

The Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park and the Transboundary Protected Areas Research Initiative

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Background: Process to date

- Post-doc Sept 2001
- Objective: research initiative in southern Africa
- Discussions at CMU (2002) lead to focus on TBPA's
- Field trip to Germany, UK & SA to develop research initiative (2002)
- Refining research focus and formalizing partnerships (2003)
- Research commenced early 2003

Today's objectives

- Outline of research partnerships
- Background on Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park
- Outline of research framework
- Investigate possibilities of synergies between yourselves and specific research projects

Research partnerships

Key partnership between CMU and the SAVANA-network

SAVANA-network:

- School of the Environment of Uni Wits, Uni of the North (SA), Uni Botswana, Eduardo Mondlane Uni (Moz) and Uni of Virginia
- Long established climate change network with physical sciences orientation
- Needs the social sciences capacity of the CMU network

CMU Network

- Universities of East Anglia, Mainz and Colby College developing linked funding proposals and coordinating research
- Students also from Uni Georgia, Uni Florida (Gainesville), Uni Maryland
- Emergent relationship with UBC
- Wits University School of Social Sciences and Department of Social Anthropology
- TBPA-list with circa 35 people internationally for circulation of papers and research coordination

Research orientation

Study TBPA in southern Africa as coupled human-environment systems across scales and boundaries.

Assess the nature of the social and natural transformations brought about by TBPA.

Provide independent research service and to make critical and constructive contributions to the policy decision-making process.

Environmental sustainability **and** social justice.

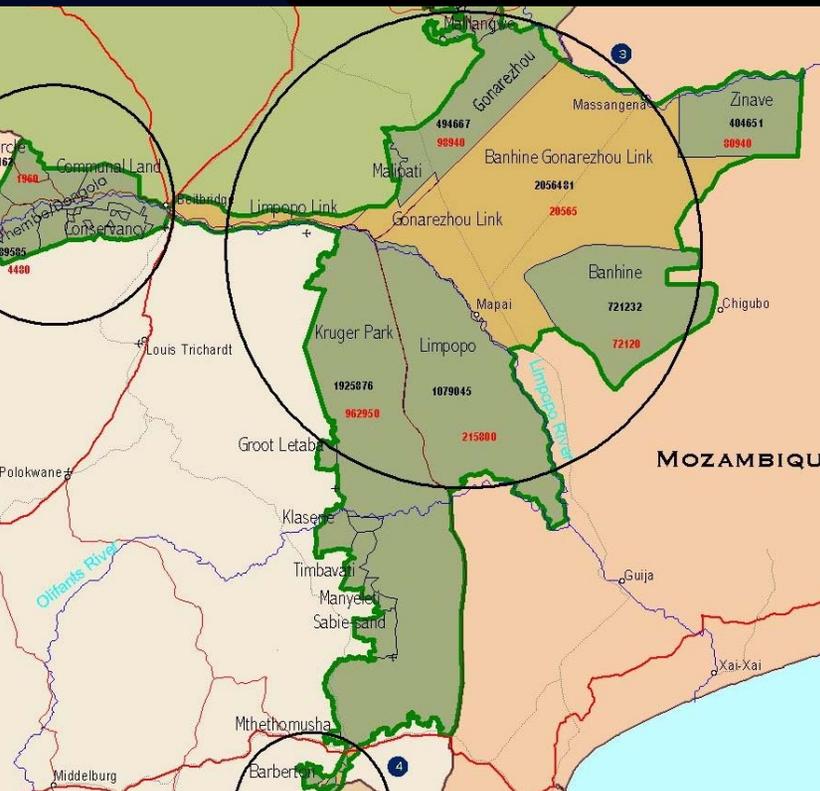
IA methodologies to bridge disciplinary gaps.

Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park as pilot case study.

A TBPA Research Unit with 6 researchers based at Wits.

First research phase beginning 2003 to June 2004.

The Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park



Major technical exercise involving 3 countries.
One of 22 proposed TBPAs in sn Africa.

Arguments used in favour:

- Biodiversity conservation benefits
- Conservation tourism for community development
- Economic integration and sustainable development
- Stabilization of region through a “Peace Park”

Implementation:

- Governments in partnership with NGOs
- Massive amounts of donor funding
- “Multi-stakeholder” systems of governance (CPPPs)

Map: Courtesy of Peace Parks Foundation

Key issues: Planning

Ecoregional planning reflects a paradigm shift away from “CBNRM” towards “corporate conservation” (Brosius)

Depoliticizes what is an intensely political process (Ferguson)

Dominance of natural/physical sciences

Snapshots in time of the social environment

Critique relates to issues of social justice

Key issues: Implementation

New systems of governance: control over and access to natural resources – issues of participation and exclusion inevitable

Wide range of actors, each assuming attributes of centrality

Characterized by competition, conflict and controversy

Metaprocess: none have complete overview over process

NB:

- Each claims to be representing the interests of local people
- Under these conditions information, knowledge and interpretation contested

Complex context

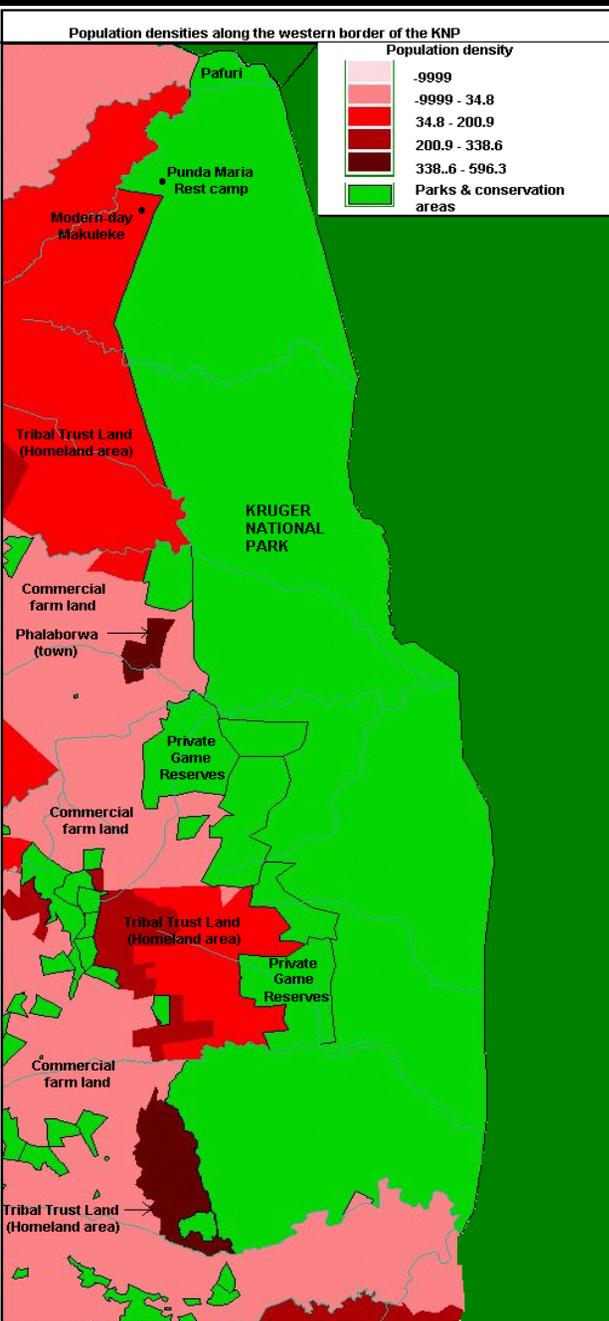
Need diachronic perspective on GLTP as coupled human-environment system for insights into (meta) process

Eg.:

- Historical links between establishment of nature reserves and 'native reserves', and privatization of the commons
- History of local adaptation to impacts of regional droughts and resource management regimes

Rapid changes underway as a result of land reform

Also need to understand the legacy of...



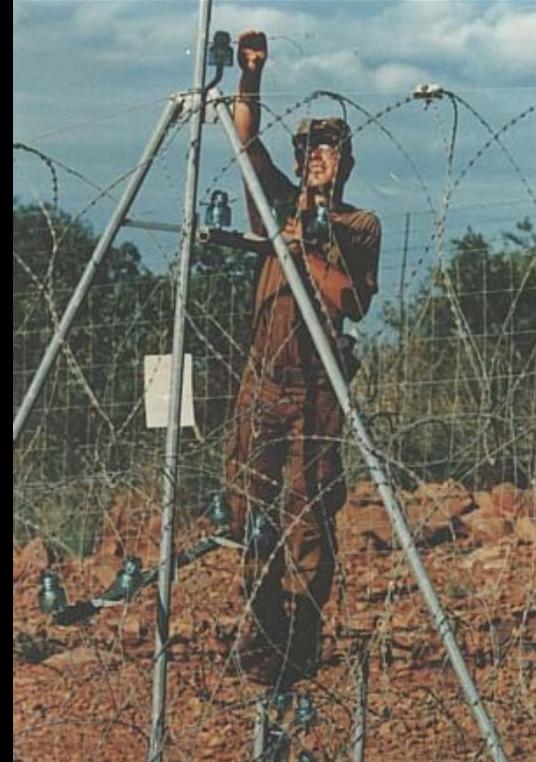
War

Cold War battlefield (1960-1990)

- Militarization of conservation services
- Arms, drugs and commercial poaching
- Destruction of infrastructure and depopulation (Moz)
- Populations currently living hand-to-mouth existence
- Livelihoods extremely vulnerable



4/21/2005



Key issue: Local people



On Mozambican side green is not green

- Poorly defined land rights and weak bargaining position of local people
- Impact of wildlife and resource use restrictions on local livelihoods
- Vulnerability to predation from the centre

As demonstrated by history, dislocation in this drought prone region can be fatal

Issues of participation/ exclusion predominate in discourse



Research objectives

Research projects will be conducted in respect of the following issues:

- The eco-regional planning framework and linkages between planning processes across scales and boundaries
- Historical vulnerabilities and adaptation of local people to climate variability, resource limitations and political ecologies
- The social and economic framework of the GLTCA, with an emphasis on land ownership, land reform and tourism development
- Community-based tourism initiatives launched in the GLTP area over the last decade, with special emphasis of Community-Public Private Partnerships
- The decision-making process and governance

Synergies

An immediate product of this process is the development of a digital archive that will be made available on the internet. It links this Initiative with the Virginia Digital History project (<http://www.vcdh.virginia.edu/>)

Co-ordinating multi-author paper for World Parks Congress on TBPA's and conflict with Pete Brosius (AAA)

Step-by-step process of developing further project-level synergies with:

- SAVANA researchers
- TBPA-RI's own network

Hoping to do same with CMU-based and other people