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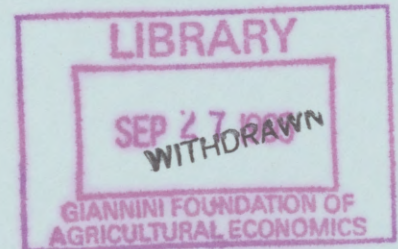
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DEVELOPMENT POLICY AND PRACTICE



**GECOUC**

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GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE PROGRAMME

## Does Democracy Matter?

Pointers from a comparison of NGOs'  
influence on environmental policies  
in Zimbabwe and Botswana

Alan Thomas

June 1995

DPP WORKING PAPER 31  
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GECOU is a research project based at the Open University. It consists of six researchers from five different disciplines: four from the Faculty of Social Sciences, namely Professor David Potter (Political Science), Professor Andrew Blowers (Geography), Dr Bernard Eccleston (Social Sciences), and Dr David Humphreys (Political Science); and two from the Faculty of Technology, namely Dr Susan Carr (Systems) and Alan Thomas (Development Studies).

The project examines the advocacy work of environmental NGOs (non-governmental organisations) and their role in the policy processes which directly affect global environmental problems.

GECOU forms part of the UK Economic and Social Research Council's Global Environmental Change Programme.

For more information contact:

Dr David Humphreys, Research Fellow, Faculty of Social Sciences, Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes MK7 6AA.

Tel: 01908 654480 Fax: 01908 654488 E.Mail: D.R.Humphreys@open.ac.uk

Previous GECOU Working Papers

Annie Taylor, "Setting Environmental Agendas: NGOs, Democracy and Global Politics, A Framework and Methodology for the Research", GECOU Working Paper No. 1, October 1993.

David Potter, "Democracy and the Environment in Asia", GECOU Working Paper No. 2, January 1994.

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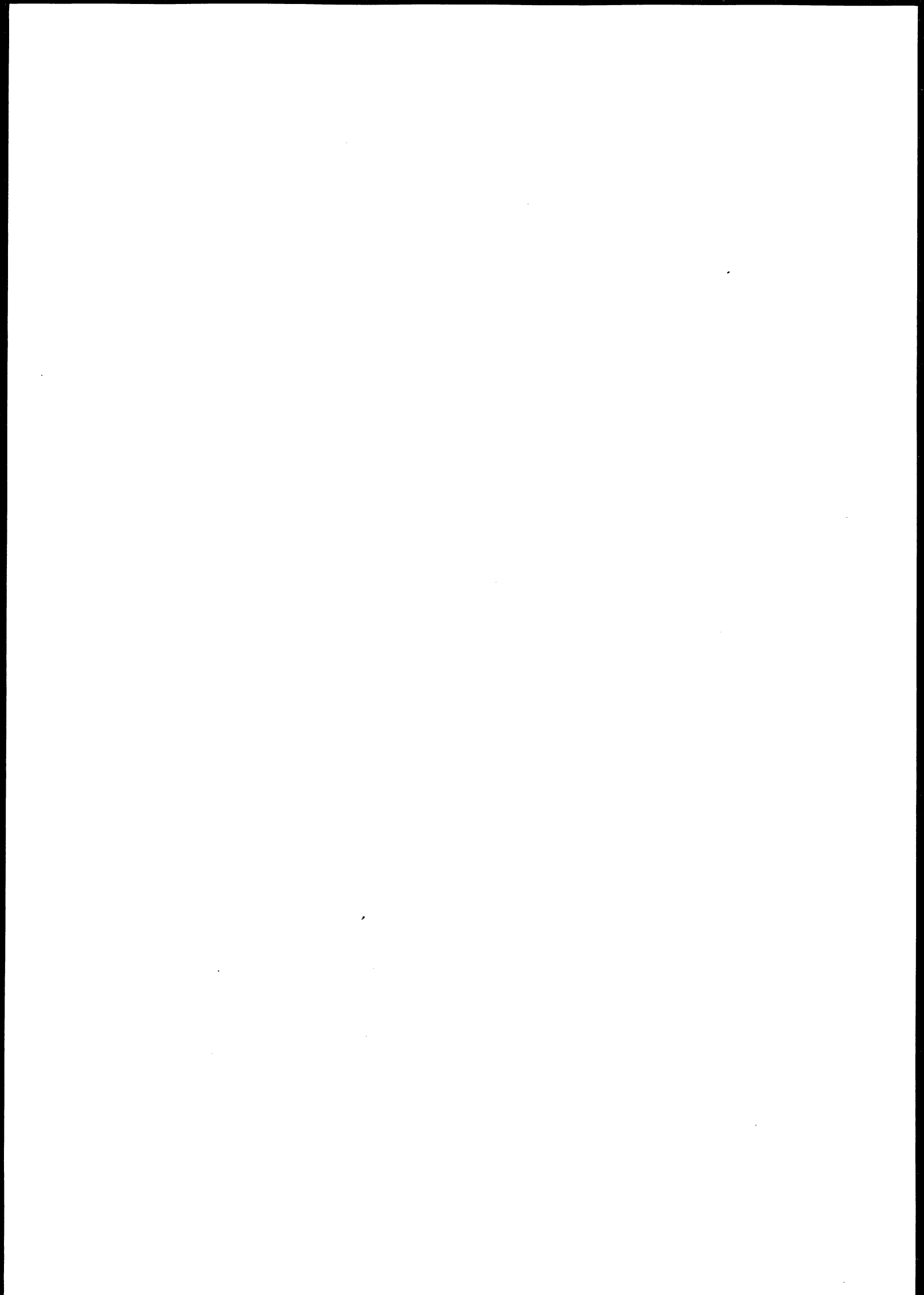
## Does Democracy Matter? -

### Pointers from a comparison of NGOs' influence on environmental policies in Zimbabwe and Botswana

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## Does Democracy Matter? -

### Pointers from a comparison of NGOs' influence on environmental policies in Zimbabwe and Botswana

Alan Thomas<sup>1</sup>

#### 1 Introduction

This paper is one of a series<sup>2</sup> prepared as part of the "GECOU"<sup>3</sup> project which is aimed at investigating why non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are influential in the development of certain policies relating to global environmental issues. Clearly NGOs are not always influential. The question is why and how they come to have influence in those cases where they are influential.

Part of the explanation why NGOs have influence over certain policies but not others must lie in contextual factors outside the immediate control of any particular NGO. The three main contextual areas identified in the overall framework for the "GECOU" project are: the nature of the issue; the nature of the "target institution" or the organization whose policies it is sought to influence; and the political context in which the NGO is working.<sup>4</sup> Each of these three gives rise to a working hypothesis, the third of which is:

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<sup>1</sup> Senior Lecturer in Systems and Co-Chair of the Development Studies subject group at the Open University, and member of the "GECOU" team.

<sup>2</sup>This is a version of a paper given to the Development Studies Association annual conference, Lancaster, 7-9 Sept. 1994. Thanks are due to all who commented on the previous draft, particularly Gaogakwe Phorano, David Wield and David Humphreys. The empirical aspect of the paper is based on interviews undertaken with NGO staff and activists in Zimbabwe and Botswana in late-1993. Thanks are also due to all who agreed to be interviewed.

<sup>3</sup> "GECOU" (Global Environmental Change - Open University) is a collaborative interdisciplinary research project based at the Open University and funded by the UK Economic and Social Research Council under its Global Environmental Change initiative. Thanks are due to the ESRC, and also to the Open University Technology Faculty for supplementary finance, without support from these two sources the work on which this paper is based could not have gone ahead. The title of the project is "Setting Environmental Agendas: NGOs, Democracy and Global Politics".

<sup>4</sup> For an exposition of the overall framework of the GECOU project see Taylor (1993).

Institutions in more democratic contexts are more amenable to NGO influence than institutions operating in more authoritarian regimes.

The empirical basis for investigating this and the other hypotheses lies in investigating attempts by a variety of NGOs at influencing the policies on a variety of environmental issues of various target institutions in different political contexts. This paper looks in particular at NGOs in Zimbabwe and Botswana and their efforts to influence policies relating to land degradation and sustainable resource management.

Received wisdom, at least in the "North", would have it that Zimbabwe has been since independence virtually a one-party state whereas Botswana is lauded as one of Africa's few examples of a successful multi-party democracy. Thus, from the hypothesis above, one might expect to find much more NGO activity and influence in Botswana than in Zimbabwe. In practice, however, there is a substantial and apparently influential NGO network in Zimbabwe, whereas in Botswana environmental NGOs are mostly new, few in number and limited in operations and influence.

This paper discusses this apparent contradiction and draws on information about NGOs and their activities in the two countries to comment on the hypothesis. It then replaces it with a more complex set of hypotheses, designed to reflect better the complexity of the concept of democracy and the variety of ways in which NGOs may seek influence.

## **2 NGO activity and influence in Zimbabwe and Botswana**

On the surface the NGO network appears more substantial and influential in Zimbabwe than in Botswana, and this itself needs explaining as a finding in apparent contradiction with the hypothesis stated above. However, the situation in both countries is more complex than this. This section gives some more detail on NGOs in the two countries, with some examples of how some of them appear to have influenced policy relevant to environmental issues in different ways. At the end of the section, with the benefit of a clearer view of the complexities of the differences that need explaining, the analytical approach to be taken in the rest of the paper is explained.

### *2.1 NGOs and environmental policy in Zimbabwe*

Along with Kenya, where a total of 23,000 NGOs has been estimated including church groups and women's associations (Ng'ethe et al, 1990, p.2), Zimbabwe has one of the most substantial NGO sectors in sub-Saharan Africa. Although Zimbabwe has a smaller population than Kenya and its NGOs are less well established, if one includes small community- and church-based groups the numbers of NGOs must also run into thousands.

Most of the very small local groups might not be regarded as being formal enough as organizations to be classed as NGOs. However, nationally registered "welfare organizations" exceeded 800 by 1989 (de Graaf et al., 1991, p.38). 298 NGOs are listed in the directory published by the National Association of Non-Governmental Organizations (NANGO, 1992), and this certainly does not include even all NGOs operating at the national or provincial levels. In particular it does not cover

international NGOs that act mainly as donors or partners to national NGOs, though some of these may have disproportionate influence on certain policies. According to Muir (1992), at least 50 international NGOs were operating in Zimbabwe in 1988. This source also estimates well over 50 NGOs each employing over 20 staff and having annual turnover exceeding Z\$200,000 or US\$65,000<sup>1</sup> (Muir, 1992, p.13; Copestake, 1993, p.20). As for total impact, total NGO spending at the end of the 1980s is estimated at between US\$12m and US\$36m per year or up to US\$5 per inhabitant per year (Copestake, 1993, p.20, quoting de Graaf et al, 1991, p.38), whereas Gore, Katerere and Moyo (1992, p.72) suggest total spending of ZS\$300m to ZS\$400m since independence, a lower annual average, indicating a great increase from relatively low levels of NGO spending in the early 1980s. Further substantial annual increases are occurring in the early 1990s.

How many of these NGOs might be expected to influence or be influenced by environmental policies? Gore, Katerere and Moyo (*ibid*, p.72) divide the estimate of over 800 NGOs in Zimbabwe, including foreign-based ones, into four categories: welfare or service oriented; development; conservation; and environmental. Almost any of these might be regarded as working in areas related to the environment, but the last is particularly problematic, since "many NGOs have, in the last three years, positioned themselves as environmental NGOs in response to the changing donor wave" (*ibid*, p.74). This may mean no more than including tree-planting in existing development programmes. However, it is argued that some NGOs "deal with environmental issues in a holistic manner", promoting environmental management at community level in a manner that "attempts to view the environment as it is seen by the communities" (*ibid*, pp.74-75).

Other NGOs may be classed as environmental research or information organizations. Moyo (1991) lists six major examples at national level. They are:

- o ZERO (Regional Network of Environmental Experts)
- o Development Technology Centre
- o Tree Society
- o NANGO (National Association of Non-Governmental Organisations)
- o ENDA-Zimbabwe (Environment and Development Activities)
- o ZNCT (Zimbabwe National Conservation Trust)

There are certainly more national environmental NGOs, including some established since 1991, as well as development NGOs with a substantial environmental research activity. *The Green Directory of Zimbabwe 1993/94* (DMP, 1993) lists 38 national and 14 international environmental organizations active in Zimbabwe, not counting international organizations which act only as donors, parastatals and private companies and consultants.

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<sup>1</sup> Comparing financial estimates from different sources across different years is particularly difficult given the high and variable rates of inflation and changing exchange rates, particularly between 1989 and 1992. I have not attempted any calculations of my own but simply quoted estimates from several sources without comment.

Quite apart from numbers, there is no doubt of the political visibility of NGOs in Zimbabwe, particularly with respect to environmental issues. Some Zimbabwean NGOs are well-known internationally for work of relevance to the environment. For example, the CAMPFIRE movement with its locally-based projects through which communities can participate in the management of wildlife and other resources and benefit from the utilisation of those resources, was promoted by a consortium of two NGOs with a University department and two government departments, the NGOs in question being the Zimbabwe Trust and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), Multi-Species Animal Production Systems Project. From an initial implementation in wards of two districts from 1988, evaluated generally very positively after eighteen months by Muir (1992, pp.83-107), CAMPFIRE had spread by 1993 to 23 out of Zimbabwe's 55 districts, including virtually all those on the national borders or adjacent to major areas of protected land, making an additional 10% of Zimbabwe's land area available to wildlife habitat (in addition to the 13% officially designated as protected areas and another 10% kept as wildlands in commercial or privately owned areas). The CAMPFIRE approach has been strenuously promoted internationally as a model for community-based natural resource management (see e.g. Murphree, 1993), and its success has been cited by the Zimbabwe government as an important plank in its arguments opposing the ban on trade in ivory imposed by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) in October 1989 (Muir, 1992, p.85).

Other internationally well-known Zimbabwean NGOs with a strong environmental interest include the Organization of Rural Associations for Progress (ORAP) and the Zimbabwe Environmental Research Organization (now known as Regional Network of Environmental Experts but retaining the acronym ZERO). ORAP is a federal organization with grassroots groups in the rural areas of Matabeleland (North and South) and Midlands provinces as its member organizations and a democratic, tiered structure. Formed shortly after independence in 1981, it has grown to such an extent that its basic member groups now include almost 500,000 individuals. With the possible exception of the Greenbelt Movement in Kenya, ORAP must be the best known grassroots-based organization in Africa, with numerous academic and other writings covering its work (see e.g. Nyoni, 1987; Kempadoo and ORAP, 1991; Ndiweni, 1993). ORAP's aim of assisting people to organise themselves towards self-help and self-reliance translates readily into the language of sustainability and a holistic view of the environment as the source of livelihood of member groups - hence the central importance of environmental issues in all aspects of ORAP's work in grassroots development. ORAP makes strong attempts to collaborate with government and other NGOs in such fields as indigenous seed research, policy on drought alleviation, rural food security, the education of agricultural extension workers, and so on, all seen as of immediate environmental relevance. It is also a regular participant in international colloquia and is consulted in its own right by various international agencies.

As for ZERO, this NGO was set up in 1987 explicitly to stimulate thinking and influence policy through research, dialogue and information exchange. Though based in Harare and with a strong membership from Zimbabwe, ZERO is designed as a regional network and where possible its methodology involves research on a particular environmental topic and its policy implications on a comparative basis with country studies from each of the member states of the Southern African Development Community (SADC). ZERO now has a long list of studies and publications, has become the first NGO to be formally accredited to SADC, and

has several other marks of recognition such as being given the role of coordinating and representing regional NGO opinion as the sole southern African NGO observer on the International Negotiating Committee for a Convention on Desertification (INCD).

ZERO is only one example of Zimbabwe's role as a regional centre for NGOs, including those with environmental interests. The IUCN (World Conservation Union) has its regional office for southern Africa in Harare; IRED Development Innovation Network has its East and Southern Africa office there; Harare is also the base of the Southern African Research and Documentation Centre (SARDC). Zimbabwe is one of the 11 countries with a branch of ENDA-TM (Environment and Development Association - Tiers Monde), the international Third-World based environment and development NGO set up after the 1972 Stockholm conference, with headquarters in Senegal. There are further examples.

In the mid-1980s NGOs were involved to a limited extent in consultations over Zimbabwe's National Conservation Strategy (NCS). However, they have become more prominent in the process of environmental policy formulation at national level from the time of the run-up to the 1992 UNCED conference at Rio de Janeiro. The Zimbabwean Government's official national report to the Rio conference was complemented by an "alternative" report prepared by two NGOs, namely ENDA-Zimbabwe and ZERO (Gore, Katerere and Moyo, 1992), which was a comprehensive discussion of the "sustainability" of the Zimbabwean environment from a "Southern" NGO perspective.

Since the Rio conference there has been a substantial government-led effort at bringing ideas from the NCS and from Agenda 21 forward to identify specific recommendations for action particularly on environmental management. Consultations, with NGOs and others, are an integral part of this process, and NGOs are identified not only as institutions for collaboration but in several cases as likely to be proactive in implementing some of the recommendations. Thus immediately after Rio a "National Response Conference" was held, the proceedings of which were to "form the basis for a more specific national environmental action plan and for briefing cabinet on the national response to the Earth Summit" (Ministry of Environment and Tourism, 1993a, p.51). In the proceedings of this conference, a summary matrix is given for a "National Environmental Actions Plan", which shows NGOs as "responsible institutions" for actions on six out of thirteen types of issues, and as "collaborating institutions" on seven (*ibid*, pp.38-41).

This is a process which is ongoing; there has been another meeting since the national response conference; there is a consultative committee convened by the Minister of Environment which has a lot of NGO members. There is also a separate consultation on Environmental Assessment (EA) policy. It appears that consultation has become normalised as part of the Environment Ministry's procedures in what one international expert at least thought was a unique way. For example, a public discussion paper was published on EA policy (Ministry of Environment and Tourism, 1993b) and debated at an open and publicly advertised workshop in November 1993. Although such consultations are public rather than specifically with NGOs, the NGOs are beginning to build up their own capacity to use such procedures to put forward a concerted view, for example by convening their own independent policy committee under the aegis of ZNCT.



By comparison with this visible official consultation activity there is only a very small amount of campaigning type work. One exception was opposition led by the Zambezi Society to Mobil Oil prospecting in the Zambezi valley. The company was forced to undertake an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and then to conduct the prospecting in a more environmentally sensitive manner.

It is not clear to what extent the consultation activities constitute real influence on the part of NGOs. Advocacy is a relatively new activity for them - as recently as 1989 Moyo and Katerere were writing about "the lack of recognition by NGOs of their policy lobby function" (quoted in Muir, 1992, p.19). These activities may also be restricted to relatively few, national, NGOs - Muir also notes that many NGOs have been involved locally in group-based development work in the communal areas, but of these "... very few NGOs have become involved individually or in groups in attempting to influence the formulation of or alterations to agricultural and rural development policies ... work has been dominated by trying to maximise the gains that groups could obtain *within the wider context*, rather than trying to alter that environment or engage in debate to initiate change" (*ibid*, p.19, emphasis in original).

## 2.2 *NGOs and environmental policy in Botswana*

NGOs in Botswana are almost all of very recent origins.

One indicator of their apparent lack of importance is the relative lack of references on NGOs. There is no published directory apart from that compiled by Ipelegeng on behalf of the Norwegian aid organization NORAD. A rough equivalent to the total of 800 registered welfare organizations in Zimbabwe in 1989 may be given by the total of only 44 registered voluntary organizations listed by Nteta (1988). Of these only three could be called national environmental organizations, namely the Forestry Association of Botswana (FAB), Kalahari Conservation Society (KCS) and Wildlife Clubs. Recent informal estimates put the number of NGOs at national or district level with some environmental interest at around fifteen to twenty, of which perhaps fewer than half-a-dozen were operating before about 1989. These estimates probably do not include international NGOs or very local groups. Even taking into account the much smaller population (about one-seventh that of Zimbabwe), this is clearly a substantially smaller level of activity.

There is some indication that at local level as well the numbers are relatively much lower than in Zimbabwe. "Traditional" forms of organization may predominate over voluntary group formation, which may be seen as "alien" (*ibid*, p.5). In other words, though a spirit of self-reliance and co-operative effort may have produced results such as schools and other local institutions, it is suggested that this has traditionally been through the community as a whole rather than specific organizations. However, this is a topic requiring careful study before any definite pronouncements should be made.

Of the longer-operating NGOs, a few are very well-known and have evolved into established national institutions or parastatals (Botswana Brigades, Botswana Technology Centre, Rural Industries Promotions). The recent modest growth is partly in response to donor pressure, including international concern over the environment, and as for Zimbabwe this carries the danger of a proliferation of "environmental" NGOs with rather shallow commitment either to community or to environmental values.

Although NGOs have been involved in formal consultations on environmental policy, they apparently do not have such a strong input as in Zimbabwe. For example, Botswana's National Conservation Strategy (NCS) was adopted in 1990 after a substantial consultation programme including NGOs, but has not been implemented. Despite this, an international Public Relations firm was used to help the government present it proudly at the Rio conference. NGOs have not been able to exert any real pressure towards adopting some of the NCS policies, particularly since they at times conflict with policies on agriculture or tourism, and the latter tend to prevail because of their immediate economic importance.

It is not just a question of lack of political muscle on the part of NGOs. They do not appear to form an important part of the political culture of Botswana. For example, *none* of the 75 draft recommendations from the 1993 Symposium on "Botswana in the 21st Century", seven of which are specifically about integrating economic development and environmental protection, fifteen on multi-party democracy and human rights, and nine on the future of agriculture, mentions NGOs or their role in any way (despite the fact that the symposium was hosted by the Botswana Society, itself an NGO!)

However, there have been a number of cases where NGOs with an environmental concern have been able to prevent certain policies or projects going ahead. The best known of these is the Southern Okavango Integrated Water Development Project, though there are some other examples as well.

The Southern Okavango Integrated Water Development Project (SOIWDP) was a planned large-scale engineering project involving dredging one of the main waterways of the Okavango Delta, in the north-west of the country. The Okavango Delta is one of the world's largest wetlands, described as "the world's greatest oasis" (Scudder, 1993, p.18). The Okavango River, having risen in Angola, spreads out over the Kalahari sands to a varying extent depending on the annual flood. 1989 maps show an area of nearly 16,000 sq.km. including dry land within the delta. The perennial and seasonal swamp, water channels and hundreds of islands form habitats for a large variety of birds and animals, so that the Okavango Delta is world famous for its wildlife and hence has increasing importance for tourism. It also has especial importance in an otherwise arid region in providing livelihoods for over 100,000 people of a variety of ethnic groups.

Plans for engineering projects to utilise the water of the Okavango go back to the 1950s. What became the SOIWDP was selected as the least environmentally damaging of several schemes recommended by studies in the 1970s. It was developed in greater and greater detail from 1982 to 1990 under a special interministerial committee with the Department of Water Affairs (DWA) as the lead agency. SOIWDP was to be "a multisectoral project for meeting a wide range of goals" (*ibid*, p.19), with water to be provided for commercial irrigation, village-based flood recession agriculture, and communities and livestock throughout the area, but particularly for the domestic use of the population of the town of Maun and surrounding areas, and for the De Beers diamond mine at Orapa. Apart from dredging and bunding 42 km of the Boro river (one of the main Okavango waterways), the scheme included building two reservoirs each 100 km. long, one providing mainly irrigation and the other water for the diamond mine and a number of communities. An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) was done, but by the same company that had undertaken feasibility and design studies (Snowy

Mountains Development Corporation), on the grounds that this made it easier to build the findings of the EIA into the project design.

It was only when earth-moving equipment began to arrive in Maun in late 1990 that local opposition to the scheme began to mobilise. There was no strong opposition from Botswana's main conservation NGO (KCS). However, a new local community-based environmental action group was formed named Tshomorelo Okavango Conservation Trust (TOCT) which mounted a very effective campaign. TOCT involved Greenpeace International, and it was suggested Greenpeace might threaten to add a "Diamonds are for Death" campaign to their anti-furs work. Whether as a result of this campaign or simply in response to general local opposition, the Botswana Government suspended the scheme and commissioned an independent study through IUCN, who assembled a team of 13 under an American expert, Ted Scudder. To the surprise of the DWA, the report was negative. In fact it made some positive proposals for alternative developments of the water resource of the Okavango, which amounted to a combination of several small-scale improvements mostly aimed at supporting the livelihoods of local people. There was no official response, but the project was "terminated" on the same day the IUCN findings were announced.

With regard to national policy, too, NGOs have at times been able to delay or call into question specific aspects of implementation. For example, the recently adopted New Agricultural Policy would build on previous policies in continuing to promote the fencing of communal lands, an idea which has been controversial for a long time. While NGOs have had little influence on the development of the policy, their opposition may be one factor in the delay in implementation which has so far prevented this from going ahead on a very large scale. Similarly the new wildlife policy, passed in 1992 to replace the previous scheme on controlled hunting areas, has been opposed by TOCT and other NGOs because it effectively favours the development of private rights to the utilisation of natural resources, and has not been implemented. The government says there is a need for "consultation" but there is a virtual stalemate. So far, however, despite their occasional ability to obstruct, and their inclusion in consultations such as that on the NCS, there appear to be no examples of NGOs in Botswana having any major input into policy development.

### *2.3 The approach in this paper*

The above sketches do no more than give a surface view of the position and role of NGOs with respect to environmental policies in Zimbabwe and Botswana respectively. However, it is already clear that one must move beyond simply rejecting the hypothesis stated in the Introduction about more democracy implying more NGO influence.

For one thing, it is not quite correct to say that in Botswana NGOs have less influence simply because they are fewer, less well-established and not so strongly represented in official consultations. Being able to stop projects, if only occasionally, is certainly a form of influence. Conversely, perhaps the consultation process in Zimbabwe stifles opposition rather than making for real changes deriving from NGOs' participation in the policy process.

Thus more analysis is needed on how and why NGOs may influence policy in the two countries. In particular, since one can say neither that more democracy means

more NGO influence nor the reverse, there is a clear need to analyse NGO influence in the context of a more considered view of "democracy". Following Taylor (1993) and Potter (1993), the following five features are identified which together define democracy as a "mode of making binding rules and policies collectively at the level of the nation state" (Potter, 1993, p.4):

1 *Accountability through multi-party elections.* In a democracy, "rulers are accountable to the ruled through representative assemblies and governments, formed at regular intervals through competitive elections based on universal adult suffrage involving multiple political parties providing a reasonable choice for the voters" (*ibid*, p.4).

2 *Diversity of power centres.* In a democracy there is a plurality of competing sources of power within and outside the state.

3 *Limited reach of the state.* In a democracy there will be areas in society over which the state has little or no control. These areas will include family life, voluntary association and private business, so that, for example, too strong an inteprenetration of business and government interests will mitigate against democracy in this aspect.

4 *Civil and political rights.* In a democracy there is a guarantee in law of civil and political rights and freedoms, including freedoms of expression and association and freedom of the press.

5 *Political participation.* In a democracy there is "political participation by people throughout society in collective decisions that directly affect their lives together with the principle of equality informing political life generally" (*ibid*, p.5).

At any given time the political context in a particular nation state will be more or less democratic with respect to each of these features. However, it is important not to regard them as static conditions. The description of a particular political context will not be complete without some knowledge of the particular process of historical change which has given rise to that particular combination of features of democracy and which continues to shape ongoing changes, perhaps through the agency of NGOs as much as other agents. Indeed, some commentators look to NGOs as agents of democratization, rather than, as here, examining whether democratization assists NGOs to be more influential (see e.g. Fowler, 1993).

The next section gives further background on the historical change processes relevant to the question at hand: recent political history, the history of NGOs, and the development of environmental issues in Zimbabwe and Botswana. The following section then comments on the five aspects of political culture with respect to the two countries and finally the concluding section relates the ways in which NGOs are able to be influential to these five factors.

### 3 Political and Institutional History of Zimbabwe and Botswana in relation to NGOs and environmental issues

#### 3.1 Recent Political History

The colonial history of Zimbabwe was dominated by white settlers, who first coexisted with, then were in violent conflict with, and finally subjugated the indigenous population. From the late nineteenth century land was alienated from indigenous Africans. The Land Apportionment Act of 1930 consolidated and institutionalised settlers rights to what became known as "commercial" farm land. To this day a division persists between "commercial" land with individualised tenure and "communal areas" with a "traditional" communal tenure system - though this communal tenure system is better regarded as a legacy of colonialism and the need to adapt from a situation of effectively unlimited land availability to one of restriction to specific areas, usually areas of poorer agricultural potential. (A full categorisation into tenure type will also include state lands - both state forests and protected areas such as national parks and game reserves - as well as urban areas and, more recently, resettlement areas.)

Moyo et al (1991, p.61) state that communal areas occupy about 42% of the country but 56% of the population live in them. This concentration may not seem disproportionate until one realises the unequal division of the land in terms of quality. In Zimbabwe agricultural land is classified into five "natural regions" corresponding to agro-ecological potential. Whereas over 30% of large-scale commercial farming land is in Natural Regions I or II (suitable for intensive cropping with rainfed cultivation), less than 10% of the communal area land is in these categories and almost three-quarters of it is categorised as Natural Region IV (subject to seasonal drought, suitable for semi-intensive animal husbandry, marginal for rainfed maize cultivation) or Natural Region V (suitable only for extensive animal husbandry - except in places for the possibility of large-scale irrigation works) (*ibid*, p.57). These are not places where one would expect large concentrations of population, were it not for the artificial restrictions on tenure which persist despite the post-independence government's stated commitment to land redistribution.

During the colonial period there was developed a mixture of constraining and enabling legislation on conservation. However, whereas commercial farmers enjoyed "massive State support in terms of credit, agricultural training and extension, infrastructural development and marketing facilities, [and] ... were able to implement the prescribed conservation measures, particularly contour ploughing and tie ridging to combat soil erosion", those in communal areas "lacked access to such facilities [and] ... were less able to afford the land and labour, while traditional conservation measures (mainly the use of fallow) became less practicable with the increasing population density" (*ibid*, p.15).

On a more positive note, the principle of "sustainable utilisation" was developed in the late colonial period. This gave to commercial farmers the right to benefit from wildlife and other natural resources, for example by exploiting hunting. Though the right was restricted to those with individual tenure, it allowed the possibility of extending the principle to communal areas, and this was in fact taken up after independence.

In practice efforts by the colonial government to enforce agricultural practices thought desirable, such as contour ploughing, and to prevent those thought undesirable, such as the cultivation of river banks, were implemented by a kind of crude policemenhip. Those in the communal areas were subject to increasing land and resource pressure at the same time that they could see commercial land being underutilised and were denied access to the forest, wildlife and grazing resource that underutilised land represented. Not surprisingly, institutional measures in favour of conservation retain unpopular associations with coercion and restriction.

The legacy of colonialism in this area is summarised in the "alternative" report for Rio, mentioned above, as follows:

"Most of the current institutional arrangements in Zimbabwe are based on or stem from colonial institutional structures which are dominated by private sector interests and perpetuate inequitable entitlements and access to resources.

Various Land Acts divided the country along racial lines and financial services were reserved for whites. Government policies promoted under-utilisation of land in the commercial sector, while over-population in the communal areas resulted in land degradation.

Colonial conservation measures were restrictive and based on policing and criminalisation of activities. As a result, conservation measures were unpopular with the peasant population, a perception that lingers to this day."

(Gore, Katerere and Moyo, 1992, p.xi.)

Following the Unilateral Declaration of Independence in 1965, the minority white regime continued enforcing restrictions on land management practices in the name of conservation. Particularly since community development and conservation measures were administered by officials of the so-called "Native Affairs" ministry, the main function of which was political, such measures tended to exacerbate tension and were a minor focus of protest and struggle. The major focus was land, particularly since the regime intensified the effect of the inequitable land apportionment by compressing the black population even more into restricted areas as a response to the increasing success of the nationalist movement.

The 1970s saw a protracted and then successful liberation struggle. This gave rise to profound changes in the political culture of the black majority. Expectations of far-reaching changes were set up amongst the whole population, for example for land redistribution. Large numbers were involved directly or indirectly in the struggle, many of whom took part in political debate and participated in decisions at a local or broader level. A necessary aspect of the struggle was the idea of voluntary participation (though this was not the language used), and this may have helped to pave the way for new forms of membership organization that cut across traditional notions of community. Also certain radical institutional ideas like collectives and co-operatives were introduced along with state socialist planning.

Independence was gained in 1980, following the Lancaster House conference at which certain "sunset clauses" were negotiated protecting the white minority. These included a ten-year guarantee of tenure for commercial farms, with commercial farm land to be obtained by the state for resettlement only on a willing-



buyer willing-seller basis. The Lancaster House agreement also provided for multi-party elections as well as for certain entrenched rights for the white minority, all for the same minimum of ten years.

ZANU(PF) won a sweeping victory in the 1980 election and has been in power ever since. In practice, many legislative arrangements and institutions were kept in place. This was partly because of specific points in the Lancaster House agreement, partly because of the practical impossibility of the new black government implementing radical change in all areas at the same time, and perhaps also because there were elements in the authoritarian nature of the minority white state inherited from British colonialism which matched the aspirations of the new government to have control of powerful state instruments.

One such example was the maintenance of conservation measures such as those against river-bank cultivation, despite their unpopularity and identification with the previous regime. Another was the continuation of independent Rural Councils dominated by white interests for commercial farm areas alongside District Councils constituted on a different basis for the communal areas, but there were many more. Again, it was important not to disturb the commercial farm sector too much, not only because of the guaranteed rights to tenure granted to commercial farmers, but also because of the need to keep up commodity production for export. Resettlement schemes were implemented, but on a limited basis that was not in fact very different from certain schemes under the colonial government.

The idea of sustainable utilisation, which has since become an important principle underlying both government and indigenous NGO philosophy on the environment, was in fact another example of continuity from the pre-independence period. In particular there was the legal notion of "appropriate authority" (AA) status, which could be conferred on an individual or organization who would then have the right to benefit from certain natural resources such as wildlife despite ownership of those resources remaining with the state. Previously applied only to commercial farmers, the possibility of being granted AA status was extended to District Councils early in the 1980s. This change was actually pushed by liberal whites, and carried in parliament because it appeared anti-racist. It was not seen as a crucial change at the time, but it opened the way to CAMPFIRE and other schemes such as forestry resource-sharing.

The two liberation movements, ZAPU and ZANU, had worked together during the struggle, but the electoral process relegated ZAPU to permanent opposition and a restricted local and provincial role in Bulawayo and Matabeleland generally. After an initial period of post-independence euphoria accompanied by high economic growth, the mid-1980s saw stagnation, little progress on land resettlement, and armed ZAPU "dissidents" opposing government and causing a near civil war in Matabeleland. Eventually ZAPU merged at the end of 1987 into ZANU(PF), a process of what Stoneman (1992, p.2) calls "shot-gun unity".

Originally socialist in orientation, though with some anti-socialist elements, the ZANU government increasingly embraced market economics. Some would trace this tendency back to 1983, but market ideas became clearly dominant from 1991 with the "Economic Structural Adjustment Programme" (ESAP). Matabeleland in particular also suffered several droughts during the 1980s, but the most severe drought for the country as a whole was in 1991/2. The combination of the effects of ESAP and the drought threatened to reverse the overall gains in areas of human

development such as health and education made during the 1980s when there was an overall average economic growth rate of 2.9% per annum.

The ten-year protection clauses negotiated in 1980 have now expired. Rural Councils have been abolished and merged into new Rural District Councils based on the old District Councils. Although previously announced resettlement schemes were restricted more by the lack of resources to support those to be resettled than by any shortage of land available on the agreed willing-buyer willing-seller basis, the government has taken advantage of the expiry of that agreement to designate further large tracts of commercial farm land for state takeover and eventual resettlement. Multi-party elections are not to be abandoned, however, and the most recent elections were held in April 1995, with ZANU (PF) winning all but two seats

Botswana contrasts with Zimbabwe in several ways. The territory which became independent Botswana was declared a British protectorate largely as a means of containing the movement of Boer settlers northwards in the late nineteenth century. However, there were in the end relatively few settlers and, unlike in many other African colonies, most of the land (80% at independence) remained in the hands of local communities under traditional communal (or tribal) forms of tenure. Not surprisingly given that most of Botswana is arid or semi-arid, this is mostly rangeland with what remains a low population density despite recent fast population growth.

Cattle ownership has been and remains significant as an indicator of wealth as well as in terms of productive contribution to the economy, though the significance varies between ethnic groups. However, although pastoralism is a traditional pursuit, cattle ownership is increasingly concentrated in the hands of a small proportion of the population. Moyo, O'Keefe and Sill (1993, p.35) quote studies by Arntzen and Veenendaal (1986) and by Yeager (1989) and estimate that 45% of rural households in Botswana own no cattle and 60% of the cattle are owned by 5% of the population.

In 1966 Botswana became independent, and the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) took power, having won the election carried out under colonial supervision in 1965. The colonial system had been one of indirect rule in which the British colonialists used traditional chiefs and institutions such as the patron-client system of cattle-loaning known as *mafisa* to maintain a paternalistic kind of control. The majority of the population lived in rural areas in abject poverty. There had been little history of opposition to British "protection", and no political parties until 1959. The only radical element was a small group involved in South African nationalist politics, some of whom formed the Botswana People's Party (BPP) in 1960.

The BDP emerged in 1962 partly as a response to the militant BPP. It was an alliance of the traditional aristocracy of chiefs and "headmen" with the new educated and salaried class of civil servants, teachers, policemen, etc., regarded by Tsie (1993, p.36) as two fractions of a "cattle-based petty-bourgeoisie", since they were both able to accumulate large herds, invest in boreholes, increase control over grazing land on a *de facto* private basis, employ semi-wage labour, and generally "convert cattle from embodiments of use-value to embodiments of exchange-value".

Molutsi (1993, p.5) characterises the decolonisation process as "largely an act of benevolence on the part of the British government" and Botswana at the time as "a poverty stricken, politically conservative society" with "an embryonic elite which was happy to peacefully acquire the leadership of the post-colonial state". A liberal democratic constitution was negotiated between members of this new elite and the colonial administration. Molutsi goes on to point out that "The country's institutions and democracy are imposed from above. Starting from the highest - parliament - down to the most grassroots, the village development committee (VDC), [they] were handed down to the population" (*ibid*, p.5).

With virtually no rural support, the BPP won only three of the 31 seats in the 1965 election, to the BDP's 28. The BDP won that election, and every election since, by combining the votes of the small but increasingly important urban-based professional elite with support from the rural peasantry based on both traditional and newer forms of patronage relations either with traditional chiefs and cattle-owners or with the newer absentee "cattle barons". The Botswana National Front (BNF), which has become the most important opposition party, is largely an urban-based labour party, and as such has won parliamentary seats and control of local councils in most of Botswana's towns but does not threaten the dominance of the BDP nationally. Thus both main parties are urban-based, and in fact leaders of both come from different elements of the same small elite sometimes known as the "class of '65". The interests of poor rural people are not really represented.

In the period since independence Botswana has enjoyed the highest average economic growth rate in Africa. Indeed, for the period 1965-1990, Botswana had the highest average annual growth of GNP per capita of any country in the world at 8.4% (Leftwich, 1994, p.397, quoting data mainly from the World Bank). During this period only eight countries experienced average growth of GNP per capita above 4% per annum; the other seven were all in East and South-east Asia. Botswana has followed a market-led development strategy, and its success is often cited as evidence for the superiority of such a strategy. In fact its economic growth has been based on the export of minerals, especially diamonds since their discovery at Orapa in 1967 and later at Jwaneng, but also salt/soda-ash, coal and copper-nickel. By the end of the 1980s Botswana was in the world's top three producers of diamonds, with about one-fifth of world output. In 1990 diamonds accounted for 80% of the country's export earnings, and minerals altogether for 88% of exports and 46% of GDP (Mzhone, 1993, p.43). Despite the continuing importance of cattle, their exports account for only about 2% of export earnings, sold mostly to the EC on specially favourable terms agreed under the Lome Convention.

Botswana has maintained a healthy economy throughout the post-independence period, with the state itself emerging as the wealthiest institution in the country, with direct revenues accruing to government from the mineral developments. However, economic growth has been accompanied not only by high population growth and urbanization (from a low base, so that the population is still mostly rural) but by increases in inequality. Botswana now has one of the world's greatest published disparities between richest and poorest, the income of the wealthiest 20% being 24 times that of the poorest 20%, a ratio exceeded only by Brazil (Pearce, 1993, p.26, quoting United Nations figures). According to the UNDP's *Human Development Report 1993*, 40% of the urban and 55% of the rural population lived in absolute poverty in 1990. However, although the mining-led economic growth has not improved the livelihoods of the rural poor, it has allowed

the government to institute a fairly comprehensive and sustainable welfare programme, including free primary education, basic health care, provision of safe water, and drought relief and poverty alleviation measures. The resulting improvements in life expectancy, infant mortality and literacy must contribute to the BDP's continuing electoral success.

Although Botswana has a reputation for a successful free market economy, it is in fact heavily dependent on South Africa. Labour migration to South African mines, though declining, is still the main basis for income and sustenance in the rural areas. In turn, dependence on South African imports may impede the development of local manufacturing. 80% of total imports of goods and services originate in South Africa, including many of the type of products that would be early candidates for import substitution. Finally, most of the foreign investment in Botswana comes from or has close relations with South African capital, as in the case of diamond mining where the main operator is jointly owned by the Botswana Government and De Beers and the output all goes via an agreement with De Beers, which maintains a global monopoly on diamond sales.

Botswana also has a reputation for open, democratic institutions. However, as already noted, these have almost all been imposed from above. There has been very little spontaneous development of non-governmental organizations or other institutions of civil society, and those which have begun to grow up have often been coopted or dominated by government, leaving civil society relatively weak (Molutsi and Holm, 1990). The democratic facade hides the fact that the country has been ruled since independence by the same small elite, with senior civil servants and politicians interchanging positions in a manner very rare in western liberal democracies. Having won all the elections since independence, the BDP has enjoyed 28 years in power, which compares with 14 years for the conservatives in the U.K. and 13 years for ZANU(PF) in Zimbabwe.

### 3.2 *The NGO movements*

NGOs are of many types, and several writers have put forward typologies or suggested principles for distinguishing, say, Grassroots Organizations (GROs) from other NGOs (see e.g. Riddell, 1990; Uphoff, 1993). I have suggested elsewhere (Thomas, 1992) that it is important to distinguish *mutual benefit* organizations, based on membership, from *public benefit* organizations, including charities and other NGOs set up to supply services to others as well as campaigning or research organizations which do not necessarily have a defined client group. It is also important to recognise differences in scope and scale; NGOs working variously at local, national and international levels should not be expected to work in similar ways.

In addition, NGOs work in different sectors. Although we are concerned here with the influence of NGOs on *environmental* policy, it is not exclusively those organizations that define themselves as environmental NGOs that may have or seek influence in this area. NGOs differ also in the interest groups they represent, either directly in the case of member organizations or indirectly in the case of a charitable or welfare organization representing the interests of its client groups. Thus there need not be a unified NGO view; different NGOs may be putting forward views based on conflicting interests.

Among the many possibilities there are five or six identifiable types of NGO of particular importance to environmental policy common to Zimbabwe and Botswana. However, their historical background and development as movements has been such that there are big differences in the relative importance of the types and the interests represented between the two countries.

First, there are Western-style conservationist NGOs. These are relatively few in number. They tend to be white-led and in many cases to have been established under colonialism. In Zimbabwe these would include the Zimbabwe Wildlife Society and the Zambezi Society, among others; in Botswana the Kalahari Conservation Society would be the leading NGO of this type; others would include the Forestry Association of Botswana and various local wildlife trusts.

While clearly analogous to conservation societies in Britain or other Western countries in that their activities include voluntary efforts in support of wildlife sanctuaries and so forth, these NGOs are also seen in Zimbabwe as representing settler interests, including interests in hunting and the commercial interests of safari operating companies as well as commercial farming interests. Although this makes it hard for such NGOs to be seen as disinterested campaigners on behalf of, say, wildlife conservation, it also means that in certain areas they have economic importance. So long as they keep a distance away from issues that have any race element, these NGOs may be the best placed of all Zimbabwean NGOs to undertake issue-based campaigning - as in the case mentioned above of the Zambezi Society and Mobil Oil prospecting in the Zambezi valley.

One new Zimbabwean NGO should perhaps also be included in this group, namely Environment 2000, which grew out of the efforts of two white women campaigning to "Save the Rhino" and is financed largely by sponsorship from industrial and commercial sources. It undertakes media campaigns, for example against the proposed Batoka Dam, and promotes environmental education, both in schools and to the general population.

In Botswana conservationist NGOs have tended to be expatriate-led rather than settler-led. This may mean they are less identified with particular economic interests. However, it also means it may be possible to dismiss their concerns as "a white man's problem". In fact, to quite a large extent the whole NGO movement in Botswana has until recently been identified with the expatriate white community. However, with the growth of an urban salaried middle class these conservationist NGOs may be taking on some of the characteristics of environmental pressure groups in Europe or the USA. One new NGO, Somorelang Tikologo (or "Environment Watch Botswana") may be regarded as the urban equivalent of a conservationist NGO, with interests in waste recycling as well as the general promotion of environmental awareness.

The second type is a branch of an international NGO, usually a Northern-based development agency such as Save the Children, HIVOS, World Vision, and so on. Most of these NGOs did not originally regard their work as environmental. However, many of them have been engaged in rural development projects and have either added specifically environmental aspects to their projects or simply found such aspects to have been an integral part of their work all along.

In Zimbabwe projects by this type of NGO mushroomed after independence. One reason for this was that they provided a way for Northern humanitarian interests to work in Zimbabwe while avoiding direct partnership with the radical nationalist

government. As far as that government was concerned, NGOs brought in resources and by providing services in areas the state could not immediately reach were able to help increase the coverage of the country in respect of certain types of services, particularly care of the elderly and disabled, education and health. More recently agriculture and rural income generation have come to the fore as foci for projects by international NGOs, and these are areas with a clear environmental impact, whether or not the projects are labelled environmental.

In any case, in the international climate of the 1980s the presence of such NGOs would have been hard to resist. Seen as independent, private providers, NGOs fit in with the neo-liberal view of the world in which state provision should be cut back as much as possible. This has been the dominant view in the international donor community. To some extent the Zimbabwe government has maintained its credentials with Western governments by welcoming NGO activity. At the same time it has avoided the excesses found in, say, Mozambique, where NGOs are accused of effectively setting up parallel administrations, undermining state control and acting as agents of recolonization on behalf of their home (Northern) governments (Hanlon, 1991), by insisting on administrative regulation of the activities of international NGOs. Though not able to fulfil all the expectations built up by the successful liberation struggle, the Zimbabwean government is strong enough to maintain its sovereignty to this extent.

Botswana has to some extent been protected from the necessity of allowing open access to Northern-based NGOs by its record of economic growth. Additional resources have not been so crucial and universal welfare provision has been more or less possible on the basis of internally generated government revenues. The democratic institutions handed down to the independent state of Botswana certainly do not exclude non-profit welfare organizations, but the Botswana government has been able to accept the aid of Northern-based NGOs on its own terms. These NGOs have tended to work through government agencies rather than independently or in partnership with indigenous NGOs, which have hardly been in evidence until very recently. Thus, despite their reduced role compared to Zimbabwe, local branches of international NGOs have dominated the Botswana NGO scene, with some of their expatriate staff taking leading roles in other NGOs as well.

Some NGOs of this type have always been based on work which is largely or wholly environmental. Examples include I.T. Zimbabwe, the Zimbabwe branch of the U.K.-based Intermediate Technology Development Group and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) Multi-Species Animal Production Systems Project, also in Zimbabwe. Both Zimbabwe and Botswana have branches of the World Conservation Union (IUCN), and in the former case the local office is also the regional office for Southern Africa. Although at an international level IUCN has governments as well as NGOs and other institutions as affiliates, probably at national level its branches should be considered alongside those of international NGOs.

This second type of NGO also includes a few which are branches of Southern-based international NGOs. ENDA-Zimbabwe is perhaps the most notable, Zimbabwe being one of eleven countries with a local office of ENDA-Tiers-Monde, set up following the 1972 UN Stockholm Conference on the World Environment. ENDA stands for "Environment and Development Activities". ENDA-Zimbabwe has become a substantial NGO in its own right, engaging in



advocacy and research as well as local development projects. Like the other NGOs of this type, ENDA-Zimbabwe has no local membership, though it is committed to a community-based participative methodology. IRED Development Innovation has its office for Eastern and Southern Africa in Harare; this is a network for development alternatives that links NGOs in North and South. Finally, Africa 2000 Network, while a creature of the UNDP, also has an office in Harare and is regarded locally as an NGO, aimed at promoting environmental activities and awareness at village level.

The third type are indigenous, national NGOs - mostly concerned with welfare and rural development. As with the second type it is not only specifically environmental NGOs whose work may be of relevance to environmental concerns. Examples in Zimbabwe include the Zimbabwe Trust, Zimbabwe Women's Bureau, Zimbabwe Foundation for Education with Production (ZIMFEP) and several well-known NGOs based on local training centres but which take on a national development brief, such as Silveira House, Cold Comfort Farm and others. They are like the second type (and differ from the next) in being clearly for public rather than mutual benefit. Some aim at particular constituencies or interests, such as women, ex-combatants, or the rural poor. Though some of them may adopt a participatory style and attempt to build up local membership, they are essentially based on trust, charity and private initiative aimed at social and development goals.

Many of the international NGOs have moved from direct running of projects to working through partnerships with NGOs of this type and the next. This type of partnership extends to other relevant sectors including non-profit publishing, as with the link between the Panos Institute in London and Development Media Publishing in Harare, which produces the *Green Directory of Zimbabwe* and the newspaper *Development Dialogue*. Though this trend is increasing, Zimbabwe seems relatively free of the tendency noted in some other African countries for local and national NGOs to be rather artificial creations of the need for local partners for international NGOs.

In Botswana, independent national NGOs of this type include Thusano Lefatsheng, working in agricultural development and the promotion of "veld products", CORDE with its work in training and support for other NGOs, and a few others. One reason why this type is so weak in Botswana is the tendency, noted above, for international NGOs to work directly with government agencies. Another is that several successful independent initiatives have been coopted by the government. These have included the Botswana Brigades, once the equivalent to ZIMFEP but now effectively a parastatal organization linked to the Ministry of Education, Rural Industries Promotions, and the Botswana Technology Centre.

It is often argued that NGOs have distinctive features that give them 'comparative advantage' with respect to government agencies, particularly in areas such as responsiveness, flexibility, experimentation and risk-taking (see e.g. Fowler, 1988). In Botswana, though indigenous NGOs are still relatively few in number, most of the examples seem to be of new areas of development pioneered by them, some of which have been taken over by state agencies, which seems to confirm this idea of NGOs as having special capacities for innovation. Vivian (1994) confirms that in Zimbabwe too NGOs are expected to fulfil a qualitatively different role in rural development from that of government agencies, and in particular to be flexible and innovative. However, she goes on to report on the results of a recent

survey which portrays the real situation as very different. "The majority see themselves as 'filling gaps': as extending the services normally provided by government so that more people can benefit from them" (*ibid*, p.185). The same survey also finds that NGOs' "reach" is "both quantitatively and qualitatively limited" (*ibid*, p.183).

There are some NGOs in Zimbabwe that are innovative both in technical and in institutional terms. The spread of CAMPFIRE schemes, promoted as described above by a consortium including the Zimbabwe Trust, is one prominent example. However, there is clearly some difference in this respect between NGOs in the two countries. Despite their limited "reach", there is a greater prevalence in Zimbabwe of indigenous NGOs working in partnership with international NGOs to provide services of a similar type to those of government agencies. Only a few of these are developing new ideas. In Botswana, with state provision closer to universal, the few NGOs tend to be more distinctive in character.

Fourthly there are membership organizations which exist to further their members' interests. Sometimes the terms "community-based organization" or "grassroots organization" are used, but these properly should refer only to local organizations of this type, whereas local member-benefit NGOs may also combine into regional or national federations or there may be national associations or unions. Examples include Zimbabwe's collective co-operatives with their federation OCCZIM, savings clubs and credit unions, women's associations and groups, Zimbabwe Farmers Union, the Small Scale Miners Association of Zimbabwe, and so on. One particularly well-known example in Zimbabwe is ORAP, already mentioned above.

While in principle there is a clear distinction between this type of NGO and those of the public-benefit type, even if the latter are set up with a fully participative style of working, in practice the differences may not be so clearcut. An NGO may be set up from the top with the intention of attracting local members to whom the staff should be accountable, as in the case of the Manicaland Development Association. In the end, however they are started, NGOs may well work both for member benefit and for general public benefit, and this is particularly so in environmental matters, where local member interests may well coincide with protection of the environment.

One type of member-based NGO is that based on a local environmental campaign. In Zimbabwe there are extremely few of these; one example is the Matabeleland Zambezi Water Project, with considerable support in Bulawayo, set up to press for a pipeline from the Zambezi to provide water for Bulawayo and its surrounding areas. An example from Botswana is TOCT, based in Maun mentioned above for its opposition to the Southern Okavango Integrated Water Development Project, and there are also potentially oppositional community-based environment groups in other parts of Botswana.

A fifth type of NGO has membership consisting of other NGOs. Various representative bodies or fora exist in both countries. In Zimbabwe, NANGO has this role with respect to NGOs in general, and ZNCT has evolved from a conservationist NGO of the first type to providing a forum for NGOs with an interest in environmental issues. In Botswana, there has been for some time an Environmental Liaison Group working on an informal basis; more recently the Forum on Sustainable Agriculture (FONSAG) has been set up with a membership of fifteen institutions, including government departments as well as NGOs.

A sixth category may be required to cover a few NGOs with special characteristics which do not easily fit the above five types. ZERO, mentioned above, is a network of experts. Whether it should be regarded as a membership organization, existing to promote the interests of those environmentalists, or, as it would probably prefer, as a public interest research organization, is uncertain. It is also unusual in having a supra-national character while being based on individuals throughout the southern African region. In Botswana, the Botswana Society is a national civic organization which raises matters of public concern, including environmental issues.

The potential for variety amongst NGOs is enormous. However, the main types and how they have arisen is as described. It should be noted that different types have different histories and concerns. Not surprisingly, we are likely to find that NGOs of different types influence, or attempt to influence, environmental policies in very different ways.

### 3.3 *Environmental Issues*

Most of the important environmental issues in Zimbabwe and Botswana can be considered under the heading of land degradation and sustainable resource management. This is in the context of low or irregular rainfall: Botswana is all arid or semi-arid; Zimbabwe has extensive dryish areas and is subject to periodic drought. There is considerable scientific and political debate about these issues and it is important to understand their main features and to place them with respect to other types of environmental issue at a global level.

Sustainable resource management needs to be considered alongside land degradation because poor resource management is often seen as the main cause of degradation and ways of achieving sustainability as a major part of any solution. Land degradation is described as "... the inevitable result of the misuse of the land and vegetation resources by overgrazing and the adoption of inappropriate agricultural practices. It consists of a number of interlinked processes, including a reduction in soil fertility, erosion of the soil, depletion of the vegetation biomass and .. [the] end product is desertification, a situation in which widespread disappearance of vegetation cover occurs, with commensurate difficulty in vegetation rehabilitation" (Moyo et al, 1993, pp.40-41).

This quote referred to the case of Botswana, but its application could be more general. In a rather similar analysis for Zimbabwe, Moyo et al (1991) cite the following as the main areas for environmental problems: soil, water, pasture, forest products and wildlife, plus pollution and pests, but note that problems are "related, mutually reinforcing and sequential" (p.73). Apart from pollution and pests, these are actually a list of natural resources, and the question is how to manage them so as to avoid their depletion or irreversible degradation. Moyo et al suggest there is a possibility of sudden ecological collapse, which would be unprecedented in Zimbabwe, and that by definition this would be outside the experience of local people so that although it may be true that local populations have good informal knowledge of resource management appropriate to their locality, this cannot be relied upon as a means of avoiding such catastrophes. They also suggest that some areas have already suffered irreversible damage, citing parts of the Upper Save catchment area as having "endured several years of soil erosion at 50 tonnes/ha/annum" (*ibid*, p.73) and thus retaining "very little agro-ecological potential".

In general all human activity exploits the environment, and does so in two basic ways: through the use of natural resources as raw materials for production; and through the use of the environment to accept waste products (see e.g. Woodhouse, 1992). Woodhouse goes on to argue that in general, concern about environmental degradation in respect of developing countries has two corresponding aspects. The first is depletion of particular resources required for people's livelihoods, and this tends to lead to widespread, but specific, problems, particular to different locations, mostly in non-industrialised areas. The second relates to pollution and here, although there are some localized problems, the largest concerns are with global issues such as depletion of the ozone layer, global warming and cross-boundary and marine pollution. From a Northern perspective, the problem here with respect to developing countries is a potential one: how can they increase living standards without industrialising on the Northern model, thereby adding enormously to pollution and multiplying these global problems?

Land degradation in Botswana and Zimbabwe comes under the first of these two general concerns. The problem also appears, at first sight at least, to be localised and to relate directly to the requirements of people's livelihoods, in the way suggested by Woodhouse to be typical of resource depletion problems in developing countries. Indeed, in Zimbabwe it is specifically in the communal areas that the vicious cycle between poverty and over-exploitation of limited resources of soil, water, forest products, etc. tends to appear (see e.g. Moyo et al, 1991), and, while interrelated, different resources will tend to be critical in different locations.

Woodhouse in fact points out that localised over-exploitation does not occur only in relation to petty commodity or "subsistence" production. Primary commodity production that provides livelihoods through wage labour can also give rise to this type of degradation, and the localised over-grazing round boreholes in commercialised cattle-ranching in Botswana provides an example. However, in this case the vicious cycle comes into operation at a much broader level, with the need of the national economy for primary commodities for export fuelling increased production irrespective of the sustainability of local natural resources such as pasture.

The other, pollution-related, type of environmental problem does exist in Zimbabwe and Botswana, but to a lesser extent. Examples are siltation and water pollution caused by uncontrolled gold-panning in Zimbabwe, and fly-tipping and litter especially from drinks cans in towns in Botswana. These are perhaps even more localised than the resource-depletion problems relating to land degradation. The global aspects of pollution, such as global warming, may well affect Zimbabwe and Botswana extremely adversely. However, since the contribution to such global problems, and hence the opportunity for preventive measures, is very limited, these issues do not have great salience in these countries.

The scientific debate about desertification and land degradation concerns their extent and whether they are at least partly "natural" processes or occur only as a result of human activity. Both terms refer to processes which are complex, hard to define and subject to controversy. Whether and to what extent particular stretches of land are deteriorating, whether this is reversible, etc. are all disputed. The physical and ecological processes concerned are poorly understood.

It may be that savannah grassland is more resilient than some have supposed (Vivian, 1994, citing Drinkwater, 1991); it has historically been subject to big variations in rainfall and suffered considerable erosion and recovered. In fact there have been worries about degradation throughout colonial history; Drinkwater (*ibid*, p.104) refers to a 1920 report which states that "... present methods of agriculture cannot continue ... the soil is being exhausted" and points out that despite the same warnings being given in similar terms throughout the past seventy years the communal areas of Zimbabwe in fact have been able to support continually increasing numbers of people. Certainly management of land can improve fertility and allow increased numbers to live off a given area, just as after a point increased numbers of people or cattle must surely affect the land adversely.

Political debate on land degradation and desertification at an international level includes the basic question of whether it should be regarded as a global issue. As one of the resource-depletion type of environmental issues, desertification is often argued, particularly by Northern interests, to be a local rather than a global concern. As a process it is not global in the same way as global warming or ozone depletion. Desertification is not one of the four planks of the Global Environmental Facility (GEF). The complexity, lack of scientific consensus and perception of land degradation as a prevalent problem in lots of places, taking different forms, rather than a global issue, was evidenced by the way the issue appeared in no less than four chapters of the Rio conference's Agenda.21 (Chapter 10 - Management Of Land Resources; Chapter 11 - Combatting Deforestation; Chapter 12 - Combatting Desertification And Drought; Chapter 14 - Sustainable Agriculture).

Although desertification may not be a global process as such, it is certainly a global concern and may be affected by, and affect, other global concerns. For example, over-exploitation may, as noted above, be driven by the national need to produce primary commodities for export, which in turn may be reinforced by the requirements of debt servicing and the terms of World Bank or IMF support, as well as by the need to earn foreign exchange to pay for essential imports. The argument that land degradation is a global concern is also strengthened to the extent that it is recognised that the physical processes concerned are at least partly "natural". This, together with macro-economic imperatives of the kind just mentioned, and the lack of alternatives for those making their livelihoods in resource-poor locations, mean that land degradation cannot simply be put down to local mismanagement. Although at Rio there was no declaration on desertification and land degradation, it was agreed that a convention should be negotiated according to a set timetable. The International Negotiating Committee for a Convention to Combat Desertification (INCD) reached agreement on a convention at its fifth session, in Paris in June 1994.

Of course, political debate around land degradation and sustainable resource management occurs at local and national levels as well as at the international level. The debate tends to derive from different ways of seeing the problem and its causes. Vivian (1994), discussing sustainable development in Zimbabwe, identifies two main views: the "Carrying Capacity Argument" and the "Land Management Argument", and these would also apply to Botswana. I would generalise the second of these to the "Resource Management Argument" and add a third, which could be called the "Resource Allocation and Entitlements Argument".

The Carrying Capacity Argument centres on the simple idea that the land and other resources in a given area can support only a limited number of people and/or cattle. This "carrying capacity" may be larger than at first thought, or increased by good resource management, but is still ultimately limited. Land degradation, then, is caused by over-population or over-stocking. In Botswana this kind of thinking is used to argue for family planning measures to restrict population growth and also for general de-stocking to achieve a reduction in the national cattle herd. In Zimbabwe the equation is made specifically for communal areas, which are much more restricted and densely populated than in Botswana. It is complicated by the fact that there may be, as noted by Moyo et al (1991, p.64), "...too many people and cattle on the land, in agro-ecological terms, while there is a shortage of labour and a lack of adequate draught power". Vivian points out that if the problem is stated in terms of "not enough land" rather than "too many people", then resettlement becomes an obvious solution, particularly if it can be argued that there are other lands which are *under-utilised*, as may be the case with some of the commercial farmlands in Zimbabwe. This then shades into the "resource allocation" view - see below.

The Resource Management Argument is about the actual practices of those who live off the land and other resources, and whether they are appropriate or inappropriate. Much of the colonial and post-colonial conservation legislation noted above for Zimbabwe was intended to promote "good" agricultural practices. The notion persists that without a mixture of coercive legislation and agricultural extension support, local farmers will tend to adopt poor practices that lead to land degradation. However, there is clearly a limit to what even the most positive programme of training and technical innovation can do, especially when farmers are constrained by poverty. The idea that poor land management in communal areas is the immediate cause of land degradation also leads to opposition to resettlement on the grounds that the same practices will soon cause the land resettled to become degraded in turn.

This argument is mainly about agricultural practices but also includes ideas about natural resource management generally. As noted above, the notion of sustainable utilisation has been current in Zimbabwe since before independence, while in Botswana the main approach has been by strict zoning, keeping agricultural and wildlife areas separate.

The third approach is the Resource Allocation and Entitlements Argument. In this view it is the highly unequal distribution of rights over and access to natural resources that is the root cause of environmental problems. In Zimbabwe this implies looking for solutions first of all via land reform and redistribution, as well as through reviewing systems of land tenure and natural resource utilisation. For Zimbabwe Moyo et al (1991) summarise this view as follows:

"The objective ... is to relate the physical problems to their fundamental causes, which are to be found in the land tenure system, the structural features of the economy and hence in the country's political and economic history" (*ibid*, p.71).



" ... Zimbabwe's environmental problems and crises are based on the conflict over natural resources arising mainly from the limited access to these resources by the majority of the country's people. These problems are not localised in the sense that solutions cannot be provided on a piecemeal basis, such as reclaiming gullies, tree-planting and other soil conservation measures. Increased access by the majority to land and other related resources becomes necessary, hence the need to embark on a major land reform programme" (*ibid*, p.123).

This view is not only about the need for large-scale land reform. There are also major arguments about reform of land tenure systems, centring around the idea that security of tenure is required before farmers will invest in land conservation measures or learn new techniques. However, as Vivian (1994, pp.178-179) points out, it is not clear which form of tenure gives the best security. Proponents of reform often argue that communal tenure is insecure compared to private landholding. However, traditionally rights under the communal system were quite high, at least for male heads of household, and although there are recent cases of these rights being eroded and even "sold", this does not necessarily mean less security than under the private system, where sales under duress may become the norm. Another part of this debate is the question of extending communal rights to natural resources via schemes such as CAMPFIRE and "resource-sharing" between a communal area and neighbouring state forest or commercial lands.

Arguments in Zimbabwe around land reform and land tenure are highly politically charged and NGOs often avoid them in favour of working on technical innovation and improving resource management practices. As Vivian also notes, the majority of NGOs in the field of environment and rural development remain oriented towards running projects, and "NGO projects seldom address the social context which complicates environmental problems: issues of land distribution, control over resources, or gender and class relation (*ibid*, p.186). There are two alternative explanations for this: one, that NGOs feel obliged to avoid such political issues; or, two, that building up expertise in practical areas of relevance is a subtle way of eventually approaching a difficult but ultimately unavoidable subject.

In Botswana, the equivalent subject to land in Zimbabwe, and one that is equally difficult for NGOs to address, is cattle. The third view would, in the case of Botswana, look at the distribution of cattle as well as of access to land and other natural resources. One specific point here would be the question of "dual grazing rights", where an individual with a commercial herd may retain hereditary rights to communal grazing and thus be able to move cattle between communal and commercially zoned areas, to the environmental detriment of the former. Just as in Zimbabwe the question of land reform is complicated by the desire of some urbanised members of the political elite to be able to acquire commercial land, so in Botswana the right to consolidate wealth through cattle is of great importance.

#### 4 Aspects of Political Context and NGO influence

There now follows a brief comparison of the two countries in respect of the five features of democracy put forward in 2.3 above. Taken together these features may be expected to capture the complexity of the differences in political culture

better than simple notions of more or less democracy and democratization as a uni-dimensional process.

#### 4.1 *Accountability through multi-party elections*

As noted above ZANU(PF) has been in power continuously since independence. At least until very recently, there has been explicit approval of the one-party state as an ideal, despite the multi-party elections which formed part of the post-independence political system agreed at Lancaster House.

ZANU(PF) won the first election in 1980, increased its share of the vote in 1985, and thereafter "concentrated on moving towards a one-party state" (Stoneman, 1992, p.2). Stoneman goes on: "after a near-civil war in Matabeleland and continuing intimidation of Joshua Nkomo's ZAPU, 'shot-gun' unity between the two parties was achieved at the end of 1987. The united ZANU-PF then hoped to bring about a clean sweep of seats in the 1990 elections, enabling the government to claim that the people, not it, had chosen one-party rule". In fact ZANU-PF only obtained 77% of the vote and lost three seats to the newly formed Zimbabwe Unity Movement (ZUM) "despite its incoherent policies and the often violent intimidation of its candidates and supporters during the election campaign; ZUM also made many accusation of ballot-rigging" (*ibid*, p.2).

Since 1990 there is still no coherent opposition party. ZUM has split, giving rise to the Democratic Party; Ndabaningi Sithole has returned from exile to form ZANU(Ndonga); there is also the Forum Party which according to Stoneman is "suspected of preparing the ground for a renewed split of some ZAPU members from ZANU-PF" (*ibid*, p.2). In local council elections and by-elections, ZANU-PF candidates still sweep the board, with, according to Stoneman, a certain amount of violent intimidation of opposition candidates. However, as noted above, multi-party elections are to continue, the most recent having taken place in April 1995.

In Botswana there has been clear and public espousal of the ideals of multi-party democracy, though in practice it is a "*de facto* one party state through the ballot box" (Tsie, 1993, p.36). The BDP has won the national elections by a landslide every five years, starting with the pre-independence elections of 1965. As noted above, Tsie describes the BDP as representing the "cattle-based petty bourgeoisie". He goes on to suggest that the BDP has built "a network of patron-client relations to sustain its legitimacy and support among the peasantry", some of whom still perceive the BDP as a liberator from the oppressive rule of certain traditional chiefs. A series of rural development programmes has "cushioned the poorer section of the peasantry from the full brunt of the process of primitive accumulation and the effects of drought" (*ibid*, p.36).

The main opposition party, BNF, is mainly an urban-based labour party. It has challenged the conduct of elections in two cases and been upheld in the High Court; it has also won several seats on different occasions including Gaborone North and South in 1984 and 1989 as well as some local councils, notably Jwaneng. It is certainly a credible opposition and there is no real dispute that the elections have generally been "free and fair", though equally there is no real prospect of a change of government through the ballot box.

#### 4.2 *Diversity of power centres*

The kinds of internal pluralities of power usual in Western democracies are weak in Zimbabwe. Many institutions set up in the Lancaster House agreement to ensure plurality of power have not been promoted and maintained wholeheartedly. For example, there is formal independence of the judiciary, but this independence may be weak in practice.

Local government is effectively dominated by centrally appointed district commissioners - elected local councils cannot act independently of them. Traditional community leaders also retain a share of power locally. In any case virtually all council elections are won by ZANU-PF. ZAPU did have, up to 1987, a power base in Matabeleland. Bulawayo and its City Council still have some potential as an alternative power centre but they are in practice very weak compared to the national government. White commercial farmers (settlers) also represent a kind of alternative centre of power for their economic importance, though they wield no influence outside their limited sphere.

More important as alternative power centres are certain organizations and institutions based outside Zimbabwe that enjoy a degree of independent action within the country and wield a certain amount of power. These include international agencies such as the World Bank, international donors, and international NGOs, and to some extent foreign companies and investors.

In Botswana both local councils and the judiciary appear to have more independence and relatively more power in their own spheres. Traditional leaders have perhaps more importance than in Zimbabwe at the local level, and while perhaps detracting from the ease of independent action of local councils this factor also contributes to internal plurality of power.

At the international level, Botswana is more independent of the international agencies and donor community. The Botswana state is strong enough to treat with them on its own terms, so that they do not represent such an important alternative source of power within the country as in the case of Zimbabwe. However, foreign investors and companies, particularly those from South Africa, are very important and powerful in Botswana, especially within their own industrial sectors.

#### 4.3 *Limited reach of the state*

In the early years of independence Zimbabwe went through a period of moving towards strong state control (effectively party control) of many institutions. Some argue that the apparent relaxation recently is partly because ZANU-PF is confident that there is no real opposition. There are still examples of state control stretching arguably further than it should. For example, there have been suggestions of state misinformation on the census in the case of Bulawayo, aimed at weakening the case for more investment in water provision for that city by showing it as having a lower population than on other estimates.

An important point is that the Zimbabwean state is not strong enough to deliver the government's policy undertakings. A striking example is resettlement, where many fewer people have been resettled than promised, but other areas, such as rural development in general, wildlife conservation, or education and welfare, also suffer from lack of resources to implement policies. This means that the

government has to allow independent actions by donors providing aid and by their local NGO partners, if only to fill the gaps in state provision and bring in foreign exchange.

As for interdependence of state and business interests, government has been to some extent a vehicle for political leaders to develop business interests. Stoneman (1992, p.2) writes that "ZANU-PF is now transparently little more than a vehicle for personal advancement of the elite". The ZANU-PF government is now largely acting on behalf of the new urban black elite, whose interests include, for example, having access to purchase of land as well as opportunities for business partnerships with foreign companies.

In Botswana there is to some degree a more classical separation of state from society. But, as in Zimbabwe, patronage remains an important way of maintaining support. However, although cattle interests in particular are strongly linked to government, in general one can say that the state and its leadership are relatively independent from the demands of special interests.

In other respects the strength and apparent democratic legitimacy of the Botswana state allow it to dominate areas such as rural development and education where in Zimbabwe there is space for independent activity. As noted above, there is a tendency for the government to coopt independent initiatives or completely take them over. For example, the Botswana Brigades has become a parastatal where in Zimbabwe the equivalent, ZIMFEP, remains an NGO with independent support from foreign donors and NGOs.

#### 4.4 *Civil and political rights*

Zimbabwe has a long history of suppression of rights and freedoms, first under colonialism, then under UDI and during the liberation struggle, which has to some extent carried over into the independence period. The idea of the need for national unity was used to justify the suppression of "dissidents" in the mid-1980s. This was the period during which ORAP, among other organizations, was banned for a time.

Despite this history, Zimbabwe has a lively political culture and varied independent media, particularly since about 1989. For example, compared with, say, the UK, there is a considerable amount of social and political comment in popular press, including discussion of environmental issues, and there is a good variety of political magazines.

Botswana has been in principle more open and politically "free". The self-conscious adherence to liberal democratic ideals has meant that it has been possible to mount effective campaigns against abuses of human rights or personal freedoms, even on behalf of expatriate individuals. However, at a more general level, it is not clear how meaningful this political "freedom" has been in terms of generating widespread discussion on important national issues.

#### 4.5 *Political participation*

Both Botswana and Zimbabwe had similar traditional forms of local participation, which are becoming of less importance, particularly in Zimbabwe, but still persist.

Zimbabwe's liberation struggle means there was a period of political debate and participation within the liberation movement itself. Also there were ideas of voluntary participation, cooperation and a style of group, or cell, organization, which formed strong parts of the struggle alongside the importance of loyalty to the central leadership. Hence the period of struggle and its eventual success left a legacy of expectations, both that the government should be working for the improvement of all the people and that there should be a right to political participation, though more likely through the party rather than in opposition to it.

By contrast Botswana has no strong popular political culture. Independence was gained through negotiation between the ruling colonialists and the local national elite. Voluntarism is to some extent still seen as cutting across traditional commitment to community - though this must be weakened with urbanisation and the spread of commercialism and the wage economy.

#### 4.6 *Summary*

To summarise, Zimbabwe has more of a history of political participation and has some important externally-derived alternative power centres which relate to the limitations in the reach or capacity of the Zimbabwean state. Botswana exhibits more democratization in most other respects, particularly multi-party elections and plurality of internal power centres.

It is apparent that many of the differences are on another dimension than that of democracy, namely the strength of the state. While neither of the two countries exhibits the extreme weakness of many Third World states, in Zimbabwe in particular the limited reach of the state and the externally-derived power centres are a function of the state's need for other agencies to complement its work and bring in resources. Botswana, by contrast, has many of the characteristics which Leftwich (1994) argues are characteristic of strong, developmental states, whether democratic or authoritarian: inter-penetration of political and administrative elites; the relative autonomy of these elites from special interests and hence their ability to act in the "national interest"; a weak civil society dominated by the state; and a successfully managed economy.

Other differences, of course, derive from the very different transitions to independence. I have suggested that the protracted period of the liberation struggle gave rise to a more participative political culture in Zimbabwe, as well as to domination by a single, originally radical, party. Conversely, the form of peaceful transition in Botswana meant the democratic institutions were all "handed down" and that there was no growth of popular political participation.

### 5 **Conclusion: of course democracy matters - but which aspects?**

One possible way of trying to draw a conclusion would be to add up "scores" on the five aspects of political culture as though they would together give a "score" for degree of democratization. One would then find that the two countries' total scores were actually quite close (Botswana might come out slightly "ahead" but not by much) so that it would not be surprising to find a limited amount of NGO influence in the two cases.

This would be to lose sight of the interesting differences. The key, I suggest, is not to look simply for *more* or *less* influence, but to look for different reasons why influence is possible sometimes but not others in the two countries.

To analyse this, there is a need to differentiate between a number of modes of or strategies for achieving influence.

### 5.1 Types of Influence

Various writers have had something to say on types of influence. A good starting definition is that of Knoke (1990), who states that an actor can be said to be influential when it intentionally transmits information to another which alters the latter's actions. Following Taylor (1993), this can be broadened to the following:

Actor A is influential when it transmits information to actor B which alters the latter's action *or* when actor A transmits information to other actors (n) who use this information to influence actor B, *or* when the fact that actors (n) are in possession of this information influences B (*ibid*, p.5).

Although this definition is quite abstract, it already includes some distinctions between types of influence. These fit in, for example, with those of Edwards (1993), who distinguishes between direct advocacy work aimed at specific institutional targets and changing particular policies of those targets, on the one hand, and campaigning work aimed at indirect influence over the long term through changing public opinion and norms. (It also fits in with the distinctions used by Rose (1993) and others who argue of Northern NGOs such as Greenpeace that they should move from issue-based campaigning to specific policy lobbying and advocacy.)

Thus one strategy is to work in the most indirect way, on public opinion at the widest level. Within the other, direct advocacy, strategy, it is worth making further distinctions in terms of *how* directly to work on particular targets and policies. Potter (1993) suggests following a policy network approach (Smith, 1993; Potter, 1993). This leads one to ask whether NGOs should try to "get in" to such networks, so as to be able to influence policy changes as directly as possible at the risk of being coopted - or "stay out", maintaining independence but having no direct input into policy-making processes? This would give two general models, which one could call entristm and opposition.

Other writers suggest more than two types of policy influence. In the Zimbabwean context Moyo (1991) suggests four models of NGO advocacy: entrist; complementary; passive resistance; oppositional. If one regards "passive resistance" as a kind of opposition, one is left with roughly the same three-fold distinction as in Clark (1991) who suggested who suggested NGOs are bound to act in one of three general ways with respect to the state: reforming the state, complementing the state or opposing the state. One can generalise this to working with, apart from or against any target institution, not just the state. Indirect, generalised, campaigning, which should not be left out of the picture, is not really directed at particular targets.

To recap, I suggest, there are four main ways in which NGOs try to achieve influence: (i) collaboration, reform and entrisism; (ii) complementary acitivities; (iii) direct opposition; and (iv) indirect, generalised campaigning.

This is not to argue that NGOs must make their attempts at policy influence in just one of these ways. It is certainly possible to combine them - one interesting suggestion in this regard is Fowler's (1993) "onion-skin strategy", where an NGO is on the surface pursuing a collaborative or complementary strategy, but at a deeper level is simultaneously holding oppositional beliefs and may pursue indirect campaigning or consciousness-raising tactics as and when it is feasible to do so.

## 5.2 *Revising the Hypothesis into four parts*

From the perspective now arrived at, it is not hard to suggest replacing the original hypothesis about democracy and NGO influence by a more complex hypothesis in which each of the four main ways of achieving influence is realted to some of the five aspects of democratization. Thus the revised hypothesis is in four parts, as follows:

*New Hypothesis 1* NGO influence via the collaborative, entrist route is most likely to be effective in a highly participative political culture. In other words, in such a culture, working in policy networks with members of the target institutions or the state is likely to achieve real change.

One should note, however, that this also implies working within the "allowed" parameters. Thus in Zimbabwe there is a high degree of NGO activity in consultations, etc., but as noted above this is mainly on topics of marginal importance and does not extend to input or influence on the land question, for example.

*New Hypothesis 2* NGO activity of the complementary kind will occur most where the reach of the state is more limited and where there are alternative power centres, particularly externally-derived ones.

These complementary activities can include both pure gap-filling and institutional or technical innovations. They can lead to major policy shifts as they grow in importance so that state or other agencies are obliged to change policy to work with or accommodate them. An example from Zimbabwe could be the way the CAMPFIRE programme may force changes in legislation on local land tenure.

*New Hypothesis 3* Oppositional strategies by NGOs may work, at least from time to time, where there is accountability through multi-party elections and internal plurality of power centres.

There appear to be several examples of this in Botswana. One can also note that the single example cited where oppositional strategy led to a change in Zimbabwe, namely the case of Mobil Oil prospecting in the Zambezi valley, involved an alternative internal centre of power, though a limited one, in the white commercial interests represented by the Zambezi Society.

*New Hypothesis 4* Finally, indirect campaigning and consciousness-raising is most likely to be successful where civil and political rights are upheld.

This type of NGO work is not the most important in the countries concerned, but the fact that it is increasing in Zimbabwe as the political culture frees up from the more repressive past gives some credence to the hypothesis.

### 5.3 *Implications for future research*

Clearly the new hypotheses need to be subject to extensive criticism and rigorous testing before they can be accepted.

A useful way of investigating further the applicability of the new hypotheses will be to look in detail at a number of cases of NGO influence or attempted influence and ask whether and to what extent the factors present in each case were as the hypotheses would suggest.

Some of the examples mentioned in this paper could be subject to detailed examination in this way. One could look more closely at precisely why the Botswana government changed its mind on the Southern Okavango Integrated Water Development Project. Did alternative internal power centres such as local councils or diamond company interests play a part? Again, precisely *why* is the Botswana government allowing a delay in implementation of policy on the fencing of communal lands, even if it is only a small delay. In Zimbabwe, to what extent are the debates on local land tenure changes in fact influenced by "complementary" activities such as the CAMPFIRE programme? And so on.

The second phase of the GECOU project is planned to investigate case histories of NGO policy influence or attempted influence in just this sort of way. The results should help establish or modify the proposed new hypotheses and give ideas on how NGOs can expect to achieve influence in different ways according to the differences in political culture.

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