

**STUDY ON OPTIONS FOR PASTORALISTS TO SECURE THEIR  
LIVELIHOODS**

**PASTORALISM AND POLICY PROCESSES IN TANZANIA  
MBARALI CASE STUDY**

Dr. Martin Walsh

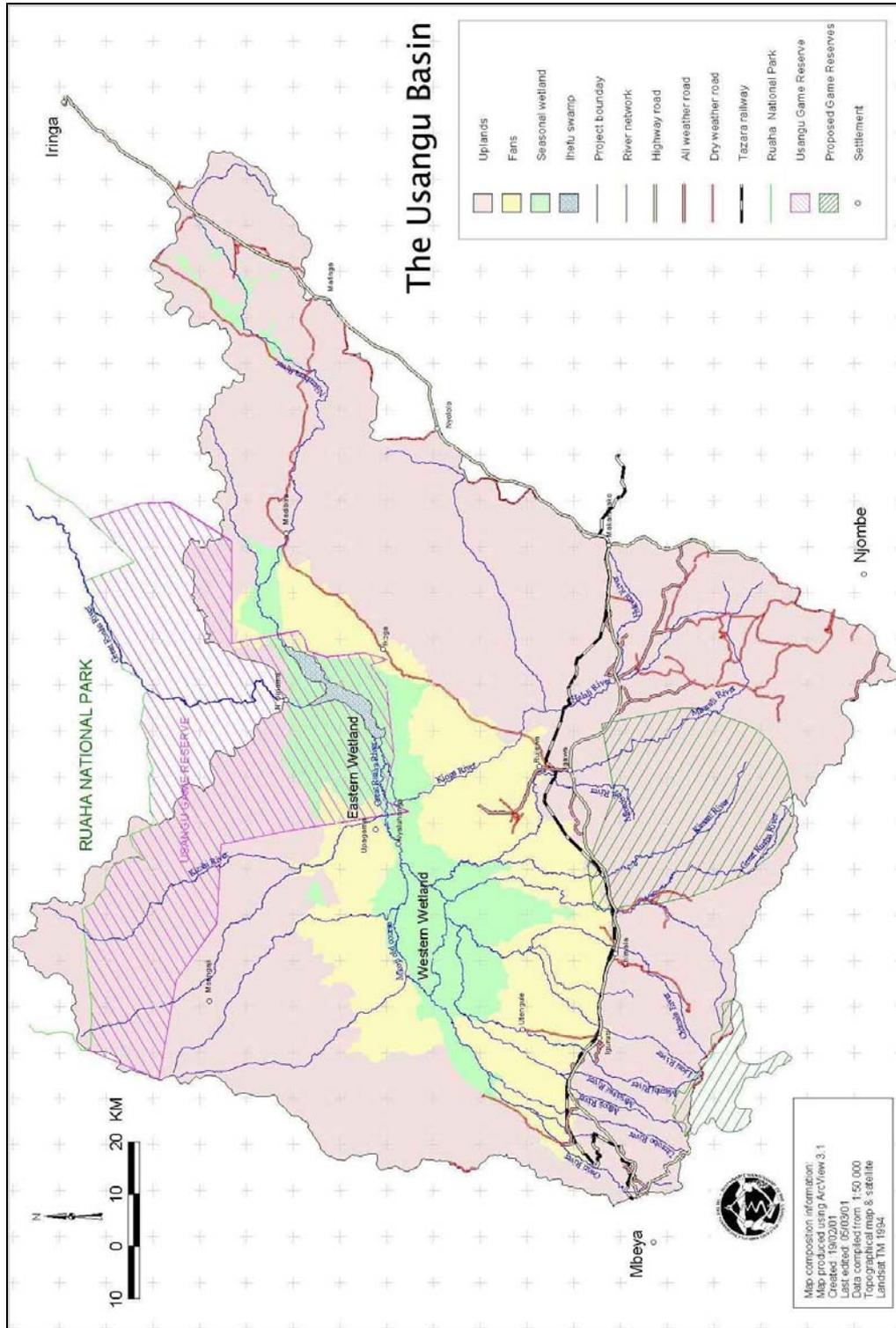
Report submitted to TNRF

**April, 2007**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1</b>	<b>PASTORALISM AND POLICY PROCESSES IN TANZANIA: MBARALI CASE STUDY.....</b>	<b>5</b>
	<b>1.1 Introduction.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>MBARALI CASE STUDY.....</b>	<b>6</b>
	<b>2.1 Methodology and sources.....</b>	<b>6</b>
	<b>2.2 Timeline and key events .....</b>	<b>7</b>
	<b>2.3 Analysis and principal findings.....</b>	<b>24</b>
	2.3.1 Policy and politics.....	24
	2.3.2 Advocacy and its shortcomings .....	27
	2.3.3 Policy and practice.....	31
<b>3</b>	<b>GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS.....</b>	<b>40</b>
	<b>3.1 Policy and Legislation.....</b>	<b>40</b>
	<b>3.2 Evidence-based advocacy.....</b>	<b>40</b>
	<b>3.3 Lobbying and politicking .....</b>	<b>41</b>
	<b>3.4 Information and publicity .....</b>	<b>41</b>
	<b>3.5 Alliances and coordination .....</b>	<b>42</b>

# Figures



**The Usungu Basin: a map produced by the SMUWC Project.**  
 The permanent Ihefu swamp is at the heart of the eastern wetland.

# They disfigured the Great Ruaha

FEATURES  
By Lawi Joel writing for JET

THE natives of Usangu Plain love grassland for their huge herds, but have such a burning hatred for trees, a quality that distinguishes them from the local community of Mbarali District.

The Sukuma cut down nearly all the trees by the river, says Hassan Mulla, Chairman of Ilanda village in the district. "This land was rich in vegetation."

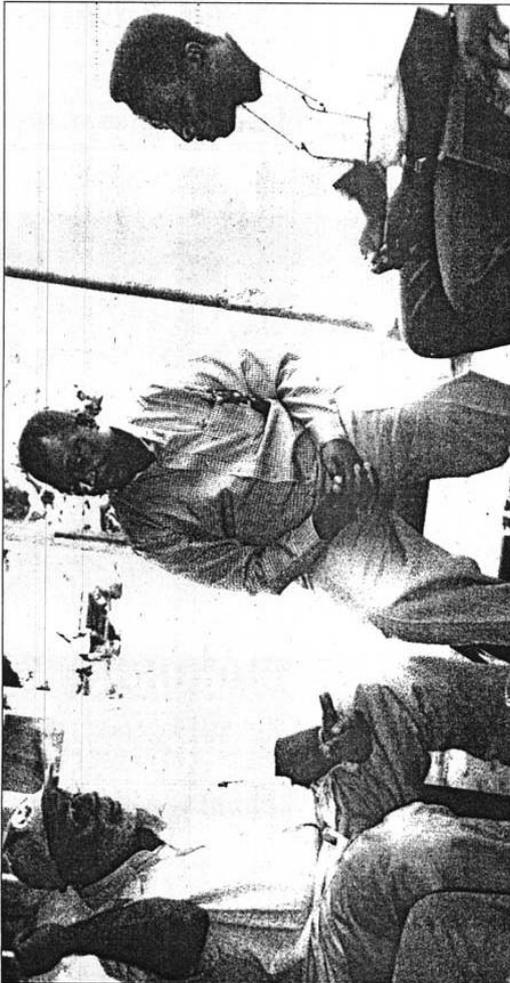
Mgasi, who boasts a certificate in Agrovet, expresses equal loathing towards the pastoralists who travelled from their homelands in the north. "A Sukuma man does not want to see a tree standing," he says.

Before the arrival of the Sukuma herdsmen, the Great Ruaha which unite with Kilombero to form the giant Rufiji river, had well-defined floodplains. The country is fed by the hydro power stations of Mera and Kidatu dams.

Swampy areas, says the sprawling swamps of *Hejia*, the 50s just a small marsh. "But to build bridges across the river for their livestock to cross to the pasture on the other side," says Hassan Mulla, a pastoralist who cut down the

lush green of Usangu of the change into a land of scrub. "The trees are mostly, the grassland is without trees, a semi-arid sprawling plain that spreads doom for the pastoralists of various communities, streamed onto the plain from other parts of the district," Mulla remembers that in the period beginning from 1959-1970 he could identify 59 different types of birds. They are all gone now.

Except for the Maasai who the natives of Usangu say



Grand Mulla of Usangu talking to The Guardian journalists on the plain's harm by pastoralists recently at his house in Lulawa.

making Usangu Plain a game reserve may be, it should be done by some carrier. One of the officials says: "It will be unwise for the pastoralists to violate the game reserve for they stand to communally and to livestock losses. All goes according to plan."

Mwaluko says: "Of the revenue, 25 per cent will go to the community." The project is, not a pastoralist game reserve, but a game reserve for the pastoralist community. "They have never built a house. They can't all," says a source.

considerable environmental change on Usangu Plain, but the district officials say the government officials. "If it were put to good use, we would have better schools and dispensaries," says one resident. "Most of them have over 1,000," Mulla observes.

For one head of cattle there is an annual tax of 500/-, from a herd of 2,000, a 300,000 head of cattle plus 100,000 head of cattle, say the SMUWC officials, however far too little. "By their estimate, there are a million head of cattle on the plain, but the millions of shillings they

don't harm nor hunt wild animals for food, other than for their own slaughter of wildlife. At one time about 200 lions were killed on the plain with what was left of the lion's mane. Some think the Sukuma pastoralists did it.

The youthful Mgasi, who also bags a diploma in Farm Management, says in 1999 there were only 30 lionettes on the plain. However, shortly after the Usangu Plains game reserve, about 30. Black and white dikdik are plenty too.

hippos and buffaloes have not only increased, they come closer to residences of the people, Magasi quips. The Usangu Plain is reported in the 70s to have singing birds, colouring the nature in its full array of hues and sounds.

Mgasi thursts for that lost glory and wants more pictures from what they see in the live lion or elephant apart from what they see in the pictures. "Some may have caused the disappearance of much wildlife, and some

pay as tax does not go into the district coffers. It is all for some carrier. One of the government officials says: "If it were put to good use, we would have better schools and dispensaries," says one resident. "Most of them have over 1,000," Mulla observes.

For one head of cattle there is an annual tax of 500/-, from a herd of 2,000, a 300,000 head of cattle plus 100,000 head of cattle, say the SMUWC officials, however far too little. "By their estimate, there are a million head of cattle on the plain, but the millions of shillings they

<sup>1</sup> See Martin Walsh, 'Conservation Myths, Political Realities, and the Proliferation of Protected Areas', *African Environments Lecture*, African Environments Programme, Oxford University Centre for the Environment (OUCE), University of Oxford, 24 November 2006.

## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AHEAD	Animal Health for the Environment And Development (WCS, IUCN VSG)
CCM	<i>Chama cha Mapinduzi</i> , Tanzania's ruling party
CORDS	Community Research and Development Services, Arusha
CSO	Civil society organisation
DC	District Commissioner
DFID	Department for International Development, United Kingdom
GCA	Game Controlled Area
HIMWA	<i>Huduma ya Injili na Maendeleo Kwa Wafugaji</i>
Hon.	Honourable (Member of Parliament)
IBA	Important Bird Area
IIED	International Institute for Environment and Development, London
IIED-EAP	IIED East African Programme, Arusha
IRA	Institute of Research Assessment, University of Dar es Salaam
ITV	Independent Television Limited, Dar es Salaam
IUCN	The World Conservation Union (The International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources)
JOLIT	Joint Oxfam Livelihoods Initiative in Tanzania
LHRC	Legal and Human Rights Centre, Dar es Salaam
MBOMIPA	<i>Matumizi Bora ya Malihai Idodi na Pawaga</i>
MP	Member of Parliament
MUWAMBA	<i>Muungano wa Ushirika wa Wafugaji Wilaya ya Mbarali</i>
NGO	Non-government organisation
NLUPC	National Land Use Planning Commission
OCD	Officer Commanding District (Tanzania police)
PINGOs Forum	Pastoralists Indigenous Non Governmental Organization's Forum, Arusha
RCC	Regional Consultative Committee
RECONCILE	Resource Conflict Institute, Nakuru
RIPARWIN	Raising Irrigation Productivity and Releasing Water for Intersectoral Needs
RLTF	Rangelands and Livelihoods Taskforce
SMUWC	Sustainable Management of the Usangu Wetland and its Catchment
TANAPA	Tanzania National Parks
TANESCO	Tanzania National Electricity Supply Company
TAPHGO	Tanzania Pastoralist and Hunter Gatherers Organisation
TNRF	Tanzania Natural Resource Forum, Arusha
TOR	Terms of Reference
TZPPG	Tanzania Pastoralists' Parliamentary Group
U.K.	United Kingdom
VSG	Veterinary Specialist Group (IUCN)
WCS	Wildlife Conservation Society, New York
WCST	Wildlife Conservation Society of Tanzania
WMA	Wildlife Management Area
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

# **1 PASTORALISM AND POLICY PROCESSES IN TANZANIA: MBARALI CASE STUDY**

## **1.1 Introduction**

This report represents a contribution to the collaborative study *Filling in the Knowledge Gaps to Better Understand Policy Options for Pastoralism and Rangeland Management* (a collaboration between CORDS, IIED-EAP and TNRF) This component of the study was funded by WCS (AHEAD). The main objectives of the study are:

1. To assess the situation of pastoralists in Tanzania in the light of current and future policy and environmental changes;
2. To identify practical responses that will help ensure pastoralism provides a sustainable livelihood to the millions of people who depend on it while contributing to the national economy of the country (TOR 2).

The Terms of Reference (TOR) of the study define three main areas of concern:<sup>2</sup>

1. Policy-related issues (TOR 2.1);
2. Legal issues (TOR 2.2); and
3. Rangeland management and economics (TOR 2.3).

The present report is written as an input to the understanding of the first of these, “Situating pastoralism in the wider debate on the future development of Tanzania”, by, in particular, “Developing an analysis of the underlying dynamics and factors driving policy priorities, discourses, processes and outcomes affecting pastoralism and rangeland management” (TOR 2.1.2).

In consultation with colleagues I have chosen to do this through a case study of policy and politics in practice, examining the causes and consequences of the recent eviction of large

---

<sup>2</sup> The full TOR are reproduced in the separate appendix to this study.

numbers of livestock (and their herders) from Mbarali District in Mbeya Region. The Mbarali case has received both national and international attention, and is the subject of a Commission of Enquiry whose report remains to be released. These events reveal a lot about the current policy environment and the ways in which key decisions relating to the future of pastoralism and alternative land uses are being influenced and made. This has a number of implications for the development of pro-pastoral policy and advocacy, and in the concluding section of this report I have made general recommendations based on observations made during the study and following discussion with other members of the study team (cf. TOR 2.4).

## **2 MBARALI CASE STUDY**

### **2.1 Methodology and sources**

The Mbarali case study is based primarily upon the following lines of research undertaken in August-September 2007:

1. Review of the published and unpublished literature about Mbarali District and the catchment of the Great Ruaha River, including available project and other reports that discuss environmental issues and the role of livestock keeping;<sup>3</sup>
2. Collection and review of documentation relating to recent events in Mbarali, including available official government documents (published laws and regulations, policies, plans, speeches, statements, minutes of meetings, records of parliamentary debate), NGO and other reports, and newspaper and magazine articles;
3. Formal and informal interviews with a wide range of people with knowledge and experience relevant to the case study, including government officials and NGO staff in Dar es Salaam, Iringa, and Rujewa, and a number of farmers and livestock keepers in Mbarali District.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> In this context I have drawn freely upon my existing knowledge of the literature and project interventions in the region, including my own contributions to these. For an overview see Martin Walsh, 'The Production of Knowledge and Reproduction of Ignorance about Usangu, Mbarali District, Tanzania', paper presented to the workshop on *Equalities and Inequalities in Tanzania: Past and Present*, Darwin College, University of Cambridge, 9 June 2006.

<sup>4</sup> An itinerary of the research and list of key meetings is given in a separate appendix to this report.

The results of this research and preliminary conclusions were discussed with colleagues in Morogoro, Dar es Salaam, and Arusha, prior to writing-up in Cambridge, U.K. The draft report was circulated to key partners and was then revised following comments and suggestions from a number of readers.<sup>5</sup> This final version is intended as no more than a summary of the material recorded and the main points that emerge from its analysis. It should be emphasised that this a lesson-learning exercise adapted to the purposes of the collaborative study on *Policy Options for Pastoralism*. It does not take the form of an investigative report into the eviction of livestock keepers from Usangu and is not meant to prejudge the conclusions of any such study, including the work of the Commission of Enquiry.

## 2.2 Timeline and key events

Livestock keeping has long been a part of the economy of Usangu and the wetlands at the heart of what is now Mbarali District. The indigenous Sangu were noted for their herds of cattle and cattle-raiding in the mid-19th century, before losing many of them to disease, warfare, and changing political and economic circumstances. In the mid-20th century immigrant livestock keepers were for the first time allowed to settle in Usangu in large numbers: first Il-Parakuyu Maasai (in the 1950s), then Sukuma and others (in the 1960s).<sup>6</sup> Although this led to some local political conflict, their presence in Usangu and seasonal transhumance in search of good grazing did not become a significant environmental issue until the early 1990s. Low reservoir levels at Mtera and Kidatu and national power cuts in 1992-93 were blamed by TANESCO on the seasonal drying of the Great Ruaha River (from 1992), which was in turn blamed on the misuse of water by upstream users. Among the latter were Sukuma and other pastoralists who used the lhefu or permanent wetland of Usangu - the immediate source of the Great Ruaha - as their own reservoir for dry season grazing.

---

<sup>5</sup> In addition to study colleagues, I am especially grateful to Pete Coppolillo (WCS), Charles Foley (WCS), Fred Nelson, William Olenasha (Oxfam), Steve Osofsky (WCS), Edward Porokwa (PINGOs Forum) and Andrew Williams (TNRF) for their detailed comments on the draft report. None of them is responsible, of course, for the final result.

<sup>6</sup> For this history see Martin Walsh, *The Misinterpretation of Chiefly Power in Usangu, South-West Tanzania*, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Cambridge, 1984; Susan Charnley, 'Pastoralism and Property Rights: The Evolution of Communal Property on the Usangu Plains, Tanzania', *African Economic History*, 25 (1997): 97-119.

In a study published in 1996 by the Institute of Resource Assessment (IRA) in the University of Dar es Salaam,<sup>7</sup> this scapegoating of livestock keepers in Usangu was given apparent scientific respectability. This study in turn provided a local hunting company, the Regional Game office and TANAPA with arguments to support their efforts to turn the Ihefu into a protected area. The new Usangu Game Reserve was gazetted in 1998, replacing an older Game Controlled Area (GCA) that had allowed resident hunters to compete with the Baluchi-owned company. The DFID-funded SMUWC Project - Sustainable Management of the Usangu Wetland and its Catchment - began in the same year, one of its primary objects being to explain why indeed the Great Ruaha downstream of Usangu was turning into a seasonal river. After exhaustive investigation SMUWC researchers concluded that the primary cause of this seasonal desiccation was the expansion of irrigated cultivation, in particular the extension of rice and other crop growing into the dry season.<sup>8</sup> Livestock keeping in and around the new reserve might have local environmental impacts, but not a major hydrological one.

This conclusion did little to change widespread popular belief that Sukuma and other livestock keepers were largely to blame for the woes of the Great Ruaha. Efforts to do something about this problem were given a boost in 2001 when the then Prime Minister, Hon. Frederick Sumaye, pledged in London that his government would ensure that year-round flow would be restored to the Great Ruaha by 2010. This became the goal of the new WWF-Tanzania Ruaha River Programme, one of a number of initiatives in Mbarali and the Great Ruaha catchment that picked up where SMUWC had left off. Among other inputs WWF has helped the Wildlife Division to develop a General Management Plan for Usangu Game Reserve,<sup>9</sup>

---

<sup>7</sup> Idris S. Kikula, Susan Charnley and Pius Yanda, *Ecological Changes in the Usangu Plains and their Implications on the Down Stream Flow of the Great Ruaha River in Tanzania* (Research Report No.99 (New Series), Institute of Resource Assessment, University of Dar es Salaam, September 1996.

<sup>8</sup> A number of readers of the first draft of this report have asked for more information on a series of questions relating to the rice farmers of Usangu, the significance of their activities, and their political organisation. There is already an extensive literature on this topic (for references see Martin Walsh, 'The Production of Knowledge and Reproduction of Ignorance about Usangu, Mbarali District, Tanzania', paper presented to the workshop on *Equalities and Inequalities in Tanzania: Past and Present*, Darwin College, University of Cambridge, 9 June 2006) and I think that a better place for discussing these questions at length would be in a more comprehensive study of project interventions and environmental degradation narratives involving Usangu.

<sup>9</sup> The United Republic of Tanzania, Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism, Wildlife Division, *Usangu Game Reserve General Management Plan 2004-09*, 2004.

and worked with Mbarali District to draft a Strategic Plan for the livestock sector.<sup>10</sup> However, by the end of 1995, when this case study begins, a number of misconceptions about pastoralism in Usangu remained, and the staff of the game reserve were still struggling to evict herders and fishermen from the Ihefu.

This, roughly sketched, is the context in which the events that are the focus of this study took place. The following table outlines in greater detail some of the key moments in this recent history, which begins with the accession of President Kikwete.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Key events</u>
30 Dec. 2005	<u>President Kikwete's speech.</u> In his speech at the official opening of Parliament, the new President, Jakwaya Mrisho Kikwete, pledges that his government will modernize the livestock sector. He also announces that the new administration will put a special effort into environmental conservation, taking measures to protect important sources of water and so of electricity. In this context he refers to the seasonal drying of the Great Ruaha River, and the fact that the hydropower schemes at Mtera and Kidatu have not been operating at full capacity. Noting the threat that this poses to other sectors of the economy, he observes that "The government leadership at all levels will have to assume greater responsibility in ensuring that the environmental destruction that has caused this alarming state of affairs is brought to a stop." <sup>11</sup>
2 Feb. 2006	<u>Severe power cuts begin.</u> As reservoir levels at Mtera become critically low, daytime rationing of electricity starts in Dar es Salaam with serious consequences for industry and other sectors of the national economy. This follows two years of intermittent power cuts, and serious shortages continue

---

<sup>10</sup> Mbarali District Council Medium Term Strategic Plan for the Livestock Sector, draft, August 2005.

<sup>11</sup> Bunge la Tanzania, Majadiliano ya Bunge, Mkutano wa Kwanza, Kikao cha Tatu - Tarehe 30 Desemba, 2005, Ufunguzi Rasmi wa Bunge Jipya / Tanzania Hansard, 3rd Sitting of the 1st Session of the 2005-10 Parliament, 20 December 2005, Official Opening of the New Parliament, pp.18, 23-25.

through most of the remainder of 2006.<sup>12</sup>

2 Mar. 2006 The Environment Minister's intervention. Following an official tour of Mbarali, the Minister of State in the Vice-President's Office responsible for Environment, Professor Mark Mwandosya, asks Mbeya regional authorities "to submit to him a report on measures they have so far taken to address the invasion of Ihefu valley by Sukuma herdsmen". He calls for "immediate action including a thorough evaluation of the invasion's impact on the natural environment", saying that "This evaluation should be a matter of urgency and must include a report to be presented to the Vice President's Office before it's forwarded to the President for further action".<sup>13</sup>

9 Mar. 2006 The President's directive. The new President is reported to have told officials in the Vice President's Office that he is committed to taking unpopular steps in order to protect the environment for the benefit of the nation and future generations. "One of these steps is his directive that livestock keepers should be immediately evicted from Usangu Game Reserve for the good of the environment in the area." Following this directive, the Mbeya Regional Commissioner, John Mwakipesile, issues a seven-day ultimatum for the livestock keepers to move voluntarily from the area or be forcefully evicted. Two weeks later large numbers of livestock are reported to have been moved out of the game reserve by their keepers.<sup>14</sup> Later reports suggest that this only a temporary removal, no more successful than similar evictions in the past.

---

<sup>12</sup> Gerald Kitabu, 'Premier okays use of Mtera dam water to generate power', *Guardian* (Dar es Salaam), 12 January 2006; Patrick Kitembo, 'Power rationing starts today', *Guardian* (Dar es Salaam), 2 February 2006; 'Tanzania cuts power after drought', *BBC News*, 2 February 2006; Editorial, 'Power cuts bad news indeed', *Daily News* (Dar es Salaam), 18 May 2006; Charles Kizigha, 'Power cuts critical against total blackout - Tanesco', *Daily News on Saturday* (Dar es Salaam), 16 September 2006.

<sup>13</sup> Deogratius Kiduduye, 'Invasion of Mbarali valley irks minister', *Guardian* (Dar es Salaam), 2 March 2006; Gerald Kitabu, 'Pastoralists "invade Usangu Game Reserve"', *Guardian* (Dar es Salaam), 2 March 2006.

<sup>14</sup> Bilal Abdul-Aziz, 'Our environment fragile, JK warns', *Guardian* (Dar es Salaam), 10 March 2006; Editorial, 'Eviction of Usangu herdsman is OK, but?', *Guardian* (Dar es Salaam), 14 March 2006; Nico Mwaibale, 'Livestock keepers heed Kikwete's directive', *Guardian* (Dar es Salaam), 22 March 2006.

- end Mar. 2006 The Vice President Office's Strategy. The Vice President's Office issues A *Strategy for Urgent Actions on Land Degradation and Water Catchments*. Heading a list of twelve numbered "challenges" is "Environmental degradation arising from the invasion of water sources by pastoralists", with Ihefu wetland in Usangu cited as an example. First on the list of actions required to tackle this national problem is "Evacuation (voluntary or forced) of all those who have invaded the plains and water basins and water sources in general". The development and implementation of plans to relocate and resettle pastoralists in Usangu and other affected areas is to be completed by June 2006.<sup>15</sup>
- 1 Apr. 2006 The Vice President's statement. The Vice President, Dr. Ali Mohamed Shein, issues a "Government Statement on Urgent Measures Aimed at Environmental Conservation and Preservation of Water Sources in the Country" reiterating the main points of the national *Strategy* and directing that "People who [are] settled in Usangu and Kilombero valleys should leave immediately. / This directive also applies [to] livestock keepers and farmers who feed their animals and cultivate land in national parks and in Ihefu and Kilombero wetlands protected under the UN Ramsar Convention and other similar areas. / Regional and district commissioners of the respective areas should ensure that there will be no encroachment on these areas in future."<sup>16</sup>
- mid Apr. 2006 PINGOs Forum's fact-finding mission. A *Fact Finding Mission on Land/Resource Use Conflicts and the Proposed Eviction of Livestock Keepers in the Usangu Basin*, commissioned by the PINGOs Forum (Pastoralists Indigenous Non Governmental Organization's Forum), is conducted in Mbarali District. The subsequent report of the mission reveals that "The

---

<sup>15</sup> United Republic of Tanzania, Vice President's Office, *A Strategy for Urgent Actions on Land Degradation and Water Catchments*, March 2006.

<sup>16</sup> Editorial, 'Political will key to turn around the environment', *Guardian* (Dar es Salaam), 4 April 2006; 'Government Statement On Urgent Measures Aimed at Environmental Conservation And Preservation Of Water Sources In The Country Issued By Vice-President Dr Ali Mohamed Shein', *The Citizen* (Dar es Salaam), 6 April 2006.

government under the district council has developed a strategic plan to evict the targeted communities particularly pastoralists and agro-pastoralists, though the plan is not yet disclosed.” Drawing attention to the potentially negative consequences of such an eviction for pastoral livelihoods and district revenue, the authors of the report assert that “There is no doubt that the exercise will make use of excessive force that will be associated with loss and destruction of properties, high degree of human rights abuse and violation.” Arguing that decision-making in Usangu should be based on research rather than the politicisation of basic facts, they recommend the following immediate response: (1) the convening of a national stakeholders’ workshop to present expert opinion and debate positive policy options; (2) an intensification of (pro-pastoral) advocacy, including the use of media campaigns; and (3) conducting a study of “the plight of women and children during and [in the] aftermath of executing [the] intended eviction” in Usangu.<sup>17</sup>

27 Apr. 2006      Lobbying for “Usangu National Park”. A tour operator writes to the Minister for Natural Resources and Tourism, Hon. Anthony Diallo, requesting that Usangu Game Reserve be upgraded to national park status, one of a number of proposals for protecting the Great Ruaha River and its catchment. This letter is bound with earlier (2004) correspondence about the “Ruaha River Disaster”,<sup>18</sup> and is also later copied to the President. This is part of a coordinated campaign of lobbying conducted by a coalition of investors associated with Ruaha National Park, targeting government ministers, national CCM officials, TANAPA Board members and others through personal meetings, presentations, and written correspondence.

---

<sup>17</sup> Emmanuel Mvulla and Chande Kawawa, *Resource Mismanagement and the Misery of Pastoralists in Usangu Basin: A Baseline Report of the Fact Finding Mission on Proposed Eviction of Livestock Keepers Submitted to PINGOs Forum*, April 2006.

<sup>18</sup> Including a widely copied letter written on 24 March 2004 to the then Minister for Natural Resources and Tourism, Hon. Zakia Meghji, and a publicly available document written by Bruce Fox, *An Overview of the Usangu Catchment, Ihefu Wetland, & Great Ruaha River Ecosystem Environmental Disaster*, March 2004.

18 May  
2006

National Anti-Livestock Operation starts. In order to implement the Vice President's *Strategy*, a *National Anti-Livestock Operation* is launched, with a particular focus on Usangu. The *Guardian* later reported the operation's first month in Mbarali as follows:

"The full-scale military National Anti-Livestock Operation, aimed at evicting herdsmen from game reserves, water catchment areas and other protected areas in the country is in progress and has so far attained 90 per cent success.

In Usangu Game Reserve, a heavily armed combined contingent of regular police, anti-poaching unit and game wardens has cleared the Ihefu Wetland of hundreds of pastoralists with over 300,000 head of cattle who moved out voluntarily.

Mbeya Regional Commissioner John Mwakipesile told reporters last week that the operation, which began on May 18 would continue indefinitely to ensure the wetland is restored to guarantee the perennial flow of the Great Ruaha River.

Mwakipesile said the central government had so far allocated 200m/- to ensure the operation was sustained because of the importance attached to the Ihefu Wetland as a reservoir for the Great Ruaha River and the hydro-electric power generation.

Despite the voluntarily departure from the wetland, some 1,500 head of livestock were impounded and the owners fined a total of 14,450,000/-.

"We will not allow them back even during the dry season. We are trying as much as possible to avoid confrontation," said the head of the operation, Officer Commanding District (OCD), Senior Superintendent of Police Komba Nonosius.

The unprecedented operation involves heavy weaponry, ground and occasional air backup and patrol.

Nonosius who was briefing reporters, however declined to give the actual number of security personnel involved in the operation.

"We have enough soldiers. But in an event of the need for more, we will reinforce. We have the capacity," said the operation's chief.

Addressing the press in his office, Mbarali District Commissioner Msagama Dololo said the government would not relent on the operation until the Ihefu Wetland gets restored to ensure a perennial flow of the Great Ruaha River.

To secure the game reserve, Dololo said the security personnel had set up camps at Ulanga, Nyota and Ikonga, from where day and night operations are anchored.

The DC said though majority of the herders had moved out, some were operating within the reach of the game reserve.

The operation is part of the government's strategy to restore the flow and water levels of the Great Ruaha River by 2010. This is expected to guarantee hydro-electric power generation at the Mtera Dam and others.

Usangu Game Reserve Manager Roman Masawe said besides the operation, the government has plans to upgrade the facility into a national game park.

With the status, Masawe noted that the Tanzania National Park Authority (TANAPA) has the capacity, resources and the legal mandate to ensure the area is protected from invaders.

"Besides general conservation, this is the only way we can ensure continuous and sustainable flow of the Great Ruaha River by 2010," said Masawe.

However, he expressed optimism [sic] that though the operation had recorded initial success, trouble could begin in July when the entire region would be experiencing dry spell and the herders could force their way back.

He said he expected violent confrontation at this stage during the operation. "This is not a simple assignment.

It requires a great deal of power. It has been difficult, not many people have been arrested and fined," he cautioned.

He said the only solution to save the Ihefu Wetland is the planned annexure of Usangu Game Reserves to Ruaha National Park.

Dololo divulged that so far 70,000 pastoralists had been forced or voluntarily move out of the Usangu Game Reserve.

However, he regretted they have created spillover conflicts in Rukwa, Songea, Mafinga, Chunya District and other areas where they have been relocated to.

The DC said the pastoralists were also complaining of lack of cattle dips, dams and watering points in the areas where they have sought refuge.”<sup>19</sup>

22-25 May 2006 Parliamentary Committee visits Mbarali. The Parliamentary Committee for Lands, Natural Resources and Environment visits Mbarali District together with officials from the Vice President’s Office - Environment, a trip sponsored by WWF-Tanzania’s Natural Resource Management Programme and its component for capacity building for parliamentarians. During their visit the committee is reportedly convinced that the Ihefu Swamp and Usangu Game Reserve require greater protection, despite efforts by opponents of park expansion to persuade them otherwise.<sup>20</sup>

20 Jun. 2006 Upgrading of Usangu Game Reserve announced. The Minister for Natural Resources and Tourism, Hon. Anthony Diallo, announces that Ruaha National Park will be expanded to incorporate Usangu Game Reserve. This announcement is made at a fund-raising dinner in Dar es Salaam organised by the Wildlife Conservation Foundation of Tanzania attended by President Kikwete, former President Benjamin Mkapa, and other dignitaries.<sup>21</sup> This

---

<sup>19</sup> Kasembeli Albert, ‘Usangu Game Reserve cleared of cattle herders’, *Guardian* (Dar es Salaam), 26 June 2006. See also Cover story / Editorial, ‘Ihefu must never go dry’, *Kakakuona/Tanzania Wildlife*, 41 (April-June 2006): 4-5; John Waluye, ‘Moves to save Ihefu Wetlands in Usangu Plains underway’, *Kakakuona/Tanzania Wildlife*, 41 (April-June 2006): 13-17.

<sup>20</sup> For published references to this visit and its consequences see Kamati ya Ardhi, Maliasili na Mazingira, *Ratiba ya Kazi Mei, 2006*, online at <http://www.parliament.go.tz/bunge/Docs/MALIASILI0506.pdf>; John Waluye, ‘Moves to save Ihefu Wetlands in Usangu Plains underway’, *Kakakuona/Tanzania Wildlife*, 41 (April-June 2006): 13-17; Kasembeli Albert, ‘Usangu Game Reserve annexed to Ruaha National Park’, *Guardian* (Dar es Salaam), 8 August 2006.

<sup>21</sup> The Minister’s announcement was not reported in the local press, though the President’s speech was: ‘Speech by H. E. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, President of the United Republic of Tanzania at a fund raising gala dinner organised by the Wildlife Conservation Foundation of Tanzania held at the Movenpick Hotel, Dar es Salaam 20th June 2006’, online at [http://www.tanzania.go.tz/hotuba1/hotuba/060620\\_-\\_SPEECH\\_BY\\_H.E\\_JMK\\_at\\_Wildlife\\_final.htm](http://www.tanzania.go.tz/hotuba1/hotuba/060620_-_SPEECH_BY_H.E_JMK_at_Wildlife_final.htm); ‘JK expresses commitment to empower local hunters’, *Daily News* (Dar es Salaam), 22 June 2006. News of the proposed park expansion later filtered into the press through statements made by the Usangu Game Reserve Manager, Roman Massawe, who first heard it himself on the radio: Kasembeli Albert, ‘Usangu Game Reserve cleared of cattle herders’, *Guardian* (Dar es Salaam), 26 June 2006; Deodatus Mfugale, ‘Usangu Game Reserve to become part of Ruaha

announcement is welcomed by the investors who have lobbied for it, though they had hoped that Usangu would become a separate national park so that tourism revenues could be maximised.

26 Jun. 2006 PINGOs Forum lobbies the Parliamentary Committee. PINGOs forum shares the report of its fact-finding mission to Mbarali with the chair of the Parliamentary Committee for Lands, Natural Resources and Environment, in response to the committee's own report and recommendations.

14 Jul. 2006 Expanded Ruaha National Park boundary proposed. A formal proposal from the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism for the expansion of Ruaha National Park into Mbarali District is discussed by the regional administration at a Regional Consultative Committee (RCC) meeting in Mbeya. It is recommended that park boundaries be extended to include the eastern wetland of Usangu and village lands outside of the game reserve, increasing the area to be annexed and necessitating the resettlement and compensation of villagers.<sup>22</sup> This proposal was developed after a visit to Mbarali and flight over the affected area in early July by officers from TANAPA and Wildlife Division headquarters.

22-23 Jul. 2006 Meeting of livestock sector stakeholders with the Minister. A group of stakeholders, supported by Oxfam-JOLIT (Joint Oxfam Livelihoods Initiative in Tanzania), meet with the Minister for Livestock Development in Dodoma to raise their concerns over the lhefu issue and eviction of livestock-keepers.

3 Aug. 2006 Seminar for parliamentarians. The Rangelands and Livelihoods Taskforce (RLTF) holds a seminar in Dodoma for the Tanzania Pastoralists' Parliamentary Group (TZPPG) and other interested MPs on *The Place of*

---

National Park', *Guardian* (Dar es Salaam), 11 July 2006; Kasembeli Albert, 'Usangu Game Reserve annexed to Ruaha National Park', *Guardian* (Dar es Salaam), 8 August 2006.

<sup>22</sup> Peter Mwaibofu, 'Hifadhi ya Taifa ya Ruaha-Usangu yasubiriwa', *Kakakuona*, 1 (Aprili-Juni 2007): 52-55. Another source gave the date of the RCC meeting as 22 July 2006.

*Pastoralism in Modern Tanzania*.<sup>23</sup> The CSOs and NGOs represented include the PINGOs Forum, the Ereto II Ngorongoro Pastoralist Project, RECONCILE/IIED (the International Institute for Environment and Development), the Tanzania Pastoralists and Hunter Gatherers Organisation (TAPHGO), TNRF, and VETAID. The focus of the briefing is a critical review of the policy environment as it affects pastoralism.<sup>24</sup> The Mbarali question is also discussed and the Ministry of Livestock Development promises to organise a larger stakeholder forum in the coming months.

16 Aug. 2006 The Prime Minister's Committee of Deputy Ministers. Responding to the questions asked by MPs about the eviction of livestock keepers from Usangu, the Prime Minister, Hon. Edward Lowassa, tells Parliament that he had earlier formed a Committee of Deputy Ministers (*Kamati Ndogo ya Naibu Mawaziri*) and sent it to Mbarali to investigate the conduct of the anti-livestock operation.<sup>25</sup> He announces that this committee has only found minor problems with the eviction process, and reads out its recommendations, which include the advice that each district involved prepares a Land Use Masterplan. The Prime Minister also announces that he will chair a forthcoming meeting of stakeholders in the livestock sector, to be organised by the Ministry of Livestock Development.<sup>26</sup>

---

<sup>23</sup> The Rangelands and Livelihoods Taskforce (RLTF), *The Proceedings of a Seminar for Members of Parliament on the Place of Pastoralism in Modern Tanzania*. Organized by: The Rangelands and Livelihoods Working Group, TNRF Workshop Report No. 11, September 2006.

<sup>24</sup> A. Z. Mattee and M. Shem, *Ambivalence and Contradiction: A Review of the Policy Environment in Tanzania in relation to Pastoralism* (IIED Issue Paper No.140), International Institute for Environment and Development, London, March 2006.

<sup>25</sup> The committee comprised the Deputy Ministers for Lands, Housing and Human Settlements Development (Hon. Rita Mlaki), Justice and Constitutional Affairs (Hon. Mathias Chikawe), Livestock Development (Hon. Charles Mlingwa), Prime Minister's Office, Regional Administration and Local Government (Hon. Celina Kombani), and Public Safety and Security (Hon. Mohamed Aboud). They visited Mbarali at the end of July 2006. For an account of this visit see John Makunga, 'Wafugaji waliohamishiwa lhefu wazidi kuharibu vyanzo vya maji Mbarali', *Kakakuona*, 24 (Julai-Septemba 2006): 22-24.

<sup>26</sup> Bunge la Tanzania, Majadiliano ya Bunge, Mkutano wa Nne, Kikao cha Arobaini na Nne – Tarehe 16 Agosti, 2006, Hoja Ya Kuahirisha Bunge / Tanzania *Hansard*, 44th Sitting of the 4th Session of the 2005-10 Parliament,

- 25 Aug. 2006 The Prime Minister's Committee of Ministers. Following a directive from the Prime Minister, the ministers concerned meet in Ngurdoto, Arusha, to discuss the recommendations made by their deputy ministers.
- 8 Sep. 2006 The Committee of Ministers meets again. The committee meets a second time in Dodoma, together with Regional Commissioners and Executive Directors from eight regions involved in the eviction from Mbarali (Rukwa, Mbeya, Iringa, Dodoma, Morogoro, Coast, Ruvuma and Lindi). In this meeting the regions agree on areas for the resettlement of livestock keepers from Usangu and other measures relating to this process.<sup>27</sup>
- 3 Oct. 2006 Livestock Stakeholders' Meeting in Dodoma. The Meeting of Stakeholders in the Livestock Sector (*Mkutano wa Wadau wa Sekta ya Mifugo*) is opened by the President. In his speech welcoming the President, the Prime Minister recounts events from the Vice President's Strategy to the present and the eviction of some 100,000 livestock from Mbarali.<sup>28</sup> The President begins his own speech by quoting from the 2005 CCM Election Manifesto and recalling his instruction to the Ministry for Livestock Development in January 2006 to promote the modernisation of livestock production and marketing. One element of this is "abandoning mobile pastoralism in favour of modern, market-oriented, livestock keeping".<sup>29</sup>

---

16 August 2006, Speech on the Adjournment of Parliament, pp.30-31; 'lhefu's vegetation coming back to life', *Guardian* (Dar es Salaam), 22 August 2006.

<sup>27</sup> *Maelezo ya Waziri Mkuu wa Jamhuri ya Muungano wa Tanzania, Mhe. Edward N. Lowassa (Mb), Kwa Mheshimiwa Rais Wakati wa Ufunguzi wa Mkutano wa Wadau wa Sekta ya Mifugo uliofanyika Dodoma, Kwenye Ukumbi wa Msekwa Tarehe 3 Oktoba, 2006*, online at [http://www.mifugo.go.tz/documents\\_storage/2006-10-4-16-30-24\\_hotubawazirimkuu.pdf](http://www.mifugo.go.tz/documents_storage/2006-10-4-16-30-24_hotubawazirimkuu.pdf).

<sup>28</sup> *Maelezo ya Waziri Mkuu wa Jamhuri ya Muungano wa Tanzania, Mhe. Edward N. Lowassa (Mb), Kwa Mheshimiwa Rais Wakati wa Ufunguzi wa Mkutano wa Wadau wa Sekta ya Mifugo uliofanyika Dodoma, Kwenye Ukumbi wa Msekwa Tarehe 3 Oktoba, 2006*, online at [http://www.mifugo.go.tz/documents\\_storage/2006-10-4-16-30-24\\_hotubawazirimkuu.pdf](http://www.mifugo.go.tz/documents_storage/2006-10-4-16-30-24_hotubawazirimkuu.pdf).

<sup>29</sup> *Hotuba ya Mheshimiwa Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, Rais wa Jamhuri ya Muungano wa Tanzania, aliyoitoa Wakati akifungua Mkutano wa Wadau wa Sekta ya Mifugo uliofanyika Dodoma, Kwenye Ukumbi wa Msekwa Tarehe 3 Oktoba, 2006*, online at [http://www.mifugo.go.tz/documents\\_storage/2006-10-4-16-30-1\\_hotubarais.pdf](http://www.mifugo.go.tz/documents_storage/2006-10-4-16-30-1_hotubarais.pdf).

- 17 Nov. 2006 Special patrol to remove livestock from Usangu begins. Following the meetings in Dodoma and decisions taken subsequently, the Mbarali District authorities direct that herders with 100 or more livestock (of any kind) should remove them from the area. The eviction process is thus extended to livestock kept outside of the Usangu Game Reserve as well as to trespassers within the park-to-be. Village chairmen in Mbarali are asked to compile lists of local livestock holdings and these are used as the basis for forcing herders to move out of Usangu and into other designated districts in Mbeya, Lindi and Coast Regions. Later reports indicate that most of them are evicted from Mbarali in the period between November 2006 and January 2007.<sup>30</sup> Significant numbers of livestock are taken to districts other than those intended. This includes an estimated 16,000 cattle that are herded down the Great Ruaha valley and into the Mtera Basin in mid-December.<sup>31</sup>
- 31 Dec. 2006 National Anti-Livestock Operation ends. The national operation officially ends, though the eviction patrol and related activities in Usangu and elsewhere continue.
- mid Jan 2007 NGO meeting in Morogoro. HIMWA (*Huduma ya Injili na Maendeleo Kwa Wafugaji*), PINGOs Forum, and HakiArdhi (Land Rights Research & Resources Institute) hold a meeting in Morogoro to discuss how to intervene in the Mbarali case and other projected evictions.
- 23 Jan. 2007 Journalists visit Mbarali with PINGOs Forum. As a follow-up to Morogoro meeting, PINGOs Forum takes journalists to Mbarali to report on the impact of the evictions and make public the voices of those who suffered eviction.

---

<sup>30</sup> Adam Kuleit Ole Mwarabu, *Taarifa ya uchunguzi wa uhamishaji wa wafugaji toka Mbarali Mbeya kwenda mikoa ya Lindi na Pwani iliyofanywa na timu ya wataalam tarehe 21-24 Machi 2007.*

<sup>31</sup> Lucas Liganga, 'Cattle die migrating from Ihefu to new design[at]ed grazing districts', *This Day* (Dar es Salaam), 22 February 2007.

- 24 Jan. 2007 The Committee of Ministers discusses abuses. In its third meeting, the Committee of Ministers Overseeing the Relocation of Livestock (*Kamati ya Mawaziri inayosimamia Uhamaji wa Mifugo*, chaired by the Minister for Livestock Development, now Hon. Anthony Diallo), debates a report on the relocation of livestock from Mbarali. A number of problems with the operation are discussed, including its unfortunate timing and hastiness, the negative impact on herders' families, and the extortion of money from them in the form of ad hoc fines. Following one of the committee's recommendations, the Minister of Livestock Development issues an official statement on the eviction process, admitting that there have been shortcomings.<sup>32</sup>
- 20-27 Mar. 2007 Independent study on the eviction and resettlement of livestock keepers. In response to reports of human rights and other abuses in the process of eviction and resettlement, a consortium of Tanzanian organisations undertakes research in Lindi and Coast Regions with livestock keepers who have been forcefully moved there from Mbarali.<sup>33</sup> The consortium comprises PINGOs Forum (Pastoralists Indigenous Non Governmental Organization's Forum), HakiArdhi (Land Rights Research & Resources Institute), HIMWA (*Huduma ya Injili na Maendeleo Kwa Wafugaji*), Legal and Human Rights Centre (LHRC), ITV (Independent Television Limited) and the newspaper *Majira*.
- 3 Apr. 2007 Fact-finding study press release. The NGO/CSO/media consortium issues a press release in Dar es Salaam alleging human rights violations in the process of the eviction of pastoralists from Mbarali and their resettlement in Lindi. The abuses cited include: theft of livestock, imposition of unjustified fines for environmental degradation, extortion of bribes, subjection of

---

<sup>32</sup> *Tamko la Serikali kuhusu kuhamisha Mifugo kutoka Vyanzo vya Maji katika Mabonde ya Usangu - Ihefu na Kilombero*, online at [http://www.mifugo.go.tz/documents\\_storage/tamko\\_la\\_serikali.doc](http://www.mifugo.go.tz/documents_storage/tamko_la_serikali.doc).

<sup>33</sup> Adam Kuleit Ole Mwarabu, *Taarifa ya uchunguzi wa uhamishaji wa wafugaji toka Mbarali Mbeya kwenda mikoa ya Lindi na Pwani iliyofanywa na timu ya wataalam tarehe 21-24 Machi 2007*; PINGOs Forum, Hakiardhi, HIMWA, LHRC, ITV and Majira, *A Report on Eviction and Resettlement of Pastoralists from Ihefu and Usangu-Mbarali District to Kilwa and Lindi District*, March 2007.

individuals to torture, the forced separation of families, denial of access to education to children, and widespread hunger. Among the demands made by the consortium is that the government should establish an independent commission to investigate the violation of human rights and take legal action against those involved.<sup>34</sup>

15 Apr.  
2007 Presentation to the Parliamentary Committee for Natural Resources and Environment. PINGOs Forum and its partners present the final report of their study (*A Report on Eviction and Resettlement of Pastoralists from Ihefu and Usangu-Mbarali District to Kilwa and Lindi District*) to the Committee for Natural Resources and Environment at a seminar in Parliament buildings in Dodoma. The advocacy consortium reportedly persuades the assembled parliamentarians (58 are present) that the eviction process was poorly implemented and that an independent commission should be established to investigate further.<sup>35</sup>

20 Apr.  
2007 Formation of an independent Commission of Enquiry. The Prime Minister, Hon. Edward Lowassa, announces to parliament that the government is forming a special commission to enquire into the eviction of livestock from Mbarali and make appropriate recommendations. The commission, which is to begin work immediately, is to be led by Judge Othman Chande, with the following members: Stephen Mashishanga, Hon. Dr. Chrisant Mzindakaya, Hon. Estherina Kilasi, Hon. Yonas Assechek, Wilson Mukama, Professor Rudovick Kazwala, Reuben Ole Kuney and Maulid O. Mvungi.<sup>36</sup>

---

<sup>34</sup> Anonymous, *Lobbying and Advocacy Work on the Effects of Pastoralists Evictions from Ihefu-Usangu Wetlands to Lindi*, unpublished report (undated).

<sup>35</sup> Anonymous, *Lobbying and Advocacy Work on the Effects of Pastoralists Evictions from Ihefu-Usangu Wetlands to Lindi*, unpublished report (undated); *Hali Halisi ya Uamuzi wa Serikali Kuwahamisha Wafugaji na Mifugo yao Toka Mbarali-Mbeya hadi Kilwa na Lindi-Lindi*, powerpoint presentation to the Committee on Natural Resources and Environment, 15 April 2007.

<sup>36</sup> Bunge la Tanzania, *Majadiliano ya Bunge, Mkutano wa Saba, Kikao cha Tisa – Tarehe 20 Aprili, 2007, Hoja ya Kuahirisha Bunge / Tanzania Hansard*, 9th Sitting of the 7th Session of the 2005-10 Parliament, 20 April 2007, Speech on the Adjournment of Parliament, p.98.

- early May 2007 Commission visits Mbarali. Shortly after it is formed, the Commission of Enquiry visits Mbarali District.
- 6 Jun. 2007 Commission report presented to the President. The finished report of the Commission of Enquiry is handed over to the President.<sup>37</sup> It is not made public.
- 8 Jun. 2007 Parliamentary committee visits Kisarawe. The Parliamentary Committee for Natural Resources and Environment visits Kisarawe in Coast Region, together with officers from the Vice President's Office - Environment, to see areas which livestock keepers from Mbarali have settled in.<sup>38</sup>
- 24 Jul. 2007 Eviction process criticised during budget debate. The Minister for Livestock Development, Hon. Anthony Diallo, presenting his budget estimates for 2007-08, announces that out of a total of 303,254 livestock scheduled for removal from Mbarali, 218,000 have actually moved: 100,000 to Chunya, 65,636 to Rufiji, 18,000 to Kilwa, 8,000 to Kisarawe, 4,958 to Lindi Rural, 4,000 to Kilombero, Ulanga and Kilosa, and 17,406 to Singida, Tabora, Dodoma, Rukwa and Ruvuma districts.<sup>39</sup> In response, the opposition spokesperson, Hon. Mwadini Abbas Jecha, criticises the eviction process, citing the conclusions of the investigative report by the PINGOs Forum and its partners. Calling for compensation to be paid to the livestock keepers, he also calls for the completed report of the independent Commission of Enquiry

---

<sup>37</sup> Bunge la Tanzania, Majadiliano ya Bunge, Mkutano wa Nane, Kikao cha Kumi na Nne – Tarehe 2 Julai, 2007, Makadirio ya Matumizi ya Serikali kwa Mwaka 2007/2008 - Ofisi ya Waziri Mkuu na Tawala za Mikoa na Serikali za Mitaa / Tanzania *Hansard*, 14th Sitting of the 8th Session of the 2005-10 Parliament, 2 July 2007, Prime Minister's Office, Regional Administration and Local Government budget estimates for 2007-08, p.118.

<sup>38</sup> Kamati ya Maliasili na Mazingira, *Ratiba ya Kazi za Kamati 28 Mei - 08 Juni, 2007*, online at <http://www.parliament.go.tz/bunge/docs/Maliasili%20na%20Mazingira.pdf>.

<sup>39</sup> These figures are at odds with those given by the Prime Minister in April, when he told parliament that it had been estimated that 235,000 cattle should be removed from Ihefu (i.e. Usangu Game Reserve), but that a total of 303,354 had subsequently been evicted from Mbarali District, 130,737 to Lindi Region, 72,517 to Coast Region, and 100,000 to Chunya District in Mbeya Region: Bunge la Tanzania, Majadiliano ya Bunge, Mkutano wa Saba, Kikao cha Tisa – Tarehe 20 Aprili, 2007, Hoja ya Kuahirisha Bunge / Tanzania *Hansard*, 9th Sitting of the 7th Session of the 2005-10 Parliament, 20 April 2007, Speech on the Adjournment of Parliament, p.98.

(already submitted to the President) to be made public and its recommendations implemented. MPs on both sides of the house join in the debate.<sup>40</sup>

25 Jul. 2007 Park expansion discussed during budget debate. The Minister for Natural Resources and Tourism, Hon. Professor Jumanne Magembe, announces that the decision to add Usangu Game Reserve to Ruaha National Park, increasing it in size from 10,300 km<sup>2</sup> to 20,226 km<sup>2</sup>, will be brought before parliament in the coming financial year. This will ensure that livestock do not invade the area again, and that this important wetland and water catchment is fully protected in Africa's second largest national park, ensuring all-year-round flow in the Great Ruaha, higher reservoir levels at Mtera, and a more reliable supply of electricity. In the ensuing debate on the minister's speech, the MP for Mbarali, Hon. Estherina Kilasi, asks for clarification of plans to expand the park beyond the boundaries agreed at a meeting of the Regional Consultative Committee (RCC) in July 2006. The original agreement was that seven villages and two hamlets outside of Usangu Game Reserve would also be added to the new park and their residents compensated. However, in a letter signed by the minister and dated 27 April 2007, a further nine villages were added to the list, creating considerable disquiet in these communities, in addition to general uncertainty about the resettlement and compensation process.<sup>41</sup>

---

<sup>40</sup> Bunge la Tanzania, Majadiliano ya Bunge, Mkutano wa Nane, Kikao cha Thelathini – Tarehe 24 Julai, 2007, Hoja za Serikali, Makadirio ya Matumizi Kwa Mwaka 2007/2008, Wizara ya Maendeleo ya Mifugo / Tanzania *Hansard*, 30th Sitting of the 8th Session of the 2005-10 Parliament, 24 July 2007, Ministry of Livestock Development budget estimates for 2007-08, pp.23, 59-61, 65-67, 78-79, 92, 108-109, 114-115; Judica Tarimo, 'MPs want compensation for lhefu evictees', *Guardian* (Dar es Salaam), 25 July 2007; Tamali Vullu, 'Wabunge watetea wafugaji lhefu', *Tanzania Daima* (Dar es Salaam), 25 July 2007; Halima Mlacha, 'Serikali kuhakiki mifugo', *Habari Leo* (Dar es Salaam), 25 July 2007.

<sup>41</sup> Bunge la Tanzania, Majadiliano ya Bunge, Mkutano wa Nane, Kikao cha Thelathini na Moja – Tarehe 25 Julai, 2007, Hoja za Serikali, Makadirio ya Matumizi Kwa Mwaka 2007/2008, Wizara ya Maliasili na Utalii / Tanzania *Hansard*, 31st Sitting of the 8th Session of the 2005-10 Parliament, 25 July 2007, Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism budget estimates for 2007-08, pp.49, 128-129.

On 17 August parliament was adjourned until Tuesday, 30 October 2007.<sup>42</sup> The Commission of Enquiry report that was presented to the President on 6 June was still unreleased, and many independent commentators doubted that it would ever be made public. This remained the situation throughout the period of this study (August-September 2007).

## **2.3 Analysis and principal findings**

Analysis of the Mbarali case generates a number of observations that have wider relevance for the understanding of the contemporary policy environment relating to pastoralism in Tanzania. The eviction of large numbers of herders and stock from Mbarali District in 2006-07 has undoubtedly been one of the most inglorious episodes in the recent history of pastoralism and state intervention in Tanzania. The challenge is to learn positive lessons from the Mbarali debacle, lessons that will promote better understanding of and policies towards pastoralism in the country, and that will deter government and other institutions from making the same or similar mistakes in future. In the rest of this section I have grouped my principal observations under a series of separate headings. These are best treated as overlapping, and no particular significance should be given to the order in which they are listed.

### **2.3.1 Policy and politics**

When talking about the Mbarali case, and in particular the series of decisions that had led to the eviction of livestock keepers from Usangu, many interviewees drew an implicit distinction between the implementation of formal instruments of policy and decisions that were taken in a more ad hoc manner and that were often described as 'political'. Most observers thought that the Vice-President's *Strategy for Urgent Actions on Land Degradation and Water Catchments* and related government statement of 1 April 2006 were produced not just to satisfy the new President's evident concern for these matters - as expressed in his first speech to Parliament - but also more specifically in reaction to the daytime power cuts which began in February 2006 and threatened to taint his first 100 days in office. Relatively few people related these and other decisions back to the wider framework of environmental legislation and policy that provided their general justification. Rather they were seen as ad hoc responses to the political problem caused by an apparent economic crisis and its perceived environmental causes.

---

<sup>42</sup> Bunge la Tanzania, *Majadiliano ya Bunge, Mkutano wa Nane, Kikao cha Arobaini na Saba – Tarehe 17 Agosti, 2007, Hoja ya Kuliahirisha Bunge / Tanzania Hansard, 47th Sitting of the 8th Session of the 2005-10 Parliament, 17 August 2007, Speech on the Adjournment of Parliament, p.45.*

Policy and politics are, of course, not just etymologically related, and this particular example shows that there are many shades of grey between published policy documents and the decisions taken and pronouncements made under political pressure. Nonetheless, and despite the semblance of order that was given to some of the decisions taken in 2006, there were clearly instances when this was done hastily and with little regard for existing policies and processes of consultation and decision-making. The best example of this was the decision to join Usangu Game Reserve with Ruaha National Park, announced to the nation on 20 June. This announcement came as a complete surprise to government officers and others in Mbarali whose work and lives were to be directly affected by the expansion of the park. None of the government and Tanzanian NGO staff that I interviewed in Dar es Salaam and the regions were able to say how this proposal had originated and how the decision had been made. Some informants speculated that it must have come from “somewhere up there”, in the higher corridors of power, while a couple of well-connected interviewees in Dar suggested that it stemmed directly from the President, who had long-standing record of supporting the development of Tanzania’s national parks and other protected areas. None of them appeared to be aware of the active lobbying by investors in tourism that seems to have prompted this decision.

Yet its effects have been far-reaching. In one stroke it rendered existing plans for the game reserve and the livestock sector in Usangu largely redundant, cancelling out government and NGO investment in the development of these and related initiatives. Not surprisingly it caused conflict both within and outside of government: the upgrading of the game reserve and its imminent transfer to TANAPA management was initially resisted by the Wildlife Division, and is still fiercely opposed by the local outfitters and hunting company that has a contract to hunt there until 2009. The impending change in the status of the game reserve gave added impetus to efforts to clear it of livestock herders and other trespassers once and for all. The decision in July to expand the park well beyond the boundaries of the existing reserve has had obvious negative consequences for all of the villages and hamlets that are designated for removal, and not just livestock keepers living outside of the reserve. To make matters worse, the Minister for Natural Resources and Tourism appears to have agreed in April 2007 that the park should swallow even more villages - a decision that was taken behind closed doors and that has created further uncertainty in the communities concerned.

These circumventions of formal policy and process were set in motion by an intensive lobbying campaign conducted by a coalition of investors with a shared interest in tourism in Ruaha National Park. Some members of this group had long campaigned for action against both

cattle keepers and rice farmers who they believed to be responsible for the drying of the Great Ruaha, a key resource in the park. In early 2006, realising that the accession of a new President and administration would provide them with a readier audience for their ideas than otherwise, they began a concerted effort to persuade key figures in the government and ruling party to put these into practice. One of the proposals made in April 2006 to the then Minister for Natural Resources Tourism was that the Great Ruaha between Usangu and Mtera should be protected by converting Usangu Game Reserve into a park and by incorporating the Game Controlled Area downstream of Usangu within Ruaha National Park. The second part of this proposal was rejected - Lunda-Mkwambi GCA was already in the process of being converted into a community-run Wildlife Management Area (WMA). But the first suggestion provided a simple and long-term solution to the lhefu problem, and was taken on board by the minister, though it was decided that there was no need to make Usangu into a separate park. The investors were in favour of having two parks because this would increase the tourism potential.

The obvious lesson that can be drawn from this is that organised and aggressive lobbying can sometimes achieve a lot more than following the formal processes of policy-making and implementation. Interviewees gave many other examples, small and large, of the same phenomenon - including, for example, the intense politicking that led to the controversial sale of the two large state rice farms in Mbarali District to private investors. Although anecdotes like this are the stuff of everyday understandings of politics in Tanzania, their practical significance can be missed in a liberalising state in which the formal instruments of policy are proliferating and infused by the rhetoric of stakeholder participation. Critical decisions affecting pastoralists and agropastoralists are frequently taken without reference to these instruments, suggesting that it would be unwise to put unreserved faith in them. The development of formal policy itself is often as much a consequence of backroom lobbying and negotiation as of public consultation and agreement. The trick is to be able to operate at both levels. Investors with an eye to obtaining land and other resources are especially good at this, and often prepared to invest their own resources to achieve these objectives. Many civil society organisations and pro-pastoralist groups in Tanzania are comparatively naïve and under-resourced, but it is difficult to see how their interests can be advanced without pursuing similarly canny strategies both inside and outside of the country.

The organisations opposing the eviction process did make extensive use of some informal channels. Behind-the-scenes contacts with key parliamentarians, including members of the opposition, are said to have influenced the increasingly critical debates about the eviction that

took place in parliament in 2007. It is difficult, however, for loosely-affiliated pro-pastoral advocates to sustain the kind of politicking that can be achieved by a tight-knit group of investors with good political connections, relatively deep pockets, and an agenda that can be packaged in the language of an environmentalism that is widely understood and supported, not least by current government policies. Perhaps not surprisingly, given the greater obstacles facing them, pro-pastoral organisations have struggled to maintain the same kind of political momentum, and there are a number of avenues of advocacy - including sources of wider support - that have remained relatively unexplored. Arguably there are opportunities here waiting to be seized, especially if other shortcomings (see below) are addressed, and a more positive message and understanding of the value of pastoral production is developed.

### **2.3.2 Advocacy and its shortcomings**

The Mbarali case highlights the weaknesses of pro-pastoral advocacy at both local and national level. Although the scapegoating of livestock keepers in Usangu had begun more than a decade earlier, and although the eviction process of 2006-07 evolved over a period of more than six months, there seems to have been almost no organised response in the district itself, save for the localised and apparently empty threat by some victims of the operations that they would take up arms. On paper there are more than twenty named groups or associations of livestock keepers in Mbarali District, some of them formally registered. However, many of them are largely inactive and loose associations based on locality and/or common ethnicity, with relatively limited objectives focusing mainly on the provision of livestock services. The principal exceptions are said to be a well-organised group in one of the agropastoral Maasai villages of Usangu, and a couple of cooperatives that are not ethnically based but focus on modern dairy production and marketing. Earlier efforts to bring all of the groups in Mbarali into a single organisation (*MUWAMBA, Muungano wa Ushirika wa Wafugaji Wilaya ya Mbarali*) failed once the German advisors who facilitated it had departed.

The livestock keepers of Usangu and the wider region are indeed sharply divided by ethnic affiliation and socio-economic class. The relatively wealthy dairy producers that I interviewed in Rujewa expressed their approval of evictions from the Ihefu and thereabouts, while a village chairman in Utengule-Usangu Ward noted that some local livestock keepers were happy to have more grazing for themselves once their Sukuma and other competitors with large herds of cattle had been removed. The Il-Parakuyu Maasai of Usangu, who have lived for many years in their own registered villages, were not significantly affected by the evictions, and at least some of those Maasai who were taken refuge with relatives. The Maasai

of Idodi and Pawaga in Iringa District are reported to have stolen many of the cattle of the Sukuma who followed the Great Ruaha valley down to Mtera. Under circumstances such as these, there was little scope for a unified local or regional response to the evictions. This was especially so because many of the Sukuma and Barabaig who were forced to move with their herds were already politically marginalised and played relatively little part in village and district government - often because of the residential choices that they made, preferring to live and farm outside of established settlements. Nonetheless, many of the younger herders who left Mbarali have also left their elderly and other relatives behind to continue farming, keeping their options open as to whether the whole extended household will eventually move or not.<sup>43</sup>

Civil society and pro-pastoral organisations at regional and national level were also slow to take up the cause of the Sukuma and other agropastoralists in Usangu, and did little to counter the negative stereotypes of them that were being disseminated prior to 2006 accompanied by repeated threats of forced eviction from the Ihefu wetland and surrounding grazing areas. Following the gazettement of the Usangu Game Reserve in 1998 these threats were carried out on more than one occasion when the homes and camps of livestock-keepers and fishermen were razed and they were driven out of the protected area. At the time these actions were alleged to have resulted in the loss of life,<sup>44</sup> claims vigorously denied by the wildlife and other authorities. The lack of documentation to support these and other allegations of abuse reflects the absence of effective advocacy on behalf of livestock-keepers and other long-established users of the wetland at that time. The only external pastoralist NGO then working in Usangu, the Iringa-based HIMWA (*Huduma ya Injili na Maendeleo Kwa Wafugaji*), was criticised in some quarters for its apparent ethnic (Maasai) and religious (Christian) bias. In any event it had limited funding for its activities, and to make matters worse was rendered ineffective for some time by a bitter internal dispute.<sup>45</sup>

---

<sup>43</sup> The ongoing patrol is therefore also on the lookout for herders returning to Mbarali with their cattle.

<sup>44</sup> See Martin Walsh, 'The Production of Knowledge and Reproduction of Ignorance about Usangu, Mbarali District, Tanzania', paper presented to the workshop on *Equalities and Inequalities in Tanzania: Past and Present*, Darwin College, University of Cambridge, 9 June 2006, p.8.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. Martin Walsh, 'Key Issues for the MBOMIPA Project', Report No.MMN3, MBOMIPA Project, Iringa District Natural Resources Office, Iringa, February 2000, p.5. When the MBOMIPA Project (*Matumizi Bora ya Malihai Idodi na Pawaga*) was being planned in 1996-97, it was hoped that it would be able to address pastoralist issues in Idodi and Pawaga Divisions in Iringa District by working in partnership with HIMWA. Once the project began, however, serious concerns were raised over HIMWA's neutrality and capacity to perform such a role

During the present study a number of observers, including pro-pastoral advocates, asserted that the divided pastoral politics of Tanzania were in part responsible for the earlier lack of interest in the plight of livestock keepers in Usangu. The Sukuma are, after all, environmentally irresponsible agropastoralists in the eyes of many other pastoralists as well as mixed farmers in the country, and have not always been particularly welcome in the pro-pastoral lobby, with its northern Tanzanian bias and emphasis on the politics of identity and the cultural distinctiveness of pastoralists as a minority group.<sup>46</sup> As one reader of the draft of this report observed, pastoralists and agropastoralists in Tanzania do not form a homogenous group, but have different and sometimes conflicting interests. The concentration of pastoral advocacy in northern Tanzania is a result of historical events, reflecting in particular the development of the pastoralist movement from the mid 1980s onwards in response to the large-scale alienation of Maasai and Barabaig lands. The non-government sector is relatively undeveloped in the west and south of Tanzania, and there are few formal organisations that represent the interests of Sukuma livestock-keepers, whose territorial expansion has its origins in a quite different set of social and economic circumstances.<sup>47</sup> It remains to be seen whether the recent evictions have a radicalising effect, and whether the Sukuma and other agropastoralists will be drawn into a closer long-term alliance with their northern brethren. The existence of two competing pro-pastoral umbrella organisations in the north, PINGOs Forum and TAPHGO, suggests that unity may never come easily - though one view is that this kind of competition need not necessarily be counter-productive, especially if it fosters institutional development and allows for constructive collaboration.

When the current situation began to evolve in 2006, pro-pastoral advocates were slow to take up the cause of the Sukuma and others in Usangu. One close observer of these events suggests the following circumstantial reasons for the initial reluctance of some individuals and organisations to engage with the Mbarali problem:

---

effectively, and the proposed collaboration was eventually abandoned. (To avoid any potential for misunderstanding I should emphasise that these are historical observations and not statements about HIMWA's current organisation, capacity, or practice.)

<sup>46</sup> The Sukuma are, of course, Tanzania's largest ethnic group.

<sup>47</sup> For a detailed account see Per Brandström, *Boundless Universe: The Culture of Expansion among the Sukuma-Nyamwezi of Tanzania*, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Uppsala University, 1990.

1. Many of them were unwilling to pick an argument with the newly-installed and popular administration of President Kikwete, especially over environmental issues when the government was struggling to address a power crisis that threatened to tarnish its 'honeymoon period'. There was also considerable nervousness in the voluntary sector at this time, prompted by the spat between the government and the educational NGO HakiElimu: in September 2005 the then Ministry of Education and Culture had issued a directive interdicting HakiElimu from undertaking or publishing any studies relating to the education system in Tanzania,<sup>48</sup> and it had come close to being completely banned. Pastoral CSOs and NGOs were afraid of meeting the same fate, and some of the leading pastoral advocates in the north are said to have refused to join hands with colleagues who were ready to intervene in Mbarali. Even those who did belatedly take action are reported to have feared a government backlash and lack of support from their fellow advocates.<sup>49</sup>
2. The evictions from Usangu began at a time when there was general 'advocacy fatigue' among leading pastoral activists. This followed a boom in pro-pastoral advocacy linked to the Poverty Reduction Strategy process and during the development of the National Livestock Policy.<sup>50</sup> The energy that was generated in response to these formal policy-making processes is felt to have further dissipated following the demise of the RECONCILE/IIED Programme on Reinforcement of Pastoral Civil Society in East Africa and the "slackening and wavering" of the former Livestock Policy Task Force (now the Rangelands and Livelihoods Task Force). This (it is argued) contributed to the lack of a united voice against the evictions in Usangu and other issues of national concern.

---

<sup>48</sup> See Jenerali Ulimwengu, 'Utangulizi' / 'Introduction', in Rakesh Rajani (ed.) *HakiElimu Inapotosha Elimu? Mkusanyiko wa Habari, Makala, Tahariri, Barua na Matamko*, HakiElimu, Dar es Salaam, 2005-06, pp.1-11.

<sup>49</sup> Some reluctant activists are also suspected of having hedged their bets in the first half of 2006 because they did not want to rule themselves out of employment or other opportunities that might be offered by the new administration.

<sup>50</sup> For details see A. Z. Mattee and M. Shem, *Ambivalence and Contradiction: A Review of the Policy Environment in Tanzania in relation to Pastoralism* (IIED Issue Paper No.140), International Institute for Environment and Development, London, March 2006.

3. The Mbarali issue also came to the fore when a number of leading and willing pastoral advocates had exhausted their advocacy budgets. The process that began with the PINGOs Forum's fact-finding mission to Mbarali District in April 2006 through to the joint study in Lindi and Coast Regions in March 2007 operated on a very tight budget - and some of the most important media activities were only made possible because of the availability of flexible funds from JOLIT (the Joint Oxfam Livelihoods Initiative in Tanzania).

The flip side of this last point is that successful advocacy activities need not always be expensive. For there is no doubt that once joint advocacy got going it did register a number of achievements - to the extent that the same observer (see above) describes this as "the best-organised advocacy ever undertaken by pastoral CSOs and their allies" in Tanzania. The high point of this process occurred when the consortium that produced the *March 2007 Report on Eviction and Resettlement of Pastoralists from Ihefu and Usangu-Mbarali District to Kilwa and Lindi District* presented their findings to the Parliamentary Committee for Natural Resources and Environment. This exercise in targeted lobbying had an immediate impact, leading directly to the Prime Minister's announcement of the formation of a Commission of Enquiry.

There were still shortcomings. Not all of the organisations that could have participated in challenging the government's actions did so. And once this campaign had met with some success and the Commission of Enquiry was established, the CSOs involved did little more to lobby the commission, press for the release of its report, or follow up on other matters that they had raised in the *March 2007 report*. There has been no investigation of the consequences of the eviction in Mbarali itself, and the outline of events given in the present study is, to my knowledge, the first of its kind. Coordinated action clearly has considerable potential, but it has to be sustained. The tour operator who described to me his colleagues' systematic and persistent lobbying of ministers and other key decision-makers likened it to a relay race in which one colleague picked up the baton and continued to apply pressure as soon as another had played his or her part and put it down. As long as the pro-pastoral lobby remains weak and divided at both local and national levels it will struggle to achieve comparable successes.

### **2.3.3 Policy and practice**

I do not want to give the impression that pro-pastoral advocacy should be merely reactive, responding to and seeking to mitigate crises such as that which has afflicted the livestock keepers of Mbarali. The ease with which they were scapegoated and evicted from Usangu

also reflects the failure of government and other agencies to protect the rights and interests of pastoralists within existing legal and policy frameworks. As Mattee and Shem<sup>51</sup> have already shown, relatively few national policy documents envisage a future for mobile pastoralism in Tanzania other than its modernisation and eventual disappearance as an outmoded way of life and inefficient use of resources. President Kikwete's inaugural speech to Parliament in December 2005 left no doubt that he shared this view. There are important exceptions, the most notable of which was the recognition in the National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty (NSGRP, aka MKUKUTA) of 2004 of pastoralism as a "sustainable livelihood" rather than simply a mode of production. This was a direct consequence of pro-pastoral advocacy. But it has proved rather more difficult to translate into practice, and implementation has lagged far behind intent. A more recent opportunity has opened up in the Ministry of Livestock Development, following the formation of a new Department of Pastoral Systems Development in 2006 that now has the mandate to develop a pastoral policy.<sup>52</sup> Opportunities like this for mainstreaming pro-pastoral policy should be seized at and followed through in a sustained way by the pastoral lobby.

The Mbarali case suggests that an inclusive approach to the understanding of pastoralism is more likely to succeed in this context. I have already referred to the ethnic and other divisions in the pastoral lobby and its failure to mobilise at both local and national levels. The politics of cultural identity and the essentialisation of pastoralism and pastoralists has not always served their interests well. As well as frequently alienating government and other potential supporters, it is also less than faithful to economic reality. The village chairman who I interviewed in Utengule-Usangu observed that while a few people had benefited from the eviction of Sukuma and other immigrant herders, the majority were not very pleased about it all. The reason was that the removal of many cattle and their keepers from the local economy had also effectively removed a lot of wealth from it, impacting negatively on the circulation of cash. It had also put future cultivation in jeopardy because many farmers had hitherto been

---

<sup>51</sup> A. Z. Mattee and M. Shem, *Ambivalence and Contradiction: A Review of the Policy Environment in Tanzania in relation to Pastoralism* (IIED Issue Paper No.140), International Institute for Environment and Development, London, March 2006.

<sup>52</sup> Although the Department/Division is charged with "modernizing pastoral farming systems" (see [http://www.mifugo.go.tz/pastoral\\_systems/index.php](http://www.mifugo.go.tz/pastoral_systems/index.php)), it is also reported to employ staff who are "sympathetic to the pastoral cause", including some who have attended courses on pastoralism at the MS-TCDC training centre near Arusha. The development of these courses is viewed as another past achievement of pastoral advocacy in Tanzania.

dependent on Sukuma oxen for the ploughing and preparation of their fields. The consequences for local livelihoods are potentially dire - quite apart from any impact that the loss of many villages to the national park might have. Over and above ethnic differences and frictions, livestock keeping is an essential component in the economy of Usangu, and undermining this productive activity is bound to have a number of knock-on effects, none of them anticipated by the proponents of eviction.

The reality of economic interdependence in a situation such as this is not captured by the use of essentialising labels like 'pastoralist' and 'agropastoralist'. These have been especially divisive when applied at national level to characterise different ethnic groups and judge their worthiness of inclusion in the pastoral lobby. A more productive strategy would arguably be to recognise the full range of pastoral adaptations and their contribution to different modes of livelihood and the economy of nation as a whole. Seeking to incorporate ideas such as these into pro-pastoral advocacy and policy-making is only one approach to the problem, too late for those already driven away from Mbarali. Working with existing policy instruments is another, though the implementation of even the most promising of these leaves a lot to be desired. A good example of this is the use of land-use planning processes to secure pastoral tenure. In the wake of the evictions from Usangu the government has invested a lot of faith and funds in the development of district and especially village land-use plans in line with procedures established by the National Land Use Planning Commission (NLUPC). The theory is impressive, but the results to date have been rather less so, given the time and resources required for each planning exercise. In Mbarali, for example, fewer than 10% of the 98 registered villages in the district had been taken through the first four steps of the PLUM (Participatory Land Use Management) process by August 2007. In Iringa the pace was reported to be even slower, and it was estimated that by June 2010 only 70 villages in the whole of Iringa Region would have land use plans.

Despite its stated participatory intentions, the land-use planning process is very interventionist, and it is doubtful whether proper understanding and agreement in the community, especially among marginalised pastoralists, can be generated in the relatively little time spent on each village land-use planning exercise (less than a week in some cases). And this is only the first stage of a long and complex process that in theory will result in rational and equitable land

use at both district and village levels. Experience to date in Mbarali and elsewhere<sup>53</sup> suggests that this process will do pastoralists and agropastoralists few favours, especially when they are in the minority in communities dominated both numerically and politically by settled cultivators. The printed reports of the PLUM exercises that have been completed in Mbarali do not conceal the fact that the district officials who wrote them would like to promote more “modern” forms of livestock production. The reports themselves are written following a template that gives undue importance to outmoded calculations of carrying capacity, and in them villagers are told exactly how many cattle they must get rid of if they are to conform to the figure that has been predetermined for the whole district. In this and other respects the PLUM process is stacked against the interests of pastoralists, and it is difficult to see land-use planning as the national panacea (as well as means to mitigate the Mbarali crisis) that it is presented as.

This argues that we should think twice about promoting the existing land-use planning processes as a means to secure pastoral tenure and livelihoods. A more sensible approach would be to remain flexible, and give serious consideration to alternative ways of securing the commons for pastoral producers. Indeed there are already a number of alternatives available, including the use of forestry and wildlife legislation. Current assessments of the process leading to the establishment of a Wildlife Management Area (WMA) suggest that it is far too cumbersome and difficult to implement without significant external support. The new forestry legislation appears to offer a lot more promise, especially if it can be used – as it has been in Kiteto District – to secure the joint ownership of key grazing resources that also fulfil the requirements of forest management. A more radical solution to securing the commons for pastoral production would be to press for separate legislation that would allow for the designation of areas of land for pastoral use on the analogy with other kinds of protected area. This could be framed as a major objective of a new pastoral policy (see above). One of the disadvantages of this would be the time taken to develop the legal instruments required – pastoralists are already playing catch-up. Supporters of the current land legislation would

---

<sup>53</sup> The pilot land titling project in Handeni District, for example, suffered a host of problems, including land grabbing by farmers seeking to gain maximum benefit from the exercise. See Kelvin Mkulila, *Practical Experiences on Land Registration in the Implementation of the Village Land Act No.5 of 1999. The Handeni Pilot Project: 18<sup>th</sup> September – 10<sup>th</sup> December, 2006*, Legal and Human Rights Centre, Dar es Salaam. Similar land speculation occurred in the pilot Wildlife Management Area (WMA) in Iringa District run by the MBOMIPA (*Matumizi Bora ya Malihai Idodi na Pawaga*) Association, forcing pastoralists to encroach on land reserved for wildlife and its utilisation.

question the need for it at all. But it could have a number of advantages over existing processes. The preservation of the commons is critical to the survival of pastoralism, and has to be at the top of the pro-pastoralist agenda.

#### 2.3.4 Science and stereotypes

One of the most disturbing aspects of the Mbarali case is that the evictions were set in motion by a series of misconceptions about the causes and consequences of the seasonal drying of the Great Ruaha River. As noted in section 2.1 above, low reservoir levels and electricity rationing in 1992-93 were blamed by TANESCO and others on the misuse of water resources upstream of the now “not-so-Great Ruaha”.<sup>54</sup> A large portion of the blame fell on the pastoralists of Usangu, whose cattle were alleged to be trampling and destroying the ecology and hydrology of the Ihefu swamp as well drinking too much of its water.<sup>55</sup> Immigrant Sukuma and other cattle keepers were an easy target, and the environmental degradation narrative which scapegoated them was further justified by exaggerated estimates of the numbers of animals being grazed in the wetlands of Usangu, between one and two million head of cattle according to many sources.

Plausible though it seems, many elements of this narrative are either unproven or simply untrue. Research conducted over a number of years by the SMUWC Project and its spin-off RIPARWIN (Raising Irrigation Productivity and Releasing Water for Intersectoral Needs) has shown conclusively that the primary cause of the drying of the Great Ruaha downstream of Usangu has been an increase in dry season abstractions of water in and around the villages and farms of the southern fringe of Usangu. Here is a summary of the researchers’ findings:

---

<sup>54</sup> I have borrowed this phrase from the cover page of three open letters written in November 2000 by Peter Fox, Sue Stolberger and Geoff Fox: *The Not So Great Ruaha River: We Need Your Help*. This document was addressed to DFID’s Natural Resources Adviser in Dar es Salaam, and was copied to the President of Tanzania, the U.K. Secretary of State for International Development and others. See Martin Walsh, ‘Pangolins, Science and Scapegoats: Environmental Narratives and Conflicts in the Great Ruaha Catchment, Tanzania’, paper presented to a symposium on *Trees, Rain and Politics in Africa: The Dynamics and Politics of Climatic and Environmental Change*, St Antony’s College, University of Oxford, 29 September – 1 October 2004.

<sup>55</sup> The most authoritative statement of this argument is in Kikula et al., *Ecological Changes in the Usangu Plains and their Implications on the Down Stream Flow of the Great Ruaha River in Tanzania* (Research Report No.99 (New Series), Institute of Resource Assessment, University of Dar es Salaam, September 1996. The conclusions of this paper were first challenged in the Project Memorandum of the SMUWC Project, drafted in early 1997.

“SMUWC and the Ministry of Water and Livestock developed a hydrological model and a monitoring programme that suggested multiple causes of the changes in the Ruaha and wetland flow regimes. In addition, by undertaking monthly spot measurements in key locations throughout the plains, SMUWC pinpointed where and when water losses were occurring. These assessments challenged the original assumptions that the reduction in wetland size and flows in the Ruaha were mainly due to overgrazing and excessive consumption of water by livestock and a reduced ability of the wetland to act as a ‘sponge’ holding back water for later release into the Ruaha. SMUWC calculated that maintaining a water flow into the swamp was more important in generating an outflow from the swamp than any effect from over-grazing. The studies also refuted the strongly held beliefs that climate change and, in particular, deforestation were the causes of reduced baseflows of rivers flowing off the escarpment (Kikula et al., 1996). Thus, the presence of an estimated 40–50 cumecs abstraction capacity from a total of 100–130 intakes on the plains was shown to play a more important role in dry and wet season hydrological change than climate change or deforestation. With respect to the latter, it was shown that the natural alpine ecology of the highest of the Southern Highlands is grassland and not forest.

The study also showed the probable cause of the power cuts in the Mtera/Kidatu hydropower plants was not water shortages in the Upper Ruaha, as argued by various studies (Faraji and Masenza, 1992). The hydrological analyses showed that irrigation in Usangu abstracts around 25–35% of Great Ruaha, itself a proportion of the inflows into Mtera and Kidatu. In addition, there is evidence that mismanagement of the reservoir and excessive releases to maximise electricity generation caused a draining of the storage from which it became difficult to recover during a series of dry years.

The analysis also showed how evaporation from rivers spreading onto the plains and wetlands result in significant natural water losses. This factor makes outflow from the Usangu wetland highly sensitive to abstraction during the dry season when river flows naturally diminish. Below a threshold of about 6–7 cumecs entering into the wetland, there is effectively no downstream flow. Thus the perceived drying up of the Ruaha River is mainly a dry season phenomena and is a result of irrigation intakes abstracting

water for domestic reticulation and wetting of rice fields extending into the dry season.”<sup>56</sup>

I have quoted this passage at length because it makes explicit reference to the claim that overgrazing in the wetland is one of the principal causes of reduced dry season flows in the Great Ruaha. As the authors go on to discuss, project researchers have struggled to change the entrenched views of government and non-government stakeholders who refuse to give up on environmental degradation narratives that wrongly point the finger of blame at immigrant livestock keepers in Usangu and/or farmers in the upper catchment and mountains to the south. While the investors lobbying for the protection of the Great Ruaha catchment and expansion of Ruaha National Park have engaged with the researchers and accepted many of the results of the work undertaken by SMUWC and RIPARWIN, some of them also cling to older narratives, and many of their writings are a hotchpotch of science and pseudoscience. The hypothesis that livestock have turned large parts of the Usangu Plains into a dustbowl and have trampled the Ihefu swamp to the extent that this has impaired the wetland’s “sponge effect” has proved particularly resistant to reason. Arguments about the ecohydrological functions of the wetland continue to provide support for this view and the claim that the ejection of livestock will help restore flows in the Great Ruaha.<sup>57</sup> Similar statements in the print media are often bundled together with wildly inflated estimates of livestock numbers in Usangu. Although SMUWC Project surveys indicated that there were fewer than 300,000 cattle in the area, much higher numbers have continued to be reported in the popular press, as the March 2006 report into the evictions by PINGOs Forum and its partners pointed out. The figure of 1.8 million appears in many newspaper stories, including accounts of the background

---

<sup>56</sup> Quoted from pp.142-144 of B. Lankford, B. van Koppen, T. Franks and H. Mahoo, ‘Entrenched Views or Insufficient Science? Contested Causes and Solutions of Water Allocation; Insights from the Great Ruaha River Basin, Tanzania’, *Agricultural Water Management*, 69: 135-153 (2004). For a more cautious overview by a former SMUWC hydrologist see Peter Baur, ‘Why Does the Great Ruaha Dry Up in the Dry Season?’, *FORS News* (newsletter of The Friends of Ruaha Society, Iringa ), 13 (1): 7 (2004).

<sup>57</sup> M. G. G. Mtahiko, E. Gereta, A. R. Kajuni, E. A. T. Chiombola, G. Z. Ng’umbi, P. Coppolillo and E. Wolanski ‘Towards an Ecohydrology-based Restoration of the Usangu Wetlands and the Great Ruaha River, Tanzania’, *Wetlands Ecology and Management*, 14 (6): 489-503, 2006. See also Peter Coppolillo, Margaret Demment, Bakari Mbano, Scott Bergin and Jessica Forrest, ‘Current Wetlands Management Practices in the Usangu Sub Catchments: A Review of Drivers, Pressures, State, Impacts and Responses’, background document for the Usangu Sub-catchments Conference *From knowledge to action: Identifying Legislative and Institutional Frameworks and Current Implementation and Wetlands Management Practices*, prepared by the Wildlife Conservation Society (International), Rungwa Ruaha Program, for the Wildlife Division, Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism, October 2006; and Peter Coppolillo, ‘Rebirth of the Ruaha: A River Runs Through Tanzania – Sometimes’, field letter dated September/October 2006, [http://www.rungwa-ruaha.org/pdf/FieldLetter\\_SO06.pdf](http://www.rungwa-ruaha.org/pdf/FieldLetter_SO06.pdf).

to the events of 2006-07, though there are some indications that the inconvenient truth that livestock numbers are much lower than this is spreading.

Stereotypes of the environmental damage caused by Sukuma agropastoralists also thrive, and were reproduced unblinkingly by many of the government and NGO officers that I interviewed for this study.<sup>58</sup> This particular stereotype is rarely challenged or fleshed out with evidence, but instead has come to resemble the environmental equivalent of an urban legend. Susan Charnley's thought-provoking comparison of the differing practices and perceptions of different groups of livestock keepers in Usangu is inaccessible and rarely consulted,<sup>59</sup> though it would provide a good starting point for re-evaluating the Sukuma stereotype, which Charnley herself unfortunately helped to disseminate in her subsequent work.<sup>60</sup> Her research also gives some insight into the interaction between the dynamics of extended households among the Sukuma and the dynamism of their agricultural and pastoral. This is also essential background to understanding how the evictions have impacted on the Sukuma in Mbarali District, many of whom now have households split between Usangu and other regions of Tanzania. Given the events of the past two years, it is disappointing – though not surprising – to see that little attempt has been made to investigate the local practice of the Sukuma and other groups in greater detail. This neglect is shared by both their accusers and their potential allies, recalling again the lack of unity in the pastoral lobby in Tanzania. Indeed it could also be argued that “pastoralist” is itself an unhelpful stereotype (see section 2.3.2 above), unwittingly employed by people on both sides of the debate.

The greatest scandal, perhaps, is the fact that livestock keepers in Usangu have been blamed not just for the drying up of the Great Ruaha, but also for the power cuts and economic damage at national level that this is supposed to have then caused. Since the early 1990s, however, some close observers have known that there is no direct link, but that the main responsibility for the electricity shortages has lain with TANESCO management and their

---

<sup>58</sup> The newspaper cutting reproduced at the beginning of this report is a striking example of stereotyping of this kind, and one in which it is possible to discern the underlying agendas of some of the people interviewed.

<sup>59</sup> Susan Charnley, *Cattle, Commons and Culture: The Political Ecology of Environmental Change on a Tanzanian Rangeland*, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Stanford University.

<sup>60</sup> Idris S. Kikula, Susan Charnley and Pius Yanda, *Ecological Changes in the Usangu Plains and their Implications on the Down Stream Flow of the Great Ruaha River in Tanzania* (Research Report No.99 (New Series), Institute of Resource Assessment, University of Dar es Salaam, September 1996.

misuse of outdated operating procedures at both Mtera and Kidatu. Given the unwillingness of TANESCO staff to admit to making mistakes in a matter of such national importance, these have been harder to document or even discuss within government, though a number of attempts to do so have been made. There have also been occasions when it has been convenient to be economical with the truth, and the estimated economic cost of repeated national power cuts has helped to justify donor support to more than one project, including SMUWC. But it is tragic that repetition of the same set of falsehoods by decision-makers from the top downwards has gone ahead and had such a damaging impact on livelihoods without being seriously challenged at any time in the past 15 years. During the same period the critical evaluation and in some cases debunking of environmental degradation narratives has become a standard topic of study in university courses. Unfortunately it has yet to filter into the political mainstream in Tanzania.

### **3 GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS**

In this final section of the report I do not intend to repeat all of the specific suggestions made in the last section. Rather I will make some general recommendations for the promotion of pastoralism in Tanzania that build upon the findings of the case study and reflect further discussion of these with colleagues.

#### **3.1 Policy and Legislation**

The development of formal policy documents and legal instruments based on these is an essential feature of government and the political process in Tanzania, and also of the relation between Tanzania and its donors. The proliferation of policies in the era of market liberalisation has, with few exceptions, bypassed pastoralism and treated it as an outmoded way of life that requires modernisation. A major challenge is to turn this perception around and ensure that the rights and needs of pastoralists and agropastoralists are fully incorporated into policy – and that these policies are properly implemented. Following restructuring in the Ministry of Livestock Development, there is now a significant opportunity to develop a cross-sectoral pastoral policy and related legislation, perhaps even to secure legal protection for the pastoral commons. This opportunity should be seized, as should opportunities to advance the interests of pastoralists in the wider environment of policy and practice. One way in which to do this is to develop and promote an inclusive vision of pastoralism which ensures that the contribution of pastoral production (both “pure” and in combination with other types of production) to the national economy is recognised. This would entail avoiding restrictive (“elitist”) definitions of pastoralism and approaches which emphasise cultural identity and distinctiveness over complex political and economic realities.

#### **3.2 Evidence-based advocacy**

The Mbarali case study and other experiences make it clear evidence-based advocacy can be of critical importance. The study by PINGOs Forum and its partners of evictees plight’, and the well-coordinated presentation of this to the nation and parliament, had an immediate and significant impact – and might have had more if it had been sustained in the following months. There is considerable scope for the development of similar initiatives based on positive policy agendas and not just in reaction to periodic crises. There is, for example, reported to be a considerable thirst for well-presented information among the nation’s legislators, and this kind of opportunity for advocacy should not be missed. The investors and others who have pressed for action in the Great Ruaha catchment have engaged very effectively with researchers and

their work. These examples underline the need for high quality research to back up advocacy. In the Mbarali case there is already a lot of published and unpublished information which to date has clearly not been used to maximum practical effect. Lobbyists should learn how to seek out and use this kind of knowledge (whether academic or project-produced) in order to support their arguments. They should also learn how and when best to commission or undertake research themselves for the same purposes. Evidence-based advocacy is especially important in the struggle to combat negative stereotypes of pastoralism and agropastoralism and develop positive counter-narratives.

### **3.3 Lobbying and politicking**

In addition to these relatively formal means of pursuing pro-pastoral agendas, there is considerable scope for the advocates of pastoralism to pursue a more diversified lobbying strategy in pursuit of their goals. The Ruaha investors claim to have done this to great effect, politicking in all of the ways that they could. They made maximum use of personal contacts, targeting key individuals in a variety of settings with the kind of information that they calculated would impress them most, and employing every available means including verbal persuasion, correspondence (and targeted copying of correspondence), and the use of visual presentations. At different times they have mobilised support from wherever they could, writing to people and organisations outside of Tanzania as well as within the country. Although only a small group of people, their politicking has been intense and sustained over a number of years. The results of this are plain to see, and while it may not be possible or indeed feasible for CSO/NGO staff to employ the full range of tactics that investors do, there are obvious benefits to be had from matching their canny political practice. Many of us do much the same in the course of our everyday work, without thinking of it as part of our job descriptions. For pro-pastoral advocates it should be, perhaps even literally so. Otherwise there is little hope that lobbyists will be able to match the achievements of those investors.

### **3.4 Information and publicity**

The wider dissemination of information is also of critical importance, and TNRF, for example, is already doing this effectively through its website. Publicity using a wide variety of media (including television, radio and print) has a special role to play in advocacy, to persuade as well as to inform. This is essential to counter negative stereotypes and promote a positive vision of pastoralists and pastoralism in Tanzania. In this context care should be taken to match message, medium and target audience, as well as to develop simple slogans ("Save the

Commons!”) that encapsulate a campaign and will capture the public imagination. Environmental degradation narratives of the kind discussed in this report comprise a special case. The SMUWC Project encountered considerable difficulty in trying to change entrenched ideas about the causes and consequences of hydrological processes in the Great Ruaha, despite engaging closely with newspaper journalists at one stage to help get their messages across. As well as using various means to undermine these narratives at local and national level, they have become so prevalent in some of the corridors of power that it might also help to bring external influence to bear through international organisations, academic and other fora, and the media.

### **3.5 Alliances and coordination**

Last but not least I would like to reiterate the need to forge wider alliances and take coordinated action. The pastoral lobby in Tanzania – as in many other countries in the region – is not as strong as it could be, and at times appears to be more divided than united. As we have seen, when the CSOs representing pastoralists join forces with other organisations, they stand a much better chance of success. While local organisations have had some success in attracting international partners, they often find it more difficult to work together. But it is difficult to see how their joint interests can be advanced otherwise. The politics of exclusion will not serve Tanzania’s pastoral producers well, and there is a danger that many opportunities will be lost in the absence of unity and the inclusiveness which this report has recommended. In this context TNRF’s potential to play a coordinating role and promote a common agenda should be of particular importance in helping to provide a positive direction for pastoral advocacy in Tanzania.

