Clear delimitation is essential for Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) in Mozambique.

A lack of strategic planning, low government priority and minimal external investments in delimited land are hindering the process of land delimitation and restricting CBNRM.

Current strategies to promote CBNRM have focused extensively on resource revenue redistribution rather than approaches that link resource rights to obligations, community-investor partnerships and enhancing community capacities for effective and sustainable natural resource management.

Sustainable resource management requires an integrated package of interventions that link strategic land delimitation, rural investments and community capacity building.
This note first highlights current land use policies and practices and their effectiveness in creating an environment for community engagement in resource management. The subsequent section offers possible alternatives to methodologies, either through policy reform or reformulation of strategies in community resource management. The brief concludes by linking the significance of land delimitation activities, community natural resource management strategies and rural development in Mozambique.

Critique of current policy options

Mozambique’s rural population (68.1%)\(^3\) depends on land for subsistence and livelihood. Constitutionally all land is public but, there is simultaneous recognition of the bestowment of land user rights (Direito de Uso e Aproveitamento da Terra—DUATS) to communities\(^4\). DUATs can be granted either by the State, through continual residence, in good faith, of ten years or more, or communal customary tenure. In addition DUATs can also be granted to individuals and corporate entities through formal requests which imply obligations of development (based on approved exploration plans) and payment of a land tax that varies based on location, type of use and area occupied\(^5\). Local communities have no such tax obligations.

Securing land tenure to communities through their formalization and issuance of Community Delimitation Certificates (CDCs) was intended to allow investments and private-community partnerships. After 19 years of community land delimitation, it remains difficult to provide an accurate status of its implementation and impact. Generally speaking, land delimitation has been slow, and sporadic, with about 23% of the country’s land delimited and certified to communities. In addition, levels of overall support for the process have been relatively low at points in time, reflected by its low priority for the government through limited public budget allocations. The NGO sector was left with most responsibility for testing and piloting this type of delimitation. As a result, relations between the land administration services, investment stakeholders, communities, public authorities and other actors reflect a dichotomous development model (communities vs investors) that currently predominates. This is in stark contrast with the “open border” model, which would secure local rights and open up community land for inclusive and negotiated investment, envisioned by the Technical Secretariat to the Land Commission in 1998. These experiences clearly demonstrate the continuing difficulties in linking community land delimitation with local development initiatives. In contrast to what was envisaged, community land is often misconceived as land where outside investment cannot take place. Within this logic, community land delimitation is seen by some as restricting the availability of land for investment, rather than as creating the basis for outside investors to establish win-win partnerships with communities.

On the other hand, private productive investments have not been satisfactory. Expectations that private investors would invest in delimited and certified community land have been realised in only few cases. In part, the low level of investor uptake of community land merely reflects the general situation with many rural land holdings; relatively few have applied for DUATs and those that have are characterised by general underuse and a lack of investment. It also reflects the overall low levels of investments in rural Mozambique. A preliminary assessment of delimited land concludes that high agricultural potential is not necessarily a factor used by NGOs, the main drivers of the programme, to target potential community land delimitations. Delimitation has arguably not served as a comprehensive strategic tool for rural landscape development as it was intended in the law.

This outcome may be the result of the lack of a strategy for identifying and aligning delimitation activities with the identification of opportunities for deriving benefits to local communities. This absence of strategic foresight reflects a lack of clarity in the exact legal nature of a transfer of a portion of community land to an investor, or may be due in part to an information problem and the lack of mechanisms to connect investors with communities whose land is available for investment. Unfortunately, communities are rarely well-informed about the economic opportunities offered by the rights they have acquired.
Case Study: Mulela and Muzo Communities

Mulela and Muzo are two communities, both amalgamated from other smaller communities, and have CBNRM projects: Mulela’s project is premised on engaging in sustainable wildlife resource utilization and biodiversity conservation for local development while the Muzo project involves a forest concession. Both projects have not realised their full potential resulting from a combination of institutional weaknesses, low expertise and technological capacities, lack of partnerships and finance, and for Mulela, a lack of transfer of legal rights over wildlife resources.

Recommendations, too, parallel at both project sites: strengthening community participation in governance; diversification of livelihood strategies through increased value-chain addition of forest products (non-timber forest products, agroforestry systems etc) and increased access to finance; expose communities to skills that enhance partnerships through investments in and management of natural resource; and increase overall community awareness to the importance of environmental services, laws and regulation governing them.

Going forward, the Mulela and Muzo case study highlights three main areas requiring attention: Institutional strengthening through reverting resource rights to communities (Mulela), institutional coordination for all stakeholders involved, and integrating findings from the case studies to action plans on national CBNRM initiatives; effective community participation in resource management and development; and improved community knowledge and governance of existing natural resources and their value.

Box 1: SWOT analysis undertaken in the context of developing CBNRM in Mozambique

Strengths:
- Progressive legislation devolving rights to resources and sharing benefits from natural resources. Many communities have been supported in organization to claim rights and make economic use particularly in relation to forest and fisheries.

Weaknesses:
- State reluctance (or lack of political will) to cede authority over natural resources to local communities seeking access to natural resource rights;
- The conveying of rights over natural resources without fully capacitating local communities to govern, manage and develop resources under their jurisdiction;
- Limited negotiating power of local people while dealing with third parties;
- Fragmented interventions at landscape level leading to high transaction costs of initiatives led by national and international institutions;
- High costs of sustainable management of natural resources (forests and wildlife), particularly in absence of valuation of these resources and the ecosystem services (public goods) associated with them;
- Lack of a sustainable exit strategy for the supported initiatives once the very short project life ends. Often this happens before local institutions (decision making and enterprise organizations) are strong enough to develop interventions into sustainable businesses.

Opportunities (see recommendations)

Threats:
- Limited funding for CBNRM;
- Recognition of property rights, through DUATs, fails to extend to natural resources held on delimited lands;
- Limited number of NGOs with long term access to funding to invest in long term support of CBNRM.
This lack of capacity is well exemplified with CBNRM. The evolution of CBNRM since 1997, when the Policy for Development of the Forestry and Wildlife Sector was approved, indicates significant progress in developing policies and legislation, and experimentation of CBNRM on the ground. However, a number of challenges to progress in CBNRM have been identified (see Box 1 below). These challenges hinder the potential of CBNRM as a means of creating economic benefits that would propel improvement of community wellbeing through their active engagement in managing resources. Rather, current CBNRM strategies have devolved into a system that shares revenues from forests and wildlife. This continued dichotomy of "communities vs investors" needs to be replaced with a better approach that views communities and investors as partners in a venture that guarantees economic benefits for all concerned parties without detriment to the natural resource base (See Box 2 for an example).

**Future of Natural Resource Management in Mozambique**

Current CBNRM strategies are not sufficient to fully develop and realise national economic and natural resource development goals. Therefore, an enabling legal, regulatory, procedural, institutional and service provision environment for land delimitation needs to be fine-tuned; strengthening the legal framework and institutional capacities at multiple scales (local, district, provincial and national). Creating a better balance, and link, between rights and obligations and rights and markets in CBNRM, is critical to the realisation of the full potential of natural resource development in Mozambique.

Below are recommendations for land delimitation activities and CBNRM strategies that offer possible areas of action that would positively further the national agendas in natural resource development and community resource management in Mozambique:

**Land Delimitation**

i) Delimitations must be planned and implemented more strategically, as part of wider rural development programmes, and implemented not only to secure rights against external threats, but also to explicitly seek concrete benefits to local residents;

ii) Institutional coordination: With multiple institutions involved in community land use and developmental planning, there is a clear need to have institutional coordination of various functions undertaken by multiple institutions;

iii) Strategic piloting and methodology development: Testing a wide range of different socio-economic settings, as well as under a series of different investment drivers to create a critical mass of information, experiences and lessons to consolidate methodologies and identify in more detail a future operational and institutional set up for these activities.

**CBNRM**

i) Strengthening the capacity of decentralized government institutions at provincial and district levels to integrate CBNRM in their development strategies and establishing monitoring and technical support;

ii) Prioritizing interventions where cost-benefit assessments for proposed CBNRM initiatives are promising and where there is potential for partnerships with actors from the private sector or NGO. Community-investor partnerships that capitalize on evaluated natural resources and ecosystem services should be promoted;

iii) Better balancing rights and obligations through performance-based incentive systems: Provide financial and other benefits according to agreed-on sustainable natural resources management goals;

iv) Broadening the current Government focus on the implementation of the “20 per cent”(Ministerial Diploma no 93/2005) to the actual implementation of CBNRM where appropriate; and

v) Harnessing other forms of finance for resource management, particularly Payment for Ecosystem Services, with REDD+ being a good opportunity.
Box 2: Successful CBNRM/CINRM Initiative: Niassa Carnivores Project (NCP)

The NCP, launched in 2003, has the mission of conserving wildlife, particularly lions and other large carnivores in the Niassa National Reserve (NR). One of the villages (Mbamba) has partnered with a private investor-Ratel Trust-to create Mariri Investimentos in the NR’s L5-S concession block. In this partnership, the management is entirely composed of Mozambicans - 96% being local residents - with the exception of two managers. In 2014, benefits from this partnership included payment of over USD 180,000 in the form of wages, stipends, and assistance; conservation programs, education, vocational training and employment of about 600 people; employment of 117 people and diversifying local incomes leading to robust and resilient households. These interventions include: strategizing and prioritising the scope and areas of intervention; securing land rights of communities through a comprehensive delimitation programme and; community capacity building and Community Land Use Plans (CLUPs) as part of delimitation, transforming communities from passive recipients of investment into active partners and leaders.

Conclusion

The placing of land, natural forests and wildlife, environment, territorial planning and rural development within a single new ministry, MITADER, creates opportunities for reforms and integrated strategies for sustainable rural development and landscape management in Mozambique, which can unlock the capital vested in land and natural resources, and create inclusive and sustainable relationships between different categories of land and natural resource users. The Government of Mozambique should consider a coherent package of interventions, rather than isolated activities, which will increase government revenues while improving and diversifying local incomes leading to robust and resilient households. These interventions include: strategizing and prioritising the scope and areas of intervention; securing land rights of communities through a comprehensive delimitation programme and; community capacity building and Community Land Use Plans (CLUPs) as part of delimitation, transforming communities from passive recipients of investment into active partners and leaders.

This should lead to recognition by key stakeholders and decision-makers that local communities occupy and manage most of the land in the country; an understanding of how the ‘open border’ allows investors and local people to work together; and a reformed land administration. With such political, legal, policy and regulatory changes, Mozambique would be in a position to fully utilise and manage sustainably its natural resource base both for national developmental goals and for rural livelihood improvement.

Endnotes
1 This Brief is a product of the staff of the World Bank. The findings, interpretations, and conclusions expressed in this document do not necessarily reflect the views of the World Bank, nor does the Institution guarantee the accuracy of the data included in this work.
2 This brief is based on the “Non Lending Technical Assistance on Land and Community-Based Natural Resources Management” delivered by the WB in 2016. Other contributors included Christopher Tanner, CTConsulting Ltd., Wales, UK, with contributions from Simon Norfolk, Isilda Nhamtumbo, Aanabela Fernandez and Raúl Varela.Terra.
3 World Bank, 2016
4 Defined in Article 1(1) of the Land Law “[a] grouping of families and individuals, living in a circumscribed territorial area at the level of a locality [the lowest official unit of local government in Mozambique] or below, which has as its objective as the safeguarding of common interests through the protection of areas of habitation, agricultural areas, whether cultivated or in fallow, forests, sites of socio-cultural importance, grazing lands, water sources and areas for expansion.
5 This taxation does not, however, reflect the relative value of, and the economic activities in, the land in question. Further, the collection of revenue is poorly coordinated and inefficient.
6 Relates to the transfer of 20% of the value of fees related to the access and use forest and wildlife resources, as well as to the undertaking of contemplative tourism in parks and national reserves in favour of communities. In spite of its importance, this transfer has come to be wrongfully equated by many, including in the Government, to CBRNM. While mechanisms for the more effective implementation of the Diploma should be developed, CBNRM and the devolution of rights over the management of natural resources to communities in Mozambique offer possibilities that go well beyond this particular income transfer.
7 With participation of local communities, Community Land Use Plans guide the delimitation process after considering not only the economic feasibility of possible investments, but also the environmental impacts of various land use practices.