

Central Issues in Decentralised Wetland Management

A comparative case study in Kumi and Mukono district, Uganda

Karin Andeweg

November 2006



Front cover:

Large photo: Wetland in Kanyum sub-county, Kumi district

Small photos (from left to right): Brick-making in Lwajjali wetland, Mukono district; Women getting water from Lake Bisina, Kumi district; Wetland with rice growing between Ngora and Kapir sub-county, Kumi district; Men washing his bicycle in a wetland, Kumi district.

Back cover:

Large photo: Wetland in Kanyum sub-county, Kumi district

Small photos (from up to down): Little boy getting water from Lake Bisina, Kumi district; Interview at Kapir sub-county headquarters, Kumi district; Fisherman in Lake Bisina, Kumi district; Boys getting water from wetland, Kumi district

Central Issues in Decentralised Wetland Management

A comparative case study in Kumi and Mukono district, Uganda

Karin Andeweg

Wageningen, 23 November 2006

Thesis supervisor: Dr. Ir. Bas J. M. van Vliet
Environmental Policy Group
Social Science Group
Wageningen University

SUMMARY

Decentralisation of governance, the transfer of powers and responsibilities from central governmental bodies to actors and institutions at the lower level, is expected to bring some significant benefits to developing countries. Also the decentralisation of natural resource management is regarded by many to be beneficial for the sustainability, efficiency and equity in the use and management of natural resources. Within decentralisation several aspects can influence whether or not the potential benefits of decentralised natural resource management are obtained: In the design of decentralisation, the extent and form determine which actors exercise which powers. In the process of decentralised governance capacity and accountability influence whether or not and how the actors exercise their powers and if they meet their responsibilities. These aspects are put together in a model which is used in this research to examine decentralised wetland management in Uganda.

In Uganda, decentralisation reforms have established local governmental bodies at different levels. Several powers and responsibilities in wetland management are devolved to local actors at these levels. This MSc thesis research studies the extent to which wetland management is decentralised and the strengths and weaknesses of this decentralised wetland management. It aims to give an indepth description of the forms, levels and processes of decentralised wetland management in Uganda's districts. The study has here fore conducted a comparative case study on wetland management in Kumi and Mukono district. It is examined how laws and regulations have formally decentralised wetland management to the different levels in these districts and interviews are held with actors at all active levels in wetland management -village, parish, sub-county, district and national- to examine how wetland management is going in practice in those two districts.

From the empirical research in the two districts appeared that actors in both districts consider the structures that are established for local wetland management and the powers and responsibilities that they have received to manage the wetlands where they depend upon themselves, as the main strength of decentralised wetland management. However, there are some main aspects that constrain optimal wetland management in both districts. The decentralisation reforms have not decentralised all aspects that are of importance for wetland management: the local actors and bodies involved can plan and budget for activities in wetland management, but as far as the allocation of money for these activities is concerned and the legal laws and regulations in wetland management, wetland management is still centrally controlled. Actors at the lower levels are depending on the higher levels for issues as funding, capacity building, assistance in technical back-up and enforcement.

Because actors at the higher level are not or can not meet these responsibilities towards actors at the local level, wetland management is hampered by a lack of funding and human resources; lacking knowledge in management; low environmental awareness of users and local governance actors; problems in enforcing compliance with laws and regulations; and an overall unsustainable use and management of the wetlands. However, despite these constraints it is believed by all actors that decentralised wetland management as it is now has been much more sustainable than central management of wetlands would have been. Furthermore, in the places where NGOs have assisted local communities with awareness raising and capacity building in wetland management by the set up of community-based wetland management plans, local people appeared to be able to manage and use the wetlands sustainable.

To sum, decentralisation in Uganda has transferred tasks and responsibilities in wetland management to local levels but this is not complemented with adequate powers, capacity building and sufficient resources from the centre. Due to this and the fact that the lower governance levels still depend on the higher levels for issues of funding and assistance, decentralised wetland management in Uganda is still pretty much controlled by the centre. However, the results of the work of the NGOs show that it is

possible to have sound and well-functioning local wetland management as long as local actors are supported with sufficient capacity building and awareness raising. Decentralised wetland management in Uganda could work better than it does at this moment if the local governments are provided with more awareness raising, capacity and powers.

FOREWORD AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Quite some time ago, I was still in primary school, I remember asking my mother what the letters ‘drs’ (former Dutch for ‘MSc’) meant in front of some names in the telephone book. My mother explained to me that those people had done *a research* and therefore have ‘those letters’ in front of their name. Somehow the mysterious idea of doing a research appealed to me. But where should such a research be about? At that time, and every once in a while in the years after, I was thinking about the kind of things one could research.

How ridiculous this question might be for a ten year old, at the time I started with the Bachelor-study Environmental Sciences at Wageningen University in 2001 this question became more realistic, and even relevant when I continued with the Master-study Environmental Sciences.

Doing a specialisation Environmental Policy, it was clear that such a research would be in the area of environmental policy and management. During the years of my study I have developed an interest in environmental problems and policy issues in developing countries but, although I started thinking about this question quite early, a year ago I still had not more than some vague ideas.

Until the moment I visited Bas van Vliet, who later became my supervisor, in January 2006. Bas came up with the idea of doing a thesis research within his Emcabu (Environmental Management Capacity Building Uganda) project. Despite my doubts in the very beginning, I soon became rather enthusiastic about the idea of doing my MSc thesis research on decentralisation of environmental management in Uganda. And, until this moment, I still am enthusiastic about the whole thesis research and the experiences I have gained in the past few months. During my time in Uganda, I often thought back at that time some 15 years ago and realised that I could not have imagined at that time that doing *the research* would be so interesting and enjoyable.

Bas, thank you, not only for the wonderful idea but also for your help and the time you have invested in providing useful comments on the completion of this report.

There are many more people whom I am grateful to for their help and support to complete this thesis. First of all I would like to show my appreciation to Miss Beatrice Adimola, the Ugandan coordinator of the Emcabu project and working at NEMA. Without her help and strict co-ordination it would not have been possible, or at least not so easily, to accomplish the practical part of the research. Also the environmental officers of Kumi and Mukono district, Mr. Michael Bernard Ikanut and Mr. Solomon Musoke, have both been very helpful in facilitating my research in their district.

Furthermore I would like to thank Narasha Bakkers, for introducing me into the Ugandan life, your company during the months in Uganda and the conversations on our balcony about the ups and downs of the research; the Isiagi family for making my stays in Kumi nice, comfortable and nutritious; the staff of NEMA for their help and kindness when I was visiting their office; and all the people in Kumi and Mukono district whom have been willing to cooperate.

Karin Andeweg
November 2006

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SUMMARY	I
FOREWORD AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	III
TABLE OF CONTENTS	IV
ABBREVIATIONS	VII
1. INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 BACKGROUND & PROBLEM DESCRIPTION	1
1.1.1 <i>The Emcabu-project</i>	1
1.1.2 <i>Uganda and decentralisation</i>	1
1.1.3 <i>Wetlands in Uganda</i>	2
1.1.4 <i>Problem definition</i>	2
1.2 THE RESEARCH	3
1.2.1 <i>Research objective</i>	3
1.2.2 <i>Research questions</i>	3
1.3 RESEARCH STRATEGY & METHODOLOGY	4
1.3.1 <i>Research strategy</i>	4
1.3.2 <i>Research area</i>	4
1.3.3 <i>Data gathering</i>	5
1.4 REPORT OUTLINE	6
2. DECENTRALISATION OF GOVERNANCE IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.....	7
2.1 INTRODUCTION	7
2.1.1 HISTORY AND JUSTIFICATION	7
2.1.2 <i>Extent and forms of decentralisation</i>	8
2.2 ACTORS, POWERS & ACCOUNTABILITY	9
2.2.1 <i>Actors</i>	9
2.2.2 <i>Powers</i>	10
2.2.3 <i>Accountability</i>	11
2.2.4 <i>Beyond actors, powers and accountability</i>	11
2.3 BENEFITS & CONSTRAINTS OF DECENTRALISATION	12
2.3.1 <i>Benefits of decentralisation</i>	12
2.3.2 <i>Constraints in decentralisation</i>	13
2.4 CONCLUSIONS ON DECENTRALISATION OF GOVERNANCE IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES	15
2.4.1 <i>Is decentralisation desirable?</i>	15
2.4.2 <i>Aspects in decentralisation</i>	15
3. DECENTRALISATION OF NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT	19
3.1 INTRODUCTION	19
3.2 ACTORS, POWERS & ACCOUNTABILITY IN DECENTRALISED NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT	20
3.2.1 <i>Actors</i>	20
3.2.2 <i>Powers</i>	20
3.2.3 <i>Accountability</i>	21
3.2.4 <i>Capacity</i>	22
3.3 BENEFITS AND CONSTRAINTS OF DECENTRALISED NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT	23

3.3.1	<i>Benefits of decentralised natural resource management</i>	23
3.3.2	<i>Constraints in decentralised natural resource management</i>	24
3.4	CONCLUSIONS ON DECENTRALISED NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT	25
3.4.1	<i>Decentralisation and decentralised natural resource management</i>	25
3.4.2	<i>Decentralisation of natural resource management versus other forms of local natural resource management</i>	27
4. BACKGROUND: UGANDA, DECENTRALISATION & WETLAND MANAGEMENT		31
4.1	INTRODUCTION	31
4.2	DECENTRALISATION IN UGANDA: POLITICAL HISTORY & GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE	31
4.2.1	<i>Political history of Uganda</i>	31
4.2.2	<i>Decentralisation of governance in Uganda</i>	32
4.2.3	<i>Objectives of decentralisation in Uganda</i>	33
4.3	DECENTRALISATION & WETLAND MANAGEMENT IN UGANDA	33
4.3.1	<i>The starting point of environmental and wetland management in Uganda</i>	33
4.3.2	<i>Wetlands and the law</i>	34
4.3.3	<i>Ownership and access</i>	35
4.4	GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE, ACTORS & RESPONSIBILITIES IN DECENTRALISED WETLAND MANAGEMENT .	36
4.4.1	<i>National Actors</i>	36
4.4.2	<i>District Actors</i>	37
4.4.3	<i>Lower-local actors</i>	39
4.4.4	<i>Interaction between the different levels</i>	41
5. DECENTRALISED WETLAND MANAGEMENT IN KUMI & MUKONO DISTRICT		45
5.1	INTRODUCTION	45
5.1.1	<i>Introduction to Kumi district</i>	45
5.1.2	<i>Introduction to Mukono district</i>	46
5.2	ACTORS & POWERS IN DECENTRALISED WETLAND MANAGEMENT.....	47
5.2.1	<i>Actors in Kumi district</i>	47
5.2.2	<i>Actors in Mukono district</i>	48
5.3	INTERACTION & ACCOUNTABILITY	48
5.3.1	<i>Horizontal interaction and accountability in Kumi district</i>	48
5.3.2	<i>Vertical interaction and accountability in Kumi district</i>	49
5.3.3	<i>Horizontal interaction and accountability in Mukono district</i>	50
5.3.4	<i>Vertical interaction and accountability in Mukono district</i>	51
5.4	MEETING EXPECTATIONS, MEETING RESPONSIBILITIES.....	53
5.4.1	<i>Meeting expectations and responsibilities in Kumi district</i>	53
5.4.2	<i>Meeting expectations and responsibilities in Mukono district</i>	56
6. COMPARING DECENTRALISED WETLAND MANAGEMENT IN KUMI & MUKONO DISTRICT		59
.....		
6.1	INTRODUCTION	59
6.2	COMPARING FEATURES, ACTORS, INTERACTION & ACCOUNTABILITY, MEETING RESPONSIBILITIES	59
6.2.1	<i>Comparing features of Kumi and Mukono district</i>	59
6.2.2	<i>Comparing actors</i>	60
6.2.3	<i>Comparing interaction and accountability</i>	60
6.2.4	<i>Comparing meeting responsibilities</i>	61
6.3	FORMS OF DECENTRALISED WETLAND MANAGEMENT IN KUMI & MUKONO DISTRICT	62
6.3.1	<i>Institutional decentralisation of wetland management</i>	63
6.3.2	<i>Political decentralisation of wetland management</i>	63

6.3.3	<i>Fiscal decentralisation of wetland management</i>	64
6.3.4	<i>Legal decentralisation of wetland management</i>	64
6.4	STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES & THREATS OF DECENTRALISED WETLAND MANAGEMENT	65
6.4.1	<i>Strengths in decentralised wetland management</i>	65
6.4.2	<i>Weaknesses in decentralised wetland management</i>	66
6.4.3	<i>Opportunities in decentralised wetland management</i>	68
6.4.4	<i>Threats in decentralised wetland management</i>	68
6.5	CONCLUSIONS ON DECENTRALISED WETLAND MANAGEMENT IN KUMI & MUKONO DISTRICT	69
6.5.1	<i>The design variables</i>	70
6.5.2	<i>The process variables</i>	71
6.5.3	<i>The outcomes of decentralised wetland management</i>	72
	 7. CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSION & RECOMMENDATIONS	75
7.1	INTRODUCTION	75
7.2	DECENTRALISED WETLAND MANAGEMENT: SUSTAINABLE OR NOT?	75
7.2.1	<i>Conclusions on the extent of decentralised wetland management</i>	75
7.2.2	<i>Conclusions on the outcomes of decentralisation for wetland management</i>	76
7.2.3	<i>Conclusions on decentralised wetland management</i>	77
7.3	DISCUSSION	78
7.3.1	<i>Discussion on the research strategy</i>	78
7.3.2	<i>Decentralisation as a theory</i>	79
7.3.3	<i>Discussing the broader scope</i>	80
7.4	RECOMMENDATIONS	81
7.4.1	<i>Maintain decentralisation or recentralise?</i>	81
7.4.2	<i>What should change? Recommendations for a better decentralised wetland management in Uganda</i>	82
7.4.3	<i>Recommendations for further research</i>	83
	 BIBLIOGRAPHY	87
	 APPENDIX I: DATA GATHERING	91
APPENDIX 1.1	RESPONDENTS AND ACTIVITIES	91
APPENDIX 1.2	INTERVIEW CHECKLIST	93
	 APPENDIX II: MAPS OF THE RESEARCH AREAS	95
MAP 1:	KUMI DISTRICT WITH SUB-COUNTIES	95
MAP 2:	MUKONO DISTRICT WITH SUB-COUNTIES	95
	 APPENDIX III: ILLUSTRATIONS	96

ABBREVIATIONS

CAO	Chief Administrative Officer
CBNRM	Community-Based Natural Resource Management
CBO	Community-Based Organisation
CBWM	Community-Based Wetland Management
CBWMP	Community-Based Wetland Management Plan
DC	District Council
DEC	District Executive Committee <i>and</i> District Environmental Committee
DEO	District Environmental Officer
DTPC	District Technical Planning Committee
DWO	District Wetlands Officer
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EMCABU	Environmental Management Capacity Building Uganda
FY	Financial Year
GoU	Government of Uganda
IPF	Indicative Planning Figures
Kunedo	Kumi Network of Development Organisations
LC	Local Council
LEC	Local Environmental Committee
MoLG	Ministry of Local Governance
MoNR	Ministry of Natural Resources
NEMA	National Environmental Management Authority
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NRA	National Resistance Army
NRM	National Resistance Movement
RC	Resistance Council
SER	State of the Environment Report
UNCED	United Nations Conference of Environment and Development
WID	Wetlands Inspection Division
WSSP	Wetland Sector Strategic Plan

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background & problem description

1.1.1 *The Emcabu-project*

This MSc-thesis research is done for the Environmental Management Capacity Building Uganda (Emcabu) project of the Environmental Policy Group of Wageningen University, the Netherlands, and the National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA) of Uganda. The aim of the Emcabu project is to improve and extend environmental management services in Uganda. By providing environmental management training for staff of national and district level and strengthening curricula of environmental management in educational institutions, the project intends to build capacity for environmental management in Uganda¹.

The Emcabu-project furthermore entails MSc and PhD researches on various subjects within environmental management in Uganda, e.g. research on environmental health and sanitation, watershed management and research on waste water management in the fish processing industry.

This research on decentralised wetland management hopes to make a contribution to the knowledge of decentralised environmental management in Uganda as an input for the environmental management trainings of the Emcabu-project.

1.1.2 *Uganda and decentralisation*

After the National Resistance Movement (NRM) gained power in Uganda in 1986, the highly central political system changed into a decentralised political system. In a decentralised political system tasks and responsibilities are devolved from the central government to lower-level authorities.

Although there is not one set of guidelines that leads to successful decentralisation, there are many thoughts about the advantages and disadvantages of decentralisation of (environmental) governance (Raussen *et al.*, 2001; Wunsch, 2001; Larson and Ribot, 2004; Meynen and Doornbos, 2004). Some argue decentralisation will improve efficiency, governance, equity, development and poverty reduction, but too much or inappropriate use can undermine the benefits that decentralisation can have (Smoke, 2003). Opponents and advocates of decentralisation quarrel whether or not decentralisation is the right method for environmental and natural resource management in developing countries (e.g. Larson and Ribot, 2004; Meynen and Doornbos, 2004). Local knowledge is important for sound natural resource management, but local leaders may have other interests than natural resource conservation, such as economic development, and as a consequence decide to exploit the natural resources instead.

In Uganda, the Local Government's Resistance Councils Statute of 1993, the 1995 Constitution and the 1997 Local Governments Act have facilitated a continuous process of decentralisation; power devolved from the central government to district councils to lower councils (Tukahebwa, 1998). Uganda now has five local governance levels; the village, parish, sub-county, county and the district. The Local Governments Act 1997 also decentralises environmental and natural resource management to the local level. This gives local governments in Uganda the responsibility for managing the environmental resources in their jurisdictions.

¹ More information about the project can be found on the Emcabu website: www.emcabu.org.

1.1.3 Wetlands in Uganda

Uganda has an abundant amount of various natural resources, especially wetlands. Wetlands are defined as “areas permanently or seasonally flooded by water where plants and animals have become adopted” (Government of Uganda, hereafter GoU, 1995: section 2), such as swamps, fens or peat land. Wetlands are one of the most essential resources of Uganda: 13% of Uganda’s total area, about 29,000 squared kilometres, is covered by wetlands (NEMA, 2002). The wetlands in Uganda represent 8% of Africa’s wetlands.

Besides ecological value, wetlands also have economic and social values for the people of Uganda. Many people directly depend on wetlands for their livelihoods; for food and water, but also for income generating activities such as craft making of papyrus. Wetland resources provide goods with a direct value such as fish, fuel wood, sand and clay, cultivation, transport and recreation, but also function for water storage, flood control, micro-climate regulation or biodiversity provision. About five million people in Uganda directly rely on wetlands for their livestock water needs (NEMA, 2002).

In the earlier years, wetlands in Uganda were used to be seen as a menace; they were dangerous and were a source of diseases and other things. Population growth forced people to use the wetlands for making a living and the perception of wetland changed (Kumi district, 1997). Though, people in Uganda were lacking recognition of the value of their natural resources and wetlands were mismanaged and exploited. The awareness on wetlands changed during the 1980s. In 1989, at the same time the country underwent the decentralisation reforms, Uganda’s first wetland policy was introduced. At this moment, Uganda has several laws and regulation on wetland use and wetland management is part of the decentralised governance system.

Despite the importance of wetlands for Uganda, they are seriously degrading: Rapid population growth increases the pressure on wetlands; they are being converted or modified for development purposes which is often considered fair by policy-makers and governments at all levels. Wetlands are for instance converted into agricultural farm land, filled in for road construction or used for brick-making. In extreme cases about 40% of districts’ wetlands are converted or modified. Decentralised wetland management, and environmental management in general, is a big challenge for Uganda and its districts (NEMA, 2002).

1.1.4 Problem definition

The conservation and management of wetlands in Uganda is devolved from the central to the local level, which shifts the main responsibility for wetlands to the local governments under which constituency the wetlands fall. Decentralisation of natural resource management is said to have some considerable benefits for a more sustainable management of the natural resource, but it also has some drawbacks that can hinder successful management. In Uganda, natural resources, including wetland resources, are seriously threatened by degradation activities. This raises the question whether or not decentralised governance is beneficial for sustainable wetland management in Uganda and in which way wetland management can be improved in Uganda.

1.2 The research

1.2.1 Research objective

The aim of the research is to give an in depth description of the forms and level to which wetland management is decentralised in Uganda's district and to identify the main strengths and weaknesses of this decentralised wetland management.

By comparing the extent of decentralisation and the strengths and weaknesses of a decentralised wetland management in these two districts this research hopes to 1) find similarities or differences in features and effects of decentralised wetland management that might indicate structural problems or positive aspects of a decentralised wetland management, and 2) to find diverse locally implemented solutions to wetland management.

1.2.2 Research questions

The main research question of this research is:

To what extent is wetland management decentralised in Uganda's districts; and what are the main strengths and weaknesses of a decentralised wetland management for the environmental protection of wetlands?

In order to answer this question it is specified in several sub-questions. The sub-questions are categorized in theoretical, descriptive and analytical sub-questions.

1) Theoretical sub-questions

- 1a) What is the objective of decentralisation of environmental and natural resource management and what are according to decentralisation literature, the main strengths and weaknesses of decentralisation of environmental and natural resource management?
- 1b) Which aspects are identified to be important in a decentralised natural resource management?

2) Descriptive sub-questions.

- 2a) Which administrative levels and which actors are involved in Uganda's decentralised wetland management?
- 2b) Which forms of decentralisation (fiscal, institutional, legal, political) are applied and to what administrative level in wetland management in Uganda?
- 2c) What are the different responsibilities (e.g. decision-making, implementation, financing, monitoring) of the actors at different administrative levels and are those actors taking their responsibilities?
- 2d) How are actors at the same administrative level and between different administrative levels interacting with each other: What are their expectations of each other and are those expectations met? Is there, apart from the formal decentralisation structure, also informal interactions between actors and how does this influence wetland management?
- 2e) What are, according to the main actors in wetland management, the main strengths and weaknesses of a decentralised wetland management?
- 2f) What are, according to the main actors in wetland management, the main threats and opportunities of a decentralised wetland management?

3) Analytical sub-questions

- 3a) What are the main differences and similarities concerning the decentralisation of wetland

- management in Uganda's districts and which conclusions about their strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities can be drawn?
- 3b) To what extent does the decentralised wetland management in Uganda's districts meet the objective of decentralisation; can this decentralised management be considered to be effective and what aspects can be identified to be important in a decentralised wetland management ?

1.3 Research strategy & methodology

1.3.1 Research strategy

To examine the decentralisation of wetland management in Uganda this research has conducted a comparative case study in two of Uganda's districts, Kumi district and Mukono district. Case studies are characterised by a small number of research units and qualitative data generation, which will give a profound insight of the research object (Verschuren and Doorewaard, 1999). This is useful for providing an in depth description of decentralised wetland management in the two districts.

In a comparative case study more cases are studied and compared. The districts have been studied independently from each other and are compared after both have been examined -a so-called hierarchic comparative case study (Verschuren and Doorewaard, 1999). Studying and comparing two districts (instead of only one) has two main advantages:

First, information of two districts gives a broader understanding of management and policy-making in Uganda in general, which is helpful when evaluating the decentralisation of (wetland) governance. Second, it provides the opportunity to identify possible similarities or differences between the district's problems or opportunities in decentralised wetland management which might indicate a structural problem or solution in Uganda's decentralised wetland management.

Although generalisation of the results is not possible with such a small-scale research, more knowledge about features decentralised wetland management of other districts, for example of conversations with district officers of other districts or NEMA, can point towards the same strengths or weaknesses in other districts.

1.3.2 Research area

The empirical research of this study is conducted in Kumi and Mukono district in Uganda. The map in figure 1.1 shows the location of the two districts. More information on the districts is given in chapter five. The districts are chosen because of two reasons: their diversity and because of pragmatic reasons. As far as their diversity is concerned, Kumi district is located in the east of Uganda and is very rural. Mukono district is near the capital city Kampala and is more industrialised than Kumi district is. Both districts have plenty of wetland resources but they differ in the way wetlands are used and, as a result, in the degradation activities that take place. By comparing two different districts, the research gives a more diverse description of decentralised wetland management.

The more pragmatic reason for choosing these districts is the cooperation of the environmental offices of the districts that was needed for the study. In both Kumi and Mukono district the District Environmental Officers were interested in helping with the research.

district. Among other things this comprised visiting some sub-county headquarters and visiting a sub-county's wetland that had problems with illegal encroaching in the wetland.

In Mukono district data gathering has been done during several days in August and September. Because Mukono district is close to the capital Kampala it was possible to stay for this purpose in Kampala. Other activities that have been done in Mukono district are a field trip to Lwajjali wetland with the chairman of the Lwajjali wetland management committee and the attendance of a meeting of the District Council and the District Technical Planning Committee. This has broadened the general understanding of governance and decision-making in Mukono district.

Furthermore, two relative 'outsiders' in wetland management are interviewed: a political scientist of the Uganda Management Institute and a person working with decentralisation for the Dutch Embassy in Uganda. Also a few workshops have been attended which have given the opportunity to discuss issues in wetland management with actors of other districts. These activities have given a deeper insight in the whole decentralisation process and in wetland and environmental management in Uganda.

In Appendix I a list of the interviewees and other activities is given, as well as the checklist that is used during the interviews.

1.4 Report outline

The report is structured as follows:

The theoretical framework of this study is discussed in chapter two and three. Chapter two deals with decentralisation of governance in developing countries in general and chapter three specifies this on decentralised management of natural resources. The theoretical chapters are concluded with a framework that comprises aspects that are of importance in decentralisation, which are identified in the decentralisation literature.

The empirical part of this research is presented in the chapters four and five. Chapter four outlines decentralisation and decentralised wetland management in Uganda and chapter five presents the results of the case studies on decentralised wetland management in Kumi and Mukono district.

Chapter six compares and analyses the results of decentralised wetland management in the two districts of chapter four and five.

The last chapter, chapter seven, contains the final conclusion and the discussion of this research. First conclusions on the research question will be formulated. After that the results in relation to the used methods will be discussed. It reviews the total research and will give recommendations on decentralised wetland management and further research.

2. DECENTRALISATION OF GOVERNANCE IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

2.1 Introduction

The empirical part of this research studies the decentralisation of wetland management in Uganda. In a decentralised political system tasks and responsibilities are devolved from the central government to lower-level authorities. Agrawal and Ribot (1999: 476) define decentralisation as “any act in which a central government formally cedes powers to actors and institutions at lower levels in a political-administrative and territorial hierarchy.” Decentralisation in developing countries is a “hot topic” of researchers, the international development community and developing states for some decades now and there are many views on decentralisation and its advantages and disadvantages for (environmental) governance (Jütting *et al.*, 2005: 627).

The theoretical framework of this study therefore considers the theory of decentralisation and the decentralisation of environmental and natural resource management.

Before specifically going into the decentralisation of environmental and natural resource management in the next chapter, chapter three, this first theoretical chapter will discuss decentralisation and decentralised governance in developing countries in general. In this paragraph a further introduction to decentralisation will be given, the next paragraph discusses elements of decentralisation, paragraph 2.3 discusses the advantages and disadvantages of decentralisation and finally, in 2.4, some main conclusions about decentralisation in developing countries will be drawn.

2.1.1 History and justification

The first attempts of decentralisation started already decades ago: in Asia in the 1950s and in Africa in the 1960s, efforts had been made to have participation of local communities in development. However, interference and distrust from central government bodies and a lack of resources and knowledge in the local communities caused most of these projects to fail (Crook and Manor, 1998). Despite this failure, decentralisation of governance as a tool for political and economic development in developing countries has gained popularity again in the 1980s (Agrawal and Ribot, 1999; Wunsch 2001; Jütting *et al.*, 2005). Various actors supported decentralisation reforms: Neo-liberal economists supported decentralisation as a result of the shifting away of powers from rent-seeking central governments. Democratic as well as autocratic politicians perceived decentralisation as a way to be responsive to local needs or to obtain legitimacy and grassroots support. In addition to the difficulties some centralised governments had caused, the support of various actors gave decentralisation a second chance (Crook and Manor, 1998). Ever since, decentralisation is supported by developing states, international donor agencies and researchers.

Initially, the guiding principles of decentralisation reforms were the neo-liberalist ideas concerning market deregulation and privatisation, but more recently the emphasis is on decentralisation of governance, local participation (Meynen and Doornbos, 2004) and democratisation (Crook and Manor, 1998).

A transfer of power from the central government to lower government levels has many advocates due to the main objectives of decentralisation: downsizing the central government, strengthening local government, increase of local participation and local democracy and improving the efficiency and equity of local services (Ribot, 2004: 8). The objectives and supposed advantages of decentralisation are further discussed in paragraph 2.3.

2.1.2 Extent and forms of decentralisation

Decentralisation can differ in the extent to which powers are decentralised and the forms of decentralisation.

Two main types concerning the extent of decentralisation can be distinguished: Deconcentration (or administrative decentralisation) and devolution (or democratic decentralisation) (Crook and Manor, 1998; Agrawal and Ribot, 1999; Larson and Ribot, 2004). Deconcentration refers to a type of decentralisation in which executive powers controlled by the state are devolved to lower-level governance actors who are appointed by and still accountable to the central government (upward accountability). With deconcentration the reach of the central government in a way extends: the central government is not giving up its authority but tends to strengthen it. Devolution differs from deconcentration in that powers and control over agencies and resources are devolved to lower-level political actors and institutions that are not upwardly accountable to the central government but downwardly accountable to the local people (Crook and Manor, 1998; Agrawal and Ribot, 1999).

More than with deconcentration, with devolution there is a form of power sharing between the central and lower-level governments. Since lower-level governments in deconcentration are responsive to a higher level (central) government and in a lesser extent to their local population, devolution is said to be a more effective form of decentralisation than deconcentration (Larson and Ribot, 2004). Ribot (2002: 4) describes deconcentration as a 'weak' and devolution as a 'strong' type of decentralisation, because with deconcentration "the downward accountability from which many benefits are expected (see 2.3) are not as well established" as in devolution: deconcentration is a "poor second choice to democratic decentralisation" (Ribot, 2004: 30).

Besides a difference in the extent of decentralisation, there can be various forms of decentralisation. Smoke (2003) outlines three basic forms of decentralisation: Fiscal decentralisation, institutional decentralisation and political decentralisation.

Fiscal decentralisation comprises the financial responsibility for an area. This involves assigning own-source revenues to governmental actors and arranging the expenditures. Institutional decentralisation concerns the structure of local and intergovernmental administrative bodies, mechanisms and systems concerned with decentralisation. This structure must manage interaction between formal government bodies and other (local) actors. Political decentralisation refers to the political reform that enhances adequate empowerment of sub-national government bodies with functions and resources. A strong local political process is needed to understand and respond to the needs of local people in a better way than the central government can (Smoke, 2003).

Smoke argues that without one of these three basic forms of decentralisation, the others will not function properly. Manor (1999) and Binswanger (1999) (in Agrawal and Ribot, 1999) also consider a combination of these three basic forms of decentralisation as a condition for a successful outcome of decentralisation: Proper designed and implemented structures and processes must enable adequate management of fiscal and political functions. But without well-developed fiscal decentralisation political and institutional decentralisation would have little impact. The same can be said for lack of a well-organised political system, without which it is unlikely for fiscal and institutional decentralisation to meet their goals (Smoke, 2003).

2.2 Actors, powers & accountability

According to the forms of decentralisation mentioned above, Agrawal and Ribot (1999) suggest three analytical dimensions that underlie decentralisation: Actors, powers and accountability. They argue that actors, powers and accountability are important elements when decentralisation processes are evaluated. This paragraph discusses these three analytical dimensions and explains their role in decentralisation.

2.2.1 Actors

Actors in decentralisation can be individuals or groups, such as communities, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) or committees and can be present at different levels, e.g. local, regional or national. Each actor has different executive powers and is located in particular relations of accountability, depending on the historical and political structure of the powers of these actors (Agrawal and Ribot, 1999). The possible actors in decentralisation are described below.

Although decentralisation mainly focuses on empowering local or lower-level governmental actors, the *central government* plays an important role in decentralisation as well. A strong central state benefits decentralisation; staff and funds are often necessary to support local reforms by means of finance and technical services (Ribot, 2002). A strong central government is, too, crucial for equity among districts or other parts of a country. It can ensure this inter-jurisdictional equity by properly redistributing financial and technical resources among the country (Ribot, 2004).

According to Ribot (2002) and Tendler (1997) the central government must play a key role in reforms in order to achieve effective decentralisation. Sophisticated political skills at the national level are required for decentralisation. Hommes calls this the “paradox of decentralisation” (Hommes, 1996 in Tendler, 1997: 143); to strengthen local governments, the national government must be strengthened as well. This process in decentralisation, the strengthening of both, local as well as national governments, can facilitate the creation of legitimate states and governments (Larson and Ribot, 2004).

The main actors in a decentralised system are *local actors*. Local actors can be local officials, local councils, local committees, communities, citizens, etc. Some actors, such as officials, councils and committees can be elected through democratic processes or can be appointed, by for example the central government. The powers that local actors have depend on the extent and forms of decentralisation. A particular group of local actors are customary authorities, which are discussed separately below.

Local (or national) elites can influence the decision-making process. They can capture and use local institutions for their own means as well. Also traditional actors, such as chiefs or headmen, the so-called ‘*customary authorities*’ in developing countries, often influence local governance. In some countries those customary authorities are often appointed to be the local authority (Ribot, 2002).

Elites and customary authorities can influence the local governance system in positive and negative ways, depending on the form of the accountability mechanism in place. Without such a mechanism accountability is mostly depending on their interests and in how far they act upon these interests, which makes it hard to rely on customary authorities as being an appropriate representation (Ribot, 2004).

International or national donors and NGOs might also influence local and national decision-making. Local or national officials can make decisions that are desired by the donor agencies in order to

receive funding. NGOs often need governmental bodies to implement their ideas or projects. This can influence the course of the governmental body. By working with local communities, NGOs can also make the public aware of their rights as voters, or can support them in lobbying for greater services to local populations (Ribot, 2002 and 2004).

Although NGOs are often thought to work in the interest of others and be unselfishness, they can represent a certain group of people (e.g. farmers, women, youth). The concerns of such groups do not necessarily reflect the interests of the whole community (Ribot, 2004), which can make the influence of NGOs in local decision-making unrepresentative to the needs of all the people.

Except for unrepresentative decisions, NGOs that work for a specific group of people or a specific interest can weaken local authorities by over-funding a specific topic. While local authorities often suffer from a lack of funding, the over-funding of a particular subject in an area can undermine the authority of the local power (Ribot, 2004).

2.2.2 Powers

With decentralisation reforms, powers are devolved from actors at the centre to local actors. Different powers in decentralised decision-making can be distinguished; the power to create rules (legislative), the power to make decisions about how resources or opportunities are used, the power to implement and ensure compliance to rules (executive) and the power to arbitrate disputes arose from rule making (judicial) (Agrawal and Ribot, 1999).

Ribot (2002 and 2004) argues that especially discretionary powers are critical for effective decentralisation. Discretion enables local authorities to respond to the needs of their constituents, contrary to mandates with which local authorities must respond to the mandating agency. Discretionary powers are necessary to have meaningful local democratic governance. Without such unrestricted powers, local decision-making would only be an extension of the central government (Ribot, 2004).

It is often discussed which powers or responsibilities should be devolved to lower government levels and which should be retained at the central level. Despite the expected advantages of local decision-making, lower-level governments can lack capacity to actually take responsibility (Ribot, 2002).

According to the principle of subsidiarity, powers and decisions should be devolved to the lowest possible governance level (Meynen and Doornbos, 2004); if local governments are able to take certain decisions and responsibilities, they should have the task to take such decisions and responsibilities instead of a higher government. Following the subsidiarity principle, local governments should not necessarily have full control over all aspects in their jurisdiction if they are not capable to. According to Ribot (2002) and Meynen and Doornbos (2004) it should be determined what local governments are capable of and which powers can be transferred to lower-level governments. The powers that actors have should depend on the capabilities of this actor.

This does not mean that this is always the case, however. Local governments can receive too much power, more than they are capable of bearing, or too little, what means that a higher level government body has too much control.

The powers local actors are given and which powers are retained at the centre in decentralisation reforms determines the extent and forms of decentralisation, or the total design or structure of decentralisation: as is explained in the former paragraph, with devolution actors at lower governmental level have received more power and responsibilities than in deconcentration.

2.2.3 *Accountability*

Accountability of actors is depending on the relation between those actors and the powers they exercise: mechanisms of accountability hold actors account to exercising their powers. Accountability in decentralisation means that actors who execute powers, act on behalf of the interests of the ones who are dependent on the decisions of the executive power (Agrawal and Ribot, 1999).

Accountability of actors is crucial to realise the aims of decentralisation. It is crucial in local democratic governance (Agrawal and Ribot, 1999; Ribot, 2002). Smoke (2003) mentions that decentralisation means a decreasing accountability of sub-national governments to the central government. This is to be replaced by accountability of this sub-national government to local people. If not, local officials become mainly accountable to themselves or to influential local elites.

In decentralisation, accountability of actors can have three facets: Downward and upward accountability (vertical accountability) and horizontal accountability (Agrawal and Ribot, 1999; Devas and Grant, 2003; Craig and Porter, 2006). Downward accountability concerns the accountability of actors towards lower-level actors, for instance the accountability of local governments to their citizens, or the accountability of central governments to local authorities. Upward accountability concerns the responsibilities of lower-level actors to higher-level actors, for example the responsibilities local governments have towards the central government. Horizontal accountability is the accountability between actors at the same level, for example the accountability between elected officials and technical officials at the local as well as national level (Devas and Grant, 2003; Craig and Porter, 2006).

Downward accountability can be ensured by democratic processes such as elections. Democratic processes encourage authorities to respond to the needs and desires of their constituents (Ribot, 2002): if authorities do not respond to the needs of their constituents, they run the risk not to be re-elected. Though, downward accountability of local leaders to their citizens is not the only important downward accountability relation. Larson and Ribot (2004) argue that it is as important that central governments are accountable to elected local authorities as well. Local governments need services from the central government, such as expertise or financial support, in order to have effective decentralisation and to be downward accountable themselves. Electoral processes are one mechanism for downward accountability of local leaders to their citizens. Other mechanisms for downward as well as upward accountability are referenda, political pressure and lobbying by associations, media, etc. (Agrawal and Ribot, 1999).

Besides differences in downward, upward and horizontal accountability, the degree to which actors are accountability can differ between the different actors in decentralisation. Elected officials might be more accountable to their citizens than appointed officials, who might be responding to the desires of their appointees, since elected officials might otherwise not be elected again. Still, this is no guarantee for good governance. Customary authorities on the other hand, are hardly ever democratic. The degree of their accountability depends most of the time on different aspects, such as personality. Their legitimacy is rather established by respect or power than by accountability (Ribot, 2002). Even if customary authorities are accountable and sustainable, they can not be replicated and spread across the whole country (Ribot, 2004) and are thus no guarantee for good governance.

2.2.4 *Beyond actors, powers and accountability*

Actors, powers and accountability are three analytical dimensions of decentralisation. These three dimensions characterise the political and institutional forms of decentralisation, while fiscal decentralisation can be seen as one of the powers that can be decentralised to the political or institutional domain (Agrawal and Ribot, 1999). The way in which these three dimensions interact

with each other, how actors exercise which powers and in how far they are accountable to other actors in exercising these powers, influence the decentralisation process.

If, for example, central government actors are not accountable to the local governments, in terms of providing guidance, local governments can be restrained in carrying out their powers or responsibilities, therewith not being able to be downwardly accountable. Besides these three dimensions, there are other aspects that can influence the outcome of decentralisation.

The capacity of actors to meet their responsibilities is also important in decentralisation reforms. Capacity is related with power as well as the accountability of actors; it is linked to skills or competence, knowledge and legitimacy. Actors need a certain capacity to be able to exercise powers and to be responsive to local needs, i.e. to be accountable to their constituents (Ribot, 2004). The capacity of one actor, however, can again be dependent on the accountability of other actors whom he depends on: Lower-level governments need resources and guiding from higher-level governments in order to meet their responsibilities. If this is lacking, the capacity of the actor itself is not necessarily the problem, but rather the complementary resources this actor needs to be capable to carry out certain tasks.

Ribot (2004) mentions another reason that can influence local governments in meeting their objectives. It can be that the set objectives are not of importance of local people if it concerns objectives of the central government rather than local priorities. Local actors can not be motivated to achieve such objectives.

So far, decentralisation in developing countries is introduced and the different elements that constitute decentralisation are discussed. But what can be the outcomes of decentralised governance for developing countries; what are the expected benefits and disadvantages of decentralisation? And how do the discussed aspects influence these outcomes of decentralisation? The next paragraph discusses the benefits and disadvantages of decentralised governance.

2.3 Benefits & constraints of decentralisation

The introduction of this chapter has addressed that decentralisation in developing countries has many advocates: Researchers, international donor agencies and developing states themselves support decentralisation reforms in developing countries. According to the support decentralisation is given and the objectives -shortly mentioned in 2.1- to which decentralisation aims, there are some advantages to gain with decentralisation reforms. Hence, as Smoke (2003) addresses, inadequate implementation of decentralisation reforms or too much decentralisation can undermine the potential benefits of decentralisation and turn out to become constraints or disadvantages of decentralisation. This paragraph first discusses the potential benefits of decentralisation and then considers possible constraints in decentralisation.

2.3.1 Benefits of decentralisation

Decentralisation reforms are implemented in many countries with multiple objectives: strengthening local governmental bodies while downsizing the central government, increasing local participation and local democracy, and improving the efficiency and equity in local service delivery (Ribot, 2004). Local participation in decision-making, or in any case, better understanding of the local needs by the decision-makers is a key aspect of decentralisation (Crook and Manor, 1998; Agrawal and Ribot, 1999). This aspect of decentralisation is considered to bring some major advantages.

First, decentralisation can increase efficiency (Agrawal and Ribot, 1999; Smoke, 2003). Lower-level governments are closer to the people and have therefore a better understanding of the local needs, local circumstances and local changes than regional or national governments have (Martinussen, 1997). This makes decentralisation more efficient in allocating adequate public services to the citizens (Smoke, 2003).

Secondly, decentralisation can improve governance: Local government's decision-making is closer to the people and, complemented with public participation, makes decision-makers more responsive and accountable to the needs of the people (Smoke, 2003; Larson and Ribot, 2004). A greater proximity of decision-making bodies and citizens makes governments more vulnerable to citizens' pressure and makes it easier for citizens to exercise more pressure (Tender, 1997), especially when the governments are elected. Also, with decentralisation the capacity of citizens to monitor the local government is higher. This increases the opportunities for transparency and a reduced corruption, and overall improves governance (Manor, 1999 in Jütting *et al.*, 2005).

Third, since local governments are more familiar with the differences in local circumstances, they can, besides improving efficiency, enable an equitable distribution of public services and thus improve equity (Smoke, 2003).

Hence, decision-making closer and more open to the people enhances a better understanding of local needs and is a basis for improved governance by decentralisation (Smoke, 2003; Larson and Ribot, 2004). The three points mentioned here together can influence economic development and poverty reduction in a positive manner. If decentralisation enhances better governance, more efficiency and equity this can lead to improved development and poverty reduction (Smoke, 2003).

The general objectives of decentralisation, to reduce the influence of the central government and in the mean while strengthening local governmental bodies, makes governance closer to the people and more adaptive to local conditions. Increasing participation and democracy in local governance enhances citizens to hold their governments better responsive to their needs.

Democratic authorities are believed to better respond to citizens' demands than non-democratic institutions (Martinussen, 1997). This is why deconcentration, a type of decentralisation in which the central government still has control, is regarded to be a weaker form of decentralisation than devolution, in which the local governments have control (Ribot, 2002, see 2.1.2): Democratic processes bring the equity and efficiency benefits that decentralisation aims to bring (Ribot, 2002).

2.3.2 *Constraints in decentralisation*

Decentralisation can have some important advantages for developing countries. However, this does not imply that decentralisation is always a "desirable phenomenon", as Smoke (2003: 11) puts it: too much decentralisation or inappropriate forms can undermine the potential advantages of decentralisation (Smoke, 2003). In addition, decentralisation as it is described in statutory arrangements often differs from how decentralisation is executed in reality. Description of actors and their responsibilities or powers on paper can be quite distinct in practice (Ribot, 2004).

This section will outline constraints or aspects that can undermine the benefits of decentralisation.

Not accountable government actors: Accountable actors are crucial in decentralisation to adhere to the needs of the citizens. But authorities might not be accountable to their constituents, what can cause decentralisation efforts to be not effective (Agrawal and Ribot, 1999). For example, local governments can not be downward accountable to their citizens; they can not be responsive to the local needs, what undermines the potential benefit of improved governance. As Smoke (2003) describes it, if officials are not accountable to their constituents, they become accountable to others, e.g. local elites or to themselves. In this case, the needs of the citizens might not be responded to and therewith undermines a potential benefit of decentralisation.

Besides non-accountable local actors, central government actors can be not accountable to lower-level governments as well. As mentioned before, the central government should still have a key role in a decentralised system: Political will of the central government is required to achieve accountability at the local level (Tendler, 1997). A non-accountable central government can thus influence the accountability of a lower-level government. Downward accountable central governments are as important in successful decentralisation as are downward accountable local governments. Nonetheless, Ribot (2004) addresses that, in practice, central governments are often still controlling local governments in decentralised systems, making local governments upward accountable rather than the other way around.

Inappropriate power transfer: The central government is influential in deciding about the powers that are devolved and which are not. According to the principle of subsidiarity, powers should be exercised at the lowest possible level. Ribot (2002 and 2004) argues that few decentralisation reforms have actually taken into consideration subsidiarity guidelines. Local authorities are often avoided by central governments with excuses of being inefficient or lacking capacity (Ribot, 2002). Smoke (2003) mentions that central governments might be more reluctant towards decentralisation reforms than local governments are since the former loses some powers and the latter has a raise in powers. Often, powers of value remain centralised and centrally defined mandates are being devolved to the lower-level (Ribot, 2004). Central authorities frequently transfer (funded as well as unfunded) mandates to local governments rather than discretionary powers. An example is the mandate to implement a policy that is defined by a central ministry.

Elite capture: Elite capture in a government system occurs when national or local elites, influential persons, interfere or are allowed to interfere with governance issues. Interference of elites can influence the decision-making process according to the interests of the elites and not that of the constituents of the local government. Elite capture in local governance can constrain the responsiveness of governments and effectiveness in service delivery to their constituents (Ribot, 2004).

Problems between customary authorities, elites and local governments: Involvement of customary authorities, elites, NGOs or other (self-appointed, elected or oligarchic) groups in local governance can be difficult if they are not accountable to the elected local governments. Local governments' role and authority can be diminished by these actors (Ribot, 2002). Involvement of customary authorities or elites can be troublesome if this means that there are two distinct powers at the local level: elected officials with constitutional and legal authorisation on the one hand, and traditional leaders with traditional legitimacy on the other. It can endanger the effectiveness of decentralisation as well as endangering traditional institutions (Nsibambi, 1998b).

Lack of capacity: Central and local governments can lack the capacity or resources to effectively deal with decentralisation. If a local government is not sufficiently empowered to exercise its authority, it can lack the capacity to avoid elite capture or involvement of customary authorities (Ribot, 2002 and 2004).

Although decentralisation reforms can have some significant benefits, there are also some major pitfalls that can undermine the benefits that decentralisation aims to bring. Hence, with the benefits and the constraints in mind one can question if decentralisation reforms in general are desirable? And, if yes, what the most adequate design of decentralisation reforms is to optimally receive the benefits of decentralisation; which aspects of decentralisation are important to ensure effective decentralisation reforms?

2.4 Conclusions on decentralisation of governance in developing countries

2.4.1 *Is decentralisation desirable?*

As is shown in the former sections, decentralisation reforms can bring some significant benefits, but there are also some factors that can undermine these potential benefits. Due to these disadvantages, it is sometimes questioned if decentralisation reforms are right for developing countries. However, Smoke (2003: 11) argues that to say that the possible disadvantages of decentralisation “justify maintaining centralisation is equivalent to condoning permanent authoritarian regimes in countries where people are poorly educated and unfamiliar with democracy.” Meaning that although decentralisation does not always bring the advantages it can have - see the points mentioned in 2.3.2- this does not mean that recentralising or remaining a centralised system is a good alternative: a centralised system does not bring the benefits either. Also Meynen and Doornbos (2004) agree that there is a broad consensus on the desirability of decentralisation as a policy reform, but that ideas might diverge about the extent and forms of decentralisation, and the level of participation and institutional changes needed. Although the benefits of decentralisation are not certain and decentralisation “is certainly not a panacea for public sector ills or (...) of effective government”, it works if the reforms are properly designed and applied (Smoke, 2003: 11).

This comes down to the second question that is posted in the former paragraph: What is a properly designed and applied decentralisation reform? What aspects are important for effective decentralisation?

2.4.2 *Aspects in decentralisation*

As Meynen and Doornbos (2004) mentioned, ideas about the design and operation of decentralisation diverge. Ribot (2002: 4) says that “effective decentralization is defined by an inclusive local process under local authorities empowered with discretionary decisions over resources that are relevant to local people (...). It [decentralization] is local democracy.” But, decentralisation does not necessarily imply democracy. This will depend on the relative weight of devolution and deconcentration in the decentralised structure (Crook and Manor, 1998). Devolution comprises democracy in a larger extent than deconcentration does. Democracy, on its turn, is an instrument that can make actors accountable to their constituents and thus to provide local needs.

But, the success of decentralisation outcomes is dependent on more factors, as they are addressed in the former sections: The actors that are formally or informally involved, the powers that they, again formally and informally, exercise and the extent to which those actors are accountable to their powers. Also the capacity of the actors and the total design of the decentralisation reforms influence the outcome and success of decentralisation.

Figure 2.1 below gives an overview of aspects that constitute and influence decentralisation.

The decentralisation design or the structure that constitutes decentralisation determines the extent and forms. The extent of decentralisation, devolution or deconcentration, decides to what extent powers are devolved from the centre to lower-level governments. This again influences the actors that are formally involved and the responsibilities or powers they exercise. In section 2.2.2 is addressed that there is often discussion about how much and what kind of powers a local government must get. If local governments lack the capacity to handle issues, this can be a reason for limiting the transfer of powers. The principle of subsidiarity gives guidance in this difficulty: many authors agree that functions which can be fulfilled at the lower level should be carried out at this level and not by the centre (Martinussen, 1997; Ribot, 2002 and 2004; Meynen and Doornbos, 2004).

Martinussen (1997) adds that in the beginning of decentralisation reforms a balance must be found between deconcentration and devolution, but in the longer term must be aimed at a gradual takeover of more and more tasks of the central governments by the local governments.

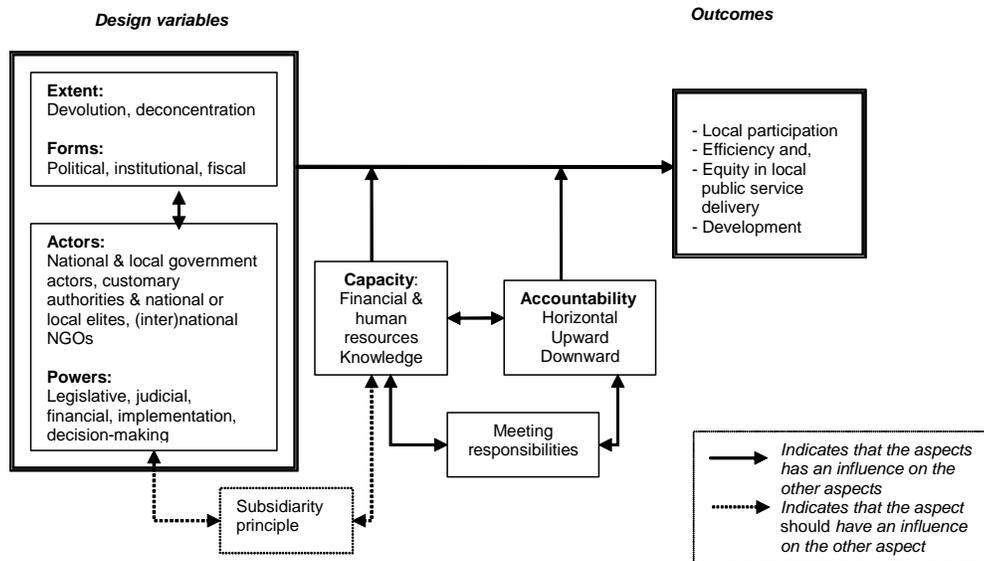


Figure 2.1: Aspects in decentralisation of governance

Then, there are different factors that can influence the outcome of decentralisation reforms. Section 2.2.3 explained that accountability of actors is formed by the way actors exercise the powers they have received within decentralisation. Also the capacity of actors or governments to exercise their powers influences the way in which they carry out their responsibilities. This capacity aspect again determines partly to what lower local governments are capable of and is the basis for the subsidiarity principle.

These aspects together, the design of decentralisation –i.e. the extent to which powers are decentralised and the forms of decentralisation that determine the actors involved and the powers they have- and aspects of accountability and capacity of the actors determine the outcome or the result of the decentralisation reform. The outcomes that decentralisation reforms expects to bring -local participation, increased efficiency and equity in service delivery, and overall development- are discussed in paragraph 2.3. Although the benefits of decentralisation are promising for governance in developing countries, the actual benefits that are derived from decentralisation depend on many aspects. Actors can have other interests and be not accountable to their powers or lack the capacity to be accountable. There can be interference of elites, customary authorities or NGOs, which can influence the way actors are handling their powers. But also constraints in the design of decentralisation can hamper the outcomes of decentralisation. For instance the powers that are transferred can not be suitable; local actors can be given too much or too little powers. All this together can influence whether or not actors are actually taking, or are able to take, their responsibilities properly and can undermine the potential benefits of decentralisation.

The capacity and accountability of all actors thus are crucial for the outcomes of decentralisation, but decentralisation is not a universal remedy for development (Smoke, 2003; Ribot, 2004). There is no such a thing as an ‘ideal decentralisation’ reform: there is not one set of guidelines that ensures appropriate decentralisation (Raussen *et al*, 2001). Conditions differ in every country and so do the appropriate forms and extent of decentralisation.

To conclude, there are many aspects that are of influence on the outcome of decentralisation but there is not a standard concept for effective decentralisation that can be applied in every country to ensure the benefits decentralisation of governance can bring.

In addition, if decentralisation is not a panacea *per se* for every country, another question is; can decentralisation be applied to all issues of management? Can decentralisation also be beneficial for natural resource management? The next chapter, chapter three, will more specifically discuss the decentralisation of environment and natural resource management.

3. DECENTRALISATION OF NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

3.1 Introduction

The former chapter introduced and discussed decentralisation of governance in developing countries in general. Local participation or better understanding of local needs and circumstances are one of the key aspects of decentralisation and are at the basis of the benefits decentralisation reforms aims to bring. In the realm of natural resource management, there is also discussion on the decentralised management of natural resources. Hardin's 'Tragedy of the Commons' has set in motion a sociological discussion on property rights and other institutional arrangements concerning the management of natural resources such as the role of state, private or local community ownership and management of natural resources. From a different perspective, anthropologist stressed the role of local communities in natural resource management because of their traditional and historically well-adapted position in the natural resource arena (Meynen and Doornbos, 2004). Anyhow, these different perspectives² all concern the interaction that people have with natural resources and in their management.

At the second global environmental conference, the United Nations Conference for Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro, Brasil, in 1992, local participation was also strongly encouraged as being advantageous in natural resource management (Meinzen-Dick and Know, 1999). Agenda 21, one of the global agreements of the UNCED about the 'road to sustainable development', even states that "one of the fundamental prerequisites for the achievement of sustainable development is broad public participation in decision-making" (UNCED, 1992: section 23.2).

Decentralisation of governance can, if adequately designed and exercised, bring several benefits, as is discussed in chapter two. Decentralisation of natural resource management is also considered by many, development agents, researchers and environmentalists, as a way to improve efficiency and equity in natural resource management (Ribot, 2002). Environmental resources are most of the time crucial for the livelihoods of people in developing countries (Larson and Ribot, 2004). Many depend on natural resources for food, income generating activities or protection. With the decentralisation reforms that many developing countries have implemented, the management of natural resources has been decentralised in many developing countries as well. Decentralisation reforms in natural resource management affect people in ways of access to, use and manage of natural resources and influence their perception and way of expressing concerns towards natural resources. Because many people depend on natural resources it is important for them to have a voice in the management and decisions over the natural resources they depend on (Ribot, 2002). For that reason the decentralisation of natural resource management requires some additional consideration.

This second theoretical chapter therefore concentrates on the decentralisation of natural resource management in specific. It discusses the issues in decentralisation that are addressed in the former theoretical chapter and specifies these issues on environmental and natural resource management to determine which aspects are of influence on decentralised natural resource management. Some examples and experiences of decentralised natural resource management from other researches will be used to clarify the issues that are addressed. The next paragraph deals with actors, powers and accountability in natural resource management. Paragraph 3.3 discusses the benefits and constraints

² For literature on this discussion and the different perspectives see for example Feeny *et al* (1990), Gardner, Ostrom and Walker (1990), Ostrom (1990), Bromley *et al* (1992), or Ostrom *et al* (1999).

that decentralised natural resource management can have. The last paragraph, 3.4, gives some concluding remarks on aspects of decentralised natural resource management and shortly addresses other forms of local natural resource management.

3.2 Actors, powers & accountability in decentralised natural resource management

Paragraph 2.2 of the first theoretical chapter discussed three analytical dimensions or elements that are of influence for decentralisation: Actors, powers and accountability. Within decentralisation of natural resource management these elements are also influencing the outcomes of decentralisation for sustainable natural resource management. This paragraph discusses these elements with respect to the influence they have in decentralised natural resource management. Illustrated examples are given of experiences with decentralised natural resource management throughout the world.

3.2.1 Actors

In 2.2.1 several actors that can be involved in decentralisation have been discussed; local actors, national actors, (inter)national NGOs, customary authorities and local or national elites. These actors can also influence natural resource management. Natural resources are often critical for the livelihoods of local people, but they are also a source of income for central governments and national elites (Larson and Ribot, 2004). Although the management of natural resources is decentralised, national actors can still have an interest in the management of natural resources and can influence this management and the local users.

Also the so-called customary authorities can be involved in decentralised natural resource management: In Cameroon for example, forest management is decentralised and management committees were established to manage the forest. In these management committees, village chiefs were members of the committee. Those committees do not ensure accountable representation and are not responsive to the local population (Oyono, 2004). In another example from Uganda, customary authorities also interfered with the management of forests. In the district of Masindi, decentralisation transferred some forests to the kingdom in the district instead of to the local authorities. The kingdom exploited the forest without consultation of the forest's villages, which lead to great conflicts between the public and the king (Muhereza, 2003).

A different group of actors that are not discussed in the former chapter are outside investors or industries. They can have a great influence on the natural resource management in an area (Ribot, 2004). Natural resources can be of special interest of these investors to, for example, cut a forest for timber production or use the land area for construction. Powers and accountability of the responsible actors in a decentralised system determine the influence outside investors can have on the natural resource (examples are given below).

3.2.2 Powers

If natural resource management is legally decentralised, it can provide local governments with different powers over the natural resources. Executive powers give local authorities the power of decision-making and implementation of the decisions. Legislative powers allow local governments to make rules and regulations over natural resources and judiciary powers provide local governments with the mandate to solve disputes in natural resource issues (Ribot, 2002). Fiscal powers over natural resources can be essential for local governments to fulfil their responsibilities: Revenue of natural resources can be important as a source of revenue (Ribot, 2004).

If these powers are devolved from the centre to the local level, secure means of transfer are necessary for any local authority to execute these powers (Ribot, 2002): Local governments must be secure about the powers they have over natural resources and not be constrained by other authorities in executing these powers. An example from Senegal shows that while rural communities are given the mandate to manage and use their forests, the centre actually still is in control of the forests; whereas the local users must apply for a permit to use the forest, commercial users -such as charcoal producers- are given easy access to exploit the forest. This has resulted in stringent situations between the local users and the companies in the forest, but also degrades the forest resources while the local communities do not have benefit of it (Ribot, 2004).

Powers that are decentralised by statute can in practice still thus be exercised by others. Discretionary powers are also in natural resource management important for local governments to make relevant decisions over the resources (Ribot, 2002). In most cases of decentralisation, devolved discretionary powers to local governments are hard to find. Ribot (2004) mentions that within decentralised natural resource management central governments most of the time control the power over natural resources by requiring approval from above in local decision-making. Local governments are more often mandated with the burden to implement central policies concerning natural resources than actually giving them unrestricted powers, making them rather an administrative arm of the central government than a sovereign local authority (Ribot, 2004).

However, hardly any decentralisation advocate is calling for the decentralisation of all decisions in natural resource management. Minimum environmental standards are good to specify a set of restrictions and guidelines for natural resource use. This can complement decentralisation by identifying the limit of the local authority's domain without limiting discretion within this domain (Ribot, 2002 and 2004). The subsidiarity principle, see 2.2.2, in natural resource management implies that decisions that can be made at the local level without endangering the social and ecological sustainability of the natural resource should be devolved to this local level (Ribot, 2004).

Central management can still be required to, for example, maintain inter-jurisdictional equity (Ribot, 2004). For instance, in decisions about a forest that covers more jurisdictions or in decisions about activities in an upstream area of a river which can also affect downstream users. It is the scale of the resource here that requires central guidance. Another example in which minimum environmental standards can be beneficial in decentralised natural resource management is in cases like decentralised forestry in Cameroon: Oyono (2004) found that villagers do not see the benefits of sustainable forestry practices and rather obtain the benefits from the forest resources now than also maintaining benefits for the future. Minimum environmental standards could help local communities to profit from the forest now, but also maintain the forest in order to obtain the benefits in the future.

3.2.3 Accountability

Part 2.2.3 about accountability in decentralisation discusses the different accountability mechanisms that exist within decentralisation: Horizontal accountability, downward accountability and upward accountability. Within the decentralisation of natural resource management, accountability is also an important factor that can influence the outcomes of decentralisation. Accountability is much about the decisions that are made by the actors who have the powers over a natural resource.

Also in natural resource issues actors can be not accountable to their constituents. It is said that if actors are not accountable to their constituents, they become accountable to others or to themselves. In the case of Senegal that is described above, the charcoal producers are allowed to use the forest despite resistance from the public. The ruling actors are more accountable to outside investors than to the local people.

A study in Uganda of Bazaara (2003) indicated a different outcome. Some of the forest resources in Mbale district have in a way been conserved because of the accountability of governmental actors. The forests in the district were a target for a forest company which intended to cut part of the forest. The district council approved the company to clear the forest, but the forestry officer of the district resisted against the logging. The forestry officer, who was acting according to formal regulations, told the district council to ask for the public's opinion since elections were coming soon. The district council however, did not dare to follow this advice, knowing that the public would not approve the proposal of cutting their forest. In this case, the district councillors were held accountable to their constituents by means of upcoming democratic elections which resulted in conservation of the forest.

In the former chapter it is stated that it is important that local governments are downward accountable to their constituents, but that downward accountability of higher or central government body is also essential for the performance of the local government. To illustrate: in Nicaragua, the local government stood with their population to protest against mining activities in one of the regions. Although the local government opposed to the mining, the central government made concessions to the mining company to continue with the activities (Larson, 2002 in Ribot, 2002). Even though the local government was accountable to its people in this case, the central government lacked accountability towards the local government, which made the decision-making central in a decentralised system.

Thus, also in decentralised natural resource management the accountability of a government to their constituents can depend on the accountability of a higher or central government to the lower government, in order to make decentralisation work.

3.2.4 *Capacity*

Larson and Ribot (2004) mention that the types and extent of decentralisation, and the way actors use their powers are not the only aspects that influence the outcomes of decentralisation for natural resources and the local people. Actors in natural resource management need skills and knowledge, such as financial management and technical knowledge about natural resource management and use, to be able to manage natural resources. This capacity is needed for actors to exercise the powers and responsibilities they have. According to central governments, local authorities are often lacking these kinds of skills which justified it for them to keep central control over natural resources (Ribot, 2004).

An example from Nicaragua shows that the lack of local capacity was long used as an excuse to prevent the transfer of powers over forests to local authorities. These authorities indeed had hardly any technical personnel. When a new director came in place who devolved decision-making powers to the local level and complemented this with sufficient funding to the local authorities, it was a great success. However, the new director was fired for allowing local governments to use the forests, and this centralised powers again (Larson, 2002 in Ribot, 2004). A study of Onyach-Olaa and Porter (2000, in Ribot, 2004) indicated that also in Uganda, some local governments are said to be more constraint by unaccountability of the central government to fulfil their responsibilities towards the lower governments rather than by a lacking capacity of the local authorities itself.

Capacity arguments are used here to keep central control over the forests and thus control over revenue, but it seems that local government's performance is more dependent on the accountability of the central government to the local authority than on the capacity of the local authority itself. It is said that if these local authorities would be suitably assisted, local communities can be very well capable of managing their own resources (Farvar, 1997 in Ribot, 2004).

3.3 Benefits and constraints of decentralised natural resource management

Decentralisation reforms have several potential benefits for the development of a country. In the introduction of this chapter it is mentioned that many people consider decentralisation to be beneficial for natural resource management. Some authors even argue that local natural resource management is the best way to sustain natural resources. It is thus believed that decentralisation of natural resource management can bring benefits to the sustainability of natural resources. However, there can also be constraints in decentralisation of natural resource management. This paragraph discusses the way in which decentralised natural resource management can benefit or constrain the sustainable management of natural resources.

3.3.1 Benefits of decentralised natural resource management

Decentralisation is said to bring more equity, efficiency and effectiveness in decision-making and allocation of services, and overall it improves governance and development prospects (see 2.3.1). Within natural resource management these benefits can also be gained by decentralisation. There are some specific explanations for the benefits in decentralised natural resource management:

Local knowledge is often highly important in the management of natural resources. The uses and occurrence of natural resources can be locally diverse and the ‘physical presence’ of a natural resource in the local arena has created a history of local knowledge and tradition in the management of the natural resource, which makes natural resources in particular suitable for local management and thus decentralisation (Larson, 2004: 56). Central natural resource management can hardly take into account all different local features and uses of a natural resource. If natural resource management is decentralised, local knowledge about natural resources is engaged in the management and decision-making process and this can make natural resource management more efficient and effective.

Decentralisation can bring equity in local service delivery. Democratic decentralisation is collective decision-making instead of private. Collective decision-making takes the broader spread of interests into the decision-making process. Within decentralised natural resource management this means that the different users of, and interests in the natural resource are taken into account which can entail more equity in the use of the natural resource (Ribot, 2004).

Given their use and importance for people natural resources are “good candidates” for decentralised management and use (Larson and Ribot, 2004: 5). Decentralisation can contribute to the conservation of natural resources which again can be beneficial for use, poverty alleviation or wealth generation (Ribot, 2004). According to Ribot (2002) decentralisation can mutually reinforce the management of natural resources and processes of democratisation. Natural resources have a crucial role in the livelihoods of people which makes decisions on natural resources of major importance for them. Local governance requires therefore that people can also influence or control the management of natural resources. A decentralised natural resource management has the opportunity to even enlarge the potentials (efficiency, improved governance, equity and development) of decentralisation since the relevance of local authorities to local people is increased (Larson and Ribot, 2004).

Another benefit of natural resource management is the revenue that can be obtained over the natural resources (Ribot, 2002). Rather than with state ownership and control over resources, decentralised natural resource management can increase local revenue and is an extra benefit for local governments or people.

3.3.2 *Constraints in decentralised natural resource management*

Besides arguments for a decentralised natural resource management in developing countries, there are also some opposing arguments. As with the disadvantages for decentralisation in general, decentralised natural resource management can have some constraints. This part discusses some aspects that can constrain sustainable decentralised natural resource management.

The same as with decentralisation in general, accountability can be a problem: actors can be not accountable to their constituents. Examples of lacking downward accountability of local as well as central governments have already been given in section 3.2.3. But local actors can also be perfectly downward accountable, as has also been illustrated in 3.2.3. However, accountable actors do not necessarily ensure good environmental management. Local authorities and their citizens may also have other interests than ensuring sustainable natural resources use, such as infrastructure investments, and ignore and exploit natural resources rather than conserving them in order to give priority to economic development (Larson, 2004). According to Larson and Ribot (2004) the economic context associated with the natural resource influences the incentive structure for resource management and the eventual decision-making on natural resources. Also the environmental consciousness and willingness of the citizens and decision-makers to take environmental considerations into account influences the incentive structure for sound environmental decision-making.

Ribot (2002) mentions that in some countries there is already criticism arising on decentralised natural resource management, saying that decentralisation has so far caused over-exploitation or damage to natural resources because the incentives to maintain the resource are too low. So, although much can depend on the accountability of the governmental authorities, a lack of interest in the environment by the constituents and the decision-maker can also constrain sound environmental management of natural resources.

Larson and Ribot (2004) argue that within natural resources democratic decentralisation is hard to find. Experiences from decentralisation have shown that central governments and environmental ministries are reluctant in transferring actual powers concerning natural resources to local governments, often with excuses of incapable local actors, as is discussed in paragraph 3.2. The local institution that does receive those limited powers are often not representative, upward accountable and controlled by extreme supervision of central planning requirements (Ribot, 2002). A reason for this can be the fear to loose economic benefits that can be obtained from the control over natural resources. The former section addressed the benefit of revenue that natural resources can bring to local governments. However, natural resources can be a source of wealth for central governments and elites as well. This can have an influence on local authorities in the decision-making process in ways that benefits the central government or elites rather than the local communities (Ribot, 2002; Larson and Ribot, 2004). The means of power transfer over natural resources can thus hamper the benefits that could be obtained from decentralisation of natural resource management. As Ribot (2002: 13) states, “while power transfer without accountable representation can be dangerous, representation without powers is empty.” Thereby, also donors and NGOs tend to avoid local governments for the reason that they are being too political or inefficient and lacking capacity (Ribot, 2002).

In addition to limited transfer of powers by the central government, privatisation of natural resources is often carried out as a form of decentralisation (Ribot, 2002). Meynen and Doornbos (2004) perceive this problem as a more fundamental contradiction in decentralisation that originates from the opposing viewpoints of the main supporters of decentralisation reforms: Advocates of neo-liberal ideas on the one hand and promoters of good governance on the other.

Whereas promoters of good governance advocate decentralisation mainly because of the increase in accountability and transparency and the defending of resource interests for local communities, neo-liberalists -for example, many international (financial) agencies- often support decentralisation in

order to achieve liberalisation, market deregulation and privatisation. They support local participation in the efficient use of natural resource management, which often means the exploitation of these natural resources. Thereby, private ownership of a natural resource does not necessarily involve the opinion and wishes of the people who are concerned with the resource (Ribot, 2002). Considering privatisation as a form of decentralisation means that the benefits concerning the contribution of local knowledge, and equity and better governance through democratisation are not necessarily included. Meynen and Doornbos (2004) see this contradiction as a fundamental problem that does not benefit decentralised natural resource management in developing countries.

This implies that, besides the other aspects that are mentioned before, the initial motivation to implement decentralisation reforms is of influence for the decentralisation design, e.g. privatisation as a form of decentralisation or actual decentralisation to local governments, and also on the decentralisation outcomes: Neo-liberalist initiatives for decentralisation are more likely to exploit natural resources rather than maintaining them and can thus also influence the sustainability benefits of decentralising natural resource management. However, (see 2.1.1) the emphasis of most recent decentralisation reforms is more on local participation and democratisation than on market deregulation and privatisation.

Besides the benefits decentralised natural resource management can bring for the sustainability of natural resources as well as for the local population, there are thus also some aspects that can undermine these potential benefits. The next paragraph gives some concluding remarks on the aspects that influence the outcomes of decentralised natural resource management.

3.4 Conclusions on decentralised natural resource management

In the concluding paragraph of the former chapter different aspects that can influence the outcome of decentralisation are addressed. It is explained that there is not one standard set of guidelines to ensure appropriate decentralisation reforms for all countries. Neither is there only one policy to successfully decentralise natural resource management. Furthermore, there are some additional aspects that influence natural resource management than only the aspects mentioned in chapter two. The first part of this paragraph addresses the aspects that are of importance for the decentralisation of natural resource management. After that, another form of local participation in natural resource management will shortly be introduced in comparison with decentralisation.

3.4.1 Decentralisation and decentralised natural resource management

Figure 2.1 in the former chapter has given an overview of aspects that constitute and influence the decentralisation of governance in general. Natural resource management, however, differs from other sectors of management in that natural resources are often essential for the livelihoods of people in developing countries and are also a source of revenue for local and central governments as well as elites (Larson and Ribot, 2004). Larson and Ribot (2004: 4) further mention that natural resources can “augment and throw into relief decentralisation’s potential and risks as a lever for local democratisation and development.” Because of the importance of natural resources for many, decentralisation of natural resource management can increase the importance of local authorities to local people, but can also cause a struggle between central and local people (Larson and Ribot, 2004).

A number of aspects have an influence on the decentralisation of natural resource management. The aspects of decentralised natural resource management that are discussed in this chapter so far can be

applied to the figure in chapter two. Figure 3.1 below gives an overview of aspects of decentralised natural resource management.

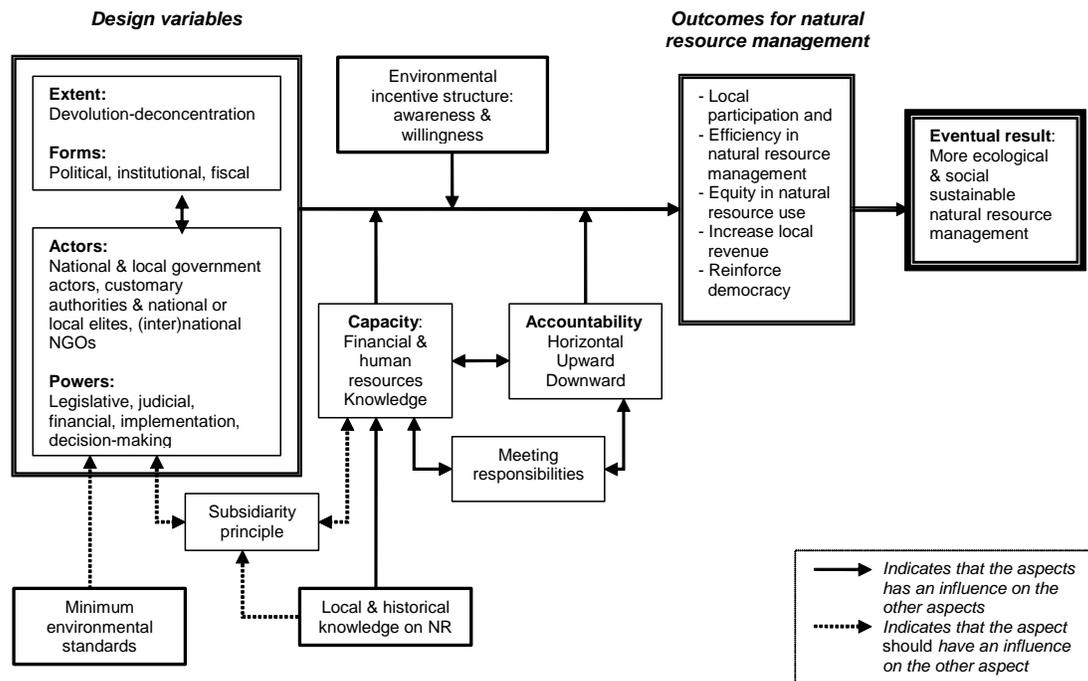


Figure 3.1: Aspects in decentralisation of natural resource management

The basis of the figure is the same as for the figure of decentralisation of governance that is discussed in chapter two, but some new aspects that specifically concern natural resource management are included.

Design variables include the extent and forms of decentralisation that determine the actors involved and the powers these actors have. These design variables in natural resource management decentralisation are the same as in chapter two. Also here, the principle of subsidiarity should be used to determine the powers that local actors should be given without endangering the social and ecological sustainability of the natural resource. However, it is said that, centrally determined, minimum environmental standards are also needed to specify a set of restrictions and guidelines that can prevent environmental deterioration in case of low environmental interests and willingness of the decision-makers and to create inter-jurisdictional equity.

During the process, several aspects influence decentralisation. The same as in figure 2.1, capacity -knowledge, financial and human resources- and accountability -horizontal and vertical- can influence whether or not and to which extent actors fulfil their tasks, i.e. meet their responsibilities. Local and historical knowledge on the use and management of natural resources in the area has an influence on the knowledge that actors need to have sufficient capacity to fulfil their responsibilities. Through decentralisation the input of local knowledge can increase, which can overall increase the capacity of actors for sound natural resource management and, indirectly, increase their accountability.

The environmental incentive structure is a new aspect in the figure that influences decentralisation. The environmental intensive structure depends on the awareness and willingness of actors to take environmental considerations into account in the decision-making process. As is explained in 3.3.2, actors can be accountable and have sufficient capacity to carry out their functions, they, and the citizens, should also be interested in environmentally sound natural resource management. It can

happen that actors have different ideas or preferences for natural resources and are not concerned with sustainable management. The awareness and willingness of local actors is of main importance for the outcomes of decentralised natural resource management. Hence, this is one of the reasons why minimum environmental standards are said to be useful in decentralised natural resource management.

The 'outcomes' box indicates the expected or preferred results that decentralisation can have. In figure 2.1 local participation, efficiency and equity in local public service delivery and development are indicated as expected outcomes of decentralisation which should eventually lead to better governance. Decentralisation of natural resources has some more specific outcomes: The efficiency in natural resource management can increase, since local knowledge on the natural resource can be included in the decision-making process. A local decision-making process can also enable more equity between different users of the natural resource. In addition, decentralised management of natural resources can result in higher local revenue and reinforce processes of democracy. Overall, this must lead to more ecological and social sustainable natural resource management.

However, also in decentralised natural resource management the outcomes or potential benefits are not certain. The former paragraph has addressed the constraints that can limit the benefits of decentralised natural resource use. Some matters that can constrain decentralisation of governance in general can also negatively influence decentralised natural resource management, like not accountable actors; lack of capacity; and inappropriate power transfers -which occurs a lot in decentralisation of natural resource management because of the government's interests in the resource- and privatisation instead of devolution. In addition, decentralised natural resource management can be constraint by a low environmental interest or incentive structure of the actors involved, who do not value the sustainable use of a resource. Also the initial driving force behind decentralisation -neo-liberal objectives or purposes of good governance- partly determines the way decentralisation is constituted and how actors perceive natural resource management. This can also influence whether or not outside investors or industries, which often have an interest in the natural resource, are allowed to use the natural resource for business purposes.

3.4.2 Decentralisation of natural resource management versus other forms of local natural resource management

The introductory paragraph of this chapter already shortly addressed that theorists differ in their perspectives on how natural resource should be managed. A key feature of many debates is how local people should be involved in natural resource management and what the effects are on the natural resource. Local participation in decision-making is said to bring several benefits in local governance and natural resource management.

In decentralisation of governance tasks and responsibilities are devolved from the central government to lower governmental bodies. A different form of local participation in natural resource management is the transfer of control to local user groups instead of to local governments. Devolution of control over natural resources to user groups is referred to as community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) (Meinzen-Dick and Knox, 1999). Community-based management of natural resources is also a way of local participation in natural resource management, as is (democratic) decentralisation. Actors in CBNRM are often users of the resource and do not necessarily represent a local community. Meinzen-Dick and Knox (1999) mention some general objectives and underlying explanations for community-based management of natural resources. The first is the recognition of the limited effectiveness of the government to manage natural resources at especially the local level. Experiences and research have shown that local users are more successful in managing a natural resource than the government is. Local users are believed to have advantages over government actors in their knowledge of the resource, and are able to better manage the resource.

A second reason is a financial one: Government staff needs salaries to manage and control natural resources, and, in case of large areas of natural resources, also travel costs are made by these government officials. It is often cheaper to have local users manage their natural resources.

The third explanation for community-based management of natural resources is the greater emphasis on local participation with CBNRM than in the devolution of powers to local governments. Decision-making in CBNRM is done by users who are directly affected by the management and they are assumed to have a greater interest in maintenance of the resource, since their livelihoods depend on it (Meinzen-Dick and Knox, 1999).

Both, community-based management and decentralisation approaches are a form of local governance and are based on the premise that local participation in management and decision-making benefits the maintenance of the natural resource. Though, there are some substantial differences:

The first is that decentralisation involves local governance by governmental bodies and community-based management involves governance by local users or communities. In practice the difference between a local government body and a local user group may not be that large, however local user groups are not part of the governmental system.

Another difference is the way the principle of subsidiarity is applied: Decentralisation implies the devolution of tasks and responsibilities to lower governments and CBNRM devolves tasks to user groups. The devolution of powers from the centre to local governments involves a vertical dimension of subsidiarity. With CBNRM, the principle of subsidiarity has a horizontal dimension (Meinzen-Dick and Knox, 1999): At the local level tasks and functions are carried out by those who are involved with the natural resource and are most reliant on the result of management decisions.

Ribot (2004) mentions that local users are often believed to be more conservative towards natural resources than local governments are. Also Meinzen-Dick and Know (1999) point out that local governments often have inadequate capacity for direct management of the resources. However, this does not necessarily imply that local users do use their resources more sustainably. In his famous 'Tragedy of the Commons' (1968), Garrett Hardin describes how self-interested and short-term thinking actors tend to overuse a common resource, rather than thinking on the longer term and using the resource more sustainably. This overuse by one actor leads to negative impacts on the use for other actors. If all actors behave in this way, the common resource will degrade (Ostrom *et al*, 1999).

As in decentralisation, the benefits of exploiting a natural resource into financial wealth can be preferred over conserving the resource. Local user groups also need incentives and capacity to successfully organise and manage the natural resource (Meinzen-Dick and Know, 1999).

Though, experiences with CBNRM have shown that democratic local institutions, such as CBNRM projects, have been effective in sustainable environmental management. Communities can develop the skills to effectively execute natural resource management (Ribot, 2002).

Meinzen-Dick and Know (1999) further address that governments might not always be capable of assisting user groups in organising and maintaining the CBNRM projects. Specialists or NGOs can assist local communities to organise themselves. Co-management with local governments can be useful to provide the user groups with legal back-up, like enforcing penalties (Meinzen-Dick and Know, 1999).

Overall, the two, decentralised and community-based natural resource management, differ in the form of democratic participation. Local participation in the user group of a CBNRM project is externally coordinated, while with decentralisation participation is an internal representative form of democracy under elected local authorities. Decentralisation can be seen as a legal institutionalised form of the popular participation in a project-based approach that CBNRM employs (Ribot, 2002). According to

Ribot (2002), this legally institutionalised form of participation through local democracy is a more sustainable form of participation.

Epilogue

The decentralisation of governance in developing countries and decentralisation of natural resource management is intensively discussed in the literature. Decentralisation of natural resource management has some substantial expectations for the ecological and social sustainability of natural resources, but these expectations are not to be taken for granted. Although there is much described about experiences with decentralised natural resource management, there are not some concrete guidelines on how to implement decentralisation and the decentralisation of natural resource management in order to obtain the expected benefits. It is possible to distinguish some aspects from other experiences with decentralisation that are of importance and that can, positively or negatively, influence the outcomes of decentralisation. It is therefore useful to further study the decentralised management of different natural resources in practice to learn from more experiences which and how aspects can influence the decentralisation outcomes.

The aspects that have been described in the former two theoretical chapters will be used as the theoretical framework to assess the decentralisation of wetland management in Uganda, which is described in the following chapters. The experiences with decentralised wetland management in Uganda can give more insight on the effects these aspects can have.

4. BACKGROUND: UGANDA, DECENTRALISATION & WETLAND MANAGEMENT

4.1 Introduction

The introductory chapter has shortly introduced Uganda, decentralisation and wetlands. In order to have a better understanding of decentralisation and decentralised wetland management in Uganda before the decentralisation of wetland management in the two case study areas is discussed, this chapter gives more background information on these topics.

Decentralisation and decentralised wetland management in Uganda are described in this chapter as it is 'on paper': it represents the formal decentralisation that is constituted in several laws and regulations. The following paragraph further introduces the decentralisation reforms in Uganda and explains Uganda's decentralised governance structure. Paragraph 4.3 describes environmental and wetland management in Uganda and discusses the policies and laws on wetland management. The last part, paragraph 4.4, describes the decentralised governance structure of wetland management in more detail, thereby discussing the governance levels, the actors involved in wetland management and their responsibilities in wetland management.

4.2 Decentralisation in Uganda: Political history & governance structure

4.2.1 Political history of Uganda

Up to 1986, governance in Uganda was highly centralised. In the colonial period Uganda experienced decentralised administrative governance, but after independence in 1962 the UPC government, under leadership of Milton Obote, restricted the power of local governments (Lubanga, 1996). The Ministry of Local Government (MoLG) controlled almost all financial and administrative activities of the local government councils. The 1967 Local Administration Act, which centralised administration, is said to be a "ground for the survival of dictatorship" (Nsibambi, 1998a: 1).

After the UPC government was overthrown by the Amin military regime in 1971, local administrations were re-organised in ten provinces which were headed by governors appointed by Amin himself. The military regime stressed the centralised power of the UPC government even more and militarised local administration to the lowest level. After Ugandans with help of the Tanzanian army, cause the downfall of Amin's military regime, the UPC regained power in 1980. The local government structure was re-organised again in accordance with the 1967 Constitution and Local Administration Act: centralised policies must achieve national recover and economic development (Tukahebwa, 1998).

In the mean time, the National Resistance Army (NRA) of the National Resistance Movement (NRM) fought against the second Obote regime. In the period 1981-1986 the NRA were activists for democratic rights and therewith gained people's sympathy. Resistance Councils (RCs) were established in NRM controlled areas. These RCs were political and revolutionary instruments which were responsible for increasing public participation in decision-making and mobilising individuals, groups and communities to participate in human, social and economic development. But RCs were also crucial for the control over these areas and in 1986, NRM leader Yoweri Museveni gained power over the whole country (Kisakye, 1996). Up to today, the NRM is the ruling political party in Uganda and Yoweri Museveni started his third term as the country's president in June 2006.

4.2.2 Decentralisation of governance in Uganda

After gaining power in 1986, the NRM gave the RCs legal protection through the Resistance Councils and Committees Statute in 1987. This statute established a five-stage system of local government that persists to this day (Craig and Porter, 2006). The five-stage system government system is shown in figure 4.1. The country is divided in several districts. The number of districts in Uganda is around 70³, but districts split and new districts are formed regularly⁴. The districts are divided in five different governance levels or local councils (LC), all councils are elected (Bazaara, 2003).

The lowest level is the village (LC 1) which consists of five to fifty households. Five to ten villages compose a parish (LC 2). Local Council 3 is the sub-county, which consists of three to ten parishes. A county (LC 4) is made out of three to five sub-counties, and the highest local council is the district council (LC 5), which is composed of three to five counties (Raussen *et al.*, 2001)⁵. The LC 1, 2 and 4 are considered administrative units, and the LC 3 and LC 5 are called local governments (Bazaara, 2003).

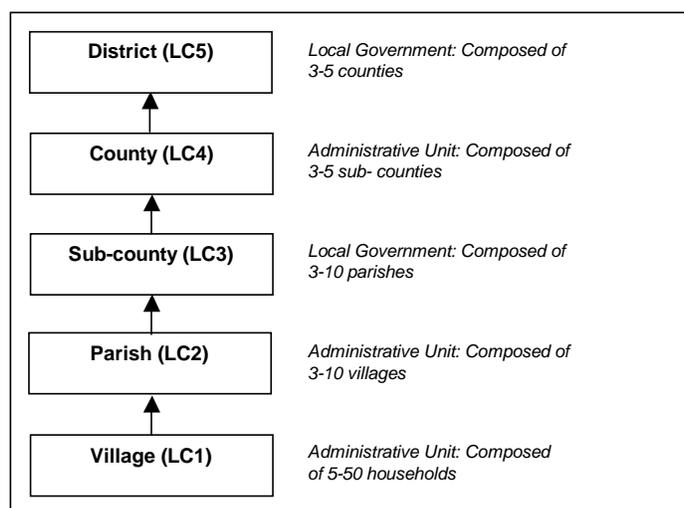


Figure 4.1: Five-stage local government structure (Raussen *et al.*, 2001)

Reviews of the local government system aimed to make it more democratic and effective. The Local Government's Resistance Councils Statute of 1993 introduced reforms in personnel system, financial management functions and structures of local governments. The Constitution of the Republic of Uganda 1995, the Supreme Law of the country, and the Local Governments Act 1997 followed the 1987 and 1993 Statutes to facilitate a continuous process of devolving powers from central government to district councils to lower councils (Tukahebwa, 1998).

The Local Government Act 1997 clearly distinguishes between the roles of the central government and the local councils. The central government is the leading agent in national policy and standard setting.

³ According to the website of the Ugandan government, www.myuganda.co.ug/about (as assessed on October 19th, 2006) the number of districts is 56. The State of the Environment Report for Uganda 2004/2005, however, reports a number of 70 districts (NEMA, 2004/2005). This number does not yet include some new formed districts. Hence, the actual number of districts is even higher.

⁴ The splitting of districts into more districts is said to be for bringing services closer to the people, which is brought about by population growth (NEMA, 2004/2005). However, opinions about this differ: it is also said to be a purely 'political' process and not to be beneficial for governance. Among other things because more districts also entails an increase in administration costs (Drazu, 2006, interview).

⁵ The categorisation in village, parish, sub-county, county and district is typical for rural areas. In urban areas the categorisation can be different: the lowest level is the ward (LC 2), the local council 3 is called a town council or municipal division, then comes the municipality or city division (LC 4), and the highest level, LC 5, is the city council (Bazaara, 2003).

The central government should guide, assist and advice local councils to enable them to comply with the national standards (Ministry of Local Government, hereafter MoLG, 2003). The local councils are responsible for a broad range of services that were previously held by the central government. They are responsible for making their own development plans and implementing them as well as the plans of the central government.

The local government system has two sets of officials: Popularly elected councils and appointed civil servants. The elected councils are the political wing of the local governments and are responsible for approving plans and budgets, while the civil servants are responsible for implementing policies and providing guidance to their councils (MoLG, 2003).

4.2.3 Objectives of decentralisation in Uganda

Decentralisation has been a popular instrument for transforming societies in especially developing countries. This popularity is caused by the many benefits that decentralisation can bring, as is discussed in chapter 2. Uganda has its own objectives for its decentralisation reforms. In general, the decentralisation policy emerged as the main instrument to increase local democratic control and participative decision making and it had to improve social services and welfare in Uganda. The objectives of the decentralisation process in Uganda were multiple: It aimed to bring administrative and political control over services where they are actually delivered, this must improve accountability and effectiveness, promoting people's feeling of ownership of activities in their districts; it should free local managers from central constraints, and eventually allow local managers to develop organisational structures adapted to the local circumstances; financial accountability and responsibility must improve due to a clear link between tax payment and service provision they finance; improve capacities of councils to plan, finance and manage of services (MoLG, 2003).

Decentralisation in Uganda is seen as a process rather than a project, which is unique for every country in which decentralisation is exercised. It is recognised however, that the structures, institutions and systems of decentralisation that facilitate local benefits are not yet optimal. But the process of experimentation, learning and change can make the system operate more optimally (MoLG, 2003).

4.3 Decentralisation & wetland management in Uganda

The decentralisation reforms in Uganda have also decentralised environmental and natural resource management to the lower level. This paragraph introduces the decentralisation of wetland policies and management. First, environmental and wetland policies in Uganda will be introduced, after which a more detailed description of the laws and regulations on wetland management is given.

4.3.1 The starting point of environmental and wetland management in Uganda

The Constitution 1995 contains a number of objectives and principles that concern the environment. The most important provision is the right for every citizen on a clean and healthy environment (MoLG, 2003). The National Environmental Statute 1995⁶ lays out the first arrangements for the environmental management structure and policy in Uganda (GoU, 1995). One of the general principles of environmental management in the National Environmental Statute 1995 is the involvement of the

⁶ The National Environmental Statute is the precursor of the National Environmental Act, Cap 153. Earlier legislation in Uganda consisted of Acts, Decrees and Statutes, but in 2003 the laws of Uganda are revised and all Decrees and Statutes are now known as 'Acts'. However, in this research the original National Environmental Statute 1995 is consulted and referred to.

citizens. As is stated in National Environmental Statute one of the principles of environmental management is “to encourage the maximum participation by the people of Uganda in the development of policies, plans and processes for the management of the environment” (GoU, 1995: section 3.2b). The Local Government Act 1997, the Land Act 1998, and other acts, statutes and policies have further provisions on sectoral environmental issues and the decentralisation of environmental and natural resource management. The key aim of the further decentralisation of environmental and natural resource management has been to increase the participation of the people and to ensure rationalisation of the costs and benefits of environment and natural resource management (NEMA, 2006).

Uganda has a history of mismanaging and exploiting their natural resources. A lacking recognition of the value of wetlands caused wetlands to be seen as “anything but unusable wastelands” (Ministry of Natural Resources, hereafter MoNR, 1995: 2). In 1986 the turn came when the new government of President Museveni started to show an interest in natural resource management. The new government almost immediately placed a ban on large-scale drainage of wetland resources⁷ until a new policy could be developed for sustainable wetland use (MoNR, 1995). Uganda now has quite a few regulations for wetland management. It is said to have one of the most advanced wetlands management in Africa and the world (WID, 2001).

Wetland management policies started with the ratification of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitats⁸ (in short: Ramsar Convention 1971) in 1988. Soon after this, in 1989, the National Wetlands Programme started with the development of a National Wetland Policy. The policy was officially launched in 1995 as the National Policy for the Conservation and Management of Wetland Resources (National Wetlands Policy 1995). The overall aim of the National Wetlands Policy 1995 is to “promote the conservation of Uganda’s wetlands in order to sustain their ecological and socio-economic functions for the present and future well-being of the people” (MoNR, 1995: 4).

In 1998 the National Wetlands Programme turned into a permanent institution within the Ministry of Water, Lands and Environment: the Wetland Inspection Division (WID). The WID is the leading agency at the national level concerning wetlands, which is charged with the formulation of policy, setting of standards and guidelines, supervision and monitoring.

4.3.2 *Wetlands and the law*

The National Wetlands Policy 1995 is based on three principles: First, wetland resources form an integral part of the environment and their management should be integrated in the overall development strategies and activities. Second, conservation of wetlands can only be achieved through a co-operative approach that involves all concerned people and organisations in the country, including local communities. And third, present attitudes and perceptions of Ugandans regarding wetlands must change in order to successfully conserve and manage wetlands (MoNR, 1995).

The National Wetland Programme has further been active in getting wetland clauses incorporated in several national policies and laws concerning the management of wetlands. Wetlands are now included in the Constitution 1995, the 1995 National Environmental Act Cap. 153, the Water Statute 1995, the Local Government Act 1997, the Land Act 1998 and the National Environment (Wetlands,

⁷ Drainage of wetlands is defined as “the artificial large-scale removal or exclusion of water from a wetland, which lowers the water table so that it does not rise to the soil surface.” This destroys the ecological value of a wetland as regulator of water flows and storage (MoNR, 1995: 12).

⁸ The Ramsar Convention on wetlands was signed in 1971 in Ramsar, Iran. It is an intergovernmental treaty which offers a framework to promote local regional, national and international action and cooperation for wetland conservation. At this moment, the Ramsar Convention has 153 contracting parties (www.ramsar.org).

River Banks and Lake Shores Management) Regulations 2000, which were published in pursuance of the National Environmental Statute 1995 (WID, 2000). These policies, acts and regulations have further provisions on the decentralisation and management of wetlands.

The newest document on wetland management is the Wetland Sector Strategic Plan 2001-2010 (WSSP) of the Ministry of Water, Lands and Environment. It is based on the ten years experience with wetlands under the National Wetlands Programme and has been developed through a consultative process including many stakeholders in wetland management and experts (WID, 2001). The WSSP aims to provide a clear action framework for those involved in wetland management and conservation and thereby expects to attract funding for the continuation of wetland management activities for the period of 2001-2010 (NEMA, 2002)

These acts, regulations and policies have resulted in a list of ten activities in wetlands that must be regulated. It contains activities that may damage the sustainability of the wetland if the activity is uncontrolled. The regulated activities in a wetland include: Brick-making; recreational activities such as sport fishing, maintenance of green spaces; cultivation; drainage; commercial exploitation of wetland resources; sewage filtration; fishing using fish gear and weirs, fish farming and other aquaculture; construction of transport and communication facilities such as roads, railways, telephone lines; burning; and any exploitative activity which is of a commercial or trade nature, such as harvesting of papyrus for commercial processes (GoU, 2000: second schedule).

All plans and projects that may have an impact on the environment, and on wetlands, require an environmental impact assessment (EIA) before they can take place (GoU, 1995).

4.3.3 Ownership and access

The National Wetlands Policy 1995 states that all wetlands are a public, or common, resource. The control of the wetlands is in hands of the government. The Constitution 1995 states that “wetlands are held in trust by the government and local governments for the good of all citizens of Uganda” (WID, 2000: 3). Wetlands can thus not be owned by individuals. However, there is said to exist some confusions and tensions in wetland policy and legislation concerning issues over rights and obligations of wetland ownership: The relatively new regulations of 1995 on land tenure are still not adequately known by all levels in Ugandan society (WID, 2001). But, a lack of ownership does not mean a lack of access or right to access: a person or community can still use a wetland for obtaining goods or other benefits. When doing this they are bound to manage and utilise the resource in accordance with any law concerned with wetlands: they should use the wetlands wisely (WID, 2000). ‘Wise use’ of wetlands is described in the WSSP as “use that is compatible with the maintenance of the vital functions or natural properties of the ecosystem” -these vital functions are the hydrological and ecological functions from which many benefits are derived- “and that any use is sustainable so that future benefit streams are not prejudiced” (WID, 2001: 3).

The Land Act 1998 (section 16) protects an interest in using wetland resources by providing the possibility to form a Communal Land Association. A Communal Land Association can be formed by a group of persons for the purpose of communal ownership and management of land, this also includes wetlands. Before registration occurs, members of a Communal Land Association must agree on a common land management scheme (WID, 2000). This management scheme must be in accordance with any law concerning wetlands as well.

4.4 Governance structure, actors & responsibilities in decentralised wetland management

The laws, policies and regulations described in the former chapter are the basis for decentralised wetland management in Uganda. Wetland management entails agencies and actors at all governance levels: national, district and local level. This paragraph outlines the actors and their responsibilities in wetland management. Information about the responsibilities of the different actors originates from documents on wetland management as well as from several interviews held with actors in wetland management while they were describing their formal function and tasks and that of others.

First, actors at the national level will be discussed. The second section outlines actors at the district level. After that actors at the lower local levels are described, and finally the total governance structure and how the different levels interrelate is described. The county level is an administrative unit which has hardly any powers in wetland management and is therefore not included in this paragraph.

4.4.1 National Actors

In the National Wetlands Policy 1995, the government states that, although the conservation and management of wetlands is a responsibility for all Ugandans, the central government should play a leading role in managing wetlands. The government regards it as their national and international responsibility to ensure a sound management of wetlands (MoNR, 1995).

At the national level, different actors are concerned with wetland management. Figure 4.2 shows the governance structure and actors at the national level.

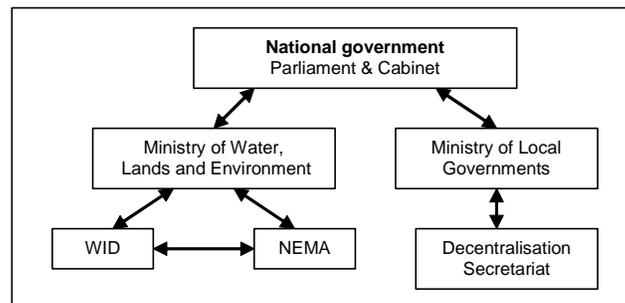


Figure 4.2: National actors and governance structure

The National Government, consisting out of the parliament and the cabinet with several ministers, including the Minister of Water, Lands and Environment, is the leading agent in national policy and standard setting. It has the function to provide policy guidelines, to formulate and co-ordinate policies, and to ensure implementation of those policies.

NEMA, established under section five of the National Environmental Statute 1995, is the leading actor in environmental management. NEMA is concerned with the management of the environment and is under general supervision of the Minister of Water, Lands and Environment (GoU, 1995). NEMA should coordinate the implementation of environmental policies from the central government and can propose policies as well. NEMA's task is to ensure integration of the environment in overall national planning and in all development projects as well. They should also promote public awareness about environmental issues (GoU, 1995: section 7).

The *Wetland Inspection Division* (WID) is a special national agency for wetland management. Formed from the National Wetlands Programme into a permanent institution within the Ministry of

Water, Lands and Environment in 1998, the WID is the leading agency at the national level in relation to wetlands, charged with the formulation of policy, the setting of standards and guidelines, supervision and monitoring of wetlands throughout the country. The EIAs for development projects that may have an impact on wetlands have to be reviewed by the WID, who then reports to NEMA, who has the responsibility of approving the development project or not (WID/IUCN, 2005).

The national actors of WID are supported by Regional Technical Support Units, which have Regional Wetland Coordinators. Regional offices in Eastern, Northern, Western and Central Uganda have Regional Wetland Officers who have the task to provide technical backstopping to district actors to support the implementation of wetland management in their districts. They are supported technically and financially by the WID (WID/IUCN, 2005).

The primary role of the *Ministry of Local Governments* (MoLG) is to oversee the decentralisation policy and its implementation in Uganda. The MoLG provides local governments with guidelines on how they should operate and builds their capacity to execute and manage their work. It should also coordinate the other ministries in their decentralisation process. The *Decentralisation Secretariat* of the MoLG has been set up to drive the decentralisation process forward, but it has been closed down a few years ago because it was felt the Secretariat had fulfilled its tasks (Kiyaga-Nsubunga, 2006, interview).

4.4.2 District Actors

The Local Government Act 1997 devolves powers to the district level and thereby shifts the main responsibility for wetlands to the districts in which the wetlands fall. Districts have the responsibility for good management of the wetlands in their jurisdiction and this must be done in adherence to the several national policies that concern wetlands.

Structural arrangements for employment are a structure established at the centre which determines the personnel provided for in the districts (Birigenda, 2006, interview). Actors can thus differ in each district, however, there is a rather general governance structure in the districts that is discussed here.

Just as at the centre, governance at the district level is conducted by a political wing, politicians who are the main decision-makers, and by technocrats or civil servants, who assist the district with technical back-up. The politicians are popularly elected while the civil servants are appointed. The civil servants used to be appointed by the district, but recently the appointment of the head of the civil servants -the chief administrative officer, see below- has been recentralised to the centre (Kiyaga-Nsubunga, 2006, interview). Figure 4.3 shows the governance structure at district level.

The political wing of the district is formed by the District Council, the District Executive Committee and the Standing or Sectoral Committees.

The *District Council* (DC) consists of district councillors among whom the district's chairman, who are all popularly elected every five years. The DC is responsible for the main decisions about policies in the district: they have to approve on budget and planning, on by-laws and ordinances, and they are thus the main decision-makers at the district level. The DC's task is also to lobby for funding at for example the centre.

The *District Executive Committee* (DEC) is composed of five district councillors, called ministers or secretaries, and is headed by the district's chairman. The DEC carries out the day-to-day tasks of the DC: They are responsible for ensuring the planning of activities and they monitor the implementation and impact of policies or programmes. There is not a specific secretary for wetlands or environment but it is in the mandate of one of the secretaries, for example the Secretary of Production.

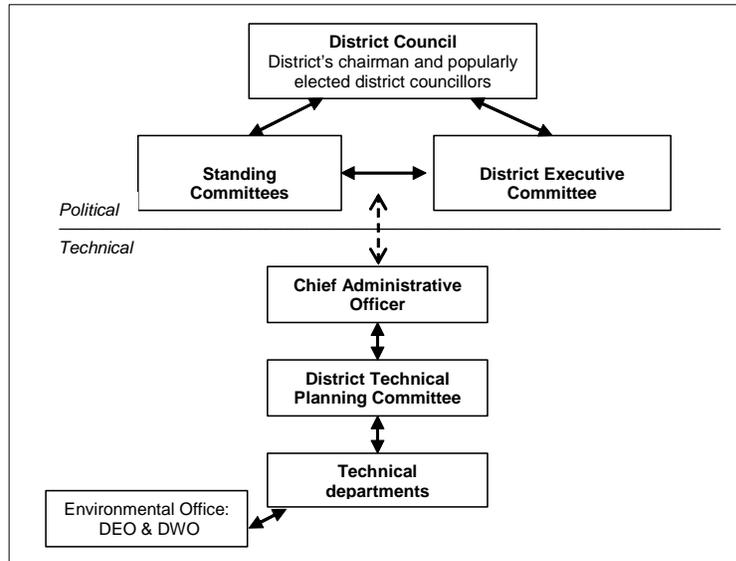


Figure 4.3: District governmental structure

The *Standing Committees* of a district, consisting out of district councillors, perform the key functions of the DC. Wetlands are included in the Standing Committee that is responsible for environment and natural resources. The National Environmental Statute prescribes the establishment of a District Environmental Committee in each district (GoU, 1995: Section 15.1). The task of this District Environmental Committee should be to co-ordinate districts' activities concerning the management of environment and natural resources. They need to ensure that the environment is integrated in all projects and planning activities of the DC and they should prepare a district state of the environment report (SER) annually. In practice, there is often not a specific District Environmental Committee and these tasks are often included in another committee. Common Standing Committees are for example; Technical services and works; Education and sports; Finance and management; and Health, environment, production and marketing.

The three decision-making organs are supported by technical staff. The technical staff works in different *technical departments or directorates*. They plan and implement activities according to the policies of the district. Their activities are supervised, co-ordinated and guided by the *District Technical Planning Committee* (DTPC), which also checks if the planning is in line with national planning guidelines. The DTPC also guides lower-local governments in their planning and budgeting. The *Chief Administrative Office(r)* (CAO) is the head of the technical staff and acts as a co-ordination office which links the District Council with the technical staff. They are responsible for implementation of policies that come from the central government and policies developed at the district. It provides the DC with technical support from the technical departments so that they can make the decisions. It thereby has to check whether or not the planning is done in accordance with the law.

One of the technical departments, often the department of natural resources, hosts the environmental office with the *District Environmental Officer* (DEO), established under section 16.2 of the National Environmental Statute. The DEO has an advisory task to the Standing Committee for environment and must liaise with and report to NEMA. The DEO must assist Local Environmental Committees in performing their functions. Furthermore, the DEO must promote environmental awareness and gather and manage information concerning the environment and natural resources in the district (GoU, 1995: section 16.2). The DEO should also carry out technical monitoring, environmental awareness raising

and capacity-building at the sub-county level, so that actors at these levels can implement activities as well.

Under the restructured Local Government Act, districts should have appointed a *District Wetland Officer* (DWO) (WID/IUCN, 2005). The general task of the DWO is to look after all the wetlands in the district. The DWO should co-ordinate and monitor wetland management, and sensitise the users of the wetlands about sustainable use. He should promote wetland management and conservation throughout the district, including the DC, and solve problems that concern wetlands. The DWO should report to the district and the WID.

4.4.3 Lower-local actors

The 1995 National Environmental Statute and 1997 Local Government Act empower communities to manage natural resources such as wetlands. The overall task for local councils is to regulate and ensure that activities that are undertaken in wetland areas do not damage the wetland. At the lower-local level, the sub-county is the only level with a government. This means that the sub-county is mandated to make policies, and also can sue or can be sued, and that the other levels are mainly administrative units (Kiyaga-Nsubunga, 2006, interview).

Figure 4.4 shows the governance structure at the lower-local levels. After this, the different local levels will be discussed as well as their responsibilities in wetland management.

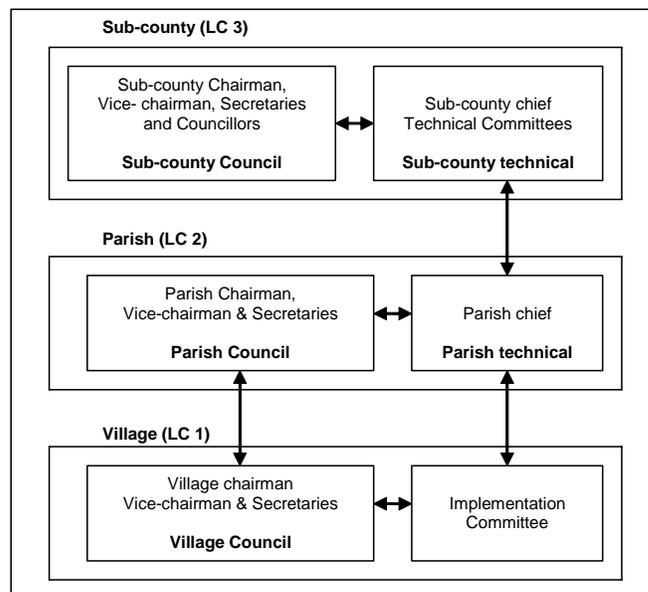


Figure 4.4: Governance structure at the lower-local level

The Constitution states that at the lower-local levels Local Environmental Committees (LEC) should be appointed (GoU, 1995: section 17). The LECs shall monitor and report to the DEO all activities in its local jurisdiction that have an impact on the environment. It shall activate the citizens of the local jurisdiction to voluntarily conserve, restore and/or improve environmental and natural resources, for example by raising awareness through education (GoU, 1995). Under section 7 of the National Environment Regulations 2000, the LEC is the implementing body in conserving and managing wetland resources in its jurisdiction. However, in practice it is said that these committees are often not operational, and they are often part of another committee (Workshop on July 18th, 2006, see appendix I).

At the sub-county level governance is, just as at the district level, conducted by elected politicians and technical staff. The political wing of the sub-county comprises the sub-county council, with sub-county councillors, the executive committee with several secretaries, and standing or sectoral committees. The technical side of the sub-county involves the sub-county chief, who is the head of the sub-county's technical staff, and some technical committees.

The *sub-county council* is headed by the sub-county chairman and consists out of ten to twenty councillors, who are all representing a parish in the sub-county. The sub-county council is the overall decision-maker in the sub-county and is responsible for monitoring all activities in the sub-county. For wetland management this includes ensuring friendly use of the wetlands by guiding the users. The councillors are responsible for monitoring activities or projects in the parish they are representing and should mobilise people for sensitisation on wetland management (Acam, 2006, interview).

The sub-county council makes an annual budget and planning, which is made together with the technical staff of the sub-county. Besides making the planning, the sub-county is authorised to make by-laws concerning wetlands and other issues in their sub-county (Egau, 2006, interview; S. Opolot, 2006, interview).

The *sub-county executive committee* consist out of the chairperson and the vice-chairperson and secretaries. The executive committee should make the policies for the council and monitor the projects in the sub-county (Acam, 2006, interview). Natural resources are often a responsibility of the Secretary of Production. His specific responsibility concerning wetlands is to sensitise the communities about the benefits of the wetlands and the dangers of deconstructing the wetlands (S. Opolot, 2006, interview). He or she has to monitor all activities concerning wetlands and report this to the council.

The *standing committees* of the sub-county are formed by the sub-county councillors. The standing committees are responsible for costing the workplan of activities that should be implemented and report to the executive committees. This committee should research issues concerning wetlands on the grass-root level and bring this to the sub-county level and the technical planning committee. Standing committees often work in the same division as the executive committee of the sub-county. A common committee that is also mandated for wetlands is the committee for production (Acam, 2006; Egau, 2006; Okiror, 2006: all interviews).

The sub-county council is assisted by some *technical committees*, which are headed by the sub-county chief or, in case of a town council, the town clerk. The technical committees are the administrative and implementation organ of the sub-county. The technical staff is responsible for finding out what the requirements are of the LC 1 and LC 2 level, to assist the sub-county council in making a work plan, the implementation of the work plan, such as the sensitisation activities and wetland policies, for example the demarcation of wetlands.

Usually, the technical committees work under the same division as the standing committees of the sub-county council. Within these committees, there is often not a committee specifically for environment or wetlands and natural resources is most of the time part of the Production Committee or of the Health Committee. The concerning officer is then the focal point person for environment. But it can also be that the responsibility for wetland management is a common responsibility for all people of the technical staff (Acam, 2006, interview).

The parish level is mainly an administrative level. This means that they are not a decision-making body but only do implementation. The parish level has a *parish council* with elected persons, which most of the time comprise a parish chairman, the vice-chairman and several secretaries. In most councils there is a *Secretary for Production and Natural Resources* who is also responsible for wetlands. He should look after the wetlands and report, in case necessary, on wetland abuses to the sub-county and also link with the responsible person at the village and the village wetland committee (Okiring, 2006, interview).

The *parish chief* is the head, and often the only person, of the technical staff. The parish chief works with the sub-county and does the implementation at the parish level.

The main task for the parishes is the flow of information from the LC 1 to the LC 3 and from the LC 3 to the LC 1. This flow of information often goes via the parish chief (Sebugwawo, 2006, interview).

Wetland management at the village level in general comprises to ensure that wetlands are preserved and to assist the sub-county with implementation of wetland issues. The LC 1 suppose to make a budget and planning for the activities it intends to conduct in its village and has to report about the condition of the wetlands to the LC 2, who again submits this report to the LC 3.

At the village level the main decision maker is the *village council*, chaired by the LC 1 chairman. The chairman is often the only elected person at the LC 1 level and the other councillors are appointed by him. These others include a vice-chairman and several secretaries, of whom the Secretary for Production is often mandated for environmental, and thus wetland, issues. This secretary should sensitise and advise the people of the village about wetland regulations and wise use, and can, together with the chairman, make decisions about wetlands in the village. However, not all LC 1s have a secretary responsible for environment and wetlands; it can also be a collective duty for all councillors (Angiro, 2006; Kakooza, 2006, Okiring, 2006; Sebugwawo, 2006: all interviews).

There is no technical staff working at the LC 1 level, but most LC 1s have *implementation or village committees* which are often headed by the parish chief. The task of a village wetland committee, if present, is to assist the Secretary of Production in monitoring and reporting on wetland management and use in the village, and implement activities on wetlands in the village, such as the demarcation of wetlands (Acam, 2006; Angiro, 2006; Galübwa, 2006: all interviews)

4.4.4 Interaction between the different levels

Figure 4.1 in the beginning of this chapter showed a simple representation of the governance structure in Uganda, and this paragraph has so far showed the governance structure for each level. The actors and governance structure mentioned in this paragraph all have different responsibilities and connections in wetland management. Figure 4.5 below shows the governance structure for wetland management with all relevant government levels and their general tasks.

In this figure, it is shown how the different levels interrelate with each other. The central government relates with the district level through the Ministry of Local Government and the district councils. The district council again relates with the lower-local councils, as is the district technical planning committee by guiding the lower levels with the planning process.

The district, and therewith the lower-local levels, depend on the centre for financing. Local governments should comply with certain standards in order to receive money. Since 2005, environmental issues are also assessed to determine the compliance. If districts have not to a certain extent integrated environmental issues into their planning and policies, they are financially penalised by the centre. Districts are also penalised if the lower local governments have not sufficiently integrated environmental issues. This must be an extra incentive for districts to stimulate the lower governments to work on environmental issues (Lwanga, 2006, interview).

What the technical side of the governance system is concerned, NEMA and the WID are the main co-ordinators of environmental and wetland policy implementation at the national level. They connect with the DEO and/or DWO at the district for giving advice on wetland issues and getting information about the wetland conditions at the local level. The WID, and also the DEO and DWO interrelate with the lower local level in the same way: they receive information about the wetlands in the sub-counties and give guidance and assistance in the management and implementation to the lower-local levels.

The levels also interrelate with each other on the subject of planning. Budgeting and planning, this also includes environmental planning must be done at the lowest levels. These budgets and plans should be the input of the budgeting and planning of the higher levels. For example, Parish Environmental Action Plans must be produced at the parish level, which must be the basis for the Sub-county Environmental Action Plan. All Sub-county Environmental Action Plans are the input for the District Environmental Action Plan. However, these plans must be all in line with the national standards and guidelines and the National Environmental Action Plan constructed by NEMA (Lwanga, 2006, interview).

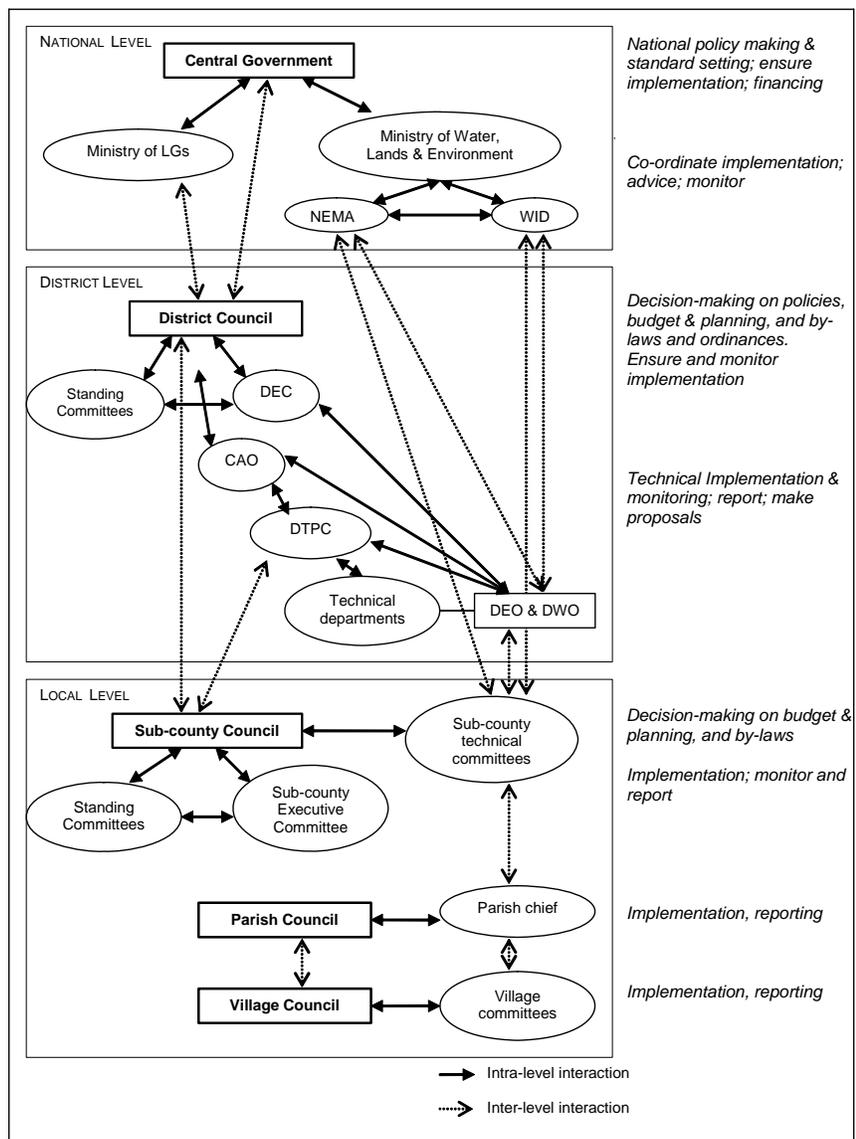


Figure 4.5: Governance structure for wetland management in Uganda

This chapter has described decentralisation, the decentralised governance structure and decentralised wetland management in Uganda. Decentralised wetland management as it is pictured in this chapter, is wetland management the way it is 'on paper'. Linking back to the theory of decentralisation in the former two chapters, this chapter has described the 'design' and the variables that constitute

decentralised wetland management in Uganda. However, decentralisation might be well designed, i.e. laws, policies and regulations can exist on paper, this does not mean that decentralised wetland management in practice, the actual wetland management 'on the ground', is executed in that same way.

The next chapters describe how wetland management is *de facto* conducted: Are actors really in place? Do they take their responsibilities in wetland management? How is the interaction between actors in reality; are actors influencing each other? And, most importantly, what are the outcomes or effects of decentralised wetland management?

5. DECENTRALISED WETLAND MANAGEMENT IN KUMI & MUKONO DISTRICT

5.1 Introduction

The aim of this study is to give an in depth description of decentralised wetland management in Uganda and to evaluate this decentralisation of wetland management. This chapter presents the findings of the case studies that are done in two districts, Kumi district and Mukono district. The findings are presented according to the themes that are addressed in the theoretical chapter. In the following of this paragraph the districts Kumi and Mukono (the research areas) will be firstly be introduced. In paragraph 5.2 this information will be complemented with more detailed information from the two districts. The third paragraph discusses interaction and accountability of actors from the two districts and paragraph 5.4 discusses to what extent this relates to whether or not actors meet their responsibilities.

Data in this chapter are obtained from interviews that are held with several actors in wetland management in the two districts. A list with interviewees can be found in appendix I. In the text of this chapter, textboxes are used to clarify the information that is given with examples from the districts.

5.1.1 Introduction to Kumi district

Kumi district is located in eastern Uganda (see figure 1.1 in the introduction for a map of Uganda). During the time of research, July to September 2006, the district was split into two districts by which one of the counties has become an independent district. This occurred because the district was said to be too big and governance is expected to be more efficient in this way (Ongaba, 2006, interview). The original Kumi district is now divided in Bukedea district and Kumi district. This research is conducted in the 'new' Kumi district.

The new Kumi district covers an area of 1,771.74 squared kilometres of which 330.8 (18.7%) is open water and wetlands/swamps (this was respectively 2,820.68 km² and 406.2 km² (34.7%) in the original Kumi district (Kumi district, 2005a and 2006)). A map of the district is shown in appendix II.

The new district comprises two counties, ten sub-counties and one town council, 149 parishes and 298 villages (Kumi district, 2006). Kumi's (excluding Bukedea) population was about 270,000 people in 2002, and with an annual population growth rate of 4.3%, is now estimated on 316,000 people (UBOS, 2005).

Kumi district has three main sources of funding: grants from the central government, grants from foreign governments (donors) and locally generated revenue (e.g. taxes and other non-tax revenue). In the Budget and Annual Work Plan for the financial year (FY) 2005-2006 the expected income consisted for 93% out of central government grants, 6% out of foreign donor grants and 1% of the expected income came from local revenue (Kumi district, 2005b). The income share of local revenue used to be higher, however the graduated tax, tax that was obtained over 40,000 tax payers in the district, has been abolished by the central government in the FY 2005/2006. Local revenue now consists out of property income (93.3%) and other taxes (6.7 %) (Kumi district, 2005a).

According to the Uganda Human Development Report 2001 of the United Nations Development Program, Kumi district is one of the ten poorest districts of Uganda (Kumi district, 2005a). The main economic activity in Kumi is agriculture. About 93% of the households in Kumi are engaged in agricultural activities, mainly through crop farming and livestock. Modern production techniques are not much used. Industrial and trade activities are limited in Kumi district, although most trading

centres (economic heart of an area) are expanding and there is increased brick-making and construction work taking place (Kumi district, 2005a).

Permanent and seasonal wetlands comprise 18.7% of the district of Kumi, this includes five lakes. The Kumi District State of the Environment Report (SER) 1997 mentions that wetlands were used to be seen as a menace; wetlands were a source of diseases and harboured some dangerous animals. Due to population growth pressure, people started to use the wetlands for agricultural purposes. Pollution of the wetlands is not a major issue, since industrial activities are very limited (Kumi district, 1997).

Since main economic activity of the people of Kumi is agriculture, the wetlands are of main importance for them. Around 60% of the wetlands in Kumi are modified for agricultural purposes: wetlands are drained for agricultural production, used for paddy rice growing, grazing of cattle during the dry season and the cutting of trees. Wetlands are also used for water winning for domestic water use and activities mentioned above seriously degrade the quality and reduce the amount of water available (Kumi district 2005a).

5.1.2 Introduction to Mukono district

Mukono district is located in the centre of Uganda (see figure 1.1), next to the capital city Kampala and on the northern shores of Lake Victoria. Mukono district comprises an area of 11,764 km², of which 987 km² is wetlands, 589 km² is forest and 9,396 km² is open water. The district comprises four counties, 24 sub-counties and four town-councils, 144 parishes and 1,119 villages (Mukono district, 2004). Appendix II shows a map of Mukono district.

Mukono district is the fifth populated district in Uganda. In 2002, Mukono district had 807,923 citizens. With an average population growth rate of 2.7%, the population is now estimated to be around 900,000. Due to abundant natural resources and a high rate of industrialisation, Mukono district has attracted huge numbers of migrants into the district, who are seeking for jobs in the several industries or in natural resource activities. In some urban areas in Mukono district the population growth rate is estimated to be approximately 11%, compared to 4% in urban Kampala (Mukono district, 2004).

The district has various sources of income. The budget estimates for the FY 2006-2007 suppose 17% of the total income to originate from the central government, 73% from donors (international governments as well as NGOs) and 8% from local revenue (Mukono district, 2006)⁹.

The main sources for local revenue in the district are profits obtained from licences and permits, market dues, and property tax on property such as industrial property and commercial buildings (Mukono district, 2004). There used to be collection of graduated tax, which accounted for 75% of the local revenue. But this tax has been abolished last year which resulted in decreasing local revenue.

Mukono district is one of the most industrialised districts of Uganda and hosts several major industrial corporations, such as a big sugar cane company, a bottling plant for soft drinks and national beer producing company Nile Breweries. As a result, quite a number of Mukono district's citizens are dependent on industrial activities for their income. Agriculture is another source of income for the people in Mukono district; more than 80% of its population are involved in agricultural related activities (Mukono district, 2004).

About 8.4% of Mukono's area consists of permanent or seasonal wetlands¹⁰. Many people use the wetlands for their livelihoods. Common activities of the wetlands are for example cultivation, sand

⁹ The percentages are calculation based on numbers from the Budget Estimates of Mukono district (2006).

mining and brick-making. Along the Kampala-Jinja highway, the main road through Mukono district, brick-making activities have almost completely transformed the wetlands (for an illustration see appendix III). Such constructions or framing in the wetlands causes the wetlands to be blocked, what has resulted in more frequent flooding.

There is also a lot of sewage discharged into the wetlands, partly by the big industries in the district. This decreases the quality of the water, making it unsafe for drinking water (Mukono district, 2004).

5.2 Actors & powers in decentralised wetland management

In paragraph 4.3 of the former chapter the different actors involved in wetland management and their responsibilities have been discussed. The governance structure and actors that are described are also generally found in the two case study areas. However, there are some differences in the actors which are actually in place. Therefore this paragraph addresses actors in Kumi and Mukono district in some more detail. By doing this, only the dissimilarities are addressed.

5.2.1 Actors in Kumi district

In Kumi district the actors involved in wetland management and the governance structure are generally the same as described in 4.3. It needs a few specifications however: The structural arrangements for employment¹¹ in Kumi district are limited. Kumi is in structure one, the lowest structure, and has thus a low number of personnel provided for in the district. The districts' local revenue is not enough to fill the financial gap themselves and to pay for extra personnel (Ongaba, 2006, interview).

At the district level, the environmental office is within the department of Production and Natural Resources. The staff of the environmental office consists only of a senior District Environmental Officer. There is provided for a second, junior DEO, but this one has not yet been recruited. The environmental office has not been provided with a District Wetlands Officer, which means that the senior DEO is the main technocrat responsible for wetland management at the district level. Besides the responsibilities of an environmental officer, he also has to take care of the wetlands in the district (Ikanut, 2006, interview; Ongaba, 2006, interview).

As far as the political side of the district is concerned, the Secretary of Production in the District Executive Committee is mandated to ensure the planning of activities and to monitor the implementation and impact of policies or programmes on wetlands. Due to the splitting of Kumi district into two districts, the former Secretary of Production of Kumi has left to the new district Bukedea. As a result, Kumi district has no secretary in the DEC who is looking after wetland policies and planning (Ikanut, 2006, interview). The District Environmental Committee, which should be established according to the National Environmental Statute, is not an independent committee but is integrated in the standing committee for Production.

Another group of actors in Kumi district that are not mentioned in the governance structure discussed in 4.3 are non-governmental organisations. In Kumi district several NGOs are active. The Kumi Network of Development Organisations (Kunedo) is a network of NGOs, community-based organisations (CBOs) and faith based organisations active in the district and assists those different

¹⁰ Wetlands contain about 41% of the actual land area, if the area of open water, almost 80% of the whole district, is not included.

¹¹ See also 4.4.2: structural arrangements for employment are centrally arranged structures that determine the personnel that are provided for in a district. Structural arrangements range from one, the lowest structure, to three.

organisations by capacity building, information sharing and lobbying and advocacy. Within Kunedo, there is not a NGO that is specifically active in the area of environment or wetlands at present moment. Most NGOs work on health issues in Kumi (Omoding, 2006, interview).

5.2.2 Actors in Mukono district

In Mukono district there are some differences compared to the situation described in paragraph 4.3. The environmental office of the district consists of three persons: a senior DEO, a junior/assistant DEO and a District Wetland Officer. The DWO is the main person responsible for wetland issues in the district, but she works close together with the environmental officers (Nakimbugwe, 2006, interview; Nannozi, 2006, interview).

In Mukono district there are quite some NGOs active in environmental and natural resource management. Those NGOs often receive financial support from (international) donors. Although these NGOs are not part of the decentralised system, they work close together with actors from the district, such as the DEO and the DWO, and with lower governance levels as well as with the national level.

5.3 Interaction & accountability

In the theoretical part accountability is described as being dependent on the relation between actors and the powers they exercise. Mechanisms of accountability are important to keep actors accountable to the powers that they can exercise. Apart from the importance of downward accountability of governments to their constituents, accountability of the central government to local governments and horizontal accountability between actors working on the same governance level is essential in decentralisation.

The actors in wetland management described in the former paragraph and in paragraph 4.3 interact and depend on each other in different ways. In this paragraph the interaction between and the accountability of actors in the two case study areas are discussed. This study has not examined to what extent democratic processes make actors of the government accountable to their constituents, but focuses more on the extent to which actors interact and are accountable to other actors in wetland management and to their tasks.

First, issues of horizontal accountability are addressed in both districts. After that vertical accountability between actors at different governance levels is discussed.

5.3.1 Horizontal interaction and accountability in Kumi district

At the higher and the lower government levels civil servants work together with the politicians of the council. The technical staff provide the politicians with technical back-up and implement the policies the political side have made. The politicians, being the main decision-makers, they are the ones deciding on issues of importance for the civil servants; budget, planning, policy approval, etc. The decision-making is done according to a majority of voting, but the DC aims to reach consensus (Ogaram, 2006, interview).

At the district level, the co-operation between technocrats and politicians is not always said to be satisfying: The politicians are elected and often have low knowledge on technical issues. "It takes long for them to comprehend certain policy proposals; this delays the implementation of the policy. And interventions sometimes need to be done quickly." This is a constraint between the policy-makers and the implementers at district level (Ongaba, 2006, interview). In addition, the environmental office in Kumi is established in 1999, while other departments exist much longer. Within the District Council

there is still the “need to lobby for adequate attention for environmental issues” (Opolot, 2006, interview). Although the DC says that environment and wetlands are a priority of Kumi district (Ogaram, 2006, interview), it is not prioritised in funding from the district. In the district’s budget, which is approved by the DC, most funding is planned for education (51%), health (17%) and roads (almost 10%). The sector natural resources receives only 0.8% of the total expenditures (Kumi district, 2005a).

At the sub-county level, the respondents said that the relation between the political side and the technical side is good and cooperative. However, during election time -beginning of 2006- the politicians have influenced the technical staff negatively by agreeing on certain issues during a meeting and later on not following this agreement, or by making promises to the citizens which were impossible for the technical staff to implement, e.g. promising citizens a borehole at a place where the water level is too low (Acam, 2006, interview; Okiror, 2006, interview).

The parish and village level do, except for the parish chief, not have technical staff. The parish chief and the village committees are assisting the councils in their work. Although the councillors of both councils are the eventual decision-makers, the parish chief, the councils and the committees work harmonious together (Angiro, 2006, interview; Okiring, 2006, interview).

5.3.2 Vertical interaction and accountability in Kumi district

Actors at different governance levels interact with each other in different ways. Lower governance levels rely on higher governance levels, while higher governance levels also depend on lower local councils for other issues:

Finance is an aspect in which the lower levels are depending on the higher governmental levels. A large part of the money that is provided for the lowest level goes from the centre, via the district to the village. The district decides the amount of money sub-counties, parishes and villages receive. If the district does not receive enough funding from the centre, the lower levels automatically also suffer from this. Thereby, if lower-local governments do not comply with the requirements (e.g. reporting in time) the district can penalize them with cutting in their resources (Ikanut, 2006, interview; Ongaba, 2006, interview).

For the FY 2005/2006, 80% of the district’s total budget was realised. For environment and natural resources this has a result that only 6% of the budgeted money was received (Kumi district, 2005b). This means that only 6% of the planned and budgeted activities for natural resources could be implemented by the district. The shortage of money at the district level has as a result that the sub-counties and other local councils also have not accomplished their budget plans.

The district also sets priorities on issues which the lower-local levels depend upon. An example given by the DEO is that the lack of resources forces the district to prioritise some issues: A local environmental officer is not provided for because the district prioritises other issues (Ikanut, 2006, interview). Because of this lack of a technical environmental officer at the lower level, they rely on the district for technical assistance (Acam, 2006, interview).

By planning, reporting and raising issues from the grass-root level, issues go from the lower level up to the higher level. The district’s planning should be and, according to all respondents, is based on work plans from the lower level. In it’s planning, the district can set priorities, however, the district’s planning has to be in line with the Indicative Planning Figures (IPF) of the centre. By raising issues of concern at annual planning conferences organised by the Uganda Local Authority Association, the district should be able to influence national policy. However, the influence the district has on this is not felt to be extensive: “issues and problems that are raised at those meetings or workshops are sometimes considered and sometimes not” (Ongaba, 2006, interview).

The governmental levels also interact with and depend on the NGOs working in the district. Until last year, the local governments and the NGOs worked separately in the same district. This caused duplication of activities: it occurred that both actors were investing time and money in the same projects without cooperating with each other (Omoding, 2006, interview). Since last year there is a memorandum of understanding between Kunedo and the district to work closer together. Now, Kunedo not only brings the different NGOs together to share information and experiences in order to support better functioning of the organisations, it also connects organisations with the local governments. This has ensured better information sharing between the district and the several NGOs about planned activities.

5.3.3 *Horizontal interaction and accountability in Mukono district*

The technical staff of Mukono district is dependent on the decisions of the district’s politicians, the main decision-makers. In general, there is harmony between the political and technical actors of the district, but this interaction does not always go smoothly.

In Mukono, some actors have said to be constrained in their work by political people of the district. In cases the DEO or DWO wanted to let people comply with the law - e.g. to get people out of a wetland- district councillors intervened with the work of the DEO or DWO to prevent them of sending people away from the wetland. The civil servants of the district would obey to the politicians in this case (Nakimbugwe, 2006; Nannozi, 2006; Mulindwa, 2006: all interviews). In box 5.1 this interference of politicians in Mukono district is further illustrated.

Co-operation at the sub-county level between technical persons and politicians is good, but technocrats are sometimes said to be constraint by the sub-county councillors because of a poor education. As one of the technical people of a town council said: “some [sub-county councillors] don’t know how to read or write.” This makes it difficult for them to understand a policy proposal correctly. “This delays and hampers the work of the technical staff.” Also, politicians sometimes want changes to happen immediately. This can not always be done, some things take a longer time before they can be implemented (Mwebaze, 2006, interview).

BOX 5.1

‘LEAVE BIG PEOPLE ALONE’

In Mukono district actors from the technical side, the civil servants, are sometimes said to be constrained by their work by politicians of all levels.

An example of a time where politicians of the district interfered with the work of technical staff being is given by one of the DEOs of Mukono. The example concerns the brick making which is done a lot in the wetlands in Mukono district. The DEO recalls that at a time, the brick makers along the Kampala-Jinja highway started to work at night, which caused dangerous situations on the nearby road due to the smoke and heat that are released during the brick making process. The DEO told the brick makers that they had two weeks to remove the bricks. Then a district councillor intervened and told the DEO to ‘leave my voters alone’.

Gaining votes appeared not to be the only incentive for politicians to interfere with the work of the technocrats. In Mukono, the central government has interfered several times with the work of the district at times that ‘big investors’ had an interest in planning a project in Mukono district. An example is the construction of a factory close to a wetland. The DEO intended to stop the construction, but he was told “to leave this big people alone” by a Minister from the centre. Also technocrats from the sub-county have said to suffer from the ‘leave-big-people-alone’-policy of politicians from the district as well as the centre.

Another recent example in Mukono district is political interference with Mabira forest reserve. President Museveni himself has recently given an order to allocate part of this national forest to a big sugarcane company, while national and district institutions concerned with the management of the forest and citizens are not supporting the de-gazetting of Mabira (Daily Monitor, September 4th, 2006).

This kind of constraints between politicians and technical staff is specific for the local governments of the sub-county and the district. At the village and parish level, the parish chief is the only civil servant. Cooperation between the parish chief and the politicians at these levels is going well and actors are said not to be constrained by other persons (Kakooza, 2006, interview; Sebugwawo, 2006, interview).

5.3.4 *Vertical interaction and accountability in Mukono district*

The lower-local governance levels, the district and the national level interact and rely on each other in different ways.

By means of reporting and planning, the lower levels intend to bring issues of concern up to the attention of the higher level. However, central planning priorities have set guidelines for planning up to the parish level, and issues brought up from below are addressed according to these priorities (Galübwa, 2006; Kakooza, 2006; Musaka, 2006; Mwebaze, 2006; Sebugwawo, 2006; Semyalo, 2006: all interviews). Furthermore, bringing issues under the attention of the higher level does not necessarily mean that those issues are actually taken into account at the higher governance level. Villages and parishes depend on the sub-county on which issues are eventually included in the sub-county's planning. An actor at the village level explained about the planning process at the LC 3 level: "Sometimes they integrate our planning in the town-council's planning and sometimes they just take it for granted and you see that they have already planned for you while you still have to bring in your own planning." So, although planning and reporting are a bottom-up process, the higher level, mainly the centre, determines the actual issues that are addressed.

Related with this matter of planning is the aspect of funding: Since local governments have hardly any source of revenue, the lower governance levels depend on the higher governments for funding for realisation of their planned activities. A substantial part of the district's budget comes from the centre. NEMA manages the amount the environmental office receives; thereby they use a system of rewarding and penalisation depending on the environmental performance of the district (Lwanga, 2006, interview). Half of the budget of the DWO originates from the WID (Nannozi, 2006, interview).

The district again controls the money allocated to the sub-counties, this money is 'earmarked'; the sub-counties receive this money for a certain activity or project and are obliged to spend the money on particularly that issue (Musaka, 2006, interview). The sub-county again channels the money to the parishes and villages in its jurisdiction. Villages and parishes should also receive a certain percentage of the local revenue collected by the sub-county, but it can be that the village receives no money at all from the LC 3. One of the respondents of the LC 1 mentioned: "We sent in our plans, but we don't receive money. They sometimes work on our behalf, but they don't give us money to implement the plans ourselves."

Hence, although the planning process is an upward process, and planning of the lower levels are the basis for the district's planning, the lower levels are dependent on the higher governance levels again which issues are integrated and how much money there will be allocated for the issues that were identified at the lower levels.

The lower governance levels in Mukono mentioned to be dependent on the higher levels for technical back-up. Villages can bring issues to the parish, but since they are often not empowered enough to assist, the villages go directly to the sub-county (Kibirango, 2006, interview). However, it is sometimes found that they are not taken seriously by the LC 3 level: "At times they are responding, and at times they are not. They don't take all matters serious" (Kibirango, 2006, interview). On the other hand, sub-counties or town-councils may also not have a sufficient manpower to assist the lower levels, and depend themselves on the district for technical assistance. Mukono town-council for example, has no specific civil servant working on environment or wetlands. For issues on wetlands they rely on the district for technical assistance (Mwebaze, 2006, interview).

In some cases, the district, on its turn, is depending on the centre for assistance. One of the things for which the district relies on the centre is enforcement. If the district fails to let citizens comply with the law (for example with illegal constructing) they rely on NEMA for enforcement (Nakimbugwe, 2006, interview).

Besides these matters, the higher level governments influence the lower levels also in other ways. During the interviews it was repeatedly addressed that the technical people at the district are constrained in their work not only by the political wing of the local government, but also by politicians of the central government. Politicians of the centre interfere with the work of the district's civil servants as is described in box 5.1. Some believe this 'leave-big-people-alone-policy' has to do with personal gains for the politicians (Nakimbugwe, 2006, interview; Nannozi, 2006, interview), but others believe that the politicians from the centre make such decisions in good faith, meaning that the construction of a factory is not expected to have serious environmental consequences, but that the original plan turns out differently than expected (Mugerwa, interview, 2006).

Also at the lower level such things occur. LC 3s can make decisions about the area of the village without consulting or discussing this with the village council. Kibirango: "It has been in some cases allowed by the LC 3 to construct in a wetland without having discussed this with the village. It can be that in such cases they only think about the money that will be brought by the investors." Another actor adds: "They have given us the power to do things, but if there is an issue 'of their interest' they still interfere" (Galübwa, 2006, interview).

As is mentioned in section 5.2.2, quite some NGOs are active in Mukono district. These NGOs work hand in hand with governmental actors at all levels to develop a sound wetland management. An example of a NGO's project in Lwajjali wetland in Mukono district is given in box 5.2. In this project sub-county technical staff has been included in the planning of the Lwajjali management plan.

BOX 5.2

LWAJJALI COMMUNITY BASED WETLAND MANAGEMENT

Lwajjali wetland is located in Goma sub-county, Mukono district. The wetland is of importance for several villages in the sub-county. The wetland, consisting mainly out of swamp forest, is used for agricultural purposes, hunting, craft making, domestic water use and brick making. Those activities have not been carried out sustainably, which has caused the wetland to degrade.

In May 2005 the non-governmental organisation Centre for Integrated Development (CIDev), in cooperation with Mukono District, the Wetland Inspection Division (WID) and financial support from the World Conservation Union (IUCN), started the development of Lwajjali Community Based Wetland Management Plan (CBWMP). The aim of the CBWMP was to promote sustainable use of Lwajjali wetland with participation of all stakeholders.

The project started with an inventory of the stakeholders and the formation of the Lwajjali Community Based Wetland Management Organisation. Creating user zones for the different activities in the wetland and raising awareness on the wise use of wetlands were among the main activities. Brick-making, for example, is now only done in a specified part of the wetland, while the other parts are left alone. After using the wetland, the users have to restore it again before moving to another part of the wetland.

The project also brought alternatives for livelihoods for the people that were making a living in the wetlands. The 'beneficiaries' of these alternatives have for example been provided with some poultry. This alternative source of income resulted in those people staying out of the wetland and prevented unsustainable use.

The community-based approach of the project also links with the decentralised governance system: The ultimate purpose is that CBWMP will be an independent organisation that is able to integrate its activities into the sub-county and district planning. By building capacity on the community level, people at this level are able to integrate wetland management into their planning and can push the wetland planning into the sub-county planning and the sub-county into the district planning. This approach results in bottom-up capacity building.

(Source: Katumba, 2006, interview and Muteme, 2006, interview: members of the Lwajjali

The NGOs also work close together with the DEO and DWO in the environmental office. The DWO goes with issues that she, in one way or another, can not handle, to the NGOs and see if a NGO can integrate this in their projects (Nannozi, 2006, interview).

Most government actors are content with the work of NGOs in their jurisdiction. They are said to be very beneficial for the district and the sub-counties in supplementing in resources and knowledge (Mugerwa, 2006, interview; Semyalo, 2006, interview): A large part of the money available in at least one sub-county and village originates from donors and NGOs (Kakooza, 2006, interview; Musaka, 2006, interview). Although most government actors are content with the work of the NGOs, it is also found that certain issues can be improved. A civil servant of the district's administrative office finds there is a lack of coordination between the government organisations and the NGOs in the district: "They do not constrain the work of the district but we should know who they are, what they do and where they originate from. We have to know where they are putting their money so we don't spend money on the same activity" (Mugerwa, 2006, interview).

On the other hand, NGOs benefit from the decentralised system. The decentralised system has familiarised communities with the idea of participating in policy-making, and this has been beneficial for implementing a community-based wetland management plan (CBWMP), as the one for Lwajjali wetland (Mukasa, 2006, interview).

This paragraph has shown that the actors in Kumi and Mukono district interact with and depend on each other in various ways. Horizontal and vertical means of accountability exist between the actors in wetland management and the way they carry out their responsibilities towards each other. Accountable or not accountable actors can influence whether or not actors meet their responsibilities. The next paragraph will discuss which of the tasks and functions actors are or are not able to carry out in wetland management.

5.4 Meeting expectations, meeting responsibilities

In this paragraph it will be discussed whether or not actors take their responsibilities in wetland management. During the interviews, respondents were asked if they and others were able to meet the responsibilities they formally have and, if not, what explanation there is for not carrying out his or her tasks.

5.4.1 Meeting expectations and responsibilities in Kumi district

The main actor in wetland management at the district level is the District Environmental Officer (DEO). As is explained, the DEO is the only person responsible for all environmental issues, including wetlands, in the district since a second environmental officer is not yet recruited. The DEO is concerned with the technical planning, implementation and monitoring of the wetlands in Kumi district. Although by his colleagues he is said to be very committed to his work and well skilled (Ogaram, 2006; Ongaba, 2006: interviews), he is not able to fulfil all his tasks concerning wetland management on his own (Ikanut, 2006; Ogaram, 2006; Ongaba, 2006: interviews): Plans are made and implemented, monitoring and sensitisation in the district is done, but not as much and often as it should be done. Moreover, the DEO has, due to other obligations outside the district, not been able to spend much of his time in Kumi, making it even harder to plan, implement and monitor all wetland activities in Kumi district (Ikanut, 2006, interview).

Besides the lack of human resources, actors at the district level are said to be constrained by a lack of funding and facilitation. For example, there is only one car for all the civil servants working at the

district. Visiting sub-counties, parishes or villages for environmental awareness raising or monitoring of wetlands is tremendously hindered by such lacking of facilities (Ikanut, 2006; Ongaba, 2006: interviews). A result of the lack of monitoring is described in box 5.3.

As is mentioned in part 5.3.2, the environmental office of Kumi district has only received 6% of the money it had budgeted for. The centre works with performance indicators to determine the allocation for money for the next financial year. Kumi district has been penalised in the government grants for natural resources for having only one environmental officer who has not been around much last year, however, this financial penalisation makes it even harder to complete the activities concerning environment for the coming year (Ongaba, 2006, interview). The abolishment of the graduated tax has left the district with a limited amount of local revenue, what makes it hard to supplement the amount of money available for wetland management.

A lack of funding also constrains the work in wetland management at other levels, which results in that people can not carry out all of their tasks. In most sub-counties for example, the budget plans have not been accomplished. Funding from the district is limited and comprises only a small part of most sub-counties income. Main part of their income is local revenue, but this has declined due to abolishment of the graduated tax. Therefore also local revenue is very little. One sub-county for example, is dependent for all its revenue on a local market which is held only two times a month. Due to this limited amount of money, standing committees do not gather as often as they suppose to do: “if there is not enough money for transport refunds, people tend to not come to the meeting” (Egau, 2006, interview). The lack of funds affects the wetland or village committees as well. Some are useful and are helping the LC 1 with their tasks, but they could do better with more funding and facilitation (Angiro, 2006, interview). Other wetland committees are not functional at all (Acam, 2006, interview). In one of the villages it is said that the wetlands committees, who assist the LC 1 in monitoring the wetlands in the area, would work better if the communities would be better sensitised (Angiro, 2006, interview). Sensitisation on sustainable wetland use is not sufficiently done throughout the district, which affects actors at all levels. At the lower level, laws and regulations on wetland management are not known or not well understood (Acam, 2006, interview).

Box 5.3 CARRYING OUT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

The National Environmental Statute 1995 stated that all plans and projects that may have an impact on the environment, and thus on wetlands, require an environmental impact assessment (EIA) before they can take place (GoU, 1995). These EIAs have to be carried out and paid for by the people who want to start the project. If the EIA is reviewed and approved by NEMA, people receive a permit that allows them to carry out the project.

However, this sounds easier than it is. Some people from Kumi have never been in Kampala. Going to the NEMA office in the capital city to obtain a permit can be too hard for people. People may be committed to use the wetland sustainable, but are just not able to get a permit. In Kumi, there are not many people who actually have a permit or apply for one, which means that constructions or other projects are taking place without having an EIA carried out and sometimes also without knowing by the DEO.

An example is the construction of a dam on the road between Kadir and Ngora sub-county. Because of the dam, the wetland on one side of the road has dried up. An EIA should have been carried out for this dam, however, the existence of the dam was unknown by the DEO.

In Appendix II, an illustration of the dam and the dried wetland can be found.

(Source: Ikanut, 2006, interview and a fieldtrip with the DEO on July 13th, 2006)

Besides constraints in human and financial resources, actors mentioned not to be able to take good care of the wetlands in their jurisdiction due to limited legal or enforcement power. Especially in the case of

BOX 5.4 WETLAND SETTLERS

A problem with the wetlands in Kumi concerns the so-called 'wetland settlers': people who have settled in the wetland and use it for different purposes. In Kumi, cattle keepers from other parts of the country- especially from western parts of Uganda and parts that are being harassed by the Karamajong people- have come to Kumi district to settle in the wetlands with their cattle. The numbers of settlers and cattle have increased immensely over the last years and they are threatening the wetlands: Faeces from the cattle contaminate the water in the wetlands, which is also used for drinking water.

Since it involves people who originate from outside Kumi, it has become a tense political issue which is also becoming a problem in other parts of the country.

(Source: Ikanut, 2006, interview; Visit to Kapir sub-county and Ngora sub-county, July 2006)

wetland settlers, see box 5.4, it was said that they lack legal authority to solve the problem. During a visit to Agule wetland in Opege parish, a wetland where the wetland settlers are causing a problem, the LC 1 said he was not able to solve the problem, although he did some attempts to ask the settlers to leave. The issue was past on to the sub-county, but his legal authority is not enough to force the settlers to leave, or at least change their activities (visit Ngora sub-county and Agule wetland, July 2006). In Kapir sub-county, the problem with the settlers is the same: The sub-county has no sufficient power to enforce the settlers who are intruding in the wetland. They have past on this issue to the district, but -according to the fact that the district lacks facilitation to regularly visit the sub-counties- the number of settlers has increased fastly and the district is also not able anymore to enforce. Now, NEMA is asked to intervene, but response from the centre is slow (Kapir sub-county, visit to headquarters July, 2006).

However, some actors in the district can meet their responsibilities regardless of lacking resources and facilitation. In Kanyum sub-county people said to be able to take most of the responsibilities in wetland management and take good care of the wetlands: people at all levels were sensitised well (Okiror, 2006, interview; S. Opolot, 2006, interview). An explanation for the difference with other sub-counties in the same district is that this sub-county has been assisted by a NGO who has, together with the sub-county, set up a wetland management plan. In another sub-county, Mukungoro sub-county, a NGO has also assisted in wetland management. Box 5.5 illustrates the NGO's wetland project in Mukungoro sub-county.

Meeting expectations and responsibilities of NGOs in Kumi district

At present there are no NGOs active on wetland management in Kumi district. Most NGOs in the district work on health issues. This is because NGOs and CBOs are often financially dependent on donors and, therefore, have to fulfil the expectations of the donor. In Kumi, the choice of NGOs and CBOs to work in a certain area is extremely sensitive to donor preferences. The head of Kunedo, the NGO association in Kumi district, says that "NGOs and CBOs are there where the money comes": People tend to form an organisation in an area of which they expect to receive funding. "One can find an organisation that first was working with environment and is now working on HIV/AIDS" (Omoding, 2006, interview). This resulted in a gap in the amount of funding of organisations in health and other sectors. Omoding: "Donors mainly want to invest in health and it is hard to get funding for other areas." Though, one can not speak of over-funding since there are still many proposals written that have not received funding. Rather, there is "under-funding of NGOs that work in the area of environment and agriculture" (Omoding, 2006, interview).

Another constraint is that there are too many organisations, and new groups come to registrar with Kunedo every day, to seek for funding. Often the capacity of these NGOs and CBOs in Kumi district is too low: Many NGOs that are registered are not able to write proposals (to extract funding) or lack the ability for financial management. Kunedo tries to improve this by providing training but their funding is not sufficient to train all organisations (Omoding, 2006, interview).

BOX 5.5**NGOS & WETLANDS IN KUMI DISTRICT**

In Oleicho wetland in Mukungoro sub-county in Kumi district, several people try to benefit from the wetland resources; fishermen, rice cultivation, cattle keepers and domestic water users. The different use purposes of the wetland causes a conflict between the users. For example, cattle keepers let their cattle graze in the spring wells which were also used for domestic water use. The cattle contaminated the water in such a way that it eventually caused an outbreak of several diseases with the domestic water users.

The community and the Kumi Sustainable Development Initiative (former Mukungoro Development Organisation) came together, with guidance of the Wetland Inspection Division (WID), to develop a management plan which included all the different users of the wetland. The community-based wetland management plan (CBWMP) for the years 2002-2004 aimed to establish an equitable use of the wetland and a better management to enable socio-economic well-being by improving the ecological and hydrological functions of the wetland. A fair distribution of wetland resources and better control of the resources must be ensured by demarcation of the wetland for multi-purposes and wise use.

The planning and implementation of the project was a participatory process. Besides the different users, the local council was involved as well as religious leaders. Wetland committees were established with at least one person of every user group and chaired by the LC 1 chairman. During the project, the communities have learnt how to manage the wetlands sustainably, and now, after the project has ended, the communities still have knowledge on how to manage the wetlands.

In the same way, in Kanyum sub-county, the Ojie Rural Integrated Development Organisation (Orido) is a community-based wetland management plan established by the local communities and the WID. Also this project has been very successful during the project and still is now the project has ended.

(Source: Okia, 2006, interview; Okiror, 2006, interview; S. Opolot, 2006, interview)

5.4.2 Meeting expectations and responsibilities in Mukono district

The environmental office in Mukono consists of three persons: two environmental officers and a wetland officer. They can not meet all the responsibilities they have in wetland management. During the interviews several explanations are addressed for not meeting these responsibilities.

One of the main constraints is the lack of human and financial resources. The DEOs and DWO are not able to monitor all wetlands in the district on compliance of the regulations; with the amount of resources they have it is not possible to visit all the 28 sub-counties monthly (Nakimbugwe, 2006, interview; Nannozi, 2006, interview). It can thus happen that illegal activities take place without the notice of the district. Although an EIA has to be carried out for all major activities, degradation activities can still take place in the wetland: the EIA then is not carried out correctly, and due to a lack of monitoring this is not noticed or too late. Thereby, small communities can not afford the costs of having an EIA done (Nakimbugwe, 2006, interview).

The lacking human and financial resources also constrain the sensitisation and awareness raising throughout the district. The wetland office has an annual budget of two million US\$ (approximately a thousand euros), according to the DWO this is enough to organise only one or two sensitisation workshops. Last year the two workshops did comprise almost all the sub-counties (Nannozi, 2006, interview). If the funds would be available, the people at the district believe they are able to carry out the responsibilities (Nakimbugwe, 2006, interview), meaning that they do have the skills and knowledge to fulfil their tasks. The village implementation or executive committees for example, are established but are not functioning as a result of any training and facilitation (Mwebaze, 2006, interview).

Due to the fact that district actors are not able to meet their responsibilities, they also fail to meet the expectations others have of them. The district should assist and advice the sub-counties. If the funds lack at the district, it is not able for them to come and assist the sub-county (Semyalo, 2006, interview). The sub-county level is said to be constrained in their work by a lack of funding. They used to collect graduated tax, but recently this tax has been abolished and the sub-county now depends on the district for funding. But the district can not fulfil the expectation for funding through which the funding of the technical staff can be delayed or is not coming at all. This constrains or delays their work which again affects what the villages or parishes can do. Due to this, sub-counties for example fail to do enough sensitisation (Galübwa, 2006, interview; Musaka, 2006, interview; Semyalo, 2006, interview). One of the respondents mentioned the fact that the sub-county can not decide about their own resources is the main constraint for carrying out one's responsibilities. The centre collects taxes from the lower areas, but there is not sufficient money coming back to the sub-county: "The centre might not have enough themselves, but they collect and decide on taxes from the lower areas and therefore the sub-county can not decide over their own resources." This has resulted in a serious shortage of money (Semyalo, 2006, interview).

Actors in wetland management at all levels are also affected in doing their work by the 'leave-big-people-alone-policy' (see box 5.1 in 5.3.3). Interference of politicians of all levels influence other actors. Later on, those actors can be blamed for not meeting their responsibilities, also by politicians or by local communities. According to the DEO, she was first told by a central minister to allow construction in a wetland. Afterwards, the Minister for Environment told the environmental office that "they should have told those people to move out." Local communities on the other hand, complain to them that "you always enforce on us poor people": if those local communities are asked to comply with regulations, politicians hardly ever come in to interfere with the work of the civil servants. Apparently votes are not as important as big investors (Nakimbugwe, 2006, interview).

Besides a lack of financial resources, sub-counties or town councils lack sufficient human resources. In one sub-county it was said that they do not have enough technical staff to carry out all activities they would like to do (Lugobobi, 2006, interview; Semyalo, 2006, interview), and in another, Mukono town council, there is no person especially for natural resources. As a result wetland management is a common responsibility of all technical staff in the town council, but receives attention only after those officers have completed their own responsibilities. Most of the time, nobody will take direct responsibility if there are issues with wetland, but they just wait for the district or NEMA to come in (Mwebaze, 2006, interview).

In addition, not all persons appear to be committed to their job: Village councils are supposed to report monthly to the parish on issues and activities in their village, so that the parish chief can report again to the sub-county. This reporting is often not done monthly by the LC 1. As a parish chairman explained: "If you call on them frequently they will get fed up with the meetings and the number of people in the LC 1 tends to decrease. So, they are now called once every three months" (Sebugwawo, 2006, interview).

Another constraint in proper wetland management is said to be the tenure system. Wetlands are officially owned by the government, but it is still hard to enforce laws and regulations by people who own a piece of land. Village councils have trouble enforcing the law in case of someone cultivating on wetlands. Kibirango: "The cultivators can say 'this is my land, you can not stop me from cultivating.' We don't have the capacity to stop them, although we have the mandate to prosecute them." Such issues are forwarded to the sub-county, after which the village is relying on the responsiveness and capabilities of the sub-county (Kibirango, 2006, interview). But sub-counties can also lack the power to enforce the law and they rely on the district for assistance (Mwebaze, 2006, interview).

Meeting expectations and responsibilities of NGOs in Mukono district

In the former paragraph is explained that NGOs and actors from the government work close together. This also creates expectations between the NGOs and for example the district. NGOs are considered to be very beneficial in complementing the work of the government. However, they can not be regarded as extended government workers. According to one of the NGOs, the Uganda Environmental Education Foundation, they only support things that are in line with their goals: “we don’t dance their tunes, we stick to our objectives” (Mulindwa, 2006, interview).

This is exactly one of the reasons why the NGOs in Mukono are said to be able to attract donor funding and the district in a lesser extent. NGOs have a clear objective and are not dependent on politicians for what they can actually do and therefore are able to work more effectively (Mukasa, 2006; Mugerwa, 2006; Mulindwa, 2006; Nannozi, 2006: all interviews). It is believed that people and donors have more faith in NGOs than in the government. The government has “double standards; today they say this, tomorrow they do something else” (Mwebaze, 2006, interview). While local governments have mandates but are not able to fulfil all, NGOs “only bite what they can chew” (Mukasa, 2006, interview): A government body relies on the political decisions whether or not they can implement a plan, NGOs actually implement the plans for which they have received funding and are therefore more attractive for donors to fund than government bodies.

The approach of NGOs is also said to be different. Environmental or wetland officers “go to communities and only say ‘go off that wetland’. We also explain to them why they should go of the wetland, and how they can use their resources better” (Mulindwa, 2006, interview). This is better understood and appreciated by the communities, and eventually gets better results.

This community based approach for wetland management is also a bottom-up process. In addition to decentralisation, people can not only decide for themselves, they are also taught what can be good for them and their awareness is raised so that they are better able to make a decision (Mukasa, 2006, interview).

Epilogue

In the theoretical chapters of this research aspects that are of importance in decentralisation and decentralised natural resource management are roughly divided in aspects that constitute the ‘design’ of decentralisation and aspects that are of influence on the ‘process’ of decentralisation.

The former chapter, chapter four, has described the ‘design variables’ that form the decentralised governance structure in Uganda. To describe the variables that influence the process of decentralisation and to examine how these process variables are behaving in decentralised wetland management in Uganda, this chapter has presented the functioning of decentralised wetland management in Kumi and Mukono district.

It appeared that actors in Kumi and Mukono have horizontal and vertical relations of accountability with other actors. Some actors are accountable to their tasks and others are not. Accountability or unaccountability of actors influences whether or not these actors and others who rely on them are or can meet their responsibilities. In Kumi as well as in Mukono district there are several reasons mentioned why actors do not meet their responsibilities.

How this all, the accountability of actors and whether or not they meet their responsibilities, is of influence on the ‘outcomes’ of decentralised wetland management in the two districts is compared and analysed in the next chapter.

6. COMPARING DECENTRALISED WETLAND MANAGEMENT IN KUMI & MUKONO DISTRICT

6.1 Introduction

This research is a comparative case study between two of Uganda's districts. The aim of comparing two case studies on the decentralisation of wetland management is to find possible similarities and differences in characteristics and effects that might indicate structural problems or positive aspects of a decentralised wetland management, and to find diverse locally implemented solutions to wetland management.

In the theoretical chapters, aspects that influence or are of importance in decentralised natural resource management have been identified from other experiences and literature on the decentralisation of natural resource management. The former chapter has separately described wetland management in the two districts according to the themes that have been identified in the literature on decentralisation. In this chapter the two districts and decentralised wetland management are compared. After the comparison between the districts is made, it is analysed what the influence of these aspects is on decentralised wetland management in Kumi and Mukono district.

Paragraph 6.2 compares the decentralisation of wetland management in the two districts. The third paragraph discusses the forms of decentralisation that are actually in place in decentralised wetland management in Uganda. Paragraph 6.4 evaluates the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of decentralised wetland management that are indicated in the two districts. The last paragraph draws some conclusions on decentralised wetland management in the two districts.

6.2 Comparing features, actors, interaction & accountability, meeting responsibilities

The case studies in the former chapter described how actors, the interaction between and the accountability of those actors, and the extent to which actors are able to meet their responsibilities influence wetland management in Kumi district and Mukono district. This paragraph discusses whether or not there are differences or similarities between these aspects in the two districts. But first it discusses the different features of the districts.

6.2.1 Comparing features of Kumi and Mukono district

Figure 1.1 in the Introduction shows the location of Kumi district and Mukono district in Uganda. Kumi is located in the eastern part and Mukono in the centre of Uganda close to the capital Kampala. Both districts have abundant natural resources, including wetland resources. Those wetlands are important for the livelihoods of the people in both districts. If the characteristics of Mukono district and Kumi district are compared, the main difference is the size of the two districts. Mukono district is more than six times as big as Kumi district (this is including the area of open water). Mukono's population of 800,000 in 2002 exceeds Kumi's population of 270,000 in 2002 by far. Not only the actual size, but also the size of the governance system differs: Kumi district has 11 sub-counties while Mukono district is divided into 28 sub-counties. Mukono district is thus much bigger, in size and population, than Kumi district.

A second big difference between the two districts is the type of economic activities in the district. In both districts, a substantial percentage of the citizens rely on agricultural activities for their livelihoods. In Kumi the proportion of people working in agriculture is over 90%, in Mukono this number is around 80%, this also includes agricultural related activities (such as coffee industry) while in Kumi modern techniques are limited used. Mukono district is far more industrialised than Kumi district. It hosts some big industrial corporations and is one of the most industrialised districts in Uganda. The second difference between the two districts is thus the origin of economic activity and the rate of industrialisation.

Due to this difference in economic activity, the environmental problems in the districts differ as well, as do the causes of wetland degradation. In Kumi, most degradation of wetlands is caused by agricultural related activities: drainage of wetlands for agricultural purposes, creating of structures for paddy rice growing, or the grazing of cattle. In Mukono, the wetlands are also degrading as a result of activities like brick making, discharge of sewage of industrial corporations and construction of industries and houses in the wetlands. So, besides size, population and economic activities, the nature of wetland degradation activities also differs.

6.2.2 Comparing actors

When comparing the actors that are involved in both districts, the governance structure is approximately the same as the general governance structure in chapter four has described. At the village, parish and sub-county the same actors are involved in wetland management. A difference between Kumi and Mukono district can be seen in governance at the district level. This is mostly due to the difference in the so-called structural arrangements of the two districts: Mukono district has far more personnel than Kumi district. At the technical side of the district, Kumi is divided in eleven technical departments and Mukono has approximately fifty technical departments or directorates. As far as the environmental department is concerned, in Kumi this department is part of the technical department of Production. Mukono has an independent directorate of Natural Resources which include the environmental office. In Mukono's environmental office are two District Environmental Officers and one District Wetland Officer. Kumi, on the other hand, only has one DEO who is, besides for other environmental issues, also responsible for wetlands. In general it can be concluded that Mukono district has more personnel available than Kumi district, but Mukono district is also bigger and there is more work to do than in Kumi district.

In both districts NGOs are working. Kumi even has an umbrella organisation that coordinates all NGOs that are working in the district. However, in Kumi are not many organisations that are working with wetlands, while in Mukono district several NGOs are active in environmental management and also deal with wetlands.

6.2.3 Comparing interaction and accountability

The governance system in Uganda involves politicians and civil servants who work at the various levels. The former chapter has described how those actors interact and rely on each other in both districts. If interaction and accountability between actors at the same governance level is considered, friction between civil servants and politicians is identified in both districts: In Kumi as well as in Mukono district, politicians of the district are said to constrain the work of civil servants because of a low knowledge on technical issues, what delays the decision-making on, for example, policy proposals. This hindrance of technocrats by politicians is also said to occur in Mukono's sub-county councils as a result of poor education of the politicians. Sub-county politicians and civil servants in Kumi say to work in harmony, except during election time, when politicians make promises to the voters which the technocrats can not implement.

Such kind of interference, politicians intervening with the work of technocrats, is occurring a lot at all levels in Mukono district. Especially when 'big investors', people who want to plan a large project somewhere in the district, are told by the civil servants to comply with wetland regulations, those civil servants are compelled by politicians for hindering those investors. Mukono district, being located close to the country's capital Kampala and having a higher industrialisation rate than Kumi district, attracts more big investors who plan a project or want to locate their businesses there. That in Mukono is more interference of the politicians in the work of the technocrats than is in Kumi, can be explained by the fact that Mukono's politicians get more offers for projects that want to locate in the district than politicians in Kumi do.

In both districts the actors of the different governance levels interact with each other. The lower levels bring up issues and information about their area to the higher governance level via planning processes and via the governance structure (e.g. sub-county councillors are all representing a parish). They rely again on the higher governance levels for technical assistance, enforcement support and the allocation of money. Due to several reasons, the district levels in Kumi and in Mukono can not always fulfil these expectations which results in lacking money, insufficient technical back-up and failure of enforcement in the sub-counties of both districts.

The abolishment of the graduated tax, through which local revenues have seriously declined, affects local levels in both districts. Local councils are now depending more on the higher governance levels for funding than they did before. But a lack of funding at the district results in lacking financial resources at the sub-county level through which parishes and villages also are constrained by a deficient in money.

In Mukono district, the district actors are also in other ways not always able to fulfil the expectations of the sub-county as far as assistance and the integration of issues into higher level planning is concerned. Sub-counties again do not adhere to the expectations of the lower levels. Actors in Mukono are thus not always downward accountable. Another example of this is the interference of not only politicians of the same governance level, but also higher politicians who interfere with the work of actors at lower levels.

Vertical as well as horizontal accountability of actors in Kumi and Mukono district towards other actors appeared to be important in decentralised wetland management for the functioning of these other actors: Actors are hindered in their work by the unaccountability of other actors. Unaccountability of actors is related with lacking capacity, e.g. limited human and financial resources and knowledge, but also with other interests of actors than the sustainability of the wetlands, such as money or votes. The next sub-paragraph discusses to what extent this has influenced how actors execute their responsibilities.

6.2.4 Comparing meeting responsibilities

The interaction between actors and the accountability of actors relates to whether or not actors are meeting their responsibilities. In both districts, actors at all levels said not to be able to meet their responsibilities because of a lack of financial resources and human resources. This constrains the work of actors at all levels. In most cases, this does not mean that actors do not carry out their tasks, but they are not doing it as much and as often as they should do. This does affect the management and use of wetlands. In both districts it was for example addressed that due to lacking facilitation and human and financial resources, the environmental officers did not always manage to monitor the wetlands in the district enough. As a result, activities in wetlands –constructing, encroachment, cultivation- can and are taking place without having an EIA being carried out.

Because of financial, human and facilitation constraints, actors are also hindered in meeting their responsibilities towards other actors (see former section). As far as enforcement is concerned, actors in both districts lack the power to put laws and regulations into effect. In Kumi district, actors at the village level fail to impose the wetland settlers to leave the wetlands, after which the sub-county is asked for assistance and after that the district. All levels have failed to solve the problem and as a result they are now waiting for NEMA to come in and assist. In Mukono district the problem of enforcement affects actors –and the wetlands- because politicians of the same or of higher levels interfere with the law and regulations. The ‘leave-big-people-alone’-policy is applied by politicians when big investors want to construct in the area.

Also, capacity building and sensitisation are not done sufficiently in both districts. People are not sufficiently aware of sustainable use of wetlands. In Mukono the village wetland committees are not working properly because of lacking facilitation and capacity building. Remarkable is that in the sub-counties where NGOs are active in community-based wetland management, the people are said to be very much aware of wise use, and that official actors could more easily take their responsibilities. In a way, non-governmental organisations have in these cases taken over the task of the government to sensitise the people, which has benefited wetland management and decentralised governance.

To sum, actors in Kumi and Mukono do not or can not meet all their responsibilities. Limited financial and human resources are the main factor why actors do not carry out their tasks. This lack of capacity affects the accountability of actors towards others. Other actors therefore can not meet their responsibilities in wetland management either. Some responsibilities -awareness raising, capacity building- of actors who are formally involved are taken over by informal actors, the non-governmental organisation.

6.3 Forms of decentralised wetland management in Kumi & Mukono district

In the theoretical chapters it is discussed that countries can implement different forms of decentralisation which gives various actors different powers: the form and extent of decentralisation. In chapter four, the total governance structure and the responsibilities of the different governance levels towards wetland management are discussed. This concerned decentralisation in Uganda as it is on paper. These two empirical chapters have so far described the actual decentralisation of wetland management as it is found in the two case study districts. This paragraph describes the forms of decentralised wetland management as it is found in practice.

Figure 6.1 below demonstrates the different forms of decentralisation and the governance levels that are relevant in wetland management in Kumi and Mukono district. The arrows show whether those forms of wetland management are decentralised or still centrally controlled from the top. The sections below clarify the figure.

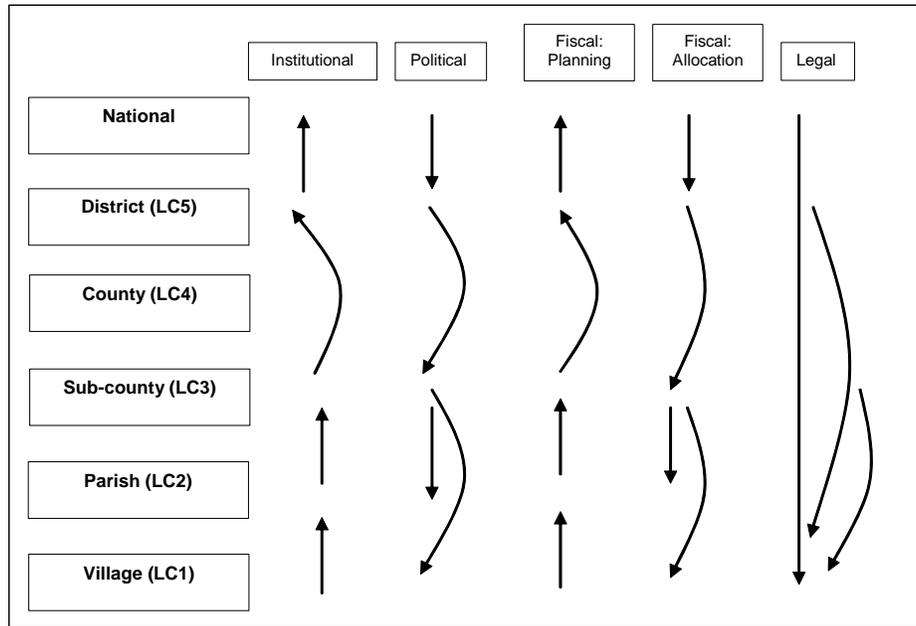


Figure 6.1: De facto forms of decentralised wetland management in Kumi and Mukono district

6.3.1 Institutional decentralisation of wetland management

Institutional decentralisation refers to the structure of local and intergovernmental administrative bodies, mechanisms and systems that are concerned with decentralisation to manage the interaction between different actors. Decentralisation reforms in Uganda have established a clear structure of local governance bodies and mechanisms to manage the interaction between the different governance bodies. Environmental and wetland regulations thereby further specified the structure for decentralised wetland management in Uganda.

In Kumi and Mukono district there is also a clear structure of local governance bodies that manages the interaction between the different actors and levels in wetland management: Villages, parishes, sub-counties and the districts are active in wetland management and interact and depend on each other for issues in wetland management. So, in these two districts, wetland management is institutionally decentralised. However, there is a difference between the formal institutional structure as it is described in chapter four. The county is not active at all in wetland management in the two districts, and the interaction from the sub-county to the higher level goes mainly directly to the district. Also, the Ugandan Constitution prescribes the establishment of environmental committees at the lower local level, the LECs. These are not present in both districts, but are integrated in other organs.

6.3.2 Political decentralisation of wetland management

Political decentralisation is described in part 2.1.3 as the political reform that enhances the empowerment of local government bodies with clear and adequate functions and resources. According to the formal regulations described in chapter four, the different local governmental bodies have clear functions in wetland management. Also the sub-paragraph above stated that in Kumi and Mukono district there is a clear structure of governance bodies. Those governance bodies and actors in wetland management are also aware of their functions and responsibilities in wetland management.

However, this does not mean that these governance bodies and actors have adequate resources to execute their functions. Actors in both districts have been given functions and responsibilities but these are not complemented with sufficient resources. For the resources to carry out their responsibilities, actors are still relying on higher governmental levels. They do not only rely on higher governmental levels for the aspect of funding, which will be addressed below, actors also depend on the higher governance levels for technical assistance and enforcement. Since the local levels are not sufficiently empowered with resources, and this sometimes also includes the district level, their capacity to carry out their tasks and responsibilities in wetland management is low. In practice, this results in higher government bodies overruling the lower governance levels in wetland management issues.

So, although decentralisation reforms have provided institutions and actors with functions and responsibilities towards wetland management at all levels, the lower-level actors are not empowered enough to carry out their tasks. Control is still at the higher governance levels, and eventually at the centre.

6.3.3 Fiscal decentralisation of wetland management

Fiscal decentralisation concerns the aspects of planning and the allocation of resources. In Kumi and Mukono district, the planning process is a bottom-up process: planning starts at the lowest level, the village, which is integrated in the parish planning. Parish planning is again integrated in the sub-county planning, which forms the basis for the district planning. Planning comprises the planning and budgeting of all activities, including activities of wetland management. Hence, wetland planning is decentralised to the lower levels in both districts.

Unlike the planning and budgeting, the allocation of resources appeared to be a top-down process. The villages and the parishes depend on the sub-counties for resources and the sub-county depend on the district again. The district, on its turn, depends on the national level for the resources that they can distribute among the sub-counties. In both districts, this money is 'earmarked': money is allocated to the lower levels for certain purposes that is determined by the centre.

The abolishment of the graduated tax last financial year meant a serious decrease in the local revenue collected by the local governments in both districts. Unlike the national government grants, local revenue can be used for whatever the local governments prioritises. In Mukono, the share of local revenue in the total budget is now 8%. In Kumi district, this is only 1%, meaning that the districts, and therewith the other governance levels, are almost fully depending on others for their resources. With the abolishment of the graduated tax, a decrease in local revenue also implied a decrease of autonomy over resources for all levels in the district.

To conclude, fiscal aspect of wetland management in Kumi and Mukono district is partly decentralised and partly still controlled by the centre.

6.3.4 Legal decentralisation of wetland management

Lower-local governments in Kumi and Mukono have the authority and are encouraged by the district to make by-laws concerning wetlands. These by-laws are explicitly defined for the wetlands in their sub-counties' jurisdiction and do not account in other parts of the district. Thereby, by-laws must be approved by the district before entering into force and must be in line with national regulations. The district also has the power to make specific laws, ordinances, for wetland management in their jurisdiction. Those must also be consistent with national wetland regulations.

The power to formulate by-laws and ordinances can be considered as a form of legal decentralisation, however, it hardly ever involves a bottom-up process, meaning that by-laws from a sub-county are hardly ever formed into a district's ordinance. In addition, by-laws and ordinances must be in line with

national regulations and legal policies from the centre are more powerful than the local by-laws or ordinances.

Thus, although local governments have the authority to make local laws and regulations, central laws are superior over those local laws, which makes the national government central in law-making.

6.4 Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities & threats of decentralised wetland management

So far, the ‘design’ of decentralised wetland management and the ‘processes’ that influence the decentralisation outcome in Kumi and Mukono district have been discussed. The question is how these aspects are influencing decentralised wetland management in Kumi and Mukono. This study has not actually measured the outcomes of decentralisation on wetland management but has examined what, according to the actors, the benefits and constraints of decentralised wetland management are. During the interviews actors were asked what in their opinion the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats are of having wetland management decentralised in their district. This paragraph presents the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in decentralised wetland management according to actors in Kumi and Mukono district.

6.4.1 Strengths in decentralised wetland management

In both districts decentralisation in general and also decentralisation of wetland management is appreciated greatly. Actors value the participatory role they have in deciding about issues in their area. That decentralisation has allowed people to manage their own resources and to prioritise issues that are of importance for them, is mentioned by almost all the actors in both districts as being a main strength of decentralisation. As one of the respondents in Kumi said: “decision-making is given *to us*, that is an important strength. That we are allowed to decide what is good for us” (J. Opolot, 2006, interview). The input of local people is taken into account since planning originates from the lowest level. This too makes people at the lowest level more concerned and ready to work on their problems (Angiro, 2006; Egau, 2006; Galübwa, 2006; Kakooza, 2006; S. Opolot, 2006; Semyalo, 2006: all interviews). Semyalo: “They feel part and person” in the decision making process.

Except for appreciation by the people, it was said in both districts that decisions can be better made at a lower level since people know better what the area needs and what is best for the area: “people who know the area decide about it, and they often want what is best for the area” (Sebugwawo, 2006, interview).

In Kumi district it was also mentioned by some actors that decentralisation reforms have provided the structures for local environmental management such as the DEO and focal point persons at lower local levels (Acam, 2006, interview; Ongaba, 2006, interview). The environmental services of the government are brought closer to the people and this has resulted in that people more easily go somewhere with their problems than within a central system. It is easier to see the impact of a programme or project and it enables people to respond to problems and degradation activities more easily and adequately than a central organ could do; the centre would have taken too much time to respond (Ikanut, 2006; Ongaba, 2006; S. Opolot, 2006: all interviews).

Overall, these positive aspects that decentralisation is said to have brought in Kumi and Mukono - empowerment of the people, including local knowledge, greater participation- are also said to have resulted in several improvements: environmental awareness is rising, environmental and wetland issues are integrated in the planning and people are in general more conscious about the responsibilities they have in wetland use than five to ten years ago. Being included in the decision-making process about their resources, it was said that people value the wetland more (Birigenda, 2006;

Mugerwa, 2006; S. Opolot, 2006; Sebugwawo, 2006: all interviews). S. Opolot: “People have now picked an interest in wetland management.” They became more aware and tend to use it more sustainably. Without decentralisation “it [degradation] would have been much worse than it is now” (Ongaba, 2006, interview).

6.4.2 *Weaknesses in decentralised wetland management*

Although the respondents said to be quite pleased with the powers that decentralisation has given them in wetland management, they also identified some weaknesses of decentralised wetland management. The weaknesses can be generally divided in a lack of human and financial resources, lack of enforcement power and inter-jurisdictional inequity.

Lack of human and financial resources

The main weakness of a decentralised wetland management mentioned by all actors in Kumi and Mukono district is without a doubt the lack of human and financial resources: “Lacking resources are affecting all the levels” (Okiror, 2006, interview).

Due to a lack of funding at all lower governance levels, most actors are constrained in fulfilling their responsibilities. This affects other actors as well: Because of lacking funds at the district level, lower-local councils do not receive enough funding either and the local revenue in both districts is often not sufficient to fill the gap (Opolot, 2006, interview; Semyalo, 2006, interview).

Thereby, it is said that centrally arranged funding is constraining wetland management: On the one hand, local levels have insufficient funds to meet their responsibilities, on the other hand, the local councils can not decide about how they spent the money that they receive. An actor at sub-county level criticised decentralisation for that they do have the responsibility to plan and budget for activities, but that the allocation of money for these activities is not done: “things are not properly decentralised” (Mwebaze, 2006, interview). In both districts this means that for wetland management a relatively low amount of money is allocated. The lack of fiscal decentralisation is felt as a constraint for adequate performance at the lower level: governments still depend on the higher level for their resources and can therefore not do what they would like to.

In addition, lacking human resources are also constraining wetland management. The structural arrangements for employment at the district are limited in Kumi: there is arranged for two environmental officers at the district level, of which the district has so far failed to attract the second environmental officer. So, there is only one skilled person for environmental and wetland issues at the district who is not able to fulfil all the tasks of the environmental office. Furthermore, people with adequate education and skills tend to move out of the district looking for another job, as happened with Kumi’s former senior environmental officer. Although the district in Mukono has two district environmental officers and a wetland officer, this is also said not to be enough to fulfil all tasks and responsibilities in wetland management throughout the district. According to one of the actors in Kumi district, there is a “technical capacity gap” at the district level (Opolot, 2006, interview). This is also found in Mukono district: The technical staff at the district level is very well skilled and capable to do their job, but there is not enough staff and not enough resources for those who are available to carry out their duty (Nakimbugwe, 2006, interview; Ogaram, 2006, interview).

Also at the lower-local levels there is not enough staff. The structural arrangements for Kumi have not provided for an environmental officer at local level. Task and responsibilities concerning environment and wetlands are therefore designated to a focal point person. Also in Mukono there is not always one specific person responsible for natural resources. Thereby, this is worsened by the low capacity of some actors at the lower-local levels: due to lacking resources people do not get adequate training or education to perform their tasks. At the village level, for example, the committees are not trained. This results in the fact that wetlands are not always taken care of or represented in the lower-local councils.

The capacity of actors for integrating wetland issues is rather low: Wetland management activities are said to be poorly integrated in policies at lower levels (Ikanut, 2006; Musaka, 2006; Mwebaze, 2006: all interviews).

Hence, decentralisation has provided people with powers and responsibilities, but this is not complemented with resources and capacity building to carry out those responsibilities.

Lack of enforcement power

Besides the lack of human and financial resources, another weakness of decentralised wetland management in both districts is said to be the lack of enforcement power at the local level. In Kumi this mainly concerns the problem of the 'wetland settlers', since local councils are not able to enforce the settlers not to encroach in the wetland. People are directly affected by the intruders and are therefore greatly concerned with this problem. It is said that "people create a negative attitude towards (national) policy because the policy is not clear and there are no good laws for intruders of the wetlands from the west" (Kapir sub-county headquarters, 2006, interview).

Also in Mukono district various actors are not able to ensure proper use of the wetlands in their area because they lack the power to enforce people to stick to the law. In Mukono, this also concerns political interference. In both districts, actors who are not able to impose compliance with laws or regulations on people, pass it through to the higher level and eventually rely on the centre, most of the time NEMA, to come in and impose compliance. It would be far more efficient if the district could do it their selves.

However, one of the DEOs in Mukono does not perceive the lack of enforcement power as a constraint: If the local actors would have the final enforcement powers they could be constrained by a politician if they want to oblige one of the 'big people' to stick to the regulations, and NEMA would not come in to let them obey. Due to the lack of enforcement power, assistance of NEMA is required now who can, if they come, be more successful (Nakimbugwe, 2006, interview). Though, the lack of judicial power also constrains actors to prevent intervention from higher politicians. If legal power of local councils was greater, they could stop people to disobey the law without being hampered by politicians (Galübwa, 2006, interview; Mwebaze, 2006, interview).

To sum, decentralisation reforms in Uganda have transferred certain powers and responsibilities to the lower level, but "this is not complemented with sufficient funding, authority and other resources" (Ongaba, 2006 interview). The lack of full decentralisation is felt as a constraint for actors to have successful management of wetland resources.

Inter-jurisdictional inequity

A different weakness of decentralised wetland management mentioned only in Kumi, is the lack of uniformity between jurisdictions (Okiror, 2006, interview; Ongaba, 2006, interview). Although there are national guidelines and regulations for wetlands, districts can plan and implement their own activities and priorities. This however lacks uniformity of interventions between different districts or sub-counties with a shared wetland. For example, Kumi district can prohibit certain activities in or near the wetlands of Lake Bisina, a transboundary lake in the districts Kumi, Katakwi and Soroti, but if the other districts are not prohibiting these activities in their jurisdiction it can still affect the quality of the lake and the wetlands in Kumi district. According to some district actors, the central government has failed to take care of such issues (Ikanut, 2006, interview; Ongaba, 2006, interview). In Mukono this aspect is not mentioned. Whether or not they have this problem is not known, but it is possible that this is not of their concern because Mukono district is located upstream of a river basin while the water resources in Kumi stem from other districts.

6.4.3 Opportunities in decentralised wetland management

Despite the weaknesses, people in Kumi and Mukono district are positive about the prospects of decentralisation and wetland management. Most actors in wetland management see opportunities for a more sustainable wetland management.

First of all, the presence of structures for environmental and wetland management at the district and lower-local levels are mentioned in both districts as an opportunity for the future. Wetland management is quite a new practice but the changes that have been caused by decentralisation promise a lot for the future (Sebugwawo, 2006, interview). In Kumi, it has so far succeeded in restoring and conserving some of the wetlands (Ikanut, 2006, interview; Ongaba, 2006, interview). Thereby, people are said to be willing and motivated to make wetland management and decentralisation work (Nannozi, 2006, interview; J. Opolot, 2006, interview). Nannozi: “There are people in office that want to move the coin.”

However, the present structures must be strengthened by training and capacity building of technical staff and the decision-makers. Lower levels and wetland committees should also be strengthened to improve wetland management at these levels (Acam, 2006; Ikanut, 2006; Okiror, 2006: all interviews). Sensitisation and capacity building activities of governmental actors and citizens, although not sufficiently done, make actors at all levels more aware, and this is believed to improve sustainable use of wetland (Egau, 2006; Ikanut, 2006; J. Opolot, 2006: all interviews).

NGOs are in both districts perceived as an opportunity to improve wetland management. In Kumi, the programs for community-based wetland management that are supported by NGOs showed good results and are considered to be important in funding and organising awareness raising activities to ensure more sustainable wetland use (Okiror, 2006, interview; J. Opolot, 2006, interview). According to the focal point person of environment in Kanyum sub-county, the sub-county in which a CBWMP has been created: “More CBOs can help” (Okiror, 2006, interview). Also in Mukono the community-based wetland management programs are mentioned as one of the opportunities to complement decentralisation in order to get better wetland management (Mukasa, 2006, interview). Assistance of NGOs can help such programs to have a better outcome of decentralised governance, not only in wetland management, but also in other sectors (Mulindwa, 2006, interview).

What the lack of funding is concerned, and the dissatisfaction about the lacking control over financial resources, actors also mentioned some opportunities for this. It is said that the many donors on which the government of Uganda relies for assistance, support full decentralisation. This is hopeful for further decentralisation of important aspects such as fiscal and legal decentralisation (Semyalo, 2006, interview). But finding a new or different source of revenue is also seen as an opportunity to have better -at least better financed- wetland management. Kumi district is already exploring other possible revenues such as a property tax. However, implementation of such a tax is a long process and will probably find some resistance from the citizens (J. Opolot, 2006, interview).

6.4.4 Threats in decentralised wetland management

Besides the multiple opportunities the actors have mentioned, there are also a few threats that, in contrast, endanger a more sustainable wetland management. Although one of the strengths of decentralised wetland management mentioned was the change in awareness and consciousness about environmental issues, actors also identified that environmental awareness is not enough yet, and that this threatens wetland management if it will not change (Birigenda, 2006; Lugobobi, 2006; Mwebaze, 2006; Nannozi, 2006: all interviews). Mwebaze: “People don’t care so much. They don’t see the immediate effects and can often not imagine what ‘long-term’ is. Environment is not taken seriously enough and more sensitisation is needed.” Also, people are ignorant; they are sensitised by newspapers and radio but still work illegally in the wetlands and degrade the wetlands (Nannozi, 2006, interview).

But not all problems with wetlands can be solved within the area of wetland management. Some external issues can be serious threats for future wetland management practices. The two main threats mentioned by almost all actors are poverty and population growth.

Related with ignorance is the issue of poverty. Poverty makes people less interested in the consequences of unsustainable wetland use for the future. Their concern is making a living today. As is said, many people make a livelihood out of the wetlands and as long as there are no alternative sources of income it will be hard to forbid people in the wetlands (Nannozi, 2006, interview; Sebugwawo, 2006, interview). Acam (2006, interview): “If you ask someone why they mismanage the wetland, they say they have no way out. There is no alternative. If there is no alternative, you can’t ban someone from the wetland.” And Musaka (2006, interview): “people lack essential needs and can nowhere else go than use the wetland.”

Also population growth threatens sustainable wetland use. Population growth is high and with an increased population, there will be not enough land available for everyone to make a living, therewith enforcing people to encroach on wetlands. Ongaba (2006, interview): “High population growth pushes people into the wetlands.” This will not only threaten the wetland itself, but can also cause conflict between different user means; grazers, rice cultivators, fishers and brick makers can not all use the same wetland (Birigenda, 2006; Ikanut, 2006; Nannozi, 2006; Semyalo, 2006: all interviews).

Poverty reduction and population growth are issues that should be more seriously addressed in the districts. For example, by programmes for family planning, and training on how wetlands can assist in eradicating poverty.

In Mukono, the location of the district is also indirectly threatening sustainable wetland management. Due to the fact that Mukono is close to the capital city Kampala, the district attracts many migrants and industries. Population growth is one of the highest in the country as is already mentioned, but industrialisation is also growing rapidly. The increased number of industries and population need more and more space and this threatens the existence of the wetlands as well as other natural resources

6.5 Conclusions on decentralised wetland management in Kumi & Mukono district

The case studies on decentralised wetland management in Kumi and Mukono district have given an insight in how decentralisation of wetland management has been conducted in those districts and which aspects are influencing the process of decentralisation and also the results for wetland management. According to the results presented in the former parts, what can be concluded about the decentralisation of wetland management in Kumi and Mukono district? And how does this relate with what is found in the literature? This paragraph analyses the results of the comparative case study on the basis of the figure of decentralisation of natural resource management that is presented in the theoretical chapters. In figure 6.2 below the basis of figure 3.1 is applied to the results of this study on decentralised wetland management in Kumi and Mukono district.

The figure aims to show the aspects that are of influence in decentralised wetland management in the two districts. The green boxes are the variables that are of influence on the design of decentralisation of wetland management in Uganda; the yellow boxes are aspects that influence the process of decentralisation in wetland management. The ‘outcomes box’ is not marked because this research has not studied the outcomes as such.

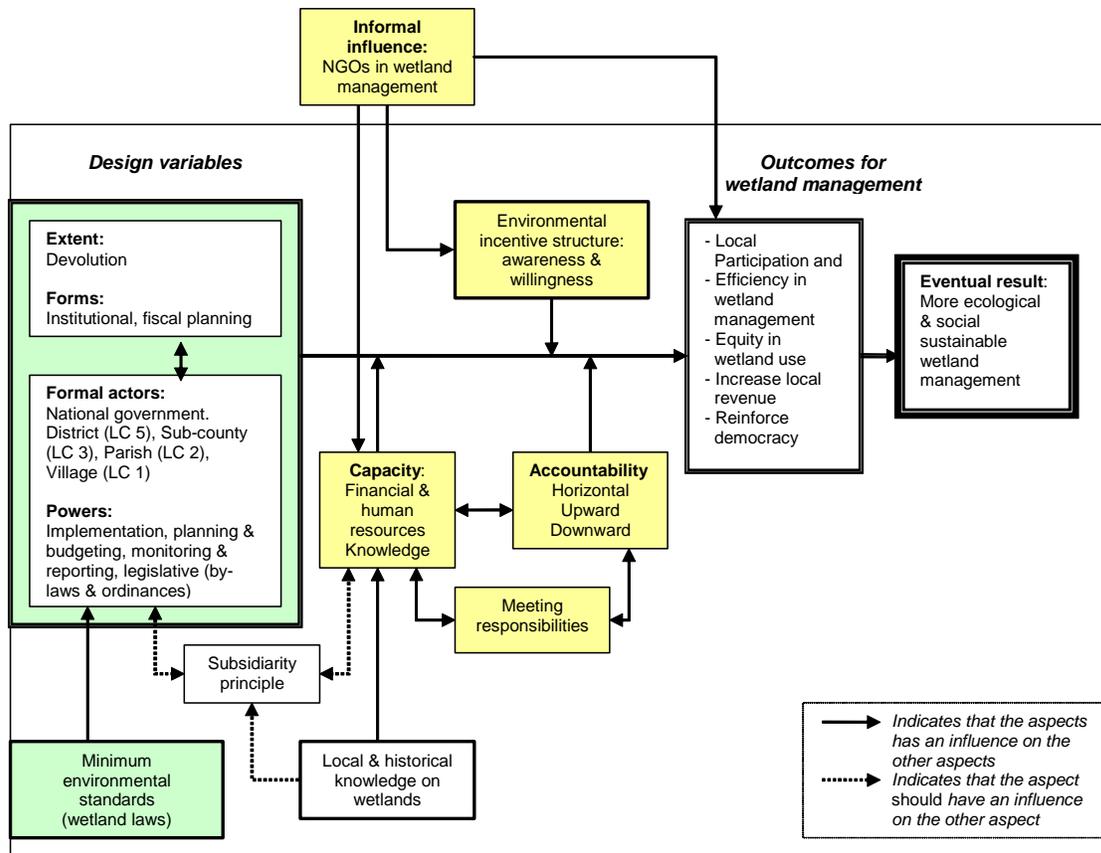


Figure 6.2: Decentralisation of wetland management in Kumi and Mukono district applied to the theoretical framework

First the design variables that constitute decentralisation are discussed, after that the variables that are of influence on the process and finally it is analysed how this is of influence on the outcomes of decentralised wetland management in Uganda that are discussed in the former paragraph.

6.5.1 The design variables

The design variables in figure 6.2 again show the extent and forms of decentralisation. Institutional decentralisation has established the structures and bodies or actors to conduct local governance at different levels in the district. The local councils are democratically elected by the people and not by the centre. This makes the extent of decentralisation a form of devolution, since powers are decentralised to autonomous local governments. Local governments are not appointed by the centre or do not have to be responsive to the higher governments, as with deconcentration, although the local councils do rely on the centre for some essential issues, which will be discussed below.

Besides institutional decentralisation, Kumi's and Mukono's wetland management is also decentralised in fiscal planning. Political power, the allocation of resources and the legal aspects in wetland management are mainly still centrally arranged, as is also illustrated in figure 6.1.

The extent and forms have determined which powers are decentralised to which actors in wetland management. As is said, the institutional arrangements have established local governance structures. Besides the national government, the district (LC 5), sub-county (LC 3), parish (LC 2) and village (LC 1) level have actors and tasks in wetland management within their jurisdiction. These tasks are the

implementation of wetland policies and regulation, planning and budgeting for activities in wetland management (fiscal planning), the monitoring and reporting and the making of by-laws and ordinances by, respectively, the sub-county and the district. However, there are national wetland laws and regulations with which the local governments must comply in wetland management.

As far as the centrally determined laws and regulations of wetland management is concerned, this can in a way be regarded as the minimum environmental standards that are, according to some scholars, needed in order to safeguard the environmental and natural resources that a local government has control over. According to one of the interviewees that is working outside the decentralised arena, such central guidelines are indeed good to specify the domain in which local governments can make their own local laws and regulations (Drazu, 2006, interview).

With regard to the other forms of decentralisation, among others, Smoke (2003) has argued that without full decentralisation, other decentralised tasks can not be carried out properly. A combination of political, institutional and fiscal decentralisation is necessary for a successful outcome of decentralisation. Also the powers that are decentralised with the different forms of decentralisation should be unrestricted. Representation of local actors is said to be 'empty' without adequate transfer of powers (Ribot, 2002). According to the subsidiarity principle, this adequate transfer of powers and responsibilities is the transfer of these powers that can be carried out at a lower level, in order to have the most ecological and social sustainable natural resource management. However, out the results is shown that actors from local governments in Kumi and Mukono district are not always able to carry out their tasks in wetland management; they have received more powers and responsibilities than they can exercise in reality. Does this mean that there is too much decentralised in Uganda's wetland management?

6.5.2 The process variables

It appeared that the reason why actors do not always meet their responsibilities is depending on different aspects. On the one hand they lack sufficient capacity to fulfil their tasks. Limited human and financial resources constrain the work of many actors. But also knowledge on wetland management at especially the lower levels is low: People can not carry out their tasks in wetland management because they are not trained how to do it. It is the task of the higher governmental levels to build capacity and raise awareness at the lower level, but they have failed to do it. As a result, actors at the lower-local level, e.g. at the sub-county level, also fail to meet their responsibilities towards others. So, because higher governmental actors are not accountable in wetland management to the lower levels, in providing funding, training and assistance, the capacity of actors to soundly manage the wetlands at these levels is too low, which causes again that these actors can not meet their responsibilities and are not-accountable to others.

In the literature on decentralised natural resource management, see chapter three, local historical knowledge on the use and management of natural resources is said to be important in the management of resources and this is said to make natural resources in particular suitable for local management. Local historical knowledge on wetlands has not appeared to be important in the management of wetlands in Kumi and Mukono district: overall awareness on sustainable use was low and there were no indications that people are using traditional knowledge for using the wetlands. Recall (chapter one) that wetland were used to be seen as a menace in Uganda and that people started to use the wetlands at the time that population growth forced them to. There probably is thus not really such thing as historical use and knowledge that increases the knowledge on sustainable use of wetlands.

Overall, this low knowledge and capacity also affects the awareness of people and the willingness to work on sustainable wetland management. People in Kumi and Mukono district appeared to have a

low awareness on sustainable wetland use and this decreases the overall incentive structure for people to invest time and money in sound wetland management.

Linking back to the subsidiarity principle, actors at the lower level do not have sufficient knowledge and capacity to manage their wetlands and, according to the principle, responsibilities that can not be taken by the lower level should be carried out at a higher level. However, in wetland management in Uganda, the centre has hampered to fully decentralise wetland management and to assist and built capacity on the lower level through which they lack the capacity to fulfil their tasks. If the higher governments would be accountable to the lower governments, their capacity to fulfil their tasks would be higher and, if the subsidiarity principle would be applied, it should be sustained to have local governments involved in wetland management.

Also, actors are influenced by other actors that informally exercise powers in wetland management: The first are the big investors. In industrialised areas they have an influence on the decision-makers and therewith interfere in wetland management. The second group of actors are the NGOs. In Kumi as well as Mukono district they have informally taken over some responsibilities -awareness raising, capacity building- of the local governments. In both districts this has a positive result; people at the lower level are capable of managing the wetlands in places where NGOs have undertaken community-based management projects. NGOs are better able to attract money from donors than governmental bodies do and are therefore capable of undertaking these activities. Through these projects, people are also more aware of the importance of sustainable wetland use. Awareness and willingness has increased and the environmental incentive structure to make environmental sound decisions is higher.

In sum, the capacity and accountability of actors determine whether or not actors meet their responsibilities. But the accountability of higher-level actors also is related to the capacity that is present at the lower level. The subsidiarity principle does not seem to bring an outcome in this situation: The experiences with NGOs in Kumi and Mukono district show that local actors are able to manage wetlands as long as they are trained on how to do it, but if the principle of subsidiarity is applied to other local actors, who are not trained, one is tempted to conclude that their capacity is too low to have tasks and responsibilities in wetland management.

6.5.3 The outcomes of decentralised wetland management

The outcomes of decentralisation of wetland management, as far as examined, are diverse: People appreciate the empowerment of local people and believe their input and participation has actually caused some positive changes. These positive changes are not necessarily caused by the input of local historical knowledge on the wetlands in their areas that, according to the literature, is expected to be helpful in decentralised natural resource management. The positive changes are rather considered to be caused by the local interests of people that are at stake: Because people depend on wetlands for their livings they have a higher interest in the resource and therefore force more sustainable and equitable decision-making for wetlands. Although a lacking awareness has resulted in a low interest in wetlands, people also believed that wetlands have benefited from a decentralised management. However, the lack of financial and human resources and insufficient authority at the lower levels is constraining a sound management of wetlands now.

In the theoretical chapter it is addressed that central governments often resist transferring powers to the lower level. Also in the case of wetland management in Kumi and Mukono, the central government has not transferred all the adequate powers to the lower level: fiscal responsibilities and enforcement powers are lacking at the lower levels. This lack of full decentralisation is felt as a constraint for actors to have successful management of wetland resources. It is argued, that without full decentralisation,

other decentralised tasks can not be carried out properly, is indeed noticed in Kumi and Mukono, where the decentralised forms of wetland management are not functioning well due to insufficient decentralisation of all relevant powers.

The interference of outside investors or industries who are interested in natural resources does also in Mukono affect wetland management. A combination of a lack of legal power and politicians who are unaccountable to the civil servants causes these investors to have an influence on the wetlands, which has had negative results in Mukono district.

Despite that lacking awareness and capacity, unaccountability of actors to their powers and other actors, insufficient power transfers and interference from outside investors in wetland management, decentralisation is expected by almost all actors to improve and bring more benefits to wetland management. NGOs are perceived as an important actor in enabling a more sustainable wetland management at the lower level. However, NGOs are not necessarily a sustainable solution to the lacking capacity and awareness at the lower level. In Mukono district quite some NGOs were active in wetland management, but in Kumi on the other hand, there are hardly any NGOs concerned with wetland management. NGOs are, at least in Kumi, said to be sensitive for donor preferences since they depend on those donors for funding. NGOs, although shown to be very beneficial in decentralised wetland management, are not a certain actor to rely on for sustainable wetland management. Still, it is very useful to consider NGOs' contribution to wetland management and for local governments to try to construct a joint management of wetlands.

7. CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Introduction

This research started with the objective to give an in depth description of decentralised wetland management in Uganda. A central research question is formulated and several sub-questions - theoretical, descriptive and analytical- have been posed in order to answer the main research question. The theory of decentralisation and decentralised natural resource management, which is discussed in chapter two and three, is used to describe and analyse the decentralisation of wetland management in Uganda. The empirical chapters four and five have presented these results of the case studies that describe the decentralisation of wetland management in Uganda, and in chapter six these results have been compared and analysed.

This leads to the last chapter: conclusions, discussion and recommendations. What can be concluded about decentralised wetland management from the results that have been presented in this research? To what extent have the used theory and the research -strategy and areas- been able to provide a profound insight in how decentralised wetland management in Kumi and Mukono is conducted? And what can be said, according to the results, about wetland management in other districts of Uganda and about other forms of environmental and natural resource management? How can decentralisation and wetland management in Uganda be improved?

7.2 Decentralised wetland management: Sustainable or not?

In this paragraph an answer to the main research question *To what extent is wetland management decentralised in Uganda's districts and what are the main strengths and weaknesses of a decentralised wetland management for the environmental protection of wetlands?* will be formulated. This main research question actually exists of two parts: the first part of the question concerns the way wetland management is decentralised; the forms and the extent of decentralisation. The second part of the question concerns the strengths and weaknesses, or in other words the effects that the decentralisation of wetland management has had on the wetlands.

7.2.1 Conclusions on the extent of decentralised wetland management

Several laws, acts and regulations have formally decentralised wetland management to the lower levels in Uganda. The decentralisation reforms in Uganda have provided for the structures and actors or bodies to conduct governance at the local level. Except for the county level (LC 4), the village (LC 1), parish (LC 2), sub-county (LC 3) and the district (LC 5) all have clear tasks and responsibilities towards wetland management. These decentralisation reforms involve different forms of management: Actors at lower levels have received responsibilities concerning the implementation of the wetlands policies and regulations in their jurisdiction, the planning and budgeting for wetland management. The local governments (district and sub-county) can make by-laws and ordinances for wetland problems in their jurisdictions. Though these tasks - implementation, planning and budgeting and making by-laws - have to be carried out in consistency with the national laws, planning and regulations.

From the research that is conducted in Kumi and Mukono district, it appeared that in practice decentralised wetland management is different from formal legislation. The fiscal aspect of planning

and budgeting in the two districts indeed is a bottom-up process: Planning and budgeting for activities in wetland management starts at the village level. These plans are integrated in the parish level, whose planning is again the basis for wetland planning in the sub-county which eventually goes to the district. However, it depends on the higher levels which of the planning aspects of the lower levels are integrated in the actual planning of the higher level. And due to the abolishment of the graduated tax that used to be collected by local governments, the fiscal aspect of allocating money now is centrally controlled; the actors at the lower levels depend on the higher levels for funding. This has resulted in that the local levels depend on the centre as of which of the activities they have planned and budgeted for can actually be carried out. So, the planning and budgeting of activities in wetland management may be a bottom-up processes, the activities that can be implemented are arranged from the top to the lower levels.

Also legal arrangements are centrally controlled: The district and sub-county local governments have the mandate to make ordinances and by-laws for the wetlands in their specific jurisdictions, but the national laws and regulations are overruling these by-laws and ordinances.

In practice it also appeared that the local levels are not sufficiently legally empowered to enforce compliance with laws and regulations and rely for enforcement on the higher governance levels and eventually the centre. In Kumi district for example, actors have problems with enforcing wetland settlers to comply with the wetland laws and regulations and need assistance from higher governance levels. Also technical assistance and capacity building for wetland management are matters for which the lower level is depending on the centre.

In a way, this reliance of the lower governmental levels on the higher governmental levels in wetland management issues, allows these higher levels to influence or interfere with the work of the lower levels, which they also do: Higher governance levels often fail to provide the lower levels with funding, capacity building, assistance in technical back-up and enforcement, and sometimes even interfere with lower levels' management by imposing decisions that are made by the higher levels. This was the case in Mukono district, where (higher) politicians sometimes interfere with the work of the civil servants if 'big investors' are involved.

Hence, the extent to which wetland management is decentralised is not so straightforward. Although some forms of wetland management are formally decentralised, such as the institutions that are established and the planning and budgeting of activities, other crucial forms of decentralisation, i.e. financial and legal powers, are still controlled by the higher governance levels and the centre. So, wetland management is not fully decentralised in Uganda.

In terms of devolution or deconcentration, it can be said that the decentralisation of wetland management that is present in Uganda is a form of devolution, since powers are decentralised to autonomous local governments who have been democratically elected by the people and not by the centre. But although the local governments are not appointed by the centre or have to be responsive to the higher governments -as with deconcentration- they do rely on them for some essential issues which are mentioned above. The centre does still control these important aspects in wetland management, which makes the local governments implementers of central wetland plans and policies.

7.2.2 Conclusions on the outcomes of decentralisation for wetland management

The second part of the main research question concerns the effects that the extent and forms of decentralised wetland management have had on the management of the wetlands.

Let's first recall the initial objectives for the decentralisation reforms in Uganda that are mentioned in chapter four. These objectives for decentralisation of the Ugandan government are multiple: In general decentralisation aimed to have more participation in governance at the lower level which should result

in improved accountability and effectiveness and should free local actors from central constraints in order to have a locally adapted organisation and a local structure for linking tax payment with service delivery (MoLG, 2003). Decentralisation of environmental and natural resource management furthermore aims to have local participation in the development of plans and policies in management of the environment (NEMA, 2006). If decentralisation of wetland management is considered, have those objectives been achieved?

In Kumi and Mukono district these decentralisation reforms have indeed enabled local people to participate in the management of wetlands. Actors at the lowest governance level have received tasks and responsibilities in the management of wetlands within their jurisdiction. The structures that are established, the institutional decentralisation, in environmental and also in wetland management are seen as a strength of the decentralisation reforms, and also the empowerment of the local people is highly appreciated by those people. However, actors appeared not always to be able to fulfil the tasks and responsibilities towards wetland management that decentralisation has given them. In both Kumi and Mukono district, it appeared that decentralisation of wetland management has some constraining factors for the execution of sound wetland management.

First of all, both districts are constraint by a lack of adequate funding: the task and responsibilities that have been devolved to the districts and lower-local governments are not complemented with sufficient resources. Due to this, actors do not have enough resources and facilitation to sufficiently monitor the wetlands -which causes degradation- and to realise the implementation of enough activities for wetland management such as sensitisation of users and government actors on wetland use and management or capacity building and providing other local councils with technical back-up.

The functioning of wetland management in the districts is furthermore constrained by a lack of enforcement power and lacking capacity of actors at the lower levels, which is caused by insufficient building of capacity for wetland management and low awareness at the lower level. These constraints seriously influence the capacity of the actors involved, which also affects their accountability to their tasks and to other actors. This mutual relation of low capacity and unaccountability again results in a low capacity and unaccountable behaviour of other actors and a failure to meet responsibilities in wetland management.

As is said above, wetland management is not fully decentralised. There is not a local structure for tax payments that provide local governments with the revenue for local service delivery. Local governments and councils are still not freed 'from central constraints' as the objectives of decentralisation in Uganda have aimed at. Local people do participate in the development of plans and policies in management of wetlands, but to what extent these plans and policies from the lower levels are adhered to and which of those plans eventually can be carried out is still in control of the higher levels.

7.2.3 Conclusions on decentralised wetland management

What does this imply for the environmental protection of wetlands? And is decentralisation an effective tool for wetland management?

The weaknesses that have been identified for decentralised wetland management seriously constrain the functioning of local governments in the sound management of the wetlands. Lacking resources and powers, low capacity, unaccountability to tasks and other actors and not meeting responsibilities causes that wetland management at all levels is not functioning well. Although the actual effects of wetland management on the quality of the wetlands have not been assessed, it is said by the respondents that these weaknesses of decentralised wetland management result in the degradation of the wetlands. Hence, the decentralised wetland management system as it is does not provide for an

environmentally sustainable management of the wetlands. However, it was also mentioned by the respondents that they believe that without decentralisation, so with wetland management being a central responsibility, the situation of the wetlands would be much worse than it is now. They do believe that local management is the most sustainable for the wetlands. So, although local actors are constrained in having sound wetland management, a centralised management is not an alternative.

Furthermore, it appeared that in the wetlands where local people are taught and sensitised in wetland management -these are the wetlands where people have been assisted by NGOs and CBWMPs- people do have sufficient knowledge and capacity to manage and use the wetlands sustainably. Although not perfect, the condition of these wetlands is said to be better than of the other wetlands in the region. It seems to be possible to have a local or decentralised management of wetlands, provided that the system that enables this should be well-developed and should provide the local levels with sufficient facilitation in order to enable people to carry out their tasks. If the design of decentralisation and the assistance from the higher governments would be more adequate to what the local levels need in order to function well (see 7.3.2 and 7.4.1 for a discussion on the adequate design), the capacity of actors can be sufficient to carry out their tasks towards the management of wetlands and towards other actors which makes actors more accountable in meeting their responsibilities. This can enhance an efficient and more sustainable wetland management.

7.3 Discussion

This paragraph aims to reflect on this research by discussing the research strategy that is used, the theoretical framework that is used in this research, and to elaborate on the broader setting in which this research is conducted.

7.3.1 Discussion on the research strategy

It is noted in the theoretical chapters that decentralisation reforms as they are described in constitutional arrangements often differ from how decentralised governance is working in practice. In order to study and evaluate the actual decentralisation of Uganda's wetland management, only a study of the laws, regulations and policies on decentralisation and wetland management in Uganda would not have been sufficient to get a sound idea of how decentralisation in Uganda is really working. This research has therefore conducted a comparative case study to the forms and effects of the decentralisation of wetland management in Kumi and Mukono district.

Doing a case study provides the possibility to intensely study a case, which should give a profound insight of the subject. The case studies that are done in Kumi and Mukono district have indeed enabled to study wetland management in the two districts deeply; the views of a considerable number of different actors that are involved in wetland management at all the levels have been taken into account. This has given a detailed overview of the way actors behave in wetland management and how they overall perceive wetland management. Interviews with those actors have given a detailed insight on how wetlands are managed in the two districts and what the strong and weak points of decentralised wetland management are.

However, one of the objectives of (democratic) decentralisation is that decision-makers are accountable to the needs and requirements of the local people in order to achieve the efficiency and equity benefits in local service delivery. This study has not researched the opinion of local people about the extent to which actors are accountable to them. Though, it is known that there is a high turnover of politicians at all levels. But whether or not this is because actors have been unaccountable and are therefore not voted back is not known. Whether or not politicians are re-elected can also

depend on for example cultural factors and does not necessarily reflect the appreciation of people towards the politician. Still, the democratic processes at the lower levels might not have been studied, the structures that the decentralisation reforms in Uganda have established also include actors at the grass-root level: The lowest governance level in Uganda, the village level, is such a low level that it actually involves the 'local people'. The councillors in the Local Council 1 are part of these 'local people' and this makes it most likely that they also represent, and thus are accountable to the local needs and requirements.

Another aspect of wetland management that has not been assessed in this research is the actual effect of the management practices on the condition of the wetlands. During the field research differences between the condition of different wetlands could be noticed; some looked exceptionally healthy and lively, others were converted to such an extent that it was hardly a wetland anymore. However, the research has not actually taken this into consideration. The views of the actors that are involved in wetland management are the basis for determining whether or not the decentralisation of wetland management in an area is beneficial for the environmental condition of the wetlands.

The comparison of decentralised wetland management in Kumi and Mukono district has in the first place been beneficial for the broader understanding of decentralised wetland management. The second reason to do a comparative case study was to find possible differences and similarities in the features and effects of decentralisation. The outcomes in the two districts do not differ much, however: in both districts the strengths and the weaknesses that are mentioned by the actors involved are more or less similar, whereas the districts do differ somewhat in their characteristics. The only characteristic that does make a difference in the management of wetlands is the higher rate of industrialisation in Mukono district. By this Mukono district appeared to be more sensitive for political interference in management practices, which causes more construction in the wetlands.

7.3.2 Decentralisation as a theory

This research has used the concept of decentralisation of governance and decentralisation of natural resource management in specific as a framework to evaluate the decentralisation of wetland management in Uganda's Kumi and Mukono district. Within decentralisation literature there are advocates and opponents of decentralisation of natural resource management. The way in which the theoretical chapter has dealt with decentralisation did not plea for or against decentralisation; it has tried to be neutral concerning this matter and to recognise aspects that are of importance in decentralisation. The aspects that have been identified from the literature that exists on decentralisation and decentralised natural resource management have enabled to assess decentralised wetland management in Uganda. However, using the aspects of this theory in examining decentralised wetland management does leave some other issues of importance out: This way of analysis of decentralised wetland management has not assessed the outcomes of decentralisation in terms of ecological and social sustainability of the wetland. But the overall objective of the research was to give an indepth description of how decentralisation was functioning to broaden the understanding of decentralised governance in Uganda. Analysing the aspects that are of importance in the decentralisation design and process is an adequate approach to examine how decentralised wetland management is working.

Analysis according to the aspects that are identified in the theory does also not include thorough assessment of the initial ideas that can be the base for decentralisation reforms. In the used literature the initial ideas where decentralisation reforms originate from is also said to be of influence on the decentralisation design. Neo-liberal objectives of decentralisation reforms originate from the idea that liberalisation, market deregulation and privatisation should be supported in development. For natural resources management this means that efficient resource use is stimulated which can result in more

commercial use of the resources. A different objective of decentralisation can be the promotion of good governance: increasing accountability and transparency and ensuring the interests of local people in natural resources. The objective behind decentralisation reforms can influence the design of decentralisation: Neo-liberals could propose privatisation as a form of decentralisation, while promoters of good governance would recommend empowerment of local people. This can also influence the outcomes: equitable local management or ensuring commercial interests in natural resources and which can lead to exploitation. These initial ideas or objectives of decentralisation reforms are not thoroughly researched, although the primary objectives of the Ugandan government for the decentralisation reforms are addressed. These objectives are to have more local participation in management issues and also in natural resource management and to free local governance from central constraints. The starting position for decentralisation is rather to achieve better governance than privatisation of natural resources. The effect this has had on wetland management is not assessed.

Although it is not the main objective of the research to complement the existing discussion with statements for or against decentralisation, the results do provide the possibility to discuss this. The next paragraph with recommendations makes suggestions on this subject of decentralised or centralised management wetland management in Uganda in specific. But for decentralisation of natural resource management in general, the results of this study show that decentralisation of wetland management in Kumi and Mukono district is not going as it should and that the potential benefits that decentralisation of natural resource management are said to bring are not derived. Does this argue against decentralised natural resource management? Not necessarily: Due to a poorly or not adequately developed system, the functioning of decentralised wetland management is hampered. This rather pleads for a decentralised system in which actors have sufficient and suitable responsibilities which are complemented with similar resources and assistance. This also appeared in the examples of NGOs in the two districts, who were able to set up a well-functioning local wetland management system. That the subsidiarity principle also does not provide an outcome in this question of decentralised or centralised natural resource management does not mean it is not useful to apply. The principle can be useful if it is integrated in a continuous process of building capacity, determining which powers actors are capable to handle, giving actors these responsibilities and building more capacity again. This would increase the capacity of actors which again influences the accountability of those actors to their tasks and to others, and whether or not they are meeting their responsibilities.

7.3.3 Discussing the broader scope

Decentralisation of wetland management has been assessed in two districts, Kumi and Mukono district. Based on these districts only it is not possible to do statements about decentralised wetland management in other parts of Uganda or on the decentralised management of other resources.

Nonetheless, as far as the forms of decentralised wetland management are concerned, it is likely that the structures and forms found in Kumi and Mukono can be found in more places in Uganda. For example, the central government has abolished the graduated tax that local governments collected throughout Uganda. All districts now are depending on the central government for their financial means. Also the laws and regulations that are imposed by the central government have an impact on wetland management in all of Uganda's districts.

Based on this research only, it is not possible to make such statements about the effects that the decentralisation of wetland management has in other districts. However, the author's attendance of several workshops and a training has given the opportunity to share the results with actors of other districts¹². From these conversations it appeared that the problems that Kumi and Mukono district

¹² Actors of other districts that have been spoken with are among others from Katakwi, Koboko, Luwero, Mayuga, Mubende, Nakapiripirit, Pader, Sironko district.

faces with wetland management are also experienced in those other districts. Lacking financial and human capacity are said to cause actors in other districts also to be unable to meet their responsibilities in wetland management, but also in the management of other natural resources. This is not explored in detail, but it indicates that the results of decentralised wetland management in Kumi and Mukono district are not just specific for those two districts.

What the results of decentralised wetland management mean for decentralised management of other environmental resources is debatable as well. It is possible that the problems that exist in wetland management also occur in the management of other natural resources. Deforestation in Kumi district is one of its other major problems with natural resources (Kumi district, 2005a) and in Mukono district interference of politicians also occurs in forest management (see for example the intended degazetting of Mabira forest that is shortly addressed in box 5.1).

People depend on natural resources for their livelihoods, but they do not see the connection between sustainable wetland use and its future benefits, even not if it is their own direct future. It is assumable that people do not see this connection between the use of other natural resources either. In addition, most natural resources are just as wetlands, a potential source of revenue and therefore also of interest for other people such as politicians or investors.

However, natural resource management differs from the management of other environmental issues, such as waste management, in that natural resources are used for the livelihoods of the people. Issues like waste management or air pollution do not directly relate with people's livelihoods, except for the fact that people live in polluted environments. Problems or positive issues in the decentralised management of waste etc. might be different than the management of natural resources. The results that this research has found in decentralised wetland management can not be connected with these other management issues. The other researches that are conducted in the Emcabu-project can perhaps elaborate on these matters.

7.4 Recommendations

Besides describing and evaluating decentralised wetland management in Kumi and Mukono district, there are also recommendations to be made on decentralisation and decentralised wetland management. In this paragraph some suggestions are given that, based on this research, propose changes to improve decentralised wetland management in Uganda. Also some suggestions will be given for further research to broaden the knowledge and understanding on decentralisation and environmental and wetland management even further.

7.4.1 Maintain decentralisation or recentralise?

In one of its articles Smoke (2003) addresses the question if failures or constraints in a decentralised system are a valid reason to recentralise governance again. Do, to apply Smoke's question on the issue of decentralised wetland management, the constraints in sustainable wetland management that are addressed in this research imply that management of wetlands should be recentralised and become a responsibility of the central government again? Smoke's answer was that arguing for a central system due to constraints in the system, undermines the background of people in a country where people might be unfamiliar with local management and democracy.

The Constitution of Uganda dates from 1995, and is at this moment a bit more than ten years old. Decentralisation and decentralised wetland management in particular is still a relatively young practice. It is said by the actors in Kumi and Mukono district that lots have been improved and that wetland management, young as it is, already has shown its benefits. It is generally believed that

without decentralisation wetland management and the condition of wetlands would have been much worse. Besides, as appeared from the interviews, the people in Kumi and Mukono appreciate the decentralised system. They appreciate the input they can have and the control they have over the resources that they use and most of them also have a positive prospect for future wetland management. Though, they also see some serious threats. Besides that the central government still retains some important powers, the recentralising behaviour of the central government¹³ makes the local governments more reliant on the centre and requires that the central government is more responsive to the local governments, something that they have shown not to be very good in yet.

However, as is also addressed in the conclusions, some sub-counties and parishes in Mukono and Kumi district are able to successfully manage wetlands locally. With adequate capacity building and sufficient resources local levels are able to meet their responsibilities in wetland management.

The Government of Uganda sees decentralisation as a continuous process in which experiences in decentralised governance help to improve the decentralised governance system (MoLG, 2003). The decentralised system must be given the opportunity to continue with the process and to develop further, rather than recentralising governance again. Awareness on wetlands and the environment is growing and this is a hopeful prospect for sustainable wetland management in the future. However, some changes are needed to improve the functioning of the decentralised system.

7.4.2 What should change? Recommendations for a better decentralised wetland management in Uganda

There are several constraints that hinder sound decentralised wetland management in Kumi and Mukono district. The main problem is the lack of financial resources. However, the problem of funding is not something that can be easily solved. The central government lacks funds in general and one can not expect them to suddenly have an extra amount of money available to invest in natural resources and environment. Hence, the allocation of money can change. First of all, local governments should get more autonomy over their financial resources. Furthermore, the central and local governments could allocate a larger percentage of their resources to environment and natural resources. Although government actors in Kumi and Mukono district say that environment and natural resources are a priority, only a small part of their budgets is allocated to environment and natural resources. Central and local governments should be trained more on the importance of environmental management in the sustainable management of their country, so that they become to see the importance of investing more money into these resources.

A result of the lack of financial as well as of human resources is that the governments (national, district, lower local) are not able to sufficiently educate users of the wetlands and sensitise the public about sustainable wetland use. In Kumi and Mukono district it appeared that NGOs in wetland management have managed to educate the communities in the districts. NGOs have more resources, among other things because they are better capable of attracting donor funding than the governmental bodies can. This is said to be because of their focussed working method and their independency from the political system.

Thanks to donor funding and enough human resources NGOs have been able to do local awareness raising and to set up some consultative community-based wetland management planning that have resulted in more awareness of the users and more sustainable use of the wetlands in the Kumi and in Mukono district. However, community-based wetland management (CBWM) is not to be seen

¹³ The abolishment of the graduated tax in the beginning of 2006 further recentralised fiscal arrangements in Uganda, and also the recentralisation of the CAO, the head of the civil servants in the districts, shows a reversed motion in the decentralisation reforms instead of further decentralisation

separate from decentralisation, the two complement each other. CBWM complements decentralisation by filling the gap where the governmental system is lacking: in building capacity, raising awareness and ensuring sound management at the local level. CBWM on the other hand benefits from the presence of the decentralised system: Due to decentralisation communities were already used to the idea of being empowered (although this could often not be exercised) and to the bottom-up approach of management than would have been in a centralised system. This has made it easier for CBWMPs to start up and eventually to function independently from the NGOs and to integrate it into the decentralised governmental system. In other words, the CBWMP has taught people to manage their wetland resources, and after such a project has ended people still have the skills to manage the wetlands. In doing so, local people still integrate wetland activities in their planning and through the bottom-up planning such activities are 'pushed up' to the higher governance levels.

Governments in Uganda could improve the functioning of decentralised wetland management if they would work together more with NGOs and to stimulate their work.

It is recognised that such a cooperation can be awkward or hard for local governments if it is not institutionalised in the 'governance culture' to work with civil society, and that NGOs are not necessarily a sustainable solution -it can result in over-funding of some issues and undermining of the authority of local governments. But the experiences in this research indicate that it can be very beneficial at this moment for Uganda's natural resource management.

The lack of enforcement power has also constrained the work of the lower local government. Waiting for enforcement from the centre has proven to take too long for urgent issues in wetland management. Local governments should be mandated to react immediately to such urgent issues instead of waiting for the bureaucratic system to solve those problems.

Besides issues that can be improved within wetland management and decentralisation, there are also issues outside wetland management, such as poverty, population growth and industrialisation, which threaten the sustainable use of wetlands. Poverty is one. People in poverty in Uganda are said to have no alternatives and go into the wetlands to make a living. If they would be taught how to make a sustainable living out of wetlands (for example with projects as described in box 5.2), it could improve the status of the wetlands a lot.

The second external threat is population growth. Average population growth in Uganda is 3.4% (NEMA, 2004/2005) and the amount of land available per person for making a living, recall that about 80% of the Ugandans make their living out of agriculture, is not enough. Programs to lower the population growth, e.g. family planning programs, can assist in overcoming this problem.

7.4.3 Recommendations for further research

Besides clarification of and recommendations on decentralised wetland management this research also raises some questions that could be suitable for new research. The discussion paragraph already raised some issues that have not been studied in this research, but are useful to research.

First of all, this research has focussed only on decentralised wetland management in two of Uganda's districts. To have a broader view on the implementation and effects of decentralisation of environmental and natural resource management in Uganda, similar kinds of researches are needed that study other facets within environmental management and in other parts of Uganda. In addition, in the conclusions it is said that decentralised wetland management can work if the system is better developed. To really have sustainable decentralised wetland management it should be studied how such an adequate decentralised system for natural resource management will look like.

But also other kinds of researches are helpful to give a deeper understanding of the decentralisation process in Uganda and the consequences it has for environmental management. It can be useful to gain

an insight in the democratic processes that are going on in Uganda to see if politicians are accountable to their constituents and whether or not environmental and natural resource issues are of importance in elections. This can clarify if total decentralisation of environmental management, so full management of all environmental and natural resources at the local level that also includes financial management and legal powers, could be beneficial for the environment: if politicians are accountable to or held accountable by their voters, environmental issues must be important for them otherwise the environmental policy of local governments can turn out to be zero. In such a case, central management or at least regulations is necessary for the sustainability of natural resources.

Also the role that NGOs and CBOs can have in the decentralised governance system of Uganda is useful to investigate. Results of this research have given the impression that CBNRM is very beneficial for environmental sound management. However, it is useful to study to what extent they are able to and will provide a solution and in which way NGOs or CBOs can cooperate with the local government system to also make it institutionally more sustainable.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Agrawal, A. and Ribot, J.C. (1999), Accountability in Decentralization: A Framework with South Asian and West African Cases, *Journal of Developing Areas*, Vol. 33, pp. 473-502
- Bazaara, N. (2003), *Decentralization, Politics and Environment in Uganda*, Environmental Governance in Africa working papers: working paper no. 7, Washington: WRI
- Craig, D. and Porter D. (2006), *Development Beyond Neoliberalism?: Governance, Poverty Reduction, and Political Economy*, New York: Routledge
- Crook, R.C. and Manor, J. (1998), *Democracy and Decentralisation in South Asia and West Africa*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Devas, N. and Grant, U. (2003), Local Government Decision-Making- Citizen Participation and Local Accountability: Some Evidence from Kenya and Uganda, *Public Administration and Development*, Vol. 23, pp. 307-316
- GoU (1995), *The National Environmental Statute 1995*, Government of Uganda
- GoU (2000), *The National Environment (Wetlands, River Banks and Lake Shores Management) Regulations 2000*, Government of Uganda
- Jütting, J., Corsi, E., Kaufmann, C., McDonnell, I., Osterrieder, H., Pinaud, N., Wegner, L. (2005), What Makes Decentralisation in Developing Countries Pro-poor?, *The European Journal of Development Research*, Vol. 17, No.4, pp. 626-648
- Kisakye, J. (1996), Political Background to Decentralisation, in: S. Villadsen and F.X.K. Lubanga (eds.), *Democratic Decentralisation in Uganda: a New Approach to Local Governance*, Kampala: Fountain Publishers
- Kumi District (1997), *District State of the Environment Report Kumi 1997*, Kumi District Local Government, Kumi
- Kumi District (2005a), *Kumi District Local Government Three-Year Rolling Development Plan 2005/06-2007/08*, The District Planning Unit, Kumi District, Kumi
- Kumi District (2005b), *Budget and Annual Work Plans FY 2005-2006*, Kumi District Local Government, Kumi
- Kumi District (2006), *Kumi District Local Government Three-Year Rolling Development Plan 2006/07-2008/09, Volume one*, The District Planning Unit, Kumi District, Kumi
- Larson, A.M. (2004), Formal Decentralisation and the Imperative of Decentralisation 'from Below': A Case Study of Natural Resource Management in Nicaragua, *European Journal of Development Research*, Vol. 16, No. 1, pp. 55-70
- Larson, A. M. and Ribot, J.C. (2004), Democratic Decentralisation through a Natural resource Lens: An Introduction, *European Journal of Development Research*, Vol. 16, No. 1, pp. 1-25
- Lubanga, F.X.K. (1996), The Process of Decentralisation, in: S. Villadsen and F.X.K. Lubanga (eds.),

- Democratic Decentralisation in Uganda: a New Approach to Local Governance*, Kampala: Fountain Publishers
- Martinussen, J. (1997), *State, Society and Market: A guide to competing theories of development*, Halifax: Fernwood Books Ltd
- Meinzen-Dick, R. and Knox, A. (1999), *Collective Action, Property Rights, and Devolution of Natural Resource Management: A Conceptual Framework*, Draft Workshop Paper, July 15, 1999, Mimeo
- Meynen, W. and Doornbos, M. (2004), Decentralising Natural Resource Management: A Recipe for Sustainability and Equity?, *European Journal of Development Research*, Vol. 16, No. 1, pp. 235-254
- MoLG (2003), *Participants Handbook on Environmental Management for the Higher Local Governments (Final Draft)*, Ministry of Local Government, Kampala, Uganda
- MoNR (1995), *National Policy for the Conservation and Management of Wetland Resources*, Ministry of Natural Resources, Kampala, Uganda
- Muhereza, F.E. (2003), *Commerce, Kings and Local Government in Uganda: Decentralizing natural resources to consolidate the central state*, Environmental Governance in Africa working papers: working paper no. 8, Washington: WRI
- Mukono District (2004), *District State of the Environment Report Mukono 2004*, Mukono District Local Government, Mukono
- Mukono District (2006), *Recurrent & Development Budget Estimates 2006/2007*, Mukono District Council, Mukono
- NEMA (2002), *State of the Environment Report for Uganda 2002*, National Environmental Management Authority, Kampala, Uganda
- NEMA (2004/2005), *State of the Environment Report for Uganda 2004/2005*, National Environmental Management Authority, Kampala, Uganda
- NEMA (2006), *Environmental Management Operational Guide for Local Governments*, National Environmental Management Authority, Kampala, Uganda
- Nsibambi, A.R. (1998a), Introduction, in: A.R. Nsibambi (ed.), *Decentralisation and Civil Society In Uganda: The Quest for Good Governance*, Kampala: Fountain Publishers
- Nsibambi, A.R. (1998b), Conclusion, in: A.R. Nsibambi (ed.), *Decentralisation and Civil Society in Uganda: The Quest for Good Governance*, Kampala: Fountain Publishers
- Ostrom, E., Berger, J., Field, C.B., Norgaard, R.B., and Policansky, D. (1999), Revisiting the Commons: Local Lessons, Global Challenges, *Science*, Vol. 284, No. 5412, pp. 278-282
- Oyono, P.R. (2004), One step forward, two steps back? Paradoxes of natural resources management decentralisation in Cameroon, *Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 42, No. 1, pp. 91-111
- Rausen, T., Ebong, G. and Musiime, J. (2001), More Effective Natural Resource Management Through Democratically Elected, Decentralised Government Structures in Uganda, *Development in Practice*, Vol. 11, No. 4, pp. 460-470
- Ribot, J.C. (2002), *Democratic Decentralization of Natural Resources: Institutionalizing Popular*

- Participation*, Washington: World Resources Institute
- Ribot, J.C. (2004), *Waiting for Democracy: The Politics of Choice in Natural Resource Decentralisation*, Washington: WRI
- Smoke, P. (2003), Decentralisation in Africa: Goals, Dimensions, Myths and Challenges, *Public Administration and Development*, Vol. 23, pp. 7-16
- Tukahebwa, G.B. (1998), The role of District Councils in Decentralisation, in: A.R. Nsibambi (ed.), *Decentralisation and Civil Society in Uganda: The Quest for Good Governance*, Kampala: Fountain Publishers
- Tendler, J. (1997), *Good Government in the Tropics*, London and Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press
- UBOS, Uganda Bureau of Statistics (2005), *The 2002 Population and Housing Consensus-Main Report*, March 2005, Kampala
- UNCED (1992), *Agenda 21*, United Nations Conference for Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro
- Verschuren, P. and Doorewaard, H. (1999), *Designing a Research Project*, Utrecht: Lemma University
- WID (2000), *Wetlands and the Law: Legislation governing the ownership, use and access to Wetlands and their resources*, Wetlands Inspection Division, Ministry of Water, Lands and Environment, Kampala, Uganda
- WID (2001), *Wetland Sector Strategic Plan 2001-2010*, Wetlands Inspection Division, Ministry of Water, Lands and Environment, Kampala, Uganda
- WID/IUCN (2005), *From Conversion to Conservation- Fifteen Years of Managing Wetlands for People and the Environment in Uganda*, Wetlands Inspection Division, Kampala, Uganda and IUCN- The World Conservation Union- Eastern Africa National Programme, Nairobi, Kenya
- Wunsch, J.S. (2001), Decentralization, Local Governance and 'Recentralization' in Africa, *Public Administration and Development*, Vol. 21, pp. 277-288

APPENDIX I: DATA GATHERING

Appendix 1.1 Respondents and activities

National actors

1. Ms. Margaret Lwanga	District Support Coordinator, NEMA	June 27 th , 2006
2. Ms. Norah Namakambo	Senior Wetland Assessment Officer, WID	June 27 th , 2006
3. Mr. Joseph Ogwal	Assistant Wetland Assessment Officer, WID	June 27 th , 2006

Kumi district

4. Mr. Bernard Ikanut	Senior District Environmental Officer	July 10 th , 2006
5. Mr. Stephen Ongaba	Economist, District Technical Planning Committee	July 11 th , 2006
6. Mr. Johnson Opolot	Acting Deputy Chief Administrative Officer	July 12 th , 2006
7. Mr. Ibrahim Ogaram	Clerk to Council	July 13 th , 2006
8. Mr. Sam Opolot	District Councillor and former LC 3 Chairman Kanyum sub-county	September 11 th , 2006
8. Mr. Martin Egau	LC 3 Chairman Mukura sub-county	July 13 th , 2006
9. Ms. Florence Acam	LC 3 Assistant Community Development Officer Nyero sub-county	September 8 th , 2006
10. Mr. Michael Okiror	LC 3 Assistant Agricultural Officer Kanyum sub-county	September 8 th , 2006
11. Mr. Gilbert Okiring	LC 2 Chairperson Atutur parish, Atutur sub-county	September 11 th , 2006
12. Mr. Francis Angiro	LC 1 General Secretary Orapada, Atutur sub-county	September 11 th , 2006
13. Mr. John Omoding	Kunedo, Kumi Network of Development Organisations	September 7 th , 2006
14. Mr. John Okia	Kumi Sustainable Development Initiative-Oleicho Community-Based Wetland Management Project	September 11 th , 2006
15. Visit headquarters Kapir sub-county		July 13 th , 2006
16. Visit headquarters Ngora sub-county		July 14 th , 2006
17. Visit Agule wetland in Ngora sub-county		July 14 th , 2006
18. Workshop on Lake Bisina-Opeta Wetland for the districts Kumi, Sironko, Katakwi and Nakiripirit		July 18 th , 2006

Mukono district

19. Ms. Anne Nakimbugwe	District Environmental Officer	July 27 th , 2006
20. Ms. Grace Nannozi	District Wetland Officer	July 27 th , 2006
21. Mr. Peter Birigenda	District Planning Unit	August 14 th , 2006

22. Mr. Robert Mugerwa	Principal Assistant Secretary Chief Administrative Officer	August 22 nd , 2006
23. Mr. Ensa Nkoyoyo Musaka	LC 3 chairman Goma sub-county	August 18 th , 2006
24. Mr. Dan Lugobobi	LC 3 Secretary for Production and Natural Resources, Goma sub-county	August 18 th , 2006
25. Mr. Ismail Semyalo	LC 3 Assistant Town Clerck, Mukono town council	August 29 th , 2006
26. Mr. David Mwebaze	LC 3 Public Health Officer Mukono Town council	September 1 st , 2006
27. Mr. David Sebugwawo	LC 2 chairman Nyenje parish, Goma sub-county	August 18 th , 2006
28. Mr. Ibrahim John Galübwa	LC 1 chairman Nyenje, Goma sub-county	August 18 th , 2006
29. Mr. Paul Kakooza	LC 1 chairman Buddugala, Goma sub-county	August 18 th , 2006
30. Mr. Bob Kibirango	LC 1 Secretary Bujujju village, Mukono town-council	September 14 th , 2006
30. Mr. Ihabiti Katumba	Chairman Lwajjali Community-Based Wetland Management Committee	August 18 th , 2006
31. Mr. David Muteme	Vice-chairman Lwajjali Community-Based Wetland Management Committee	August 18 th , 2006
32. Mr. Joseph Mulindwa	Programme Officer at the Uganda Environmental Education Foundation	August 22 nd , 2006
33. Mr. Henry Mukasa	Programme Officer at the Centre for Integrated Development	August 22 nd , 2006
34. Visit Lwajjali wetland		August 18 th , 2006
35. Visit District Council meeting		August 22 nd , 2006
36. Visit DTPC meeting		August 24 th , 2006
Other		
37. Mr. John Kiyaga-Nsubunga	Director General Uganda Management Institute in Kampala; Political Scientist; formerly working for the MoLG	September 19 th , 2006
38. Mr. Charles Drazu	Advisor Local Governance Dutch Embassy in Kampala	September 21 st , 2006
39. International stakeholder workshop on the decline of Lake Victoria levels, in Kampala		August 18 th , 2006

Appendix 1.2 Interview checklist

Interview national actor: elected yes/no

Decentralisation:

- Levels
- Actors involved at national, district, local
- Forms, to which level

Responsibilities

- Own, concerning wetland management and to lower level; met? If not, why?
- Other actors at national level; met? (According to them)
- Actors at district and local level; met? (According to them)

Interaction

- Own influence on other levels' management and other actors
- Other actors or levels influence on this actor or national management
- Expectation from district and local level

Decentralised Wetland management

- Strengths
- Weaknesses
- Opportunities
- Threats

Interview district actor: elected yes/no

Decentralisation

- Which lower levels
- Actors involved district, local
- Forms, to which level

Responsibilities

- Own, concerning wetland management; met? If not, why?
- Own, concerning to national and lower level; met? If not, why?
- Other actors at district level; met? (According to them)
- Actors at national and local level; met? (According to them)

Interaction

- Expectation from other district actors
- Own influence on other actors at district level
- Expectation from national actors
- Own influence on national levels' management
- Expectation from local actors
- Own influence on local levels' management
- Other actors or levels influence on this actor or district management

Decentralised Wetland management

- Strengths
- Weaknesses
- Opportunities
- Threats

Interview local actor: elected yes/no

Decentralisation

- Levels and actors involved at local level
- Forms, to which level

Responsibilities

- Own, concerning wetland management; met? If not, why?
- Own, concerning other actors at local level; met? If not, why?
- Own, concerning actors at district or national level; met? If not, why?
- Other actors at local level; met? (According to them)
- Actors at district and national level; met? (According to them)

Interaction

- Expectation from other local actors
- Own influence on other actors at local level
- Expectation from district actors
- Own influence on district levels' management
- Expectation from national actors
- Own influence on national levels' management
- Other actors or levels influence on this actor or local management

Decentralised Wetland management

- Strengths
- Weaknesses
- Opportunities
- Threats

APPENDIX III: ILLUSTRATIONS

Vital and damaged wetlands



Vital wetland in Kanyum Sub-county, Kumi district, September 8th, 2006



Drying up of a wetland due to dam construction on the road from Ngora to Kapir Sub-county, July 13th, 2006

Brick making in Mukono



Large brick-making place along the Kampala-Jinja highway. September 12th, 2006



Small-scale brick-making in Lwajjali wetland August 18th, 2006

