

Fostering indigenous stewardship: towards decolonising natural resource management in southern Africa

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Introduction

- ❖ Community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) program in southern Africa was designed to include local communities in wildlife conservation.
- ❖ However, the program continually fails to adequately integrate indigenous worldviews into the conservation practice.
- ❖ The program is seen as not benefiting local communities, thus requiring changes to share the burden & benefits of conservation more equitably.
- ❖ We seek to understand hindering challenges and strategies thereof, for a more decolonial approach.

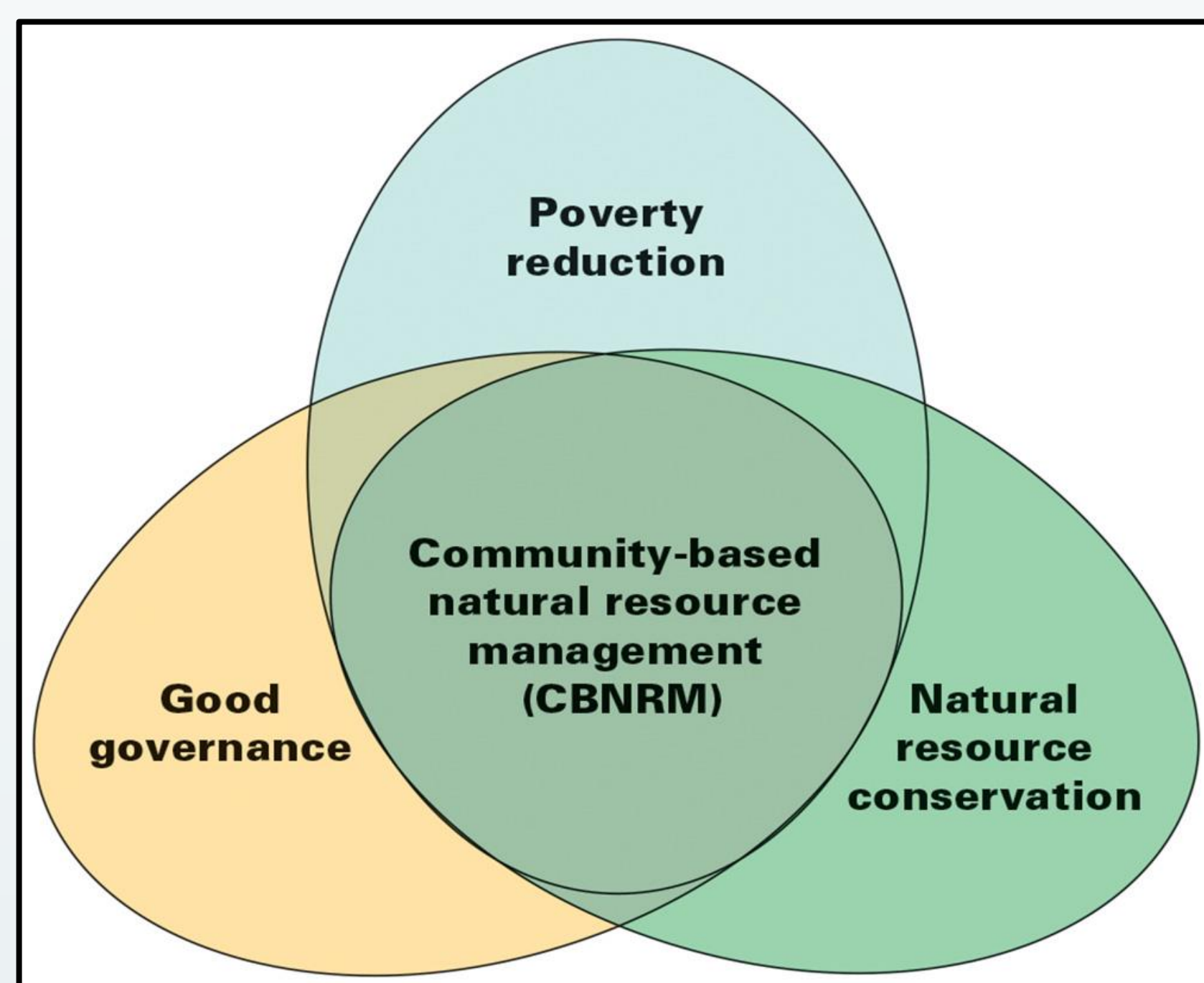


Fig 1: Core tenets of CBNRM (Purdon et al. 2018)

Research question

What are the challenges and strategies to decolonising wildlife conservation in southern Africa CBNRM?

Methods

Study area

Kavango-Zambezi conservation area

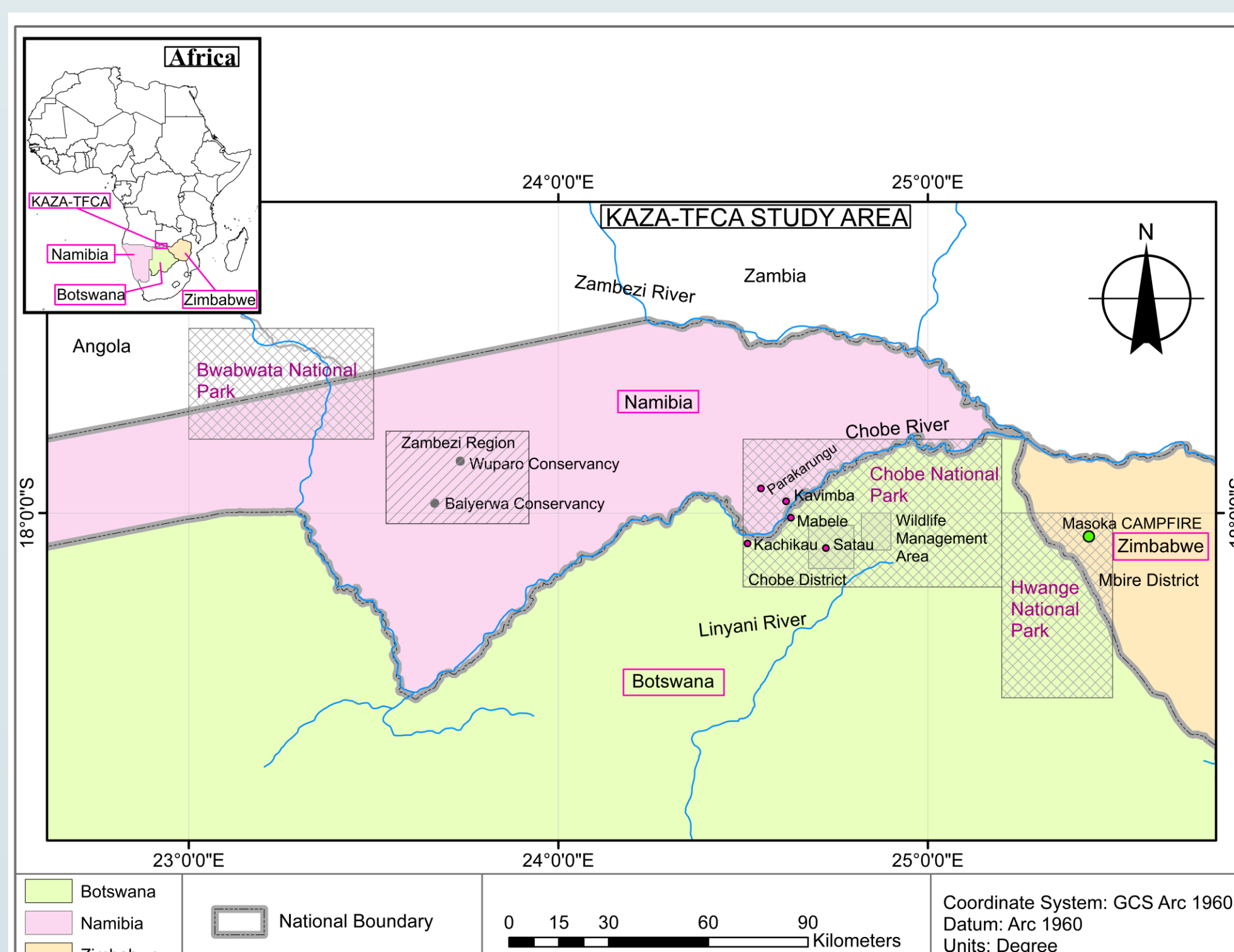


Fig 2: Map showing study area

Data collection

Field research: Oct 2023 - Mar 2024

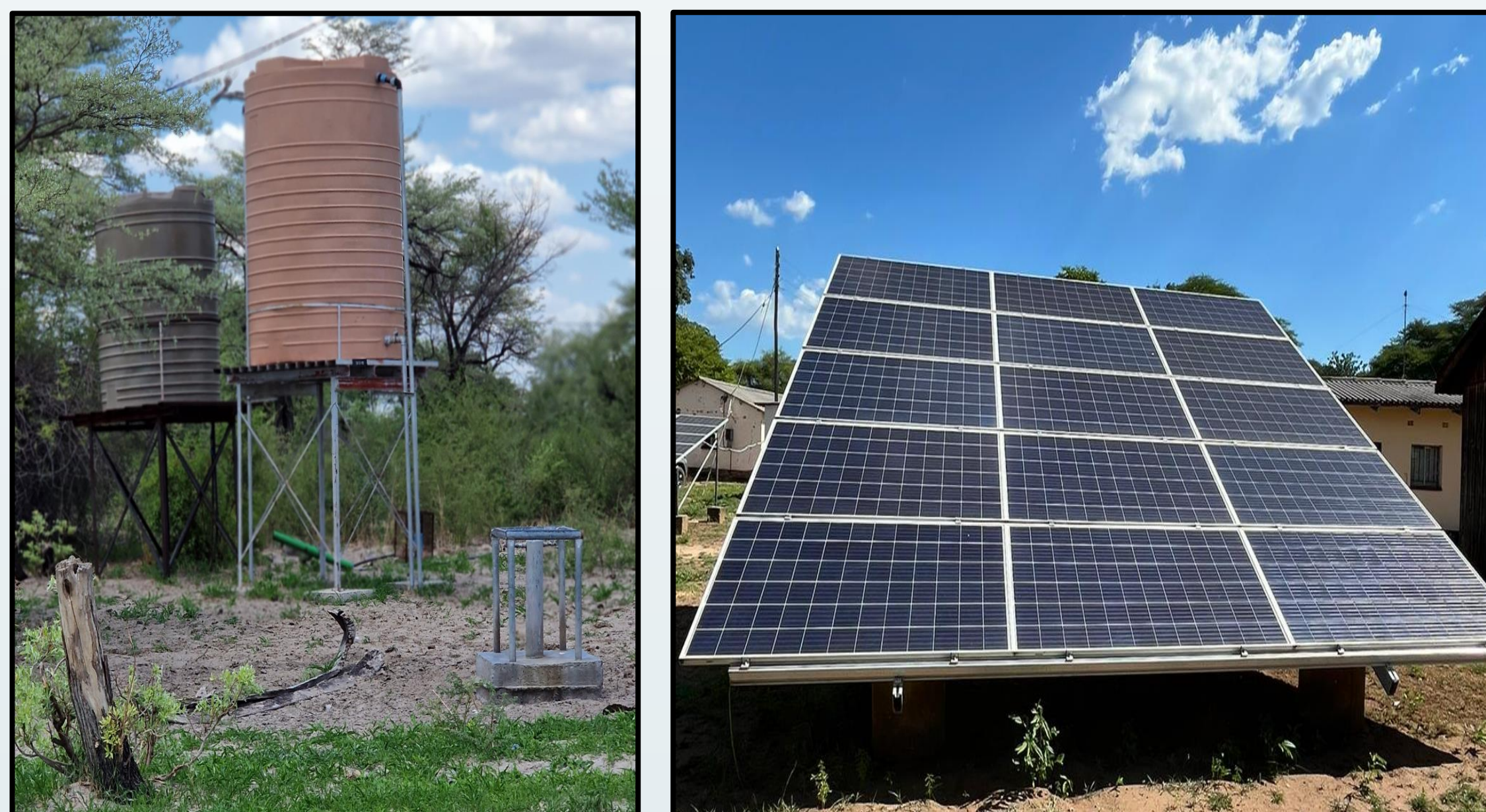


Data analysis

Thematic content analysis to identify common themes in the interview and transcript texts.

Results

- ❖ The incomes from tourism are invested in community developments e.g. electricity, providing water and free education.



2. Strategies

- ❖ Empower and incentivise local communities to own tourism businesses.
- ❖ Negotiate for more power for local & decentralised governance on indigenous resource stewardship.
- ❖ Integrate local knowledge in conservation, negotiated hunting & redress land tenure.

Conclusion

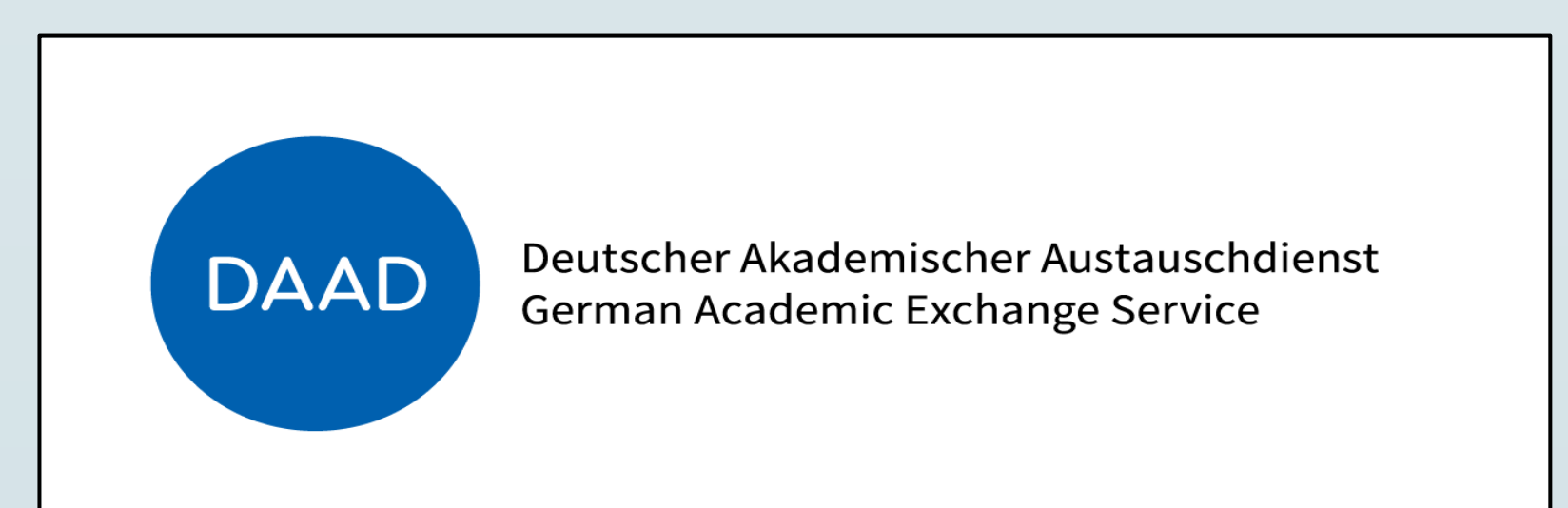
- ❖ Despite years of community-based conservation, the practice fails to prioritise local communities in southern Africa.
- ❖ Local communities perceive conservation efforts are not benefitting them equitably.
- ❖ Incorporating Indigenous perspectives in conservation is the most transformative aspect of this decolonisation process.

References

Purdon, A., Mole, M. A., Chase, M. J., & Van Aarde, R. J. (2018). Partial migration in savanna elephant populations distributed across southern Africa. *Scientific reports*, 8(1), 11331.

Acknowledgements

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1. Key challenges

Human-wildlife conflict loss aversion

- ❖ Primacy given to wildlife over humans
- ❖ Inadequate HWC compensation

Inequity aversion

- ❖ Benefit derived not equally shared to communities
- ❖ Tourism is non-local dominated

Challenges

Power relations

- ❖ Local leadership is not fully integrated into the conservation practice

Indigenous worldviews excluded

- ❖ Local knowledge is not adopted in conservation
- ❖ Local hunting prohibited

Trophy hunting import ban

European trophy hunting import ban threatens local community income generation and their incentive to keep conserving

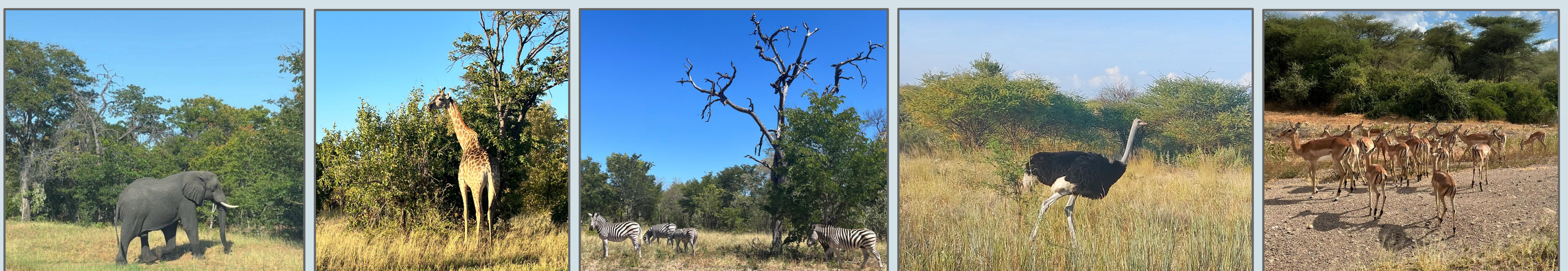


Photo credits: Masole & Petrick, 2024