Principles for Investing in Ecological Infrastructure

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From payments for ecosystem services to investing in ecological infrastructure...
What is investing in ecological infrastructure?

• The term ‘investing’ in investing in ecological infrastructure is not restricted to purely allocating budget to certain activities.

• Devoting time, effort, finances &/or making decisions in support of a particular undertaking with the expectation of a worthwhile result.

• Investing in ecological infrastructure involves maintaining functioning ecological infrastructure, as well as rehabilitating degraded ecological infrastructure.
Draft principles developed through a collective process

DEA, SANBI, CSIR, CSA, EKZNW, DEA:NRM, WWF-SA, EWT
Principles for investing in ecological infrastructure

Investing in ecological infrastructure ...
1. should focus on achieving clearly defined benefits & outcomes
2. should focus on systematically identified spatially strategic areas
3. requires a collaborative & multi-disciplinary approach
4. should build on & learn from existing experience & programmes
5. should take place in a participatory, socially sensitive & durable manner
6. should optimise its contribution to job creation, poverty alleviation & rural development
7. must include monitoring & evaluation
Principle 1
Investing in ecological infrastructure should focus on achieving clearly defined benefits & outcomes

- Assist with identifying exactly how & where investment should take place, who benefits, & what aspects should be monitored

- Credibility
Principle 2
Investing in ecological infrastructure should focus on systematically identified spatially strategic areas

• Prioritization should be informed by landscape features, as well as pragmatic requirements for implementation, likely beneficiaries & other social and economic outcomes
• Use best available science
• Land tenure should not be a limiting factor
Principle 3
Investing in ecological infrastructure requires a multi- & trans-disciplinary approach

• Different disciplines working together
• Ultimately integrating knowledge systems as ecological infrastructure becomes a fundamental component of the broader infrastructure landscape
Principle 4
Investing in ecological infrastructure should build on & learn from existing experience & programmes

- Natural Resource Management programmes have an integral role to play
- Existing practices, institutions & technologies include the practice of
  - mainstreaming critical biodiversity areas into decision making
  - biodiversity stewardship
  - biodiversity offsets
Principle 5
Investing in ecological infrastructure should optimise its contribution to rural development, job creation & poverty alleviation

• Diversify rural livelihood options
• Generating work
• Skills
• Cash in cash poor systems
• Access to ecosystem services
• Improved services
*Principle 6*
Investing in ecological infrastructure should take place in a participatory, socially sensitive & durable manner

- Context specific - take cognisance of the socio-economic factors & needs of the area & the beneficiaries
Principle 7
Investing in ecological infrastructure must include monitoring & evaluation

- Biophysical & socio-economic
- Use, revive, &/or tweak existing M&E structures where suitable
- Forms part of good project management & demonstrates returns on investment
Some potential sources of funding

- Water sector
- SIP 19
- DEA: Natural Resource Management programmes
- Disaster mitigation