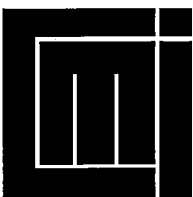


# **From Policy Guidelines to Problem Solving**

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Kjetil Børhaug

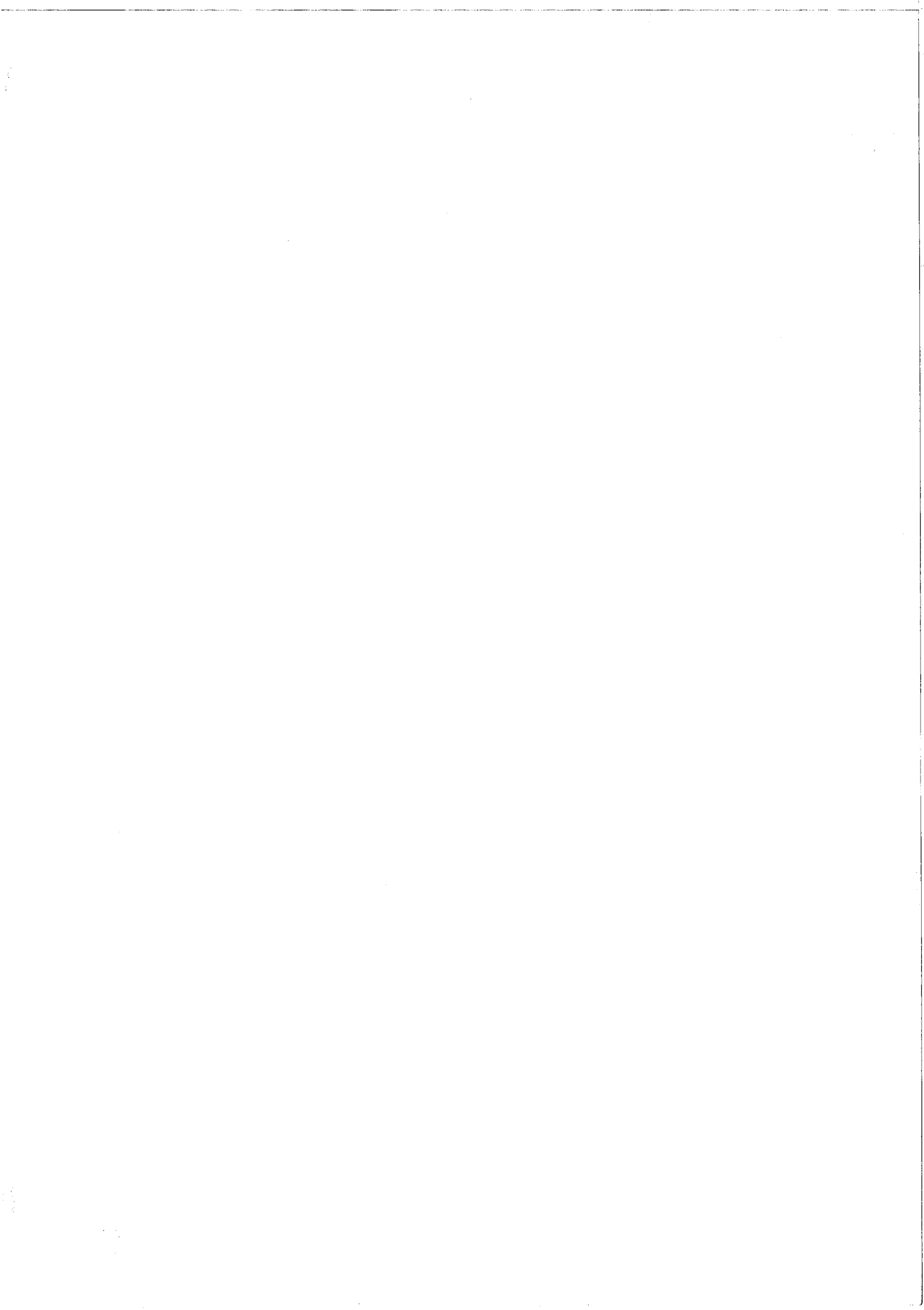
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A Critical Assessment of the National Conservation  
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Bergen, November 1993. 62 pp.

**Summary:**

This study focuses on the National Conservation Strategies of Botswana and Zambia. The strategies contain detailed elaborations about environmental problems, goals, means and implementation. The implementation of the NCSs depend on a number of conditions and the main part of this analysis discusses whether these efforts are likely to produce the intended changes. The conclusions reached are that the efforts will most likely have effects on governmental performance, but that the effects will probably be unexpected and that some intended effects will not materialise.

**Sammendrag:**

Denne studien fokuserer på de nasjonale miljøvernstrategiene i Botswana og Zambia. Strategiene inneholder detaljerte utredninger om problemer, mål, midler og iverksettningstiltak for miljøvernet. Gjennomføringen av strategiene avhenger av en rekke betingelser, og hoveddelen av analysen diskuterer hvorvidt disse tiltakene vil føre til de ønskete endringer. Studien konkluderer med at tiltakene vil ha klare virkninger på offentlig iverksettingskapasitet, men at virkningene vil være uventete og at noen av dem vil utebli.

**Indexing terms:**

Environmental protection  
Government policy  
Botswana  
Zambia

**Stikkord:**

Miljøvern  
Offentlig politikk  
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Zambia

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## Abbreviations

- ALDEP - Arable Lands Development Program, Botswana.
- ARAP - Accelerated Rainfed Arable Program, Botswana.
- EIA - Environmental Impact Assessment.
- GOB - Government of Botswana
- GOZ - Government of Republic of Zambia
- IUCN - International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources
- LIRDEP - Luangwa Valley Integrated Resource Development Project, Zambia.
- MFDP - Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, Botswana.
- MLGL - Ministry of Local Government and Lands, Botswana.
- NCDP - National Commission of Development Planning, Zambia.
- NCS - National Conservation Strategy.
- NDP - National Development Plan, Botswana.
- NEAP - National Environmental Action Plan.
- NEC - National Environmental Council, Zambia.
- NGO - Non Governmental Organization.
- TGLP - Tribal Grazing Land Policy, Botswana.
- SSA - Sub-Saharan Africa.
- UNDP - United Nations Development Program.
- UNEP - United Nations Environment Program.
- WWF - World Wildlife Fund.

## Preface

What can be done to address the environmental problems in Africa? Protecting the natural environment of African societies is an important goal because people's lives depend upon its achievement. The environmental problems are accelerating, and they are among the causes of poverty in African societies. But how can they be addressed? How can structures and processes which will focus continuously on these matters be established? Are national comprehensive plans an answer?

I first heard of the National Conservation Strategy of Botswana in 1989, when I was in Botswana doing field work for my master thesis. I soon learned that also other countries had formulated or were about to formulate such national strategies. The strategies looked impressive. They dealt with a whole range of problems, they formulated sub-goals and means. They designated responsibilities. Implementing all this would quite obviously be a huge challenge, and it seemed reasonable to expect that it would pose problems. My aim in this study is to point out more precisely what problems we should be prepared to encounter. The hope is that it will be a useful contribution to those who work with these issues from day to day. The contribution I hope to make, is to give names and labels to likely problems. But I will also argue, as I do in the concluding chapter, that such strategies may be worthwhile even if they produce results that are different from those envisioned in the NCS documents. The study is based on literature studies and on short visits to Lusaka, Gaborone and to IUCN head quarters in Geneva in 1992.

Alf Morten Jerve has commented the contents and language of this study. The study was made possible by a generous grant from the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. I would also like to thank the Chr. Michelsen Institute for a pleasant working place during most of the period I have worked on this study.



# 1. Introduction

The environmental problems in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) are now recognised as a major challenge by most governments in the area. Among the reasons for this development are increasing donor pressure, a worsening of the environmental degradation and a growing amount of research documenting the seriousness of the problems and their consequences.

The trend in most countries seems to be to address the environmental issues by means of national, comprehensive policies. One group of countries has formulated National Environmental Action Plans in cooperation with the World Bank. Another group has developed National Conservation Strategies assisted by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) (Toulmin 1991: 27). Botswana and Zambia are two countries found in the latter group, and our study object is the National Conservation Strategies of these two countries.

The National Conservation Strategies (NCS) are impressive. They address a whole range of important problems and they have high ambitions. If these plans or at least parts of them can be put into practice, that would be an important and very encouraging achievement. The question is naturally if they really can be implemented. The study of implementation processes has developed rapidly the last 20 years. Students of African development have also increasingly come to realize the importance of the processes of putting plans and programs into practice. It is now common knowledge that implementation often fails in Africa.

Numerous conditions for successful implementation have been identified in the literature (van Meter and van Horn 1975). One group of conditions focuses on the qualities of the policy itself. Another group focuses on characteristics of the implementing organisations. A third group focuses on the relationship between implementors and target groups.<sup>1</sup> We will in particular examine the two latter types of conditions. These conditions are recognised by the policy makers in both countries, and efforts are planned to meet them. Our main concern is what

<sup>1</sup> Included in these groups of conditions are that goals have to be clear, consistent and clearly communicated, the implementing agencies must have sufficient capacity and the right type of capacity, the active support and endorsement of the policy must be developed among the implementors, the policy itself must be based on relevant means-ends knowledge, policy makers must have some means to control the implementing agency and finally, the implementing agencies must handle powerful actors in the environment who wish to alter the policy.

prospects these efforts have to meet the conditions and thus facilitate implementation.

These objectives require the following steps in our discussion:

1. What requirements do the policies impose on the governmental apparatuses in the two countries? We will focus on a few, which are also identified as crucial by the policy makers. First is the requirement that a whole range of agencies in the governmental machinery has to take up new tasks of a conservationist<sup>2</sup> nature, i.e. that they change their present activities in a conservationist direction. The second requirement is that various agencies coordinate and integrate their respective activities in cross-sectoral programs. Third is the requirement that this policy and its implementation are adjusted to local variations regarding what problems to address and how, and that it mobilizes the knowledge and the resources of local populations. Finally, donors have to be activated and contribute funds and expertise.
2. To what extent are the governmental agencies capable of meeting these requirements? As will be shown below, there are reasons for concern.
3. What measures are suggested to increase this capability? The designers of the environmental policies in both countries have identified several shortcomings, and have proposed a number of measures to enhance the capability of government institutions to act according to the policies.
4. Will these measures enable government organisations to play the kind of role that the policies require? This is the main question of this study.

Environmental policy is a broad category and can be defined in a number of ways. In this study we take as a point of departure that the National Conservation Strategies of Botswana and Zambia are perceived as centre pieces of their environmental policy, and we will limit our discussions to the NCSs.

It is still too early to evaluate these strategies, as well as the actual effects of the measures proposed to facilitate their implementation. The NCSs have just been launched. Thus, this study is no evaluation of performance, but an attempt to point out where problems are likely to occur in the process of implementation.

The data material for the present analysis comprises of interviews with civil servants, NGO representatives, IUCN officials and NORAD personnel working in

<sup>2</sup> The terms conservation and environmental policy and protection are used as synonyms, conservation being the term most often applied in the policy documents.

both Zambia and Botswana. Furthermore, the plan documents of the National Conservation Strategies have been examined.<sup>3</sup>

In the following chapters, we will first outline in brief what problems the policies address, how the policies have developed, what general objectives they contain and what requirements for governmental action the policies prescribe. From this background, we move on to discuss the prospects of the various measures to facilitate implementation of the NCSs.

Our main objective is to identify possible problems of an organisational nature in the cases of the two NCSs. However, these conditions are of importance for environmental policy making and implementation in most African countries. We observe that in most countries, the environmental problems are met with national comprehensive plans. If the conditions for such planning cannot be met in the case of our two NCSs, then there is reason to be sceptical about the prospects of similar plans as well.

<sup>3</sup> These documents include the formally approved plans, some of the preparatory memoranda, drafts of proposals for organisation, and some conference proceedings and progress reports.



**PART I**

**BACKGROUND: ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS,  
GOALS AND POLICY MEANS**

## **2. The development of the National Conservation Strategies in Botswana and Zambia**

The environmental degradation in Zambia and Botswana is not an entirely new phenomenon. Overgrazing was recognised as a serious problem in Botswana already in the 1930's. In Zambia, environmental protection early became an issue for the colonial administration, and regulation on land use, notably forests, was introduced by the colonial authorities (GOZ 1985: 27).

However, like most newly independent states, Botswana and Zambia saw environmental protection as a low priority task. It was perceived that this objective was far less important than the one of socio-economic development, and environmental policy was understood as a complicating factor in development processes (Baker 1989; Colby 1990). Furthermore, regulation on the use of natural resources was discredited as illegitimate colonial repression.<sup>4</sup> Consequently, environmental issues were largely ignored. In recent years, however, they have come high up on the political agenda.

Before the National Conservation Strategies were initiated, both countries had already adopted fragments of an environmental policy, trying to solve acute problems within various sectors. The NCSs in contrast, represent an ambition to formulate a national, integrated strategy, encompassing all sectors and activities. In other words, the NCSs imply a change in scope as well as in integration of the environmental policy in both countries.

The processes leading to the formulation of the National Conservation Strategies in Botswana and Zambia are quite parallel. Both processes were launched in the early eighties. In 1983, the Government of Botswana invited the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) to assist in the development of the strategy. The IUCN provided expatriate expertise and consultancies. IUCN's assistance was largely funded by NORAD, SIDA, UNDP, UNEP, the Netherlands, EEC and USAID (GOB 1986: 11-13; 1990a: 2).

The Zambian National Conservation Strategy came as a result of contacts and discussions between the very top political leadership of the country and IUCN.

<sup>4</sup> See for instance Matiko (1990), for the case of Tanzania. Interview Mr. Maimbolwa, Lusaka, april 1992.

After a feasibility study, the work on the National Conservation Strategy was launched in early 1984 and completed by the end of the same year. As in Botswana, a permanent IUCN mission assisted the project, and the Swedish and Dutch donor agencies provided funds (GOZ 1985: 18).

In both countries, the key policy makers were a relatively limited group of government officials, assisted by IUCN advisors. In Botswana, a group of officials in the Department of Town and Regional Planning, Ministry of Local Government and Lands coordinated, guided and kept up the momentum in the policy making process (GOB 1990a: 2). Task forces and technical committees with representatives from the various agencies were mobilized and put to work in a coordinated manner, providing background papers and knowledge. In Zambia, a small secretariat in the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources led a larger, multi-sectoral Task Force, which organised and coordinated the work. More background information was provided by a 30 member Technical Group, representing various agencies and interests groups (GOZ 1985: 8).

In Zambia, the NCS was approved by the Cabinet and the UNIP Central Committee in 1985. However, soon after the political approval, the NCS encountered problems. A serious economic, social and political crisis paralysed the Government and it was not until 4 — 5 years later that the process got back on the track. In Botswana the process took more time. There was controversy over the livestock policies signalled in the NCS, and the NCS was not approved by the Cabinet and the National Assembly until 1990.

### **3. Main issues addressed by the National Conservation Strategies of Botswana and Zambia**

The National Conservation Strategies address a whole range of issues. The question of whether these issues are the most important ones and whether they are correctly understood is beyond the scope of this report. In general, the policies seem to include the problems most frequently mentioned in the literature. Thus, we will only briefly outline the problems addressed in the policy documents.<sup>5</sup>

#### *Water scarcity*

Botswana suffers from scarcity of water, and more efficient management is urgently needed. The many different needs for water put a very heavy pressure on water resources, whose carrying capacity is not sufficiently well known (GOB 1990a: 20-21). Zambia has larger water resources, but also in Zambia, increasing demands for water combined with poor management systems and infrastructure, make water shortage a prospect within less than 10 years. An additional problem is the serious pollution of water supplies in areas with intensive mining and industry (GOZ 1985: 55).

#### *Deforestation*

In both countries, trees and bushes are an important source of energy, and construction, fencing and crafts also depend on wood resources. Around towns and larger settlements bush and forests are being depleted at an accelerating pace (GOB 1990a: 23; GOZ 1985: 23-27), which in turn leads to erosion, reduces water catchment capacity and increases off-take of remaining forestry resources.

Numerous causes of deforestation are identified. A particular problem in large parts of Zambia is slash-and-burn agriculture (*chitemene*) (GOZ 1985: 24-25;

<sup>5</sup> Environmental policy guidelines in both countries identify control of the population increase as an important issue (GOB 1990a: 27; GOZ 1985: 53-54). Both countries have very high growth rates, that have to be reduced. However, even if this is presented as a major problem, not much is said about operational goals and practical means. This contrasts with the other problems identified. This issue will therefore be left out in the remaining analysis.



NORAGRIC 1989).<sup>6</sup> Overgrazing is mentioned as a cause, as it prevents forests to regenerate (GOZ 1985: 26). The problem is not only the magnitude of the forest off-take. It is also the lack of coordination among various users.

### *Overgrazing*

This is seen as the most urgent problem in Botswana (GOB 1990a: 23), but also in Zambia is this a serious problem in areas where people keep livestock (GOZ 1985: 33). The consequences of overgrazing include increasing losses of animals, diminishing returns on livestock production, soil erosion and deforestation.

The causes of overgrazing are numerous. Management systems have increasingly proved incapable of preventing over-exploitation of common grazing lands. Governments' development policies, in particular in Botswana, have allowed and encouraged expansion of the national herd without sufficient regard to ecological conditions (GOB 1990a: 22-23). Arable expansion into grazing areas has intensified the problems.

### *Pressure on wildlife and natural vegetation*

Protection of natural fauna and flora requires considerable areas of land, and in both Botswana and Zambia, these needs for land conflict with land requirements for livestock and agriculture. Zambia experiences severe pressure on wildlife resources as well as on reserved land, endangering valuable species and ecosystems (GOZ 1985: 42). Pressure on wildlife resources is a problem in Botswana as well. To stop the depletion of veld products is given particularly high priority (GOB 1990a: 24-25). While wildlife is threatened by human activities, wildlife also creates problems for human activities, for instance, arable farming through crop damage.

In Botswana, the cattle industry causes problems by expanding the grazing areas, and by erecting cordon fences that interfere with wildlife migration routes. There are multiple claims on wildlife and natural vegetation in both countries. Local people need hunting and gathering grounds, the tourism industry needs the resources and there is strong claim for the preservation of resources for aesthetic reasons (GOZ 1985: 42). The problem of poaching is also significant.

<sup>6</sup> *Chitemene* is a traditional form of cultivation, which was sustainable as long as land was allowed sufficient fallow periods. Due to increasing population pressures this is no longer the case in many areas.

### *Industrial and urban pollution*

There is a growing problem of pollution from settlements. Disposal of waste is arbitrary and sanitary infrastructure is not adequately developed in Zambia (GOZ 1985: 38). Botswana's settlements often suffer from the same problems (GOB 1990a: 25). Pollution from mines and industry is also recognised as a significant problem, although such sites are not numerous, particularly in Botswana. But the problem is aggravated by the fact that settlements are often located near industrial sites and mines (GOZ 1985: 52; GOB 1990a: 25-26).

These problems are caused by neglect and poor governmental control and legislation. Not least local governments have failed to develop satisfactory sanitary infrastructure. Furthermore, industries, particularly in Zambia, are outdated and worn down, due to sinking profits and shortage of foreign currency for import of spare parts and improved technology.

### *Agriculture*

Arable farming is not included in Botswana's list of priority issues although it is perceived as a problematic area, e.g. concerning soil erosion (GOB 1990a: 2). Zambia makes agriculture a more prominent issue in its environmental policy. Poor cultivation techniques, overgrazing, deforestation, inadequate fallow periods and poor crop rotation systems all contribute to erosion and diminishing agricultural output (GOZ 1985: 30-32). Other pertinent problems are dangerous use of chemicals and inconsistency between production types and ecological potential, due to price and other incentives promoting cultivation of a particular crop, while the land may better suited for other crops.

### *Poverty and underdevelopment*

A recurrent theme is that the development process is dependent on the solution of environmental problems. On the other hand, the environmental problems result among others from poverty and underdevelopment. It is emphasized that if exploitation of resources can be made optimal and sustainable, this will be a major contribution to the development process and to the struggle against poverty. Which will further improve the resource management systems.

## 4. Objectives of the National Conservation Strategies

The NCSs comprise of a whole range of objectives and not all of them can be reviewed here. We can identify three overall objectives that are more or less the same in the two countries.

*1. All resources should be in use.* In the documents one can hardly trace any concerns for protecting nature for its own sake. It is perceived that each country is dependent on its own resources, and the emphasis is on maximum utilisation for the benefit of development. The policy documents stress that an environmental policy should aim at identifying untapped potentials and it is argued that this is one of the ways in which environmental policies may assist the development process.

It follows that more information should be gathered about what resources exist. The NCSs do also identify some inadequately tapped resources. For instance, fisheries in Botswana are said to have an untapped potential and forest resources as well as agricultural land are said to be under-utilized in Zambia (GOZ 1985: 17,23; GOB 1990a: 14).

*2. All use of resources should be sustainable.* The concept of sustainability is often criticized for not being a very clear analytical concept (Jerve 1990). Here it is applied as a political principle, meaning that renewable resources should be used in ways allowing it to regenerate and to be harvested indefinitely.

The policies identify a number of resource exploitation practices that are definitely unsustainable, and in need of changes. Exploitation of water, arable land, forests, pastures, fish and wildlife are all pointed out as areas where substantial changes are needed in both countries (GOZ 1985: 65; GOB 1990a: 7,38).

The changes that are required to fulfil the goal of sustainability include first of all, changes in technology. Exploitation can only be made sustainable if improved technologies in production, processing and consumption are adopted. Secondly, and of equal importance, are changes in the resource management systems, including land use planning, management of common resources and land tenure. Along with these changes there will be a need for infrastructure development.

*3. The use of resources must be optimal* (GOB 1990a: 2; GOZ 1985: 15). This means that the use of a resource should be as efficient and profitable as possible.

Efficiency and profit can be greatly enhanced by reducing losses and waste of harvested resources. It is a goal to improve storage technology and marketing infrastructure, e.g. for fisheries and agricultural products (GOZ 1985: 36,49).

Optimal off-take of a resource requires that there is a well functioning management system, which can regulate accurately how much can be harvested at various points in time. The development of improved management systems for groups of users as well as individual users is considered important.

Furthermore, resources used should be further processed and value-added. Zambia points out this challenge within fisheries and forestry (GOZ 1985: 23,29,49). In and near urban centres, the agricultural and fuel wood production potential should be better utilized and managed in sustainable ways, as there is a growing market for these products.

Strongly emphasized in both countries is the potential of multiple use of resources. This include agro-forestry, combining controlled off-take of wildlife with local communities' needs for hunting and multiple use of water (GOZ 1985: 65).

## **5. Policy means and governmental action**

How do the NCSs envision that these goals can be reached? Even if substantial emphasis is placed on education and information that may motivate people to take a responsibility for conservation themselves, the heaviest responsibility is placed on the governmental apparatus. As already indicated, the NCSs point out a large number of fields where the Governments have to intervene with assistance, guidance, technology, credit, training, regulation and planning. The policies do not spell out in detail what should be done within various sectors and sub-sectors. However, we can outline a framework for implementation of the strategies. The general approach is that the existing governmental structure should elaborate specific programs and projects. Among the principal guidelines for this implementation are:

1. The sectoral agencies have a primary responsibility to solve the environmental problems within their fields, and to adjust present activities to the NCS guidelines.
2. Due to the cross-sectoral character of environmental problems, governmental agencies are expected to cooperate closely and to design integrated programs and projects.
3. Because the problems and potentials vary greatly throughout the country, local adjustment of policies is absolutely necessary. Furthermore, implementation should seek to mobilize the knowledge and resources of the local people. Finally, implementation has to be adjusted to people's perceptions, wishes, interests and needs in order to build legitimacy and acceptance.
4. The strategies aim at quite massive action, in many sectors and locations. This means that donor support is absolutely necessary. Neither Botswana nor Zambia dispose the required financial and professional resources, and need assistance.

These guidelines for implementation will be elaborated in the following section. Our main concern is whether the expectations and demands expressed by the NCS can be met.

### **5.1 Expectations to the performance of sectoral agencies**

The NCSs place heavy requirements on the governmental agencies who are responsible for sectoral and national policies affecting the use of resources. Agencies that deal with livestock, agriculture, fisheries, forests, water resources, and wildlife are in particular singled out as key actors in both countries.

The present activities of these agencies are seen as not sufficiently consistent with the new environmental policies, and changes are required. This means firstly, that already existing environmental responsibilities have to be addressed more forcefully. In particular the Zambian policy emphasizes this concerning sectors like forestry, agriculture, wildlife and fisheries (GOZ 1985: 26-28,32,42,48-49). Also Botswana recognises the problem of poor enforcement of existing environmental rules and regulations due to shortage of funds and skilled manpower (GOB 1990a: 15,21-23,32).

Secondly, the various agencies are expected to develop new, specific environmental goals and premises for their sector, and adjust their ordinary projects to these. The policy makers in Botswana explicitly point out various agricultural projects that have to be adjusted (GOB 1990a: 48). It is underlined that Environmental Impact Assessments have to be included in the planning of all projects of environmental relevance (GOB 1990a: 70-72). Also the Zambian policy states that environmental principles have to be integrated in all sectors. For instance agricultural extension programs, town planning and tourism development projects all need adjustment to environmental goals (GOZ 1985: 32-34,40-46,64).

Thirdly, policies that are unsustainable should be phased out. The Botswana policy states that destumping for arable development has to be stopped, but it seems mainly to be left to the sectoral departments and ministries to identify which activities are unsustainable.

Fourthly, it is required that these agencies take up new tasks. For instance, the Zambian policy signalizes new activities such as promotion of fuelwood plantations and community planting for fuelwood purposes, and systematic attention to urban agriculture in town planning (GOZ 1985: 26-28,40-41). These are new tasks for the Forestry Department and the urban planning authorities. In the case of Botswana, it is proposed that the Water Department should engage in provision of management systems for water resources and the Department of Wildlife and National Parks should take up development of wildlife based industries (GOB 1990a: 21,36).

## **5.2 Inter-organisational change**

In order to realize the ambitions of the policies, important changes are needed also in the relationship among the various governmental agencies. This requirement to implementation has several aspects.

In both Zambia and Botswana, governmental policy is framed by a national planning system, administered by the MFDP (Ministry of Finance and Development Planning) in Botswana, and by NCDP (National Commission of Development Planning) in Zambia. MFDP is a quite effective and powerful system

(Gasper 1989). NCDP is also powerful, but it is by many observers seen as an old-fashioned planning mechanism that creates more problems than it solves. At present, the NCDP's role is under consideration, as part of major reorganisations. The future role of NCDP is still unsettled, but an overall framework of national planning will remain. It is important that these national planning structures facilitate and promote the new environmental policy. It is realized in both countries that environmental premises have to be integrated in this national planning system. Both to allow environmental project ideas from the agencies, and to actively promote the initiation of such (GOZ 1985: 69; GOB 1990a: 33,69). The Botswana NCS is said to depend on the MFDP, and is envisioned to be integrated in the National Development Plan (GOB 1990a: 33,69). The Zambian policy likewise stresses the need to engage the NCDP (GOZ 1985: 69).

Another requirement is that various governmental agencies avoid launching projects which together will over-exploit any resource. This is a matter of coordination. Both policies emphasize strongly that inter-sectoral coordination is poor, and in need of improvement ( GOZ 1985: 18,58 and GOB 1990a: 25,59).

Optimal resource management implies planned multi-purpose use, like agro-forestry. It is required that various agencies should develop such activities in cooperation. The Zambian policy aims at integration of agricultural and forestry programs and extension. Wildlife issues should be addressed in ways integrated with agriculture, tourism and forestry projects. The development of tourism and infrastructure has to be integrated with the infrastructure needs of other sectors, and the various users of water resources have to integrate their activities (GOZ 1985: 29, 44-49). The Botswana NCS clearly emphasizes that the policy has to be based on interventions that actively and directly promote integrated, multi-purpose use of resources. It is even suggested that development planning may be based on a concept of ecological zones (GOB 1990a: 33,44-47).

### **5.3 Field implementation**

The challenges for institutions at the sub-national level are formidable. The field staff of sectoral ministries, the district administrations as well as the local governments are all expected to cooperate in integrated resource management.

All the activities proposed in the NCSs imply substantial workloads for the field units. Not least because many activities will be quite demanding, requiring experimentation, data collection and local adjustment in addition to administration and advice.

The needs for integration at the national level, pointed out by the NCSs are valid also at the local level. The NCSs expect that the field services of various agencies, local governments, and district administrations integrate their activities. In

Botswana, for instance, envisions that units implementing forestry projects, livestock development and conservation projects cooperate with the District Administration. Furthermore, District Land Use Plans should link the problems of the wildlife and pollution (GOB 1990a: 55-60). This is seen as a prerequisite for integrated resource management systems that also benefit the local people (GOB 1990a: 35,41,52). The Zambian policy also emphasizes strongly the need for integration of field staff. The departments of Agriculture, Fisheries, Forestry and Natural Resources should all be integrated. Furthermore, District Councils should participate in forestry projects in cooperation with the local staff of the Forestry Department (GOZ 1985: 29,32,75-76).

It is recognised in the NCSs that it is important to adjust implementation to local circumstances and to ensure that the people contribute actively in environmental projects (GOZ 1985: 76; GOB 1990a: 47). This means that implementors have to work closely with the local people. First, the latter are the holders of detailed knowledge about local ecological, social and economic conditions. These vary greatly, and many projects will not succeed without careful attention to these issues. Second, many projects will depend on resources from the local people, i.e. labour, land and resources spent on future maintenance of infrastructure. Such relationships, it is argued, will only occur if people themselves see any benefit from it. Thus, projects depend on being adjusted to local needs (GOZ 1985: 45,65). The NCSs list numerous reasons for participation; it facilitates self-help, it eases pressure on governmental resources for implementation, it reveals local needs, it makes people engaged so that maintenance can be left to them, and finally, it utilizes local skills and knowledge (GOZ 1985: 76).

#### **5.4 Donor involvement**

Both countries hope that donors will play a major role, contributing to specific projects, to research and to building of indigenous competence (GOZ 1985: 57). This is a crucial matter particularly in Zambia as the Government finances and the administrative system are in a very poor state. Parts of the Zambian public administration hardly function at all. Funding for both recurrent costs and investments is extremely inadequate. But also Botswana rely significantly on donor engagement in the environmental field (GOB 1990a: 36,62).

The problem, however, is not only to mobilize donors, but also to channel their contribution into the NCSs' framework of goals, implementing principles and organisational framework. In other words, to prevent that donors apply the bypass strategies that have been resorted



## 6. Facilitating implementation

Basically, the organisational model is to operationalise and implement the NCSs through existing agencies, and to avoid setting up large new agencies. In Zambia, the launching of the NCS coincides in time with the establishment of a new Ministry for Environment, but this ministry only contains two departments that previously belonged to the now dissolved Ministry of Lands, Water and Natural Resources, i.e. the Forestry Department and the Department of Natural Resources.

There are suggestions to strengthen a number of departments in Zambia and Botswana. It is repeatedly argued that the various agencies are in need of more personnel, more skilled personnel, and more funds. It is suggested that more people are hired, and that those already employed are trained so that they can handle the new policies. In some cases, it is suggested to take Zambian personnel out of the regular salary ladder, and to pay them enough so that they can afford to work full time. This will depend on donor funding. These suggestions apply also to the sub-national levels.

What is new, is the establishment of special, national policy coordinating mechanisms in both Zambia and Botswana. It is decided to form a Council with broad representation from relevant government agencies, academic institutions and NGOs.<sup>7</sup> The Councils are expected to perform a variety of tasks. They will be in charge of most of the measures that are intended to facilitate implementation. First, to develop the national policies further. The environmental situation will be monitored and new policy initiatives may be suggested. Second, the Councils are expected to coordinate and integrate the activities of the various governmental agencies, NGOs and donors. In order to facilitate this task, the Councils may organise themselves in sub-committees and task forces. Third, the Councils are expected to encourage and support research concerning environmental problems. They are also expected to launch education and information campaigns directed towards resource users throughout the country, and towards decision makers in the administration. In general, the belief in the impact of information and education is noteworthy. It is a recurrent theme in the policy documents. Fourth, the Councils are expected to coordinate donor contributions and monitor donor funded activities. Fifth, as the Councils will have rather small implementing capacities on their own, they will largely depend on other agencies to plan and implement

<sup>7</sup> National Environment Council, Zambia, and National Conservation Board, Botswana. They will be referred to as the national environmental councils. The data on these councils, their function and staff is gathered from the policy documents themselves, and from interviews with a number of informants in both countries.

projects. Information and education campaigns are among the few tasks that the Councils and secretariats will implement themselves. The Zambian Council and its secretariat will, however, have some regulatory powers and its own budget to carry out some projects. Also the counterpart in Botswana will have some financial means, but will have smaller implementing capacity than the Zambian counterpart.

The councils will have weak formal hierarchical powers. Instead, the environmental policy is expected to evolve based on consensus built on persuasion, information and education. However, if the planning ministries in both countries cooperate with the councils, that would give the councils access to hierarchical power over reluctant agencies.

The Councils will be served by a secretariat.<sup>8</sup> The Zambian secretariat will contain two Inspectorates and two Environmental Management Services. One Inspectorate will work on pollution control. In addition to monitoring, it will have regulatory powers, and it will have inspectors in the field. Some of these are already hired. The other Inspectorate will focus on natural resources, i.e. land use, soil, forestry, fisheries and wildlife. They will mainly monitor and coordinate research and advise the Council as well as the agencies. The Environmental Management Services will have two sub-units. One unit will provide services for the agencies in the area of project planning and environmental assessments. The other unit will provide information, promote research and run information and education campaigns.

The proposed set-up in Botswana has a unit for research, education, training and management assistance. Another unit will have specialists in resource planning, land use, agriculture, water, energy, wildlife and natural resource economics. Besides supporting the Council, these units will offer advice, training and research to the various governmental agencies involved in environmental policy.

The Councils, as well as the governmental agencies will also be served by specialized sub-committees of professional advisors. The Councils and their secretariats will be semi-autonomous in the governmental structure and not under the instructions of a ministry.

<sup>8</sup> National Conservation Strategy Agency in Botswana, National Environment Council Secretariat in Zambia.

## **PART II**

# **THE PROSPECTS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL CONSERVATION STRATEGIES**

## Introduction

We have pointed out four conditions for the implementation of the NCSs. These are:

- \* The existing governmental agencies must be capable of carrying the responsibility for the conservation policies. I.e. they have to deal with the environmental problems in their sectors, and integrate this with other sectoral activities.
- \* Due to the interrelatedness of the environment, agencies have to integrate their programs across sectoral lines.
- \* The technical and financial resources of the donor community must be mobilized for the NCSs.
- \* When implementing NCS programs, the administration in the districts have to adjust these to local circumstances. The local population must participate, otherwise needed local resources and commitment will not come about.

None of these conditions can be taken for granted. Realizing this fact, policy makers in both countries have proposed numerous measures in order to make sure that these conditions are met. The measures may be grouped as follows:

- \* Resource provision to the involved agencies.
- \* Hierarchical control measures.
- \* Education promoting conservationist ways of thinking.
- \* Dissemination of scientific knowledge and information.
- \* Setting up coordinating mechanisms.

These measures will in particular be the responsibility of national environmental councils in both countries. It remains to be seen whether the measures will be implemented. It seems that most of them will, at least to some extent. Our objective is to assess what prospects they have to facilitate implementation of the NCSs, i.e. to ensure that the organisational conditions are met. That assessment depends on the nature and extent of the problems they address. In the following chapters we will first examine why the mentioned conditions are problematic. Next, we will review the prospects that the various measures have to overcome organisational obstacles to implementation.

## 7. Organisational challenges

### 7.1 Governmental agencies and environmental issues

Policy makers in both Zambia and Botswana perceive that environmental considerations have not been given high priority in the public policies of the two countries. The large departments which are in charge of the major development programs, often ignore environmental premises. In a review of Botswana's environmental problems and public policy, Arntzen and Veenendaal state that concerning arable farming,

Government's efforts are mostly directed at increasing production, and at reducing food imports. Environmental considerations do not play an explicit role (1986: 77).

As a consequence, major rural development programs in Botswana have turned out to have adverse environmental effects. One example is the Tribal Grazing Land Policy, which has accelerated rather than alleviated overgrazing problems in the country. Another example is the Accelerated Rainfed Arable Program (ARAP) which included a land clearing subsidy. The land clearing had negative environmental effects in many areas (Eskeli 1989, Børhaug 1992).

Zambian development programs also ignore environmental aspects in many cases. Serious environmental problems arise from traditional cultivation techniques when land become scarce, and the agricultural policy has not addressed these problems (NORAGRIC 1989). The information and production techniques disseminated by the agricultural extension service do include environmental issues, except some advice on soil conservation (Rawlins 1985). Agricultural policy has promoted maize production. In several regions climate and soils are not well suited for this (CMI 1986: 79).

In as far as they are addressed at all, environmental issues are often left to small units with very few resources, and their projects and efforts are consequently too small and limited. Consider the example of the Forestry Unit in Botswana's Ministry of Agriculture. The unit is small with very few staff in the field. The unit has to limit its activities to nurseries, distribution of seedlings and regulation of commercial logging. Important areas like agro-forestry and communal woodlots are beyond the capacity of this unit (Børhaug 1992).<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Interviews, Gaborone march 1989, march 1992.

Or consider the example of Zambia's Natural Resources Department. Its overall task is quite ambitious. The department is responsible for conservation of soil, water and natural woodlands. It is also in charge of monitoring of the environment, policy advice on environmental matters, rehabilitation of degraded resources, and public education campaigns. In its annual report for 1989, it is stated that hardly any projects were carried out at all, due to lack of manpower, funds and infrastructure. The only projects carried out were some tree-planting projects, and one project for replanting of indigenous flora. Furthermore, some of the few district staff of the department had been able to organise some conservation construction works (GOZ 1990).

Even small environmentalist units could have had quite some importance if they were regularly consulted by the larger departments when programs were being developed. This happens only sporadically, these small units dedicated to environmental issues seldom have much influence on the larger sectoral programs (Veenendaal and Nolefi, undated; Børhaug 1992).

The argument is not that the ignorance is complete, but that seen in relation the needs pointed out in the NCSs, the priority given to environmental matters in many key agencies is too limited. Environmental issues are left to understaffed and underfunded small units. The programs they can handle are too small, and these units are not included regularly in the design of larger programs even when these do affect the environment.

## **7.2 Cross-sectoral integration**

We distinguish between coordination and integration. By coordination is meant the absence of duplication and conflicting projects and actions. This requires that agencies inform each other about programs and projects, and that they settle conflicting plans some way or another. By integration is meant that the projects and programs of various agencies become complementary parts of a whole. While coordination is an ambition to avoid that projects undermine each other, integration is that projects are dependent on each other.

Coordination is repeatedly referred to as a problem in development administration in Africa (Adamolekun and Muller 1989; Mutahaba 1989). Coordination is often inadequate among sectors, as well as among organisational units within one sector.

In Botswana, the Rural Development Council is an example of a working coordinating body. Still, the coordination problems are significant. In a sector study of Botswana's agricultural sector done for the Ministry of Agriculture some years ago, measures to coordinate better are suggested to an extreme extent, indicating that the problem is large indeed (Edwards, Amani, Frankenberger et al. 1989).

However, there are factors facilitating coordination in the case of Botswana. First, the small size of the administrative apparatus. Second, the spirit of progress that is very present in Botswana. This spirit creates commitment and motivates people to engage in the quite time consuming task of building and using informal coordinating networks. The planning cadre system is also important. Planning Officers in all ministries except Ministry of Agriculture are under the control of Ministry of Finance and Development Planning. The MFDP recruits, trains, promotes and regularly briefs its cadres, and thus maintains a strong cross-sectoral network. In addition comes the coordination exercised by the MFDP controlled planning system (Gasper 1990). Under this system all projects need approval from the MFDP before funds are released, and this approval procedure also includes whether a given project is within the political guidelines for the plan period. The governmental system of Botswana thus has a capacity for coordination. However, as the Wildlife Policy for Botswana illustrates (GOB 1986b), policies do not always become integrated even if there is an amount of simple coordination. The Wildlife Policy strictly addresses wildlife and proposes actions without any explicit consideration of the needs and opportunities represented by other sectors.

In the case of Zambia, the system is fragmented and poorly coordinated. Mutahaba argues that this is a long lasting tradition in Zambia, caused by the selective public policy of the British colonial administration (1989).<sup>10</sup> Also Tordoff in his analysis of the Zambian administration underlines the administrative fragmentation along sectoral lines (1980: 271). There are some formal coordinating mechanisms. There is an inter-ministerial committee for agriculture, fisheries, natural resources, land and water. It is not functioning regularly. The National Conservation Committee, which has been in charge of the NCS until 1992, has also served coordination purposes. These are, however, among the very few coordinating mechanisms of this kind (NORAGRIC 1989). UNIP may have played a coordinating role in the past. The dissolution of the UNIP one-party state may in the short run increase coordination problems.

The characteristics of Botswana that are important to coordination are hardly very typical for the Zambian system. The NCDP is definitely not as well developed as its Botswana counterpart, Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, and it does not function equally well as a coordinating mechanism. The administration is much larger in absolute terms, and the other factors are also mostly absent. The Zambian NCS policy document refers to the poor coordination of the whole governmental machinery, and urges that coordination must be improved (GOZ 1985: 18).

<sup>10</sup> The term selective refers to the British policy of investing quite heavily in selected areas of importance for the mining industry, while leaving other areas almost to themselves. This created departments with very narrow orientations.

If simple coordination is problematic, cross-sectoral integrated programs are even more so. However, some programs have been framed as cross-sectoral efforts. For instance the Tribal Grazing Land Policy (TGLP) in Botswana, or the Luangwa Valley Integrated Resource Development Project in Zambia. In both cases the programs depended on significant support and interest from the top political leadership (Picard 1987). If integration depends on the president's active participation, it will hardly become a normal way of solving development problems. The need for presidential support rather underlines the exceptionality of cross-sectoral integration.

### **7.3 Implementation capacity**

The new strategies require more than indirect macro measures and incentives. They require direct intervention in and interaction with communities and resource users throughout the country. This means that substantial implementation capacity is needed in the districts. District level implementation must involve the local government system, the local generalist state administration (i.e. District Commissioner/Governor and his administration), the field staff of various sectoral departments, and tribal administrative units and leaders.

In general, the implementation capacity of all governmental agencies in both countries is too limited and inadequate. There is hardly any free implementing capacity in the districts (Rawlins 1985; Farrington 1987). New, nation-wide environmental programs as well as expansion of existing programs will compete with other programs for implementation capacity. In both countries, the problems of high turnover, poorly skilled staff and many vacancies are widespread. The Zambian situation is particularly problematic when it comes to implementation capacity (NORAGRIC 1989). Rawlins argues that it is only the agricultural administration that actually has an apparatus that reaches throughout the whole country, an apparatus that is hardly characterized by substantial free capacity. The situation in Botswana is somewhat better, but capacity is scarce also there.<sup>11</sup>

There are problems of capacity caused by poor infrastructure, i.e. office buildings and living quarters, transport and office equipment. These problems are far worse in Zambia than in Botswana. The economic crisis in Zambia has led to drastic reductions in governmental spending for recurrent expenses. This has also included spending for salaries. The government salaries have not kept up with inflation, and for most of the staff, the monthly payment is not enough to make ends meet. This forces people to engage in various small scale businesses, and their ordinary job suffers (Maipose 1984; NORAD 1989; Times of Zambia 10.04.1992).<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Most informants in both Botswana and Zambia pointed out the problems of limited implementing capacity (Interviews, March-April 1992).

<sup>12</sup> Interviews, civil servants, Lusaka April 1992.



The under-funding and under-staffing not least hit the local governments. Faced with scarcity, both Zambia and Botswana have channelled the bulk of resources to the central government agencies at the expense of local government units (Egner 1978, 1987; CMI 1986: 16-17; Tordoff 1988; Sikabanze 1990).

The coordination among sectoral agencies at the district level is inadequate in both countries. In Botswana, the typical pattern is that the staff follow instructions from their ministerial headquarters. Faced with this, the local coordination structures are too weak (Hughes 1984; Duncan et al. 1989). The District Commissioner who might exercise such a role, is too weakly staffed to fill it. A further complicating issue is that various ministries organise their sub-national levels in districts and regions that do not always coincide. On the other hand, District Development Committees, in which all sectoral ministries are represented, and the District Development Plans are promising in terms of coordination, even if they still do not function adequately (Egner 1987; Gasper 1990). The district staff are organised in Extension Teams designated to areas within the district. Thus, the mechanisms exist to some extent, but the resources and the discretion needed to make them work regularly are often missing.

The situation in Zambia is far worse when it comes to coordination in the districts. Horizontal relations at that level are characterized by extreme fragmentation and rivalries (Maipose 1984; Mutahaba 1989; NORGRIC 1989). Compared with Botswana, the scarcity of resources and infrastructure is larger. The organisations in question are larger, and thus less easily coordinated by informal mechanisms. The UNIP control has on one side weakened the administration, while on the other hand, it has probably resulted in some coordination. This coordinating mechanism is now gone.

It is required that implementation processes take advantage of people's knowledge about resources, local circumstances, technology and traditions as these vary dramatically among areas. The implementation processes have to involve mobilisation at the local level also for reasons of securing input from the local communities. It is necessary to mobilize resources like labour, funding and land for communal as well as for individual efforts and investments. Furthermore, it is necessary to mobilize acceptance of sacrifices. The local people have to consent to abstain from using certain pastures, arable fields, forests and the like in order to allow their regeneration.

The capacity to adjust programs to local circumstances and interests have in many cases been low. This is a general problem in most African countries (Wunsch and Olowu 1990). The local circumstances vary a lot, are insufficiently known by policy makers and are often not recognised. Fortman and Roe illustrate very well how policies under these circumstances become irrelevant and inefficient (1985). They describe how a water development project in Botswana, designed to construct dams throughout the countryside was based on inadequate understanding

and knowledge of a whole range of local factors, and consequently failed. These factors included migration patterns, the various water needs of different groups of people at different times, forms of ownership, management systems and access rules that varied substantially among communities, and finally norms and economic rationality calculations of different groups at different locations. In Zambia the ecological conditions vary at least as much as in Botswana. The standardized national policies to promote maize cultivation is an example of a policy not equally efficient and relevant in all communities (NORAGRIC 1989).

#### **7.4 Donor mobilisation**

The shortage of resources has been frequently mentioned in the above sections. Both countries are in need of funds, expertise and skilled manpower if they are going to succeed with their NCSs.

In particular in Zambia is the dependency on donors severe (Sikabanze 1990). Botswana is in a better position financially, and is able to fund at least parts of the NCS from domestic sources. But also Botswana needs expertise and funds.

Integrating donors in the national framework of NCS is a challenge. This is a two-sided issue. First, it is important that donors accept the policies and problem definitions of the recipient state. Second, it is important that donor contributions are coordinated. If this fails, the strategy will be undermined. We know from numerous research works that donors often fail to channel their assistance through the system and plans of the recipient country (Linné Eriksen 1987). Donors typically accuse recipients for lack of commitment, slowness and inconsistent implementation. Most recipients have problems to adapt to the speed and precision of administration expected by donors who are eager to ensure that their money are well spent (Mwanza 1990: 8). In response, donors often turn to by-pass strategies.

In Zambia an attempt was made to introduce a committee where donors and the Government could meet and coordinate donor engagements. The system has not worked properly (CMI 1986: 67-68). In Botswana the situation is better, as the donors are all channelled through the MFDP.

#### **7.5 Theoretical perspectives**

Why do organisations for planning and administration ignore environmental premises, what leads them to change and to address new problems? Why is coordination so difficult? Why are donors attracted to some policy fields and not to others? Why are implementation structures so often inflexible and incapable of adjusting to local needs and circumstances? The answers one gives to these questions depend on what conceptual lenses one applies. The answer we give has

implications for the assessment of the measures that are expected to facilitate the NCSs.

We will briefly examine a rational perspective, a political perspective and an institutional perspective on the governmental organisations. These perspectives inform us about what influences what organisations do and how they interact. We also need to consider various views about the conditions for flexible and adapting implementation.

### *7.5.1 Organisational change and integration*

*Rational organisations.* In this perspective governmental organisations are perceived as loyal tools for their superiors, in our case the political leadership. The leadership controls the organisations by means of hierarchy and objectives. Faced with clear and unambiguous objectives, the organisation will respond with loyal pursuit of these. Resistance from lower levels may be overcome by use of hierarchical control or by persuasion and rational argument.

For the administrative organisations to respond effectively, resources must be provided. Staff, funds, expertise, means-end knowledge, legal tools and physical infrastructure. When new policies and goals are presented to the organisation, it will obey and operationalise and implement it, if the necessary resources are provided and the goals are properly communicated (Morgan 1986; Scott 1992).

The critical problem here is how rational the leadership is, how well it directs and designs both policies and organisational change.

*Political Systems.* In this perspective, the assumption of unity of a government's goals, interests and power is questioned. The political-administrative system comprises many actors with partly inconsistent goals and interests, and the actors are quite loosely linked together. There are few unambiguous and tight hierarchies.

Interests and goals are derived from the need for resources and power, and from the needs arising from specific tasks and operations in various parts of the larger system. Actors thus develop their own specific interests and goals. The actors in the system are individuals or often groups of individuals who have the same interests, often because they belong in the same organisational unit which has certain interests in the struggle for resources and power (Scott 1992).

Policy making, planning and implementation are all processes characterized by conflict and bargaining. When a new policy is officially decided upon, the new formal goal is only one of many competing goals. Formal and informal processes of bargaining, conflict and coalition building may result in changed or modified actual goals.

Analyses of African policy making often draws on the concept of ruling elite. In some cases, the ruling elite is defined as a very small group of political leaders, who control the governmental system very closely (see for instance Barkan and Chege 1989). This approach comes close to the rational perspective, by focusing on the motives, choices and rationalities of the few leaders who direct the whole system. In other cases, the ruling elite includes also medium level officials and is a more fluid entity. The focus in many of these analyses is on the processes of conflict, bargaining and coalition building in this rather large group of administrative and political elites (see for instance Picard 1987).

*Institutional Perspective.* In this perspective, governmental organisations are seen as bodies which act by means of routines. When acting to solve a problem, the organisations act by choosing one of the available routines. Often, routines that are only partially suitable have to be chosen because there are no better options available in the short run.

Routines change slowly. Once a routine is established, the organisation tends to stick to it until the results achieved by it are no longer acceptable. Developing routines are costly, and routines are appreciated by those who have developed and use them, and by those in society who benefit from and feel confident in them.

The institutional perspective sees organisations as dependent on their environment. They search stable allies and support. However, allies who approve of and support the organisation and its routines are not always easily found. In recent theory it has been examined what organisations do when the surroundings do not offer friendly allies, but instead comprises many actors who have expectations to processes and substance that the organisation cannot easily meet within its known routines and preferred tasks (Scott 1992). In these circumstances organisations develop visible formal structures and processes that correspond to expectations in the environment. Often these expectations do not suit the organisation, and informal structures are thus developed, containing the processes and routines which guide actual operations. This formalism problem is not least known from African countries.

Introducing new policy objectives to organisations is difficult unless they suit existing routines and values. Faced with new goals they cannot handle with existing routines, organisations may resort to resistance, or to formalism.

Also this approach has informed students of African policy making. Wunsch and Olowu (1990) make it a crucial point in their critique of the African states that the organisations that belong to the governmental system dispose of a very limited set of action programs, and that they often do not suit many of the goals that the Governments pursue. Shortage of material resources, and even more, inadequate knowledge about the very problems and the very society that the organisations

face make it extremely demanding to develop new and appropriate action programmes.

### 7.5.2 *Centralised or decentralised implementation*

The debate about how the implementation challenges in Africa should be met, have often centred around the question of centralisation versus decentralisation. It has been argued in favour of both.

Most African governments have been strongly influenced by the belief that centralized control over planning, program design and implementation is the best way to trigger off socio-economic development and change. The main arguments in favour of centralisation has been first, that the scarcity of resources necessitated centralized control to ensure the most efficient and rational use of them. This also implied a belief in rational comprehensive planning as a means to achieve consistent and targeted governmental actions. Second, that centralisation would ensure national unity and balanced development among groups and regions. Third, that local level units were too inefficient and had to be strictly controlled. According to this view, local level organisations should be stripped of autonomy, and turned into tools for the central government. This view of course realizes the need for strong local administrative units. It argues in favour of strengthening them, and in favour of some delegation of routine decisions. But this should be done very carefully, under close central surveillance (Wunsch and Olowu 1990). Popular participation is seen as important in this view. Participation is, in addition to research, pilot projects and systematic data collection, necessary in order to design good policies that are relevant and effective in the local context. This design, however, should mainly be the responsibility of national centralized institutions. Only the central level organisations have the necessary professional capacity and quality to perform such tasks.

The other view argues that the centralized model has performed very badly. Some even argue that centralisation has a large responsibility for the disappointing development in Africa since independence. Far-reaching decentralisation is argued to be more promising in the long run.

The decentralists argue that public policy for development in general depends on being based on people's perceptions, interests, needs and problems. This does not rule out central level policy guidelines, but it is needed that policies are adjusted to local needs in order to be relevant and legitimate. If such adjustment takes place, people are also willing to engage themselves, take on costs and cooperate. This is particularly important when the problems at hand are not well understood, and solutions have to be developed in flexible, integrated, locally adjusted ways

in order to be relevant in the local context (Wunsch and Olowu 1990: 53,61-64).<sup>13</sup>

For this to take place when policies originate at the central level, central level policy makers need a counterpart at the local level which can represent local knowledge, preferences and interests, and engage in negotiation and cooperation with the central state (Mawhood 1974). For local level organisations to play this role, a substantial amount of autonomy is required. Autonomy depends on three main dimensions.

*Local decision making autonomy.* Local autonomy is low when local units are under centralized control by not having the formal powers to decide on taxing, personnel, budget, projects and implementation. In most countries where this is the case, budgets and projects of local organisations depend on approval at the central level. Personnel is hired, trained, evaluated and promoted by the central level. Being stripped of autonomy and independence, even local governments become local administrative tools for the central government (Wunsch and Olowu 1990).

*Local Interactions.* Performance and local problem solving capacity will be enhanced if the various governmental and non-governmental actors as well as the population at large and clientele groups cooperate, share information, integrate and form flexible problem solving networks. Such interactions depend on genuine popular mobilisation and representation in decision making bodies. Otherwise, the local people will seldom enter these processes (Mutizwa-Mangiza 1991).

Career control mechanisms and centralisation within the various functional lines of command, particularly in sectoral ministries will cause that the local officials cannot enter bargaining and cooperation processes locally, nor are they allowed to adjust policies in such processes. They are made to stick to standard policies of their home agency. Administrative deconcentration within the sectoral administrations is thus also needed for such broad problem solving activities to take place.

In a centralized system, the various units at the local level work in isolation from each other as well as from the local people, with a common exception of sections of the local elites, and work according to centrally defined and narrow guidelines.

*Resources at the Local Level.* Resources are needed if local level decision making and interactive problem solving are going to have any meaning. Such resources

<sup>13</sup> This implies that the importance of local adjustment varies across sectors. Policies involving standardised service provisions, and policies that are based on clear goals, known means and standardised solutions may well be centralised in terms of goals and means, like health policy and possibly primary education policy. These may efficiently be standardised and implemented in similar ways throughout the country.

include staff, skilled and experienced personnel, funding, legal tools, infrastructure and transport. Furthermore, it requires options to improve the resource supplies.

## **7.6 Summary**

We have examined what kind of organisational problems that the NCSs face. Exactly how widespread these problems are, is difficult to say. But they sufficiently widespread to make the policy makers aware of them and trying to address them. The problems are complex and caused by many factors. These perspectives are complementary in the sense that political-administrative systems function according to complex mixtures of them. We should let us inform by all of them, thus enriching our analyses. Simple as these perspectives or metaphors may be, they have far-reaching implications for our assessment of the measures that are proposed to facilitate the implementation of the NCSs. In the next section, we will consider each of the four main organisational problems, and examine the proposed measures in light of various perspectives.

## **8. Facilitating organisational change**

### **8.1 New issues in old line agencies**

In chapter 7 it has been shown that the governmental apparatuses in Zambia and Botswana do not pay sufficient attention to environmental issues. The challenge seen from an environmentalist point of view is whether and how it is possible to encourage a change in the priorities and ways of thinking in these agencies. Several of the proposed measures are clearly relevant in that context.

#### *8.1.1 Information*

There is a lack of scientific knowledge and information about the ecological systems, as well as about how human activities interact with nature. The councils will have as a main task to promote research projects and to monitor the environmental situation. Furthermore, action will be taken to compile available information in data banks so that it will be accessible. Finally, the councils will play the role as disseminators of knowledge and research results. This includes publishing monitoring reports and research findings, as well as continuous spreading of information in council meetings. To what extent may an improved information basis induce changes in governmental agencies' priorities and program designs?

Information is a necessary basis for any sound environmental policy, and the usefulness of it is beyond doubt. But as a trigger of change in priorities and attitudes, its value is less certain. However, the environmental debate has often been characterized by the belief that if knowledge about the state of the environment is disseminated, all relevant parties will see the obvious need for action. Baker labels this the awareness trap (1989). It is a trap because information is hardly ever unambiguous stimuli for action. Information is received and processed by individuals operating in an organisational setting, and most information can be interpreted in several ways (Tannenbaum and Wildavsky 1984).

Interpretation processes concern not only information, but also goals, management techniques and guidelines. We will review these, and then consider further how interpretation processes in organisations may give unexpected results.

#### *8.1.2 Resource provisions*

For a policy to be operationalised and implemented resources of several types are needed. We may distinguish between technical assistance, staff and infrastructure, and investment funds. All three types are said to be forthcoming for the agencies



involved in the NCSs. The question here is whether these will be applied as intended, if they will be used to reach the objectives of the NCSs.

The policy documents strongly recommend a general strengthening of the agencies that will plan and implement the NCS policy. To some extent, it is proposed to direct resources to specific environmental purposes, but it is mainly a general strengthening of the agencies that is proposed. More staff, better working conditions, more funds and equipment.<sup>14</sup>

Our general argument is that resources are flexible, i.e. they can normally be put to a number of uses. This point is obvious considering staff and administrative equipment, and to some extent also funds. However, also technical assistance may be used for unexpected purposes. Technical assistance will be provided by the national environmental councils and their secretariats to interested agencies. It includes assistance and training in environmental accounting, how environmental costs of a project may be calculated in economic terms, and how to conduct Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) for projects. EIAs are techniques for assessing the environmental impacts of governmental actions. As most planners and policy makers have little experience with such assessments, a standard procedure is developed to be used in planning of programs and projects. The technical assistance is thus mainly an offer of techniques for planning and management of public policy.

Introducing new management, planning and monitoring techniques in Africa has a long history, and the results have often been disappointing (Leonard 1987; Reilly 1988). New management techniques have often not been based on actual needs, have been too theoretical, have not been given to those in greatest need, have often not been followed by posting of trained personnel to where the needs are, and have often been seen as irrelevant for the actual operations of the agency. Instead, training and knowledge of management techniques are crucial elements in the quests for power and advancement within departments and ministries (Reilly 1988). Knowledge of new management techniques have been perceived as irrelevant for the organisational tasks, and have mainly been seen as assets for promotion and advancement and less as means for improving performance.

These problems are not surprising. Seen in a perspective emphasizing competition and conflict in the governmental system, knowledge, technique and training are likely to become assets in the competition for resources, advancement and power. The effects on policy making and performance becomes a secondary concern. Seen from an institutional perspective, techniques often does not make sense to the

<sup>14</sup> Naturally, the NCSs argue that staff, recurrent funds, equipment and training are to be provided for the benefit of environmental tasks, and not as a general strengthening of agencies. Our point is whether it can be controlled what resources such as these are used for.

agency's problem perceptions and routine actions, and are thus dismissed or informally put to other uses.

However, provision of administrative resources may be accompanied by conditions considering what use they should be put to. This is related to hierarchical control measures, which we will consider in the next section.

### *8.1.3 Hierarchical control*

Hierarchical control refers to commands and guidelines from superior to subordinate levels. Of particular interest in our discussion are goals decided upon in political organs, the control exercised by planning ministries, and the authority and hierarchical control exercised by the environmental councils themselves. These are all means to influence what the governmental agencies do.

The NCS policy documents contain out numerous goals. These are decided upon in the highest political organs in both countries. These documents also assign responsibilities for various goals to identified agencies. The NCSs thus represent official decisions that the governmental apparatuses are obliged to comply with. Which often does not happen exactly as expected. It is common knowledge that goal formulation are imprecise control mechanisms. They are often too general, too inconsistent and too ambiguous to control action. Furthermore, they may conflict with other important goals.

Many would argue that facing ignorant governmental agencies, environmental policy depends on a strong agency committed to conservation, which has the powers to control and direct the performance of other agencies. The national environmental councils are not equipped with strong powers of this kind. Policy makers have feared that this would only create intensified conflicts, and prevent progress. Instead, cooperation and a persuasion have been selected as the strategy towards other agencies.

However, by being in charge of a policy area that not least donors are interested in, and by having the backing of the central political leadership, the informal authority of the councils may be significant. The secretariats are small, but the staff are very dedicated to the environmental policy. They clearly aim at using the councils, where all important agencies will be represented, as channels not only for dissemination of information, but also for building consensus around key values and goals. Furthermore, education campaigns directed towards government personnel are planned in both countries. The secretariats will have sub-units solely in charge of education campaigns directed towards resource users and government officials. The form of the NCS documents is also important. They are written with a strong ideological flair, forwarding the conservation strategies as comprehensive doctrines for development and society at large. It clearly aims at establishing a

new vision, or a new development paradigm that may gradually leave its mark on the whole system and all its activities. Finally, the relevant agencies have been activated by the key policy makers during the formulation of the NCSs in the hope that they will thus feel some dedication to its principles and basic ideology. All this contributes to build an informal authority base for the councils, or perhaps even more, for the council secretariats.

Planning ministries may be powerful control instruments. Botswana's Ministry of Finance and Development Planning is an example. All government expenditure depends on approval in MFDP project by project. The approval criteria include the financial ceilings for a given sector, they include the technical quality of preparation and planning, and finally, they include whether a given project is consistent with policy guidelines (Gasper 1990; Børhaug 1992). This is a powerful means of control, as it is linked to resource supplies. The Zambian equivalent is less developed. The National Commission of Development Planning and the Ministry of Finance do not have the same wide powers, neither do they exercise the same detailed control. Still, they are means of hierarchical control over the government system. Policy makers in both countries have attempted to make the planning ministries their allies and supporters in securing that the NCSs are acted upon.

The planning agencies, in particular the MFDP in Botswana, have been uncertain as to the practical use of the environmental policy as a guideline in the planning process. As pointed out by many authors, environmental principles to be operational, have to be translated to economic terms. In Botswana, there has been done some work to develop National Resource Accounts as well as methodologies for economic and environmental assessment of projects (Perrings, Gilbert, Pearce and Harrison 1989; Perrings, Opschoor, Arntzen et al. 1988). It is reported that these reports have been met with considerable interest in the MFDP. In Zambia, IUCN has supported a project in the National Commission of Development Planning for training in environmental economics. The aim has been to develop routines in the NCDP for applying Environmental Impact Assessments in their project appraisals. Still, it remains to be seen how the planning agencies will apply these measures and how they will be adjusted to other premises and values. The number of possible outcomes is probably significant.

In short, hierarchical control includes the planning system, official policy guidelines and a national council with weak formal powers, but with significant informal authority. We should note the uncertainty of depending on the planning system. Environmental premises and goals easily conflict with other goals that are considered important. The message from the NCS is exactly that policies need to be changed and adjusted. This probably implies that established interests and actors in the planning system will be challenged. Bargaining processes resulting in adjustment of goals may result. Or seen from the institutionalist perspective; the

new goals conflict with established problem perceptions and routines. The result may be reinterpretation processes, where the outcome is uncertain.

Considering all the measures for organisational change, they are quite promising when seen from a perspective that views organisations as rational machines for whoever leads them. In this view, communication of goals, hierarchical enforcement and control structures, resource provision and training, and information will in most cases lead to the intended implementation. However, this perspective alone cannot capture how the governmental system responds to new policies and attempts for change. The two other perspectives add valuable insights, and experiences are often consistent with their predictions. We will consider the issue of how the governmental agencies may respond in the next section.

## **8.2 Incentives for change and organisational responses**

In as far as governmental agencies function as institutions, we ask how they perceive and interpret goals, information, training, techniques and control measures in the light of established ideas about what are important problems and what are good and realistic solutions. Institutions tend to transform information, goals and guidelines so that they correspond with existing practices.

The history of decentralisation reforms in Africa provides illuminating examples of how values and goals of decentralisation permeate the rhetoric and the policy documents, but still fail to materialize (Rondinelli 1981). The experience from these reforms is not so often open resistance in the administrative system. There is generally an initial endorsement of the reform principles. Gradually, as the reforms are implemented, organisational routines and action programs have influenced the meaning and understanding attributed to the principles, and gradually the reform is undermined. Not least decentralisation reforms in Zambia has taken this direction (Mutahaba 1989). Similar processes were at work in Botswana during the planning of the ALDEP and ARAP programs in the early eighties.<sup>15</sup> These programs were responses to changed political guidelines which gave more attention to the rural poor. The agricultural administration was charged with the responsibility to launch programs for the poor rural dwellers. However, both programs became based on already existing problem perceptions and solutions. These had long been in operation in programs that aimed at the better-off section of farmers. Consequently, in spite of its official poor people's bias, the agricultural policy remained adjusted to better off farmers' problems, because it was based on routinised solutions that suited this group (Børhaug 1992).

<sup>15</sup> ARAP (Accelerated Rainfed Arable Programme) and ALDEP (Arable Lands Development Programme) were programmes for assisting poor farmers to become commercial farmers in arable production.

Another possible outcome is that agencies respond by arguing that they are already engaged in conservation. The Botswana policy documents state that conservation is already a national priority for the Government, and has been so since independence (GOB 1990a: 1-3). It is not unlikely that some agencies in the system will think that this statement refers to them.

When faced with changed policy guidelines, line agencies sometimes act tactically and make only minimal changes in the content of projects, but give it new headings that are consistent with goal formulations. Toulmin argues that African governmental agencies are quite good at adopting the terminology that is in vogue at any particular time, without really taking it too seriously in practical terms (1991: 35). The NCS background paper about arable farming is said to represent a new direction for the policy, even if it contains mainly the policies and principles that have been in operation for many years with mixed results.<sup>16</sup> The paper, which is meant to operationalise the NCS principles in the policy field of arable agriculture, goes in quite some detail to describe the environmental problems. The NCS principles are strongly endorsed. When it comes to action, the paper argues first, that principles of increased food production, increased productivity, diversification of the rural economy and improved technology are important if sustainable agriculture is to be achieved. This may well be true, the point is that these are the basic principles that the agricultural policy has built on for a long time. Second, under the heading of strategies, it lists all the programs that the Ministry has in operation. There are innovations too, new technological solutions and some adjustment of programs, but the main line of reasoning is that the existing policies are environmentally sound. Well known policies, principles and programs are said to be in line also with the new environmental policy.

Organisations are not always capable of adjusting. One issue is what has been touched upon, the slowness of adaption caused by the standard action programs, and the tendency to prefer these instead of developing new ones. Another issue is the fact that in particular in Zambia, the governmental structure has degenerated substantially, due to extremely inadequate funding and party interference. This affects investments as well as maintenance, but also salaries. The situation now is that most civil servants have problems making ends meet with their salary. Officials are forced to engage in various small businesses, and thus their jobs are not attended to (Maipose, undated).

One may argue that such "starving" agencies will adjust to anything that will provide them with desperately needed resources. But it may also be argued that deteriorating organisations loose the ability to recover when deterioration goes far

<sup>16</sup> Many departments in the Government system produced background papers for their sector as a contribution to the NCS formulation. In these papers, problems and actions to take are outlined.

enough. Weitzel and Jonsson (1989) argue that when an organisation has deteriorated it is extremely difficult to put it back on track again. The best people have left, routines are breaking down and the organisation slides into anarchy. It might be possible only if the leadership is changed, and the organisation completely transformed. This crisis description seems to fit well with large parts of the Zambian governmental system and the prospects for controlled organisational change are not good.

The Government comprises numerous semi-autonomous actors that compete for resources, power and prestige. New goals, information and resources are understood in terms of their possible effects on distributions of power and resources. The NCSs may be changed in processes of bargaining and conflict.

Another possible outcome is illustrated by the experience of Botswana's Tribal Grazing Land Reform, launched in the mid 1970's. The background for this land reform in the livestock sector was that the Government had pursued an expansionist policy for a long time, without due regard to the environmental consequences of letting livestock expand into increasingly fragile areas. In the end, the degradation of the grazing land had become so severe that a major environmental program was needed to rehabilitate the range and to introduce improved resource management systems, and TGLP was initiated. The members of the ruling elite in Botswana took a strong interest in the program, among others because many of them were large cattle owners. They formed a strong coalition that overruled the opposition from lower level bureaucrats and expatriate advisors. They gradually adjusted the program to their own needs for further control of land. Gradually, the environmental aspects of the program disappeared, and what came out in the end was another livestock expansion program, favouring the few wealthy cattle owners (Parson 1981; Picard 1987).

In the political perspective, even if the governmental agencies assume the new policy ideas, they may do so while at the same time continue with what they are already doing. This is due to the loose coupling among the parts in the system, making it possible for two units to pursue opposing objectives. Environment may be just another portfolio, while the previous policies are maintained, environmentally sound or not. Again ARAP provides us with an example. One unit of the Ministry of Agriculture in charge of the ARAP program subsidized large scale land clearing, while other actors tried to encourage tree-planting in the farming communities (Børhaug 1992).

In short, we have argued that in loosely coupled systems comprising actors with differing interests and values, these interests often conflict with and prevail over new policy goals. But there may also be actors who see it as being in their interest to respond to new policy goals. First, there will most likely be some actors who share the new values and policy principles. Second, there may be actors who should rather be described as somewhat opportunistic in terms of policy values,

but who are interested in resources, status and prestige to their organisational unit, or even to themselves. In as far as they are relatively autonomous, initiatives like the NCSs may offer opportunities. Dresang describes the Zambian system as one which is gradually breaking apart, where hierarchical control is weak (1975). There are few resources to support action, and officials receive rather few programs and initiatives from superiors. Their autonomy is greatly enhanced by this. There is thus a room for administrative entrepreneurship, that is, autonomous actors may respond with proposals in line with the new policy on their own initiative, often without going through established hierarchies.

Formal goals do not stimulate system responses, nor organisational responses, but responses from entrepreneurs located in organisations that do not use them very much. What stimulate these entrepreneurs, are the prospects for funding beyond what governments normally offer, prospects for accelerated advancement due to extraordinary achievements, and extra personal benefits. These prospects are particularly bright when donors are involved. As Dresang argues, the achievements of such entrepreneurs may be significant also in terms of policy objectives. The problem is that it is difficult to predict where such entrepreneurs will appear, what they will want to do and how it fits the policy framework in general.

Considering the NCSs, it is too early to assess the extent and direction of processes like these. Still, there are some puzzling indications. The Zambian NCS has broad objectives covering most sectors, not least the rural development sector. In as far as preparations could be interpreted by the time of data collection, there was a noteworthy bias to give priority to pollution control. Which is definitely needed, but it is still only one of many objectives of the NCS. The pollution control Inspectorate was already operational. People were already hired to inspect production sites, cooperation with the industry was initiated, and infrastructure (i.e. laboratories etc) was already in place. The Natural Resources Inspectorate was not operational, few observers had any clear idea about what this inspectorate should do and when. Concerning policy issues within forestry, wildlife, agriculture and land use planning, some observers had problems to point out any preparation and forthcoming action at all. Some of them frankly stated that they did not expect much action and implementation in the near future (Interviews, Lusaka april 1992). It may be that the organisations who could gain more resources through priority to pollution control have won some bargaining process, and thus captured the bulk of available resources. Or it may be that this was an area where the routines and structures already existed to some extent (laboratories and pollution control experts). In that case, it was easy to link existing practices to new goals and policies. It may be that an actor acted like an entrepreneur, and moved quickly in order to get started with pollution control. Another issue is the mentioned tendency in Botswana to leave the country's largest environmental problem, overgrazing, untouched. The explanation may be the interests and power of key actors in the system. Or that established problem perceptions and routines have proved resistant,

and instead of being shaped by the new environmental policy, the latter is shaped by them.

According to observers, there are also encouraging signs in Botswana. In several major road construction projects, EIAs have been conducted, and in one major case at least, this exercise led to substantial changes in the project design. The same observers, however, note that in practical action, it is difficult to engage the agricultural administration, and the latest NDP for Botswana was a disappointment to many (Interviews, Gaborone march-april 1992). The problem, they argue, is that the officials are sceptical to let environmental issues interfere in projects designed to increase production and productivity in agriculture.

In summary, it is likely that changes will come about as a result of the proposed measures. However, the actual content and direction of these changes are difficult to predict. They may or may not be beneficial to the environment. The latest NDP of Botswana does include projects that are in line with the new NCS principles. Projects in fisheries and forestry are promising. As recommended by the NCS, untapped resources should be more fully utilized, and these projects reflect that goal. It is most likely easier to add new sub-sectors and policies than to change old ones.



## **9. Organisational integration**

The NCSs envision close integration and coordination in the program and project design, and in the implementation processes. We distinguish between coordination and integration, by understanding coordination as the absence of duplication and conflicting projects and actions. By integration is meant that the projects and plans of various agencies are complementary parts of a whole.

Several measures have been proposed to increase coordination. The efforts mentioned in the above, i.e. information, education, policy guidelines and resource provision are expected to increase integration because they will reveal the need for it. The uncertainty related to these measures apply also to the question of integration. They may lead the officials to see the need for integration. But officials may also be guided by bureaucratic interests and struggles for power, or by routines and standard actions, to conclude that integration can be ignored.

The establishment of the national environmental councils, with high level representation from most ministries, research institutions and NGOs is perhaps the most crucial innovation concerning coordination and integration. These councils will be quite autonomous and they will not be under the hierarchical control of other agencies or bodies. The environmental councils will have many tasks. They are expected to initiate projects and programs, to improve coordination by facilitating exchange of information, they will monitor the environmental situation, they are expected to facilitate integrated action when multi-sectoral problems arise, they are supposed to be fora for advice and education, and they should develop the NCS policies further.

There are few material or hierarchical incentives for genuinely cross-sectoral projects, for instance guidelines for resource allocation that signalize priority to integrated instead of sectoral environmental projects. This means that the extent of integration depends on the processes that will take place when agencies meet in the councils. A key question is what role the council secretariats will play. They are in both countries dominated by the environmentalists who have been driving forces in the NCS formation processes, and they have in the councils an unique opportunity to set policy development and program designs in motion.

What are the conditions for organisational cooperation, be it coordination or integration? According to the rational organisation perspective, the crucial issue will be whether cooperation improves goal realisation. If it is perceived that it does, then provision of meeting places will facilitate cooperation greatly. As we

have elaborated on above, this perspective does not capture all important features of the processes that shapes practical policy.

According to the institutional view, organisations avoid uncertainty. They avoid the grey zones between organisational domains where few routines exist. In these areas conflict, tension and uncertainty easily arise. Most agencies will therefore be reluctant, and at best engage in marginal cross-sectoral efforts. They may realize the need to work across sectors if this is what is required in their environment, but they will try to keep most of their activities outside the grey zones between organisations.

However, drawing on an institutional perspective, Beck Jørgensen (1977) refers to research suggesting that if inter-organisational cooperation do get off the ground, whatever the intentions and functions in the short term, in a longer time perspective, may facilitate the development of common values and perspectives. The organisations may, influenced by these values, gradually come to pursue policies that are more in line. This may mean that policies may gradually become more consistent and oriented towards increasingly similar goals. This may in turn intensify cooperation. The environmental Councils may have exactly this function; over time to expose the representatives of governmental agencies to certain values and perspectives.

The council secretariats may themselves become institutions, not least because they are permanent bodies with legal powers, and with a permanent staff that may act on their own. Even if their proposed role is mainly to coordinate and facilitate the implementation of the NCSs, they may gradually take on larger responsibilities that the other agencies are not able to shoulder. They may become the main vehicle for environmental policies. Not least if donors perceive that assistance will be most efficiently spent if it is channelled to the council secretariats, by-passing other agencies. If the secretariats do become such main actors, how will they cope with integration problems? The formal organizing of the secretariats is based on conventional lines, as outlined in chapter 6. Specialisation in the Botswana secretariat follow mainly standard functional divisions, and even if the secretariats are small and capable of integrating by informal means, these formal structuring is not particularly promising. Most likely, the conventional division of work is chosen to fit the division of tasks in the governmental structure and in order to facilitate engagement of many donors, i.e. to construct one counterpart for each donor. That may be effective, but it does not promote integrated policy making.

In the political view, the councils are arenas where the actors meet. The actors may use the arena in various ways, according to the rules of the game that are established, and what interests they pursue. The secretariats of the councils will be actors along with many other actors, pursuing their own interests. The agencies that are involved in the environmental policy field may benefit from cooperation for other reasons than the ambition to integrate their programs. By pulling together

under the umbrella of a national policy and a national council, that they will after all partly control themselves, they will create an image of dedication, coordination and efficient joint action. Such an image may be instrumental for acquiring larger resources. What realities that are to be found behind the image is another matter.

Inter-organisational cooperation may have informal functions. It is a way to be informed about what is going on and to receive information. African governmental systems are systems where information is a scarce resource. Councils are obviously important for receiving information. Participation in the council may be a way to spread responsibilities for failing to act effectively and to postpone action. Hill (1979) argues in a study from Tanzania that government officials consciously created and increased such confusion and unclear responsibilities as this protected against criticism and allowed freedom of action. It is quite possible that the governmental agencies will cooperate, but the motives, contents and outcome may be surprisingly different from those envisioned.

Donors may demand and facilitate integration in the projects in which they activate themselves. Often cross-sectoral programs in Africa are donor projects, like the Luangwa Valley Integrated Resource Management Project in Zambia. The many IRDPs (Integrated Rural Development Programs) throughout Africa are also pertinent examples. This, however does not create stable, general conditions for such integration outside the donor funded projects.

It is still too early to reach conclusions about the extent and depth of cross-sectoral cooperation. Mainly based on theory, we have argued that cooperation is indeed difficult, and it may not come about in the magnitude that the NCSs seem to envision.

Some data from Botswana suggest that multi-sectoral efforts, apart from those initiated by donors, are only of an experimental nature, and rather marginal. The agencies seem to wish to retain control over their main programs. However, experimental, specialized pilot projects of cross-sectoral nature seem possible. For instance in the background documents about the contributions of the livestock sector and the arable agriculture sector of Botswana, a few ideas of cooperation in research and pilot projects with the wildlife sector are suggested. Compared to the visions of the NCS policy documents the suggestions are modest, but still positive. On the other hand, in the latest National Development Plan for Botswana, the review of agricultural projects contain hardly any multi-sectoral projects. The next plan will give a more solid basis to judge about this. Concerning Zambia, most NCS projects remain sectoral this far.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>17</sup> IUCN, Zambia has made an overview of NCS projects commenced, which supports this impression.

The problems of poor coordination and integration in public policy are well known, and hard to overcome. Still, it remains that lack of such integration is a serious obstacle to solving environmental problems. The most frequently mentioned problem is that the ecological systems are themselves interconnected, and ignorant of sectoral divisions. They should thus be addressed in an integrated manner. As Asmeron reminds us, also the exploitation systems are integrated (1991: 18). The typical resource user in the African countryside exploits a whole range of natural resources in integrated and complex survival strategies. A sectoral environmental policy means that this production system, is unevenly approached and thus disturbed. Asmeron also points out that if the environmental challenge is left to sectoral policy making, only the problems closely related to the established sectoral activities will be addressed. Those parts of the environmental problems that do not have immediate relevance for any sectoral responsibility will be left unattended. Baker notes that when complex and integrated environmental problem are disaggregated by sectorisation, many of the basic forces and causes of the problems disappear from our view. The result is that policies will tend to address symptoms, not causes (1989).

## 10. Field implementation

The implementation of the NCSs depend on local integration among the various sectoral field agencies, the sub-national generalist administration and local governments. Because the environmental problems are interrelated across functional lines, these lines have to be crossed in an integrated manner. It is to these sub-national units that the other requirements are directed as well. It is required that implementation processes take advantage of people's knowledge about resources, local circumstances, technology and traditions. The implementation processes have to involve mobilisation at the local level also for reasons of securing input from the local communities. It is necessary to mobilize resources like labour, funding and land for communal as well as for individual efforts and investments. Furthermore, it is necessary to mobilize acceptance of sacrifices.<sup>18</sup>

What are the prospects for achieving such local level performance in Botswana and Zambia? In short, policy makers have suggested to strengthen the existing system. It is suggested to hire more staff, train them better, improve working conditions and provide more resources. Advice and technical assistance are also proposed. Concerning local integration, it is proposed in Zambia to assign coordinating environmental officers at sub-national levels, and in both countries is it proposed to set up coordinating committees. These measures are obviously needed. Our question here is whether they will facilitate the type of implementation processes envisioned. To strengthen the existing systems means to stick to a centralisation strategy as the systems in both countries are relatively centralized. We will first consider centralizing characteristics of Botswana and Zambia, and next discuss the prospects for centralisation in the field of environmental policies.

Centralisation is that the state diminishes the decision making autonomy of local level organisations, that it does not provide the necessary resources for autonomy to be meaningful, and that it prevents the formation of broad local problem solving networks. Such networks should include government agencies, NGOs and people's representatives. On all three dimension of centralisation, Zambia and Botswana both have to be portrayed as centralized structures. In both countries popular participation is restricted. In Botswana, the tradition of consultation in the *kgotla*

<sup>18</sup> The local people may have to consent to abstain from using certain pastures, arable fields, forests and the like in order to allow their regeneration as well as improved management of them. In the short run, this will be a sacrifice.

is often referred to as a main vehicle for direct consultation and democracy. However, as the case of the Tribal Grazing Land Policy in the early seventies illustrates, the *kgotla* meetings, that all citizens of the village may attend to voice their opinions to government officials, serve more as top-down information and propaganda channels and less as true democratic arenas (Parson 1981). The district councils are elected in free elections and represent the element of indirect democratic participation. These councils suffer from poorly educated and trained councillors, and the power left to them is quite restricted. Picard has argued that one reason why the elected district councils are allowed to function, and even voice some criticism is that the opinions and actions of these councils are very weakly connected to actual policy making (Picard 1979).

In Zambia, the elements of popular participation have deteriorated after the reforms of 1980, after which UNIP seized firm control over the councils (Mijere 1985). As UNIP experienced an increasing crisis of legitimacy and support, the democratic character of the representative elements of the system vanished even further (Maipose undated). People increasingly became quite ignorant of local political participation. However, the whole system of local government is now under consideration and district councils elected under conditions of party competition may improve the situation.

The extent of local autonomy is low in both countries. Concerning Botswana, Egner has argued strongly that the local government in Botswana is formally very much controlled by the central ministries, in particular the Ministry of Local Government and Lands (MLGL). Projects, plans, funding and personnel matters are all firmly under the capital's control. Furthermore, he argues that informal controls, like the MLGL's application of approval procedures, budgeting routines and fund releases reduces local autonomy even further (1987). As for Zambia, Maipose (1984) describes the local government system as extremely under-funded, like most of the Zambian bureaucracy. He further argues that local autonomy is constrained by a number of factors. First, general central control out of fear of opposition and incompetence. He also notes that Zambia's many huge, resource demanding national initiatives and special programs effectively have taken all local level implementation capacity, and left ordinary tasks largely unattended. Botswana has to some extent experienced similar problems (Farrington 1987; Børhaug 1992). The shortage of resources in Zambia has grown worse in recent years, and lay-offs are probably unavoidable (Maipose undated; Times of Zambia 10.04.92). Maipose describes the Zambian local governmental system as centrally controlled. Personnel, spending, projects and taxing; all depends on central level approval (undated: 32-33). Even if the reforms of 1980 explicitly aimed at increased autonomy for the District Councils, control remained in the ministerial offices in Lusaka (Mutahaba 1989).

Centralized policy implementation may work relatively well, if the knowledge basis for the policy is good, if local variation is limited, and if the centre can

provide the resources needed to maintain and control a professional, effective bureaucracy that penetrates the whole country. If not, centralisation means that adjustment to local priorities, preferences and circumstances is difficult (Wunsch and Olowu 1990). In as far as ecological, social and economic conditions vary substantially standardized policies will turn out to be irrelevant or damaging in some districts, as we have illustrated in section 7.3.

The effects of centralisation on development policy in general and on environmental policy in particular have been studied extensively, and the conclusions suggest that centralisation is not well suited to guide implementation of environmental policies in the field. The variation and the lack of knowledge is too great (Wunsch and Olowu 1990). In some cases, centralized policies become irrelevant and inefficient in the local context. In other cases, the same poor adjustment to local conditions make policies even damaging. Baxter refers to research showing how development projects for dairy processing and pastoral production were based on inadequate knowledge of local circumstances and therefore turned out to be damaging to the target groups' adaptive capacities and later led them into serious problems (1991).

Based on successful resource management projects, Drijver strongly argues that people will only play their part and provide needed input and support if they are motivated, which they will be only if they are asked to involve themselves in solving felt problems (1991). The systems of management and regulations have to be adjusted to the local traditions and institutional forms in order to be legitimate and understood (Baxter 1991). Implementation has to leave much discretion to the local communities themselves, while at the same time the local processes have to be watched to prevent local power abuses.

When a policy addresses problems and opportunities that are only partly understood, where goals and means relations are unclear and where circumstances vary greatly, centralized policies will, if they are implemented as such, be problematic. In section 7.3 we have presented research showing this kind of problems in Zambia and Botswana. Centralisation is a key explanation for these problems. However, experience shows that many governments in Africa do not have the capability to go completely through with centralized policies (Mawhood 1974; Stahl 1990; Toulmin 1991). As noted, local level organisations under central control are often severely understaffed and inadequately funded. Their ability to implement policies effectively is low, also when acting as administrators of central level programs and projects. Peasants have the option of withdrawing from interaction with the state if policies are not relevant or seen as profitable for them. The local branches of the state have quite small options to reach them.

These factors mean that the state is unable to penetrate the country effectively, and the consequences of this are serious when the state is not willing to leave it to the local people and their organisations either. It means that the state is unreliable. In

local level implementation, the central level often has the logistical responsibility. I.e. providing items needed as inputs, providing transport and adequate storage for such items and providing needed infrastructure. Furthermore, the administrative logistic is also often in the hands of the centre. This includes releasing funds in time and approving applications of various sorts without delay. The central government is not always capable of doing this properly, projects often stop halfway in their implementation. It has serious consequences for the target groups, if in the middle of a project, the supplies are not there in time (Howell 1985; Asmeron 1991; Baxter 1991). Even Botswana has experienced problems of this type (Rashem 1987).

The central state may act in ways that become destructive by being only partially implemented. Toulmin (1991) describes this very clearly. Land tenure is, since colonial times, formally in the hands of the state. Traditional local tenure systems have no formal status and is thus unreliable to people, as it may be overruled by central government intervention at any time. The state, on the other hand, while being able to intervene from time to time, is not able to fully substitute traditional systems. Often its capacity is so restrained that it only manages to undermine the predictability of traditional systems by intervening arbitrarily. This leads to uncertainty. The problems experienced with Botswana Land Boards bear some similarity to this description. With experiences like these, it is no wonder that there are reports of people having attitudes of open hostility to state intervention in environmental management. An example is that foresters who have regulatory powers are feared, and thus unable to engage in cooperation with local communities (Matiko 1990). Skepticism among the local people towards state intervention is reported, the NCS documents of Zambia report that Fishery Officers, who have some regulatory powers, are feared and avoided to such an extent that it is impossible for them to provide services based on voluntary cooperation with the fishermen (GOZ 1985).

The full implementation of the NCS lies ahead, and the above sections only identify possible problems. But there are data showing that the concerns about centralized implementation principles are justified. In Zambia, it was attempted to launch sub-national conservation strategies a few years ago. The project had donor support, and aimed at producing sub-national plans, priorities and projects based on local consultation, local circumstances and local priorities. The district councils proved unable to follow up. No plans were ever completed, the whole exercise was a failure. One observer stated that the whole thing was a blind track as the local authorities were completely unable to take on such a task. If they really are, the NCS implementation is likely to meet problems very quickly. Because it is this inability to act locally which is the problem, and centralisation is an important explanation for these problems.

In the case of Botswana, Duncan and Egner note that there is not capacity, local autonomy and coordination in the districts to handle the forthcoming NCS (1989).



Their concerns are confirmed by some other data as well. When the NCS process was set in motion, there was considerable interest in the districts for the NCS.<sup>19</sup> The districts in particular endorsed a proposal to set up an independent trust that would provide resources and expertise to the districts in their attempts to deal with the environmental problems. Such a trust could have provided resources, autonomy and a focal point for joint local action. However, this solution was turned down by the Government because it would give too much autonomous disposal of resources to the districts. Not surprisingly, after this, interests in the districts faded away.

<sup>19</sup> Interview, Gaborone March-April 1992.

## 11. Attracting donors

In order to attract donors to a policy field, the field and the concepts used to describe it must be at least to some extent consistent with donor policies at the time. In spite of the ambition of many donors to adhere to the priorities of the recipient country, the donor agencies tend to follow their own policy guidelines as to what to give priority.

Several donors, not least the Scandinavian donors, see environmental issues as a priority and are eager to assist. Donor interests are in fact partly the reason for the ambitious plans for environmental policy in Botswana and Zambia. Toulmin argues that both the National Conservation Strategies as well as other similar national plans are responses to donor initiatives (1991: 28). The Zambian policy makers argue that conservation measures in public policy is a promising means to attract donors (GOZ 1985: 66). Although detailed data are missing, it seems that policy makers in the two countries take considerable donor support for granted, and it also seems that several donors are indeed prepared to support. The environmental policy initiatives of the two countries are launched in the form of a wide policy framework which is given quite some publicity. This way of initiating a policy means that it is very visible, and may be functional for attracting donors who are not always well aware of what goes on in the various government offices.

Another critical condition is that the donor can identify a suitable counterpart in the recipient government. A problem for environmental projects has been that they have suffered from a weak organisational base. The responsible departments have been too small, with too few powers and personnel, and with very weak links to policy makers in other sectors (Baker 1989). The NCS linking departments and ministries in a national high ranking Council, promises that there will be much clearer and more unified structures to deal with on the recipient side. The Councils and their secretariats will have a delegated responsibility to coordinate donor engagement in environmental projects. Furthermore, the secretariats of the Councils will be very specialized. One government official said that one important reason for specializing, was exactly that it would facilitate donor engagement. Each donor may then have a counterpart that will deal only with one donor. Thus donor rivalries and conflicts can be avoided.

Another aspect is the issue of donors' confidence in their counterparts, i.e. their ability to come up with reports, accounts and applications as agreed, and whether they can be trusted to implement timely and efficiently. If this confidence is missing, donors often resort to by-pass strategies. It is the explicit ambition of both NCSs to avoid this, and to ensure that donor engagement results in the

development of competence and experience in the governmental administration. The Government of Botswana in general has quite a good reputation, while the Zambian record is more mixed. By having developed a new organisational set-up, parts of which will be allowed more generous salaries and working conditions than ordinary governmental standards, it may well be that donors will have more confidence in the structure, and will be more willing to operate in close cooperation with it.

It thus seems that the organizing of the NCSs will facilitate donor supplies of needed resources. The core issue here is that there is a donor interest, and that the recipient country is able to adjust to and exploit these interests. Organisational means are important in this respect. In fact, Botswana officials have expressed the view that donors have turned to environmental problems to such an extent that it is becoming a problem. Other sectors suffer, and the coordination tasks is becoming huge indeed. However, it has taken a lot of time and many delays before the NCSs became operational. There are indications that donors are becoming increasingly uncertain as regards whether the NCSs are the best framework for the assistance. Donors will not necessarily channel their contribution to the NCS framework.

But a key ambition is that the councils should coordinate the donor contribution into the NCS framework. Uncoordinated donor contributions have long created problems for development policies in many African countries. Coordinating donors is not an easy task. An attempt to establish a donor coordination council in Zambia in the mid-eighties failed because the administrative resources needed for it were not provided (CMI 1986). Difficulties in coordinating donors relate also to the unwillingness of donors themselves. Donors are positive to coordination, but not to be coordinated (Whittington and Calhoun 1988). Firm recipient coordination reduces the freedom of action for the donors. Coordination would also bring conflicts among donors to the surface, as they operate with different principles and procedures. Such conflicts they try to avoid. Donor coordination is costly also for the donor. It takes time and money, in particular as many donors' country representations have limited delegated powers. Finally, donors are not always very confident in the quality of recipient coordination. This is particularly true in countries with relatively unreliable administrative systems, like the case of Zambia. Donors do not necessarily have an interest in coordination. It may be good for the national development policies, but seen from a strictly project oriented perspective, such coordination quickly becomes an obstacle and a constraint.

Several project proposals in the NCS documents have already been endorsed by donors, and implemented as donor projects. This indicates that donors are interested indeed. On the other hand, these projects were launched without waiting for the establishment of the councils and without waiting for the final decision to launch the NCSs. To integrate donor contributions in the national policy might be more difficult than to get them.

## **12. Summary and concluding remarks**

The objective of this study was to identify and analyze some critical organisational preconditions for the implementation of the National Conservation Strategies of Botswana and Zambia. We identified four important preconditions, namely that the governmental agencies are capable and willing to take on a major responsibility for new environmental tasks, and that they adjust existing programs to the new policy principles. Next, that they integrate their activities across sectors. Third, that implementation in the field is flexible and mobilizing. Finally, that substantial donor support is mobilized and integrated in the strategies.

As policy makers have realized, these conditions are not easily fulfilled. The NCSs thus propose a range of measures aimed at facilitating and encouraging organisational change adjusted to these preconditions. We have seen that the prospects of these measures to succeed are at best uncertain, with exception of donor mobilisation. It seems that the two governments quite skilfully have adjusted to donor preferences, and donor support thus seems likely.

Considering the measures for improving agency performance and inter-agency relations, a recurrent theme in our analysis has been that the NCSs quite likely will induce organisational changes, but it is very uncertain what kind of changes, and some will be unexpected — at least to outside observers. We have also referred to research indicating that changes may turn out to be quite superficial. Concerning implementation in the field, the NCSs present few solutions to the challenges they pose. Standardized, top-down programs may be advantageous in certain sectors, but with regard to environmental policy they are quite problematic.

Critical organisational conditions for the NCSs are thus uncertain or even partly absent. It is therefore not very likely that all the actions proposed by the NCSs will be put into practical action as the policy documents outline them. The key problems are that governmental systems are difficult to change intentionally, and that centralized policies run the risk of being irrelevant or even damaging in the districts.

These problems are relevant not only for the NCSs of Botswana and Zambia. The environmental problems are addressed in similar ways in many countries in Africa. IUCN has promoted and supported the development of such strategies in approximately 50 countries, many of them in Africa (IUCN, UNEP and WWF 1991: 1). IUCN participates in both the development and implementation of NCSs, and has permanent offices in many countries, included Zambia and Botswana. It is very likely that at least in Less Developed Countries, in which environmental

policy is a new field, IUCN influences very strongly how the strategies should be developed and implemented. The organisation has done so in the cases of Botswana and Zambia. The NCSs of these two countries correspond very closely with the model for strategy development and implementation that is put forward in IUCN's overall strategy document, the World Conservation Strategy (IUCN 1980). This model has obviously guided and shaped the NCSs of Botswana and Zambia, and probably also in the NCSs of other African countries where the IUCN has been involved. The question of what prospects this approach of comprehensive national strategies has in the field of environmental policies is thus a matter of significant interest also beyond Zambia and Botswana.

The IUCN approach offers many advantages, and is clearly attractive to those who wish to see quick and comprehensive action taken to address the environmental problems. It deals with many problems in integrated ways, it sets up goals and promotes prompt action. Its weakness is that it over-estimates how quickly, effectively and controlled we can change the very mode of functioning of a governmental apparatus, and that it over-estimates the governments' capability to reach the districts with relevant and effective public policy. The actual outcome in practical action will most likely be different from what is envisaged in the NCSs. The strategies will be transformed and partially ignored in the process in which the NCSs meet the interests, values, routines, resource shortages and weak implementation capacity of the governmental systems.

Seen in a traditional perspective on policy making and implementation, these problems make the IUCN approach a not very promising one. The traditional and conventional approach to strategies and their implementation is that the given goals should be realized by the effectuation of the defined means of organisation, procedures, resource use and legal instruments. Compliance with the strategy and the means it defines is the key norm. If this compliance is not forthcoming, this is defined as the crucial implementation problem that should be addressed. The conditions for compliance are that goals have to be clear, consistent and clearly communicated, the implementing agencies must have sufficient capacity and the right type of capacity, the active support and endorsement of the policy must be developed among the implementors, the policy itself must be based on relevant means-ends knowledge, policy makers must have some means to control the implementing agency and finally, the implementing agencies must handle powerful actors in the environment who wish to alter the policy. These causes of the problems can be corrected by the responsible superior officials in charge of implementation. They may improve goal clarity, communication, provide more resources, increase monitoring and control, and they may persuade and educate the implementors to accept the policies (Ham and Hill 1984).

This line of reasoning has been very influential in studies of implementation processes in African countries. Cheema and Rondinelli (1983) are quite representative when they discuss the failures of decentralisation programs in this

perspective. They argue that implementation of such programs depends on clear and realistic goals, clear and correct means-ends knowledge, sufficient resources, technical assistance to the implementing agencies, clear and detailed action programs, clearly defined division of responsibility, systematic evaluation, control, monitoring and coordination exercised by the central level policy makers, and promotion of the necessary attitudes among those whose cooperation is necessary. All these factors failed in the cases they reviewed. They thus argue that these causes have to be corrected by the responsible officials.

However, implementation is hardly ever characterized by strict compliance if the task at hand is complex and affected by contextual and organisational variables that are only partly known, controlled, and predictable. Which is often the case, not least in African contexts. Implementation strictly directed by a policy document may be desirable. But it is seldom possible, and it is therefore not a very constructive prescription for how implementation should be done and how we should evaluate it (Ham and Hill 1984; Offerdal 1993).

An alternative view recognises that implementation of a policy normally involves adjustments, transformations and surprising developments. Policy making continues well into the implementation process. The official decision makers are only one group of decision makers, the implementors are equally important.<sup>20</sup> The system is not a centrally controlled machine, but composed of many actors with differing interests, as well as differing routinised problem perceptions, values and goals. In order to influence practical policy in the short run, one must start by analyzing what the actors actually do. What problems they see, what interests they have, and what actually influences their decisions must be the point of departure. Based on such insights, one may cooperate with them with the aim of improving their problem solving, and to some extent, develop their problem understanding (Ham and Hill 1984).

Recognizing the autonomy and differing interests and routines of the many actors in the governmental system does not mean that policies are produced in an anarchy where the many actors do as they please. There is a collective level as well, the system in general or an organisation have common goals, values and perceptions that are accepted by all as constraints on and guidelines for individual behaviour. These collective goals are not synonymous with official formal goals, but they may be influenced by official goals. They are also influenced by symbolic politics. I.e. expressions of commitment to certain values that may over time be widely accepted as legitimate goals and constraints on behaviour. Finally, they are influenced by the experiences of the individual actors in the system. Organisations

<sup>20</sup> The implementors are both the field level officials, who interact with target groups, and the officials of various agencies in the capital, who receive a policy from other organs in order to operationalise and communicate it to the field staff.

learn and develop changed goals and values when somebody in the system has made experiences and learnt something. Such actor experiences may influence collective goals, values and routines in the organisation at large.

Such learning occurs not least during implementation (Offerdal 1993). In many cases, this learning process is very valuable. It facilitates necessary adjustments, and it develops indigenous knowledge and experience in the governmental system. The designers of a plan or a policy naturally have only quite general control and influence on these processes.

What are the prospects for the NCSs seen in this perspective? Ideally, these ideas suggest that the NCSs should aim at combined efforts at both the collective and the individual level. Concerning the collective level, the NCSs include several efforts that may have effect. Education efforts, information, continuous deliberation of the strategies in the councils, participation from the various agencies in the preparation of the NCSs are all important here. Furthermore, the strong ideological flair in the whole policy document and its form as a grand strategy give it a symbolic importance. Symbolic actions are not wasted in this perspective, they are expressions of commitment to key values. Expressing such commitment repeatedly may lead to acceptance throughout the system over time, and influence actors' goals and values gradually.

However, operational goals, held by the actors in the system should also be addressed. Both to produce changed common, collective goals, and to generate action in the short run. Several informants seemed to think somewhat in line with this reasoning, arguing that the point was not to implement everything at once, but to get started, show some results and build experiences which would lead to more firm commitment later on. At this point, the NCSs are less promising. When it comes to immediate action in the many offices, field services and agencies, the NCSs mainly stick to the traditional top-down approach. Decisions about problem priorities and definitions, goals and means, designation of responsibilities to other organisations and development of more specific goals and means were mainly concentrated in a rather small group of policy makers. The perspective applied here argues that one should take the problems, values and goals of for instance Botswana's Forestry Unit as the starting point, and analyze what problems this unit were concerned with, what they saw as urgent, how they could be assisted and influenced. Which would in turn give the unit new experience, changed goals and values, and acceptance of new collective goals of a more conservation biased nature.

The NCS preparation does include some measures of this kind. The agencies were asked to participate in producing background papers for the NCSs. However, this was done within defined values given at the outset by the NCS policy makers, values that the agencies were asked to operationalise in their sectors. What room there actually was for these agencies to take their own problem perceptions,

interests and goals as a basic premise is uncertain. Observing the striking similarity of the conservation policies between the two countries, one may ask whether existing goals, values and interests were really taken very seriously in all sectors. Some of these previous goals and values are indeed not very desirable from a conservationist point of view. But they are the goals which exist, which are operational, and it is argued in this perspective that any change must start from that basis. The NCSs are expected in both countries to lead to the formulation of even more specific action plans. Perhaps that would be an occasion to develop agency participation further. This also includes field staff, and it is probably here that the need is the greatest.

In this latter view, implementation should not be evaluated in terms of how precisely a plan is able to direct action, but rather in terms of the quality of the mutual interaction between formal policy makers, implementors and the general context. In fact, it may be advantageous for a policy to be adjusted this way. In our case, the most important question is not whether the NCSs can be forced into practice as they are formulated. Instead, we may look at them as a body of thought, largely developed outside the governmental systems in the two countries, and as a challenge to these systems. The ambition is not whether it can be put into practice as it is, but whether it may engage in interaction with local and national actors, and stimulate learning, development of indigenous knowledge, improved problem understanding and changed collective goals. This is important not least in Africa, where organisational models, policy principles, technology and management techniques are often imported from the western world.

The problems and prospects for controlled and intentional organisational change in African state bureaucracies represent an insufficiently explored field. This is particularly the case for reforms attempting to alter values and action programs of organisations. In his review of a whole range of reform experiences in Africa. Mutahaba (1989) notes in his conclusion, that reforms aimed at qualitative changes in the performance of governmental agencies have not much been examined. For instance training programs aimed at increasing innovation and sensitivity to popular needs.

There is thus a need for research on how the African political-administrative systems change. The perspective outlined above emphasize that they change not least by implementing, which brings new problems to attention, and which gives new experiences and knowledge. The distinction between a collective and an actor level is a promising approach not least in African countries where formal official goals are often strange for most officials, being developed in the donor community and by researchers from the western world. How such concepts, values and goals interact with the indigenous administration's values and interests should be more closely examined. The NCSs will therefore be worth following in the years to come.



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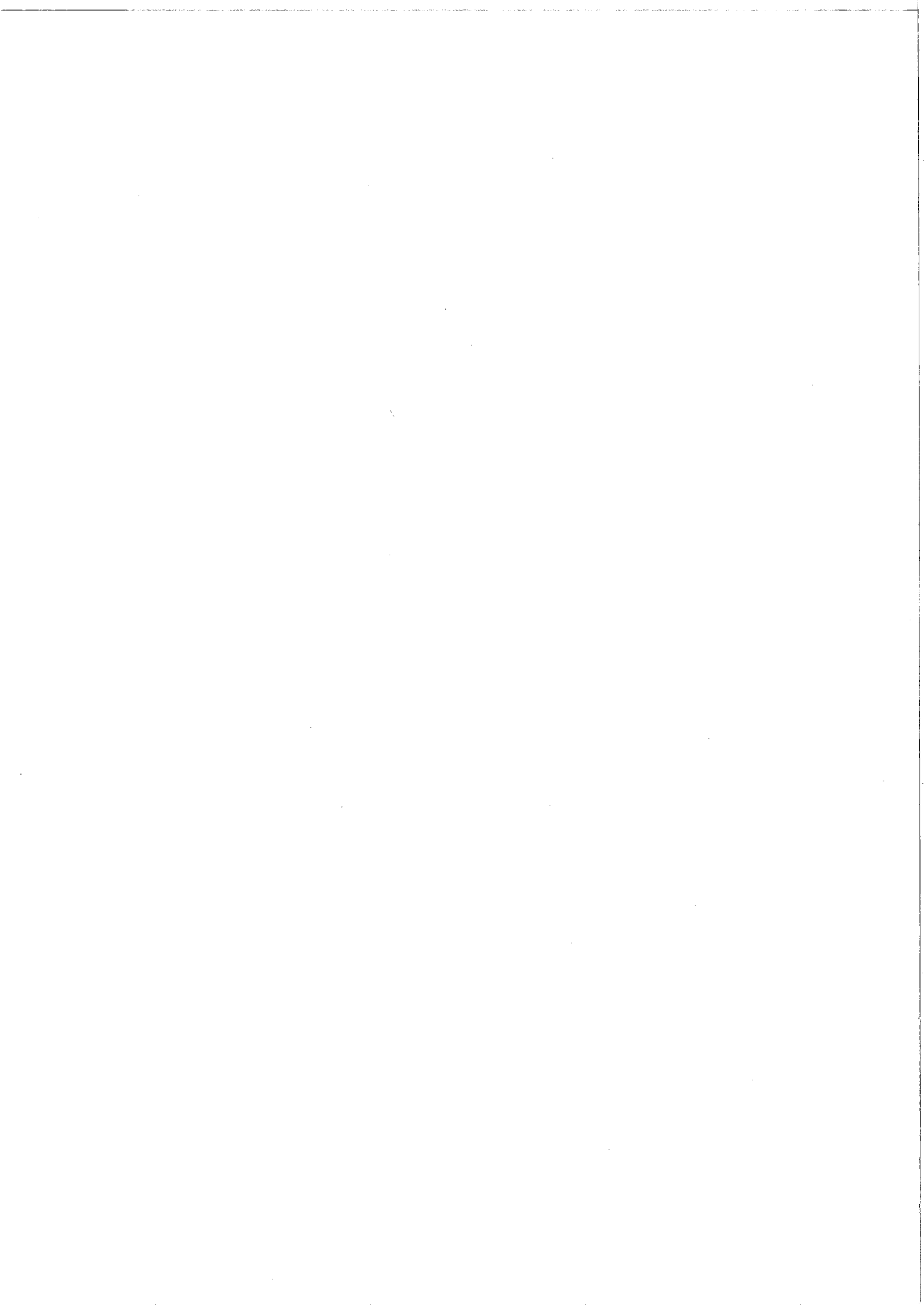
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