

Imagining cultures of cooperation: Universities networking to face the new development challenges

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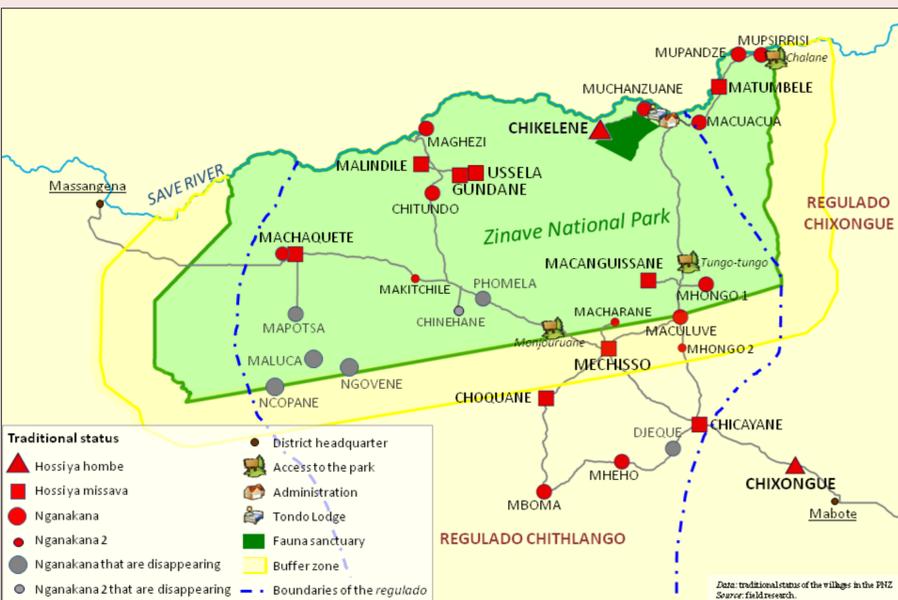
CST-LABORATORIO CARTOGRAFICO
DIATHESIS

PARTICIPATORY METHODOLOGIES FOR A RESPONSIBLE TOURISM: THE ZINAVE NATIONAL PARK (MOZAMBIQUE)

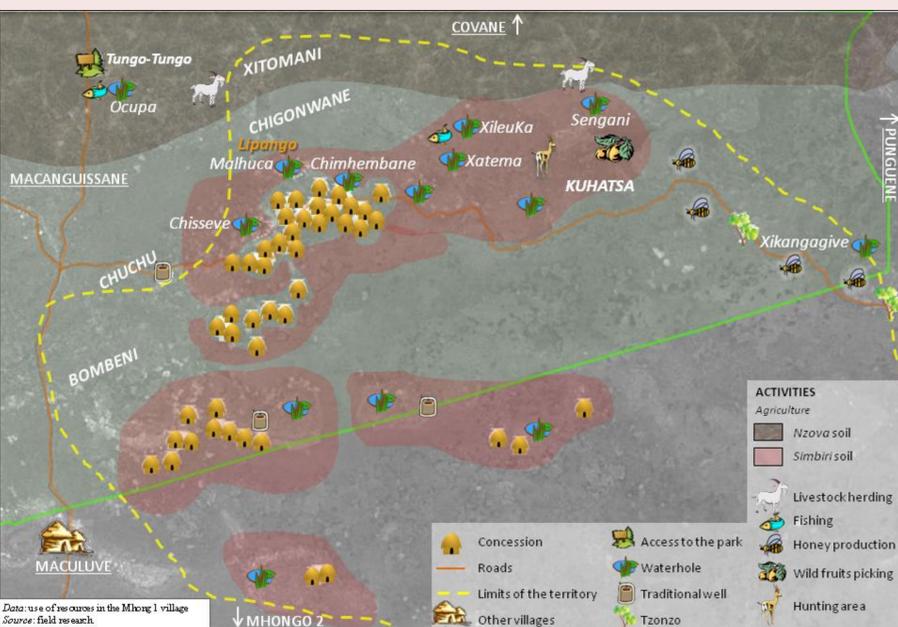
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Abstract

The **Zinave National Park** (Mozambique), included in a system of protected areas known as the **Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park**, is the experimental area for the application of a particular approach to the involvement of local communities in the conservation effort: the **community conservation**. In order to achieve this implicative form, as part of a *Ph.D. thesis*^{*}, a field research aimed at recovering the local knowledge and the traditional values related to the use of resources in the villages located within the protected area was carried out.



The traditional status of the villages in the Zinave National Park



Resource-use system in the village of Mhongo 1 in the PNZ

Conclusion

The field data were used to bring out the **territorial governance systems**, recovering local knowledge, and has allowed to highlight some conflict situations about: i. **land ownership**, because of land use competition between Park and local communities and the boundary change of the protected area; ii. **resource use**, due to the incompatibility of hunting, fishing and agriculture with the environmental management of the Park; iii. **tourism**, for the difficulty in achieving a sustainable system that will ensure the practice of tourism without causing negative impacts on the land system and local production.

Achieved results

Through the **observation**, the **inquiry** and the use of **participatory mapping**, the **traditional status** and the **organization of the villages of the PNZ have been investigated**, thus recovering the **resource-use systems**.

In particular, the research has produced the following results:

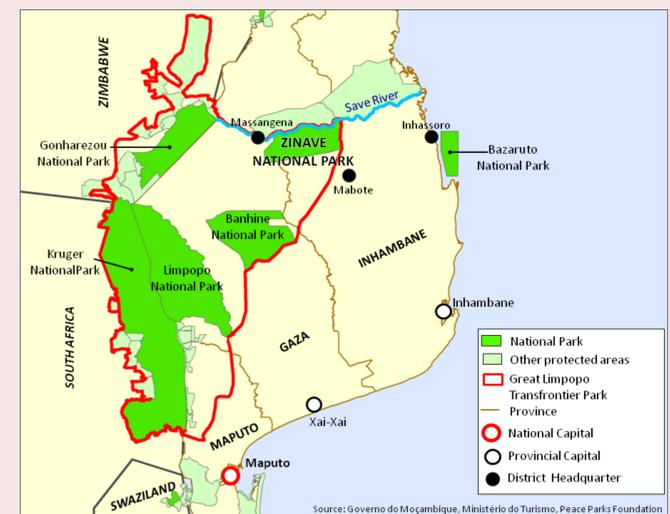
- the **census of 25 villages**, represented cartographically for the first time, and the reconstruction of their traditional organizational structure;
- an in-depth analysis of **two sample villages**, Mhongo 1 and Makitchile, thus recovering their traditional resource-use system;
- the study of the potential **sustainable tourism development** as an alternative activity for the livelihood of local communities, in view of the implementation of new regulations for resource use in the Park.

Objectives

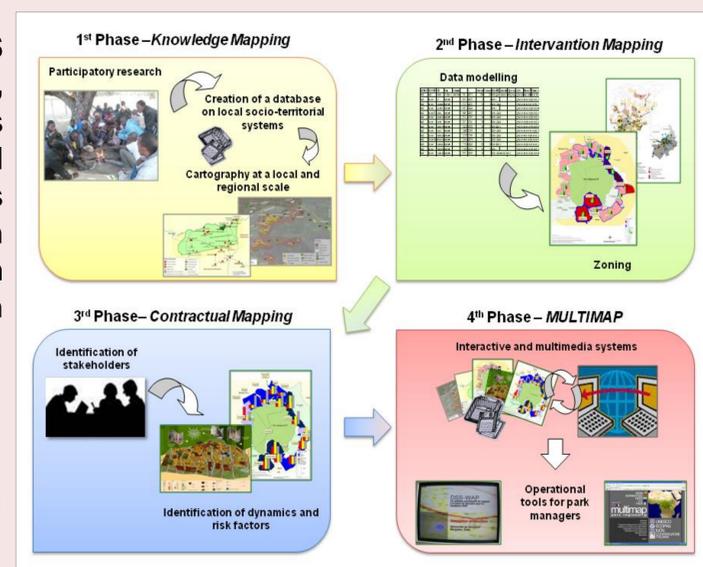
The research has highlighted the importance of the territorial organization of local communities for the recovery of the **spatial capital**^{**} in order to manage and develop tourism in African protected areas.

Methodological approach

The **SIGAP Strategy** is a **participatory research methodology** based on: i. **field work** for collecting data; ii. **mapping systems** for communicating results. In particular, this research presents the application of the first, knowledge-based phase of such strategy, which allowed the creation of a **participatory database** that was digitized in order to create **GIS cartographic documents**, useful to activate a process of **environmental governance** and people's **participation** in environmental conservation projects and the promotion of tourism initiatives.



The Zinave National Park and the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park



The SIGAP Strategy

^{*} The PhD thesis in Geography of Development entitled "The Transfrontier Conservation Area Of Great Limpopo: participation and tourism promotion in the Zinave National Park (Mozambique)", is coordinated by Prof. Emanuela Casti, head of the Diathesis Cartographic Lab of the University of Bergamo (www.unibg.it/diathesis). The defense is expected for the beginning of 2014.

^{**} The term *spatial capital* refers to the heritage of places, territories and networks built up by a social actor and the set of skills acquired over time to manage it, which can give benefits for his own survival (J. Levy, M. Lussault, Dictionnaire de la Géographie, Belin, Paris, 2003, p. 124-126.)