

THE GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT OF COMMONAGES IN THREE SMALL
TOWNS IN THE EASTERN CAPE, SOUTH AFRICA

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Of

RHODES UNIVERSITY

By

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May 2009

Abstract

Commonage is land that is usually found adjacent to a town, which is owned by the local municipality and acquired through state grants or, historically, through the church. Since the new government dispensation in 1994, poor and previously disadvantaged residents have acquired access rights to commonage for agricultural purposes. Through the Department of Land Affairs's Commonage Programme, local municipalities are acquiring more commonage land for purposes of agriculture and grazing livestock. Commonages are increasingly being recognised as an important livelihood asset for the poor and unemployed residents' of towns and rapid urbanisation is contributing to the increasing use of commonage for livelihood provisioning. Some municipalities view commonage as a key asset to promote Local Economic Development, while others are finding it difficult to manage the land effectively, to the extent that some analysts see tragic ecological consequences occurring due to over-grazing. This has been likened to the "tragedy of the commons" as advocated by Hardin in 1968. Commonage and common property resource systems have many similarities and co-management has been advocated as a potential management regime for commonage. Researching the policy framework, institutional structures and management bodies involved in commonage, gave a better understanding of the governance and management of the commonages in Grahamstown, Fort Beaufort and Bathurst. Current management attempts are not ensuring the efficient, equitable and sustainable use of these commonages. The governance framework is not adequately supporting proper management. In an environment of resource-poor institutional bodies, adaptive co-management could prove to be the most effective system to ensure the sustainable use and development of this natural resource. Furthermore, commonage is no longer contributing to the Land Reform Programme. Commonage should be better integrated into agrarian reform through lease schemes and an efficient Emerging Farmer Programme.

Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge the following people who proved to be vital for the completion of the thesis. Firstly, I would like to acknowledge the support of my mother, who has not only contributed financially, but also through encouragement and patience, to my studies at Rhodes University and accepted my prolonged and often changing course of study.

In addition, I would like to acknowledge the support of my supervisors, Doreen Atkinson and Wouter de Groot, as well as the support of James Gambiza and Charlie Shackleton from the Department of Environmental Science at Rhodes University. I would like to emphasise the importance of Dr Gambiza, because it was he who recognised my abilities and insisted on me undertaking this immense Masters. Further recognition must be given to the extensive knowledge of Doreen Atkinson who was my principal critic. I would like to extend a big thank you to SANPAD for giving me this opportunity by funding my Master's studies.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my time in the Department of Environmental Science at Rhodes University, which has contributed to my growth as an academic and as a person. I would like to thank all those who were my support base and gave advice at every turn. I would especially like to acknowledge Georgina Cundill, who unknowingly became my mentor in the field of social studies.

Lastly, I would like to acknowledge the support of Nicholas Davenport, James Puttick and Banele Dube, my SANPAD compatriots, who were always ready with humour, advice and encouragement. Nicholas, thank you for the time spent debating the issues with me, and shedding light on the complexities of commonage. We really did become commonage warriors!

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Abbreviations

ACM	Adaptive Co-Management
CASP	Comprehensive Agricultural Support Grant
CMC	Commonage Management Committee
CPR	Common Property Resource
DEDEA	Department of Economic Development and Environmental Affairs
DLA	Department of Land Affairs
DM	District Municipality
DoA	Department of Agriculture
DPLG	Department of Provincial and Local Government
ECARP	Eastern Cape Agricultural Research Project
ECP	Eastern Cape Parks
EFA	Emerging Farmers' Association
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
LED	Local Economic Development
LM	Local Municipality
LRAD	Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development
LSU	Large Stock Unit
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NTFP	Non-Timber Forest Product
PLAS	Proactive Land Acquisition Strategy
PLRC	Provincial Land Redistribution Committee
SA	South Africa
SDF	Spatial Development Framework
SES	Social-Ecological System
SLAG	Settlement and Land Acquisition Grant
SSU	Small Stock Unit
TLC	Transitional Local Council

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1. Introduction

1.1. Introduction to this Thesis

The South Africa - Netherlands Partnership on Alternatives for Development (SANPAD) commissioned funding for four Master's research projects on the topic of "commonages" in South Africa. The research topics covered land-use changes on commonage, ecological changes on commonage land, the livelihood provisioning of commonage and lastly, the institutional arrangements governing commonage. These four Master's projects give a broad overview of the socio-economic, institutional and ecological status of commonage in the Eastern Cape, focussing on three particular towns; namely, Grahamstown, Fort Beaufort and Bathurst. This thesis covers research undertaken on the fourth topic, the institutional arrangements governing commonage in the Eastern Cape.

The topic for the Master's research programme was conceived due to recent literature indicating poor management of commonages in South Africa. Furthermore, the government of South Africa has recently embarked on a Commonage Programme. Although commonage land is a valuable natural resource, local government has been unable to manage it in a sustainable and efficient manner. The research programme aimed to understand how commonage land-use has changed over time, and especially since 1994 when new laws allowed previously disadvantaged people to gain access to the resource. The programme also aimed to understand how the ecological component of commonage has changed over time, and whether high livestock numbers is leading to over-grazing. Furthermore, the programme aimed to understand how much commonage contributed to peoples' livelihoods and whether commonage could be used to contribute to Local Economic Development.

The purpose of this thesis is to:

1. Add to the limited existence of research pertaining to commonage management, especially in the Eastern Cape Province.
2. Critique the way that commonages are managed and governed at the moment through an institutional analysis of the study sites.
3. Through discovering limitations in the Commonage Programme, offer solutions to how commonages should be governed and managed.

There are a number of key questions that form the basis of this research. They are:

1. What are the policies, laws and legislation that guide commonage governance in South Africa?
2. What is the nature of commonage and how is it managed in three study sites in the Eastern Cape?
3. What can these case studies teach us about commonage management in the South Africa?
4. How should commonage be managed to address the goals of equity and efficiency?
5. How can commonage complement the Land Reform Programme in South Africa?

1.2. Structure of This Thesis

The **first section** of this thesis aims to introduce the concept of “commonage”, giving an overview of what it is, how it features in the legislative framework for South Africa, the Commonage Programme and its role in the Land Reform Programme and the institutional arrangements which govern commonage. What is important to think about is how commonage laws have changed since the fall of the Apartheid government and how this has impacted on the management of commonage.

The **second section** of this thesis gives an extensive overview of literature pertaining to key themes which impact on the governance and management of commonage. This section discusses how the Land Reform Programme in South Africa is failing to reach its targets of equity and efficiency and briefly mentions that role that commonage could play in contributing to reaching these goals. A more detailed discussion of this connection can be found in later sections of the thesis. Furthermore, this section considers the value of natural resources to peoples’ livelihoods and how commonage plays an increasing part in the livelihoods of many of the poorest urban dwellers. The literature overview also considers some of the debates about rangeland degradation and how the current understanding of communal grazing must consider the aspirations of farmers when determining the kind of management regimes that must be implemented to ensure continued grazing capacity of rangelands. Lastly, this section details how commonage can be considered a common property resource and how some of the current debates about common property resources will be crucial when formulating an effective management system for commonages in South Africa.

The **third section** in this thesis describes the study sites where the research was conducted. It will give details of the commonages and the towns in which the commonages exist. This section will highlight the unique situation in which commonage features in the Eastern Cape and how commonage is an essential resource for the poor. This is because the Province is under-developed

and stricken by poverty and resource degradation. Furthermore, due to urbanisation, more and more people are migrating to towns but are discovering that it is difficult to find employment. As the demand for urban goods and services increases, and the number of unemployed people increase, more pressure is placed on commonage to provide natural resources.

Section four describes the methodology used in conducting research on the management and governance of the commonages in the study sites. Through conducting interviews with key informants, an attempt was made to describe the current standing of commonage management in the three study sites.

Section five sets out the results of the interviews and desk-based literature review conducted in this research. This section has been divided into general results which indicate the history and use of commonage, governance results which pertain to policy and management results. The results show just how poorly developed and managed commonages are in the three study sites.

Section six discusses the results of this research; particularly, the failure of management, how broader processes affect management attempts, the use of commonage, the tenure situation on commonage, the emerging farmer programme and the goals of equity and efficiency Land Reform Programme.

Section seven argues why commonage is important for the Land Reform Programme in South Africa and why it should be expanded and why it should be incorporated into a land rental market system. This section also debates the likely benefits of transforming management of these commonages into a system of Adaptive Co-Management system. The steps of transformation to an Adaptive Co-Management model are detailed.

1.3. Introduction to Commonage

According to Donges & van Winsen (1940: 296) commonage lands are “lands adjoining a town or village over which the inhabitants of such a town or village have a servitude of grazing for their stock, and, more rarely, the right to cultivate a certain portion of such lands”. Commonage land, or land for public purposes, is land that was allocated to towns by the Crown as part of their establishment (Hall et al., 2007: 25). In terms of the Department of Land Affairs definition (DLA, 1997: 1) commonage is a term “traditionally given to land, owned by the municipality or local authority, which was usually acquired through state grants or through the church”. According to

Donges & van Winsen (1940: 296) commonage was created through granting land to the local council, by the Crown, although land could also be granted by an individual or by the local council itself for the purposes of commonage. The purpose of granting this land to the municipality was to allow inhabitants of the town and erfholders to graze their livestock (Donges & van Winsen, 1940: 297). All other uses of the commonage was not permitted to infringe upon this public benefit (Donges & van Winsen, 1940: 297).

From the onset it is important to distinguish between two types of commonage as set out in the White Paper on South African Land Policy (DLA, 1997). “Traditional” commonage is land that was acquired historically; whereas “new” commonage is land that has been acquired after 1994 through the Department of Land Affairs Commonage Programme (DLA, 1997; Ingle, 2006: 47). Municipal commonage is found mainly in the Western, Eastern and Northern Cape; those areas of the country that were part of the old Cape Colony (Hall et al., 2007: 25). The Free State too has widespread commonage but most of this commonage was acquired through the Department of Land Affairs Commonage Programme (Hall et al., 2007: 25).

1.4. The Legal Nature of Commonage

1.4.1. Legislation Applicable to Commonage

Very little about commonage was mentioned in South African legislation before 1995 and it is only since the new democratic government dispensation that commonage has featured more strongly in national legislation (Ingle, 2006: 48). References to commonage are found mostly in policy to do with general land issues and very little legislation relates to commonage specifically; although, there are many Acts that have implications on the management of commonage as land under the ownership of municipalities.

In the past, commonage laws were contained within the laws applicable to local authorities; for example, the municipal regulations or ordinances. Because commonages fell within the Province of the Cape of Good Hope, the applicable law was the Municipal Ordinance 20 of 1974 (Anderson, 1996: 3). Commonage was also regulated by Ordinance no 10 of 1912 and Ordinance no 33 of 1934 and before this Act 45 of 1882 (Donges & van Winsen, 1940). The date of the latter Act indicates the length of time that commonages have been established in South Africa under law.

The ordinances served particular roles. Section 17 of Ordinance 33 of 1934 describes the applicable legal uses of commonage. Although commonage is to benefit inhabitants of towns, it can also be set

aside for public purposes such as cemeteries and refuse sites. Furthermore, it can also be subdivided into erven¹. Section 170 and 171 of Ordinance 10 of 1912 set out the conditions for the alienation and disposal of commonages. Municipalities may not dispose of commonage if people have acquired servitudinal rights to the land. Municipalities have rights of control over the commonage. These rights include the right to:

- Provide for the management and protection of the commonage by fixing the number of animals allowed to graze and the fee applicable for use
- Grant licences or permits to use natural resources
- Grant temporary grazing rights to non-residents
- Remove unauthorised buildings

The municipality, when exercising these rights, may not infringe upon the rights of the inhabitants. However, Ordinance 18 of 1935 allows municipalities to infringe upon these rights if measures to prevent soil erosion have to be implemented. In this case, environmental and soil conservation can be implemented on the land, free of any interference by residents or law.

Under the Apartheid government, the benefits of commonage largely accrued to white inhabitants of towns (Anderson, 1996: 3) and it was generally understood that land was available only for the use of white residents. In some instances parts of, or the whole, of the commonage was leased to the highest bidder and this system clearly discriminated against poor people; a group largely made up of the black residents of towns (Anderson, 1996: 7). Following the implementation of the ANC government policies after 1994, the DLA has stated that land must now be made available for the use of previously disadvantaged communities (DLA, 2002: 6). Although, during the Apartheid years, commonage lost its public nature through discriminatory laws and through leases between the municipalities and private farmers, the purpose of the original laws is becoming more applicable today, and commonage has regained its past nature and is now reverting back to its previous status as a public resource.

Today, commonage is governed by new legislation, in particular the Provision of Land and Assistance Act 126 of 1993². Section 10 (1c) gives the Minister authority to “grant an advance or subsidy to the Municipal Council to acquire land to be used as commonage or to extend an existing commonage”.

¹ Erf is a term used to describe the subdivision of land into sections, each erf being allotted a number. Erven is the plural of erf.

² This Act has since been amended by the Development Facilitation Act 67 of 1995 and the Provision of Certain Land for Settlement Amendment Act 26 of 1998. However, these have not changed the provisions for commonage acquisition and expansion.

The Grant and Services document (version 6), as approved by state expenditure, allows for funds to be used for infrastructure development on new and existing commonage (Atkinson et al., 2004: 15). Hence, there is a movement towards extending or acquiring new commonage and developing old and new commonage alike.

1.4.2. The Land Reform Policy and New Commonage

Under the White Paper on South African Land Policy (DLA, 1997), a grant has been made available for the acquisition of commonage, subject to certain conditions (Scheepers, 2000: 144). This has allowed land to be acquired for purposes of commonage or commonage development. The municipality must show the following (Scheepers, 2000: 144):

- That the land will be made available to the poor residents.
- That the potential users of the land have participated in the planning and acquisition process.
- That there is a plan for development, management and use of the land.
- The municipality has disclosed all of its financial records.
- The municipality will contribute to the purchase and development of the land.
- The municipality is committed to meeting the needs of poor residents.
- The purchase price of the land is market related.

Once the land is purchased, a notarial deed of perpetual servitude is endorsed against the title deed (Scheepers, 2000: 144). This ensures that the municipality uses the land only for those purposes of commonage or commonage development. The precise legal position of commonage (old and new) depends on the conditions under which the land was granted or the conditions stipulated in title deed (DLA, 1997). According to the DLA (1997), the general condition applicable to all commonages is that they cannot be alienated (sold) without the consent of the Premier (or the MEC responsible for Local Government).

Historical regulations still exist. According to the DLA (1997), the local municipality who owns commonage land is empowered to make by-laws to regulate the control and use of such lands. The measures are contained in the relevant Local Council Ordinances. The DLA (1997) recognises that many municipalities are unaware of these powers or do not know how to exercise them. This is not surprising if one sees the array of applicable ordinances, some which have been amended by subsequent ordinances or legislation. Furthermore, although land that is considered commonage must have its own title deed, accessing these documents can be difficult and time consuming,

especially if the deeds date back to the time of the first establishment of commonages (Pienaar pers. comm., 2008).

1.4.3. Institutional Arrangements

1.4.3.1. Introduction

Before embarking on an account of the nature of the institutional arrangements that affect commonage management, it is important to look more closely at the structures of government that came into effect after the democratic elections in 1994. The former centralised government of the Apartheid era was replaced with a government with federal elements, whereby powers and responsibilities are currently devolved to provincial and local level (Bekink, 2006: 15). This sees the beginning of a tiered system of government with three spheres, national, provincial and local, which are distinctive, interdependent and interrelated; so set out in the supreme law, the Constitution of South Africa (Bekink, 2006: 16). According to the White Paper on Local Government (2000), the municipality is a developmental, autonomous and democratic sphere of government and as such is a “tier of government in its own right” (de Visser, 2005: 66). So, although municipalities are by law required to share responsibility with higher government tiers, they have their own mandate and powers.

1.4.3.2. Developmental Local Government

The preamble of the Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000 states that “... the Constitution of our non-racial democracy enjoins local government not just to seek to provide services to all our people but to be *fundamentally developmental in orientation...*” (emphasis added). Furthermore, the Constitution (section 152(1c)) states that the objectives of local government are to promote social and economic development. This clearly indicates the path that government is now expected to take; one that has shifted from service delivery, to one that is developmental.

1.4.3.3. Integrated Development Plans

An important means through which municipalities fulfil their developmental role is by means of the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) process. As defined in the Municipal Systems Act (section 35 (1)), the status of an IDP is all-encompassing, because the document guides and informs all planning and development and binds the municipality and all other affected parties to the duties and rights imposed on them through the IDP process. The IDP is a document that represents a single inclusive plan for the Municipality and “defines the new landscape for Developmental Local Government” (Ndlambe, 2007: 13). According to the White Paper for Local Government (1998), it is a tool for

transformation, and the process is stipulated within Chapter 5 of the Municipal Systems Act. This legitimate vehicle for development is a crucial way for commonage development to be guided, planned and implemented (Bekink, 2006: 71). Commonage should be well represented within the IDP of a municipality, showing concrete and specific proposals relating to commonage, indicating how the commonage can be utilised for livelihood provisioning and other uses (Govender-van Wyk, 2007).

1.4.3.4. Local Economic Development

Atkinson (2005: 4) argues that commonage is, in many smaller towns in South Africa, “by far the most important developmental asset for the poor and often makes an important contribution to household food security”. As such, commonage is seen as an opportunity for Local Economic Development (LED) (Anderson & Pienaar, 2003: 18). This has partly been motivated by the notion of Developmental Local Government and also by the change in emphasis of the Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development Programme (Anderson & Pienaar, 2003: 18). This change took place after the 2002 Commonage Policy made amendments to the former 1997 Commonage Policy. Whereas the previous policy made no specific mention of the kind of user who should be allowed access to the commonage (if you exclude the notion of ‘poor local people’), the latter policy clearly sees two kind of commonage users; that of the subsistence user and that of the emergent farmer (DLA, 2002). According to the 2002 Policy, the subsistence user will have little education, limited financial capital and management skills with little or no access to finance, resources or credit. This user will be using the commonage resources at a survivalist level and low levels of commercial activity will take place. In contrast, the emergent farmer will aspire to be a commercial farmer and will, over time, build up sufficient assets and skills to leave the commonage. This can be referred to as the “stepping stone” system or graduation system of commonage. The two user systems are envisioned to be separate, with individual leaseholds assigned to emergent farmers and communal leaseholds assigned to subsistence farmers (DLA, 2002). Each municipality is required to create an emerging farmer system with the assistance of other commonage role-players. This emergent farmer system is crucial for the development of the commonage, which will contribute to the LED responsibilities of the municipality.

1.4.3.5. Commonage Institutional Arrangements

According to the former Commonage Programme policy document (DLA, 1997), the following recommendations were made, (1) that commonage should retain its public character and, therefore, the DLA must commit itself to ensuring that existing commonage land is made available to local poor

residents for agricultural purposes; (2) that municipalities must be encouraged to develop conditions that will enable poor people to access the commonage land; (3) that provincial government must be encouraged to develop appropriate policy and legislative frameworks; and (4) that a Grant for the Acquisition of Commonage must be made available to municipalities to enable them to create or extend commonage for the purpose of establishing agricultural or other productive lease schemes.

The document fails to specify which level of municipality is responsible for commonage programmes, although the duties of the local municipality are extensive because they are the owners of the land. A workshop was held with the intention to inform the commonage programme (Atkinson et al., 2004: 13). Following this, and other recommendations from analysts, specific duties and responsibilities were given to various government bodies, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and commonage users, as set out in the new Commonage Programme policy document (DLA, 2002).

There are essentially five governance scales of commonage role-players: national departments, provincial offices, district offices, local municipalities and grass roots level role-players. Table 1 summarises the roles and responsibilities of these role-players. All information was acquired from the Commonage Programme policy document (2002).

Although a respective Local Municipality (LM) owns its commonage, the DLA Commonage Policy focuses on both district municipalities and local municipalities as the driver of commonage projects (DLA, 2002). The District Municipality (DM), due to the legislative framework³, takes the role of land reform delivery (DLA, 2002). The Chapter 5 functions, as set out in the Municipal Systems Act, specify that the district municipality is responsible for Integrated Development Planning and the allocation of grants to local municipalities. Local municipalities, on the other hand, are expected to assist the DLA in its land reform objectives and use the IDP as a vehicle through which to determine whether there is landlessness, inequitable access to land or land claims within their jurisdiction (Hall et al., 2007: 26). Therefore, the IDP must also identify the commonage needs and development priorities.

³ In particular the Local Government: Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998 and the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000.

Table 1: The Responsibilities of Commonage Role-players

Commonage Programme Role-players and Responsibilities		
Level	Role-player	Responsibilities
National	Department of Land Affairs	1. Policy 2. Programmes 3. Coordination of provincial strategies 4. National budget
	Department of Agriculture	1. Land-use management guidelines 2. Prioritisation 3. Manage allocated budget
	Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism	None
	Department of Provincial and Local Government	1. Contribution to policy 2. Monitoring of projects 3. Sign Notarial deed
Provincial	Provincial Land Reform Office	1. Transfer funds to DM 2. Allocate budget (district land reform planning) 3. Member of Provincial Land Redistribution Committee (PLRC) 4. Ensure compliance and registration of deeds
	Department of Agriculture and Land Affairs	1. Manage funds (commonage support and municipal infrastructure grant) 2. Feasibility reports and assessments 3. Training and land-use management 4. Emergent Farmer programme 4. Extension services
	Department of Economic Development and Environmental Affairs	Occasional member of PLRC
District	District Land Reform Offices	1. Land reform planning 2. Decisions on LRAD grants 3. Funding to LM
	District offices of the DoA	Extension services (training and support)
	District offices of Environmental Affairs	None
	District Municipalities	1. Provide information to LM 2. Member of PLRC 3. IDP and commonage planning 4. Manage commonage funds 5. Deliver projects (from identification, planning and implementation) 6. Needs analysis 7. Set up management committee and select users 8. Day-to-day management
Local	Local Municipalities	Site of day-to-day management
	Commonage Management Committee	1. Contribute to commonage planning and management 2. Establish user association 3. Responsible for life of project
Grassroots	Emerging Farmers Associations	Support and management
	Other user associations	Support and management
	NGOs	1. Contribute to Prioritisation 2. Facilitation and assistance

1.4.3.6. Commonage Management Committee

It is recommended that commonage, although owned by the respective local municipality, be managed through a management body comprising of representatives from the local municipality, the users and other relevant authorities (DLA, 1997). According to the DLA (1997), the role of the

management committee is to establish conditions and allocate procedures for users and ensure the effective use and management of the land, with the co-operation of relevant authorities. The local municipality is responsible for the creation of this body and must ensure that it is established before new commonage is acquired (DLA, 2002). The users must generally be part of a user association; however, if there is an existing user committee, such as a Stockowners' Association, it is not necessary to create a new one (DLA, 2002). Essentially, this means that the responsibility and power to manage commonage has been devolved to community level and, therefore, management of commonage acquires a co-management approach (Anderson & Pienaar, 2003: 16); in other words, the management of commonage is jointly undertaken by the users, municipality and other role-players.

2. Literature Overview

2.1. The Land Reform Programme in South Africa

The Land Reform Programme has been necessitated by the inequitable land situation in South Africa at present, which is a product of the past “land laws” that governed South Africa pre-1994 (Badenhorst et al., 2006: 585). These land laws⁴ were designed as measures to segregate people of different races and regulated the occupation of land according to race. Homelands were established and black people were moved to these areas in order to separate them from whites who lived in all other available areas of South Africa. These laws led to the erosion of the rights of black people in the country (Badenhorst et al., 2006: 585). This has resulted in a situation where the black people in South Africa are experiencing landlessness, poverty, vulnerability, unemployment and lack of basic services (Lahiff, 2003: 2). This in turn has “racialised”, not only the land issue in South Africa (Walker, 2005: 806), but also the agricultural issue; whereby large commercial farms are concentrated in the hands of white farmers, and black farmers continue to farm in a subsistence manner in the communal areas (Goebel, 2005: 364). However, in the time leading up to the new democratic dispensation, and since then, numerous legislative acts have abolished this racial geographical and social separation and, since the Final Constitution (Act 108 of 1996), government policies are now actively seeking to redress these imbalances (Badenhorst et al., 2006: 592).

The Constitution is the supreme law of South Africa and all other legislation must be consistent with it (Act 108 of 1996 ss2). Under section 25 of the Constitution (the property clause) the Land Reform measures are stated. In South Africa, Land Reform is divided into three programmes: Land Redistribution, Land Tenure Reform and Land Restitution. Without expanding on the goals of all three programmes, it is adequate for this thesis to state the collective purpose of the Land Reform Programme, which is fourfold (DLA, 1997): (a) to redress the injustices of the past; (b) to foster national reconciliation and stability; (c) to underpin economic growth; and (d) to improve household welfare and alleviate poverty. The practical goal of the Land Reform Programme is to transfer 30% of agricultural land from white people to black people through its various programmes. The Land Reform Programme of South Africa is considered the most progressive, but costliest and slowest form of Land Reform (van den Brink et al., 2007: 174).

2.1.1. The Redistribution Programme

The Redistribution Programme requires that the South African State is to “take reasonable legislative and other measures, within its available resources, to foster conditions which enable citizens to gain

⁴ These being the Black Land Act 27 of 1913; the South African Development Trust and Land Act 18 of 1936 and the Group Areas Act 41 of 1950 to name a few.

access to land on an equitable basis (Act 108 of 1996 s25:5). The 'reasonable legislative measures' concept has resulted in the White Paper on South African Land Policy (1997), which contains all the Land Reform Programmes and sets out funding and other developmental measures to address the requirements of the Constitution.

The Commonage Programme is a sub-component of the Redistribution Programme (which has a number of different facets) and falls within its Land Redistribution of Agricultural Development sub-programme (LRAD⁵). According to Badenhorst et al., (2006: 593), the aim of Land Redistribution is to "provide the landless (or poor) with land for residential and agricultural purposes in order to improve their livelihoods". Through this Programme, various "access products" have been created; such as the Commonage Programme and LRAD (Badenhorst et al., 2006: 594). The LRAD sub-programme is set out in two parts; one aspect of the programme is to transfer agricultural land to specific individuals or groups, to create a new class of black commercial farmers (Jacobs et al., 2003: 1); and the second aspect is to improve peoples' access to municipal and tribal land for grazing purposes (Didiza, 2006: 22). Hence, the Commonage Programme is intricately connected to LRAD. This has two implications; (1) the intended implication that commonage is used for grazing or agricultural purposes (Govender-van Wyk & Wilson, 2006: 2); and (2) the unanticipated implication that the focus on commonage is not exclusive, and it has the potential to lose its significance in the greater Programmes into which it falls.

LRAD is the programme that has, to some extent, replaced the former Settlement and Land Acquisition Grant (SLAG), which was a grant system aimed at different types of projects, such as group settlement, group and individual production, on-farm and off-farm settlement and farmer equity schemes (Didiza, 2006: 22). LRAD has performed better than SLAG since its inception in 2001 and SLAG is now predominantly used for settlement purposes (Didiza, 2006: 22). The initial pro-poor focus of SLAG has been replaced by the emerging farmer approach of the LRAD programme. The Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme (CASP) of the Department of Agriculture is used to support LRAD through a grant for the development of land purchased through LRAD or acquired in other ways.

The LRAD programme has been amended recently after thorough reviews of the failures of the programme by various analysts (see the section below on failures of the Land Redistribution

⁵ LRAD offers a 'sliding-scale' of grants to black South Africans who wish to buy land on which to practice agriculture. The grants used to vary from R20 000 to R100 000 depending on the level of 'own contribution' (Hall, 2007). LRAD has since been amended to increase the level of the grants to vary from R111 152 to R430 857 (DLA, 2008: 6).

Programme). Of significance is the increase in the level of grants offered (DLA, 2008: 6). The targeted groups for the grants are the most vulnerable black members of society (DLA, 2008: 3). The objectives of the revised programme are to increase access to land and to stimulate agricultural growth (DLA, 2008: 3). One of the methods envisioned to achieve this objective is to abolish the restriction on sub-dividing land (DLA, 2008: 11). Thereafter the grant should be sufficient to purchase a private and economically viable land parcel.

There are a number of reasons why it is important to contextualise commonage within the greater Land Reform Programme. The first is that, as stated above, commonage is part of the Redistribution Programme of Land Reform and is calculated into the percentage of land that the South African government wants to redistribute (Anderson & Pienaar, 2003: 1). The second reason is that commonage is intended to be used as a “springboard” for the LRAD programme through the emerging farmer system of the Commonage Programme (DLA, 2002). As indicated above, the “stepping stone” policy of the Commonage Programme *should* result in emerging farmers accessing enough skills, capital and livestock to exit the commonage. The LRAD grant will allow the emerging farmer to purchase his or her own land on which to farm independently. Thirdly, as per the goals of the Redistribution Policy, commonage should be used to alleviate poverty and contribute to economic development (Jacobs et al., 2003: 4). A careful consideration of the Land Reform Programme, with specific reference to the Redistribution policy, can, therefore, shed light on the future of commonage as a redistributive mechanism and how it should be better integrated into the greater Land Reform Programme.

Lastly, commonage land, although peri-urban in nature, is subject to land-use practices that are characteristic of communal areas in South Africa. Communal areas are characterised by a number of individuals using the same piece of land; therefore, communal land can be viewed as a Common Property Resource. Land used for commonage purposes, as this thesis will argue later, is also a Common Property Resource. Both these property regimes are subject to land-use practices which are driven by livelihood needs, for supplementing incomes and for subsistence needs. Therefore, one can argue that there is a strong connection between goals of communal farming and commonage farming. Problems occurring in Land Reform projects are mirrored by problems occurring on commonage projects. However, commonage has a strong advantage over other Common Property Resource systems; it has a potentially strong institutional body for management, the respective Local Municipality.

2.1.2. Land Reform and Poverty Alleviation

As a poverty alleviation strategy, the Land Reform Programme has not made significant progress (Andrew et al., 2003). In a recent study, it was found that 50% of Land Reform projects have failed to make beneficiaries permanently better-off (CDE, 2008b). Goebel (2005: 358) states that it is becoming more difficult to argue convincingly that Land Reform will significantly relieve rural poverty and Cousins (2007) feels that Land Reform is necessary but not sufficient for economic transformation. For example, land transferred in redistribution processes in Limpopo were found to be either abandoned or used less productively than before (McCusker, 2004: 71). These failures have led some to argue that Land Reform progress should not be about hectares transferred from white to black ownership, but about how that land has impacted on the lives of the poor (Walker, 2005: 819). Hence, it is not the quantity of land that is important but the quality of the benefits derived (Jacobs et al., 2003: 26).

Land Reform has been slow (CDE, 2008b). Some authors argue that it is slow because of the route taken, that of Market-Based Land Reform (Walker, 2005; Didiza, 2006; Lahiff, 2007), and many are now arguing that the process needs to be fast-tracked, with proactive state involvement (Kepe & Cousins, 2002; Wegerif, 2004). Market-Based Land Reform (MBLR), or the Willing-Buyer, Willing-Seller approach that South Africa has adopted, has been heavily criticised for various reasons. The MBLR concept is a neo-liberal approach adopted with the support of the rest of the “westernised” world and is premised on the protection of private rights (Goebel, 2005: 361). It seeks to redistribute land, liberalise land and other markets, draw small-holder farmers into commercial production and minimise the role of the state in land allocation, the regulation of the agricultural economy and rural development (Lahiff, 2007: 7). It is based on a voluntary market system where beneficiaries are self-selected and where land owners have the freedom to choose whether or not to sell their land (Saturnino & Borras, 2003: 370). Therefore, it has been embraced by commercial farmers and the non-poor have availed themselves to the programme (Saturnino & Borras, 2003: 384). As described by Saturnino & Borras (2003: 369), supporters of MBLR believe that this system leads to the efficient and equitable redistribution of assets.

Widespread critics feel that MBLR pushes up land prices, excludes the poor and has failed to draw in willing sellers and private sector agencies (Lahiff, 2007). It requires good planning and good support services; and lack of these has led to poor performance in South Africa (Saturnino & Borras, 2003: 385). The main programme on which it is based, LRAD, has many flaws. The following section will examine the failures of both the Redistribution and the LRAD programme.

2.1.3. The Criticisms of Land Redistribution and LRAD

As noted before, several agencies and observers have noted that the process of land redistribution is too slow (Didiza, 2006; CDE, 2008b). The bureaucratic red-tape of the process hampers fast, easy and efficient exchange of land (Lahiff, 2007: 12) and many farmers would rather use private markets to sell their property⁶. However, not only is the programme slow, it has been discovered that there is also not enough money available for the Land Reform Programme in general (Walker, 2005; CDE, 2008b). The responsibility for Land Reform rests on the shoulders of provincial departments who have little financial and other resources and there is no explicit role for Local Government (Lahiff, 2001). Furthermore, it has also been discovered that the performance of Land Redistribution has been hampered by a subversion of the process by the Restitution⁷ Programme of Land Reform; once land has been transferred, new farmers are discovering that it is under a land claim (CDE, 2008b).

A very important criticism of the Land Reform Programme is that it is no longer pro-poor, because of the financial contribution required, which results in the poor losing out to the non-poor (Lahiff, 2007: 14), generally because the non-poor can mobilise more capital to buy land (Hall, 2007). Therefore, the labour, income and gender inequalities in South Africa are not being addressed through Land Reform (Lahiff, 2001; McCusker, 2004: 69). Furthermore, HIV/AIDs is compromising the ability of people to use the new land due to labour shortages and time spent caring for the sick (Walker, 2005: 17).

Another important criticism of the Land Redistribution Programme is that land prices in South Africa are high (Lahiff, 2007: 11) because current owners of land control the time of sale and the price of the land (Lahiff, 2001). The LRAD grant size is too meagre to purchase large-scale commercial farms which results in people buying the land in groups. This further results in too many beneficiaries using the same piece of land, and they are generally disorganised and lack capital (McCusker, 2004: 66). Because of the restriction on the sub-division of the land, which creates a communal farming situation, it is often the weakest and poorest members of the group who have little say in the management of the land (Lahiff, 2007: 10). One suggested response to this issue is to identify better equipped beneficiaries, with adequate capital and experience (Walker, 2005: 819). For example, it has been found that black farm workers remain the most marginalised people in the country; they are poorly paid, geographically isolated and politically marginal (Crane, 2007: 1038). Yet, they are

⁶ However, this has meant that the extent of Redistribution has been underestimated; the private markets have contributed as much as 40% of land transferred between black and white farmers (Lahiff, 2007: 8).

⁷ The aim of the Restitution programme is to compensate people for being unfairly disposed of their land after 1913. They will either receive monetary compensation for the value of the land, or will be able to claim back the land.

not always identified for Redistribution projects, even though they may be skilled in farming (Atkinson & Buscher, 2006).

One of the issues not addressed in the Land Reform Programme is that of arable land, of which South Africa has very little (Walker, 2005; Didiza, 2006: 28). Furthermore, there are climatic and water constraints to farming (Marcus et al., 1996). In addition to the poor climatic conditions for farming, the economic climate in which agriculture is now practiced is competitive and difficult due to agricultural deregulation, lack of subsidies and trade liberalisation (Hall, 2007: 88). This has resulted in small farmers struggling to compete with larger established farmers.

Another pertinent criticism of the Land Reform Programme is that it is too focused on commercial production (Lahiff, 2007: 15). Furthermore, there is a failure to recognise the difference between household and national food-security (CDE, 2008a). Household food security is linked to small-scale subsistence farming, while national food security requires large-scale commercial production. The South African government does not recognise that rural people adopt multiple livelihood strategies and that small-scale agriculture can be as productive as large-scale commercial agriculture (Goebel, 2005: 353). Private consultants usually draw up the business plans for the newly redistributed land, without taking into account the multiple users and uses of the land (Lahiff, 2001). Therefore, it has been argued that LRAD is not contributing to livelihoods and access to land does not mean better livelihoods or better land-use practices (Andrew et al., 2003).

A criticism of the Land Reform Programme, that has a crucial bearing on the use of commonage, is the criticism that, whereas DLA focuses on large-scale agricultural away from towns and cities, there is an urban bias to land reform; therefore, people are more interested in acquiring rights to urban or peri-urban land (Adams et al., 2000; McCusker, 2004; Walker, 2005). The increased demand for urban land can be partly attributed to urbanisation, and partly due to the failure of land to contribute to poverty alleviation in rural areas, which results in people leaving rural areas to find employment in cities and towns. In this urbanising climate, the demand for commonage is rapidly growing. Commonage is becoming more valuable because it contributes to peoples' livelihoods and because it can be used for cultural practices.

2.1.4. Solutions to Land Reform Failures

The most widely entertained solution to Land Reform failures is a systematic integration of Land Reform into broader rural development processes (Lahiff, 2003; CDE, 2008b). Land only plays a

permissive role in poverty reduction and must, therefore, be part of a broader poverty reduction strategy before it is able to contribute to the livelihoods of people (Chimhowu, 2006: 7). Therefore, a process of agrarian reform, which will help to improve rural dwellers' access to markets, social services and employment, is a good way to complement and enhance the greater Land Reform process (Jacobs et al., 2003: 28). This will require restructuring the rural economic space, the property regimes and the socio-economic relations between the rural and urban areas (Cousins, 2007). It will also require that agriculture be better supported by central government through national economic policies (de Visser, 2005; van den Brink et al., 2007). It is still unclear how the finer details of agrarian reform will be carried out and if it will succeed in its goals.

Another solution, as offered earlier, is that the State must be more active in the redistribution of land (Jacobs et al., 2003; Chimhowu, 2006; Cousins, 2007). This idea has been accepted by the South African government through its Proactive Land Acquisition Strategy (PLAS). Some years after its inception, representatives of the government, recognising some of the flaws of the Land Reform Programme, came up with the following policy solutions: proactive land acquisition, better expropriation measures, subdivision of land and "levelling the playing field"; in other words, ensuring that the non-poor and the poor have equal access to the benefits of land reform (Didiza, 2006: 22). PLAS was conceived in 2003 and has been implemented since 2006. The aim of this government strategy is to proactively target land and match it with demand, with emphasis on developing the land prior to assisting people to access the land (DLA, 2006). However, it is uncertain how this objective may be achieved. As will be shown later, the costs of undertaking Land Reform in South Africa may be a hindrance to such a scheme.

Because of the high urbanisation rates in South Africa, it is important that government programmes should start to make more land available for peri-urban and urban residents (Walker, 2005: 822). Land reform must, therefore, focus on land close to settlements (Jacobs et al., 2003). Furthermore, the rural geography left over from Apartheid is highly inequitable (van den Brink, 2002: 15). Some analysts suggest that small-scale farming can address this inequality because this system is more fair and equitable than large-scale farming (van den Brink, 2002: 13; Lahiff, 2007). In addition to this, it is believed that, in order for land to be appropriate for the poor, smaller groups sizes and individual projects may be more advantageous than the communal purchase of large land parcels (Jacobs et al., 2003: 25).

The South African government policies need to recognise the continuum of farmers and their various needs; from subsistence to commercial, part-time to full-time and large and small-scale farmers (Andrew et al., 2003). Therefore, there may be merit in researching the likelihood of introducing small-holder farming to the Land Reform Programme, for those without the capital to purchase large-scale commercial enterprises. This may require subdividing larger pieces of land (van den Brink et al., 2007). However, small farms are more efficient, especially when one considers the livelihood benefits of the land (van den Brink et al., 2007). Small farms also allow for people to self-finance the land (van den Brink et al., 2007). Although Goebel (2005: 353) agrees with other analysts that small-holder farming can be socially efficient and economically efficient, other analysts feel that small-holder farming does not drive economic growth (Chimhowu, 2006: 42).

Deininger et al. (2008) take a closer look at equity of land access in the form of land rental markets. They show that in India, China and Vietnam, land rental markets allowed the poor access to land, and increased equity of land holdings (Deininger et al., 2008: 893). This is corroborated by other research in Hungary (Vranken & Swinnen, 2006: 481). This could have important implications on the redistribution of land. One analyst believes that the South African government policies must explore land rental markets because these allow for the participation of the poor (Chimhowu, 2006: 38). The poor have better access to land through rentals in countries where there are other land market imperfections, such as poor access to credit and high transaction costs (Vranken & Swinnen, 2006: 481). Furthermore, rental markets allow families to farm on land that is optimal in size (Vranken & Swinnen, 2006: 496) as well as to diversify income streams in the case of renting out (Deininger et al., 2008: 893). This indicates that Land Rental Markets could be pro-poor in the sense that poor peoples' labour can determine their access to land, as opposed to their financial capital. Another important consideration of Land Rental Markets is the effect it has on productivity. In India, increased rental market activity led to an increase in productivity on farms (Deininger et al., 2008: 893). This may be attributed to better access to land by those with higher farm management skills, as was found in the case of China (Vranken & Swinnen, 2006: 496).

The Commonage Programme can be related to the recommendations above in two ways. Firstly, the emerging farmer programme can be enhanced by rental markets, which make it easier and less-risky for emerging farmers to exit the commonage and farm independently. Secondly, through the same programme, the Commonage Programme could be used to enhance an agrarian reform programme because the commonage can contribute to the socio-economic system that would connect urban areas to their surrounding rural areas. The Commonage Programme could provide the financial,

managerial and rangeland management skills that improve the use of rural land use and contributes to the Land Reform Programme; firstly, by contributing “hectares”, and secondly by ensuring new black farmers are equipped to use redistributed farmers efficiently.

2.2. The Equity-Efficiency Debate

As Olubode-Awosola et al. (2008: 851) acknowledge of the SA Land Reform Programme, the policy needs to address the challenge of balancing equity with efficiency. The Programme aims to transfer 30% of all agricultural land to black South Africans by 2014 (DLA, 2008: 1). The LRAD programme, although aiming to improve the plight of the poor and landless by helping them to gain access to land, allows LRAD grants for food safety-net projects and equity schemes, as well as large-scale productions schemes (DLA, 2008: 1). One of its overall objectives of LRAD is to stimulate growth from agriculture (DLA, 2008: 3). Although not defined, or spelt out explicitly, the Land Reform Programme (Redistribution, Restitution and Land Tenure Reform) aims to improve the equity of land holdings, while ensuring the efficiency of the use of the land such that agriculture can stimulate economic growth. As Hall (1998: 452) notes, when a policy aims to promote equity and efficiency, it must indicate how these two objectives will work together because they can be conflicting without clear, workable instruments. Government policy must consider whether the goals of Land Reform can be reconciled; for example, whether poverty reduction can be reconciled with the “deracialisation” of land and equitable access (Chimhowu, 2006).

In terms of the definition of equity and efficiency, authors use various interchangeable words for both. For example, Hall (1998) uses “productive” to refer to efficiency. Besley & Burgess (2000: 391) speak of “poverty reduction and growth” as the outcome of Land Reform. Policy developers within the South African Government view economic growth and poverty alleviation as the goals of the Land Reform Programme, which could indicate that the policy defines efficiency as “economic growth”. However, one goal that is neglected in the Land Reform Programme is that of sustainable development; which means improving ecological system health and ensuring the maintenance of the ability of the ecological system to adapt to changes (Islam et al., 2003: 152). The issue of ecological system health is a third dimension of the equity-efficiency debate; it is a dimension that will require more attention in the future. However, for this thesis, the discussion will remain on how the South African government policy hopes to reconcile economic growth with Land Redistribution goals.

According to van den Brink et al. (2006: 18), Land Redistribution is important for equity, conflict prevention, economic growth, jobs and poverty alleviation. They argue that 1) equitable land

redistribution is good for agricultural and non-agricultural, rural and non-rural growth; 2) good farm land can lift people out of poverty permanently; and 3) unresolved land issues leads to land conflict. Small-scale farming has been suggested as one of the ways to ensure that the challenges of equity and efficiency are met in land reform programmes. SA bases its equity judgement on the 30% transfer figure; although it is submitted that a 30% transfer rate of agricultural land does not equate to land ownership equity because black people make up the greater majority of the SA population figures. Furthermore, as indicated above, owning land does not automatically mean that poverty levels will be reduced, because other inputs, such as mechanical and physical infrastructure, are necessary to make the land productive.

In his essay on Land Reform in South Africa, van den Brink (2002: 11) discusses the notion of small farmer efficiency. He equates high efficiencies with more output for less input. Here output and input can be either in cash or in kind. He suggests that high yields does not equal efficiency (van den Brink, 2002:11). Small farmers usually use their household labour and farm on land sizes that they can comfortably manage without large inputs of cash or outside labour (van den Brink, 2002: 11). Therefore, small-scale farmers use resources (capital, land and labour) more efficiently than large-scale farmers (van den Brink et al., 2006: 18). Van den Brink (2002: 13) also believes that focussing Land Reform on the creation or maintenance of large-scale farms can lead to rural poverty and, therefore, country-wide economic problems. Olubode-Awosola et al. (2008: 851), in an extensive modelling exercise of Land Reform, found that this assumption may be false, and that large-scale farming is much more productive than small-scale farming. They found that land fragmentation and the settling of groups on land decreases the ability of the land to contribute to regional production and can be a poverty trap for those who have settled there. However, they do note that small-scale land parcels can be more efficient when serving a safety-net function (Olubode-Awosola et al., 2008: 852). The question remains whether the safety-net function of land is as important as national food security function of land and whether small-scale farmers are able to contribute to the agricultural markets in a way that ensures that the urban populations are fed. Consensus on this matter will help to inform Land Reform Policy.

2.3. Land Reform and Livelihoods

Some analysts of the Land Reform Programme, especially Lahiff (2003; 2005), feel that government policy needs to take into account how livelihoods are defined and provided for when embarking on rural reform programmes. Land Reform is too focussed on giving support to medium to large-scale black commercial farmers and gives little support to subsistence farmers; these people also deserve

access to markets and social services and systems (SLSA, 2003: 23). Indeed, Land Reform will impact on millions of households in the Eastern Cape by affecting their access to land and resources (Lahiff, 2005). Therefore, Land Reform must take into account secondary products, such as fuelwood, medicinal plants and wild vegetables, that contribute to the range of livelihood benefits; this will have implications on the business plans and feasibility studies connected to redistribution and restitution processes (Cousins, 1999: 314). Land Reform may also be crucial for sustainable resource use and the avoidance of degradation (Meadows & Hoffman, 2002: 436). The next section will consider more closely the connection between land and livelihoods, and later, how this influences the management of rangelands.

2.3.1. Rural Livelihoods

Cousins (1999: 300) refers to rural livelihoods as multiple, diverse and dynamic; the aims being to manage risk, reduce vulnerability and enhance livelihood security. Hence, livelihoods in the Eastern Cape and elsewhere are made up of various sources of income and other provisions, such as natural resources and agricultural off-take (Lahiff, 2003; Ainslie, 2005). Although agriculture generally contributes a relatively minor percentage to peoples' livelihoods, compared to remittances and social grants, it still plays an important role in supplementing income for many rural households (Lahiff, 2003: 9). In the Eastern Cape, the largest agricultural sector is livestock production (Ainslie, 2002: 2), although livestock owners lie on a continuum of scales of activities; in other words, there are different farming activities along a continuum between purely subsistence and purely commercial farming (Ainslie, 2002: 10). In general, therefore, rural or urban-poor households will rely on a combination of social grants, remittances, natural resources, arable fields and livestock production for their livelihoods.

2.3.2. Livestock and Natural Resource Benefits to Rural Livelihoods

Rural people rely on their surrounding natural resources for various direct and indirect contributions to their livelihoods. Communal rural households procure a wide range of natural resources for consumption or sale, which are sometimes sold in urban areas (Shackleton et al., 2001: 582). These are often complemented by other agricultural-based endeavours, such as livestock production and arable fields (Shackleton et al., 2001: 593). Therefore, arable production, animal husbandry and natural resource harvesting all contribute in various ways, across sites and scales, to livelihood provisioning (Shackleton et al., 2001: 582).

Natural resources are not used just by *poor* rural dwellers. Shackleton & Shackleton (2006: 313) suggests that the contribution of Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs) to households is similar across all income levels in the Kat River Valley in the Eastern Cape. The differences between the use of NTFPs by poor and less poor households is related to whether there was own collection, as opposed to the sale of NTFPs; for example, the poorer households tended to collect more and sell more, while the less-poor households tended to buy more products (Shackleton & Shackleton, 2006: 314).

The study by Shackleton & Shackleton (2006: 307) shows that guiding and enhancing the use of NTFPs can lead to increased livelihood security and possibly poverty reduction. However, the authors warn of the dangers of commercialisation of natural products; which can create opportunities for poorer households, but may lead to the exploitation of the products by elites and outsiders (Shackleton & Shackleton, 2006: 315) or over-harvesting by locals. When commercialising agricultural activities there is also the danger of increasing the risks to a household because it may lead to a dependency on one source of income (Shackleton et al., 2001: 596). Instead, it is suggested that the multiple livelihood strategy approach adopted by poor households in rural areas ensures that risks are spread, and NTFPs are often used as a safety-net in times of crisis (Shackleton et al., 2001: 582).

Certain commonalities characterise livestock production and rural livelihoods (Shackleton et al., 2001: 586):

- A minority of households own cattle and cattle ownership is highly skewed; usually those households that receive higher off-farm income own large herds and account for a disproportionate percentage of total cattle numbers.
- Benefits of livestock are distributed widely (throughout communities) and the use and benefits of cattle are multipurpose in character.
- Less well-off cattle owners use a larger variety of livestock benefits. However, owner benefit priorities change over time according to the livelihood strategies adopted.
- When considering the range of products and services accrued through owning cattle, communal areas may be more productive than commercial areas; which is also due to lower input costs in communal areas.
- Off-take of cattle from communal areas is perceived to be low, but may be as high as commercial off-take.

It is suggested that livestock have multiple uses within livelihoods, such as direct consumption, socio-cultural outputs and non-market outputs (Dovie et al., 2006: 261). Livestock are kept for their multiple uses, as opposed to just being kept for the social status attached to their ownership, as was suggested in the past (Shackleton et al., 2005; Dovie et al., 2006: 260). Direct and non-direct contributions of livestock also accrue to non livestock-owning households (Shackleton et al., 2005: 135). Ainslie (2005: 136) indicates that cattle also have a strong social role in rural areas; “they are a means of engaging in and maintaining social networks and circuits of exchange that extend beyond the rural homestead into the village and further”. He further suggests that Xhosa people prefer not to sell cattle, and will only do so when there is strife in the household (Ainslie, 2005: 137). Therefore, livestock production is not just about commercialising and selling to the markets (Ainslie, 2002: 7), but has a social, cultural and safety-net worth.

If policy makers took these suggestions into account, it may impact on how land reform and rural development programmes. It also impacts on how outsiders may view the management of land by households in rural and other areas. Government’s rural development policies must take into account the value of livelihoods, and ensure their enhancement alongside other commercial ventures (Shackleton et al., 2001: 582). The Land Reform Programme tends to promote one sector, large-scale commercial agriculture (but with multiple beneficiaries), without considering the impact it has on these livelihood strategies (SLSA, 2003). However, considering the equity-efficiency debate, it is still important that livestock production contributes to national food security. Commercial agriculture is promoted by Government in its Land Reform Programme because it is more productive than subsistence agriculture. It contributes to economic growth, the export markets and national food security. So, although some may argue that subsistence production is valuable in the rural agricultural setting, it is important to consider if subsistence agriculture is more efficient and equitable than commercial agriculture. It is suggested that, for social and cultural reasons, an equal mixture of both may be appropriate for South Africa.

2.4. Commonage Management Success

2.4.1. The Importance of Commonage for Livelihood Provisioning

The Department of Land Affairs identified Commonage as a pillar of Land Reform because “it is public land which does not need to be acquired, there is an existing institution which can manage the land and *needy residents live next-door and have certain rights to the land*” (DLA, 1997: 54). Commonage is intended as a livelihood option for poor people (Atkinson et al., 2004). It serves numerous livelihood needs; such as livestock grazing, fuelwood collection, wood collection for

building materials, vegetable production and the collection of various other natural resources (Anderson & Pienaar, 2003; Ingle, 2006: 47). Commonage is sometimes the only resource available for livelihood provisioning for very poor households (Atkinson, 2005: 1). Furthermore, natural resources are productively and resourcefully used by many poor beneficiaries, even though their livelihoods are limited to survivalist mode (Andrew et al., 2003). Commonage benefits the urban poor as opposed to the rural poor (Deininger, 2003), and is an urban resource subject to peri-urban land-use practices (Ingle, 2006: 48). Many people prefer to engage in *peri-urban* land-use practices because engaging in rural land-use practices (for agricultural or livelihood provisioning) is difficult without capital and services and the risks are far higher (Anseeuw & Laurent, 2007: 660).

Considering the value of commonage, the following section will focus on the failures of the Commonage Programme, with special emphasis on the failures of local government to develop commonage and ensure that the management of the land results in the equitable and sustainable utilisation of the land. There is not an extensive amount of peer-reviewed literature pertaining to commonage in South Africa. Much of the literature is constituted by theses, popular articles and reports. However, much of this literature is rife with pessimistic views of commonage management and this thesis will argue that management failure is intricately linked to a governance system that does not adequately take cognisance of the poor performance of developmental local government and the place of commonage in the lives of the poor residents of towns in South Africa.

2.4.2. Management Failure

Municipal commonage is a resource that is used communally by a large number of people, with increasing numbers of livestock; and this raises the question of the sustainability of current management practices (Atkinson, 2005: 2). Anderson & Pienaar (2003: 13) sum up the poor attempt at commonage management rather aptly when they state that “the result has been self-help, dominance and exclusion of women and the poor, non-payment of user-fees, land degradation and severely reduced or minimal benefits to the few who manage to gain access”. Poor management and absence of adequate resource-use rules has resulted in an open-access situation whereby the powerful and wealthy dominate access to the land (Anderson & Pienaar, 2003: 15). In this environment there is little or no creation or enforcement of rules, and even when rules exist, no one has the authority, capability or desire to punish those who infringe upon these rules. These open-access systems are unsustainable in the long-term and overgrazing is becoming more prevalent in commonage situations, such as in the Free State (Atkinson, 2007b: 193). Therefore, the poor institutional environment of commonage management is resulting in the “tragedy of the commons”,

as described by Hardin (Ingle, 2006: 52). As acknowledged by the Department of Land Affairs in a review of the commonage programme, most of the commonage projects visited by them showed that unsustainable land-use practices are leading to degradation of parts of the land (DLA, 2005: 29).

2.4.3. What are the Constraints to Effective Commonage Management?

In a substantial legal and technical review of the Commonage Programme of the DLA, Atkinson et al. (2004: 5), the following three core recommendations were advocated by Pienaar in the section on Policy and Legal Issues. Firstly, the institutions and legal aspects of commonage projects in SA need to ensure that the individual user rights are better defined and allocated. Secondly, leases should not be exclusively promoted, but should be promoted as one of a number of institutional structures that can be used to manage the commonages. Lastly, Local Government should be allowed to apply for a planning grant for commonage projects. This review highlights a number of problems that are constraining effective commonage management. These and other constraints have been widely acknowledged elsewhere.

Commonage managers are constrained in their abilities to consider commonage as a developmental option; these constraints are financial as well as related to the political will to develop commonage for the benefit of the poor residents (Anderson & Pienaar, 2003: 20). As Ingle (2006: 52) indicates, the transaction costs for municipalities of abandoning the commercial rental option that was so prevalent in the past, and the money that is forfeited in doing so, is very high in many instances and has led municipalities to continue to lease commonage, even though the Commonage Policy is explicit when it states that commonage must revert back to its public character of the past (DLA, 1997). However, DLA only has the power to determine the use of new commonage land, and some municipalities continue to lease old commonage to commercial farmers. The transition of commonage to a “pro-poor” nature has meant a corresponding increase in the number of responsibilities of local government (Atkinson, 2005: 3). Local municipalities suffer from organisational and capacity defects and are failing to address their developmental mandates (Benseler, 2004: 48).

Local government receives poor and uncoordinated support from its district and provincial counterparts, as well as from the DoA (Anderson & Pienaar, 2003: 20). Local government has never had the function of agricultural development and has neither the necessary expertise nor the capacity. It is, therefore, essential that DoA support local municipalities in agricultural functions; however, any support is usually insufficient and local municipalities are failing to manage

commonage adequately (Benseler, 2004: 49). In the Northern Cape it was found that there is also some confusion about the strategic roles of the offices of the provincial departments, who have decision-making powers and more capacity than the local municipalities (Benseler, 2004). Atkinson (2007b) stresses the need for agricultural guidance and extension services for commonage farmers and for the DoA to engage with municipalities in order to share environmental and rangeland management knowledge. This is supported by other studies that suggest that support from other departments must be provided to the municipalities, by providing aftercare facilities, skills and resources once commonage is purchased; as well as to the commonage users, by providing extension services (Benseler, 2004: 15).

The commonage management committees are in the rarest cases functional and suffer from their own capacity constraints, as well as lack of power to make decisions (Benseler, 2004: 52). In some instances there is no CMC, as was discovered by the DLA when they conducted a review of commonage projects (DLA, 2005: 15). Furthermore, most of the informal structures that are managing commonage are not registered as legal entities (DLA, 2005: 25). However, even where the commonage management committees are functional, they will sometimes subvert any attempts by municipalities to impose a management system. This was found to be the case in Namaqualand, where the commonage committee was dominated by the wealthier men in the community; and the disjuncture of their management attempts in theory and practice led to elite capture and over stocking of communal lands (Lebert, 2004: 29).

2.4.4. Integrated Development Planning

In a study done by Hall et al. (2007) on the IDPs of a number of municipalities, a key finding with regards to commonage was that some officials were unclear about what constitutes commonage land and some were unclear about such a category of land (Hall et al., 2007: 25). Furthermore, commonage was not always considered a strategic resource that can be used for development purposes or to satisfy land needs. These issues, and problems with administration and the encroachment of housing onto the land, led the authors to conclude that commonage land needs investments in (1) land rights administration and (2) physical infrastructure (Hall et al., 2007: 27).

Some of these issues are intricately linked to the developmental mandate of local municipalities. Ingle (2006: 53) feels that local municipalities are finding their role as agencies of development difficult, and that municipalities barely fulfil the functions of a 'developmental' government and have been "crushed by 'unfunded mandates' thrust upon them by government line departments".

The responsibility of commonage development comes at a time when local municipalities have other necessary developmental functions such as tourism, integrated planning and service provision, but have also lost the critical revenue from commonage leases. There may be some justification in Ingle's (2006: 54) suggestion that municipalities, as they are currently constituted, will never be able to adequately manage their commonage land. Therefore, he concludes that the system of developmental local government needs to be reconsidered.

2.4.5. Livelihood and Economic Benefits

Very few cases of graduation by means of the emerging farmer system have been reported and there are no guidelines on how this process should take place (DLA, 2005: 20). Only one graduation from commonage has been reported (Govender-van Wyk & Wilson, 2006: 7). The reasons for lack of graduation have not been formally studied. However, it has been suggested that graduation has not taken place for several reasons. Stock limitations do not allow substantial gains in cattle numbers; very few farmers make a profit from farming and some farmers face exorbitant fees and cannot access credit or funding in order to purchase their own land (DLA, 2005: 20). Anseeuw & Laurent (2007: 666) found that there is no system in Namaqualand that provides for the conversion of subsistence farming to commercial farming. In conclusion to a study on livestock farming on commonage in Namaqualand, Govender-van Wyk & Wilson (2006: 25) concluded that livestock farming cannot provide sustainable livelihoods for users.

There are many constraints to livestock farming in many rural areas in South Africa. Govender-van Wyk & Wilson (2006: 10), through an amalgamation of a number of studies, suggest that the following are key constraints: there is a shortage of grazing and forage resources, livestock are in poor condition and suffer from disease and drought, there is a shortage of labour for livestock production (partly due to HIV/AIDs) and there are knowledge and capital constraints to marketing and selling livestock. In another study conducted by Masiteng et al. (2003: 90) it was found that small farm sizes, population pressure, land tenure problems, distance from markets, poor transport and poor infrastructure constrained the communal farming system on commons in the Free State. Therefore, even if a farmer were able to graduate from a commonage situation, they face added constrictions in rural areas.

Subsistence commonage users have neither regressed or progressed in their livelihoods (DLA, 2005: 20). The commonage policy is silent on other livelihood strategies that are practiced on commonage; which is a mirror of the general Land Reform Programme which fails to take diverse livelihoods and

multiple income streams into account when considering rural development (Govender-van Wyk & Wilson, 2006: 7). Although the benefits of commonage to livelihoods is difficult to quantify, the contribution may be substantial; however, it is constrained by poor management of the land (Anderson & Pienaar, 2003: 15).

2.5. Rangeland Management and Environmental Considerations

In light of the poor management performance of local government, it is easy to suggest that the future of commonage rangelands is uncertain. But is it too simplistic to advocate the notion of the “tragedy of the commons” and implement “scientific” rangeland management measures (such as carrying capacity) to counteract the unsustainable use of this important natural resource? The following discussion will consider the mixed-income strategies that dominate commonage use, despite concentrated efforts on grazing projects on commonage (Anderson, 1996: 22), and how conventional rangeland management techniques are not always appropriate for communal rangeland management whereby a number of individuals are farming on the same piece of land.

Ainslie (2002: 1) indicates the four assertions that underpin the views of communal rangeland management and livestock production:

1. Rangelands in communal areas are overstocked.
2. There is a free-rider problem inherent in communal rangeland management.
3. Off-take to the market is minimal.
4. Livestock production techniques in communal areas are backward.

Ainslie (2002: 7) feels that these discourses arise from the Hardin tragedy; the idea that a rational livestock owner will overstock the land because the negative effects of his actions are shared by all. But these assertions ignore a number of different other variables in rangeland management for livestock production. In a literature overview conducted in 1993, Shackleton (1993: 73) found that overstocking is not necessarily an outcome of communal rangeland management systems. Generally, overstocking and overgrazing (degradation) are believed to be two sides of the same coin (Ainslie, 2002: 6) but Shackleton (1993: 74) feels that, even where rangelands are overstocked, this is not necessarily the only driver of rangeland degradation; for instance, there are also natural drivers such as droughts. Indeed, Meadows & Hoffman (2002: 435) show that drivers of degradation in communal areas is usually a combination of drought and high stocking rates.

Meadows & Hoffman (2002) and Ainslie (2002) feel that overstocking in communal areas is rooted in the historical and political past. Furthermore, Benjaminsen et al. (2006: 525) view carrying capacity as a concept that stems from the political and ecological processes of the past, whereby communal rangeland management was considered backward and ecologically unsustainable. Furthermore, Ainslie (2002: 8) asserts that the discourse of communal farming as irrational and inefficient stems from the desire of white colonist farmers to expand their territory and was also used to justify the creation of homelands as a source of cheap labour. However, this situation has exacerbated degradation, which can now be attributed to the tenure situation in the homelands of the Apartheid era, which has led to a high concentration of people living off a small percentage of the South Africa's land (Meadows & Hoffman, 2002: 435).

Many analysts believe that rangelands in communal areas are in fact managed through community norms and other institutions. For example, Cousins (1999: 301) feels that livelihoods are institutionally mediated through formal and informal rules. In agreement are Allsopp et al. (2007: 749) who believe that the commons in Namaqualand are managed through a complex social system of shared norms. Allsopp et al. (2007) found that these same commons are managed through informal institutions; and that livestock keepers realise the trade-offs between high livestock numbers and poor livestock condition. Their reasons for keeping livestock at times differ from commercial mindsets, and there is a strong aversion to reducing numbers (Allsopp et al., 2007: 750). However, this does not suggest that communal institutions do not need government interventions, especially when there are cases of community management systems that result in the poor losing out to the non-poor. It suggests that community norms and rules can be as effective, and are as important, as formal, imposed management systems.

What outsiders do not always recognise are the objectives of the management system and the factors that are driving those norms. The objectives of rangeland management in communal areas is generally multipurpose (Cousins, 1999: 306); in other words, rangeland management is undertaken in a way that ensures that communal users can take full advantage of the multiple uses of land and its resources. As stated above, livestock have a number of different uses. Due to this, people try to maximise numbers of livestock (Shackleton, 1993: 70). Furthermore, because of this multipurpose character, high stocking rates make economic sense and may not be ecologically unsustainable (Cousins, 2000: 4). In Namaqualand, it was found that agricultural professionals ignore the reasons why people keep livestock and support only those people who are willing to commercialise their activities (Allsopp et al., 2007: 745). Furthermore, it was found that, even with high livestock

numbers, the productivity of the land has not changed in decades (Allsopp et al., 2007: 749). Therefore, it may be suggested that stocking densities are rational adaptations to the particular constraints, needs and objectives of the individual farmers (Benjaminsen et al., 2006: 531).

The reasons for keeping livestock and the multiple benefits of livestock suggest that “westernised” views of rangeland management may be inappropriate for communal areas (Allsopp et al., 2007: 750). Communal farming methods are criticised and abandoned for conventional scientific ways of management; for example through leaseholds and the enforcement of stocking rates and rotational grazing systems (May & Lahiff, 2007). These systems are viewed as superior ways of avoiding the “tragedy” and are used to justify “privatisation” of communal and common land (Lebert & Rohde, 2007: 827). As indicated by Mashinini & de Villiers (2004: 40), some analysts believe that communal rangeland management can lead to sustainability, equity and good governance because local institutions are involved. However, commercial forms of management such as fixed stocking rates and rotational grazing is advocated strongly for communal rangeland management or for the management of common property resources (Benjaminsen et al., 2006: 530).

Lebert & Rohde (2007) build a strong case against conventional rangeland management of the commons in Namaqualand. Indeed, strong voices of protest against “privatisation” and commercial management systems flow from this semi-arid region of the Northern Cape (see, for example, Benjaminsen et al., 2006; Lebert & Rohde, 2007). The tendency to sub-divide pieces of commonage land to lease out to the highest bidder is seen as a form of “privatisation”; and these pieces of land are often “captured” by the less poor or wealthier members of the communities in Namaqualand (Lebert & Rohde, 2007: 823). This has been intensified by the creation of management committees who are made up of wealthier and elite members of the community and who are able to wield their power to gain access to these individualised camps (Benjaminsen et al., 2006: 535). Lebert & Rohde (2007: 832) concluded that the narratives of degradation and commercial rangeland management are biased against the poor.

In a similar vein, some analysts believe that there is a poor understanding amongst commonage managers and stakeholders about the multiple benefits of commonage; benefits that extend beyond commercial activities such as livestock keeping (Anderson & Pienaar, 2003: 17). In fact, commercial and communal farmers have contrasting management aims (Benjaminsen et al., 2006: 529); which could also include contrasting aims between subsistence communal farming and commercial communal farming. In a study done on Grahamstown commonage in the Eastern Cape, it was

suggested that there are very different goals and production methods between farmers who want to farm commercially versus those farmers who farm for their subsistence needs (Davenport & Gambiza, 2008: 6). Although there was low commercial production of cattle, some farmers had very large herds, whilst the majority had very small herds (Davenport & Gambiza, 2008: 5).

A better understanding of commonage use, and the management goals which drive use, will inform the management decisions that are undertaken and the geographical and ecological situation of the land acquired for commonage purposes (Anderson & Pienaar, 2003: 17). However, this is not suggesting that conventional rangeland management methods, such as stocking rates, should be ignored. Discussions about land management prove to be a sensitive matter, considering that land is a contentious issue in South Africa. However, in the light of climate change and food security issues, management may need to take into account more conservative methods of livestock production, because it is uncertain how changing rainfall and weather patterns may affect the commons in South Africa. Furthermore, livestock owners may need to make allowances for other commonage uses, especially where grazing may impact on the natural resources available to people. Lastly, although communal farming methods may be considered ecologically “sustainable”, because the main use of the land (grazing) can continue despite heavy stocking densities, it may result in reduced biodiversity on the commons which impact on other uses of the land. For instance, biodiversity may be essential for livelihood provisioning, such as the collection of medicinal plants, and for eco-system services, such as water retention, soil stabilisation and carbon sequestration. These services accrue to non-users of commonages and are, therefore, beneficial to everyone.

In addition to the above, “privatisation” of the commons should not be seen in such a negative light, but should rather be viewed as individualisation of land. Individualisation of land should not be considered the same as privatisation of the land, although it may be similar. Privatisation equates to individual ownership that is more formal than individualisation and in most instances has a long-term and legal basis. As will be demonstrated later, there is a continuum of property regimes, and individualisation will fit somewhere between private land and public land.

Furthermore, leases are not a form of privatisation, because leases can be revoked after a set time has passed. Privatisation is not, therefore, a consequence of leaseholds, or the enforcement of stocking rates, rotational grazing systems or individualisation because privatisation requires legal enforcement. Even though it may lead to individualisation, outside interventions into rangeland management may be necessary, and the enforcement of conventional practices, having been used

for decades elsewhere, may prove to be more appropriate in some contexts than informal management practices. The enforcement of lease systems and conventional management systems may also prove to be the most beneficial for poor people. For example, it allows the poor access to land, it prevents elite capture, if it is fairly enforced, and it also ensures that the land continues to provide in a productive manner for decades to come.

2.5.1. Property Rights under Commonage Systems

Throughout commonages in South Africa, rights allocation processes, which determine who has access to commonage land and how much of the resources they are allowed to extract, are non-existent or poorly developed and the structures for administration of land rights is not in place before land is transferred to municipalities (Anderson & Pienaar, 2003: 16). Although the DLA advocates a lease agreement scheme for commonage access and use, the DLA is now acknowledging that, although formal agreements are necessary for compliance with environmental regulations, user agreements may also be necessary to implement (DLA, 2005: 21). User agreements are agreements whereby a fee per head of livestock is paid to the municipality, as opposed to a fee per portion of land. Poor rights allocation processes has resulted in many poor residents, and especially women, not benefitting equally from commonage access (Anderson & Pienaar, 2003: 10). Furthermore, the emergent farmer focus of new commonage restricts access of the poor and new members of towns to commonages in Namaqualand (Anseeuw & Laurent, 2007: 669). For example, in Leliefontein in Namaqualand, it was found that the “privatisation” of new commonage farms for emerging farmers resulted in only a few members of the farming community benefitting from access and use (Lebert, 2004: 29).

Unfortunately, as found in the Namaqualand example, and supported by Bennett & Barrett (2007), common property resource management by communities, without any outside control, can intensify the elite capture and privatisation (individualisation) of the commons. In times of population growth and technological change, there may not even be a minimum of common property resource management and this can lead to a system of open-access with elements of privatisation (Bennett & Barrett, 2007). Privatisation is not new to southern Africa; it is occurring throughout the region due to appropriation of land by individuals and as a response to competition for resources (Bennett & Barrett, 2007: 109). As one can see from the Namaqualand example, this does not lead to equity. In Lesotho, it was found that membership or grazing fees led to the marginalisation of the very poor (Mashinini & de Villiers, 2004: 43). Furthermore, tenure reform in the form of privatisation of pieces of land can create more problems than it solves (Ainslie, 2002: 10). As Mashinini & de Villiers (2004:

40) indicate, the poor performance of communal rangeland management is often due to conflicts in and outside of the community. By interfering in the management structures at community level, the incidences of conflict could intensify and one group may benefit more than another (Allsopp et al., 2007: 751).

The question now arises as to what property regime may be more appropriate for managing commonage land. Thornton (2008: 4) stresses the need for flexible land ownership options in peri-urban settings in the Eastern Cape town of Peddie; whereby low intensity cultivation in individual or community gardens can take place. Leases can lead to *de facto* privatisation of the commons as was found in Namaqualand (Lebert, 2004; Lebert & Rohde, 2007). However, systems of co-management, the parties being users and municipalities, has also proved to be a flawed system because of issues with the commonage management committees, as stated above (Lebert, 2004: 29). As Bennett & Barrett (2007: 109) reveal, common property resource management is not as straightforward as one would suppose. Common property regimes are vulnerable in South Africa, and this leads to ecological degradation, spontaneous enclosure of resources and elite capture (Cousins, 2000: 5). These systems are sometimes dominated by open-access and private tenure (through elite capture), which is often a result of increasing pressure for the resources to provide for increasing numbers of people and for commercial ventures (Bennett & Barrett, 2007: 108). However, as this thesis will reveal later, managing commonage as a common property resource may be best for equity and efficient use of the resource; but only if the management system is adapted to suit the needs of the social-ecological system as is the case of adaptive co-management.

2.6. Commonage as a Common-Pool Resource

Property regimes fall somewhere within the continuum between the free-for-all regime of open-access and the individualised regime of private property (Bromley & Cernea, 1989: 10). However, there are four main regimes that fall within the public or private domain (see Bromley & Cernea, 1989; Vatn, 2007). Public domain regimes include state land (people acquire rights of use but not ownership), common property land (in which a number of people have rights to the land) or open-access land (where no rights are conferred). Private domain land is private land, and the person or group who owns the land has the right to exclude others from access and use of the land. Van den Brink et al. (2006) feel that the extension of common property is public property (which extends the members from group to larger community size) and state property (which is property for the nation as a whole). Vatn (2007: 625) refers to state land as public land and notes that some property regimes are more distinct than others.

Commonage is described as a Common Pool Resource (DLA & DANCED, 2001; Benseler, 2004; Ingle, 2006). Common Pool Resources are resources jointly used by a group of persons, referred to as a resource community (Husain & Bhattacharya, 2004: 201). The term Common Pool Resource is used to refer to the resource itself, rather than the arrangements that govern that resource (Dietz et al., 2002). The term Common Property Resource (CPR) refers to how the resource is managed. Therefore, a resource is referred to as a CPR if it is managed as a resource that is common to many, dependent on rules that govern the collective (Dietz et al., 2002). Hence, a common property regime is defined as a set of institutional arrangements that define the conditions of access to, and control over, a range of benefits arising from collectively-used natural resources (Swallow & Bromley, 1995: 100). This distinction is important because it indicates that Common Pool Resources are able to fall into open-access regimes and it also suggests that there are a wide range of common property regimes that govern Common Pool Resources (Swallow & Bromley, 1995: 100). Vatn (2007: 624) asserts that the different resource regimes, the institutional arrangements, will affect individuals' behaviour, which will affect how people manage the resource.

The definition of CPR, as stated above, allows for a wide range of institutional arrangements and governance structures (Swallow & Bromley, 1995: 100). Common property can be individualised or made private when strict rights of use to a piece of the land is assigned to an individual (van den Brink et al., 2006). As indicated by Bromley & Cernea (1989: 15) and van den Brink et al. (2006), common property is private property for a group, as the group has rights to the land and the use of the land can be regulated. Common property is non-exclusive by nature and its characteristics include the difficulty in excluding others and the inherent ability of users to extract resources from the property (Pomeroy & Berkes, 1997: 466). Every common property resource is different from the next and the way it is managed, therefore, changes too.

Policy makers have, in the past, assumed that central state intervention, markets regulation or privatisation of resources are the ideal means by which to manage natural resources (Agrawal, 2002: 44). However, new knowledge about common property management regimes suggests that under certain conditions, communal arrangements can compare favourably in terms of efficiency, equity and sustainability (Agrawal, 2002: 44). Therefore, policy makers are becoming more concerned with how rules impact on rights and powers of access, use, management, exclusion and transferability of natural resources (Agrawal, 2002: 44). This is allowing common property resource management to find a place within natural resource governance.

2.6.1. Introduction to Common Property Resource Theory

The theory of Common Property has been constantly proved, disproved and adapted since its inception in the 1960s. Most of the theorists use, as their starting point, the famous paper by Garrett Hardin (Hardin, 1968) entitled “The Tragedy of the Commons”(Husain & Bhattacharya, 2004: 203). Hardin’s greatest rival in the Common Property Resource field is Elinor Ostrom, who has spent many years attempting to prove that Hardin’s belief that “the tragedy of the commons as a food basket is averted by private property” (Hardin, 1968: 1245) is not true, and that common property can be managed effectively, equitably and sustainably by institutions (Ostrom, 1990; van Laerhoven & Ostrom, 2007). Hardin’s rivals feel that he made the mistake of confusing “common property” with “open-access” when he states that “freedom in the commons brings ruin to all” (Hardin, 1968: 1244). That is not to say that the “tragedy” is not an actual phenomenon; Hardin’s theory has been proved under certain limited conditions (van Laerhoven & Ostrom, 2007: 19).

Ostrom, in her influential work on institutions, set out eight principles for effective institutional governance of Common Pool Resources (Ostrom, 1990: 91). She uses these to describe the scenario where the “tragedy” can be avoided and, since then, researchers have critiqued these principles using case studies where Common Property Resource management has worked or not worked. The principles are best used to describe the situation of the Common Pool Resource. Therefore, the principles are a useful tool for assessing the management of commonage at a local, situational level. However, the following sub-section will show that the focus on institutions at a local level ignores contextual factors that, should these factors be left out from CRP research, would give us an incomplete appreciation for how institutions govern CPR.

2.6.2. Contextualism

Common Property Resource theory has adapted over the years in response to criticisms from a school of theorists called Contextualists. They believe that the focus of commons research on institutions is too shallow and that researchers should focus more broadly on outside influences. As described below, another criticism of commons research is that theorists have yet to fully develop a theory of what makes sustainable common property resource management (Agrawal, 2001: 1651). Contextualists believe that it is important, for advancements in Common Property Resource theory, that contextual factors are always considered, as it gives a more complete picture of CPR management (Edwards & Steins, 1998: 2).

Recent work by Agrawal (2007) summarises the variables that are important to focus on when considering successful resource governance. The important variables are the characteristics of the resource system, the characteristics of the users, the characteristics of the institutional arrangements and the nature of the external environment (Agrawal, 2007: 119). The final variable is important, as it relates to the context of the Common Pool Resource. Demographic, cultural, technological and market related factors, the nature of the state agencies, the level of involvement by other actors and the forces such as Non-Governmental Organisations and international aid flows all impact on Common Property Resource management (Agrawal, 2007: 124). Here he is supporting the theorist, Pauline Peters, who, as an advocate of the Contextualism school, believes that institutions are “socially embedded” (Peters, 1987: 34); in other words, that one cannot ignore the social, political, power and economic context in which a Common Pool Resource is entrenched.

There is a distinction made between internal and external contextual factors. The internal or local factors influence how people act and the external or remote factors determine the supply and demand for a resource (Edwards & Steins, 1998: 3). In a commons situation, the users and uses interact in a complex manner and one must distinguish between different institutions at play and the various direct and indirect uses that emanate from a resource. This is an exercise that is difficult when one considers that the researcher must be sensitive to the physical, technical, social and institutional arrangements governing a resource (Edwards & Steins, 1998: 10). In reality there is a ‘Contextual Factors Continuum’ (Husain & Bhattacharya, 2004: 203) which further complicates the process of research. This continuum refers to “ a series of relationships linking remote with local contextual factors...which implies that remote and local contextual factors may mutually enforce changes in the system...” (Husain & Bhattacharya, 2004: 203). Although contextual studies may prove complicated, Agrawal (2001: 1662) feels that, should a researcher fail to look at the causal factors (the context) of their study, they may fail to apply the correct method to their research.

2.6.3. Governance and Management in Common Property Resource Theory

The subtleties between Institutionalism and Contextualism are very important for this thesis. When considering management of Common Pool Resources it is important to consider the institutional structures that create the rules of the game; which is how Institutionalism works. However, Contextualism considers how the management structures (institutions) are influenced by their embeddedness in broader processes; that is, in the governance structures that determine the creation of the rules of the game. These differences in meaning are especially important for showing that case studies on common property management must be viewed in light of the social, historical,

political and economic structures which determine how these broader structures (governance structures) shape the rules that are played out on the ground. As will be argued later, the capacity to manage natural resources effectively is reliant on the broader structures that determine the actions of individuals. Hence, management must always be viewed in the context in which it is embedded.

At this point is necessary to elaborate on the concepts of governance and management. “Management” can be understood as the day-to-day activities that are guided by operational rules and these are performed under the umbrella of collective choice rules (Carlsson & Berkes, 2005: 70). These collective choice rules are developed by the governance system and can refer to the laws, regulations, debates, negotiations, conflict resolutions, elections, public consultations, protests and other decisions making processes that are part of the governance system (Lebel et al., 2006: 20). “Governance” means creating the conditions for ordered rule and collective action through structures and process by which people can make decisions and share power (Folke et al., 2005: 444). Carlsson & Berkes (2005: 70) refers to governance as the setting of rules, and the application and enforcement of those rules. Management is thereafter considered the way that these rules are implemented on a day-to-day basis. Governance is not the sole pursuit of government but emerges through the interaction of many actors; it can be formally institutionalised or carried out through subtle norms (Lebel et al., 2006: 20).

2.7. Co-Management of the Commons

Co-management is a new intellectual tradition in natural resource management (Plummer & Armitage, 2006) 62) and has emerged due to blending of both practice (decentralisation in natural resource management) and theory (Common Property Resource theory) (Plummer & FitzGibbon, 2004a: 63). Co-management is, therefore, almost solely associated with Common Property Resource management (Plummer & FitzGibbon, 2004a: 67). It is a response to natural resource management challenges (Plummer & FitzGibbon, 2004a: 63) and aims to link local communities and government (Armitage et al., 2007: 1). Co-management was advocated by Fikret Berkes in his earlier work, where he recognised the limitations of purely national-level management and purely local-level management (Berkes, 1997: 5) and the conflict between them (Berkes, 1994: 18). At the time, co-management was defined broadly as “an integration of local- and state-level systems” (Berkes, 1994: 18), the function of which is to “encourage partnerships” (Berkes, 1997: 6).

What was recognised then, and is a idea that still exists, was that co-management could have a variety of possible arrangements with various degrees of power sharing (Berkes, 1994; Pomeroy &

Berkes, 1997: 466). Co-management is considered a middle ground between pure state control and pure communal control (Pomeroy & Berkes, 1997: 467). Carlsson & Berkes (2005) explain that there are different levels of participation and shared responsibilities and power, which are indicative of the continuum of co-management regimes that exist in practice. This continuum shows the different kinds of partnerships that communities can enter into with the state, from a simple exchange of information to a formal partnership (Carlsson & Berkes, 2005: 66). As Plummer & FitzGibbon (2004b: 70) show, co-management requires that a number of actors take part in a power sharing process; therefore, co-management is multi-dimensional and complex. Hence, many definitions of co-management fail to capture the complexity, variation and dynamic nature of these systems (Carlsson & Berkes, 2005: 67).

Co-management is a special type of governance (Carlsson & Berkes, 2005: 67) because co-management can be described as a network of actors involved in the management of natural resources across scales (Carlsson & Berkes, 2005: 70). Dietz et al. (2003) uses the concept of governance to expand the management focus to the broader social contexts that enable the management to take place (Folke et al., 2005: 444). Therefore, co-management is a process that is embedded in a wider social and institutional context (Carlsson & Berkes, 2005: 69).

Van Laerhoven & Ostrom (2007: 11) refer to the emerging issues of the commons. These are issues related to new understandings of complexity, uncertainty and institutions. For example, co-management systems are vulnerable to external drivers and are insufficient to deal with cross-scale challenges (Berkes, 2006: 54). Scale-related complexities include: complexity at the level of the community, the existence of externalities, the problem of mismatch of the resources and institutional boundaries, and the necessity of the management system to deal with these (Berkes, 2006) 47). Hence, theories of co-management have been evolving for some time and theorists are becoming influenced by new understandings of social-ecological systems (SES).

Social-ecological systems occur where there is a coupling of social organisations with resource conditions (Nayak, 2004: 7). Uncertainty is inherent in any SES (Armitage, 2005: 712) which is characterised by non-linear dynamics and evolves across temporal and spatial scales (Folke, 2007: 14). Furthermore, social-ecological systems have multiple outcomes and limited predictability (Olsson et al., 2004a: 76). Therefore, they are referred to as complex adaptive systems (Olsson et al., 2004a: 76). This indicates that they have the capacity to adapt and change in the face of complexity and uncertainty (Armitage, 2005: 74). Hence, complexity scientists are interested in how the world is

constantly adapting and changing in response to environmental feedback (Plummer & Armitage, 2006: 64).

This ability to adapt and change in certain circumstances is referred to as the resilience of the system (Folke et al., 2005: 444). However, as Folke (2007: 14) warns, the adaptive capacity of these systems can be eroded by incorrect governance systems that ignore crucial ecological functions of the system in the urge to fulfil social or economic goals. This is because social and ecological systems are intricately linked and their management requires an interdisciplinary undertaking (Folke, 2007: 14). Hence, theorists of natural resource management recognise that these systems of co-management need to build resilience both in the social and the ecological system. The result is a new governance system referred to as an adaptive co-management system. Adaptive co-management is a system of management that responds to SES dynamics and helps to increase the ability of the system to adapt (Olsson et al., 2004a: 87).

2.7.1. Adaptive Co-Management of the Commons

Adaptive co-management systems are flexible community-based systems of resource management tailored to specific places and situations and supported by, and working with, various organisations at different levels (Olsson et al., 2004a: 75). Nayak (2004: 4) views the management approach as dynamic, conscious, context-specific, evolutionary and responsive to change. Adaptive co-management combines the dynamic learning process that is characteristic of adaptive management and the linkage characteristic of co-management (Folke et al., 2005: 448; Olsson et al., 2004a: 75). Adaptive co-management is also referred to adaptive governance.

The development of adaptive co-management systems requires either that new organisations are crafted, or that a process of self-organisation takes place (Olsson et al., 2004a: 83). However, the environment must be conducive to the creation of these management systems (Nayak, 2004: 5). Certain factors play an important role in enabling the self-organisation process (Olsson et al., 2004a):

- Leadership and trust building
- An enabling environment that requires devolution of power and decision making
- Funding
- Monitoring of environmental feedback by the community
- Information flows and social network building
- Combination of various sources of information
- Senses making of knowledge

- Arenas for collaborative learning

2.7.2. Adaptive Co-Management and Commonage

This thesis will argue that commonage is currently poorly managed, which is linked in complex ways to an environment of natural resource governance that is both inequitable and inefficient. Furthermore, the governance system that creates the context for commonage management is hampering effective management due to substantial social problems in South Africa and management bodies (local municipalities) with little financial capacity and manpower. However, without proper institutional arrangements, commonage, as a natural resource, will lose productivity and will fail to provide for the poor into the future. Commonage has the potential to address food security and poverty relief, but only at a household level. However, with an effective emerging farmer programme, it can be an asset in the creation of a new class of black commercial farmers and support the Land Reform Programme currently embarked upon in South Africa. Land Reform in South Africa is currently experiencing many difficulties. Commonage can help to address the goals of increasing national food security and reducing poverty, as well as “deracialising” land ownership patterns.

Thus, it is crucial for commonage to be managed efficiently and for a system to be developed that ensures that commonage contributes to the Land Reform Programme. Therefore, commonage must be expanded to ensure that the expanding poor urban populace have access to the products and services that the resource produces. Secondly, commonage should be incorporated into a rural development programme which includes the expansion of a land rental market. In this way, those emerging farmers who would like to graduate to commercial small-holdings are able to do so without experiencing the risks associated with large-scale commercial farming.

In order for commonage to be able to embrace the goals of both efficiency and equity, it should be managed as a common property resource. Currently, commonage is subject to open-access natural resource harvesting practices. Current arrangements for co-management of commonage may work in theory, but not in practice. An adaptive co-management approach must be adopted in order to transform the current system of management into one that is sustainable and resilient. Actors involved in adaptive co-management must recognise the multiple uses of commonage, embrace the needs and aspirations of the community, link commonage users with higher governance bodies and learn through adaptation. This will create a meaningful system of resource governance.

Transformation into an adaptive co-management system will require those ingredients as advocated by Olsson et al. (2004a).

3. Study area

3.1. Eastern Cape Province

The Eastern Cape Province, situated on the eastern seaboard of South Africa, has the highest incidence of poverty out of the nine provinces in the country (Lahiff, 2003; Nauta, 2004). It is the third largest Province in South Africa with a population of 6.4 million in 2001 (CSIR, 2004: chapter 1). The region is constituted by a Xhosa-speaking majority, who are largely rural based and who depend on the land and its resources to supplement their household needs, and are still highly dependent on government grants (Lahiff, 2003). The province is made up of two former homelands, namely the former Transkei and Ciskei. The creation of these “Buntustans” during the Apartheid era led to the forced settlement of thousands of individuals in these areas, resulting in high population densities and land shortages (Nauta, 2004). Thus, historical inequalities enduring from the Apartheid era have contributed to a land-hungry populace. Over 48% of the people in the province are living in poverty conditions, whilst over 59% of arable land is in the hands of white commercial farmers (Lahiff, 2003).

The Eastern Cape Province has the highest number of biomes and vegetation types out of all the provinces in South Africa (CSIR, 2004: chapter 5). It has many sensitive and conservation-worthy areas in the region which are under threat from alien vegetation, erosion, pollution and poor land-use practices (CSIR, 2004: chapter 5). Due to the special and varied environment in the Eastern Cape, there are opportunities for improving economic development; however, these are constrained by insufficient physical and human capital resulting from the high incidence of poverty and unemployment (CSIR, 2004: chapter 5). Economic development is also constrained by poor institutions, lack of management skills, local political tensions and an inadequate fiscal base.

In the last few years the Eastern Cape has experienced mass migrations of rural people to towns and cities in the Province in search of employment (Nauta, 2004). This can be partly attributed to the large-scale eviction of thousands of farm workers following new labour and land rights (Nauta, 2004). For example, under the Extension of Security of Tenure Act (ESTA), many farmers feared that their workers would have too many rights, including the right not to be evicted, and farmers pre-emptively evicted farm workers before these workers’ security of tenure could be established. Other drivers of labour shedding included global economic competition, lack of tariff protection and the lack of government subsidies for agriculture, which resulted in farming becoming a difficult and costly business. Other drivers of urbanisation are the droughts of the 1980’s which preceded more farm evictions, the retrenchment of migrant workers from mines and the ending of influx control laws following the new political dispensation (Higginbottom et al., 1995). The abolition of the

discriminatory land laws has allowed people more freedom of movement, and many rural people are moving to urban areas seeking jobs and a better quality of life. This mass migration to urban centres has resulted in the establishment of informal settlements in the peri-urban spaces and some settlements are situated on commonage land (Higginbottom et al., 1995). These informal settlements are poorly serviced, compared to the well-serviced urban areas of the Eastern Cape (CSIR, 2004).

In two of the towns in the study area, Grahamstown and Bathurst, migration was occurring in the 1940s (Manona, 1988: 95). This is attributed to farms becoming mechanised and fewer jobs being available for black Africans, who then chose to seek employment in urban centres (Manona, 1988: 95). As the town of Grahamstown expanded, it attracted more and more black people to its fringes and adjacent farms. These people brought cattle with them and attempted cultivation in surrounding areas (Manona, 1988: 96). This trend led to, firstly, an emphasis on the reform of urban land, to allow opportunities for black people to settle in towns, and secondly, increased demand for peri-urban land in order to engage in agricultural practices (Marcus et al., 1996).

Today, the former homeland areas of the Eastern Cape are subject to social, economic, political and ecological problems (Nauta, 2004). The formal employment sector is in decline and people are turning to land-based activities to obtain a livelihood (Lahiff, 2003: 36). With limited land suitable for cultivation and water being a constraint to commercial and communal agriculture, the predominant farming occupation is livestock (Marcus et al., 1996). Another constraint to communal land-based activities is massive land degradation resulting from soil erosion and overgrazing (CSIR, 2004: chapter 9). The agricultural sector is still largely dominated by rural women who have to overcome problems of drought, erosion and inland winter frost, as well as stock theft, in order to engage in productive subsistence farming (Nauta, 2004). Subsistence agriculture is the most predominant form of agriculture (CSIR, 2004: chapter 9) but contributes a small percentage (2%) to the Gross Geographic Product of the Eastern Cape (Marcus et al., 1996).

The redistributive Land Reform projects in the Eastern Cape are dominated by SLAG and LRAD projects (Jacobs et al., 2003: 8). Land Reform is largely dependent on the Department of Land Affairs and local Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) to steer the various projects. These bodies have proved to be innovative and fairly successful, although they have been hampered by various constraints that are affecting Land Reform projects in other areas of the country (Lahiff, 2003). This has led Lahiff (2003: 43) to conclude that, although the NGO sector is involved in meaningful work,

their work, and that of the government departments' is failing to show real benefits to communities. Slow and unsuccessful Land Reform have impacted on the development and management of the land in the Province and large tracts of land is poorly utilised and unproductive (CSIR, 2004: chapter 9). Approximately 51% of the Province's land is unmanaged and 11% of the land is severely degraded (CSIR, 2004: chapter 9). Furthermore, although only 30% of the land in the Eastern Cape is communally owned, while 66.5% is privately owned, most of the severely degraded land is in the communal areas (CSIR, 2004: chapter 9).

Commonage land is predominantly found in the Western, Eastern and Northern Cape and Free State regions of South Africa. Commonage in the Eastern Cape consists of thousands of hectares of peri-urban land and is an important livelihood asset for many poor residents in towns all through the province (Higginbottom et al., 1995). There has been no study done to determine the number of hectares of commonage that exists in the Province but it can be safe to assume that a large number of towns have commonage land available to them. As mentioned before, commonage is being encroached upon by informal settlements; however, it is also being used for recreational, agricultural and consumptive purposes (Higginbottom et al., 1995), as well as for residential, cultural and conservation purposes. There is an increasing demand for land for cultivation purposes, to supplement household income, and for settlement purposes. These livelihood and agricultural needs emphasise the increasing importance of land in peri-urban areas. However, the Eastern Cape government has been slow in emphasising the use of commonage and peri-urban land for poverty alleviation projects (Cocks et al., 2002: 389). To understand the importance of commonage in the towns of the Eastern Cape, indeed the towns within the study area, it is necessary to recognise the socio-economic and political context of the towns and districts.

3.2. The study sites

The research was conducted in three study sites with their own unique circumstances. However, because they are situated in the Eastern Cape, there are similarities in the social-political, economic and cultural context in which they are found. Nonetheless, it is important to consider each site in isolation before looking at their similarities. The three towns under discussion are Bathurst, Fort Beaufort and Grahamstown. The study sites were isolated using municipal boundaries. As per the tiered structure of the municipal system in South Africa, each study site falls into the jurisdiction of a Local Municipality (LM), which in turn falls within the jurisdiction of a higher-order District Municipality (DM). See figure 1 for details of where the study sites are located in South Africa.

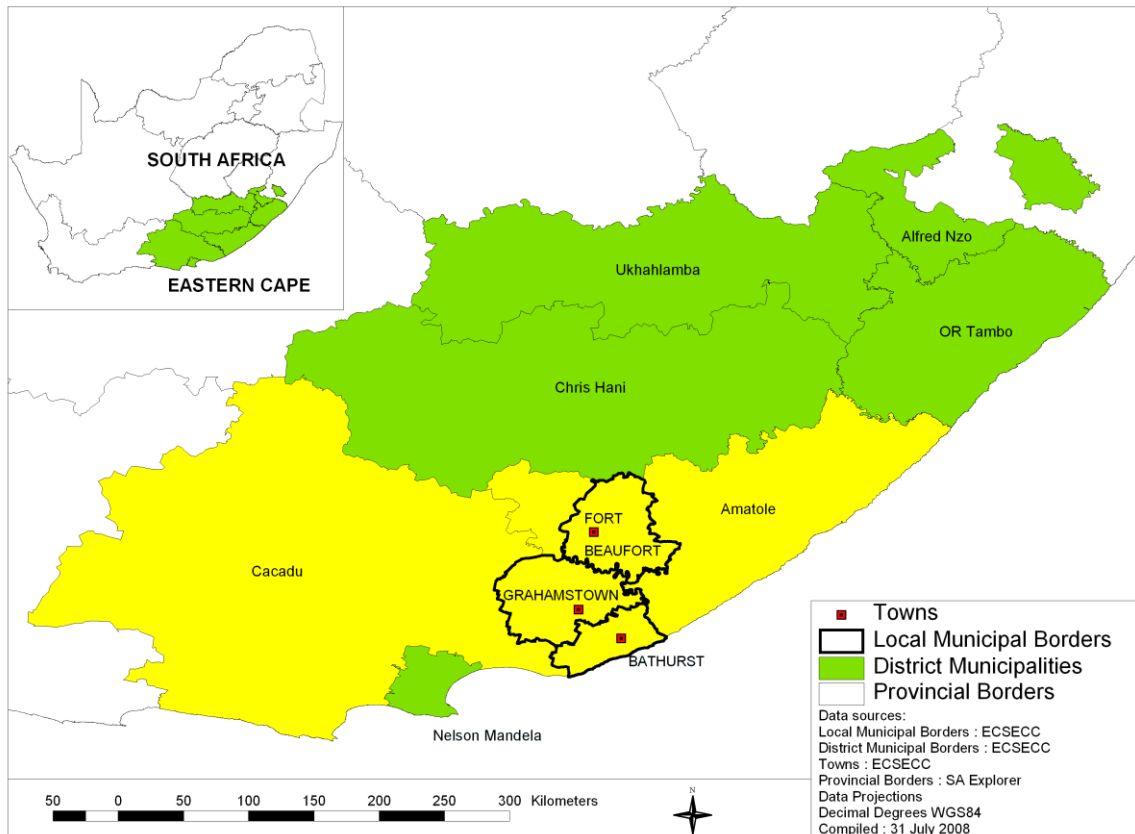


Figure 1: Map showing the locality of the study sites

3.2.1. Cacadu District Municipality

Grahamstown and Bathurst are situated within the Makana Local Municipality and Ndlambe Local Municipality respectively. These Local Municipalities are further situated within the jurisdiction of the Cacadu District Municipality. The Cacadu district is dominated by semi-desert Karoo, although its climate ranges from mild conditions with moderate rainfall on the coast, to harsh conditions with low rainfall in the Karoo or interior (Cacadu, 2007: 47). Due to erratic rainfall conditions, the vegetation can only support extensive grazing on large farms, and economic development in the district is reliant on agriculture and tourism (Cacadu, 2007: 49).

Small rural towns are scattered around the landscape of Cacadu; however, urbanisation to affluent bigger centres is on the rise because the labour demand on large commercial farms is decreasing. This is resulting in the establishment of large informal settlements on the outskirts of towns and subsequent land and housing backlogs (Cacadu, 2007: 45). The district is plagued by a high unemployment rate of 20.5%, a high population growth rate of 2% (higher than the provincial and national rates), water shortages and a significant proportion of people dependent on social grants (Cacadu, 2007: 14). The web of scattered rural towns is proving a hindrance for service delivery,

because funding for infrastructure have to be spread out thinly and existing infrastructure cannot meet current demands (Cacadu, 2007: 48). The Cacadu IDP (2007: 30) acknowledges that there is a strong need to support local municipalities in the district and build up their capacity for development. However, both Makana and Ndlambe are considered last on the priority list of towns to support, presumably because they are better developed than other local municipalities in the district.

3.2.1.1. Makana Local Municipality

The Makana Local Municipality consists of three large towns; namely, Grahamstown, Alicedale and Riebeeck-East. It is an agriculturally-orientated region with various state reserves (nearly a million hectares are devoted to private and state-run game reserves) interspersed with game, beef, goat and ostrich farms (Makana, 2008: 21). The Makana Local Municipality has a significant proportion of the population of the district and is experiencing the highest housing backlog and the highest unemployment rate in the region (Cacadu, 2007: 15). Only 42% of the population is economically active and nearly 66% of these people have no income (Makana, 2008: 13). Unemployment has increased significantly from 1996 to 2001, whilst employment has decreased (Makana, 2008: 13). Furthermore, there is a 33% illiteracy rate in the area, and a dependency ratio of 5 people to every 1 working person (Makana, 2008: 173). The people in the Makana region are getting poorer faster than the rate of the province and the Local Municipality is feeling the pressure of providing more houses and services; especially because Makana is the key node for urbanisation in Cacadu (Makana, 2008).

3.2.1.2. Ndlambe Local Municipality

The Ndlambe Local Municipality consists of 9 wards and approximately 27 settlements, the largest of which are Port Alfred, Bathurst, Alexandria and Kenton-on-sea (Ndlambe, 2007: 29). The Local Municipality is grappling with the problem of a large influx of farm workers into the urban areas, which has resulted in an increased demand for social and public service provision (Ndlambe, 2007: 14). The region is also experiencing high poverty levels (63% of population live in poverty) and nearly 60% of households receive social grants (Ndlambe, 2007: 15). Bathurst is described as a meeting-point between urban and rural, due to the extent of agriculture bordering on the town and due to the number of small-holdings in the town (MAFA, 2006: 4). Like many apartheid towns, Bathurst consists of a black township and a white town (MAFA, 2006: 19). The township settlement of Bathurst, called Nolukhanyo, has a high number of female-headed households and has one of the highest numbers of people in the Local Municipality earning under R800 a month (Ndlambe, 2007:

41). However, the area has a number of positive attributes and good potential for tourism development. It has a pristine coastal area with low residential development, and well preserved river mouths and diverse vegetation types.

3.2.2. Amathole District Municipality

The area of the Amathole District Municipality encompasses some of the lands of the former Transkei and Ciskei homelands, as well as old Cape Provincial land, known as the “border area” (Amathole, 2006: 43). The District Municipality contains 25.9% of the Eastern Cape’s population, comprises of eight local municipalities, and has a high population of black Africans (92% of the population), who are found mostly in the rural and peri-urban areas. The poverty levels are high in the Amathole district, and have increased since 1996. Many of the rural municipalities show alarming rates of poverty and unemployment, especially those in the former homeland areas (Amathole, 2006; Shackleton & Shackleton, 2006: 308). There is also massive urbanisation occurring and poverty levels are increasing in areas outside of the major city centres of King Williams Town and East London (Amathole, 2006: 33). More than 80% of households have an average annual income of less than R18 000. The area has a very good agricultural potential, but this is underdeveloped, contributes little to formal employment, and this potential is being superseded by the game industry (Amathole, 2006: 131). The people in Amathole depend, to a large extent, on government grants and subsistence agriculture (Amathole, 2006: 131).

3.2.2.1. Nkonkobe Local Municipality

Nkonkobe Local Municipality is located in Amathole District Municipality and comprises three major towns, Alice, Fort Beaufort and Middledrift, as well as numerous smaller settlement zones, peri-urban settlements and rural areas (Amathole, 2006: 23). It is the second largest local municipality in the Eastern Cape, and Fort Beaufort is the most densely populated town in the region (Nkonkobe, 2007: 6). Fort Beaufort is an agricultural town with a population of approximately 20 000 people (Shackleton & Shackleton, 2006: 308). The eastern portion of the Local Municipality is situated in the former homeland state of the Transkei; and due to this legacy, there is massive underdevelopment, high levels of unemployment and poverty and poor service provision (Shackleton & Shackleton, 2006; Nkonkobe, 2007: 11). The population is dominated by Black Africans (95% of the population) who are largely rural dwellers. People in Nkonkobe rely heavily on social grants because 74% of the population has no income at all (Nkonkobe, 2007: 12). The agricultural sector in the area has been in decline for a number of years and people are dependent on government to fund agricultural projects, even though many LRAD initiatives in the area are failing (Nkonkobe, 2007: 22). However,

there are a few emerging farmers in the area who are leasing citrus farms (Shackleton & Shackleton, 2006: 308). The Local Municipality is gearing towards the tourism market, with major plans to upgrade tourism facilities and create new tourism centres (Nkonkobe, 2007).

3.2.3. General Characteristics of the towns

Each study site is an urban area experiencing the following generalities:

1. The towns are situated in a province that is economically poor, but has immeasurable ecological wealth that has potential to improve the lives of its people. It has a relatively benign climate with significant and regular rainfall.
2. The towns exist in a province that has a large communal populace and there are strong economic and social links between the rural and urban areas.
3. The towns have a large poverty-stricken populace and a spirit of dependency; a result of previous racially discriminating practices. Consequently, people depend on social grants.
4. The towns are experiencing mass urbanisation and, due to the agricultural nature of the surrounding rural areas, have many ex-farm workers in their resident populace.
5. There is limited employment, huge service backlogs and an increasing reliance on social grants. Many of these problems persist in the peri-urban fringes of the towns.
6. The economy of the area is reliant on tourism and the renewal of the agricultural sector, which is expected to contribute to economic growth.
7. People tend to rely on the municipalities to improve their lives, but the municipalities are struggling to do so because of limited fiscal and human resources.

3.2.4. Town Commonage

The study sites of Grahamstown, Fort Beaufort and Bathurst fall under the old Cape Province and each has land that is considered “old commonage”. The following map (see figure 2) of the towns was created showing the extent of commonage in the Transitional Local Council (TLC) period (1994-2000) and, hence, is inaccurate. Details about the latest commonage boundaries were assembled from key informant interviews, and in the case of Bathurst, from the MAFA document and mapping exercise (MAFA, 2006). It was impossible to get GIS boundary lines because the Local Municipalities did not have their own maps of the commonage.

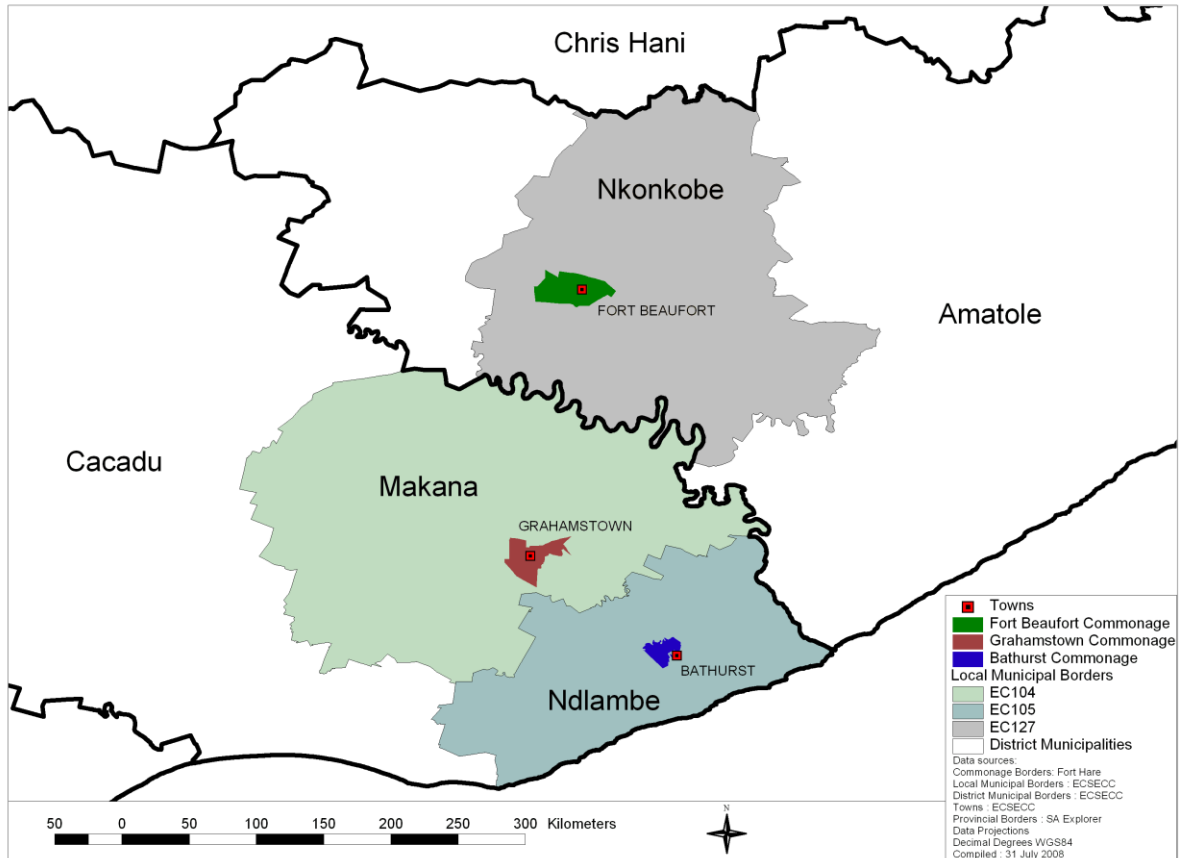


Figure 2: Map of the traditional commonages during the TLC period (1994-2000)

3.2.4.1. Grahamstown

The Grahamstown municipal commonage covers approximately 8741 ha of land surrounding the city of Grahamstown. According to Bates (pers. comm., 2008) the commonage in Grahamstown was expanded in 1994, and also in 2002. In 1994, two farms were purchased, totalling 1766 ha, and six new farms, totalling 2920 ha, were bought in the Northern area of the town in 2002. This is referred to as “new commonage” land. “Old commonage” consists of approximately 4397 ha of land, which has been owned by the Grahamstown municipality since the establishment of the town in the early 1800s (Puttick, 2007: 7). According to Puttick (2007: 7) the commonage falls within four vegetation biomes; grassland, thicket, karoo and fynbos, and is, therefore, biologically diverse. The rainfall season is all year round, even though it is unreliable (Puttick, 2007: 7). According to Bates (pers. comm., 2008), there are approximately 2000 head of cattle on the commonage.

3.2.4.2. Fort Beaufort

The extent of the commonage in Fort Beaufort is unknown to the Municipality but, according to a Master’s student it is approximately 2350 ha (Dube pers. comm., 2009). According to Trollope (pers. comm., 2008) the extent of commonage in Fort Beaufort has decreased since the TLC period.

Although he was unable to point out the boundary lines, he indicated that southern sections of the commonage were sold to a farmer and to the local agricultural college. The land belonging to the agricultural college has been invaded by residents of Fort Beaufort and is currently used for grazing (Trollope pers. comm., 2008). Mean annual rainfall in Fort Beaufort is 500 mm and the area's vegetation consists of Eastern Thorn Bushveld, dominated by *Acacia Karroo*, and succulent thicket vegetation types (Shackleton & Shackleton, 2006: 308), which are presumably the type of vegetation types found on the commonage. The numbers of livestock currently grazing and browsing on the commonage is unknown in the literature, and the Nkonkobe Local Municipality is also unaware of numbers.

3.2.4.3. Bathurst

According to Higginbottom et al. (1995: 12), the Bathurst commonage consists of approximately 3031 ha of Thicket and Grassland vegetation. However, according to MAFA document (2006: 6) the commonage is approximately 2900 ha. The boundaries of the Bathurst commonage has largely remained static since the early 1900s, except for the addition of 400 ha of "Erf 2" in 1924 (MAFA, 2006: 6). The commonage is used mainly for grazing purposes and is largely unsuitable for cultivation (MAFA, 2006: 7). Bathurst has a mild subtropical climate, and the commonage consists of dense thicket vegetation with grasslands scattered in the flatter, middle sections (Higginbottom et al., 1995: 12). In the time that Higginbottom et al. (1995) did their study, there was bush encroachment occurring (dominated by *Acacia Karroo*) and signs of soil erosion, indicators of overgrazing. According to Higginbottom et al. (1995: 19), the thicket vegetation on the commonage has high conservation potential and many different species of birds and animals live in the area, some of which are rare and endangered. According to MAFA (2006: 27), there are anywhere between 500-700 head of cattle and 100-500 goats on the commonage, although numbers are estimated.

4. Methodology

4.1. Important Considerations

This research is largely influenced by the two important and interrelated considerations. The first consideration is that Common Property Resource theory was used to describe and critique commonage management and governance. Consideration of this theory impacted largely on the key questions and focus of the research. The second consideration is that the terms “governance” and “management” are regarded as having different meanings in this thesis, although they are words that are often used interchangeably in the literature. This distinction impacted on the methodology used to answer key questions regarding one or the other. Key questions regarding governance were largely answered through careful analysis of literature, although interviews were used to supplement governance questions about the study sites in particular. In contrast, interviews were largely used to gain insights into the management practices, at the local level, which are influenced by the governance structures at the local and higher level institutions.

4.2. Research Design

This research was conducted using a qualitative research design. According to Janse van Rensburg (2001: 1) research is influenced by the methodological approach of the researcher, which determines the method of research and the technique used.

The methodological approach adopted for this work is Interpretivism. The Interpretivist researcher is interested in rich, detailed information of a qualitative nature, that can be interpreted in order to learn how people make meaning of phenomena (Janse van Rensburg, 2001: 16), in this case commonage. The methodology requires that the researcher try to adopt a neutral approach and no prior theory is established about the phenomena; rather, the researcher would seek to gain a better understanding of it through qualitative methods (Janse van Rensburg, 2001: 16). Being objective is a difficult task, and the researcher is likely to have established pre-conceived ideas about the phenomenon. Nonetheless, the researcher should strive for objectivity. The researcher must look at actions and interpret these actions as being influenced by certain intentions or ways of seeing the phenomena (Connole, 1993: 13). Through understanding the situation, the researcher can unravel the relationships and complexities of the phenomena being studied (Janse van Rensburg, 2001: 17).

The research method consists of a case study analysis of three small towns in the Eastern Cape. Using the Interpretivist methodology, this method was used to gain an understanding of the management situation of each study site and how it is influenced by the governance framework. The

technique used to gain this understanding was through in-depth interviews with key stakeholders and informants. The second approach was through a desk-based literature review of commonage governance, land reform in South Africa, the historical, social and economic situation in which the study sites are embedded and the management of commonages in other parts of South Africa.

The way that management bodies and individuals take action determines how commonage is managed. In other words, what Local Municipalities considered the purpose of commonage, what decisions were made about commonage and how they interacted with commonage users gives an indication of how commonage is managed. The question of governance of commonages was investigated in existing policy and literature. Furthermore, by investigating policy and literature, and through interviews, it is possible to understand how management takes place and how it is influenced by broader institutional and governance context.

This study method supports the Contextualism School in Common Property Resource Theory (see for example, Edwards & Steins, 1998; Agrawal, 2007). The Contextualist approach allows the researcher to determine the environment in which Common Pool Resource management takes place; and it allows the researcher to look at the layers of institutional, social, ecological, political and economic structures that determine how commonage management is conducted (Edwards & Steins, 1998: 1).

4.2.1. Desk-based Literature Review

The research required a desk-based literature analysis of the governance of commonages in South Africa. In February 2007 the desk-based literature review began with a thorough literature review covering the following topics: the theory of Common Property Resource Management, Common Property Resource management in South Africa and in Africa, the Land Reform Programme in South Africa, the Commonage Policy in South Africa, commonage history, commonage management, Developmental Local Government, legislation relating to Developmental Local Government and Land Reform, Local Economic Development, Integrated Development Planning, and environmental policies.

4.2.2. Case Studies

The case studies, Grahamstown, Bathurst and Fort Beaufort, were chosen by the Project Supervisors. The criteria on which they based their decision were the following:

1. Three study sites is an adequate number for a Master's level project.
2. The study sites are not too widely dispersed – which is more cost effective to research.

3. They are reasonably small towns and the local authorities are receptive to research.
4. Recent work has been done on the commonage.
5. The social or ecological setting across sites is diverse.
6. The commonages in the study sites are not subject to land claims.

Between September 2007 and October 2008, interviews were conducted with various role-players in commonage management. A “snow-ball” qualitative method was used to identify these organisations, institutions or individuals; for example, by asking various interviewees to identify other individuals that may be important to interview. The topics for the interview schedules used were directed by the literature review, which helped to identify concerns regarding commonage management and governance.

4.3. The Interview Schedules

Four different interview schedules were developed, each representing a different level of institutional involvement. However, many questions were replicated so that different views could be ascertained on the same key topics or themes. This method was important in order to triangulate information (Janse van Rensburg, 2001: 9) so that the situation of commonages could be better understood from as many perspectives as possible. Furthermore, the interview schedules were created in order to ensure that the same key themes were investigated and improved the interview technique to ensure credibility and transferability of information if such a study were to be replicated or scrutinised (Janse van Rensburg, 2001: 9).

The Local Municipality interview schedule is the longest, and most detailed, for the primary reason that local municipalities are the owners of commonage land. The questions cover the following topics: the commonage history and scale, establishment of new commonage, commonage use and users, infrastructure, commonage and economic development, co-management, training and mentorship, developmental local government, other institutional and governmental involvement, environmental management and, finally, policy and direction. The main concerns, when developing this interview schedule, were the changing Local Municipal mandate after 1994, and the ability of Developmental Local Government to cope with new responsibilities, with an emphasis on the management of commonage. Practical management is situated at the Local Municipality level and municipal departments have more knowledge about the everyday commonage issues and problems that arise than any other government level.

The role of District Municipalities is to administer certain district-level functions and to assist local municipalities to build up their capacity. For this reason, and because district municipalities do not own the land, the District Municipality interview schedule is much shorter and contains fewer questions directly related to physical commonage. Instead the questions relate to Developmental Local Government, institutional and government involvement, environmental management and policy and direction. The main concerns directing these questions were how district municipalities perceive the efforts of local municipalities to manage commonage land, and how much support was given to local municipalities by district municipalities and other institutional bodies.

An interview schedule was developed for the district-level offices of national or provincial government departments such as Agriculture, Environmental Affairs and Land Affairs. The district branch of these departments was chosen as the institutional level for this research because this level of government may be involved in the governance of commonage. Higher levels of these national and provincial government departments are primarily concerned with policy development, planning and funding. The questions to national and provincial departments covered the following topics: the experience of the commonage issue, Developmental Local Government, institutional and governmental involvement, environmental management and policy and direction. The concerns directing these questions were these departments' responsibilities to commonage governance and how they support and enhance the development and maintenance of commonage at a local level.

The final interview schedule was developed for the lowest level institutional body involved in commonage management: that of the Commonage Management Committees (CMC). Questions to the CMCs focussed on the following topics: commonage users, the committee, committee capacity, institutional relationships and communication, rule making and enforcement and problems identified on the commonage. The concerns that directed these questions were how the CMC conducted its day-to-day management responsibilities, if and how they were supported in doing so and some of the practical difficulties of managing commonage.

An interview schedule was not developed for Non-Governmental Organisations or other interested parties. Instead, questions were asked based on the interests or involvement of the organisation or individual regarding commonage. Therefore, the interviews were conducted as informal conversations discussing any topic that arose, but including topics of concern (some of which would have been mentioned in the other interview schedules). Concerns included how they were involved regarding commonage, who they had interacted with in the process, what problems they have

encountered regarding commonage management, and what solutions they see, and how they view the Land Reform policy of the National Government.

4.4. Ethical Considerations

When interviewing the individuals in question, introductions were made, the research was discussed and the organisation for which the research was being conducted was identified. The right to confidentiality and the right of refusal was made clear to the respondent. All respondents, with one exception, reacted positively to being approached about being interviewed and did not request confidentiality. Care was taken to keep questions simple and neutral, while encouraging respondents to share information openly. Informants seemed comfortable with the institution (Rhodes) and no “ulterior motives” were conceived with regards to the interviewer’s reason for asking certain questions. Feedback to the community and respondents was provided in the form of community feedback meetings in the towns of Bathurst and Grahamstown and one additional meeting was conducted with the Makana Municipality. Unfortunately a community meeting in Fort Beaufort proved too difficult to arrange and no meeting took place in this town. Feedback was also given to all interested and affected parties in the form of a summary document. Finally, e-mails containing this document will be sent to all interviewees.

4.5. The Interviews

Shorter interviews took approximately 15 minutes, especially when the respondent knew little about the topic. The longest interview took an hour and 15 minutes. Most respondents were interviewed face-to-face with the exception of the district DLA in East London, the national DLA in Pretoria and the District Municipalities of Amathole and Cacadu. These individuals were interviewed telephonically. The interviews were conducted telephonically to save costs of transport and to save the respondents’ time. All these individuals reacted favourably to being interviewed in this manner.

It would be fair to caution the reader that views or opinions reflected in this thesis do not necessarily correspond with the views of the organisation or department that the individual is representing. Hence, although no one asked for a confidential interview, any remarks that may seem subjective are simply the opinion of the interviewee.

4.5.1. The Interviewees

The government officials interviewed were selected because of their involvement with commonage management or because of their knowledge of commonage management or governance. Some

officials could not be interviewed because they had resigned from their respective departments or municipalities. Certain officials were essential to interview and they were approached first. These were Local Municipality officials, DLA officials and DoA officials. Through anecdotal evidence and through inquiries about other role-players, NGO's, key informants and other institutions/government departments were identified and approached. These could essentially support, contest or add to the findings from the Local Municipality interviews, especially with regards to the history of commonages and their uses and management. Lastly, the final key interviews were conducted with emerging farmers associations. Some information was also received through anecdotal evidence.

The study sites fell into different Municipal boundaries; the Makana, Ndlambe and Nkonkobe Local Municipalities and the Amathole and Cacadu District Municipalities. Care was taken to interview a representative from each. Some respondents were responsible for just one study site in their jurisdiction, while others were responsible for two or more study sites in their jurisdiction. See Appendix 1 for the list of interviewees.

4.6. Limitations to this Study

For several reasons the number of interviews was more limited than originally anticipated. The researcher found it difficult to find the appropriate or relevant people to interview, such as in the Nkonkobe Municipality where the potential interviewee had resigned. Some of the interviewees, therefore, were unclear as to the intricate workings of commonage management. Furthermore, it would often take many months to organise an interview and sometimes data was not provided, such as municipal minutes or copies of grazing agreements. However, being resident in Grahamstown for six years has allowed the research to be supplemented by anecdotal evidence. Care was taken to be critical of such information, but often the information came from more than one source.

Another pitfall to the research was the inability to interview the Emerging Farmers' Association in Bathurst. The livestock owners are suspicious of outsiders and the intentions of scientists or academics. At the time of the research, the Ndlambe Municipality was making plans to implement a tourism initiative on the commonage and the cattle owners were objecting to the idea. After repeated attempts to interview a certain livestock owner, without success, the interview was shelved. It is unfortunate because the internal structures of the association could not be better understood and information about the livestock owners had to be gained from previous work documented in the MAFA report (MAFA, 2006).

The final limitation of this study is the lack of formal documentation from which to compare the information from interviewees. Council minutes, grazing agreements and management plans were difficult to obtain from municipalities for a number of reasons. Firstly, some municipalities did not have this documentation. Secondly, one municipality was not forthcoming with council minutes for unknown reasons. However, it is assumed that the municipality either did not have a proper minute-taking system or there was sensitive information contained in the documents. This gives an indication of the limited capacities of municipalities to acquire all relevant documents. There is also a perceived lack of trust between municipalities and researchers. This is very frustrating for researchers who have to work with municipalities. This, along with poor understanding of subject matter, can make the process of research difficult and the results poor. However, this research was conducted using the method of triangulation to insure against poor results. Even when formal documents could not be found, other supplies of information were sourced.

5. Results

5.1. The Nature of Commonage

H. Prinsloo (pers. comm., 2008) sees new commonage as having a “private” nature, as opposed to the public nature of old/traditional commonage. This private nature may stem from the individualisation of new commonage by emergent farmers. This is in contrast to old commonage whereby a community of users has access to its resources. However, the nature of the commonage will change according to the situation and town. Each piece of commonage land is subject to different legal requirements as set out in the title deed attached to the land (Prinsloo, H. pers. comm., 2008). Therefore, to determine the title deed provisions, which will give an indication of the stipulated legal arrangements of the deed and the corresponding nature of the commonage, one must look at the actual deed. These conditions can be altered through permission from the Provincial Administrators.

5.2. History of Commonage

5.2.1. Fort Beaufort

According to the Chairperson and Secretary of the local Emerging Farmers’ Association, the commonage in Fort Beaufort was not used exclusively by white people in the past (Dyasi & Tonisi pers. comm., 2007). Instead, the then “white” municipality allowed black people to graze livestock on three pieces of commonage land. It was a well functioning system whereby the Municipality created a camp system and maintained the infrastructure (Dyasi & Tonisi pers. comm., 2007). Mr Mxoli, who is director of Town Planning in the Nkonkobe Local Municipality, has only been in the Municipality since 2002 (Mxoli pers. comm., 2007). Therefore, he is unaware of how many hectares the commonage consists of and could not give an indication of commonage history. He did suggest that more land has been accessed by the municipality, donated by the Department of Public Works, for use of residents of the town. However, this is not referred to as ‘commonage’. The extent of this land, consisting of one farm, is unknown and the Mr Mxoli was also not sure about the date of purchase. This land is leased per head of livestock to a number of black farmers in the area. As indicated by a local Fort Beaufort resident and rangeland specialist, Dr Trollope (pers. comm., 2008), two sections of commonage have been sold to a private commercial farmer and the local Agricultural College, but the time of sale is unknown.

5.2.2. Bathurst

According to the MAFA document (2006: 6) the Bathurst commonage is approximately 2900 ha in extent and was first handed over to the people of Bathurst in 1825 by the Royal Commission.

According to a commonage worker in Bathurst, there is only old commonage in the town (Ntlokwana pers. comm., 2007); however the original commonage was extended in 1924 to include what is now known as Erf 2 (MAFA, 2006: 6). Ntlokwana (pers. comm., 2007) produced a map detailing the number of hectares of the commonage. According to him, the land was used in the same way before 1994, as it is being used now, for grazing of cattle by black and white residents, but that no white residents graze cattle on the land anymore. This is supported by Higginbottom et al. (1995: 18) who indicate that the commonage was divided into camps that separated black and white owned livestock. The MAFA document (2006: 7), which is an amalgamation of a study done on the Bathurst commonage by members of the Rhodes University Department of Environmental Science, indicates that, until 1994, the privilege of grazing cattle on the commonage was reserved for whites only and blacks had no say in the management of the commonage. Whites used the commonage for pineapple farming, grazing cattle, vegetable production and the collection of natural resources (MAFA, 2006: 7).

During the 1990's there were conflicts between blacks and whites over the use of commonage, with the latter expressing anger that people who do not pay rates should be allowed use of the commonage (MAFA, 2006: 7). The commonage is now used by black cattle farmers; however, anecdotal evidence suggests that one white farmer still grazes cattle on the commonage. According to a source in the Conservation Department in the Ndlambe Municipality, Mr Fouche (pers. comm., 2008), the commonage was placed under the mandate of the Conservation unit of the Ndlambe Municipality when the new Local Government structures were created, post-1994. However, the Conservation Department in the Ndlambe Local Municipality has not been extensively involved in managing the commonage presently and, since 1994, the involvement of the Ndlambe Local Municipality in commonage management has dwindled. This is supported by MAFA document (2006: 7) which indicates that the commonage is not being actively managed, nor is it generating an income for its management. At present, the maximum head of stock per farmer (20 per farmer as set out in the original agreement) is being exceeded by some individuals. Currently, the DoA is involved in dipping of cattle and the Ndlambe Local Municipality is involved in infrastructure maintenance.

5.2.3. Grahamstown

According to the Management Plan and Grazing Agreement for Grahamstown Commonage (ECARP, 2002b) the previous council in Grahamstown (before 1994) had a formalised farming unit of 900 ha divided into nine camps, with watering points, dipping facilities and the introduction of bulls for

breeding purposes. A register was kept for all stock units and a fee of R5/LSU/Month was paid to the council. According to the Director of Parks and Recreation in the Makana Local Municipality, Mr Bates (pers. comm., 2008), this system was run by the then Agricultural Department (the equivalent of the DoA today). This system worked efficiently because it was a small piece of land, tightly managed and the number of animals on the commonage never exceeded 200. This land was used by black farmers. Just before 1994, Grahamstown experienced a time of social unrest and the infrastructure on the land was vandalised and badly damaged and farmers refused to pay for access to the land (Bates pers. comm., 2008; ECARP, 2002b). Since 1994, the land has been grazed in excess of the carrying capacity and new farms have had to be purchased due to the expansion of livestock numbers (ECARP, 2002b). Subsequent attempts to repair damaged infrastructure and implement new infrastructure have been met with more vandalism and theft (Bates pers. comm., 2008; ECARP, 2002b).

There are some inconsistencies regarding the number of hectares that constitute the Grahamstown commonage. According to Puttick (2007: 7) there are approximately 8741 ha but, as noted in the section on the expansion of Grahamstown commonage, there are approximately 4057 ha, according to ECARP (2002b). However, a calculation of the figures supplied by Bates (pers. comm., 2008) brings the total to 9083 ha.

Table 2: The history and expansion of commonages in the study sites

Commonage History				
		Grahamstown	Bathurst	Fort Beaufort
Pre-1994 users		Small numbers of black livestock owners	Black and white livestock owners	Black and white livestock owners
Hectares	Old	4397	2900	2350
	New	4686	N/A	Unknown
New commonage establishment		New commonage established in 2003 (5 new farms)	No new commonage and none required at present	One farm donated by the Department of Public Works and other land is required

5.3. The Acquisition of Commonage

According to both the Cacadu and Amathole district offices of the DLA, local municipalities can apply to the DLA for funding for the acquisition of commonage. This is what a Development Planner in the Cacadu District Municipality, Ms Bezuidenhout (pers. comm. 2008) refers to as the “needs-based”

approach of the Commonage Programme. A Senior Planner in the Amathole District DLA indicates that the DLA expects local municipalities to identify the land that they would like to obtain, that they commission an evaluation report and that they produce a management plan (Zungula pers. comm., 2008). The management plan must contain a veld assessment section that details the carrying capacity of the land, as well as indicating what the land will be used for and how it will be managed. The Deputy-Director of the Cacadu District DLA states that there must also be a grazing agreement or lease agreement formulated (Prinsloo, H. pers. comm., 2008).

Once the DLA has found all these requirements to be satisfactory, it will purchase the land on behalf of the local municipality and ownership will pass to the municipality through a title deed (Zungula pers. comm., 2008). The DLA in Cacadu indicated that the existence of certain documents often depends on the local municipality and official dealing with a certain application (Prinsloo, H. pers. comm., 2008), which suggests that some required documents may exist while others may not. The DLA has the right to register a notarial against the title deed that sets out certain conditions that must be met. If any title deed condition is to be subsequently changed, the local municipality must apply to the Premier of the province to get permission to do so (Prinsloo, H. pers. comm., 2008). Once the title deed is registered, the municipality has the sole responsibility of managing the land with the support of other government departments. A key question is the monitoring of commonage management after ownership has been transferred to Local Municipalities. In this regard, the DLA in Amathole indicated that the monitoring and evaluation of all Land Reform projects is undertaken by the Monitoring and Evaluation Department of the DLA. However, monitoring is restricted to assessing the success or failure of Redistribution projects and does not necessarily include assessing the management of commonage land (Zungula pers. comm., 2008). Therefore, there is little or no monitoring and evaluation of commonage projects. However, the commonage programme as a whole was investigated by the National DLA office which involved evaluating a number of commonage projects (DLA, 2005).

Support for local municipalities takes the form of funding for infrastructure from the Department of Agriculture. The municipality must approach the DoA with a funding proposal. The DoA, by means of their Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme (CASP), can fund the provision of infrastructure on commonages; such as dams, fences and dipping facilities (Zungula pers. comm., 2008). However, H. Prinsloo (pers. comm., 2008) indicates that this funding is difficult to acquire because the DoA is mandated to use the funds primarily for private agricultural projects or for private landowners; therefore, local municipalities have a small chance of successfully acquiring

funding for infrastructure. A Chief Planner in the national DLA offices feels that the DoA should do more to support the Commonage Programme, because the DoA is mandated to be involved but fails to fulfil all of its responsibilities (Prinsloo, A. pers. comm., 2008). This failure to fulfil its mandate may be because the DoA lacks the capacity to do so, as suggested by Bates (pers. comm., 2008)

The District Municipalities (Amathole and Cacadu) in the study areas claim to have little or nothing to do with commonage management (Bezuidenhout pers. comm. 2008; Sawuti pers. comm., 2008). Both of these District Municipalities consider commonage to be a local municipal function and the role of the district municipality as a government department is simply to support the local municipality when there is a need; for example, when the local municipality feels it does not have the capacity to fulfil one of its legislated mandates in terms of the Municipal Systems Act (Bezuidenhout pers. comm., 2008; Sawuti pers. comm., 2008). A district municipality is, however, required to ensure that the local municipality carries out all of its mandates, whether related to commonage management or other mandates. However, the extent to which this supervision is carried out will depend on the district municipality concerned (Bezuidenhout pers. comm., 2008). This indicates that the amount of supervision may depend on the capacity of the respective district municipality and the performance of the local municipality. Bezuidenhout (pers. comm., 2008) feels that district level municipalities are just there as guiding institutions and do not “wave a big stick” over the local municipalities to ensure that responsibilities are fulfilled.

5.3.1. New commonage in Grahamstown

Grahamstown, situated in the jurisdiction of the Makana Local Municipality, is the only municipality in the three study sites that purchased additional land for the expansion of the commonage. Five additional farms were purchased in 2003. A Grahamstown-based NGO, the Eastern Cape Agricultural Research Project (ECARP), was commissioned to do veld assessment of the old commonage and suggest new farms/land to purchase, to create a management plan which included an indication of carrying capacity, to draw up grazing agreements and to suggest grazing management schemes. According to a researcher in ECARP (Faye pers. comm., 2008) the following process was followed. Meetings were set up with livestock owners to determine the amount of livestock being grazed on the land at that time. Unfortunately, this was a flawed process as many commonage farmers failed to reveal their true number of livestock. Even so, it was discovered that the old commonage carrying capacity was being severely exceeded. The carrying capacity was measured at 400 Large Stock Units (LSU) and 1222 Small Stock Units (SSU) as compared to the actual numbers of livestock grazing on the land, which was estimated at 1858 LSU and 1912 SSU respectively (ECARP, 2002d). The ECARP

report suggested that the commonage be extended by 4770 ha, which would increase the land by 200% from 2003 ha to 6773 ha. The new farms were identified for purchase which added on an additional 2054 ha, although this additional land was still not sufficient for the number of animals at the time. The carrying capacity increased to 1357 LSU and 2612 SSU for all commonage land, which allowed for additional SSU but required that large stock numbers be adjusted to carrying capacity (ECARP, 2002a).

Table 3: The expansion of Grahamstown commonage and the impact this had on the number of livestock that the land has the capacity to support

The Expansion of Grahamstown Commonage				
	Carrying capacity before expansion	Carrying capacity after expansion	Estimated Livestock numbers (2003)	Difference between carrying capacity and actual numbers
Large Stock Units	400	1357	1858	301
Small Stock Units	1222	2612	1912	-700

In 2003, once the reports were completed by ECARP, they were handed over to the Makana Municipality, whose job it now was to implement the recommendations and plans. According to the Management Plan and Grazing Agreement for Grahamstown Commonage (ECARP, 2002b) and the Management Plan and Grazing Agreement for the Extension Farms (ECARP, 2002c), the grazing fee was set at R2/SSU/Month and R10/LSU/Month. During the consultation process the livestock owners agreed to pay the fee, but once regulations were enforced the livestock owners refused to pay (Faye pers. comm., 2008; Bates pers. comm., 2008). A poor relationship has developed between the livestock owners and Makana Municipality, and the refusal by the livestock to pay a fee can be attributed to this.

5.4. Direct Use of Commonage

The users of commonage consist mostly of stockowners, people in the “townships” (poor residents), traditional healers and, in Bathurst and Grahamstown, white residents. All three commonages are predominantly being utilised by black farmers for grazing livestock. Smaller projects have been initiated on some of the commonages but they use only a small percentage of the available land. One must take into account that the informants in Fort Beaufort were unsure of all activities taking place there, and more activities are predicted for the commonage; such as initiation ceremonies. However, the uses of commonage in Grahamstown and Bathurst, as indicated by informants, seem

to be more diverse than in Fort Beaufort. Uses are included in Table 4. This table indicates direct uses of commonage. It does not take into account the indirect services of commonage such as the ecosystem processes that commonage supports. It also fails to consider the intrinsic value of the commonage as a resource or the future benefits that may be derived from the resource.

Table 4: The use of, users and numbers of cattle on the commonages in the study sites

Commonage Characteristics				
		Grahamstown	Bathurst	Fort Beaufort
Use of land	Grazing	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Piggery	Yes		
	Sand Mining	Yes	Yes	
	Fuelwood and Plants	Yes	Yes	
	Initiation Ceremonies	Yes	Yes	
	Cultivation			Yes
Users		Stock Owners, Traditional healers, Township residents	Stock Owners, Traditional healers, White residents, Township residents	Stock Owners, Township residents
Cattle No	Estimated	2000-2500	200 / 500-700	Unknown
Ha/LSU		7ha/LSU	3.5ha/LSU	7.5ha/LSU

Illegal activities are taking place on the Bathurst commonage. Some residents are poaching game and some white residents are collecting rare flowers or plants for their gardens. There is also illegal sand extraction and the felling of trees for fuelwood (this latter activity requires a permit). These activities are regulated by the commonage Ranger and his staff and illegal activities are reported to the Conservation Unit (Ndlambe Local Municipality) and the Department of Conservation (Eastern Cape Parks). Illegal activities are not confined to Bathurst. The DEDEA in Grahamstown has suggested that there is over-harvesting of medicinal plants occurring on the Grahamstown commonage (Hahndiek pers. comm., 2008). Other illegal activities were not mentioned; however, considering that people harvest many natural resources from commonage, it may be the case that many other illegal activities are occurring on the Grahamstown and Fort Beaufort commonages.

The cultivation occurring on the Bathurst commonage is a vegetable project established by a local Grahamstown NGO called Umthathi, which employs a handful of poor, black Bathurst residents. However, according to the Ndlambe Local Municipality, the economic benefits are not large and there is an urgent need to commercialise the project (Mjacu pers. comm., 2008). According to anecdotal evidence, the project failed after Umthathi pulled out of the project. The NGO considered

the management to be up to standard, and the presence was no longer necessary; however, they realised later that the management was not effective after the crops failed and the greenhouses were vandalised. The Ndlambe Local Municipality have plans for future agricultural projects; these are mainly cropping projects and possibly an essential oils project (Mjacu pers. comm., 2008). The tourism development side of the LED department is finding it difficult to acquire funding for tourism opportunities (Marala pers. comm., 2008). Tourism on the commonage can take the form of hiking, 4X4 trails, craft, camping or eco-tourism. This is possible because the commonage borders on a state reserve called Waters Meeting State Reserve and may be incorporated into the Reserve in order to create a viable land area.

According to the Emerging Farmers' Association's of Grahamstown and Fort Beaufort, anyone is allowed access to the respective commonages. Furthermore, this access is not regulated through rules, an institutional body or other users (Dyasi & Tonisi pers. comm., 2007; Mamkeli pers. comm., 2007). However, when questioned about the use of commonage by white people it was considered a humorous statement because white people do not use the commonage for grazing (Mamkeli pers. comm., 2007). However, in Bathurst and in Grahamstown, the commonage is utilised by whites for collecting plants and for recreational purposes respectively. Access to part of the Grahamstown commonage is restricted. This land is called "southern commonage" and is currently included in the Oldenburgia Conservancy (Bates pers. comm., 2008). The Working for Water Programme (WfW) is using poison to kill Alien Invasive Plants (AIPs) and the cattle may be poisoned if they were to graze there (Bates pers. comm., 2008). Access to this land may in future be granted to farmers running herds of Nguni cattle (a cattle breed that is indigenous to South Africa), but there will be strict controls regarding this access (Bates pers. comm., 2008). This commonage land is mainly used by people in the town for recreational purposes.

5.5. Commonage Concerns

There are a number of concerns related to the commonages in the study sites. These concerns are contained within table 5.

1. Infrastructure (boreholes, water tanks, fences and gates): poorly delivered and maintained commonage infrastructure, non-existent infrastructure or vandalised infrastructure.
2. Housing development: encroachment of formal and informal housing onto commonage.
3. Overgrazing or overstocking: exceeding the carry capacity of the land.
4. Stock theft: stock owners or other residents stealing from one another and selling the stock in adjacent areas.

5. Elite capture: a minority of stock owners grazing a large number of stock (which exceeds the regulated number) whilst the majority graze only a small number of stock. Wealthy or powerful stockowners intimidate weaker members of the community.
6. Rapid urbanisation: due to a number of reasons, more and more people are settling in urban areas and this is placing enormous pressure on the Local Municipality to supply social and infrastructural services.
7. Land hunger and conflict: people requesting more land on which to graze cattle and, due to farm evictions and subsequent urbanisation, more people requiring it.
8. No employment opportunities: people relying on surrounding land (e.g. commonage) to supply natural resources to supplement their social grants/incomes.

Table 5: The problems that affect the use and management of the commonage

Commonage Concerns			
	Grahamstown	Bathurst	Fort Beaufort
1. Vandalism	Yes	Not mentioned	Not mentioned
2. Housing encroachment	Yes, informal	No	Yes, formal
3. Over-grazing	Yes	Yes	No
4. Stock Theft	Yes	Not mentioned	Yes
5. Elite Capture	Yes	Yes	Not mentioned
6. Rapid Urbanisation	Yes	Not mentioned	Yes
7. Land hunger	Yes	Yes	Yes
8. No employment	Yes	Yes	Yes

The following sections will explain these issues in more detail.

5.5.1. Infrastructure

The infrastructure on Grahamstown commonage was badly damaged in the period preceding the 1994 democratic elections (Bates pers. comm., 2008). Since then, the subsequent efforts of the Municipality to deliver infrastructure has been hindered by the constant vandalism and theft of fencing for informal housing and other purposes (Bates pers. comm., 2008). This has become the most contentious issue on the commonage because the stockowners are refusing to pay a fee to the Makana Local Municipality due to the lack of infrastructure on the commonage (Bates pers. comm., 2008; Mamkeli pers. comm., 2007). Bates (pers. comm., 2008) feels that the vandalism of the infrastructure could be deliberate efforts by the stockowners to sabotage the infrastructure

implementation of the Makana Local Municipality; thereby allowing them free and unrestricted access to the commonage. The stockowners feel that the Makana Local Municipality have not kept their promise with regards to the building of kraals for cattle and, because it is the Local Municipality's land, they should manage it properly (Mamkeli pers. comm., 2007). Until infrastructure is implemented, no fees will be paid, no rules made and the management plans will not be followed (Mamkeli pers. comm., 2007). This is a catch-22 situation and the only way the Municipality sees it being resolved is through a mass implementation project which will require a huge funding effort (Bates pers. comm. 2008). So far, the only infrastructure on the commonage is a boundary fence, but even this is often cut and damaged.

The infrastructure on the Bathurst commonage is in a state of disrepair (Mjacu pers. comm., 2008) even though the Ndlambe Local Municipality has a commonage ranger who actively maintains the fencing (Fouche pers. comm., 2008). According to the informant in the Ndlambe Local Municipality, the commonage ranger is in charge of all commonages in the jurisdiction of the Municipality and, therefore, he lacks time and manpower to do a more efficient job (Fouche pers. comm., 2008). The lack of adequate water on the commonage is a hindrance to doing more cultivation.

On Fort Beaufort commonage there seems to be little or no infrastructure (Mxoli pers. comm., 2007). The Nkonkobe Local Municipality does not seem to actively manage the commonage, although the IDP indicates that money has been set aside for fencing the commonage (Nkonkobe, 2007: 47).

5.5.2. Housing Development

In Fort Beaufort, the Nkonkobe Local Municipality has allowed RDP houses to be erected on commonage land (Mhlaba pers. comm., 2007; Mxoli pers. comm., 2007). No informal housing is being erected on the land because there are a sufficient number of RDP houses being built near the town (Mhlaba pers. comm., 2007). In Grahamstown, old commonage is being encroached upon by informal settlements; however, houses are not being built on new commonage land (Bates pers. comm., 2008). Bathurst seems to have no problem with informal or formal settlement encroachment onto commonage; however, the Nolukhanyo Township was originally erected on commonage land (MAFA, 2006: 7) on one side of a main road, with most of the commonage situated on the other side. This could be a deterrent for anyone wanting to build a house on the commonage, as they would be separated from the rest of the Township by the main road.

5.5.3. Overstocking

In all three study sites, one or a number of informants have indicated that overgrazing is occurring due to overstocking of the commonage. On Bathurst commonage the Conservation Unit indicated that there is overgrazing occurring and that there is also encroachment by Alien Invasive Plants (Fouche pers. comm., 2008). The local LED officer for Agriculture also mentioned overgrazing (Mjacu pers. comm., 2008), although another informant says that he has never heard of reports of overgrazing (Ntlokwana pers. comm., 2007).

In Grahamstown, the informant for the Makana Local Municipality feels that the land is being overgrazed (Bates pers. comm., 2008), as does the ECARP informant (Faye pers. comm., 2008), the DoA (Nelani pers. comm., 2007) and Department of Economic Development and Environmental Affairs (Hahndiek pers. comm., 2008). The DoA feels that the carrying capacity regulations are not being adhered to (Nelani pers. comm., 2007). However, the Emerging Farmers' Association does not see overgrazing as an issue affecting the commonage (Mamkeli pers. comm., 2007).

It is only in Fort Beaufort that the Emerging Farmers' Association and the Nkonkobe Local Municipality agree that there is no overgrazing, although the Emerging Farmers' Association feels that more land is needed (Dyasi & Tonisi pers. comm., 2007). However, the Amathole DLA has indicated that the Local Municipality acknowledges that there are too many head of cattle currently utilising the available land (Zungula pers. comm., 2008). A local resident and range ecologist feels that the veld surrounding Fort Beaufort is being abused (Trollope pers. comm., 2008).

Despite overgrazing been mentioned as a problem due to too many head of cattle on the commonage, key informants were unable to indicate actual livestock figures. In Grahamstown, the figure given is between 2000 and 2500 head of cattle (Ward, 2007) and in Bathurst the figure was given as 200 head of cattle (Ntlokwana pers. comm., 2007), although anecdotal evidence shows that one cattle owner alone has 200 head of cattle. The MAFA document (2006: 27) indicates that there are between 500 and 700 head of cattle on the Bathurst commonage. The Nkonkobe Local Municipality does not know cattle figures and could not even give an estimate.

Ainslie (pers. comm., 2007) indicates that authorities may be unable to calculate cattle numbers because many cattle owners perform what is known as "shadow herding" to confuse local authorities about actual cattle numbers. Cattle numbers are usually calculated at dipping sessions. However, some livestock owners will only bring half their herd one week and the other half the following week – alternating in this way so that no one can count the real numbers of livestock that they own.

5.5.4. Stock Theft

Stock theft is mentioned as a major problem in both Fort Beaufort and Grahamstown. Both the municipalities and the Emerging Farmers' Associations mentioned this. Part of the reason for this high incidence of stock theft is poor herd management of the livestock, and lack of fencing on the commonage, which allows animals to stray all over the respective towns (Dyasi & Tonisi pers. comm., 2007; Mamkeli pers. comm., 2007). The Grahamstown Emerging Farmers' Association blames some white farmers for the theft, suggesting that they are the ones who are purchasing the animals (Mamkeli pers. comm., 2007); however, the Makana Local Municipality says that, although one theft took place where a white farmer was involved, it was an isolated incident and nothing could be proved (Bates pers. comm., 2008). Because of stock theft, many animals are kept in the township or in the garden's of houses, which is not an ideal system due to health problems associated with cattle (Mamkeli pers. comm., 2007).

5.5.5. Elite Capture

In Grahamstown (Bates pers. comm., 2008) and Bathurst there are reports of elite capture. This phenomenon refers not only to inequitable numbers of cattle (a few people grazing more head of cattle than regulations allow, whilst others only graze two or three head of cattle), but also to a "mafia" syndrome, whereby a few stock owners use the land shamelessly, and to the detriment of other resource users, and intimidate anyone who speaks up about it. Anecdotal evidence indicates that a white farmer in Bathurst is grazing a herd of cattle on the commonage that is in excess of 200 head. He is married to a black woman who is the local chief's daughter. Although, by law, he is only allowed 20 head of cattle (and the commonage is only for the use of black people) his cattle are managed by various family members and so he is able to hide the true number of head of cattle from the authorities. It has also been suggested that, in Bathurst, the stock owners are a powerful social force and dominate commonage use. They are able to intimidate other resource users and this is causing conflict between resource users.

In Grahamstown, the local Chairperson of the Emerging Farmers' Association has moved onto one of the farms that make up new commonage. He has taken over this farm for his own use and even charges other people to graze cattle on the land (Bates pers. comm., 2008). However, the Local Municipality is in the process of removing him from the land. Bates (pers. comm., 2008) suggests that the Emerging Farmers' Association committee, and those who are literate, dominate those who are poor and illiterate. They are now a very powerful group of people on the commonage. They have also been defying the Makana Local Municipality by vandalising the fences and refusing to pay a fee;

and even organised a march when the Local Municipality tried to implement certain regulations. Bates (pers. comm., 2008) also suggests that commonage managers are subject to bribes or intimidation. This is not an isolated case; the DLA (Prinsloo, H. pers. comm., 2008) indicates that some pressure groups are driving the management processes on many commonages and that elite people, who do not even live in the respective towns, will graze cattle on commonage because of the cultural and social status that is achieved by doing so.

There is an interesting disparity between Fort Beaufort and the other study sites. The elite capture of commonage resources happening on the Fort Beaufort commonage is fuelled by the nepotism and corruption of the Nkonkobe Local Municipality, who allow friends and families access to commonage before allowing other residents the same benefit. This is according to the Fort Beaufort Emerging Farmers' Association (Dyasi & Tonisi pers. comm., 2007). Although unproven, it does seem like a conceivable scenario given the reports of other incidences of corruption throughout South Africa.

5.5.6. Rapid Urbanisation

In Grahamstown and Fort Beaufort, urbanisation is proving to be problematic for the management of the commonage. This is due to the rising number of people who are relying on the land around the towns to supplement their income and for the provision of fuelwood and other resources. In Grahamstown, there are approximately 200 cattle owners (who come to livestock meetings) (Bates pers. comm., 2008). This requires regulating the movements of all these owners and their cattle, which the Makana Local Municipality is finding difficult to do at present. This problem of urbanisation contributes to the subsequent issue of land hunger. Local Municipalities are under increasing pressure to provide services for the people, and subsequently are unable to meet all of their mandated responsibilities. In Bathurst, this trend is substantiated in the IDP, which indicates that the region has a housing shortage due to an influx of farm workers into the towns (Ndlambe, 2007: 14).

5.5.7. Land Hunger

In all of the study sites, land hunger is stated as a problem affecting the commonage; there is not enough land for all the commonage users. This can be attributed to urbanisation, unemployment, increasing cattle numbers and the encroachment of housing or other land uses. The Emerging Farmers' Association of Fort Beaufort and Grahamstown indicate that they require more land for the purpose of grazing livestock (Mamkeli pers. comm., 2008; Dyasi & Tonisi pers., comm., 2008). Land

hunger is also driven by farm evictions (Prinsloo, H. pers. comm., 2008), and anecdotal evidence suggests that evicted farm workers will often bring cattle to the towns. These animals were acquired from the farm owner or manager during their employment on the farm.

5.5.8. Limited Employment Opportunities

Related to rapid urbanisation, the lack of employment in the study sites is impacting on the use of commonage. Both the Grahamstown and Fort Beaufort Emerging Farmers' Associations (Mamkeli pers. comm., 2008; Dyasi & Tonisi pers., comm., 2008) have indicated that this is a problem in the towns, which is potentially leading to increasing numbers of people relying on the commonage to supplement their income. This is substantiated by the IDPs of the respective municipalities.

5.6. Governance of commonage

5.6.1. General Policy

According to the DLA, the Commonage Policy was under review in 2004, but any envisaged changes to the Policy have been shelved (Prinsloo, A. pers. comm., 2008). Some of the problems that are being experienced by local municipalities, when attempting to manage their commonage, are lack of capacity, poor lease implementation and enforcement and lack of political will (Prinsloo, A. pers. comm., 2008). However, a new Commonage Implementation Manual is in the process of being developed (Prinsloo, A. pers. comm., 2008). One of the major concerns of the DLA is the implementation of a planning grant system so that local municipalities can develop feasibility and planning documents before applying for new commonage (Prinsloo, A. pers. comm., 2008). According to the national offices of the DLA, there are still commonage projects (acquisition of new commonage) being implemented in South Africa (Prinsloo, A. pers. comm., 2008). For example, in Gauteng the DLA is purchasing commonage because high urbanisation rates are leading to township development and there is an accompanying increase in demand for land for livelihood provisioning. In the Northern Cape, because the land has a low carrying capacity, more needs to be purchased for increasing livestock numbers in peri-urban areas.

With regards to other Land Reform Policies, the LRAD programme has been renewed. One of the key changes in the LRAD policy is an increase in the size of the grants, ranging from a minimum of R111 000 to a maximum of R430 000 (Prinsloo, A. pers. comm., 2008). This has a potential influence on the "stepping-off" policy of the Commonage Programme, as will be discussed below.

5.6.2. The Stepping-off Policy

As encapsulated in the 2002 policy (DLA, 2002), the commonage Programme now regards beneficiaries as belonging to either the subsistence farming bracket or the emerging farming bracket. New commonage land must be used to support the latter, whereby commonage farmers can increase their herds until they are ready to “step off” commonage and purchase their own land by means of Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD) or through an emergent farmer programme. These farmers will then begin to farm commercially and produce for the market (DLA, 2002). They would have gained, from their time accessing commonage land, the necessary skills, experience and assets to do so (DLA, 2002). Furthermore, through the emergent farmer programme, it is envisaged that local municipalities will engage with provincial level departments of Agriculture and Land Affairs, thereby providing support and planning capacity to local municipalities, to help them implement an emerging farmer system (DLA, 2002).

The key informants in the study sites have all agreed that the Emerging Farmer Programme has not been performing as envisaged and that there are serious flaws with the implementation of this policy. According to the Local Municipalities, the Cacadu district DLA and other key informants, there have been no or few cases of farmers stepping-off the commonage. According to the interviewees, the reasons for this trend are as follows:

- The farmers are not earning enough from commonage farming to purchase their own land and LRAD funding is insufficient (Mxoli pers. comm., 2007).
- There is no infrastructure or services on the newly purchased land (Mxoli pers. comm., 2007). Therefore, post-settlement support is essential on new farms, but this is unattainable or inadequate (Mxoli pers. comm., 2007). This is directly related to the LRAD grant being insufficient for farming.
- Land is too expensive (Bates pers. comm., 2008; Mhlaba pers. comm., 2007; Nelani pers. comm., 2007; Ntlokwana pers. comm., 2007), which again relates directly to the insufficient LRAD funding.
- Information about funding to purchase other land is not communicated to the commonage users (Ntlokwana pers. comm., 2007).
- Land in the Eastern Cape that can be purchased with available funds is not producing enough as it has a low carrying capacity; therefore, farmers will be unlikely to see profits immediately (Bates pers. comm., 2008, Hahndiek pers. comm., 2007). This indicates that

farmers will need large capital inputs to maintain the farm until the land is producing a profit.

- Farming is a difficult career path and requires extensive training and skills. Some emergent farmers will never acquire these skills by farming on commonage (Bates pers. comm., 2008).
- Farming requires a lot of capital input for fertilizer, livestock feeds and medicines and farming implements. Finding money for these inputs is not possible for small emergent farmers (Bates pers. comm., 2008).
- People are reluctant to lose a free resource such as commonage (Prinsloo, H. pers. comm., 2008).
- The Department of Agriculture is not supplying the right equipment for the farmers and sometimes the equipment cannot be maintained due to lack of skills or money (Hahndiek pers. comm., 2007).
- The selection of beneficiaries for LRAD grants is flawed and needs to be re-evaluated. At present the beneficiaries are affluent people who have political connections and no farming background (Hahndiek pers. comm., 2007).
- Ainslie (pers. comm., 2007) sees cultural and social constraints to commercialising livestock on commonage. He feels that others will get jealous and livestock owners may fall out of favour with the community. People are expected, if they have sufficient animals, to supply livestock for funerals, weddings and other cultural and social events. Therefore, it will be difficult for emerging farmers to produce large herds of livestock.

Solutions to these problems were discussed and the following recommendations were supplied by interviewees:

- Information on funding options must be communicated to local farmers (Ntlokwana pers. comm., 2007). This would enable those farmers who are interested in becoming commercial farmers to identify subsidies and support.
- More training is needed and funding made available for post-settlement support (Mxoli pers. comm., 2007). Mentoring is required for farmers while they are still on the commonage. This may also require more intensive extension support.
- Municipalities must buy the new land and rent it to farmers, but not refer to it as commonage (Mhlaba pers. comm., 2007). This could be a transitional phase between commonage farming and commercial farming on private land.
- The DLA should keep a data-base of individuals who are eager to become commercial farmers and require funding to access land. This will prevent land being allocated to people

who “do not have the heart to farm” (the necessary passion, skills and knowledge) (Bates pers. comm., 2008). The selection criteria for beneficiaries must be re-evaluated or rigorously and fairly implemented (Hahndiek pers. comm., 2007).

- The time it takes for the farmers to step off is too lengthy and pressure remains on the commonage resources (Bates pers. comm., 2008). Municipalities must “increase the pressure” to get off commonage – they should increase the amount one pays per head of cattle as the amount of cattle owned increases (sliding scale of fees) (Prinsloo, H. pers. comm., 2008).

Land prices, and the corresponding productivity of the land, are a matter of concern. According to H. Prinsloo (pers. comm., 2008) the market prices for agricultural land are beyond the value of production and it is now no longer possible to farm in an economically sustainable manner. Agricultural and other land prices in South Africa have increased by 400% since 2003, although it has now stabilised. In the Eastern Cape, the average was a 360% increase (Prinsloo, H. pers. comm., 2008). Bates (pers. comm., 2008) argues that emerging farmers cannot be expected to farm profitably on land that white farmers were unable to do the same on, especially because some farms are expected to support more than one beneficiary.

Prices in the Eastern Cape, in terms of 2008 figures, are on average R10 000 per 10 hectares of land and some land can only support 1 LSU per hectare (Nelani pers. comm., 2007). This is according to the local DoA. Therefore, if one farmer receives a R20 000 grant for the purchase of land, he can still only purchase 20 hectares of land and support 20 LSU on such a piece of land. This information is somewhat inaccurate of the reality of the area. A quick overview of farms purchased in the Eastern Cape from March to June this year (farm prices derived from *Farmers Weekly*) shows that the average price of agricultural land in the Eastern Cape is R2 800/ha. However, the average for Grahamstown is R3 600/ha and Bathurst is R17 000/ha. According to one source in real estate, the price of agricultural land in the area ranges from R6 000/ha to R10 000/ha, which seems like a more accurate estimate. Furthermore, according to the Department of Agriculture (Raath, 2004) the grazing capacity (or carrying capacity) of the area ranges from 3.5 ha/LSU near Bathurst, to 7 ha/LSU north of Grahamstown. According to ECARP (2002d) the carrying capacity of Valley Bushveld (the predominant vegetation type of the area) is 3 ha/LSU, which is much less than the carry capacity mentioned by the informant from the Department of Agriculture.

The variation in carrying capacity values indicates that the carrying capacity must be ascertained on an individual farm basis. Carrying capacity changes with vegetation composition and rainfall and is subject to change from day-to-day (Trollope pers. comm., 2008). Therefore, carrying capacity must be evaluated constantly, and will change according to the stocking rate (the number of animals on the land). Therefore, if one exceeds the carrying capacity by stocking too many animals of the land, the veld condition will deteriorate, and the carrying capacity will change – growing increasingly worse (Trollope pers. comm., 2008).

This shows that some land may be in a good condition and may support a large number of animals. However, the stocking rate suggested by the other sources indicates that even fewer animals can be grazed on the surrounding land and the prospects for emerging farmers are poor. At the figure of 3.5ha/LSU, a group of 10 farmers in Bathurst, who each receive R20 000 from LRAD, could purchase a farm of 20 ha (at a price of R10 000/ha) and graze approximately 6 head of cattle. Due to the high prevailing land prices, the DoA have indicated their dissatisfaction with the current level of the LRAD grant (Nelani pers. comm., 2007).

Land prices are not the only constraint to “stepping off”, as one can see from the list above. There are two examples of LRAD initiatives in the area that have failed for different reasons – not mentioned by key informants. The first initiative, by a certain Mr Xinsa, was an LRAD purchase of approximately 50 ha of land next to the Nolutkhanyo Township in Bathurst (Ainslie pers. comm., 2007). The land was invaded by people in the township, who grazed their animals on the land and even set the farm house on fire. Mr Xinsa was not utilising the farm at the time, and was not using the farmhouse. It is not certain what has happened since, but Ainslie (pers. comm., 2007) thinks that the land may have reverted back to the government.

The second LRAD project is near the Kenton-on-sea Township. The farm is called Foresthill, and at the time of purchase was heavily degraded and had extensive tracts of alien vegetation. The land was completely unproductive and would have required approximately R1 500 000 to restore, with an annual extra R150 000 for maintenance. The land has been invaded by residents from the nearby township for grazing purposes.

5.7. Management of Commonage

The next few sections describe key aspects of current commonage management in the three case studies. A comparative table is provided below.

5.7.1. Institutional Context

Local municipalities, as the owners of the land, are responsible for commonage management (Bezuidenhout pers. comm., 2008). The responsibility for commonage management is allocated to different departments within a local municipality, which all depends on the organogram and structure of the individual local municipality. In all three study sites, the community (and social) services branch of the corresponding Local Municipality is the highest level of commonage “management”. The day-to-day management will take place at a sub-branch of the community services department.

In Grahamstown, the responsibility is mandated to the Parks and Recreation Department, whose duty it is to oversee all public spaces within its jurisdiction (which includes all towns with the Makana region). The day-to-day management is undertaken by a commonage manager, who at the time of the research, had been suspended (fired) for incompetence (Bates pers. comm., 2008). His or her duties are to communicate with the Emerging Farmers’ Association and to report problems on the commonage.

In the Ndlambe Municipality, the responsibility is mandated to the Conservation Unit; however, in recent times this responsibility has shifted to the Department for Local Economic Development (Fouche pers. comm., 2008). The Conservation Department also has a lower management tier in the form of a commonage ranger, whose responsibilities are to oversee all commonages within the Local Municipality’s jurisdiction. He or she is responsible for maintenance of infrastructure, the reporting of problems, alien invasive plant eradication and stray animal recovery. The developmental duties of the commonages rest with the LED department. This includes agricultural and tourism development (Marala pers. comm., 2008).

In the Nkonkobe Local Municipality, the responsibility of commonage management is mandated to the LED officer. He had left the municipality at the time of the research (Mxoli pers. comm., 2007), so no information could be ascertained about his duties or responsibilities. It is, therefore, assumed that he has the responsibility to initiate and implement development projects on the commonage.

5.7.2. Emerging Farmers' Associations

5.7.2.1. Institutional Arrangements

The Commonage Policy envisages that a Commonage Management Committee (CMC) be established to manage commonage. This would be through a co-operative body comprising of members of the local municipality, commonage users and other relevant departments. All three commonages have an Emerging Farmers' Association or Livestock Owner's Association (referred to as an Emerging Farmers' Association collectively). It is debatable whether their role is that of the CMC, as envisaged by the Commonage Programme (DLA, 1997). Instead, the Emerging Farmers' Associations interviewed seemed to be wholly responsible for livestock; this being any type of domesticated animal such as goats, cows, pigs, donkeys and sheep. However, those informants interviewed seemed only to be concerned with cattle and one informant said that there were other associations for other types of livestock (Dyasi & Tonisi pers. comm., 2007). None of these Associations were concerned with any other type of resource that is provided for by commonage.

Each Emerging Farmers' Association is a sub-group of a bigger Emerging Farmers' Association; for instance the Emerging Farmers' Association in Fort Beaufort is known as the Ngxwence Emerging Farmers' Association, which is a sub-branch of the Nkonkobe Emerging Farmers' Association (district level) and this is a sub-branch of the Amathole Emerging Farmers' Association (regional level). It is unclear how the committee members are elected and who they report to. However, the Ngxwence Farmer's Association does have an annual meeting with the Nkonkobe Emerging Farmers' Association (Dyasi & Tonisi pers. comm., 2007). The same structure is applicable in the Makana local area; there is a Grahamstown Stockowners' Association, which is part of the greater Makana Emerging Farmers' Association.

The Ngxwence Farmers' Association was formed after 1994, owing to the encouragement of the Nkonkobe Municipality, and represents the interests of the livestock owners in Fort Beaufort (Dyasi & Tonisi pers. comm., 2007). They have some women representatives on their committee and at present have a constitution drawn up with the help of the DoA (Dyasi & Tonisi pers. comm., 2007).

The Grahamstown Farmers' Association was formed before 1994 because black livestock owners were using the commonage prior to the creation of the Commonage Policy (Mamkeli pers. comm., 2007). There are some women representatives on the committee and the Constitution of the committee is currently being updated (Mamkeli pers. comm., 2007). Both committees meet once a month to discuss issues affecting them.

5.7.2.2. Management Responsibilities

In terms of the management responsibilities, it appears that the main role of the Emerging Farmers' Associations in the study sites is communication, information gathering and dissemination, discussion and advice. Discussion topics relate mainly to livestock and land issues. However, from a capacity point of view, they claim to have little power or influence to make a difference at Local Municipality level; but rather try to influence the livestock owners themselves. In other words, the discuss problems and try to educate livestock owners about issues such as the danger of stray animals. They are supported mainly by the Municipality and DoA, although the Nkonkobe Emerging Farmers' Association does not communicate well with its Local Municipality and its main support base is the Cape College of Education (the former agricultural college) and the DoA. There is at present no mentorship of farmers in any of the towns and very little structured and consistent training.

5.7.2.3. Aspirations and Capacity

There seems to be a divergence between the aspirations, and capacity to fulfil these aspirations, of the Emerging Farmers' Association of the Makana Local Municipality, in comparison to that of the Nkonkobe Local Municipality. This may be a skewed opinion, in that only the chairpersons of the respective Emerging Farmers' Association were interviewed, and as already mentioned, the chairperson of the Makana Emerging Farmers' Association may represent only an elite point of view.

There is a strong desire in the Ngxwence Emerging Farmers' Association in Fort Beaufort to sustain the land and animals, develop the livestock production in the area and create a good institutional structure with power and capacity (Dyasi & Tonisi pers. comm., 2007). They are concerned about conservation of this resource and the sustainability of the committee. They also acknowledge the need for payment of services (a stock fee); however, they feel they are unable to pay this fee due to high unemployment rates and pressing poverty. They desire more communication with the Local Municipality (Dyasi & Tonisi pers. comm., 2007). The situation at present is not conducive to fulfilling such a need or desire.

The Makana Emerging Farmers' Association, on the other hand, has a dedicated Local Municipality, which has purchased more land for commonage, which develops projects on the commonage to improve LED and which continues its attempts to provide infrastructure. However, the Makana Emerging Farmers' Association seem to be deliberately frustrating Makana Local Municipality efforts to improve the commonage management situation, even though this is to the detriment of the land and their livestock. They are refusing to pay for the use of the commonage until infrastructure is

upgraded. They have commercial aspirations for the commonage but do not mention a desire to engage in conservation.

5.7.2.4. Concerns expressed by the Farmers' Associations

In Grahamstown, the Emerging Farmers' Association identified several concerns (Mamkeli pers. comm., 2007). They felt that the Makana Local Municipality had not fulfilled promises that they had made to them regarding the development or improvement of infrastructure on the commonage. They voiced concerns about the stray cattle and stock theft occurring on the commonage and felt that the Municipality was slow to seek funding to improve their situation. Because of the high unemployment rate and lack of jobs in Grahamstown, they emphasised the economic and cultural value of cattle, which is largely not accounted for when decisions about commonage management are made.

In Fort Beaufort, the Emerging Farmers' Association was frustrated by the poor communication with the Nkonkobe Municipality and the lack of power and influence of the Emerging Farmers' Association to change things. They worried about cattle diseases, the cost of impoundment when cattle stray, the fact that there is no rotational grazing system in place and no stock fair for marketing their animals (Dyasi & Tonisi pers. comm., 2007). The chairperson was also frustrated by the dumping of waste on the commonage by the Municipality. He felt that the Municipality has a poor understanding of the economic and cultural value of cattle.

5.7.3. Financial Management

In the Ndlambe Local Municipality and Makana Local Municipality provision was made for a fee per/LSU and SSU to be paid to the municipality for the use of the commonage. Nevertheless, the Municipalities indicated that no fees are being paid at present. In Fort Beaufort, it is unknown if a fee has been planned for; however, the Amathole DLA have indicated that there is a fee system (Zungula pers. comm., 2008). Nonetheless, no fees are paid to the municipality (Mxoli pers. comm., 2007). The fee that is required for the use of commonage is expected to be used to finance the upkeep and maintenance of the commonage land and infrastructure (DLA, 2002). Therefore, the initial commonage expansion and infrastructure development is financed through the DLA, but maintenance of the land is the responsibility of the respective local municipality, which should use the fees to finance this.

Without finances acquired from the fee system or lease system, funding for commonage infrastructure, including development and maintenance, has to be sourced from elsewhere.

According to the various IDPs (Nkonkobe, 2007; Ndlambe, 2007; Makana, 2008) the main sources of funding for commonage infrastructure development and maintenance are the DoA, the Municipal Infrastructure Grant and the municipal coffers (the municipality will often receive funding from central government and also lesser amounts from rates and taxes). Therefore, it is difficult to predict, should fees be paid, what the money will be used for, whether it will be 'ring-fenced' and how it will be managed.

According to the Cacadu district DLA (Prinsloo, H. pers. comm., 2008), the National Government makes funding available for the acquisition of new commonage from the Commonage Programme, and the DoA has funding available for infrastructure development; possibly from the Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme (CASP). The DLA undertakes roadshows and other means to educate municipalities about their options for funding for the expansion commonage, and therefore the Cacadu district DLA (Prinsloo, H. pers. comm., 2008) feels that municipalities should be aware of the avenues for funding. Nonetheless, the number of Local Municipalities requesting funding for purchasing new commonage has decreased in recent times; either because they are satisfied with the number of hectares of land they currently own, or do not want the added burden of managing more land (Prinsloo, H. pers. comm., 2008).

5.7.4. Management Plans

Bathurst does not have a management plan for its commonage (Fouche pers. comm., 2008); and according to the Chairperson of the Rate Payers Association, no management occurs on the commonage (Gess pers. comm., 2008). It is unknown whether the Fort Beaufort commonage has a management plan. However, a local rangeland specialist, Dr Trollope (pers. comm., 2008) is concerned that a management plan needs to be formalised and implemented. The Grahamstown commonage had management plans for old commonage and the new commonage land parcels. However, these plans are not being implemented and the grazing agreements are not being adhered to (Faye pers. comm., 2008).

Table 6: The management of commonages in the study sites

Commonage Management				
	Grahamstown		Bathurst	Fort Beaufort
Management Bodies	Responsible Municipal Department	Parks and Recreation (Corporate and Social Services)	Conservation and LED (Corporate Services)	Local Economic Development (Corporate Services)
	Dedicated Municipal staff member	Commonage Manager but laid-off for incompetence	Commonage ranger (for all commonages)	LED officer but subsequently left
	Duties	Communicate with EFA, report problems, maintenance of infrastructure	Maintenance of infrastructure, report problems, manage cattle, stray animal recovery, alien invasive plant eradication	Not known
	Other	Emergent Farmers' Association	Emergent Farmers' Association	Emergent Farmers' Association
Contracts, leases or grazing agreements	Type	Grazing agreements with households, also: Slaaikraal is leased to 5 farmers	Permit system for resource extraction, grazing agreement	Lease agricultural land to emergent farmers
	Agreement	30 cows/ household	20 cows/individual	Fee per LSU
Management Plan		Yes, but not implemented	None	DoA has produced one for the new land (none for Old Commonage)
Communication and Relationships		Lack of communication between parties. Poor relationship between Municipality and EFA	Poor relationship between Municipality and Stockowners'	Lack of communication between parties. Poor relationship between Municipality and EFA
Rules and enforcement		Impossible to impose rules, no law enforcement or monitoring	Monitoring by Eastern Cape Parks and Municipality (fines)	People manage themselves
Fees		Poor payment	No system in place	Poor payment
Land or Resource conflicts		Conservancy denies access for grazing purposes	None mentioned	The Agricultural College (formerly commonage land) has been invaded by livestock owners
Other points of contention		Refusal to pay fees, intimidation of Municipality by MEFA, deliberate vandalism of infrastructure	Poaching, illegal sand extraction and felling of trees, Stockowners' confrontational	

5.8. Relationships

It is difficult to make any real conclusions about the relationships between commonage management bodies, except to give a broad assessment, based on what little evidence was given;

evidence which is often subjective or hearsay. Nonetheless, the following relationships between management bodies were deduced from interviews.

5.8.1. Relationships With Other Government Departments

In the study sites, according to key informants, the local municipalities receive little or no support from their district counterparts. Instead, the district-level DoA is the main source of funding or support and the Local Municipalities are seeking other ways of fulfilling their management needs; for example by employing Eastern Cape Agricultural Research Project to create management plans. Despite the fact that it provides funding for infrastructure and dipping facilities, the DoA has very little technical capacity and manpower to undertake management on the commonage (Bates pers. comm., 2008; Trollope pers. comm., 2008). Instead, the DoA is not a developmental partner, but focuses primarily on the veterinary care of commonage livestock. The district level DLA is another body whose role in commonage management extends only as far as the transfer of land and funds to the Local Municipality, and to ensure that the Local Municipality has various planning documents available before transfer (Zungula pers. comm., 2008).

5.8.2. Relationships between Municipalities and Emerging Farmer Associations

The Local Municipalities in the study sites receive little or no support from their respective Emerging Farmers' Associations and the relationships between these two management bodies are poor, ineffectual or sometimes contentious. In Grahamstown, the key informant in the Makana Local Municipality believes that there are deliberate actions by the stock owners to subvert management attempts (Bates pers. comm., 2008). The source of contention, as mentioned before, is the unwillingness of stock owners to pay commonage fees; the refusal being justified by the poor or non-existent state of the infrastructure. The Local Municipality in Fort Beaufort feels that it has a good relationship with the local stockowners; however, the stock owners themselves feel frustrated by a lack of communication with the Local Municipality (Tonisi & Dyasi pers. comm., 2007). In Bathurst, the white livestock owner who dominates the number of cattle being grazed on the commonage has allegedly benefitted financially from the arrangement; so much so that he has been able to buy another piece of land. However, this new land is degraded and, according to various people, he continues to graze his cattle on the commonage. The Municipality has been unable to rectify this situation. The municipality has also indicated that the other livestock owners are uncooperative (Mjacu pers. comm., 2008).

Through information gathered through informal discussions and through key informant interviews, the key point of contention between the stock owners and local municipalities (not just those from the study area) is the reduction of stock on the commonages. Due to various social and cultural reasons, livestock owners refuse to reduce their cattle for any reason; especially for “environmental” reasons. The social and cultural benefits of livestock relate to the practices of *lobola*, the sacrifice of animals on important occasions and the sale of animal products. A study done by Puttick (2007) on the Grahamstown commonage shows that there is a disjuncture between what western science would consider degraded or unproductive land, and what cattle owners would consider degraded land. As such, the livestock owners are unwilling to reduce numbers for the sake of ensuring that land does not become degraded according to westernised standards.

5.8.3. Relationships within Municipalities

In Grahamstown, Bates (pers. comm., 2008) mentions that the relationships within the Local Municipality are poor because communication is poor and the rate of personnel replacement in the Local Municipality is high. He says that the LED department has initiated development projects on the commonage without consulting him or the commonage users.

The two departments that are concerned with commonage in the Ndlambe Local Municipality do separate functions; in other words, the LED department is concerned with development and the Conservation department is concerned with day to day maintenance.

5.9. Capacity

The DLA (Prinsloo, H. pers. comm., 2008) realises that local municipalities have little capacity to participate in effective commonage management. There are usually more pressing issues, such as service delivery, and because it is not a political priority there is little will to be involved. The national DLA agrees that there is a lack of political will to be involved in commonage projects (Prinsloo, A. pers. comm., 2008).

5.9.1. Grahamstown

In Grahamstown, Mr Bates (pers. comm., 2008) openly admits to having little technical capacity and too little manpower to fulfil his obligations and responsibilities. He does not have enough support staff and his jurisdiction now covers the whole of the Makana region, which encompasses three larger towns, as well as smaller rural villages. He also feels that agricultural development is not part of his mandate and that the Agricultural Department was more effective in the past, in terms of

management of commonage and agricultural land. However, he does realise that every government department has its own problems and that the DoA, as mentioned before, suffers from staff shortages, a large geographical jurisdiction and loss of technical expertise. Nelani (pers. comm., 2007) says that the mandate of the DoA is livestock dipping, land management and funding. How much of this mandate is fulfilled was not mentioned although dipping occurs every two weeks on every commonage within the jurisdiction of the DoA.

Bates (pers. com. 2008) refers to his job as “disaster management” and feels that he is too often dealing with day-to-day problems to think futuristically. The commonage manager, who was subsequently laid off, was incompetent and did not have the necessary skills to achieve commonage goals. He also feels that intimidation and bribery of officials, including the commonage manager, has serious consequences for land management because people can continue to abuse the resource without serious penalties. Bates (pers. comm., 2008) also suggests that the transitional period (since 1994) has proven disastrous for land management and the environment due to the free-for-all system that prevails and because people feel they are entitled to the services provided by government.

The Grahamstown Emerging Farmers’ Association (Mamkeli pers. comm., 2007) agrees that the Makana Local Municipality has too little financial and personnel capacity but also mentions the Emerging Farmers’ Association’s own lack of funding and resources. They receive little support from elsewhere and would like an administration building with administrative resources from where they can manage the cattle owners and hold meetings. Mamkeli (pers. comm., 2007) feels that the manpower for management is available in the form of cattle owners, who he feels will be willing to help with management and policing, but for now it seems that they are not co-operating (Bates pers. comm., 2008). Mamkeli (pers. comm., 2007) feels that another hindrance to proper management is the lack of infrastructure and funding. Lastly, the Makana Emerging Farmers’ Association feels that the Local Municipality has all the power to make decisions about the commonage and that the commonage manager and users have little power to change the rules (Mamkeli pers. comm., 2007).

5.9.2. Bathurst

In Ndlambe Local Municipality, the LED Department seems to be out-sourcing its capacity; therefore, it is paying other bodies to do work that they do not have the skills to do themselves. Marala (pers. comm., 2008) says that the Local Municipality is unable to do effective conservation and is looking to Rhodes University to help in this regard. The agriculture sector of the LED Department has large

stakeholder involvement, from users themselves, to the DoA (provincial), the Department of Labour and the Department of Social Development (Mjacu pers. comm., 2008). However, the local commonage ranger feels that the Local Municipality is too over-burdened at the moment to engage in co-management, are underfunded and have too little manpower. Therefore, they are struggling to fulfil their mandates (Ntlokwana pers. comm., 2007). Fouche (pers. comm., 2008) indicates that the commonage ranger has a large geographical jurisdiction and can only do day-to-day tasks. He believes that because no *one* person is responsible for commonage management, and it is essentially a management “grey area”, and many projects “fall flat”.

5.9.3. Fort Beaufort

The Nkonkobe Local Municipality has financial problems and relies mainly on the equity share funding from central government to ensure that the Local Municipality functions optimally (Mxoli pers. comm., 2007). The Local Municipality has to rely on this fund because it has a very small revenue base in the town, which is exacerbated by the high unemployment rate and lack of industry. Mxoli (pers. comm., 2007) emphasised the need for the commonage to generate its own income and so be financially self-sustainable. The Emerging Farmers’ Association says it has no funding support for administrative purposes and, therefore, little capacity (Dyasi & Tonisi pers. comm., 2007). Their general support base consists of the local college (Cape College), with very little DoA and NGO involvement. The Emerging Farmers’ Association feel that the Municipality has its own agenda (and nepotism is rife) and are not proactive enough in commonage management issues (Dyasi & Tonisi pers. comm., 2007). They further mention the lack of democratic rule, the bribery and corruption being experienced within the Municipality and the poor communication skills of the Local Municipality. The Emerging Farmers’ Association feels that, without adequate infrastructure, they cannot farm efficiently and effectively.

5.10. Monitoring

According to the Cacadu and Amathole DLA there is little or no monitoring on commonage projects (Prinsloo, H. pers. comm., 2008; Zungula pers. comm., 2008). The DLA is only responsible for ensuring that management plans are available upon purchase of the land (Zungula pers. comm., 2008) and the effectiveness of the implementation of this plan will usually also depend on the DLA official dealing with the case (Prinsloo, H. pers. comm., 2008).

Table 7: The capacity and support given to the Local Municipalities

Capacity and Support				
		Grahamstown	Bathurst	Fort Beaufort
Capacity	Municipal	Little in LM: too big a jurisdiction and no focus exclusively on commonage	Little in LM: too many other priorities and not enough manpower or vehicles	No capacity and no funds (poor revenue base due to poor area)
	Other	Alleged bribery of officials, high councillor turnover rate, loss of institutional memory in DoA		
Revenue		Only from Slaaikraal	None	None
Involvement of other	Who	DoA, DEDEA	DoA, Dept of Conservation (ECP)	DoA
	What	DoA: Funding for infrastructure, dipping and inoculations, DEDEA: Conservancy	DoA: Dipping and infrastructure, Dept of Conservation: monitoring illegal activities	DoA: training
Training and Mentorship		No, but LM feels something should be done about this	None	DoA training of emergent farmers
Local Ecological Knowledge	Used at all?	No	No	No

5.11. Environmental Management

The Department of Economic Development and Environmental Affairs (DEDEA) is the former Eastern Cape Department of Conservation. The regional Department's jurisdiction includes Fort Beaufort, Grahamstown and Bathurst. This regional body indicates that it has no involvement in commonage management except in Grahamstown, where a part of the commonage has been included in the Oldenburgia Conservancy (Hahndiek pers. comm., 2007). The Oldenburgia Conservancy is envisaged as a conservation area for education, training and recreational purposes. It consists of the "Southern Commonage", private farms and a nature reserve. Essentially no access will be permitted to livestock owners (Hahndiek pers. comm., 2007).

The lack of involvement of DEDEA shows that little or no environmental management is formally undertaken, if one excludes agricultural management as advocated by management planning in the respective Local Municipalities. Environmental management is therefore *ad hoc*, informal and implemented by different agencies or when it is absolutely necessary (for instance in Fort Beaufort).

Table 8: Environmental management occurring on the commonages in the study areas

Environmental Management of Commonage				
		Grahamstown	Bathurst	Fort Beaufort
Environmental Management	How	Southern Commonage incorporated into Conservancy, no other management	Eastern Cape Parks monitors illegal activities	None, unless serious environmental issue, then DEDEA intervenes
	Responsible Department	DEDEA and LM	ECP and LM	DEDEA
	Problems with EM	Environmental management on Oldenburgia Conservancy	Township residents opposed to conservancy	No body to do this
Environmental problems	Alien invasive species	WfW programme underway	Yes	Unknown
	Illegal activities	Plant extraction	Poaching, sand extraction and felling of trees	Dumping municipal waste
	Overgrazing	Yes	Yes	Yes
Future plans			Joint venture with ECP	
Protected areas in vicinity		Oldenburgia Conservancy	Waters Meeting State Reserve	

Eastern Cape Parks monitors activities in Bathurst because the commonage borders the Waters Meeting Nature Reserves. The body is concerned with poaching and illegal extraction of fuelwood, sand and plants, activities which are subject to a fine (Fouche per. comm. 2008). In Fort Beaufort, DEDEA will only intervene in “serious” cases (Mxoli pers. comm., 2007). In Grahamstown, the activities on the Conservancy are monitored, but no environmental management is implemented on the rest of the commonage.

One key informant, Mr Rob Gess, the Chairperson of the Bathurst Rate Payers Association mentioned that the commonage users in the Nolukhanyo (township) were approached with plans to create a conservancy on the commonage. The idea was objected to immediately; although, Gess (pers. comm., 2008) feels that the local people misunderstood the idea behind a “conservancy” and saw it as a means of excluding them from the land.

5.12. Integrated Development Planning

5.12.1. Nkonkobe

As mentioned in section 2, Nkonkobe Local Municipality is under the jurisdiction of the Amathole District Municipality. Commonage development is recognised in the Amathole IDP as a spatial planning approach and is, therefore, reflected in its Spatial Development Framework (SDF). The SDF outlines several key principles and policies (Amathole, 2006: 158). It stipulates that the most favourable areas for land reform are existing settlements. Where a settlement is surrounded by commonage, the existing settlement must expand into the commonage and new land be found to extend the existing commonage area. Good agricultural land must be reserved for commonages and farmlands. Emerging farmers (those with large herds) must be identified and moved onto agricultural land elsewhere, as this will make additional commonage land available to other users. Therefore, the SDF recognises that land reform is essential in peri-urban areas, that there is a strong need for commonage land for use by residents in settlements and that emerging farmers must make room for subsistence users.

The Nkonkobe Local Municipality IDP (Nkonkobe, 2007: 47), in which Fort Beaufort is situated, mentions the 'commonage' under its social needs projects and suggests the allocation of R120 000 towards the fencing of the commonage. The source of funding is suggested as the Municipal Infrastructure Grant. Besides this, it is not mentioned again and is not considered a resource for potential projects or strategic development. Yet, Nkonkobe is in a dire situation, compared to the Local Municipalities of Ndlambe and Makana. The IDP indicates extreme underdevelopment, very high levels of unemployment (only 3.5% of the economically active population have access to jobs in the Nkonkobe economy) and very low income levels (74% of the population are without an income). The IDP acknowledges that, through a proper planning process, the Municipality must derive the maximum benefit from available resources.

In terms of the LED context, the Nkonkobe Municipality has identified that the agricultural sector in the region is in decline, but has a potential for growth. Also, tourism has been identified as a sector that could revive the economy of the Nkonkobe region, and the Municipality is making positive steps towards seeking funds, creating partnerships and building tourist infrastructure to help in the process of tourism development. The Municipality has identified nature conservation, game reserves and heritage sites as having the largest potential for LED, although the former requires the support of the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry. In a somewhat contradictory manner, the IDP acknowledges that Environmental Management is not prioritised in Nkonkobe and that

“environmental concerns do not surface in any part of its operations” (section 5.5) (Nkonkobe, 2007). Fort Beaufort has a high concentration of people and economic activity, in comparison to other towns in Nkonkobe, yet still has low employment levels. The IDP states that agricultural revival is crucial for LED throughout Nkonkobe, together with tourism and SMME’s as other potential LED activities.

5.12.2. Makana

Makana Municipality (Grahamstown), in contrast to the Nkonkobe Municipality, does view commonage as a potential developmental asset and has allocated large amounts of funding to infrastructure establishment and upgrades and even to the establishment of new commonage in other towns in the Makana jurisdiction (Makana, 2008: 74). Unfortunately, it seems that many of the plans are unfunded, although the Makana Local Municipality is seeking funding from the DLA, DoA and from its own internal coffers. The overall objective relating to commonage is “to ensure that commonages, farms and nature reserves are managed effectively and efficiently at all times” (Makana, 2008: 74). There is currently an established stock farming project. The IDP also suggests a timeframe for these commonage projects: 90% of the target to be reached by 2010, whereby the current standing is 0-25% (depending on the project). The responsibility for these projects rests with the Parks and Recreation Department, which suffers from low expertise capacity, insufficient management of newly acquired farms and too many functions (Makana, 2008: 43).

The IDP recognises the environmental wealth of the Makana region whilst also recognising the following threats to the vegetation: (1) overgrazing, (2) development of new lands for agriculture, (3) the collection of plants and (4) invasive alien plants. In particular, the IDP recognises the role that uncontrolled subsistence grazing is playing in wetland degradation (Makana, 2008: 19). However, they are aiming to draft a sustainable management plan for the commonages and stray animals. Furthermore, the IDP recognises the need to effectively implement the Conservation of Agricultural Resources Act 43 of 1983 (CARA), in particular the implementation of carrying capacity regulations, and the appointment of a permanent conservation officer (Makana, 2008: 20).

5.12.3. Ndlambe

The Ndlambe IDP (2007: 44) recognises the role that well-managed commonage facilities play in food security and income generation strategies, and that commonage offers the municipality an opportunity to contribute to the improvement of quality of life. However, it recognises numerous problems with commonage (Ndlambe, 2007: 44): (1) commonage is not well managed; (2)

communities are hesitant to use it because of theft of animals; (3) poor availability of commonages in some communities; (4) refusal to pay for use and access; (5) fences continue to get stolen; (6) lack of infrastructure and adequate roads; and (7) insufficient water on commonages. The IDP acknowledges the needs for a closer and better relationship with the DoA; however, it also recognises the challenge of effective management in terms of camp creation, maintenance of infrastructure and monitoring its use, as well as managing it in a way that makes a meaningful contribution to poor households.

The IDP reflects that Ndlambe Local Municipality has allocated funding to commonage fencing, with the suggestion that these funds be derived from the DoA. It also has suggestions to expand some of its commonages through DLA funding (Ndlambe, 2007: 87). Through this LED project, which aims to provide facilities to support economic activities in the community, fencing and establishment of commonages will be combined with capacity building of emerging farmers. The major problem of crime in Bathurst will be dealt with through commonage guards (Ndlambe, 2007: 128). The IDP further acknowledges the need for commonage management plans for all the commonages, which will require the active participation of the Community Services Division, in particular the LED Department. Furthermore, through a commonage and coastal conservation project, alien vegetation will be eradicated from the municipal commonages (Ndlambe, 2007: 57).

Table 9: The LED initiatives mentioned on the commonages in the study areas

Local Economic Development on Commonage			
	Grahamstown	Bathurst	Fort Beaufort
Projects	Piggery, Mining and Brick making factory, goat project	Cultivation (crops) but poor marketing and benefits	LM expects residents to approach them with development plans (incl an EIA)
Other	LM does not think development is possible	Plans for Tourism ventures and more cultivation	None
Hindrances to LED	Need more water for cultivation	Need more water for cultivation	

5.13. Recommendations for Improving Management

5.13.1. Management Recommendations

The various key informants gave various recommendations for overcoming some of the problems with commonage management, problems that were raised in the interviews. The Local Municipalities of Ndlambe and Nkonkobe offered the suggestion of co-management (Fouche pers.

comm., 2008, Mxoli pers. comm., 2007). This suggestion takes the form of an all-inclusive management body with representatives from the Municipality (Fouche suggests one department; preferably the LED department), user associations (including cattle owners as well as other commonage users), ward councillor/s, other government departments and even the commonage rangers. Fouche (pers. comm., 2008) sees a facilitation role for municipalities.

Bates (pers. comm., 2008) suggests a leasehold system whereby pieces of land are leased to livestock owners and only certain numbers of animals can be grazed on each piece of land. This is offered as a solution to management problems related to elite capture. This echoes the feelings of the Nkonkobe Local Municipality who feel that land must be made available to people who indicate their need to the Local Municipality, which will then purchase land to be made available for agricultural purposes (Mxoli pers. comm., 2007).

H. Prinsloo (pers. comm., 2008) feels that the culture of expectancy and dependency must change. People must become more aware of the value of commonage and that they need to pay for such a service. Bates (pers. comm., 2008) feels that users must be educated to become better acquainted with the reality of the commonage situation. He realises that law enforcement is too confrontational and will never work. Furthermore, he feels that education may help to change the attitudes of people, after which the payment of fees can be better enforced because people begin to take responsibility for the land. He also believes that the commonage users have an important role to play in policing each other and ensuring that rules are followed.

5.13.2. Practical Recommendations

Bates (pers. comm., 2008) in Grahamstown feels that the co-operation of livestock owners is crucial for success of commonage management but sees a hindrance to this co-operation being the high numbers of cattle owners who are difficult to control and monitor. Without fences and the regulation of movement, management is impossible. Therefore, Bates (pers. comm., 2008) feels that large amounts of funding must be made available for the mass implementation of infrastructure on the commonage. So far, the fluctuating funding is proving ineffectual. The respective Chairpersons of the Emerging Farmers' Associations in Fort Beaufort and Grahamstown also expressed a wish to see a "commercialisation" of the commonage, with better infrastructure and markets, and the implementation of conventional rangeland management practices (Mamkeli pers. comm., 2007; Tonisi & Dyasi pers. comm., 2007). Better markets could be crucial for the sale of livestock, which would help ease the burden of grazing on commonage. However, people are unwilling to sell

because their cattle fetch poor prices on the markets as they are often bought for the slaughter houses. Their animals are generally in poor condition and diseased.

Other practical recommendations are as follows:

1. General management recommendations: There is a need to introduce a fee system (per head of livestock) or improve the current fee system (Mjacu pers. comm., 2008; Prinsloo, H. pers. comm., 2008).
2. Development recommendations: LED can be enhanced through a tourism venture on the Bathurst commonage (Marala pers. comm., 2008; Gess pers. comm., 2008). H. Prinsloo (pers. comm., 2008) warns that the benefits of such a venture should accrue to the community and not the municipality. The commonages need good local-level markets to enable people to sell their stock for reasonable prices and they will also need to be educated about market mechanisms (Ainslie pers. comm., 2007). An Nguni Project can be introduced onto commonage which would lead to better quality of animals, reduced pressure on grazing resources and more economic benefits from this highly priced animal (Ainslie pers. comm., 2007; Gess pers. comm., 2008).
3. People development recommendations: Emerging farmers on commonage need mentorship (Prinsloo, H. pers. comm., 2008). Local skills of people should be optimised and commercialised (Ntlokwana pers. comm., 2007).
4. Environmental and Veld Management systems: Strategic water points and strategic herding will make infrastructure like fences less important for rotational grazing (Ainslie pers. comm., 2007). Fodder should be grown on the commonage for those seasons and times when grazing is poor (Trollope pers. comm., 2008). Large herds need to be removed from the commonage, as well as people who are abusing the commonage (Gess pers. comm., 2008). A conservancy needs to be created on the Bathurst Commonage so that better management principles are applied (Fouche pers. comm., 2008). More land must be purchased and some set aside for conservation (in Bathurst) (Ntlokwana pers. comm., 2007).

6. Discussion

6.1. What Have We Learnt?

The results of this research confirm existing findings in the literature, with regards to the management of commonages in South Africa. Other case studies conducted throughout the country support many of the issues raised in the previous section. In particular, the failures of commonage management can be linked strongly to the inability of Local Municipalities to fulfil their “developmental local government” mandate and all the responsibilities that are associated with their role as developmental agencies. As Fouche (pers. comm., 2008) stated, commonage management is a “grey area”, indicating that Local Municipalities are often unsure of their responsibilities, and often lack the capacity to develop commonage in such a way that it contributes to poverty alleviation or economic development.

Some of the issues that have emerged in this research, such as poor infrastructure, overstocking, stock theft and elite capture can readily be attributed to inadequate management of commonage, resulting from local municipalities with poor financial capacity and too few resources. However, social concerns such as poor employment prospects, land hunger and rapid urbanisation, although they impact on the amount of people who use commonage to provide for their livelihoods, are concerns that are out of the scope of the municipality to rectify; except over the long term. These are social and economic concerns that stem from broader processes within South Africa and from the inequality that was promoted during the years of Apartheid. Hence, this is an obvious example where management processes are embedded in the broader governance structure. It is clear, therefore, that commonage management in South Africa is affected by wider policies, institutions and governance structures. This is certainly the case for the commonages in the study sites, considering they are situated in South Africa’s poverty-stricken province of the Eastern Cape. One may deduce that there are constraints to commonage management found at a broader governance level. As one will begin to see in the subsequent discussion, resource use is complicated by the contextual factors that affect institutional interplay and which determine the use and management of commonage.

6.2. Commonage Management

One of the failures of commonage management in the study sites can be attributed to financially weak, but socially powerful Emerging Farmers’ Associations. In Bathurst and Grahamstown, the Emerging Farmers’ Associations have poor commonage user representation and are able to intimidate the Municipality and other commonage users. The characteristics of Emerging Farmers’

Associations in other parts of the country suggest that they are informally and loosely organised, lack representation of poor and women stakeholders but often consist of the most powerful members of the community (Benseler, 2004). They are sometimes relied upon for management but are unqualified to do so (Buso, 2003). Commonage management committees in Namaqualand, who regulate access and use of the commonages, are dominated by wealthy or non-poor members of a community, who are mainly men, and because the municipality fails to regulate their actions, the committees flout regulations, capture resources for themselves and overstock the land (Lebert, 2004). The committees use the narrative of degradation to justify the quasi-commercialisation of farms and the subsequent private tenure that it involves, but fail to implement commercial rangeland management practices; for example, carrying capacity regulations, resting and rotational grazing (Lebert & Rohde, 2007).

Although it is sufficient in terms of the commonage policy (DLA, 2002) to have the user association represented by the livestock owners association, it is insufficient for reaching the goals of equitable and efficient use of the commonage. This system threatens the livelihoods of other commonage users because it fails to represent their interests and it is subject to elite capture by the livestock owners. It also threatens the ecology of the commonage because the harvesting of NTFPs on the commonage is unchecked, because these resource users are unaccounted for, and, if the CMC is dominated by livestock owners, livestock numbers are not properly monitored.

The Municipal interviewees in Fort Beaufort and Bathurst suggest that a system of co-management should be initiated on the respective commonages. However, as discovered in the literature on natural resource management, this system of management has many flaws, especially when there is lack of *true* collaboration between affected parties, either due to power imbalances or failure to define resource rights (Kepe et al., 2003). This collaborative element is already missing from commonage management in the study areas, when one considers the poor relationships and poor communication that occurs between municipal departments, between municipalities and emerging farmers associations and between emerging farmers associations and other users. There is also a lack of integration of other government departments into governance structures.

The interviewees also suggest a number of practical recommendations to improve commonage management, such as improving livestock herds or implementing a fee system. Although they may prove useful for commonage managers, and are certainly examples of creative thinking, they do not account for the framework of management, and the exogenous and endogenous variables that

affect the physical, ecological and socio-economic environment. In other words, these recommendations do not address the governance situation in when management is embedded. It is uncertain what the outcome of such interventions would be, and issues of community buy-in, sustainable development and success of management interventions are not considered.

6.3. Commonage Rangeland Degradation

There is evidence that there is, or may be, rangeland degradation on the commonages in the study sites. Degradation can be linked to over-stocking of the land and other poor rangeland management practices. However, these drivers are also linked to other governance issues such as: 1) growing township populations resulting from rapid urbanisation rates in the Eastern Cape and the eviction of farm workers from farms; 2) poor regulation and management of cattle numbers; 3) poor marketing facilities which constrains the sale of livestock; 4) increasing unemployment and the accompanying reliance on natural resources to supplement social grants; 5) too little land for increasing livestock numbers; 6) poor infrastructure and lack of rotational grazing and stock movement; 7) failure of some livestock owners to keep their herd sizes within sustainable limits; and 8) the encroachment of other land uses (such as housing) onto the commonages.

In Grahamstown, the condition of the vegetation suggests that there is some degree of degradation because there is a shift from palatable to unpalatable species composition (Puttick, 2007: 29). Puttick (2007: 29) attributes this to a combination of overgrazing and poor rainfall. Although CPR analysts suggest that in non-equilibrium rangeland conditions, climatic factors may be more important drivers of rangeland condition than rangeland management practices (see for example, Benjaminsen et al., 2006). Puttick (2007) states that overgrazing plays an important role in degradation because older commonage areas are more degraded than new commonage areas. This supports the idea presented in the first section that one must better understand the dynamics of the rangeland in order to attempt to understand the drivers of degradation. However, Higginbottom et al. (1995: 96) asserts that “it is universally agreed that on most veld types in the Eastern Cape, stocking rates above those recommended for an extended period of time will lead to a decline in the number of stock that can in the future be supported”. Hence, overgrazing plays a significant part in rangeland degradation in the study sites and can lead to a loss of productivity.

The constraints to appropriate rangeland management practices are related to broader socio-economic and political drivers in the Eastern Cape. Considering the extent of the poverty in the area, it is crucial to be more sensitive to the needs of the peri-urban dwellers, because they are often

people with few income generating opportunities, very few skills, deal with poor service delivery on a day-to-day basis and are finding natural resources in the area subject to increasing competition. Furthermore, commonage land may be the only natural resource available to the poorest in the community. Although Benseler (2004: 23) suggests that poor institutional arrangements and failure to comply with regulations as drivers of overgrazing, it is too simple to consider such site-specific factors as the sole determinants driving poor rangeland management.

When considering the broader context into which commonage management falls, the drivers of poor management and overstocking become more complicated. Not only are there ecological factors driving degradation, such as the rangeland dynamics that characterise ecological systems (Puttick, 2007; Atkinson, 2007a: 29), but socio-economic drivers also impact on rangeland management, in particular the poverty which is prevalent in the Eastern Cape (see for example Lahiff, 2003). However, it is difficult to say whether it is poverty or wealth that leads to overutilization of the commons and consequent degradation (Agrawal, 2001: 1658). Management objectives also drive rangeland management, as argued by Benjaminsen et al. (2006), who feels that stocking densities are rational adaptations to the objectives and needs of the farmers using commonage. Other drivers, such as political factors which relate to developmental local government, the Land Reform Programme and other policy changes in South Africa, and global drivers such as climate change and the current food crises, also have an impact on rangeland management practices. Agrawal (2001: 1655) also suggests that market forces, state interventions and population pressures are exerting an influence on commons use. Hence, commonage is facing many challenges from multiple scales. It is necessary to consider these contextual factors on a case by case basis (Agrawal, 2001: 1657).

6.4. Developmental Local Government and Capacity Constraints

This research gives evidence of the pressure that municipalities, and other government departments, are under to provide services for their growing urban populations, whilst still being burdened by the necessity of Local Economic Development. Research in the Northern Cape, Free State and Karoo suggest that this is not unique to the Eastern Cape (see Buso, 2003; Benseler, 2004), although one can argue that the poverty levels and poor development in the Eastern Cape make LED more difficult in the study sites than in other areas of South Africa. As Higginbottom et al. (1995: 94) suggests, the management of homeland towns, of which there are many in the Eastern Cape, has deteriorated rapidly following the incorporation of the homeland states into the Republic of South Africa and the subsequent release of the tight controls that the former Apartheid government

implemented in these areas. The commonage of Fort Beaufort is arguably the most poorly managed of the three commonages, and this may be attributed to its location right near the former Ciskei homeland. Consequently, it is situated in the least developed town, which has the highest unemployment rates and is the most burdened by service delivery requirements.

In the Northern Cape it was found that commonage management requires additional capacity at municipal level, and that the staff responsible for commonage management are unskilled, have no agricultural background and no financial resources (Benseler, 2004: 35). Commonage management is considered a burden to the municipalities, is poorly implemented and increasingly, the municipalities are relying on the commonage users to maintain the infrastructure on the commonage (Benseler, 2004: 44). Commonage projects in the Free State are constrained by lack of support to municipalities, lack of qualified personnel and lack of support to commonage users (Buso, 2003: 69). These case-studies support the current research in the Eastern Cape. The management of the commonages in the study sites are also constrained by lack of municipal capacity, poorly qualified personnel, non-existent or poor clarity of management roles, lack of funding and poor or uncoordinated support from other stakeholders or government departments.

This suggests that capacity constraints in municipalities are related to manpower and funding constraints, but also to a lack of clarity of roles and responsibilities. However, it can be argued that capacity constraints also relate to others mentioned by Lambin (2005). He suggests that sustainable management of resources requires the provision of appropriate physical, technical and institutional infrastructure. This indicates that resource management requires a policy that allows for rule creation, the technology and skills to implement management, high levels of social capital amongst stakeholders, the availability of labour and capital and the readiness of resource users to adapt to changing circumstances (Lambin, 2005: 179). This implies that sustainable natural resource management requires more than just physical infrastructure and manpower. As suggested by Bates (pers. comm., 2008) and H. Prinsloo (pers. comm., 2008), commonage users need to have the right attitude towards commonage management and there needs to be co-operation between management stakeholders such as users and municipalities. It is, therefore, imperative that social capital is invested in so that all management parties can strive towards a collective goal. Furthermore, the lack of political will amongst municipal officials to be involved in commonage management, as suggested by some sources, needs to be rectified and a culture of accountability created, whereby a town's populace can expect local government to account for all their actions and

thereby, allow local people to influence future decision-making processes in respect of commonage land use and access rules.

As shown in the Fort Beaufort case, commonage management is being undermined because access is controlled by municipal officials who are subject to nepotistic and corrupt practices. Corruption has also affected a project on the Grahamstown commonage known as the Makana Goat Project. As the *Grocott's Mail* reports, a final audit of the project revealed that almost a million Rand was used "ineligibly" and now the project may have to be discontinued if the funding partner pulls out (Butana, 2008). These cases of misused funds are not unique to the study sites or commonages, but can be found in other Land Reform case studies. An investigative report by *The Mercury* shows how an agricultural project failed, even though millions of Rands had been obtained for the project from Eskom and the South African government (Dardagan, 2008). *The Mercury* reporter found that the farm had been abandoned and that the machinery that had been bought was missing. It is difficult to be optimistic for the future of Land Reform in a climate such as this.

6.5. The Tenure Situation on Commonage

It can be argued that commonage is state land, with a public nature, that is common to a community (or town), and as such is a common property resource, but is subject to open-access land-use practices. The use of commonage is communal (Atkinson & Buscher, 2006: 457), due to its public nature and because it is mainly used for subsistence agriculture (Masiteng et al., 2003: 89). Therefore, it shares many similarities with rural communal rangeland use, such as the use of multiple and diverse natural resources and the tendency of users to engage in multiple income generating activities. It can be argued too that a trend of "individualisation" is affecting commonage land-use in the study sites, whereby emerging farmers are informally securing access to portions of the land, and are powerful enough to deny access to other members of the community. In Fort Beaufort, a number of black farmers are leasing a portion of land that was donated to the municipality and in Grahamstown, a similar phenomenon is happening on one new farm that was purchased by means of the Commonage Programme. This individualisation could have detrimental effects on the equitable use of the commonage and does not necessarily lead to the sustainable use of the natural resources (Dietz et al., 2003: 1907). The negative results of this trend of individualisation are detailed in research done in Namaqualand (see for example, Lebert, 2004; Lebert & Rohde, 2007 and Benjaminsen et al., 2006).

Individualisation will not necessarily lead to inequitable use of the commonage, if it is regulated and controlled in a fair and democratic way. At the moment, however, wealthier cattle owners are engaging in a form of “elite capture” by ignoring regulations, intimidating weaker members of the community, conflicting with other users of the commonage and by refusing to pay a user fee. This may be attributed to a failure to acknowledge the existence and worth of other livelihood activities on the commonage. In the subsequent section, it will be argued that other commonage uses are just as important as grazing. Therefore, systems must be put in place to “dilute” the power of these individuals, by giving other land use options equal weight when deciding on the future of commonage, and by putting an end to elite capture through democratic and accountable control over resource access.

6.6. Uses and Users of Commonage

The predominant use of commonage in the study sites is for grazing purposes. However, this finding fails to account for the number of different activities taking place on commonage that are either unknown, illegal, have very little economic worth or are not considered to be agricultural. This is similar to the argument in livelihoods literature, that the use of NTFPs and other natural resources is often unaccounted for (see for example, Shackleton et al., 2001). Nonetheless, there is also failure of interviewees to differentiate between the commercial and subsistence needs of commonage users. It is also unknown why livestock seems to be the predominant livelihood strategy on the commonages. Although the results presented fail to inform the reader about the equity of the commonage use in the study areas, it is suggested that commonage grazing dominates use, that it is predominantly a male occupation (Davenport & Gambiza, 2008: 5) and that the failure to recognise the other livelihood generating activities on commonage may lead to potentially inequitable access and use of commonage.

The commonage programme advocates an agricultural development land-use model, dominated by grazing (Govender-van Wyk & Wilson, 2006: 2). As the literature suggests, the use of commonage by poor residents, in particular women, could be constrained by management systems that individualise portions of the commonage (Higginbottom et al., 1995). Women play a critical role in harvesting products from a common pool resource but are often marginalised from decision-making, ownership of assets and exercising power (Agrawal, 2001: 1657). Furthermore, the agricultural focus of commonage management systems ignores the other livelihood opportunities that are presented by tourism or other projects (Govender-van Wyk & Wilson, 2006: 2), which could have

benefits that accrue to the whole community, such as is envisioned by the tourism project on Bathurst commonage.

Anderson (1996), in a preliminary study of commonage, indicates that conservation or other land-use practices have not been fully investigated as a way to use commonage in an equitable and sustainable manner. She discusses a number of “creative options” for the use of commonage, from stock farming in a subsistence manner, to game farming, recreation and tourism. As Higginbottom et al. (1995: 97) recommends, the constraints to certain land-use options must be investigated and the use of commonage tailored to the specific vegetative, geographical, social and political situation in which it features. Evidence from the IDPs and the interviews suggest that the commonages in the study sites are being considered for development initiatives, but it can be argued that projects are not being implemented, and when projects are implemented, such as the vegetable cultivation in Bathurst, they are inclined to be small-scale and fail to show community benefits. Furthermore, they are not always successful.

In Namaqualand, Govender-van Wyk & Wilson (2006) found many constraints to livestock farming as a livelihood option on commonage and suggests that tourism has enormous potential for local economic development and benefits can be spread widely throughout the community. In the Northern Cape, Benseler (2004: 45) suggests that the commonage is often the only available land that can be used for projects to benefit communities, but that these projects must not be limited to those of an agricultural nature; commonages should be considered for community initiatives, local economic development projects and tourism facilities.

The focus on tourism as a potential LED initiative is of particular importance when considering the commonage in Bathurst. The MAFA document, quoted many times over, was an initial report focussed on reporting the likelihood of initiating conservation efforts on the commonage and the potential benefits that may accrue to the community of Nolukhanyo through ecotourism. The purpose of conservation is not to deny the community access to the commonage, but rather to conserve key ecosystem processes and ensure that the commonage is managed sustainably, whilst developing projects on the commonage that will show economic and ecological returns to all residents of Bathurst. This idea has become a contentious issue, as indicated by Gess (pers. comm., 2008); however, Ntlokwana (pers. comm., 2007) felt that many members of the Nolukhanyo community do support conservation efforts and see the value of sustainable harvesting and tourism. It would be an interesting case study if the conservancy idea was initiated on the Bathurst

commonage. Similar projects have been successful in other places in South Africa, such as Rooiberg Conservancy Project in Eksteenfontein, whereby a community turned their commonage into a viable tourist destination (see Govender-van Wyk, 2007). The project has shown real benefits to the greater community and is more viable than other land-uses in the area (Govender-van Wyk, 2007: 211).

Despite the potential for conservation and tourism, the argument that commonage managers should use creative thinking when initiating projects on commonage does not preclude the use of commonage for livestock production. As noted in the first section, livestock have a range of uses, and the benefits of the use accrue to all members of the community. They also have immense social and cultural wealth, although it is evidently difficult to quantify this. Livestock production will always be considered a valuable land-use option, and to deny people use of the commonage for grazing will result in conflict. The Emerging Farmers' Associations have indicated that they hope that municipalities will acknowledge the worth of livestock and promote projects to improve its production. Suggestions such as the introduction of Nguni cattle, fodder production, marketing facilities and strategic water points prove valuable in this regard, and it is crucial for municipalities to consider creative ways of improving livestock management practices too. Furthermore, it is important for municipalities to consider just how "productive" subsistence livestock production can be. It is not always appropriate to measure this against Western standards. Work done by Nicholas Davenport on the commonages in the study sites suggests that commonage use is much more productive per hectare than other commercial land-use options (Davenport, 2008).

6.7. Implications for Land Reform in South Africa

Evidence from the research conducted in the study suggests that the failure to exit commonage is linked to problems experienced by the Land Reform Programme in South Africa, such as high land prices, poor post-settlement support, bad planning, insufficient farming knowledge and poor beneficiary organisation. It can be argued too that until the failures of Redistribution, and in particular LRAD, are addressed, using commonage as a "stepping stone" for emerging farmers is not going to be effective because farmers are constrained by the broader agricultural climate. A closer look at lessons learned may, however, indicate where commonage, for graduation purposes and as a sub-programme of the Redistribution Programme, can be used to complement the Land Reform Programme of South Africa.

6.7.1. Constraints to Graduation

The stepping stone system in Namaqualand is found to favour non-poor over poor residents because little support is given to those members of the community who wish to convert from subsistence agriculture to commercial systems of agriculture (Anseeuw & Laurent, 2007: 668). In earlier research conducted on Grahamstown commonage, it was found that the stepping stone policy fails to clarify who subsistence and emergent farmers are, and how and when the latter should exit (Davenport & Gambiza, 2008: 6). Nonetheless, no graduation cases have been reported by the informants in the research. This can in part be attributed to the “privileged” LRAD system (which requires capital input) and part to the insufficient funding offered through LRAD. LRAD is only beneficial if one has capital to begin with (Anseeuw & Laurent, 2007: 667) and the necessary financial skills to manage the business.

As indicated in the first section, the Redistribution Programme, which aspirant farmers would apply to for funds to buy their own land, has been shown to be suffering under a number of constraints. The high price of agricultural land is a major constraint to purchasing a private commercial farm. Land ownership is failing to ensure that black people benefit in a way that alleviates poverty. It is sometimes more of a burden than an opportunity. As mentioned by some of the interviewees, farming is a difficult business and requires more than just knowledge about farming. It also requires knowledge about management practices, rangeland management, marketing and other skills (Masiteng et al., 2003: 87). Furthermore, it requires “heart” (Bates pers. comm., 2008). This may be an indication of why many commercial farmers are farming on a part-time basis or have multiple income streams. Farmers in the Eastern Cape have also changed to game farming enterprises due to its lucrative nature.

Farming in a communal system, that characterises commonage farming, is difficult for a number of reasons; for example, the size of the land is not adequate to build up sufficient resources and earn enough money to exit commonage (Masiteng et al., 2003: 93). For farmers who have acquired farm land in Namaqualand, the key constraint to success is the high capital costs that are associated with commercial farming, which is unlikely to make a profit in the first few years of production (Anseeuw & Laurent, 2007: 666). Therefore, it may be necessary to reduce these risks by introducing a system that allows for people to exit the commonage without incurring the costs of farming commercially immediately.

6.7.2. Objectives of Commonage Users

As Atkinson & Buscher (2006) show in Philippiolis, commonage users cannot be clearly categorised as either commercial or subsistence users. The authors questioned a number of commonage users and discovered that the objectives of livestock production are complicated and, therefore, the typology of users exist on a continuum between survivalist users and proto-capitalist users (Atkinson & Buscher, 2006: 451). Livestock owners will keep livestock for a number of reasons such as livelihood provisioning, as a safety-net in times of crisis, for subsistence use, because they have commercial aspirations or simply because they enjoy having animals (Atkinson & Buscher, 2006: 449). These objectives will determine the numbers of animals that a person will keep and how that person will practice rangeland management.

Many farmers will prefer to keep using the commonage, because they have no aspirations to farm privately, but would like the management of the communal commonage area to be improved (see, for example, Masiteng et al., 2003). However, even if there are farmers with aspirations of graduating to their own farms, there are many constraints to achieving this. Commonage is often a free or cheap resource, and there is no incentive to find alternative land. Although managed sub-optimally, in the face of constraints to farming in rural areas or on private farms, it can be argued that commonage is a more attractive resource than private farms, especially on those commonages that are poorly regulated and where payment of user fees is not enforced.

The objectives of the users will need to be considered in the emerging farmer system in order to avoid conflict and to optimise use of the commonage. It will also be important in the interests of fairness, because livestock owners are usually the dominant users. Presently, more emphasis is placed on rangeland management in the interests of livestock production; however, this is often uninformed and prejudiced against other commonage land-uses. A thorough understanding of the aspirations of commonage users will help to inform the management of commonage because it will impact on how the emerging farmer system is implemented.

6.8. Equity and Efficiency

It can be argued that the goals of Land Reform, in terms of poverty reduction and fostering national economic growth, as well as the goal of redressing the injustices of the past, are more simply goals of equity and efficiency. Hence, redressing the injustices of the past will require 30% of agricultural land to be passed from white to black, which is considered fair and equal by government. However, in parallel to this, the government hopes that equitable land distribution will contribute to poverty

alleviation and economic growth. As a component of Land Reform, commonage is land that is used to address the issue of black and white ownership, because it is now considered as land for the exclusive use of poor and previously disadvantaged members of the community, and is also seen as an asset that can contribute to economic growth through the creation of a class of commercial black farmers. As noted in the first section, Land Reform is failing to address both its equity and efficiency goals. As such, it is important to consider whether equity and efficiency are being addressed by the current system of commonage management.

Access to particular livelihood provisions are bound up in property rights and relations and configurations of power (Plummer & Armitage, 2006). Commonages in the study sites, as well as in other towns in South Africa, are arguably used for many livelihood needs, such as fuelwood and medicinal plants, as well as for cultural purposes, such as *Lobola* and initiation ceremonies. In an attempt to reconcile the different, and sometimes competing, uses of commonage, a land tenure situation must be found that allows for equitable access, while ensuring that the land is used for sustainable development that contributes to LED. Hence, rights to use of commonage and its resources should be based on the value of equity.

6.9. How Can Commonage Complement Land Reform?

There are two ways in which commonage can complement Land Reform. The first way is through the Emerging Farmer Programme discussed above. However, this Programme needs to be carefully planned and the following sections will show just how. The second way that commonage may complement Land Reform is a renewed interest in its purchase and expansion. In this way, commonage may become the bridge that links urban to rural and may become crucial to an agrarian reform programme in South Africa.

Although it was mentioned before that the aspirations of livestock farmers are complicated and that some farmers do not wish to exit commonage because it is less risky than farming on a private farm, there are still people who do wish to own their own farm. These are the people who should be targeted for the Emerging Farmer Programme, a programme that, if implemented appropriately, will be an effective mechanism for complementing the Land Reform Programme. However, the constraints to graduating need to be addressed. In particular, the agricultural policies that the government has adopted do not support the Land Reform Programme (SABC, 2008) and, as mentioned before, the Land Reform Programme must be integrated into an Agrarian Reform Programme that addresses the constraints to effective farming (Lahiff, 2003; CDE, 2008b). As some

of the stories in Farmer's Weekly suggest, the Land Reform Programme is focussed too narrowly (Zvomuya, 2007). Farming is a business and should be promoted as such, instead of placing unskilled people on productive farms and expecting them to know how to manage the farm efficiently (Zvomuya, 2007).

There is a greater demand for urban or peri-urban land in South Africa at present. This land is more attractive for a number of reasons, such as shorter distances to markets and homes and better services and infrastructure. Therefore, is it not justified to suggest that commonage is the most important land-use option in terms of the Redistribution Programme because it requires low levels of investment, enables multiple livelihoods, promotes rural development and is low-risk for many users (Anderson & Pienaar, 2003: 25). Anderson & Pienaar (2003: 25) indicate that there is a substantial demand for commonage. Although the purchase of new commonage is tailing off, it can be argued that there needs to be a renewal of interest in acquiring more land for commonage purposes. Although it may not be an attractive option for local municipalities, with the correct tenure options and better management, commonage could prove to have real poverty relief potential while contributing to the goals of equity and efficiency.

Commonage can help to achieve the 30% target of the Land Reform Programme. By 2003 the Commonage Programme had accounted for the largest percentage of land transferred by one programme within the Land Reform Programme (Anderson & Pienaar, 2003: 25). Considering the failures of the Redistribution Programme to alleviate poverty, it may be more productive and useful to concentrate on commonage within the Land Redistribution Programme. Recent reports on Land Reform in South Africa suggest it is vital that the Government begins to prioritise land for Land Reform Programmes. Land Reform will require the investment of R200Billion if the government hopes to reach its target of 30%, and invest in post-settlement support services (Nxumalo, 2008). So far, only 4% of the 30% target has been reached. Furthermore, the government has to extend its target date from 2014 to 2025 (SABC, 2008).

6.9.1. National Food Security

Unfortunately there is one aspect of commonage that is irreconcilable with Land Reform and that is the limitations of its ability to contribute to national food security. As has been argued before, commonage plays a crucial role as a safety-net for households in times of crisis. Although it may be argued that commonage is efficiently used, the argument does not specify *how* efficient that use is. It, therefore, remains a challenge to reconcile food security issues with productive use of

commonages. Arguably it contributes sufficient revenue to ensure household food security for many people living in peri-urban areas. Furthermore, this contribution to food security and as a safety-net in times of crisis is crucial for many households, either to see them through these crises in their lives, or to ensure they do not fall into poverty or deeper poverty (see for example Davenport, 2008). It is submitted that commonage will never play a role in national food security simply because there is not enough of it and it is not managed adequately to ensure that Local Economic Development occurs. However, if it integrated into a greater rural development programme, such as an emerging farmer programme, it may become part of the skills development process of the new class of black commercial farmers. These farmers will then be able to contribute to national food security through the commercial production of livestock or through other agricultural enterprises.

6.10. The Potential of Small-Holdings

As was argued in the first section, the value of small-holdings and rental markets have been identified by various analysts as a means to ensure that the poor have better access to land, and that the land is used efficiently (see for example van den Brink et al., 2006; van den Brink et al., 2007). The informant in the Nkonkobe Local Municipality indicated that land is being rented out to a number of emerging farmers in Fort Beaufort. The informant, Mr Mhlaba, insists that this land should not be considered commonage and should be leased as a commercial farm to aspirant farmers who have requested access to new land. However, the concept is not new if one considers that commonage land was leased to white farmers before 1994. The difference between now and then is that, if his suggestion was common practice, the land would be used in a communal fashion in contrast to private nature of the rental market before 1994. Furthermore, the suggestion mimics that of the DLA Commonage Programme (2002) in that new commonage should be used to support emerging farmers through the Emerging Farmer Programme mentioned above. Through this system, commercial or highly productive land can be set aside or be subdivided and individual leases drawn up between the emergent farmer and the local municipality (DLA 2002). Again, Mr Mhlaba suggests that a number of individuals be allowed access to a certain piece of land; and they will be expected to pay a fee per LSU. This fee could also be a commercial fee, although subsidies from government may help to include those that are very poor.

This land tenure system may be efficient and supported by policy, but it still borders on privatisation of land and may be elitist. However, if the land is not considered “commonage” and commonage land remains for the use of the poor members of the community, such a system should be carefully considered as a means to improve the use and management of commonage and as a system that

can contribute towards Land Reform goals. Firstly, it ensures that people with large herds of cattle, but insufficient capital to purchase land, are able to exit the commonage. Secondly, it allows people to farm independently. Thirdly, the land will be peri-urban in nature and close to markets and services. Therefore, it is not as risky to utilise as rural land, and may ensure that the land is used productively. Furthermore, it will benefit non-users because the fee system will ensure that the land is managed sufficiently and will not require the input of other monetary sources such as taxes. Lastly, it will allow the poor to engage in farming, which has been indicated in the literature as a positive aspect of the rental market.

Although lease systems may appear to be elitist, with the wealthiest capturing the benefits of the system, it can be argued that these systems are not necessarily inequitable because they can be democratically regulated and leases can be withdrawn if necessary. Access to this land should be regulated in a fair manner. Regulation of the use of this land should be separate from commonage management. The use of commonage, especially old commonage, should be regulated by a management system that does not support sub-division and rental. The commonage should be managed as a Common Property Resource because of the potential of its natural resources to contribute to peoples' livelihood needs. However, if there is sufficient space, and the rights of subsistence users are not infringed upon, it may still be viable to introduce a small-holder lease scheme.

The above arguments indicate that commonage may be important *in its own right* and not just as part of the Land Reform Programme. Furthermore, the South African government has placed an emphasis on the ownership of land, as opposed to the access of land. If one had to consider commonage and land rental as instruments of land access, then the Land Reform Programme could be considered as performing well if this access was promoted. In the same vein, one should question whether the productive use of land is more important than the ownership of land. Land that is rented has been shown to be as productively utilised as land that is privately owned. Furthermore, productive use is more likely to reduce poverty than the private ownership of land.

6.11. Improving Management – Suggestions from Interviewees

Many of the interviewees offered suggestions on how to improve the management of commonage and, therefore, the likelihood of being able to exit the commonage. These suggestions are important because they are creative ways to improve management and come from people with experience in commonage management. These recommendations should be shared across municipalities. The

recommendation of “commercialising” the commonage system is interesting because it relates to the emerging farmer system. Ways of “commercialising” the commonage system are introducing a mentorship programme, introducing an Nguni programme and introducing markets. The commercialisation of commonage systems can be advantageous for both the local farmers and the ecological system. If the local municipalities were able to improve the marketing facilities and marketing prospects for commonage farmers it is likely that the off-take on commonage would improve and many commonage farmers could make a better living from livestock production.

Other recommendations are also advantageous for the ecological system. For example, a well enforced fee system has many advantages, such as reducing the number of animals on the commonage. It may encourage farmers to exit the commonage as costs rise in proportion to the number of animals that one has. Introducing fodder production will allow the pressure on grazing to be reduced in times of drought because animals can be fed on fodder. Furthermore, strategic watering points will encourage livestock movement and allow sections of the veld to rest.

However, the success of these endeavours is not certain because it has not been researched. One can be certain that manager will encounter obstacles when implementing any of these recommendations because they only address the immediate management problems. They are also short to medium-term solutions. Obstacles in the governance of commonages will need to be addressed before management interventions will be effective. It is for this reason that this thesis will argue in the following section that the governance regime must be improved, before an over-all improvement in management will be seen.

Furthermore, commonage management, up until now, has been largely driven by concerns about rangeland management. This is indicative of a focus on the Emerging Farmer Programme and how to maximise the productivity of agrarian style practices such as livestock farming. This has failed to account for the diversity of livelihood needs. Commonage management should be broadened to consider natural resource management, which combines elements of rangeland management, as well as biodiversity conservation and sustainable harvesting practices. This holistic management system requires an approach that considers various uses and users (Cousins, 2000: 8).

7. Recommendations

It is argued that commonage should be managed as a common property resource to ensure equity and efficiency of use. However, the success of CPR management is determined by as many as 30 to 40 factors within a Social-Ecological System (SES) (Agrawal, 2001: 1660). These factors relate to the characteristics of the resource system, characteristics of the user group, institutional arrangements and the external environment (Agrawal, 2001: 1659; Gibson et al., 2005). Effective governance is easier to achieve when there is monitoring and communication, when rates of change in the system are moderate, when users support the governance system and when there is easy exclusion of outsiders (Dietz et al., 2003: 1908). As evidence from South African case studies suggests, there are poor relationships between users, local municipalities and other government departments and there is a failure of managers to support one another. There is also lack of support for management from the users. Lastly, there is no exclusion of outsiders from use of the resource.

Drivers of change are often complicated and multi-dimensional (Agrawal, 2001: 1664) and change can rarely be attributed to one cause (Ostrom, 2007: 15181). As argued above, commonage management is influenced by many factors in the SES. Describing the SES is, therefore, more complicated than one imagines, and Ostrom et al. (2007: 15176) warns against recommending a blue-print for governance (for example, privatisation, government ownership or community property). However, advocating a CPR regime, with elements of adaptation, makes sense for commonage management. Firstly, the Commonage Programme advocates a co-management framework; secondly, CPR regimes are better for attaining goals of equity and efficiency of resource use; and lastly, in the face of increasing change, the resilience of commonage as a natural resource is questionable.

7.1. Adaptive Co-Management

This research supports other commonage case studies which show that poor management is leading to potential resource degradation; and this indicates that a new approach to managing commonage as a natural resource should be identified. An approach that should be considered is Adaptive Co-Management (ACM). As discussed in the first section, ACM combines the linking element of co-management with the learning element of adaptive management (Armitage et al., 2008). Therefore, ACM of commonage will require the creation of meaningful partnerships and networks. These networks will require collaboration between commonage users, government departments and other experts or stakeholders. Furthermore, ACM of commonages will require state support (Agrawal, 2001: 1653) though the creation of appropriate policy guidelines. ACM of commonage will also

require that, through the networks of actors, learning takes place. The ecological component of learning will require an understanding of rangeland dynamics and the resources available for use. The social component will require an understanding of population dynamics, needs and desires and power relations; and how these affect the use of commonage resources.

7.1.1. The Adaptive Co-Management Model

Figure 3 indicates the model for ACM of commonage. Commonage policy and funding should originate from national government bodies, but these should be closely informed by information obtained through networks of learning. Information and ideas should flow throughout the system; firstly, between stakeholders at the local level, and secondly, between the local level and the national level. A commonage steering committee must be constituted by the local municipality, the commonage ranger and user groups (representing all uses of the commonage). The local municipality should perhaps have more than one representative on the committee; firstly, because they are the owners of the commonage and have many responsibilities towards its management, and secondly because various departments within the municipality may be responsible for different aspects of management, such as infrastructure, livestock management and LED. However, users must also be able to communicate with the steering committee. It is important to note that there should be direct communication with district- and regional-level departments, including the Department of Environmental Affairs, who has been previously excluded from commonage governance. Another aspect of this model, which is important to note, is that information and ideas should feed into plans and regulations for the commonage; plans which should be flexible enough to change as new knowledge is processed into action. Furthermore, because the DLA is only necessary for funding of new commonage and development of commonage, they are only required to communicate with district municipalities (for Land Reform planning); however, their ideas and knowledge should be shared with all governance institutions.

7.1. Transformation to an Adaptive Co-Management System

As argued in the first section, the development of an ACM system requires either the crafting of new organisations or is the outcome of self-organisation (Olsson et al., 2004a: 83). Over time, institutions evolve and self-organise, through learning and adaptation, with changes in the ecological system (Nayak, 2004). However, the commonage policy in South Africa, which advocates that commonage should be made available for the use of previously disadvantaged individuals, is relatively new; the policy having been in place for just over ten years. Hence, there has not been enough time for self-organisation to take place. As seen from this research, and from case studies, there is a danger of

resource degradation occurring to such an extent that the productivity of commonage is severely reduced. This will certainly be the case if the influx of people into urban areas continues to the extent that it is occurring at the present moment and increases the demand for commonage resources. As yet, management of commonage has proven to be inadequate to ensure sustainable utilisation of this resource. Although crisis in a SES often triggers transformation (Folke et al., 2005: 455), crisis may prove to be detrimental to the lives of those depending on commonage for a large part of their income or livelihood. Therefore, it is essential that commonage management is improved as soon as possible, and it is argued that new organisations for adaptive co-management must be crafted at the soonest possible moment.

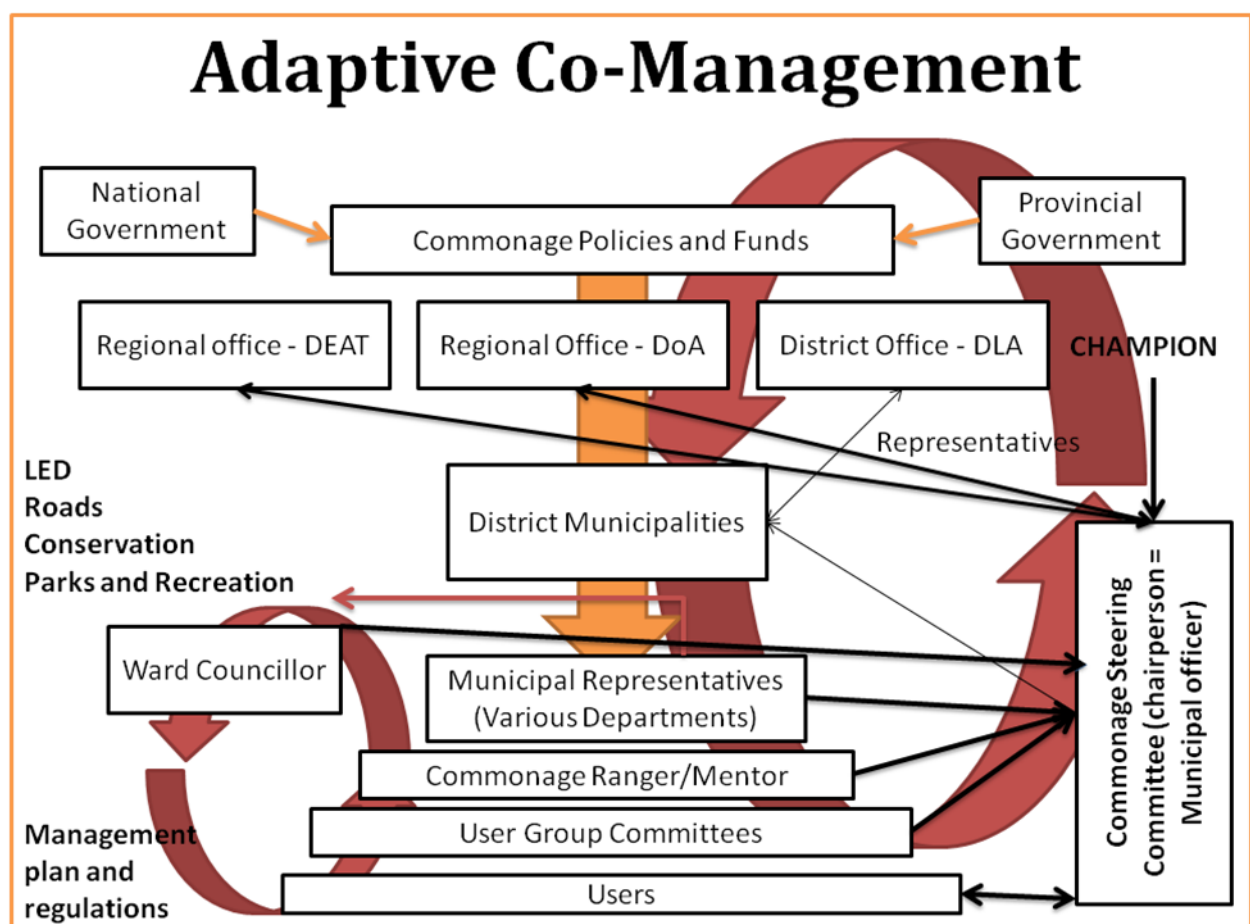


Figure 3: The Adaptive Co-Management Model for Commonage
Note the flow of information, knowledge and ideas

A case study conducted on a SES in Sweden shows how the transformation to an adaptive co-management regime required three phases: 1) a phase that prepares the system for change; 2) a phase where a window of opportunity allows transformation to begin; and 3) a phase where resilience is built up in the new system (Olsson et al., 2004b: 19). The first phase requires that

knowledge is built up, networks are created and leadership emerges (Olsson et al., 2006: 22). In the second phase, windows of opportunity can present themselves in many ways, but usually occur when there is awareness of a problem and political action results in a solution (Olsson et al., 2006: 24). The last phase occurs while the system re-organises itself to a more adaptive state. This phase is the least predictable and the most turbulent (Olsson et al., 2006: 28). However, the entire *process* of self-organisation is important for capacity building, allowing the SES to become more robust to failures in natural resource management (Olsson et al., 2004a: 87). It is process of building conservation knowledge in co-management systems (Nayak, 2004: 9). The process of transformation of ACM on commonage will now be discussed in detail.

7.1.1. Leadership and Trust Building

In the Swedish case, a key steward was involved in the process of transformation to an adaptive governance system. This individual provided leadership, took advantage of a policy change inside the municipal structures and built and processed knowledge about the ecological system (Olsson et al., 2004b: 5). Leaders, or key stewards, play a role in trust building, senses making of knowledge, linking actors, initiating partnerships, managing conflict, compiling knowledge and mobilising support (Folke et al., 2005: 451). Their role in transformation is arguably vital and they are key features in any SES (Folke et al., 2005: 451; Olsson et al., 2006: 31). Leaders should be embedded across scales because the work of one person can be complemented and enhanced by the work of others at higher levels (Olsson et al., 2006: 33).

Because Adaptive Co-Management is a process, it requires that collaboration and social learning takes place; and Plummer & Armitage (2006: 66) warns of the dangers of ignoring the long-standing institutions and social values that contribute to the system. One of the key social aspects of a SES that must be maintained throughout transformative process is trust (Olsson et al., 2004b: 23). Trust is a fundamental characteristic in any SES and is an essential element of social capital (Folke et al., 2005: 444). Social capital, itself, is the “glue” of adaptive capacity and is created through trust, norms, reciprocity, common rules, sanction and connectedness (Folke et al., 2005: 451) and any processes that generate learning, meaning and knowledge are part of this social capital (Folke et al., 2005: 445). It is important then that stakeholders invest in social capital and that the process of transformation is democratic and open to infuse trust within the resource community.

Consultation with commonage users can lead to the identification of leaders in the community. Another source of leadership could be the commonage manager; someone who is appointed by the

Local Municipality. The best person for this job would probably be someone from the community who has an education or special skills, who is innovative, organised, trustworthy and who knows the community well. However, this person must be guided by national and provincial government policy and local government by-laws. The research indicates that the Local Municipalities of Ndlambe and Makana recognise the importance of having a commonage manager, whose sole job is to manage commonage. However, if the commonage is to be managed in the fashion of ACM, the person should also take on the responsibility of ensuring the creation of networks and the combining of knowledge systems. Perhaps it is important to emphasise that the role played by the leader is vital for the whole system of governance, and that this person needs to be skilled and trained in community development.

7.1.2. Enabling Policy Environment

Adaptive Co-Management of an SES requires motivation to change, which is related to many aspects of the system, including the policy environment which allows for subsidies and incentives for management (Lambin, 2005: 178). The policy environment must also ensure that there is devolution of *real* power and capacity to the resource users, who are then able to make decisions regarding resource use independently of top-down control (Olsson et al., 2004a: 83). This may require that *de facto* and *de jure* property rights are reconciled. In other words, rights that are recognised by the community (*de facto* rights) must also be recognised by the government (Schlager & Ostrom, 1992: 254). This will make the community rules more legitimate, ensure that they are legal and can be easily enforced.

There is a distinction between operational rights and collective choice rights, whereby operational rights are those that determine access and use of the resource, and collective choice rules determine the future of the resource (Suryanata & Umemoto, 2005: 751). Advocates of the Institutional School are strongly supportive of collective choice, which is a community's ability to participate in rule-making, enforcement and institution building. Devolution of rights results in local users being able to use their collective choice rights. In a case study conducted by Suryanata & Umemoto (2005) it was found that users feared losing control over the future of their resource, and through participating in decision-making process, the fears were abated and the community was more willing to be involved in natural resource management (Suryanata & Umemoto, 2005: 756). Therefore, collective choice is important for institutional legitimacy and buy-in from the community (Suryanata & Umemoto, 2005). Furthermore, the devolution of management rights allows for adaptation by the community (Folke et al., 2005: 449).

The right of use of the commonage will be meaningless if it is not legally protected, and if the future of the resource cannot be controlled by that right. Rights of access and use must be recognised by the community and government, must be democratically and fairly obtained, and must ensure that the future of the resource is secured. Already there is a strong culture of devolution in South Africa, but devolution must ensure that these rights are *real*, that people have the capacity to change and enforce them, and that power is given to the poorest and weakest members of society to participate in this process.

7.1.3. Funding

Funding is essential for responding to environmental change and embarking on remedial action (Olsson et al., 2004a: 84). Funding is also required for projects, for physical and technical infrastructure (Dietz et al., 2003: 1909) and for incentives to induce compliance with rules. Funding will be essential throughout the transformative life of ACM of commonage, as well as after institutions are created. It may be more important and more useful to fund the transformation to ACM than to fund physical infrastructure. The Grahamstown commonage case study has shown that no matter how dedicated the Local Municipality is at securing funding and using it effectively, the infrastructure is continually being damaged. Once people become custodians of the land, and are willing to participate in managing the land, it is likely that efforts at infrastructure development will not be continually frustrated by vandalism and theft.

7.1.4. Monitoring

Monitoring of natural resource change and adapting to these changes requires that local people are involved in the process. This is also financially advantageous because it is often too costly to rely on state intervention (Olsson et al., 2004a: 85). Monitoring by community members often results in the respective members gaining knowledge about resource dynamics and ensures the creation of local knowledge systems (Olsson et al., 2004a: 85). In a study done by Gibson et al. (2005: 282), it was found that monitoring of resources and enforcement of rules of use and access significantly contributed to maintaining a good ecological condition in forests. Therefore, it is the role of the user and non-user community to monitor the commonage and to monitor rule compliance. There must be systems in place where complaints and knowledge can be communicated to other members of the governance community and where incentives for sustainable use and sanctions for rule-breaking can be implemented.

7.1.5. Information Flows

There is a strong emphasis on learning through partnerships (Armitage et al., 2008), and sharing knowledge systems (Berkes et al., 2000) in ACM literature. There are three types of learning, according to Armitage et al. (2008: 88): experiential learning, transformative learning and social learning; which allows for groups of people to learn through experimenting, and use knowledge gained to transform their SES into a new desired state. Through sharing knowledge systems, “western” knowledge can be combined with local practices to enhance what is known about the attributes of a particular ecological system and the ability to respond to changes in the system (Berkes et al., 2000: 1254).

Providing information can help actors to understand their SES and the interactions that occur and help to predict the affect that decisions will have on the resource (Dietz et al., 2003: 1908). ACM is a problem-solving process (Plummer & Armitage, 2006: 70). It is crucial to assimilate information on ecosystem functioning, the inherent uncertainty of the system and the social values that underpin decisions (Dietz et al., 2003: 1908). A SES requires knowledge which is communicated (Lambin, 2005: 178). This will require that information flows through networks of actors, who are often key stewards, and it is, therefore, essential that social networks are created and maintained (Olsson et al., 2004a: 85). Furthermore, these networks must be horizontal as well as vertical; in other words, from user to user, and from user to higher management persons (Olsson et al., 2004a: 85). Some of these networks can be informal and “shadow” more formal networks but are just as critical for facilitating information flows (Olsson et al., 2006: 29).

Agricultural knowledge is considered important for effective commonage management and for the emerging farmer programme. DoA extension services are ineffectual at the moment, even though these services are crucial for commonage management (see for example, Atkinson, 2007b). Emerging farmers often lack the managerial, entrepreneurial and financial skills, as well as capital assets, to farm in a productive way (Olubode-Awosola & van Schalkwyk, 2006: 554). This can be rectified by mentorship alliances between commercial farmers and emerging farmers. Commercial farmers can provide the information on production, marketing and finance, but can also jointly-manage farms with new entrants into the Redistribution Programme (Olubode-Awosola & van Schalkwyk, 2006: 556). Articles in the *Farmers Weekly* show that mentorship is proving to be effective and is helping to fill in the gaps created by poor agricultural extension services. Furthermore, some emerging farmers have benefitted from their years farming on commonage land.

7.1.6. Combining Information

The mismatch of scale between ecosystem processes and the scale of decision-making is considered a key reason for many environmental problems (Cundill et al., 2005: 11). One way to ensure a matching of scales is to combine information. The management of complex adaptive systems requires that a combination of knowledge be integrated into the learning element of ACM (Olsson et al., 2004a: 76). Therefore, traditional ecological knowledge, which has generally evolved with changes in the resource system, should be combined with “western” systems of knowledge and the best elements of each used to respond to management needs (Olsson et al., 2004a: 77). However, knowledge about the local environment is not always considered “traditional”; therefore contemporary local practices can also contribute to understanding of local system dynamics (Berkes et al., 2000: 1252).

Adaptive capacity requires learning and the ability to experiment and foster solutions to SES problems (Armitage, 2005: 703). There are four dimensions to adaptive capacity: learning to live with uncertainty and change, promoting diversity, combining different kinds of knowledge and maintaining opportunities for self-organisation (Armitage, 2005: 706). “Learning communities” are groups of people with a shared interest in management who actively address learning through partnerships (Armitage et al., 2008: 86). In the process of collective learning, social memory is captured at community level (Olsson et al., 2004a: 77). Social memory is derived from experience and enhances the SES’s ability to adapt to changes (Folke et al., 2005: 444). This is why it is stressed that the institutions adapt with changes in the environment and operational rules are shaped by the constant learning; in other words, adaptive capacity must be maintained (Rammel et al., 2007: 14).

Vegetation change should not always be considered as an indication of degradation (Benjaminsen et al., 2008: 236). It is better to understand the dynamics of the ecological system that is to be managed. If overstocking is playing a strong role in degradation, systems to reduce stock numbers must be considered. This will require building up an understanding of indicators of degradation, systems to counteract degradation and sustainable harvesting levels. It is also essential that resource managers begin to recognise the drivers of degradation and the complexity of their interactions. Once a better understanding of the resource is gained, it will be easier to recognise the opportunities presented by certain land uses, the constraints to these uses and how certain land uses are a threat to the ecology of the system.

A recognised concern of ACM is the relations of power and the ability of actors to be involved in the learning process (Armitage et al., 2008: 93). Power relations have been shown to influence the use of commonage, with women, youth and the poor unable to participate fully in decision-making about management; therefore, it is important to include all commonage users, from different socio-economic strata, to be involved in all aspects of management. This involves the learning and linking elements of ACM.

In the first section, the discussion on rangeland management practices showed that some communities were able to manage their resources through community norms and existing institutions. The value of these should be carefully considered and protected to ensure that the needs of commonage user community are respected and that the positive elements of their traditions are developed to enhance the management practice. This will also ensure that the community feels comfortable with commonage management and feel responsible for its future.

7.1.7. Sense Making

It is no use having knowledge if sense cannot be made of it. Sense making of information and knowledge requires interpreting the information and making decisions based upon these interpretations (Olsson et al., 2004a: 86). For as Folke et al. (2005: 464) explains, it is essential that adaptive governance systems build knowledge and understanding of resource and ecosystem dynamics and feed this knowledge into practice. This will require that a strong vision and value system is developed, so that knowledge can be fed into practices that are accepted by all resource stakeholders (Olsson et al., 2004a: 86). Furthermore, it requires recognising the value of local knowledge and practices (Ainslie, 2002) and resisting the urge to impose “westernised” standards into commonage management systems.

Consultation and better knowledge of commonage dynamics will no doubt prove that the livelihood provisioning services provided by commonage are very complicated. Research conducted in the three study sites by Davenport (2008) shows that commonages provide numerous resources, from fuelwood, medicinal plants, wild vegetables and grazing for livestock. Furthermore, commonages are used for initiation ceremonies, for arable fields and for recreation. New awareness of services provided by commonage will help to identify the needs of the poorest and those who use it for marginal products. The management actors can then create a typology of the resources used and guide the management of them. Management actors must also recognise the aspirations of

commonage users and identify opportunities for projects. This emphasises how important it is to have a strong manager or leader, who will be involved in sense making of this information.

7.1.8. Arenas for Collaboration

Arenas for collaboration require that platforms are created where meaningful participation can occur (Olsson et al., 2004a: 86). These arenas should provide a place for conflict resolution and rule making (Dietz et al., 2003: 1909). They are also used as a space for learning (Armitage et al., 2008: 96). These arenas should be physical, as well as figurative. The policy space must recognise the need for such interactions, and encourage the sharing of information and participation of all interest groups. Therefore, it is important for the commonage managers and other interested and effected parties to participate in discussions that identify management problems, give feedback on monitoring and allow for rule creation and alteration.

7.2. Evaluating Adaptive Co-Management and Livelihoods

When evaluating Adaptive Co-Management Plummer & Armitage (2006: 65) feel that you should focus on three aspects of the system: 1) the ecological component and whether critical natural capital is conserved; 2) the economic component and whether livelihoods are sustainable (resilient); and 3) at the process. Sustainable livelihoods, in the context of the transformation of commonage management, are a critical factor to consider in commonage research. As Armitage et al. (2008: 95) warn, there are risks to livelihoods in ACM initiatives, and these often require trade-offs between individual and group, and long-term and short-term, livelihood needs. However, just as ACM initiatives increase resilience and adaptability in a SES, so sustainable livelihoods are ones that are resilient and adaptable (Plummer & Armitage, 2006: 68). Therefore, resilient livelihoods cope with and are able to recover from shocks, maintain and enhance existing capabilities and assets and ensure that sustainable livelihoods opportunities are available for future generations (Plummer & Armitage, 2006: 68).

In evolving complex systems, natural resource management requires trade-offs between efficiency (local needs) and adaptability (system needs); investing in adaptability lowers efficiency gains today, but investing in efficiency lowers the ability to adapt to changes tomorrow (Rammel et al., 2007: 17). Sometimes it is more important to ensure that one minimises the costs to livelihoods, as opposed to maximising the livelihood gains (Plummer & Armitage, 2006: 69). These warnings are crucial for commonage management because commonage is a resource that provides for livelihoods. However, as indicated by research around the country, the ability to provide resources is reliant on the

sustainable use of commonages. Without an effective management regime, the ability of the system to keep providing these services will deteriorate over time, to a point where the system can no longer recover from shocks. In the interests of the resource and the people reliant thereon, the time for transformation is now.

7.3. The Letsemeng Model

The Free State Department of Agriculture has developed an innovative information booklet for emerging farmers in the region of the Letsemeng Local Municipality (Letsemeng Local Municipality, 2005). Within this booklet the CMC structure is set out. Of importance are the following: it sets out the roles and responsibilities of members; the CMC has various sub-branches representing various user groups; the committee comprises of representatives from the municipality, various government departments and the users themselves; and lastly, the committee is headed by a full time commonage manager. The management structure is responsible for the supervision of the commonage, where as the sub-structures are in charge of routine supervision and the reporting of any problems (reporting is done through a formal scheduled meeting where feedback is given by all interested parties). Of crucial importance is that the system allows for commonage farmers to move from subsistence agriculture to quasi-commercial agriculture with the assistance of the Local Municipality.

There are elements that can be found within the outline of this CMC structure that indicate an ACM model. There are networks for learning and joint problem solving which is crucial for building knowledge about the system, for including multiple objectives and linking lower level institutions to higher level organisations (Carlsson & Berkes, 2005: 72). Powers are devolved and responsibilities designated in a clear manner (Cousins, 2000) which is crucial for autonomy (Benseler, 2004). The committee is built on existing institutions and allows for the interests of many different stakeholders to be expressed (Andrew et al., 2003). There is a high level of accountability to users and this helps to create legitimacy and support (Njaya, 2007: 138). It creates access for users to bodies that can assist in conflict resolution and help with legal matters (Cousins, 2000) and also helps to monitor rule compliance (Lebert, 2004). Through these elements the capacity and legitimacy of the CMC can be increased, which will have a positive effect on the capacity of municipalities to effectively manage their commonages (Benseler, 2004). This model may be an excellent example to other Local Municipalities across the country who would like to embark on the transformation to an Adaptive Co-Management model for commonage management.

7.4. Conclusion

What this research has attempted to show is that current systems of commonage management are failing due to limitations in the governance structures and due to exogenous factors beyond the control of Local Municipalities. Furthermore, after an extensive literature review undertaken in the first section, it was possible to identify many limitations to commonage governance, communal rangeland management and Land Reform. The policy environment is limited in its ability to see commonage for its contribution to peoples' livelihoods and advocates agrarian style practices that fail to incorporate natural resource management. Although commonage can contribute to the Land Reform Programme by acting as a stepping stone to commercial farming, current failures in the Land Reform Programme make it impossible for the contribution to be meaningful. If the South African government could concentrate Land Reform on promoting access to land, rather than private ownership, through a good land rental market scheme, the contribution of commonage to Land Reform may be enhanced, because it will become the link between urban subsistence farming and rural commercial farming.

In addition to agrarian style land-use practices on commonage, local municipalities should focus on site-specific Local Economic Development opportunities presented by commonage land. Furthermore, commonage management must be tailored to the context of the commonage, which should include the aspect of natural resource management. Furthermore, commonage managers must take cognisance of the objectives of communal rangeland systems, especially livestock production strategies. By including the needs and aspirations of the commonage users in management systems, commonage may continue to provide for the livelihoods of poverty-stricken peri-urban dwellers.

Adaptive Co-Management will not only be context-specific, but allows for adaptation to changes in the system. With increasing pressure being placed on commonages to provide for growing urban populaces, and in the face of climate change uncertainty, ACM is the arguably the most appropriate management regime for this important natural resource. The steps to transformation have been explored in this research and can easily be followed by any local municipality with the will to improve their current commonage management practices. In summary these are:

- 1. Prepare the system for change**

This involves building up knowledge about the system, identifying leaders and creating linkages.

- 2. Grasp a window of opportunity**

Influence or create a new policy which generates an enabling environment for adaptive co-management.

3. Build up system resilience

This is the stage where re-organisation takes place. During this stage the leader and other managers will embark on the Adaptive Co-Management strategy. This requires trust building, funding, monitoring, information flows, combining knowledge, sense making and arenas for collaboration.

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8.2. Personal Communications

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Appendix 1: List of Interviews

Date	Interviewee	Position	Department	Place
07-04-2008	Mr R Gess	Chairperson	Bathurst Rate Payers Association	Bathurst
17-09-2007	Mr Ntlokwana	Commonage Ranger	Ndlambe Local Municipality	Bathurst
29-05-2008	Mr S Zungula	Senior Planner	Department of Land Affairs for Amathole District	East London
30-09-2008	Mr Z Sawuti	Land and Housing Division	Amathole District Municipality	East London
14-10-2007	Mr H Mlaba	Housing Officer	Nkonkobe Local Municipality	Fort Beaufort
17-10-2007	Mr Mxoli	Town Planner	Nkonkobe Local Municipality	Fort Beaufort
22-07-2008	Dr W Trollope	Associate Professor	University of Fort Hare	Fort Beaufort
22-11-2007	Mr Tonisi and Mr Dyasi	Chairperson and Secretary	Ngxwence Emerging Farmers Association	Fort Beaufort
06-10-2007	Mr P Nelani	Extension Officer	District Department of Agriculture	Grahamstown
09-10-2007	Mr M Mamkeli	Chairperson	Makana Emerging Farmers Association	Grahamstown
10-02-2007	Ms B Faye	Researcher	ECARP (NGO)	Grahamstown
13-02-2008	Mr K Bates	Director, Parks and Recreation	Makana Local Municipality	Grahamstown
24-10-2007	Mr A Ainslie	Researcher	Khanya aicdd (NGO)	Grahamstown
07-11-2007	Mr Q Hahndiek	Regional Director	DEDEA	Grahamstown
09-04-2008	Mr F Fouche	Conservation Officer	Ndlambe Local Municipality	Port Alfred
09-04-2008	Ms Z Marala and Mr S Mjacu	LED, Tourism and Agriculture officers	Ndlambe Local Municipality	Port Alfred
23-04-2008	Mr H Prinsloo	Deputy Director	Department of Land Affairs for Cacadu District	Port Elizabeth
01-10-2008	Ms C Bezuidenhout	Development Planner	Department of Infrastructure and Planning for Cacadu District Municipality	Port Elizabeth
30-09-2008	Mr A Prinsloo	Chief Planner	Directorate for Redistribution and Implementation Systems	Pretoria

Appendix 2: Questionnaires

Local Municipality Questionnaire

Interviewer	
Interviewee	
Municipality	
Place	
E-mail address	
Telephone No	
Date	Time

Introduction, nature of research, risks and benefits, confidentiality and feedback

Section 1
Commonage history/scale

1. What kinds of commonage do you have in your jurisdiction?
 - a. How many hectares are there of each?
 - b. Do you feel that the boundaries of the commonages are well defined and that people are aware of them?
 - c. Are there obligations attached to the title deeds of old and new commonage and what are these?
2. Before the land reform programme, how was the commonage land managed? (Was there a system of leasing?)

Section 2
Post 1994 and the establishment of commonage

1. Tell me about the establishment of commonage after 1994.
 - a. When did it happen?
 - b. Who was the land intended to benefit and roughly how many people are they?
 - c. On whose initiative was this undertaken and who assisted you?
2. What was the process involved and what was that process like (frustrating or easy)?
3. Was the funding for the project sufficient?
4. Was there post-delivery support? Who provided it?
5. Were legal arrangements in place before the land was transferred to you and did the land come with a set of legal obligations in terms of the use and alienation of the land?
6. Who made decisions about the management of the commonage, particularly who the users are and how they may come to use the land?
 - a. How do they decide who the users should be- are there criteria?
7. Did the public have a say in the management of the commonage (in terms of users and management bodies)?
8. How were the management bodies selected?
9. Is the new commonage managed differently from the old commonage (i.e. the commonage inherited from 1994)? If so, how and why?

Section 3
Use of the commonage

1. What are some of the uses of the commonage, and what is the primary use?
2. Who are the people using the commonage, what kind of people are they, where do they come from?
3. Do you think certain groups should be prioritised?
4. Is there a contract or rental agreement with the users, or are users regulated through municipal bylaws?
 - a. If contract: What does it stipulate? Can I get a copy of this?
 - b. If bylaws: what do they stipulate about commonage use?
5. Do the users all belong to commonage committees or other representative structures?
6. Are you able to stop 'outsiders' from using the commonage and if so, how do you do this?
7. Are there rules about commonage use?
 - a. Who makes decisions regarding the rules about commonage use?
 - b. Are the rules simple to follow and understood by all?
 - c. Is there a fee for use (rent)?

- d. Who is in charge of the collection of this fee and the enforcement of the fee?
- e. Who enforces the other rules regarding the commonage?
- f. If people don't comply, are there any penalties?
- g. Are there any incentives to co-operate with the rules?
- 8. Are there conflicts occurring over the land and who are the stakeholders involved in the conflicts?
- 9. Is there good communication between users and the Municipality?
- 10. What can be done to improve the use of commonage and the systems of regulating this use?

Section 4

The physical commonage

- 1. What infrastructure is provided on the commonage? How is it budgeted for? (M minutes will show actual money spent on commonage)
- 2. What is the condition of the fences, pumps, drinking points? If it is not in good working order, why not?
- 3. Are there any protected areas (for environmental conservation)?
- 4. Who is in charge of maintenance of the infrastructure?
- 5. In your opinion should the commonage users be more involved in payment, maintenance or management of infrastructure?

Commonage and economic development

- 6. Do you feel that commonage land can be used as a strategic resource to improve the lives of the poor people living close by?
- 7. Do you think that commonage land could be used for Local Economic Development? Please comment on why you think so?
- 8. Is the land being encroached upon by informal settlers
- 9. Is the land being used by unauthorised users?

Co-management

- 10. What are your views on co-management (joint management between the Municipality, users and supporting institutions) as an approach to commonage management? Has your department had any experiences of this and knowledge about it?
- 11. Are the experiences of other Municipalities and their commonages ever evaluated, discussed or used to improve the management of the commonage?

Training and mentorship

- 12. Are people on the commonage being trained?
 - a. What kind of training is occurring and who is doing the training?
 - b. Is it effective?
- 13. Are people on the commonage being mentored?
 - a. Who is involved?
- 14. Are there Extension officers present on the commonage?
 - a. What are some of their duties?
 - b. Are they being effective in terms of training and mentoring users?

Section 5

Developmental local government

1. How is the municipality structured? What departments are there?
 - a. Which department is primarily responsible for commonage? (e.g. technical dept, financial dept)
 - b. Is it a specific portfolio?
 - c. What are some of their duties?
2. How do you feel about Local Municipalities becoming centres of local development and do you think they have the capacity to fulfil this mandate?
3. Is there a management plan for the commonage?
4. Is commonage featured in the IDP? Are there plans for future expansion?
5. What/who compels the Municipality to become involved with commonage?
6. What are the Municipality's developmental goals and targets related to commonage? What, in your opinion, would count as 'successful commonage management'?
7. Is any revenue received from the commonage users?
 - a. Is this sufficient to cover expenses?
 - b. What are these expenses?
 - c. Is such revenue "ring-fenced" (i.e. is it used exclusively for commonage, or is it added to the general municipal revenue)?
 - d. Is there any way of getting other funding for commonage management?
8. What is the District Municipality's involvement in commonage and some of their duties? Should these be expanded?
9. In your opinion, is there a common policy in the government system with regards to the commonage? E.g. Department of Agriculture, Dept Land Affairs.
10. Are these Departmental policies and programmes appropriate and sufficient to assist the municipality to manage its commonage?
11. What are your feelings about devolution of powers to local level: is this feasible, should it be done, is it being done and is there a will to do so? (For example, do you think that agriculture and/or land reform should be devolved to municipal level? Can local users take on certain responsibilities effectively?)

Section 6

Institutional involvement, other govt involvement, Non Governmental Organisations and Commonage Management Committees

1. Which institutions are involved in the management of commonage? (prompt ideas)
 - a. Do they have a legal status?
 - b. How did they become involved?
 - c. What are their interests in the commonage and what are their functions?
 - d. Are they seen as legitimate stakeholders by your Department and the people using the commonage?
 - e. Do they have a constitution and code of conduct?
 - f. Do they have a strong motivation to be involved?
 - g. Do they have women and youth representatives?
2. What are the relationships like between them? Is there trust, reciprocity and equal power relations? Are there political rivalries?
3. Are there rights, obligation and powers clarified? Is there an overlap and therefore conflict?
4. What is communication like between them? Do you think that there is a flow of information?

5. Is there ever a negotiation of powers and responsibilities? How do they decide who does what?

Section 7

Environmental management

1. Is there overgrazing occurring on your commonage?
2. Are there rules/regulations for grazing?
3. How do you view the concept of carrying capacity? Is it enforced in your department?
4. What other measures have been introduced to maintain the condition of the commonage?
 - a. What are some of the strategies and procedures?
5. Who do you think should be responsible for environmental management?
6. Are any other government departments and/or institutions helping your department with environmental management?
7. Are the knowledge systems of the users being acknowledged? Are they being supplemented with environmental information?

Section 8

Land reform, Privatisation and “stepping off” of the commonage

1. Do you think that commonage development can be regarded as a type of land reform? In your opinion is commonage reform working on a national scale.
2. What do you see as some of the solutions to problems associated with commonage management? (Would you suggest better rule making and enforcement, a more specific portfolio in local government, more support from other departments, long-term leases as what happened in the past etc)
 - a. Considering long-lease systems further: can it occur, would be help and what would be the major drawback of doing so?
3. Are people leaving the commonage to access their own privately-owned land?
 - If yes
 - a. Why do you think they are doing this? (because they want to/it is easy or because it is encouraged)
 - b. How may this be improved?
 - If no
 - c. Why not?
 - d. What can be done to assist people to do so?

District Municipality questionnaire

Interviewer	
Interviewee	
Municipality	
Place	
E-mail address	
Telephone No	
Date	Time

Introduction, nature of research, risks and benefits, confidentiality and feedback

Section 1

Developmental local government

1. Is your department involved in commonage management or commonage policy in any way?
 - a. Do you have a management plan for commonages under your jurisdiction?
 - b. What department in the District Municipality has an interest in commonage?
2. In the local municipalities within your jurisdiction, are there management plans for commonage?
 - a. Do you consider them in close alignment with your own plans?
3. Are municipalities in your jurisdiction developing their commonage? What are your feelings on the capacity of Local Municipalities under your jurisdiction to carry out a developmental mandate in general?
 - a. Has National Government given them the means to do so and is there a will to do so?
4. What are some of the problems that Local Municipalities in your jurisdiction are experiencing with regards to management of commonages specifically?
 - a. Is it proving too costly?
5. Is commonage featured in the District IDP and are there plans for the future expansion of commonage land?
6. Is there political will in your department, and in other District Municipalities, to become involved with commonage and is it a topic that arises frequently, if at all?
7. Does your department incur any expenses with regards to commonage land under your jurisdiction?
8. Do you think that there is a common policy within the national, provincial and local government that deals with commonage, and do the different departments act in a consistent and similar fashion? What are the relationships like between the departments when it comes to managing commonage land?

Section 2

Institutional involvement, other govt involvement, Non Governmental Organisations and Commonage Management Committees

1. What are some of the institutions that are involved with the commonages in your District? (NGO's, Private sector stakeholders, unions, Commonage Management Committees etc). If no idea, skip section.
2. Do you think that these organisations make a constructive contribution to commonage management and development? Do they co-operate with each other?
3. What is the relationship like between the institutions and your own department?
 - a. Do these institutions communicate with the relevant departments?
 - b. Are there conflicts of interest?
4. What are your thoughts on the devolution of powers to these institutions?
 - a. What powers should be devolved?
 - b. Has/will it worked for commonage and could devolution be improved?

Section 3

Environmental management

1. Is environmental management of the commonages happening in your district?
 - a. Who is involved? Who is concerned?

- b. Is there an obligation on government departments (such as Agriculture, DLA or DEAT) to assist municipalities regarding the environmental management of commonage?
- 2. What are some of the regulations for the commonages in your District with regards to environmental management, i.e. are there rules about carrying capacity, resource use etc?
- 3. Does your Department have management strategies or plans regarding environmental management in general?
- 4. Do other government departments get involved in environmental management of commonages? And what do they do? (Extension officers involved?)
- 5. Is information about land degradation and its solutions being given to Local and District Municipalities?
- 6. Are environmental knowledge systems of the users (people on the ground) being taken into account or being acknowledged as beneficial or valuable?
- 7. Are people being trained in land conservation measures?
 - a. Who is involved/should be involved in this?
- 8. Are farmers on commonage being mentored?
 - a. Who is doing this?
 - b. Is it successful?
 - c. Could this be improved?
 - d. What is some of the knowledge being passed on?

Section 4

Land reform and “stepping off” of the commonage

- 4. Do you think Land Reform in South Africa is going too slow? What are some of the other problems with the Programme? Do you think that commonage development can assist land redistribution in South Africa? If so, how?
- 5. What do you see as some of the solutions to problems associated with commonage management? (Would you suggest better rule making and enforcement, a more specific portfolio in local government, more support from other departments, long-term leases as what happened in the past etc)
 - a. Consider long-lease systems further: can it occur again like what happened in the past, would be help and what would be the major drawback of doing so?
- 6. Are people stepping off the commonage land and buying up private land on which to farm?
 - If yes
 - a. Why?
 - b. How may this be improved?
 - If no
 - c. Why not?
 - d. What can be done to assist people to do so?

National Government departments

Interviewer	
Interviewee	
Govt department	
Place	
E-mail address	
Telephone No	
Date	Time

Introduction, nature of research, risks and benefits, confidentiality and feedback

Section 1
Your experience of the commonage issue

1. What is your Department's involvement with the management or support of municipal commonage?
 - a. Do you have a management plan for commonages under your jurisdiction?
 - b. Is there a specific portfolio, within this Department, for the management of commonage?
2. Does your Department incur any expenses with regards to commonage land under your jurisdiction?
3. Does your department interact with municipalities about commonage? If so, which municipalities, and what kind of assistance is provided?
4. Is there political will to become involved with commonage and is it a topic that arises frequently, if at all?

Section 2
Developmental local government

9. Do you think there is the capacity within local municipalities to carry out a developmental mandate? Distinguish between political will, financial capacity (what expenses are incurred) and technical capacity.
10. In District and Local Municipalities, are there management plans for commonage?
11. Is commonage featured in the IDPs and are there plans for the future expansion of commonage land?
12. Do you think that there is a common policy within the national, provincial and local government that deals with commonage, and do the different departments act in a consistent and similar fashion? What are the relationships like between the departments when it comes to managing commonage land?
13. Are there conflicts occurring between the District, Local Municipalities and National Departments in terms of commonage land? What other topics are the causes of conflict?

Section 3
Institutional involvement, other govt involvement, Non-Governmental Organisations and Commonage Management Committees

5. What are some of the institutions that are involved with the commonages in general? (NGO's, Private sector, unions, CMC etc)
 - a. How did these institutions become involved?
 - b. Whose interests are they representing?
 - c. How do these institutions benefit commonage management?
6. Do some of the following problems arise with regards to these institutions: their legal status is unsure, they don't have a constitution or code of conduct, they are not seen as legitimate by government or by the people, they lack motivation to be involved, they have poor youth and women representation?
7. What is the relationship like between the institutions and your own department?
8. What are the relationships like between all the stakeholders, in general? Are there trust, reciprocity or power issues?
9. Do these institutions communicate amongst one another and with the relevant government departments?
10. Do they ever negotiate the responsibilities of each?
 - a. How do they decide who does what?

- b. Are there conflicts that arise because of overlapping powers/responsibilities?
- 11. What are your thoughts on devolution of powers to these institutions i.e. do you think that it is working? Could devolution be improved?

Section 4

Environmental management

- 9. Are Local and District Municipalities concerned about commonage land in terms of the threat of soil erosion and land degradation?
- 10. As far as you are aware, is environmental management of the commonages happening?
If yes:
 - a. Are there measures to ensure that there are not too many animals on the land?
 - b. What are some of the regulations for the commonages with regards to environmental management, i.e. are there rules about carrying capacity, resource use etc?
 - c. Do they have management strategies or plans for environmental management? Or does the responsibility fall elsewhere?
 - d. Do other government departments get involved? And what do they do? (Extension officers involved?)
 - e. Is information about land degradation and its solutions being given to Local and District Municipalities?
- 11. Are knowledge systems of the users (people on the ground) being taken into account or being acknowledged as beneficial or valuable?
- 12. Are people being trained in land conservation measures? Who is involved/should be involved in this?
- 13. Are farmers on commonage being mentored, in terms of environmental and agricultural management? Who is doing this? Is it successful? Could this be improved? What is some of the knowledge being passed on?

Section 5

Land reform, Privatisation and “stepping off” of the commonage

- 7. Do you think Land Reform in South Africa is going too slow? What are some of the other problems with the Programme? Do you think that commonage development can assist land redistribution in South Africa? If so, how?
- 8. What do you see as some of the solutions to problems associated with commonage management? (Would you suggest better rule making and enforcement, a more specific portfolio in local government, more support from other departments, long-term leases as what happened in the past etc)
 - a. Consider long-lease systems further: can it occur again like what happened in the past, would be help and what would be the major drawback of doing so?
- 9. Are people stepping off the commonage onto privately owned land?
If yes
 - a. Why, what compels them to do so?
 - b. Could the number be improved? How may this be improved?
 If no
 - c. Why not?
 - d. What can be done to assist people to do so?