Establishment of Community Wildlife Management Areas (WMA’s) around the Serengeti National Park.

1. Definition

Wildlife Management Area has become a key word in modern conservation. In case you were still wondering what exactly it means, here is the official definition taken from “Wildlife Policy of Tanzania”.

“An area of communal land that contains wildlife and the people have user rights and the mandate to protect wildlife and other natural resources contained therein, and from which they are allowed to retain a significant proportion of revenue. The size of each area will take into account its ecology, wildlife densities and other natural resources, the proposed form of land-use for the area, and the cohesiveness of the community. Each area will have legal administrative boundaries and can include one or more villages. The area must be leased, entrusted or owned through customary or titled systems of land tenure by villagers who form an Authorized Association. All forms of land use will be governed by a land-use plan made in consultation with rural communities. Where conditions allow, the WMA’s will be used as exclusive zones for the management of wildlife and other natural resources, as defined in a land-use plan and the use of which can be regulated by by-laws.”

2. Background / Achievements

The following activities have been carried out up to now:

• Participatory Rural Assessment (PRA) Training of staff from TNP, SRCS, WD and FZS
• PRA workshops in all 18 concerned villages
• Analyses of PRA data
• Socio-economic studies
• Economic study in Loiondo
• Aerial resource assessment in all concerned areas
• Awareness workshops in villages
• Meetings with all concerned District Authorities including councillors.
• Meetings of village representatives
• Election of village wildlife committees
• Individual village meetings
• Meetings of villages/district authorities combined in the proposed WMAs
• Stakeholder meetings including hunting operators and tourism sector
• Village meetings on WMA boundaries, zoning and request for establishment
• Formulation of request for the establishment of the WMA’s by all villages involved.

As a result of these activities, four major WMA proposals have been passed and agreed at village and district level. These are ready for ratification as “pilot” projects. The gazettment will follow as soon as the relevant law has been passed by the government.

The WMAs are:

**IKONA Community Wildlife Management Area.**
Four villages around Ikoma. (Robanda, Nyichoka, Makundusi, Nattambiso), approximately 450 square kilometres.

**ERAMATARE Community Wildlife Management Area.**
Five villages in Loliondo along the Serengeti/Ngorongoro boundary (Losoito/Malooni, Oloipiri, Olorien/Magaiduru, Arash, Soit Sambu), approximately 4500 square kilometres.

**LAKE NATRON Community Wildlife Management Area.**
Pinyiny Ward, approximately 2,000 square kilometres. This proposed WMA is also a newly confirmed RAMSAR site.

**MAKAO Community Wildlife Management Area.**
Eight villages in Meatu and Karatu Districts, approximately 1700 square kilometres.

### 3. Project Details

The project will continue working with the communities and the government to properly establish the Community Wildlife Management Areas all around the Serengeti National Park. As women are the main users of the natural resources strong attention has been and will be given to include them in the process. As a consequence the project leader has been and will continue to be a woman. In the past phase this role was filled by an expatriate but it is suggested that for the continuation a Tanzanian, Ms Sekela ... will be the project coordinator.

Activities will include general support to the local communities in establishment, management, administration and monitoring of the WMA’s. Focus Activities will be the following:

• Survey and demarcation of WMA boundaries
• Preparation on village level of Land Use Zone Plans
• Establishment of Authorised Associations in the WMA’s
• Establishment of a revenue reinvestment and sharing code
• Securing of the land through title deeds for the villages
• Establishment of WMA administration and governing structures
• Establishment of a control and monitoring system for sustainable use
• Training of village administrators and scouts
• Establishment of an umbrella organisation to represent the villagers in the Serengeti ecosystem
• Integration of hunter/gatherers (Hdazabe and Dorobo) into the WMA
  Facilitating the role of women with the WMA and ensuring that gender issues are taken into consideration in reinvestment and revenue sharing

4. Assumptions and risks

The Government Policy is clearly formulated in the “Wildlife Policy”, the “Land Act”,
the “Village Land Act” and the “Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania”.
Individual Government Officials however are reluctant to go ahead with the empowerment of the local communities at the loss of their own privileges. Although the strictly bottom – up approach that has been followed by the project has gained a very strong base for the proposed WMA’s the Wildlife Division is reluctant to give up the traditional Top – down approach.

The proposed Community Wildlife Management Areas can be established under the existing law with assiting by-laws on village level. Following the acceptance of the “Wildlife Policy” by the Parliament the Government is suggesting to make a proper law frame for the policy. The gazettment of all WMA under this law could be delayed by slow government procedures.

5. Project Management

Overall Project Supervision: Joe ole Kuwai, Frankfurt Zoological Society with Pia Zimmermann

Project Leader: Sekela Mwangota, Community Officer on secondement from Tanzania National Parks

WMA Co-ordinator Makao and Ikona: Steve Makcha
WMA Co-ordinator Loliondo and Lake Natron: Alays Kagil