi-disciplinary analyses of these CBNRM programmes had been published in formal journals and books over the last 15 years, but that these largely academic analyses tended to focus on the social, ecological and economic impacts of the programmes.[3]

Generally there has been very little attention given to the **tools** that have been developed by the facilitators and implementers of the CBNRM programmes. This special edition of *PLA* has allowed practitioners from across southern Africa to document and share their experiences with tools that are being and have been developed. These tools are necessary because protected area approaches to wildlife management are, in most cases, inappropriate for replication in the communal areas.

The common theme in almost all of the tools has been the highly **participatory and iterative processes** between communities and technical facilitators, with strong personal relationships developing over a number of years. The tools have inevitably arisen as part of an adaptive management process in response to emerging needs of communities as they have absorbed more authority and benefits. This has always been far more than a technical process of developing tools: the purpose of many, if not all, of the tools has been to encourage the devolution of managerial rights, and the tool development process has inevitably and purposefully addressed both technical rigour and absolute changes in power relationships.

In addition, **transfer to other regions** was deemed to be both timely and important as community-based natural resource management approaches are being applied outside of southern Africa. A collation of lessons and innovative tools will be an important resource for facilitators in other regions.

In all the countries mentioned these are national programmes that are ongoing processes, which will evolve and change over time. Given the nature of the process it is essential that there is some form of **institutional memory**. A collation of recent and current tools will contribute to this memory. This collection of tools and experiences will also form an important resource for both Mozambique and Angola. For this reason, we are hoping to raise funds to translate this special edition into Portuguese.

Writeshop process

In May 2006, with funding gratefully received from IUCN Southern African Sustainable Use Specialist Group (SASUSG),[4] WWF-UK and WWF-SARPO,[5] we held a day's writeshop

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during the week of the SASUSG meeting in Pretoria, South Africa. This was ably facilitated by Russell Taylor and enabled the participants to learn more about the *PLA* editorial process, and provided an opportunity for the guest editors, Brian Child and Brian Jones, to discuss the draft articles with the principal authors. It also allowed all to brainstorm the overview article by identifying common threads running through the articles. See article 1 for this overview, as well as a short introduction to each of the papers.

Participants at the writeshop were: Brian Child, Andee Davidson, Lilian Goredema, Tamara Guhrs, Brian Jones, Nicole Kenton, Misael Kokwe, Shingirai Mandizadza, David Mulolani, Sam Murinye, Michael Murphree, Greg Stuart-Hill and Russell Taylor.

Guest editors

Our two guest editors have spent long hours coordinating, collating, editing and refining the articles. We thank them for their tireless efforts and energy.

Brian Child is an associate professor in the Department of Geography and Center for African Studies at the University of Florida. He is a former government official in Zimbabwe's Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management, where he supported both private conservation and coordinated the CAMPFIRE programme. He was technical advisor to the NORAD-funded Luangwa Integrated Resource Development Programme in Zambia supporting a community programme and a park for six years. He has also worked as a private consultant in park and community management in southern and East

Participants at the *PLA* 55 Writeshop, Pretoria, South Africa, 12 May 2006. Front row (seated) Sam Murinye. Second row from left to right: Russell Taylor, David Mulolani, Lilian Goredema, Shingirai Mandizadza, Brian Jones, Nicole Kenton. Back row from left to right: Tamara Guhrs, Brian Child, Greg Stuart-Hill, Michael Murphree, Andee Davidson

Africa. Brian was a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford where he got a D.Phil in the ecology and economics of wildlife enterprises in African savannas.

Brian Jones is an independent environment and development consultant focusing mostly on policy development and implementation of CBNRM. He is Namibian and currently works as CBNRM and Collaborative Management advisor to the Namibian Ministry of Environment and Tourism. He is a former government official in the Namibian Directorate of Environmental Affairs where he coordinated the national CBNRM programme. Brian has an M.Phil in Applied Social Sciences.

Acknowledgements

In addition to the two guest editors and all the authors, we would like to thank Russell Taylor and Ivan Bond for their invaluable support and advice on this issue. Our thanks also go to Josephine Charinga from IUCN

in Pretoria who was responsible for all the travel and logistics associated with the writeshop. We again express our thanks to WWF-SARPO and its regional CBNRM project, in particular Harrison Ochieng Kojwang, WWF-UK, in particular Mark Wright, and the IUCN SASUSG for supporting this special issue.

We also express our deep regret and sadness on receiving the news of the unfortunate and untimely death of Mr Morse Nanchengwa in a road accident in Zimbabwe in September 2005. Morse was the coordinator of the Regional CBNRM Project in WWF-SARPO and would have facilitated this issue of *PLA*. He had been actively working on the funding and getting commitments from authors.

General section

We have three general articles in this section. Firstly, **Christopher and Joanne Hartworth** describe their experiences of doing a participatory evaluation of

the Inspire public art programme in South East Northumberland, UK. The evaluation sought to find out whether several of Inpsire's key objectives were achieved. The authors raise a number of interesting issues about using participatory approaches in public art programmes.

In the second general article, **Tariq Omar Ali, Mehnaz Rabbani and Munshi Sulaiman** share their experiences of refining a participatory method to investigate poverty dynamics of the extreme poor in Bangladesh following programme interventions. Although some changes were apparent, the families did not move up or down in the wealth ranks defined by the community. So the authors refined the method, resulting in valuable insights about the perceptions of change and mobility of the extreme poor.

Finally, our third general article is by **Harriet Menter, Maria Cecilia Roa, Omar Felipe Beccera, Clara Roa and Wilson Celemin**. Here, the authors focus on using participatory video (PV) with young people from a rural conflict zone in Colombia. PV was used to help them focus on their leadership skills, and proved to be a powerful tool for working with young people.

Regular features

Tips for trainers
In this section, we share some of the tools developed within the CAMPFIRE programme for community use, from the Wildlife Management Series produced by WWF-SARPO through collaboration with rural communities.

We present three tips from the *District Quota Setting Toolbox*.

In touch
These pages include book reviews, events and training courses, as well as on-line resources.

RCPLA update
Latest news from the coordinators of the Resource Centres for Participatory Learning and Action (RCPLA) network.

Follow-up to *PLA* 54 Mapping for Change – practice, technologies and communications

Survey results
On pages 115-123 we present the results of the online readership survey of our last issue. The feedback from you has been very encouraging and we thank all who took part.

Multilingual CD Rom
Responses to our readership survey from community groups in the South were low, partly reflecting the difficulty of on-line access, but also the fact that English is not always an accessible language. We hope to address the language issue by producing a multilingual CD Rom of the theme articles from *PLA* 54. The articles have been translated into Arabic, Chinese (traditional and modern), French, Portuguese, Spanish and Swahili. Bangla, Farsi, Hindi and Tamil are in the pipeline. The CD Rom is being produced in collaboration with CTA (Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation), who co-published *PLA* 54, and will

also include multimedia and additional resources on the practice of participatory geographic information systems (PGIS). Additional financial contributions are still being sought so please get in touch if you are able to help. For more information, please contact Nicole Kenton at IIED (Nicole.Kenton@iied.org).

Multimedia multilingual training kit on Participatory Spatial Information Management and Communication
IIED is collaborating on another exciting initiative led by CTA. Feedback from our survey and from the *Mapping for Change* conference in September last year indicated a need to develop and share a multilingual modular training package covering participatory mapping practices to be used by technology intermediaries including practitioners, activists and researchers. See our next issue for more information.

Next issue
Our next issue, no 56, will be a general issue. We are also planning some exciting theme issues for 2007 and beyond, including the unspoken dilemmas of participation (see page 140 for more information), community radio, participatory video and face-to-face learning. As always, please send us articles on your experiences for future issues. Guidelines for contributors can be found on the inside back cover, or on our website www.planotes.org.

Last but not least we welcome Holly Ashley as a fully fledged co-editor of *PLA!*