



Tropentag, September 16-18, 2015, Berlin, Germany

“Management of land use systems for enhanced food security:  
conflicts, controversies and resolutions”

## What Can Conservationists Learn from Local Rule Negotiation Processes? National Park Tsimanampetsotse in Southwestern Madagascar

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### Abstract

Known for its highly endemic biodiversity, Madagascar is still in the center of interest of multilateral donors financing nature conservation. In this context, the area of the National Park Tsimanampetsotse has been quintupled while the pastoral area and the use of natural resources for economic, ritual and social purposes were further restricted for the local population. Two management systems, namely co-management for the national park on one hand and community based natural resource management (CBNRM) for the buffer zone on the other hand, have been introduced following the global trend of participatory natural resource management.

The stereotyped approaches of the development organisations often neglect the diversity of interests in groups and local procedures of decision-making. Furthermore, the Tanalana, the biggest ethnic group living in the vicinity of the National Park, have different perceptions of ownership and access to land and natural resources than the conservationists: their concepts of autochthony, gerontocracy and spirituality define rights and property.

For analysing the different management forms a qualitative case study approach was applied based on 160 semi-structured interviews in the periphery of the National Park. By analysing negotiation processes of rules for natural resource use outside the protected areas it becomes obvious that several aspects peculiar to the Tanalana society need to be respected by development agencies if the objective of a bottom-up movement is meant seriously. In particular, it would be important to leave the choice of the type of rules and sanctions to the local people to avoid a donor driven artificial framework for natural resource use.

**Keywords:** Co-management, community-based management, land management, local rules, Madagascar, national park, participation, SuLaMa