

**THE UTILISATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES IN THE
MATUTUINE DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN
MOZAMBIQUE: IMPLICATIONS FOR
TRANSFRONTIER CONSERVATION**

by

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Summary

**THE UTILISATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES IN THE
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This dissertation deals with the economic aspect of culture and focuses on the patterns of renewable natural resources utilisation among the people living in the Matutuine District of Southern Mozambique. The study also focuses on the demography, history and socio-political organisation of the area. Against this background the study emphasises the importance of the fact that these aspects will have to be taken into account if the establishment of the planned Lubombo Transfrontier Conservation Area in the same region is to be in any way successful.

This area has no conservation status at present but has been earmarked to become part of the Lubombo Transfrontier Conservation Area. This will mean that the entire area, or a substantial part thereof, will have to be proclaimed as a protected area. In Southern Africa the establishment of conservation areas have often been coupled with the removal of people from such areas. People removed from land declared as nature conservation areas were often denied access to resources they previously utilised to survive.

The research findings indicate that the local people who live in the Matutuine District of Mozambique are extremely dependent on the natural environment for their everyday survival. The vast majority of people are concentrated in small villages where they practise subsistence agriculture. Due to nutrient poor soils and other factors, the local people are not able to produce enough foodstuffs to fulfil their

survival needs. Although most people own small stock, the absolute minority of people own cattle. This is largely, although not solely attributable to the turbulent history of the area, especially the effects of the Mozambican Civil War. The poverty of the people in the area increases their dependence on natural resources. Local people supplement their diets by fish, caught in the lakes and rivers in the area, and wild fruits. Due to the effects of the Civil War, most fauna in the area have been depleted but people still hunt wild animals, especially small game, for food.

The local people are thus extremely dependent on the natural resource base of the area earmarked to become part of the Lubombo Transfrontier Conservation Area. With the information presented in this study it is possible for the planners of the Lubombo Transfrontier Conservation Area to devise a strategy that will not impair the livelihoods of the local people who live in the area, but instead accommodate their socio-economic needs in the planning process and in the eventual establishment of the Lubombo Transfrontier Conservation Area.

Keywords: community-based nature conservation; ethnobotany; ethnozoology; human-wild animal interaction; Maputaland; Peace Parks; renewable natural resource utilisation; Southern Mozambique; Tembe-Thonga; Transfrontier Conservation.

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