

The Making and Contents of Zanzibar National Land Use Plan: A brief account on a donor funded project

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Key words: settlement structure plan, tourism zoning plan, integrated land use plan, physical and economic planning, spatial resource allocation, land administration, sustainability.

ABSTRACT

Zanzibar, which is part of the United Republic of Tanzania, comprised of two main Islands of Unguja (1464 sq km) and Pemba (868 sq Km) and over 50 small off shore islets most of which are uninhabited. Having an estimated population of around 900,000 and a corresponding population density of about 380 persons per square kilometre, Zanzibar stands out as one of the most populated agricultural islands in the world.

During the past three decades the Government of Zanzibar (GOZ) prepared and implemented a number of short term as well as medium term economic plans for the purposes of improving life standards of the inhabitants. This period witnessed massive investment on economic as well as social infrastructure such as transport water, power, health, industry, education and settlement programmes. However many of these investments were the product of independent decisions by public and private sector as well as donor agencies without any meaningful spatial coordination. Thus compounded with rapid population growth, spatial expansion of these activities have all brought tremendous pressure on the utilization of land and other natural resources.

Having a fundamental goal of economic growth and development the national economic plans that were prepared usually contained only implicit recognition of the spatial structure of the economy and at best provided for superficial treatment of physical problems that existed. Therefore, it became obvious that the long experienced spatial problems could not have been solved better by the economic plans only. Consequently the GOZ approached the Finnish Government (FINNIDA) to assist in preparation of an integrated land use plan and strengthen land management and administration in the country.

For the purpose of making the planning process as participatory as possible, four task forces, which drew members from various public as well as private institutions were formulated. The Integrated Planning Unit (IPU) of the Commission for Lands and Environment (COLE) acted as secretariat. Conveniently the planning process could be divided into three phases. The first phase was dedicated to data collection and analysis of the then existing situation, thereby paving way for the second phase of actual planning process. The second phase involved the production of sectoral land use maps, formulation of broad sectoral policies and strategic guidelines to address the identified issues and problems. Whereas the third phase involved the normal administrative procedures for approval of plans and policies.

NLUP is a broad, comprehensive strategic policy document, which sets out physical planning framework with a perspective to the year 2015. It provides a spatial framework for public as

well as private sector investment programmes and serves as a basis for environmental protection.

The NLUP covers all sectors of the economy and contains a number of supplementary plans such as:

- *The Settlements Structure Plan*, which lays foundation and guidelines for balanced approach to settlement development.
- *Tourism Zoning Plan*, which identifies tourism development, zones and proposes strategy for its implementation.
- *Coastal Zone Management Plan*, which provide for the best long-term sustainable use of the nation's terrestrial and marine resources.

It must be stated that considerable progress has indeed been made with regard to policy objectives and implementation of the plan in general. Conflicts between different land users have been significantly reduced and the NLUP has implicitly contributed to the lessening of the fundamental problem of poverty.

Many of the basic pitfalls experienced have not been emanated from the plan itself but rather from the common phenomenon of unsustainability of donor funded projects. As stated earlier preparation and subsequent implementation of NLUP depended almost entirely on the financial assistance from FINNIDA and when it pulled out in June 1996, many of the planned activities could not be implemented. Also despite of deliberate efforts to involve villagers during planning process, some of the planned activities have not been satisfactorily undertaken simply because they were not demand driven. Similarly during the implementation phase, one of the important objectives was to foster meaningful integration between physical and economic planning exercises. This important objective has not been fully realised as the economic plans are still having an upper hand and spatial dimension of development has not been given the expected attention. This scenario leads to the conclusion that the successful implementation of NLUP will necessarily continue to require a high level political backing.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Located off the coast of Tanzania mainland between latitude 4-6.50S and longitude 39-400E, Zanzibar which is part of the United Republic of Tanzania, comprises of two main islands of Unguja and Pemba and over 50 offshore small islets most of which are uninhabited. The two main islands cover a total land area of 2,332 square kilometres (1464 sq km for Unguja and 868 sq km for Pemba) and are divided into five administrative regions.

The good agricultural lands are located on the western side of the islands and the coral rag (approximately 60% for Unguja and 17% for Pemba) is mostly on the eastern parts of both islands and south of Unguja. The forest reserves cover about 8 per cent of total land area. The estimated current population is a little over 900,000 of which about 60% are living in Unguja and the remaining 40% in Pemba.

With an estimated population density of about 380 persons per square kilometre, Zanzibar stands out as one of the most densely populated agricultural islands in the world. Despite somehow successful attempts to diversify the economy, agriculture remains a vital productive sector not only because of its long standing role as the mainstay of the economy, but also due to the fact that it creates a large number of employment opportunities compared with other sectors of the economy. The sector accounts for about 45 % of GDP, 30 % of Government revenues, 60 % of the labour force employed and 75 % of export earnings of the islands (World Bank; 2000).

Performance of Zanzibar economy has been fluctuating from year to year but overall trend depicts a gloomy picture. The Gross Domestic Product (at constant 1976 prices) declined from TS 979m in 1976 to TS 734 m in 1986 and thereafter slightly recovered to reach TS 977 in 1995. The corresponding per capita income also dropped by 44% from TS 2240 to 1245 between 1976 and 1986 and stagnated throughout the decade to TS 1240 during 1995. The average per capita income for the year 2000 was US \$ 220 (Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs, 2001).

2. BACKGROUND

In an effort to foster balanced regional development and to uplift areas lagging behind, the post independence era witnessed massive investment in economic as well as social infrastructure developments such as settlement programmes, transport, industry, health, education, power, water and alike. However, many of these investments were the product of independent decisions and plans by sector ministries, private sector and donor agencies without any meaningful spatial coordination. Compounded with rapid population growth,

spatial expansion of these activities, have all brought a tremendous pressure on the development of land and exploitation of other resources. This scenario is summarized in the Appraisal Document (NLUP S 02) which states that, uncontrolled encroachments of urban settlements on to good agricultural land, growth of minor settlements without guiding (land use) plans, conflicts between farming and forest plantations, expansion and intensification of agricultural activities into the fragile coral rag areas, uncoordinated public as well as private investment have all resulted into many conflicts among various land users and indeed have contributed to wastage of scarce national financial and natural resources.

Having a fundamental goal of economic growth and development, national short term as well as medium term economic plans which were prepared usually contained only implicit recognition of the spatial structure of the economy and at best provided for superficial treatment of physical problems that existed.

Therefore, it became obvious that those (above stated) spatial problems could not have been solved better by economic plans alone. Faced with that challenge/fact the GOZ started to look for financial and technical assistance in order to prepare a comprehensive physical plan, which would bring about development in a coordinated and integrated manner. Consequently, in 1985 the GOZ forwarded official request to Finnish Government to assist in preparation of an integrated land use plan and to strengthen land administration in the country. With the advice of a Finnish expert, the first project document was formulated in 1988. During the same period the Government decided to re-organise institutions dealing with land administration which led to the passage of the Bill that established the Commission for Lands and Environment (COLE) in 1989.

A draft Project Document was submitted to FINNIDA in May 1989 which set forth a project focusing mainly on the preparation of an integrated land use plan and capacity building for the newly established COLE. This was later appraised and reviewed to include environmental and land management components. The final version of the Zanzibar Integrated Land and Environment Management (ZILEM) Project Document for 1991 - 1994 was approved in December 1990 with Finnish assistance of 16.2 m FIM.

The GOZ had to contribute 5% of the total project costs and provide for salaries from its recurrent budget for local project staff.

Request for extension of ZILEM project for the period of 1996-2000 was submitted to Finnish Government for consideration, which was in principle accepted, and FINNIDA agreed to continue financing the project.

However, in mid 1996 FINNIDA and other bilateral donor agencies decided to withdraw their assistance to Zanzibar for political reasons. From there on, project activities are being financed by the GOZ.

3. THE MAKING OF THE NLUP

Being the first attempt to prepare a plan of this nature, it was not easy for the COLE in general and planning team in particular to find an appropriate approach in the planning process. The Project Document insisted on the importance to involve every sector of the economy in the planning but did not go further than that. Therefore, the intention and reason for broader participation were there but the mechanism of realising that goal was not in place. Experimentally, it was decided that all important institutions with regard to land matter should be divided into four groups, which were later known as task forces. Four task forces, namely, land use, national economic development, social services and infrastructure and utilities were established and drew members from almost all sectors of the economy with different disciplines and professions. Members of the Integrated Planning Unit (IPU) acted as secretariat for all task forces.

This strategy (of involving every stakeholder) was motivated by the fact that, though COLE had full mandate on all matters related to land, yet the use of it is attached with many and complex socio-economic variables that needed to be critically and jointly analysed by as many people as possible in order to avoid potential conflicts.

The planning process itself was divided into three phases or stages:

The first phase involved mainly collection of data that described and analysed the then existing situation. At this stage a range of problems and issues were identified and documented by the planning team (under COLE) in collaboration with key persons from Government departments and private sector institutions. A number of local as well as foreign consultants were hired to undertake various studies which were also very useful inputs to the preparation of subsequent reports. Consequently, four draft reports were prepared and presented to respective task force members for discussions and comments. Major changes and amendments were made to the original reports and final versions were produced for the planning team to work on. This led to the preparation of the document (NLUP S 02) entitled **Appraisal: Analysis of Potentials and Issues**, which summarised and combined fact reports revealing the existing situation with regard to spatial distribution of land uses and socio-economic dimensions in all sectors. This provided the basis for analysis, thereby paving way for the second phase of (actual) planning process.

The second phase involved the production of sectoral land use maps, formulation of broad sectoral policies and strategic guidelines to address the identified issues and linking existing and committed investments spatially and providing a framework for coordination. Contributions from task force members as well as other stakeholders were very critical at this stage. After various consultations, meetings and workshops were organised at different levels and subsequently a final report entitled **National Land Use Plan: Planning Policies and Proposals** was produced incorporating all subsequent amendments and changes.

Essentially, the third phase involved the approval procedures. As required by the existing administrative procedures, after passed through the Advisory Board of COLE the plan was sent to the Committee of Principal Secretaries. With some minor changes the plan was sent to the Cabinet for final approval which was granted in September, 1996.

During the whole period of planning process, contacts between IPU and task force members and other stakeholders were very close. This particular form of participation was very successful and thus commended by ZILEM Project Evaluation Team, which concluded that, there has been sufficient involvement of different sectors from the government and non-governmental organisations throughout the planning process (Review, 1995).

4. THE CONTENTS OF NLUP

NLUP is a broad, comprehensive strategic policy document, which sets out physical planning framework with a perspective to the year 2015. It provides a spatial framework for public as well as private sector investment programmes and serves as a basis for the environmental protection. The NLUP emphasises on efficient spatial resource allocation across all sectors of the economy, regulating land use activities, conservation of terrestrial and marine resources. These form the basis upon which all the sectoral land use policies and strategies have been spelled out in the plan. As per the Project Document, the long-term objective of the NLUP is “to support the development of balanced land use by integrating and coordinating the ongoing activities of land use development and plans in the form of an integrated land use plan and permanent planning and coordination capacity for land use development”.

To allow flexibility and to overcome rigidity, the NLUP is not presented as a blue print or a conventional Master Plan but rather in a model, which readily permits changes, additions or deletions to take into consideration socio-economic and physical realities of a particular time and place. Thus for the purposes of coping with unforeseen changes, the Plan has set up a time frame for periodic updating and revisions.

The NLUP, however, does not identify specific sites for particular development but rather outlines sites for particular requirements for the present and future provision of land for different activities that will accommodate growth and changes in the country’s population and economy. More detailed land use proposals showing the exact planned uses of every piece of land are set out in what are called detailed local land use plans. These planning schemes are prepared separately but follow the general spatial policy framework outline in the main NLUP and are subject to legal requirements of declaration of planning area set out in Section 3 of the Town and Country Planning Decree, Cap 85 of 1955. The NLUP advocates a local approach to development planning and management whereby local ambitions and endeavours, and popular participation can be effectively realised. Therefore, all subsequent planning schemes would necessary reflect people’s needs and involvement in the process from the beginning.

Due to an unprecedented growth of tourism industry, emphasis on preparation of detailed plans has been placed on tourism-designated zones in coastal areas. So far six schemes of that nature have already been prepared and successfully implemented. As stated above, people’s

participation is an important aspect of these plans. Nevertheless, despite the decentralisation of some activities and functions to regional and district levels, physical planning is still centralised due to lack of enough planners who would have been posted to local authorities. Therefore, IPU coordinates and participates fully in the preparation of local land use plans by involving local communities. Participation is ensured through involvement of villagers in the Participatory Rural Appraisals, the presentation of results and further discussions on problems and their solutions.

Despite of having predetermined general guidelines outlined by the NLUP, villagers are given unrestricted opportunities to discuss and propose numerous changes and to block any proposed development, which they jointly consider detrimental to their collective interests. Villagers of different occupation, age and sex are gathered to gather at informal settings and participate in the planning process. This "consensus building" is not a one-go exercise but a result of a long (and sometimes tedious) negotiation process between different interest groups in the village. The first few days are devoted to the teaching of villagers on how to read (the enlarged) maps including the location of important landmarks in a village. This is followed by a bit longer period of time in which proposals are developed and discussed until they are accepted. These (planning) forums are not only used to get rich information and knowledge from villagers but serve as a link between the central government and the people, an aspect which is missing in other existing forms of planning. The fact that people participate in planning makes the implementation of such plans much more easily especially on aspect of development control.

As stated earlier, NLUP covers all sectors of the economy. However, it is worth looking on some special components of the plan:

5. THE SETTLEMENT STRUCTURE PLAN (SSP)

The basic premises in the formulation of policies and strategies for settlement development are based on the fact that Zanzibar Municipality has over expanded with all common socio-economic and environmental problems associated with overgrowing cities. The unplanned and uncontrolled settlement development causes physical disorder, uneconomical land utilisation, and excessive intrusion of settlement into good agricultural land and environmental degradation and pollution risks.

Thus, balanced approach to settlement development has been adopted taking into consideration the actual existing and potential economic, social and environmental conditions as well as the long established Government policy of decentralisation. For the purposes of reducing regional imbalances and rural-urban migration, the Plan proposes a new system of service centres whereby Chake Chake will be the second tier town after Zanzibar Municipality and will be able to grow as the principal service centre for Pemba islands.

Important district centres of Mkoani, Wete (for Pemba) and Mkokotoni and Makunduchi (for Unguja) are categorised as third tier towns, which will have all important services as towns. The Plan proposes a number of rural service centres, which will have basic services for rural

communities. The selection of these settlements is based on their location in relation to the distribution of the population, infrastructure and natural resources.

The important principle in this context, is not to create (or to take) cities into rural areas but is rather to create more conducive environment for development by appreciating the existing physical, socio-economic and cultural set up of area in question. Thus it has been clearly spelled out in the NLUP that all the subsequent strategic plans to be prepared for the proposed centres will have to take into consideration all physical, economic and social variables existing in those area.

5.1 Tourism Zoning Plan (TZP)

In efforts to diversify the economy, the GOZ adopted an outward looking policy on trade and other sectors in mid 1980s. The trade liberalisation policy and subsequent measures attracted many foreign as well as local investors who wanted to take advantage of the introduced open door policies. Having potential for tourism development, Zanzibar recorded an unprecedented number of applications for tourism investment. These applications were flooding in such large numbers that it was impossible to deal with them properly given the fact that no land use planning had been done. Thus, all decisions concerning land allocation for hotel development were made in an uncoordinated and ad-hoc manner that was threatening the attractiveness of the very areas, their resources and the adjacent marine eco-system. In this context, the need for land use planning guidance as a regulatory mechanism in tourism development could no longer be postponed to a later date.

Therefore, while in the stage of data collection, in October 1991, the Integrated Planning Unit (IPU) of COLE was asked to prepare a separate land use plan for the tourism sector. The tourism zoning exercise had to come forth a head of completion of the comprehensive NLUP. This implied that the whole aspect of integration would be lost if tourism as a single sector was treated separately. This fear was vividly shown in the introductory part of what was later to be known as the Tourism Zoning Plan when the planning team observed that “although we were to concentrate on one sector of activities only and hence, the integrated planning approach had to be somewhat neglected, the planning team has nevertheless, tried to work as closely as possible to the principle of proper planning (COLE,1993).

The tourism zoning plan which was completed in early 1993 identifies six tourism zones and provides a standard format of “area definition forms”, the general physical descriptions of the potential tourism areas (TAs), the planned use, the planned capacity, the restrictions or specific conditions of use and special considerations pertaining to the development of those areas. Within those six zones, the zoning plan proposes 19 different areas with a total area of 399.5 hectares in Unguja and six areas having a total area of 83 hectares in Pemba Island. These land allocations are based on upper limit projection for tourism development of 15,000 beds by year 2015.

The plan also proposes strategy for its implementation; essentially, the means and institutional framework required for implementation; realistically to work and provides the

general guidelines and conditions important to enforce control of development in the designated zones. Like the overall NLUP, the TZP does not identify the actual sites for development but rather outlines the strategic requirements for the current and future provision of land for tourism development. As stated earlier more detailed land use proposals showing, for example, plot subdivisions, road circulation, dumping sites and other services are set out in the detailed local plans whose preparations has already started.

6. COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT (CZM)

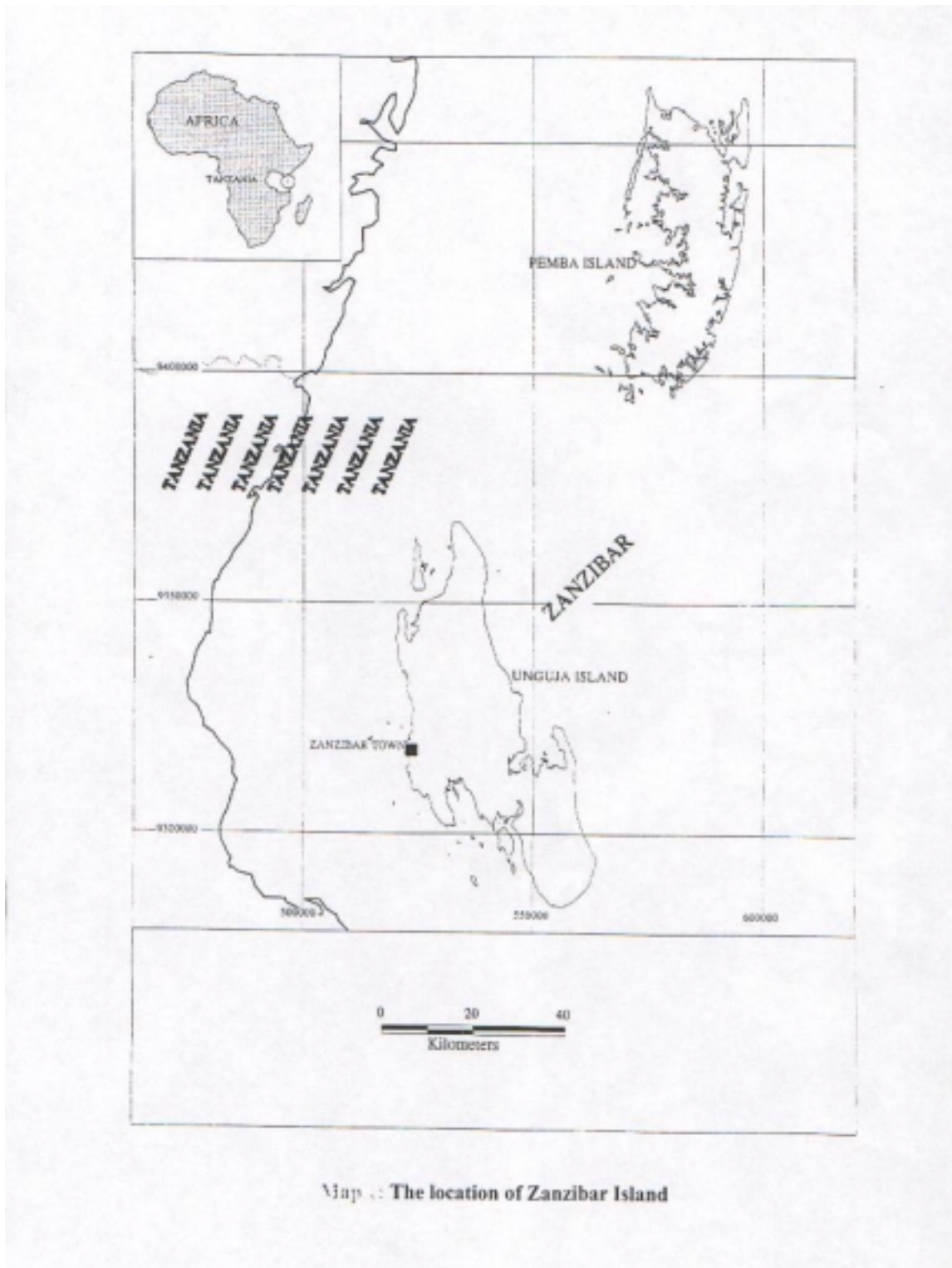
The coastal areas of both Unguja and Pemba have been subjected to an enormous pressure due to ever increasing economic as well as social activities such as human settlements, tourism development, and industries alike. Like other activities, these were previously undertaken in unplanned and uncoordinated fashion. The NLUP calls for the need of an integrated coastal management plan to manage and direct those activities, which are undertaken by various actors. Towards this direction a separate action plan for a pilot area of Chwaka Bay - Paje has been jointly prepared whose overall objective is to “provide for the best long-term sustainable use of the nation’s coastal resources and to maintain Zanzibar’s high quality coastal environment”(DoE,1999). In respect of the Integrated Coastal Area Management, the NLUP creates a framework within which various efforts by the different sectors may be coordinated in terms of spatial aspects, formation of land use zones and delineation of the conservation of protected areas. As part of the CZM initiatives, the NLUP has also outlined general spatially oriented policies and strategies in the aspect of land use and environmental management for the EPZ, Port development and small islets. In this context, therefore the NLUP is complementary to and consolidates the concept of environmental protection, which embraces a broad spectrum of policies from natural resources conservation, pollution control to species and wilderness preservation.

Also a separate report entitled **Policy for allocation and use of Zanzibar small islets** has been produced which establishes a basis for future planning of the use of small offshore islands around the main islands of Unguja and Pemba. The report categorises islets according to their corresponding economic, geographical biodiversity and socio-cultural importance. Generally, the report concurred also with the recommendation made by a consultant (Koth,1990), that the small islets should not be allocated to private developers unless and until thorough studies are carried out on their suitability for recreational uses. The now defunct COLE had to organise studies in collaboration with different stakeholders (before year 2000) to assess islets suitability. Due to lack of funds, very few studies have been carried out but the policy of not allocating small islets to private developers still stands. This particular policy has been cemented by the findings from those few studies already done which indicate that local people, fishermen and environmental groups are generally against the idea of leasing out the surrounding offshore islands to private companies. The much-talked problems of Mnemba and other leased islands make this policy statement socio-economic and political sound.

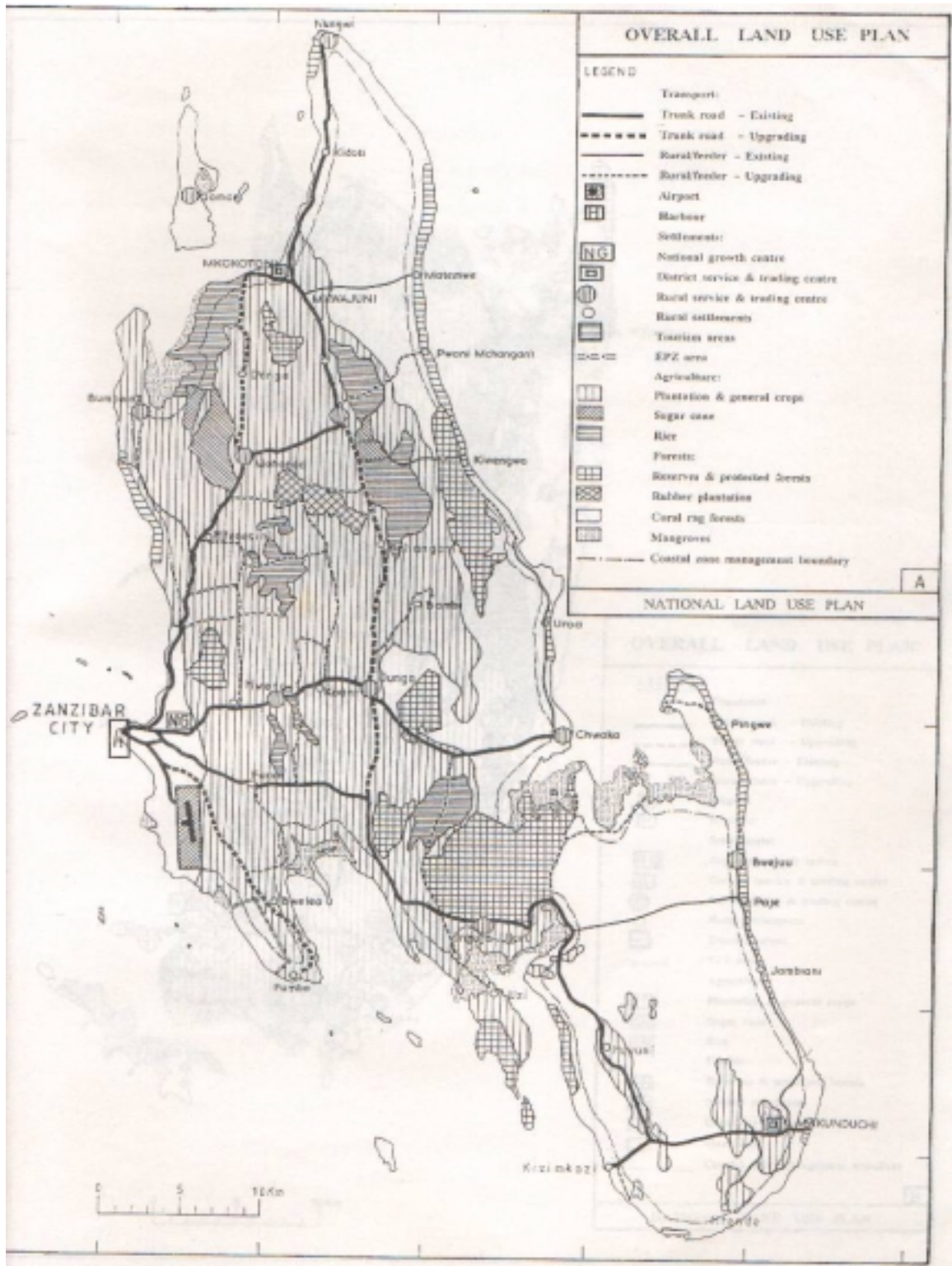
There are certain policy matters in the NLUP, which cannot be implemented or controlled directly through physical planning mechanisms. These issues are therefore, presented as

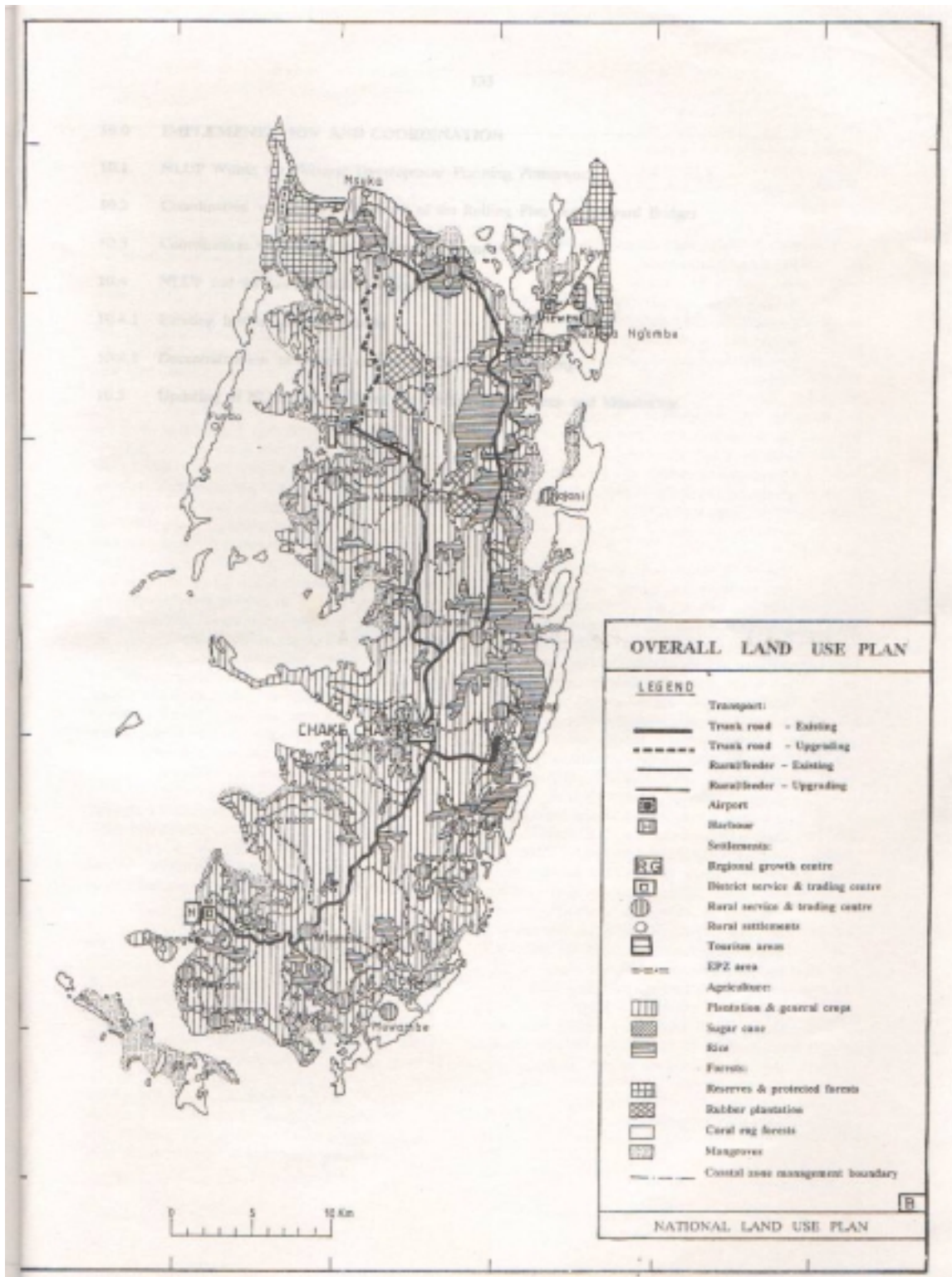
“recommendations” to other public as well private institutions in carrying out their day-to-day development activities. This scenario suggests that the successful implementation of NLUP will continue to require high-level political backing.

Together with the above highlighted sectors other sectors such as agriculture and livestock, forestry, industry, social services, infrastructure and utilities have been detailed covered by the NLUP, as shown in maps in pages 11 and 12.



Map : The location of Zanzibar Island





7. ACHIEVEMENTS

Looking at the achievements so far, it must be stated that considerable progress has indeed been made with regard to policy objectives and implementation of the plan in general. Tourism industry, which previously was growing in a rather haphazard fashion, is now being developed in an orderly and planned manner. General and specific guidelines established by the plan have helped to reduce many social and economic problems. For instance, the much-experienced conflicts between villagers who use the beach and inter tidal flats for economic purposes such as seaweed farming and the hoteliers/tourists who wanted the same for recreation purposes have been significantly reduced. Now the tourist industry and local communities co-exist in a relatively harmonious environment. Therefore, conflicts between different land users have been minimised. By setting aside areas for economic activities such as seaweed farming and protecting land from wasteful uses, one can safely conclude that the NLUP has implicitly contributed to the lessening of the fundamental problem of poverty. Likewise, common environmental problems especially in the coastal areas have to a large extent been minimised.

Another area in which the NLUP has succeeded is in the aspect of directing investments and infrastructure development in spatial dimension. Under the framework and recommendation spelt out in the NLUP, private and public investments have been linked together. Consequently, cost of projects and programmes implementation have been minimised.

Though there has been no specific research under taken on the subject, general observations suggest that these attributes have jointly contributed in lessening the basic problem of rural-urban influx. In fact in some rural areas there are some evidences, which suggest that the trend has been reversed. Another success story with regard to the making of the NLUP is the question of capacity building. Unlike many donor funded projects where plans and programmes preparation is normally done by foreign experts, the entire process of making the NLUP was dominated by local professionals. This rather new initiative has helped much to build capacity for local experts and provides hope for successful implementation of the Plan.

8. PITFALLS

The major and basic problem that the NLUP has been experiencing over the last five years is not emanating from the plan itself but rather from the common phenomenon of unsustainability of donor funded projects. As stated earlier, preparation and subsequent implementation of NLUP depended almost entirely on the financial assistance from FINNIDA. It was literally seen as a "FINNIDA project". Unfortunately in June 1996 the Government of Finland (and other donors) decided to pull out from assisting Zanzibar on political grounds. Consequently, many of the planned activities could not be undertaken.

Due to lack of funds, the supporting facilities left by FINNIDA such as motor vehicles, computers, and photocopiers, were poorly maintained and at present most of them are out of order. This situation has severely affected the implementation of NLUP. Also public awareness campaigns on Plan's contents, goals and benefits has not been sufficiently pursued.

This, not uncommon experience, calls for the integration of donor-funded projects into government budgetary system in order to sustain project's activities when donor funds are phased out for whatever reason.

Another pitfall is with regard to the adopted approach in the NLUP implementation. As per the NLUP, the COLE acts as a coordinating body, leaving other public as well as private institutions to carry out the proposed actions. For instance in the detailed land use plans, proposals are spelt out for sectoral ministries, local authorities and villagers to act or implement. This approach has created some delays and violation of plan proposals. Therefore, for smooth implementation, the GOZ (and/or donor) need to look on the possibility of actual funding for some of proposed small infrastructure projects and surveying of residential and service plots as proposed by the detailed local plans. This will help protect the land from being utilised for unplanned uses.

Having a multi-sectoral outlook the NLUP is regarded to be an important working tool for bringing together the traditionally isolated spatial and economic planning processes. Thus, during the implementation phase, one of the important objectives was to foster meaningful integration between physical and economic planning exercises. To link these two types of planning, it was proposed in the NLUP that the Ministry of Water, Construction, Energy, Lands and Environment (MWCELE) and COLE coordinate effectively with the Ministry of Planning to expedite the following:

- Initiate and implement direct participation of COLE in the process of preparing Rolling Plan and Forward Budget, within the existing administrative and legal framework.
- In coordination with sector ministries, identify the planned land related projects and coordinate their spatial implementation with the Ministry of Planning.
- Coordinate updating and monitoring of the implementation process of the NLUP within the framework of the Rolling Plan.

Frankly speaking, this important objective has not been fully realised. Having actual financial allocations attached to it, economic plan is still having an upper hand and spatial dimension of development has not been given an expected attention. Again this calls for a high level political backing and deliberate measures to be taken by the now MCEWL and the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs.

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

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