

Transfrontier Conservation Governance, Commodification of Nature, and the New Dynamics of Sovereignty in Namibia

JOHANNES DITTMANN AND DETLEF MÜLLER-MAHN

Introduction

Elephants know no national boundaries. This truism is frequently heard when conservationists explain the establishment of the Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA), the largest in all of Africa. Whenever people talk about KAZA, elephants seem to take centre stage. The trivial fact that these large mammals do not stop their migrations at borders is used to justify an unprecedented international cooperation across southern Africa. Yet the implementation of transfrontier conservation areas (TFCA) does not only concern wildlife ecology. To tell the whole story, one also has to address more complex questions regarding political authority, environmental governance, economic interests, and the marketisation of natural resources. This chapter explores the relationship between emerging new dynamics of political power, the struggle for national sovereignty, and the commodification of nature in north-eastern Namibia.

All over sub-Saharan Africa, the transfrontier conservation paradigm is currently finding its way into environmental policies. It emanated originally from the engagement of the Peace Parks Foundation (PPF), which is based in South Africa. Today it is applied in numerous border regions, most of them in the south of the continent. As part of currently ongoing conservation initiatives, transfrontier conservation areas (TFCAs), dubbed ‘peace parks’, promise a triple-win situation for nature conservation, economic growth, and peace building (Ramutsindela 2007). Cross-border conservation initiatives are driven by a complex interplay of governmental and non-governmental actors. The main protagonists in the field of conservation comprise international organisations like the PPF, the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), together

with national governments and regional bodies like the Southern African Development Community (SADC). These actors jointly point at the ecological connectivity paradigm, presenting it as the new goal of conservation in Africa (Goldman 2009).

The overarching goal of cross-border conservation is widely accepted as a common and unifying new mission among countries in the wider region, which can be attributed to two reasons. First, there is the ecological argument. Connecting the growing number of previously more or less fragmented conservation areas is generally seen as a prerequisite for a landscape approach to protect biodiversity. Second, and less obviously, there is a mixture of political and economic interests which also play an important role in decision making. The transfrontier conservation paradigm is widely supported by national elites, heads of state, and development agencies, because it promises economic growth by linking natural resources in border regions to international tourism. As a consequence of these two reasons, the implementation of TFCAs gained an enormous momentum in regard to ecology and politics, transforming the physical landscape as well as regional governance systems. However, the implementation and performance of large-scale cross-border conservation is a multifaceted process with controversial effects. While international consultants and development agencies support the technical implementation of TFCAs, local government agencies are often absorbed by ceaseless negotiations, agreements, implementation plans, and concomitant funds. Under these conditions, national governments may perceive foreign interference in TFCA development not only as a support, but also as a challenge to their sovereignty (van Amerom 2002).

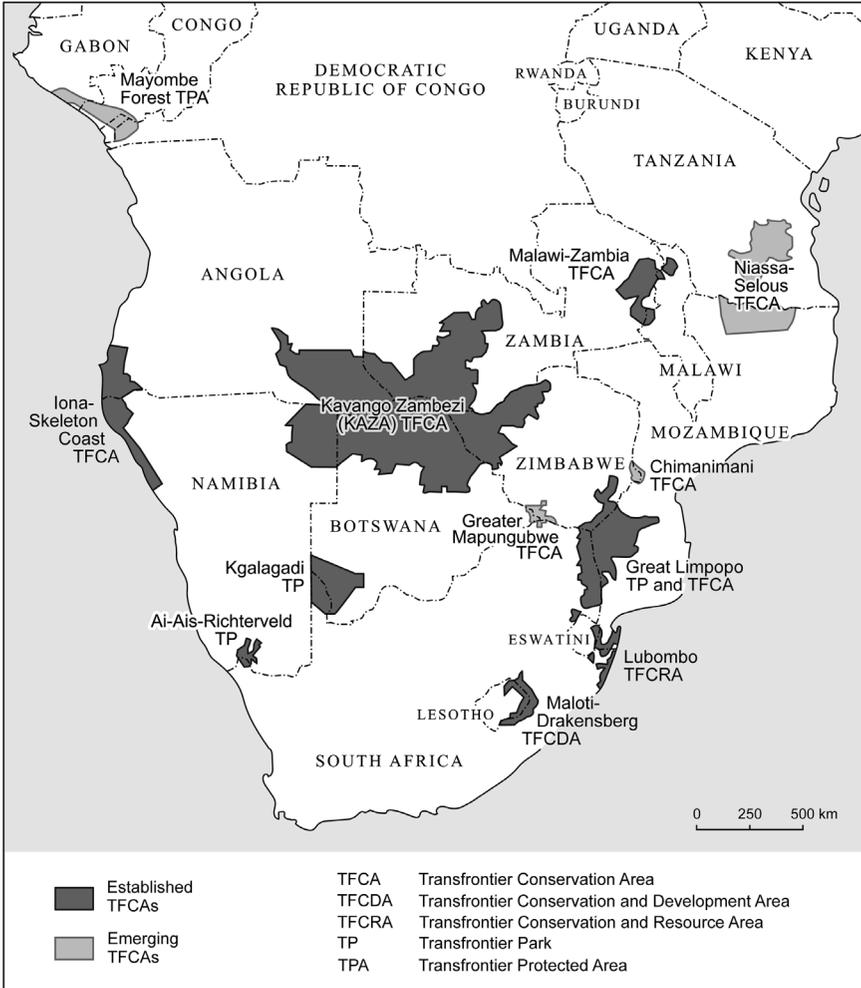
Against this backdrop, the chapter takes the case of KAZA and Namibia to investigate the relationship between the commodification of nature and the transformation of political authority. It focuses on the following questions: how are ecological needs and economic potentials of transfrontier conservation framed? How are they used *to legitimise* international interference in the domestic affairs of states? To what extent does the implementation of KAZA go along with new forms of environmental governance and the emergence of new forms of sovereignty?

The emergence of transfrontier conservation must be seen in light of the changing political economy after the end of the apartheid regime when SADC promoted TFCAs as catalysts of regional integration (Ramutsindela 2007). The first TFCAs in southern Africa were established in the 1990s, with the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park (Botswana, South Africa), Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park (Mozambique, Zimbabwe, South Africa), and Ais-Ais/Richtersveld Transfrontier Park (Namibia, South Africa). Later the idea was transferred to regions beyond the borders of South Africa. In 2012, the

governments of Angola, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Botswana, and Namibia launched KAZA as the largest TFCA (520,000 km²) in the world. From the beginning, Namibia played a key role in the establishment of KAZA and continues to be a forerunner of conservation initiatives in the region, together with Botswana. Namibia's communal conservancies and its national parks in the north-east of the country are considered important building blocks for the greater transboundary landscape approach. In that context, KAZA plays an essential role as a top-level initiative that is expected to promote the idea further. During fieldwork, different conservation actors repeatedly highlighted the significant role of north-eastern Namibia as it lies 'at the heart of KAZA', by which they allude to the geographically central position of Namibia's administrative regions, Zambezi and Kavango East, in the transfrontier conservation area. Most of KAZA wildlife corridors are supposed to be implemented across north-eastern Namibia to facilitate migration of wildlife from Botswana to Zambia and Angola and back. Considering that Namibia also played a decisive role in the inception and official opening of the initiative, the Namibian case provides an important point of departure for analysing new dynamics of political authority in the context of transfrontier conservation.

TFCAs have witnessed a remarkable increase of scholarly attention in recent years (Ali 2007; Ramutsindela 2007; Andersson *et al.* 2013). Studies address a wide range of topics, including ecological and economic potentials and impacts of transboundary conservation initiatives (Hanks 2003; Suich *et al.* 2005; Naidoo *et al.* 2018), their historical evolution and political background (Ramutsindela 2007; Spierenburg & Wels 2010) and critical implications in regard to local communities and social inequalities (Andersson *et al.* 2013; Spierenburg 2013; Duffy 2016; Büscher & Ramutsindela 2016). Focusing on the relationship between conservation and commodification, Büscher (2013) views TFCAs as neoliberal development interventions that primarily aim at linking peripheral borderlands to global markets, thus 'unlocking' the hidden potentials of previously underutilised natural resources through international tourism and a commodification of nature. From this perspective, he criticises the triple-win promise of peace parks as a political strategy to legitimise TFCAs as apolitical interventions (Büscher 2010). We agree with this position, which also holds true for KAZA, and suggest conceiving of TFCAs in general and KAZA in particular as tools to commodify 'wild' objects, landscapes, and imaginations of Africa. Against this backdrop, new questions arise concerning the relationship between transboundary initiatives, the commodification of nature, and issues of national governance and policy.

In this chapter, we follow the arguments of the above-mentioned authors who have highlighted the neoliberal dynamics in the transformation of conservation areas. Yet, we believe that the 'commodifying the wild' focus needs to



Map 5.1 Transfrontier conservation areas in southern Africa (Source: Editing: Johannes Dittmann; Cartography: Irene Johannsen, Monika Feinen).

be augmented by political geography perspectives on territorial control, state sovereignty, and institutionalised authority in the context of transboundary conservation. Hence, studies that point to the different dimensions of how transboundary conservation reshapes spaces of political authority are particularly vital for our case (van Amerom 2002; Wolmer 2003; Dhlwayo *et al.* 2009; Rusinga & Mapira 2012; Noe 2015; Lunstrum 2013; Ramutsindela 2017). So far, only Lunstrum (2013) has explicitly addressed the question of how

transfrontier conservation and the establishment of a new border regime affect territorial control, political authority, and state sovereignty. We propose to expand the argument by linking up to recent debates in political geography on new dynamics of spatiality, territoriality, and sovereignty in the 21st century (Agnew 2005; Kuus & Agnew 2008; Elden 2010; Painter 2010; Agnew 2015).

The chapter will first revisit current theoretical debates on state sovereignty and transboundary environmental governance. In its empirical section, the chapter relates these debates to a case study of KAZA TFCA, describing how the implementation of transfrontier conservation changes the patterns of political authority in Namibia. The chapter illuminates the political conditions of the emergence of KAZA and shows that in the initial phase the Namibian motivation to push the project was largely determined by interests in extending the external and internal sovereignty of the state. It continues to show how the Namibian state re-asserts its sovereignty and legitimises the commodification of ivory in KAZA area by joining a transnational conservation agreement. The final section focuses on the limits to these re-assertions and the contestations of Namibian state sovereignty in the context of KAZA. Therefore, this chapter is less concerned with emphasising that TFCAs have either erosive or enhancing effects on state sovereignty; rather, it intends to illustrate the ambiguity in these effects, showing that sovereignty in TFCAs must be understood as a transnationally negotiated, challenged, and graduated phenomenon. The chapter concludes by encouraging further research on transboundary conservation from a post-colonial perspective, asking for alternative views of sovereignty and environmental governance in Africa.

New dynamics of political authority

In political science and geography, sovereignty has long been conceived of as the capacity of a state to exert authority and control over its territory (Biersteker 2013: 246). This understanding implies an idea of the state which is firmly embedded in the political order of the Peace of Westphalia of 1648, i.e. an order in which the state is conceived as a spatially defined phenomenon (*ibid.*). In this view, the power of the state relies on its territoriality, i.e. its ability to occupy and control a particular geographical space (Allen 2003, Painter 2010). Agnew (2005: 437) defines territoriality as ‘the use of territory for political, social, and economic ends ... implied by state sovereignty’. In conventional political theory, the concepts of state, sovereignty, and territory are inherently connected. However, this Western ideal of the nation-state stems from a particular historical setting, which was globally mainstreamed only in the middle of the 20th century as a ‘universal form of territorial political organization’ (Biersteker 2013: 248).

Agnew (1994) calls the definition of sovereignty in terms of spatial containers a 'territorial trap', which should be overcome by disconnecting it from demarcated boundaries of state territories. In that regard he is supported by other authors who point at the new dynamics of sovereignty and territoriality in the context of globalisation and neoliberalisation (Brenner *et al.* 2003; Painter 2010; Mountz 2013). According to Brenner *et al.* (2003: 4) these political geography perspectives have to be distinguished from closely related but analytically distinct research perspectives that deal with the theorisation of state space. These include among others, globalisation debates that generally challenge the Cartesian image of space as a static, bounded block and call for relational perspectives, as well as debates on new localisms and regionalisms that criticise the national scale as an adequate ordering category in the 21st century (*ibid.*). Political geography perspectives do not focus on what the role of the state in contemporary world politics is or whether the state loses its significance in the face of globalisation. Following Kuus and Agnew (2008), political geography perspectives theorising the state are concerned with the ways political authority is being reconfigured and spatially articulated. These critical voices agree that there is a threefold flaw in conventional approaches of state theory: first, that state sovereignty is bound to a demarcated territory; second, that foreign and domestic affairs contradict each other; and third, that states can only act within spatial containers (Elden 2010: 801). However, in political practice one still observes the persistence of space-bound concepts of sovereignty as stated by Agnew (2005): 'this standard conception is a poor guide to political analysis. It is a 'truth' that has always hidden more than it reveals. In a globalizing world, this obfuscation is particularly problematic' (*ibid.*: 456). The state and its boundaries, sovereignty, and territory should not be considered as given facts predetermined by natural boundaries. Instead, sovereignty is contingent and socially constructed (Biersteker 2013). With the rise of *new forms of governance* at levels above or below nation-states, relational perspectives are becoming more appropriate to understand the emergence of new forms of sovereignty and territorial figurations (Brenner *et al.* 2003; Agnew 2005; Painter 2010; Biersteker 2013). This applies especially to newly emerging governing patterns in cross-border regions. Agnew suggests the concept of *graduated sovereignty*, which comes closer to how sovereignty is practised, contested, and negotiated in quotidian politics (Agnew 2005: 442; Mountz 2013; Boeckler *et al.* 2018). Understanding the hybridity of sovereignty means that political authority is not necessarily exercised by the state and through absolute territoriality, but rather as a *continuous contestation of practices through inter-scalar networks* (Kuus & Agnew 2008; Berg & Kuusk 2010).

There are many forms, degrees, and different ways of being sovereign which not only hold true for nation-states, but also for other spatial configurations (Berg & Kuusk 2010: 40) such as regional bodies, transnational networks, and cross-border regions. Conventional conceptualisations of state, territory, and sovereignty are often too narrow and culturally biased, as they are mostly seen in relation to the Western ideal, hence they tend to describe state governance in Africa in terms of deprivation, deficiency, and failure (Sidaway 2003). Ramutsindela (2019) urges us to decolonise concepts of political geography and to identify alternative forms of sovereignty without simply framing them as deviations from Western norms. 'It would appear no region of the world has a wide-range classification of states like Africa' (ibid.: 285). Sovereignty in Africa has been and still is contested, and not only as an effect of colonial border-drawing. What we can see across the continent is not the result of failed nation-building, but the emergence of fragmented forms of political authority (Mbembe 2000), 'where pre-colonial, colonial, modern and transnational modes of sovereignty compete for their appropriate spatial manifestation' (Boeckler *et al.* 2018: 7). Following Sidaway, 'the supposed 'weakness' of certain African states might be interpreted as arising less from a lack or absence of authority and connection (including the presence of the West), but rather as an excess of certain forms of them' (2003: 157). Sovereignty in Africa today is exercised by a number of actors, not only by national governments. Complex transnational private–public partnerships are rapidly expanding all over Africa. This process is driven by several factors, including the 'African land rush', the new role of China as a hegemonic power, and the creation of new networks by international, national, and non-governmental organisations for development and conservation. 'Africa has once again become a living laboratory, this time for the experimentation with new dis/orders and novel kinds of sovereignties' that result in changing transnational relations (Boeckler *et al.* 2018: 3).

Some of these newly emerging forms of political authority can also be observed in the context of cross-border conservation areas, which are to a large extent determined by markets in environmental services. Commodification of nature implies massive transformations of the political economy of states, regions, and landscapes (Liverman 2004: 734–735). This includes new trends of territorialisation and the emergence of transnational spaces where state and non-state actors on different scales intervene in localities under overlapping political authorities (Igoe & Brockington 2007). Mbembe (2000) points out that the exploitation of natural resources in Africa is again becoming a field of contestation where sovereignty is renegotiated. He argues that international policies of conservation put whole territories into

a *de facto* extraterritorial status, thereby placing them outside of immediate state authority (ibid.: 283). Observations concerning the increasing neoliberalisation of transnational conservation ‘refer to an emerging system where sovereignty has become highly decentralised and fragmented – controlled by different state actors, in different contexts and for different purposes’ (Igoe & Brockington 2007: 439).

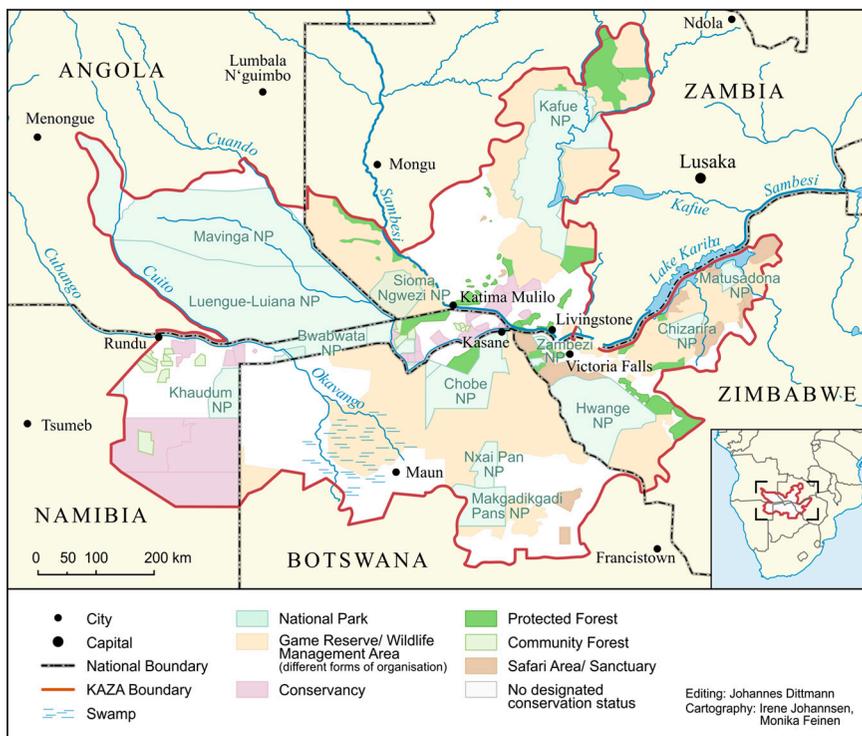
Transfrontier conservation areas can be conceived of as instruments to commodify nature in international contexts (Ramutsindela 2007). Wolmer clarifies that the implications of transboundary approaches in natural resource management go far beyond biodiversity protection as they are ‘bound up with regional debates on national sovereignty, land reform and poverty alleviation’ (2003: 261). In a study of the Selous-Niassa Wildlife Corridor, Noe shows that the establishment of TFCAs and wildlife corridors involves the alienation of land, going along with ‘complex and highly localised circumstances of power struggles that reflect broader issues of territoriality’ (2015: 121). Under these conditions, land management becomes upscaled to the international level, leading to the emergence of new types of border regimes. According to Ramutsindela (2017), the rise of transfrontier conservation in southern Africa caused a new hegemony of space through the denationalisation of conservation and the insertion of green capitalism. Conventional conservation models such as national parks and community-based conservation are challenged by TFCAs, as these imply re-conceptualisations of border and territory, and transcend common ways to frame conservation governance. By ‘greening borderlands as a national and regional imperative’ Ramutsindela argues (2017: 106), peace parks create transnational spaces that are shaped by processes of commodification of nature.

Only a few studies explicitly address the implications of transfrontier conservation for state sovereignty. For this present chapter, Lunstrum’s (2013) study on the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park (GLTP) is particularly relevant, since it argues ‘that the same partnerships that seem to threaten sovereignty in some respects in fact shore up the power of the Mozambican state in other respects’ (ibid.: 1). The study shows how the Mozambican state expands its power base in the GLTP. This point is critical for this case study about Namibia in the context of KAZA. Drawing on insights from multi-sited ethnographic fieldwork in Namibia, the following sections deal with the question of how new forms of sovereignty emerge in the processes of re-asserting, negotiating, and challenging political authority in KAZA.

Transfrontier conservation and sovereignty in Namibia

KAZA – design and establishment of a TFCA

The setting up of conservation interventions unfolds along particular pathways that must be considered to illuminate the practices and institutional frameworks of environmental governance. Actors at different scales cooperate, negotiate, and compete on these pathways and thereby reconstitute political authority and state sovereignty (Müller-Mahn *et al.* 2018: 26–27). The KAZA Conservation Area has been configured in a spatially ambitious way by the responsible ministries of five different African countries, together with various donor organisations in the context of development cooperation, and a number of international and national NGOs. The actors driving this process include national governments, experts from the North and the South, government officials at all levels of the administrative hierarchy, and the people living in the area.



Map 5.2 The Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (Source: Editing: Johannes Dittmann; Cartography: Irene Johannsen, Monika Feinen).

Today, the KAZA area is home to a population of 2.67 million people, with an annual growth rate of approximately 2%. The Conservation Area comprises more than 20 national parks, 85 forest reserves, 22 communal conservancies, 11 game sanctuaries, and 103 wildlife management areas. In total, around 371,000 km² of the KAZA area are under conservation management, while 149,000 km² are under agricultural use. This huge conservation initiative aims at making the region a world-class premier transfrontier conservation area and tourism destination (Mosimane *et al.* 2014; KAZA TFCA 2015). In official words the goal is defined as ‘to sustainably manage the Kavango Zambezi ecosystem, its heritage and cultural resources based on best conservation and tourism models for the socio-economic well-being of the communities and other stakeholders in the region’ (KAZA TFCA 2015: II). The project’s main concern is to facilitate the establishment of transboundary wildlife corridors to enable cross-border wildlife movement and ensure connectivity of ecosystems. By promoting transboundary conservation the KAZA initiative aims to increase the potential for international tourism in the area and thereby intends to stimulate new markets for wildlife economy. New sources for revenue are supposed to benefit mainly local communities through joint ventures.

The Conservation Area is mainly financed through the German Bank for Reconstruction and Development (KfW), which so far has contributed €40 million (US\$35.7 million) in grants in three funding phases since 2010 (KAZA TFCA 2018). The KfW funds are administered by the KAZA Secretariat with assistance of the PPF and channelled to the five responsible ministries who implement directly or contract NGOs and consultancies for implementation. The funds are mainly spent on operational costs of the KAZA Secretariat, joint cross-border initiatives and the countries’ individual conservation programmes. Investments are committed to the aims and vision of the KAZA initiative, which are adopted by the partner countries and KfW as well as to the bilateral conditions of development cooperation between the German government and the five recipient governments. While the first two funding phases (€20 million – US\$17.86 million) mainly focused on institutional capacity building, the third phase is more concerned with the implementation of wildlife corridors across the countries. Furthermore, KAZA receives funds through the TFCA programme of SADC, which is also largely funded by German development cooperation, as well as through a number of governmental and non-governmental organisations such as the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), World Wildlife Fund for Nature (WWF), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Dutch postcode lottery. The KAZA Secretariat acts as a mediator between the five governments, coordinating activities in the KAZA region in regular meetings of a Ministerial Committee, a Committee of Senior Officials, and a

Joint Management Committee. Within the five countries, the KAZA initiative is coordinated by national steering committees under the lead of the respective ministries. Apart from this, there are several working groups that focus on specific tasks like tourism development or wildlife corridor implementation. They consist of technical staff from different governmental and private institutions. Compared to other TFCAs in the wider region, KAZA is not only by far the biggest and most differentiated project area, but it also has a particularly complex governance structure with numerous national and transnational actors collaborating at different levels (Linell *et al.* 2018: 58).

The origins of KAZA date back further than its official opening in 2003. They build on two previous transboundary conservation initiatives, which were not successful. The first one, the Okavango Upper Zambezi International Tourism Initiative (OUZIT), was initiated in 1993 by the Development Bank of South Africa and the Regional Tourism Organisation of Southern Africa, facilitated by the SADC tourism sector. The Initiative grew out of the Spatial Development Initiatives (SDI) programme that was part of the vision to restructure the inherited apartheid space economy of South Africa (Rogerson 2003). It is interesting to note that, from the beginning of the OUZIT project, the establishment of a transboundary conservation area was legitimised by ecological arguments, while the process itself was mainly driven by economic and political interests (see also Goldman 2009). With a focus on international tourism, the project aimed at development and national growth through regional integration. However, OUZIT as well as the following Four Corners Transboundary Natural Resource Management initiative were dropped again by the participating governments. The failure of these two transboundary conservation initiatives preceding KAZA may be explained by the lack of ownership on the side of the participating governments (Mogende 2016). The South African Government largely dominated OUZIT, and the African Wildlife Fund and USAID dominated the Four Corners initiative. From the point of view of the participating governments, these projects were too donor-driven and insufficiently aligned with their own interests, which finally led the Botswanan and Namibian governments to drop out.

However, it is remarkable to note that even failed projects may leave a legacy. The prematurely terminated conservation projects produced a heritage of infrastructures, maps, reports, and memories, leading to the resurgence of past aspirations and instigating a continuation of activities in a new guise and under a new title (Bluwstein & Lund 2018: 454). In 2003 the first Namibian president Sam Nujoma gathered the ministers of environment and tourism of the five neighbouring countries in Katima Mulilo, the regional capital of the Caprivi Region, as north-eastern Namibia was then called, to revitalise the idea of a transboundary conservation area and seize the golden opportunity

to take complete ownership ... to sharpen its focus so that it can complement the socio-economic development efforts of ... respective countries.' (Hon. S. Nujoma, President of Namibia 2003 cited in Suich *et al.* 2005: 4). Nujoma wanted the governments to be able to account for their citizens in the KAZA area by taking the complete responsibility and ownership of the initiative (Suich *et al.* 2005). Due to this, KAZA became a project with a strong buy-in among the participating countries that enhanced sovereignty as being founded in distinction to previous projects with stronger foreign influence. Namibia played a key role in drafting the KAZA Memorandum of Understanding, which was signed in 2006. It continued to take the lead in the implementation of the KAZA treaty, which laid the foundation for the official opening of the TFCA in 2012. The process was greatly supported by the Namibian minister of environment and tourism Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, who later also served as minister of international relations. From the beginning, KAZA was envisioned to become an initiative to enhance transboundary collaboration at different scales, and not only in ecological terms, and promote regional integration as a flagship programme of SADC.

During the early years of the KAZA in the early 2000s, the area was still ridden by the consequences of civil war and secession. The Angolan component in Cuando Cubango Province was the scene of the fiercest military conflicts, which also affected parts of Namibia and Zambia. Since independence, Zambia's Western Province has been the scene of a separatist movement building on the identity of the old Lozi kingdom that also reached into today's Namibia (Zeller & Melber 2018). The Namibian component of KAZA, especially the Caprivi, was exposed to different conflicts shortly after the country's independence. The spill-over from the Angolan civil war, disputes between various traditional authorities, and the Caprivi secessionist movement threatened peace and the sovereignty of the young state (Lenggenhager 2018; Kangumu 2011). Soon after the Namibian Defence Force quelled the secession movement that was driven by the Caprivi Liberation Army in 2002 (Melber 2015), the Namibian president gathered representatives of the other KAZA countries in Katima Mulilo to kick off the transnational initiative. As a conservation consultant who was actively involved in the inception of KAZA from the beginning put it in September 2018:

The war had come to an end. It had caused a lot of unrest in the Zambezi and there was the secessionist movement. That generated some momentum for reaching out from a Namibian perspective. And why not use the existing platform that was already there ... Let us take control over OUZIT and let's put our stamp on it ... this was driven by the desire to have stability in the area where in the previous five years there was not stability ... That is why this government, specifically the president, saw an opportunity.

The emergence of KAZA must be seen in the context of the historical conditions of the emergence of conservation initiatives in north-eastern Namibia. These are often linked to past development pathways, established spatial knowledge, and military and security interventions in pre- and post-independence periods. Nature conservation narratives and institutions had already been used for securing spaces before independence. As Bollig and Vehrs (2021) show, Namibia's Zambezi Region has been constructed as a wilderness by the colonial governments through the reordering of human-environment relations and decoupling humans from wildlife spatially. Already at that time, a path was taken to create a pristine conservation landscape serving visions of economically productive conservation programmes which was later translated into a natural potential for being part of a transfrontier conservation area (*ibid.*). After 1990, community-based and transfrontier conservation approaches in the region followed in that line (Lenggenhager 2018), although not necessarily in a linear continuity of mind-sets and practices. With the emergence of OUZIT and later KAZA the notion of the Caprivi Strip as a territorial anomaly of colonialism was translated into an image of the region as 'the key' or 'the heart of' the largest conservation area of Africa.

After the Cold War, new narratives of security emerged in southern Africa to which peace parks were presented as silver-bullet solutions (Ramutsindela 2007). Keeping in mind the aspired multiple-win situation of TFCAs, the institution of KAZA was a means to establish state sovereignty in areas where regional movements opposed it. Political authority strengthened through the initiation of KAZA should be understood not so much as effective but as *symbolic* sovereignty, which is a strategy deployed by states to 'uphold the imagination that the state in question is indeed sovereign' (Müller-Mahn *et al.* 2018: 26). Furthermore, as Ramutsindela argues, narratives of community development and nature conservation that are key within the scope of TFCAs can be seen as depoliticising strategies on the sub-regional level employed by governments to silence local resistance (2007: 109). Linell *et al.* argue that KAZA can be understood as an instrument to demobilise opposition and boost the legitimacy and power of national leaders by introducing international agencies to the national level (2018: 66).

To summarise, the evidence presented above questions the official reading that the KAZA project was launched primarily for conservation purposes and a better commodification of natural resources. We find this explanation insufficient, not least because similar initiatives had already existed before. The Conservation Area makes promises of economic growth and livelihood enhancement through tourism, but these have not become realised yet, as different actors of the regional tourism sector told us. Instead, we assert that the main purpose of the project should rather be seen in relation to its political function. In contrast to its predecessors, KAZA gives the five

participating governments full ownership, thereby allowing them a more comprehensive eco-governmental control over peripheral regions, and strengthening their sovereignty.

Transfrontier conservation and the re-asserting of political authority

The KAZA Conservation Area remains politically important, because it allows the Namibian state to establish a particular regime of environmental governance and exert sovereignty not just within its borders, but also in international contexts. This move became possible due to newly emerging global environmental issues, which instigated some sort of environmental solidarity among African states, and strengthened their position in international environmental negotiations (Ramutsindela & Büscher 2019). In this context, the establishment of the TFCAs in its border regions helps the Namibian state not only to gain better control over its periphery, but also to win international recognition, and access to new forms of funding. Following Death (2016), KAZA can be seen as an instrument of the African green state, which mainly has symbolic and representational functions to generate sovereignty, both in terms of internal control over peripheral border areas, and externally in terms of a joint bargaining power of the five participating countries.

This observation is also supported by an analysis of how KAZA is publicly represented. Transfrontier conservation interventions require the constitution of a positively connoted and apolitical discourse that legitimises their existence because of their inherently political implications and contradictions (Büscher 2010). The Conservation Area is glorified as a flagship programme on a pathway to a bright future of African conservation and wildlife economy that coincides with the recent rise of green development visions across sub-Saharan Africa. Connectivity of ecosystems seems to be the leading paradigm that legitimises the establishment of wildlife corridors and other cross-border interventions under KAZA. This goal is based on aspirations of restoring an imagined 'pristine African wilderness' that are still very present in the mindsets of conservation institutions and are broadly mainstreamed to drive the commodification of nature. Further, TFCAs initiatives are seen as drivers for regional integration, economic development, and independence from global spatialities of economic power inherited from the colonial period (Ramutsindela 2007; Gibb 2009). In popular debates about borders, the African national border as imposed by colonial powers has primarily negative connotations as being disruptive to natural and social connectivity. Lifting borders and breaking down fences as imperatives of peace parks is instrumentalised to legitimise TFCAs as development interventions in line with Pan-African visions (Ramutsindela 2017). Hence, KAZA represents political visions of regional bodies such as SADC, New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), and the African Union

(AU) that contribute to Pan-Africanism and African Renaissance. Especially on high political levels, KAZA has a positive reputation as an ‘African solution to African challenges’ that aims to overcome the curse of colonial border-drawing. Visually and rhetorically the proponents of KAZA, especially PPF, apply sophisticated techniques to uphold a glorifying discourse that is used to attract funding and advance international standing among conservation lobbies. The current Namibian president, who is an honorary patron of the Peace Parks Foundation, shows a strong commitment to KAZA.

How KAZA is presented in this idealising narrative was clearly demonstrated at the Elephant Summit and the Wildlife Economy Summit at Victoria Falls in 2019. The presidents of Namibia, Botswana, Zambia, and Zimbabwe and a state representative of Angola appeared at the venue as one community of interests that directed their arguments against the restrictions imposed by Western-dominated nature conservation institutions, such as the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), which, as they proclaimed, impaired the sovereignty of African environmental policy through international conventions. Particularly the KAZA vision as a joint leitmotif was used here by the presidents themselves to articulate their claims:

I support KAZA efforts on elephants. We should not be victims of our success in conservation ... The West must humble itself and learn conservation from us, instead of lecturing us on what we ought to do (President of Namibia Hage Geingob, *Namibia Daily News*, 2019)

[S]ome communities from Europe prefer animal rights sometimes more than human rights. You will see that they are so concerned about elephants, lions and cheetahs ... And these animals are sometimes many because of our good governance, because of our good conservancy policies ... We have a crisis now in Namibia as you know. There is a human–animal conflict ... Now people whose fields are destroyed by elephants want compensation. What do you compensate them from? If you could sell some of this ivory in a controlled way ... It would be easier for the national party to address that issue. (President of Namibia Hage Geingob, *ZimParksTV*, 2019)

The efforts regarding African elephants in KAZA – a project which, as its advocates recurrently emphasise, is not driven by Western institutions but by African governments and their aspirations – serves as an instrument at international conservation summits to assert sovereignty against international restraints and to legitimise claims for the commodification of ivory. This is done by referring to the successes and experiences of conservation policy in southern Africa (e.g. increase in wildlife populations in Namibia) and through

criticising the paternalism of Western conservation organisations. During the Wildlife Economy Summit 2019, visions of a paradigm shift towards institutional and economic emancipation from international conservation legislation and a stronger emphasis on conservation as a form of economy were perceivable. The KAZA Conservation Area is considered to be an initiative to drive this shift and thereby enhance the external sovereignty of African states. Compared to its early phase, today the economic motives of the initiative in terms of ecotourism, hunting, and recently ivory trade are emphasised more strongly. For the heads of state of the five participating countries, KAZA today is a platform for strengthening symbolic sovereignty and gaining international acceptance for the commodification of natural resources according to African environmental policy. This trend shows that the presidents promote KAZA as a catalyst of the commodification of natural resources of southern Africa, and that transfrontier conservation is in line with recent neoliberalising developments in many African countries (Büscher 2013).

Furthermore, the KAZA initiative is used to expand conservation efforts on the national level. By using the transfrontier conservation paradigm as a way to support the national community-based and parks programmes in its individual KAZA component, the Namibian government manages to maintain the sovereignty of its domestic conservation initiatives, although entering into an international agreement for joint transboundary efforts. The initial successes of the Namibian conservancy programme confirmed older development visions for north-eastern Namibia, which defined its future as lying in conservation and tourism development (Lenggenhager 2018). The initiative therefore fitted into the path taken as a complementary project on a meta level. However, a new project does not necessarily mean a break with conventional thinking. In the implementation of KAZA in Namibia it is evident that the organisational memory of the prevailing community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) model is still very present.

On the national level, Namibia translates the transfrontier conservation idea into the national conservation agenda, as conservancies and national parks are being promoted with KAZA funds, because they are considered as important building blocks for the transboundary vision. So far, less effort has been put into the establishment of transboundary conservation interventions such as corridors. Most of the individuals who are involved in the national implementation of KAZA have a strong CBNRM background and continue to think through the lens of Namibia's conservation success story. They are confident that the proven concept is the way to go for Namibia under the transboundary paradigm. By saying, 'you cannot work transboundary if you don't solve your own issues first', a government official argued that there are many internal challenges regarding conservation that take priority before working

on joint initiatives. Especially among the interviewed NGO representatives, KAZA is considered to be a good idea, but the main reason for promoting it and highlighting its importance is to get additional funding and legitimacy for their usual activities by terming them as contributing to transboundary efforts under KAZA. When asked about why his organisation has an interest in promoting KAZA, a member of a local NGO (September 2018) said

it is an opportunity to get money. Zambia wanted support in helping communities so we got money through KAZA to work on cross-border CBNRM ... it is an opportunity for people to support other activities they are already doing or would like continue to do. CBNRM money had been sharply reduced for various reasons. People get tired of the same programme so you have to rebrand it, come up with a new name.

The Namibian government also uses KAZA funds for infrastructure development in its north-eastern national parks. This shows that despite entering into an international agreement and the entanglement of international processes and actors, the Namibian conservation sector understands that it can maintain its sovereignty, gain international recognition and access new funding opportunities by translating the transfrontier conservation idea into the national programmes that focus on community-based conservation and parks.

The integration of transfrontier conservation into national policy also has implications for regional environmental governance of north-eastern Namibia. Through coordinating KAZA at the national level the Namibian ministry of environment and tourism increases its power of control over natural resources in north-eastern Namibia, where different claims of land use overlap and are continuously contested between state authorities, traditional authorities, NGOs and private investors. As the whole area of north-eastern Namibia is part of KAZA, the conservation sector can stabilise its territorial claims and oppose land uses that run against the KAZA vision. This can currently be observed in context of prospecting activities by the Canadian oil company ReconAfrica in the Kavango regions of Namibia. These activities in north-eastern Namibia are attracting the attention and opposition of a number of different Namibian and international conservation organisations, which accuse the company of veiling its real intention which is allegedly fracking. As the areas in question are within KAZA, environmentalists can argue with the aims and narratives of transboundary conservation in the debate, contributing to at least delaying, if not interfering with, ReconAfrica's activities (NCE 2021). The example shows that transfrontier conservation has territorialising effects with direct consequences for land governance on national level favouring conservation interests.

In this section we emphasised two points. First, that the transfrontier conservation paradigm in the context of KAZA is used on the international

level to enhance the sovereignty of African regional and national environmental governance. In KAZA, sovereignty is constituted by a conglomerate of transnational governmental and non-governmental influences and therefore cannot be understood as a capacity of individual states. Second, that today the economic motives related to KAZA have become stronger compared to its initial phase. Against this backdrop, the following section illuminates contestations of political authority, a grasp of which is crucial for an understanding of graduated sovereignty in KAZA.

Nested and contested sovereignties in transfrontier conservation

Although entering a transfrontier conservation initiative serves to re-assert sovereignty, there are also limits to it, because its regulations summon governments to reconfigure regional land-use policies and engage in joint cross-border activities with other governments and transnational actors. The extent to which the KAZA TFCA can challenge political authority is defined in Article 3 of its treaty:

(1) KAZA TFCA shall be an international organisation, and shall have legal personality with capacity and power to enter into contracts, acquire, or dispose of, movable, inter alia intellectual property, and immovable property and to sue and be sued.

(2) In the territory of a Partner State, the KAZA TFCA shall, pursuant to paragraph 1 of this Article, have such legal capacity as is necessary for the proper exercise of its functions. (KAZA TFCA Treaty, KAZA TFCA 2012, Article 3: 8–9)

Signing a treaty for the establishment of a TFCA results in the rearrangement of authority and space through the deinstitutionalisation of the border and the emergence of post-national borders (Ramutsindela 2017). According to Ramutsindela (2017), TFCA Memoranda of Understandings (MoUs) are instruments to limit the authority of individual states by creating what he calls a 21st century *terra nullius*. Through treaties, new obligations of the state are introducing a transnational space where governmentality is renegotiated to create a transnational conservation territory with green capitalism at its core (ibid.: 108).

Accordingly, our fieldwork revealed that, among national agents, KAZA is not always seen as an opportunity to enhance sovereignty, but also as a threat to it. In general, environmental challenges and the opportunities that come along with environmental solutions create conditions for competition among African states (Ramutsindela & Büscher 2019). This is reflected in issues concerning the perceived ownership of KAZA, which is clearly defined in the treaty as

being distributed equally among the five governments. Several interviews and minutes of KAZA meetings show that the ownership is contested and seems to be unclear. This does not mean that KAZA TFCA lacks agreements that define the roles of all involved actors. Issues of contested ownership were mentioned in terms of how the project is managed *de facto* and how certain actors within the initiative think of themselves and their respective roles in KAZA. A Namibian government official confirmed the instrumental role of president Nujoma in the setting up of KAZA and thus claimed it to be a Namibian project: 'I keep telling the KAZA people that this was Nujoma's idea. He wanted to see the area connected and it was Nujoma who brought all the presidents and ministers together to agree on KAZA' (Government of the Republic of Namibia official July 2019). Several representatives of different government levels and funding and advisory agencies confirmed that there is confusion about the coordination of KAZA, referring to assertions and claims of ownership. The Namibian claim shows that ownership is debated, although officially determined in the KAZA regulations.

Among the different stakeholders there are several claims that some actors are more important for KAZA and hence should have more authority, as well as many accusations that some actors fail to meet commitments and hence ought to have less. An interviewed conservation consultant (September 2019) stated: 'Every organization is trying to claim to be the founder, godfather, main actor or whatever in KAZA because it is the place to be!' Angola is often accused of a lack of commitment to KAZA because it does not appear in meetings in a representative manner, and joint decision-making processes are thus slowed down. Angola, on the other hand, replies to these accusations that decision-making processes are often carried out without its consent and thus it has a right to prevent decisions from coming into force. Zimbabwe and Zambia argue that they deserve more financial support from the KAZA funds, as their nature conservation initiatives are not yet as far advanced as those in Namibia and Botswana. Botswana expresses doubts about the benefits it stands to gain from its participation in KAZA, as even without the initiative it has established a successful conservation and tourism model for the region, while Namibia insists on the essential position of its Zambezi Region, as being located 'right at the heart of KAZA'. The partner states are struggling for recognition of their respective political authorities in the project, which has implications for joint cross-border initiatives such as the implementation of the KAZA visa, which is meant to ease border crossings for international tourists throughout the whole area. While Zambia and Zimbabwe have launched the visa pilot project, other countries remain sceptical about potential risks, like illegal wildlife-product trafficking that could be aggravated through eased border crossings. Although the visa is only meant to be issued to international tourists and not to citizens

of the five countries, it still is perceived as a threat to national sovereignty and security, which prevents government officials, especially those from the ministries of home affairs and from the ministries of international relations, to adopt the visa programme. The fear of losing sovereignty is a major constraint inhibiting states from fully participating in transboundary conservation initiatives (van Amerom 2002: 269). Dhliwayo *et al.* (2009) argue that the insistence on the inviolability of state sovereignty among the SADC countries is at the expense of community participation in transfrontier conservation. This point should also be considered concerning KAZA, as the majority of our respondents confirmed that community involvement remains low.

Another example of how potential threats to national sovereignty challenge transboundary conservation efforts under KAZA are joint wildlife-security services. Funded through USAID, the KAZA secretariat coordinates trainings for national prosecutors in the partner countries that aim at harmonisation of wildlife-security policies and practices including enabling joint wildlife patrols across boundaries. As came out in several attended KAZA workshops, transboundary wildlife-security efforts are perceived as a major interference to national sovereignty, as security forces of one state trained by transnational institutions operate on the territory of another. Considering political outcries as more than thirty Namibian citizens were shot dead as alleged poachers by the Botswanan Defence Force since the 1990s (Mongudhi *et al.* 2016; *The Namibian Sun* 2019), cross-border patrols remain a politically highly sensitive issue. Currently, different USAID-funded wildlife-security trainings on transnational and national levels run parallel, which causes confusion among national prosecutors and fuels accusations of foreign interference.¹

Concerns regarding ownership and state sovereignty interference are not only significant in inter-state communication but were also raised in terms of external non-state organisations like the PPF: 'I don't think that the advice from the PPF always helps. Because I think they see KAZA pretty much as theirs, they think it is peace parks. And I think they like the control and they exert the control' (conservation consultant, August 2018). A challenge of the external influence of the PPF that was mentioned by conservationists is that the guidelines for the implementation of KAZA in terms of their general outline followed the blueprints of documents designed for other TFCAs such as the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park. That means that the logic of projects designed for a transfrontier conservation park between two countries is transferred into the management of a transfrontier conservation area with a variety of different land uses that is coordinated by five different governments. Concerns about the appropriateness of plans that are not derived from local or even national

¹ Interview with conservation expert in Namibia, Windhoek, September 2018.

perspectives but from the views of external agents are significant with regard to the national integrated development plans (IDP) for the individual countries. A Namibian government official commented on the first KAZA IDP for the Namibian component as follows: ‘I would have never written such a thing. It was done by a consultant and consultants tend to produce thick documents with a lot of background information but usually they don’t really know the local context’ (GRN official, 19 June 2019). As the official explained in the discussion, the IDP was written by a PPF consultant funded by KfW who barely knew the Namibian KAZA component. By outsourcing policy making, transfrontier conservation reconfigures political authority over the regions targeted, as foreign expertise is integrated into the national implementation plans of Namibia. According to Noe (2019), in transboundary conservation projects the power of the state is contested through the continuous influence of international conservation agents who incorporate different values, ideologies, and aspirations, and this has direct effects on project implementation.

This section has shown that there are limits to the re-assertions of sovereignty through KAZA that are set by the same partnerships that constitute them. Hence, we argue that a rigid conception of sovereignty as being exclusively bound to state power is insufficient under conditions of the commodification of nature. Sovereignty is a dynamic effect of continually contested practices across inter-scalar actor networks. What we can see in KAZA are various overlapping authorities transcending state borders and scales that lead to re-conceptualisations of political authority and graduated forms of sovereignty.

Conclusion

This chapter took the example of KAZA to scrutinise how transfrontier conservation goes along with a commodification of nature, new forms of regional governance, and a transformation of political authority. It argued, first, that the establishment of TFCAs cannot be sufficiently explained by focusing only on the intended improvements of conservation, or on the commodification of natural resources. Instead, we suggest that the purpose of KAZA should primarily be understood in relation to its political functions. The KAZA initiative makes promises of economic growth and livelihood enhancement through tourism, but these have not yet been realised, as involved politicians prefer to use KAZA as a means to extend their authority. In the early 2000s KAZA served to gain complete ownership of the transboundary conservation idea among the participating governments and to consolidate their state sovereignty over peripheral regions.

Second, our study has shown that the commodification of nature in the cross-border setting of TFCAs does have immediate consequences for environmental

governance at national and international scales through a reconfiguration of territoriality and state sovereignty. To understand these new dynamics, the concept of sovereignty has to be disentangled from its previous fixed, spatial association. Sovereignty in KAZA emerges from participating in a transnational conservation initiative in which various governmental actors, funding organisations, and consulting agencies are involved who continuously enhance and contest sovereignty at different scales, making it a nested or *graduated* phenomenon (Agnew 2005). This was exemplified in the way the partner governments use the idealised depiction of KAZA to call for more funding and claim to emancipate African environmental policy from the paternalism of Western nature conservation agencies. At the same time sovereignty becomes an object of contestation through disagreements about ownership, risks to national security, and the interference of non-state actors such as consulting agencies. In this case, graduated sovereignty is the result of contested types of differential governmentalities in a highly complex transboundary conservation mega-project.

Third, the chapter illustrates how the commodification of nature and the establishment of political authority in peripheral border areas mutually reinforce each other in a transboundary conservation regime. Transfrontier conservation is a neoliberal paradigm (Büscher 2013) that commodifies wildlife, plants, and whole landscapes attributed to imaginaries of 'wild' Africa by employing narratives of ecological protection and development. By conceiving TFCAs as instruments of the market, the commodification of nature instigates new dynamics for political authority through the transnationalisation of sovereignty and territory. These new dynamics result in an extension of eco-governmental control, and they contribute to the reinforcement of the commodification of nature. They do so because the internationally recognised KAZA allows the partner governments to legitimise the extension of ecotourism and hunting as well as to claim the legalisation of ivory trade. Therefore, we assert that commodification and the restructuring of political authority are mutually dependent in KAZA.

In conclusion, we want to encourage a post-colonial perspective on transboundary conservation and ask for alternative views of sovereignty and environmental governance in Africa. The newly emerging authoritative and territorial dynamics faced by the KAZA partner states also leave their traces in the implementation process, which makes progress rather slow, at least in the eyes of donor organisations. However, as we would argue in conclusion to the above analysis, this view may reflect a Western perspective that implicitly compares the performance of KAZA with European models of statehood, interstate cooperation, and regional integration. From this Western view, progress is linked to specific paradigms of modernity, economic growth, and development.

In this regard, we would follow Sidaway (2003), who argues that such a notion of failed governance is based on the Hegelian notion of Africa as lacking in civilisational spirit. An understanding of graduated sovereignty in Africa urges us to decolonise concepts at political geography and think of alternative forms of governance that are not framed through a comparison with Western norms (Ramutsindela 2019). A perceived slowness in the implementation of KAZA does not mean that the project generally fails. European ideas of regional integration ‘are out of touch with the reality of the economy and polity of sub-Saharan Africa, and in particular with the nature of the African state’ (Gibb 2009: 702). As shown, KAZA has different political functions beyond economic growth and ecological protection. The fact that KAZA has symbolic functions should not be interpreted as an indication of a lack of perseverance or ‘weak governance’. Using KAZA for representational means is a strategy which effectuates politics by enhancing international recognition and symbolic sovereignty. From this view the partner states reconstitute parts of their sovereignty in KAZA by outsourcing policy making to international consultants to position themselves strategically in today’s development economy. Hence, it would be insufficient to explain the slowness of implementation through the weakness or *absence* of political authority, but rather through an *excess* (Sidaway 2003) of various inter-scalar state and non-state forms of nested sovereignties imposed on one transnational space.

Bibliography

- Agnew, J. (1994). ‘The territorial trap: The geographical assumptions of international relations theory’, *Review of International Political Economy*, 1, 53–80.
- Agnew, J. (2005). ‘Sovereignty regimes: Territoriality, and state authority in contemporary world politics’, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 95(2), 437–461.
- Agnew, J. (2015). ‘Revisiting the territorial trap’, *Nordia Geographical Publications*, 44(4), 43–48.
- Allen, J. (2003). *Lost Geographies of Power* (Oxford: Blackwell).
- Ali, S. H. (2007). *Peace Parks: Conservation and Conflict Resolution* (Cambridge MA: MIT Press).
- Andersson, J. A., de Garine-Wichatitsky, M., Cumming, D., Dzingirai, V., & Giller, K. (2013). *Transfrontier Conservation Areas: People Living on the Edge* (London: Routledge).
- Berg, E. & Kuusk, E. (2010). ‘What makes sovereignty a relative concept? Empirical approaches to international society’, *Political Geography*, 29, 40–49.
- Biersteker, T. J. (2013). ‘State, sovereignty, and territory’, in: W. Carlsnaes, T. Rises, & B. A. Simmons (eds), *Handbook of International Relations* (London: SAGE), 245–272.
- Bluwstein, J. & Lund, J. F. (2018). ‘Territoriality by conservation in the Selous-Niassa Corridor in Tanzania’, *World Development*, 101, 453–465.

- Boeckler, M., Engel, U., & Müller-Mahn, D. (2018). 'Regimes of territorialization: Territory, border and infrastructure in Africa', in: M. Boeckler, U. Engel, & D. Müller-Mahn (eds), *Spatial Practices: Territory, Border and Infrastructure in Africa* (Leiden and Boston MA: Brill Academic Publishers), 1–20.
- Bollig, M. & Vehrs, H. (2021). 'The making of a conservation landscape: The emergence of a conservationist environmental infrastructure along the Kwando River in Namibia's Zambezi Region', *Africa*, 91(2), 270–295.
- Brenner, N., Jessop, B., Jones, M., & MacLeod, G. (2003). 'Introduction: State space in question', in: N. Brenner, B. Jessop, M. Jones, & G. MacLeod (eds), *State/Space: A Reader* (Oxford: Blackwell), 1–26.
- Büscher, B. (2010). 'Anti-Politics as political strategy: Neoliberalism and trans-frontier conservation in southern Africa', *Development and Change*, 41(1), 29–51.
- Büscher, B. (2013). *Transforming the Frontier: Peace Parks and the Politics of Neoliberal Conservation in Southern Africa* (Durham NC: Duke University Press).
- Büscher, B. & Ramutsindela, M. (2016). 'Green violence: Rhino poaching and the war to save southern Africa's peace parks', *African Affairs*, 115(458), 1–22.
- Death, C. (2016). 'Green states in Africa: Beyond the usual suspects', *Environmental Politics*, 25(1), 116–135.
- Dhliwayo, M., Breen, C., & Nyambe, N. (2009). 'Legal, policy, and institutional provisions for community participation and empowerment in transfrontier conservation in southern Africa', *Journal of International Wildlife Law & Policy*, 12, 60–107.
- Duffy, R. (2016). 'War, by conservation', *Geoforum*, 69, 238–248.
- Elden, S. (2010). 'Land, terrain, territory', *Progress in Human Geography*, 34(6), 799–817.
- Gibb, R. (2009). 'Regional integration and Africa's development trajectory: Meta-theories, expectations and reality', *Third World Quarterly*, 30(4), 701–721.
- Goldman, M. (2009). 'Constructing connectivity: Conservation corridors and conservation politics in East African rangelands', *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 99(2), 335–359.
- Hanks, J. (2003). 'Transfrontier conservation areas (TFCAs) in southern Africa: Their role in conserving biodiversity, socio-economic development and promoting a culture of peace', *Journal of Sustainable Forestry*, 17, 163–187.
- Igoe, J. & Brockington, D. (2007). 'Neoliberal conservation: A brief introduction', *Conservation & Society*, 5(4), 432–449.
- Kangumu, B. (2011). *Contesting Caprivi: A History of Colonial Isolation and Regional Nationalism in Namibia* (Basel: Basler Afrika Bibliographien).
- KAZA TFCA (2012). 'Treaty between The Government of the Republic of Angola, The Government of the Republic of Botswana, The Government of the Republic of Namibia, The Government of the Republic of Zambia, And the Government of the Republic of Zimbabwe on the establishment of the Kavango Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area'. Available at: https://tfcaportal.org/system/files/resources/KAZA%20TFCA%20Treaty_SIGNED.pdf [Accessed 2 January 2023].
- KAZA TFCA (2015). 'Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area Master

- Integrated Development Plan'. Available at: <https://kavangozambezi.org/en/publications-2019?start=9> [Accessed 16 November 2020].
- KAZA TFCA (2018). 'Collaborative Partnerships Boost Conservation Efforts in KAZA'. Available at: www.kavangozambezi.org/pt/events-public/item/24-collaborative-partnerships-boosts-conservation [Accessed 28 February 2019].
- Kuus, M. & Agnew, J. (2008). 'Theorizing the state geographically: Sovereignty, subjectivity, territoriality', in: K. Cox, M. Low, & J. Robinson (eds), *The SAGE Handbook of Political Geography* (London: SAGE), 95–106.
- Legal Assistance Centre (LAC) (2021). 'The Law and Oil exploration in Namibia'. Available at: www.lac.org.na/index.php/projects/land-environment-development-lead/oil-exploration [Accessed 18 January 2022].
- Lenggenhager, L. (2018). *Ruling Nature, Controlling People: Nature Conservation, Development and War in North-Eastern Namibia since the 1920s* (Basel: Basler Afrika Bibliographien).
- Linell, A., Sjöstedt, M., & Sundström, A. (2018). 'Governing transboundary commons in Africa: The emergence and challenges of the Kavango-Zambezi Treaty', *International Environmental Agreements: Politics, Law and Economics*, 19(1), 53–68.
- Liverman, D. (2004). 'Who governs, at what scale and at what price? Geography, environmental governance, and the commodification of nature', *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 94(4), 734–738.
- Lunstrum, E. (2013). 'Articulated sovereignty: Extending Mozambican state power through the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Parl', *Political Geography*, 36, 1–11.
- Mbembe, A. (2000). 'At the edge of the world: Boundaries, territoriality, and sovereignty in Africa', *Public Culture*, 12(1), 259–284.
- Melber, H. (2015). *Understanding Namibia* (London: Hurst & Company).
- Mogende, E. (2016). 'The Politics of the Kavango-Zambezi (KAZA) TFCA in Botswana', MPhil Thesis, Department of Environmental and Geographical Science University of Cape Town. Available at: https://open.uct.ac.za/bitstream/handle/11427/23761/thesis_sci_2016_mogende_emmanuel.pdf [Accessed 28 February 2019].
- Mosimane, A., Lendelvo, S., Glatz-Jorde, S., Kirchmeir, H., & Huber, M. (2014). 'Livelihood baseline survey report for the Kavango Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA TFCA)', Available at: <https://kavangozambezi.org/en/publications-2019> [Accessed 16 November 2020].
- Mountz, A. (2013). 'Political geography I: Reconfiguring geographies of sovereignty', *Progress in Human Geography*, 37(6), 829–841.
- Müller-Mahn, D., Weisser, F., & Willers, J. (2018). 'Struggling for sovereignty: Political authority and the governance of climate change in Ethiopia', in: M. Boeckler, U. Engel, & D. Müller-Mahn (eds), *Spatial Practices: Territory, Border and Infrastructure in Africa* (Leiden and Boston: Brill Academic Publishers), 21–40.
- Naidoo, R., Kilian, J. W., Du Preez, P., Beytell, P., Aschenborn, O., Taylor, R. D. & Stuart-Hill, G. (2018). 'Evaluating the effectiveness of local- and regional-scale wildlife corridors using quantitative metrics of functional connectivity', *Biological Conservation*, 2017, 96–103.
- Namibia Daily News (2019). 'Four Southern African countries agree on "integrated"

- elephant management approach', 7 May, via *XINHUA*. Available at: <http://namibiadailynews.info/four-southern-african-countries-agree-on-integrated-elephant-management-approach> [Accessed 28 February 2020].
- NCE – Namibian Chamber of Environment (2021). 'Recon Africa's Seismic "Thumper" Survey Levels Wilderness and Damages Homes in Kavango East' (Windhoek: Frack Free Namibia, 5 October). Available at: https://n-c-e.org/sites/default/files/2021-10/FFN_press%20release_seismic%20surveying_5%20October%202021.pdf [Accessed 12 October 2021].
- Noe, C. (2015). 'Washoroba and the proliferation of borders in the Selous-Niassa Wildlife Corridor', in: M. Ramutsindela (ed.), *Cartographies of Nature: How Nature Conservation Animates Borders* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing), 113–139.
- Painter, J. (2010). 'Rethinking territory', *Antipode*, 42(5), 1090–1118.
- Ramutsindela, M. (2007). *Transfrontier Conservation Areas: At the Confluence of Capital, Politics and Nature* (Boston MA: CABI).
- Ramutsindela, M. (2017). 'Greening Africa's borderlands: The symbiotic politics of land and borders in peace parks', *Political Geography*, 56, 106–113.
- Ramutsindela, M. (2019). 'Governing territory, scalecraft and intrapreneurialism', *Territory, Politics, Governance*, 7(3), 285–288.
- Ramutsindela, M. & Büscher, B. (2019). 'Environmental governance and the (re-)making of the African state', *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics*. Available at: <https://oxfordre.com/politics/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228637.001.0001/acrefore-9780190228637-e-903> [Accessed 16 November 2020].
- Rogerson, C. (2003). 'The OUZIT initiative: Re-positioning southern Africa in global tourism', *Africa Insight*, 33(1–2), 33–35.
- Rusinga, O. & Mapira, J. (2012). 'Challenges of transfrontier conservation areas: Natural resources nationalism, security and regionalism in the Southern African Development Community', *International Journal of Development and Sustainability*, 1(3), 675–687.
- Sidaway, J. D. (2003). 'Sovereign excesses? Portraying postcolonial sovereigntyscapes', *Political Geography*, 22, 157–178.
- Spierenburg, M. (2013). "'We agreed to move but we did not do so freely": Resettlement from the Limpopo National Park, Mozambique', in: B. Dermann, A. Hellum, and K. B. Sandvik (eds), *Worlds of Human Rights: The Ambiguities of Rights Claiming in Africa* (Leiden: Brill), 101–128.
- Spierenburg, M. & Wels, H. (2010). 'Conservative philanthropists, royalty and business elites in nature conservation in southern Africa', *Antipode*, 42(3), 647–670.
- Suich, H., Busch, J., & Barbancho, N. (2005). 'Economic impacts of transfrontier conservation areas: Baseline of tourism in the Kavango-Zambezi TFCA'. Conservation International South Africa, Paper no. 4. Available at: www.cbd.int/financial/values/southafrica-valuation1.pdf [Accessed 21 January 2019].
- Mongudhi, T, Konopo, J. & Ntibinyane, N. (2016). 'Deadly borders ... 30 Namibians killed through Botswana's shoot-to-kill-policy', *The Namibian*, 9 March. Available at: www.namibian.com.na/148318/archive-read/

- Deadly-borders--30-Namibians-killed-through-Botswana&39s-shoot-to-kill-policy [Accessed 28 February 2020].
- The Namibian Sun (2019). 'Two poachers shot dead', 29 August 2019. Available at: www.namibiansun.com/news/two-poachers-shot-dead2019-08-28 [Accessed 28 February 2020].
- van Amerom, M. (2002). 'National sovereignty & transboundary protected areas in southern Africa', *GeoJournal*, 58, 265–273.
- Wolmer, W. (2003). 'Transboundary conservation: The politics of ecological integrity in the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 29(1), 261–278.
- Zeller, W. & Melber, H. (2018). 'United in separation? Lozi secessionism in Namibia and Zambia', in: L. de Vries, P. Englebert, & M. Schomerus (eds), *Secessionism in African Politics: Aspiration, Grievance, Performance, Disenchantment* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan), 293–328.
- ZimparksTV (2019). 'AU-UN Environment Wildlife Economy Summit 2019'. 24 June 2019. Available at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZvHcwqhZ0Yc, 1:38:20-1:41:01 [Accessed 28 February 2019].

