

“DOUBLE SUSTAINABILITY” IN BOTSWANA AND SOUTH AFRICA: THE CASE  
OF THE SAN IN THE CENTRAL KALAHARI GAME RESERVE AND  
KGALAGADI TRANSFRONTIER PARK

by

Lindsay Nelson

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of  
the Wilkes Honors College  
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Arts and Sciences  
with a Concentration in Environmental Studies

Wilkes Honors College of  
Florida Atlantic University

Jupiter, Florida

May 2013

“DOUBLE SUSTAINABILITY” IN BOTSWANA AND SOUTH AFRICA: THE CASE  
OF THE SAN IN THE CENTRAL KALAHARI GAME RESERVE AND  
KGALAGADI TRANSFRONTIER PARK

by  
Lindsay Nelson

This thesis was prepared under the direction of the candidate’s thesis advisor, Dr. William O’Brien, and has been approved by the member of her supervisory committee. It was submitted to the faculty of the Harriet L. Wilkes Honors College and was accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Arts and Sciences.

SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE:

---

Dr. William O’Brien

---

Dr. Kanybek Nur-tegin

---

Dr. Buller, Dean, Wilkes Honors College

---

Date

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Dr. O'Brien for all of his advising and keeping me "on track", no matter how many times I felt like I derailed. His comments and insights are invaluable and something I will take with me long after life at the Honors College. Additionally, Dr. Nur-tegin offered countless wise words during our conversations about economics and the environment. He helped me establish a thesis topic that was not only approachable, but was also something that could ignite my curiosity.

My family and friends contributed their kindness and patience throughout the entire thesis process and were always available for moral support. Gina Brockway, my loyal thesis buddy, was particularly dependable when discussing the spiraling thoughts that come with the combination of thesis writing and senior year of college.

The Honors College is a place I am forever thankful for. The students and faculty create a community that lends unconditional support and a contagious passion for learning.

## ABSTRACT

Author: Lindsay Nelson

Title: “Double Sustainability” in Botswana and South Africa: The case of the San in the Central Kalahari Game Reserve and Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park

Institution: Wilkes Honors College of Florida Atlantic University

Thesis Advisor: Dr. William O’Brien

Degree: Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Arts and Sciences

Concentration: Environmental Studies

Year: 2013

The question of land access rights for indigenous peoples is now a prominent theme in the management of large parks and game reserves in Africa. This comparative study addresses different government responses to this question regarding land dispossession of the San in Southern Africa. Ancestral lands of this unique and marginalized indigenous population had been rendered off limits by the creation of Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park (KTP) in South Africa and the Central Kalahari Game Reserve (CKGR) in Botswana. In more recent years, the government of Botswana and the post-apartheid government of South Africa have pursued quite divergent approaches to addressing the question of renewed San access rights in the parks. Central to the comparative analysis in this study is the degree to which South Africa and Botswana have embraced the concept of “double sustainability” in park management, which emphasizes the protection of biodiversity and people’s livelihoods at the same time.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	1
Conservation and Indigenous People’s Rights .....	2
Conservation and Development in Southern Africa .....	7
Considerations for Implementing Double Sustainability.....	10
People and Parks in Africa.....	12
The San: A Brief but Harsh History .....	14
Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park (KTP) .....	18
About the KTP .....	19
From Apartheid to Decentralized Development.....	21
Land Restitution and Local Economic Development (LED) in KTP.....	24
Central Kalahari Game Reserve (CKGR).....	27
The Basarwa of the Kalahari.....	28
Development and Botswana’s Booming Economy .....	32
Contesting Dispossession in CKGR .....	36
Discussion of Double Sustainability in the KTP and CKGR .....	40

## INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study is to analyze how land access rights are addressed according to the different management ideologies of Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park (KTP) and the Central Kalahari Game Reserve (CKGR). I examine how the Republic of South Africa's economic development fostered decentralization and local economies and how this affects the access rights of the San that were initially displaced from the KTP. In comparison, I examine the CKGR in the Republic of Botswana, a country experiencing rapid economic growth, and how the government has handled those San evicted from the park. Together, these two parks illustrate how access rights of the indigenous San people are contingent on the economic ideologies in which the institutions controlling national park management have evolved.

Throughout the world, contemporary efforts at conservation are surrounded by a multitude of obstacles. Increasing resource and commodity consumption has contributed to environmental pressures that threaten biodiversity and overall ecosystem health. Impending effects of climate change have attracted attention to conservation as species and the systems they depend on decline. Despite these challenges, overall funds available for action have decreased. The complexities between conservation, poverty alleviation, social equity, and economic growth threaten to exacerbate the tensions between human development and biodiversity protection. Faced with these constant challenges, international organizations argue, among other things, that biodiversity conservation is an ethical necessity; that conservation can be accomplished together with poverty alleviation; that biodiversity conservation is important in utilitarian terms for

humans in the long run; and that an exclusive concern with human development often leads to negative impacts on biodiversity conservation (Angermier 2000).

At the forefront of recent discussion about conservation are ethical issues that emphasize the suffering that conservation programs can impose on people. Conservation has led to the displacement of millions of people who formerly lived, hunted, farmed and fished in areas that are now protected. When biodiversity conservation distresses human populations, especially those that are impoverished, then few conservation initiatives will be effective. Many of the displacement problems resulting from conservation are comparable to development-induced displacement, but while international organizations such as the World Bank and the International Organization for Economic Development have formulated guidelines to address development-induced displacement, there is no coherent set of guidelines for conservation-induced displacement (Agrawal and Redford 2009).

### **Conservation and Indigenous Peoples' Rights**

The term “displacement” is used here to signify the involuntary removal of peoples from historical or existing homes, as well as loss of access or restrictions on livelihood opportunities or future income related to environmental resources (Cernea and Schmidt-Soltau 2006). Beyond material loss, displacement can also be a symbolic removal from the land—from its history, memory, or interpretation (Brockington and Igoe 2006). Agrawal and Redford’s (2006) survey of 37 projects attempting the combined achievements of biodiversity conservation and poverty alleviation found little evidence that poverty alleviation and biodiversity conservation can coexist and prosper

together. The study concluded that conservation of species and ecosystems requires restrictions on human influences (Arun and Redford 2009). As conservation projects become more prevalent, the displacement of people and their simultaneous impoverishment becomes a more inevitable and widespread occurrence. The involuntary removal of impoverished people from their land can strengthen the common perception that conservation is for the rich and powerful (Colchester 2004). This criticism in particular undermines the moral high ground of many conservationist goals. Since most governments among developing countries have a limited capacity to enforce existing legislation, the success of a protected area is likely dependent on local acceptance (Agrawal and Redford 2009).

Historically, conservation strategies have been dominated by separating humans from landscapes in an attempt to reserve such places strictly for nature. Wilderness areas were imagined as pristine environments with delicately balanced ecosystems, comparable to those that existed before humans. However, with increasing conservation knowledge, these “protectionist” conservation principles came under criticism and led to the emergence of conservation with the involvement of people (Thondlana 2011). Political changes also inspired a new appeal to decentralization and local participation in conservation initiatives. Innovative programs aimed at reducing conflict between conservation areas and people signal a shift in thinking on conservation issues (Fabricius 2004, 93–114).

Governments are increasingly realizing the imbalance between biological sustainability and poverty alleviation, but addressing the issue in practice has proven to be challenging (Cernea and Schmidt-Soltau 2003). The concept of “double



sustainability” presents the realization that sustainability is only truly accomplished when people’s livelihoods and biodiversity are both sustained. Often, wildlife is preserved successfully through the creation of national parks, but this form of land usage tends to impoverish those people and communities living in and around the parks. There is a general lack of appreciation for the extent to which perceived “pristine” environments were the result of long-term land use by local populations. Where human land use is recognized in a protected area such as a national park, it is often regarded as detrimental to nature conservation. The result specifically in rural Africa has been that populations were either forcibly removed from such areas, or faced drastic restrictions in access rights (Dahlberg et al 2010).

Until around the 1960’s, promoters of protected areas favored a top-down approach and rather exclusive view of such spaces. Particularly in Africa, setting up large reserves without much concern for the impact on local people fitted well with the autocratic style of colonial, and often post-colonial, governance (Colchester 2004). The previous chairman of the World Commission on Protected Areas noted, “Certainly the opinions and rights of indigenous peoples were of little concern to any government before about 1970; they were not organized as a political force as they are now in many countries” (Phillips 2003, 3).

Increasingly over the past forty years, the reasons why protected areas either fail or succeed in achieving livelihood stability are important considerations in achieving “double sustainability.” Attempting to engage indigenous peoples more effectively in biodiversity projects, the Environment Department of the World Bank produced a paper titled, *The Role of Indigenous Peoples in Biodiversity Conservation* (2008). The analysis

revealed that the number of biodiversity projects with fully engaged indigenous peoples was “extremely low,” especially considering that a large number of indigenous peoples were the inhabitants of areas rich in biodiversity and forests (Sobrevila 2008, xii). The study also concluded that, around the world, the territories of indigenous groups that have been given the rights to their lands had been better conserved than the adjacent lands (Sobrevila 2008, xii).

Since 1975, the World Conservation Union (IUCN) and World Parks Congress have been making important statements suggesting the recognition of indigenous peoples’ rights and the need to accommodate these rights in protected areas. These groups urged governments to formulate a means by which indigenous people could use the land within conservation areas. Resolutions to the IUCN have since noted that indigenous people should not be displaced from their traditional lands by protected areas, nor should protected areas be established without consultation with the people to be affected (Colchester 2004).

An examination of the experiences of indigenous peoples from about 1995-2004 by the IUCN found that these new principles of conservation are not yet being widely applied in developing countries. The actual recognition of indigenous rights is often not even on national agendas. In Africa, protected areas continue to force the relocation of indigenous people, often without any plans for resettlement or compensation (Dahlberg 2010). Serious impoverishment is widely reported and participation is at its most basic stages (Cernea and Schmidt-Soltau 2003). Only in southern Africa have participatory wildlife systems and land restitutions gained currency (Colchester 2004).

While these international groups have generated specific tasks toward attaining double sustainability, the majority of these factors require representation and support by an outside organization. Legal policies promoting or protecting indigenous people's lands are almost non-existent, and policies most often undermine rather than support their livelihoods (International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs). Compared to other regions of the world, the indigenous movement is still weak in Africa, with a low capacity in the few indigenous organizations that exist (International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs). Participatory field research on parks and indigenous peoples in Africa suggests that international laws recognize that indigenous peoples may own and manage protected areas, but national laws and institutions have yet to be revised in conformity with international laws (Colchester 2004).

In developing countries, international laws are likely to gain less attention, and instead the relationship between park management and the local community can be contingent on a country's strategy for developing economically. As described by Michael Todaro (2003), a respected expert in the field of development economics, economic development is an increase in living standards, which takes into account freedom from oppression, and leads into the creation of smaller sectors of the economy. An economy emphasizing growth, a narrower concept than development, is mainly interested in increasing national Gross Domestic Product (GDP), which is typically evident in a country exporting mainly natural resources. Development aims to sustainably alleviate people from poverty, while growth strives to quantitatively raise GDP (Todaro 2003).

## **Conservation and Development in Southern Africa**

The sociopolitical context of southern Africa makes conservation initiatives incorporating economic development particularly appealing. Drastic shifts in government ideologies over the past 50 years make the region highly volatile in terms of changing conservation and poverty alleviation strategies (Colchester 2004). Local communities, especially poor and marginalized rural populations are generally negatively affected when access rights to land, natural resources, and management decisions are restricted. National parks tend to have a management plan for sustaining the ecosystems within the park, but the role of the people living in or adjacent to the parks is considered less often.

Comparing two parks in southern Africa, I discuss the role of past and present economic decisions in determining access rights for those displaced. Using the KTP in South Africa and the CKGR in Botswana I explain each country's focus on either development or growth, and how these approaches affect the access rights of the San within the parks. The San of southern Africa are among "the region's best known peoples" (Suzman 2001, 9). However, in contrast to their popular image, majority of the San population are struggling to adapt to a rapidly transforming world in which they lack modern rights to land and also the skills necessary to compete in the evolving political economy (Suzman 2001).

South Africa's post-apartheid government is working to correct its past errors through pro-poor economic development policies. The new democratic government is aware that improving the livelihood of the wealthy minority under apartheid was unsustainable, and instead the country should focus on true development from a local

level. Through local economic development (LED) strategies the national government is decentralizing with local authorities leading poverty reduction. The San in South Africa were displaced during the construction of the Kalahari Gemsbok National Preserve in 1931, now known as Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park (KTP), but have recently benefitted from these pro-poor development policies that can address their needs. The San gained recognition by the government as an impoverished community and received land restitution both inside and along the borders of the park.

Just to the north, Botswana's tremendous economic growth since the government began mining for diamonds in 1966 has widened the gap between the rich and poor. Since all diamond rights and profits are held by the government, centralization is increasing and political leaders are striving to make Botswana a modern and economically homogenous state. The favored development ideals of the Botswana government have shaped policies that are unwilling to accommodate alternate development models for the San. The government of Botswana has explicitly stated that the best way to improve the lives of citizens is for all people to assimilate into the modern way of life. The CKGR was initially created to support the San's livelihood, but as land became scarce and questions about the cooperation between people and wildlife arose, the San were displaced to areas outside the CKGR. Since then, they have not celebrated the same victories as those San displaced from the KTP. The San attempted to reclaim land from the Government of Botswana, and after the longest court case in Botswana's history, the group won rights to return to their land. However, while the San had a victory in court, they face many restrictions when entering the park and the rights do not continue for future generations (Taylor 2007). Botswana's extreme emphasis on growth

has occurred with the cost of ignoring the specific needs of the San peoples. The policies toward diamond extraction fuel the central government's income, but inhibit action for marginalized communities.

These comparative case studies reveal the impact of a country's political and economic patterns on the willingness and ability to pursue double sustainability. Due to the nature of these rapidly changing political economies, it seems as though direct recognition of indigenous peoples' rights to land access is unlikely. Even in the successful land claim by the San in South Africa, the access rights were granted through means of poverty reduction rather than indigenous rights. "National governments in the southern Africa region are reluctant to consider expanding the rights of minorities within an indigenous rights framework" (Suzman 2001,2). Instead, it seems more feasible for indigenous peoples to gain acknowledgement through national policies that support economic development, strengthen localized communities and strive to pursue poverty alleviation. Once a country is focused on development that enhances the lives of those most marginalized, then issues of access rights can more appropriately be addressed. The San displaced from the KTP in South Africa have the support of a decentralized government with intent to raise living standards for those most neglected, while the San relocated out of the CKGR in Botswana are contending with a wealthy national government attempting to force assimilation into modern day lifestyles.

## CONSIDERATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTING DOUBLE SUSTAINABILITY

Recognizing that displacement due to conservation can exacerbate or induce impoverishment, in 2003 the World Park Congress called for “the knowledge and understanding of ...the impacts of protected areas on the livelihoods of the rural poor” (Cernea and Kai Schmidt-Soltau 2006,180). Additionally, the Convention on Biological Diversity called for the recognition of “the economic and socio-cultural costs and impacts arising from protected areas, particularly for indigenous and local communities, and (an adjustment of) policies to ensure that such costs and impacts—including the cost of livelihood and opportunities forgone—are equitably compensated” (Cernea and Schmidt-Soltau 2006,180). Attempting to implement this request, Michael Cernea and Kai Schmidt-Soltau (2006) present the idea of “double sustainability” as a conceptual framework for practicing sound conservation.

As described above, “double sustainability” refers to maintaining an ecological balance while ensuring that people’s livelihoods are not compromised. A more comprehensive and effective sustainability must be concurrently social and ecological (Cernea and Schmidt-Soltau 2006). However, empirical research on each of these types of sustainability is unequal, creating conflict with how to handle policies appropriately. Biological sciences have conducted extensive research into what happens when biodiversity is lost and how that loss happens, while social scientists’ analyses have failed to address a conclusive argument for how to manage human displacement (Cernea and Schmidt-Soltau 2006). The biological side also tends to have more direct, practical recommendations that can gain policy backing and financial resources for

implementation, while the sociological side remains under-researched and under-funded (Cernea and Schmidt-Soltau 2006).

The solutions needed for protecting both biodiversity and people's livelihoods—achieving “double sustainability”—revolve around how to do this effectively, not whether it should be done. A broad range of issues from policy to practice surrounds governance in protected areas. The type of governance has an influence on management objectives, determines how costs and benefits are divided, and also affects the generation of community, political, and financial support. Given the complexity of impending global changes to conservation areas, it is increasingly recognized that African national governments cannot, alone, accomplish all of their conservation objectives. In addition to protected areas owned by the national government, there are areas managed by local government units, co-managed arrangements with local communities and other stakeholders, territories managed by indigenous and local communities for livelihood purposes, private protected areas run by their landowners, and trans-boundary reserves managed jointly by two or more governments (Borrini-Feyerabend 2003).

While the types of management in parks have been modified, the method for establishing parks has hardly changed in over a century. As Adams and McShane state, “In almost all cases, the result is a park surrounded by people who were excluded from the planning of the area, do not understand its purpose, derive little or no benefit from the money poured into its creation, and hence do not support its existence” (Adams and McShane 1996, xv). Consequently, local communities distrust the park authorities, in part because of the lack of attention those authorities, supported by conservationists, have



paid to the relationship between park ecology, the survival of wildlife, and the livelihood of the displaced people (Adams and McShane 1996).

### **People and Parks in Africa**

African societies historically co-existed with local wildlife, but over the last century they have been characterized as threats to the health of wildlife. African hunters are now branded as “poachers” whenever they cross over park boundaries, giving rural community members the misleading connotation as the villains of conservation. Rural Africans are by now increasingly cautious and skeptical regarding conservation attempts. One of the leading figures in African conservation in the 1960’s and 1970’s, Professor Bernhard Grzimek, president of the Frankfurt Zoological Society and former director of the Frankfurt Zoo, embodied the traditional approach that still influences conservation in Africa. Grzimek helped regenerate this skepticism of African people as illegal hunters (Adams and McShane 1996). According to Grzimek, “A national park must remain a primordial wilderness to be effective. No men, not even native ones, should live inside its borders” (Adams and McShane 1996, xvi). However, people’s need for land will eventually exceed the purposes of parks and protected areas unless the parks serve, or are at least not entirely opposed, to the needs of the local people. Though the issue is complicated by the profitability of parks for certain people and revenue to governments, if communities are without land then none the park’s benefits are less understood.

One of the most stubborn ideas amongst conservationists is that development is the rival. However, viewing the two as opponents is no longer possible since human population growth and human needs are expanding to even the most isolated areas.

Conservationists are now realizing that building barricades in objection to development will not be effective. Success comes with understanding that “conservation and development, long at loggerheads, are two parts of a single process” (Adams and McShane 1996, xix). Development that does not consider the environment is destined to failure, as is conservation that ignores the needs of human beings.

As countries develop, double sustainability can be greatly influenced by which economic route a country takes. Whether a country follows a growth-focused route or pursues bottom-up development can provide differing results for people’s quality of life. Poverty alleviation in a country primarily concerned with growth has a tendency to focus on increasing GDP through strengthening nationalization, while a country focused on development is more inclined to decrease inequality through local empowerment. Economic growth is mainly concerned with increasing the economy’s output and economic development is centered on structural changes that improve the quality of life.

Conservationists generally consider the ecological benefits when establishing a national park, but the displacement of people and the effects on the overall livelihood of local communities is often determined by economic decisions. The case studies from the KTP and the CKGR portray the impacts of differing economic strategies. The different strategies for growth and development in each country affect the success of double sustainability. Although the communities of San in southern Africa are diverse, a new collective San identity has emerged that is based on cultural continuities, a shared experience of history, and similar conditions of poverty (Suzman 2001).

## THE SAN: A BRIEF BUT HARSH HISTORY

Estimates of the numbers of San in southern Africa have varied greatly over the past century. The data are more complete than ever, but identity-switching, movements and migrations in response to war, population pressure, ecological constraints and the inaccuracy of census data all hinder an accurate count. With these inconsistencies in mind, Suzman estimates that between 85,000 and 90,000 San live in southern Africa, with the overwhelming majority living in Namibia and Botswana. Less than 2,500 and 5,000 San live in Zimbabwe and South Africa respectively, and only very small San populations remain in Angola and Zambia. Thus, San constitute small minorities in all of the countries in which they live, but Botswana and Namibia, and to a lesser extent South Africa, are home to sufficiently large San populations and have generated significant public debate concerning their status (Suzman 2001).

The San, occasionally referred to using the obsolete term “Bushmen,” or the “Basarwa” for those native to the Kalahari, are commonly considered to be the earliest inhabitants of the Kalahari region of southern Africa (Thondhlana et al 2011). Idolized as the archetypal hunting and gathering society, they are the subjects of numerous ethnographic studies. Today, however, very few San live a life in isolation or depend on hunting and gathering. Now that development is expanding into areas inhabited by the San, the majorities of them are forced to become dependent on government welfare in the form of food aid or extremely poorly paid jobs (Suzman 2001). San dependency on the government is a complex issue, and as much as it is principally economically motivated, it also has strong socio-political and cultural dimensions. According to Suzman (2001, 9) “San social inferiority is not popularly understood to be a consequence of the actions of

others.” In Botswana particularly, the reluctance of state officials to follow a participatory approach to San development is partly motivated by the widely held perception that few San are competent to make important decisions without guidance from others (Suzman 2001). Dependency was affected by various motives, but it “occurred most rapidly where San lost secure access to land and consequently the capacity to live autonomously of the dominant political economy through foraging and hunting” (Suzman 2001, 8).

In the past, the trademark of their social attitudes was their belief in cooperating within the family, between clans, and through nature itself. The San people found a sense of belonging from the connectedness to a single place and through the belief that natural resources were common property (Thondhlana et al, 2011). However, it was this very form of identification and mutual land access between the San that allowed them to be persecuted firstly by the Bantu settlers and then by European colonists, which often took the form of eviction from lands (Holden 2007). According to Chennels (2009), in every country where the San once lived, their evictions from traditional lands had been shaped in such a way to appear legal. The removal of the San to make way for nature preserves to provide areas of “wilderness” is just one such example (Thondhlana et al 2011).

Up to 300,000 indigenous peoples once lived throughout southern Africa. Around two thousand years ago, this population was fully comprised of hunter-gatherers. Once Bantu cattle economies settled in the region segments of the indigenous population turned to pastoralism. Following European colonization of southern Africa in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, most of the indigenous peoples were wiped out. Between the Bantu settlers from the north and east and the white colonizers from the south, they were mostly assimilated,

decimated, or subjugated. By the early 20<sup>th</sup> century in southern Africa, the only surviving indigenous group was a small population of the San, majority of which lived in and around the Kalahari basin in Botswana and Namibia, southern Angola, southern Zambia and north-western Zimbabwe. As conditions grew worse in these countries, some San relocated to areas within South Africa. Still relatively isolated, they continued a hunting- and gathering lifestyle complemented by trade with others (Suzman 2001).

In the last century the surviving San have almost completely assimilated into the lowest levels of the regional political economy, and with it increased their dependency on the government (Chennells 2009). Bantu in southern Africa did not perceive the San as a distinct ethnic community so much as an “inferior order of humanity” (Suzman 2001, 2). Similarly, white colonists did not consider San to be “blacks”, but rather to constitute a “lower” and more “primitive” expression of “mankind” (Suzman 2001, 2). With neither European nor Bantu immigrants considering hunting and gathering to be a legitimate form of land use, the San were falsely declared nomads and given no rights over land or natural resources. By the mid 1970’s close to nine-tenths of the region’s San population had been dispossessed of their traditional lands and their source of economic and political autonomy (Suzman 2001).

During the 20<sup>th</sup> century the San became increasingly affected by decisions of their national governments (Suzman 2001). The nature of San dependency was shifting away from direct dependency on themselves and other San peoples to a broader structural dependency on the State and its welfare programs. San marginalization became essentially a bureaucratic decision-making process (Hitchcock and Holm 1993). Since access rights to land were illegitimate for the San, the increased dependency on the

government highlights the San's economic vulnerability, as well as government initiatives to affect any substantial change to the economic status of San populations.

The extent to which the San once depended on hunting and gathering as their principal economic strategy has meant that relations between San communities and national governments have often been conducted in the context of nature conservation. The similarities and contrasts of land access rights to the San are compared between Botswana's growth-focused democracy, and South Africa, an apartheid state turned democratic that is trying to correct past mistakes through development. In both cases, the unjust legacy of dispossession continues to influence relationships between the San peoples and the management of the KTP and the CKGR.

## KGALAGADI TRANSFRONTIER PARK (KTP)

Since the abandonment of apartheid and the election of a majority government in South Africa in 1994, the government has undertaken efforts to ensure that local San populations have adequate land access. The San were evicted from their traditional lands in South Africa in order to establish the Kalahari Gemsbok National Preserve, known today as part of the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park (KTP). Corresponding to South Africa's Restitution of Land Rights Act 22 of 1994, which was designed to give land rights back to those displaced after 1913, the San presented a successful claim for access rights and sustainable resource use rights within the KTP (Magome and Murombedzi 2003). The restricted prior access and displacement of ancestral communities prevented the San from effective foraging or pastoral practices. Gaining access to the park was seen as a way of addressing some of the socio-economic challenges (such as high levels of unemployment, low education levels, dependence on state grants, alcoholism, domestic violence and associated social problems) that became characteristic of the San after being displaced (Thondhlana et al 2011). However, the challenges of a relatively powerless group gaining back land rights were complex and at least partly resolved through South Africa's post-apartheid political and economic strategies. The government's support for those who were mistreated during apartheid and the intentional focus on economic development through decentralization assisted the San in gaining environmental justice.

The first national park in South Africa was established in 1926, when the concepts of biodiversity conservation and the science of ecology were just forming. There was no mention of scientific purposes in the legislation when parks were first being established, and for many decades protected areas were considered to be outside the boundaries of

science. Military-style administrators were in charge of managing national parks with a general mandate to leave nature alone. In the 1960's the intervention of biologists into South African national parks affairs introduced a policy of 'management with intervention,' permitting the wildlife to be actively manipulated by providing water for wildlife, instituting a grass-burning regime, and removing animal populations that were considered to be too large (Carruthers 2007). Presently, this scientific paradigm is being remodeled in light of new research and ideas about the role of humans in ecosystems.

The first formally named transboundary protected area in Southern Africa was the KTP, described as a "wildlife conservation area with common international boundaries managed as a single unit by a joint authority that comprises the representatives of the participating countries" (Moswete 2011, 67). The former Kalahari Gemsbok National Preserve in South Africa and the Gemsbok National Park in Botswana were merged in April 2000 to form KTP (Kepe et al. 2005). Using transfrontier conservation management policies, such as united agreements on conservation, tourism development, poverty alleviation, and enhancing local community participation, the park operates under dual ownership and management of governments between Botswana and South Africa (Moswete 2011). Despite dual ownership, Botswana does not have governance over those San displaced from the KTP since South Africa was responsible for the eviction of San peoples out of the Kalahari Gemsbok National Preserve prior to the joint agreements of the KTP (Campbell 2004).

### **About the KTP**



The KTP is one of the most visited parks in South Africa for tourism. The park sustains a number of species with considerable tourism appeal, including big cats, raptors, and ungulates. There are two entrances in the South African part of the KTP, and once visitors are inside they can travel freely between countries (unless they want to enter from one side and exit another). There are three large rest camps each containing campsites, cabins, a gas station, and a shop. All three rest camps pre-dated the KTP, though there were extensive renovations to one camp in 2001. Between 2002 and 2004, five additional eight-bed wilderness camps and a 30-bed tent camp were developed to keep up with increasing visitors. These additions increased the total number of beds in the park from 175 to 279, totaling 50,000 visitors for the available 110,000 beds a year (Scovronick and Turpie 2009).

The KTP accomplishes goals similar to other parks in southern Africa, but more specifically the benefits include: reduction of conflict or political differences between countries; reduction of poaching and halting illegal trade across boundaries; enhancement of nature-based tourism due to joint marketing, tour operator training, and joint agreements on fees; visitor management and possible reintroduction of a large range of species; and promotion of ecosystem management. However, the creation of KTP has also alienated adjacent San communities in South Africa due to restrictions on resource access. As with other conservation initiatives, KTP faces financial, socio-cultural and ecological challenges as government managers attempt to balance conservation, poverty alleviation, and community-based economic development (Moswete 2011).

Before European settlement in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the South African part of the KTP was the San people's hunting and gathering territory (Thondhlana et al 2011.) The

Southern Kalahari San were evicted from the Kalahari Gemsbok National preserve in South Africa (now the KTP) after its formation in 1931 and were widely dispersed into South Africa, Namibia and Botswana (Chennells 2009). The San were deprived of their land rights, access to ancestral lands, and livelihoods while being forcibly removed and taken to unfamiliar places. However, since South Africa shifted political philosophies after 1994 and dedicated economic strategies toward bottom-up development, the San launched a successful land claim in the KTP (Chennells 2009).

### **From Apartheid to Decentralized Development**

Land dispossession in South Africa was based upon its apartheid policy, a racially oppressive social, political, and economic system that was designed to benefit the minority white citizens by subjugating and controlling its majority African population. The Native's Land Acts in 1913 and 1936 were particularly what restricted land ownership of the black majority to just 13% of the country's total land area. The land set aside for Africans was fragmented and scattered throughout areas of the country and most of this land was infertile and thus unsuitable for living (Magome and Murombedzi 2003, 111). These frameworks explain the beginnings of native peoples' impoverishment and guide the process of their exclusion from protected areas like the KTP.

The land reform process throughout the country began in April 1994, when apartheid officially ended and the transition to democracy began. In an attempt to provide restitution for those wronged during the apartheid era, the government legislated its Restitution of Land Rights Act 22 of 1994, which is dominated by three features. First is the reimbursement of land rights to compensate for land lost due to racial laws. The

second is land redistribution to provide the poor with land for homes and productive use to improve their livelihoods. The government was considering that it would be difficult for the poor to buy land on the open market without assistance. The third is land tenure reform, which is supposed to redistribute the land rights of those unfairly privileged by apartheid (Magome and Murombedzi 2003). These amendments were targeted at decreasing poverty through reconstructing land rights. Complementary changes were also made in economic policy, which perhaps further induced land reform action and helped the San gain access back into the KTP.

In 2003, the United Nations Development Program produced its *South Africa Human Development Report*, which was primarily about sustainable development. The report stated that under apartheid South Africa developed a growth path for the economy that was not based on improving the livelihoods of the country's majority and was therefore unsustainable. While South Africa has made many socio-economic achievements since the end of apartheid, poverty indicators, inequality, and unemployment have all continued to increase (UNDP 2003). The report added that the country must address these challenges at all three levels of government—national, provincial, and local (Rogerson 2006).

South Africa is currently pursuing local economic development (LED) strategies, such as implementing community-based development, small enterprise development and locality development as a means for pro-poor development. Local economic development is one of the more important post-apartheid development strategies and is now being practiced by locals with the open support of the national government. The local governments are recognized by the national government as vital sources of change

and are tasked with finding solutions for developmental needs in their localities with a particular focus on the poorest members of society (Rogerson 2006).

Since 1994, the promotion of LED has become a central concept for policy and planning in both urban and rural reconstruction, and new initiatives are now found in South Africa's constitution and in other important documents (Nel 2000). It is apparent that national government's priority is for LED to be concentrated around poverty reduction. There is also a growing acceptance in national planning that poverty reduction requires more than macro-economic advantages, such as increased employment, economic growth, or investment (Nel 2000). Instead, what is acknowledged is the necessity for a form of growth that benefits the nation's poor. Designing specific plans for pro-poor development suggests that the government will be in support of the San gaining access rights back into the KTP. If granted access to the park for sustainable practices, the San are not only less dependent on government welfare, but are also given a source of economic livelihood. Income generating activities inside the park are a possible source such as ecotourism, as well as returning to their traditional cultural practices. Additionally, the emphasis on localized governance allows the San's specific needs to be met quickly and on a more personal level.

Decentralization in South Africa is progressing and headed in the direction toward a purposeful improvement in local authority. In a survey done by Stephen Ndegwa analyzing decentralization in Africa, he found that "in no country was the claim to centralization as preferred organizational model made or implied, nor was decentralization considered undesirable, only difficult to effect and sustain" (Ndegwa 2002). Based on the assessments of World Bank specialists working in each country

covered, Ndegwa's survey sought to examine the status of decentralization, through a number of indicators, across the regions of Africa.

In *Decentralization in Africa*, the scope of decentralization was measured by using three factors of decentralization: political, administrative, and fiscal. The overall existence of institutions and structures for these three components determines how a country scores on the level of decentralization. Out of the thirty African countries analyzed, South Africa had the highest degree of decentralization in all three factors. While there are varying degrees of success with regard to each factor, the findings indicate that South Africa is creating and enhancing local authority structures at a greater degree than most other African nations (Ndegwa 2002).

### **Land Restitution and Local Economic Development (LED) in KTP**

Special measures such as LED and decentralization were taken in South Africa to improve the status of the country's poorest people, including the San. Shortly after apartheid ended, the land reform process involved dual goals: socio-economic development and the correction of past inequality. As part of this reform process, the government created the South African National Parks (SANParks) agency, a constitutional body under the Department of Environmental Affairs, which was delegated to manage national parks (Dahlberg et al 2010). The authority of SANParks includes the right to buy, lease, and request the expropriation of land to be used as a national park. Since the KTP is a transfrontier park, only the South African portion is managed by SANParks. When SANParks was first administered to the KTP, the management approach was to maintain a pristine wilderness with little human influence (Hughes

2011).

In 1994, after the Restitution of Land Rights Act, SANParks was reorganized and their stated mission now is “to develop and manage a system of national parks that represents the biodiversity, landscapes, and associated heritage assets of South Africa for the sustainable use and benefit of all” (Dahlberg et al 2010, 213). SANParks aims to achieve these goals through increasing community involvement and economic benefits to local development, improved accessibility and negotiated land claims (Cock and Fig 2002). The park staff is now involved in outreach programs concerning poverty alleviation, educational and cultural activities. Minimizing friction between the park and local communities, SANParks established Park Forums to encourage participation in park management and to allow local concerns to be voiced (SANParks 2009b). The success of the San’s land claim regarding the KTP required this drastic change in SANPark’s approach to conservation (Hughes 2011).

In 1995 the San community launched a land claim against the South African government for return of their ancestral land rights in the park, stating that its members had been illegally alienated after the declaration of the park in 1931. The group was encouraged by the government and SANParks to join together a larger group of San who could sustain the claim and together benefit from the land restitution that would be made. In March 1999, a group of about 300 San won their land restitution claim out of court and received 42,000 hectares of land outside the park and about 25,000 hectares of land inside the park. The land given to the San inside the park is supposed to generate socio-economic benefits through profitable projects, such as ecotourism. The San also had intentions to use these lands to reconstruct their identity through rebuilding their language

and culture (Bradstock 2005). The government purchased the land outside park to be given to the San as farming land (Carruthers 2007).

The San received the 25,000 hectares of land inside the park in several categories of access availability. Three types of parkland access rights are recognized and organized into three main zones situated from the southern outskirts to further in to the park's interior. The Contract Park, located on the outer edge of the KTP, supplies job opportunities through ecotourism ventures, including traditional use of wild resources, camping trails, walking trails, and a tourism lodge. The second zone, just inside the park, the Commercial Preference Zone, is exclusively for the San to exercise commercial and cultural rights. In this zone, the San partner with SANParks and allowed to use traditional hunting methods on the Auob river system. The third zone covers the remaining interior of the park and is called the San Symbolic and Cultural Zone. According to the co-management agreement with SANParks, only members of the San are allowed relatively free access to visit culturally and symbolically important sites (Thondhlana et al 2011).

Access rights for the San in South Africa were accomplished through broader programs designed to help the general population out of poverty. The impoverished status of the San allowed them to gain recognition as a community that could benefit from recent land reform. Additionally, since government initiatives were working toward improving the lives of those peoples marginalized in the past, support from the government was more possible. Through localized management action the San were able to gain specific access rights into the KTP that might not have been available otherwise.

## THE CENTRAL KALAHARI GAME RESERVE (CKGR)

Contrary to the relatively positive outcome in South Africa, the displaced San in Botswana have not had the same amount of successes. The government of Botswana forced the removal of the San from the CKGR and is continuing to disregard indigenous peoples' rights and traditions (Archer and Dutton 2004). As one of the most successful and stable countries in Africa, the government and the general public, known as the "Batswana", view the San as people of the past, representing lifestyles that are outdated in a prosperous nation (Saugestad 2005). "The average Batswana see the Bushmen representing a not very distant past of physical hardship and material scarcity from which the Batswana want to disassociate themselves" (Saugestad 2005, 7). The country has recently modernized after maintaining its annual 9.2% GDP growth rate for the past three decades. Botswana's focus on remarkable economic growth facilitated a disregard for the Basarwa, the San people living in the CKGR, and hindered the San from a successful land claim in the CKGR.

Game reserves in Botswana have a relatively short history, since funds for conservation were historically minimal. The first game reserve in Botswana was established in 1940 in response to poaching complaints by South Africa near its Kalahari Game Reserve. Since Botswana did not have the money to set up a reserve on its own, the Resident Commissioner of Botswana agreed to move the people, so long as they agreed and South Africa paid all the expenses, including compensation (Campbell 2004). Also in 1940, a new form of protected area came into being, known as sanctuaries. These were usually small areas in which the only protection afforded was a single wildlife species. The colonial government proclaimed Game Reserves the 1960s to protect wild



animals. People were allowed to remain in the Reserves, or the boundaries were shaped in a way to avoid human settlements (Campbell 2004).

The British colonial government of Botswana established the Chobe Game Reserve, the CKGR, and the Moremi Wildlife Reserve between 1960 and 1964. The Chobe Game Reserve was the only reserve specifically designed for wildlife protection. The CKGR and Moremi Wildlife Reserve were both established to secure land for indigenous peoples (Campbell 2004).

The CKGR is the largest, most remotely situated reserve in southern Africa, and is the second largest wildlife reserve in the world (Solway 2009). The reserve gives the impression of unending space with waist-high grasses, dwarfed trees, and scrub bushes. During and shortly after the summer rains, wildlife gathers in the northernmost area of the park, which includes the most fertile grazing areas. These include large herds of springbok and gemsbok, as well as wildebeest, hartebeest, eland and giraffe (Botswana Tourism). The CKGR was closed for tourism purposes until about 1990, when the government started relocating San out of the reserve to increase tourist visitation. Tourism has recently increased while the CKGR's native peoples have minimal access to the reserve (Hitchcock 1999).

### **The Basarwa of the Kalahari**

The Kalahari is a semi-desert, with no permanent surface water, poor soil, and great variation in rainfall. The Basarwa have developed flexible land-use strategies to work with the unpredictable environment. In 1958, the district officer under colonial rule, George Silberbauer, produced the "Bushmen Survey," a report required by the

government to make recommendations for the future of the Basarwa. Silberbauer recognized the difficulties the Basarwa faced in relations with other groups and particularly their inability to retain rights on land wanted by encroaching commercial farmers. In his survey, Silberbauer recommended that the entire Ghanzi District, the region that surrounds the present-day CKGR, be secured for the Basarwa living in it so that “they could be free to decide their own future on their own time” (Campbell 2004, 59).

The British colonial government in 1961 created the CKGR. It was created not only as a nature preserve, but also to protect the rights of around 5,000 people, mostly San, living within its borders, who wanted to maintain their hunting-gathering lifestyle. The easiest way to achieve this was to use existing legislation from previous protected areas, the Chobe Game Reserve, and declare it a game reserve. The protectorate government had been liberal in establishing reserves for native peoples, with a fair degree of autonomy given to indigenous groups (Saugestad 2005).

A year after Bechuanaland achieved independence from Britain and became the Republic of Botswana, a national conservation policy was prepared and the need to develop wildlife, not only for its aesthetic value but also as a commodity, was recognized (Campbell 2004). Development in rural areas to manage what the new government called “squatting” indigenous peoples also became a matter of concern (Saugestad 2001). The controversial Bushmen Development Program was devised in 1974 to “foster self-reliance and development” as a means of facilitating integration of the Basarwa into the general population (Saugestad 2001, 117). Legally, the CKGR was considered as strictly a game reserve, so the Basarwa held no rights to the land. Focused on indigenous

people's rights and working on the Bushmen Development Program, Liz Wily (the first Bushmen Development Officer), worked to achieve integration in two ways; by extending existing rural development assistance, and by implementing new special projects (Saugestad 2001).

The government accomplished many projects to aid in the integration of the Basarwa into modern society. In the early stage of the CKGR, in 1969, the government of Botswana drilled a borehole for clean water in the largest settlement, attracting San from various camps. The borehole's purpose was to attract San together to make it easier to provide them with government services. By the mid-1980's, the CKGR inhabitants engaged in a wide variety of livelihood strategies ranging from hunting and gathering to agriculture, pastoralism, and reliance on government welfare subsidies (Solway 2009). The government built a school and health center and the people within the community began to cultivate crops and brought dogs, goats, donkeys, and horses into the reserve for transport and hunting (Saugestad 2005). The goal of these projects, mainly completed through Wily's efforts, was to implement the principles of the Bushmen Development Program and foster the principles of citizenship, self-reliance, and the recognition of special needs (Saugestad 2001).

The CKGR encompasses an extremely fragile ecosystem, and in the mid 1980's the amount of livestock in the reserve led to concerns about whether people, livestock, and wildlife could coexist. Around this time the government realized for the first time that land was a resource in short supply, and the question of what exactly the Bushmen Development Program was trying to achieve remained unresolved. There was an agreement from the beginning that the long-term objective of the program was the

integration of Basarwa with the wider society of Botswana. The problem was in what was meant by the term “integration.” Wily argued that integration meant the equal right to co-exist, but most commonly integration was interpreted as full assimilation where Basarwa were no longer identifiable by society. The Bushmen Development Program did not allocate any land or additional rights, and the Basarwa became heavily dependent on government welfare (Saugestad 2001).

The ministry in charge of the CKGR decided that all social and economic development should be moved outside of the reserve (Saugestad 2005). Another key justification was to enhance the government’s ability to provide “development” to these people. Many of the Batswana are known to view the hunter-gatherer lifestyle as an embarrassment, an indicator of poverty, which weakens the nation’s ambitions toward modernity (Saugestad 2005). Around 1985 the communities were “encouraged” to relocate outside of the CKGR (Taylor 2007). Between 1997-2002 the Basarwa had their possessions loaded onto trucks and transported to relocation areas east and west of the CKGR. Storage tanks for water were overturned, water pipes were sealed, and remaining social services were withdrawn (Saugestad 2005).

The position of the Government of Botswana concerning the relocation of indigenous people was made clear on their website. In 2005 the Government website stated under the heading “Relocation of Basarwa:” “In a world where governments stand accused of many terrible crimes, it does seem strange that Botswana Government should have to defend itself against the charge of improving the lives of its citizens” (Saugestad 2005, 1). Most of the San in Botswana have been relocated or dispossessed, demonstrating the power of the government’s notion that they should leave their itinerant

ways and become settled (Saugestad 2005).

The government of Botswana renamed The Bushmen Development Program the “Remote Area Development Program” (RADP) in 1977 (Saugestad 2001, 122). The RADP focused on rural development policy, a larger framework that included the bottom 30% of rural populations (including Basarwa). This view focused on “a conventional large population agglomeration approach”, or the idea that the larger groups the people live in the more services and facilities the government can provide (Saugestad 2001, 122). However, the RADP is responsible for most of the San in Botswana being relocated or dispossessed (Saugestad 2001).

### **Development and Botswana’s Booming Economy**

The Botswana have a vision of Botswana as a modern, homogenous, prosperous state where Basarwa are a piece of history, which is consistent with the government’s idea of “improving the lives of its citizens.” In the last fifty years, Botswana has grown from the second poorest country in the world to a prosperous middle-income nation (Manatsha and Maharjan 2009). However, while the Government achieved astounding economic growth, the lower class, including the Basarwa, was left behind and many times weakened further by denial of basic access to lands.

When it attained independence from Britain in 1966, Botswana’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita was US\$80, making it the second poorest country in the world (Manatsha and Maharjan 2009). As of 2009, Botswana was classified as an upper-middle-income country with a GDP per capita of US\$17,779, and remains the only country in the world to have sustained an annual economic growth rate of 9.2% for three

decades (Manatsha and Maharjan 2009). Today, Botswana is the largest producer of diamonds in the world and also ranks among the least corrupt countries. However, while these growth records are outstanding, as of 2008 Botswana's poverty incidence is 30%, with a Gini-coefficient of 0.63 and unemployment rate of 17.6%, indicating that, despite the country's wealthy exterior, there is still a wide gap between the rich and poor. Botswana's intense economic growth has strengthened centralization and strained the poor majority (Manatsha and Maharjan 2009).

The relatively less corrupt political leadership, almost homogenous population, the rule of law, market-friendly institutions and policies, and the profusion of diamonds are all decisive factors that contribute to Botswana's economic growth. Botswana is described as a "developmental state" based on its pursuit of policies that coordinate investment plans and promote growth through a national development vision. Referring to Africa specifically, Mkandawire (2001, 290) describes a developmental state as "one whose ideological underpinnings are developmental and one that seriously attempts to deploy its administrative and political resources to the task of economic development." The political leaders of Botswana have enthusiastically put their resources into economic development, which can be interpreted clearly in the nation's motto: Democracy, Development, Self-reliance and Unity (Manatsha and Maharjan 2009). While Botswana claims itself to be "developing," its central focus is on using a single natural resource (diamonds) to raise national GDP, suggesting its concentration is purely on growth.

At the time of independence in 1965, small amounts of minerals were just being found in Botswana. This very lack of known economic assets likely contributed to political stability while Botswana became independent from Britain (Hazleton 2002). Sir

Seretse Khama, the first president of Botswana and member of the Botswana Democratic Party, advocated for this developmental state in managing the new found wealth from diamond profits (Manatsha and Maharjan 2009). Khama was elected just after Botswana gained independence and at that time two main issues required attention. First, traditional rights to land, and implicitly the rights to minerals below the land, were held by individual ethnic groups. If these rights were left unchanged, a leader whose territory a large mineral discovery happened to occur would have significant economic and political power (Hazleton 2002). He argued in 1965 that no tribal or ethnic group can claim ownership of the minerals found within tribal territory and stated that: "...leaving mineral rights vested in tribal authorities and private companies must necessarily result in uneven growth of the country's economy, as well as deprives the central government of an important revenue for developing the country" (Hazleton 2002, 5).

As a result of Khama's efforts, in Botswana all mineral rights are fully held by the government (Manatsha and Maharjan 2009). The government's authority to claim all mineral profits proved to be the key in establishing a guaranteed source of government revenue. Rather than allowing inter-regional income difference to generate through ethnic groups holding mineral rights, as has happened in other African countries, the national government's ownership of mineral wealth was used for improvements made through the central government. (Hazleton 2002).

Elections that are among the most free and fair in Africa have taken place every five years since 1966. The Botswana Democratic Party has won every election, with the most progressive policies aimed at the mineral sector (Hazleton 2002). However, while Khama's intention to increase government revenue appeared successful, marginalized

groups such as those dependent on access to native lands, bore the true costs of these mineral rights. At the present time, regardless of whether they are seeking profits from minerals or not, ethnic groups face discrimination by the government for any land with potential resources. Since the government of Botswana owns any mineral deposit found, they also indirectly have the authority to remove peoples from potential mining sites. Prohibiting access rights to groups that are likely already not benefitting from the government's prosperity actually exacerbates the uneven growth in the nation.

While Botswana has a relatively clean history of political leaders and uninterrupted rapid growth, when compared with other diamond-rich countries it has not done well in terms poverty reduction. In 2008, Botswana's poverty incidence was higher (28%) than South Africa's (10.7%) even though Botswana has a higher GDP per capita. Wealth, extreme poverty, and dramatic socio-economic inequalities are the three overarching problems that have persisted since 1966. With success from the diamond industry, the "primary beneficiaries of government policy in the areas of economic development have been the organizational elites" (Manatsha and Maharjan 2009, 30). The condition of Botswana's poor has worsened as the "bureaucratic bourgeoisie" emerge from the triumphs of the mining sector. Botswana's social democracy is being challenged as the alliance between the bureaucratic bourgeoisies, the cattle barons (mainly politicians) and the ruling class are adamant in its encouragement of elitist policies (Picard 1987). Manatsha and Maharjan argue: "This class-coalition's intent is to perpetuate elitist development through public policy bias and manipulation" (2009, 30). These political troubles and bias ruling elites heavily contribute to unfavorable social conditions.

It is difficult to identify the exact causes of the socio-economic problems in



Botswana, but the major problems of poverty could come from an economy that is single-commodity driven. Focusing on one of the various aspects of poverty, unemployment is a major problem in Botswana. In 2006, the unemployment rate was officially at 17.6% and unofficially at an appalling 40% (Manatsha and Maharjan 2009). Those between 12 and 34 years old accounted for about 70% of the unemployed and were reported to be the most affected by unemployment (Manatsha and Maharjan 2009). The Human Development Report (2004) found that the richest 10% in Botswana receive 56% of the national income. Between 1966 and the 1990's, Botswana went from being one of the poorest countries in the world to attaining middle-income status.

Economies that are mineral-led are often associated with development problems, “notoriously known for producing a rapid and uneven economic growth” (Manatsha and Maharjan 2009). Botswana follows this pattern, as its rapid economic growth has not had a positive effect on the population at large. The main reason Botswana’s economy has failed to diversify “relates to the government negative attitude toward other sectors like agriculture which has since stagnated or recorded negative growth, and this neglect means that large sections of the rural population were left out (Wikan 2004, 99).” The diamonds allowed Botswana to attain an immense amount of growth, but problems related to poverty reduction continue to prevail.

### **Contesting Dispossession in CKGR**

In January 2002, an issue that had been stirring in Botswana for several years was brought to international attention. Since the beginning of their displacements around 1986, several hundred San have approached the government about being evicted from

their homes in the CKGR (Hitchcock 1999). The BBC reported, “The government says it wants to protect the wildlife, and cannot afford to keep track of the ‘Bushmen’,” an outdated and somewhat derogatory term for the San. “But many believe that they are motivated by the huge mineral wealth the Kalahari is believed to possess, including diamonds and possibly uranium” (Hazleton 2002, 6).

Survival International, an indigenous rights non-governmental organization, responded by stating, “the Botswana government is trying to drive the indigenous people out of the area and make way for diamond mining and tourism. Over a thousand have been coerced into moving out” (Hazleton 2002, 6). The government claims to be removing peoples for the sake of biodiversity conservation, but if mining practices are taking place on restricted access lands, then neither side of double sustainability is accomplished. Instead, the initial purposes of the park, which included the protection of San rights, are overruled by the government’s desire to seek revenue and raise national income.

A court case began in 2004 with 243 San contesting their removal from the CKGR (Saugestad 2005). Residents argued against their relocation from the park, saying “they were in favor of both conservation and development and that they had shown they could live sustainably inside its borders” (Taylor 2007, 3). The Botswana government argued that the San’s livestock herding was incompatible with conservation and development of tourism potential. The government also mentioned that it needed to relocate the San to be able to support them with modern services. However, Suzman (2002, 4) argues, “rather than liberating them to drink freely from the cup of Botswana’s prosperity, resettlement simply increased the extent to which Kalahari peoples were dependent on Government.”

During the court case hearings, Survival International controversially compared the relocations with genocide and claimed that a strong interest in diamonds lay behind the government's relocation of the San (Taylor 2007). The organization emphasized that the CKGR lies between two of the world's largest diamond mines, which are responsible for making Botswana one of Africa's wealthiest nations. Survival International allegations, and its protests to diamond companies, however, were based on dubious evidence (Solway 2009). Many Batswana view Survival International as a "misguided troublemaker," interfering with the country's progression to modernization by questioning its policy of equal treatment for all citizens (Mphinyane 2001, 173-189). Some Batswana argue there is no reason that Botswana's ethnic minorities should be treated preferentially from other groups with unrestricted access back into the CKGR (Mphinyane 2001).

Contrary to Survival International claims that the San have welcomed the organization, development workers involved in the case argue that its campaign caused much more harm than good. Working toward recognition of indigenous rights, Survival International unintentionally divided the San against each other. All sides tended to point to problems associated with many different interest groups who claim to speak for and with the San, including anthropologists, lawyers, celebrities and advocacy groups (Solway 2009). While challenging the vested interests of the government and Basarwa will bring hostility, granting access rights to the San on the basis of indigenous rights proved to be complicated and tangled.

In December of 2006, the longest and most expensive court case in Botswana's history ended with 189 San winning the right to return to their land in the CKGR.

However, the Government of Botswana's interpretation of the court ruling undermines the apparent success of the San (Solway 2009). The government placed various restrictions on the applicants who secured the rights to return to the park and does not allow for those rights to be applied to future generations. Successful applicants must show government identification when entering, can only bring limited supplies of water into the CKGR, may not keep animals, and must apply for hunting licenses (Taylor 2007). This court case has, for the San in particular, brought up many new dimensions to human rights, conservation and development initiatives.

Questions remain on the role of international advocacy groups in the development of international policy-making on indigenous peoples. The account of the San in CKGR represents other concerns about the relationship between the San minority and the state, and illustrates that indigenous peoples exercising their livelihood are "less determined by the sustainability of their environment, and more by the premises laid down by states and transnational economies" (Saugestad 2005, 3). Double sustainability for the CKGR and the San in Botswana remains a mostly unresolved issue with access rights strictly limited and poor support from the central government.

## DISCUSSION OF DOUBLE SUSTAINABILITY IN THE KTP AND CKGR

The fundamental differences between the economies of South Africa and Botswana have deeply influenced the degree and success of double sustainability in each country. The establishment of the national parks and awareness of human beings' impacts on the biodiversity, accounts for the countries' deliberate sustainability of biodiversity. However, South Africa's focus on poverty alleviation through pro-poor economic development, and Botswana's emphasis on centralized economic growth, creates different results for the sustainability of the San's livelihoods within the KTP and CKGR.

As part of double sustainability, I analyzed the success of livelihood sustainability based on economic indicators of poverty alleviation that would specifically benefit the San: minimizing inequality, localized development, land and resource access rights, and participatory management. Livelihood refers to "the means of securing the necessities of life," and the needs of the San appear to be related to environmental justice, which can be closely related to enhancing local engagement. Lee (2006) argues that to the San people, land means life. The San do not feel whole if they cannot find fruits and vegetables, wild plants for medicine, and meat or are unable to walk in the bush and reconnect with nature. Therefore, without land they are unable to live according to their culture and face losing their identity. Protecting the San's livelihood means sustaining their cultural and spiritual connections to the land (Thondhlana et al 2011).

After reviewing both countries' economic structures, I found that the San's needs are more thoroughly addressed by policy emphasizing local level attainment, which South Africa, a country focused on balanced development, is better suited to recognize. Botswana's attempts to assimilate the San into modern society might secure basic

“modern” necessities, but providing these essentials does not necessarily guarantee the San’s perception of a sustainable livelihood.

Throughout the literature, the way the San are discussed can be perceived differently depending on which context it takes place in. The way a country recognizes an indigenous group will surely affect the economic approaches in favor of them. San displaced from the KTP have the benefit of a post-apartheid government that is in favor of those displaced due to previous racial laws. The democratic government of South Africa recognizes that it is at fault for much of the country’s previous impoverishment, so economic policies facilitate pro-poor development. Additionally, support for improving the quality of life for rural communities is embedded in national documents, lending a sense of acceptance toward land access rights. When evicted communities in South Africa seek restitution, they are not negotiating with a reluctant government, as might be the situation in Botswana. Less than twenty years ago, those now in government were themselves marginalized local people under apartheid, and consequently there is both understanding of and commitment to the troubles of the poor and landless (Carruthers 2007).

Conversely, the Government of Botswana interprets the San as encompassing an outdated way of life, one that does not fit in to modern society. Botswana has chosen to elevate the culture and language of the numerically dominant Tswana people to a new national standard. “Twanadom” has become the dominant symbol for the whole nation, and has been the image of a culturally homogenous state (Saugestad 2001). The economic policies of the region reflect this sentiment and concentrate on increasing incomes purely through growth in natural resource exports, a sector with a few elite

bureaucratic people making decisions that affect the entire region. Decentralization, which can result in more region-specific management, does not fit into the Government of Botswana's ideal homogenous nation of centralized governance. Here, the government has not only deprived the San of livelihood stability by restricting access into the CKGR, but it also fails to recognize that the San lack the skills to compete in the modern economy, which will only result in further dependency on the government for welfare.

Even though the governments' perception of the San varies between countries, the San in Botswana and South Africa continue to face hardships even after winning their court cases. Five years after settling the land claim in KTP, a South African newspaper called the restitution "A case study in how land reform could be botched" (*Sunday Independent*, 17 October 2004). The San community there quickly divided themselves into "traditionals," who wanted to revert to the forager lifestyle, and "moderns" who wanted to engage with the tourist industry (Carruthers 2007). In Botswana, Taylor (2007) worries about "celebrating the San victory too soon" since the government had a very narrow interpretation of the court's verdict. Implementation has been slow and those San who did secure rights in CKGR continue to face many restrictions on land access.

The San in South Africa faced disappointments after the land restitution in KTP as well. While government did facilitate a successful land claim that restored lost land and dignity to secure future livelihoods, they could not predict the fragmenting of the people thereafter. Hopefully though, local co-management between the San and SANParks will not exacerbate these problems and instead will find viable development solutions. In

Botswana, however, these conflicts could grow worse due to the less likely mediation between the San and the central government.

The verdict of the land claims and results thereafter between Botswana and South Africa varied greatly, emphasizing the importance of particular economic principles. In South Africa, there were positive outcomes for the San based on local economic development. These efforts in decentralization inhibited the renovation of SANParks and allowed the San additional access rights in the KTP that are not seen within the centralized nature of Botswana, and thus the CKGR. In the CKGR the San received no land for permanent settlement, only limited individual visitation access

There is little argument that San are descendents from southern Africa's aboriginal peoples and that their ancestors' presence in the region long predated the arrival of Bantu, Europeans, and others. Based on the route taken by Survival International, the most desirable course of action for San access rights into the CKGR in Botswana was to entail official recognition of their "indigenous" status and the obligations that would follow from this. Even when teamed up with an indigenous rights organization, such as Survival International, the San still struggled to gain appropriate recognition and receive land rights. This evidence shows that addressing the position of the San by way of appealing to rights associated to their status as "indigenous people" might not be the most effective strategy.

Instead, given the current political and economic climate in southern Africa, arguing on the grounds of substantial marginalization could be the source for a successful land claim. The impoverished status of the San is so straightforward that regardless of questions about their status as an "indigenous minority," special measures should be



adopted to improve their livelihoods relative to others (Suzman 2001). In South Africa the San are more so recognized as a highly impoverished group of people whose deteriorating livelihood was exacerbated by the government's denial to land access in the past. The South African government enacted policies for reducing poverty for the nation's population as a whole, providing supportive conditions for the San to gain access rights. Specifically, the government's revisions of SANParks promoted national parks that can supplement pro-poor development. The government revisions to mend past injustices helped create an environment for local management and the return of the San to the KTP.

These cases of land reclaims are part of a much wider debate about the position of indigenous peoples in southern Africa, their identity, poverty, and cultural heritage, and what is genuinely in the San's best interest. The examples of San land rights in KTP and CKGR raise questions of whether, to what extent, and how a poverty alleviation policy should be balanced with indigenous rights advocacy. In Botswana, the focus on national growth distracts from the implementation of rights that favor the San. As Taylor states plainly, "Botswana's land legislation makes no special provisions for the particular needs of the San and their historical circumstance" (Taylor 2007). Economic growth threatens to strip the San of their traditional lifestyle when the land claims in themselves demonstrate that the San do not desire to assimilate with the modern culture. The LED goals in South Africa better situates the government to handle local level issues. The zones that were created in KTP need local management and development solutions that can be discussed at a personal level.

These cases of the San in the KTP and the CKGR reflect the wider trends of issues

and suggestions for implementing double sustainability. “Despite a threefold increase in the number of protected areas in the last 30 years, we have relatively little idea of what the social costs of that expansion has been” (Brockington and Schmidt-Soltau 2004, 141). The research to establish costs due to conservation-induced impoverishment is far behind other fields. The consequences to land lost to dams or large scale development projects, for example, is now better recognized and clear methodologies are drawn up to assess the impacts (Brockington and Schmidt-Soltau 2004).

The increase in protected areas is likely to have a considerable human cost, about which there is remarkable silence or denial in conservation circles (Chatty and Colchester 2002). Adams et al (2003) suggested that the fundamental conflict here might be cognitive. “It is in the framing and awareness of the issue that conservation-induced impoverishment is ignored”, just as development planners and poverty alleviation strategies commonly turn a blind eye to conservation needs (Brockington and Schmidt-Soltau 2004, 141). However, recognizing the existence of both human and environmental costs does not mean that conservation and poverty alleviation can be equally provided in any given situation. There are many cases where conservation can only succeed in the absence of people and removing them will likely be costly and aggressive. Nor will economic measures alone capture the full loss of identity, home, belongings and the other intangibles that protected areas will restrict (Brockington and Schmidt-Soltau 2004). Recognizing the existence of both needs will require acknowledging these conflicts and compatibilities.

Sustainability has both social and ecological dimensions. Population relocation for park creation requires this double sustainability—of people’s livelihoods and the

biodiversity. When protected area policies and resources are put in place to ensure poverty reduction through relocation for conservation, then the double sustainability will be accomplished. The KTP and CKGR were established for the preservation of wild ecosystems, but the park agencies in both countries had evicted the San and thereby threatened their livelihood. In giving restitution for the displaced San, the South African government created zones inside and outside of the KTP to allow the San a source of economic stability and rights to their indigenous cultural practices. The Government of Botswana awarded some of those whom were evicted from the CKGR restricted access back in to the reserve. The complexities of the diamond industry and growth focused centralized economy of Botswana have not created a background that is favorable for the San's localized needs in the CKGR. The emphasis of LED and efforts toward decentralization in South Africa allow a personalized approach to the requests of the San's livelihood while conserving the biodiversity of the KTP.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Adams, Jonathon, and Thomas McShane. 1996. *The Myth of Wild Africa: Conservation Without Illusion*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Adams, W.A., D. Brockington, J. Dyson, and B. Vira. 2003. "Managing tragedies: understanding conflict over common pool resources." *Science* 302: 1915-1916.
- Agrawal, Arun, and Kent Redford. 2009. "Conservation and Displacement: An Overview." *Conservation and Society* 7, no. 1:1-10.
- Angermeier, P.L. 2000. "The natural imperative for biological conservation." *Conservation Biology* 14(2): 373-381.
- Archer, Fiona, and Shelia Dutton. 2004. "Transfrontier Parks in South Africa." *Cultural Survival Quarterly* 28 (April): 57.
- Borrini-Feyerabend, Grazia. 2003. "Governance of Protected Areas-innovation in the air." *IUCN Commission on Environmental Economic and Social Policy: Community Empowerment for Social Policy* 12 (September): 92-101.
- Botswana Tourism. 2013. "Central Kalahari Game Reserve." <http://www.botswanaturism.co.bw/ckgr.php>
- Bradstock, Alastair. 2005. "Key Experiences of Land Reform in the Northern Cape Province of South Africa." *FARM Africa* (January): 1-32
- Brokington, D., and J. Igoe. 2004. "Eviction for Conservation: A Global Overview." *Conservation Society* 4: 427-70.
- Brockington, Dan and Kai Schmidt-Soltau. 2004. "The social and environmental impacts of wilderness and development." *Oryx* 38, iss. 2: 140-142
- Campbell, Alec. 2004. "Establishment of Botswana's National Park and Game Reserve System." *Botswana Notes and Records* 36: 55-66.
- Carruthers, Jane. 2007. "'South Africa: A World in One Country' Land Restitution in National Parks and Protected Areas." *Conservation and Society* 5, no. 3: 292-306.
- Cernea, Michael M., and Kai Schmidt-Soltau. 2003. "Biodiversity conservation versus population resettlement: risks to nature and risks to people." *International Conference on Rural Livelihoods, Forests and Biodiversity* (May): 19-23

- 2006. “Poverty Risks and National Parks: Poverty Issues in Conservation and Resettlement.” *World Development* 34, no. 10:1808-1830.
- Chatty, D. and M. Colchester. 2002. *Conservation and Mobile Indigenous Peoples: Displacement, Forced Settlement and Sustainable Development*. Los Angeles: Berghahn Books.
- Chennells, R. 2009. “Vulnerability and indigenous communities: are the San of South Africa a vulnerable people?” *Camb. Q. Healthcare Ethics* 18: 147–54.
- Cock, J., and D. Fig. 2002. “From Colonial to Community-Based Conservation: Environmental Justice and the Transformation of National Parks.” *Environmental Justice in South Africa*: 131-155.
- Colchester, Marcus. 2004. “Conservation Policy and Indigenous Peoples.” *Environmental Science and Policy* 7: 145-153.
- Dahlberg, Annika, Rick Rohde, and Klas Sandell. 2010. “National Parks and Environmental Justice: Comparing Access Rights and Ideological Legacies in Three Countries.” *Conservation and Society* 8, no. 3: 209-224.
- Fabricius, C. 2004. The fundamentals of community-based natural resources management. In *Rights, Resources and Rural Development*. Edited by C Fabricius, E Kock, H Magome and S Turner. London: Earthscan: 3-65.
- Hazleton, Ralph. 2002. “Diamonds: Forever or For Good?” The Economic Impact of Diamonds in Southern Africa.” *The Diamonds and Human Security Project*: 1-24.
- Hitchcock, R.K and J. D. Holm. 1993. “Bureaucratic Domination of Hunter-Gatherer Societies: a Study of the San in Botswana”. *Development and Change* 24: 305-338.
- 1999. “A chronology of major events relating to the CKGR.” *Botswana Notes and Records* 31: 105-118.
- Holden, P. 2007. Conservation and human rights—the case of the Khomani San (Bushmen) and the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park, South Africa *Policy Matter* 15: 57–68.
- Hughes, Cassie. 2011. “Co-Management, Conservation, and Heritage Land in the Kalahari.” *Indigenous Peoples and Conservation: From Rights to Resource Management*: 39-47.
- Human Development Report. 2004. <http://hdr.undp.org/enireports/global/hdr2004/>.

- International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA). Indigenous peoples in Africa-a general overview. <http://www.iwgia.org/regions/africa/indigenous-peoples-in-africa>.
- Kepe, T., R. Wynberg, and Ellis W. 2005. "Land reform and biodiversity conservation in South Africa: complementary or in conflict?" *International Journal of Biodiversity Science Management*:3–16.
- Lee, R.B. 2006. Twenty-First Century Indigenism. *Anthropological Theory* 6: 455–79.
- Manatsha, Boga Thura, and Keshav Lall Maharjan. 2009. "Fancy Figures and Ugly Facts' in Botswana's Rapid Economic Growth." *Journal of International Development and Cooperation* 15, no. 1-2: 19-46.
- Magome and Murombedzi. 2003. Sharing South African Parks: Community Land and Conservation in a Democratic South Africa. In *Decolonizing Nature: Strategies for Conservation in a Post-Colonial Era*. London and Sterling: Earthscan Publications.
- Mkandawire, Thandika. 2001. "Thinking about developmental states in Africa." *Cambridge Journal of Economic* 25: 289-313.
- Moswete, Naomi M. 2011) "Attitudes and Opinions of Local and National Public Sector Stakeholders Towards Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park, Botswana." *International Journal of Sustainable Development and World Ecology* 19, iss.1: 96.
- Mphinyane, S. 2001. The 'dirty' social scientist: Whose advocate, the devil's or the people's?" In *Africa's indigenous peoples: "First peoples" or "marginalized minorities?"*: 173-189. Centre of African Studies: University of Edinburgh.
- Ndegwa, Stephen, and Brian Levy. 2004. The Politics of Decentralization in Africa: A Comparative Analysis. In *Building a State Capacity in Africa: New Approaches, Emerging Lessons*. Edited by Brian Levy and Sahr Kpundeh: The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.
- Nel, E. 2000. "Economic Restructuring and Local economic Development in South Africa." *Infrastructure Mandates for Change 1994–1999*: 197–211.
- Picard, L. 1987. *The Politics of Development in Botswana: A Model for Success?* Boulder: Lynne Rienner.
- Phillips, Adrian. 2003. "Turning Ideas on Their Head: The New Paradigm for Protected Areas." *The George Wright Forum*: 1-32.
- Rogerson, Christian M. 2006. "Pro-poor local economic development in South Africa:

- the role of pro-poor tourism.” *Local Environment: The International Journal of Justice and Sustainability* 11: 37-60.
- Saugestad, Sidsel. 2001. *The Inconvenient Indigenous: Remote area development in Botswana, donor assistance and the First People of the Kalahari*. Uppsala: Nordic Africa Institute.
- 2005. ‘Improving their lives’: State policies and San resistance in Botswana. *Before Farming* 4: 1-11.
- Scovronick, Noah, and Jane Turpie. 2009. “Is enhanced tourism a ‘reasonable expectation for transboundary conservation? An evaluation of the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park.” *Environmental Conservation* 36:149-156.
- Seers, D. 1969. 'The Meaning of Development'. *International Development Review* 24, no. 3: 1-14.
- Sobrevila, Claudia. 2008. “The Role of Indigenous Peoples in Biodiversity Conservation: The Natural but Often Forgotten Partners.” *The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank*: 1-84.
- Solway, Jacqueline. 2009. “Human Rights and ‘NGO Wrongs’: Conflict Diamonds, Culture Wars and The ‘Bushman Question.’” *Africa* 79, iss.3: 321-346.
- Suzman, James. 2001. “An Introduction to the Regional Assessment of the Status of the San in Southern Africa.” *Regional Assessment of the Status of the San in Southern Africa* 1:1-96.
- 2002. “Kalahari conundrums: Relocation, resistance and international support in the Central Kalahari Botswana.” *Before Farming* 3-4: 1-10.
- Taylor, Julie J. 2007. “Celebrating San Victory Too Soon? Reflections on the Outcome of the Central Kalahari Game Reserve Case.” *Anthropology Today* 23, no.5 (October): 3-5.
- Thondhlana, Gladman., Sheona Shackleton, and Edwin Muchapondwa. 2011. “Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park and its land claimants: a pre- and post-land claim and conservation history.” *Environmental Research Letters* 6: 1-12.
- Todaro, Michael. 2003. *Economic Development*. Boston, MA: Addison Wesley.
- UNDP. 2003. South Africa Human Development Report 2003—the Challenge of Sustainable Development in South Africa: Unlocking People’s Creativity. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

Wikan, Gerd. 2004. "Cash, Crops and Cattle: A study of Rural Livelihoods in Botswana."  
*Botswana Notes and Records* 36: 91-105.