Chapter 6

CONCLUSION

Visual evidence and the data obtained from the digitization of satellite images indicate significant net agricultural expansion in the project area during the period from 1987 to the present day (2005). Results from the partial census of Arkaria indicate that, whilst the original driving factors for commencement of cultivation were related to, among other factors, drought, present day continuation and even expansion of agriculture is driven by the need of the Maasai to supplement their traditional diet to stave off starvation and malnutrition and, for some, to provide a source of income for the household. Perhaps, the most important driver is the decline of cattle per capita over the past half a century. This has been attributed to a combination of drought, disease and a frail livestock economy compared to the endorsed agricultural economy.

Cultivation techniques are currently being adopted in Maasailand with little regard for their long term sustainability. The Maasai are traditionally used to moving away from problems. Now sedentarised, they cannot just move away and let the environment recover. If they want the land to continue to provide them with pasture for their cattle in future decades, they not only have to halt the accelerating spread of cultivation but they also have to start cultivating responsibly.

Whilst the Maasai of Arkaria appear technically to be agro-pastoralists, it is evident from the PPPM results of the project area that livestock husbandry features most strongly in the problems identified by the majority of the groups whilst agriculture related constraints are brought up by less than half the groups. The PPPM results show clearly the willingness of the Maasai to become part of Tanzania's development process. However this is difficult for them to do if they do not even have ready access to the most basic of human needs: water.

A possible change in perceptions of resource problems could occur if the AIDS epidemic was to hit the Maasai. This would affect perceptions of resource problems in two ways. Firstly, in the longer term, instead of looking at consequences resulting from the problem of population pressure, the Maasai would instead face those problems brought on by large numbers of deaths in one section of the population

pyramid. The other likely consequence would be a sudden dramatic increase in the importance of healthcare services to the Maasai. Therefore, if used regularly, PPPM might be able to show the changing prioritisation of problems, indicators of impending social change and, possibly, provide advance warning of impending crisis. The PPPM methodology is recommended in this thesis because, although a guided and not a totally open exercise, it was proven to elicit participants' true perceptions.

The application of the PPPM technique is not restricted to problems associated with livelihoods. It could easily be used as a tool to identify and start the debate on the most pressing of the Maasai's current and future concerns. The most immediate concern has to be land management. The current practices cannot continue *ad infinitum*. Other livelihood strategies will have to be found within the next decade if the ecological integrity of the land is to be sustained.

Hunting tourism is so potentially lucrative that both the hunting company and the Government have a vested interest in the current land management and future development of this area of Maasailand. The Maasai in the southern area of the Burko Hunting Block already have a voice as stakeholders. The hunting company itself and its community liaison NGO (CHCWP) are already working with the Maasai (and have the most longstanding reputation in community wildlife development in Tanzania). It would seem unlikely that Government national development policies would offer tangible benefits to the Maasai in the immediate future. The hunting company, with its enlightened policies of inclusion, would seem to offer an avenue through which the different land management styles and concerns of the stakeholders (the government, the hunting company and the Maasai) could meet at the same level. However, if the Maasai are not actively engaged with the other stakeholders in making decisions about the most appropriate and sustainable use of their land, they will have no choice but to continue to over-exploit their dwindling natural resources (Mwalyosi 1998). This has already proved to have a disastrous effect on the condition of the land. However, it is apparent from the data collected in this project that the choice the Maasai currently face is stark. It is either participation or starvation.