

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN



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Militarisation of conservation, violence and local people: The case of Sikumi Forest Reserve in Zimbabwe.

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ABSTRACT

Violence in protected areas has become more pronounced in the last decade due to the increasing use of military practices in conservation. This study examines the texture and nature of everyday militarisation and violence effected in protected areas different from national parks and wildlife conservation. It also examines the consequences of militarised conservation on people living in, or adjacent to, these protected areas. The analysis takes a case study and ethnographic approach. It is embedded in daily patrol activities of the state paramilitary unit responsible for conservation enforcement and in experiences, with the practice of militarisation, of people living around Sikumi Forest Reserve in Zimbabwe. The study demonstrates that the form and texture of militarisation in conservation are dependent on the type of protected area, and the nature of resources under protection. It is additionally dependent on the political-economic context, and the capacity, of the state authorities responsible for protected area management, to execute military practices. Thus, protected areas that are different from national parks and, or, managed by organisations without resources to implement militarised conservation policies, may paint a different picture of militarisation. They can enforce militarised policies and strategies but only in a symbolic manner towards halting armed poaching activities. These insights reflect an alternative pattern of militarisation, which this study frames as symbolic green militarisation. Symbolic green militarisation is developed to provide alternative thinking to the idea that use of paramilitary personnel, strategies and technologies transforms protected areas into war zones or deadly landscapes. The study presents evidence that while symbolic green militarisation may not result in high-level violence, it is sufficient to expose local people, who depend on protected areas for subsistence, to particular and diverse forms of direct and indirect violence. These forms of violence are often facilitated and perpetuated by factors beyond immediate conservation practice. The study broadly argues that, regardless of the texture and nature of militarisation, demonstration or use of any amount of force in protected areas has rather significant consequences for local people who need such spaces to support their development. Overall, the resurgence of fortress conservation coupled with the adoption of military practices represents hope deferred for local people.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

| | |
|-----------|---|
| BSAC | British South Africa Company |
| CLCRA | Criminal Law (Codification and Reform) Act |
| CONEX | Conservation and Extension Division |
| CP and EA | Criminal Procedure and Evidence Act |
| CSO | Chief Security Officer |
| FC | Forestry Commission |
| FCS | Forestry Commission Security |
| FPU | Forest Protection Unit |
| FCZ | Forest Company of Zimbabwe |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Product |
| HSBCP | Hwange Sanyati Biological Corridor Project |
| IPZ | Intensive Protection Zone |
| KAZA | Kavango-Zambezi |
| KNP | Kruger National Park |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organization |
| PDC | Painted Dog Conservation |
| ZimParks | Zimbabwe National Parks and Wildlife Management Authority |
| Saflodge | Hwange Safari Lodge |
| SEPs | State Enterprises and Parastatals |
| SMART | Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool |
| SONA | State of the Nation's Address |
| TFCA | Transfrontier Conservation Area |
| WB | World Bank |
| WWF | World Wide Fund for Nature |
| ZANLA | Zimbabwe African Liberation Army |
| ZANU-PF | Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front |
| ZAPU | Zimbabwe African People's Union |
| ZimASSET | Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation |

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Chapter 1. Protected areas, militarisation and violence: The research agenda

1.1. Introduction

Violence has historically characterised the creation of protected areas and coercive conservation practices in many parts of the world (Brockington & Igoe, 2006; Peluso & Watts, 2001). Protected areas were traditionally set to benefit the state, its agents and a few elites. These areas are still managed with specific goals for biodiversity conservation and capital accumulation (Büscher *et al.*, 2014). States often dominate resource control and use coercive approaches characterised by the use of force and violence (Brockington *et al.*, 2008; Peluso, 1993). This violence is mainly perpetrated against local people who, from the history of protected areas, are already disadvantaged by land dispossession. The rising pursuit of more violent approaches in defence of protected areas, by states and conservation agencies, has, in the past two decades, reignited interest in violence around protected areas (Mollett & Kepe, 2018). State authorities from developing countries, particularly those in sub-Saharan Africa, have resorted to militarised responses to save endangered wildlife species from armed poaching. This turn to military practices has been framed as the militarisation of conservation and describes the process through which military ideologies are brought into mainstream conservation practice (Duffy, 2014; Lunstrum, 2014).

Since the mid-1980s, the militarisation of conservation has been widely justified by states and conservation non-profit organisations (see Büscher & Fletcher, 2018; Verweijen & Marijnen, 2018), and has, to this day, intensified. The increased interest in military practices in defence of protected areas has, in the process, seen community-based conservation programmes losing hegemony over a resurgence of the back to the barriers approach to conservation (see Hutton *et al.*, 2005). The same period has equally witnessed rising interest, amongst political ecologists, in examining the practice of militarisation in conservation and its implications for violence against people. National parks and wildlife conservation dominate most of the analysis on, and critical thinking around, the militarisation of conservation, because it is in these areas that military responses have been intense owing to the high value placed on wildlife species such as rhinos, gorillas and elephants.

Significant conceptualisations arising from these studies include the killing for conservation thesis by Duffy (2000). This thesis stems from experiences with Zimbabwean wildlife conservation practices in the 1980s, characterised by shoot-to-kill policies, indemnification of

rangers to kill without facing legal charges, and the involvement of the military and other national security apparatus to assist paramilitary rangers. According to Duffy, the consequences of killing for conservation include the extrajudicial killing of real and suspected poachers. The war for conservation thesis is, yet another idea, framed against how national governments have declared war on those using armed techniques to deplete wildlife resources (see Duffy, 2014; Neumann, 2004). Using cases from Kenyan, Tanzanian, Malawian and Zimbabwean national parks, Neumann (2004) declares that war has become an important framework for planning biodiversity conservation in most African countries, and further elaborates the loss of human life as a consequence of militarised conservation.

The militarisation of conservation has also been framed in terms of green militarisation. The concept is developed from experiences with rhino poaching in Kruger National Park (KNP). It hypothesises that the use of military personnel, technologies and partnerships, as well as values that legitimise this trend, have turned protected areas into deadly landscapes characterised by an arms race between state agents and poachers (Lunstrum, 2014). Lunstrum documents that green militarisation has produced KNP as a dangerous space for bystanders and affected economic migration of people who use protected areas securitised by militarisation as migration routes. She also anticipates damages to people-state relationships as a long-term effect of militarisation. Other scholars have coined the rising adoption of military practices as green violence. Green violence focuses on examining the violent tactics adopted to enforce conservation and the emerging forms of violence as a result of military practices in conservation (see Büscher & Ramutsindela, 2016).

These theorisations provide useful stepping-stones for examining the militarisation of conservation, but also give a general impression that protected areas with high-value resources, and securitised by military means, must be understood within the frames of such ideas. This is further complicated by the fact that, although traits of militarised conservation and violence can be traced to other protected areas such as marine (Norton, 2015) and forest reserves (for example, Dressler & Guieb III, 2015; Guha, 2000; Peluso, 1993; Peluso & Watts, 2001), theorising the militarisation of conservation specific to these areas has not attracted as much attention compared to national parks and areas with a firm mandate for protection of megafauna. Thus, idealising the militarisation of conservation in protected areas, so far, appears to be guided by what is emerging from wildlife conservation case studies, notwithstanding the circumstances of different protected areas. This study, therefore,

joins the scholarship on the militarisation of conservation but documents and theorises militarisation, violence and its consequences from a setting different from national parks.

1.2. Problem statement

If we rely on the current concepts to examine the militarisation of conservation, hypothetically, we must expect protected areas with high-value resources and securitised by military means to mirror the same ideas in theory and practice. However, there are two problems with making such an assumption. First, these concepts are drawn from not only a single conservation sector, but also the same kind of protected areas. Furthermore, the studies from which these concepts are drawn, to a small extent unravel the ground mechanics of everyday military practices. Consequently, little is known regarding how militarisation in these areas unfolds in practice. With inadequate knowledge of the ground practices of militarisation, it is risky to assume that militarisation and violence in different kinds of protected areas take the form described in national parks. Without this clarity also, conceptualising militarisation becomes limited to information obtained from wildlife conservation cases, and risks misrepresenting the ground realities of other protected areas. Second, studies from where these concepts are drawn, limitedly examine the consequences of military practices on people living in, or adjacent to, protected areas. Although they acknowledge the presence of violence against people, methodologies used barely examine and categorise this violence. Thus, the nature of violence associated with military practices is sketchily documented. And yet, there is rising persuasion amongst scholars in political ecology to question the ethical implications of militarised conservation. It becomes challenging to examine the moral position of militarised conservation or its consequences with inadequate knowledge on the nature of violence involved. These are the problems with which this study grapples.

1.3. Study objectives

Against the problem framed above, the primary aim of this study is to examine the texture and nature of everyday militarisation and violence effected in circumstances outside wildlife conservation, and the consequences of such practices on people living around protected areas. This broad objective is further structured into four specific objectives:

1. Examine how militarisation of conservation unfolds in protected forests.
2. Examine the nature of violence experienced by communities living in, or adjacent to, protected forests.
3. Investigate factors facilitating the violence experienced by local people.
4. Provide alternative thinking around the militarisation of conservation and violence in protected areas.

1.4. Research questions

Drawing from the overall objective, the study grapples with two central research questions: What is the texture and nature of militarisation in protected areas that are different from national parks and wildlife conservation? What are the consequences of militarised conservation on local people living in, or adjacent to, these areas? The specific research questions are:

1. How does militarisation unfold in protected forests?
2. What is the nature of violence experienced by local people as a result of militarised conservation practices?
3. What factors facilitate this violence?
4. What alternative thinking can be drawn from experiences on militarised conservation in protected forests?

1.5. Significance of the study

Over the past decade, conservation has become more violent with the adoption of military practices. In the context of this increasing violence, consequences on local people, who have already endured dispossession for many years, must not be underestimated. Thus, as we grapple with the problem of militarisation and conservation-based violence, it is essential that realities of ground practices are carefully represented, and forms of violence against local people understood and categorised. As the study engages with these issues, it becomes significant for its contribution to scholarship and policy. To scholarship, this work does not only broaden evidence on militarised conservation and its consequences on people living around protected areas, but also extends the scope for understanding the militarisation of conservation beyond national parks to other protected areas, as well as expanding methodology beyond interviews to include ethnography. In doing so, it provides alternative thinking around methods and theorisation of the militarisation of conservation and violence.

The study also comes during a new geological epoch known as the Anthropocene, in which anthropogenic activities are recognised as responsible for altering the earth's processes and causing environmental change. This new epoch exposes people to vulnerabilities in the name of environmental protection, and, therefore, is important to think with in examining the militarisation of conservation. Policy debates around human and non-human rights have commenced at the international level. Examining violence and categorising it, contributes towards a framework for advancing these policy debates and thinking with the Anthropocene in sub-Saharan Africa.

1.6. Conceptual overview

The militarisation of conservation falls within the 'conservation and control' theme of political ecology. Hence, this study is located within a political ecology conceptual and analytical framework. As Robbins (2004) reveals, there are several definitions of political ecology (Box 1.1). They all draw our attention to the fact that the militarisation of conservation must be examined in the context of broader social, economic and political relationships that inform it. The political ecology framework challenges those who seek to apoliticise nature conservation (Peluso & Watts, 2001; Robbins, 2004). It is, therefore, useful for interrogating the militarisation of conservation, which is often justified, by states and conservation agencies, on the basis of science. Political ecology is used in many variations. Chapter Two will elaborate my modification of the analytical framework, but examining the militarisation of conservation remains informed by four broad conceptual aspects of political ecology, which are scale, political economy, discourse and framing analysis, and power relations.

Scale. The political ecology of scale is used, in this study, to make sense of the power relations, socio-ecological processes and actor relationships emerging around the militarisation of conservation across spatial, temporal and jurisdictional scales (Cash *et al.*, 2006; Neumann, 2009).

Political economy. Political economy "asserts that particular social relations of production and exchange translate into patterns of accumulation by certain groups..." (Walker, 1998:134). This study, therefore, engages with political economy to examine the interactions between the state, private actors and society in relation to the politics of wealth accumulation and the militarisation of conservation. In this light, the study additionally embraces the concept of neoliberal conservation as part of the broader political economy of conservation

and control. Neoliberal conservation refers to the commodification and marketisation of nature to achieve the twin objectives of conservation and economic growth (see, for example, Büscher *et al.*, 2014; Igoe & Brockington, 2007).

Box 1.1: Defining political ecology

| <i>Author/Source</i> | <i>Definition of “political ecology”</i> | <i>Goal</i> |
|-------------------------------|--|--|
| Cockburn and Ridgeway (1979) | “a useful way of describing the intentions of radical movements in the United States, in Western Europe and in other advanced industrial countries . . . very distant from the original rather sedate operations of the eco-lobby” (p. 3) | Explicate and describe first world urban and rural environmental degradation from corporate and state mismanagement; document social activism in response |
| Blaikie and Brookfield (1987) | “combines the concerns of ecology and a broadly defined political economy. Together this encompasses the constantly shifting dialectic between society and land-based resources, and also within classes and groups within society itself” (p. 17) | Explain environmental change in terms of constrained local and regional production choices within global political economic forces, largely within a third world and rural context |
| Greenberg and Park (1994) | A synthesis of “political economy, with its insistence on the need to link the distribution of power with productive activity and ecological analysis, with its broader vision of bio-environmental relationships” (p. 1) | “Synthesize the central questions asked by the social sciences about the relations between human society, viewed in its bio-cultural-political complexity, and a significantly humanized nature” (p. 1) |
| Peet and Watts (1996b) | “a confluence between ecologically rooted social science and the principles of political economy” (p. 6) | Locates “movements emerging from the tensions and contradictions of under-production crises, understands the imaginary basis of their oppositions and visions for a better life and the discursive character of their politics, and sees the possibilities for broadening environmental issues into a movement for livelihood entitlements, and social justice” (pp. 38–9) |
| Hempel (1996) | “the study of interdependence among political units and of interrelationships between political units and their environment . . . concerned with the political consequences of environmental change” (p. 150) | Explore and explain community-level and regional political action in the global sphere, in response to local and regional degradation and scarcity |

Source: (Robbins, 2004:6)

Discourse and framing analysis. A political ecology analytical framework is also supported by Foucauldian perspectives on how power and authority operate through discourse and ideology (Arts, 2003; Hajer & Versteeg, 2005), even how discourse is integrated with “historical geography of material practice” (Harvey 1996:183 cited in Peluso & Watts, 2001:25). Thus, understanding why and how militarisation unfolds is embedded in analysing how language and ideology developed over time create meanings around conservation practice. To further understand these discourses the study uses framing analysis to conceptualise the text of existing conservation discourse (Pan & Kosicki, 1993), to examine how discourses legitimising militarised conservation practices are defined and problematised, and with what effects.

Power and power relations. The militarisation of conservation is about the use of power and demonstration of authority, as the next chapter will elaborate, suggesting that the concept of power is a useful aspect in political ecology studies. However, the study does not delve into the very rich, but also highly contested literature on power, except to acknowledge its significance in examining the militarisation of conservation. In engaging with the concept of power, this study examines forms of power involved (such as, resources, legitimate power), how it is exercised (direct or indirect), the type of power relations (unilateral, bilateral or multilateral), and what social or psychological influence that power has on those on whom it is exercised (see Arts & Tatenhove, 2004; French *et al.*, 1959; Goldhamer & Shils, 1939). The study uses these dimensions of power to examine actor relationships in conservation and control, and in the development of militarisation in protected areas. In the next section, I turn to the methodology adopted to examine these aspects of political ecology.

1.7. Methodology

This section outlines the body of methods used in response to the framed problem, set research objectives and questions, and the various analytical aspects provided by the political ecology conceptual framework. It explains five main methodological elements: research approach and design, selection of case study area, data collection techniques, and procedures for data presentation.

1.7.1. Research approach and design

This study epistemologically took an anti-foundationalist approach. After Furlong and Marsh (2010), the study hypothesises that ideas of the world are socially constructed. It is against this philosophical position that research questions set for this study are qualitative, to capture and examine meaning, process and context while examining, explaining and understanding how militarisation unfolds and how it affects local people (Devine, 2002). In addition, qualitative methods were selected because of their flexibility to collect information from several sources of data (Silverman, 1997).

But, the study focus had to be guided. It had to be set within a context that allows for examination of causal mechanisms, measurement of variables in social science, and one that permits new variables and alternative thinking to be drawn (Eisenhardt, 1989; George & Bennett, 2005; Yin, 2013). A case study approach was, therefore, an appropriate design. A case study design was also relevant because single case studies can be interpreted at multi-level temporal, spatial and jurisdictional scales (Benjaminsen *et al.*, 2009), an attribute which makes case studies ideal for studies in political ecology. Previous studies (for example, Kelly & Ybarra, 2016; Lunstrum, 2014; Massé & Lunstrum, 2016; Ybarra, 2012), show the usefulness of case studies in examining the militarisation of conservation. Thus, this study also learnt from methodological footsteps of previous studies in political ecology.

However, case studies are criticised for, for example, selection bias and lack of representativeness. The study acknowledges these limitations. With respect to selection bias, what remained significant in selecting the case study was its ability to offer deep engagement with the scholarly problem identified and to answer the set research questions. Moreover, representativeness is not usually the focus of studies in political ecology. Hence, this study focused on the conditions under which the militarisation of conservation occurs, mechanisms through which it occurs, and how people become affected, rather than the frequency of events and outcomes of militarisation. A single case study was, therefore, sufficient. In the next section, I introduce the case area and the characteristics that qualify it as a suitable study area.

1.7.2. Selection of case study area

Sikumi Forest Reserve (hereafter Sikumi) was selected as an appropriate case study. The protected area is managed by the Forestry Commission (hereafter the FC), a state authority responsible for management of all protected forests in Zimbabwe. I selected Sikumi because,

foremost, it is a forest conservation case and, therefore, potentially offers a different perspective on the militarisation of conservation. However, it also became a suitable case study based on five distinct reasons linked to its protection. Here is a brief description, but Chapter Four will provide an extended case study context. First, Sikumi is located on unstable Kalahari soils. Illegal activities such as logging and veld fires expose these light soils to degradation. There is, therefore, compulsion, on ecological grounds, for the FC to protect Sikumi against all forms of human activities that may result in its degradation. In addition to a Forester, the FC entrusts the protection of Sikumi to a paramilitary forest security unit comprising forest guards.

Second, Sikumi is contiguous to Hwange National Park (hereafter Hwange), with which it shares a porous border. It is, thus, essentially a buffer¹ zone and wildlife corridor for large fauna, such as elephants, considered to be of high value for eco-tourism. In the study's intention to examine militarisation from a case study that is not a National Park, what makes Sikumi distinct from Hwange is the difference in the administrative systems and in the mandates of the organisations responsible for managing these two spaces. Sikumi is a forest reserve managed by the FC for the purposes of forest conservation through the Forest Act Chapter 19.05, while Hwange is a National Park managed for wildlife conservation by the Zimbabwe National Parks and Wildlife Management Authority (ZimParks). The differences in mandate and administrative systems make these two spaces different in terms of how conservation initiatives are supported and unfold, as the empirical chapters will demonstrate.

However, while wildlife management is not the mandate of the FC, it took advantage of its proximity to Hwange, introduced a wildlife based forest management programme to tap into revenue streams of the growing eco-tourism industry through photographic safari activities. The revenue generated from Sikumi is ploughed back into forest conservation initiatives. Thus, in addition to its ecological importance, Sikumi is of economic value to the FC. It additionally contributes towards the approximate 3 per cent contributed by the whole forestry industry towards the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (Forestry Commission, 2008; Forestry Commission, 2013). Thus, economic value further intensifies the urge, by the forest authority, to enforce conservation laws and to provide continuous protection of wildlife in transit that support its photographic safari business.

¹ Although Sikumi is in its own right a protected area, its occurrence at the peripheries of, and between, Hwange and local communities additionally makes it a special zone. It enhances the importance of Hwange by expanding the home range of, and transiting corridors for, wildlife species.

Third, Sikumi is part of the Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA-TFCA) whose objectives include conservation for eco-tourism, regional integration and security (Kavango-Zambezi Organisation, 2014). Sikumi, therefore, belongs to a larger conservation landscape that recognises resource securitisation as a regional mandate. Fourth, Sikumi is part of the World Wide Fund for Nature's (WWF) Hwange Sanyati Biological Corridor Project (HSBCP) that commenced in 2015. Five protected forests fall in the HSBCP project area, but the project focuses on Sikumi and Ngamo forests because they buffer Hwange and provide continuity of wildlife movement in the project corridor (Government of Zimbabwe, 2014). One of the focal areas of this project is improving the management efficiency of Hwange and its buffer zones by supporting existing militarised anti-poaching activities.

Lastly, Sikumi is surrounded by the Kalanga, Tonga, Ndebele and Nambya ethnic groups, displaced to the peripheries of the forest during colonial land dispossession. These people contest shifting boundaries in western Zimbabwe, which have changed access and control over resources since colonisation (Andersson *et al.*, 2012; Matose, 2002). Over the years, their resistance to this change has led the state to adopt more forceful conservation policies. Apart from resistance by local people, the greater Hwange and its buffer zones have, since the mid-1980s, experienced an upsurge in armed illegal resource access activities by individuals seeking financial gains (see Bechtel, 1998; Buitrón, 1989; Duffy, 2000) as Chapter Three will further elaborate. Since then, conservation is reliant on militarised policies.

The insights explained here demonstrate that, first, conservation enforcement (by military means) is active in Sikumi. Second, they show that many causal mechanisms can be examined and potentially new ideas discovered for conceptual development. Lastly and importantly, they illustrate that the research questions can be answered. It is against these reasons that Sikumi was selected. The next section now explains how data related to the militarisation of conservation in Sikumi were collected.

1.7.3. Data collection

Data collection took place between November 2015 and November 2016. Categories of data required to examine research questions included historical information, community experiences and ground enforcement practices. These categories relied on multiple sources of data, such as reports, multimedia, newspaper articles, participant observation and interviews

as summarised in Table 1.1. Methodological triangulation (Miles & Huberman, 1994) was adopted to tap into these data sources. I decided to triangulate qualitative methods to overcome individual methodological shortcomings. By using several data sources, I was additionally able to take care of validity issues (Marsh & Stoker, 2002). The subsequent subsections describe the specific data collection methods, and how they were used to collect information for this study.

Table 1.1: Summary of data collection methods

| Data category | Specific needs | Methods and sources |
|--------------------------------------|--|--|
| Historical information | The context of land and protected forests | Literature review, reports and speeches from FC records, oral histories, policy and legal document analysis, multimedia (YouTube), social media (Twitter, Facebook), newspaper articles, and internet blogs. |
| | National economy and forest management | |
| | Zimbabwe's military context | |
| | -Development of militarised forest conservation. -Structure and composition of the forest protection unit | |
| | Case study background | Literature review, FC official documents, Legal and Policy documents, and observations. |
| Everyday forest protection practices | -Daily law enforcement procedure. -Techniques and strategies -Apparatus used -The procedure of prosecution and confiscation | Participant observation, field photographs and videos, formal and informal interviews, official communications such as speeches and memoranda, patrol reports and records. |
| Community experiences | Local people's experience with militarised law enforcement | Formal and informal interviews. |
| Role of non- | The contribution of NGOs and | Project documents and |

| Data category | Specific needs | Methods and sources |
|--|---|---|
| governmental and private organisations | private organisations in conservation enforcement | reports, key informant interviews, formal speeches, participant observation (meetings, workshops and conferences), and official websites. |

a) Interviews

Interviews dominated data collection throughout the study. Before describing specific aspects of interview structure, here is a profile of people who were interviewed throughout the study, the reasons and how they were selected.

Interview respondents

Interviews took a multi-actor approach (Little, 2007). The study purposively identified five categories of actors from various organisations. Selection of respondents was done through stakeholder analysis, which, more broadly, identified all the stakeholders in forest conservation, and then specific to Sikumi. No specific number of respondents was targeted. People were interviewed based on their willingness to participate and until a saturation point was reached (Guest *et al.*, 2006), that is, when no additional information emerged. These groups were:

- ***FC officials and employees.*** This group included all forest guards working in Sikumi and FC officials. At the time of data collection, I was an employee of the FC. I, therefore, selected all officials based on my knowledge of the organisation and how it operates. Thus, I purposively selected officials responsible for protected forests management, from head office to local level Sikumi.
- ***Former FC officials and employees.*** The study benefited from interaction with former FC employees whose institutional memory supported the historical context of the study. People interviewed included former forest guards and FC officials, who were purposively selected. Current FC officials provided links to these people. Once one person was identified and located, the study then used snowballing techniques to find other significant sources of information in this category.

- ***Other government departments.*** This group comprised respondents from government ministries and departments working with the FC. These included members of the Zimbabwe Republic Police (hereafter the police), for their overarching regulatory role in the Ministry of Home Affairs, their recognition by the Forestry Act as an eligible state organ to assist with forest law enforcement, and their participation in state-approved and -directed militarised conservation campaigns in Sikumi. The groups also included staff from ZimParks for their dominant role in wildlife management, and as neighbours of Sikumi. Respondents were purposively identified by liaising with the FC and with the local and national authorities from these departments. Members of the police became naturally part of discussions that unfolded during daily anti-poaching activities, which they became part of through operation *Nhaka Yedu* (Our heritage). Chapter Three will describe the operation in detail.
- ***Community members.*** Selection of community members (people living in villages adjacent Sikumi) for interviews did not necessarily follow a systematic approach. Community members were selected and interviewed according to their availability and willingness to participate, but efforts were made to obtain a balance between young, old, females and males, as well as the villages they reside. Initially, community members were selected and interviewed village-by-village. However, as interviews progressed, a referral process in which community members suggested key informants in relation to questions asked influenced a targeted selection process, which unsystematically cut across villages, both near and further from the forest. Interviewing community members also targeted villagers previously arrested for resources access. Identification of these individuals relied on patrol reports of previously detained people. After identifying one person from the list, the snowballing technique was used to increase the number of respondents in the category. Communities were interviewed between August and November 2018
- ***NGOs and private organisations.*** The study also identified external actors working with or supporting state conservation practices. Two groups were identified: non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and private safari operators. I identified interview participants through personal knowledge of individuals in some of the organisations and through the assistance of FC officials in contact with individuals in other organisations that I had not interacted with before the study.

Interview structure

Interviews were open-ended and unstructured. The conversation leading to the interview occurred naturally depending on the circumstance of respondent at time of the interview. Following a brief description of the study, I used general questions to commence the interview process and to trigger discussion. These questions were not conformed to a specific template. Both general and specific questions asked were dependent on the person interviewed and on how the interview unfolded, but of course linked to the key research questions of the study. Interviews were mostly formal, but in some cases, informal discussions generated much data. The open and unstructured approach was useful because it allowed for flexibility of interview questions depending on the person interviewed, and depending on whether the interview was a follow up with the same respondent, validation of issues from previous interviews, whether the respondent was a ‘poacher’, government or NGO official, female, male, young or old.

Unstructured interviews also supported storytelling. Storytelling was an essential approach to interviews because it enabled respondents to share their experiences at length and for themes emerging from their stories to be further explored during discussions (Devine, 2002). Following Riessman (2008), I specifically picked unstructured storytelling for its ability to invite the researcher into perspectives of the narrator, but also because, in itself, narration helped respondents to recall past events in respect to their current existence, thereby providing an in-depth understanding about the issues they raised. Themes raised in stories embodied theoretical abstractions, further strengthening the worth of storytelling. An unstructured approach was, therefore, useful for obtaining and validating stories, and examining themes.

Interview languages

Three languages were used during interviews, Shona, English and Ndebele. The choice of language was dependent on the language spoken by respondents or their preferences. Officials from the state, NGOs and private organisations preferred English, while community members preferred mostly Ndebele and Shona. A Ndebele-speaking field assistant was engaged to assist with interviews that were conducted in Ndebele. The assistant was from the FC. She joined the organisation as a student attaché from Great Zimbabwe University in Zimbabwe. Her interest in policy and environmental governance issues made her relevant and useful in addition to language skills. Using a Ndebele speaking assistant positively influenced

obtaining information from Ndebele speaking communities. The fact that she was not from the community would likely not cause discomfort amongst villagers participating in interviews. Of course, trust issues would likely be a challenge because we were both from the Forestry Commission, the organisation imposing resource access barriers in the area. However, choosing an assistant from the villages could have potentially caused more problems because of the already volatile situation characterised by suspicion amongst villagers, for example, villagers suspecting each other to be informants of the FC. Thus, choosing an assistant from the village would have had greater disadvantage on the amount and quality of data obtained from local people.

Recording of interviews

Interviews, stories and discussions were recorded by using a recorder. Where respondents were not comfortable with being recorded or where it was not appropriate to use a recorder, notes were taken instead. Depending on the situation, notes were taken instantly or later decoded through a recollection process.

b) Participant observation

Another useful data collection technique was participant observation. Throughout the data collection period, I participated in many policy planning meetings and practical processes that generated valuable data for examining the militarisation of conservation. This section explains some of the processes and events in which I participated that became part of the data collection process.

Workshops and meetings

A substantial amount of historical and contemporary data was collected during workshops organised by the FC and other stakeholders before and during the data collection period. Meetings, seminars and conferences became part of participant observation because I did not merely attend these meetings but also participated in the discussions, and, in some cases, gave presentations. I also relied on conferences and workshops that I attended as an FC staff member before the fieldwork period. Some essential seminars and meetings I attended which benefit this study include:

- Integrated Result Based Management (IRBM) training of trainers' workshop for government departments and parastatals in 2013

- IRBM training workshop for the FC's managers in 2014
- The 7th stakeholder consultative workshop on the national forest policy (NFP) in 2015
- WWF-Hwange Sanyati Biological Corridor Project (HSBCP) handover ceremony in December 2015
- The FC's revenue generation strategic meeting in March 2016
- Meeting for village heads in Mabale, Dete in June 2016
- The WWF symposium on harnessing landscape connectivity and ecosystem resilience for sustainable socio-economic development in north-western Zimbabwe in August 2017.

Information from workshops before 2015 relied on records followed up through previous email communications, while notes and recordings were taken from meetings attended as from 2015. Data obtained from these workshops contributed to historical as well as current data.

Participant field observations

I spent eight months (April to November 2016) in Sikumi. For four of these (April to July 2018), I worked as a forest guard as part of examining ground activities of paramilitary forest guards and the process of militarisation in protected forests. The work chiefly involved anti-poaching operations during which I observed what the practice involves. These observations were often complemented by formal and informal discussions with forest guards to understand ground conservation practices further. Forest guards in Sikumi are organised into four groups, as Chapter Five will further also elaborate. An effort was made to work with all four groups throughout my experiences as a forest guard, to tap into the different perspectives on forest protection. I kept a daily field diary in which I documented all observations and reflective notes, while I recorded all conversations. Photographs and videos complemented field observations and interviews.

c) Secondary data

Secondary sources of data complemented interviews and participant observation techniques explained above. I collected additional information from previous studies (books, monographs, journal articles, Masters and PhD theses), reports, minutes, proposals, memoranda and newspaper articles. Permission was sought to access the FC record unit, where I obtained many internal communications. Some secondary data was accessed from the FC's Forest Research Centre (FRC) library, where previous researches and archives of

newspaper articles are deposited. The study also obtained vast information from legal and policy documents. It additionally benefited from social media platforms, such as Facebook and Twitter, as well as multimedia platforms, such as YouTube, where I obtained videos of historical national political events, and of debates on contemporary political issues. Social media helped in providing information related to the broader national political economy.

1.7.4. Data analysis

A considerable amount of text and pictorial data were collected from various sources. This data needed robust but systematic data analysis techniques. Data analysis began by generating contact summaries (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Contact summaries for interviews were created by transcribing all interview data. For archival documents, contact summaries were notes taken as a summary of reports, memoranda, proposals and other documents, while from the field diary, notes were rearranged to produce historical and structured accounts. These contact summaries became the material basis for further analysis and reduction through narrative analysis. Narrative analysis is a family of methods concerned with what is said, written or visually shown (Riessman, 2008). It includes analytical approaches such as thematic, structural and content analysis. I used these methods to analyse data through a reflective and iterative approach. The subsections below describe more closely how narrative analysis was done.

Thematic analysis

The central focus of thematic analysis is what was said rather than how it was told (Riessman, 2008). Thematic analysis was the second stage of data analysis, after the generation of contact summaries, and took an on-going comparative analysis procedure (Brummans *et al.*, 2008) involving repeated coding. Thematic analysis involved uploading all interview transcripts into QSR NVivo computer program, which can handle and organise large sets of text data. I used the computer program in an iterative process, to code sets of data and to categorise them into themes. Themes emerged through two methods: they were either framed based on insights from literature, or originated from the data itself. However, using thematic analysis alone could not provide in-depth analysis other than to show a generalised trend of what the data represent. The investigation, therefore, extended to structural analysis.

Structural analysis

The focus of structural analysis is how stories are told and structured. Structural analysis became particularly important for comparing stories told by different people about similar events because different respondents structured their stories differently. This analysis involved analysing sequencing of stories, the tone of voice and facial expressions. It also involved analysis of how metaphors were used to explain experiences, emotions and meanings about conservation enforcement (Herman & Vervaeck, 2005; Riessman, 2008). As part of the analysis, I also paid attention to how the broader and local political economy described in Chapters Three and Four shaped narratives. Thus, structural analysis provided an expanded understanding of themes emerging from the thematic analysis.

Content analysis

Content analysis was a combination of thematic, discourse and framing analysis and was used to analyse documents such as reports, memos and letters, proposals, speeches, legal, policy documents, and field notes. Most official documents could not be retrieved from record keeping. Information from the documents was entered manually into matrices, arranged in chronological order and essential themes identified. Organising the matrices in chronological order made it possible to follow the evolution of topics/discourses before generating connected interpretive stories.

Determining prominent themes

Whether or not an issue (referred to as a node in NVivo) was dominant and worth pursuing was determined using hierarchy charts produced in NVivo (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013). I used hierarchy charts of sources to compare the amount of coding per source. These charts determined sources heavily coded at specific nodes. Thus, the pattern of themes could be analysed according to sources. Hierarchy charts for nodes were also used to compare the amount of coding at particular nodes and to visualise dominant nodes for all coded text. There are two types of hierarchy charts in NVivo: treemap and sunburst charts. I chose the treemap over sunburst hierarchy chart because it was easier to compare the sizes of different aspects of data using rectangles rather than curved segments. Rectangles were sized by coding frequency, thus the larger the rectangle, the more significant the frequency of nodes coded under the theme.

1.7.5. Data presentation

The previous sections have described how data were obtained and analysed. This next section now turns to how findings are presented in this thesis.

Historical data is presented in context Chapters Three and Four, while all field data is presented in empirical Chapters Five, Six and Seven. Data presentation takes a narrative approach supported by quotations from interviews, excerpts from documents, workshop presentations, and field pictures. Most extracts are presented in their English translation, but in some cases, Shona and Ndebele phrases are used to maintain the rawness of what was said, and then translated into English. All identities for quotations used remain anonymous. Anonymity was maintained by either using pseudonyms, merely referring to respondents as anonymous, or in cases that involve officials from government or other organisations, simply as FC official or WWF official. Where more than one respondent of the same category was referred to, they were suffixed with numbers: for example, FC official 1, FC official 2, respondent 1, respondent 2, anonymous woman 1, or anonymous woman 2.

1.8. Researcher positionality

The previous section briefly gives a hint of my positionality in the research process. Let me further elaborate on this. At the time of the study, I was employed by the FC, the organisation that manages Sikumi, and the practices of which this study examines. During the data collection period, I was simultaneously reporting for daily duties as Research Officer with the Research and Training (R&T) Division and collecting data. Thus, I had the advantage of examining state practices from inside its bellies. I had access to FC records and could attend various meetings and workshops as a staff member. I could additionally seek the audience of senior FC officials without challenges. Thus, I was well positioned with regard to inside policy and practice information, as well as data collection itself, compared to an outsider. The research topic is quite a sensitive one because it uncovers state practices and produces a discussion that is beyond the comfort of state discourses. It is expected that accessing information and case study areas for such a study would be a challenge for an outsider.

My positionality had apparent advantages, but also limitations. The primary barrier was with data collection at the site level. Disclosure of my identity worked to my advantage in some cases, but came with disadvantages in others. One of the significant drawbacks was a trust issue particularly with members of the community, who were hesitant to open up about

illegal activities and their experiences with forest guards. Trust was mainly a challenge with community members who had been previously arrested. Another disadvantage was around personal safety. In one incident, an angry villager threatened to harm me after discovering I was from the FC. I, therefore, became cautious about disclosing my FC identity. Where I felt it would ruffle feathers, I merely disclosed my University of Cape Town identity. The challenge was distinguishing when to use which identity because some respondents were comfortable with my FC identity leading to more-open discussions. However, others remained unsure of how I was going to use the information collected. In the next section, I describe other limitations of the study independent of my positionality.

1.9. Study limitations

Several circumstances and situations restricted research methods. Although these limitations were beyond my control, I also demonstrate how I endeavoured to address these challenges so that conclusions made in this study remained valuable.

a) Working with forest guards

Working with forest guards presented great opportunities for examining how militarisation unfolds on the ground but came with limitations. This section describes some of the restrictions experienced.

Anti-poaching patrols

I decided to join anti-poaching patrols as an approach to examining ground conservation practices. Participating in anti-poaching activities was a risk considering that I was not trained for such operations. Anti-poaching involved long patrol walks in the forest. A single patrol covered a total radial walk of about 30 km per day. The distance was exhausting enough, but unbearable daytime temperatures made it worse as the heat came from both above and from the hot Kalahari sand below. Thus, participating in anti-poaching activities on a daily basis was impossible. I, therefore, set aside three days a week for resting during which I did less strenuous data collection activities. There is, however, a chance that, by solving the problem of exhaustion, I created another one. I could have missed useful anti-poaching events during days I did not go on patrol. However, I believe that the data collected when I was less strained remained helpful in responding to research questions and making meaningful study conclusions. However, there were still chances that forest guards behaved

differently in my absence and presence, so that certain information remained beyond my reach.

Wild animals

Anti-poaching patrols naturally invade wildlife space. So, sometimes, we were forced to detour when invading areas of large fauna, such as elephants and buffalos. The patrol direction changed, sometimes the patrol mission changed too, affecting access to potentially useful field data. It was not easy to overcome this challenge because forest guards controlled patrol direction. Besides, safety was vital for successful completion of data collection. The rich sources of data you will engage with, in this study, are because I chose to remain safe rather than pursue dangerous missions.

Gender

Being female and working mainly with male forest guards limited collection of data from camping activities². Daily anti-poaching activities by forest guards take two forms in Sikumi: either they are conducted from the base station, or guards are deployed to the forest for seven days during which patrol activities originate from their camping site as the base station. I could not join forest guards while on camping because of safety and ethical issues involved with sharing a tent with male guards. Forest guards offered an extra tent, but I was terrified of sleeping alone. As a result, I did not camp with guards and potentially missed out on events during camping. The study, therefore, relied on daily anti-poaching activities originating from the Dete offices base station. These data were sufficient in understanding what militarised law enforcement entails.

Anti-poaching records at Sikumi

Obtaining historical anti-poaching data from reports was limited to a few available anti-poaching reports. Currently, it appears that, for some time now, reports have not been handwritten but verbally presented to forest protection unit officials or sent by mobile phone. Therefore, most of the anti-poaching data presented in this study are based on field observation with reference to a few historical reports that were available. Other historical

² Although the FC employs and trains female forest guards, all forest guards in Sikumi are male. The FC, however, also has a policy that prevents female guards from anti-poaching activities. Female guards are usually deployed to static duties such as security of FC property.

information on anti-poaching relied on discussions with forest guards regarding their previous experiences.

b) Local people's experiences

Ethnicity and language

Being Shona studying a mostly Ndebele community had its data collection restrictions. Some villagers insisted that I learn to speak Ndebele before interviewing them, giving the impression that they were not comfortable speaking a different language. I, therefore, discovered how to greet, approach and leave homesteads, and express gratitude. While, my interest in learning the language warmed many villagers, which helped with breaking the ethnicity and language barrier, it was not enough to engage in profound conversation during interviews. Thus, quantity and quality of information on local people's experiences could have been compromised.

I, however, worked with a Ndebele field assistant who helped with translations into Shona and English. Villagers often consented to have a translated conversation, but I cannot entirely confirm that they were comfortable with the arrangement, a situation that could have also restricted what and how much they told. Furthermore, while translation solved the problem of language, it was still difficult to establish whether the translation to Shona and English represented all the information, and in precisely the manner people relayed it. There was a risk that translation from Ndebele to Shona or English diluted the rawness of stories. Another challenge was that probing for clarification could only be based on how the information was translated. Therefore, use of a Ndebele assistant was based on the trust that a competent job was done and issues sought for, well understood. However, after being exposed to the language for a couple of months, I could pick themes from Ndebele conversations and used this knowledge to complement those from translated interviews. Most villagers also agreed to be recorded providing an opportunity to seek a second translator, where necessary, although the chance to probe on some issues was no longer available. Where a second translator was used translations were not far from the first translator. Therefore, although ethnicity and language restricted data collection, efforts were made to ensure that sufficient data was collected and correctly interpreted.

Indifferent key informants

Key informant interviews, mainly with those previously arrested by forest guards for illegal resource access, were an important data collection technique. However, the method proved to be restrictive where key informants did not want to speak. Nothing could be done with informants who did not want to respond. Ethical issues had to be observed to ensure participation was not coerced, while other respondents willing to share their stories were sought.

Challenges with snowballing

In some cases, key informants were not comfortable disclosing other villagers involved in illegal resource access. In such cases, examination relied on experiences of one or two people. Although the information may not be representative enough, it gave the study an idea of how arrest processes for illegal resource access occur, the level of violence involved and how people may be affected by it. Moreover, experiences from other resource categories, such as firewood collection, hunting and grazing, taken together provided a bigger picture of local people's experiences with militarised conservation.

Women were not forthcoming

Most women were not willing to communicate their views. Their failure to communicate was a data collection limitation particularly during interview sessions where their husbands were present. They either gave short responses or preferred their husbands to respond even on matters that concerned them as women. To overcome this challenge, I resorted to interviewing women during firewood collection, in community gardens and at water sources, where mainly only women would congregate. Although the number of male respondents was more than females, I am confident that women were well represented in issues that concern them.

Verifying cases of violence

Authenticating truth in stories told by local people as well as those by forest guards was challenging. Since I was from the FC, there was a probability that local people raised false accusations against forest guards hoping that they would be implicated. It is also possible that forest guards were going beyond the law in enforcing conservation practices. While verification was done, it still could not be determined whose story was correct, as each side

blamed the other for not telling the truth. Some forest guards admitted to accusations of violence, while others labelled villagers as ‘liars’ and ‘attention seekers’. However, stories told by villagers during different interviews were sometimes very similar in ways that suggested levels of truth. The study, therefore, also relied on structural analysis to verify the authenticity of experiences.

Despite the presented study limitations, the data obtained in this study was adequate, valid and sound for the purposes of responding to key research questions, drawing meaningful conclusions and future implications.

1.10. Ethical considerations

Many ethical issues were observed during data collection. Although I am employed by the FC, it was essential to seek written permission through the Human Resources Department for access to information from the various departments within the organisation. I also requested permission from surrounding community leadership to conduct research in their areas. In both cases, authorities were briefed on research objectives. Individual participants were also informed about the research before their participation. Children were interviewed with the consent of their parents. This study, therefore, ensured voluntary involvement of organisations and respondents, since participants were not coerced. Thus, data collection methods respected people’s decisions and boundaries. The identity of respondents remained anonymous during cross-referencing.

As part of the study briefing session, institutional affiliations and identity were disclosed. Consent forms were available for those who agreed to sign. However, most respondents were not comfortable with written consent forms. Verbal agreement was in such cases considered as consent to participate. Approval was repeatedly checked at the beginning of all interviews conducted. The use of voice recorders and cameras was done with permission from the research participants. All data collection techniques were carefully chosen, appropriate language and dress code adopted to respect the rights and culture of all participants involved.

My safety during fieldwork was necessary considering that I was working in a forest with deadly wildlife, alleged deadly poachers, and working predominantly with men. Throughout the data collection period, I remained alert and expanded the accountability network for my safety. I did this by periodically reporting, in writing or by telephone, to FC officials and my supervisor at the University of Cape Town. I also requested a briefing session on lifesaving

skills before joining guards on anti-poaching activities. These safety briefs were on-going throughout my engagement with forest guards.

Lastly, this work unearths sensitive state practices, which could have implications for my relations with the FC. Besides, given experiences of some people who have opposed or questioned state practices, this work could have consequences on my safety. The Zimbabwean environment has not been entirely conducive to discussions outside state discourse. This research comes across as sensitive in a way because it exposes violent state practices, also policy and operational deficiencies of the state forest authority. During one of the meetings in which I represented the FC, a presentation on the preliminary findings of this work raised the interest of officers from the Central Intelligence Organisation, in the office of the president, who questioned my positionality with the state. I have, therefore, ensured that all data from the various sources is presented and cited as obtained as a precaution against issues that could come out as sensitive, and placed against me.

1.11. Thesis organisation

The research agenda has been set by introducing the study problem, what the study seeks to achieve and how it aims to accomplish these achievements. Below is a summary of what will be delivered in the rest of the thesis.

Chapter Two elaborates the conceptual aspects engaged in this study using insights from military sociology, political geography, ecology, science, and gender studies, all which support a multidisciplinary political ecology conceptual and analytical framework. It shows how extant literature has framed militarisation and violence, discusses emerging theoretical debates and demonstrates how this study engages with these conceptual discussions. It is against these debates that the rest of the thesis seeks its contribution by providing alternative thinking and expanding the scope of some critical frames around militarisation and violence in conservation.

Chapter Three sets the broader national political and economic contexts of Zimbabwe by touching on three issues that are important for understanding militarisation and violence in conservation. First, it demonstrates that violence in Zimbabwe's protected areas is related to the problem of land and its re-distribution. Second, it shows that economic and political issues interface in ways that inform militarised conservation practice. Third, the chapter illustrates that the adoption of militarisation in conservation is part of a broader national

imperative on use of force. The chapter, therefore, proves that the factors motivating the militarisation of conservation cannot be apoliticised. It demonstrates that the militarisation of conservation is part of broader political processes of ecology and environmental conservation.

Chapter Four provides the political-economic context of Sikumi Forest Reserve. The case study context is juxtaposed against the broader national political setting discussed in Chapter Three. It describes site-specific characteristics that position Sikumi as a valuable resource for state economy, state authorities responsible for area management and private organisations with business interests. The chapter further demonstrates how these values contrast with those of people living around the protected area. These issues are raised to highlight the nature of relationship between the state and local people, how national and global political economies control local level interactions over resource access and the subsequent adoption of violent practices in conservation. Overall, the chapter sets the scene for the empirical evidence presented in Chapters Five and Six.

Chapter Five examines the manner in which the state uses military practices to control resource access and how these practices unfold on the ground. It does so by narrating lived experiences of paramilitary anti-poaching activities by forest guards. The chapter unravels the mechanics of militarised forest protection, in the process uncovering dynamics and complexities associated with the implementation of militarised conservation policies in protected areas. It additionally demonstrates why and how the objectives for militarised conservation shift from halting armed poaching to preventing local people's resource access. The chapter concludes by suggesting that militarised policies may have more consequences on local people than on those poaching resources for commercial purposes.

Chapter Six picks and further examines conclusions made in Chapter Five by turning to local people's experiences with militarised conservation enforcement. Using four resource categories, firewood collection, timber collection, grazing and bushmeat hunting, it highlights the ramifications of militarised conservation practices on people who still depend on enclosed resources for their livelihood. The chapter also reveals the nature of violence experienced by local people at the hands of paramilitary conservation units. It concludes by arguing that the shift in focus, of militarised anti-poaching methods, to local people results in the asymmetric use of force and violence, and that discussing this violence must be addressed in terms of far-

reaching social and economic consequences against people living in, or adjacent to, protected areas.

Chapter Seven returns to the broader political ecology issues by examining the factors facilitating militarisation and violent conservation practices. It reverts to the national and local political-economic contexts presented in Chapters Three and Four, traces some significant political and economic events at the national and local level, and examines their influence on violent conservation practices. The chapter discusses the role of the state, non-governmental and private organisations in together facilitating the use of force in conservation to the detriment of local people. It concludes by suggesting that, while conservation discourse around extinction underpins militarisation and violence, they are facilitated by factors beyond conservation itself.

Chapter Eight synthesises research insights emerging from the study by broadening and discussing them in relation to the study problem and objectives, and within the context of existing literature and study setting. The chapter discusses the texture and nature of militarisation unfolding in protected forests showing the factors that make militarisation different from what is documented in wildlife cases, before suggesting alternative thinking around the militarisation of conservation. It also discusses the various forms of violence emerging as a result of militarised conservation practices and their effects on local people, and draws a framework for understanding conservation-based violence in protected areas. Lastly, it discusses the factors facilitating these forms of violence and evaluates ideas on accumulation by securitisation and green-grabbing. The chapter ends by presenting three key research insights and broad thesis arguments.

Chapter 2: Conceptualising the militarisation of conservation

2.1. Introduction

Chapter One introduced this study as broadly situated within a political ecology framework. By focusing on concepts that shape the militarisation of conservation as a political process of resource control, this chapter goes into the belly of political ecology. In five sections, the chapter provides a careful delineation of these concepts demonstrating how this study adopts and uses them as lenses for understanding the militarisation of conservation. The first section offers conceptual clarification, from a vast body of literature, of the central terms of this thesis, which are military, militarism and militarisation. It shows how the study uses these concepts by picking relevant indicators for understanding militarisation in conservation. The second section connects militarisation with the idea of securitisation. It explains how the two different concepts come together in analysing the militarisation of conservation. In the third section, I clarify linkages between militarisation and violence, however, without delving much into the vast and vibrant conceptual debate of violence itself. The fourth and final section turns to how present-day conservation scholarship frames militarisation, securitisation and violence by turning to some dominant concepts emerging around the militarisation of conservation. It closes with a guide for engaging with these issues. The chapter concludes by valuing the multi-faceted nature of the conceptual framework and its importance in seeking to cover new ground along with rethinking and expanding the framework for understanding militarisation and violence in conservation.

2.2. Military, militarism and militarisation

The terms ‘military’, ‘militarisation’ and ‘militarism’ are theoretical terms understood and applied differently across a variety of academic disciplines. It is useful to delve into these conceptual debates before setting the boundaries of use in this study.

2.2.1. *Military, paramilitary, civilians*

The starting point is to be conceptually clear about the terms ‘military’, ‘para-military’ and ‘civilians’ as they form the basis of the concepts of militarism and militarisation. According to the Oxford Dictionary, the term ‘military’ is both a noun and adjective describing armed forces of a country and anything connected to armed forces, respectively. Conceptual implications of these dictionary meanings have, however, been debated. For example, Skjelsbaek (1979) draws our attention to two distinct usages of the term. He notes that the

military can be described from both legal and social perspectives. The legal sense, in similar ways to dictionary meanings, refers to the military as uniformed personnel in the armed forces. According to Lang 1968 cited in Skjelsbaek (1979:214), the sociological definition of the 'military' "implies an acceptance of organised violence as a legitimate means for realising social objectives". Similarly, for Cock and Nathan (1989), the relationship between the military and society cannot exist without war as a central theme. To these scholars, therefore, the military is not only a social organisation but also one that is an organised armed force.

The primary challenge with the legal approach is that different countries have different ways of describing the military, particularly conceptualisation of non-combatant members, such as paramedics, cooks and drivers (Skjelsbaek, 1979). Similar conceptual challenges also complicate views on what the 'para-military' means. The 'para-military' is a central unit of analysis in this study and it is, therefore, important to clarify the context in which the term is used. Cambridge and Oxford dictionaries refer to a 'para-military' as a group that is, in structure, organised in ways similar to how the army is organised. Although a paramilitary force can work together with the military, they are not a legal establishment. However, in many African countries, police officers, often recognised as paramilitary in other parts of the world, are part of state military structures and, thus, recognised as legal organisations, while legislation, policy and discourse formalise paramilitary establishments such as park and forest rangers or municipality police. In the Zimbabwean context, for example, the military is "the entire state-security apparatus (soldiers, police, intelligence, and prison services) because senior military figures and war veterans have been deployed to head these strategic security institutions" (Mangongera, 2014:68). This view, then, includes forest guards and park rangers in conservation because they are headed by former members of the police and military personnel. Thus, as the term 'military' is used in the subsequent sections and the rest of the study, it is informed by state security structures in the Zimbabwean context, where the paramilitary is constitutive of the state security apparatus.

Challenges with sociological perspectives come with distinguishing 'civilians' from the military and paramilitary. The International Committee of the Red Cross keeps a database of the Customary International Humanitarian Law, also known as the law of war and armed conflict, domesticated by over 50 countries. This database shows that most countries, including several African states, agree that a civilian "is any person that does not belong to

the armed forces and does not take part in *levée en masse*^{3,4}. However, conceptual complications arise around how to define military personnel that are civilianised, for example, when military personnel are given non-military societal functions. For example, it has happened in Zimbabwe that the military has invigilated national primary schools' examinations in the absence of school teachers. For this reason, Skjelsbaek (1979) remains more general in his clarification. To him, a civilian is anyone who does not take part in organised violence. His conceptual description is, however, not clear on how to explain situations where civilians organise themselves to participate in violence against each other, for example, the Kilosa killings between herders and farmers in Tanzania (Benjaminsen *et al.*, 2009) or range wars between cattle herders themselves (Butler & Gates, 2012). Another conceptual issue arises concerning how to define civilians that are given military functions as shown by Bernazzoli and Flint (2010) and Mangongera (2014), yet not recognised as formal military units such as with paramilitaries. In addition, in militarised contexts, civilians become generally prepared for war. Adelman (2003) questions the 'civiliansness' of people in such settings.

To distinguish civilians from the military, civilians, in this study, are people who are not part of a military or paramilitary organisation and not led by military personnel in and out of service in the production of violence. This approach distinguishes the military from civilians in ways relevant for understanding the consequences of using military personnel and strategies for conservation on civilians, who are, in this case, people living in, or adjacent to, protected areas.

2.2.2. Militarism

Militarism has been explained in multiple and different ways. By unpacking militarism and its corollaries, I do not focus on obtaining a distinct conceptualisation; instead, I review the various understandings and pick common threads relevant to this study. This section will, therefore, explore some of these conceptions and close by sifting an appropriate conceptual guidance.

Focusing on third world militarism, Albrecht (1977) explains that militarism covers aspects such as militant patterns of decision-making processes. These decision-making processes are characterised by the use of force to suppress opposition, and nationalistic attitudes, which

³ Mass mobilisation or uprising

⁴ https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/customary-ihl/eng/docs/v2_rul_rule5: Accessed May 2018

usually legitimise the use of force to achieve national goals. Thee (1977) focuses his clarification on the influence that the military has on international and domestic civilian affairs. He explains:

Under the term militarism, I subsume such symptoms as a rush of armaments, the growing role of the military in national and international affairs, the use of force as an instrument of prevalence and political power and the increasing influence of the military in civilian affairs (Thee, 1977:296)

Klare (1978) resonates with Thee but clarifies his understanding differently. He believes militarism is

[t]he tendency of a nation's military apparatus (which include the armed forces and associated paramilitary, intelligence and bureaucratic agencies) to assume ever-increasing control over the lives and behaviours of its citizens...and for military values (centralisation of authority, combativeness, and xenophobia) increasingly to dominate national culture, education, the media, religion, politics and the economy at the expense of civilian institutions... Militarism then is a dynamic condition characterised by the progressive expansion of the military sphere over the civilian, rather than a static fixed phenomenon whose contours can be accurately mapped (Klare, 1978:121).

Ben-Eliezer (1998) appears to draw from Klare's thinking. He writes about militarism in the context of complex relationships between the military and society, while Cock and Nathan (1989), Charlton and May (1989), Adelman (2003) and Bernazzoli and Flint (2010), who follow scholars such as Enloe (2007), tend to agree that militarism is broadly an ideology whose preference for solving societal conflicts is embedded in military practice. When Skjelsbaek (1979) reviews encyclopaedia articles, he similarly observes that militarism is generally perceived as a doctrine and policy orientation that values war-like attitudes, application of violence, and domination of the military over civilians. He, however, discovers in the process that not all definitions emphasise militarism as ideology; others tend to focus on the size of the army and expenditures on growing military regiments. He, therefore, extends his understanding of militarism to military build-up –what he calls excess and relating to excessive use of violence. Overall, Skjelsbaek, understands militarism as the “the expansion of the military beyond certain, usually not very well defined bounds” (Skjelsbaek, 1979:216). His notion of excess also surfaces in Klare's definition above in which he uses phrases such as ‘progressive expansion’ and ‘increasing domination’; also in Thee's conceptualisation in which he refers to force as ‘instrument of prevalence’ and ‘a rush of armaments’.

Skjelsbaek also introduces to the conceptual debate, liberal and Marxist views of militarism. He explains that the liberal position is not concerned with class interests neither does it justify the reasons for the use of violence. The Marxist school, on the other hand, believes that, when the governing exploiting class consciously uses violence for the wrong reasons, it is considered as being militaristic. In the Marxist tradition, Skjelsbaek explains, ‘wrong reasons’ focus on issues around capitalism and suppression of any forces that regress capitalistic objectives. Aspects of class structures and justice are also raised by Klare (1978) as relevant internal factors that support militarism.

The common thread portrayed in the literature reviewed here demonstrates that militarism should be understood as an ideology that values the use of force as a means of solving societal challenges or of achieving specific societal goals. This study follows the same conceptual trajectory. Skjelsbaek rejects the Marxist approach based on it relying on a single cause. In conservation, however, militarisation of protected areas is a political process tied to territorialisation (Vandergeest & Peluso, 1995) dispossession, securitisation and capital accumulation (see, for example, Benjaminsen & Bryceson, 2012; Fairhead *et al.*, 2012; Massé & Lunstrum, 2016; Ojeda, 2012). Militarisation is discussed as a practice constitutive of fortress conservation; one that defines social class structures by creating winners and losers (see Brockington *et al.*, 2008). Thus, despite Skjelsbaek’s rejection, understanding militarism in this study follows the Marxist tradition due to its relevance in the conservation context.

Analysis of militarism and militarisation is often categorised into dimensions of militarism (Skjelsbaek, 1979). Some writers refer to these dimensions as variants, shades and indicators of militarism (Thee, 1977), others speak of dimensions of militarisation (Ross, 1987). It is my observation that the path analysis of militarism and militarisation takes also depends on how militarisation is conceptualised. Thus, before turning to the framework for analysing militarism and militarisation, it is prudent to visit the conceptual differences or linkages between ‘militarism’ and ‘militarisation’, which isn’t an easy task, but essential process for charting a clear and useful conceptual framework for understanding militarisation in conservation.

2.2.3. Militarisation

Existing literature uses militarism and militarisation interchangeably. “Theorists of armed forces and society”, argue Charlton and May (1989:15), “operate with confusing and confused concepts, notably ‘militarisation and militarism’ which have no generally accepted

definition". However, most scholars who write about militarism and militarisation attempt to draw the conceptual boundary between these two terms. Some provide clear-cut boundaries, while others remain vague. This review does not focus much on the strength of distinction between the two words, instead, on emerging conceptual trends from which a lens for this study can be drawn. There are currently two trends in literature: one group tends to conceptualise militarisation as a social process, while, to the other group, militarisation is concerned with military spending and military build-up. The following subsections explore these trajectories.

Militarisation as a social process

According to this group, militarisation is a social process through which militaristic values and ideologies not only become an ability to drive social change, but are also used to control civilian affairs. Cock and Nathan (1989) describe this process as one characterised by intrusion into civilian space and one made possible through mobilisation of resources. Thee (1977:296) provides a similar conceptualisation by describing militarisation as "an extension of military influence to civilian spaces". These two understandings are related to Ross (1987), who sees excessive use of force as constitutive of the process of militarisation. They concur with Charlton and May (1989) who write about militarisation as a process characterised by expansion in the use of military units in civilian space. Other conceptualisations sharing similar thoughts include that by Enloe (2000:3) who expands: "militarization is a step-by-step process by which a person or a thing gradually comes to be controlled by the military *or* comes to depend for its well-being on militaristic ideas". When this happens, Adelman (2003) believes militarisation also then becomes a product of a naturalisation process in which values of military culture obtain a place in society as the new normal. Bernazzoli and Flint (2010) sum up these understandings of militarisation by describing them as simply a process in which society and the military interact. But, there is also a discursive approach to understanding militarisation as a process. Lutz (2002), for example, proposes that when societal values change in ways that legitimise the use of force, that change has to be viewed as a process of militarisation. She further suggests that such societal changes are dependent on race, class gender and sexuality.

Together, this literature demonstrates that militarisation is a product of militarism, but Charlton and May (1989) complicate this assumption. They argue that militarism and militarisation may occur independently of each other depending on the context. In their

analysis, high levels of militarisation can occur with low levels of militarism and vice versa. This analysis is a valuable insight, which demonstrates that determining whether militarism and militarisation are mutually inclusive or exclusive need to be verified not just by site-specific studies as suggested by Lunstrum (2014), but also by ethnographic documentation of militarisation as a process as it unfolds on the ground. For example, study findings, as shall be demonstrated in detail in the subsequent chapters, show that adoption of military ideologies does not necessarily translate to high-level militarisation in some protected areas. These findings indicate that studies in political ecology still lack conceptual clarity on militarisation as a process, and how to engage 'process' as a methodology for understanding it. This lack of transparency currently gives the impression that adoption of military ideology in conservation has practically turned protected areas into highly militarised zones characterised by the extrajudicial killing of people, and hence, deadly landscapes. The contribution by Charlton and May (1989), is, hence, a useful lens to think with in examining the militarisation of conservation.

Militarisation as military build-up

The second group of scholars generally agrees that militarisation occurs because of military build-up. Military build-up is discussed in literature regarding the size of the military; how much a country spends on arms production at the national level or imports at international level. It may also refer to arms transfer between developed and developing nations (Skjelsbaek, 1979; Thee, 1977). Examples of military build-up are demonstrated in examples given by Hook (1988) who positions Japan as a militarised economy because it uses government funds in growing the military through arms production. Using the model of South Africa, Cock and Nathan (1989) explain that militarisation of a country can be seen by the size of its arms industry and interactions between the private sector, and the national defence forces. Writing about militarisation in the Third World countries, Albrecht (1977) challenges that military ideology alone is not sufficient to shape the process of militarisation. Militarisation will largely depend on military build-up, through the transfer of arms and military technology from developed countries. Countries that have high-value resources such as crude oil, minerals and ivory could also use money generated from these resources for arms purchases. But Ross (1987) gives a more encompassing explanation of military spending and build-up. He expounds:

Military spending is the size of arms forces, arms imports and production; it is also distinguished by the army's rising demands upon society and the economy and consequently, by a possible accompanying increase in the military's political role and influence and its actual appropriation of the state apparatus. It is this type of militarisation that enables third world nations to engage in domestic and international violence of the most modern and industrialised variety (Ross, 1987:564).

Clarification on whether militarisation should be understood as a social process or military build-up is, therefore, dependent on how militarisation becomes linked to militarism. I have here sifted two threads for understanding militarisation as far as it relates to militarism. I have also already explained that this study is theoretically inclined to Marxist theory and, consequently, to militarism as an ideology that values the use of force as a means of solving societal challenges or of achieving certain societal goals concerning politics of capitalism and social class. Because the study grapples with the expansion of military practices in civilian spaces such as conservation and the interaction of these practices with society, it is drawn towards understanding militarisation as a process. However, the study also deals with the extent to which there is military spending for conservation and how that influences militarisation as a process. Thus, the supporting role of 'spending' is acknowledged as an important aspect of enabling 'process'. A combination of insights from militarisation as process and as build-up, therefore, provides the overall framing of the study. This conceptual evaluation having been reached, I now draw insights from literature to develop a framework for analysing militarism and militarisation in conservation.

2.2.4. Framework for analysing militarism and militarisation

There are several suggestions on how to investigate militarism and militarisation. Scholars that view militarisation in the context of military build-up use dimensions of militarism and militarisation that focus on military expenditures, armed forces growth rates, arms production, and the number of wars over time (for example, Ross, 1987). Those lacking a distinct position on militarisation tend to combine elements of process and military build-up, for example, Klare (1978), Thee (1977) and Skjelsbaek (1979). I choose to pick conceptual elements from a wide range of frameworks rather than rely on a single framework. The elements are selected based on their ability to facilitate examination of militarisation, and its consequences in conservation.

Table 2.1: Framework for analysing militarism and militarisation

| Dimension | Analytical guide | Source |
|----------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| Ideological militarism | Wars are the result of human decisions conditioned by factors external and internal to the human mind. | (Skjelsbaek, 1979) |
| <i>i. Militarism of the mind</i> | “Ready acceptance, endorsement and enjoyment of violence is a central element of the militaristic mind.” | (Skjelsbaek, 1979:220) |
| | “Authoritarian personality is likely to use physical violence as a means of punishment and is less likely to disobey the order to apply excessive violence.” | (Skjelsbaek, 1979:220) |
| | Forms of group identifications such as nationalism and tribalism may result in violence against those who do not belong to or share the values of such groups. | (Skjelsbaek, 1979) |
| | Threat, revenge, supremacy, military strength, order, destruction are examples of militaristic thinking. Those with an aggressive mind are most likely to pride themselves with these values than they would with concepts such as forgiveness and trust. | (Skjelsbaek, 1979) |
| | The military mind and militaristic attitudes are conditioned by socialisation processes of indoctrination, usually through training and inculcation of certain | (Cock & Nathan, 1989; Thee, 1977) |

| Dimension | Analytical guide | Source |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| | values. | |
| <i>ii. Values</i> | Glorification of military/paramilitary personnel as a sign of masculinity, strength, loyalty linked to a cause | (Cock & Nathan, 1989; Skjelsbaek, 1979; Thee, 1977) |
| | Values attached to human life, for example, where there is a disregard for human life may be correlated to militarism. | (Skjelsbaek, 1979) |
| | Nationalism, tribalism and other forms of group identification may result in violent criminalisation of members of another group (opponents) as a means of defending one's group. | (Cock & Nathan, 1989; Skjelsbaek, 1979; Thee, 1977) |
| | Military symbols, like uniforms, are valuable to military personnel, also to society and have psychological effects on both. | (Skjelsbaek, 1979; Thee, 1977) |
| <i>iii. Emotional characteristics</i> | In addition to what the militarist values, believes and thinks, what does s/he feel? Are they emotionally blunt or do they lack empathy? | (Skjelsbaek, 1979) |
| Behavioural militarism | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The way militarism and violence are acted out or excessive use of violence • Use of actual and latent force and threats • Excessive use of force is more likely cases of asymmetric power relationships | (Skjelsbaek, 1979) |
| Structural | Pertains to | (Cock & Nathan, |

| Dimension | Analytical guide | Source |
|---|---|---|
| militarism | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The organisation of military-civilian relations • Militarisation as a political process | 1989; Skjelsbaek, 1979; Thee, 1977) |
| <i>i. National economic and political level</i> | <p>Focus on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Size of the military sector (regarding, for example, military spending, and the actual number of military personnel) in relation to other areas of government • Relationship of the military with these sectors • The relationship between the military and national political institutions, for example, use of the military, by governments, to suppress democratic forces of groups with different opinions • Increased military influence in decision-making processes | (Cock & Nathan, 1989; Ross, 1987; Skjelsbaek, 1979; Thee, 1977) |
| <i>ii. Inter-national economic level</i> | Relations between the rich and developing nations including the transfer of arms and technology from industrialised to non-industrialised countries | (Ross, 1987; Skjelsbaek, 1979; Thee, 1977) |

Thus, following the framework illustrated in Table 2.1, examining militarisation of conservation pays attention to analysing the values supporting militarisation, how these values are indoctrinated in those who perpetrate violence, and the effects of such social processes in producing militaristic attitudes. The analysis also focuses on examining how ideology manifesting through values, hostile attitudes and emotional characteristics translates into visible actions of violence and how these behavioural mechanisms unfold. Examination

additionally pays attention to structural issues. While structural militarism, as illustrated in literature, recognises the need for militarisation to be examined as a political process, it appears to be limited to attributes and indicators related to military build-up. These are valuable insights, but the study adds to this category, legal and policy aspects for their significant role in shaping values, attitude and the behaviour of (para)military forces, hence also crucial in analysing the militarisation of conservation. Furthermore, it is suggested in literature that military spending does not necessarily result in war, and that military ideology does not necessarily translate to high-level militarisation, such as, as argued by Charlton and May (1989) in section 2.2.3 above. The study also takes note of these insights in examining the texture and nature of militarisation in protected areas and uses empirical evidence presented in Chapter Five to confirm these assertions.

2.3. Militarisation, securitisation and violence

Section 2.2 above delineated conceptual aspects around the terms, military, militarism and militarisation, and subsequently developed a framework for examining the militarisation of conservation. This section explains the use of ‘securitisation’ with militarisation, having realised that these terms are often discussed in the context of security. It also clarifies the relationship between militarisation and violence, and how these terms are used in this study. The first part, therefore, focuses on the extent to which the terms securitisation and securitism are different or similar to militarism and militarisation, in the process showing how they are used in examining the militarisation of conservation. The second part turns to violence and the importance of recognising it as integral to the process of militarisation.

2.3.1. *Securitism and securitisation*

Brock (2008) suggests that securitisation is a strategy that is motivated by threats, one that may involve the use of militarisation as a method of achieving the needed security where non-military means for mitigating risks are unsuccessful. She writes:

The securitisation of non-military issues may promote public peace building, but also the militarisation of non-military matters like development cooperation (civil-military cooperation). Also, the complexity of the non-military problems may support those who ask for military solutions or at least for an army to stabilise a situation as a precondition for working on non-military issues Brock (2008:51)

Thus, threat can be seen as a determining factor for whether or not security is needed, as well as the nature of securitisation required. In South Africa, instruments of defence (against

threat) together make the security establishment comprising the department of defence, and the police (Cock & Nathan, 1989). The South African Defence Force (SADF), for example, is legitimised to defend the country against all forms of threats that may include the preservation of life, health and property (Satchwell, 1989). Similarly, in Zimbabwe, the Zimbabwe Defence Forces (ZDF), Central Intelligence Organisation (CIO), Zimbabwe Prison Services (ZPS) and the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) belong to what is called the Joint Operation Command (JOC), a state-security establishment against all forms economic, political and social threats (see Mangongera, 2014; Masunungure, 2008). These examples demonstrate that militarism is a critical element of securitism in Africa. Hence, in using the terms militarism/securitism, militarisation/securitisation, it is upon the realisation that there are close linkages between securitisation and militarisation, the latter being a method of providing security or securitisation against forms of threat. Linkages between securitisation and militarisation demonstrated here become relevant for examining militarisation in conservation, particularly where there is a perceived threat to high-value resources and belief that only aggressive approaches can mitigate this threat.

2.3.2. Violence

I have shown in sections 2.2.2 and 2.2.3 that militarism and militarisation are used in this study to refer to an ideology of using force, and the influence of these ideologies in managing societal issues. The preceding section has shown the relationship between securitisation and militarisation. I now show how we cannot omit a conversation on violence when discussing securitisation by militarisation. Feld (1977) informs us that application of force is the primary occupation of any military organisation. Likewise, Bernazzoli and Flint (2010:158) recognise military professionals and militarised civilians as “specialists in violence”, while Dandeker (2013) expands:

At the heart of (military) culture and way of life of the armed forces is the idea of organised violence: the need to plan, prepare for and apply lethal force on behalf of the state in pursuit of its political objectives ... violence may lie at the core of the military, but through the connections of that violence to the state and its sovereign legal power, it becomes force (Dandeker, 2013:36-37).

These insights on violence confirm that, indeed, militarism is founded on values of use of force and violence, and that, where military strategies are a preferred method; violence is by nature constitutive of militarisation and securitisation. In conservation, violence, although with contention from political ecologists (for example, see Peluso & Watts, 2001), has roots

in Malthusian perspectives, which link conflict and violence to resource scarcity and security. It is proposed by Malthusian scholars that environmental degradation creates or perpetuates social conflicts (Homer-Dixon, 1994) and that degradation in itself is a threat equal to war (Conca, 1994). It has also been shown by Mitchell (2004) that Malthusian students view natural resources such as minerals, oil, timber or wildlife as scarce commodities that need to be defended from threat through national and international (para)military forces if peace is to prevail. It can, thus, be picked from these examples that biodiversity “is replete with imagery war and conflict” (Duffy, 2014: 821), be it human-wildlife conflict, community conflicts, or the war by the state to save biodiversity from decimation.

Violence, then, cannot be omitted from discussions around securitisation by militarisation. Violence is usually described, following its dictionary meaning (for example, the Oxford dictionary), as acts of physical force with the intention to harm in physical or psychological ways. Examples of violence tend to focus on homicide, assault, robbery, and rape because these are the most central forms of observable violence. Studies in the militarisation of conservation often follow these rigid frames of violence (for example, Duffy, 2000; Dunlap & Fairhead, 2014; Neumann, 2004; Norton, 2015) without further synthesis of the broader social, political and economic effects constitutive of other often less-spoken-of forms of conservation-based violence. As this study engages with violence, it takes note of this gap and goes beyond person-to-person violence as a way of expanding the concept of violence in conservation. Study findings demonstrate that violence in conservation goes beyond direct to broader, social, economic and political forms of violence. How this violence unfolds is shown in Chapters Five and Six, while its typology is discussed in Chapter Eight, all to demonstrate that violence is not only constitutive, but is also a broader consequence, of militarisation.

2.4. Militarisation, securitisation and violence in conservation

The concepts of militarisation, violence and securitisation have become central in understanding the militarisation of conservation. In the past decade, adoption of military practices in conservation have received considerable attention in political ecology resulting in many concepts emerging around militarisation and violence. Chapter One gave a brief background of these concepts. This section revisits and reviews the usefulness and deficiencies of these concepts with the objective of developing a framework that complements Table 2.1 explained in section 2.2.4 above.

2.4.1. Killing, war for conservation

The killing for conservation thesis emerges from the work of Rosaleen Duffy's PhD thesis in which she widely interrogates wildlife policy in Zimbabwe (Duffy, 2000). There are many insights to which she draws our attention in this work: for example, racial, party and class politics concerning wildlife conservation, the role of NGOs and sustainable development, and community involvement in wildlife management. I, however, focus on her interrogation of state force, concerning securitisation of wildlife species using militarised anti-poaching techniques. The highlight of her work in this regard is that the militarisation of conservation is characterised by militarised campaigns institutionalised by shoot-to-kill policies. In her view, this approach is the deadliest conservation enforcement policy ever recorded. She qualifies the deadliness of these efforts by quoting the death of 170 poachers between 1983 and 1993; the indemnification of Parks Rangers in 1983, which enabled rangers to kill people without facing legal charges; the subsequent outcry by human rights organisations over extrajudicial executions; and condemnation of killings by Zambian members of parliament. She also strengthens her view by quoting phrases used by government officials such as 'full-scale war' and 'contacts', which, in her view, denote the production of war for conservation. She additionally qualifies the deadliness of militarised policies when she constantly refers to the presence of a 'war on poachers'. For example, she describes as follows:

The war on poachers deeply affected regional relations...(Duffy, 2000:50)

The war on poachers filled the gap left by the end of the liberation war for military personnel who transferred to Parks Department. (Duffy, 2000:65)

Duffy (2000) develops her idea of killing for conservation in Duffy (2014), further describing the militarisation of conservation as 'waging a war to save biodiversity'. While she is guided by her work, she also uses insights by Neumann (2004), who, based on evidence from Tanzania, Kenya, Malawi, Botswana and Zimbabwe on enforcement of shoot-to-kill policies and killing of people argues as follows:

War is now a common model and metaphor for conceptualizing and planning biodiversity protection in Africa. Consequently, there is a new moral geography wherein parks and protected areas have become spaces of deadly violence ... deadly violence has become normalized in African national parks (Neumann, 2004:813).

To support his argument, Neumann reports over 157 people killed in Zimbabwe, 100+, 300+ and up to 50 and 90 people killed in Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania, and Botswana, respectively.

The overall impression emerging from these writers' work is that the militarisation of conservation is characterized by extremely deadly violence involving the death of people.

This work is essential for this study because it poses critical questions around the moral and ethical justifications of designating parks as war zones and places of violence against humans in defence of non-human species. However, the challenge with the killing, war for conservation thesis is that it is based on wildlife conservation, yet conclusions drawn appear to blanket all spheres of biodiversity conservation. Findings in this study, as demonstrated by evidence in Chapter Five, show that not all protected areas reflect this deadly representation of militarisation in conservation. Sikumi is not separated by any physical barriers from Hwange and could be regarded as being in itself a wildlife area, yet it shows a different picture of what Duffy portrays about park management in Zimbabwe. What these findings suggest is that the framing of protected areas as places of 'war' is case- and context-specific. Chapter Eight expands on research findings, and the conceptual and methodological implications not captured in the scholarship on killing and war for conservation.

2.4.2. *Green militarisation*

Lunstrum (2014) frames green militarisation within the context of halting rhino poaching in South Africa's flagship Kruger National Park. Green militarisation refers to the "the use of military and paramilitary actors, use of technologies and partnership in pursuit for conservation" (Lunstrum, 2014:817). Three issues emerge from Lunstrum's work. First, she argues that spatial factors shape green militarisation. In the case of Kruger, use of military and paramilitary personnel, technologies and partnerships are encouraged by its location as a borderline between Mozambique and South Africa, which makes Kruger and South Africa prone to Mozambican armed poachers and invaders. Green militarisation is also shaped by the topography and terrain, which makes it difficult for active ground patrols, hence an increase of paramilitary staff, deployment of soldiers and introduction of air surveillance such as drones to assist ground forces. Second, and related to existing literature on militarism discussed in section 2.2.2, green militarisation is motivated by ideologies of national sovereignty and security. In the case of Kruger National Park, Lunstrum argues that framing of poaching as a national sovereignty and security issue has led to greater violence. Third, her work shows that these spatial and ideological values result in heavily militarised and increasingly dangerous landscapes. Although the South African National Parks does not practice shoot-to-kill, Lunstrum argues that the number of deaths proves that green militarisation and values authorising it have gone deadly.

Lunstrum's work has become one of the central pieces for discussing the militarisation of conservation (cited by 114 Google scholar, 55 Web of Science, 68 SciVerse by 13 March 2018). However, some of her critics think thus:

It is not only the militarisation of conservation around Kruger National Park, and the GLTP⁵ that is striking, but also the broader range of violent practices engendered by the rhino poaching crisis and concomitant drive to save South African Peace Parks (Büscher & Ramutsindela, 2016:10)

Büscher and Ramutsindela (2016) here acknowledge that green militarisation is useful, but argue that it could be more useful if discussed in terms of green violence. In their view, a green violence approach goes beyond green militarisation. Others think that green militarisation “runs the risk of simplifying what is, in reality, a complex and more contested process than is being given credit for” (Shaw & Rademeyer, 2016:173). These two scholars critique the methodology upon which conclusions on green militarisation are drawn. They argue that a broader range of sources could have been used than to limit to interviews with environmental personnel. Using more comprehensive sources, they further explain, informs green militarisation also from the perspectives of institutional change and political processes.

In addition to these two critiques, it is my view that green militarisation can be more valuable as a concept if it is further understood in the context of its ground operationalisation rather than from the perspectives of why it occurs and who is involved. I have highlighted earlier in section 2.2.3 that process issues have been limitedly captured in studies of the militarisation of conservation. For this reason, literature is so far not clear on the extent of green militarisation or how it can be examined. Study findings presented in Chapters Five and Six confirm the inadequacies of the concept of green militarisation and the importance of process as a methodology for understanding how militarisation unfolds in protected areas.

2.4.3. Accumulation by securitisation

Accumulation by securitisation brings together three crucial conceptual issues: securitisation of resources, militarisation as a means to do so, and dispossession as an effect of doing so. The concept falls within critical literature on territorialisation of nature (Vandergeest & Peluso, 1995), neoliberal conservation practices, green grabbing, green security and accumulation by dispossession (see Benjaminsen & Bryceson, 2012; Brockington *et al.*, 2008; Büscher, 2009; Büscher & Dressler, 2012; Fairhead *et al.*, 2012; Kelly & Ybarra, 2016;

⁵ Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park

Massé & Lunstrum, 2016; Ojeda, 2012). This scholarship acknowledges two things. First, it recognises that securitisation produces protected areas as spaces of capital accumulation. Second, it demonstrates that neoliberal conservation and green-grabbing (forced removal of people for the purposes of conservation projects) has evolved from earlier versions of colonial conservation where conservation and economics were together objectives for securitising resources to recent moves of opening up land specifically for the commodification of resources as illustrated by Massé and Lunstrum (2016) who posit thus:

At the heart of accumulation by securitisation in the GLC⁶ is hence the enclosure of both land and wildlife, which enable a securitized green spatial fix for the over accumulation of capital (Massé & Lunstrum, 2016:228).

However, this scholarship does not surface how even such current practices are in themselves evolving with changing national and global political economies. Chapter Seven touches on some of the mechanics of these changes. For example, it shows how conservation enforcement agents, traditionally used to enable a securitised spatial fix for capital accumulation, have themselves become revenue generation sources for the state through their anti-poaching and conservation law enforcement functions.

2.4.4. *Green violence*

Büscher and Ramutsindela (2016) develop the concept of green violence to explain issues on broader conservation-based violence, which presently fall in the blind spot of green militarisation. They join Nixon (2011)'s idea of slow violence and Carson (2012)'s silent spring on violent environmental effects of agricultural chemicals on nature and human life, which demonstrate that conservation-based violence has to be understood beyond the usually reported interpersonal violence. Using the case of Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park (GLTP) and activities of the Peace Parks Foundation (hereafter Peace Parks) they draw to our attention three forms of green violence, namely, material, social and discursive, which, according to them, best describe the tactics used by Peace Parks to pursue their objectives and aspirations of nature conservation.

Based on what they are defended for, Peace Parks are spaces of conservation, local people development and regional integration (Andersson *et al.*, 2012). In developing green violence, Büscher and Ramutsindela argue that the agenda of the Peace Parks contradicts what it must be known for, particularly due to the emergence of green violence in Peace Parks areas.

⁶ Greater Limpopo Conservancy

Based on their argument, and also bearing in mind that local people are central to the idea of trans-boundary parks, a framework on green violence that attends to green violence in relation to local people in protected areas of this nature becomes useful for expanding the concept of green violence. The categories of violence they provide are useful because they challenge our ideas on militarisation and violence. However, going beyond explaining green violence from the context of those who promote it (for example, Peace Parks and online media) to those highly likely to experience it (local people) will expand the conceptual framework for analysing conservation-based violence in protected areas. Chapter Eight provides this extended analysis, and develops a more expanded conceptual framework.

Table 2.2: Analysing the militarisation of conservation: A guide from conservation

| Concept/ thesis | Analytical guide | Contributors |
|--------------------------------|---|--|
| War, killing for conservation | Shoot-to-kill policies | (Duffy, 2000; |
| | Indemnification of rangers | Duffy, 2010; |
| | Deployment of military | Duffy, 2014; |
| | Support from NGOs | Neumann, 2004) |
| | Death of people (poachers, bystanders and local people) | |
| Green militarisation | Use of military and paramilitary actors, technologies and partnerships to enforce conservation | (Duffy, 2014; |
| | Motivated by spatial qualities of protected areas and values of national security | Duffy, 2016; |
| | Deadly force, the arms race | Lunstrum, 2014) |
| Accumulation by securitisation | The securitisation of (wildlife) resources for capital accumulation by states and private organisations | (Brockington <i>et al.</i> , 2008; Kelly & Ybarra, 2016; |
| | Securitisation by military means | Massé & |
| | Dispossession of local people | Lunstrum, 2016; Ojeda, 2012) |
| Green violence | Broader conservation-based violence beyond green militarisation such as material, social and discursive | (Büscher & Ramutsindela, 2016) |

Table 2.2 summarises an analytical guide for examining the militarisation of conservation emerging from the political ecology field. As this study uses this framework, it pays attention to the extent to which protected forests reflect these ideas. Attributes are analysed regarding how they unfold in the case of Sikumi, for example, whether they occur in combination or not, and in light of the dynamics and political economy surrounding their manifestation. I use these attributes in conjunction with the broader analytical framework on militarisation and militarism framed in Table 2.1. By doing so, I additionally examine the extent to which conservation reflects aspects of militarisation and violence as demonstrated in studies from other disciplines.

2.5. Conclusion

The conceptual foundation of this study is embedded in militarisation concepts borrowed from studies on armed forces and society, and developed from studies in conservation and political ecology. The framework does not, therefore, rely on one particular insight but a combination of ideas from military sociology, political geography, political science and gender studies. The rest of the thesis now engages with these frames, which I will later return to after empirical evidence to discuss, evaluate and rethink the texture and nature of militarisation in protected areas that are different from national parks and the emerging forms of violence. Before delving into empirical findings, the next two chapters will first situate the political and economic context, more broadly in Chapter Three and specific to the case study context in Chapter Four.

Chapter 3: The political economic context of conservation in Zimbabwe.

3.1. Introduction

Understanding the militarisation of conservation is framed within a political ecology framework. The previous chapter has engaged with, and elaborated the conceptual aspects of political ecology. It is against this political ecology framework that this chapter now provides the political-economic context of conservation in Zimbabwe. The chapter focuses on issues related to land and resource access, economic and political environment, giving attention to how these issues lead to the adoption of military interventions in conservation.

These issues are presented in four parts. The first briefly visits the land question in Zimbabwe. It illustrates how a history of colonisation, territorialisation, securitisation and capital accumulation leads to conflicting ideologies over land under protected forests. The second turns to some significant economic events since Zimbabwe's independence in 1980. It demonstrates relationships between a declining national economic performance and increasing economic importance of land under protected forests and, hence, the need to defend land for financial security. The third part of the chapter traces the propensity for military strategies in Zimbabwe showing how the militarisation of conservation is situated within a militarised national setting, one in which use of force as a means of solving national threats has naturalised as the new normal. Against this historical land, economic and political setting, the fourth and last part provides a brief background on the development of military strategies, and the legal structures that legitimise these strategies in conservation. It ends by citing notable militarised interventions in the history of forest management, which I will expand and examine in the empirical chapters. The chapter concludes that military practices in conservation are located within a broad political economic setting that promotes the use of force.

3.2. History of land and protected forests

One reason that motivated the liberation struggle was the need to address unequal land distribution during the colonial era (Moyo, 1995; Palmer, 1990). While the Fast-Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP), implemented since 2000, endeavoured to address the unequal distribution of land, protected areas have remained under colonial legacy. These areas are not included in the land reform programme. Because of this exclusion, protected areas have

become exposed to invasions and illegal settlements, much to the disapproval of the responsible state authorities. The FC, for example, maintains that protected forests should strictly be reserved for conservation and national economic development (Forestry Commission, 2013) – the same goal that the colonial government pursued. In fulfilment of this goal, the FC has adopted various strategies to sustain the vestiges of colonial objectives. One of these strategies includes the endorsement of military conservation practices as a means of mitigating forest degradation. It, thus, becomes necessary to examine the militarisation of forest conservation within the history of land and protected forests in Zimbabwe.

When the British South Africa Company (BSAC) and first white settlers arrived in Zimbabwe around the early 1890s, land takeover and colonisation took place through the conquest of Shona and Ndebele tribes, which led to the first *Chimurenga* war fought between 1896 and 1897 (Mataya *et al.*, 2003). After the defeat of native Africans, white settlers took over prime land and displaced people to less productive land known, then, as native reserves (Kwashirai, 2009; Mataya *et al.*, 2003; Palmer, 1990). Loss of land by native Africans continued after Britain took over from BSAC in 1923. Legal frameworks, such as the Land Apportionment Act of 1930, which were characterised by racial discrimination, facilitated the further loss of land. Discriminatory legal structures saw the reoccupation of areas earmarked for native reserves (Mataya *et al.*, 2003; Moyo, 1995), gazetting of areas under commercial hardwood timber and wildlife (Kwashirai, 2009), and the deprivation of Africans from buying farms in the African purchase areas (Moyo, 1995). As racial division increased, blacks began to actively protest domination over land by minority white settlers as part of broader political struggles that led to the second liberation struggle during the late 1960s (Palmer, 1990).

Towards the end of the liberation war, redistribution of land received significant attention at the Lancaster House negotiations in 1979. The British government agreed to provide the new government of Zimbabwe with funds to buy out white-owned farms on a willing buyer willing seller basis during the first ten years of independence. It was hoped that these farms would be used to redistribute land to the majority of blacks that lost land during the colonial era (Moyo, 1995; Palmer, 1990). Based on this agreement, at independence, the new government promised that it would return the land to majority Zimbabweans through resettlements. The government demonstrated its commitment to this promise by putting in place enabling laws and policies, such as the Land Acquisition Act and the Constitution of

Zimbabwe, and facilitated their subsequent amendments (see Mutimukuru-Maravanyika, 2010). However, these legal amendments only targeted redistribution of white commercial farms. Land reform programmes, to date, exclude state-owned gazetted forests, national parks and those areas specified under national museums and monuments, irrespective that many people in these areas also lost their land during the colonial era. These enclosures remain under state control, fraught with contestations, yet government makes no plans for land reforms in protected areas.

Government excludes protected forests from land redistribution process because it has, since pre-independence, earmarked these areas for conservation and state capital accumulation through hardwood exploitation on a sustainable yield basis. The establishment of the Forestry Commission in 1954 following the enactment of the Trust Land Forest Produce Act of 1929, Land Apportionment Act of 1930 and the Forest Act Chapter 19:05 in 1948 was a deliberate strategy of securing gazetted forests for these twin objectives (see Kwashirai, 2009; Mapedza, 2007; Matose, 1997). The setting aside of some gazetted forests for photographic and hunting safaris and the establishment of the Ngamo Safaris business unit towards and after independence demonstrates that the post-independence FC not only inherited colonial conservation and capital accumulation practices but, supported by existing state structures, remains committed to sustaining this legacy. In 2013, thirty-three years after independence, the FC still argued that protected forests contribute to the Gross Domestic Product through tourism (Forestry Commission, 2013), the basis for why they should be a prioritised national asset (Forestry Commission, 2008). The FC has maintained this policy direction with minor changes. The current vision and mission statements of the FC uphold utilisation of resources (for capital accumulation):

Our mission is to contribute to national socio-economic development through effective regulation and capacity enhancement in the sustainable utilisation and management of forest resources⁷.

Our vision is to be a world-class leader in the sustainable management and utilisation of forest resources in Zimbabwe⁸.

There are also values of national heritage and future generations enshrined in these policy statements, which further legitimise dominion of the FC over protected forests. Thus,

⁷ See Forestry Commission official website <http://www.forestry.co.zw/>: Accessed 3/06/2018

⁸ See Forestry Commission official website <http://www.forestry.co.zw/>: Accessed 3/06/2018

parcelling out land within protected forests for land reform would conflict with state values of national heritage, conservation and, importantly, capital accumulation.

In support of the on-going national land reform, the FC has, thus far, suggested a forest-based land reform programme in which it expects forestry to be recognised as a viable land use option, however, only as a measure of mitigating degradation in resettlement areas (Forestry Commission, 2008). The FC does not make any provisions for this programme in protected forests. When the governor of Midlands Province requested for people illegally settled in Mafungautsi Forest Reserve to be regularised through ceding a piece of the protected forests for their legal settlement, his single-paged request was met with a 21-page response from the FC. The FC reminded him of the reasons such areas are important for conservation and national economic development, how they must be protected from encroachment, agriculture, grazing, timber and wildlife poaching, deforestation, uncontrolled fires and overall land degradation, if national goals must be maintained (Forestry Commission, 2013). Although there are formal provisions for de-gazetting protected forests, FC officials are adamant that illegally settled people are illegitimate, thus cannot be consulted or considered for the de-gazetting process. In fact, there is concern that if this happens in Mafungautsi, it will open doors for similar operations in other protected forests. The FC will then lose its power as the supreme forest regulator.

However, values placed on protected forests at the national level differ with those of people living within or adjacent to these enclosures. Most displaced people see in the protected forests, potential arable land (Mutimukuru-Maravanyika, 2010) and argue that they have been practising agriculture and accessing resources inside forests, as well as managing them, before they were reserved (Matose, 2002). Such differences have been the primary source of people-state conflicts in protected forests (Matose, 2002; Mutimukuru-Maravanyika, 2010). In 2008, the FC claimed in a National Forest Programme document submitted for funding to the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organisation, that its policy thrust had evolved from exclusive to inclusive approaches in line with its mission statement on sustainable utilisation (Forestry Commission, 2008). However, inclusivity was not a genuine change on the part of the forest authority.

In many cases, it was in response to conditions set by international donors that poured in money in support of shifting forest management towards bottom-up approaches, whereby local people take the lead in managing forests. When these donations came through, the FC

used them to strengthen its exclusionary policies. For example, Mapedza (2007) discloses that donations from Canadian International Development Agency were, in fact, used to enhance the FC's paramilitary forest protection unit, actions which were contrary to the cause for which the forest authority was receiving funding. These opposing actions demonstrate that the FC is unwilling to cede access to land and resources or share ownership with people in protected areas. Furthermore, at the time that the FC claimed to be inclusive in its approaches, it was simultaneously committed to the regulation of trade in indigenous hardwood timber and self-funding mechanisms (Table 3.1). Such commitments were intuitively incompatible with the inclusion of people in land and resource benefits.

Table 3.1: Forest conservation policy thrust (Forestry Commission, 2008:7)

| Period | Policy thrust |
|---------------------|--|
| 1920-1980 | Forest reservation; plantation development; commercial exploitation |
| 1980-1990 | Rural afforestation and community forestry projects |
| 1990-2000 | Co-management initiatives, benefit sharing and some attempts at devolution |
| 2000-to date | Emphasis on regulation, e.g., regulation of trade in indigenous hardwood timber products and innovative self-funding mechanisms/initiatives advocating forestry as a viable land use option across all sectors including urban settlements |

In 2015, the FC embarked on drafting a national forest policy, after having operated with several uncoordinated policy statements since independence. When the national forest policy commenced, there was an expectation that through a national public consultation process, the FC would revise land and resource access issues in protected forests. However, the current national forest policy still does not adequately address issues of local people's needs as far as they relate to protected forests, partly due to its reliance on existing land laws and reform processes that exclude protected areas. The goal of the forest policy is

[t]o manage, conserve and sustainably utilize forest resources, and to enhance the contribution of the forestry sector to development and social equity through active participation of all stakeholders for the benefit of present and future generations of the people of Zimbabwe (Government of Zimbabwe, undated:10).

However, the policy, which is in its final draft, continues to maintain the colonial integrity of protected forests as shown in Box 3.1.

Box 3.1: Policy statements for protected forests in Zimbabwe.

| |
|---|
| <p>Policy Statements</p> <p>The Government of Zimbabwe, together with stakeholders, will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Continue to set aside, protect and manage selected areas of the country as representative examples of the forest diversity of Zimbabwe.b) Extend gazetted forests to include those in catchment areas, steep slopes and other vulnerable sites as well as in wildlife corridors and permanent carbon pools.c) Halt and prevent illegal settlements in gazetted forests to maintain their integrity.d) Take measures to ensure adequate conservation of representative forest ecosystems and key species or habitats that are not represented in State forests.e) Create buffer zones around State Forests and, where appropriate, promote collaborative management of gazetted forest areas and buffer zones with the relevant local authorities for those areas and neighbouring communities to ensure sustainable management and protection of the gazetted forests while benefiting the adjacent communities and local authorities.f) Continue to use a fire management approach that maintains the ecological integrity of forests.g) Rehabilitate degraded forest areas through appropriate sustainable management practices.h) Promote the enforcement of environmentally sound forest practices in the execution of timber concessions.i) Introduce mechanisms to make the energy and agriculture sectors, as well as towns and cities, pay for watershed protection to improve their water supply.j) Support improved management of gazetted forests and encourage certification to enhance forest productivity and sustainability, biodiversity conservation and environmental protection. |
|---|

Source: Final draft National Forest Policy (Government of Zimbabwe, undated:11)

One of the very early forest policies in Zimbabwe focused on “the demarcation and reservation of natural forest reserves, the provision of funds for the protection of the forests and the close supervision of timber exploitation” (Mudekwe, 2007a:22). Thirty-eight years after independence, the government of Zimbabwe still promises to not only expand areas under protected forests but also set aside additional land to protect biodiversity. It continues to take measures against local people who access these areas for subsistence. The government

is still safeguarding its wealth accumulation interests, and allowing the same practice of timber concessions that caused massive deforestation during the 1920s to continue (see Kwashirai, 2009). It is even going further to push for certification of protected forests, a practice that has been previously limited to plantation forestry. The national policy, therefore, comes to reinforce state monopoly over land under protected forests, and is not concerned with land redistribution in these areas or at least involving local people in forest management despite the call over many years for community-based natural resources management.

Matose (2002), Maravanyika and Mutimukuru-Maravanyika (2009), and Nemarundwe (2003), supported by evidence in Chapter Six demonstrate how in light of existing policies on protected forests, people living in and adjacent to protected areas continue to be restricted to minor products, while high-value resources, such as land for agriculture, construction timber and bushmeat remain beyond the reach of many. Because of strict regulation of resource access by the FC, people resort to pilfering and sometimes sabotaging conservation efforts by causing forest fires, actions that further motivate the use of greater force by state officials resulting in a vicious cycle of conflict. According to Matose (2014), local people do not usually engage in open disputes. However, the forest authority has shown a propensity for the use of violent control measures, such as denying resource access permits, forceful evictions and dispersal methods that include burning people's homes as a way of forcing them out of protected forests. The situation worsened from 1991 when activities of foresters received the support of a paramilitary forest protection unit dedicated to day-to-day ground policing. The development of these events will be picked in the subsequent sections.

Thus, state violence in Zimbabwe's protected forests is underwritten by contradicting ideologies over land and forests, shaped by a history of colonisation, territorialisation, securitisation and state capital accumulation, on one hand, subsistence, livelihoods and development on the other. Exclusion of land under protected areas in current land reform policies further legitimises the use of force in pursuit of preventing local people from invading and settling in these forests. In addition to the unresolved land issues, the national economic context also shapes state violence in protected forests. The national economic decline, since 1980, has increased the value of land under forests. I briefly turn to this history in the next section to show the linkages between land, protected forests, capital accumulation and state-approved violence.

3.3. Economic recession and forest management

At independence, the Zimbabwean government replaced the Rhodesian dollar at ratio value of 1:1. By the end of December 1980, the Zimbabwean dollar (Z\$) was stronger than the United States dollar (US\$) at 1 US\$: 0.6236 Z\$⁹. After independence, public expenditure increased against a stagnant per capita income as the new government invested into health and education (World Bank, 2012). Inflation took a toll on the Zimbabwean dollar, which depreciated against the United State dollar (Taylor, 2015). As Taylor explains, a collapse in farm production as a result of land redistribution, failure of the banking system, involvement in the Congo war in 1998, and the 1999 drought are some of the factors that led to the declining economy. Because of inflation, Zimbabwe was unable to repay its foreign debts leading to suspension from the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The suspension meant that government had limited chances of borrowing money for national development. Inflation rates rose from 10 per cent in the 1980s, to 20 and 30 per cent between 1990 and 1997. Post-2000 became known as the period of hyperinflation. Inflation during this period exceeded 100 per cent (ibid). Around 2007, Z\$ 100 billion was unable to buy a loaf of bread. Since 2009 to date, Zimbabwe has no currency relying on multiple currencies such as the South African rand, US dollar, and the Botswana pula (personal experiences as a Zimbabwean citizen).

As inflation was taking a toll on Zimbabwe, the government introduced structural adjustment programmes as a measure of mitigating economic challenges. The first was the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) between 1991 and 1995, financed to the tune of US\$125 million by the World Bank (WB). The objective of ESAP was to transform Zimbabwe's government-controlled into a free-market-driven economy (World Bank, 2012). Several economic adjustments followed ESAP, such as the Zimbabwe Programme for Economic and Social Transformation between 1996 and 2000. One of the significant changes initiated by ESAP was fiscal reform targeted at reducing the size of government expenditure on civil service and parastatals. According to the WB report of 2012 cited above, although the government had reduced spending from 46 to 39 per cent of the GDP between 1989 and 1984, the civil service wage bill remained high while slow pace in parastatal reforms contributed to deficits. The government was, thus, coerced to embark on a restructuring

⁹https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/GOVPUB-T63_100_3a1c412279b9d41760aeb975bfc3fe27/pdf/GOVPUB-T63_100-3a1c412279b9d41760aeb975bfc3fe27.pdf: Accessed on 22/03/2018.

programme, which saw the commercialisation of most government departments. The impacts of these economic adjustments were felt differently. For example, before ESAP, by law, farmers sold their products only through the Grain Marketing Board (GMB) and Cotton Marketing Board (CMB). Deregulation brought by ESAP saw these parastatals losing market monopoly. Declining prices subsequently led to substantial financial deficits and to the gradual collapse of these enterprises (see, Masuko, 1998; Ranga, 2004).

These changes equally affected the forestry sector. Forest management activities were state-funded since establishment of the FC in 1954. However, from 1980, the financial relationship between the state and the FC gradually changed together with overall declining national economic performance. During the restructuring period, commercial forest activities became commercialised to form the Forest Company of Zimbabwe (FCZ). Initially, the FC wholly owned FCZ, which generated revenue for the organisation through plantations forestry. Later, FCZ was privatised and separated from the FC. Commercial forestry activities began operating as Allied Timbers, leaving the new FC with state activities that did not generate much revenue and relying on dwindling government resources. These state activities included Forest Extension Services, now Conservation and Extension (CONEX), Research and Development, now Research and Training, to include the Zimbabwe College of Forestry (ZCF) and Forest Industries Training Centre (FITC)¹⁰. The new FC contested reduction of funding for its activities. It argued that its activities were purely developmental with little scope for self-sufficiency and that it always depended on the state to underwrite its operations¹¹. The government did not reconsider FC's petition, instead, more economic adjustment programmes were introduced.

The latest structural adjustment programme that affected the FC is the Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation (ZimASSET) introduced in 2013 and inspired by the Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (Zanu-PF) manifesto. ZimASSET was introduced as a result-based management five-year policy agenda through which government departments and parastatals were encouraged to achieve economic growth in four strategic clusters by December 2018. These strategic clusters were food security and nutrition; social services and poverty eradication; infrastructure and utilities; and value

¹⁰ Restructuring and Commercialisation of the Forestry Commission –Minutes of Cabinet Committee on Commercialisation and Privatisation meeting 13 August 1997, Forestry Commission Records.

¹¹ Memo to the Office of the President from the Forestry Commission on outstanding issues on the restructuring of the 10/08/1997.

addition and beneficiation¹². Because state funding continued to diminish across all its departments and parastatals, the results-based system encouraged achievement of economic growth with minimum resources. During a result-based management training-of-trainers workshop held at Trout Beck Inn, Nyanga in 2014, a government official in the Office of the President and Cabinet, emphasised that lack of adequate resources was not an excuse for underperformance. Thus, that government funding for state activities had declined became politically accepted and departments were forced to produce results under unfavourable economic conditions. In January 2016, the FC was formally weaned from government funding. The announcement came in the middle of the five-year ZimASSET economic policy agenda. However, the FC was still expected to proceed with the state programme even without any support from the government. Since the government had terminated funding, it implied that the FC had to develop ways to finance its traditional activities as well as meet ZimASSET goals through the resources it manages.

As these changes were happening at the national economic and political arena, gradual termination of government funding for state forest activities also occurred within a much broader political economy. Post year 2000 witnessed the withdrawal of funding from major international donors for state activities, across all sectors in Zimbabwe (Andersson *et al.*, 2012). In conservation, funding for programmes such as Community Based Natural Resources Management was redirected to transfrontier conservation areas (TFCAs) programmes (Hutton *et al.*, 2005). Donors funding developmental work deliberately preferred any other country, not Zimbabwe, to host and manage financial resources¹³. This shift in the financial relationship between the state and non-state donors, most of whom were based in Europe and the United States, followed after the 2000 and 2002 parliamentary and presidential elections, which were reported in the press as being perceived as unfair by the international community (Andersson *et al.*, 2012; BBC., 2000). Before 2000, the FC had enjoyed funding from NGOs. This external funding complemented the dwindling government funding and supported the FC's internally generated financial resources. For example, out of the total recurrent budget allocation in the year 2000, 40 per cent came from government, 34 per cent from own revenue and 26 per cent from donors. The privatisation of commercial forestry activities, harsh economic policies and donor withdrawal, thus, plunged state forestry activities into financial crisis.

¹² Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-economic Transformation policy document, October 2013-December 2018 by Government of Zimbabwe.

¹³ Personal experience while working in the civil society in 2007.

Around the late 1970s to early 1980s, the FC had, however, established Ngamo Safaris, a wildlife utilisation and business unit¹⁴. The unit was established with a business idea to tap into the rapidly growing eco-tourism industry through hunting and photographic safaris in identified protected forests¹⁵. Proceeds from Ngamo Safaris constituted the bulk of the 34 per cent revenue that the FC generated, but these resources were ploughed back into conservation operations within protected forests. With the persistent national economic decline, the introduction of successive structural adjustment programs and continuous reduced government funding for forest activities, Ngamo Safaris not only became responsible for supporting conservation activities within protected forests but also turned into a ‘cash cow’ for the overall running of whole the FC. It began financing administrative costs, forest extension activities and, naturally, became over-stretched.

When government removed the FC from funding, attempts to bring back state forest activities on the national budget failed. The Ministry of Finance under former President Robert Mugabe’s administration argued that the FC was in a position to sustain itself because it is endowed with vast tracts of land and valuable resources¹⁶. The overall effect was mounting pressure on Ngamo Safaris as well as the Research and Training and CONEX divisions. Between January 2016 and July 2018, the FC has struggled to pay salaries and its creditors on time. It managed to pay up to March 2017 salaries in March 2018, while employees’ medical benefits scheme was suspended since March 2016 due to non-payment. Outsiders, such as consultancy companies called to assist with strategic planning, concluded that the FC faced threats of closure and loss of relevance if it did not obtain solutions to the financial crisis. This solution depended, foremost, on the FC generating revenue from resources it manages, a circumstance that was, and is, highly likely to increase use of force in defence of the last economic and survival hope.

But, the solution also meant that the government must embark on yet another restructuring programme for state enterprises and parastatal. Zimbabwe’s new administration, running under the banner of a ‘new dispensation’, decided to pursue reform processes since its takeover in November 2017. During his inaugural statement, the new President of Zimbabwe, Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa, stated the following:

¹⁴ Ngamo Safaris is a unit within the Conservation and Extension division, but due to its revenue generation importance, it operates like a standalone division.

¹⁵ Way Forward for Ngamo Safaris Forestry Commission Records Ref: FHO/F/109/2652.

¹⁶ Informal discussion with an FC official.

Our system of economic organisation and management will incorporate elements of market economy in which enterprise is encouraged, protected and allows just and merited rewards, while gainfully interacting with strategic public enterprises run professionally and profitably, all to yield a properly run national economy in which there is room and scope for everyone¹⁷.

As part of fulfilling this economic goal, the President announced a 100-day turn-around target during his first State of the Nation Address (SONA) in which the importance of improving performance and service delivery by parastatals received significant attention:

Madame President, Mr. Speaker Sir, Government has taken the bold decision to reform, commercialise or wind up some State Enterprises and Parastatals, which have been for a long time an albatross around the Government's neck owing to, inter alia, poor corporate governance, under-capitalisation, unsustainable salaries and allowances and excessive borrowing. A full programme of the reforms shall be unveiled during the first quarter of 2018¹⁸.

Reform of state-owned enterprises officially began in January 2018 (Share, 2018). The SONA impelled the development of a state enterprises and parastatal's short and medium-term reform framework. The process was led by the corporate governance unit in the office of the president, the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development and the State Enterprises Restructuring Agency whose task was to review the performance of state-owned enterprises and parastatals. Currently, the objective of the framework is to assist line ministries with disposing of non-performing parastatals. In line with these reform initiatives, the office of the president issued a circular to all line ministries for detailed self-assessment and proposal turnaround strategies for all state enterprises and parastatals under their portfolios¹⁹. Concerning the FC, the Ministry of Environment Water and Climate commented in response to the Office of the President thus:

The Ministry supports the recommendation to speed up the restructuring process for the Forestry Commission. There is, however, need to consider the following:

- All the bankable commercial aspects of the Commission were hived off during the creation of Allied Timbers more than 15 years ago

¹⁷ President Mnangagwa's inaugural speech, 24/11/2017 <http://www.insiderzim.com/mnangagwas-inaugural-speech-at-zimbabwes-new-president-in-full/4/>: Accessed on 18/05/2018.

¹⁸ State of the Nation Address by President E.D Mnangagwa, 20/12/2017. <http://www.veritaszim.net/node/2293>: Accessed on 18/05/2018.

¹⁹ Press statement by Hon P.A. Chinamasa, Minister of Finance and Economic Development on decisions made by cabinet on state enterprises reform on 12/04 2018 <http://www.sera.co.zw/category/latest-speeches/>: Accessed on 18/05/2018.

- The current structure of the Commission is mostly social and cannot be commercialised without affecting its statutory functions
- Commercialising the Commission in its current state will, in essence, create another Allied Timbers competitor
- There is a need for some Government support to enable the Commission to pull itself out of the current crisis²⁰

The FC was requested to respond to these comments before Ministry sent them to the office of the president. It added the following:

Whatever restructuring process is proposed for the Commission, it is essential to clear its current debts, which emanated from a sudden withdrawal of government financial support without measures in place to sustain its operational and administrative financial obligations. The Commission would still need financial support for at least 12 months to enable it to establish viable revenue generation projects to sustain itself thereafter²¹.

By the first quarter of 2018, the Cabinet Committee on State Enterprises and Parastatal development chaired by the Vice-President decided that the FC remains a regulatory authority²².

The impact of this decision is unclear regarding the future of funding for forest activities. Government heeded the FC's request and assisted in offsetting 12 months' (April 2017-April 2018) salary arrears. However, May salaries were still not paid by end-July 2018, suggesting that the FC may not officially be back on the Government payroll. However, whether the FC receives funding from the government to perform its regulatory role is not really the point. The point is that cabinet's decision for the forest authority to retain its regulatory functions demonstrates that the FC will, in the so-called 'new' dispensation, continue to operate within the confines of a colonial forest legacy and state bureaucracy underwritten by coercion. Reliance on force, which often involves the use of military tactics, is part of a broader past and present national imperative for resolving national threats. Therefore, the history of state-authorised and –directed military interventions at the national level becomes useful for understanding the context of militarisation, use of force and violence in protected forests.

²⁰ Proposed state enterprise and parastatals short and medium-term reform framework Ministry of environment water and climate 05/05/2018. Source: FC

²¹ Ibid.

²² Press statement by Hon P.A. Chinamasa, Minister of Finance and Economic Development on decisions made by the cabinet on state enterprises reform on 10 April 2018 <http://www.sera.co.zw/category/latest-speeches/>: Accessed on 18/05/2018

3.4. The state and military interventions in Zimbabwe

The perception that military strategies hold the solution to national threats is situated within historical government-military relationships dating back to the liberation struggle. During this period Zanu-PF, which has been the ruling party in Zimbabwe since independence, relied on its Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA) and Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA) military wings in negotiating the establishment of a majority government (Towriss, 2013). Government-military relationships and military interventions to political issues were not only crucial for Zanu-PF before, but also after, independence.

Between 1983 and 1987, the Zanu-PF led government again relied on its relationship with the Zimbabwe National Army, to oust ZAPU and its military wing (CCJP, 1997; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2012; Rwafa, 2012) in what was named the *Gukurahundi*²³ war fought in Matabeleland province of Zimbabwe. The state continued to use state security apparatus (army, police, Zimbabwe Prisons Services and central intelligence, also known as the Joint Operations Command-JOC) between 2015 and 2016 against cyber-coordinated protests organised by the #ThisFlag movement, an online-mobilised civil movement organised to protest against government. Involvement of the national military in events that led to the ousting of former President Robert Mugabe and takeover by his vice, and now President of Zimbabwe, Emmerson Mnangagwa, in November 2017, is yet another example demonstrating that the ruling government continues to rely on its security apparatus and use of force for political dominion. Members of the security forces instrumental in milestone events in the history of Zanu-PF's rule have been rewarded by being integrated into lucrative networks of wealth accumulation and posted to senior positions in government and parastatal organisations (see Alexander, 2013; Alexander & Tendi, 2008; Mangongera, 2014; Towriss, 2013) in a move to cement government-military relationships. The trend continues. When President Mnangagwa was sworn into office after the November 2017 controversial military takeover of power from former President Robert Mugabe, he appointed retired major generals and war veterans to senior positions in his government.

Placement of former security personnel in government structures has cemented government-military relationships and expanded the range of decisions and actions made by security apparatus in the everyday running of the country (Alexander & Tendi, 2008; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2006). It has, in the process, also supported well-coordinated adoption of

²³ *Gukurahundi* is a Shona term for 'the rain that sweeps away chaff from the last harvest'.

militarised campaigns in the form of ‘operations’ designed to solve any problem perceived as a national crisis or threat to the ruling government. The penchant for military responses to national economic, political and social crises by the Zimbabwean government was perhaps epitomised by the 1997 and 1998 civil protests over poor working conditions, increase in prices of basic commodities and general poor governance, which were perceived to be the most violent protests ever recorded since independence (Bradshaw & Ndegwa, 2000). During these protests, the government responded by engaging the army and police, resulting in civilian deaths, injuries and detention (Amani Trust, 1998). According to Amani Trust, the ruling Zanu-PF government blamed opposition parties and the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions for organising protests. Since this era, protests are usually perceived by the government as having a political agenda and therefore needing a political reaction involving a demonstration of force and power (Andersson, 2007).

After the events of 1997 and 1998, the Zanu-PF led government organised several militarised operations to deal with issues of national economy, politics, security, environment and health. An increasing number of such operations led to perceptions that Zimbabwe’s governance system had become a ‘government by operations’ (Mangongera, 2014; Masunungure, 2008). Some notable examples of militarised interventions include operation *Murambatsvina* (no to dirt) in May 2005. This operation was thought to be one of the state’s most ruthless campaigns (see, Bratton & Masunungure, 2007). The state used its security apparatus to forcefully destroy illegal housing structures in many urban areas under the pretext of controlling crime and reorganising the country’s urban settlements (Musoni, 2010). Another noteworthy state-led militarised campaign was against artisanal miners between 2006 and 2009. The police, army battalions and central intelligence sponsored by the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe (RBZ) were instructed to crack down on illegal gold and diamond mining activities under the flagship of national economic recovery (Spiegel, 2014; Towriss, 2013). Through operation *Chikorokoza Chapera* (Shona for: stop illegal mining), *Hakudzokwi* (Shona for: no coming back) and *Dzokerai Kumusha* (Shona for: go back home), a military-led expulsion of artisanal miners and informal traders resulted in more than 200 deaths of real and suspected illegal miners in Chiyadzwa diamond fields. The militarised campaign also left many civilians tortured and injured within a few months of operation (Centre for Research and Development, 2016; Nyamunda & Mukwambo, 2012).

While drastic state actions in these operations were justified upon collective national benefits, some scholars observe that violent campaigns against citizens were *de facto* a political

strategy to deal with opposition voters. For example, they evaluate *Murambatsvina* as being motivated by the loss of urban parliamentary seats in 2002 primary elections (Mangongera, 2014; Masunungure, 2011; Musoni, 2010), while the crackdown on Chiyadzwa was in response to the loss of votes in 2008 (Centre for Research and Development, 2016). Government intentions of retaining political hegemony by force became evident during the 2008 presidential elections. After failing to secure the majority votes in the first round of elections, the former President is quoted as having informed his party members “that in order to win the Presidential election runoff, the party has to establish a warlike and military-style leadership to campaign for [me]” (Masunungure, 2008:83). His statements legitimised the launch of operation *Wakavhotera papi* (Shona for: who did you vote for?) during the runoff preparations. Security forces led by the army unleashed terror on suspected and real opposition voters. The military was reported to have declared, in support of former President Robert Mugabe, that they would not support and salute anyone without a history of the liberation struggle (Alexander & Tendi, 2008). The army is said to have additionally threatened a military takeover if another political party won the presidential elections (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2006). It is estimated that more than 300 people died while many others were tortured, arrested and homes destroyed during the runoff preparations (Mangongera, 2014).

Events of November 13 to 21, 2017 are the most recent militarised intervention in Zimbabwe. Army generals led a campaign in which the military took it within its responsibility to bring under control socio-economic and political turmoil ravaging the country. The events led to the resignation of long-serving former president, Robert Gabriel Mugabe. These events together show that government-military relationships nurtured since pre-independence have naturalised the use of the national security apparatus as instruments of solving perceived national socio-economic and political threats. It is within this broad national militarised context that militarisation of conservation unfolds in Zimbabwe.

3.5. Military interventions in conservation

Militarisation in conservation began as early as the colonial era when white settlers created most protected areas and forcefully grabbed valuable resources. However, I am particularly interested in the development of militarised interventions after 1980. For scholarship, this era attracts today’s attention on the militarisation of conservation. For Zimbabwe, this era marked the militarisation of conservation after independence, a period that peace and

repossession was expected. During the mid to late 1980s, alleged Zambian armed wildlife poachers stormed Zimbabwean national parks. The Zimbabwean government declared illegal wildlife poaching of this nature as a threat to national borders, security and the heritage of *bona fide* Zimbabweans (Duffy, 2000). The framing of the conservation crisis as a national security threat led to the militarisation of rhino and elephant conservation. According to Duffy, shoot-to-kill policies were instituted while rangers received military training, were equipped with AK 47 automatic rifles and indemnified to kill ‘poachers’. The army and police support unit (the military wing of the police) was engaged to support park rangers leading to the launch of militarised campaigns such as Operations *Stronghold* and *Save Our Heritage*, since 1984. These operations left many suspected and real poachers dead, some who were local people. Although ZimParks authorities claimed that the intention of the policy was “not to kill poachers but to identify them before killing” (Hill, 1991:29), it is disclosed that, between 1988 and 1998, 178 suspected poachers were killed by rangers, with 1990 being the year in which more people than rhinos were killed (Bechtel, 1998; Duffy, 1999). The death of people in defence of conservation was, and continues to be, defended by the government through its authority, ZimParks, as necessary for the safety of rangers and biodiversity (Duffy, 1999).

The latest militarised campaign against armed poaching in Zimbabwe is operation *Nhaka Yedu* (Our heritage) launched in 2004. The government of Zimbabwe introduced *Nhaka Yedu* as an expansion of rhino protection in the Zambezi valley, specifically for the protection of elephants known as the Presidential elephants located in the north-west region of Zimbabwe. The police authored the *Nhaka Yedu* policy (considered a security document and therefore inaccessible) with input from ZimParks and FC authorities. The FC became involved because of Sikumi and other forests in the north-west region. The government officially mandated police to join patrol activities and to investigate cases of elephant poaching. It additionally authorised the police to make official statements to the press on elephant poaching in the region²⁴. The police are a national law enforcement organ. According to the Police Act Chapter 11:10 of 1995, last revised 2001, it is within the mandate of the police to enforce all laws of parliament in Zimbabwe, including the Forest Act. Their principal duties include crime investigation and apprehension of criminals. To the Zimbabwean government, wildlife crime is a crime, hence the involvement of the police force in conservation enforcement. Such reasoning has also been used to justify the militarisation of protected areas by private

²⁴ Interview with ZimParks official, 09/2016.

conservationist such as McCann (2017). Thus, the police *de facto* controls conservation in Zimbabwe.

A significant issue that operation *Nhaka Yedu* brings to light is that, while militarised campaigns in conservation were initially introduced for protecting wildlife in national parks, the practice of engaging (para)military personnel has found itself in protected forests, particularly those that are buffer zones to wildlife sanctuaries. However, before operation *Nhaka Yedu*, or more generally militarised wildlife policies, militarisation as a strategy in forest conservation originated from colonial conservation ideologies. Later, it was shaped by the liberation struggle, and after independence, by the *Gukurahundi* war. At the beginning of this section, I indicated that I am more interested in the era after 1980. However, the next part begins by briefly returning to the period before, to demonstrate how militarisation initially developed in protected forests independent of militarised wildlife policies of the 1980s.

3.5.1. Development of militarisation in forest conservation

Until around 1990, protected forests were managed by professional foresters supported by ‘patrol boys’ (see Kwashirai, 2009). A historical account shared by an FC official reveals that, at the time that white settlers evicted African natives and forests considered for reservation, most forest areas shared boundaries with Tribal Trust Lands²⁵. It became imperative for foresters to erect fences to separate protected forests from evicted people as a means of preventing encroachment into state private property. When local people resisted by damaging state physical boundaries, forest authorities were compelled to engage patrol boys who patrolled the perimeter of the fence, monitored its condition and repaired damaged areas. Forest officers picked patrol boys from a trusted pool of natives and armed them with baton sticks, which they used to ward off animals. These patrol boys reported to forest officers in the course of their duties. With time, local people became hostile towards patrol boys, accusing them of siding with the white settlers in disadvantaging them. After several acts of resistance, forest authorities resorted to providing patrol boys with handcuffs in addition to sticks²⁶.

During the late 1970s, the FC introduced wildlife as a core activity of forest management. The FC purchased white rhinos from South Africa, while plain game was translocated to selected protected forests such as Gwayi with the idea of increasing the value of forests for

²⁵ Areas that were officially designated for the African population after being expelled from forests.

²⁶ Interview with FC official 1/06/2017.

eco-tourism. Introduction of wildlife, however, also attracted increased hunting by local people who saw game as a ready source of protein. Villagers armed themselves with knobkerries²⁷, spears and hunted in the company of dogs while rhinos attracted commercial poachers armed with guns²⁸. These activities were incompatible with ideas of eco-tourism. Dogs, in particular, outpaced patrol boys, but having rhinos killed by armed poachers meant the FC could not sell its photographic safari product. The state authority was thus compelled to protect wildlife. It introduced guns to patrol boys²⁹.

Since the introduction of guns partly occurred because of increasing threats to rhinos in protected forests, it could also have been influenced by militarised rhino policies in national parks. However, historical accounts by FC officials demonstrate that rhino wars in national parks did not influence the development of militarisation in protected forests. They agree that, while there is an inclination of forest conservation towards wildlife practices, particularly in forests that are buffer zones to national parks, shoot-to-kill policies and rhino wars were restricted to Intensive Protection Zones (IPZs) inside national parks. When rhinos in protected forests became unsafe due to poaching, they were translocated to these IPZs. The execution of militarised rhino policies hence became restricted to these IPZs. Thus, according to FC officials, military strategies in forest reserves had already taken shape before and continued to develop after rhino translocation, with the sole vision to protect forests for conservation and economic activities, and not as a direct influence of wildlife policies of the mid-1980s³⁰. The FC officials, therefore, link militarisation in protected forests more to aspirations for commodification and marketisation of forest resources through eco-tourism, less to transient rhino wars.

However, militarisation in protected forests cannot be separated from the liberation struggle. During this period, forest authorities saw the escalating liberation struggle as a safety threat to foresters and property. Since forests were under the influence of white foresters, patrol boys, who worked in support of white men's rule, were at risk of being killed by the black freedom fighters. Government infrastructure was also to be at risk. A new breed of patrol boys tasked beyond preventing encroachment by villagers with sticks to protecting state infrastructure with guns, was now required. The FC no longer recruited patrol boys from villages as before. It now sought those who had some security background and with

²⁷ A kind of club characterised by a knob on the end

²⁸ Former patrol boy 06/2016.

²⁹ Former FC official 02/2016.

³⁰ FC officials 05/2017.

knowledge of guns, such as those that had worked as police reservists. Patrol boys used guns until after the *Gukurahundi* war in 1987. At the end of the war, the army called for the FC to return all rifles³¹.

However, the end of the *Gukurahundi* war coincided with the escalation of illegal wildlife hunting for subsistence and commercial purposes, posing a threat to the introduced eco-tourism project. *Hondo yemhuka* (war on illegal wildlife access), as one of the interview participants, framed it, obligated the FC to repossess guns. According to him, a new war had risen, in which people from Zambia “were running around with guns”, shooting at forest guards. However, since government considered protected forests as low-risk areas, it decided it was not necessary for patrol boys, who the FC had renamed as forest guards by the end of *Gukurahundi*, to use automatic rifles. Government handed over to the FC three-oh-three (303) rifles instead. As soon as forest guards were permanently re-armed with these rifles, their uniform changed from khaki to jungle green so that they could effectively ambush perpetrators of illegal activities³². The re-introduction of guns also made it necessary for forest guards, old and new, to receive training in weaponry discipline, handling and usage. Such training required to be led by a person with a military background. FC officials believed that only a candidate with a military background could inculcate discipline amongst forest guards³³.

In 1991, the FC hired a former police constabulary and war veteran to lead and restructure forest guards into a paramilitary guard force called the Forest Protection Unit (FPU). It could have been a former member of either the military or Zimbabwe Prison Services, as long as they had a military background. The recruited former service member became the forest protection officer. As the FPU grew in size to include static guards, the forest protection officer later rose to the position of chief security officer. The chief security officer developed the FPU into a more extensive security agenda, today known as the Forestry Commission Security (FCS)³⁴. The chief security officer became head of security supported by security officers, sergeants and corporals. He recruited forest guards from those who had previous military experience, such as former military, police or prisons officers. Most of these were,

³¹ FC official 02/05/2017 and former patrol boy 06/2016.

³² Former patrol boy, 06/2016.

³³ FCS official 6/04/2016.

³⁴ In discussing the FCS, hereafter my focus is on the FPU and not the static guards.

however, not happy with the remuneration and left the FC. After that, recruitment turned to school leavers³⁵. Table 3.2 provides an overview of these historical events.

Table 3.2: Development of militarisation in protected forests

| Period | Events | Monitoring & policing | Tools |
|---------------------|---|--|---|
| 1920s-1940 | Reservation policy | Patrol-men Foresters | Sticks, khaki uniforms |
| 1940s-mid 1970s | Resistance to forest enclosures by Native Africans | Patrol-men Foresters | Stick and handcuffs, khaki uniforms |
| Late 1970s- 1987 | -Introduction of wildlife management programme -The liberation struggle -Increased cases of hunting by Africans using dogs | Wildlife Ecologist Forest guards | Handcuffs and guns, khaki uniforms |
| 1987-1991 | -Rise of (armed) poaching -Establishment of the forest protection unit | Foresters and forest guards | Handcuffs and guns Jungle green uniform |
| From 1991 | -Formal military training of forest guards -Formalisation a paramilitary Forest Protection Unit -Establishment of the FCS -Integration of existing legal framework into the scope of the FCS | -Forest Protection Unit - joint operations with national park rangers and police -Inclusion of static guards on FC property | Handcuffs, 303, AK 47 and FN Rifles Jungle green uniform |

³⁵ FCS official 6/04/2016.

The FCS currently reports to the conservation unit under the CONEX division of the FC. The extension unit is based in Harare, but the conservation unit operates from Bulawayo closer to many of the protected forests. Administrative relationship between security and conservation functions within the FC is illustrated in figure 3.1. Overall duties of the FCS are concerned with the security of FC property including protected forests, but specific responsibilities differ according to ranks in the establishment. The chief security officer supervises security officers, develops security policies, systems and procedures, and reports to the Chief Conservator of Forests, who in turn reports to the Deputy General Manager responsible for the conservation and extension. He also develops security plans and strategies for anti-poaching and static operations in liaison with other national security agencies. The security officer develops security systems, issues out firearms, ensures proper use of firearms and supervises the whole unit under his charge. Sergeants supervise corporals and guards at their stations on a daily basis, and liaise with Foresters on conservation activities. They ensure that forest guards arrest offenders and hand them over to the police. The Corporal is the most senior of the guards. He supervises the rest of the guards and is responsible for gathering information during anti-poaching operations. This information is forwarded to the Sergeant, copied to the Forester. The task of the guard on the ground is to protect the property of the FC by guarding and patrolling. Every guard is tasked with arresting and surrendering offenders to the police through the Corporal and Sergeant³⁶. Activities of the FCS are supported and legitimised by a robust legal framework. The next section briefly outlines the power of forest guards.

3.5.2. Security powers

The FCS currently obtains security powers from Sections 1 and 3 of the Forest Act Chapter 19:05 of 1948, last amended 1999. Section 1 of the Act gives power to the FC to do anything for the purposes of protecting forests, while section 3 gives the Minister authority to appoint any person employed by FC or in any public service sector as a Forester for achieving the objectives of the Forest Act³⁷. At the passing out parade, all guards are lawfully appointed by the Minister for law enforcement³⁸. With this appointment, the power of the FCS becomes akin to that of Foresters. Reading the Forest Act together with the Criminal Procedure and

³⁶ Forestry Commission Security Manual.

³⁷ Forest Act Chapter 19: 05 of 1948 (last amended 1999).

³⁸ Forestry Commission Security Manual.

Evidence Act Chapter 9:07 of 1898 and the Criminal Law (Codification and Reform) Act Chapter 9:23 of 2004 further legitimises the FCS.

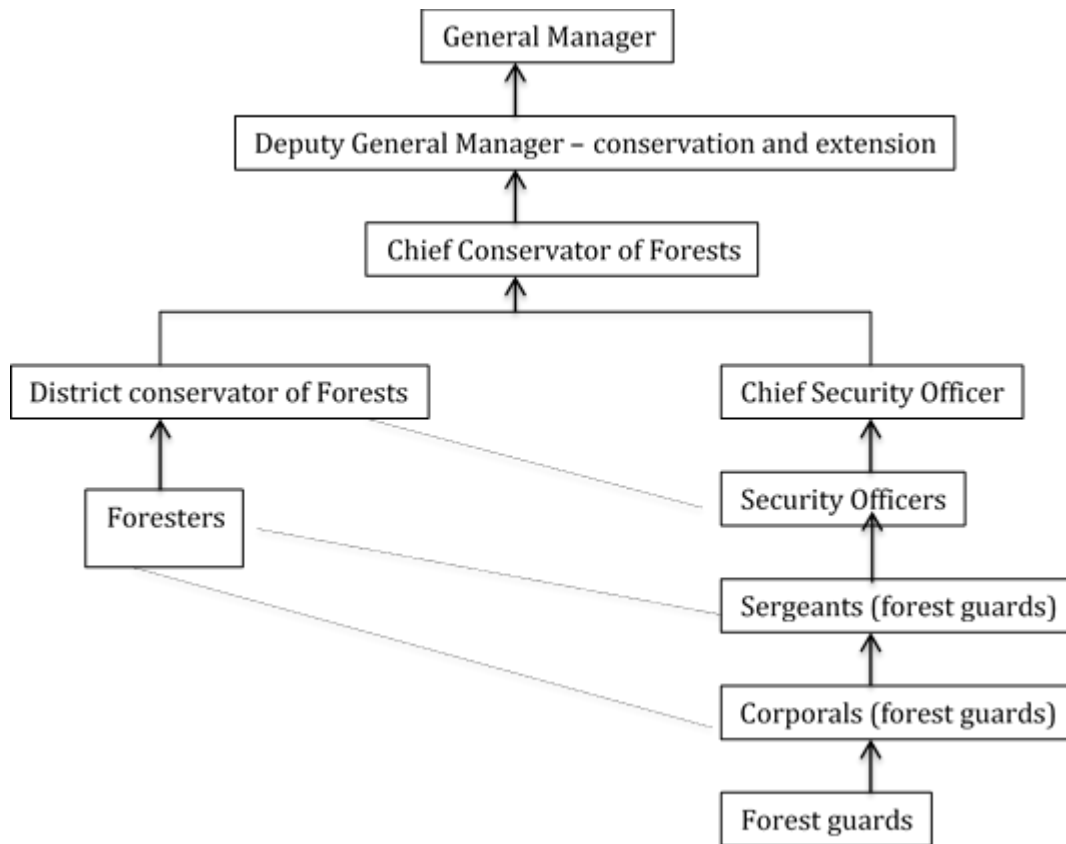


Figure 3.1: Administrative organogram for Forestry Commission Security. Source: Forestry Commission Security Manual

According to section 175 of the Criminal Law (Codification and Reform) Act, forest guards are peace officers. Within the provisions of this Act, peace officers are duly accepted public officials that perform public duties, which often include law enforcement and achieving departmental mandates (also see, Norton, 2015). Peace officers are granted certain rights for the purposes of performing their duties as public officers. For example, in the capacity of peace officers, the law protects forest guards and grants them arresting powers. It specifies that

[a]ny person who assaults or by violent means resists a peace officer acting in the course of his or her duty, knowing that he or she is a peace officer or realising that there is a risk or possibility that he or she is a peace officer, shall be guilty of assaulting or resisting a peace officer and liable to a fine not exceeding level twelve or imprisonment for a period not exceeding ten years or both³⁹.

³⁹ Criminal Law (Codification and Reform) Act Chapter 9:23 of 2004, Section 176.

Recognition of guards as peace officers also means that the law grants the FCS power to arrest without warrant through the Criminal Procedure and Evidence Act, which sets out the following conditions:

Any peace officer and any other officer empowered by law to execute criminal warrants is hereby authorised, subject to the general or specific directions of a superior officer or person placed in authority over him to arrest without warrant (a) any person who commits any offence in his presence, (b) any person whom he or she has reasonable grounds to suspect of having committed any of the offences mentioned in the First Schedule (c) Any person whom he finds attempting to commit an offence or clearly manifesting an intention to do so⁴⁰.

The Criminal Procedure and Evidence Act additionally gives the FCS power to use force in accomplishing legitimate purposes, and authority to conduct forceful searches and seizures. Thus, the power of the FCS is also akin to that of the police.

In addition to the Forest Act, Criminal Procedure and Evidence, and Criminal Law (Codification and Reform) Acts, the FCS currently obtains its security powers from many national and global legal and policy frameworks. The Parks and Wildlife Act Chapter 20:14 of 1975 is administered by ZimParks, but also gives the FCS authority to criminalise wildlife hunting in protected forests. In section 71, the Act prohibits the sale of meat unlawfully hunted, and section 62, gives forest guards power to kill dogs in the forest estate⁴¹. These sections are read together with section 41 (a) of the Forest Act, which states that “no person shall cut, fell, injure or destroy any forest produce, or remove any produce from any demarcated forest or protected private forest”⁴², where wildlife falls under ‘any forest produce’. The wildlife Act, therefore, not only reinforces the Forestry Act but also extends the power of the FCS, similarly, wildlife policies such the 1990 declaration by former President of Zimbabwe that all elephants roaming around Hwange and its buffer zones be protected against poaching.

The FCS additionally obtains enforcement power from the Environmental Management Act Chapter 20:27 of 2002 and the Constitution of Zimbabwe. The Environmental Management Act provides for sustainable management of all natural resources, protection of the environment and prevention of degradation. Section 4(c) of the Act, is supported by Article 73 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment Act (No. 20) of 2013 in granting rights to

⁴⁰ Criminal Procedure and Evidence Act Chapter 9:07 of 1898 Section 25(1) (last amended 2004).

⁴¹ Parks and Wildlife Act Chapter 20:14 of 1975 (Last revised 1991).

⁴² Forest Act Chapter 19:05 of 1948, (Last revised 1999).

areas like protected forests for their protection against degradation⁴³. However, failure by these two pieces to specify rights that people who depend on these resources have, has been seen as only perpetuating resource access and control imbalances (for example, Chirisa & Muzenda, 2013). Notwithstanding, the Forest Act, which the FCS must enforce, is enshrined within these supreme laws. Thus, the Environmental Management Act and the Constitution of Zimbabwe also legitimise the functions of the FCS.

International legal and policy frameworks indirectly inform policing activities of the FCS, hence also enhance its authority. There are several multilateral treaties to which Zimbabwe is a signatory. The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), a key international policy on biodiversity conservation, is an example. As illustrated by Box 3.2, Article 8 of CBD legitimises the existence of protected areas. It provides for signatory countries to take ‘special measures’ in defence of biodiversity, regardless of the contestations around many protected areas. The multilateral contract is underpinned by Malthusian perspectives and degradation narratives, both of which compel contracting parties to reverse degradation. Thus, the CBD not only supports existing national conservation policies and laws, it obliges contracting states to abide by international contractual agreements. Regional treaties, on the other hand, additionally increase pressure to achieve multilateral conservation agreement. For, example, the SADC Protocol on Forestry of 2002, in Article 15, section 2 compels member states to

[c]ontrol human activities that threaten forests, including land and natural resources-use practices that conflict with principles of sustainable forest management [and to] implement strategies for conservation of forests (SADC, 2002: 14).

On the ground, pressure from these contractual agreements is, within state environmental departments, transferred to conservation enforcement organs such as the FCS as a ‘special measure’ (CBD) or ‘strategy’ (SADC Protocol on Forestry). Thus, multilateral regional and global conservation requirements additionally empower state paramilitary organs. Chapter Five and Six will show how, in the context of these security powers, the FCS operates. Security powers are indoctrinated in forest guards through a training process. In the next section, I briefly highlight how forest guards are prepared for security activities before turning to some of the early effects of using paramilitary forest guards to enforce conservation in and around protected forests.

⁴³ Environmental Management Act Chapter 20:17 of 2002 (last revised 2005) and the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment Act (No. 20) of 2013

Box 3.2: Convention on Biological Diversity, Article 8.

Each Contracting Party shall, as far as possible and as appropriate:

- (a) Establish a system of protected areas or areas where special measures need to be taken to conserve biological diversity:
- (b) Develop, where necessary, guidelines for the selection, establishment and management of protected areas or areas where special measures need to be taken to conserve biological diversity:
- (c) Regulate or manage biological resources important for the conservation of biological diversity whether within or outside protected areas, with a view to ensuring their conservation and sustainable use
- (d) Promote the protection of ecosystems, natural habitats and the maintenance of viable populations of species in natural surroundings
- (e) Promote environmentally sound and sustainable development in areas adjacent to protected areas with a view to furthering protection of these areas
- (f) Rehabilitate and restore degraded ecosystems and promote the recovery of threatened species, inter alia, through the development and implementation of plans or other management strategies

Source: (UN, 1992:6)

3.5.3. Security training

An important aspect of the FCS is security training for forest guards. This training is done at recruitment of new guards, but refresher courses are offered once a year, depending on availability of resources. The actual training takes about 4 weeks, but may be shorter depending on availability of resources. According to the Forestry Commission Security manual, forest guards are trained in the following areas

- Threats to the organisation
- Basic legal aspects, and interpretation of law
- Operational knowledge on guarding and patrolling
- Collection of evidence and court procedures
- Use of security equipment
- Use of access control systems
- Use and safe keeping of fire arms
- Human rights (right to liberty, right to privacy, right to protection of law, protection against inhuman treatment and torture)
- Public relations
- Investigations, taking statements, searches
- Physical training involving foot and arms drills, and road runs

- Armed and unarmed combat
- Armed patrol formations
- Ambushes and raids
- Apprehension of armed and unarmed criminals.
- Report writing and record keeping
- First aid
- Code of conduct and conditions of service
- General administration issues
- Disciplinary procedures

The content of this training highlights that forest security is a militarised procedure tailor made to protect all property belonging to the Forestry Commission, including protected forests.

3.5.4. Militarised interventions in protected forests

The effects of formalising militarised forest conservation began to manifest as early as 1993 with increased use of force and violence in and around protected forests. Foresters in the presence of armed guards intimidated villagers and forcefully confiscated their forest products in a bid to discourage them from illegal activities. FC records show that Foresters, in the presence of armed forest guards, constantly intimidated local people settled in Gwampa forest reserve. Villagers raised cases of intimidation and harassment through their parliament representative who in turn raised the issue with the then Minister of Environment and Tourism. When the Minister of Environment and Tourism instructed FC officials to respond to these allegations, an official admitted the use of violence but defended the work of guards as a necessary forest practice. He explained that

[a]n investigation by FC management revealed wrongdoings by FC staff. In February 1993 the forest protection unit came across an individual who killed a kudu in Gwampa, this individual had other products of protected animals in his home like skin of a python. His wife had used the skin for ancestral worship. The wife who had run away was found and stated that she was scared of seeing a gun. Because one member of the unit was armed, she was reminded of the horrible times of the dissident war. However, the unit was executing its duties and did not threaten the individual concerned...⁴⁴.

The FC official's statement demonstrates that the FC supported forest guards' enforcement activities, while disapproving resource access by local people. In January 1999, the *Sunday News* newspaper reported yet another incident of armed violence. The report stated that FC employees armed with guns pulled down huts belonging to 14 families and threatened to

⁴⁴ Letter to the Minister of Environment and Tourism by the General Manager, 7 June 1993 – FC records.

destroy their crops if they did not vacate the forest at Molocorm farm in Lupane. The then Governor for Matabeleland North province, Welshman Mabhena, who was disappointed with the violent actions, was quoted as describing the FC as a colonial and tribal agent. He loathed the actions of the FC declaring that

[t]he whites that used to manage these forests are better than the blacks that are now in. These officials are unpatriotic and do not have the national spirit. Even the government itself has said it will give white farmers it is compulsorily acquiring land from a grace period so that they can harvest their crops. The Forestry Commission, which seems to have a government of its own, decided to be merciless as to threaten to destroy crops belonging to people at Molocorm (Sibanda D, 1999).

It is important to highlight that the Molocorm events that led to the above sentiments coincided with a significant turning point in Zimbabwean politics. Nineteen-ninety-nine is the period that the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) political party was gaining popularity, the same period that the ruling Zanu-PF party also sought to retain its political dominion by revisiting the promises of the liberation struggle, land (Raftopoulos & Phimister, 2004). Therefore, politicians targeted protected forests for land redistribution. They saw reserves as an opportunity to buy the electorate and supported the idea of people settling in protected forests. In 2004, the Governor of Matabeleland North instructed that no one was to move out of the forest because people were more important than trees and forests. Only he as Governor could tell people to move out. He told people not to attend any meetings where the FC told them to move out. The Governor was concerned that violent activities by the FC were disturbing votes⁴⁵. Thus, as state forest protection clashed with political interests, the protected forests also became zones of politically motivated resistance. The FC sought to evict illegal settlers, but the people resisted, evidently backed by political motives.

Despite the highly charged land contestations, the FC continues to rely on its paramilitary forest guards to prevent illegal settlements and activities throughout its forests. The FCS recognises violent evictions, arrests and, sometimes, death of people as important measures of success. During a result-based management training meeting in 2014, a security officer insisted that the killing and arrest of 'poachers' should be recognised as an achievement for forest conservation⁴⁶. The number of people arrested or killed, therefore, featured as activity targets for the FCS's integrated performance agreement, while the FC rewarded forest guards for killing poachers on duty. The most recent of such awards occurred after one of the forest

⁴⁵ The Governors meet the people tour report by the District Coordinator Lupane, 6 February 2004. FC Records.

⁴⁶ Forestry Commission Result Based Management Training, Dzimbahwe Lodge, 16-20/06/2014.

guards in the company of a police officer shot dead a suspected 'Zambian poacher', and injured another in Pandamasue forest. An FC official in the executive celebrated the achievement. He demonstrated an interest in rewarding the guard for successfully killing a suspect poacher. According to him, the death of the poacher confirmed that the FC had a robust forest protection unit⁴⁷. True to his promise, the organisation honoured the forest guard with a certificate of achievement and prize money of US\$ 100 at a passing out parade ceremony in July 2017. A formal citation accompanied the award (Box 3.3).

To the FC, this citation was a celebration of achievement in conservation. However, this citation also came out as encouraging forest guards to kill as a sign of bravery and loyalty for a national cause. The statement also communicated that ruthlessness for a purpose is an act that earns special recognition from state authorities. The Minister of Environment, Water and Climate was present to grace the occasion, suggesting that the highest political office in conservation approves of the violent actions by conservation enforcement agents. Presently, the FC and officials from the Ministry of Environment, Water and Climate continue to support the use of lethal force in conservation despite ethical concerns raised by local people and opposition from government officials outside the Ministry. Reasons for supporting such practices revert to issues around colonial conservation legacies, land and resource-based capital accumulation highlighted throughout the chapter. Chapter Five will continue from these brief historical events to demonstrate and examine how the FC continues to rely on its paramilitary unit to perpetuate violence in and around protected forests.

⁴⁷ Discussion with anonymous attendee of the senior management meeting held on 30/03/2017.

Box 3.3: Citation in recognition of the death of a poacher.

[It has] been said, “Where there is a brave man, in the thickest of the fight, there is the post of honour” Today, we pay tribute to a Zimbabwean man, a forest protection unit guard who placed himself in the thick of the fight. Every day when a patrol goes out, the major reason is to fight against the poachers who illegally cut down trees or kill animals, cause fires etc.

On the 30th of January 2017 in Pandamasue forest at Sibomvu base, there was a two-man patrol comprising a forest protection unit guard and a Zimbabwe Republic Police support unit constable. While in the middle of their patrol, which was headed towards Sarapisa dam, they heard gunshots and they patrolled towards the direction of the gunshots for 2.5 km. The team managed to crawl for 500 metres until they got to the scene where an elephant had been shot, and the poachers were chopping off the ivory. Our team managed to shoot and kill the gunner who was carrying a .375 rifle, and they managed to recover the .375 rifle, 19 live rounds, one elephant carcass, four spent cartridges and a pair of elephant ivory.

Lungile Sithole⁴⁸, I know that you have grappled with the grief of that day that you have said your efforts were somehow a failure because some of the poachers ran away. But, as your security officer (commander), and on behalf of everyone here today and all Zimbabweans, I want you to know it's quite the opposite. You did your duty, above and beyond, and you kept the faith with the highest traditions of the forest protection unit that you love. I want to conclude by asking now Lungile Sithole to stand and accept thanks of a grateful unit and nation.

Source: Forestry Commission (2017)

3.6. Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated that, although national and international conservation requirements shape military practices in protected areas, violence is additionally set within a broader political-economic context characterised by struggles over land, political dominion and national economic performance. The chapter has additionally showed that military interventions in the conservation sector are a reflection of a militarised domestic setting, one in which overt involvement of security forces is a common practice in the country's administration system. Within such a violent national context, conservation practice does not likely have an alternative policy direction. The next chapter highlights the extent to which this broader national political-economic setting is mirrored by the case study context.

⁴⁸ Actual name replaced with pseudonym.

Chapter 4. Sikumi Forest Reserve: Converging interests, conflicting values

4.1. Introduction

Whereas the last chapter provided the national political-economic background, this chapter moves to the specific study setting in relation to the following: (i) state monopoly over land and resource control, (ii) conflict between state capitalistic values and local people's resource access, (iii) coercive and authoritarian resource management system, and (iv) use of force as a conservation strategy. This setting is important to understand the reason violence continues to plague forest conservation practices.

The first section briefly describes when, why and how Sikumi was gazetted. It particularly highlights goals of colonial forest administration towards resource exploitation and capitalism at the expense of local people. The second section shows how these imperial aspirations are maintained in the present Sikumi as reflected by the manner in which the protected forest is managed. In the third section, the chapter demonstrates tourism-related developments in the study area, to show how conservation and capital accumulation converge and how they further legitimise state monopoly and authoritarian forest management in Sikumi. Section four demonstrates the involvement of Sikumi in corridor-wide projects. It shows that the forest area is located in a multi-layered and highly politicised conservation area shaped by regional securitisation of resources for capital accumulation. In the fifth section, the chapter examines the immediate neighbours of Sikumi with a focus on their interactions. The last section turns to the geography and climate of the region. It discusses this setting with respect to local people's well-being in light of dispossession and limited potential for livelihood, given low productivity outside the forest. In the process, the section shows the complex intertwining of local people's livelihoods with resource dependency. The chapter concludes that Sikumi is a place of converging interests, conflicting values and of coercive conservation practices.

4.2. Sikumi Forest Reserve

Sikumi is in Hwange District, Matabeleland North Province. The reserve is located in Dete, about 415 km North West of Bulawayo and approximately 93 km south-east of Hwange town. It is at the north-eastern border of Hwange National Park (Hwange), which is managed by ZimParks. It is one of the 21 forest areas reserved for economic and conservation purposes

in Zimbabwe (number 10 in figure 4.1) and covers about 54 400 hectares. It was gazetted during the 1930s under the Land Apportionment Act of 1930 and immediately became the responsibility of the state. The gazetting of Sikumi occurred at a time when white colonial settlers were implementing racial segregation policies on land and forest areas, as the teak forests continued to attract state interest. By this time, the then Southern Rhodesia had been taken over by Britain and was no longer under the governance of the British South Africa Company (BSAC) state, which was led by Rhodes between 1890 and 1923 (Kwashirai, 2009). However, the new government adopted segregatory land policies and the timber concession system formally used by BSAC. It took over all prime land including areas in African reserves such as Sikumi (ibid). Thus, the reservation of Sikumi occurred during an epoch of racial discrimination and dispossession of land from Africans for the economic benefit of whites. Until now, Sikumi has been under the sole management of the state agency, the Forestry Commission. The FC was established in 1954. Since then, the FC maintains a colonial mandate as highlighted in the previous chapter.

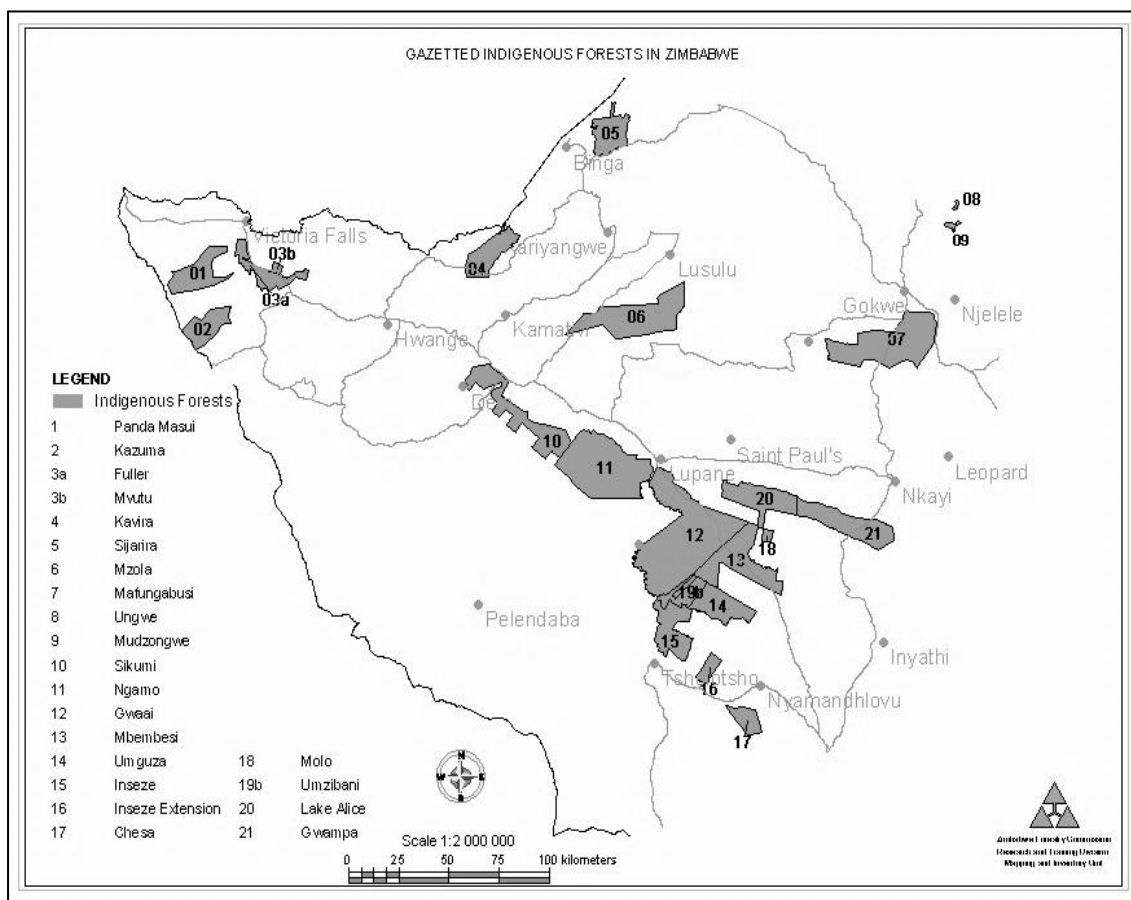


Figure 4.1: Gazetted forests in Zimbabwe. Source: Forestry Commission Mapping and Inventory Unit (2015).

4.3. Forest management in Sikumi

The FC has designed a structure for management of all state forests in Zimbabwe. Below, I describe the organisation of Sikumi, management objectives and ground practices, also showing how the national and international legal framework informs these ground practices.

Structure of forest management

State monopoly regarding management and usufruct rights in demarcated forests has submitted to the pressure of co-management with local people, but there are no provisions for joint forest management with communities in Sikumi. Thus, compared to other protected forests, such as Mafungautsi, the management structure of Sikumi does not include resource management committees, which comprise selected community members to assist the FC with forest management. Therefore, forest management in Sikumi is solely the responsibility of FC.

Within the FC, management responsibility for Sikumi falls under the Conservation and Extension (CONEX) division. On the ground, management is entrusted to a qualified non-military Forester. The Forester develops and implements the management plan for Sikumi and reports progress achieved to the District Conservator of Forests. Operationalisation of the forest management plan is supported by the Forest Protection Unit (FPU) comprising of paramilitary forest guards, who are responsible for daily law enforcement and forest security. The FPU shares these responsibilities with other law enforcement agents, such as the police, park rangers and anti-poaching scouts from private safari operators in the forest area. It is expected that the FPU copy its reports to the Forester because he has the overall responsibility over management of Sikumi. However, this is not entirely the case as Chapter Seven shows.

Management objectives and conservation practices

Key management objectives listed in the Forester's management plan for Sikumi include wildlife management and game water supply, fire management, water and soil conservation and overall biodiversity conservation. These are the same objectives framed by early Foresters as far back as 1921, whose focus was adopting a sustainable yield approach that sustains forest management as a commercial enterprise (Kwashirai, 2009). However, timber exploitation is no longer part of Sikumi's management plan. When game management was introduced in the 1960s (Mudekwe, 2007a), the FC suspended timber exploitation to focus on

increased production and protection of wildlife for eco-tourism. Thus, conservation practice in Sikumi largely focuses on anti-poaching and prevention of illegal encroachment for the state to benefit from wildlife resources through eco-tourism. These operations are implemented by the FPU. The primary objective of anti-poaching has been, since the colonial era, to prevent people living adjacent to the forest from resource access. However, since the advent of armed poaching, anti-poaching activities have also turned to those accessing high value resources for commercial gain. Today, armed poaching is used by FC officials to justify the use of paramilitary personnel, strategies and technologies. Yet, as the next chapter will demonstrate, there is still an inclination towards preventing local people who access resources for subsistence.

A national and international legal framework described in the previous chapter, section 3.5.2, guides all management practices in Sikumi. Some of the activities prohibited in Sikumi in fulfilment of these legal and policy requirements are specified in sections 41 and 78 of the Forest Act. They include:

- Harvesting forest produce (for example, timber, bush meat, thatch grass and fruits) without permission from the FC
- Tampering with any beacons marking forest boundaries
- Causing fires
- Leaving fires unattended even when started with authority
- Interfering with notice boards
- Entering into any part of the forest prohibited by notice
- Disobeying conditions set in a resource access permit

These offences often attract a fine, imprisonment or both. They also demonstrate that permits are vital in obtaining access to resources. Permits are, however, a problematic conservation practice in Sikumi as will be examined in Chapter Six.

4.4. Sikumi and wildlife-tourism developments

Uncontrolled hunting by white hunters ravaged protected forests and national parks during the 1930s (see Kwashirai, 2009) until government introduced a game management programme in the 1960s (see Mudekwe, 2007a). I have stated in the previous section that since the introduction of forest based wildlife management in Sikumi, timber exploitation was abandoned to focus on increasing wildlife production for eco-tourism. In this section, I

show some developments, related to eco-tourism, that have occurred in Sikumi because of the shift to wildlife management.

One of the effects of the game management programme was the establishment of Ngamo Safaris in 1982. Ngamo was established as the FC's official sustainable wildlife utilisation unit with the aim of capitalising on the rapidly growing eco-tourism industry in the 1990s⁴⁹ through hunting and photographic safari activities. The FC co-opted Sikumi as part of Ngamo Safaris based on two reasons. First, while wildlife had to be translocated to some forests such as Gwayi (Mudekwe, 2007a), Sikumi benefited from its proximity to Hwange. The two spaces share a porous border in the form of the Bulawayo-Victoria Falls railway line. Thus, there is free movement of wildlife, with the same wildlife species in Hwange also found in Sikumi. Thus, the abundance of wildlife in Sikumi created a lucrative opportunity for photographic safaris. Second, Hwange is the second-largest wildlife sanctuary in southern Africa after Kruger National Park in South Africa. It attracts large volumes of tourists by itself; even more when marketed together with Victoria Falls. Thus, Sikumi had, and still has, an advantage of benefiting from the already vibrant tourism industry. As of 5 June 2018, 24 of the first 30 results on Google linked Sikumi to travel, accommodation and tourism, suggesting the extent to which eco-tourism is vibrant in the area. The Google results also indicate that Sikumi appears to be known more for its eco-tourism functions than for biodiversity conservation.

There are currently four photographic safari lodges in Sikumi namely, Ganda, Ivory, Elephant's Eye, and Sable Sands (figure 4.2). The lodges cluster in that particular region of Sikumi because it is close to Hwange main camp, therefore a strategic position to attract tourists. The FC initially operated all four lodges. When it began running at a loss in some of the lodges, it decided, guided by section 17 of the Forest Act, to lease them out to private concessionaires on an annual lease fee collected by Ngamo Safaris. Currently, the FC only operates Ganda Lodge. Photographic safari activities make exclusionary conservation practices, such as anti-poaching, important in Sikumi. Anti-poaching is not only crucial for providing security to wildlife from which wildlife consumers such as the FC and its private partners accumulate capital, but also serves as a guarantee to tourists that they will see animals, as advertised, during their photographic experience. Private safari operators also recognise the importance of anti-poaching by providing various incentives in support of state

⁴⁹ FC records.

conservation practice, as Chapter Seven will further examine. In addition to providing incentives, some lodge operators run private policing units specifically to drive away local people’s activities, such as grazing. Eco-tourism, therefore, increases the value of Sikumi and, consequently, the need for the FC to provide for its security.

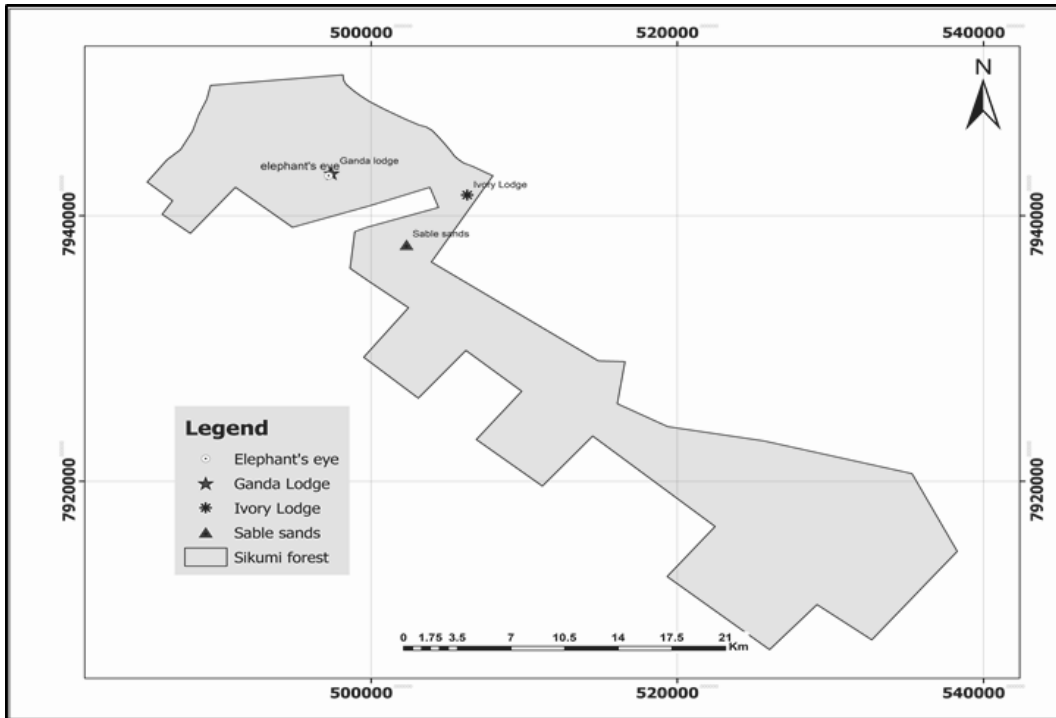


Figure 4.2: Safari lodges operating in Sikumi Forest Reserve. Source: Forestry Commission Mapping and Inventory Unit

4.5. Corridor-wide projects in Sikumi

Sikumi is an important wildlife corridor. It connects wildlife from Hwange to several habitats within and outside Zimbabwe. Because of its ecological importance, Sikumi is currently part of two corridor-wide conservation projects implemented in north-west Zimbabwe and in southern Africa. These projects are known as corridor-wide projects because they often stretch over several kilometres of different landscape types across Zimbabwe and beyond. They enhance the effectiveness of landscapes by providing links for wildlife to resources, such as cover, water and feed. In the following subsections, I describe these corridor-wide projects and how they (re)define Sikumi’s value, conservation goals and practices.

Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area project

The Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA-TFCA, hereafter KAZA) is in the Okavango and Zambezi river basins at the borders of Angola, Botswana, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The region, which spans about 520 000km², is endowed with wildlife sanctuaries such as Hwange, the Victoria Falls and the Okavango Delta (Kavango-Zambezi Organisation, 2014). With these endowments, the KAZA project area aims to be southern Africa's premier tourist destination marketed under the Boundless Southern Africa and Open Africa brands (Andersson et al., 2012). The Southern African Development Community (SADC) recognises the KAZA project as one that encapsulates its vision of regional integration and objectives for promoting sustainable natural resources management (Kavango-Zambezi Organisation, 2014).

Article 4.1e of the KAZA treaty (signed by Zimbabwe) lists Sikumi as constituting the Zimbabwean component of KAZA. The KAZA treaty, as specified in Article 5.1.e, requires Sikumi to

[p]revent excessive utilisation of Natural Resources and ensure that the use of Natural Resources is commensurate with the productive capacity of species and habitats. Where appropriate the Partner States shall take measures to rehabilitate populations or of species in decline or degraded habitats and prevent the indiscriminate destruction of habitats through pollution or other human activities (KAZA, 2011:11)

Thus, policy provisions for this corridor-wide project compel Sikumi to uphold conservation practices that reflect regional values for resource security, conservation and capital accumulation. FC is an implementing agent of a signatory member state to the treaty. In that capacity, it collaborates with ZimParks and the police to fight the indiscriminate destruction of ecosystems by human activities. The KAZA, therefore, increases the value of Sikumi and the need for its protection, not only at national but also at the regional level.

Hwange Sanyati Biological Corridor Project (HSBCP)

WWF-Zimbabwe launched the HSBCP on 20 March 2015 in Hwange. The project runs under the theme, community participation for sustainable biodiversity management (Figure 4.3). According to the Environment and Social Management Framework and Process Framework

for the HSBCP, also information from the official WWF-Zimbabwe website⁵⁰, the project covers about 5.7 million hectares of KAZA on the Zimbabwean side including Sikumi. The project has four focal areas: biodiversity, climate change, land degradation and sustainable forest management. Through these areas, the project seeks to address landscape challenges, which include, among other things, land degradation, inadequate water supplies for wildlife and illegal access to wildlife and timber resources. The Global Environment Fund of the World Bank (WB) is supporting project activities to the tune of US\$ 6.4 million over a period of five years beginning from 2014 (WWF, 2014). The WB is the implementing agency, while WWF is the activities-implementing entity.



Figure 4.3: WWF markets the HSBCP as a community participation project. Source: Field picture

The FC is one of the key project partners together with ZimParks, Environmental Management Agency (EMA) and CAMPFIRE Association. The WWF's HSBCP official website states that, under the biodiversity focal area, the project is supporting conservation by strengthening management of Hwange and its buffer zone. In line with this focal area, it

⁵⁰ http://zimbabwe.panda.org/what_we_do/hwange_sanyati_biological_corridor_project/: Accessed on 06/06/2017

identifies as a key project component, improvement of protected area management effectiveness⁵¹. One of the major activities of HSBCP in support of management effectiveness is enhancing anti-poaching operations.

The common focus of the KAZA and HSBCP projects is that the WWF and Peace Parks Foundation market these projects under the pretext of bringing community participation and development. However, these projects are implementing policies that exclude people. The two programmes additionally support militarised conservation in various ways, as will be further explored in Chapter Seven. Thus, Sikumi is part of a multi-layered national and regional politicised landscape shaped by economic and conservation objectives that uphold securitisation of resources and exclusion of local people.

4.6. Sikumi's neighbours

Sikumi has three key immediate neighbours. This section examines how the forest reserve interacts with these neighbours and how this interaction influences conservation practices in Sikumi.

Hwange National Park (Hwange)

Hwange is on the north-western border of Sikumi (Figure 4.4). The occurrence of these two together is not by coincidence. While Sikumi was initially reserved for timber exploitation, it also became a prominent buffer zone to Hwange, mainly because, in its reserved state, it naturally extended wildlife habitat and breeding ground, as well as served as an important wildlife corridor for megafauna, such as elephants. So, although Sikumi is a forest reserve, it expands the niche for wildlife species in Hwange, hence important for wildlife conservation and for ZimParks. In that regard, it may be argued that Sikumi is in that sense a national park, which is one of the issues that, in fact, support the problem defined for this study. Can it, therefore, be inferred that Sikumi will reflect militarisation in the same nature and form as in neighbouring Hwange?

But, important to highlight about these two neighbours are the similarities in their formation and conservation ideologies as summarised in Table 4.1. Hwange was reserved in 1928 through the appropriation of land, characterised by violent expulsions, for sustainable wildlife conservation and economic development. After that, proprietorship of wildlife was restricted

⁵¹ http://zimbabwe.panda.org/what_we_do/hwange_sanyati_biological_corridor_project/: Accessed on 06/06/2017

to white settlers while blacks in communal areas were not given the same opportunities to benefit from wildlife (Mombeshora & Le Bel, 2009; Murphree, 1993). Similarly, Sikumi was reserved through the violent expulsion of local people to give access to white-owned timber concessions to harvest timber for commercial purposes (Kwashirai, 2009).

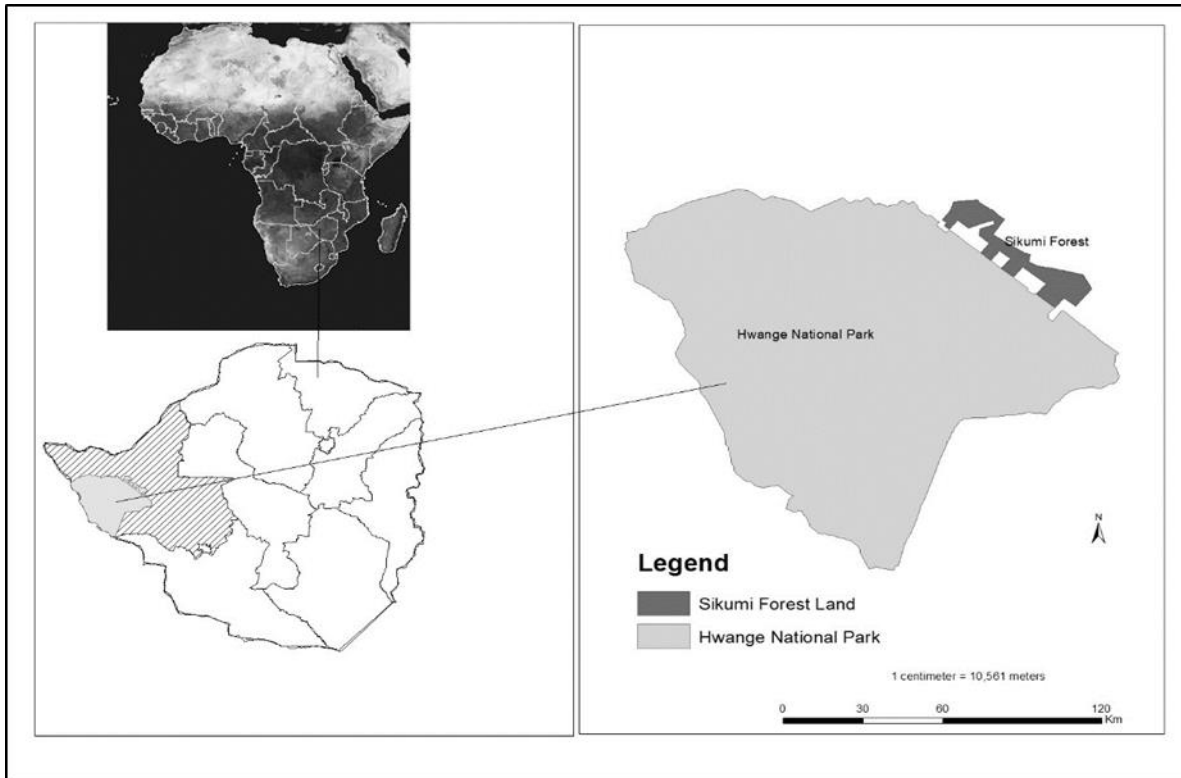


Figure 4.4: Sikumi Forest Reserve and Hwange National Park. Source: Forestry Commission Mapping and Inventory Unit

Enactment of the wildlife and forest laws disadvantaged majority black people, while government and a few white hunting and timber concessions benefited. Today, the two spaces still restrict access by majority local people and continue to be valued by the state for their economic and ecological benefits. Therefore, Hwange and Sikumi share the same history of violent expulsions and coercive conservation, and have similar values for conservation. Over the past decade, anti-poaching in Hwange has taken hostile approaches in the form of militarised policies as shown in the previous chapter. The next chapters will unravel whether the way militarisation and violence unfold in protected forests is similar to what is documented about national parks in Zimbabwe.

Table 4.1: Similarities between Hwange and Sikumi

| Aspect | Hwange | Sikumi |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| Reservation period | 1928 | The 1930s |
| Methods of reservation | Expulsion of people | Expulsion of people |
| Access to resources colonial era | Proprietorship of wildlife restricted to white settlers | Timber concessions and hunting permission granted to white concessionaires |
| Access to resources post-colonial era | No access to local people | Limited access to local people |
| Ideologies | Conservation and economic development | Conservation and economic development |
| Primary National Legal frameworks | Parks and Wildlife Act of 1975 | Forest Act of 1948 |
| International legal frameworks | For example, Convention on Biodiversity Conservation (CBD) | For example, Convention on Biodiversity Conservation (CBD) |

Painted Dog Conservation

Painted Dog Conservation (also locally known as *Maganyana* after the vernacular name of painted dogs) is a non-profit organisation researching on painted dogs (hereafter, dog(s)). It operates on about 25 km² piece of land on the peripheries of Sikumi. A key icon of Painted Dog Conservation is its information centre. The centre is strategically located along the road to Hwange main camp to attract tourists travelling to the national park. At this information centre, Painted Dog Conservation disseminates information related to its mission to save dogs from extinction, during which it also requests donations from tourists. On its official website (<http://www.painteddog.org/>), the private voluntary organisation claims that there are fewer than 7,000 dogs remaining in the wild and that the Zimbabwe population is one of the remaining strongholds of the species. Sikumi is a home range for these allegedly decreasing dogs and is, therefore, important for the conservation of dogs. Thus, conservation activities in Sikumi inform broad imperatives of Painted Dog Conservation's work. The organisation created an anti-poaching unit it calls scouts (again known in the area as *Maganyana*, after the

name of the organisation), to rescue painted dogs from disappearing. The scouts assist park rangers and the forest guards in protecting the dogs' home range and its prey. In addition to running an anti-poaching team, Painted Dog Conservation's aspirations to conserve dogs involves local people. It runs several community-based programmes in the area. Chapter Seven examines activities of the organisation in detail to uncover its support for exclusionary conservation policies, and facilitation of violent anti-poaching in and around Sikumi.

Local people

Sikumi is surrounded by local people. Communities surrounding the forest are, Dete Township, Dingani, Jwapi, Mabale, Dopota, and Lupote (figure 4.5). This community is mostly of Ndebele, Tonga and Nambya people. I will first describe the living conditions of these communities and end the section with the general perception of the FC of people living around Sikumi. Housing structures are of traditional and mixed dwellings. Traditional houses are made of pole and dagga⁵² with a thatched roof (Figure 4.6), but some people have houses built of modern brick with thatch or iron roofs, especially in Dete Township. Summerhouses⁵³ are, however, usually made of pole and dagga and supported by timber. Timber is, therefore, valuable construction material for villagers.

According to the census of 2012, about 72 per cent of the households in Matabeleland North province do not have access to electricity (ZimStats, 2012) and a greater proportion of this percentage is in the rural areas. Firewood is, therefore, the primary source of energy for the majority of people living around Sikumi. Villagers access water from boreholes and protected wells. Some villagers have water sources on their homesteads, but others have to walk to access water. However, due to interventions by non-state organisations such as the Painted Dog Conservation, there are boreholes installed in almost every village and school. Even when villagers have to walk to access water, they do so for one kilometre or less. However, some villagers depend on water sources inside the reserve for household and livestock, especially during the dry season.

⁵² Dagga here refers to mud and not cannabis

⁵³ A summerhouse in the Ndebele culture is a traditional house with a wall approximately 90cm high. It is finished with poles to hold a thatched roof. It is similar to modern gazebos.

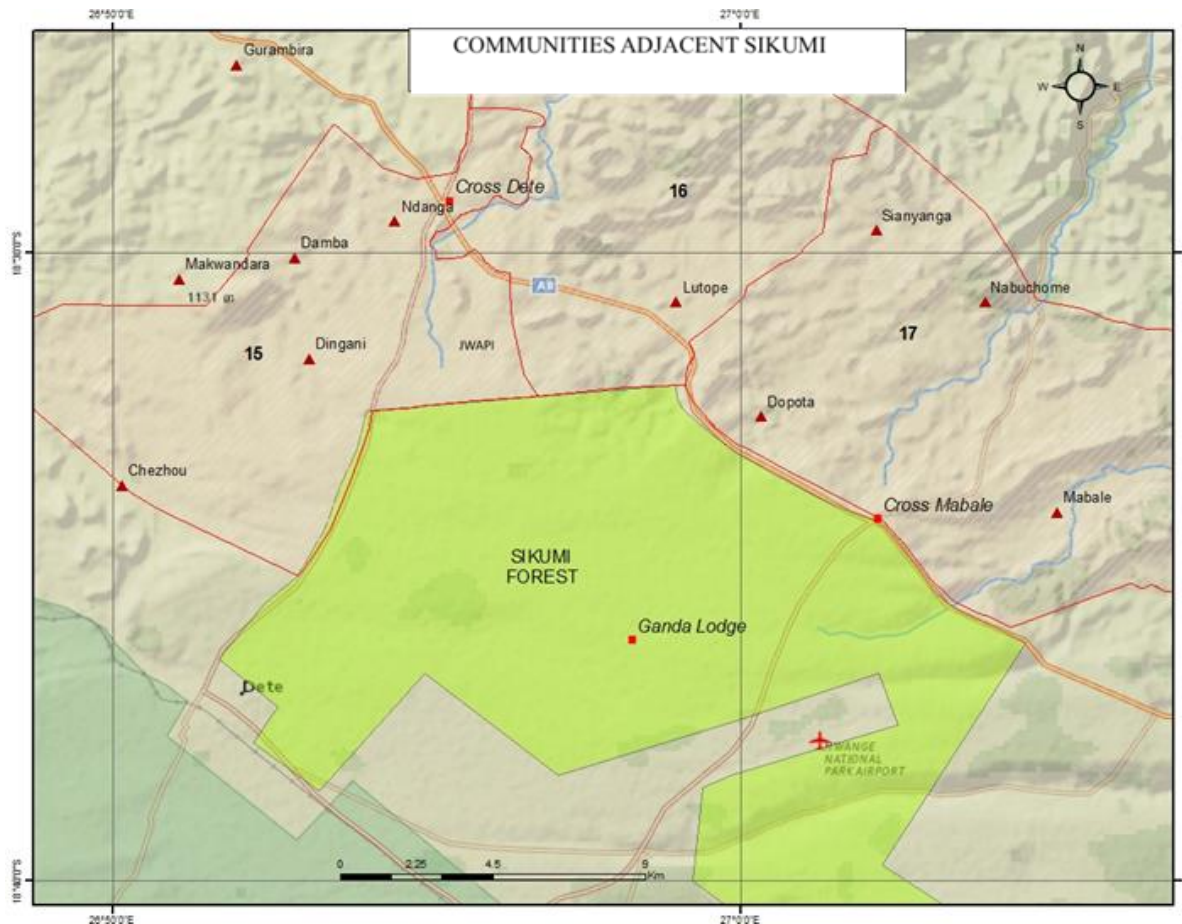


Figure 4.5: Communities adjacent Sikumi Forest Reserve (area marked in red shading).
Source: Forestry Commission Mapping and Inventory Unit

The primary source of livelihood is agriculture. However, crop production is on a small scale and limited to drought-resistant crops, such as sorghum and millet, because of unproductive soils and erratic rainfall patterns as explained in the next section. Villagers often resort to livestock production. But because of unrestricted movement of animals into villages, livestock production is threatened by wildlife such as lions (Giller *et al.*, 2013). A game fence once physically separated communal areas from the forest to prevent human-wildlife conflict. When villagers began vandalising the fence, the FC’s management removed it. Presently, there is no physical boundary separating local people from the forest. Animals, therefore, move in and out of the forest destroying crops and livestock in neighbouring villages. Nonetheless, the absence of the game fence has become an opportunity for villagers to access restricted and forbidden resources without permission from the FC.



Figure 4.6: Pole and dagga traditional house in a village adjacent to Sikumi. Source: Field picture

The FC has always viewed people living adjacent to Sikumi and all other protected forests as troublesome illegal encroachers (Kwashirai, 2009). This remains a dominant perception within the FC, also for those with interests in protected forests. The forest authority blames villagers for poaching timber and non-timber forest products, stealing infrastructures, such as fence and water pumps, and vandalising fire towers (Forestry Commission, 2015). It accounts for the majority of fires in protected forests as being caused by local people (Gondo *et al.*, 1992). Local people disagree, and obviously have different values for forests from those of the state, as the next section will further elaborate. So, as, on the one hand, the FC puts structures in place to halt all illegal activities, local people, on the other hand, fight back by covertly sabotaging forest management activities such as by causing fires. The relationship between the FC and local people is, therefore, underwritten by suspicion and mistrust. This kind of relationship sustains forest enforcement and violence in protected forests as Chapter Six presents.

4.7. Environmental characteristics of Sikumi

This section describes the ecological context of Sikumi and its environs to demonstrate the reasons villagers living around the reserve cannot solely depend on agriculture for their livelihoods, but also turn to forest resources to supplement household needs.

Vegetation

Predominantly teak forests and woodland characterise Sikumi and its environs. These woodlands are defined by *Baikiaea plurijuga*, *Guibortia Colophospermum*, *Pterocarpus angolensis* as well as Combretum and Mopane species (Bradley & McNamara, 1993). The FC reserved these species as commercial species due to their high value in the hardwood timber industry. Although the FC has suspended exploitation of these species in favour of wildlife and eco-tourism, communities adjacent to Sikumi depend on many timber species for construction and carving of curios. They also rely on the woodland for grazing and fruits.

When government gazetted Sikumi during the 1930s, it congested people on the peripheries of the forest. The population has been growing ever since. Ninety-one per cent of the people in Matabeleland North live in rural areas. The community of Hwange rural district alone has a population of about 62,670 (ZimStats, 2012). Thus, over time, competition for resources has depleted vegetation and other non-vegetative resources outside the forest, leaving the forest the only place local people can turn to for resources such as timber for construction, firewood, thatch grass, and grazing. The FC uses contrasting ecologies between the forest and surrounding communal areas, developed over years, to justify the importance of forest law and policy enforcement.

Therefore, through forest regulation, the FC restricts access to forest resources on the basis of conservation and ecosystem integrity. For example, livestock grazing was previously an offence in Sikumi until the FC revised its grazing policy in 1994. Nevertheless, the new system comes with several ground rules, such as grazing boundaries. Grazing boundaries are one of the most problematic regulations in Sikumi because they are ambiguous on the exact permitted grazing distance. Official documents state that grazing must not go beyond 1 km (Forestry Commission, 2015). Previous studies in Sikumi document that grazing must not exceed 3 km (Giller *et al.*, 2013), while villagers use self-declared beacons to mark grazing distance inside the forest. As Chapter Six will further examine, restrictions over resources

important for livelihoods often cause disharmony between local people and forest authorities, particularly with forest guards who enforce forest regulations.

Soils

Soils in and around Sikumi are generally unproductive. A soil map of Zimbabwe shows that the regosols soil group constitutes much of Hwange region. The soils are commonly referred to as Kalahari dunes of central and southern Africa, named after the Kalahari dunes. They are believed to have accumulated through wind erosion from the Kalahari Desert (Childes & Walker, 1987). Regosols are mainly of deep sand with less than 10 per cent silt and clay. The low silt and clay are due to lack of weatherable sediments and an underdeveloped horizon (Thompson, 1965). Due to extremely low silt to clay ratio, regosols have low water-holding capacity, high permeability and low nutrient reserves. Therefore, they are not suitable for intensive crop production but can support small grain production (Nyamapfene, 1991). The soil map additionally shows that there are pockets of Siallitic and sodic soils. Siallitic soils have vast reserves of weatherable minerals but are shallow and unable to support root depth. Sodic soils, on the other hand, are high pH soils and inhibit nutrient availability (Nyamapfene, 1991; Thompson, 1965). Because the majority of soils in Sikumi and its surroundings are not well developed, they affect dry land crop production. For this reason, people living in this region cannot rely on crop production alone, but also need to turn to forest resources as safety nets.

Climate

There are five agro-ecological regions in Zimbabwe. Sikumi is located in agro-ecological region IV. This agro-ecological region receives short, erratic rainfall seasons characterised by low rainfall quantities not exceeding 650 mm (Bradley & McNamara, 1993). Mudekwe (2007b) documents that the dry season ranges from April to November and that the mean annual temperatures for the region are approximately 21.5 degrees Celsius, while mean annual temperatures for hot and cold months are around 30 and 17 degrees Celsius respectively. Climate change experts in Zimbabwe, however, project that ground temperatures in this region are rising because of the effect of greenhouse gases and will continue to limit crop production to small grain subsistence production in the future⁵⁴. The

⁵⁴ Climate change and agriculture prospects for KAZA Zimbabwe: Oral presentation at the WWF Symposium on harnessing landscape connectivity and ecosystem resilience for sustainable socio-economic development in north-western Zimbabwe, 23-25 August 2017, Victoria Falls Zimbabwe.

problem of low rainfall compounded by effects of climate change and unproductive soils, further limit local people's livelihoods. Communities around Sikumi, therefore, turn to forest products as the cheapest alternative, but not without conflict with forest authorities.

4.8. Socio-cultural context

Sikumi is home to significant cultural sites. However, disuse resulting from access restrictions has destroyed many of these sites. Tourism has also contributed to their desecration, for example, the location of Ganda Lodge. Ganda is short for *Gandavapati*, which means a very big house in the Tonga language. Local people used to visit *Gandavapati* once every year to conduct hunting, initiation and rainmaking ceremonies. The waterhole at *Gandavapati*, now Ganda water pan, baffled traditional leadership for its all year round provision of water, while other places were already dry. They, therefore, decided to use it as a rainmaking ceremony site⁵⁵. The rainmaking tree still stands on the edges of Ganda water pan but has no life and no sign of recognition from the FC. In addition to Ganda, local people around Sikumi claim they left their ancestral graves inside the forest area, which they can no longer access because of forest law enforcement. There is also general attachment to Sikumi as 'home' especially for those who were born there and whose umbilical cords are buried in the forest. The area is under the traditional leadership of Chief Nelukoba Dingani who is keen to see his people reconnecting with the forest and benefiting from eco-tourism proceeds.

While the FC acknowledges that people living adjacent to Sikumi lost links with their cultural sites, which became damaged and destroyed with time, it still views people as destroyers who do not know the value of the forest. On that basis, the FC does not allow people to reconnect with cultural sites inside the forest. Non-recognition, by the FC, of these socio-cultural issues, together with lack of benefits from tourism activities in the area, is amongst the many reasons local people continue to contest access regulations and also why the FC, in turn, applies more force.

4.9. Conclusion

This chapter has provided a detailed overview of the Sikumi environment to situate how local people, NGOs, private companies and the FC relate to the case. Sikumi is valuable to the broader national economic context for its contribution to the national economy through eco-tourism and for the conservation of biodiversity, as part of its international obligations. To the

⁵⁵ Interview with FC official 6/05/2016.

FC and ZimParks, Sikumi is a source of wealth that plays a critical role in sustaining state authorities, more so given the declining economic context and failure by government to fund conservation activities. The forest is also important for private companies accumulating wealth in partnership with state authorities. For local people, Sikumi is a safety net, rich in resources essential for their livelihood given low productivity outside the forest. It is also a place to reconnect with culture and tradition after several years of dispossession. Sikumi is, therefore, a place of converging interest. However, differences in value of the forest, to local people and the state, engender Sikumi as a place of conflict and violent conservation practices. Having provided the broader political-economic national context in the previous chapter, and now the local setting, the next chapter turns to the mechanics, and evidence of militarised conservation in Sikumi.

Chapter 5. Hunting down *vavengi*: The practice of militarised conservation in Sikumi

Approaching Sikumi Forest Reserve

“If they think you could be armed, you can be shot⁵⁶”

I stayed in staff houses at Ganda Lodge, a photographic safari lodge owned and operated by the Forestry Commission (FC) in Sikumi. Upon arrival at Ganda, I was welcomed by a lodge official who took me on a quick tour around the lodge. He explained that business at Ganda lodge is not the lodges or trees, but the wildlife that tourists come to see. I could agree and anyone would if they came to Ganda Lodge and were welcomed by a tower of giraffes, a parade of elephants or a herd of impalas congregated by the Ganda water pan. The FC conservation office for Sikumi is, however, located in Dete, about 30 km away from Ganda lodge using the tarred road and approximately 15 km driving through the forest. This is where the forest protection unit is stationed.

During my first drive to Dete on 9 April 2016, I offered a lift to a man from Hwange Safari Lodge (popularly known in the area as SafLodge), which is along the tarred road stretching from Cross Mabale Junction, along the Bulawayo-Victoria Falls road, to Hwange Main Camp. The man was looking for transport to cross over the protected area to Dete Township. Being a strict wildlife and tourist area, the Cross Mabale-Main Camp-Dete route is not serviced by a public transport system. Workers from safari lodges dotted along the road rely on irregular private vehicles for their transport.

The man greeted “*salibonani*” (Ndebele for: Hello) while sitting on the front passenger seat. I answered the way I had learnt and practised before travelling to Matabeleland, “*yebo linjani*” (Ndebele for, hello, how are you?). As highlighted in Chapter 3, Ndebele is the main language spoken in the Matabeleland region of Zimbabwe. Being born and raised in Mashonaland where Shona is the predominant language, my tongue felt heavy for Ndebele. I, however, responded well to the man's greeting, enough for him to think I was Ndebele. He was surprised to learn I was not, as I could not proceed with the deep conversation. His

⁵⁶ Anonymous respondent

surprise triggered a conversation that led to introductions. He spoke Shona very well, so we began chatting. The man was employed at SafLodge, taking a few days off to visit his family in Dete. He was grateful that I offered him a ride. When I asked him about transport challenges in the area, he remarked as follows:

Transport is a challenge in this area. At the same time walking is a risky behaviour because of these shoot-to-kill policies [by parks authorities]. Some time ago, a young boy was grazing his cattle with an axe on his shoulder in the forest. He was mistaken for a poacher carrying a gun by park rangers. *Vakamupfura ipapo ipapo!* [Shona for: They shot him dead on sight]. They have no time to verify; *kungokufungira kuti wakabata pfuti, chero riridemo, vanokupfura*” (if they suspect you are armed, they can shoot you). Therefore, people here walk at their own risk because sometimes you fail to get transport and have to walk. You see these things I am carrying [10 kg bag of mealie-meal and some groceries in a plastic carrier bag]. If the forest guards or park rangers see these, they may not be sure of my intentions. They will suspect that I am carrying food to the forest for poaching activities. People are aware of these things but what can we do? We sometimes have no alternatives. People have to walk if they do not get transport.

His remarks were, to me, a rich introduction to the study area, and importantly, to issues I had driven over 800 km to understand. The discourse on ‘poachers’ and ‘shoot-to-kill’ became alive. After dropping the man, I drove to the FC offices. The Forester responsible for Sikumi met and introduced me to the forest protection unit. Six out of thirteen forest guards were on duty. Three guards were dressed in jungle green overalls, while the other three were in jungle green trousers and shirts. Green webbing jackets covered their chests. Each of them wore a new pair of military ankle-height canvas boots, with firearms slung over their shoulders. At a glance, the team resembled an army and war until I was exposed to their anti-poaching activities. This experience lays the foundation of this chapter.

5.1. Introduction

In the previous chapters, I provided the national background of militarised practices in Zimbabwe, the importance of Sikumi to the state, and eco-tourism in the region. I also highlighted the conservation practices undertaken by the state to achieve conservation and economic objectives. Against this background, this chapter now unpacks how the militarisation of forest conservation unfolds in Sikumi by tracing processes of militarised forest protection as operationalised by paramilitary forest guards.

The chapter is organised into two parts. The first picks on past militarised forest protection interventions highlighted in Chapter Three, section 3.5.4 and the general conservation practices prescribed for Sikumi outlined in Chapter Four, section 4.3 to examine the mechanics of protecting forests from *vavengi*⁵⁷ (Shona for: enemies), and to demonstrate the texture of everyday militarism in Sikumi. Therefore, the section examines aspects, such as patrol strategies, equipment and language used in relation to the extent that they shape militarisation and prevention of people from resource access. The second part presents stories of conservation enforcement told by forest guards during patrols. The chapter uses these narratives to uncover and examine hidden processes of militarised conservation ordinarily out of the sight of forest authorities. In conclusion, the chapter evaluates the capacity of forest guards in light of the texture and nature of militarisation and inclination of violence towards local people.

5.2. Anti-poaching in Sikumi: process and events

Anti-poaching is a systematic forest protection exercise organised in the form of patrols. These patrols constitute the major forest protection activity of forest guards. It is through patrols that forest guards identify cases of fire and illegal resource access activities for further action. Forest guards conduct patrols daily in Sikumi. They begin their patrol as early as half past six in the morning with a briefing facilitated by the most senior forest guard. The presentation, which takes less than 30 minutes, reviews patrol activities from the previous day and identifies problem areas needing patrol attention. The briefing also discusses reported, or potential, cases of bush meat trade needing follow up as suspected cases of wildlife poaching. Based on this briefing session, patrol objectives for the day are set. After the briefing, the senior forest guard hands guns over to forest guards. These guns are stored in a built-in armoury secured by a lock, in the forest protection unit's office. Upon receiving the firearms, each guard checks if it is working before beginning the patrol. In the following subsections, I describe some key processes, events typical of anti-poaching in Sikumi, in the process, examining how the process of militarised conservation enforcement unfolds.

⁵⁷ Forest guards consider any illegal trespassers, regardless of the motive, as poachers and enemies of state conservation initiatives.

5.2.1. Patrol size and the concept of ‘sticks’

This part describes the organisation and composition of forest guards in a patrol, to demonstrate how patrols in Sikumi mirror a military arrangement. During patrols, guards are organised into ‘sticks’. In military terminology, a stick is a group of soldiers deployed for a patrol⁵⁸. Sikumi has thirteen forest guards, organised into four sticks of a maximum of three and minimum of two guards⁵⁹ in each stick. Patrols are arranged such that two sticks cover daily patrols from the base station, while the other two are deployed to camp and patrol from two different bases in the forest. Patrol sticks rotate every twenty-one days. However, at 54,400 hectares, Sikumi is too large for thirteen guards to patrol effectively. Thus, larger patrol sticks are required for patrols seeking to achieve more substantial coverage, also so that forest guards engage in more efficient patrol strategies. In such cases, joint patrols become necessary. The police, through operation *Nhaka Yedu* (Our Heritage) contribute at least two duty police officers from Dete or other police stations in the district, while Painted Dog Conservation assists with scouts and a vehicle. In a joint operation, law enforcement agents from different organisations are represented in each stick. The most senior of forest guards usually leads the stick. He is responsible for determining the time of departure and return, giving patrol orders, identifying the general patrol route and for communication while on patrol, as the next parts of the chapter will demonstrate. I now turn to how these sticks operate during anti-poaching patrols.

5.2.2. Patrol formations

Forest guards do not walk randomly during anti-poaching operations. They adopt systematic ways of surveillance called patrol formations. A patrol formation is how forest guards arrange themselves while patrolling the forest. The choice of patrol formation depends on objectives of the patrol, and size of the patrolling stick. I observed that, in Sikumi, the primary objective of a patrol is apprehending people engaging in illegal forest activities. Forest guards achieve this objective through reconnaissance, ambushes, and raids. Characteristically, each patrol begins with reconnaissance, in search of, and to remove, wire snares, as well as to hunt, catch and arrest people involved in illegal activities in the forest. When the stick is small (three guards), reconnaissance uses a single file formation. Single file formations usually follow elephant trails, led by the stick leader. During a single file formation, each guard is responsible for checking his front, flanks, rear and above his head as part of the surveillance

⁵⁸ Interview with FCS official 6/04/2016.

⁵⁹ Sometimes the patrol number drops to two or one when a stick member (s) take(s) time off.

procedure. However, for larger sticks, for instance, during joint patrols, an extended formation is used. During the extended formation, guards organise themselves in a horizontal squad line. This patrol formation usually covers more ground than a single file.

However, I observed that, although forest guards plan patrol formations before embarking on a patrol, there is no standard formula for beginning and ending a patrol. How a patrol progresses depends on events that occur during the patrol. Uneventful patrols likely begin and end with a single patrol formation. Eventful patrols often result in a change of patrol objective and, consequently, patrol formation. For example, on 13 May 2016, we set out for what we intended to be the usual reconnaissance patrol. Halfway through the patrol, the stick leader stopped the stick after we heard vultures screaming some distance away. He ordered one of the guards to climb a nearby tree with binoculars to investigate the state of the forest. The guard discovered a kettle of vultures in flight some distance into the forest. Forest guards explained that vultures were indicators that there was a dead or dying animal somewhere and that it was likely that poachers had killed an animal. If we were lucky, we would find the perpetrators in action and arrest them. The leader, therefore, decided that we follow the vultures for further investigation.

We immediately abandoned the extended formation and search for snares, and embarked on a new mission. The stick leader led a single file, guiding the group in the direction of the vultures. After walking for approximately two and a half kilometres, the screams of vultures became more audible. Trees around us hosted communities of vultures perched as if waiting for something. Then we saw an elephant carcass already in a decomposed state (Figure 5.1). The guards estimated that the elephant had died about four days ago. Upon further investigation, the body had two visible bullet wounds. One was below one of the elephant's ears, another on its back. The forest guards concluded that the fate of the elephant had fallen into the hands of armed poachers and that they had used a Heckler and Koch (G3) battle rifle to kill the elephant. One of the guards took out a GPS gadget to record coordinates of the crime scene for further investigation by the police. The elephant did not have tusks, and it was clear that the suspects had successfully fled. Thus, there was no need to lay an ambush.

Forest guards explained how the process of ambushing unfolds. An ambush is organised only when there is a high probability that the suspect will return to the crime scene. According to their explanation, the core of an ambush is to catch suspects red-handed, when they least expect it and have little time to launch a counter-attack. During an ambush the patrol team

organises itself around the crime scene (for example, around the elephant in Figure 5.1), wait for the suspect to return and launch a surprise attack. The role of the stick leader is to assign a stick member, who, upon his signal, will make the first move to confuse the unsuspecting suspect(s) while the rest of the team close all possible routes of escape.



Figure 5.1: Elephant carcass discovered during a patrol. Source: Field picture

The technique requires endurance and extreme patience for the suspect to be in an appropriate position before forest guards can launch a surprise attack. According to forest guards, it is unacceptable to leave a duty post during an ambush. Their statements confirmed the concern and anger communicated in an internal memorandum by an FC official over guards abandoning a cyanide site during an ambush in 2014. The official vented thus:

It was reported that on Monday 24 March 2014 around 1600hrs a poacher attempted to remove tusks of an elephant but was disturbed and disappeared. The guards claim that they had gone to cook some food, the entire stick? It is disgusting that a stick in ambush decided to leave a station unattended and failed to apprehend a poacher⁶⁰.

⁶⁰ Internal memorandum, FC Records.

The process of ambushing explained by forest guards during the patrol of 13 May 2016 further clarified information provided by another stick in a previous patrol, where the stick leader explained that

[u]sually when we ambush wire snares, we wait for the snares owner to come for them, when he arrives we will wait for him to start touching the snares, and then we pounce on him. In many cases, we will disturb one of the snares so that as he puts his tools down to start attending to the disturbed snare, we will take the opportunity to pounce on him⁶¹.

It is, however, difficult for forest guards to come across illegal activities during a patrol. During four months of anti-poaching patrols, we hardly came across offenders except evidence such as wire snares, carcasses and skeletons because of information leakages. Guards suspect their wives of innocently passing on information about their patrol activities to relatives and family friends who could be members of hunting syndicates. An official from the forest protection unit confirmed the challenge of information leakages. He explained that it is often difficult to plan a successful ambush because, in many cases, suspects are already informed. The official referred to a situation in which guards that operate at Forest Hill in Lupane discovered timber by the roadside. Forest guards laid an ambush near the timber, but the owner did not come to collect it. He further related that, for a long time, he suspected that a police officer in the district was divulging information about their operations. After a complaint to the district Joint Operations Command (JOC) meeting about the issue, the police officer was transferred⁶². Thus, because of patrol information leakages, forest guards in Sikumi often rely on raids to apprehend perpetrators of illegal activities. A forest guard described a typical raid process thus:

When we decide to raid, we visit the suspect's home at night or early in the morning between two to four o'clock. This is the best time to conduct a raid because it is when people are in deep slumber and powerless. Each time we raid, we go in the presence of the police. We will have information from informants who usually contact us directly or through the PDC's [Painted Dog Conservation] toll-free telephone numbers. The informant usually offers to lead us to the suspect's homestead. When he has shown us the suspect's bedroom, we will excuse him from the site while we raid the home. Two guards will knock at the bedroom door. One guard will be in front, immediately behind a police officer with a gun. If the suspect does not respond to the knock, we will break the door open and immediately disempower the suspect by handcuffing him. Meanwhile, the rest of the forest guards will be planted around the homestead in such a way that the suspect, upon opening the door, will think that there are only two guards

⁶¹ Forest guards during a patrol 12/05/2016.

⁶² Informal discussion with FPU official 16/05/2016.

on his homestead. It is only when he tries to run away that he will discover his house is surrounded. However, in most cases, the suspect does not have time to think of running away because he will be in a state of confusion. This makes such odd hours the best time for raiding⁶³.

An observation made about patrol formations and strategies is that, while they are a military practice designed for chiefly responding to illegal armed activities, forest guards deliberately do not attend to suspected deadly situations in the absence of park rangers or the police. Several gunshots were reported to the senior forest guard during my stay in Sikumi. After receiving these reports, he was often not prepared to send his team to investigate. Instead, he called ZimParks for assistance. In cases that he decided to send forest guards for investigation some delaying tactics were involved, so that, by the time guards visited the suspected crime scene, suspects had disappeared. This was the case with the elephant carcass (Figure 5.1 above) discovered during the patrol of 13 May 2016. I later learnt that this carcass was a result of a gunshot reported to the senior forest guard on Sunday 8 May 2016. We patrolled this area five days after the report. Forest guards had not taken any action about this gunshot between the report and patrol dates. On a different occasion that occurred on 7 May 2016, the senior forest guard alerted forest guards after we arrived from a patrol that some men suspected of being armed poachers were spotted walking through the forest. However, he instructed forest guards to wait for the Forester to pick them from their camping site. The Forester, who happened to be at Hwange on other business, was to bring armed rangers to support the mission in case the men were armed and deadly. These two incidences suggest that forest guards, by themselves, cannot respond to incidents of armed poaching. Nonetheless, patrol formations and strategies used by forest guards demonstrate that they adopt military practices for conservation enforcement. Forest protection is, thus, militarised in structure and process, although rather symbolic in halting armed poaching.

5.2.3. Patrol equipment

A range of patrol equipment support military strategies explained in the previous section. This equipment consists of guns and handcuffs, more recently, Global Positioning System (GPS) devices, communication radios, cameras, and binoculars. In this section, I examine how this equipment is used and how it, in turn, shapes the form of militarisation unfolding in Sikumi.

⁶³ Discussion with a forest guard 12/05/2016.

Firearms

The historical development of militarisation in protected forests explained in Chapter Three section 3.4.2 shows that introduction of guns to forest protection was necessary for forest protection due to three reasons. The first relates to use of dogs, which outpaced forest guards' enforcement activities, the second, to the pre- and post-independence wars that ravaged the country threatening not only the safety of government infrastructure but also the lives of forest guards. The third was in response to the rise in armed poaching in protected forests. The Forestry Commission Security (FCS) manual developed during the 1990s continues to identify anti-poaching work as hazardous and emphasises the need to protect guards' lives while on national duty⁶⁴. Thus, in Sikumi, each guard carries a gun during forest protection activities.

Forest guards use the 1942 Lee-Enfield British rifle of model No.4 Mk II, commonly called the three-oh-three (303) rifle. The gun is a bolt-action, magazine-fed repeating rifle with a 10-round magazine that is loaded manually from the top. It has a firing rate of 10 rounds per minute. An official from the FCS explained how they use guns during conservation enforcement. Forest guards use guns for anti-poaching, vermin control and protection of clients during safari hunts⁶⁵. The senior forest guard at Sikumi expanded the importance of 303 rifles to conservation and the circumstances that force forest guards to discharge firearms.

Pfuti ndedzekuzvidzivirira [Shona for: Guns are for our safety]. The situation will determine whether you kill a person or not. Initially, however, the guns are to protect ourselves from dangerous animals while we are on patrol. *Iwe munhu ndiwe unoassessa situation* [Shona for: The forest guard on the ground should assess the case]. If we tell our guards not to shoot, [poachers] will kill them first if the situation requires that they must search for, and kill somebody. Before armed poachers, we knew that our enemies were just animals. Now we have armed poachers poaching elephants in the forest. If someone is armed, you cannot just shoot to scare that person; you shoot to kill. Otherwise, we do not carry guns with the intention of killing people we are not in a war situation. We are also not indemnified like parks rangers so we cannot just shoot anyhow. We have an incidence of a guard who shot dead an ordinary poacher [villager] while in training. He was dismissed and jailed. The law only covers for shooting and

⁶⁴ Forest Commission Security Manual.

⁶⁵ Application letter for renewal of firearms licences, from an [FCS official] to the controller of firearms 12/09/2008. FC records

killing someone depending on the circumstance that the killing incident occurred⁶⁶.

The justification for use of guns given by the FCS official and senior forest guard in Sikumi resonates with why the FC introduced guns to forest guards as explained in Chapter Three section 3.4.2, and with what the Forestry Commission Security manual specifies. The overall message is that guns are to protect forest guards from armed poachers and wild animals during conservation enforcement.

However, while forest guards are armed, the condition of guns does compromise not only their safety, but also their effectiveness. According to an FCS official, the 303-rifles are obsolete, not ideal for anti-poaching operations and therefore not acceptable for military operations. He has been appealing to the FC's management to reconsider working conditions of forest guards by equipping them with modern and more capable automatic rifles, like those used by park rangers⁶⁷. The senior forest guard in Sikumi and the FCS official clarified in separate discussions that forest guards do not use AK 47 rifles like park rangers because the national army believes that protected forests are low-risk areas compared to national parks, therefore not requiring the use of deadly weaponry⁶⁸. I observed that in addition to model, age and capacity of 303 rifles used by forest guards, lack of regular servicing of rifles aggravates inefficiency. The FC is required to service all firearms on a quarterly basis, but the last available record for their service was in March 1992⁶⁹. The senior forest guard could not remember when last the FC's management serviced rifles under his charge. Thus, the rifles used in Sikumi are not in their best operational state, just like the armoury itself (Figure 5.2). This is the armoury that the police also use to store their guns during deployment to Sikumi. Apart from storage of weaponry, the armoury is also used to store goods confiscated from people, such as catapults, axes, wire snares and hoes.

The inadequacy of ammunition also compromises the effectiveness of guns. Although the rifle's capacity is ten rounds of ammunition, guards often go on patrol with one round of ammunition each. Thus, a stick of three guards would likely have three rounds of ammunition to counter all forms of attack during a twenty-to-thirty-kilometre patrol. I experienced the inefficiencies and risk of inadequate ammunition on 28 April 2016. We had to run for our lives following an encounter with elephants. The elephants were trumpeting in a manner that

⁶⁶ Sikumi senior forest guard 10/09/2016.

⁶⁷ Internal memorandum. FC Records, Also interview with FCS official 6/04/2016.

⁶⁸ Informal discussion with senior forest guard 12/05/2016 and interview with FCS official 6/04/2016.

⁶⁹ Internal memorandum from security officer to administration officer in Harare, 1993. FC Records.

sounded as if they were disturbed. Without opting to investigate, the stick leader instructed the team to change patrol direction. As we changed direction, the elephants' trumpeting sounded as though it was right behind us. The stick leader instructed everyone to run out of the dense woodland to a more visible area. When we were in a relatively safe area, I requested to understand the reasons we resorted to running away without establishing why the elephants were disturbed. In my view, the elephants were in danger. It was necessary for forest guards to investigate the situation as part of their forest protection responsibility. It would have also been an opportunity to learn, first-hand, how they handled situations of 'poachers' – if indeed this was such a case. The stick leader explained that he based his decision on safety. The two rifles available on this patrol had one round of ammunition each. Thus, in total, we had two rounds of bullets. It was therefore risky to investigate the situation without being fully equipped for a counter-attack.



Figure 5.2: Armoury at Sikumi Forest Reserve. (The first two firearms from the right are FN rifles belonging to the police, the rest are 303 rifles). Source: Field picture

There were two scenarios of risk associated with proceeding with an investigation. The first was that, if elephants had been disturbed by armed poachers, part of, or the whole, team would likely be injured or killed in the event of an exchange of fire or if the poachers

panicked and fired shots. The second was that, if one elephant ran wild and in an attempt to disperse it the two bullets available missed, the elephant would kill a team member or two. There was also a possibility that the firearms would altogether fail to fire due to their condition. This incident demonstrated that, contrary to what the senior forest guard explained, guns used for anti-poaching in Sikumi could not protect guards. As such, guns are merely symbolic tools not useful for anti-poaching activities.

Joint patrols involving the police could improve the safety and effectiveness of forest guards. The police use the Fabrique Nationale (FN) battle rifle, which is a more sophisticated and efficient gun compared to 303 rifles. A police officer deployed to Sikumi under operation *Nhaka Yedu* described the FN as a self-loading, 50 round magazine gun, with a firing rate of about 600-700 rounds per minute and an effective firing range of approximately between 200 and 600 metres. During a joint patrol, the police officer patted his FN rifle, boasting about its efficiency in killing people:

This is a Fabrique Nationale. *Yakagadzirirwa kuuraya vanhu, ingangourayawo hayo mhuka asi basa rayo nderekuuraya vanhu. Dzaishandiswa muhondo, hondo yapera, dzakapihwa kumapurisa* [Shona for: It is designed to kill people not animals. These guns were used during the war. After war, the army handed them over to the police]⁷⁰.

However, I observed that police officers deployed for *Nhaka Yedu* do not attend daily patrols. They spend most of their time at the base station in Dete complaining that the government does not support them during the *Nhaka Yedu* deployment exercise. It was difficult for the senior forest guard to instruct police officers to attend to patrols because, according to security ranks, police officers are more senior to the forest protection unit. Thus, I concluded that the presence of police officers does not necessarily improve the safety or effectiveness of forest guards' anti-poaching activities.

Park rangers, on the other hand, use the Russian Automatic Kalashnikov (AK) 47 assault rifle, which is also as efficient as the FN rifle. However, park rangers limit their patrols to boundaries of Hwange, only coming to Sikumi in cases where forest guards call them to assist, or when they are tracking armed poaching suspects whose activities originate from inside the park⁷¹. The use of the AK 47 for forest law enforcement is, therefore, limited. Thus, although forest protection is militarised in structure and process, use of paramilitary personnel and military technology, such as guns, does not necessarily turn Sikumi into an

⁷⁰ Informal discussion with a police officer during a patrol 11/04/2016.

⁷¹ ZimParks official from Hwange 05/09/2016.

arms race against poachers as observed by Lunstrum (2014) in protected areas such as Kruger National Park. Chapter Eight will further elaborate on this observation. Meanwhile, the following section further develops this assertion.

Other patrol equipment

To enhance anti-poaching effectiveness, forest guards are also equipped with communication radios, binoculars, and GPS devices, which they received as a donation from World Wide Fund for Nature-Zimbabwe (WWF-Zimbabwe) as part of the Hwange Sanyati Biological Corridor Project (HSBCP). At the time of the study, communication radios were not in use due to challenges with radio frequencies. The WWF was still working on improving the radio network in the project area. Binoculars are used in Sikumi to investigate the forest from a distance, while GPS devices obtain coordinates for crime scenes. GPS devices are used together with the Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool (SMART) software to produce maps and to improve monitoring of illegal activities in the forest. SMART is an essential element of the HSBCP, but the tool was dysfunctional at the time of data collection due to failure by the FC to pay a six months' overdue electricity bill.

Other equipment donated in support of anti-poaching under the HSBCP includes military green backpacks, webbing jackets, water bottles, single-man jungle field tents, desktop computers and an all-terrain land cruiser vehicle. The vehicle is the most significant donation for the FC. Protected forests have operated without a functional and reliable car for several years. However, I observed several challenges affecting the mobility of forest guards, regardless of the availability of the HSBCP vehicle. For example, fuel was not readily available. The process of fuel allocation for anti-poaching operations was not transparent. An executive FC official failed to understand how and why Sikumi did not receive fuel for operations. The official explained that he regularly authorised fuel requests for Matabeleland North, in which fuel resources for all operations for all stations are well allocated⁷². The Forester in Sikumi was hesitant to furnish the executive official with details. He later explained that he did not want to tarnish working relationships with his superiors at the district level. Presently the Forester relies on remnant fuel from Ganda Lodge's operations, such as banking trips to Hwange town to cover forest management activities⁷³. Due to unclear

⁷² Informal discussion with FC executive official and Forester 06/ 2016.

⁷³ Informal discussion with Forester, 06/2016.

circumstances regarding vehicle allocation to the Ganda Lodge Manager, the lodge has tended to depend on the HSBCP vehicle, to the short-lived benefit of conservation operations.

Another challenge further affecting the mobility of forest guards is a frosty working relationship between forest guards and the Forester. When the FC officially handed over the vehicle donated by WWF to Sikumi, it placed its responsibility with the Forester. As illustrated in Chapter Four, section 4.3, the Forester not only oversees the general management of the forest area, but he is the most senior personnel in Sikumi. It has always been company policy that Foresters are entitled to a vehicle to assist in forest management activities, including the activities of the forest guards. I, however, observed that the working relationship between the Forester and forest guards is characterised by suspicion. Forest guards are unhappy with issues regarding distribution of corporate gear such as caps and t-shirts. They complained that the Forester issues what belongs to FC staff to his friends. Forest guards further suspected that the Forester divulges information about their operations to these friends, who likely have links with illegal activities. There is also resentment amongst guards who firmly believe that WWF donated the HSBCP vehicle for their operations and not for the Forester to run his personal errands⁷⁴.

On the other hand, there are indications that the Forester is unhappy that forest guards exclude him from forest protection operations. The Forester hinted that the reason that forest guards exclude him from actively participating in patrols is that they think his presence will disturb unlawful activities, such as killing small game for meat, while they are on patrol⁷⁵. Forest guards are, however, not keen on including the Forester in their anti-poaching activities insisting that it is not safe 'security wise' to report matters of forest protection enforcement to the Forester, as he is a security threat⁷⁶. Due to issues such as these, I observed that the Forester is somehow reluctant to assist the forest protection unit when they need transport for anti-poaching activities, merely giving lack of fuel excuses. Thus, while equipment donations should support anti-poaching activities, factors such as hostile working relations, failure by the FC to pay for electricity, and lack of transparency in the distribution of fuel for operations prevent this equipment from achieving anti-poaching objectives. To expand the point raised earlier, these dynamics demonstrate that use of paramilitary personnel and technologies for enforcement conservation does not always run efficiently, suggesting

⁷⁴ Guards during a patrol, 12/05/2016.

⁷⁵ Informal discussion with Forester, 7/04/2016 and 16/04/2016.

⁷⁶ Informal discussion with forest guards 20/04/2016.

that operational dynamics determine how militarisation shapes and unfolds on the ground, and in any given context.

5.2.4. Uniform and identity

Uniform often identifies military and paramilitary establishments and distinguishes them from civilians. Here, I examine the uniforms and identity of forest guards in Sikumi. According to the Forestry Commission Security manual, the standard uniform for forest guards comprises jungle green short/long sleeved cargo shirts with shoulder titles designating rank, and a gold crowned FC logo, cargo trousers with two side pockets, military caps with a back flap, berets, webbing jackets with belts, combat patrol boots and woollen stockings. The FC registered this uniform under the Armorial Bearings, Names, Uniforms, and Badges Act Chapter 10:01 of 1971. The Minister of Environment, Water, and Climate approves this uniform while the security manual regards it as symbolic security equipment and a dress code⁷⁷. The FCS official explained that, apart from the jungle green colour being preferred to the previous khaki uniforms due to its ability to blend with vegetation, it is one of the FC corporate colours (white, green, and black), hence symbolic of the organisation⁷⁸.

However, forest guards in Sikumi do not display the stated dress code during patrols. Some wear military green overalls, while others dress in trousers, shirts, and cardigans in a miserable condition. The few guards that had caps explained that they make them from old trousers and shirts. During patrols, forest guards complained about the manner and rate that the FC issues uniforms. On recruitment, they receive an incomplete set of uniform. The FC's management usually promises forest guards that they will receive the rest of the uniform later, but they never honour their promises. At the time of the study, forest guards had spent over five years with an incomplete and old set of uniform⁷⁹. Ten out of twelve guards received a pair of canvas ankle boots from Elephant Eye Safari Lodge management. For the two that were yet to receive boots, one wore old leather ankle boots; the other used his dress shoes not appropriate for field purposes (Figure 5.3). Furthermore, the uniform has no identity, that is, it does not identify forest guards with the FC. Contrary to what the security manual prescribes, forest guards do not carry any form of identification cards to compensate for their unlabelled uniforms.

⁷⁷ Forestry Commission Security manual.

⁷⁸ Interview with FCS official 06/04/2016.

⁷⁹ Group discussion with forest guards 21/04/2016.

FCS officials are aware of this and have been for a long time lobbying for FC senior management to reconsider the status of forest guards. In March 2009, one of the officials expressed his embarrassment over the condition of guards' uniforms. He brought to the attention of the Human Resources Department that forest guards had attended a security meeting in Victoria Falls with torn uniforms. Senior police officers present at this meeting queried why the FC guards were not presentable and why they were sent for operations without proper equipment for military operations⁸⁰. However, the image of forest guards is still not a priority for the FC because, based on observations made during fieldwork in 2016, the FC's management had not addressed the issue of uniforms and appearance. The donation received from WWF in 2016 did not include uniforms for guards; neither does the current budget for anti-poaching under the HSBCP include their purchase.



Figure 5.3: Forest guard in inappropriate shoes during an anti-poaching patrol. Source: Field picture

As highlighted earlier, uniform is an important symbol of identification serving to differentiate military and paramilitary personnel from civilians, in the case of Sikumi, distinguishing forest guards from *vavengi* or poachers. With the current state of uniforms, forest guards in Sikumi can easily be mistaken for poachers themselves. The state of forest guards reflected here and circumstances described in section 5.2.3 demonstrate that forest guards are working under unfavourable working conditions. I shall pick up these issues in Chapters Seven and Eight as I examine factors encouraging aggressive attitudes amongst

⁸⁰ Memorandum to Human Resources Manager from an FCS official 03/03/2009. FC Records.

forest guards, and the subsequent violent tendencies. In the meantime, I move on to modes of communication used by forest guards during a patrol to further elaborate how forest protection operations are framed within a military arrangement.

5.2.5. Communication

For patrol formations to be successful, they need a good communication plan. Most patrol strategies require that forest guards conduct patrols in silence. Thus, the mode of communication used is sign language through arm and hand signals, and to a lesser extent, verbal orders. During patrols, the stick leader holds the communication plan, although it is everyone's responsibility in the group to communicate events during a patrol. The stick leader usually positions himself where the entire stick can see him. The silent mode works well for the guards. During a patrol on 7 May 2016, one of the guards wanted to relieve himself. We were walking in an extended formation. To draw the attention of the stick, he stopped in his path, and immediately the rest of us stopped. He signalled his intention to detour. We had to walk ahead for his privacy while he looked for an appropriate place, but did not necessarily wait for him. When he was done, he missed the direction the rest of us had taken. To locate us he signalled a code sounding like a guinea fowl. Other guards responded by calling back with the same code, and he finally caught up with us. Guards explained during this incident that signals are meant to confuse *vavengi* into thinking that they are guinea fowls. It is advantageous to conduct a reconnaissance survey in silence so that *vavengi* do not detect their movements. Guards also use signals to blend with nature and to avoid disturbing or being disturbed by animals.

Active voice communication between guards of a single stick is restricted to the resting place, but it is also common for forest guards to quarrel during a patrol. On 17 April 2016, there was a misunderstanding between two guards over direction. The stick leader ordered the patrol to take a route further into the forests towards a specific water pan, but one of the forest guards was not happy with the decision. He preferred the patrol direction to head back towards the base station, complaining that he was tired and hungry. He also claimed that the water pan that the stick leader suggested did not exist, which fuelled a debate that turned into a protracted intense argument. The guards quarrelled for more than two kilometres until a police officer present resolved the dispute. During these two kilometres, no active patrolling took place, as we all got involved in mediating the argument. This event hints that frustration

due to hunger and tiredness, for example, can affect patrol strategies, such as communication, and consequently, the effectiveness of ground operations.

5.2.6. *Choosing a resting place*

Forest guards routinely rest after about ten to fifteen kilometres. The stick leader, with the help of the stick, identifies a suitable resting place. According to forest guards, a 'suitable' resting place is one with adequate cover, close to water pans, but not on a wildlife corridor or trail. The reason most resting places are located near water pans is that local people usually set animal traps along animal trails leading to water points. The resting place, thus, also becomes good for launching ambushes. After identifying a good place, forest guards will conduct a swift 360 degrees patrol around the identified spot. This is a security check to detect the potential presence of *vavengi* or potentially dangerous animals. At this resting place, guards relax and replenish their energy but remain on the lookout. While resting, they keep all guns within arm's reach.

5.2.7. *Deployment and camping*

According to the deployment schedule, the senior forest guard must deploy guards to camp for twenty-one days. However, due to failure by the FC to support anti-poaching activities with food supplies and bush allowances, guards are deployed for a maximum of seven days. The availability of transport and food again determines the frequency of supplies for this deployment⁸¹. Lack of support for militarised conservation does not only affect the FC. As shown in section 5.2.3, it also affects police officers who usually agree to be deployed as a way of avoiding being targeted by their superiors⁸².

During field deployment, forest guards leave the station in the company of the senior forest guard, usually on board the HSBCP vehicle. If the car is not available due to fuel challenges, Painted Dog Conservation may assist. On arrival at the proposed area, the team of guards selects an appropriate camping site. Selection of a camping area is based on, for example, trends of wire snare recovery, elephant carcasses, and areas not readily accessible during daily patrols, while a camping site depends on adequate cover. Thus, the presence of trees with large crowns and trunks is advantageous to camouflage guards, as well as provide safety from elephants (Figure 5.4). When the senior forest guard is satisfied with the camping site, he leaves the guards in the forest to resume patrols. He is supposed to top up water and food

⁸¹ Discussion with senior forest guard 12/05/2016.

⁸² Informal discussion with the police officer during a joint patrol 11/04/2016.

supplies in between deployment, supervise activities of forest guards while on deployment and pick the guards up at the end of seven days. However, he often fails to meet these obligations due to transport challenges⁸³.

It is uncertain whether guards go on patrol every day or patrol effectively while on deployment, as I never joined camping activities. But, on 12 June 2016, a researcher researching on lions in Sikumi received reports of the death of a collared lion. She wanted to collect the exhibit and recover the radio collar in the company of forest guards who happened to be camped close to Ganda lodge. Therefore, I offered to escort her to the guards' camping site.



Figure 5.4: Settling at a camping site in Mashambanzou area of Sikumi. Source: Field picture

When we got to their campsite around twelve o'clock in the afternoon, ordinarily a time that they should be out on patrol leaving only one guard to look after the site, all guards were present. They claimed to have just returned from a patrol and were busy preparing a meal. I recalled how forest guards generally complained about deployment without food provisions, how they had to share foodstuffs meant for the family to provide for camping⁸⁴. It was

⁸³ Interview with senior forest guard 03/05/2016.

⁸⁴ Discussions with forest guards during patrol 17/04/2016.

possible that forest guards went out on camping but did not attend to their duties in protest. For the eight months that I stayed in Sikumi, forest guards did not report any major incidents from deployment exercises, giving the impression that illegal activities did not occur either because they effectively patrolled the forest or that they did not work at all. In the absence of supervision from the senior forest guard, it is difficult to establish whether deployments are useful or merely symbolic in Sikumi. The effectiveness of anti-poaching activities can only be assessed by how patrol success is measured and rated.

5.2.8. Measurement of patrol success and reporting

Analysis of success appears to be determined by the number of people arrested or wire snares recovered. The language used in patrol reports, verbal and written, demonstrates that, when forest guards do not make arrests or recover wire snares, the patrol is unsuccessful, for example, when forest guards report as follows:

- Women cutting thatch grass leaked information resulting in our being unable to catch any poachers⁸⁵.
- We managed to arrest six people⁸⁶.
- Unfortunately, we did not find anything fruitful⁸⁷.
- The operation was a success in view of the fact that we managed to recover snares and meat and two spring jaw traps and the operation ended without any incident⁸⁸.
- *Akula lutho* (Ndebele expression for: there is nothing)⁸⁹.

The language in these excerpts additionally suggests an inclination of anti-poaching activities towards local people. This is because the present reporting system is limited to a few field parameters and not guided. Although the HSBCP introduced a data form to assist forest guards with recording a patrol, it is not used. The Forester explained that forest guards needed training before adopting a new recording procedure⁹⁰. It was not, however, clear why this training had not taken place. Thus during the study, forest guards had not received training on other issues to report on beyond arrests of local people and snare recovery. In the absence of data forms, forest guards report events of a patrol verbally to the senior forest guard. The senior forest guard, in turn, sends a telephonic message with daily or weekly

⁸⁵ Anti-poaching report 10/2008.

⁸⁶ Anti-poaching report 04/2009.

⁸⁷ Joint FC and Painted Dog Conservation patrol report 04/2009.

⁸⁸ Joint FC, police and Painted Dog Conservation patrol report of 10/2010.

⁸⁹ Verbal report given to senior forest guard by forest guards after a patrol 10/04/2016.

⁹⁰ Informal discussion with Forester 06/05/2016.

highlights to senior forest protection unit officials stationed in Lupane about 150 kilometres away from Dete. The senior forest guard resorted to a cell phone to report anti-poaching activities due to lack of stationery. He lamented the lack of stationery as simple as Eversharp⁹¹ writing pens and exercise books. The Forester supported the senior forest guard's concern further explaining that the station hardly receives money to purchase stationery and other small requirements⁹². Thus, measurement of success and reporting is ill-structured. Presently, measurement of progress and reporting is inclined to preventing local people from accessing resources, therefore exposing them to various forms of disadvantage and violence, as the next chapter will show.

5.2.9. *Discipline*

Discipline is a requirement for forest guards. The manner in which they present themselves should display the ideals of uniformed personnel. The senior forest guard explained that it is not acceptable for a forest guard to be seen drunk in beer halls, or heard shouting anyhow in public places like civilians. With or without uniforms, forest guards must behave like military personnel regarding speech and handling of various situations. Forest guards go through military drills during which they are taught to adhere to orders and observe discipline at all times. He further added that, by security order, forest guards must not question an order before but after fulfilling its demands⁹³. A forest guard supported these remarks and testified that

[e]ven when the situation is unfavourable, you have to report for duty. The kind of training we get forces us to. If your shoes wear out, you will buy *matenesi* [Shona for, canvas shoes] with your own money. Sometimes you can be three guards for the whole station. After arriving from a daily patrol, Ganda Lodge may call informing us that they have discovered poaching activities. You will go running to Ganda on foot because there is no car or there is no fuel. When you get to Ganda, tired as you are you will chase a poacher who has just come from the nearby villages and who is full of energy. Therefore, this job forces you to follow orders. If you receive a message at midnight that things are bad, you can look for your boots and not find them, but grab personal shoes and report for duty. As long as I am on duty, I will do as instructed otherwise I will lose my job⁹⁴.

However, the FC also uses discipline to silence guards, preventing them from complaining about their working conditions and to bring them to order. For example, in September 2016,

⁹¹ Eversharp pen is relatively the cheapest ballpoint pen in Zimbabwe costing about USD 0.10.

⁹² Informal discussion with Forester 06/05/2016.

⁹³ Senior forest guard 10/09/2016.

⁹⁴ Forest guard during a patrol 12/04/2016.

an FCS official issued a security order to control a volatile incident during which forest guards demanded an explanation regarding delayed salaries for over six months. The atmosphere at the meeting became so tense that the FCS official had to issue a security order instructing all guards to return to work regardless of the financial situation⁹⁵. Thus, discipline often prevents guards from questioning issues concerning their working conditions and welfare. As a result, they work under duress and frustration. Forest guards defended themselves on the basis that it is usually due to this frustration that they treat people with hostility. As Chapter Eight further examines, discipline, in addition to unfavourable working conditions illustrated in the previous subsections, often results in violence against forest guards. In turn, forest guards perpetrate violence against those they police, most of whom are local people, as the next section illuminates.

5.3. Hidden anti-poaching practices

The previous section has illustrated the process and events of anti-poaching activities in Sikumi. However, other practices are happening beyond these visible processes. For example, following a successful ambush or a raid, a typical arrest process begins with forest guards handcuffing the suspects before taking them to the police for further interrogation. However, an arrest does not happen as simply as this in Sikumi. This section discloses the ‘behind-the-scenes’ of arrests and further defines what constitutes *vavengi*.

‘We will apply minimum force’: arrest process uncovered

According to forest guards, there is no difference between local people who access resources for subsistence, and those who kill elephants for ivory. They often regard all illegal activities as poaching activities and the perpetrators as *vavengi* or ‘poachers’. However, many of their experiences are around dealing with local people as ‘the poachers’. After going on patrols for several days without experiencing any arrest incident, I was prompted to ask how often guards met *vavengi* during a patrol and how a typical arrest process unfolded. Two forest guards took turns to narrate activities of a typical arrest process thus:

Forest guard 1

Unosangana nepoacher anytime musango umu. Unotorityisidzira nekuridza pfuti kuti uribate zvakakanaka. Anooma nekutya, hapana kwaachenda, wobva watomubata ipapo. Tinosangano navo mapoacher emumaruzevha umu. Unotomubvunditsira nemibvunzo, urikutsvagei muno, obvious wauya kuzoteya mhuka, watouya kuzotarisa mawaya ako kuti abata here, tiratidze kwaari? Kane

⁹⁵ Interview with FCS official 30/11/2016.

vaine imbwa totodzipfura ipapo. Asi vanomboramba pekutanga! Ndipo panotanga basa redu manje. Unotomutyisidzira kuti atange kutaura nyaya yake. [Shona for: You can meet a poacher at any time during a patrol. They come from nearby villages. You have to intimidate the poacher with a gunshot to catch him without challenges. The shot will paralyse them with fear that they cannot run away. When we catch them, we will ask them: “What are you doing here? It is obvious you have come to steal. You have come to check your wire snares. Where are they? Show us!” If they have dogs, we will shoot the dogs immediately. Initially, they will refuse, that is when the real work begins for us. You have to threaten them hoping that they will be scared and start releasing information.]

Forest guard 2

Haisi nguva yekunzwira munhu tsitsi. Ndinomupa zenya nokuti ndinenge ndatomuona munzvimbo maasingafanirwe kunge ari. Saka unomukwatura kuti atye wotanga kutsika tsika pasi zvinehasha uchishevedzera, ndinokuuraya! Anotanga kutaura, aiwa musandiuraye! Musandiuraye! ...kwandiri itori minimum force iyoyo, but kwaari inogona itori maximum. But, zvinonetsa manje kuti uzive kuti minimum yacho inokwanira papi. Kazhinji tinongotaurirana kuti zvakwana varume. [Shona for: At that point, you cannot feel sorry for them. I will slap him because I would have seen him in a place he is not supposed to be. So you hit and intimidate him, stepping your boots hard on the ground shouting, “I will kill you!” He will start talking, “No do not kill me, do not kill me!”...To me, that is minimum force, but to him, it may be ‘maximum’. The problem is we do not know how much is ‘minimum’. It is difficult. We usually discuss amongst ourselves where minimum force starts and ends depending on the situation we are dealing with.]

Forest guard 1

Aaah kungotaura navo chete hakubatsire, munhu anotonzwa nekurohwa. You just give him one good lovely slap, anotanga kutaura, handei ndinokuratidzai kune mawaya. Zvino zvemarights izvi zvatikanganisira basa. Kusunga munhu kwaakutonetsa mazuva ano nekuti vanhu vavakuziva mutemo. Saka kana torova, toziva pekubata. Unotorova nzvimbo dzekuti madoctor haaone, sepasi petsoka. Unogonawo kungopanicha pane kurova. Kungomuti ita ma air squats, 30 minutes akagara mumhepo. Anotaura chete. Dzimwe nguva totoita movie style, kumuvhara kumeso nemhuno nejira kwakumudira mvura ne hosepipe. Zvinorwadza zvekuti munhu anotaura chete. Ndizvo zvavanoita ku Parks. Kune muchinda akabatwa tiriko [kuParks], vakangoshandisa zvehose pipe akadurura information yese. Ukasadaro, mapoacher haataure. Ukada kutevedzera mitemo hapana waunosunga, nyaya inongofa yakadaro vachingoramba kuti hatizive nekuti vanenge vachiziva kuti havarohwe. Wotongorova pasingaonekwe, nokuti ukazorova panoonekwa nemadoctors unopinda busy. [Shona for: Just talking with them (poachers) does not lead to a successful arrest. You need to apply some level of force for them to release information. However, it is now difficult to arrest people because they know their rights. Therefore, we often beat body parts such as under the feet, where doctors cannot detect otherwise you can be sued. Alternatively, we use punishments such as squats or cover their face and nose with a cloth then spray water with a hosepipe, for them to release information. This is the technique used at ZimParks. There is a man who was apprehended while we were there. (Park rangers), just used the water technique and he released

all the information. Without these punishments, poachers will not release information on illegal activities. If you want to follow the law and its procedures, you will not get any leads for cases of illegal activities, and therefore fail to prosecute.]

Forest guard 2

Kune dzimwe nzira dzekuinvestigeta nyaya pane kurova. Zvinongosiyaya ne situation yauri kushanda nayo. Unogona kuwana case ine evidence yekuti nhingi akabatwa achiita zvakati, asi munhu iyeye achiramba. Pakadaro unomubata bata⁹⁶. Asi panewo mamwe masituations ekuti vanhu vanomhan'ara case, voti ivo vane munhu wavarikufungidzira. Ipapo unoita mainvestigations usati watanga kungorova munhu. Asiwo kana munhu wacho achitozivikanwa nekumbopara mhosva yaari kupomerwa, unogona kumubata bata kuti atotaure nyaya yake. [Shona for: There are other means to investigate cases, but it depends on the situation. For instance, you can get a case with evidence that a person was found doing something illegal but that person is denying; you can beat them. In other situations, people report an incident and suggest a suspect. You do investigations before resorting to hitting. However, if the person is a known criminal convicted of similar cases before then, you have to use force such as hitting to obtain information from him.]

Forest guard 1

Kudhara vanhu vairohwa mhani, ichiri forest protection proper, madays Mutsvene⁹⁷ achiri sergeant kuno. Murume anorova uya, munoziva here? Kana nazvino, munhu kana aine mhosva akangoda kuramba ramba hake, anomudestroya. Unotomubata nokuti chero papfuti haanonoke kuridza. Anokwanisa kungopfura munhu. [Shona for: During the old forest protection unit, when Mutsvene was in charge, people used to be beaten, unlike nowadays. That man is ruthless. If someone is guilty and denies charges yet there are indications that the person is guilty, he will beat him ruthlessly. If you do not stop him, he can even shoot someone.]

This dialogue uncovers the hidden processes of forest protection, displays the militaristic behaviour of forest guards, and further confirms that anti-poaching is inclined towards preventing local people from accessing resources. From this description, a typical arrest process is characterised by direct physical, psychological, and emotional violence. The conversation also demonstrates that there is no standard guide on how forest guards must apply the policy of minimum force. How much is 'minimum' depends on events of the particular arrest and discretion of the forest guard. The senior forest guard and an official from the forest protection unit expanded the issue of minimum force. The senior forest guard confirmed the absence of precise measurement of where minimum begins and ends and that

⁹⁶ *Kubata bata* is 'to touch or feel' in Shona, but in this case, forest guards use the term to refer to use of force through manhandling and physical torture.

⁹⁷ Name replaced with pseudonym.

the prerogative lies with the forest guard handling the case to decide how best to handle the arrest.

There is no clear gradation to say this is now maximum; normally we just discuss amongst ourselves to decide where minimum force starts and ends. We can just tell the person to sit or stand idle for the whole day. It is painful to sit doing nothing, you know. We can even tell a person to go inside his wire snare so that he feels what animals feel when caught by wire snares. With such kind of punishments, you know one cannot die, but they can force a person to release information. We can ask a person to sit in the air; we will say, - “tool somewhere!” We will do what we want with the person. For instance, ask them to act as though he is touching the breast of a woman while squatting⁹⁸.

The official from the forest protection unit, also a training instructor, while agreeing to the absence of a standard measurement of minimum force explained that, where the policy of minimum force is applied, it must only be used to disempower suspects. After handcuffing and disempowering the suspect, forest guards cannot continue to apply force⁹⁹. However, as demonstrated in the next chapter through community experiences, local people are subjected to direct violence before and after admitting to guilt. Violence against people is usually not reported in anti-poaching reports as guards usually tamper with reports to hide information on abuse. The following section enlightens on how tampering with reports may occur.

Tampering with reports

Cleaning his FN battle rifle engraved ‘John White’ on the barrel, a police officer deployed from Siyabuwa Police Station bragged about killing four people in an operation in which he took part at Chizarira National Park in Binga. He thought law enforcement operations in Sikumi were lenient on poachers and encouraged the killing of anyone suspected of carrying a gun in the forest. He did not regret the death of a person while on operation, instead, he bragged about tampering with the docket and how this would lead to the closure of the case in his favour. His narration discloses how unprocedural conservation enforcement can become during a patrol, and how details of actual events can easily be covered up from senior authorities (who in many cases have no means to verify facts of an arrest) or manipulated to the disadvantage of the policed. The narration also links with the vignette at the beginning of the chapter, which discloses that law enforcement agents operate on suspicion without proper verification procedures. It demonstrates how such policing techniques expose people

⁹⁸ Senior forest guard 10/09/2016.

⁹⁹ Official from the forest protection unit official 12/09/2016.

accessing resources in protected areas to abuse, and, how this abuse can occur unnoticed. Forest guards did not mention anything around tampering with reports, but the few anti-poaching reports available at the forest protection unit demonstrate that they too do not report the violent policing activities.

5.4. Conclusion

This chapter has explained processes and events, as well as strategies adopted by forest guards to enforce forest protection in Sikumi. Two pieces of evidence emerge. First, the methods of anti-poaching demonstrate that the practice is militarised in structure and practice. However, forest guards lack the capacity and efficiency to protect themselves against animals and, similarly, to respond to armed poaching activities. Thus, anti-poaching operations in Sikumi are merely symbolic as far as halting armed poaching is concerned. Second, the chapter shows that, while anti-poaching activities are symbolic towards armed poachers, they are instrumental in preventing local people from accessing resources. Therefore, local people are more likely to suffer the consequences of militarised conservation than those involved in poaching for commercial gain because they are more exposed to the everyday violence of forest protection and naturally easier to police. To elaborate these findings, the next chapter turns to experiences of local people with militarised forest protection.

Chapter 6. Listening to the grass: Local people and a ‘violent forest’

Have you come to arrest us?

Each time I disclosed my Forestry Commission (FC) identity I observed levels of discomfort amongst local people. Those who were brave enough to challenge this discomfort asked, “*Mauya kuzotisunga here?*” (Shona), “*Selibuye ukuzosibophayini?*” (Ndebele) (Have you come to arrest us?) Others confronted me regarding violent actions by the FC over resource access. My first experience with discomfort signalling fear of arrest amongst local people was when I visited an elderly woman living with several grandchildren, all younger than 12 years, in Mtuya section of Dete Township. The interview went well until I was leaving. One of the older grandchildren gave a deep sigh, and then exclaimed, “*Ngibengicabanga ukuthi uzosibopha!*” (Ndebele for: “I thought she had come to arrest us!”)

Similar reactions to my identity from old and young, male and female suggested that people living adjacent to Sikumi are living in fear of being arrested by forest guards. The concern is not so much about the arrest itself but the process of being arrested. Forest guards, popularly known as *maForest* (belonging to the Forestry Commission), are known by villagers for ambushing, raiding and arresting people in violent ways. *Kushungurudzwa* (Shona) or *ukuhlukumezwa* (Ndebele) (harassment), *kunetsana* (Shona) or *ukukhathazana* (Ndebele) (verbal fighting and quarrelling,) *ukutshayana* (Ndebele) or *kurovana* (Shona) (physical beating and fighting) and *hondo* (Shona term for conflict and fighting) are some expressions local people use to refer to experiences of physical, verbal and emotional abuse by forest guards.

6.1. Introduction

‘When two elephants fight it is the grass that suffers’ is African metaphorical idiom often used in conservation to explain how local people (the grass) suffer the most during the ‘war’ to save biodiversity fought between the state, represented by its law enforcement agents (elephant one), and armed poachers (elephant two). The previous chapter, however, demonstrates a slightly different scenario in which the two elephants do not fight because elephant one is not ready to face the battle with elephant two, turning the fight directly to the grass. This chapter continues to examine the practice of militarised conservation in Sikumi. It turns to local people’s experiences, expanding on evidence provided in the previous chapter by uncovering how resource access is policed and the consequences of such policing strategies on communities that depend on the forest reserve.

There are four main resources accessed by local people in Sikumi: firewood, grazing, timber and hunting. The chapter is organised according to experiences of people with access to these resources. The first part describes forest regulations related to firewood collection and how local people, predominantly women, experience enforcement of these regulations. The second presents the voices of villagers and herders regarding access to grazing. Experiences related to timber harvesting and bushmeat hunting are presented in the third and fourth segments of the chapter, respectively. The chapter concludes by highlighting the nature of violence that people experience in the course of accessing resources that are controlled by state-approved militarised practices.

6.2. Firewood collection

Firewood is a necessity for people living around Sikumi. In this section, I examine the practice of firewood collection and how it is enforced in Sikumi. Firewood collection was forbidden in Sikumi until the FC changed access regulations. It set new guidelines that set aside Thursday as the only day permitted to collect firewood. There are several conditions attached to the Thursday policy. The policy authorises only females to collect firewood. Men and boys cannot assist women and girls with firewood collection. According to some female respondents, the FC has deliberately excluded men because they engage in illegal activities such as animal trapping. They reasoned as follows:

Men are not allowed because they look at other things apart from firewood collection. Yes. So they are not allowed¹⁰⁰.

Men are mischievous. They engage in other activities in the forest other than collecting firewood¹⁰¹.

Men are not trusted for hunting using wire snares. However, women, especially those married to men involved in illegal hunting, know how to do it as well¹⁰².

Thus, trails of women carrying firewood on their heads are a common sight on Thursdays from all directions leading in and out of Sikumi.

In addition to prohibiting males from assisting females during firewood collection, the FC further forbids women from using axes. Women must use their hands to prepare firewood into small portable pieces. Since axes are illegal, women can only collect firewood from either dead trees or those knocked down by elephants. Transporting fuel using animal-drawn carts is also an offence. This regulation limits women and girls to carrying firewood on the head, thus limiting the amount of firewood that they can collect on the scheduled firewood collection day. Women are aware of these regulations but feel disadvantaged. A number of women told that firewood collection without an axe is difficult. In the absence of an axe, it is impossible for large pieces of firewood to be broken down into smaller pieces portable by head. Because axes are illegal in the forest, they have to walk long distances into the forest to access readily portable firewood and reduce completion. However, going deep into the forest exposes them to risk of injury from animal attacks. Although there is no limit on how much firewood a single woman can collect, walking long distances also often disadvantages women by consuming time needed to gather enough firewood for the week. Thus, while women are grateful to the FC for the Thursday policy, they feel the regulation on axes is unfair. Responses by most women who commented about firewood collection disclosed these feelings. Their responses were similar in many ways as exemplified by the following:

How do we look for firewood without an axe? We cannot go into the forest with an axe because we are afraid of being arrested. If you go with an axe, then be prepared for *kunetsana* [Shona for: verbal exchanges] with forest guards. They will take [the axe], so we are afraid. If only they could allow us to get into the forest with axes, because the firewood is now only found far deep into the forest, we don't have time to walk that far and still collect enough firewood for the whole week¹⁰³.

¹⁰⁰ Anonymous woman 1.

¹⁰¹ Anonymous woman 2.

¹⁰² Anonymous woman 3.

¹⁰³ Anonymous woman 4.

They do not want people who carry axes, but sometimes it is challenging to collect firewood without an axe. You need to cut it so that it becomes easy to carry¹⁰⁴.

Usually, they do not allow an axe. They also encourage that we reuse tree bark to tie your firewood to avoid damaging trees. If you bring an axe, they will collect it because you would have gone above the law. However, we request that they allow us to bring axes into the forest on Thursdays so that firewood collection can be easier. The forest guards can arrest anyone caught with an axe on another day¹⁰⁵.

Women also feel their health and safety is in danger due to firewood collection regulations and their enforcement, particularly following severe injuries to a woman from Dete Township who was hospitalised at the time of fieldwork. This woman is reported to have single handily fought with a log that unexpectedly sprang off her hand and fell on her leg. She collapsed and was unconscious for 30 minutes. Women who shared this story thought the misfortune occurred because of regulations on axes and the fear of being harassed by forest guards for carrying and using one¹⁰⁶. This led to some women insisting that forest guards should protect them during firewood collection instead of harassing and exposing them to risk of injury.

Despite the fear of arrest or confiscation of axes, some women, however, always find a way of hiding small axes in their wrappers and sneaking them into the forest. Observations from anti-poaching patrols revealed that axes illegally brought to the forest are confiscated. Confiscation is often accompanied by spells of verbal harassment. The day we ran away from elephants during a patrol (narrated in the previous chapter, section 5.2.3), happened to be a Thursday. Three kilometres after changing the patrol direction, we heard echoes of a chopping axe. We immediately detoured towards the echoes and came across a group of women collecting firewood. One of them had a small axe. It was too late for her to hide it because as ambushed them. The women were also preoccupied with trying to break down firewood from a big dead tree into manageable pieces. They could not have detected our approach. One of the forest guards harshly (personal observation) interrogated the woman who was in possession of an axe. He questioned why she had brought an axe while fully aware that it was an offence. The woman was polite in her explanation. She justified how it was challenging to break big pieces into small pieces of firewood without the axe. She also explained that she had not cut a live tree but was only preparing firewood from a dead one for handiness. Although the woman tried to be nice and to joke with guards, the guards remained

¹⁰⁴ Anonymous woman 5.

¹⁰⁵ Anonymous woman 6.

¹⁰⁶ Anonymous women.

stern and confiscated her axe. They did not offer her a chance to pay a fine to get her axe back. The forest guard who seized the axe explained that not confiscating the axe would encourage other women to commit the same offence in future.

In addition to regulations on axes, women are generally emotional over the law's indifference towards their energy needs. Several respondents explained that, when they fail to collect firewood on Thursday due to personal circumstances, they are supposed to wait until the following week. Almost all women respondents complained that the once-a-week policy does not adequately meet their energy needs, especially in winter when more energy is needed. Households often visited by elephants also often have to distribute firewood between household needs and warding off elephants, making firewood collected in a single day inadequate. High-energy demand, therefore, coerces women to collect firewood in between the scheduled collection days. Three women complained thus, in separate interviews:

Thursday alone is not enough. They should allow us two days because once a week, the firewood is not enough. That is why people go in [the forest] to steal. My daughters-in-law end up uprooting droppers supporting the fence to use as firewood¹⁰⁷.

On behalf of the women, we are requesting that you review the law so that we can have a collecting and transporting day since we are not allowed to go with carts into the forest. We cannot carry more than 100 kg on a single Thursday. Besides, waiting until the next Thursday is difficult, as by that time our stocks would have depleted¹⁰⁸.

To some of us who are often visited by elephants. Firewood collected on Thursday alone is not enough because we need to light a fire every night to keep the elephants away. We, therefore, require more firewood¹⁰⁹.

While women resort to breaking the Thursday policy, collecting firewood on a non-scheduled day attracts exchanges with forest guards. According to experiences shared by some women, it is impossible for forest guards to catch a person and release them without subjecting them to some form of harassment. This harassment often involves interrogation and punishments such as forced delays and confiscations, exemplified by the following experiences of two women:

We were caught, and [the forest guards] punished us by making us sit by the bridge. They later released us, but we spent the whole day sitting and doing nothing by the bridge. What happened is that forest guards were hiding while we

¹⁰⁷ Anonymous woman 7.

¹⁰⁸ Anonymous woman 8.

¹⁰⁹ Anonymous woman 9.

were busy looking for firewood. They waited for us to finish then surfaced from their hiding place and asked us if it was a day for collecting firewood. When they came out from their hiding place, we were terrified and speechless because we were not expecting them. From that day, I have never gone back on any other day that is not Thursday. I do not want to be arrested¹¹⁰.

I once got into the forest on a day that was not Thursday. They caught and asked me to leave the firewood in the forest. I tried to explain that I did not have any firewood to cook for the baby. I was carrying a baby on my back, but they did not understand that. So, I had to leave the firewood I had collected ... It disturbed me a lot because I knew I had nothing at home and yet I still had to cook for the family. Here the only source of energy is firewood. It is different when you use firewood just because there is load shedding; here we use firewood all the time¹¹¹.

In other cases, women have to pay a fine of US\$ 20 for illegally collecting firewood. One of the respondents explained that failure to pay the fine results in community service of between 2 to 3 weeks. Doing community service as punishment for collecting firewood, however, results in *kushungurudzwa* (shona), *ukuhlukumezwa* (Ndebele) (emotional harassment) as it is often embarrassing for women to be seen by other people cleaning public areas¹¹². Another respondent further clarified that, before forest guards decide on either to charge a fine or give a punishment, there is usually a verbal exchange between women and forest guards. Women try to justify their actions, while guards accuse them of conniving with their husbands, releasing information on the status of their snares, or on areas that are excellent for trapping animals. She acknowledged that, while there could be cases of such collaborations occurring, being falsely accused is distressing¹¹³.

A conversation with a woman who affectionately referred to herself as belonging to *kabhineti yehuni* (Shona for: Firewood cabinet) expanded on many issues illustrated above. She gave an extensive narration on firewood collection regulations that encapsulated several enforcement issues experienced by women. Her narrative expounded on issues around the interaction of conservation enforcement with gender roles, femininity and health and safety problems.

¹¹⁰ Anonymous woman 10.

¹¹¹ Anonymous woman 11.

¹¹² Anonymous woman 12.

¹¹³ Anonymous woman 13.

Listening to the grass: Case 1

'How can they take cover to watch us struggling with firewood?'

Prohibition of axes

My only problem is that you see some of us we are now old, we are no longer able to collect firewood. We have been collecting firewood since long back before it was prohibited, when we used to steal, until now that we are allowed. We used to chop firewood with our axes, but now they do not allow axes in the forest. So, she and I will fight with a big log until we break it. When we were still strong, we used to do so without a problem. Now we are old without strength. These days, most of us are on medical prescriptions. Many people are sick, and people are not strong enough to fight with firewood. One day you shall hear that a woman has died because axes are not allowed. If only they let us [use axes] we see a lot of firewood close by, but we leave it going to faraway places because we cannot break it. We kindly ask if they [FC] can at least allow us to carry our axes just that one day. We will not cut the fresh trees, but the ones that the elephants have knocked down. People are sick surviving on tablets; you know that. Our legs are painful because we walk long distances. Sometimes *maForest* do not check on us. We spend the whole day running away from elephants with confusion because we do not understand the forest and behaviour of animals. This is in addition to the difficult task of collecting firewood without axes.

So, please, they should allow us to use axes so that we do not have to go further into the forest. We are women; we do not have the power like men. Where do we get the strength to give birth to children and fight with firewood? Some of us have no money, no husbands. Our children cannot do everything for us. I do not have electricity here as you can see. Please, can they make our life easier, at least let them allow us to chop with an axe those trees that have been knocked down by elephants. These days when you go to the clinic they will tell you, you are working too much. If you by chance meet *maForest* and ask them to help you they will say, “*Yenzani lina. Asolanga lenu lenkuni yini? Asomsebenzi wethu*” [Ndebele for: Do it yourself. Is it not that today is your day for firewood? That is not our job]. Yes, it will be a firewood day, but we cannot do it ourselves without an axe. How can they take cover to watch us struggling with firewood? At least they should give us firewood permits that allow us to use axes. The forest guards can then monitor how we are cutting firewood. But, they [FC] do not want. It is our plea to the Forestry Commission; all women are concerned. We have no power; we are on drugs. So, we end up carrying our axes to avoid going far and risk of being attacked by elephants and lions. But, it will seem like we are not respecting their [forest guards] job. While we know the rules, we just take chances and say, “*Sizakhuluma labo singahlangana labo*” [Ndebele for: We will negotiate with them when we meet them], because we are no longer able ... When they take our axes we try to plead with them. They will say, “*Sisemsebenzini, asililandelanga ngakini kodwa yini elibuye lamahloka enu eforestry*” [Ndebele for: We are at work, we did not follow you to your homes, but you brought the axe to the forest.]

Safety

They do not guard us. They do not look after us; you can go and come back from the forest without seeing them. If they are there, you will not see them. We will be asking each other, “*Labona abalindi maForest?*” [Ndebele for: Have you seen the forest guards?] Is that guarding people? On firewood days, they should be close by. There has been an agreement from the beginning that forest guards look after us during firewood collection, but they do not. We go without their protection and spend the whole day running away from elephants and buffalos. Now some of us cannot run away from elephants. When it is trumpeting, you are stuck with fear. The other time, we came across lions. If they had attacked us, what would we have done without forest guards to protect us? They should lead us so that they advise us. One day an elephant gave birth, some women went in that direction without knowing. The elephant was trumpeting, and we thought the women had died. The women ran away, but *maForest*, we did not see them. We just heard the elephants trumpeting, and we wondered. Then we discovered it had given birth. We met *maForest* on the same day and told them that we could not continue going in that direction because of the elephants. They responded saying, “*Indlovu kazihlali endaweni eyodwa, zihlala zihamba*” [Ndebele for: The elephants do not stay in one place, keep on going]. It is easy for them to say that because they have guns and know the forest. They say they carry guns to protect us; God, not *maForest* protects us. If the elephants attack you after making three trips of firewood where will you get the strength to run, you fall down and die without it killing you. God protects us¹¹⁴.

Apart from disadvantages brought by forest regulations, and a handful of cases of verbal harassment by forest guards, women generally do not complain about physical harassment except in a few instances of relatively light punishment (in relation to experiences of their male counterparts). However light these experiences, they still lead to feelings of emotional abuse. The overall effect of firewood regulations and their enforcement is mostly harassment in the form of deprivation of energy needs, which has a consequence on cultural and traditional gender roles and expectations of women. I pick on these insights in Chapter Eight.

Women with experiences from neighbouring Hwange, however, had a different story to tell about firewood collection in this area. They disclosed that the Hwange area is more dangerous due to more stringent policies enforced by ZimParks. One respondent recounted that, while she has not encountered park rangers, she had heard of cases of where *maParks* (park rangers) beat up women on their buttocks with *sjamboks* after which they were instructed to pay a fine to the police¹¹⁵. Another woman described how the ZimParks operations are coordinated in the skies and on the ground. She reported how one day, while

¹¹⁴ Anonymous woman 14.

¹¹⁵ Anonymous woman 15.

looking for firewood in the Hwange area she and her mates had to leave the forest immediately after a jet belonging to ZimParks flew past above them. They knew the plane had discovered them, so they decided to leave the forest. By the time they got out of the forest, parks rangers on bicycles were already waiting for them. One of the women tried to run away, but other women advised her not to try unless she wanted to die. At that time, she explained, rangers were already loading their guns ready to shoot, in case they started running. The woman generally felt that *maParks* are more aggressive than *maForest*¹¹⁶.

Differences in experiences by women in Sikumi and Hwange suggest that both spaces are violent towards resource access by local people. However, enforcement in wildlife areas appears to be more stringent and violent compared to protected forests. These insights point to differences in the nature and texture of militarisation between the two spaces.

Firewood collection regulations and men

While firewood collection policies mainly affect women, men also feel violated and disadvantaged. For example, one man complained that allowing women only to collect firewood is not fair. He questioned how the FC expects him to access firewood when his wife travels and his daughters are in school. He also asked the fate of male-headed households as in the case of widowers or orphaned boys¹¹⁷. Other men felt it is their responsibility to escort and protect their wives and daughters from danger, therefore were not happy with the criminalisation of men over firewood collection. One male respondent was explicitly worried about losing his wife resulting from a relationship that could develop during firewood collection activities. For that reason, he was not comfortable to let his wife go for firewood collection in his absence. He expressed as follows:

The law that women go for firewood collection alone is a regulation, I agree. Now our women are going and not coming back to us. They are falling in love with forest guards. I have seen this happening because I have worked as a forest guard myself for three years. What usually happens is when a woman is caught engaging in illegal activities she negotiates with the forest guards to avoid arrest. In the process, forest guards take advantage of the woman and sort of reach an agreement with her. Therefore, while we accept the firewood collection regulation, we do not entirely agree it is a good law, it only works when both parties are well behaved. Otherwise, we are losing our women¹¹⁸.

¹¹⁶ Anonymous woman 16.

¹¹⁷ Anonymous villager 1 at villagers meeting at Mabale Business centre 06/2016.

¹¹⁸ Anonymous villager 2 at villagers meeting at Mabale business centre 06/ 2016.

The Chief, however, reprimanded the man to stop portraying women in the area as with loose morals in front of visitors (myself). Days after the meeting the man still expressed concern over losing his wife and maintained that the Chief and everyone knew these things happened. Despite the general displeasure amongst men over firewood collection regulations, forest law enforcement remains strict on males. Men that decide to violate the Thursday policy experience more than verbal harassment due to the already existing mistrust between men and forest guards. Box 6.1 presents an example of harassment against men due to firewood collection.

Box 6.1: Violence against men over firewood collection

I decided to visit one old man after several villagers in this area informed me that he was continually fighting with forest guards over firewood collection. He was about 69 years old, lived alone and therefore could not benefit from the Thursday policy. Only the Bulawayo to Victoria Falls main road separated the man's homestead from the forests. So he occasionally crossed the road to pick up firewood for cooking. I figured this could be why he was continually fighting with guards over firewood. He explained with anger, in Shona and English, that forest guards were always mistreating him and that they were not good people. He complained of *kushungurudzwa* (Shona for: emotional harassment) and *kurohwa rohwa* (Shona for: physical assaults and manhandling). What enraged him most was the number of axes he had lost to forest guards, which he could not replace. He did not understand why he always had to be harassed for 'just' collecting firewood close by and why forest guards always confiscated his axe. The man was also angry with forest guards for falsely accusing him of bushmeat poaching. He claimed that he had never trapped animals and that, in fact, he did not eat anything from the forest. In his opinion, he thought people who set snares in the forest were the ones to be harassed, not people like him who looked for firewood. He was so angry that he threatened to kill the guards if he could. He remarked in English "If I had a gun, I would shoot them. They are not good people!"

Men's experiences with firewood collection taken together with the remarks made by women over why the FC excludes males from accessing this resource suggest that enforcement practices in Sikumi appear to be gendered in ways that expose men to more forms of violence than women. The old man's experiences further show that the level of harassment is greater against men who collect firewood without permission, than towards women. Chapter Eight will examine these gender disparities in relation to conservation-based violence.

6.3. Grazing and law enforcement

Grazing is another vital resource for local people living around Sikumi. Due to erratic rainfall patterns and unproductive soils in Matabeleland, livestock rearing remains one of the most viable farming practices, but one that also requires vast grazing land. As I have shown in Chapter Four section 4.7, resources outside the forest area are depleted due to low

productivity and competition. In this section, I pick on from this local context to examine the consequences of militarised forest protection and grazing enforcement on local people. I capture the concerns of villagers more generally, expanded by experiences of herders.

As highlighted in Chapter Four section 4.7, the FC allowed for grazing in Sikumi since 1994. The primary challenge with the new policy is its ambiguity on grazing boundaries, which are somewhere between 1 to 3 km from the forest boundary. There are two things that remain unclear about this grazing distance. First, I observed that it is not clear where measurement of this range must begin, given that forest boundaries are not themselves visible in some areas since the removal of the game fence. Second, the FC is not clear where the grazing boundary ends inside the forest resulting in local people declaring their beacons. Some use physical landmarks such as electricity pylons¹¹⁹, while others use water pans inside the forest to mark the grazing boundary¹²⁰. However, villagers highlighted that livestock do not know whether they have come to the end of the grazing border. When cattle go beyond boundaries and herders have to search for them, it often results in disharmony between forest guards and people¹²¹.

The fact that forest guards also appear unaware of the exact grazing conditions raises more confusion around grazing distance and intensifies disharmony between the guards and local people. According to the senior forest guard in Sikumi, there is no formal or written policy except verbal alterations of forest law to ease the plight of local people. These alterations were an agreement between the FC and local leadership. He, therefore, dismissed changes in grazing law as informal, further explaining that forest guards are generally not happy with the new policy because it interferes with anti-poaching activities. He complained that herders' spoors and those of livestock erase suspect poachers' spoors, hence affecting their operations¹²². Forest guards concurred with this view. They suspect that herders are involved in bushmeat 'poaching'¹²³.

These perceptions about herders and their livestock complemented views of one herder who clarified that mistrust is the reason forest guards accuse herders of ulterior motives leading to violent searches and harassment¹²⁴. These sentiments were confirmed by another herder who

¹¹⁹ Anonymous herder 1 – Dingani.

¹²⁰ Anonymous herder – Jwapi.

¹²¹ Anonymous herders – Dingani.

¹²² Informal discussion with senior forest guard.

¹²³ Informal discussion with forest guards during a patrol.

¹²⁴ Anonymous herders – Magoli.

further told that harassment is extreme when a herder is the first person forest guards meet after recovering wire snares. Forest guards will harass the herder and force him to plead guilty to an offence of bushmeat poaching in physically and verbally abusive ways¹²⁵. Thus, lack of clarity on grazing boundaries and the negative reception of the grazing policy by forest guards causes confusion as to how the grazing issue should be policed, while general mistrust between forest guards and herders results in constant violent exchanges.

Worth highlighting is that the 1994 grazing policy does not exempt grazing from existing forest regulations such as the prohibition of axes and dogs. According to forest law, the being in possession of an axe or dogs is associated with illegal activities. The criminalisation of axes, catapults, and dogs is as contentious amongst herders as axes amongst women. Contributions submitted by villagers during a meeting at Mabale business centre in June 2016 suggest that criminalisation of axes and dogs is not only a threat to local people's safety and that of livestock, but it is re-criminalisation of grazing itself. Thus, what is contentious is the apparent re-criminalisation of pasture that comes with the prohibition of tools necessary for the practice, also the abuse of herders for accessing permitted resources. Since a grazing agreement exists, villagers question why forest guards subject them to various forms of violence. At the meeting, villagers complained about the rough treatment of herders, which according to their assessment, is based on suspicion rather than on facts.

A concerned villager explained that it was not in the interest of villagers to break the law, but that circumstances often led to non-compliance. He highlighted two situations. First, villagers are forced to search for their animals beyond agreed boundaries because lions sometimes drive cattle deep into the forest. Second, lions often visit villages during the day, steal goats and take them to the forest. However, searching for livestock without reporting the case to the FC invites trouble. The villager thought it is an illogical policing practice that forest guards expect herders to travel to the FC offices, several kilometres away for many villagers, to report cases of missing livestock and obtain a search permit, meanwhile, lions are devouring their livestock. He expected forest guards to listen to their story before resorting to using violence. He also urged forest guards to assess situation by situation before resorting to labelling someone a poacher based on suspicion¹²⁶.

¹²⁵ Anonymous herder 2 – Dingani.

¹²⁶ Anonymous villager 3 – villagers meeting at Mabale business centre 06/2016.

Similar views were gathered after the meeting. These sentiments, however, demonstrated levels of resistance to regulations on axes and grazing in general, exemplified by the following opinion:

We were given I think 2 km into the forest to graze our cattle, but they do not allow us to get in with axes. There are lions, a python may attack you, and if you have an axe, you can help yourself. You can cut yourself to bleed following a snakebite to avoid poisoned blood into the system. If a wire snare traps your cow, you can use your axe to rescue it. I once raised these points at a meeting, but the Forestry Commission ignored my contribution. They insisted I should rush to the FC offices to tell them that my cow has been trapped so that they can come and remove it themselves. How I can go all the way to Dete while my cow is suffering in a snare and exposed to danger, *kunyepa chaiko* [Shona expression for: I will not do that.] My axe is my axe, I will use that axe in the event of a problem, not to cut trees or set wire snares but if a lion comes, I will assist my animals and myself¹²⁷.

Another villager choked with anger over forest guards' violent actions. According to him, reliance on violent practices by forest guards has practically turned into an unsupervised hobby, characterised by overzealousness, ill-discipline and lack of respect for elderly people of the community¹²⁸.

In addition to regulations on axes and search permits, villagers are generally concerned with the prohibition and killing of dogs. Discussions around the shoot-to-kill policy on dogs disclosed that villagers are concerned with the FC's insensitivity towards herders' and livestock safety as well as lives of dogs themselves. While the law on dogs is well understood and obeyed by many, villagers at a villagers meeting concurred with one who explained that, in many cases, dogs sneak and follow them to the forest without their knowledge, and that it is painful to have their dogs killed under such circumstances¹²⁹. Their concerns were similar to those raised by another villager from Lupote who described the safety relationship he enjoys with his dog. He explained that when his dog senses a lion, it jumps three times to alert him. Without his dog, he will only notice lions when his cattle are already in danger. He was, therefore, concerned with the ignorance with which forest guards handle villagers' relationships with their dogs. To him, the shooting of dogs, in addition to being unfair, is a violent practice¹³⁰.

¹²⁷ Anonymous villager 1 – Dopota.

¹²⁸ Anonymous villager 2 – Dopota.

¹²⁹ Anonymous villager 4 –villagers meeting at Mabale Business Centre June 2016.

¹³⁰ Anonymous herder – Lupote.

Similar to the case of firewood collection, grazing rules complicate the grazing process leading to violence against local people. Case 2 exemplifies how herders experience violence. It is a narration by a herder from the Jwapi village. The herder claims he was harassed for suspected poaching while searching for his cattle.

Listening to the grass case 2: Grazing and harassment

“Bantwabami kungcono ukuthi lingitshaye ngife, kungcono ukufa kulokhlukumezwa” (Ndebele for: My children, is it not better that you beat and kill me? It is better to die than to suffer in pain.)

A 71-year old man from Jwapi village always relied on the forest for grazing his livestock until a day in 2015 when forest guards harassed him. When he met forest guards, he was with his neighbour who, upon perceiving trouble, ran away. Due to his age, he could not escape the forest guards. He also found no reason to run away because, according to him, he had not committed any crime. He was looking for his cattle. However, the running away of his neighbour landed him in trouble with forest guards who began accusing him of poaching, because he was carrying an axe. Forest guards dragged the old man to a place in the forest where they showed him wire snares and forced him to accept responsibility. Denying the evidence angered forest guards who began flogging him. Three guards took turns to whip him with huge sticks while he was lying on the ground on his stomach, face-down. He pleaded his innocence and tried to reason with forest guards asking them to compare his spoor with spoor around the wire snares. Forest guards claimed the spoor were similar and continued battering him. After beating him, he still did not accept the allegations. He instead requested: *“Bantwabami kungcono ukuthi lingitshaye ngife, kungcono ukufa kulokhlukumezwa”* (My children, is it not better that you beat and kill me? It is better to die than to suffer in pain). The guards did not listen; instead, they instructed him to stand on his head with his legs parallel to a tree trunk and flogged him in that position. After this punishment, guards forced him to ‘rest’ on sticks whose ends they had sharpened. After torturing, forest guards handed him to the police. The police charged him with several counts of poaching. He laid charges of assault against forest guards, but the police did not give him attention. When the police took his case to court, he also informed the magistrate that forest guards had assaulted him. However, neither the police nor forest guards were charged. Due to his age, the court acquitted him with warning¹³¹.

Forest guards who handled his case admitted subjecting the man to painful punishments. They, however, defended that, without such punishments, it is difficult to get information from ‘these poachers’. They were convinced the man had been hunting claiming that his axe had fur of a kudu and smelled of rotten meat. The old man’s case demonstrates an overall manifestation of direct violence on local people characterised by verbal, physical and emotional abuse. However, it cannot be concluded that every herder experiences these forms

¹³¹ Anonymous man – Jwapi.

of harassment or that violence of this nature happens to all herders. I observed that experiences differ, so does the amount and kind of harassment a suspect experiences depending on the mood and discretion of the forest guard(s) handling the case. I additionally observed that there is no set standard of how these forms of abuses against herders occur and this observation applies to other resources.

The experiences of villagers and herders over grazing demonstrated here show that, although the FC allows villagers to graze their livestock in Sikumi, enforcement activities still disadvantage people and exposes them to violence. As Chapter Eight will further examine, this violence goes beyond direct to other indirect forms of violence.

6.4. Timber collection

In this section, I examine experiences with, yet another important resource for people living adjacent to Sikumi, timber. Figure 6.1 shows that local communities living around Sikumi use timber for construction of houses, granaries, animal kraals and protection of water sources from wild animals, such as elephants. However, the collection of timber for these livelihood purposes is restricted. Timber is harvested on a permit basis. These permits are available at no charge from the FC offices. I observed that the permit system is doubtfully a benign policy because it comes with disadvantages. For example, a timber-harvesting permit is issued for a maximum of three days during which the permit holder is required to look for the right sizes of timber, cut and transport. This time allocation is not often adequate and is contested by villagers. For example, one villager who was comfortable with walking a return trip of about 14 km to collect a permit felt that three days are not adequate for timber harvesting considering that he has to carry harvested timber on the head or shoulder¹³².

I also observed that it is easier for people who live close to FC offices in Dete to access timber harvesting permits without incurring transport costs except for some physical energy; but comes at more costs for those living further away in terms of transport, time and energy. Villagers without transport money are likely walk up to 40 km for a return trip to access Dete. Lack of a direct route to the permit-issuing office makes it even harder for villagers because the law prohibits them from shortcutting through the forest. Thus, while timber access is 'free', legally accessing a harvesting permit is structurally and materially costly as well as a tedious process for many villagers. Except for few loyal villagers, many bypass the permit

¹³² Anonymous villager – Dingani.

system to access timber. However, timber poaching in Sikumi is considered one of the gravest illegal activities after animal trapping. Whether a person chops a whole tree or branch, the offence has similar penalties. It attracts confiscation of axes, a fine, arrest, or all three, a process that can turn out to be quite violent depending on the forest guard handling the case. Case 3 is an example of what may happen to local people involved in illegal timber harvesting.

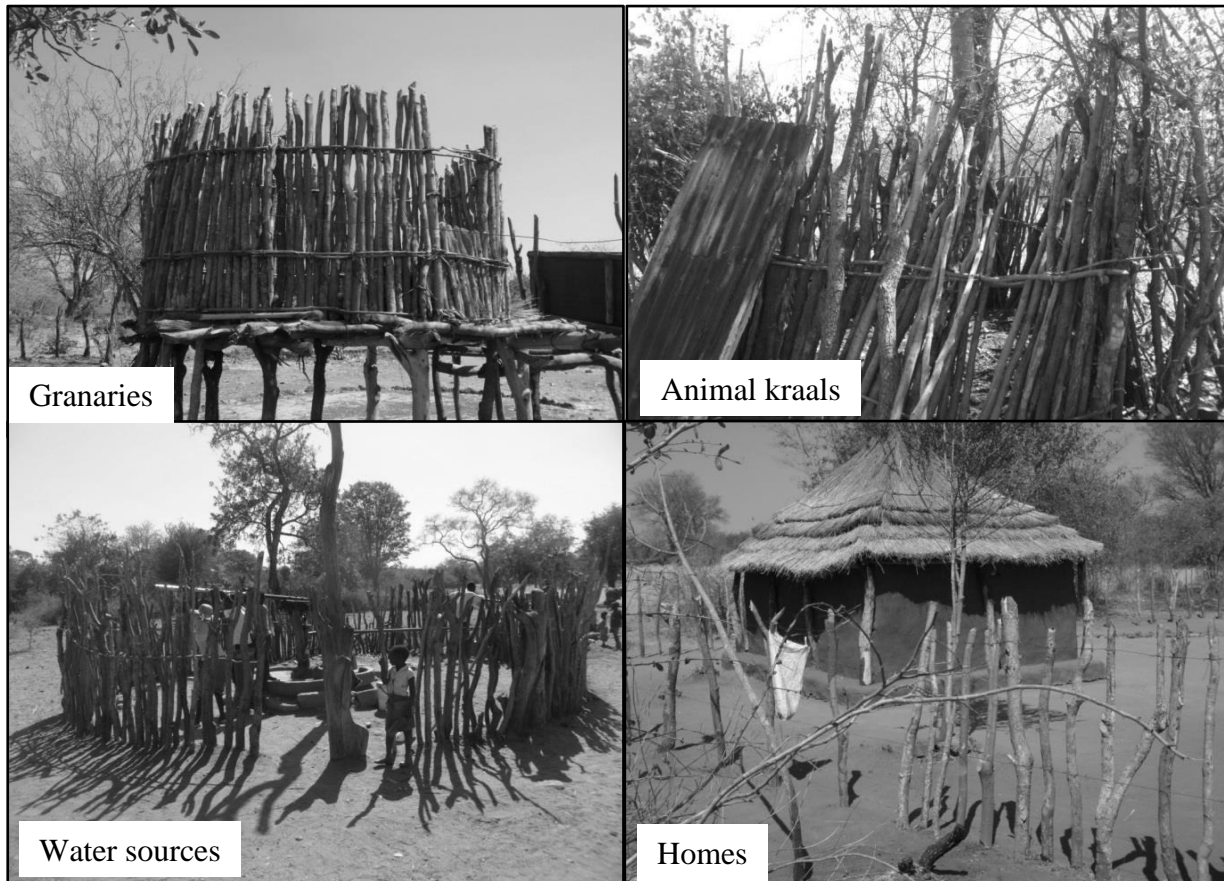


Figure 6.1: Uses of timber around Sikumi Forest Reserve. Source: Field pictures

Listening to the grass Case 3: Ambushed during timber harvesting

“Madoda fikani kuhle hatshi ukwenza udlakela lisilimaza” (Ndebele for: Gentlemen approach us well, do not be violent or hurt us.)

We were caught trying to find means for survival. I am a carpenter, so I went to the forest to look for timber for my business. I was with my friend when we were caught with an *umvagazi* [Mukwa] tree branch. What I condemn is the way they approached us; they beat us instead of arresting and confiscating the branch we had felled. What happened is we were already carrying our logs back home. I think the forest guards were tracking our spoor. They [forest guards] tripped us, and we fell to the ground with the logs on our heads. They began booting us. Immediately we told them, “*Madoda fikani kuhle hatshi ukwenza udlakela*

lisilimaza. Siyakwazi ukuthi sisendaweni yenu. Lingasibopha kodwa lingasihlukuluzi” [Ndebele for, gentlemen approach us well, do not be violent or hurt us. We know we are in your area; you can arrest us but do not beat us]. When we said this, they calmed down and stopped kicking us.

We had two dogs, a big one and a puppy. So they accused us of hunting as well. The guards started debating about killing our dogs. One said the dogs should be killed, while the other refused. They finally decided to shoot the big one and left the puppy. Before they shot the dog, we tried explaining to them that dogs are a problem. When you leave the house, it will sneak and follow you. When you tell it to go back home, it will not. We also explained that we only cut branches not the whole tree, but they accused us of logging the entire tree and trapping animals. To be charged with poaching offended us ... A vehicle belonging to PDC [Painted Dog Conservation] took us to the police station. We, however, had to walk about 2 km to where the car was parked with logs on our heads. The logs became heavier because we had been caught and carrying them was now like a punishment. When we arrived at the station, police officers simply asked: “So you are the poachers?” We said, “Yes”. They asked us to pay a fine of US\$ 20 each without beating us. The logs were confiscated. We have no complaints with the police, but forest guards enjoy hitting people. We do not know if they are allowed to beat us in the manner in which they do ... Since that time, I have been afraid to go to the forest ... I was hurt that my dog was shot. The loss of my dog changed a lot of things because it used to take care of the homestead. It used to provide security at night against hyenas, lions and other wild animals. When it was shot, we did not feel protected anymore. It is not fair that they kill our dogs. A dog is livestock that we are allowed to keep is it not¹³³?

At the time of the interview, the two men claimed to have stopped the carpentry business, resorting to piecemeal jobs such as building, thatching, and fitting doors for people around Cross Dete as an alternative means to earn income. However, these piecemeal jobs are not as lucrative as carpentry. A village head confirmed in a different discussion that enforcement practices in and around Sikumi coerced several carvers in his area, including himself, to stop selling wooden artefacts following continuous direct threats of violence and intimidation¹³⁴. Confiscation of wooden curios from local people is a common practice along the Victoria Falls road. Villagers earn a living by selling their products to tourists travelling to and from Victoria Falls. I often joined the Forester on trips to Hwange town and observed many villagers selling artefacts by the roadside. But the Forester had a slightly different policing approach. He occasionally stopped to inspect curios and permits. Carvers who used wet wood or did not have required documentation were ideally supposed to have their woodcrafts confiscated or charged a fine, but the Forester, usually let them go with a friendly warning.

¹³³ Anonymous villager – Jwapi.

¹³⁴ Anonymous village head.

The case of the carpenter above and violent confiscation of curios leading to loss of income generation projects suggests that enforcement practices by forest guards do not only affect people at the point of arrest or seizure of forest products. There are long-term effects on economic development, sufficient to expose local people to economic violence. The Forester's approach to timber access is also strikingly different from that of forest guards. If only this evidence is used, it can be concluded that using military personnel to enforce conservation exposes people to more consequences compared to using non-military Foresters.

6.5. Bushmeat hunting and violence

In this section, I turn to one of the most contentious resources in many protected areas of Zimbabwe, access to bushmeat. No permits are issued for bushmeat hunting, making it the gravest crime in Sikumi and the primary preoccupation of anti-poaching patrols as demonstrated in the previous chapter. Nonetheless, bushmeat hunting is common judging from the number of wire snares recovered during patrols and from forest guards' narratives, again presented in the last chapter. Like timber collection and livestock herding, the practice is male-dominated and done in secrecy. Hunters are well organised and experienced in their activities making it difficult for forest guards to catch and arrest them. It is therefore rare for bushmeat hunters to be captured through ambushing techniques. As a result, most successful arrests occur during raids, a process facilitated by informants. These informants are community members that volunteer to assist forest guards, hoping to get contract jobs in the reserve. The process of raiding was explained by the forest guards and presented in the previous chapter. Case 4 further uncovers the process from the experiences of local people.

Listening to the grass Case 4: Raided for bushmeat

Jabulani¹³⁵ shared a story about his arrest, which occurred in May 2015. He was implicated in an arrest process involving his friend Dumisani¹³⁶ who, following a tip-off, was raided and arrested for possessing [bush]meat. Eleven men consisting of five scouts from Painted Dog Conservation, two forest guards and a police officer invaded Jabulani's home to arrest him after midnight. They were in the company of Dumisani whom they had severely beaten to get information concerning with whom he was hunting. The beatings forced Dumisani to implicate his friend. Jabulani was not home when forest guards raided his homestead. His wife who was present was verbally harassed. The harassment began with a loud bang on the

¹³⁵ Actual name replaced with pseudonym.

¹³⁶ Actual name replaced with pseudonym.

couple's bedroom door. The following conversation between Jabulani's wife and the team of guards unfolded in Ndebele:

Wife: *Ngubani?* [Who is it?]

Guards: *Vula umnyango. Ungekela sizogqekeza umnyango singene.* [Open the door, or else we will break it open.]

Wife: (Opens the door)

Guards: *Siphe inyama.* [Give us the meat.]

Wife: *Ingaphi inyama. Angikwazi elikutshoyo mina.* [Meat? I do not know what you are talking about.]

Guards: *Ungaphi umkakho?* [Where is your husband?]

Wife: *Angikwazi ukuthi uyengaphi.* [I do not know.]

Guards: *Letha umkakho singakakutshayi kathesi.* [Bring your husband out otherwise we will beat you.]

Wife: *Akakho lapha.* [He is not here.]

Guards: *Suka ke emnyango singene sidinge sodwa endlini.* [Get off the door we want to get in and search the house]

Wife: *Angazi lutho ngenyama elikhuluma ngayo mina.* [I do not know anything about any meat.]

According to Jabulani's wife, as guards were searching the home, they threw things around.

In the process, they came across cooked meat in a lunch box. She was further interrogated.

Guards: *Sitshengise ukuthi inyama le ngeyani?* [What kind of meat is this? Tell us.]

Wife: *Ngeyembuzi.* [It is goat meat.]

Guards: *Uqamba amanga, sitshengise eyenyamazana singakaqali ukulwisana lawe,* [You are lying; show us the bushmeat, before we start beating you.]

Wife: *Selingaqhubeka ke ngokutshaya lokho. Mina sengilitshelile engikwaziyo. Lokho elikhulumayo angikwazi.* [You can go ahead and beat me. I have told you I do not know anything about what you are talking about.]

Guards: *Undoda le uyayazi?* [Do you not know this young man? (Pointing at Dumisani).]

Wife: *Yebo, ngiyamazi* [Yes, I know him.]

Guards: *Undoda lo ngumngane womkakho.* [This man is your husband's friend.]

Wife: *Uhhh, lokho angikwazi.* [Uhhh, I do not know him.]

As they harassed Jabulani's wife, forest guards brought out the kudu's hindquarter accusing her husband of poaching and forcing her to disclose where the rest of the meat was hidden. She denied all allegations of possessing bushmeat. At that time, guards heard singing from a distance. It was Jabulani and his friends arriving from the beer hall. Guards ordered his wife to get into the house, threatening to kill her if she shouted for help. She went quietly into the house and closed the door. Guards then arranged an ambush around Jabulani's house. They launched an attack from his summerhouse. As Jabulani was knocking on the door, forest guards pounced on him and accused him of possessing bushmeat, using Dumisani and the hindquarter as evidence against him. They held the kudu's leg in his face demanding to know what it was. Jabulani responded that, if anybody knew what kind of meat it was it had to be forest guards because they had brought the meat to his home. His response angered forest guards, who immediately started flogging him in front of his wife. His 3-year old son, who was woken up by the noise and terrified, ran to his mother and clung to her dress.

While being flogged Jabulani insisted not being with Dumisani and that he was therefore not aware how or where he got the alleged said bushmeat. After beating and insulting Jabulani, forest guards searched the whole compound. On the same compound with Jabulani's house was a hut belonging to his uncle who was however absent during the raid. The hut was locked resulting in guards suspecting this is where the rest of the bushmeat was hidden. They, therefore, ordered Jabulani to open the hut. He did not have keys to the hut and thus could not open, further raising suspicion. Guards broke in and searched but found nothing. With the hindquarter as the exhibit, Jabulani and Dumisani were dragged to the police station. The incident left Jabulani's son terrified. The son, who was now four years old at the time of the field visit, remembered the incident. He confirmed that some men came to beat his father, accusing him of *ukuthiya* (Ndebele for, trapping animals/illegal hunting). The mother further confirmed that her son often spoke about the incident demanding to know why his father's 'friends' were beating him. On their way to the police station, Jabulani and Dumisani were slapped and kicked while handcuffed. At the station, police officers also beat them under their feet because Jabulani kept denying all allegations of bushmeat. He insisted not being with Dumisani and, therefore, not having information on how he got the bushmeat. The two friends slept in police cells while waiting for their case to be heard in court. The court ruled

210 hours of community service in Lupote upon charges of animal trapping and contravening the Wildlife Act¹³⁷.

The discussion with Jabulani and his wife attracted other villagers. Amongst them was Jabulani's uncle whose house was broken into the night Jabulani was raided. He was furious and threatened to charge the FC with housebreaking. With his eyes wide open and forehead creased he vented in Shona “*Ndashanda musango umu ndichishanda ne PDC* [Painted Dog Conservation] *saka ndinoziva panotyorwa mitemo*” (I have worked in the Painted Dog Conservation anti-poaching scouts before, and I know when the law is broken). He was also bitter that some of his wife's utensils had been stolen, claiming that his marriage was shaking as a result. Jabulani's uncle also claimed to be a village head. In that capacity, he demanded that forest guards should seek his authority before conducting any business in his village. Other village heads, in separate interviews, had similar concerns around what they called intrusion by forest guards¹³⁸.

Others present accused forest guards of having girlfriends in the village that they use as informants. Taking turns, they demanded that forest guards stop falling in love and frolicking with girls from their village. They also required forest guards to work during the day and to stop disturbing the peace of villagers at night. For that reason, they requested that forest law enforcement activities conducted in villages be done in broad daylight. They also accused forest guards of planting evidence, explaining that guards come with meat and force villagers to accept it using violence, a practice that they despised. This is not the first time villagers spoke about planted evidence; a hunter from a different village had similar concerns. Another concerned villager also raised the issue during a villagers meeting in June 2016. Judging from these cases, the point of planted evidence could have some truth. It, however, emerged in a follow-up discussion with Jabulani that he (Jabulani) had gone to Dumisani's house early in the morning on the day of the raid. Dumisani had had a successful hunt and offered his friend some meat. They often hunted together, but on this particular hunt, Dumisani had been alone. He denied that the leg that forest guards brought to his house was planted evidence; it was evidence of a successful hunt.

The story of Jabulani and his wife suggests that villagers involved in bushmeat hunting are exposed to more violence than other resource users. It shows that, in addition to physical,

¹³⁷ An anonymous man and his wife – Jwapi.

¹³⁸ Anonymous village heads.

verbal and emotional abuse that almost all villagers suffer from accessing resources, those involved in illegal hunting also suffer an invasion of privacy and destruction of property mainly where raids are used as a policing strategy. There are also long-term psychological effects on spouses and children of hunters. For example, Jabulani's wife explained that she couldn't walk freely around the village without people whispering behind her back, which affects her. In a different case, another hunter and his wife complained about the use of obscene language and condemned violence in the presence of children. They were specifically concerned that their son's performance in school had deteriorated after a violent raid incident. They were also worried about losing the bond with their son who now prefers to live with his maternal grandparents. The couple further expressed concern over the use of informants by forest guards, explaining that it causes community disintegration as people fight, burn each other's houses and threaten each other with witchcraft¹³⁹.

In another case, a woman whose husband was sentenced to ten months in prison for hunting guinea fowls, admitted that selling bushmeat supplemented their household income. After her husband's arrest, she was failing to pay bills and buy food. She could not readily explain the complex difficulties that she was facing having to look after herself without her husband. In Shona, she commented thus: "*Zvinonetsa kugara usina mumwe wako, zvinonetsa, handizive kuti ndingazvitsanangure sei*" (It is just difficult to be alone without your partner. It's difficult. I do not know how best to explain it). Her in-laws knew about her husband's arrest but were not assisting her. Her relatives, however, did not know. She was struggling to tell them. She explained that, in 2015, her husband had been taken by the Central Investigations Department for questioning over cyanide poaching¹⁴⁰, but was acquitted. She told her relatives about this incident. She was ashamed of telling them that her husband had once again been arrested for a similar crime. She further explained that it was difficult to walk around freely without her thinking people were discussing her¹⁴¹. Together, these cases further show that violence associated with bushmeat does not only affect the suspect hunters, but consequently has an impact on family and community structures.

¹³⁹ Anonymous hunter – Jwapi.

¹⁴⁰ Using cyanide to poison animals

¹⁴¹ Anonymous woman – Dete

6.6. Conclusion

This chapter has elaborated two issues raised in Chapter Five. First that, use of paramilitary forest guards does not mitigate armed resource crime in Sikumi, and second that, there is an inclination of anti-poaching activities towards preventing local people from resource access. Thus, violence perpetrated to save biodiversity in Sikumi is asymmetric. It is between armed and trained state law enforcement agents, and local people using traditional safety and livelihood tools. This violence is not only structural and physical, but it also raises for discussion, issues around cultural, economic, gender, material, discursive and occupational violence, which will be further examined in Chapter Eight. The chapter has also demonstrated that these forms of violence affect men and women differently, with violence against men more intense than against women, hence more violence around grazing, timber and bushmeat resource access predominantly performed by men. It has additionally illustrated the consequences of militarised conservation practices on local people's livelihood options, which are already limited due to unproductive land outside the forest. Before discussing these consequences, the next chapter examines the political ecology of violent tendencies displayed in this and the previous chapter to obtain a sense of why protected areas like Sikumi are plagued with hostility towards local people's resource access.

Chapter 7. The political ecology of violence in forest conservation

7.1. Introduction

The last empirical chapters brought two issues to attention. First, they highlighted that militarised forest protection is inclined to preventing local people from accessing resources rather than halting armed poaching. Second, they established that preventing local people from accessing resources unfolds in ways that expose them to various forms of direct and indirect violence. Previously, Chapters Three and Four provided the national and local context of militarisation and violent conservation practices. It is within this context that this chapter now examines the dynamics influencing militarism and violent tendencies in forest conservation.

The chapter is organised into three parts. The first section continues from the financial crisis that the FC is experiencing because of the overall national economic meltdown explained in Chapter Three, section 3.3. It describes the strategies adopted by the FC to overcome funding challenges, and demonstrates how these strategies facilitate the continuation of violent forest conservation. In the second part, the chapter analyses how alliances between the FC and private organisations alleviate funding challenges for state forest activities, but also how, in the process, such partnerships either resuscitate or open new scope for violent conservation practices. The third section returns to the operational challenges raised in Chapter Five. In this chapter, they are examined in the context of how they become conduits for violence. The chapter concludes that factors facilitating militarism and militarisation in protected areas transcend the ideals of scientific biodiversity conservation.

7.2. FC's survival strategies and violence

In Chapter 3, section 3.3, I presented the economic context of Zimbabwe and demonstrated how national economic decline subsequently led to the official termination of state funding for forest management activities. Withdrawal of state funding had implications on survival strategies taken by state authorities that rely on the government for their operations. Based on personal observations during fieldwork and my work in the organisation, this section describes the survival strategies taken by the FC between 2016 and 2018. It illustrates how the withdrawal of state funding influenced policy decisions towards greater use of force.

When the FC's management received official communication on termination of state funding, it called for an emergency two-day revenue generation strategic meeting in March 2016. An

executive FC official opened the meeting on 9 March in the Forest Research Centre boardroom. He informed all in attendance that the meeting was in response to the official communication received from the Ministry of Environment, Water and Climate that the FC had been terminated from state funding effective 1 January 2016. The official explained that the move by the government was going to affect the FC's survival, specifically the payment of staff salaries and financing of operations. He presented an overview of the challenge ahead clarifying that the FC's annual salary wage bill was at about US\$ 4.5 million. Without government assistance, the FC only generated an estimated US\$ 3.5 million per year, which covered operations. Management had, therefore, convened the revenue generation strategic meeting to map the way forward amid the looming survival crisis.

After the objectives for the meeting were clarified, a consultancy company and expert in strategic business planning took over the proceedings. The consultant acknowledged that the FC was in deep financial crisis. With approximately US\$3.5 million, the FC would not sustain a US\$4.5 million wage bill, previously supported by the government, and still be able to fund its mandate. Without intervention, the consultant worried that the FC was a 'sinking ship'. He, however, assured that he was going to assist with drawing up a strategy that would help the organisation to cover the financial gap created by government. The starting point was to view all divisions (Conservation and extension [CONEX], Research and Training, and Ngamo Safaris) as strategic business units. In this regard, every division was required to work out how much it could contribute, from its current and new activities, towards the financial gap and to present its revenue generation strategy. The total revenue generation target was set at US\$7.5 million for 2016, based on what the organisation previously received from government and what it was generating. Divisions were additionally encouraged to project business to 2020, to present clear outputs of how they were going to generate revenue and to consider cost drivers versus the profit margin sought.

During the first round of presentations, the CONEX division projected to generate an approximate US\$2.5 million, Research and Training (R&T) and Ngamo Safaris expected US\$ 900,000 and US\$2 million, respectively, giving a total of US\$5.4 million, which was less than the set target. The consultant challenged every division to push their targets to at least US\$7.5 million annual business. He reminded managers that the organisation was already operating in the red, therefore needing to generate enough to remain in existence. He further called for a 'business unusual' approach in which the FC was encouraged to think beyond legacy issues, importantly, to think conservation in business terms. The consultant,

therefore, raised the target to US\$3.5, 1.5 and 2.5 million for CONEX, R&T and Ngamo, respectively, totalling US\$7.5 million. Thus, the strategic meeting became a business agenda. Executive managers, most who are trained Foresters with little scope for running the FC as a business enterprise, began scratching their heads as the new approach threw them out of their comfort zone. It was going to be an unusual annual strategic planning process, different from previous years during which departments copy-and-pasted strategic actions without reflection. But, the new business agenda also implied an increase in the value of forest resources in light of their significance in rescuing the FC from the financial crisis. The repercussions for securitisation of resources would likewise be great as illustrated by CONEX's revenue generation strategy.

CONEX identifies regulation as a significant product line

In its presentation, CONEX identified five revenue generation sources, which were framed by the consultant as 'product lines'. Regulation emerged as the major product line, projected to generate about US\$1.5 million, followed by US\$445 400 from hardwood timber production, US\$155 000 from hunting and about US\$148 700 from lease fees, all of which are activities conducted in protected forests. It also projected to raise about US\$580 000 from retail outlets (selling of finished products, such as furniture). The total projected from these activities was about US\$2.8 million, a figure still less than its set target of US\$3.5 million for CONEX. Thus, regulation would contribute over 50 per cent of the total revenue generation target at the divisional level and about 15 per cent of the total projected revenue for the whole organisation. The FC's finance department confirmed that regulation remained a major source of revenue and the division's 'cash cow', highlighting that the previous two seasons had produced about US\$900 000 and US\$1.1 million respectively. According to the finance department's view, the US\$1.5 million projections for 2016 were feasible. It, therefore, endorsed CONEX's targets.

The Division's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis highlighted two strengths and opportunities that strategically positioned its plan to achieve over half of its target from regulation. First, CONEX was proud to be the sole regulator and of having supreme authority over all forest resources in Zimbabwe. It, therefore, had the regulatory muscle to bring all revenue collected from law enforcement directly to the organisation. The presenter also explained that the division was taking seriously the forest-offender-pays principle, which they were in the process of pursuing with the Ministry lawyer

and the Attorney-General's office. He furthermore identified illegal settlers in protected forests as an opportunity for revenue generation. CONEX realised that it could not easily evict illegal settlers. It was, therefore, considering reintroducing tenancy fees while managing tenants' stay. The major outputs for revenue generation identified from forest regulation, thus, became intensification of forest law enforcement, penalising offenders through ticketing, prosecutions and seizure of goods. To achieve these outputs, CONEX planned to mobilise forest officers and the forest protection unit because of the amount of resistance expected and the force required. The presenter further emphasised the need to hire forest guards and foresters fearsome in looks to intimidate people and obligate them to comply. He added that, in adopting the offender-pays approach, it was heeding calls made by other organisations within the Ministry of Environment, Water and Climate who thought the FC was a toothless bulldog that could not use opportunities provided by the Forest Act to generate revenue.

By December 2016, the division had surpassed the set target through intensification of forest law enforcement. An official in the division confirmed that revenue was collected from ticketing offenders and selling of confiscated goods, such as timber, curios and firewood, throughout the country. Important for discussion is, however, not the revenue generation success attained by the FC, it is how conservation strategies are changing with survival pressure and demands for a new business culture, particularly changes in the role of the Forestry Commission Security. The presentation by CONEX additionally proved financial and survival threats increased the value of land under forests and reinforced state monopoly over forest resources. The next chapter discusses these observations.

The predicted rise in photographic revenue

Ngamo Safaris (hereafter Ngamo) gave the next presentation. Ngamo has been in the business of generating revenue for the past thirty-six years (see Chapter Three, section 3.3), generating almost half of the revenue within the FC, but it was also challenged to increase its annual revenue generation target. It projected to be a US\$1.8 and US\$2 million per annum business unit in 2016, and by 2020, respectively, from four hunting camps and two photographic lodges. The presenter on behalf of Ngamo illustrated in his presentation that, in 2015, the unit had generated approximately US\$1.3 million and US\$241 000 from hunting and photographic safaris, respectively. In 2016, it was projecting about US\$1.5 and US\$335 000 from hunting and photographic safaris, respectively. Although figures for hunting were

high, an overall decline in hunting and rise in photographic revenue by 2020 was expected. The presenter estimated that, by 2020, the photographic revenue was expected to rise to US\$500 000 per year, while hunting revenue's growth margin would likely increase by a meagre 1 per cent. The hunting quota system, which is controlled by ZimParks, limited hunting revenue. ZimParks authorities had reduced the hunting quota for 2016, and the future was unknown. Ngamo expected a further decline in hunting safaris due to campaigns against hunting at the international level. The presenter was concerned that green movements were advocating for the non-consumptive use of wildlife. There was also a ban on exports of hunting trophies to countries such as the United States of America (USA) and China. He highlighted that about 45 airlines banned the transport of hunting trophies from Africa to Europe, the USA and Asia, resulting in big markets like the USA going for non-consumptive use. The presenter shared his experiences in 2015 while attending an annual hunter's convention in Las Vegas, USA, where green movements threatened the city of Las Vegas to discontinue hosting hunting shows otherwise they would campaign for all other activities happening in the city to stop for hunting shows to take over the city.

Due to these changes at the national and international levels, Ngamo instead saw an opportunity to grow in photographic safaris. Quoting the Minister of Tourism, the presenter enlightened that there were a projected billion tourists in 2016 alone. From this figure, Ngamo was targeting at least 1 per cent of the tourist trade to achieve its revenue generation target. Its strategies included improving product quality. Product quality was going to focus on upgrading lodges like Ganda Lodge in Sikumi to a 5-star rating, as per Zimbabwe Tourism Association (ZTA) rating. Another strategy was to take ownership of game water supply. Ngamo believed that success of photographic safaris in forests like Sikumi was wildlife, not timber. It was important for the FC, as a wildlife consumer, to invest in water supply to attract wildlife. Consistent with wildlife management, Ngamo also planned to raise the capacity of forest guards by reinstating refresher-training courses and supporting the forest protection unit with the necessary tools required for effective anti-poaching. These plans displayed Ngamo's commitment towards the security of its revenue generation resource base.

After Ngamo's presentation, there was pressure from the consultant for the unit to raise its revenue generation targets to at least US\$2 million in 2016. The consultant saw no business sense in growing with US\$200 000, which translated to a growth rate of a meagre US\$50 000 per year in total earnings over five years. From a business point of view, the consultant explained, if Ngamo maintained this strategy, it had no prospects for growth mainly because

international campaigns against hunting affected areas producing most of the revenue. The consultant also analysed the business growth of photographic safaris. His sentiments were that, by 2020, the FC would likely not have a meaningful business to talk about if hunting markets continued to fall. In response, Ngamo officials present took turns to explain the reason that Ngamo was failing to grow in photographic safaris was due to lack of capital injection to upgrade photographic lodges. The money generated from its activities in protected forests was going towards administrative costs and payment of staff salaries instead of growing the business unit. An executive FC official present then suggested that every division must stand alone, only consuming what it produces so that Ngamo gets time to recuperate and grow. The ‘eat-what-you-kill’ approach was met with animosity, especially from divisions like Research and Training that thought they were running purely state functions with little scope for self-sufficiency. However, the consultant supported the approach, stating that it was not time to rely on other divisions. Each division was to contribute effectively towards its survival. Although there was no agreement on the ‘divisionalised’ approach, the strategy endorsed essential product lines, such as law enforcement by CONEX.

Proceedings of the FC’s revenue generation strategic meeting elaborate assertions made earlier in Chapter Three, section 3.3, that the solution to the FC’s financial crisis lies in the resources it manages and that as economic and survival threat increases, so does the value of land under forests, consequently the impetus to protected resources. Thus, it can be inferred that increased militarisation and violence in conservation is a broader implication of financial insecurity, of state authorities that rely on resources for their survival.

7.3. State-private sector alliances

The previous section has described strategies taken by the FC to generate revenue and to fund conservation activities. In addition to these strategies, the FC has also entered into conservation partnerships with private organisations. Externally driven conservation projects often cushion state authorities by donating equipment and directly funding daily conservation activities, but they also facilitate a policy environment that favours conservation practices inclined to use of force. In this section, I interrogate state alliances with the private sector to demonstrate how such partnerships facilitate violent conservation. I turn to four examples in Sikumi.

7.3.1. Peace Park's Kavango-Zambezi (KAZA) project

This section continues from the case study background provided in Chapter Four, section 4.5 and examines the ways in which Sikumi as a national project relates with the KAZA project at the regional level, and how this interaction facilitates the use of force in conservation. Responsibility for the Zimbabwean side of the KAZA project is entrusted with ZimParks. A representative from ZimParks shared perspectives on how the Zimbabwean side is preventing “indiscriminate destruction of habitats by human activities” as enshrined in the KAZA treaty (KAZA, 2011:11), also on the roles played by KAZA project towards this policy outcome. He enlightened thus:

The KAZA project in Zimbabwe has not been funded and, therefore, there has not been much done on the law enforcement side. But in other countries, it has been quite active. KAZA has bought vehicles for law enforcement and capacitated rangers. We are, however, expecting funding from WWF Namibia to enhance forest law enforcement in the project block. The only activity running under KAZA on the Zimbabwean side is the law enforcement working-group. We meet from time to time to discuss law enforcement issues. ZimParks, police, army and the FC constitute this working group. This representation is important because poaching is a national and regional security issue, so the army and police should be involved. For example, this year most cases we experienced were armed, and it is usually Zambian poachers using arms¹⁴².

Although the FC is supposed to be part of the KAZA law enforcement working-group, the Forestry Commission Security (FCS) does not attend most of the meetings due to funding issues. Commenting on FC's involvement in the law enforcement working-group, an FCS official gave this information:

We are part of this law enforcement working-group; however, we are not told about the schedule of meetings. Even if we were informed, we are usually not supported to attend these meetings. So the FC is hardly ever represented in the KAZA law enforcement working groups. As a result, we are currently unaware of the issues being discussed regarding forest law enforcement in the region¹⁴³.

Although there is little to no involvement by the FCS, the FCS official's statement confirmed the existence of a KAZA law enforcement working group, while the KAZA treaty and the statement submitted by the representative from ZimParks suggests that the KAZA project is facilitating the use of violent practices in Sikumi and the region as a whole in two ways. First, the KAZA treaty provides a policy foundation for excluding human activities for the benefit of national and regional capital accumulation through eco-tourism. Second, the law

¹⁴² Respondent from ZimParks 05/08/2016.

¹⁴³ Interview with FCS official 12/12/2016.

enforcement working-group allows for military involvement in conservation-related decision-making processes thereby facilitating diffusion of military ideology into conservation and tourism activities. Thus, KAZA's aspirations for a boundless southern Africa and mega tourism zone play a role in promoting violent conservation practices in Sikumi.

7.3.2. Hwange-Sanyati Biological Corridor Project (HSBCP)

One of the major activities of HSBCP is to promote management effectiveness by enhancing anti-poaching operations (see Chapter Four, section 4.5). WWF showed that it was committed to supporting anti-poaching activities when it officially handed over equipment to project partners (personal observation, 17 December 2015). The presentation of equipment took place during a ceremony graced by the Minister of Environment, Water and Climate at the WWF head office in Harare. In the keynote address, a representative of the WWF-Zimbabwe justified the choice of project area citing it as having the second-largest elephant population in southern Africa, an important region of the KAZA tourism venture with potential to participate in Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) projects.

This statement confirmed observations made in Chapter Four, section 4.5 that Sikumi is part of a multi-layered political landscape. He also underlined the importance of keeping abreast with technology such as Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool (SMART), in enhancing law enforcement in Hwange and its buffer zones, although, as demonstrated in Chapter Five, these technologies are not being used adequately. Table 7.1 illustrates items and quantities handed over to the FC, while figure 7.2 is a visual illustration of some items exhibited during the ceremony and received by all implementing partners of the HSBCP. In addition to these handouts, in June 2017, forest guards at Sikumi received advanced paramilitary training funded by WWF-Zimbabwe to the tune of about US\$10 000. These donations and financial assistance are clear indications that the WWF is supporting state-approved militarised conservation practices but representatives of the project disagreed with this view.

Table 7.1: Items handed over to the FC by WWF-Zimbabwe

| Item | Quantity |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Vehicle - land cruiser, Single cab | 1 |
| Tractor | 1 |
| Laptops | 3 |
| Desktop units | 5 |
| GPS units | 6 |
| Night vision goggles | 2 |
| Radios | 4 |
| Digital cameras | 2 |
| Binoculars | 4 |
| Backpacks | 22 |
| Water bottles | 22 |
| Webbing jackets | 22 |
| First aid kits | 10 |



Figure 7.1: Equipment handed over to HSBCP implementing partners by WWF-Zimbabwe.
Source: Field pictures

Earlier in December 2015, before the handover ceremony, a project leader in the HSBCP insisted the project was not supporting the militarisation of conservation, instead it was supporting anti-poaching activities, so that forest guards and park rangers become more useful in allowing the government to accumulate wealth for national development. The official expressed the following views:

As HSBCP, we are not supporting militarisation of biodiversity conservation but the anti-poaching activities of forest guards and park rangers so that they cover their areas of operation more effectively. It is appropriate and necessary to protect forest and wildlife resources. People first, but it is important that people realise the importance of other natural resources. We cannot make natural resources suffer because the government has failed to create jobs. The government should protect natural resources and generate revenue to augment people's basic needs. Fencing off people was and is still a good approach for government to utilise resources in the best interest of all Zimbabweans. It is what the government must do to generate financial resources¹⁴⁴.

Another project leader shared similar sentiments and underlined the importance of park protection and HSBCP's role in strengthening management of Hwange and its buffer zones:

The HSBCP has put in place an anti-poaching plan for forest and wildlife anti-poaching, which will involve various key stakeholders in its execution. The critical components of this anti-poaching plan are law enforcement, which includes patrols, deciding on nature of patrols, aerial or ground patrols, equipment and communication, to quicken the response time of rangers and forest guards. The project has procured patrol vehicles, radios, cameras, night vision binoculars, GPS units, chest webbing jackets for carrying notebooks while on patrol, GPS gadgets, radios and other things rangers need during patrols, metal detectors and backpacks for investigation of 'crime scenes'. Another key component is a monitoring system. The HSBCP has a 'science-driven' anti-poaching monitoring system called SMART standing for Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool. This is a ranger-based approach designed to generate reports easily, for example, how many patrols have been carried out, how many elephants have been poached, etc. It is also used to monitor individual ranger/guard performance over time so that rangers do not just walk about the park doing nothing. As for collaborative management with local communities in joint anti-poaching activities, HSBCP is yet to develop an action plan on how the idea is going to be operationalised¹⁴⁵.

The anti-poaching plan could not, however, be verified because it was considered a security document only available to those directly involved with the project. Concerning the anti-poaching plan, the official added thus:

¹⁴⁴ WWF respondent 1, 10/12/2015.

¹⁴⁵ WWF respondent 2, 10/12/2015.

In Zimbabwe, poaching is as at the global level a national security issue. It becomes a national security issue particularly with poachers crossing borders to deplete the nation's national heritage. We also have illegal resources being transported through our ports such as airports. So, we can't divulge our anti-poaching plan to everyone, because poachers might get hold of that information and use it to their advantage¹⁴⁶.

The WWF official may have denied involvement in supporting militarised conservation; however, observations made at the symposium on harnessing landscape connectivity and ecosystem resilience for sustainable socio-economic development in north-western Zimbabwe, in August 2017, demonstrated shared interests between state conservation authorities and WWF-Zimbabwe in strengthening conservation efficiency through militarisation. Discussions after a presentation on violence in the project area gave a general view that the HSBCP component on anti-poaching was significant for state authorities, notably from ZimParks and the FC who could not imagine park protection without militarisation. A ZimParks official remarked that people they were fighting were themselves armed with dangerous weapons. It was, therefore, imperative to equip rangers for them to rise to the task of halting armed poaching. His remarks triggered a debate around subsistence and armed commercial poaching. People began to question whether state conservation authorities must treat surrounding villagers like armed poachers. Academics' views were that application of military strategies against poaching should be applied differently. Some suggested the possibility of having non-violent approaches. For example, one academic contributed the following:

It is only when a mosquito lands on your testicles that you realise there is a way to solve issues without using violence. It is easy for all of you here to say poachers must be killed and that local people must be punished because these people are not your relatives. If that old man were your father, you would have a different perspective. Why can conservation not adopt less violent approaches?¹⁴⁷

State authorities, however, disagreed. They, rather, alleged that local people were accomplices to armed activities. Therefore, a blanket approach would sweep poaching to a halt. Remarks made by an FC official suggested that the state was not willing to relinquish militarisation as a strategy for conservation efficiency. He said:

On behalf of the Forestry Commission, I am saddened to hear about violence against local people by forest guards. It is a disciplinary issue that we can resolve.

¹⁴⁶ WWF respondent 2, 10/12/2015.

¹⁴⁷ A respondent from University of Zimbabwe 23/08/2017.

However, how do we deal with the situation when we have community members being accomplices to armed poachers?¹⁴⁸

Thus, although state authorities recognised the problem of using violence in Hwange and its buffer zones, they maintained that a militarised approach is the best way to halt all forms of poaching. A presenter from WWF on the second day of the symposium went on to present to the Minister of Environment and Tourism that military training of parks rangers and forest guards was an essential activity for the HSBCP to enhance anti-poaching in the region. During discussions that unfolded after this presentation, the WWF-Zimbabwe was probed on issues around human rights particularly concerning their commitment to supporting military training in light of the position of local people the project purports to protect. The WWF-Zimbabwe presenter responded thus:

Rights come with responsibilities; if they come without responsibilities, they are not rights. Rights only become rights if they do not override other people's rights. On the issue of paramilitary training, the WWF is not supporting militarisation of conservation or the consequential abuse of local people; it is only supporting eco-guards so that they become more efficient in their work¹⁴⁹.

This response was the third time a WWF-Zimbabwe official denied the HSBCP playing a role in not supporting violence but park protection. Senior WWF-Zimbabwe and World Bank representatives did not comment. At the close of the symposium, it emerged that issues related to state-directed violence against local people in protected areas were not of immediate policy concern. They did not appear on the priority list of policy issues to be addressed in the zone. The panel led by WWF chose to dwell on thriving biodiversity, functional and productive ecosystems, thriving landscapes, food nutrition, and the contribution of national resources and agriculture to household and community income. Although issues related to violence could affect the realisation of these essential policy elements, effects of militarised conservation on local people did not receive attention in the discussion that followed the closure of the symposium.

Although the WWF-Zimbabwe denies having a role in facilitating the militarisation of conservation by financing anti-poaching activities, strengthening paramilitary skills, and improving the efficiency of forest guards, it precisely demonstrates a commitment to support violent state-directed conservation practices. In areas such as Sikumi, where lack of funding in the past years has greatly affected forest protection, this support has raised the capacity of

¹⁴⁸ FC Official 23/08/2017.

¹⁴⁹ WWF respondent 3, 24/08/2017.

forest guards and re-enabled the use of force and violence. However, also important to note is that the HSBCP is in itself a fundraising project for WWF-Zimbabwe. Therefore, while the WWF-Zimbabwe appears concerned with the conservation of wildlife corridors, it is generating funds necessary for its existence, suggesting that the need to survive by NGOs like WWF also facilitate violent state practices. The next section elaborates these insights.

7.3.3. Painted Dog Conservation: donor money and incentives for violence

The previous section examined how donations for conservation projects by NGOs facilitate the use of force in protected areas. Using the example of Painted Dog Conservation's fundraising activities, this section examines how NGOs access funds, and how fundraising often influences the use of force in conservation.

The rationale for Painted Dog Conservation fundraising

Examining Painted Dog Conservation's fundraising activities began at its information centre. Observations made at the information centre in May 2016 demonstrate that Painted Dog Conservation benefits from portraying dogs as 'good' while humans are seen as dangerous to their survival. In addition to a seven-minute video clip on Painted Dog Conservation's website¹⁵⁰, which blames the decimation of dogs on human activities, the portrayal of human beings as 'bad' is particularly demonstrated by the story of Eyespot, a painted dog whose family allegedly perished as a result of human activities (Box 7.1). Painted Dog Conservation exhibits the story using paintings arranged in chapters on the walls of its information centre. A tour guide takes visiting tourists through the wall paintings telling them the life story of dogs and their plight (Figure 7.2). The story begins with excitement ending with grief, and conveying a narrative of human beings as cruel poachers who use wire snares to kill innocent animals. The guide then uses this narrative to persuade tourists to donate money towards the 'good' cause of saving innocent lives. On the exit door is a notice, which further entices tourists to reach into their pockets (Figure 7.3). With this notice, Painted Dog Conservation, calls on well-wishers to support its conservation activities, and by so doing, acknowledges that it relies on donations to run its programmes. However, Painted Dog Conservation does not only use the narrative of people as a threat to dogs' survival to beg for donations at the information centre. The narrative also legitimises functions of the organisation's anti-poaching unit. The job of this anti-poaching unit is not only to protect the dogs, their prey and home range; it is also to raise funds for the organisation through anti-poaching activities that

¹⁵⁰ <http://www.painteddog.org/>: Accessed 18/02/2018.

facilitate the use of force in Sikumi. The next section unravels how Painted Dog Conservation's anti-poaching and fundraising activities facilitate violence.



Figure 7.2: A tour guide narrates the plight of dogs¹⁵¹.

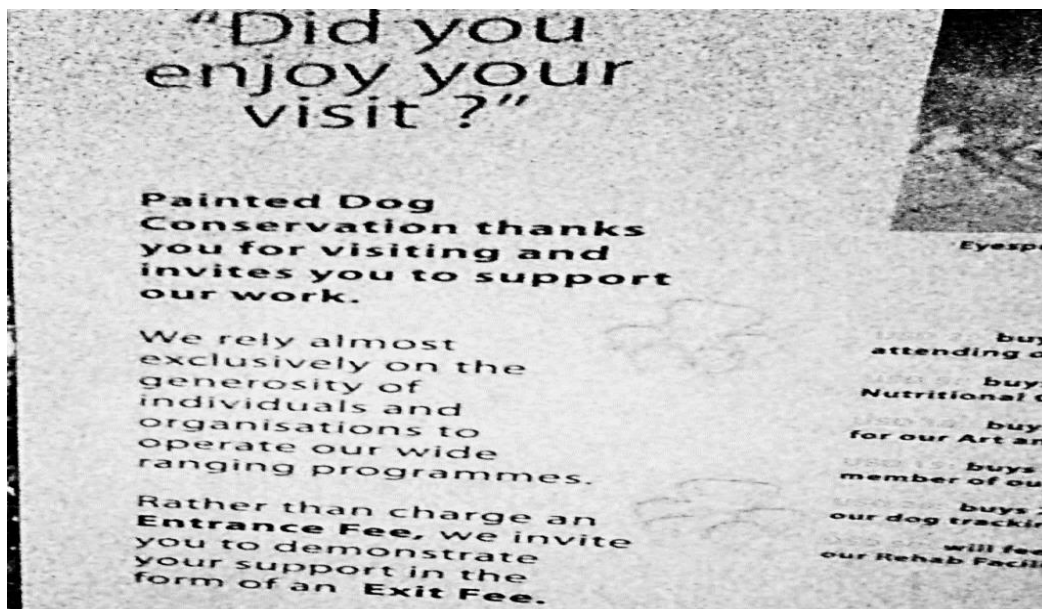


Figure 7.3: Requesting donations from tourists at the Painted Dog Conservation information centre. Source: Field picture

¹⁵¹ <https://www.painteddog.org/education-and-outreach-programs/>: Accessed 11/06/2018

Box 7.1: The story of Eyespot:

Chapter 1: Eyespot was born in Hwange National Park in a family of ten. Painted dogs are found in family units called packs. A pack consists of 7-15 painted dogs. In each pack, there is only one alpha male and an alpha female, the rest of the dogs are family members. They breed once a year in June, giving birth to 7-15, sometimes more than 20, puppies in each litter. When the puppies are young, any adult dog in the pack can act as a babysitter of the puppies.

Chapter 2: Young Eyespot and other puppies are waiting for the hunters to return from the hunt. When painted dogs catch the prey they do not eat the meat, they swallow and regurgitate it to puppies. All adults help the alpha pair to feed puppies.

Chapter 3: Today the puppies are leaving the den for their first time travelling long distances with the pack and crossing the road to hunt. Crossing the road exposes dogs to many dangers. Two of Eyespot's sisters were killed by negligent motorists while crossing the Harare-Victoria Falls Road. Reckless drivers are a risk to painted dogs. Painted dogs are an endangered species; they face extinction caused by human activities, poachers and reckless drivers.

Chapter 4: Painted dogs do not breed in their family pack, in each pack same aged sisters at the age of 2-3 years leave the pack to start a new pack, the same with same aged boys at the ages of 2-3 years. Eyespot and his brother, Arrow, therefore, left the pack to form a new pack.

Chapter 5: Eyespot and his brother Arrow decided to go to Livingi pan in Hwange National Park for a drink where they met an alpha female called Crescent. In most cases when it comes to choosing the partners, the alpha female selects the alpha male, so Crescent chose Arrow to start a new pack. Eyespot could not, therefore, become an alpha male; he would stay with the pack and be a cousin to the family helping his brother to look after the pack. Eyespot wears a tracking radio collar because we are trying to protect the dogs. The collar helps us to track the dogs; it also protects the dogs from wire snares; it has a battery that lasts for five years, but the collar is not 100% protective because the dog can be caught on the legs.

Chapter 6: Arrow and Crescent had 13 puppies. As Arrow left the pack for hunting one day, he was caught around the neck by a wire snare set by poachers. Other adults of the pack came to help him; they too were captured by snares. Eyespot was also caught, but because of the radio collar, he managed to free himself. Arrow and the others perished. Poachers do not think of tomorrow. They set many wire snares. If they all catch something, they select the best meat and leave the rest to rot. Poachers are usually local people who have taken poaching as a moneymaking profession actively selling bushmeat to fellow villagers. Poaching activities kill dogs directly or by destroying their food. Because of this, we have our team, which patrols the bush on a daily basis to remove wire snares. When these wire snares are removed, they are turned into pieces of art.

Chapter 7: So Eyespot was left to hunt alone and to feed his brother's puppies. Crescent one day went to help him, but she was caught by a wire snare on the leg and had to return to the den to be with the puppies as she was no longer fit to hunt. Eyespot could not manage to look after all his brother's puppies by himself; out of 13 only four survived. He took over his brother's place and had another litter of puppies with Crescent, and another one again in the following year. He later led the pack out of Hwange National Park. Crescent was later killed, and the rest of the puppies died because of hunger. Eyespot was shot by a farmer. So, that is why we are educating people about painted dogs. Each time one dog dies; it means the dogs are on the road to extinction forever. This is only Eyespot's story we have many stories to tell about painted dogs and poaching¹⁵².

Source: Transcribed as narrated by tour guide at the PDC information centre.

¹⁵² Experiences from participant observation 05/2016.

Anti-poaching, fundraising and violence

A representative from the Painted Dog Conservation anti-poaching unit confirmed in May 2016 that, as a non-profit organisation, it relies on donors. The official's statements were contradictory as to whether the anti-poaching unit was contributing towards fundraising. Initially, the official stated major donors for the organisation's work include Wildlife Conservation Network (WCN) and TUSK and that these organisations need information from the organisation's anti-poaching activities to account for funds disbursed, to make decisions on whether to continue or discontinue funding. This statement suggested two points: first, that Painted Dog Conservation receives funding for anti-poaching and second, that it uses anti-poaching activities as a fundraising activity. However, the official later stated in another statement, that Painted Dog Conservation is not using anti-poaching data to fundraise. The official refuted suspicions by community members that the organisation uses wire snare data collected in and outside the forest area to obtain donations from the international community. These communities, the official explained, were demanding to receive a share of the amount they thought was generated from wire snares local people collected in support of Painted Dog Conservation's anti-poaching activities. However, the organisation flashes 'Did you know' facts on its websites. One of them, for example, says, "Did you know? Since 2001, we have collected over 30,000 snares—enough to kill roughly 3,000 animals"¹⁵³, suggesting that it is using anti-poaching data to market its work as well as to petition for funding on the internet.

It turns out that not only communities are suspicious of the work by Painted Dog Conservation. Forest guards also expressly doubted the kindness of the organisation in assisting the FC with anti-poaching. One guard expressed these sentiments while on patrol (with others concurring) as follows:

*Itsitsi dzei tsvimborume kubvisa mwana webvana madziwa?*¹⁵⁴ [Shona for: Why would a senior bachelor be interested in taking care of an unmarried mother's child?] It is obvious *Maganyana*¹⁵⁵ wants to benefit from our forest. Their area is small to patrol and so they cannot get enough information for significant funding. If they collect wires snares from the forest, they use the information as theirs. They take pictures and post on the Internet. All the money they get from donors they do not give any to FC. For that reason, Ivory Lodge does not want to see

¹⁵³ <https://www.painteddog.org/education-and-outreach-programs/>: Accessed 11/06/2018.

¹⁵⁴ This is a Shona idiom, which explains the unusual kindness of a person seeking to achieve personal goals.

¹⁵⁵ Local name for Painted Dog Conservation.

Maganyana in their concession because they are getting money and enjoying it alone. They cannot even help us or give us boots¹⁵⁶.

On 13 May 2016, a different group of guards also suspected Painted Dog Conservation of planting wire snares during their absence so that they could collect GPS locations of these wire snares as potential sources of data. They interrogated why they came across more snares during joint patrols with Painted Dog Conservation scouts. Guards explained that, at these potential crime scenes, the scouts logged GPS locations and took them to their offices to produce maps of poaching zones. These maps, they suspected, then appeared in anti-poaching reports to donors. This team of guards, similar to the team joined on 7 of May, also speculated that the Painted Dog Conservation was making a lot of money from data obtained from Sikumi and were disgruntled that they did not receive part of these funds in support of their anti-poaching activities.

The anti-poaching representative at Painted Dog Conservation was aware of FC's suspicions. The official speculated that it is likely due to such suspicions that the organisation struggled to get access into Sikumi. However, the organisation had kept urging to have access into Sikumi, not for reasons related to fundraising, the official explained, but to assist the FC with the management of the forest. The official related that it was important for the Painted Dog Conservation to help with anti-poaching because, at 54 400 hectares, Sikumi is too large to be patrolled by 13 guards. Thus, by increasing the workforce on the ground, the organisation would assist the FC to be more effective in anti-poaching. However, once the Painted Dog Conservation got access into Sikumi, it began advocating for the use of force. For example, an anti-poaching report of March 2009 warned, "As long as National Parks, Zimbabwe Republic Police and Forestry Commission do not show force, the trend [poaching] will continue to unprecedented levels."(PDC, 2009:1). The organisation also began incentivising the use of force. It currently awards a poacher's bonus of US\$5 per person for every bushmeat hunter apprehended and every animal released from a snare. The bonus increases when the animal released from a snare is a dog.

The fact that Painted Dog Conservation incentivises anti-poaching activities confirms that the organisation is indeed receiving funds from the donor community. As an organisation that relies solely on donations, where would it get funds to incentivise anti-poaching? However, no facts emerged regarding how much the organisation raises from the anti-poaching programme, or how much it then allocates towards anti-poaching activities. The anti-

¹⁵⁶ Forest guard, 07/05/2016.

poaching representative only confirmed in another contradictory statement, despite having denied the use of anti-poaching in fundraising, that a percentage of funds raised went towards anti-poaching operations, provision of uniforms, equipment, food and incentives.

Despite the complicated relationship between the FC and Painted Dog Conservation around fundraising, I observed that although Painted Dog Conservation anti-poaching scouts are themselves non-military, save for physical fitness training, their presence in Sikumi increases patrol sizes during joint patrols. As demonstrated in Chapter Five, joint patrols with Painted Dog Conservation scouts use robust techniques, such as extended formations, which enable patrols to cover more ground. Additionally, large numbers work to intimidate forest activities by local people. The case of Jabulani in Chapter Six, section 6.5 demonstrates how numbers are important in successful raids. Thus, in addition to its fundraising agenda, the participation of Painted Dog Conservation scouts increases ground force in Sikumi and makes the execution of force more effective.

Community-based programmes and community violence

Painted Dog Conservation also runs a community outreach programme that raises funds from people-interested donors. The organisation uses these funds to finance community-based conservation programmes in favour of dogs and uses outcomes of these projects to generate more funding. A respondent in the community education and development programme explained that the objective of the programme is chiefly to change the mind-set of local people towards conservation of dogs by bringing direct benefits to communities. The official stated the following:

Our focus is on raising awareness, for communities to understand why we conserve dogs. We are not here to appease people's lives, we are here to save the dog, and so anything that we do, we are doing it for the dog. Anything that we do has to hinge on increasing the dog population, maintain sustainable populations in Zimbabwe and elsewhere. So whether it is community development, bush camp school, research, all is directed to saving painted dogs and their prey¹⁵⁷.

The Managing Director's statement, on the Painted Dog Conservation website, further affirms the importance of community outreach programmes for dogs. It says:

Everything is about the dogs. Our aim is to demonstrate that a conservation organisation such as PDC can and does bring benefits to the communities in many

¹⁵⁷ Respondent from Painted Dog Conservation 9/05/2016.

different ways and we are here because of the dogs. We have an approach of ‘provide people with a fishing rod rather than just give them fish’¹⁵⁸.

The respondent in the community-based programme explained that funds raised for the community education programme are used to finance environmental education in schools, community water supplies (which support community food security), construction of clinics and provision of drugs so that, as people look at these benefits, they cannot imagine life without dogs. The official bragged thus:

No one comes with an invoice when they visit our clinics because they are living well with dogs. The thinking of local communities now is, if we wipe out the dogs what is going to happen? They are always saying, “What will happen without dogs? There will be a problem.” So, we have had positive responses to the extent that communities have volunteered to do anti-poaching, as the only way they can return the help. Such an initiative has not only helped dogs but other animals too. So, it is that attitude that we are trying to teach: We save these species, and our lives are saved¹⁵⁹.

Painted Dog Conservation, thus, uses community discourses and social responsibility rhetoric to petition for funds from people-centred donors. It shares pictures and success stories of its engagement with communities on the internet as a way of marketing its involvement with community members to global interest. Box 7.2 is an example of how Painted Dog Conservation exhibits success stories to potential donors. These success stories petition for funding by providing confidence to potential donors in two ways: they show funding commitment demonstrated by existing donors and explain how the organisation has used previous donations for community development and conservation.

It is, however, important to highlight that Painted Dog Conservation uses part of the money raised for community projects to finance a toll-free telephone line for reporting crimes such as cases of suspected bushmeat hunting. Posters advertising the toll-free line (Figure 7.4) are on almost every grocery store at Mabale, Lupote, Cross Dete and Dete business centres as part of the awareness campaign against wildlife crime in the area. There are three points that the advert evidences. It shows that Painted Dog Conservation works with state organs in support of anti-poaching in the greater Hwange region. It proves that Painted Dog Conservation resonates with state values of national heritage used to rationalise reporting wildlife crime. Lastly, the advert frames hunting activities by local people as wildlife crime. After receiving alerts through the toll-free reporting facility, Painted Dog Conservation facilitates the arrest of

¹⁵⁸ <http://www.painteddog.org/education-programs/community-development/>: Accessed 18/02/2018.

¹⁵⁹ Respondent from Painted Dog Conservation 9/05/2016.

people by ZimParks or the FC. In return for cooperating, communities benefit from increased food security, nutritional health, and household income generating projects.

Box 7.2: Community projects for dogs

Education/Schools project: Bishop Gilpin Primary School, London SW19

Bishop Gilpin Primary School in Wimbledon, south-west London, has been raising money to support a poor, rural primary school and provide schooling for both primary and secondary-aged children in Zimbabwe since 2009. This relationship is facilitated by Painted Dog Conservation, which works in partnership with Bishop Gilpin Primary School to ensure that their funds and support gets directly to those that need it most. The school calls its fundraising project, Mabale+, as it was initially formed to just provide essential teaching materials for Mabale Primary School, but has since been extended to provide educational sponsorships for children from all 19 schools in the region, plus raise money for Bush Camp visits and more. Bishop Gilpin's school community has raised more than £5,000 over the years, money that has been used by PDC to not only provide teaching materials but also to get the school connected to the electricity, supply new windows and doors and carry out other essential building repairs. Bishop Gilpin is currently raising money to build a new teacher's house at Mabale. In addition to the fundraising, Bishop Gilpin's children have been exchanging 'pen pal' letters with Mabale children for the past four years, with children forging friendships and learning about each other's cultures and lives. While life in Wimbledon – known internationally for its tennis championship – is a world away from life in Mabale, the children focus on their many similarities: their love of sport, their families, pets, and which subjects they like most at school. Working in partnership with PDC, Bishop Gilpin's school community is supporting the education of children in rural Zimbabwe, helping communities forge stronger links and gaining wider appreciation of PDC's work in the region, while children in the UK also learn about the importance of conservation and community support. Each year a member of the PDC team visits Bishop Gilpin School with tales from Mabale, Bush Camp and the dogs, an event, which is enjoyed by the children and PDC alike. Children have gone on to create projects on, and write presentations about, Mabale and PDC, with one child in Year 5 urging others in her class to get involved in conservation by supporting the dogs and PDC.

In 2004, PDC secured funding to drill a borehole at Lupote School and thus provide a secure source of water, which in turn facilitated the development of a nutritional garden. Utilizing skill sharing, conservation education and training the garden aimed to provide the community with a reliable food source. The goal was to reduce the reliance on illegal bushmeat and to improve overall levels of health. An additional bonus was the production of cash crops, which helped alleviate economic hardships. Fully operational now, the Lupote Garden Project is self-sustainable after only three years.

Source: <http://www.painteddog.org/education-programs/community-development/>: Accessed 18/02/2018

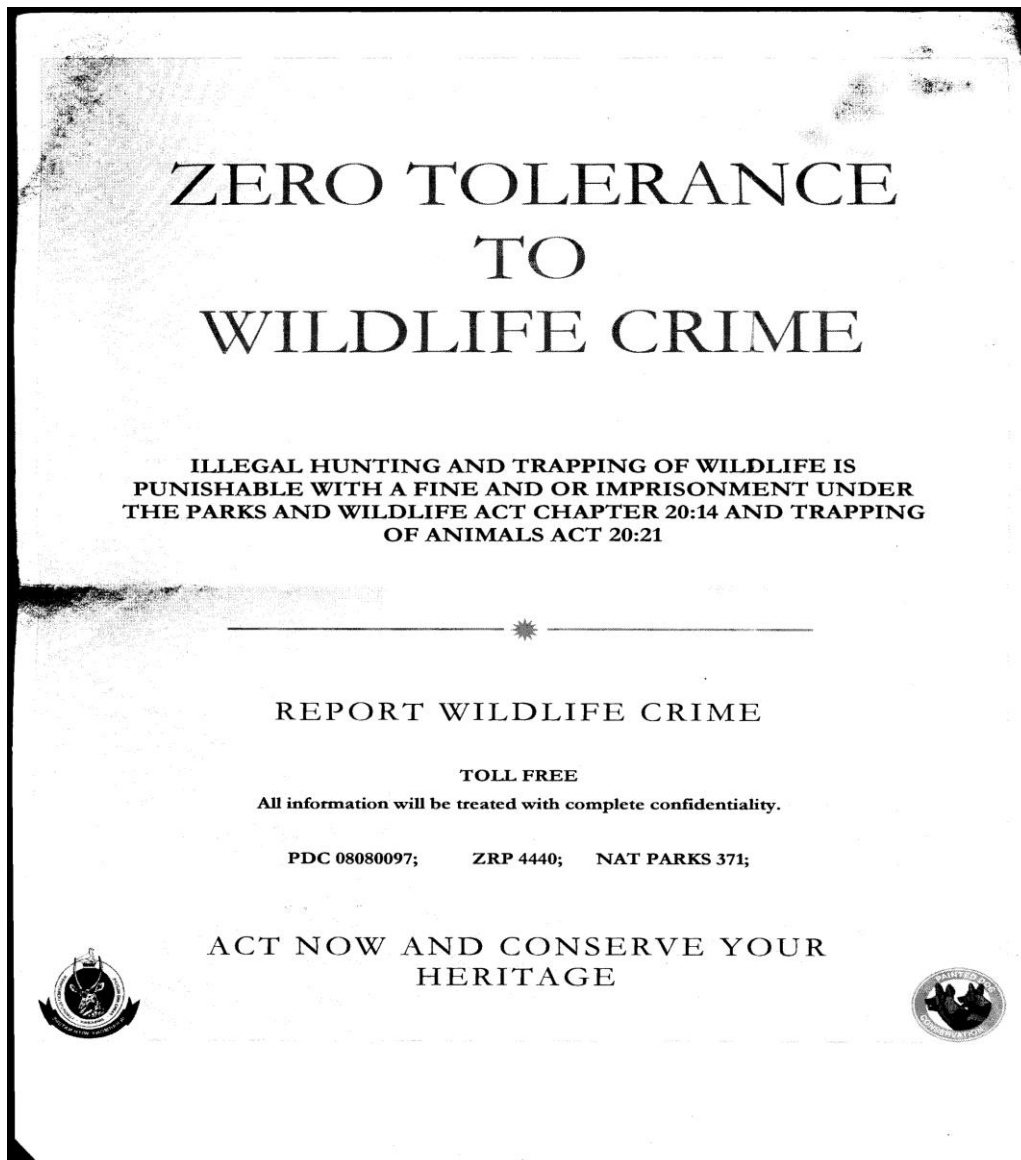


Figure 7.4: Reporting wildlife crime in Dete. Source: Forestry Commission Dete offices

Some villagers from Mabale, however, disclosed that the telephonic reporting system is causing disharmony in the community. Villagers turn against each other while those villagers involved in anti-poaching activities are shunned. They explained that when Painted Dog Conservation, ZimParks or the FC pick someone for questioning or arrest, on his return, he/she fights suspected spies for reporting him/her. They further disclosed that threats of witchcraft amongst villagers in such incidences are common¹⁶⁰. Thus, community-based programmes are not merely a fundraising agenda for community wellbeing. While they bring some benefit to local people, they still embody community repression, support state-directed

¹⁶⁰ Group discussion with villagers – 02/08/2016.

exclusionary conservation practices and underwrite violent policing practices in Sikumi and its surrounding communities.

Insights obtained from Painted Dog Conservation's fundraising activities demonstrate that, while conservation discourses appear to be the primary drivers of violent practices, capital accumulation and the need to remain existent by non-profit conservation organisations often perpetuates violent tendencies in protected areas. Chapter Eight further examines these insights.

7.3.4. Private concessions and violent conservation practices

The previous subsections reviewed the role of externally driven conservation projects, funded by non-governmental organisations (NGOs), in facilitating violent conservation practices. In this section, I turn to the contribution of private eco-tourism operators whose focus in Sikumi is to benefit from state and NGO conservation initiatives. I examine the involvement of one of the four lodges operating in Sikumi, Elephant Eye, in supporting violent conservation practices.

When I first met forest guards in April 2016, each wore a new pair of canvas military boots. Elephant Eye Lodge management had donated these boots as part of its commitment towards anti-poaching activities in the forest area. Box 7.1 summarises the points raised by forest guards during patrols as to the reasons Elephant Eye Lodge management is interested in helping anti-poaching. Forest guards speculate that it is only logical for Elephant Eye Lodge management to support the FC for it to continue operating in Sikumi.

Box 7.3: Elephant Eye Lodge and anti-poaching in Sikumi

Elephant Eye Lodge is one of four private lodges operating in Sikumi together with Ganda, Sable Sands and Ivory Lodges. These lodges profit from bed sales, which depend on visitors' reviews of photographic safari experience on internet sites such as Trip Advisor. Tourists rate safari experience over overall safari experience and availability of big game, like elephants, in the concession. However, concessions like Elephant Eye, that are located close to the local communities, are often visited by villagers for resources, such as timber, firewood and grazing. Elephant Eye Lodge management, however, disapproves of communities grazing cattle in its concession. It, therefore, hired private men from surrounding communities to drive out herders and their livestock, and supplies forest guards with water food and sanitation when they are camped in its concession. Elephant Eye argues that it cannot advertise to its American and European markets that it has wildlife only for these visitors to come and see cattle grazing. For the sake of its business, it is, therefore, compelled to support anti-poaching activities to keep local people's movements out of its concession.

The Elephant Eye Lodge official website confirms advertising and product issues raised by forest guards. To its American and European markets, it advertises thus:

Elephants Eye Hwange is situated 13 km from the entrance to Hwange National Park on a private concession of 6000 acres. The lodge is a truly eco-style lodge offering a unique barefoot luxury experience. The concession has three waterholes, which are frequently visited by game such as giraffe, buffalo, leopard, lion, plains game, and many bird species. Relax in a very homely environment or enjoy spa treatments before or after game activities. You are sure to enjoy your stay in this unique and one of its kind lodge on the outskirts of Hwange National Park. Also on offer is the opportunity to spend a night on their open-aired deck, The Eye, where guests can stargaze and wake to watch the animals take their early morning drink from the watering hole that the deck overlooks¹⁶¹.

From this photographic safari business, Elephant Eye Lodge is said to earn approximately US\$300 per person for a single night bed¹⁶², which is comparable to rates advertised on its website as of June 2018¹⁶³. Thus, Elephant Eye's business relies on wildlife conservation. For the benefit of its business, Elephant Eye Lodge management pledged to donate 150 rounds of ammunition and US\$500 motivational allowance, per team, towards every poacher apprehended by forest guards¹⁶⁴. It was additionally planning to rehabilitate a vandalised house inside the forest for forest guards to use as an anti-poaching base¹⁶⁵.

An FC official concurred with speculations submitted by forest guards. In an informal discussion, the official highlighted that, since private lodges operate on a renewable ten-year lease, it was imperative for Elephant Lodge to maintain a good relationship with the FC to guarantee renewal of its operating contract. Buying in on areas of mutual interest, such as resource securitisation and wealth accumulation, therefore, made business sense for private safari operators. I observed that, in the process, the FC benefits in two ways important for its survival. First, it generates revenue through collection of lease fees from the operators. These private operators, in turn, assist the FC's securitisation agenda by boosting anti-poaching activities, which the forest authority needs for the same purposes of wealth accumulation through Ganda Lodge. Thus, commitments to fund anti-poaching operations made by private companies create relationships of mutual financial gains that encourage the use of state force as a resource securitisation strategy.

¹⁶¹ <https://www.jenmansafaris.com/accommodation/elephants-eye-hwange/>: Accessed 21/06/2018.

¹⁶² Informal discussions with FC official.

¹⁶³ <https://www.jenmansafaris.com/tours-and-lodges-type/lodges/>: Accessed 21/06/2018.

¹⁶⁴ Forestry Commission internal memorandum, February 2016.

¹⁶⁵ Informal discussion with FC official.

7.4. Perpetuation of violence at the operational level

Thus far, I have demonstrated how outsiders facilitate violence in Sikumi. In this section, I explain how operations within the FC promote violence. I return to challenges of anti-poaching raised by forest guards in Chapter Five and examine them in light of how they sustain violence.

7.4.1. Forest protection operational policy

In the previous two chapters, anti-poaching activities by forest guards and experiences of local people with militarised forest protection demonstrate that there are no specifications on how forest guards should use minimum force. Statements from two forest guards confirmed lack of operational procedure on the use of minimum force.

It is not official policy to use minimum force, but we use it anyway. Since there is no guide, how we apply minimum force will depend on the situation we are dealing with. The force can become excessive, but how can we tell without a clear guide of where it must begin or end¹⁶⁶?

We do not have a standard operations procedure (SOP). We just operate without it. We rely on offences in the forest and wildlife Acts, and we obtain our powers to arrest from there. These acts do not give us the procedure of operation only the offences. As for the process, we usually make our own decisions in the field. This is a problem for us. The FC does not care about how we operate, so we just work anyhow without formal documentation that guides us¹⁶⁷.

These statements further suggest that, in addition to lack of an operational procedure, forest guards also lack supervision. I observed that supervision of forest guards is limited to the senior guard. When we returned from patrols, forest guards reported to the senior guard only. Although the Forester is technically in charge of overall forest management in Sikumi, forest guards deliberately exclude him on ‘security’ grounds due to reasons explained in Chapter Five, section 5.2.3. However, the senior guard, by himself, cannot supervise his team. As highlighted in Chapter Four, the Forester is the most senior person in Sikumi, which is the reason he is in charge of the vehicle donated by WWF under the Hwange Sanyati Biological Conservation Project (HSBCP). Besides, the Forester manages all funds disbursed to Sikumi. The senior guard must, therefore, rely on the Forester for supervision of his team. But the tension between the two units separates forest security from forest management, thereby limiting the supervision network in Sikumi.

¹⁶⁶ Forest guard, 23/05/2016.

¹⁶⁷ Senior forest guard, 13/09/2016.

Lack of an operational guide and absence of supervision, together empower forest guards by giving them the prerogative to decide when and how to use minimum force and also gives them the room to cover up extreme cases of minimum force against local people. As such, aggressive policing practices are sustained in Sikumi. The absence of supervision creates a *laissez-faire* environment, where any amounts of force fall within limits of minimum force, and where violent practices against local people proceed unchecked and unreported. Violence, therefore, remains unknown to the FC's management for possible intervention. However, it is also an intense training process and ill-treatment at the workplace that drive forest guards to exercise the use of force in the manner they do. The next section elaborates how this unfolds.

7.4.2. Violent training and ill-treatment of forest guards

Apart from policy issues, forest guards' working conditions also foster violent policing practices. Forest guards experience ill-treatment during training and operate under unfavourable working conditions. All guards agreed training was an intense, violent and a frustrating process. They did not hide their resentment and frustration. For example, one forest guard gave his views as follows:

After training, we are angry. With the kind of training we receive and the way we are treated, if I meet a person after training trying to be funny, I will kill him. Imagine being asked to tell everyone that, I am a fool, for failure to rehearse rifle parts and their functions. It is degrading¹⁶⁸.

Another added that some guards quit during training, while for some, lack of food, harassment, and intensity of training exposes hidden illness¹⁶⁹.

An official from the forest protection unit, who is also a training instructor, agreed that military training is often intense. The reason that training is intense is to de-civilianise forest guards and to ensure impartiality towards all forms of illegal activities. He confirmed that instructors punish forest guards who fail to follow instructions during training. These punishments are not intended to hurt forest guards but to instil discipline. Punishments include physical assault, forced running or repeated assault courses. An assault course is the most intensive part of training. During this part of military training, forest guards navigate challenging physical obstacles within a specific record of time. These obstacles may include crawling in narrow conduits with spikes or barbed wire above the head, or climbing over

¹⁶⁸ Forest guard during patrol, 12/05/2016.

¹⁶⁹ Forest guard during patrol, 12/05/2016.

dangerous situations using ropes or bars¹⁷⁰. According to the training instructor, going through the assault course helps forest guards to overcome field challenges. However, forest guards feel ill-treated by these modes of training. The Forestry Commission Security manual itself underlines the importance of intense instruction on certain components of training to ensure security of the FC.

Military training that occurred in June 2017 is a recent example illustrating why forest guards feel ill-treated. On 1 August 2017, I received information that the passing out parade ceremony held on 27 July 2016 almost became a failure after forest guards threatened to boycott. A training instructor who was present during this event confirmed the incident and explained the events that unfolded. Forest guards planned to boycott the passing out parade because the FC's management did not provide adequate food supplies during training. They had to supplement with food from their homes. Training instructors were embarrassed because they too had to rely on food supplies from forest guards. The management had promised to pay forest guards training allowances, which were part of the training budget, but did not do so. Guards were further infuriated because, at the end of training, the passing out parade, which usually marks the end of military training, was postponed to a later date. Training instructors had to send all forest guards home and asked them to travel back at a future scheduled time using their own funds. To guards, this was an inconsiderate arrangement considering a seven-month gap in salary arrears and a broken promise on training allowances.

On the day of the passing out ceremony, which also typically became a political gathering, the FC's management brought truckloads of food to feed guests, yet, guards had gone through a 30-day training period without adequate food supplies. Management had not purchased uniforms for forest guards but brought new dustcoats, wellingtons and promotional materials, such as t-shirts and hats, for guests, while guards wore old and shabby uniforms for the parade. Forest guards, therefore, failed to contain their frustration and anger leading to the whole team planning to boycott the ceremony. The instructor believed that, since the Minister of Environment, Water and Climate graced the ceremony, guards purposely planned to boycott the ceremony to disgrace management. When the news reached management, they instructed the head of security to issue a security order compelling forest guards to attend the ceremony. However, officials from the Forestry Commission Security (FCS) did not issue

¹⁷⁰ Official from the forest protection unit and training instructor 1, 12/09/2016.

this order because they too knew the grievances by forest guards were genuine. There was, therefore, panic amongst management who immediately instructed the finance department to disburse training allowances. Forest guards only agreed to take part in the event when bank alerts started coming through to their mobile phones¹⁷¹.

Events of 27 July 2017 demonstrate that poor working conditions and remuneration, in addition to intense training, often aggravate guards' frustration. Forest guards work every day of the year to ensure resource security round the clock, compared to other employees within the FC who, on average, work eight hours a day and five days a week. Forest guards are some of the lowest-paid personnel and considered with low priority by the FC's management. The forest protection unit is also one of the most affected groups of employees within the organisation following the withdrawal of government funding. Delayed salaries and removal of bush allowances compelled many forest guards to apply for bank loans to cover family needs. An FCS official confirmed in December 2016 that 99 per cent of forest guards asked for bank loans. Due to their low rank in the organisation and low salaries, guards did not qualify for a loan arrangement between the FC and one of the commercial banks, in which the organisation took full responsibility to facilitate repayment of loans. As a result, most guards had individual agreements with banks¹⁷². Commenting on the issue of loans, forest guards in Sikumi explained that this arrangement was difficult for them because the FC was not paying salaries on time. When it finally managed to disburse salaries, they were not in full. Meanwhile, banks were charging interest. When the half salaries were deposited, banks debited their accounts, leaving most guards with barely anything. As a result, many could not look after their families, leading to frustration.

Due to violent training, inadequate remuneration and generally unfavourable working conditions, forest guards are, therefore, frustrated. This frustration breeds aggressive attitude, such as those displayed in the last two chapters, consequently perpetuating violence in protected areas. The next chapter will elaborate on these insights as it examines violence perpetrated against perpetrators of violence.

¹⁷¹ Official from the forest protection unit and Training instructor 2. 05/08/2017.

¹⁷² FCS official, 17/12/2016.

7.5. Conclusion

This chapter presented two factors perpetuating violence in forest conservation. First, the national level economic crisis, linked to the global political economy, encourages survival strategies that re-produce and perpetuate local level violent conservation practices. The chapter presented two sets of evidence in support of this observation. National level economic crisis, and pressure to survive, can change the dimension and scope of forest protection in ways that intensify violence. Financial turmoil, furthermore, coerces state authorities to enter into partnerships with non-governmental conservation agencies and private organisations. While these relationships alleviate operational challenges and foster scientific conservation practice, in the background, they encourage local level violence by supporting state-directed exclusionary practices. The second factor perpetuating violence relates to operational difficulties. The absence of operational and policy frameworks for forest protection allows for violence in protected areas. Three sets of evidence support this observation. Lack of adequate enforcement staff creates opportunities for non-governmental conservation organisations to participate in anti-poaching. The organisations not only come with hidden agendas, but their participation also comes with incentives for anti-poaching, overall increase of ground force in support of state violence. Lack of operational policies coupled with inadequate supervision, within state conservation agencies, creates a *laissez-faire* environment that sustains abuse of local people. Lastly, occupational violence against forest guards breeds militaristic attitudes that perpetuate hostility in protected areas. This chapter, therefore, demonstrates that on-going day-to-day violence in protected areas is sustained by factors beyond immediate conservation practice.

Chapter 8. Militarisation and violence in conservation: Textures, forms and consequences

8.1. Introduction

The last three chapters focused on empirical material around the militarisation of conservation and violence perpetuated therein. Three sets of evidence emerged from protected forests. First, it is undeniable that forest protection is militarised. The state forestry authority has adopted paramilitary measures to mitigate armed poaching and to provide forest security. However, there are also indications that these paramilitary operations do not receive adequate state support. As a result, paramilitary anti-poaching operations tend to focus on preventing local people from resource access instead of pursuing armed poachers. Second, this shift in focus results in abuse and perpetration of various kinds of violence against people living adjacent to protected forests. Lastly, and third, the study establishes that violence against people persists not only as a relic of aggressive colonial land appropriation and exclusionary conservation ideologies but also because of socio-economic and socio-political factors transcending ideologies of conservation science.

This chapter synthesises these insights into three parts. First, I discuss research insights with regard to the texture and nature of militarisation unfolding in protected areas. I end the section by evaluating what these findings mean for theorising the militarisation of conservation. Second, I elaborate on the consequences of militarised conservation on people that depend on protected areas for their survival. In the process, I categorise the nature of violence dispensed to local people. I end the section by drawing a framework for hypothesising conservation-based violence. In the third and final part, I discuss the factors facilitating this violence and in the process evaluate the concepts of accumulation by securitisation and green-grabbing. The chapter ends with a summary of key research insights and presents broader thesis arguments in relation to the militarisation of conservation, violence and local people.

8.2. Not all protected areas are places of ‘war’.

A central message obtained from operational processes of militarisation presented in Chapter Five is that conservation enforcement can use paramilitary personnel, strategies and technologies yet remain symbolic in halting armed poaching. This is a scenario likely to happen when state conservation authorities do not prioritise anti-poaching activities resulting

in paramilitary units being inadequately equipped and consequently incapacitated in the course of their duties. This research outcome suggests the significance of capital injection in shaping the forms and textures of militarisation in conservation. Military equipment and technology required to execute military practices are expensive to purchase and maintain. If conservation authorities lack resources to support general conservation activities, they will also fail to fund militarised policies, the operational costs of which are usually high. The situation is exacerbated when states altogether stop supporting conservation activities, leaving conservation authorities to fend for themselves. Exclusion of environmental activities from national budgets, such as has happened in Zimbabwe, is a common phenomenon in third world countries where states give priority to other development projects, such as education and health, due to limited financial resources (Duffy, 1999). So why do state authorities adopt conservation policies that they cannot fund?

A possible explanation is coercion. Studies on coercive conservation often discuss coercion in the context of state authorities exercising authority over resource users (for example, Agrawal & Gibson, 1999; Dressler & Roth, 2011; Hitchcock, 1995; Peluso, 1993). They discuss less about coercion between states and amongst state authorities. Yet, there are legal, economic and political factors that coerce state authorities to adopt militarised conservation practices, even when they are not in a financial position to fund such practices. Legal coercion can happen at the national and international level. At the national level, forest, wildlife and fishery resources often fall under one ministry in most countries, but their management is usually entrusted to different state authorities and governed by different laws, some of which may be superior to others. In the Zimbabwean context, the wildlife authority holds supreme authority over wildlife consumption and coerces consumers of wildlife to follow wildlife regulations. Thus, forest authorities may have wildlife in their jurisdictions but cannot make decisions about these resources. They must observe wildlife regulations and consult ZimParks regarding any decision concerning wildlife. In the process, they are coerced to implement park models.

While, in this case study, the FC's management denies that parks management models have any influence on conservation practices in protected areas (Chapter Three, section 3.5.1), revenue generation projects running under Ngamo Safaris are controlled by wildlife laws and policies administered by ZimParks. If the FC must generate revenue, it must meet the requirements sets by ZimParks. One of such requirements is to have a wildlife management plan, which is one of the Forester's duties (Chapter Four, section 4.3). These plans usually

assimilate models by ZimParks for the FC to remain in line with what the wildlife authority expects, and importantly not to compromise revenue generation from wildlife resources. Thus, state authorities may be pressured to adopt militarised policies due to national legal requirements that have ramifications on their economic survival.

At the international level, Peluso (1993) argues that regional and international conservation agreements, such as the SADC Protocol on Forestry and Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), pressure states and their respective state authorities to adopt forceful measures in order to meet conservation targets. Realising that, without adequate funding, they are not in a position to meet international deadlines and provisions, states engage NGOs, who already see this as an opportunity to tap into conservation coffers of big international financial institutions. The relationship between the state with WWF-Zimbabwe and Painted Dog Conservation, in this case study, exemplify how states and NGOs are coerced to come together towards achieving international conservation requirements, but also, in the process, capital accumulation.

Another factor that coerces state authorities to adopt military practices is national political discourses of national security and national heritage. Lunstrum (2014) and Duffy (2016) write about these national values in South Africa and beyond. Zimbabwe is not an exception. The 1990 Presidential declaration on the protection of elephants further reinforced national security and heritage values that motivated the first militarised operations after independence (see Duffy, 2000). While wildlife policies of this political nature enhance the security powers of state authorities such the FC (Chapter Three, section 3.5.2), a declaration from the highest political office and reframing of elephants as presidential elephants also implies that wildlife becomes a political figure demanding a political right to be protected for its national intrinsic value. In Zimbabwe's current political context, where almost every event is politicised, not doing anything about these non-human political figures can easily be interpreted as subverting the authority of the President, which is a crime. State authorities responsible for, or tasked with, wildlife management are, thus, compelled to adopt and implement specific conservation policy measures to be politically correct. Hence, political discourses also force states and state authorities to adopt militarised practices beyond their abilities to sustain them as a way of showing that they are in solidarity with national and global discourses.

Therefore, while Neumann (2004) asserts that militarisation has become the preferred conservation policy, I argue instead that, in some cases, it is a matter of coercion rather than

preference. In such instances, state authorities will require funding and institutional support. Otherwise militarisation remains symbolic. It is, however, evident in this case study that protected areas do not necessarily attract the same amount of state support for militarised conservation practices. We know from Duffy (2000) that when the militarised campaign against rhino poaching in Zimbabwe commenced during the 1980s, the project faced financial challenges. The state intervened by deploying the military and special paramilitary units of the police force to national parks, allowed for arms transfer from the military to ZimParks and introduced legal structures in support of the campaign. Today state security still plays a role in park management. On the contrary, duty police officers and forest guards with out-dated weaponry and technologies operate in protected forests. Only a railway line separates Hwange and Sikumi. Arguably, this is one space. Yet, the administration and state support in these two spaces is different.

NGOs also tend to incline their support towards national parks. Although protected forests that buffer national parks are technically wildlife areas, the official mandate for wildlife management usually remains with the Parks authorities. International organisations funding wildlife projects are interested in funding and working with the responsible official state department. Thus, there appears to be more NGOs interested in working with national parks than protected forests. The reason that WWF is funding protected forests like Sikumi in Zimbabwe is because of their importance in park management nationally and in the region. Thus, administrative differences influence the extent of state and external support for militarised policies and differentiate the capacity of state paramilitary units, consequently influencing and differentiating the nature and texture of militarisation unfolding in protected forests and national parks.

These issues draw our attention to a different kind of militarisation. By all means, this case study displays traits of militarisation and mirrors the definition of green militarisation developed by Lunstrum (2014). The values underpinning the use of paramilitary personnel partnerships and technologies presented here are in many ways similar to those documented by Lunstrum (2014), Duffy (2000, 2010, 2014 and 2016) and Neumann (2004). Therefore, I do not dispute that this case study is an example of the militarisation of conservation. But, Sikumi is also an illustration of how concepts such as green militarisation run the risk of inadequately representing realities under which militarisation unfolds, particularly in protected areas administratively different from national parks or with different operational support structures. Sikumi is, thus, an illustration that the militarisation of conservation may

occur in shapes, dimensions and textures different from what we already know from previous studies. This case study is notably different because the paramilitary unit implementing militarised policies has strategies for avoiding armed poaching activities, rather than for pursuing them.

Based on process and implementation of green militarisation, rather than rely on definition alone, I, therefore, argue that, this case study is an example of symbolic green militarisation. In my view, symbolic green militarisation is characterised by the adoption of military practices with the aim of countering armed incursions while, in practice, paramilitary units minimally take action against armed poaching. Symbolic green militarisation, therefore, challenges the idea of war for conservation or production of deadly violence. The militarisation of conservation can only be discussed in terms of 'war' for conservation when there is an armed conflict, and the warring parties have equal capacity to battle (Cock & Nathan, 1989). In this case, the ground efficiency of paramilitary units is not at the same level with armed poachers, resulting in evasion of contacts. As a result, Sikumi is merely a place of resource securitisation and asymmetric struggles over resource access, rather than of war. In that light, symbolic green militarisation deviates from discussions around the "war to save biodiversity" thesis (Duffy, 2014:819), or protected areas as "deadly violence" (Neumann, 2004:813).

Likewise, the killing for conservation thesis by Duffy (2000) may not precisely define contexts of symbolic green militarisation. At the core of killing for conservation is the use of shoot-to-kill conservation policies resulting in the killing of people in defence of conservation. Nevertheless, we have observed here, that extremely coercive conservation policies such as shoot-to-kill, shoot-on-sight are not designed for, or supported in, all protected areas. In some protected areas, paramilitary units are not indemnified to kill nor provided with automatic rifles, neither are they supported by the national armies. Besides operational support, we have also seen that killing for conservation needs financial and institutional support. Thus, while the killing for conservation thesis is useful for conceptualising the nature of violence in conservation, it is not concomitant with symbolic green militarisation.

However, symbolic green militarisation is not a permanent situation. There is potential for an outbreak of war. In the case of Sikumi, if neighbouring wildlife rangers, the military and special police units move in to protect elephants, a situation of securitisation can escalate to

that of war for the apparent reason that these units are of equal capabilities with armed poachers. An arms race will, thus, become more likely. There can also be an outbreak of war if the state gives protected forests the necessary structural and financial support as it has done with ZimParks. However, there first has to be a change, in government perception, around linkages of protected forests adjacent to wildlife areas with armed poaching. Currently, the state believes protected forests are low-risk areas, hence not needing advanced military techniques.

Militarisation in protected forests is also likely to re-configure to more violent and lethal forms with the growing significance of photographic safaris following the ban on consumptive wildlife trade and changing global and national political context that will increase opportunities for eco-tourism, as section 8.4.1 will expand later in this chapter. Also worth highlighting, is the recent trend in Zimbabwe's conservation sector, of engaging into private-public financing partnerships as a means boosting the performance of state conservation agents. A recent development is the private-public partnership between the German Zoological Society conservation agency and ZimParks' Gonarezhou National Park, now Gonarezhou Conservation Trust¹⁷³. If this option proves viable, it is likely to be up-scaled to Hwange. Buffer areas to Hwange such as Sikumi will likely be subsumed into these kinds of financialised arrangements, leading to greater conservation and securitisation, consequently more externally funded state-approved violence. In the interim, Zimbabwe's protected forests will only reflect symbolic green militarisation against armed poaching activities, however, with different forms of violence perpetrated against local people accessing resources for subsistence. The next section discusses these forms of violence and their consequences.

8.3. Forms of violence in conservation

A shift in policing mechanisms from pursuing armed poachers to preventing local people from resource access is starkly evident in this case study. Stories shared by forest guards and local people in Chapters Five and Six are rich with experiences of violence. Recent scholarship has advanced past green violence to examine how the phenomenon is being contested by state and non-state and conservation agencies (Büscher & Fletcher, 2018; Fletcher, 2018). However, insights from Chapters Five and Six suggest the need to pause and broaden our understanding on the consequences of militarised conservation on local people.

¹⁷³ See <https://fzs.org/en/projects/gonarezhou-conservation-trust/>: Accessed on 23/07/2018

There is also need to discuss and categorise forms of violence as a way of expanding the useful but brief typology of green violence provided by Büscher and Ramutsindela (2016).

The emerging insights from this case study prove that violence in protected forests is a broader consequence of the militarisation of conservation but also demonstrate that it is first a structural issue before an operational one. Thus, in discussing and categorising violence, this section shows how violence progresses from broader structural to other forms of violence, such as symbolic, direct, gender, economic and occupational violence. I am specifically interested in demonstrating that violence in conservation goes beyond physical, emotional and psychological abuse, and to explain that these forms of direct violence are connected to other lesser-documented strains of conservation-based violence. I, however, do not suggest that the order with which types of violence are presented here is the order in which they unfold in the practical sense. I only endeavour to show how they may be linked. How these forms of violence unfold in practice remains reliant on the context in which they manifest.

8.3.1. Structural violence

Violence in conservation, and perhaps other disciplines, is commonly discussed in the context of direct harm on people (for example, Duffy, 2000; Neumann, 2004). These discussions tend to omit the fact that actions of direct injury to persons are a product of existing structures that permit violence to occur. This subsection focuses on discussing the effect of such structures, here described as structural violence, and how they manifest in conservation as drawn from this case study.

Structural violence is witnessed in the form of structures of social control manifesting as conservation laws, policies and practices governing resource access in protected areas, and is the most invisible type of violence. Based on experiences of local people presented in Chapter Six, resource access regulations and policies are the beginning of all forms of violence in protected areas. The Forest Act, for example, is a deliberate structural barrier designed to deprive local people of resource access upon the belief that they are destructive and do not know the benefits of forests and nature (Kwashirai, 2009). The free permit system, which the state forest authority argues to be a benefit-sharing mechanism and proof of good forest governance (see Mushonga, 2012), comes with several restrictive conditions designed to control what people can and how they access.

Experiences with forest laws and policies shared by local people draw our attention to how structural barriers imposed by forest laws work to further dispossess and deprive rather than alleviate local people's resource needs. In addition to quotidian resource access challenges, forest laws induce slow-paced disadvantages. In my view, deprivation is not only a consequence of structural barriers but is, itself, structural violence. Deprivation is connected to ideas of slow violence and corrosive disadvantages (see Dressler & Guieb III, 2015; Nixon, 2011) due to its ability to, in invisible ways, cause short-and long-term emotional and psychological suffering, as well as the ability to expose local people to corrosive effects linked to health, economic development and cultural security. So, people may not be killed in the biological sense as recorded elsewhere (for example, Duffy, 2000; Neumann, 2004), but being unable to develop in the economic, cultural and social spheres that depend on resources as a result of structural violence is death in itself. The San people in Botswana, for example, have cried out to Prince Charles, "If you deny us the right to hunt, you have killed us" (Vidal, 2014:1). In cases of symbolic green militarisation, where the killing of people is infrequent, the death of people is likely, therefore, to be because of structural rather than direct violence.

Structural violence described here is a common phenomenon in conservation. Although not necessarily framed in the manner presented here, effects of institutions as barriers of resource access and structural violence are well articulated in other studies. For example, state failure to fully decentralise resource management in Senegal, Uganda, Nepal and Indonesia (see Ribot *et al.*, 2006) was necessarily a matter of rigid conservation laws and policies that embodied structural violence of dispossession. Similarly, blue and green-grabbing in Tanzania is another useful example of how institutions decentralise conservation while dispossessing people who depend on resources (Benjaminsen & Bryceson, 2012), hence in themselves exposing people, who rely on those resources, to structural violence. The deprivation of services such as drinking water and grazing land to permitted tenants living in Gwayi Forest Reserve in Zimbabwe (see Matose, 2014) is an example closer to this study showing how resource access control ideally becomes a demonstration of structural violence. It is, however, important to acknowledge that structural barriers in conservation are not new; they have a long lineage in conservation connected to colonial processes of land appropriation, territorialisation and creation of protected areas (see Vandergeest & Peluso, 1995), as a means of separating people from conservation areas. The insidious effect of institutions is, therefore, not a recent development; it is conceptualising effects of these

institutional practices in the context of the militarisation of conservation and violence that has not received robust attention in present political ecology.

8.3.2. *Symbolic violence*

In section 8.2, I discussed the nature and texture of militarisation of conservation unfolding in protected areas and conceptualised that the militarisation of protected forests in Zimbabwe takes the form of symbolic green militarisation. Such demonstration of intent does display not only traits of symbolic militarisation but also symbolic violence. However, my attention to symbolic violence is drawn to the presence of paramilitary units as symbols of state authority, social control and centralised power. These units do not only serve as a symbolic reminder of the importance of heeding to structural barriers but have subconscious emotional and psychological effects (Johnson, 2017; Skjelsbaek, 1979) on people living adjacent to protected areas.

Effects of such symbolic communication of authority can be adverse; for example, instances of induced fear and coerced compliance such as in cases illustrated in Chapter Six. This assumption, however, appears to contradict findings by Bickman (1974) and Durkin and Jeffery (2000), who conclude that people often comply with uniformed personnel not out of coercion but out of the belief that these people are legitimate symbols of authority. It is also contrary to assertions made by Norton (2015:3) that “inspectors are the expression of centralised power, but not the power itself.” While these arguments may be valid, in my view, in contexts of persistent conflict between uniformed personnel and civilians as presented in this study, the legitimacy of paramilitary personnel as symbols of authority often ties in with coercion to produce compliance in symbolically violent ways. In Zimbabwe’s protected forests, for example, the FC and its forest guards have a known history of harassing people as demonstrated in Chapter Three, section 3.5.4. Thus, in Sikumi, the knowledge of permanent presence, the sight of forest guards or just the mention of the Forestry Commission is sufficient to induce fear or coerce voluntary actions against illegal forest activities. Thus, while forest guards and rangers represent central power, they have, in themselves, the symbolic ability to effect compliance. My views here also relate with Skjelsbaek (1979) that symbols such as uniforms may be petty militarism but have great significance in inducing compliance, hence the reason they are used.

What makes people even more afraid in Sikumi is that they do not notice forest guards approaching because of the green uniform, which camouflages their arrival. The importance of uniform colour as a symbol of violence cannot, therefore, be overlooked in discussing symbolic violence. Light shades are often associated with goodness or weakness, while dark colours are symbolic of strength and ruthlessness (Johnson, 2017). Returning to the background on the development of militarised practices in Chapter Three, section 3.5.1, when the FC introduced guns to conservation enforcement it changed its uniform colour from khaki to green. By changing the colour of uniforms to jungle green, it can be assumed that the FC needed a representation of strength and ruthlessness, which khaki did not provide. Thus, uniform colour supports the effect of symbolic violence on the policed. In addition to uniform and colour, guns also serve as important symbols of control against illegal activities. Guns can have different meanings to different people in different contexts. Zimbabwe has a history of a deadly liberation struggle before independence and, after independence, the *Gukurahundi* war in Matabeleland provinces, where most protected forests are located. Guns in these places are, therefore, symbols of death. But, symbolic violence is not only about uniform and guns; it can also be about the stature of personnel recruited into paramilitary units. As demonstrated in Chapter Seven, section 7.2 the need to hire forest guards and foresters fearsome in looks is important to intimidate people and obligate them to comply. The same strategy has been used in Cameroon where huge Bantu forest guards are recruited to police Pygmy populations (see Survival International, 2014).

The use of armed and uniformed personnel is not unique to conservation or Africa, it is widely used in many developed and developing countries, and in many sectors of society to instil civilian discipline. A significant difference between developed and developing countries is that, in the latter, use of paramilitary personnel is often located within generally militarised national administrative systems where aggressive and intimidatory approaches are standard practice for controlling people's behaviour. Thus, in most developing countries, paramilitary units are first a representation of symbolic violence even before direct harm is perpetrated against people.

8.3.3. *Direct violence*

In the previous sections, I have shown how paramilitary units are symbolic reminders of structural barriers to resource access, hence linked to symbolic violence. I now turn to how actions of paramilitary units manifest as direct violence. Paramilitary units become conduits of direct violence when they, in the course of their enforcement duties, transform structural and symbolic violence to direct or to person-to-person violence (Neumann, 2004). This form of violence manifests as physical, verbal and emotional abuse of people accessing resources in protected areas.

In Sikumi, despite training on human rights and protection against inhuman treatment and torture (see Chapter Three, section 3.5.3), forest guards become instruments of physical abuse when they use sticks, the butts of their guns, bare hands and boots to directly manhandle, beat and injure people arrested for resource access. In addition to hitting, guards also subject people to painful punishments (Case 2, Chapter Six, section 6.3). Physical violence also goes as far as killing dogs (Case 3, Chapter Six, section 6.4). Direct violence of this nature is applied with the intention of causing pain, discomfort or injury in the hope that arrested persons admit to an allegation of illegal activities or disclose information concerning illegal resource activities (Case 4, Chapter Six, section 6.5). Sometimes it is applied just as a show of authority as to what might happen if the suspect does not comply with demands of forest guards. Verbal abuse involves harsh interrogations of villagers over illegal resource access or rule breaking. These interrogations may involve unreasonable ordering about as demonstrated by the interrogation process of Jabulani's wife in Case 4. They may also include the use of pejorative and obscene language with the intention of demeaning or offending people, and discouraging them from becoming involved in illegal activities in the future.

Emotional and psychological abuses occur as an effect of physical and verbal abuse. People subjected to physical and verbal harassment by forest guards usually feel offended and belittled. There is also generally a feeling of fear and traumatising that develops amongst people exposed to physical and verbal harassment. It seems, however, that emotional and psychological violence affects women and children more than it affects men. Memories of violent episodes remain in the minds of children with potential psychological effects. Women, on the other hand, lose confidence when their husbands are physically harmed or arrested. The arrest of their husbands also affects how women interact with others in the community.

What can be discerned about direct violence from this case study is that, while it is perhaps the most visible, and likely most common everyday form of abuse in conservation, it is not met by violent reactions from villagers contrary to what is demonstrated by the fisheries case in Western Cape (Norton, 2015). Direct violence does not also involve murdering people as illustrated elsewhere (Neumann, 2004). It is, however, quite evident that, whether or not physical violence involves the physical death or direct injury of body and mind, cases of direct violence are a manifestation of asymmetric power differences between conservation paramilitary units and local people. On the one hand, paramilitary units receive military training, use guns and are legitimate symbols of authority and power. On the other hand, local people predominantly use primitive safety and livelihood tools and are untrained. Forest guards take advantage of these asymmetric power relations to perpetrate violence and to abuse their authority over local people. However, this abuse of power is unlawful. As a result, forest guards deliberately omit actions of direct violence in patrol reports as demonstrated in Chapter Five, section 5.3. Unlike in the Congo basin, and perhaps elsewhere, where efforts are being made to investigate unlawful abuse of people by forest guards (see Poulsen *et al.*, 2012), monitoring activities of forest guards or park rangers is a practice that appears uncommon in many developing countries including Zimbabwe. It is likely that, if states, to begin with, struggle with financing anti-poaching activities, they will struggle equally with monitoring and evaluating these operations.

Apart from examples of direct violence presented in this study and those provided by Neumann (2004) in Malawi, Kenya and Tanzania, other patterns are mirrored in South Africa's fishery conflicts and rhino poaching (Lunstrum, 2014; Norton, 2015), also in the Republic of Congo (see, for example, Barkham, 2017; Survival International, 2014) and Cameroon (see, for example, Lang, 2017). Direct violence is, therefore, a widespread phenomenon in many protected areas across Africa, even more widespread with the increasing adoption of military strategies in conservation. State authorities and NGOs funding forest guards are aware of direct violence. They receive reports of excessive use of force but treat them as regrettable and unintended events occurring as a result of lack of discipline on the part of guards. For example, when the WWF was taken to task by human rights organisations over abuse of the Pygmies by forest guards in Cameroon, whom they fund, it issued a statement expressing shock and sadness over the violence and abuse of indigenous people. It also stated that such violence was unacceptable (*The Citizen*, 2017).

Turning to abuse in this case study, when an FC official learnt about abuse of local people over resource access, he expressed sympathy and promised that appropriate action to discipline forest guards would be taken. He, however, went on to defend the organisational policy direction towards poaching in protected forests, suggesting that he is aware of violent policing practices in protected forests (Chapter Seven, section 7.3.2). But, while it may appear to state authorities that direct violence is a result of lack of discipline and supervision, it also seems to be driven by violence against forest guards, discussed in section 8.3.8 below. First, however, is an extended analysis of the effects of direct violence and its linkages with other forms of violence.

8.3.4. Cultural violence

To end the discussion on consequences of the militarisation of conservation with direct violence would neglect its long-term implications on local people. Direct violence goes beyond physical, emotional and psychological effects to broader social consequences such as an impact on culture and tradition. In many parts of Africa and Asia, traditional practices for forest gathering have, since the colonial era, legitimised structural and direct violence upon the basis that these practices result in the wholesale destruction of resources (see Baviskar, 2001; Kwashirai, 2009; Steinhart, 1989). However, following Galtung (1990), when states use cultural aspects to rationalise violent exclusion from resources, they subject local people to cultural violence.

In Sikumi, women are dependent on axes to meet their cultural responsibilities of gathering household energy. Similarly, men also depend on axes and dogs to meet their cultural obligations of construction, livestock rearing and hunting. Axes and dogs are, therefore, significant in meeting essential aspects of people's culture and traditions. But possessing an axe or being accompanied by dogs increases one's chances of being physically abused, as well as the intensity of harassment due to the association of these tools with illegal hunting or 'poaching'. Constant direct violence against people for using axes induces fear. As a result of such emotional abuse, people are often coerced to give up on activities that constitute part of their cultural obligations and existence. Regulations against traditional tools and deprivation of resources that are part of cultural and traditional aspects of people's lives can, thus, be categorised as cultural violence.

The killing of dogs ought to be also discussed in the context of cultural violence. The killing of dogs does not only display aspects of physical abuse against dogs, neither is it merely

violent in so far as it is a reminder of a brutal colonial era remembered for the killing of African dogs on the basis of their potential risk to contaminate white man's pure breeds of certified pedigree (Tropp, 2002). It is a violent separation of the human-canine bond deep-seated in tradition and culture, hence cultural violence. Following Haraway (2003), the elimination of dogs in the lives of herders and hunters is a violation of a cultural process of 'becoming with' which is recognised as an important aspect of co-being. In the rural African setting, similar to western cultures, dogs have many utilitarian functions (see Kennedy, 2005). In fact, for some villagers around Sikumi, dogs are more than a source of protection and hunting companion, they are *izifuyo/chipfuyo* (livestock). It is, thus, in my view that killing of dogs, as a conservation practice, should be discussed as cultural violence against people who depend on dogs as important aspects of their culture.

Besides being denied resource access, local communities are also denied access to their cultural sites. For example, we learn from Chapter Four that the place where Ganda Lodge is located in Sikumi Forest used to be a place where males congregated for initiation and rain making ceremonies. Chief Nelukoba and the people living adjacent to Sikumi can no longer access Ganda because it has been reserved for, and desecrated by tourism and anti-poaching activities. There are several other cases in Africa where people have lost contact with their cultural sites and practices because of conservation and eco-tourism. The Nama and Khomani San in South Africa and Botswana, also the Twa people of the Republic of Congo have been denied access to ancestral land, traditional diets, medical care and traditional houses, and ill-treated by Park officials in the name of conservation (see Barume, 2000; Dutton, 2003; Hoering, 2004; Vidal, 2014). The Forests Monitor, Cultural Survival and Survival International have, on their websites, additionally provided significant evidence of abuse of the Pygmies by anti-poaching squads in Central Africa. The Pygmies cannot practice their culture without fearing mistreatment by forest guards funded by *dobidobi* (WWF)¹⁷⁴.

Scholars, such as, Dutton (2003) argue that protected areas have a role to play in ensuring that indigenous knowledge systems are maintained and culture passed from generation to generation. However, violent state practices displayed in this case study and examples obtained from other studies demonstrate that protected areas are, instead, promoting the

¹⁷⁴ <http://www.forestsmonitor.org/en/reports/540539/549939>: Accessed on 3/08/ 2015
<http://www.culturalsurvival.org/news/matthew-english/conservation-program-accused-human-rights-abuses>:
Accessed on 31/07/2015.
<https://www.survivalinternational.org/tribes/pygmies>: Accessed on 31/07/2015
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7qaEx_lBsQ&t=219s

erasure of cultural practices and redefining the existence of people in ways that are harmful to their culture and traditions.

8.3.5. Gender violence

Another broader consequence of structural and direct violence is the effect they have on the social roles of males and females that are linked to resource access and use. These effects bring the discussion to gender violence. While my concerns with gender violence are related to those from gender studies, in this section, I demonstrate the texture of gender violence in conservation.

Gender violence in conservation takes place when structural barriers, such as institutions for resources access, result in access inequalities and disadvantages based on gender. In Sikumi, institutions for firewood collection, for example, are gendered as a systematic means of controlling access and use. Only women are allowed to access firewood from the forest resulting in resource-based gender inequalities and disadvantages. But, females and males are together affected. While the gendered firewood collection policy appears to be in favour of women, they are disadvantaged by it. Prohibition of axes and men exposes women to health risks and injuries from wildlife attacks. Biologically, women do not have upper body neuromuscular strength compared to males mainly due to differences in hormonal profiles (Rippetoe *et al.*, 2006). Although feminists would argue that sex difference should not be used to determine capabilities (see Larsen & Long, 1988), gendered policies and accompanying restrictions do not take into account biological differences between males and females, to the disadvantage of women. As a result, women cannot fully benefit from resource access activities that require muscular strength, hence disadvantaging them from meeting their needs.

Men equally suffer from effects of gendered resource access policies, particularly when male-dominated households or widowers become deprived of basic needs such as household energy. As illustrated in accounts given by women in Sikumi, men are not allowed to access firewood or assist women on the basis that they will engage in other illegal activities, such as illegal hunting. This perception is underpinned by racial and colonial stereotypes that frame African men as cruel poachers on the basis of mistrust (Neumann, 2004; Norton, 2015). However, as Nemarundwe (2003) shows, traditionally, men view themselves as heroes, problem solvers and fighters. These perceptions reflect men's self-image as protectors of the family. Thus, being denied an opportunity to protect their families from danger during

resource access may bring psychological suffering to men. When this happens, gendered policies become a violation of traditional beliefs of men as protectors of their families, also an overall violation of gendered cultural expectations. I, therefore, consider gendered resource access policies that work against men as part of conservation-based gender violence.

Gender violence in conservation also manifests in ways through which law enforcement is differentiated between males and females. In Sikumi, women are often not subjected to physical abuse. They usually experience verbal exchanges with forest guards, at the worst, confiscation of axes or firewood collected on non-scheduled days. Men, on the other hand, receive a combination of both, due to the existing mistrust between forest guards and men. Despite military indoctrination and attitudinal militarism acquired by guards during training to treat local people who trespass into the forest as enemies and with impartiality, it seems that forest guards' behaviour may remain inwardly controlled by societal behavioural expectations and norms around how men are culturally expected to handle women, hence their lenience to females and hostility towards males. So, borrowing from gender studies where gender-based violence refers to "violence that targets individuals or groups on the basis of their gender" (Izumi, 2007:14), I consider this differential treatment constituent of gender violence in conservation.

8.3.6. *Invasion as violence*

Direct violence has consequences related to invasion of space. Physical abuse, for example, is an invasion of bodies, but it often also involves forceful incursions into private lives, homes and communities and hence, another form of abuse experienced by people living in and around protected areas.

Despite a security training procedure, which includes training of guards on right to privacy, invasion as violence in conservation takes two primary forms in Sikumi. The first involves state conservation enforcement agents intruding into villagers' homes in search of illegal resource access evidence. A common kind of violence associated with invasion of this form is the invasion of privacy and destruction of property. Policing strategies such as raids habitually involve intrusion, the destruction of doors, furniture and utensils as armed guards search for evidence of illegal resource access. Raids also usually take place shortly after midnight, a time for privacy, peace and rest. They are particularly problematic because they do not only affect the suspect but potentially the whole family. Evidence presented in Chapter Six shows that children are traumatised while spouses are verbally abused and threatened.

The manner in which men are abused in the presence of their families potentially reduces confidence and respect for men as heads of family. Thus, this form of invasion potentially disrupts family structures with implications for family cohesion.

The second is related to use of informants in support of state-led raids. Forest guards pick informants from the community with promises that they will be offered contract jobs and other favours by state authorities. These informants often operate as secret agents and, thus, remain unknown to the rest of the community members. Traditional leaders, who also have the responsibility of looking after resources and dealing with ‘bad apples’ of the community, are in many cases also not aware of these informants. Since informants operate as secret agents, raided villagers can only suspect certain individuals for having spied on them. Such suspicions then lead to suspected informants’ homes being burnt and threats of witchcraft, amongst other threats. Thus, use of informants results in disharmony amongst villagers with consequences for community cohesion. Consequently, I argue that co-opting community members into state-led violent conservation practices is an invasion of community space and order, and is invasion violence.

Elsewhere, Büscher and Ramutsindela (2016) discuss the use of informants in the context of community disintegration and material violence. I rather suggest that material violence in this sense is constitutive of invasion. This is because material violence, as they explain it, would likely occur as a result of some sort of invasion of state authorities into community structures. However, others, like Mabele (2017), are optimistic that community involvement in state-directed conservation programmes will lead to fair and ethical strategies to safeguard and manage resources in ways that substitute the use of forceful measures. Similarly, Clark *et al.* (2012) believe that involving local communities in resource access policing reduces law enforcement by forest guards and strengthens village-based mechanisms.

Other studies, however, show that invasion of existing community structures by state authorities or the systematic integration of communities into state-led practices have negative rather than positive outcomes. The Selous conservation programme in Tanzania is an example. The programme introduced community wildlife programmes in a bid to achieve conservation and development, as well as to overcome state coercion, but, instead, shifted state violence to self-surveillance at village level (Neumann, 2001). Hulme and Murphree (2001) also present cases from across sub-Saharan Africa of how overt and covert conflict unfolds amongst communities involved in formal structures of state-driven community

conservation arrangements such as Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE). Beyond Africa, joint forest management in India brought territorialisation into mainstream community-based management, inciting violence amongst villagers over boundary encroachment, thus breaking existing social structures (Sundar, 2001). Therefore, while there is optimism over the integration of communities in state-led conservation programmes, there are also experiences proving that such approaches are an invasion of community structures. These examples, tied with this case study, strengthen the argument that co-opting local people into state programmes is a strategic means by the state to invade the daily lives of communities living adjacent protected areas. Such, are actions of invasion, and of violence.

8.3.7. *Economic violence*

The last consequence of structural and direct violence I discuss relates to economic violence. Forest areas significantly contribute to household income (see Heubach *et al.*, 2011; Kamanga *et al.*, 2009; Mamo *et al.*, 2007; Vedeld *et al.*, 2007), suggesting that they alleviate household economic challenges. Hence, continually denying local people access to resources that potentially enhance their financial status and livelihoods exposes them to economic violence. In Sikumi, economic violence manifests when violent confiscations of curios and other timber products force people to abandon their economic activities for fear of constant threats. Using the cases of the old man (Chapter Six, Box 6.1) and the carpenters (Chapter Six, Case 3), I argue that, beyond short-term effects of physical, emotional or psychological injury, direct violence has long-term socio-economic effects, and men are more affected than women are. As Nemarundwe (2003) shows, men are forced to engage in resource-based economic activities due to gender division of roles, which make income generation a prime responsibility of men. However, constant violent confiscations, threats and direct harm to forest-based enterprises leave men with limited household income generation options and exposed to economic violence.

8.3.8. *Occupational violence.*

I have in the previous sections dealt with forms of violence against local people, but it is also important to highlight that even perpetrators of this violence are exposed to abuse. I, therefore, also discuss state violence against its paramilitary units.

This case study demonstrates three ways through which forest guards are abused. First, forest guards do not receive adequate support from the state and generally work under unfavourable conditions. They use out-dated patrol equipment and are not sufficiently provided with personal protective equipment. They are, therefore, exposed to work-related threats to health and safety. Secondly, forest guards are abused during training. Abuses manifest in the form of physical and verbal abuse often justified as necessary for instilling discipline in forest guards. Finally, violation of guards is demonstrated through deprivation of food and health care during training, as well as during field operations. Following Leather *et al.* (1998), it can be concluded that forest guards are exposed to occupational violence

When the state abandons its responsibilities to provide conducive working conditions, it is an act of neglect (Krug *et al.*, 2002). Neglect has been listed as a form of violence by the government of Newfoundland and Labrador in Canada¹⁷⁵. Therefore, abandonment of forest guards by responsible state authorities, yet, a rising expectation that resources are secured 365 days per year, becomes an act of occupational violence. Furthermore, the concept of discipline, which is part of militarism, turns out to be a coercive management approach that exposes forest guards to occupational violence. While discipline is important in any organisation, it is, in my view that, in military establishments, discipline serves as an oppressive barrier that prevents forest guards from submitting grievances related to working conditions. It becomes logical, in this regard, to argue that it is those that are oppressed that often resort to direct violence (Winter & Leighton, 1999). Lack of opportunities for forest guards to submit their grievances develops a militarist who is emotionally blunt and lacks empathy (Skjelsbaek, 1979) leading to hostile policing tendencies.

Occupational violence against forest guards is, in the current critical literature on the militarisation of conservation, overshadowed by concerns of violence against poachers and local people. Yet, it is widespread. Other examples of occupational violence in Zimbabwe's protected forest are mirrored in Gwayi and Mafungautsi forest reserves where a few forest guards are known to patrol over 200 000 and 82 000, hectares respectively, with inadequate water and food supplies (Matose, 2002). Elsewhere, forest guards in the Korup National Park, Cameroon are, in ways similar to Sikumi, working with out-dated equipment, exposed to the risk of injury and death while on duty and not recognised with the same importance as other uniformed forces such as prison, police and customs officers (Ndimuh, 2016). It has also

¹⁷⁵ <https://www.gov.nl.ca/VPI/types/index.html>: Accessed 04/2018

been reported in India, that forest guards work under strenuous working conditions with no leave days to visit families, and on low salaries resulting in many guards quitting the job (Asianet, 2016). However, Matteson (2015) shows us that abuse of forest guards is not a new phenomenon. It has existed as far back as the 1600s, as demonstrated by the case of ill-treatment of forest guards in France between 1669 and 1848.

Despite the widespread nature of occupational violence against forest guards, there is limited discussion on violence perpetrated against forest guards and rangers working on behalf of states to save biodiversity. In the Western Cape, South Africa, Norton (2015:3) demonstrates that the state does not only control resource users but also law enforcement agents by “employing bureaucratic methods to control their freedom, their presence, by codifying times and place where their activities are legitimate”. Her observation enlightens us on the kind of predicaments that states agents are subjected to in the course of conducting state duty. Yet, few studies examine the plight of these state controlled establishments. I, therefore, suggest that the everyday violence in protected areas must also be examined and discussed in the context of occupational violence against forest guards and parks rangers.

8.3.9. A framework for conservation-based violence

I end the discussion on forms of violence in conservation by drawing together a framework for conservation-based violence in expansion of the concept of green violence. While local people have been exposed to violence since the creation of protected areas, this study, however, argues that adoption of militarised conservation practices has expanded the range of violence experienced by local people from person-to-person violence to other forms of social, economic and cultural violence summarised by Figure 8.1. The framework shows that violence in conservation is first a structural issue before an operational one. Institutions and policies governing protected areas are invisible forms of violence with significant implications for hidden and slow-paced economic, social and cultural disadvantages. Using paramilitary units to enforce structural barriers to resource access not only manifests as a symbolic reminder that conservation laws must be observed; state enforcement agents become instruments of direct violence through their anti-poaching operations.

Indisputably, direct violence is the most visible manifestation of behavioural militarism, and hence, the commonly documented form of violence in and around protected areas. However, the framework draws attention to the fact that structural, symbolic, and direct violence together precede other indirect and long-term forms of social, cultural, and economic

violence. Hence, the trio broadens the consequences of the militarisation of conservation and the typology of green violence provided by Büscher and Ramutsindela (2016). The framework, furthermore, demonstrates that direct violence experienced by people in and around protected areas is influenced by occupational violence perpetrated against enforcement agents, such as forest guards and rangers. Organisational policies affect how occupational violence against law enforcement agents unfolds, hence its linkages with structural violence. The framework, therefore, shows that violence in conservation should not only be understood in relation to recipients of state-led violence, but also in light of violence perpetrated against perpetrators of violence.

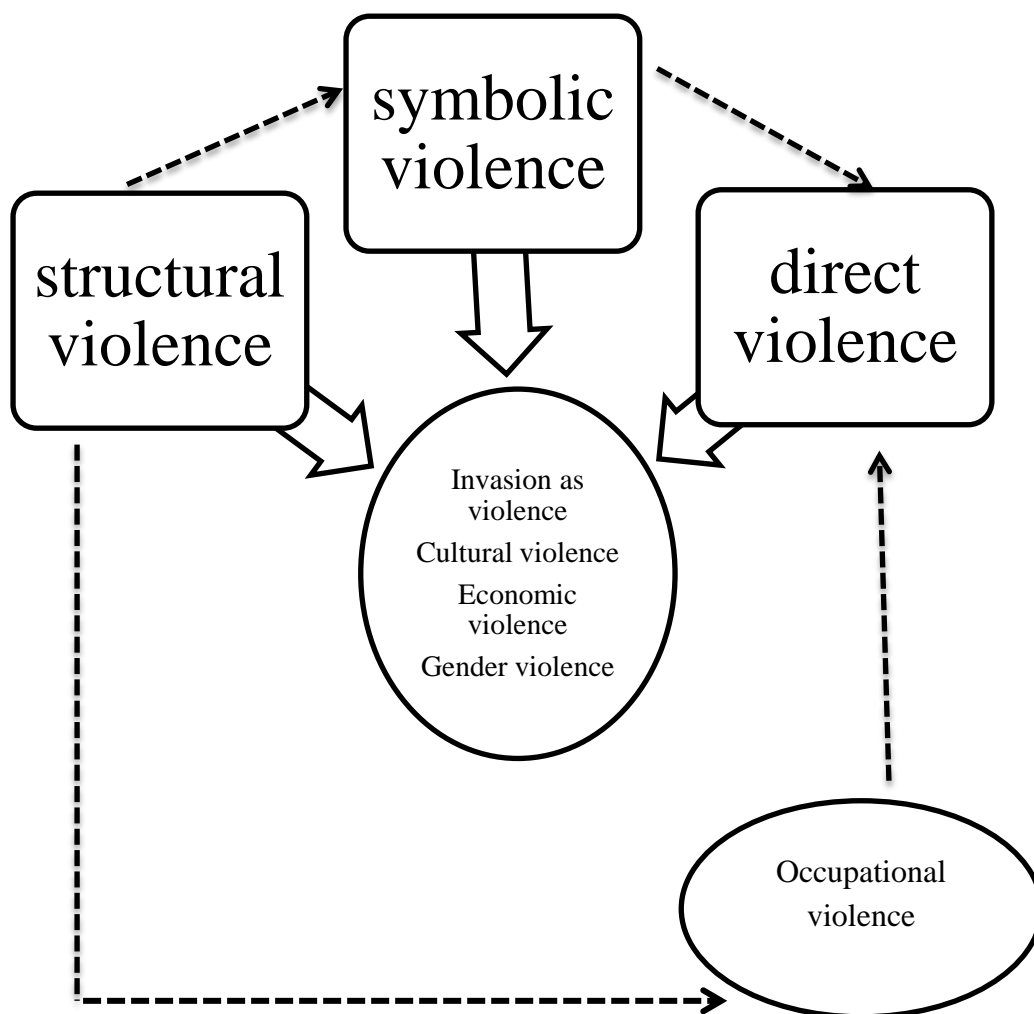


Figure 8.1: Typology of conservation-based violence and its linkages.

8.4. Capital accumulation and violence

This section discusses factors influencing violence (all forms discussed in section 8.3) particularly the linkages between capital accumulation and ground operations in protected areas. First, I consider the influence of a changing national economic and political climate on the evolution of capital accumulation within the state. Next, I discuss externally driven conservation programmes such as capital accumulation projects for states and NGOs and their implications for violence in protected areas. I close the discussion on capital accumulation and violence by discussing private eco-tourism companies and incentives for the use of force in protected areas. The section ends by evaluating securitisation (by militarisation), green-grabbing and capital accumulation.

8.4.1. *The state*

Protected forests have always been spaces for capital accumulation. However, choice of management strategies for capital accumulation is an evolving process controlled by the socio-political and socio-economic factors of the day. The previous chapter shows how national economic crisis, for example, will increase state dependency on resources for economic survival, particularly where protected areas become primed for rescuing state authorities from financial collapse. It can be drawn from experiences of the FC that violence in conservation may become purely a question of survival. State authorities may be coerced into a kind of violence that they ultimately practise as part of survival strategies. In the process, pressure for survival may shift traditional state strategies for capital accumulation to suit the rising financial demands in ways that call for the extended use of violence.

The role of forest guards and park rangers in many protected areas has been primarily to secure green spatial fixes that enable the state and a few approved private actors to accumulate wealth (see Kelly & Ybarra, 2016; Massé & Lunstrum, 2016). However, we understand from events presented in this study that, as a result of economic crisis at the national level and pressure for survival by state authorities, the role of state enforcement agents may shift from providing security that enables wealth accumulation, to directly engaging in revenue generation activities, as a security function. When this happens, security functions of conservation enforcement agents and the resources they protect, together become a commodity further entwining securitisation and militarisation with financial security. These shifts in the commodification of nature are fundamentally different from the production of

spatial fixes that Massé and Lunstrum (2016) or Kelly and Ybarra (2016) describe. In addition to rewriting nature in financial terms (Sullivan, 2013), commodifying the activities of state enforcement agents also re-writes their security functions in banking terms. It can be argued that the commodification of forest guards' security functions is, in fact, militarisation of revenue generation and can be seen as a new form of accumulation by securitisation, also a new trend of green-grabbing.

Green-grabbing, as it is so far defined, is characterised by appropriation of land, and by displacement and dispossession of people from protected areas for state financial gains (Benjaminsen & Bryceson, 2012; Fairhead *et al.*, 2012; Kelly & Ybarra, 2016). Not far from these understandings, we see that green grabbing occurs differently when tied with the commodification of forest guards' security functions. Commitment by state authorities to generate revenue directly from the seizure of harvested resource and fines from people engaging in resource-based enterprises, further placing a target, is a new round of green grabbing that has ramifications for conceptualising violence and the concept of green grabbing itself. It also appears that with this new drift, forest guards will not only become symbols of state authority and social control but also of capital and wealth. These insights bring awareness that understanding accumulation by securitisation and green-grabbing may need to reflect on the evolving roles of conservation enforcement agents.

Lastly, global economic dictates have a way of influencing choices that developing countries make around capital accumulation from nature resources. For example, we have seen in the previous chapter how the ban on wildlife trade originating from first world countries will likely raise stakes for non-consumptive uses in developing countries. On the other hand, socio-political changes at the national level can enhance opportunities for state revenue generation in protected areas. For example, Zimbabwe's political climate is changing. Since 24 November 2017, the new political dispensation led by President Mnangagwa is putting measures in place towards political and economic reforms bent on attracting investment in Zimbabwe. If these political and economic changes yield positive outcomes, and depending on the election result of July 30, 2018, tourism might grow. Pressure to securitise resources will consequently increase, likewise levels of state-directed and -approved violence. There will be a shift in violence from consumptive to non-consumptive conservation practices. This is why I highlighted earlier in section 8.2 that symbolic green militarisation may not be a permanent situation. The transition from symbolic green militarisation to more violent forms of militarisation will depend on the global and national political economy.

Thus, while it is the need to protect endangered species from extinction, and where such protection is perceived to overlap with militias, the need for national and global security, that often rationalises extremely forceful measures (see Büscher & Ramutsindela, 2016; Duffy, 2016; Kelly & Ybarra, 2016; Lunstrum, 2014), it is financial (in)security concerns that will likely lead impoverished states to unleash violence against its own people. The previous chapter has demonstrated how states often collaborate with NGOs as a conservation and financial strategy. In the next section, I discuss the relationship between states and externally funded state conservation programmes in relation to capital accumulation and facilitation of violence.

8.4.2. NGOs

International NGOs in alliance with international financial institutions (IFIs) accumulate money in the form of donations from industrialised countries (Brockington *et al.*, 2008), and use it in developing countries to finance repressive conservation policies that serve to support wealth accumulation for the state, NGOs and a few private partners. In this section, I discuss how conservation projects funded by international NGOs are also capital accumulation projects that facilitate state violence.

From my experience working with government, it is usually a requirement that NGOs collaborate with state authorities for them to access funding for national development in any sector. This requirement places state authorities in a strategic position to benefit from the fundraising activities of NGOs, while NGOs, in turn, use the participation of national governments to generate funding. Thus, states and NGOs use conservation projects as capital accumulation projects. It is documented that NGOs accrue huge amounts of funding for conservation projects (see, for example, Benjaminsen & Bryceson, 2012; Duffy, 2010). This study does not have accurate figures of how much money NGOs make by supporting state-led conservation in developing countries other than the US\$6.4 million mentioned in the Hwange Sanyati Biological Corridor project (HSBCP) documents and on the WWF website. It, therefore, cannot comment on the amount of funding generated by NGOs for conservation projects. But, the amount of capital accumulated is not the issue here; a concern for discussion is how such capital is accumulated and how violence is altogether produced in conservation.

International NGOs often use community rhetoric to access funding from IFIs. Once funds are obtained, implementation of projects tends to be in contradiction to community needs and

somewhat inclined to state objectives (Benjaminsen & Bryceson, 2012; Brockington *et al.*, 2008). The HSBCP, for example, is marketed as a ‘people-centred’ project but project activities such as, the financing of paramilitary forest guards, donating equipment and technology to improve anti-poaching efficiency by their very nature demonstrate the desire to exclude people from nature, hence, little concern about the ‘people in the centre’. After strengthening the capacity of forest guards, the WWF does not have checks and balances to ensure that they do not abuse local people. Their activities contradict not only the project vision of community participation for sustainable biodiversity management but also the global promise made by WWF-International in May 1996 to actively oppose any interventions that will cause harm to local people (Barume, 2000). Concerning such international obligations made by NGOs, Duffy (2014) has also questioned their membership in the Conservation Initiative for Human Rights (CIHR), which aims to promote dialogue on human rights in conservation, and yet their activities are the opposite of these initiatives.

Similar trends can be drawn from the activities of private voluntary organisations. The Painted Dog Conservation project described in Chapters Four and Seven, sections 4.6 and 7.3.3, respectively, uses community development language to obtain donor money. The community projects run with donor money are superficially benign because they entice local communities into development projects that only function to make them feel less antagonistic of exclusion (Hulme & Murphree, 2001), while in the background inciting intra-community violence in favour of state exclusionary and violent conservation practices. In addition, part of the money raised for community development goes towards financing an anti-poaching unit, which complements state paramilitary units. Thus, while fundraising processes for externally driven conservation projects appear underpinned by benevolent intentions, they are, in fact, founded on violent state conservation practices. NGOs implementing these projects also purport to be non-profit making, apolitical and not aligned to state practices, but their activities show that they are, in many ways profit-making and political organisations working to achieve state objectives (also see Duffy, 2010; Fisher, 1997).

Returning to the HSBCP, this is not the first time that international NGOs have collaborated with the state to promote violence in protected areas. The WB and WWF, in particular, have partnered with third world states in corridor-wide projects that expose local people to green violence. The WB has been linked to establishment of, *inter alia*, Maloti-Drakensberg TFCA between South Africa and Lesotho (Büscher & Dressler, 2012); the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor-Barrier Reef System Project extending through Honduras, Belize, Mexico and

Guatemala (Brockington *et al.*, 2008), all of which have contributed to violent dispossession of people for tourism and conservation purposes. Therefore, international financial institutions and NGOs have a history of facilitating violent and exclusionary conservation practices in protected areas to the benefit of themselves, the state and a few private enterprises, however, to the disadvantage of local people.

NGOs often deny supporting coercive conservation practices, as in the case of WWF and the HSBCP. Peluso (1993) argues that, while international organisations might not have a direct agenda of supporting violence, their support for state coercive conservation contributes to collective violence against local people. Others like Benjaminsen and Bryceson (2012) critique actions of violence by NGOs in terms of dispossession. They argue that the use of the win-win rhetoric, by NGOs, is just but a capital accumulation strategy that further dispossesses people who depend on resources. Following these arguments, it can also be suggested that, when large international organisations support state-sanctioned violence, they, in part, contribute to creating what Bocarejo and Ojeda (2016) call violent geographies of exclusion and dispossession. These organisations, hence, become responsible for reproducing and perpetuating violence to the detriment of the people they purport to defend. Thus, it can be discerned more broadly that externally driven conservation projects are the coming together of coercive state-directed conservation, capital accumulation and dispossession in similar ways to what Marijnen (2017:1) frames as the “green militarisation of development aid”. Violence is inevitable in these internationally funded projects.

8.4.3. *Private concessions*

In the previous section, I have discussed how externally driven conservation programmes also manifest as capital accumulation projects that, in the background, facilitate violence. In this section, I discuss the role of private safari operators in protected areas. Private companies are different from NGOs in that they have an open agenda on capital accumulation. They, therefore, openly support state programmes that benefit this agenda.

In this study, the relationship between the state and private safari operators is founded on mutual interest of capital accumulation and securitisation of resources. Elephant Eye Lodge, for example, is a case of neoliberal conservation that is similar to examples presented by Bocarejo and Ojeda (2016) and Massé and Lunstrum (2016) in which private eco-tourism organisations facilitate exclusion of people through violent policing strategies. However, my attention is drawn to the influence of motivational allowances provided by private operators

and other non-state stakeholders towards militarisation of conservation, which scholarship on accumulation by militarisation often omits in discussion around factors that motivate violence. Critical literature on the militarisation of conservation has demonstrated factors that motivate poaching (for example, Duffy & St John, 2013; Duffy *et al.*, 2016), with little discussion on the factors that motivate paramilitary units to perpetrate violence on poachers.

We have learnt, in the previous chapter, that, when private concessions operating on state land offer incentives for securitisation of resources, they do so in the hope of establishing a good working relationship with the state, one which guarantees extension of their operating licence. Supporting state initiatives is, thus, a logical business strategy for these private eco-tourism companies. However, these incentives, particularly monetary motivational allowances for forest guards, play a role in facilitating violence on the ground. Violence manifests through conditions set for accessing these incentives. Access to motivational allowance is dependent on sufficient evidence during an arrest. Evidence related to apprehensions would usually be required in judicial courts. But, in Sikumi, evidence is also needed for accessing motivational allowances, a condition that permits violence to be perpetrated against the policed. Forest guards, who may not have any means of guaranteed evidence, often resort to using force in the hope that the suspect reveals information linked to evidence. Chapter Six has already illustrated how local people living adjacent to protected areas may be subjected to various forms of direct violence and coerced to accept or to divulge information linked to evidence. Therefore, in addition to aggressive attitudes indoctrinated during training, or frustrations due to unfavourable working conditions, forest guards also perpetrate violence because they are motivated to do so through incentives offered by private companies, whose agenda is economic benefit through securitisation of resources.

8.5. Militarisation, violence and the future of local people: some conclusions

So far, the thesis has examined how and why militarisation unfolds and its consequences on people living adjacent to protected areas. Using the case of Sikumi Forest Reserve in Zimbabwe, it has provided evidence on the ground mechanics of militarised conservation in protected areas different from national parks and synthesised the emerging insights in relation to the process of militarisation, emerging forms of violence and the factors facilitating this violence. As a reminder, examining militarised conservation was motivated by the realisation that previous studies have used national parks, with a strict wildlife conservation mandate, as case studies to conceptualise the rising adoption of military strategies in conservation. The

study, therefore, sought to document and theorise the militarisation of conservation in contexts outside national parks, with different conservation mandates, and under a different administration system. It additionally sought to unpack the nature of violence perpetrated against people living in, or adjacent to, protected areas having realised that violence is acknowledged as a consequent of the militarisation of conservation yet inadequately examined.

The thesis raises three insights. First, the texture and nature of militarisation in conservation is dependent on the type of protected area in which military practices are implemented, the kind of resources under protection, and is contingent upon the capacity of the state authority implementing it. It is also reliant on the national political economy. In protected areas that are different from national parks, managed by organisations whose mandate is not wildlife conservation, or states without resources to implement militarised conservation policies, conservation practice may assume militarised approaches but fail to meet desired objectives of halting armed poaching due to lack of funding. The militarisation of conservation in such contexts deviates from broad ideas of killing and war for conservation, which depict high-level violence in protected areas, to what I frame as symbolic green militarisation. Symbolic green militarisation distinctively evades conflict with armed poachers but retains the traditional state practice of preventing local people from accessing resources in usually aggressive ways. Thus, the concept is developed to provide alternative thinking to the idea that use of paramilitary personnel, strategies and technologies transforms protected areas into war zones and increases high-level violence.

Second, the study establishes that the shift of militarised conservation enforcement towards subsistence resource access exposes people, who depend on protected areas, to structural, symbolic and direct violence. This combination of violence further exposes people to other broader social and economic forms of violence related to gender inequalities, economic development and invasion, all that have negative consequences for their development. Thus, within the idea of symbolic green militarisation, the thesis argues that, regardless of the texture and nature of militarisation, demonstration, or use of any amount of force in defence of protected areas has more significant consequences for local people who need these spaces to support their development, less on those poaching resources for large-scale commercial purposes. The resurgence of fortress conservation coupled with the use of military practices is, therefore, hope deferred for local people.

Third, conservation-based violence is often motivated by the capital accumulation agenda of states and private investors. The thesis broadly argues that as national-global political economies shift and as different methods to conserve biodiversity and generate revenue are sought, conservation policies will continue to support violence as an appropriate strategy for achieving conservation and economic goals. Increasing reliance, and intensifying pressure, on resources for survival by impoverished state authorities also suggests that policy reforms in favour of inclusive and non-violent conservation remain far from recognising human needs and impartiality in conservation. Such policy reforms may not easily be recognised given a context of the unresolved land question in most of Africa, which still sets aside vast tracts of protected land under state and private ownership. Unless land policies in Africa address the issue of land under protected areas, it can only be projected that conservation policies will, in the future, not have an alternative policy direction, and that violence will continue to persist in these areas. Moreover, since violence underwrites the nature of the state in Africa, it will be easy for this violence to be overlooked. Thus, change in conservation policies will depend on broader national policy reforms towards peaceful means of addressing societal challenges. In the absence of these national reforms, it may be difficult to achieve any meaningful policy reforms towards peaceful development in other societal sectors such as conservation.

These insights all demonstrate the importance of methodology in examining the militarisation of conservation and in applying the various lenses of militarisation so far developed in existing literature. This study has shown that understanding the militarisation of conservation is a practice and praxis issue. The extent to which protected areas are spaces of 'war' or simply places of asymmetric and violent resource conflict need not rely on interviews but take into account 'process' as a methodology. In this study, process as a methodology introduces an alternative lens for viewing the militarisation of conservation. Examining militarisation from its operational dynamics also pioneers a discussion on texture and nature of militarisation and brings us closer to a broader understanding of conservation-based violence in different conservation contexts. While fewer studies adopt the process approach, which can be risky in some settings, I believe it is a comprehensive approach for conceptualising a more extensive range of issues around militarisation, violence and people around protected areas.

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