



# **THE CONSERVATION CONVERSATION**

**A Case Study of Maa-speaking Pastoralist Expectations of Conservation in  
Relation to WMA Discourse**

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Cover Photograph Taken by Author: Oltepesi, Tanzania, January 2014

## **DECLARATION**

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I, **Dennis James Robert Bednar**, declare that this thesis is the result of my research, investigations, and findings. Sources of information other than my own have been acknowledged and a reference list has been appended. This work has not been previously submitted to any other university for awards of any type of academic degree.

Date:

Signature:



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## **ABSTRACT**

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Conservation discourse continues to shift, which is apparent in a Tanzanian context. In the past, conservation discourse relied solely on biology, focusing primarily on the idea that nature and culture must be kept separate. This is known as a “fortress” approach to conservation. Although the biology behind such initiatives was right, conservation continued to fail. Therefore, a new paradigm developed: community-based conservation (CBC). This new model of conservation concentrated on community-centered initiatives, where biological and social benefits were the main objective. In Tanzania, a conservation policy change in 1998 introduced Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) to the nation – a form of CBC. A WMA intends to empower communities and allow them to have control over their own conservation initiatives. This ethnography explored how the implementation of a WMA in a Maa-speaking pastoralist community related to national WMA discourse. Through qualitative methods with a research assistant translating Swahili and Maa to English, evidence was provided that the national WMA discourse is perceived differently in a Maa-speaking pastoralist setting. Furthermore, the persistence of a “fortress approach” to conservation continues to be apparent in the WMA discourse through a separation of livestock and wildlife. Lastly, a new paradigm shift should be considered, where an emphasis on the intrinsic value of natural resources should be at the core of the conservation practice. Only by understanding such a shift can conservation initiatives in a Maa-speaking pastoralist setting be successful.



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## ABBREVIATIONS & GLOSSARY

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- **CBC** – Community-Based Conservation
- **CBNRM** – Community-Based Natural Resource Management
- **NRM** – Natural Resource Management
- **WMA** – Wildlife Management Area
- **CBO** – Community-based Organization
  - Organization that consists of all representatives elected to be part of the WMA, including village representatives and elected WMA officials. Before the WMA is officially registered, it is a CBO and then becomes an AA.
- **AA** – Authorized Association
  - Representatives of the WMA, including a board and three representatives per village. *Note: during my field research, the WMA was a CBO and not an AA as it was not fully registered.*
- **AWF** – African Wildlife Foundation
  - Facilitating NGO of the WMA process.
- **RZMP** – Resource Zone Management Plan
  - A document formulated by the members of the CBO, government officials, facilitating NGOs, and researchers that is sent to the Ministry to obtain user rights. These are the guidelines and plans that the entire WMA is based on.
- **LUP** – Land-Use Plan
  - A map of the various natural resource zones that is outlined per village at the start of the WMA process. A LUP Committee and AWF make it.
- **Mila** – Maa word for tradition/traditional government
- **Serikali** – Maa word for the central government
- **Olaigwanani/olaigwanak** – Maa word for traditional leaders/leader
- **Wazee/mzee** – Maa word for elders/elder
- **Boma** – Maasai homesteads
- **Olopololi** – Maasai zones for calves.
- **Engaroni** – Maasai zones for dry season grazing.
- **Ronjo** – Maasai temporary homesteads that are situated near the *engaroni*.
- **Manyisho** – Maasai zones for settlement



## **Chapter 1 - Introduction**

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I was in Mama and Baba Babu's house in Longido Tanzania, a traditionally ethnic Maasai and Meru household. Mama Babu, Baraka, and I were watching Disney's *The Lion King*. Baraka is a 9-year-old child that the family informally adopted when Mama Babu's sister passed away. It was a special experience to watch a movie that takes place in an ecosystem/environment such as the one that I was currently in. I was trying to explain to them why the lion is named *Simba*, which means lion in Swahili, or why the monkey is named *Rafiki*, which means friend, or even why the warthog is named *Pumba*, which means to be foolish or silly in Swahili. Mama Babu and Baraka were puzzled. "Did you know Swahili when you were a child? Did you see lions?" I had to try to explain that when I was growing up, I had no idea that Swahili was a language even though I grew up surrounded by these words. Then Mama Babu asked me a critical question, "but Dennis, where are the people?" Good question Mama Babu, good question.

When wildlife is considered, people cannot be forgotten. This is especially evident in the Tanzanian context where African wilderness seems abundant and the people are often overlooked. Current nature conservation is the practice that attempts to find the balance between this, between people and nature. In the past conservationists have largely relied on the biological sciences in order to attain theoretical as well as analytical tools to inform conservation policy makers and influence practice. Yet conservation initiatives seem to fail even when the biology is right. A new conservation discourse has appeared in order to consider social reality during implementation. Social factors have been considered the primary determinants of success or failure of a conservation initiative (Orlove & Brush, 1996; West et al., 2006; Igoe & Croucher, 2007). As counterintuitive as this may seem, the social aspect determining the success of an environmental policy is relevant as human decision-making processes and behaviors influence conservation strategies (Mascia et al., 2003). The conservation debate relies on a manner of top-down nature conservation as well as socially embedded conservation (West et al., 2006).

The focus on conservation as a social phenomenon has been coined community-based conservation (CBC). The occurrence of CBC in the conservation debate is a global one, but it has been promoted more in the African context. Such a participatory approach to conservation thrives in Africa as the establishment of networks and communities of protected areas remains a primary approach for conserving biodiversity (Sunguisa, 2010). Conservation discourse in Africa previously consisted of traditional, top-down, protectionist conservation approaches (Goldman,

2003). Today, wildlife management policy has shifted to a participatory, community-based, bottom-up approach where biological and social benefits for local and national communities are the prime objectives (Berkes, 2004). Although this shift is theoretically occurring, whether or not it is a practical reality remains to be seen. There are expectations that come with conservation from all actors involved but whether or not they coincide with the discourse remains a key question. Does the conversation of conservation coincide with the theory? This question will be the focus of this ethnographic study.

Tanzania's conservation policy has seen various changes over the past decades. Spanning a total area of 945,166 km<sup>2</sup>, Tanzania is amongst the largest countries in sub-Saharan Africa and 31<sup>st</sup> largest country in the world; it is four times the size of the United Kingdom (Kideghesho, 2008). Approximately 30% of its land surface is dedicated to wildlife conservation, which is the size of The Netherlands, Slovakia, and Switzerland combined (Neumann, 1997; Kideghesho, 2008). The land surface allotted to conservation continues to increase. Existing literature shows that protected areas in Tanzania often stemmed from the forced eviction of local peoples (Chatty & Colchester, 2002; Brockington & Igoe, 2006; Homewood & Randall, 2008). Therefore, in order to address criticism towards Tanzanian conservation policy, community-based conservation (CBC) was implemented (Leader-Williams et al., 1996; Minwary, 2009). In 1998 the Tanzanian government redefined their conservation agenda marking a crucial point in the movement towards CBC. The point of interest was on directly engaging local communities while simultaneously focusing on three aspects: the 1) conservation of biodiversity, 2) sustainability of wildlife resources, and 3) improvement of Tanzanian quality of life (Igoe & Croucher, 2007). From this emerged the new Tanzanian form of CBC: Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs). These areas are extensions of protected areas that have been founded and managed by villagers forming an Authorized Association (AA), consisting of three elected representatives per village within the WMA (Igoe & Croucher, 2007). Through such an establishment, villagers are given full mandate over the management and benefits of their own conservation efforts (Sunguisa, 2010). The question of whether or not conservation is on the primary agenda for local communities then comes into play. How can community-based participation be observed before there is knowledge of where conservation lies within a community? How can any form of participation be expected within WMA and conservation discourse in general?

According to my respondents in the field, there are currently 19 officially registered WMAs in Tanzania with another 19 in the making. Thus, a total of three percent of Tanzania's surface area

is devoted solely to WMAs with a total area of 27,430 km<sup>2</sup>. If the last 19 WMAs are registered then land coverage will reach an estimated 125,000 km<sup>2</sup>. It is estimated that around 450,000 people in 116 villages are involved with WMAs, however the degree of involvement cannot be deduced from this number alone (Personal communication, Tanzanian AWF Representative [Male; Ethnicity unknown – *English interview*], Arusha WMA Workshop, 03/02/14). I conducted my research in Oltepesi, a village that is part of the soon-to-be Natron WMA. The Natron WMA is in the process of being fully registered with the Ministry and is located in the Longido district, in the northern part of Tanzania. It shares borders with Kenya to the north, the eastern shores of the saline Lake Natron to the west, and the Enduimet WMA to the east. The Enduimet WMA, which is also situated in the Longido district, has been in the WMA process for over a decade, which has had a large impact on expectations within the Natron WMA. Various studies have been conducted amongst the Maasai population of Enduimet (Kabiri, 2007; Minwary, 2009; Trench et al., 2009). Their results will be addressed further in the ethnography. The Natron WMA consists of 32 villages and the majority of its inhabitants are of Maasai ethnicity. It is crucial to note that Maasai are fundamentally pastoralist peoples; therefore, a zone-based WMA is already paradoxical, since pastoralists are in the habit of moving about. Nonetheless, the WMA is still in the process of being legitimized. Will this have an impact on Maasai livelihoods? What does this mean for Maasai expectations of conservation initiatives? As the Natron WMA is in the process of becoming fully registered, my time in the field provided unique insights. This research has been conducted at a different point in the process of WMA establishment in comparison to previous studies conducting research on outcomes (Goldman, 2003; Igoe & Croucher, 2007; Minwary, 2009; Rantala et al., 2013). The full registration of the Natron WMA was supposed to have been completed in January 2014, but this had not happened yet when I left Tanzania in March 2014. This highlights how throughout my research it was important to compare expectations to reality in order to attempt to understand Maa-speaking conservation discourse.

This ethnography will therefore investigate the question: **How do Maa-speaking pastoralist expectations of conservation relate to Wildlife Management Area (WMA) discourse in Oltepesi, Tanzania?** Through answering this question, this ethnography will highlight how the expectations of conservation represent a language of conservation that is being translated to various actors. In order to answer this question, an understanding of previous fortress-based approaches to conservation must be compared to CBC initiatives such as WMAs. Moreover, other queries need examination in order to answer the following question: What are the expectations of conservation amongst the Maa-speaking pastoralists in Oltepesi? What is the

WMA discourse? Which actors play a part in the WMA establishment? How does the Maa-speaking pastoralist community participate in WMA matters? What are the incentives to participate? These questions address a large population. Through my methodology and choice of research site I have narrowed down this population and attempted to answer these questions.

Throughout this ethnography I have added anecdotes from my time in the field in order to offer a richer understanding of the reality in Oltepesi. This will serve as a tool for providing important details that will help analyze the current situation there. In addition, there are many abbreviations and terms used. Therefore, there is a glossary that should always be referred back to for clarification (see pg. 13). Lastly, It must be noted that I often use the term ‘Maa-speaking’. I made this methodological choice as I believe that I cannot generalize about the Maasai as the Maasai in Kenya are quite different from those in Tanzania. For example, if I just use Maasai then it does not consider that some Maasai are more like the Turkana, a neighboring ethnic group in Kenya. Furthermore, I chose the term ‘Maa-speaking’ because the communicative context is essential to this research. Simply stating that the population is Maasai or pastoralist does not do justice to the reality in Oltepesi. In Tanzania, those in charge are Swahili-speaking and those that are often forgotten are Maa-speaking, therefore this ethnography focuses on a communicative context using Maa-speaking to define my population. Current vogue in regards to WMAs highlights a lack of awareness and participation. In Oltepesi though, it is the communicative context that creates these shortcomings, therefore the fact that they are Maa-speaking is vital. The Maa-speaking pastoralists of Oltepesi associate the WMA with something other than conservation, namely land and property rights. The communicative context is often disregarded in the course of implementing conservation policy on both local and national levels. It is essential to consider this fact within the WMA framework.

The following ethnography will first provide a theoretical framework for my research. This will consist of the following: First, the notion of expectations as it was used in this research will be described in addition to the paradigm shifts underlying the global conservation discourse from fortress-based to community-based. Furthermore, the colonial legacies in contemporary conservation will be clarified, followed by an analysis of the political ecology, access, and discourse involved in framing WMAs. Additionally, participation and the defining of community will be elaborated upon, as they are prominent themes within CBC discourse. Lastly, I will describe the Tanzanian context of devolution in natural resource management (NRM), a brief history of pastoralism in Tanzania, and finally, an outline of WMAs in regards to policy, actors,

and Maa-speaking pastoralist experiences. Succeeding the theoretical aspect of this ethnography, I will outline the methodology used, where the limitations and ethics of my research come into play. Subsequently, the case study of this research of the village Oltepesi, the Natron WMA, and the institutional influences will be elaborated on. Finally, I will discuss my results from the field based on the paradigm shifts in conservation discourse. This will allow me to reach the answer to my research question: That the intrinsic value of natural resources need to be understood as a means of conservation amongst Maa-speaking pastoralists; the land, rain, and specific resources need consideration prior to the implementation of CBC policies. Through the following chapters this will be elaborated on in order to gain a complete understanding of how Maa-speaking expectations of conservation relate to the WMA discourse.



## **Chapter 2 - Theoretical Framework**

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### **2.1 - Expectations**

Expectations are the object of this study. Conservation discourse seems to be governed by expectations; there is an on-going struggle of power and inequality conducted between various actors by proposing, imposing, and changing expectations in the broader context of a global agenda. Expectations play a large role in this ethnography as throughout my research period, the process of registering the Natron WMA was underway; people were building expectations upon experiences and memory, which drives behavior (Ferguson, 1999). Employing such a notion as expectations is loosely based on Ferguson's (1999) ethnography *Expectations of Modernity*. Although Ferguson focuses on expectations of modernity rather than expectations of conservation and does research in the Copperbelt region of Zambia rather than Maasailand of Tanzania, the emphasis on European "myths" (1999) being seen as culture is relevant and essential. Ferguson follows expectations of modernity, just as Marcus (1995) states that ethnographers must do - follow things, metaphors, people, and etcetera. I attempted to follow the expectations of conservation amongst the Maa-speaking pastoralists of Oltepesi. This meant that whilst following these expectations, an array of actors were encountered that each played a role in the Maa-speaking pastoralist conservation discourse. Expectations are treated as cultural statements that (can) drive behavior (Ferguson, 1991). In previous literature on WMAs (Igoe & Croucher, 2007; Nelson, 2007; Sacchedina, 2008), expectations have not been a focal point of research. However, in this ethnography expectations are of the utmost importance, as the studied WMA is not officially registered yet. Essentially, as a researcher, I also had expectations prior to entering the field. I expected that the Maa-speaking communicative context would play a large role in shaping the expectations of conservation in general - which it clearly did as the Maa-speaking communicative context differed from WMA discourse expectations.

### **2.2 – The Paradigm Shift in Global Conservation Discourse**

Global conservation discourse coincides with global trends. During the 1970s and 1980s, conservation discourse was of a more exclusionary nature. The "fortress" approach paradigm was based on the assumption that natural resources of all sorts were in principle everlasting but people were destroying them rapidly. People living in and around what was measured as valuable natural resources under the global conservation discourse, were not considered in laws regarding nature (Songorwa et al., 2000). The desirability of a separation of nature and culture, of the environment and people, was one of the primary expectations of conservation. This is often known as the

“fines and fences” or “fortress” approach to conservation (Minwary, 2009; Wilfred, 2010). This fortress approach was a spatial model of conservation that did exactly what the name entails – it kept out the socio-cultural in order for easier conservation policy implementation to take place with the natural (West et al., 2006:264). More recently, a paradigm shift has occurred as certain facets of fortress-based conservation have been criticized. This includes the idea that the natural resource supply on our planet is in fact limited and that “community participation, cooperative management, power, decentralization, empowerment, and participatory democracy” need to be fundamentally considered in order for conservation initiatives to succeed (Songorwa et al., 2000). This shift is a community-based one, where the well-being of communities is theoretically considered side-by-side with wildlife.

Conservation discourse has become immersed in community-centered initiatives in order to show that a “fortress” approach to conservation is not the solution to better natural resource management (Kideghesho, 2008). A focus on ‘local’ people in conservation came about. Sustainable conservation of natural resources has remained a priority on the agenda for wildlife managers or biologists, but now, the local community comes into play. Local communities have been regarded as developing a “historical interaction with wildlife in rural areas” (Wilfred, 2010:104), a fact that has been omitted from the “fortress” approach to conservation. The global doctrine regarding wildlife conservation in Tanzania is apparent in this exact way. The idea in Tanzania is that if conservation costs are lowered and benefits are raised, then rural communities, the local community, will adopt conservation goals (Kideghesho, 2008). When thinking within a mindset of profits or benefits, this seems to be a logical assumption. However, theory differs from reality in the Tanzanian context. An important aspect to consider in the Tanzanian setting is that a large array of conservation strategies exists. This includes strategies such as national parks or game reserves that have been present for decades. The majority of such initiatives were established under German or British colonial rule so that when colonialism ended, power was transferred to national and international conservationists (Neumann, 1998; Neumann, 2000; Mukumbukwa, 2008). How does such a paradigm shift occur in practices that are so historically embedded?

CBC is often called community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) or community wildlife management (CWM). Both labels remove the notion of conservation. CBC is a form of conservation that theoretically solves all social and ecological difficulties faced when using a traditional, top-down, protectionist, “fortress” approaches to conservation (Goldman, 2003). Two

principles are the building blocks of CBC: 1) local control of natural resources and 2) participation, or providing local communities with an opportunity to represent and state opinions in decision-making within local institutions (Songorwa et al., 2000). Under the new community-based conservation paradigm, state control is deemed less relevant as a means of intervening in conservation initiatives. There is an emphasis on focusing on participatory and inclusive community-based efforts. Therefore a few things can be theoretically expected. Firstly, it is assumed that national governments as well as wildlife authorities are willing to decentralize claim and ownership. Secondly, there is the assumption that communities are actually interested in participating and can indeed manage wildlife. Lastly, it is anticipated that conservation and development are paired terms; that wildlife conservation is suited for rural economic development (Songorwa et al., 2000). There is a tendency to illustrate conservation as a form of development and to focus on benefits of conservation. Though a shift to CBC is a historic reality, the question remains whether the “fortress” approach to conservation is truly no longer relevant.

Though a shift to CBC arose out of the failure of and challenges faced when employing a “fortress” approach to conservation, whether or not it is no longer significant remains the question. In a “fortress” approach, pristine wilderness was considered as a vital point of preservation, regardless of the marginalization of local people (Neumann, 1998). Due to the lack of raising awareness of both nature and culture together, the “fortress” approach received a great deal of criticism, resulting in the formation of a new discourse. Many conservation initiatives around the world have begun to involve communities. This involvement of local communities focuses on incentives to participate, such as economic benefits, regardless of whether or not participatory processes are considered (Nelson et al., 2009). A few examples include the monitoring and reduction of traditional human activities such as collecting medicinal plants or firewood (Primack, 2006) or the sustainable resource use and biodiversity conservation in specifically rural areas (Western & Wright, 1994). These examples highlight the shift to CBC.

In theory scarcity of natural resources or environmental degradation are solved through CBC. These efforts towards CBC have been regarded as a means of rural development or poverty eradication (Blaikie & Brookfield, 2006; Igoe & Croucher, 2007; Nelson & Agrawal, 2008). CBC highlights how paradoxical participatory development can be; forcing a community to participate places you directly in the paradox that it reduces community-based participation. Regardless of this paradox, local peoples and communities that are connected to natural resources in some way remain at the center of CBC approaches. This assumes that these local communities have

knowledge suited for such resource management (Armitage, 2005). Traditional and local knowledge are both considered and employed in CBC (Berkes, 2004) and are recognized as bringing further community participation as well as socio-economic and ecological benefits (Pound et al., 2003). Theoretically, the paradigm shift that CBC entails, from wildlife- to people-based conservation, is an ideal shift.

A question that is often overlooked in regards to CBC is that of motivations and expectations. What are the motivations to shape a CBC initiative? What expectations are paired with this? In Kaswamila's (2012) research, motivations for CBC were based on wildlife, community security, land tenure, resource access, and lastly, benefits. In the context of Oltepesi, access and community appear crucial since CBC discourse usually fails to define community (Godfrey, 2013:382). Nonetheless, a failure to recognize community heterogeneity is a common theme in numerous participatory and sustainable conservation agendas in Tanzania (Agrawal & Gibson, 1999; Songorwa, 1999; Minwary, 2009). When placing this paradigm shift into the context of Tanzania, the definition of CBC on the national level must also be considered. According to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism (Ministry) in Tanzania, CBC is the "utilization and conservation of wildlife by local communities" where wildlife is described as any "species of wild and indigenous plants and animals found in Tanzania" (MNRT, 1998).

In addition to the national setting, the global conservation agenda must be considered. This global discourse heavily influences issues surrounding CBC and WMAs in Tanzania. When considering political ecology, power, and access in natural resource management (as will be discussed further below), one often encounters a hegemonic power of international conservationist interests (Brockington et al., 2008; Minwary, 2009). In a study on protected areas by Adams and Hutton (2007), the international NGOs and donor governments sustained the protected areas and therefore framed the discourse. The study shed light on the fact that these international actors outlined the discourse to be about biological and economic aspects of conservation, without considering the social aspects as CBC intends to do (Adams & Hutton, 2007). On the other hand, other studies such as that of Levine (2002) concluded the opposite in terms of the influence of the global conservation agenda on CBC. Levine (2002) concludes that the international NGOs could actually be the actors providing a positive influence on WMAs in Tanzania. It must be noted that CBC programs do often rely on support from facilitating NGOs (IRA, 2007) and with this support comes an array of power relations and discourse. How are these power relations and discourse translated in the local context? How do international, facilitating actors in Tanzania,

such as the African Wildlife Foundation (AWF) or World Wildlife Fund (WWF) disseminate the global conservation discourse and does it have a positive influence in a local setting? Is local adoption of a global conservation agenda possible or is it simply imposed?

Research has criticized that conservation policies in Tanzania suggest a colonial legacy, that Western ideologies of natural resource management have been imposed on the global South (Neumann, 1997; Robbins, 2004). This implies an authoritarian attitude towards local communities, which has been claimed to be the reality in Tanzania (Minwary, 2009). Protected areas in Tanzania were originally established under German and British colonial rule giving them control over local land and natural resource user rights (Minwary, 2009). When colonial power shifted from the German to British regime, forest and game reserves from the late 1800s remained intact (Goldstein, 2005). Additional conservation policies were established on the framework that the German regime had fashioned (Nelson et al., 2007). For example, under the German regime subsistence hunting was permitted within game reserves but under the British regime any form of land-use was prohibited. The Governor of Tanganyika had full power over local land access and use (Neumann, 1998). In Tanzanian contemporary conservation, colonial legacy remains as all of the National Parks and Game Reserves are still in existence (Nelson et al., 2009). Many question the reform of the wildlife sector, as decentralization of wildlife authority has seemingly not occurred even after independence (Songorwa, 1999; Nelson et al., 2007; Nelson & Agrawal, 2008; Schroeder, 2008; Minwary, 2009; Nelson et al., 2009). The Wildlife Conservation Act of 1974 restricted local communities access and use of wildlife as the state merged power to control commercial use of wildlife efficiently (Mkumbukwa, 2008). Following colonial and post-independence conservationist developments, creating equal conservation policies became a focus of the state, especially for local communities surrounding protected areas. As past conservation initiatives denied use of natural resources within protected areas, the development of WMAs intendeds to create an incentive to preserve wildlife by providing access of these resources to local communities (Baldus & Cauldwell, 2004). This is deeply rooted in the colonial legacy of Tanzanian contemporary conservation.

The paradigm shift in conservation discourse is heavily influenced by a global conservation agenda. A shift has occurred such that local communities are empowered in order to establish a means of managing and arranging benefit sharing in natural resource management (International Resources Group, 2000). This is the ideal of CBC and WMAs in Tanzania are supposed to be an exemplary form of this. Theoretically, an increase in economical and personal investments in

WMA territories will follow the establishment of a WMA. This is the case since more land is delineated for conservation, which allows for key species to thrive, tourists to experience the pristine wilderness, and most importantly, local communities to be empowered (Igoe & Croucher, 2007:537). The future of conservation planning is one that removes the notion of separation entirely from the equation and considers rather a “conceptual and material place for human society within...nature” (Adams & Hutton, 2007).

Perhaps a new step needs to be taken in conservation research. The CBC model is perhaps too rationalistic. CBC is based on the notion of benefit-sharing, often economic benefits, in order to conserve. What if these economic benefits are no longer present? Will conservation still take place? The CBC model has begun to be critiqued, as there seems to be a common failure to achieve a degree of substantial conservation under CBC initiatives (Fletcher, 2010). A new shift in paradigm discourse may be occurring, towards one where the intrinsic value of resources is of utmost importance. According to Justus, et al. (2009:187) “many conservation biologists believe the best ethical basis for conserving natural entities is their claimed intrinsic value”. It comes down to the studying of what communities think of the intrinsic value of the landscapes that they are situated in in order for conservation to positively occur. Not much research has been conducted in regards to this current shift, yet it seems to be a new trend in conservation studies. The importance of intrinsic values of wildlife and landscape also becomes evident from the following ethnography.

### **2.3 - Political Ecology, Access, & Discourse**

Whilst paradigm shifts in the conservation agenda of Tanzania occur, the political ecology in Tanzania changes too. Political ecology explores human-environment relations. It thoroughly expands on understanding connections between both human and environmental variables such as geography, ecosystems, wildlife decline, climate change, etc. (Minwary, 2009). However, these variables that are considered are not neutral; power relations and politics shape the perceptions and understandings of environmental issues (Robbins, 2004). Uneven power relations impact sustainable use of natural resources, which could easily be overlooked if only ecological variables are considered (Brown, 1998). Power relations exist between all actors within a conservation initiative, between governments, institutions, non-governmental organizations, and local communities. Considering the political ecology of a nation therefore allows for social concerns to be suggested; one can comprehend what social dynamics affect

conservation that would otherwise be supposed irrelevant (Berkes, 2004). The paradigm shift in the conservation discourse should essentially “reverse top-down, center-driven conservation by focusing on the people who bear the cost of conservation” (Western & Wright, 2003:6). Therefore, political ecology in CBC should consider power as central to understanding the development of decentralization of natural resource governance (Raik et al., 2008). How does this develop in Tanzania under the WMA structure? Access, participation, and devolution are emphasized as aspects that need consideration in a Tanzanian political ecology (Raik et al., 2008; Minwary, 2009).

Colonial legacy in contemporary conservation in Tanzania reflects a development of theories of access, from restriction to limited access. Since this ethnography focuses on a primarily pastoralist group, access plays an essential role. Under the global conservation agenda, access is considered as ability rather than a right. If one has access, one has the ability to derive benefits rather than the right to (Ribot & Peluso, 2003). Hence, a WMA should create the opportunity for local communities to determine access rather than be allowed access. Similar to the notion of a political ecology, theories of access must consider many variables. “Technology, capital, markets, knowledge, authority, social identities, and social relations can shape or influence access” (Ribot & Peluso, 2003). These variables are considered as a framework to analyze WMA discourse, although the knowledge and social relations variable are the most relevant. As this ethnography examines expectations and the language of conservation amongst Maa-speaking pastoralists, discourse as a means of research needs clarification.

Conservation and the environment are no longer seen as simply biological notions but are discursively co-produced (Orlove, 1996; Wilshusen et al., 2002 ; West, 2006; Feindt & Oels, 2005; Igoe, 2007). Often discourse is strictly perceived as having to do with language. In this ethnography both language and knowledge are understood as creating discourse. It is “in discourse that power and knowledge are joined together” (Foucault, 1998:100) within a communicative context. In addition, environmental discourses tend to be unfamiliar amongst the relevant public (Feindt & Oels, 2005). The Maa-speaking community of Oltepesi is considered the relevant public in this ethnographic study. How is environmental discourse translated to this Maa-speaking community? Expert language and concepts, research practices and technology from a global conservation agenda are used in environmental discourse (Feindt & Oels, 2005:162). The translation, both literally and conceptually, is the aspect that this ethnography explores. Such translation of global and local discourses needs to be understood in order to

comprehend when Maasai expectations are relevant. Political ecology and theories of access must also be considered since the influence of NGOs, partnerships with transnational institutions, rising environmental economic activities, privately operated reserves, and the devolution of natural resource management (Fletcher, 2010) all impact the discourse of conservation and WMAs in Tanzania. In order to further understand the discourse, the means of participating must be described.

## **2.4 - Participation**

Within an East African conservation context, participation has been considered the missing link to alter top-down, “fortress” conservation approaches (Minwary, 2009). Conservation initiatives with participation at the core are considered building blocks (Tyler, 2006) to effective CBNRM. For example, Zimbabwe’s Communal Areas Management Program for Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE) was a predecessor to any form of community-based resource management. CAMPFIRE focused on participation as the starting point to conservation (Child, 1995). Although participation is considered the key to success, the understanding and application of the term has become loaded with assumptions.

Participation within a conservation discourse is based off sustainable development and rural development theories (Songorwa et al., 2000). In development theory, participation focuses on optimal project outcomes and capacity building. This focus ensures that individuals can enrich their own well-being and facilitate change (Cleaver, 1999:598). However, in natural resource management participation is perceived as a means to ensure change in addition to empower people (Mannigel, 2008). If participation is understood as a means of ensuring change, individuals become the tools to support conservation (Wells & Brandon, 1993). Participation consists of individuals recognizing that a high level of participation is for their own benefit, a mobilization process (Cleaver, 1999:605). However, participation differs per context and per actor. For example, local communities may assume that when they join a conservation initiative they are just participating in an extension of central power (Goodwin, 1998). Hence, participation may be important but understanding what participation is actually considered to be is essential.

Participation within natural resource management is based on development theory and therefore, a participation typology created by Pimbert & Pretty (1994) was used as a means of guiding the primary field research (see Table 1). This continuum creates a set of participation categories used

in development and conservation studies. Nonetheless, these typologies will not be used as distinct groupings of participation. Rather they will be considered as expectations.

**How People Can Participate in Development Programmes**

	<b>Participation Typology</b>	<b>Components</b>
1.	Passive participation	Told what is going to/is happening. Top-down and information shared to external professionals.
2.	Participation in information giving	Answer questions posed by extractive researchers through surveys, etc. People do not have influence.
3.	Participation by consultation	Consulted and external agents listen to opinions. Usually consists of externally defined problems and solutions. People are not really involved in decision-making, simply consultation.
4.	Participation by material incentives	Provision of resources but little incentive to participate after the incentives end
5.	Functional participation	Form groups to meet predetermined objectives; usually done after major project decision made, therefore initially dependent and enabling. Participation as organization.
6.	Interactive participation	Joint analysis to joint actions. Possible use of new local institutions or strengthening existing ones, enabling and empowering so people have stake in maintaining structures or practices.
7.	Self-mobilization	Already empowered, take decisions independent of external institutions. May or may not challenge existing inequitable distributions of wealth or power. Participation as empowering.

**Table 1** – Participation Typology Often Used in Research on NRM Participation (Pimbert & Pretty, 1994)

The various typologies became a guideline in the field to create questions and interpret responses. For example, the first typology, “passive participation” (see Table 1) directed me to asking whether or not individuals were simply told about the WMA and what was going to happen. As this was not always the case, the third typology could be referred to, “participation by consultation” (see Table 1). Then respondents were asked whether or not external agents listened to their opinions before any action was taken. Through using such a typology, a more in-depth understanding of expectations could be achieved. Once again, even though there are set typologies described by Pimbert & Pretty (1994), in this ethnography the typologies are viewed as a continuum where actors cannot simply be compartmentalized.

This typology was used because of the assumptions of CBC, it is expected that the communities within or surrounding such initiatives are voluntarily active. They need to make choices in terms

of formation, execution, and assessment of CBC programs and projects (Songorwa et al., 2000). This places the local communities of CBC initiatives within Pimbert & Pretty's (1994) 7<sup>th</sup> typology, the "self-mobilization" typology (see Table 1). This ethnography examines to what extent this is valid amongst the Maa-speaking pastoralist community in Oltepesi. Does the political ecology in Tanzania allow for such degree of participation by the Maa-speaking community?

## **2.5 - Defining Community**

Contemporary conservation discourse has created a distinction between (foreign) organizations investing in conservation initiatives and protected areas on the one hand, and on the other, 'local communities' (Godfrey, 2013:380). Similarly to participation, community is also a rich term within the discourse of CBC. Who defines community? When using 'local community' in policy, whom does this refer to and how does it differ from how the community views themselves? The element of community is essential in this ethnography as the Maa-speaking context that the Natron WMA finds itself in influences the discourse. Communities have to be examined through understanding incentives, actors, and their influence on decision-making in conservation discourse (Agrawal & Gibson, 1999). More often than not, community is a monolithic notion, a "natural desirable social entity imbued with all sorts of desirable values...in organizational form" (Cleaver, 1999:603). Community is often perceived as an identifiable entity in a given location. The heterogeneity of community is disregarded in WMA policy of Tanzania through describing community as a homogenous, national unit. The Maa-speaking community is forgotten in the larger WMA discourse. Nonetheless, it is this context that needs consideration to make CBC successful.

The "fortress" approach to conservation does not consider community to consist of units of people with both personal and powerful conservation experiences (Godfrey, 2013:394). Yet within CBC discourse, community still needs to be defined. Essentially, it is better to define community through an assortment of characteristics that affect natural resource management whilst interacting with various actors surrounding conservation (Agrawal & Gibson, 1999). These interactions between institutions, communities, and decision-making processes are always being contested and (re) formed. Hence, community cannot be viewed as a homogenous social structure. Rather, community is a heterogeneous component with characteristics that are means to improve conservation. Community was distinguished as a notion that was difficult to split from its monolithic understanding in previous WMA literature (Shivji & Kapinga, 1998; Minwary,

2009). Regardless of its definition, the fundamental question should be who is using the term ‘community’ and how? Even though in a global agenda community may be defined by size, structure, customs, or resource dependencies, does the defined ‘community’ consider themselves one? The term community needs assessment prior to implementation within policy. In addition, the process of devolution needs analysis since it aids in defining communities involved; understanding the division of power between communities and local governments, which is central to natural resource management (Nathan et al., 2007).

## **2.6 - Devolution in natural resource management (NRM) in Tanzania**

The idea of handing over management and power of natural resources to local administrative branches of the central government is a common occurrence in natural resource management (Miller, 2004; Ribot, 2004). When the government reorganizes power into smaller, more autonomous groups, it is known as decentralization. In the case of WMAs, this deals with the power over natural resources being delegated to local branches. However, in Tanzania a different phenomenon is occurring. Rather than local administrative branches of the central government gaining power over resource management, elected local governments are gaining the power; this is devolution (Nathan et al., 2007). Tanzania is one of the few countries that combine devolution with other NRM strategies. WMAs are an example of devolution. However do the theoretical ideas of devolution fit the reality?

Devolution is often compared to equitable and efficient management of natural resources (Nathan et al., 2007). Theoretically, decisions are made by representative, downwards-accountable, local bodies (Ribot, 2004). The elected local members are grass-root bodies, the Authorized Association (AA) in WMAs – three representatives elected from each village located within the WMA. In the case of devolution and natural resource management, local governments are entrusted with significant amounts of autonomous discretionary power (Nathan et al., 2007). In WMAs this is translated to the user rights that are given to the locally elected representatives such as the Chairman of the WMA. The Chairman of the local community-based organization (CBO) that forms the WMA has the power to decide which investors are allowed into their villages as well as how land-use policies are being implemented. This is an example of how resource management strategies have shifted to moving processes closer to people so that processes can be affected directly (Grindle, 1982; World Bank, 1997). This relates to participation because devolution in NRM is often linked to the fact that people respect decisions more when they are personally involved in the making of them (Chambers, 1994; Larson, 2003). In theory, by having

the Maa-speaking community of Oltepesi elect local representatives, decisions made by the WMA will be respected. However, as previously stated, the ‘local’ community is not the only actor within the WMA process.

Devolution focuses on downwards accountability towards local populations, that free and fair elections are needed as well as mechanisms to enforce accountability through community meetings (ADB, 1995; Sorabjee, 2001; Kafakoma et al., 2005; Nathan et al. 2007). Nathan et al. (2007) describe how devolution increases the need for clear boundary demarcation, horizontal coordination with other villages, and rules adapted to the social reality of the villagers in Tanzania. This conclusion is essential to consider in comparison to WMA discourse. WMAs consider border demarcation an essential element as can be seen in the Land-Use Plan and Resource Zone Management Plan (RZMP), two zoning documents created for WMA establishment. The horizontal coordination with other villages is relevant because the Natron WMA will consist of 32 villages. Lastly, whether or not rules have been adapted to the social reality of the pastoralists in the Natron WMA is crucial to consider. These conclusions are relevant in the case of the Natron WMA as a form of devolution in Tanzanian NRM. Through investigating the social reality of pastoralists in Oltepesi an understanding of how the WMA acts as a form of devolution is portrayed.

## **2.7 - Brief History of Maasai Pastoralism in Tanzania**

In East Africa there are numerous pastoralist groups living in arid and semi-arid lands surrounded by wildlife, tourism and conservation. In northern Tanzania and southern Kenya, the Maasai pastoralist group is found. They are one of the poorest pastoralist groups and the most vulnerable to weather changes (Homewood et al., 2012). Essentially, being Maasai means being pastoralist, relying on cattle, rain (believed to come from God - *enkai* in Maa), and grazing areas (Spencer, 1988; Hodgson, 1999). These are traditional distinctions that continue to change. Being pastoralist means being livestock-focused, including grazing, milking, and trading livestock. Livestock is central to a pastoralist livelihood. Nonetheless, in contemporary society, pastoralists combine livestock-oriented occupations with additional livelihood undertakings (Homewood, 2008). These activities involve “farming, fishing, hunting and gathering, processing natural resources for sale, artisanal work, wage labor, salaries employment, and/or investment in non-pastoral trade and businesses” (Homewood et al., 2012:2). Maasai pastoralism relies on access to natural resources for livestock to graze on across a large ecosystem. The migratory movement of wildlife is similar to the seasonal movements of Maasai livestock (Goldman, 2003). Although

Maasai pastoralists historically maintain semi-permanent homesteads, or *bomas*, this trend continues to change as Maasai pastoralists continue to become more sedentary. Maasai migration was based on situating oneself in areas with year-round water access and grazing, but then moving to wet-season pastures during the rains (Goldman, 2003). Currently, people are creating permanent homesteads with temporary *bomas* during the wet-season.

According to McCabe et al., (2010) there are few events in history that severely influenced the contemporary pastoralist way of life. The event with the largest impact was in the 1880's to the 1890's, a period known for a series of disasters. These included an outbreak of diseases amongst the cattle population that was unknown to East Africa followed by an outbreak of small pox amongst the human population. Lastly, this included warfare between Maasai clans as everyone was rebuilding herds and raiding others (McCabe et al., 2010). This is important to consider in a contemporary context as it resulted in the migration of pastoralists to live with agriculturalist tribes. This has impacted livelihood diversification to this day. Even the host family that I was staying with during my field research may have been an example of this as the family consisted of a Maasai man married to a Meru woman, a tribe known for agriculture.

In a contemporary Maasai pastoralist context, there is an increased dependence on non-livestock elements within Maasai livelihoods (Galvin, 2009). The assumption, linked to the history of Maasai, is that diversification of pastoralists was towards agriculture (Mace, 1993) yet in areas such as Oltepesi, the yields of farming is so low that one can profit more from “wage labor, remittances and trade (from petty vending to full-fledged business)” (Homewood et al. 2009). Pastoral diversification tends to fall under a wider discourse of the de-agrarianization of African rural livelihoods (Bryceson & Jamal, 1997). Pastoralist livelihoods continue to diversify, which affects the community in which the WMA is being established. In addition, conservation initiatives such as National Parks and Game Reserves have restricted pastoralists' grazing access, impacting views of conservation initiatives based on history. In the remaining section, the WMA policy, structure, and actors will be described followed by an understanding of previous Maasai experiences with the neighboring Enduimet WMA.

## **2.8 - WMAs**

Tanzania has numerous wildlife conservation areas such as Game Reserves, National Parks, conservation areas, and since 1998, WMAs (Wilfred, 2010). WMAs are the first form of CBC to emerge in Tanzania when conservation debate emphasized that current initiatives were

not enough to protect biodiversity loss (Leader-Williams et al., 1996). Protected areas and National Parks were viewed as not successful in conserving the natural resources of Tanzania. Therefore, in 1998, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism (MNRT) of Tanzania decided upon

...the establishment of a new category of protected areas known as WMA, where local people will have full mandate of managing and benefiting from their conservation efforts, through community-based conservation programmes.  
(MNRT, 1998: 31).

The Ministry expected a decrease in human-wildlife conflicts to occur alongside a development of positive outlooks towards wildlife. Meanwhile, a stream of profits to local communities from wildlife processes would be generated, creating incentives to conserve biodiversity (MNRT, 1998; MNRT, 2003; Minwary, 2009; Nelson et al., 2009). By following such a model of CBC, the United Republic of Tanzania aspired to decentralize wildlife ownership to local government and communities, the main actors in wildlife conservation. The belief is that by constructing a sense of ownership and benefits, incentives to preserve biodiversity will surface (Wilfred, 2010). The policies and structure of WMAs around the country are largely influenced by the devolvement of power and authority over wildlife (Minwary, 2009). Nonetheless, previous literature states that the global conservation agenda determines the WMA process and only elites of a community actually benefit (Igoe & Croucher, 2007; Nelson, 2007; Sacchedina, 2008). Where does the policy and structure go wrong?

### **2.8.1 - Policy & Structure**

The WMA process has been regarded as time- and resource-consuming; a long and bureaucratic procedure (Nelson, 2007; Minwary, 2009). For example, Enduimet WMA, the neighboring WMA to the Natron WMA, took 10 years to be officially registered (Minwary, 2009). The Natron WMA process began four years ago and is still in the process of being officially legitimized. The fact that it takes this amount of time is based on the social processes and steps in order to establish a WMA. A crucial element is the fact that a 'community', however it may be defined, must apply to become a WMA to the Director of Wildlife (Nelson, 2007). The Director of Wildlife, and therefore the Ministry, has a final say in the establishment of a WMA. Hence, the Ministry has criteria that must be met. This includes that a WMA has a) a considerable amount of accessible resources that are b) environmentally sustainable, whilst c) having substantial economic significance and d) belonging to one or more villages (MNRT, 2003). This ethnography does not explicitly attempt to recognize these criteria in the Natron WMA setting but

they are still significant in terms of understanding expectations. If these are the criteria that the community must uphold, to what degree do they (dis) agree with them? When the criteria are met, then a 7-step process provided by the facilitating NGO, AWF (African Wildlife Foundation), can be followed:

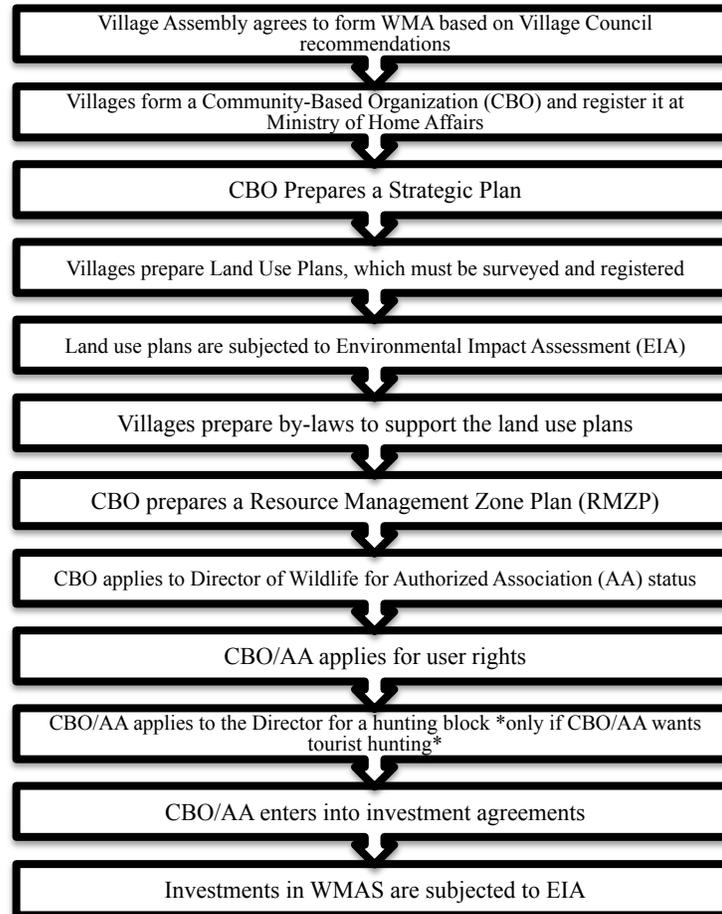
1. Awareness-raising about wildlife, land-use and common rights
2. Agreeing through the village assembly to proceed
3. Land-use planning and zoning for the WMA
4. Registering a community-based organization (CBO) to become a legally recognized Authorized Association (AA) to manage the WMA
5. Gazetting the WMA and obtaining legal rights to wildlife
6. Working with an investor to create a community-based venture
7. Monitoring the WMA

(Nelson, 2007)

The process presented above is a simple breakdown. Who is this process even for? A 12-step process has been developed as can be seen below (see Figure 1), which is based on Ministry policy and previous WMA research (Nelson, 2007). By examining the process, ethnographic information can be obtained as a process consists primarily of expectations; they are expectations of the WMA discourse and of contemporary conservation. I want to especially stress the influence of various actors within the discourse as can be seen in the two charts. The 7-step version emphasizes on the empowerment of people, which the facilitating NGO wants to exemplify. However, the 12-step process (see Figure 1) portrays that there is no complete devolution throughout this process; the central government still retains a lot of power. This is apparent because in the 12-step process, numerous steps involve applying to the Ministry or a form of central government. This means that there is a possibility of being rejected for not meeting certain criteria. In the 7-step process, “self-mobilization” is occurring, the 7<sup>th</sup> typology in Pimbert & Pretty’s model (1994) (see Table 1 pg. 28). The 7-step process seems to reflect theory whilst the 12-step process depicts reality. Regardless, both processes depict that various actors come into play within the process as a whole.

### **2.8.2 - Actors**

In natural resource management literature, actors are often viewed as stakeholders constructed on the concept of benefit sharing (Reed et al., 2009). The actors are considered based on the ‘stake’ that they hold within a conservation initiative. Stakeholders in CBC initiatives consist of individuals, peoples, and organizations that are affected by or can affect the process (Reed et al., 2009). Therefore, allowing them to be involved in decision-making to some degree.



**Figure 1** – Twelve steps to establish a WMA, simplified version (Adapted from Nelson, 2007)

Whilst this understanding of stakeholders exists, in this ethnography the term actor will be used over stakeholder. This is so because of the meager reduction that the term stakeholder does to an actor. As the notion is based on having a stake and benefits, it does not consider awareness or participation and other essential components within CBC discourse. In addition, I specifically chose not to use the term stakeholder because of the WMA research conference I attended in Arusha, Tanzania. During this conference it became evident that stakeholder was a concept that smuggles in assumptions of a global agenda. The term is found primarily in an institutional or NGO setting rather than a research site. The term stakeholder remained popular with policy-makers, regulators, governmental and non-governmental organizations, business, and the media (Friedman & Miles, 2006). As a researcher, I wanted to set myself apart from these positions and therefore made the choice to use the term actors over stakeholders as these hidden assumptions were not apparent. This conference depicted how there are actually only three actors within the WMA discourse that are constantly confronting one another: the policy-makers, the researchers, and lastly the local community. Policy makers and researchers are confronting the local

communities through technicalities such as maps and global discourses. Local communities are confronting policy makers and researchers by the heterogeneity of communities. Simultaneously, researchers are being confronted by ethical pressure from policy makers and an expectation of benefits from local communities. This distinction is quite general but using stakeholder remained inapplicable as the local community tends to be disregarded then. As this ethnography primarily focuses on the local community, an actor is the term that will be used.

According to WMA research, there is a certain level of institutional framework at both a village and district level that is deemed necessary in the WMA process (International Resources Group, 2000). In a progress report presented by the International Resource Group (2009) to USAID, a list of actors was compiled based on previous research. This included village councils, the Authorized Association (AA), the Village Assembly, the District Council, the District National Resources Advisory Board, the Wildlife Division, the Ministry, government facilitating institutions and lastly non-governmental facilitating institutions. In this list, the village councils, the AA, and the Village Assembly represent the local community. However, whether or not this is applicable in a Maa-speaking pastoralist setting was the question at hand – do they actually represent the local community when the communicative context they are representing differs? Are these actors a valid representation of the heterogeneity of the community in which the WMA is being established? To what degree do these various actors participate? Regardless, the Enduimet WMA has been established in the same district as the Natron WMA, the Longido district. Hence, there have already been Maa-speaking experiences and expectations of WMAs.

### **2.8.3 – Experiences of Maa-speaking Pastoralists**

Maa-speaking expectations of WMA discourse are discussed in this ethnography. However, this is not the first research that has been conducted under such a communicative context. On the eastern borders of the Natron WMA, the Enduimet WMA, a WMA that has existed for over a decade, is situated. Primarily Maasai pastoralists inhabit the Enduimet WMA and the WMA consists of 7 villages in the West-Kilimanjaro area. Numerous studies have been conducted (Kabiri, 2007; Minwary, 2009; Trench et al., 2009) in terms of the impact of changing conservation policies and outcomes of WMA interventions in this region. As Maasai are pastoralist peoples, conservation policies have affected their livelihoods most. Prior to implementation of WMAs, livelihoods were limited by the national prejudice against a nomadic lifestyle (Homewood & Rodgers, 1991). Even though interpretations of the Maasai have shifted from a destructive to custodial view, Maasai knowledge is inadequately considered in conservation processes such as the WMAs (Goldman, 2003). Pastoralism has not been considered

in initial planning stages of WMA strategies in Tanzania. Therefore, pastoralists are currently becoming the focus. A WMA centers on a precise zone-based land-use plan, which needs to be infused with seasonal Maasai grazing zones, posing a challenge to pastoralist livelihoods (Goldman, 2003).

In northern Tanzania, also known as the ‘northern tourist circuit’, issues of limited grazing land and natural resource access are actual struggles for many Maasai families (McCabe, 2003; Homewood & Randall, 2008; Homewood et al., 2009). Thus, Maa-speaking experiences of conservation and WMAs tend to be negative as people are distrustful of any ‘new’ initiatives (Goldman, 2003). In Longido district, where Enduimet WMA and Natron WMA are both situated, livestock remains a primary source of wealth (Homewood et al., 2009). Nonetheless, attempts at diversification are being made, partly due to WMA establishment. The means of livelihood diversification that are associated with the WMA consist of wildlife tourism-related revenue as well as hunting-related income (Homewood et al., 2009; Minwary, 2009). However, the impact of CBC efforts seems to benefit less than expected in the Enduimet WMA (Trench et al., 2009).

...while WMAs are present as a way for pastoralists to diversify their income sources with increasingly vulnerable livelihood, setting aside village land for conservation could mean people will lose access to resources that they depend on for basic livelihood strategies

(Minwary, 2009)

Although the quote represents findings on the Enduimet WMA, these factors can be considered in the Natron WMA as well. Why would a community take part in establishing a WMA that jeopardizes their livelihoods? The Enduimet WMA experiences have been heard over in the Natron WMA and similar fears and opinions of the WMA were apparent. Both positive and negative attitudes about the Enduimet WMA were expressed, yet a majority of my respondents all stated that the Lake Natron WMA would be better if it did not follow the same path as the Enduimet WMA. Nonetheless, the policy and structure is the same. Whether or not these expectations were translated in the WMA discourse is highlighted in this ethnography. As the theoretical framework has been laid, the following chapter will discuss the methodology that was used in order to conduct field research as well as the ethics and limitations that came to the foreground.

## Chapter 3 - Methodology

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Prior to considering this case study, my research must be placed in a communicative context. As anthropologist Johannes Fabian pointed out, language is the “most important medium in a communicative context” (1971), which played a large role in this ethnographic study. Ferguson (1999) highlighted this in his ethnography on expectations of modernity as well. The communicative context that I found myself in was one where three languages were intertwined with one another. In Tanzania, the lingua franca is Swahili but English is considered the second official language. However, in Maasailand this differs. Amongst the Maasai, Maa is the language that is most frequently spoken. When I walked from the bus stop to the guesthouse that I was staying in, I experienced this intricate mix of languages. Young children would just yell “hello” in English over and over again, even if you responded. Teenagers would greet me with *shikamo* (a Swahili term used for your elders to show respect, to which you must answer *marahaba*). Then there is the usual *mambo*, *habari*, and *jambo* in Swahili, as well as the Maa greeting *supa*. I came across each and every one of these types of greetings just in the short 5-minute walk to my guesthouse. Language barriers were therefore an aspect that played a role in this ethnography. I primarily conducted research through a research assistant as I only picked up minor words and phrases in Maa. However, what I did pick up allowed me to conduct research whilst being not only ethical but also polite. For example, I understood that when greeting an elder you have to say *shikamo* or when greeting a man in the same age-set as you, you greet them differently than a woman in the same age-set.

Nonetheless, I had to go through a research assistant, which impacted my research. Prior to entering the field I expressed that I needed to consider Borchgrevink’s (2003) five points when dealing with language barriers and interpreters. These were that a) you need to use a local interpreter, b) you should use several interpreters, c) using a trained interpreter is recommended, d) consider strategic intervening, and e) continuously do language training. When in the field I attempted to control all of these aspects. The research assistant I worked with is a local Maasai man, in his late 20’s, from a neighboring village within the Natron WMA. Although this may create bias, he has attended Conservation College in Tanzania and has worked with the organization that hosted my research before. He was also a trained interpreter as he was a research assistant before my fieldwork commenced, aiding in research on the Enduimet and Natron WMA. I was continuously considering strategic intervening as throughout interviews I ensured that he would not discuss something with respondents without translating it for me first. I

also continuously did language training to a certain degree as I was always in the field and spent a lot of time understanding the language that was being used in both formal interview settings and informal gatherings. However, language training in Maa was limited as dictionaries and language books are not so readily available. I made the methodological decision to not work with several interpreters as recommended because by the time I would have become comfortable with a second or third translator, too much time would have passed (Borchgrevink, 2003) for efficient results to be obtained. In addition, I made the methodological choice to call him a research assistant rather than interpreter or translator and I told him this from the start. I expressed that I wanted to work with somebody who would directly translate what people said but was also an assistant in the research process. He translated interviews from Maa or Swahili into English for me unless the interviews were conducted in English. Additionally, he helped arrange interviews and discussed both academic and practical themes with me allowing me to conduct effective ethnographic research. Nevertheless, this must still be considered throughout the ethnography as a both an advantage and limitation.

In order to understand expectations of conservation, I relied on qualitative anthropological methods. Qualitative research has various benefits. It provides a comprehensive understanding of human behavior and provides insight as to what governs such behavior. As I was dealing with expectations, a driving force of behavior, I needed to unravel what administers expectations. Meanwhile, qualitative methods create a locally relevant focus for the research (Bernard, 2006; Boeije, 2010). Based on previous literature, I originally entered the field thinking I was going to use Reed's et al. (2009) stakeholder analysis. As mentioned in my theoretical framework, once in the field it became evident that a stakeholder was a term that I did not want to use. Nonetheless, the methodological model remained a relevant tool to base my research off of. A stakeholder analysis is a methodological technique often used in development and natural resource management research consisting of various qualitative methods such as interviews, mapping, and etcetera (Johnson et al., 2004). The analysis is a process that defines and prioritizes aspects, individuals, groups, and organizations of a specific phenomenon that has been affected by a decision or action (Reed et al., 2009). In this ethnography, the phenomenon is the expectations of conservation/WMAs and the action is the establishment of the Natron WMA.

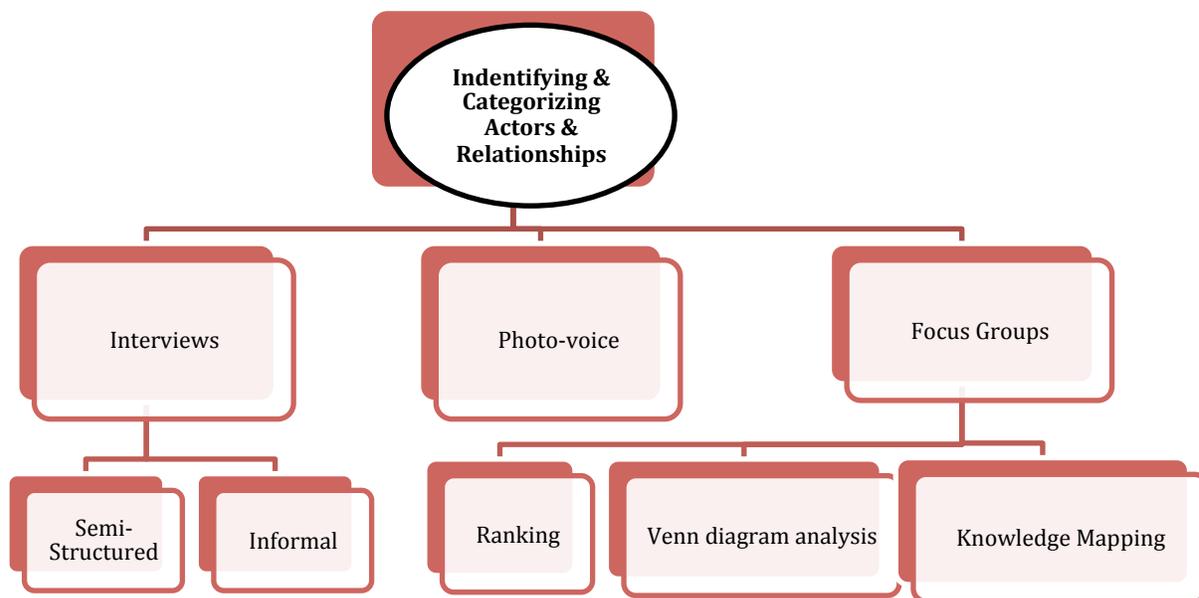
Once in the field, I narrowed my sample down to one village, Oltepesi. This changed my research question as well as my methodology. I made the methodological choice to base my research on one village, as basing my research on two other villages in the Natron WMA (Ketumbeine and

Orobomba) would not be feasible in the time allocated. This does not mean that I have disregarded the results from the few people in Orobomba that I interviewed because these respondents do add details about the WMA discourse amongst pastoralists in Tanzania. The reasons that I chose to focus on Oltepesi are elaborated on in Chapter 4, the case study of this ethnography.

The stakeholder analysis model was chosen as WMAs deal with many actors, a core element of the analysis. Stakeholder analyses provide awareness into potentially conflicting interests amongst stakeholders (Friedman & Miles, 2006; Prell et al., 2007). This model is based off of Reed's et al., (2009) study on the stakeholder analysis method. Active participation was claimed unnecessary from stakeholders during a stakeholder analysis unless ethnographic data is unavailable, if there is inadequate detail on the investigated population (Reed et al., 2009). I particularly needed active participation from stakeholders in the field as no ethnographic detail regarding the Maa-speaking community of Oltepesi and the Natron WMA existed. Thus, I particularly chose participatory qualitative methods in order to control for this. I used Reed's et al. (2009) schematic representation of the rationale, typology, and methods behind a stakeholder analysis to guide my research. Stakeholder analyses are ongoing processes as stakeholders are not stagnant; they are often changing making it a fluid model. Therefore, using this general methodological technique in my research only contributed to the ongoing stakeholder analysis that should be occurring in CBC research. There are three major steps in a stakeholder analysis process, consisting of different methods. During my field research, a full stakeholder analysis was not achievable given the research time frame. Thus I focused partially on all the steps: identifying stakeholders, differentiating between and categorizing stakeholders, and investigating relationships between stakeholders (Reed et al., 2009). I decided to partially take methods from each step but primarily focus on "Step 1: Identifying stakeholders" (Reed et al., 2009). This analysis loosely framed my methodology.

Using the stakeholder analysis schematic representation, I created my own model for identifying actors (see Figure 2). This model outlines the specific methods that I used based off of the stakeholder analysis. I chose these methods as they provided me with the optimum opportunity for answering my research question on Maa-speaking expectations of conservation and WMA discourse. It is key to note that snowball sampling was primarily used to obtain a research sample. Once again, I chose to create a similar model to that of Reed et al. (2009) because I believe it describes the typology and methods behind my methodological framework. The following

sections will outline each method and how they were conducted in the field. The order in which I describe my methodology is chronological, thus reflecting the changes in my research over my time in the field.



**Figure 2** – Schematic representation of methods for identifying stakeholders (adapted by author, 2013)

### 3.1 - Interviews

I conducted a total of 25 interviews with a sample of actors apart of the WMA process in Oltepesi. These interviews included talking to local government such as the Village Chairman or Village Ward Executive Officer, to elected members of the Oltepesi Authorized Association (AA), and to villagers that had never heard of the WMA but do live in Oltepesi. The network that I had the possibility of conducting interviews with was largely based on the network of my research assistant and host organization, which will be described further in this chapter. Nonetheless, I attempted to acquire a balanced mix of young and old, as well as male and female respondents. This did become more difficult than intended due to the fact that my research assistant and I are both men, which has cultural implications in regards to access amongst the Maasai. In the end my research assistant and I interviewed a total of 8 women and 17 men.

The semi-structured interviews that my research assistant and I conducted required time, transport and a controlled environment as I recorded them. These interviews were generally structured depending on the livelihoods of respondents. For example, if I were going to interview young men I would go in the early morning or late evening before or after they take their cattle grazing.

If I were interviewing a woman it would primarily be in their homesteads during the day, whilst they were in between household chores and the market. If I interviewed elderly people, it would be at any time of the day. Interviews were often postponed due to unforeseen circumstances. My research assistant and I would travel to the various interview sites in Oltepesi by motorcycle taxi, walking, or using the host organization's car. Ideally the interviews would be conducted in a controlled setting like the car or a neutral building such as an office or empty classroom, but most of the times it was in various homesteads (*bomas*).

The semi-structured interviews were conducted to gain a detailed understanding of what people knew and expected of the WMA and what conservation meant to them. My research assistant played a large role before, during, and after all of these interviews. He helped arrange the meetings with respondents, translated all of the interviews, and furthermore aided in discussing and transcribing the interviews. All of the semi-structured interviews were recorded. Having a controlled interview site is important as flies and heavy tropical rains often interfered with recordings. This experience also emphasized the importance of an interview guide (see Appendix I) in order to loosely direct interviews. My interviews, research assistant, and interview guide, followed a funnel structure in order to avoid the deference effect; that respondents say what I want them to say (Hennink, 2010). My research assistant aided too at times as he had a copy of my interview guide and reminded me of questions that I forgot. There were many distractions such as a woman with a crying newborn child on her lap, flies and bedbugs everywhere, children in the doorway fascinated by my *mzungu* (Swahili word for foreign) skin, people pulling my leg hair, or even gusts of wind. Luckily the interview guide and my research assistant helped me stay on track.

The informal interviews conducted were based on impromptu conversations that I had with people. This included many previously interviewed respondents from Oltepesi that I would talk to for a second or third time as I bumped into them drinking *chai* (Swahili word for tea) and eating *ugali* (Tanzanian national maize porridge) in Longido town where I was living. This also included people that I met during my homestay in Longido. Although these informal interviews did not only take place with people from Oltepesi, they cannot be overlooked because they provided details of the WMA discourse. I would also include conversations with my research assistant as informal interviews because he would often tell me about various aspects of Maasai culture or conservation in Tanzania, which were not structured.

### **3.2 - Photo-voice**

A photo-voice is “a process by which people can identify, represent, and enhance their community through a specific photographic technique” (Wang, 1997). This technique consists of giving a camera to respondents and asking them to photograph a specific topic. I used this method by asking respondents to take pictures of what aspects of their livelihoods they thought the WMA would improve and what benefits they would gain. I used a disposable camera to conduct this exercise. My research assistant and I walked with the respondents to allow them to explain what they were photographing during the process. I conducted three photo-voices and in two of the three, I had to alter the question to what they think conservation would improve rather than the WMA, as they could not relate to the term WMA. Nonetheless, this exercise reemphasized the shift of conservation discourse to one where intrinsic values need consideration as most photographs were based on the intrinsic value of specific species. This will be elaborated on in the discussion chapter (Chapter 5) of this ethnography.

### **3.3 - Focus Groups**

I considered focus groups to be my principal mean of collecting data, as this method is what my host organization, Sauti Moja, primarily uses as well. The host organization has created a platform to give people a voice by means of focus group discussions. Most of my focus groups were originally based on Sauti Moja’s network but through the focus groups I conducted, my own network was created where I was able to speak to an assortment of people, occasionally more than once but in different group arrangements. My research assistant and I would consider which target group we wanted to speak to and then discuss with the host organization in order to try and arrange the focus group. I conducted a total of 8 focus groups in the field with groups no larger than four at a time. In these focus groups we discussed the WMA, influences and interests in conservation and expectations of conservation and land-use. By having small groups, it allowed for more voices to be heard. Nevertheless, I ensured that throughout the focus groups I got answers from each participant. In some cases I noticed that one participant would be more vocal than another. Consequently, I would tell my research assistant to direct the next question at a participant that was less responsive in order to create a fruitful group discussion.

Although the focus groups were not structured, the technique generated data on complex issues that often require a degree of discussion. The subjects I focused on were also based on the Maasai age-sets, which play an important role in decision-making amongst Maasai communities (Goldman, 2003). Therefore, I deliberately chose to conduct a focus group with an array of

participants from elder men and women to the warrior age-set of men and the equivalent for women. This resulted in me speaking to a total of 12 women and 18 men during my focus groups, with different positions within the community. I spoke to members of the Oltepesi AA, the Village Council, the Land-Use Plan Committee and other village project committees such as a women empowerment group and a borehole committee for Oltepesi. However, men and women were always kept separate when conducting focus groups. This was done for ethical purposes as my host organization and research assistant stated it was culturally necessary. Similar to the semi-structured interviews, I used a focus group guide to loosely pilot these focus groups (see Appendix II) alongside my research assistant to avoid the deference effect. In addition, the focus groups I conducted were participatory so these gatherings could become a means of discussing relevant issues within the conservation discourse rather than just getting answers to my questions. Therefore, my research assistant and I conducted a Venn diagram analysis, a ranking exercise, and a knowledge mapping exercise within certain focus groups. Each participatory focus group method provided insight into a different aspect, be it the perception of conservation within the community as in the Venn diagrams, the importance of conservation in the ranking exercise, or lastly the importance of land in WMA discourse as the mapping exercise portrayed. The following paragraphs will outline these methods further.

### **3.3.1 - Venn diagram analysis**

The Venn diagram analysis consisted of participants in the focus group comparing the involvement of the traditional government (*mila* – Maa word) and central government (*serikali* – Swahili word) and placing various community issues in one or the other categories. The diagram was drawn on a large A0 sheet of paper and then various themes were stuck on using sticky notes. The Venn diagram analysis was piloted after having conducted approximately 10 interviews so that a better understanding of what issues were pressing to the Maa-speaking community in Oltepesi could be obtained. Based on these preliminary interviews it became evident that the *mila* and *serikali* both played a role in the community, yet the question was to what degree? The distinction of *mila* and *serikali* was also used as the central government was often referred to as something that people did not take part in, whilst the *mila* represented the people. Throughout the interviews, common themes were defined. These were reinforced by my research assistant's personal knowledge and previous research that was conducted at my host organization. The Venn diagram analysis therefore attempts to understand how conservation and the WMA are perceived, as traditional or imposed notions. Examples of some of the themes are as follows: *land, traditional zones for calves, traditional zones for dry season, traditional settlement zones,*

*temporary homesteads, conservation, WMA, water, education, investors, livestock, wildlife, poaching, tourism, charcoal-burning, cutting of tress, family conflicts, meetings, rituals, natural hazards, community, hunting, health, and cultivation.* These were common topics amongst Maa-speaking pastoralists in Oltepesi and therefore provided insight into the relation of such themes between traditional and imposed entities (see Appendix III).

### 3.3.2 - Ranking exercise

Following the success of the Venn diagram analysis, I wanted to analyze the importance of these common themes highlighted in the Venn diagram analysis. The ranking exercise made participants rank the issues with dried beans using a scale of 1-5, 1 being least important and 5 being most important. Participants placed the amount of beans that they deemed appropriate in the corresponding squares, creating an apparent distinction on whether or not WMAs, conservation, and other common themes within the discourse are significant. The picture below (see Figure 3) provides an example of how it was carried out. As can be seen, I drew boxes representing each one of the common themes and used a jar of dry beans (*marage*) as counting units in order for the participants to use something they were familiar with. I had the participants sit in a semi-circle around the paper with my research assistant and I sitting across from them.



**Figure 3** – Image of the focus group ranking taking place. Sticks used to simply keep the beans in place and rocks used to keep the paper from blowing away (Photograph by author)

My research assistant would translate each theme, as I could not assume that every participant could read the Maa translations on the paper. I also ensured that everyone could participate by giving five dried beans to a different person for each theme so that everyone had a chance of placing the beans within the squares. In this exercise, importance of these themes was emphasized. Unfortunately, as this was a process I conducted closer to the end of my field research, I was only able to conduct two ranking exercises with a focus group of men and a focus group of women.

### **3.3.3 - Knowledge mapping**

Originally, I was not going to conduct a knowledge mapping exercise in my research as I expected that interviews and focus group discussions would provide enough insight into the relevance of land-use in WMA discourse. However, I was mistaken. During one of my first focus groups, somebody requested to draw out the land in order to explain the various zones and resources found in Oltepesi. It became evident that not only the land-use plans formed for the WMA are relevant but also all the traditional land-use zones must be considered. The mapping exercise was conducted to examine traditional Maasai conservation expectations. The exercise was completed in five focus groups, which resulted in comprehensive results in regards to peoples' awareness of natural resource use and land-use in Oltepesi. The following two images provide an example of the mapping exercise and how the same knowledge was mapped in all cases (see Figure 4). Traditional natural resource use and land-use was considered common knowledge amongst various respondents. The images also depict how the mapping exercises varied from being drawn by sticks in the dirt by two members of the Land-Use Plan Committee to being drawn on paper and annotated by the AA members of Oltepesi. Regardless, the mapping exercise will be further discussed in Chapter 5, the discussion chapter of this ethnography. This section simply defines the exercise methodologically.



**Figure 4** – Two different focus group mapping exercises of Oltepesi village (Photograph by author)

These methods that I have outlined above all relate to the qualitative nature of research that I have conducted. I am aware that through such methodology I must always consider my own subjectivity. Due to having been to Oltepesi prior to conducting field research, I was wary of the fact that I could easily assume something to be true. Being conscious of my research assistant's subjectivity was just as important. As he is of Maasai descent and is originally from a village within the Natron WMA, I had to be aware of the network that he has established and how this may provide one perspective. Thus, I discussed the connection and context of each respondent that my research assistant got hold of to try and better control this subjectivity. In addition, the results of my research were obtained over a three-month period and represent one site and a limited number of people. Nonetheless, I attempted to challenge the subjective nature of a small scale, short-term research where I, the researcher, was the instrument. Through the use of the multiple data collection methods that I outlined above, I strive to intensify the validity and reliability of my research (Boeije, 2010; DeWalt & DeWalt, 2011).

As my methodology attempts to eliminate subjectivity, it also aims at conducting ethical research. Ethically speaking, an anthropologist should primarily be concerned with research subjects as "there is a need to reexamine the place of human concern in our pursuit of science" (Bourgois, 2012:330). In many cases within contemporary sciences, this aspect is forgotten. Personal ethics need consideration as well, but first and foremost are research participants: your subjects. In the sciences, people are often reduced to "statistics for purposes of observation [which] appears to be inconsequential" (Deloria, 2012:206). This is where my ethnographic methodology hopefully differs.

In the academic discourse of anthropology, a formulated set of rules in regards to ethically conducting fieldwork exists. Therefore, various approaches to research affect information access in the field. In this case study, the host organization, Sauti Moja, created a specific network to be accessed, which comes with a set of assumptions too. "Anthropologists have an obligation to distinguish the different kinds of interdependencies and collaborations their work involves" (AAA Code of Ethics, 2012). In this ethnography these relations are essential. For example, this ethnography is part of the vision of the Canadian-based host NGO, Sauti Moja, meaning *one voice* in Swahili. The NGO primarily works on capacity building, education, child mothers, sustainable livelihoods, and HIV/AIDS. As Sauti Moja hosted my research, there are certain implications that are in place. People often assumed that I was taking part in one of Sauti Moja's projects and not conducting independent research. In the field I had to deal with three interests;

the Maasai interests, the institutional interests of NGOs or governmental organizations, and the researcher interests. This is based on the fact that in the field I distinguished that there are three main actors or stakeholders and the interests represent that I dealt with them in the field.

The most ethical concerns I encountered in the field were based on these three interests and interdependencies. First of all, being hosted by the NGO, Sauti Moja, had many ethical implications for me as a researcher. However, these were not necessarily negative implications but more like guidelines that I had to follow in the field. I had to follow the organization's ethical standards as well as my own. For example, I financially compensated all of my subjects/participants. This was something that Sauti Moja did with all their participants. Being host to my research, I was an external representative of the organization and therefore had to continue to do so. My research assistant emphasized the importance of financially compensating participants. In contemporary Tanzania, this is an expectation when research is being conducted. When I attended a WMA conference in Arusha, Tanzania, about an upcoming research project, the issue of financial compensation was brought to light as well. In this case, the researchers were going to financially compensate participants with phone credit. After the conference, my research assistant stressed how he talked to people being compensated by phone credit and how they felt it was an irrelevant form of compensation. Furthermore, I also talked to other researchers who were compensating participants with care packages of staple foods, such as tea, bread, and rice. However, the tea was in teabags and bread is not considered part of a typical Maasai diet. These details made me decide that monetary compensation would be the best choice and that I would stick to my host organizations interests.

Secondly, my way 'in' to the field was through a PhD candidate from McGill University in Canada. He has been conducting WMA field research, specifically in the Enduimet WMA and currently the Natron WMA. Although he was not in Tanzania during my time in the field, he aided me in establishing contacts. Through his own research he made it possible for me to come in contact with my research assistant, with my host organization, as well as a network of researchers. His network made it possible for me to attend this WMA research project conference in Arusha, providing an understanding of WMAs in a larger, national context. The ethical implications of this that I have considered are that any associations people may have with him are linked to me, which in the end turned out to be a helpful feat.

Lastly, my role as a researcher in Tanzania was an ethical concern on its own. This became apparent when I attended this conference in Arusha. At this conference community, government, civil society, and conservationist representatives were all present. Representatives from the Ministry and conservation organizations stated that researchers needed to rethink their role in Tanzania. They emphasized that there were too many researchers in Tanzania. As I had only been in Tanzania for a few weeks at this point, the ethical implications of my research became more apparent than I was aware of. It dawned upon me that when research is written it is “a powerful factor influencing what happens when the people we write about read what we write” (Greenberg, 2012:218). This is what the representatives were discussing and therefore I, as a researcher, must be aware that what I write as an anthropologist may be read and will be contested (Sluka, 2012). Therefore, this ethnography on its own is an ethical concern that I have taken into consideration. Doing your own field research is quite a unique experience; you truly have to motivate yourself to make things happen. Nobody is going to tell you to get to work. Nobody is going to watch whether you do it “right” or “wrong”. It’s just you. Therefore, ethics need to be considered in this case study of Maa-speaking pastoralists in Oltepesi. This will all lead to answering the question of **how expectations of conservation relate to wildlife management area (WMA) discourse in pastoralist Maa-speaking Oltepesi, Tanzania?**

## **Chapter 4 - Case Study: Oltepesi, Tanzania & Lake Natron WMA**

### **4.1 - Population**

The population that this ethnography focuses on is primarily Maasai. The landscape where the Natron WMA is located is considered the Tarangire-Manyara ecosystem or the Maasai Steppe Heartland (Goldman, 2003). The Maasai are an indigenous pastoralist group found in northern Tanzania and southern Kenya. They occupy over 150,000 km<sup>2</sup> of what is considered Maasailand (McCabe et al., 2010). In this ethnography the livelihood that is linked to the Maasai will be considered: pastoralism. The research population is known for keeping large numbers of cattle, goats, and sheep and seasonally migrating depending on grazing lands and access to resources. In a contemporary context, Maasai are becoming more sedentary as they are diversifying their livelihoods to include more non-livestock related means of income (Homewood et al., 2012). Most people in Maasailand are diversifying through cultivation or small businesses (Homewood et al., 2006; Muruthi & Frohart, 2006; McCabe, 2003; McCabe et al., 2010). Nonetheless, Maasai pastoralism remains a form of land-use in Tanzania that relies on zones of land as grazing resources across the ecosystem throughout the year (Goldman, 2003).

Amongst the Maasai population, social organization is based on marriage and family relationships, territory, and the age-set organization (McCabe et al., 2010). These are the aspects that drive the community. According to my research assistant, age-set classifications are everlasting (Personal communication, research assistant [Male Maasai – *English interview*], 25/02/14). Therefore, I had to take this into account; the various age-sets that were involved with the WMA and/or conservation would impact village participation. For example, a recently married 19-year-old woman in Oltepesi told me that she could not participate in village matters because she was recently married. According to her, her age-set could not participate until they were married and 30 (Personal communication, Oltepesi woman [Maasai], 22/01/14). The Maasai have often been romanticized as being ‘custodians of wildlife’ and have indeed historically been more tolerant of wildlife than many neighboring tribes in Tanzania and Kenya (Goldman, 2003). According to a *mzee* (Swahili for elder) in Oltepesi, the Maasai are “conservationists by nature” (Personal communication, Oltepesi elder [Male Maasai], 13/02/14). The chairman of the WMA (CBO Chairman) repeated this as well, emphasizing the importance of the relation between the Maasai and nature. As previously stated, in this ethnography the population is referred to as Maa-speaking rather than Maasai because I am dealing with a communicative context not just an ethnic group. Maa-speaking pastoralists provides clarification into the Tanzanian reality.

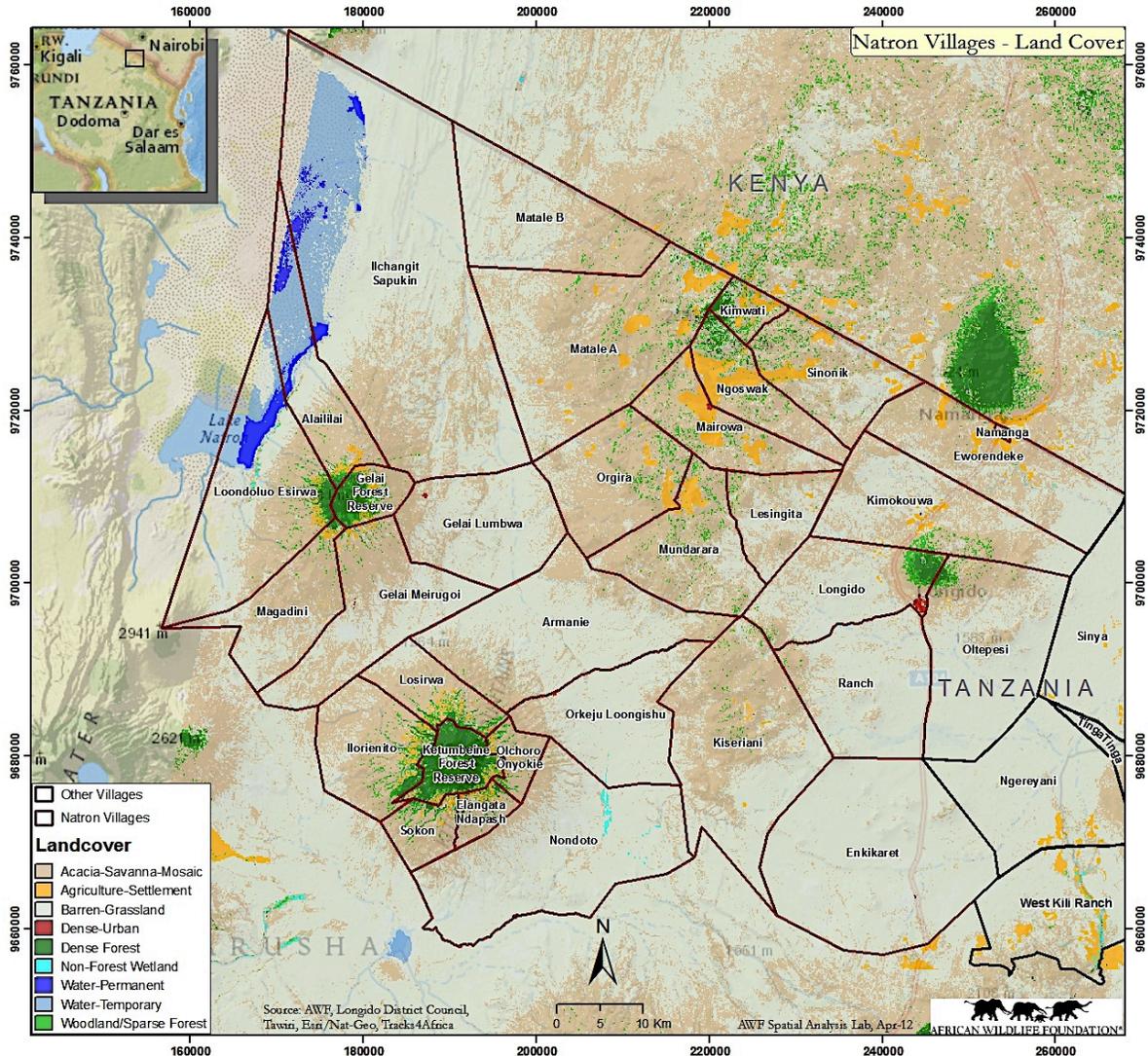


Figure 5 – A map of the Natron WMA and the 32 villages that are apart of it (Natron CBO, 2014)

## 4.2 - Oltepesi

I conducted my research in Oltepesi, a village in the eastern part of the Longido district in northern Tanzania (see Figure 5). Oltepesi is a member village of the Lake Natron WMA. This arid and semi-arid ecosystem does not have any paved roads and the trees are brown with dust as the sun reflects off the bright green leaves. Through the dense, thorny bushes, spots of bright red and blue can be seen as the villagers of Oltepesi walk around in their *shuka*, traditional Maasai cloths. There has not been much previous research conducted in this exact village, making it a unique research site by providing insight into Maa-speaking pastoralist conservation expectations and the WMA discourse. According to the Village Chairman of the Oltepesi, the village was previously a sub-village of the neighboring town Longido until about four years ago (Personal

communication, Oltepesi Village Chairman [Male Maasai], 27/02/14). Longido is a central town for the district since the head offices for the District Commissioner and various NGOs are situated there. In addition it is on the Arusha-Nairobi highway, being a key transportation hub between Tanzania and Kenya. Oltepesi is a village that lacks the infrastructure that Longido town has. Oltepesi consists of five sub-villages and approximately 82 *bomas* (homesteads) according to the Village Chairman (Personal communication, Oltepesi Village Chairman [Male Maasai], 27/02/14).

I traveled to Oltepesi by foot, by my host organizations car or by the *boda-bodas*, motorcycle taxis. The Oltepesi Village Office, where the Village Ward Executive Officer was situated, is also located in Longido because there is no infrastructure to support this office in Oltepesi yet. Most inhabitants of Oltepesi go to Longido daily because this is where markets and shops can be found. I made the methodological choice to live in Longido and travel to Oltepesi to conduct interviews or focus groups. This was in order to distance myself from my research subjects and to allow myself to have evenings to reflect upon and transcribe interviews. Nonetheless, the intimate network that is created in Oltepesi and Longido affected research. When I arrived in Longido for the first time by bus, my bag was being thrown off the roof and there I was, in a town with one tarmac road and a few buildings; a *mzungu* (foreigner) with his backpack. My phone had no signal so I had to find my research assistant another way, by going to the ‘human watering hole’ – a bar. I walked over to the *Mama Nancy* bar, where a man immediately started speaking to me in English, asking me what I was doing in Tanzania and why I was in Longido. I mentioned my host organization (Sauti Moja), my research assistant, and the informant (the PhD candidate from McGill) that introduced me to this site and he knew exactly whom I was talking about. He immediately connected me with my research assistant and there I was, instantly in the field. This arrival exhibited how strong these networks are between Longido and Oltepesi; an element to consider when defining community.

Although there are numerous committees and positions held in Oltepesi, there were only certain actors that I came in contact with. Oltepesi has a Village Chairman that is elected locally every four years. On the other hand there is a Village Ward Executive Officer appointed by the Ministry every four years that reports back to the central government. In this case, the current Village Ward Executive Officer in Oltepesi was actually from Oltepesi, however, through interviews I conducted in Orobomba (neighboring village), I discovered that this position does not have to be filled by somebody from the village. For example, the Orobomba Village Ward Executive Officer

was in fact from Monduli, a bordering district. These two positions highlighted an example of devolution versus decentralization as the Village Chairman is locally elected and the Village Ward Executive Officer is centrally appointed to a local level. In addition, there are members of the traditional government, the *olaigwanani* (Maa for traditional leader), that meet in order to discuss relevant issues within the community. According to an *olaigwanak* that my research assistant and I interviewed, it was not until the demarcation of borders and villages that the traditional government did so as well; previously being part of the traditional government was not organized as it currently is (Personal communication, Oltepesi *olaigwanak* [Male Maasai], 20/02/14). Lastly, in each village there are sub-villages. In the case of Oltepesi there are five. For each sub-village there is a chairman (*balози* – Maa word) that plays a role in decision-making for their sub-village, reporting to the Village Chairman. All these positions of representation in Oltepesi were encountered in the field and it became evident that their role in conservation practices does not differ based on their position. What differed was what information they had access to, as the facilitating NGO (AWF) would reach the Village Ward Executive Officer prior to a *balози*.

I chose Oltepesi primarily because of its location and what that has to offer for my research. It is situated on the border with the Enduimet WMA and many people that I interviewed also based their expectations of conservation and WMAs on this. These included things such as the WMA compensating for livestock killed by wildlife and the WMA putting a fence around wildlife. This creates a unique parameter for my research. Oltepesi is also a village that is furthest east in the Natron WMA (see Figure 5 pg. 52), which provides a characteristic stance in regards to defining the WMA community. It allowed me to explore whether or not community members of Oltepesi have similar expectations of conservation as the whole Natron WMA states the community has. Majority of people in Oltepesi were not aware of the 32 other villages that were part of the WMA and did not consider the breeding ground for the large population of lesser flamingoes on the eastern shores of Lake Natron as a species that needed conserving. However, these lesser flamingoes are a top priority of the WMA as a whole (as will be expressed later), which is not translated to the village level in Oltepesi. Furthermore, Oltepesi shares borders with Longido town, a highway town between Tanzania and Kenya. This town is, as many of my respondents told me, one where poaching occurs because all the game meat is brought to the highway to be traded and exported. Longido town is the ‘capital’ or hub of Longido district and the District Commissioner is situated there, adding a political aspect to the participation and expectations within Oltepesi. Lastly, Oltepesi is unique because it has been part of various tourist-hunting

blocs over the years. This means that hunting tourism has occurred in the past, an important element to take into consideration in regards to conservation. All of this builds upon the fact that it is a village within the Natron WMA, a CBC initiative unfolding in a Maa-speaking, pastoralist portion of Tanzania.

### **4.3 - Lake Natron WMA**

Previous studies on the Enduimet WMA described that local community actors within the WMA were unaware of the initiative and its effect, let alone the environmental and financial benefits that were assumed to come with the WMA (Kabiri, 2007; Trench et al., 2009; Minwary, 2009). Regardless, there has been no extensive research conducted regarding what the expectations of the WMA discourse are. The Enduimet WMA borders the eastern part of the Longido district and the eastern border of the Natron WMA. On the map you can see that the Enduimet WMA continues east from Sinya and Tinga Tinga (see Figure 5 pg. 52). This is where the Natron WMA begins, extending to the eastern shores of Lake Natron. Lake Natron is a shallow endorheic soda lake 610 meters above sea level, meaning that it holds water without allowing outflow into other external bodies of waters and equilibrates through evaporation (Muruthi & Frohart, 2006). The Lake Natron WMA is in the process of being officially registered by the Ministry and therefore, there is no CBO or AA head office as compared to other WMAs, such as the Burunge WMA. There is no archive or files in regards to the WMA procedure that are accessible to the public. One of the last steps of the WMA process is applying for user rights (see Figure 1 pg. 36), which was still underway when I left the field. Thus, the WMA is still not officially registered and legalized.

The Lake Natron WMA will consist of 32 villages and has a landscape that varies from barren grasslands in Oltepesi, temporary and permanent waters on the eastern shores of Lake Natron, open woodlands in Longido, grassland savannas in Kimokowa, seasonal riparian vegetation in Ngoswak, to dense forests in Gelai or Ketumbeine (see Figure 5 pg. 52). According to the Resource Zone Management Plan (RZMP) created by various actors within the Natron WMA, this area is perfect for a conservation intervention. It is the “world’s only known breeding site for Lesser Flamingos (*Phoeniconaias minor*)...in addition to abundant and diverse wildlife species including the rare Oryx (*Oryx gazella*), Gerenuk (*Litocranius walleri*), and Black Leopards (*Panthera pardus*)” (Lake Natron CBO, 2014). The climate consists of rain scarcity in terms of onset and amount. This is hypothesized as being a result of climate change and

variability. On average, rainfall amounts to 500mm per year (Lake Natron CBO, 2014). During my fieldwork, many respondents stated how the rains were always changing and that drought remains a major concern within the community. This is especially the case due to the 2009 drought that wiped out the majority of peoples' livestock. In some cases, herds in the hundreds were shrunk to the tens (Personal communication, Oltepesi Village Chairman [Male Maasai], 27/02/14). This description of the Lake Natron WMA intends to clarify the WMA context in which Oltepesi is positioned. Furthermore, the institutional influences on my research must be described to fully understand this case study.

#### **4.4 - Institutional Influences**

In this section the institutional influences on my research will be discussed. This is closely linked to the actors that I distinguished in Chapter 2, the theoretical framework, in regards to WMAs: organizations/policy-makers, researchers, and the local community. As the Maa-speaking pastoralist community is the subject of this study I did not consider them as an institutional influence. Rather I focused on influences such as my host organization Sauti Moja and the facilitating NGO, the African Wildlife Foundation. In this case study, the influence of researchers on my research needs to be described too since it also played a role.

Firstly, the African Wildlife Foundation (AWF), as the facilitating NGO of WMAs in Tanzania needs to be described. It is an international NGO established in 1961 with a mission to ensure that the wildlife and wild lands of Africa will endure forever with the people. They aim at working in partnership with African individuals, local communities, and institutions (Muruthi & Frohart, 2006) in order to conserve landscapes with a high biodiversity value. Such areas extend across state, private and community lands and therefore the AWF aids in the facilitation of conservation initiatives. They assist numerous conservation initiatives in east Africa such as WMAs. For Oltepesi, the closest AWF office is in Namanga, on the border with Kenya, or to the south in Arusha. There are two reasons why the AWF is an important influence to consider within my research: 1) the AWF also facilitated the establishment of the Enduimet WMA, resulting in conflicts between local communities and the NGO (Minwary, 2009) and 2) the Natron WMA is situated in a particular project hosted by the AWF: the Kilimanjaro Heartland program. Respondents always referred to the AWF as the facilitating NGO of the Natron WMA. Whenever a meeting or step in the WMA process was mentioned, the AWF was seen as the facilitator. For example, the Oltepesi Land-Use Plan (LUP) Committee had not met in the past three years. I asked the Chairman why and he told me it was because the AWF had not facilitated a meeting

(Personal communication, Oltepesi LUP Committee Chairman [Male Maasai], 13/03/14). The AWF works with various landholders from government officials, to local authorities, to individuals and communities with the aim of conserving (Muruthi & Frohart, 2006). The AWF is highly involved in the Natron WMA establishment, depicting how the WMA is being created under a solid institutional setting. The AWF plays a large role in deciding the discourse, as a member of the Oltepesi AA reiterated when he told me that the pamphlets and guidebooks that the AA members received from the AWF were only in English and Swahili, no Maa (Personal communication, Oltepesi AA Representative [Male Maasai], 10/03/14). This depicts how the AWF, as facilitating NGO, plays a large role in influencing the WMA discourse in Oltepesi.

Although the AWF had a transnational influence on my fieldwork, my host organization had a local influence on my research. My research was hosted by Sauti Moja, a Canadian-based charity NGO focused on linking donors to community projects of the Maasai in Kenya and Tanzania. Sauti Moja focuses on community initiatives such as the education of vulnerable girls and children about HIV/AIDS prevention or workshops on sustainable livelihoods. The Tanzanian-based office, Sauti Moja – Tanzania, was established based off of collaborations in 2010 between Sauti Moja staff members and Maasai leaders in the Longido district. Currently, the local staff consists of both men and women who play an active role in their community. These communities are found within the district of Longido, and major projects are conducted in Longido (town), Oltepesi, Mairowa, Ngoswak, and Ketumbeine (see Figure 5 pg. 52). The belief driving Sauti Moja is that the Maasai are an indigenous pastoralist group that have encountered great challenges and thus capacity building and understanding the intricate realities that the Maasai are living in is needed. Part of this vision includes understanding where wildlife conservation comes to play as it reaches high on the pastoral agenda. Through my research being hosted by Sauti Moja, an entire network unfolded. Although I had a sizable chain of connections available to me, all these contacts came with assumptions in regards to the NGO and myself. As previously stated, the ethical dimension of compensating participants was an influence that having this network had on my research. As the NGO has not conducted any projects regarding conservation, through hosting my research, the organization is taking a stepping-stone to understanding an aspect of Maasai livelihoods that has previously not received much attention. This is where the institutional influences of researchers come to play.

As previously mentioned, my way into the field was through a PhD candidate conducting research on WMAs, specifically on issues of governance and political participation in the

Enduimet WMA. This ethnographic research will collaborate with his and therefore ethical implications on my research must be considered. For example, a pre-existing network was provided to me, which I would otherwise not have had access to in such a short time frame. Although this collaboration has its ethical implications, the influence of being a researcher and talking to researchers is even more vital in understanding the institutional influences on my research. At the conference in Arusha that I attended I met a group of Danish researchers who were conducting research on the Enduimet WMA and wanted to test their methodology in the Natron WMA. Thus, they asked to meet me to discuss our studies. The meeting was a relief to me as I noticed that some of the same themes were expressed such as the modern/technical, imposed nature of the WMA, the importance of zoning, and the conservation discourse in general.

Nonetheless, to my surprise, it was at this meeting where the different power relations and assumptions attached to previous networks came to light; institutional influences were apparent. There was a man from the AWF at the restaurant at the same time as our meeting and he questioned what we were doing there. I explained the research that I was conducting and then he questioned the reliability of my research: “how can your research represent WMAs if you are only focusing on one village? How can you know if you have only been here for such a short period?” (Personal communication, AWF Representative [Male Maasai – *English interview*], 03/03/14). These questions were alarming and made me reposition the influence that being a researcher has my research. To a certain degree, the man was right. I told the man that I cannot make generalization on all WMAs in Tanzania of course, and that my research is a case study on the expectations of CBC. This event highlighted the importance of ethnography, the importance of stories. This was also an example of where the two institutional influences of the AWF and myself as a researcher collided as my research assistant told me that the AWF has received bad publicity over the past years and is therefore trying to “clean their image” (Personal communication, research assistant [Male Maasai – *English interview*], 03/03/14). Thus, all these institutional influences, from the AWF, to Sauti Moja, to researchers in Tanzania, have all been considered in this case study. Moreover, the discussion of this ethnography will analyze how the expectations of conservation amongst the Maa-speaking pastoralists relate to the Lake Natron WMA discourse.

## **Chapter 5 - Discussion**

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Deciding on how to discuss my results was challenging; I could present it based on data themes or chronologically based on my methodology. However, I decided to structure my analysis on the paradigm shifts in conservation discourse. The shift from fortress-based conservation to CBC has occurred and can be seen in the Lake Natron WMA. Regardless, the persistence of a “fortress” approach to conservation is also apparent. It seems that a third shift is occurring; one where conservation discourse is based on emphasizing the intrinsic value of natural resources. Although previous research is limited on this subject, my ethnographic research highlights such a shift. In the following discussion, I will attempt to elaborate on how these paradigm shifts come to light using the Maa-speaking pastoralist expectations of the Lake Natron WMA. The sections will also underline how the conservation conversation needs to be understood within these shifting paradigms.

### **5.1 - WMA Discourse as Community-Based Conservation**

After arriving in Tanzania, I understood that awareness of the Lake Natron WMA is where my research would have to start. Previous research stated that a lack of awareness tends to be a challenge of WMA discourse (Igoe & Croucher, 2007; Kaswamila, 2012). Therefore, I made it a priority to ask people whether or not they had heard of the WMA and what this means to them from the beginning (see Appendix I). I made this clear to my research assistant; I wanted to explore the relevance of WMAs within the Maa-speaking pastoralist community. The results of these initial interviews stressed how the literal notion of WMAs is perceived. For example, in the second interview that I conducted, an Oltepesi Maasai man, who had reasonable knowledge of the English language that he learned from school, stated that:

WMA stands for wildlife management areas, which I understand that the purpose for it is that it is some kind of reserve that people are reserving for wildlife. It is an organization or a charity, which is standing to defend or to rescue the wildlife  
(Personal communication, Oltepesi man [Maasai], 22/01/14)

This response portrays how this man indeed has a certain degree of knowledge about the WMA discourse, even without a direct position within the WMA structure. That same day, another respondent stated that he had also heard of the WMA. He was a Maasai livestock keeper from Oltepesi, who could not speak English, and thus my research assistant translated for me. Whether or not the use of the research assistant would affect responses is what I had to pay close attention to. The response he gave about what he knew concerning the WMA was that:

The WMA is to conserve wildlife and protect them against poaching and also for the benefit of those investors who come and take part with the wildlife  
(Personal communication, Oltepesi man [Maasai], 22/01/14).

The awareness of the Lake Natron WMA as a form of CBC was apparent. However, later that day it dawned upon me how essential context is within my analysis. While I was interviewing a Maasai woman from Oltepesi, she stated that she had only heard rumors about the WMA but “I don’t know what it is” (Personal communication, Oltepesi woman [Maasai], 22/01/14) was her final standpoint on the matter. A few days later, I conducted an interview with a 22-year-old woman from Oltepesi, who had no idea about the WMA or about conservation whatsoever (Personal communication, Oltepesi woman [Maasai], 29/01/14). My research assistant translated these interviews for me and made sure to include English, Swahili, and Maa to avoid that this was not just a case of linguistic misunderstanding. Perhaps, the fact that this man I previously spoke to could speak English, was educated, or even just because he was a man, made a difference in the accessibility to information within the discourse.

Throughout the preliminary interviews my research assistant translated responses that described the WMA as being a “company” (Personal communication, Oltepesi man [Maasai], 29/01/14) to being a “tool brought by AWF” (Personal communication, Oltepesi AA Representative [Male Maasai], 20/01/14). In this last definition the respondent is directly part of the WMA process as an Authorized Association representative for Oltepesi, and yet he described the WMA as coming from an external force. Although the interview was conducted through my research assistant, I could hear the respondent say “AWF”, which he further explained he did not know the meaning of the abbreviation; AWF was just the name that everyone used. Wilfred (2010) mentions this as a key element in regards to conservation in Tanzania; there needs to be more advocating for sustainable utilization of wildlife resources rather than merely telling people. According to a traditional Maa-leader, *olaigwanak*, “the issue of conservation is not very attractive here because we [the Maasai] don’t know exactly what it is” (Personal communication, Oltepesi *olaigwanak* [Male Maasai], 20/02/14). This reiterated the emphasis on the awareness of the WMA discourse. In reality, most of the people who had heard about the WMA had heard it through their education. This was the case especially for women as the female respondents that I interviewed that knew about the WMA stated they had heard about it through school. They either heard of the WMA in school or had not heard about it at all. Just as Songorwa et al. (2000) question: how can individuals have a key voice in decision-making when they are unaware of the CBC intervention to start with?

During interviews with people who I would have originally considered to be ‘unaware’ of the WMA discourse, I noticed that they were simply aware of a different discourse, one where natural resources are emphasized rather than benefits. The WMA discourse in a Maa-speaking setting is one where a conservation discourse is understood but it does not fall into the national WMA discourse. For example, my research assistant and I interviewed a Maasai woman from Oltepesi, who was around 45 years old and only spoke Maa. The reason I estimate her age is because she stated that she was unaware of her own age. Regardless, she is active in Oltepesi as she is part of the Village Committee and participates in workshops hosted by a local NGO about women empowerment. She stated the following:

If we [Maasai] were to be taught about conservation...it is very important to conserve. If we got education about these issues about conservation because us as Maasai we keep lots of livestock. And you can't just say, set aside that area to protect for wildlife so livestock cannot get in. That is very difficult. But if we can get education on how that could work it would be better. Even when we do cultivation in our shambas [farms], when we remove the beans or the maize, we allow the livestock to get in and eat the remains. So actually, to me conservation is good but we can't separate with livestock.

(Personal communication, Oltepesi woman [Maasai], 12/03/14)

This anecdote highlights numerous aspects that need to be considered. First of all, it demonstrates that there is an understanding of WMAs and conservation discourse amongst the Maasai. However, if the discourse needs to follow a national structure, then there needs to be education about this. She mentions that through methods such as cultivating the land and allowing livestock to eat leftover produce, the Maasai conserve areas. This is a traditional means of conserving, yet is not fully incorporated into WMA discourse. Maa-speaking pastoralists of Oltepesi have an expectation of being educated about conservation rather than simply separating livestock, as this woman mentioned. Secondly, the quote exemplifies how diversification of the pastoralist livelihoods is occurring as literature states (Homewood et al., 2012). This highlights the sedentary dimension of the nomadic pastoral livelihood. Lastly, this excerpt depicts the paradoxical nature of participatory development and CBC in general because only telling someone to allocate land for wildlife, to participate, shows traces of a more fortress-based approach to conservation.

As the first few anecdotes portray, awareness of the WMA discourse closely relates to expectations of conservation. However, I wanted to gain more insight into what the WMA discourse was intended to be according to the policy and structure. Therefore, my research assistant managed to get hold of the former AWF Community Conservation Officer. He had quit his position a year ago in order to follow a Masters and is fluent in English. Nonetheless, he is

also fluent in Maa and Swahili as he is from Ngoswak, a village situated within the Natron WMA boundaries. He had been part of establishing the Enduimet WMA and facilitated parts of the earlier processes within the Natron WMA. Therefore, his opinion about the WMA discourse provided insight into the institutional perspective:

You know conservation or natural resource management, if you trace the history back, communities knew that this was government work. They [locals] can conserve their resources locally, using traditional means and local means, whatever. With Enduimet [neighboring WMA], 10 years ago or 11 years ago, this conservation was done by the government but since the WMA exists the government has stopped doing the conservation and the community was doing it themselves. And we [AWF] could see a big impact compared to when the area was controlled as a Game Controlled Area. You will see the population of wildlife has increased. There are no issues of charcoal burning. You can see the vegetation coming back and the rangelands have improved due to the WMA. So we realized, if you empower these people they can do better then compared to what other people do. It starts with mobilizing people, sell the idea to them, train them. It is like a gospel! It is like preaching the gospel of conservation! You are telling them and hoping they will understand this new approach. It is not a top-down approach. It is a bottom-up approach. You train them first of all to that extent so they can know what community conservation is about. Once they've got that knowledge and feel comfortable with it, you can then take them through the whole process of a WMA. It is quite sensitive. Because there is that negative mentality when you mention conservation. If you look at National Parks, people are not allowed to graze within National Parks. And for the whole Longido district, these guys are pastoralists. We tell them we are establishing the WMA, a conservation area, though it is just a community conservation area, it is within their village area, but yet they still have that fear that maybe it's going to be like the other National Parks. If you take time to train them and to make sure they know then they can understand how they can keep the conservation area and put by-laws by themselves. They can come up with their own Constitution and their own rules. At the end of the day the frustration or any fear is gone because now you've empowered them. So it's actually more about training them, about giving them the language, facilities, and equipment to empower them.

(Personal communication, Former AWF Community Conservation Officer [Male Maasai – *English interview*], 28/01/14)

This quote highlights how the CBC initiative of a WMA should play out – success is an option. He describes the challenges and necessary steps in order to raise awareness of the WMA discourse according to the facilitating NGO, the AWF. As awareness of the WMA discourse coincides with expectations of conservation, more awareness would mean different expectations of conservation. Expectations would move away from the negative mentality regarding conservation of the past. When comparing this response to responses by Maa-speaking pastoralists in Oltepesi, one aspect is not considered, the aspect of gender in the WMA discourse. Throughout my time in the field, the only respondents who had never heard of the WMA

discourse were women. As Hodgson (1999) says, “gender relations of predominantly pastoralist peoples have been, with a few notable exceptions, curiously excluded from historical examination” (41). In conservation research, gender relations between pastoralists have also been overlooked.

In this ethnography I do not attempt to understand the contemporary gender relations amongst the Maa-speaking pastoralists of Oltepesi. Nonetheless, it is an aspect that cannot be discarded, as it affects peoples’ awareness of the WMA discourse. Gender relations amongst the Maasai may be deeply embedded within the history and culture of the people, but according to respondents, things are changing.

...before, women were not taken to school. They just grew up and got married. But now, women go to school – primary, secondary, university, and then get a job and get married. Before the lady grows, they do a ceremony, and then send her to a husband. After a lady completes her study now, she can choose her own husband. Before you weren’t allowed to choose but now because of education a lady can choose herself who she wants. She can choose her husband and now the wazee [elders] aren’t complaining like before. Now people are getting educated by NGOs, adults included.

(Personal communication, Oltepesi woman [Maasai], 12/03/14)

This respondent told my research assistant how the reality of women in Maa-speaking communities is rapidly changing. Women within Maa-speaking communities are getting educated. They are practicing their rights of freedom and choice in regards to marriage. Additionally, they are somewhat responsible for diversifying livelihoods amongst the pastoralists in Oltepesi as they are starting to sell products in the markets or make traditional jewelry for tourists. However, although the older and uneducated women that my research assistant and I interviewed were unaware of the WMA discourse, they were aware of traditional land-use zones. These will be elaborated on further in this discussion, but what is important to consider now is that traditional zones highlight an aspect of the WMA discourse that is not emphasized as much by organizations and policy-makers. This is especially relevant with the fact that if the NGOs, such as the AWF or even my host organization – Sauti Moja, are educating about conservation, what does this education consist of? What expectations of conservation are being translated from the local perceptions into the WMA discourse? Such distinctions between gender relations and conservation initiatives affect participation within CBC.

As the Natron WMA was not fully registered during my time in the field, participation within the WMA was limited to organizational roles. By this I mean that people could not be “employed by

conservation” (Personal communication, Oltepesi women [Maasai], 22/01/14) as a respondent told my research assistant and I. This 19-year-old woman wanted to practice conservation in order to gain financial benefits from the WMA, by getting a job from conservation. At this stage, expectations of conservation and the WMA discourse represent participation for individuals without a direct position within the WMA structure. According to the awareness of WMA discourse in previous excerpts, most respondents were in the first two typologies: passive and information-giving participation (Pimbert & Pretty, 1994; see Table 1). This means that individuals are told what is happening by facilitating NGOs or are giving information to external actors, such as the AWF. On the other hand, those with a position within the WMA, such as the AA representatives or the CBO (Community-Based Organization) Chairman – chairman of the WMA – participate more functionally, the fifth typology in Pimbert & Pretty’s (1994) continuum. These actors are conducting meetings and participate as an organization, which the WMA essentially is. Nevertheless, as the typologies are on a continuum and the WMA focuses on benefits, all actors fall into the fourth participation typology: participation by material incentives (Pimbert & Pretty, 1994). Although I previously stated that the compartmentalization of actors into these typologies was irrelevant, this outcome of participation by material incentives highlights that there is “little incentive to participate after the incentives end” (Pimbert & Pretty, 1994). What happens if the material incentives do end? Will people still conserve? This is exactly why a new shift in conservation discourse is occurring to one that emphasizes intrinsic values rather than only benefits from conservation. This current paradigm shift will be elaborated on further in the ethnography, as now the evidence of material incentives being the motivations to participate in conservation needs describing.

In CBC literature, community participation is an aspect that is deemed as essential because the local knowledge of a community yields to better socio-economic and ecological benefits (Pound et al., 2003). In the case of Maa-speaking Oltepesi, the community participation was based on benefits. For example, an *olaigwanak* (traditional leader) told my research assistant and I that wildlife was important and they [the villagers of Oltepesi] will benefit from it [the WMA] because more tourists will come and pay the village office. This Maa-speaking pastoralist *olaigwanak* stated that the WMA would allow them to conserve the environment whilst accruing benefits (Personal communication, Oltepesi *olaigwanak* [Male Maasai], 20/02/14). A male member of the Oltepesi AA described to my research assistant how the community will participate through tourists coming to Oltepesi and buying Maasai beads and viewing traditional culture (Personal communication, Oltepesi AA Focus Group [Male Maasai], 19/02/14). However,

the most evident means of participating in the WMA was expected to be through the opportunities created by the “provision and social services such as roads, schools and hospitals and children will get sponsored” (Personal communication, CBO Chairman [Male Maasai – *English interview*], 05/02/14). The CBO Chairman who was elected into this position due to his communicative capabilities and is from a neighboring village to Oltepesi stated this expectation of participation within conservation initiatives. His opinions represent expectations of conservation that are balanced between the central government and local communities such as the Maa-speaking pastoralist community of Oltepesi. The previous quotes explain how participation and expectations of conservation highlight common topics in WMA discourse.

Based on preliminary interviews, a clear list of themes became apparent within pastoralist WMA discourse. Some of these themes included aspects such as education, traditional zoning, cultivation, and conservation. I wanted to use these topics to understand the association between the subjects and participation, how is the WMA discourse perceived in terms of where one can participate? In many interviews, the respondents mentioned the *serikali* (Swahili word for central government) and the *mila* (Maa word for tradition/traditional government) in relation to one of these themes. *Mila* is a term that is specifically relevant in the communicative context of the Maa-speaking villages. People do not only refer to the *mila* as traditional government, but to tradition in general. Respondents often considered issues such as traditional zoning and livestock, as matters of the *mila*. On the contrary, the *serikali* (central government) was considered to be involved in matters that that community could not directly take part in. According to an Oltepesi AA representative, benefits were “lost to the *serikali*” and the *serikali* was an entity that is distant to the people (Personal communication, Oltepesi AA Representative [Male Maasai], 06/02/14). Hence, comparing these themes within the WMA discourse to the *serikali* and *mila* would be an effective way to understand what topics are represented by the people and which ones are coming from outside the community.

In order to make such a comparison, my research assistant and I conducted a Venn diagram analysis. This idea was based off of previous research conducted at my host organization; while the topics used were based off of the interviews I conducted in the first month in the field. The themes that were used (see Chapter 3 - Methodology) were all translated into Swahili and Maa, but when analyzed were translated back to English for purpose of this ethnography. It is important to note that the notion of a WMA was only translated to Swahili, as there is no direct translation into Maa. This was also done because most individuals who knew about the WMA

understood it as a ‘WMA’ and not in a translated form. I conducted a total of four Venn diagram analyses, which included a group of young Maasai men from Oltepesi, a group of Oltepesi women, the Oltepesi AA (2 men and 1 woman) and lastly a group of male Oltepesi *wazee* (Swahili word for elders). These groups were chosen in order to gain a full understanding of the perceptions of the WMA discourse as a CBC initiative (see Appendix III pg. 86).

These Venn diagram analyses provided insight into how themes in the WMA discourse were considered as either issues for the people, imposed notions, or a combination of the two. What needs most consideration here is the fact that the WMA was always considered a *serikali* notion, even by members holding a position within the WMA structure (AA members, see Appendix III). These AA members even stated, “the *serikali* is the one connecting the community with the WMA” (Personal communication, Oltepesi AA Representative [Female Maasai], 19/02/14). The WMA is considered as not from the community, which one would assume CBC initiatives to be. Regardless of their positions, the *serikali* is the one deciding. Additionally, conservation was considered as something from the *serikali* as “they [*serikali*] tell us what to do” (Personal communication, Warrior age-set Oltepesi man warrior (*muran*) age-set [Maasai], 12/02/14). In the focus group with the elders conservation was marked as a topic for both the *serikali* and *mila* because of poaching; once the poachers are in their [*mila*] area, the *mila* intervenes (Personal communication, Oltepesi *mzee* (elder) [Male Maasai], 24/02/14). Although a distinction of WMA discourse exists, distancing the WMA from local communities, all the traditional zones such as that for calves or dry season grazing were considered a *mila* issue (see Appendix III pg. 86). Since WMA discourse consists of Land-Use Plans and Resource Zone Management Plans, zoning is essentially a core issue. Thus traditional conservation discourse is not being translated and integrated in WMA discourse; traditional conservation and the WMA are seen as two very different entities when it is possible that they are one in the same. I realized that issues of land in a Maa-speaking pastoralist community needed to be further understood regarding their importance in WMA discourse thus a ranking exercise was conducted.

In the last month of my field research, I wanted to gain a better understanding of how important these previous themes were to the Maa-speaking pastoralists. Did these themes resonate with a Maa-speaking pastoralists understanding of the WMA discourse? I conducted two ranking exercises: one with a focus group of four Oltepesi women that were between the ages of 28 and 42, and the other with four men in the warrior age-set of Oltepesi, who were younger than the women. These exercises were executed during focus groups and were translated by my research

assistant. Although it is presented here in English (for the most part), my research assistant and I translated each of the themes into Maa in order to conduct the ranking exercise (see Table 2 & 3). It must be noted that the Maa terms *olopololi*, *engaroni*, *manyisho*, and *ronjo* represent Maasai traditional zones that were described to me by interview respondents and my research assistant. The *olopololi* represents a grazing zone for calves, the *engaroni* is a grazing zone only used in the dry season where wildlife is usually found, the *manyisho* is a settlement zone, and the *ronjo* is a temporary settlement area used during the dry season and is often situated close to the *engaroni*. Furthermore, WMA was not translated into Maa but into Swahili because there is no direct translation of WMA, which will be expressed further in the ethnography.

As can be seen in the two tables below (see Table 2 & 3), similar issues are considered as important aspects to the Maa-speaking pastoralist livelihoods. For example, in the exercise with the women (Table 2), land, education, livestock, community, health, and cultivation were considered as the utmost important themes within the Maa-speaking pastoralist community.

Land	Olopololi	Engaroni	Manyisho	Ronjo	Water
5	3	4	4	3	4
Conservation	WMA	Education	Investors	Livestock	Wildlife
4	3	5	1	5	2
Poaching	Tourism	Charcoal Burning	Tree Cutting	Family Conflicts	Natural Hazards
1	5	1	1	0	1
Meetings	Rituals	Community	Hunting	Health	Cultivation
4	4	5	1	5	5

Table 2 – Ranking exercise conducted with Oltepesi women (05/03/14)

This corresponds to the responses provided by the group of men who participated in this exercise (Table 3). The men considered land, the traditional zones except for the *ronjo*, water, education, livestock, meetings, rituals, community, health, and cultivation to be the most important. This reinforced the previous literature that has been written on Maasai livelihoods (McCabe, 2003).

Land	Olopololi	Engaroni	Manyisho	Ronjo	Water
5	5	5	5	3	5
Conservation	WMA	Education	Investors	Livestock	Wildlife
4	4	5	2	5	2
Poaching	Tourism	Charcoal Burning	Tree Cutting	Family Conflicts	Natural Hazards
0	3	0	0	0	1
Meetings	Rituals	Community	Hunting	Health	Cultivation
5	5	5	0	5	5

Table 3 – Ranking exercise conducted with Oltepesi men (07/03/14)

The importance of topics such as land, livestock, and cultivation represent diversification in pastoral livelihoods just as literature states (Homewood et al., 2012; McCabe et al., 2010; McCabe, 2003). In addition, conservation, the WMA, and wildlife were given approximately the same value of importance by both men and women (see Table 2 & 3). This does not provide much useful data unless the ethnographic details are considered. Throughout the exercises, my research assistant would translate each theme into Maa and Swahili in case people could not read. In the focus group with the women, there was one woman out of the five who was educated and had heard of the WMA before. She was the member in the group who supported conservation and my research assistant translated how she discussed this with the other participants, that conservation is something that needs to be considered important. Therefore, they gave 'conservation' a ranking of 4 (see Table 2). However, when the topic of wildlife was mentioned, the other participants could not value it as relevant because of the numerous livestock-wildlife conflicts that occur in Oltepesi. Therefore a 2 was given, regardless of what the educated woman said. Nonetheless, the one educated woman clearly told my research assistant that she did not agree with this and would have given it a 4.

This corresponded precisely with what the men had to say about wildlife (see Table 3). The men stated that the reason why they gave such values to conservation and WMA was because "we don't know the importance but we think there will be benefits" (Personal communication, Oltepesi man [Maasai], 07/03/14). They believe WMAs will do what is assumed of CBC: bring benefits. The ranking of conservation and the WMA represent expectations when in fact the ranking of wildlife may represent reality. However, according to the CBO Chairman of the Natron WMA, wildlife needs to be considered equally to the context of land. As an educated Maa-speaking pastoralist, he could also speak English allowing him to thoroughly discuss how the WMA discourse has a persistence to consist of fortress-based conservation themes.

For the first time, I [CBO Chairman] thought it was a very bad issue because I heard that it [WMA] will take part of the land as a conservation area. So I was fearing, what about the community that are there? Where will they go? Anyway, after some seminars, those experts come and try to raise awareness; to tell us how it will really come to look and now we understand that it is not just part of land-taking but the community can also benefit from the natural resources found there. The experts were brought by AWF. They are the ones who conducted the system. There are some experts from different parts, most of them from Kenya, those of them who are professional in wildlife. They come to talk to us and explain of course that you contribute part of the land but no land is taken away and automatically used for conservation. You can involve other human activity in these areas; for example, we have so many cows, us Maasai, so we don't want to

separate cows and wildlife animals; the domestic and wild animal – let's not separate them. So this will avoid conflicts because as you know, Maasai are the conservationists by nature. They are here so many years ago and wild animals are here too. They are not hunting. They one that is hunting are those coming from outside of the areas. So when I first heard of it [WMA] I thought it [WMA] was a very bad activity but then we [community] come to understand that it is not bad in such; it is just a perception. So we [the WMA] try to make sure that the community can remain a friend of the boss [Ministry].

(Personal communication, Natron WMA CBO Chairman [Male Maasai – *English interview*], 05/02/14)

In the previous excerpt the CBO Chairman expressed how the expectations of conservation amongst the Maa-speaking community are based on the history of conservation in Tanzania. It is based on the “fortress” approach to conservation that can be seen in examples such as grazing restrictions in National Parks. It is because of this that people are hesitant of new initiatives. Even within the WMA discourse there is a persistence of a “fortress” approach to conservation. The following section will elaborate on this.

## **5.2 - WMA Discourse Remaining Fortress-Based**

According to the Ministry (1998), WMAs follow a model of CBC. This focuses on local participation and empowerment in protecting biodiversity through benefits (MNRT, 1998; Minwary, 2009). Conservation practices in Tanzania in the past followed a “fortress” approach to conservation where people and nature were kept separate. A paradigm shift in conservation discourse occurred towards CBC since this model should help post-colonial communities manage natural resources for a local and global benefit (Godfrey, 2013). However, during my time in the field it became evident that a persistent influence of a “fortress” approach to conservation exists in WMAs. Expectations of conservation were often based on the history of the region. For example, the secretary of the Land-Use Plan (LUP) committee in Oltepesi had a distinct opinion on conservation. She said that conservation consisted of putting a fence around wild animals, which she compared to national parks that she had seen in Nairobi, Kenya – where people and wildlife were living amongst one another because wildlife was fenced in (Personal communication, Oltepesi LUP Committee Secretary [Female Maasai], 18/03/14). Being a member of the LUP Committee meant that she was part of the group that constructed the Land-Use Plan for Oltepesi that would furthermore be used to create a complete Resource Zone Management Plan (RZMP) for the Natron WMA. Such an expectation reflects a colonial conservation mentality (Goldman, 2003) in the sense that a conservation area must still be created in a WMA; an area devoted solely to wildlife removed from people.

Although this is simply one opinion, other respondents expressed similar concerns about the fortress-based influence on the WMA discourse. Whilst discussing the issue of conservation and land with my research assistant, the subject of borders arose – a key concept in a “fortress” approach to conservation.

Traditional zoning has been happening for a very long time, ancestors and ancestors before me. The LUP [Land-Use Plan] is very difficult though because of bordering. The LUP is very technical. When you ask people where Oltepesi ends, they just point. No coordinates. Then when the LUP came, the used technical, modern uses of coordinates and bordering villages, which created conflicts. Disagreements occurred in terms of borders [between Orobomba and Ranch, neighboring villages]. Us Maasai, we use natural resources as borders. “That mountain there is the end of Oltepesi and the start of Sinya [neighboring village in Enduimet WMA].” But using coordinates became very difficult and so bordering was probably the hardest about zoning.

(Personal communication, Research assistant [Male Maasai – *English interview*],  
26/02/14)

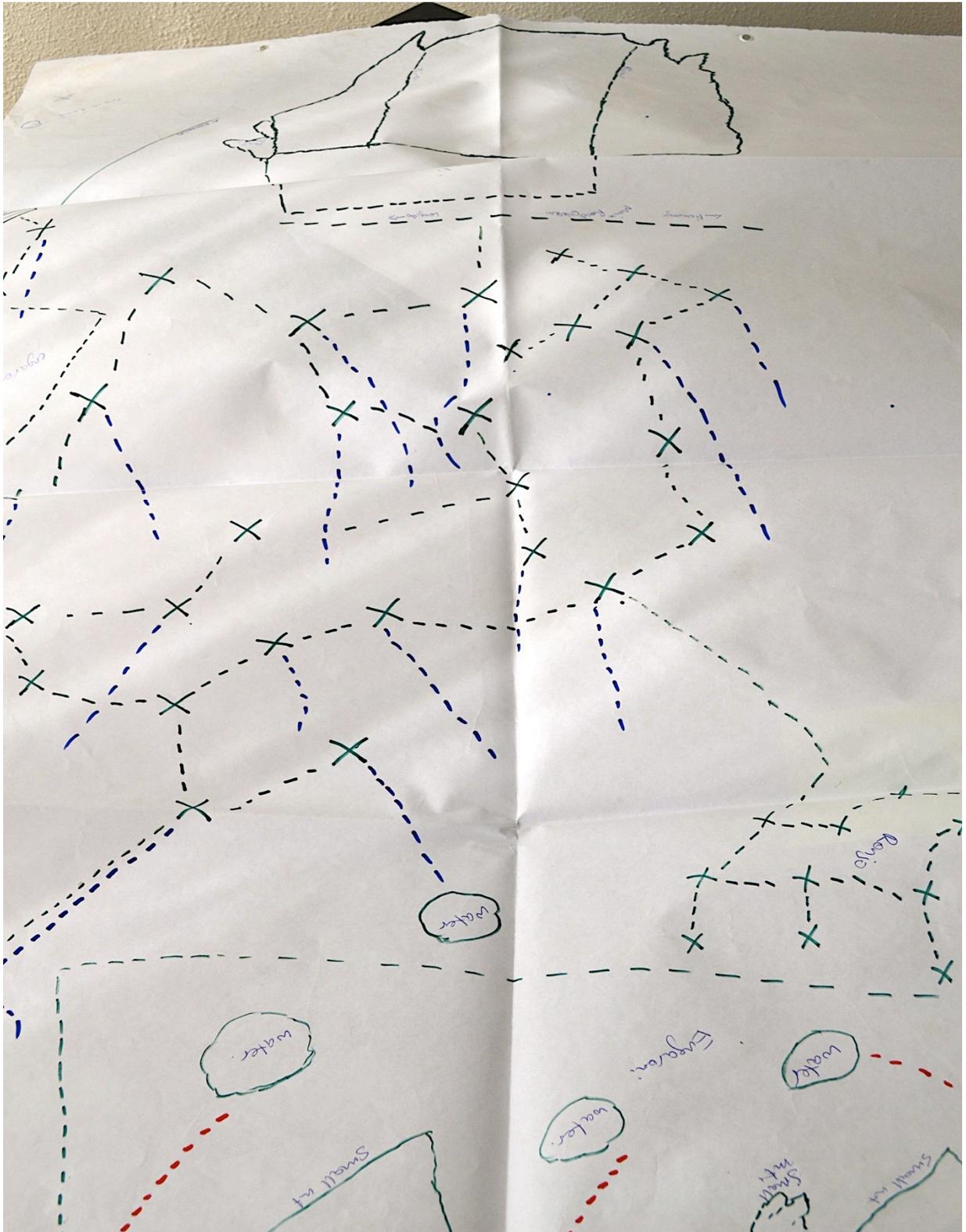
This anecdote portrays how traditional zones exist amongst the Maa-speaking pastoralists of Oltepesi and yet, they are not translated into the WMA discourse. Borders are an element that is translated differently in a Maa-speaking pastoralist conservation discourse than the WMA discourse. In a Maa-speaking setting, they are not followed as strictly. For example, a traditional leader (*olaigwanak*) from Oltepesi told my research assistant “the government has divided these villages and each village has their own boundaries...as *mila* [traditional government], we ignore that kind of bordering” (Personal communication, Oltepesi *olaigwanak* [Male Maasai], 05/02/14). According to the *mila*, this ideology of borders is imposed. However, the LUP is part of the WMA process and thus cannot be disregarded as an element to consider within WMA discourse. Something is being lost in translation and interpretation between the Maa-speaking pastoralist expectations of conservation and the WMA discourse.

To further investigate this, I conducted mapping exercises with various focus group respondents. The exercises were either executed on paper with markers or simply drawn in the dirt. During these exercises, my research assistant and I asked respondents to teach us about land-use in Oltepesi. As the discussions regarding the maps concerned land and natural resources, my research assistant made sure to translate the dialogues. The following diagram (see Figure 6 pg. 72) depicts how these maps are relevant within the WMA discourse from a mapping exercise I conducted with a focus group of *wazee* (elders). Imagine me sitting at the foothills of Mount Longido, in a *boma* (homestead) surrounded by huts, goats, and dogs under a tree to stay out of the sun. At this *boma* that is furthest up on the slopes of Mount Longido, I could over-look the

entire village of Oltepesi. Oltepesi is to the south. A *mzee* (elder) slowly walks up to me, wearing a *shuka* (traditional cloth) and a thick blanket, regardless of the hot temperature. He is swatting flies around his face with a branch that looks as old and decrepit as he does. My research assistant tells me “elders are the ones who know the truth, only they have seen it all” (Personal communication, research assistant [Male Maasai – *English interview*], 16/03/14). *Wazee* (elders) are respected over traditional leaders (*olaigwanani*) as it turns out that traditional leaders are not necessarily elderly – an assumption of mine that was corrected. After some time, a few other elders walked into the *boma* and sat down next to me on tree stumps and upside down buckets. My research assistant and I began a focus group discussion that immediately centered on land-use. The *wazee* (elders) pointed out different landmarks and zones that had been created in Oltepesi. These were not things that were recorded. They were not put down on paper and kept in an office. They were not used for policy. They were passed on, by word of mouth, from generation to generation. Nonetheless, when I asked the respondents to map out what they had been telling me, a reflection of the zones as a means of conservation became evident.

Although this ethnography will only show one of these maps, the results from the other mapping exercises that I conducted with two groups of women from Oltepesi, Oltepesi AA representatives, and the future village game scouts of Oltepesi provided similar outcomes. In all mapping exercises, Mount Longido was the starting point. It was considered as a source of water and an area with wildlife where livestock commonly did not venture. However, at the foothills of Mount Longido, is an *olopololi*, a traditional, fenced-in grazing zone for calves (see Figure 6 pg. 72). The mountain was also a place to collect traditional medicine and specific types of firewood. Directly south of the mountain is a settlement area with an intricate network of *bomas*. Then to the south and east of the settlement area, an *engaroni*, grazing area during the dry season, is located. Most livestock routes headed south towards the fertile zone (see Figure 6). Each exercise conducted displayed the same knowledge in regards to traditional zones such as the *engaroni*, *ronjo*, or *olopololi*. My research assistant would ask where wildlife could be found during each exercise and the answer was always to the south, in the *engaroni*. We then asked whether a division between wildlife and livestock existed and this was made clear to not be the case.

During a mapping exercise with a group of women, my research assistant translated a discussion that two women were having with one another. They were discussing how people did want a conservation area; a division between livestock and wildlife, except on the top slopes of Mount Longido. This ensured that people and livestock would not have conflicts with the wildlife.



**Figure 6** –Focus group 4 Oltepesi wazee [Maasai male elders], mapping exercise. **X** = bomas; **blue dashed lines** = livestock route; **green dash between X** = connection between *bomas*; **O** = water; **top green-dashed square** = *olopololi* (grazing for calves); **bottom green dashed-square** = *engaroni* (grazing for dry season); **red dash** = wildlife corridor; **Ronjo** (upside down) = temporary *bomas* (Personal communication, Oltepesi wazee, 16/03/14)

Other focus group respondents stated that there is no division between wildlife and livestock because this is not compatible with a pastoralist way of life (Personal communication, Oltepesi *wazee* (elders) [Males Maasai], 16/03/14). The maps reflect traditional knowledge of land-use. However, the RZMP land-use map, one of the final documents exhibited to the Ministry prior to WMA registration depicts a different outcome – one that portrays how a “fortress” approach to conservation is present within WMA discourse in Oltepesi.

Previous literature states that creating a legible system of management that is based off of a global/Western notion of tenure and management may have contrary effects than conservation agenda predicts (Goldman, 2003). Whether or not this has opposing results in Oltepesi is debatable but there is an apparent contrast between the Maa-speaking system and the WMA system, between the Maa-speaking pastoralist conservation expectations and the WMA discourse. It is important to outline that all respondents I spoke with described that in Oltepesi they did not want a conservation area set aside for just wildlife. When my research assistant and I interviewed the LUP Committee Chairman, he told us that the

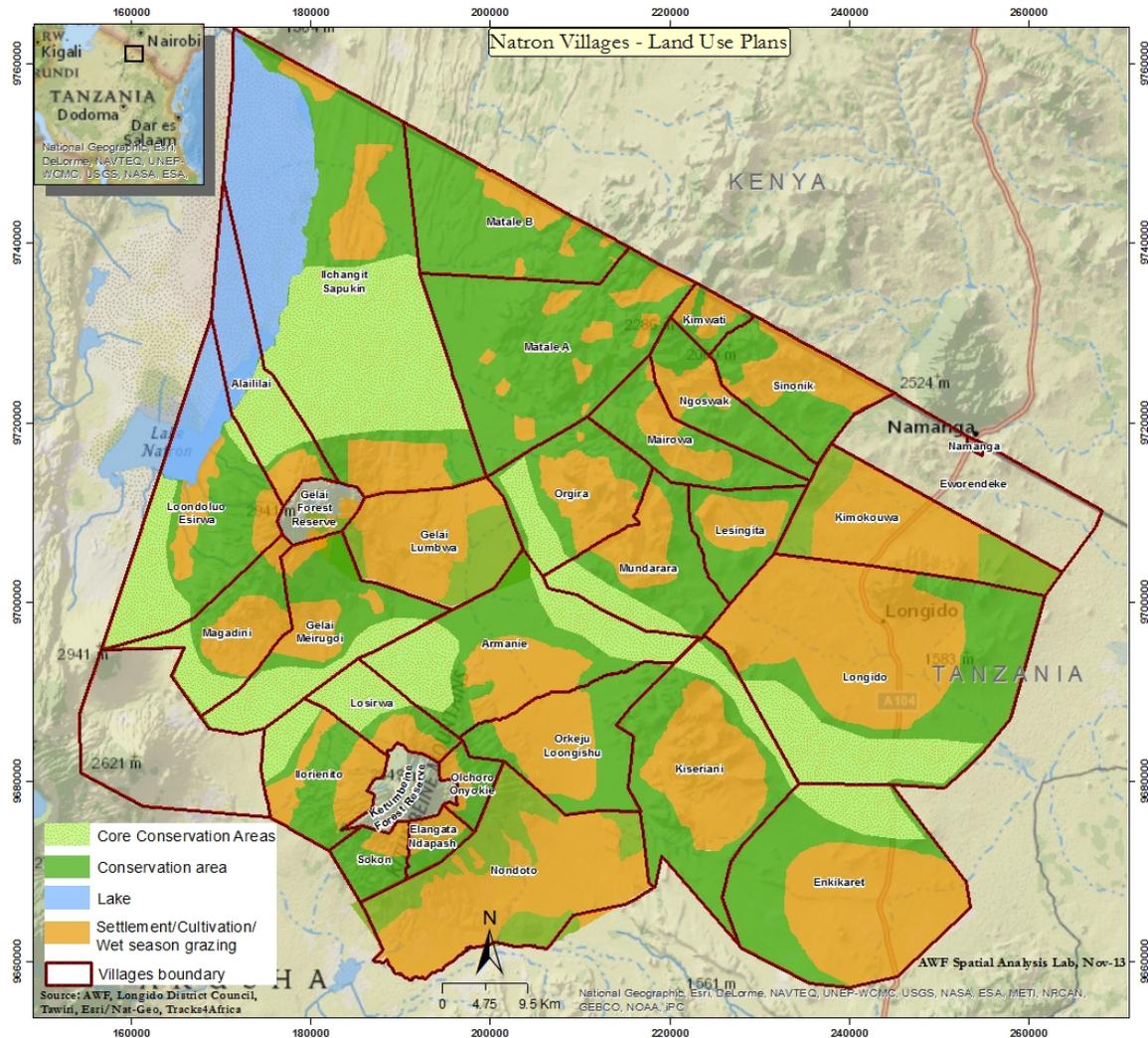
AWF told us that there should be an area for conservation. We didn't agree as it [conservation] is everywhere. So we decided that if we had to have a conservation area we would let it be on the top of the mountain [Longido].

(Personal communication, Oltepesi LUP Committee Chairman [Male Maasai], 13/03/14)

Of course the influence of his position must be taken into consideration, as he was part of the committee that created the LUP for Oltepesi, as one of the first steps in the WMA process. Nonetheless, this corresponded with responses I got during the mapping exercise; the conservation area should be on the top of Mount Longido. In the last few weeks of my time in the field, I received a final draft of the Lake Natron WMA Resource Zone Management Plan (RZMP). This document was sent to me by the CBO Chairman himself, and is an unpublished document, yet it still is the document that will be sent to the Ministry in order to obtain the final user rights for the WMA. The document offers a map of the zones in the Lake Natron WMA, created by technology provided by the AWF and based on the Land-Use Plans of each village within the WMA (see Figure 7 pg. 74).

In this map it is important to note that Oltepesi is on the eastern part of the WMA. If we look at the legend and what zones are found in Oltepesi, we can see three zones. There is a Settlement/Cultivation/Wet season grazing zone to the west of Oltepesi, a Conservation area in

the east, and lastly a Core Conservation Area in the south (see Figure 7). This corresponded to the various mapping exercises that I had conducted in the field (see Figure 6 pg. 72). However, it is the definition of what a Core Conservation Area is that needs attention. In the RZMP it states that non-permissible activities in the Core Conservation Area include “cattle grazing, hunting of wildlife except those provided by the RZMP, mining, settlement and farming” (Lake Natron CBO, 2014). This is contrary to what all my respondents told me, including the CBO Chairman – the Chairman of the WMA. I followed up on this by speaking to the CBO Chairman once again.



**Figure 7** – RZMP Map of Natron WMA zones [Note: Oltepesi is not demarcated as it was just placed in Longido along with Ranch and Orobomba] (Lake Natron CBO, 2014).

I asked him why, on the resource map in the RZMP, there was an area that was devoted to only wildlife when all the Maa-speaking pastoralists in Oltepesi that I had spoken to emphasize that splitting livestock and wildlife could not be done. How the Chairman described the following

situation to me epitomizes the persistence of a “fortress” approach to conservation in the WMA discourse.

I don't want there to be a separation between wildlife and livestock but there needs to be a clarification here. In times of drought, this area [Core Conservation Area] becomes a ronjo [zone for temporary homesteads]. We just need to distinguish that we, the community, are indeed focusing on conservation. If we do this then the Ministry will give us the user rights. But in our Work Plan document and even in the Constitution, I think we [WMA] clarify this more in terms of seasonality. See that is the challenge. In this process you need to balance conservation and the community. Often they are opposing forces. But there needs to be some sort of balance. That is why these Core Conservation Areas exist.  
(Personal communication, Natron WMA CBO Chairman [Male Maasai – *English interview*], 14/03/14)

This is an example of how the two discourses, WMA and Maa-speaking pastoralist conservation discourses, collide and are not translated. Even within a supposedly CBC initiative such as the WMA, a top-down structure remains. There are actors, the government and facilitating NGOs, who are telling people what to do because that is what is believed to be right under a global conservation agenda. This highlights the paradox of participatory development; it is still quite fortress-based and top-down to have a community make a distinction between wildlife and livestock when this is not a priority of the people it affects. Who truly benefits? Is the WMA simply an “investment” as the government representative of Oltepesi stated (Personal communication, Oltepesi Village Ward Executive Officer [Male Maasai], 24/01/14)? This development highlights how the WMA discourse is one that has not been translated based on the Maa-speaking pastoralists expectations of conservation when translation is in fact key.

After conducting my first interview in Oltepesi I noticed that language was going to be an aspect to consider in the WMA discourse. I was in a setting where three languages were interwoven. Therefore, whether or not the WMA discourse was altered for the appropriate audience needed consideration. Through the use of my research assistant, it became evident that I truly needed to examine if the WMA discourse was unfamiliar to the relevant public because of the use of an expert language (Feindt & Oels, 2005). I needed to scrutinize if linguistics was taken into respect. I attempted to control this limitation as much as possible by intervening in interviews but as I was unfamiliar with Swahili and Maa, it became a challenge to understand in what language the WMA discourse was primarily understood. However, an Oltepesi AA member described that:

It's not very difficult to teach people about conservation but it depends on which language you use. Sometimes words in Swahili are very difficult to translate into Maa. When I learned things from the AWF they taught me in Swahili and some things were in English. No Maa whatsoever. Sometimes things are written like 'game reserve', which I don't understand. Or the 'National Park' or even 'wilderness', so they have to translate it again for us. They even call us the AA but I don't know the long form of it {Chuckles}. The other issue is that people don't differentiate between AWF and WMA because they sound the same. Some people say AWF instead of WMA but that's just because we don't know what they stand for. If you try to ask people about who was facilitating, some people will say AWF and others will say WMA.

(Personal communication, Oltepesi AA [Maasai Male], 13/03/14)

This highlights the essential nature of language within WMA discourse. It also depicts how the Maa-speaking pastoralist setting differs from the rest of Tanzania. Although the national language is Swahili, the lack of knowledge of Swahili and the emphasis of Maa as the primary language is illustrated. Whether or not this is considered in WMA discourse is of great concern. In Swahili, WMA is translated to *huifadhi ya jamii*, meaning conservation by the community. In Maa, there is no direct translation for the WMA. When people discuss the WMA in Maa it is translated and interchangeable with *eramatata enkop/ong'wezi/ong'kishu*, which means conserving land/wildlife/livestock. Respondents usually used the term "WMA" rather than the Swahili term, regardless of if they knew the literal meaning of it. The remainder of this ethnography attempts to focus on these translations of discourse into Maa. By doing so another shift in conservation discourse arises, one where the intrinsic value of resources is the basis of conservation.

### 5.3 - WMA Discourse Becoming Intrinsic-Value Based Conservation

As can be seen in the previous chapters, this ethnography explores how WMA discourse is being translated and understood in a Maa-speaking pastoralist setting. Such an analysis provides evidence that a shift in conservation paradigms to an intrinsic-value based form of conservation is arising. This shift is one where the benefits of conservation are not emphasized; rather the intrinsic value of natural resources needs additional attention. During interviews I observed that whenever a question regarding conservation and environmental changes was brought up, the same answers were given; answers that highlight the reality of pastoralists corresponding to literature (Spencer, 1988; Homewood et al., 2012; McCabe et al., 2010). However, when I asked for specific examples, the discourse was translated to include intrinsic values of natural resources. For example, in numerous interviews and focus groups, respondents described how there are two species, *oldepe* and *oltelemeti* (in Maa) that are dominating species in the ecosystem that do not allow grass to grow for livestock (see Figure 8). Additionally,

livestock does not eat these species. Unfortunately, I could not discover what species this was in English. Nonetheless, what is of particular importance here is that respondents continuously brought these species up but in the WMA discourse the intrinsic value of such resources is vaguely discussed. Endangered species and natural resources are described but their intrinsic value is disregarded. Benefits within CBC are a primary concern but these intrinsic values are forgotten in the larger discourse. If intrinsic values are omitted, will people conserve if benefits are not present as expected? Therefore, a photo-voice exercise was conducted to allow for the possibility to perceive the world through the lens of those that are living differently “from those traditionally in control of the means for imagining the world” (Wang, 1997). The exercise was conducted to gain an understanding of what intrinsic values of natural resources are emphasized and furthermore, their translations within WMA discourse.



**Figure 8** – A field of the dominating *oltelemeti* species in Oltepesi (Photograph by author)



**Figure 9 (left) and Figure 10 (right)** – Photo-voice exercise with 2 Oltepesi men. Picture taken by a disposable camera. (Personal communication, Oltepesi men [Maasai], 22/01/14).

In Figure 9 and Figure 10, it is evident what the expectations and outcomes of conservation are. As seen in Figure 9 (left), a picture was taken by a Maa-speaking, Oltepesi male pastoralist to portray exactly what he was hoping that conservation would avoid – a bare landscape. This included the dust, lack of green, and the species that livestock and wildlife would not eat, such as *oltelemeti* (see Figure 8). Subsequently, Figure 10 (right) portrays the better grazing that is expected of conservation; he explained how conservation would make the whole landscape lush and green. The intrinsic value of other resources was also highlighted. Examples included better soil, less dominating species, more shade, termite mounds to be used as bricks during the dry season, and more water sources. Pastoralism is considered a compatible form of land-use to conservationists; however, the needs of pastoralists are often disregarded (Goldman, 2003). This includes the intrinsic values of natural resources.

The importance of the intrinsic value of resources also became apparent in interviews that my research assistant and I conducted. For example, in a focus group that we conducted with a group of Maa-speaking pastoralist men from Oltepesi, the conservation priorities that were expressed within a local discourse are based on intrinsic value of resources:

When there is enough wildlife there is good rain; wildlife and livestock mix together. If wildlife moves from this area then this area will remain dry and not good for our livestock. Conservation means rain. It is all about rain. For example, if there is rain there is availability of food, water, grass, livestock, and wildlife. We participate when we set aside zones like engaroni or the olopololi that is how we conserve. So for the times of drought we have areas for our livestock.

(Personal communication, Focus Group Oltepesi men [4 males Maasai],  
24/02/14)

In numerous studies on pastoralism, rain is a vital resource to consider (Spencer, 1988; Hodgson, 1999; McCabe, 2003). Although the importance of rain within the pastoralist conservation discourse is vital, in the WMA discourse it is not emphasized. This is local knowledge on the intrinsic value of rain within a Maa-speaking pastoralist setting. These men were not clarifying a benefit of the WMA as a motivation to conserve, rather the intrinsic value of resources as one. Another member of that same focus group stated that:

We are just conserving as we were before. When conserving, like forests, it will attract visitors with good air and environment...Conserving nature is like conserving water, about creating a good environment to live in. When conserving big trees, it will bring more rain and cattle will have shade so there won't be too much sun. Us as Maasai we like conserving to have a good environment so we have no diseases. Wildlife is an indicator to us. It will tell us that there is rain

near. If they migrate far, we know we will have drought. That's why we don't kill our indicators.

(Personal communication, Focus Group Oltepesi Maa-speaking pastoralist [4 males], 24/02/14)

This man explicitly stated the importance of the intrinsic value of resources such as the wildlife that the WMA intends to conserve. The wildlife acts as an indicator for rain, which is not considered in the WMA discourse. The WMA discourse is not modified for a pastoralist community. Wildlife's awareness of rain is a heavily labeled symbol within Maasai community, which conservation needs to take into consideration, as it is an intrinsic value of rain to Maa-speaking pastoralists. Rain is almost a religious symbol as Maasai prophets and God (*enkai* in Maa) preached rain (Spencer, 1988). Once again the importance of rain is expressed, alongside of wildlife. Although the respondent expressed a myth that conservation would bring good air and therefore attract tourists, this is a myth that cannot be ignored. Such local insight is not translated into WMA discourse. Another example of this is the following folk story that an elderly Maa-speaking woman of Oltepesi told me.

There is an old Maasai folk story about how a long time ago, it was the women who were also herders. We had our own livestock. Our livestock consisted of the wild animals, the elephants, lions, giraffes, and antelopes. We [women] allowed our livestock to go into the forest and up into the Mountain [Mount Longido] and just to be free to roam because they would always come back. But one day, the cattle came and our livestock [the wild animals] didn't come back so that is why there are wild animals in Longido and also why the women are not allowed to be herders anymore

(Personal communication, Oltepesi elderly woman [Maasai], 22/01/14)

Even though the previous story is folklore, it still exemplifies that intrinsic values of resources need more attention in conservation discourse. In this case, such a myth, similar to the expectation that conservation attracts tourists with good air, highlights a dimension within the WMA discourse that is unnoticed. These myths highlight the intrinsic values such as Spencer (1988) suggests; "they live off their cattle, which feed on grass, which is nurtured by rain, which is a gift from God" (141). Such aspects are not considered. It underlines that a new paradigm shift in conservation may need further emphasis, one where intrinsic values of resources to a given community are at the core.

Lastly, this ethnography did not intend to describe a shift in conservation discourse. However, when conducting the Venn diagram analysis (see Appendix III) and ranking exercise (Table 2 & 3 pg. 67) the importance of the intrinsic value of natural resources was suggested. The land and

water themes were always considered important and related to the people. Investigating what this specifically means for the Maa-speaking community could be a way of broadening future research on intrinsic values of natural resources within a given community. This is a combination of doing ethnographical research on intrinsic values of the environment – merging nature and culture together. Although little research has currently been conducted and this ethnography is not able to completely describe this shift, future research should consider this as an alternative paradigm in the conservation discourse. By doing so issues such as the translating of Maa-speaking pastoralist expectations of conservation will not as easily be overlooked in conservation practices.

## **Chapter 6 - Conclusion**

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Conservation is a notion that is based on expectations. It is a term that continues to steer away from a previously fortress-based ‘fences-and-fines’ approach, which was considered a panacea for wildlife conservation, to a more community-centered conservation discourse (Kideghesho, 2008). This shift towards CBC is evident in Tanzania through the 1998 conservation policy amendment to include the formation of WMAs. This ethnography has observed these expectations of conservation amongst Maa-speaking pastoralists in Oltepesi in relation to WMA discourse. Through qualitative methods, a conclusion can be drawn.

First of all, awareness of conservation issues remains to be one of the larger aspects to consider in the WMA discourse. In previous research, a lack of awareness is often expressed to imply the degree of participation and relevance of the WMA in given communities (Igoe & Croucher, 2007; Minwary, 2009). However, this is not necessarily the case in Oltepesi. There is indeed a lack of awareness, but this is because the WMA discourse is not translated in a Maa-speaking pastoralist context. Through the ranking exercise and Venn diagram analysis conducted, specific themes became apparent as being expectations of conservation as well as parts of the WMA discourse. This included benefits as being vital. Such an assumption highlights the CBC influence in WMA discourse. In both exercises though, the WMA was seen as an entity that the community associates themselves to differently. As I was working through a research assistant that translated for me, I went into the field understanding parts of the WMA discourse that had not been translated in the Maa-speaking pastoralist setting, which became evident in the field. However, aspects such as the language and pastoral livelihoods had clearly not been associated into WMA discourse, which leads me to my second conclusion.

The conservation discourse is perceived differently in the Maa-speaking context than the national WMA discourse expects. The WMA process requires a Land-Use Plan (LUP) to be made followed by a Resource Zone Management Plan (RZMP). In the Maa-speaking village of Oltepesi, the traditional zoning scheme was simply applied to the WMA process. The Maasai have their own zoning and regulations that they enforce traditionally, which they now have to adapt to the WMA. For example, in the RZMP, a Core-Conservation Area has been created where no human interaction is allowed; it is an area allocated entirely to wildlife, in the traditional Maasai zone *engaroni*, which is used for dry season grazing. However, this aspect differs from what the Maa-speaking pastoralists view as conservation. All respondents, including those with a

position in the WMA structure, stated that the WMA would and could not consist of a division between wildlife and livestock. Nonetheless, this was still done in the RZMP to obtain user rights from the Ministry; the Maa-speaking pastoralists just would not respect the document. This portrays how even though the WMA represents a paradigm shift towards CBC, there is persistence for conservation discourse to follow a “fortress” approach. There is still a need to separate wildlife and people.

Nonetheless, this leads me to my final conclusion that the intrinsic value of natural resources need to be considered within a new paradigm shift in conservation discourse. There have evidently been shifts in the political ecology of Tanzania as “fortress” approaches to conservation such as National Parks are being surrounded by WMAs, a CBC approach. However, this style does not necessarily apply the Maa-speaking pastoralist discourse into a larger WMA discourse. Through not adapting and translating the WMA discourse in a Maa-speaking context, the intrinsic value of resources is forgotten and benefits are seen as the essential goal of conservation. Just as Berkes’ (2004) says “the larger issue is not whether or not communities conserve...[but] rethinking conservation at a time when there is a historical shift in ecology and applied ecology towards a systems view of the environment”. Reflecting on such changes need to continue to occur. Considering intrinsic value differs from using traditional knowledge within conservation initiatives as what is considered traditional knowledge is static; it is always changing. However, intrinsic value focuses on the natural resources at hand placing the local setting into a wider discourse. By further understanding the intrinsic values of natural resources, the notions of nature and culture can be merged for successful conservation initiatives.

In conclusion, the three deductions reached in this ethnography are that 1) WMA discourse is perceived differently in a Maa-speaking pastoralist setting, 2) the CBC initiative of a WMA continues to contain traces of a “fortress” approach to conservation, and lastly, 3) a paradigm shift in conservation discourse needs to move towards emphasizing the intrinsic value of natural resources. I would like to end this ethnography with an anecdote that I believe represents how the Maa-speaking pastoralist expectations of conservation relates to WMA discourse in Oltepesi.

They [pastoralists] could even tell us things and mention species that disappeared like *koromiti* [shrub found in Maasailand]. They told us “aih, we used to have a lot of them in this area. *Ngroswa* [shrub found in Maasailand] we used to have a lot of them.” In Oltepesi, of course acacia trees but they [Oltepesi villagers] know why they’ve lost them – because of charcoal burning. So we [AWF] ask them why they are doing charcoal burning and they say it’s because they can

hardly get a means of surviving, they can't get an income. They don't even have enough cattle to get food or money to send their kids to school and to get their basic needs. So they need charcoal to get money; to get a means of surviving. So now there is a challenge there. You need to give them an option to have an alternative. They really understand. If you look at climate change they [pastoralists] know the impact of climate change. It is getting dryer and dryer and they have long dry seasons and I think it's cause we've cleared our forest and they could easily say that. I think it depends on that level that you communicate on, especially when you talk about conservation. Even if you talk to people who went to school, PhD holders or masters degrees holders in conservation, like those that did wildlife management degrees. You know there is a way we can communicate that they will perfectly understand me. If you use those words and difficult concepts then it won't be as easy for others. So it [conservation] is more on communication. They've [pastoralists] got the knowledge that is quite useful and it needs to get translated and used in the WMA.

(Personal communication, Former AWF Community Conservation Officer [Male Maasai – *English interview*], 28/01/14)

This depicts how the communication and translation of knowledge on the intrinsic value of resources needs to be combined within the WMA discourse to obtain substantial success in conservation practices. If further research is conducted on WMAs amongst Maa-speaking pastoralists I recommend that the intrinsic value of resources be examined more closely, combining biological and ethnographic research. Additionally, I recommend that this be considered for future implementation of conservation initiatives, as the Lake Natron WMA is one that will receive much more attention, being the largest WMA in Tanzania. As the Natron WMA is soon to be registered, examining the expectations of conservation amongst Maa-speaking pastoralists in relation to WMA discourse can no longer be done. As an ethnographer, I experienced a unique research setting that gave access to a larger understanding of shifting conservation discourses. From staying in a homestay, to working continuously with a research assistant, and gaining access to my host organization's network, I was able to effectively use this short period. I gained a deeper understanding of reality in Oltepesi, understanding the conservation conversation amongst Maa-speaking pastoralists in Oltepesi.



## APPENDIX

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### Appendix I – Interview Guide

#### Interview Guide for Individuals

1. What are your responsibilities?
2. What is a WMA?\*
3. What is the WMA process?
4. What have you heard about other WMAs in Tanzania?
5. Where did you hear about the Natron WMA? How were you informed?
6. Who is involved in the WMA process?
7. Have you been involved in the WMA process? How? Do you make decisions or attend meetings or just talk about it with others?
8. What do you expect the Natron WMA will bring to the community?
9. What benefits does joining a WMA have?
10. What challenges have you faced with the WMA?
11. Do you know about the AA and did you vote for its members?
12. Is there any land-use plan in Oltepesi or is the WMA the first one?
13. Do you have any conflicts with other villages in the Natron WMA?
14. Are there any wildlife conflicts? Destruction of houses, poaching, etc.?
15. What does conservation mean to you?
16. How would you improve the WMA?

\*If respondent is not familiar with WMA, focus on conservation. If they are not aware of conservation, focus on livestock, land, and wildlife.

### Appendix II – Focus Group Guide

#### Interview Guide for Focus Groups

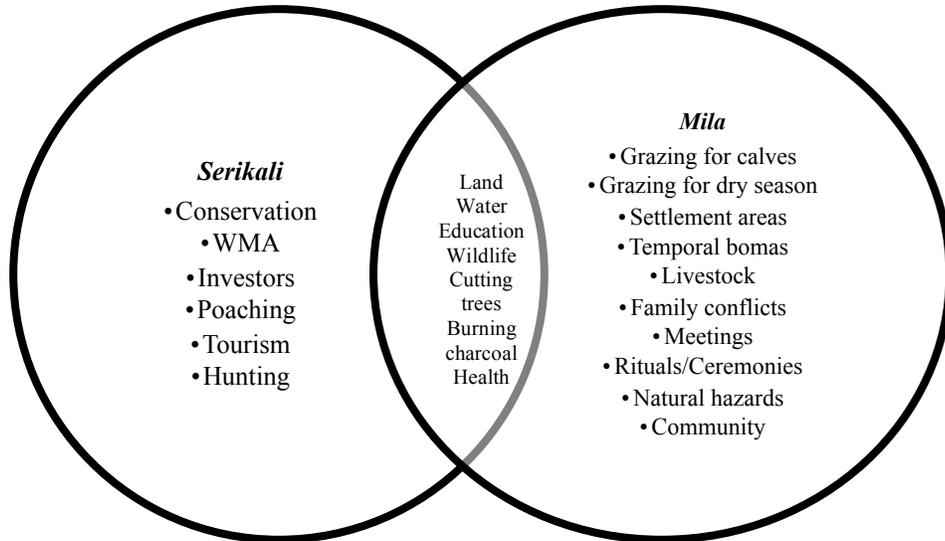
1. Do you live in permanent or temporary bomas in Oltepesi?
2. What is a WMA?\*
3. What is the WMA process?
4. Where did you hear about the Natron WMA? How were you informed?
5. Who is involved in the WMA process?
6. Have you been involved in the WMA process? How? Do you make decisions or attend meetings or just talk about it with others?
7. What do you expect the WMA will bring to the community?
8. What benefits will you have from joining the WMA?
9. Do you know about the AA and did you vote for its members?
10. Is there a land-use plan in Oltepesi or is the WMA the first?
11. Do you have any conflicts with other villages in the Natron WMA?
12. Are there any wildlife conflicts? Boma destruction, poaching, etc.?
13. What does conservation mean to you?
14. How would you improve the WMA?

\*If respondent is not familiar with WMA, focus on conservation. If they are not aware of conservation, focus on livestock, land, and wildlife.

### Appendix III – Venn Diagram Analysis

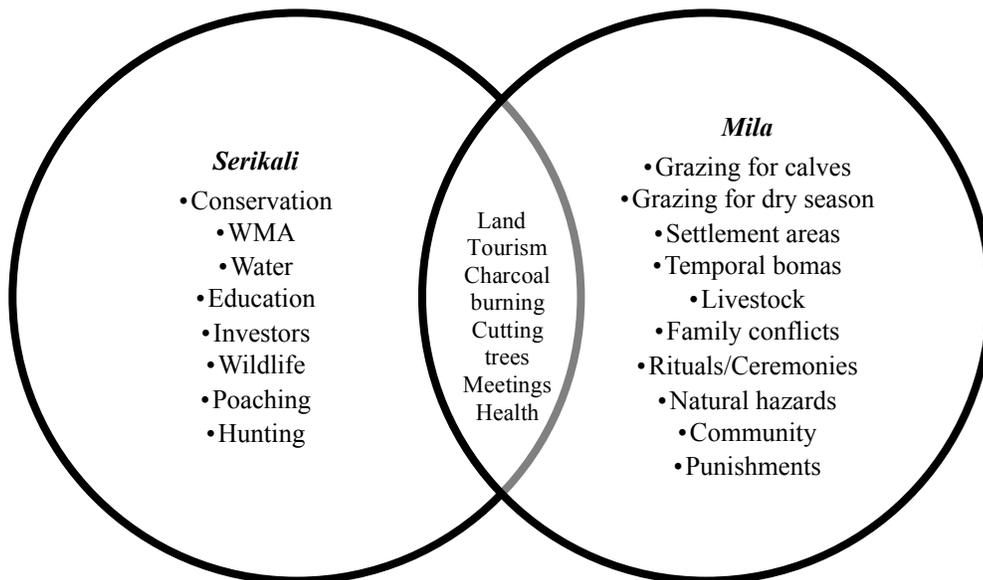
#### Venn Diagram Analysis

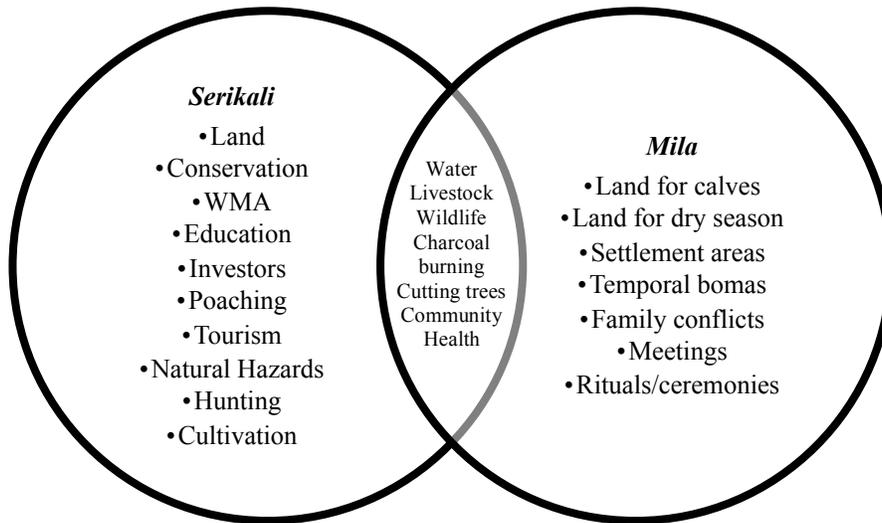
Note: all focus groups were conducted in Swahili and Maa and were translated by my research assistant.



**Above:** Focus group with Oltepesi women (11/02/14)

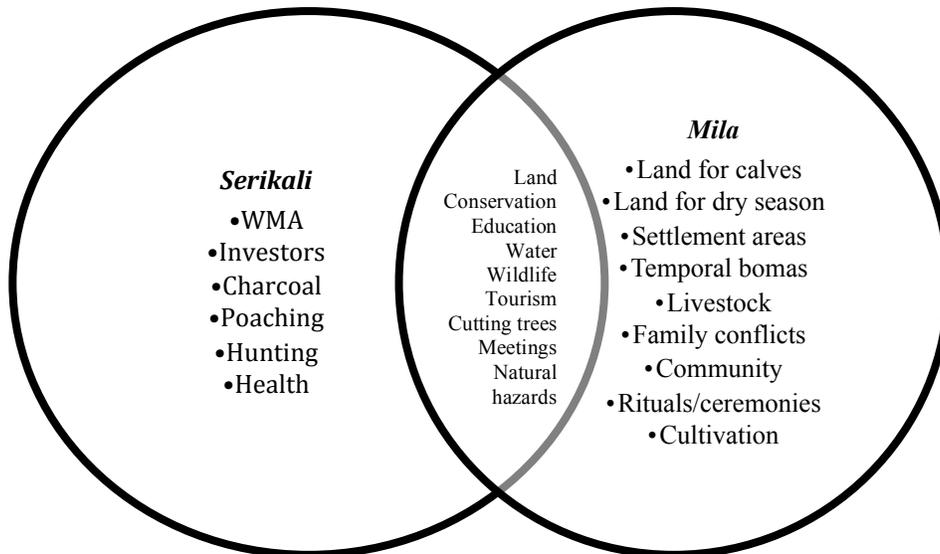
**Below:** Focus group with young Oltepesi men (12/02/14)





**Above:** Oltepesi AA representatives, 2 men and 1 woman (19/02/14)

**Below:** Focus group with male wazee [elders] from Oltepesi (24/02/14)





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