

Biodiversity Stewardship Unlocking the Rural Economy

Land Reform & Biodiversity Stewardship Initiative Learning Exchange

20 – 21 February 2013, Lily Lodge, Port St Johns



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Acknowledgements

The coordination team acknowledges the roles played by all who attended the learning exchange. But more specifically, the lead partners, DEA and DRDLR for being amazing partners in making this event happen, especially to Magezi Mhlanga and Wilma Lutsch for finding the resources to bring many of the participants to this event.

The Eastern Cape Parks and Tourism Agency for co-hosting the event, particularly to Mr Gasela Maninjwa, who went beyond what was expected to make this event a reality. To the venue, staff, fantastic food, sound team; the event organisers who ensured that things went smoothly; to the presenters for putting real thought and preparation into the presentations, they were incredibly informative.

The session chairs, Kamva Qwede and Tsumbedzo Mudalahothe. To the participants for coming from far and wide to be part of this event.

To Wiseman Sithuko for the field trip. The journey was as valuable as the destination and for those of us who don't know the area very well to get to know the area, the challenges and remoteness of the projects that we are trying to establish.

To the community for the tea they provided, it was very welcomed after the long journey. To the bee project which was an inspiration to many of the participants. Lubabalo Ntsholo for his leadership in making this event happen and your strategic guidance and for putting together this strategy which was extremely exciting to move forward and into implementation. To the SANBI team in making this event possible.

Summary

From the 20th to the 21st of February 2013, the Land Reform and Biodiversity Stewardship Initiative (LRBSI) hosted a two day learning exchange at Lily Lodge in Port St Johns in the Eastern Cape. The exchange was held in partnership between the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR), the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA), and the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI). The participants consisted of 87 individuals from all nine provinces in South Africa.

The theme of the learning exchange was *Biodiversity Stewardship Unlocking the Rural Economy*. The aims of the visit were to:

- share knowledge and show case experiences from across the provinces on successes and challenges from current and emerging land reform and biodiversity stewardship projects,
- to provide an opportunity for projects to learn lessons and adopt new ideas from other projects,
- To provide an update on the LRBSI, and to build and strengthen the Land Reform Biodiversity Stewardship Learning Network.

The overarching objective of the LRBSI is to stimulate socio-economic development in land reform projects that overlap with areas of critical biodiversity, in a manner that allows for the full use of both human and natural resource capacities, while preserving the sufficient functioning of the ecosystem. The LRBSI, through this learning exchange, was a great success as it allowed the participants to engage with progress being made in reaching biodiversity conservation and socio-economic developmental imperatives.

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1. Introduction & objectives

On behalf of the Port S John's community, the Learning exchange delegates were formally welcomed by Mr Wiseman Sithuko, and on behalf of the partnership, the event was opened by Kristal Maze, who informed the delegates of the objectives on the learning exchange. She gave a brief background of the Land Reform and Biodiversity Stewardship initiative (LRBSI), a partnership initiative made possible through a partnership between the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI), Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA), Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR). The Learning exchange was a combined effort by these three partners, assisted by the Eastern Cape Parks & Tourism Agency (ECPTA) to enhance lesson sharing and learning between land reform communities that are also in areas of important biodiversity. Maze emphasized that South Africa is the richest country in the world in terms of biodiversity, standing head and shoulders with other Countries and that the Eastern Cape Province has a vast amount of biodiversity gems.

The land reform and biodiversity stewardship project was initiated in 2009 as a response to the opportunity presented by the overlap of critical Biodiversity Areas with areas that are also targeted for land reform purposes.

2. Overview of the LRBSI to date

Lubabalo Ntsholo, the Coordinator of the LRBSI from SANBI proceeded to present on the contextual background, objectives, progress to date as well as the opportunities and challenges of the LRBSI

The LRBSI was initiated in 2008 / 2009 by DEA DRDLR and SANBI, responding to specific challenges facing conservation in land reform areas such as ecosystem threat status; environmentally unfriendly economic development; unsustainable extraction of natural resources; and the general need for comprehensive development models in land reform projects. LRBSI had two broad objectives namely:

- To establish a network of learning and community of practice regarding land reform/communal lands and biodiversity stewardship between the land and conservation sectors across the country; and secondly to;
- Demonstrate the successful delivery of both socio-economic and conservation benefits at a project level.

2.1 PROGRESS TO DATE

Three learning exchanges have thus far been convened, and this one was the fourth. These learning exchanges looked at various aspects of the dynamics facing the land reform and conservation interface. Thus far over 17 projects in 6 provinces have been identified as needing special attention from the partnership. Properly supported, these projects could help achieve the objectives that the LRBSI seeks to achieve.. These projects are in the Northern Cape, Western Cape, Mpumalanga, Limpopo, KwaZulu Natal and in the North West.

A reference group has been established, comprising of government and non-governmental organisations to help guide the strategic direction of the LRBSI. The lesson sharing and learning network component has been the strongest thus far, and not much has been achieved in catalyzing site based socio-economic development. There have been significant strides made towards building a solid culture of learning and lesson sharing among LRBSI projects and relevant institutions over the past few years. Not much has been done however in ensuring that land reform beneficiaries are enabled to access benefits at a project level. To this end, preparatory work is being undertaken, with the Department of Rural Development and Land reform having appointed a consultant to develop a guideline document that will assist the initiative with unlocking socio-economic development opportunities at a project level.

2.2 CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The growth of the initiative was scuppered by financial constraints in the 2010/11 financial year. By this time, the initiative was yet to make any meaningful impact on the socio-economic conditions of the majority of rural communities that got their land back through the land reform programme. This now provides the initiative with an opportunity to re-assess its role in furthering comprehensive and sustainable rural development.

3. Update on the development of guidelines for the LRBSI By: Magezi Enock Mhlanga

The presentation focused on the development of a guideline document that aims to unlock sustainable economic development potential on land reform projects that are located within areas of biodiversity importance.

The aim of the guideline document is to develop a 'how to' guide for identifying land reform projects that could positively and substantially contribute to the expansion of biodiversity conservation in South Africa – this will be our contribution to the NPAES. In addition, the document will be focused on developing various funding models for the different types of projects with clearly articulated exit strategies, budgets and other necessary information for both governmental institutions and strategic partners. The guideline document must also work out the mode of facilitation and coordination of various projects with varying dynamics – e.g. projects in the Northern Cape will not be the same as those in KZN. There is a need to categorize projects in terms of location, vegetation, and climate, as well as socio-cultural, economic and geographical conditions. This should also reflect how the initiative can apply various approaches to deal with projects with varying post settlement challenges. The guideline document must focus on profiling, but not be limited to, areas such as nature-based tourism and the wildlife economy, green jobs, green property development, conservation agriculture, sustainable land management such as grazing management and sustainable harvesting etc. and suggest a set of criteria to guide the choice of an investment option and business model suitable for a particular category of projects. Developing a database of strategic partners with

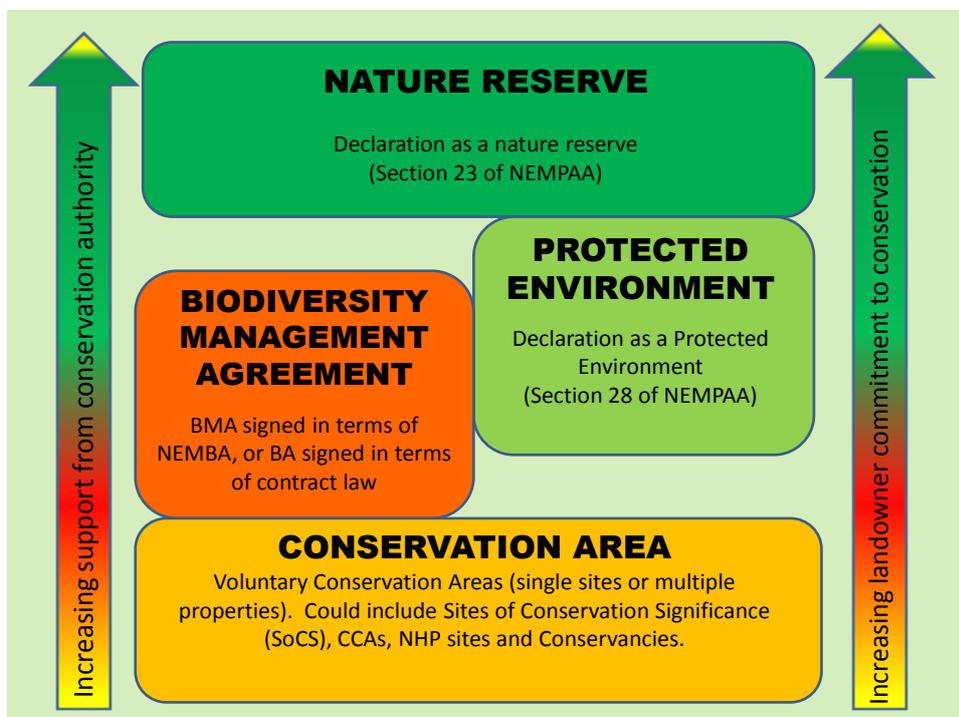
expertise and interest on nature-based tourism and the wildlife economy, green jobs, green property development, conservation agriculture, grazing management, sustainable harvesting, etc. and their roles in the development process; and developing a separate abridged guideline document for ease of reference by land owners, government officials, investors and conservation authorities in a few indigenous languages to ensure communities understand the concept and the process.

Status of the project

Procurement processes concluded; and a consultant has been appointed to have this project completed by August 2013.

4. Biodiversity Stewardship Implementation: Value to Communities By: Willeen Olivier

This presentation focused on the value that biodiversity stewardship can bring to communities. Olivier presented the four tiers of stewardship, and the kind of benefits the communities can get with each level of stewardship commitment.



Hunting is one of the most clear means through which high monetary returns can be extracted from conservation.

However stewardship is not just about high end protected areas where we have big game it is also about sustainable land management and a lot of this is around the hidden values of nature, values that we do not realize we get until we lose it. If we look after the environment properly we get clean water. The environment is geared to handling floods if we look after it properly.

Our environment is part of our culture and part of who we are, if we lose our environment we lose a part of who we are.

5. The Wild Coast Project: Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity in the Wild Coast; Eastern Cape

By: Peter Tyldesley

The Wild Coast project operates in a very specific area focusing on very specific challenges, thus the challenges cannot be extrapolated to the rest of the country, but there are some principles that can be adopted by others. The Wild Coast is special as it is fractured, little patches of high biodiversity forests, intermingled with a lot of people, business and uncertain land tenure issues. The West Coast is an international biodiversity hotspot with new species regularly being discovered. There are many vulnerable species. The natural resource base is depleted due to poor management, mandate uncertainty and land tenure issues. State forests, parks board, traditional leaders, municipalities, marine and coastal management, etc. and all this integrates and it is a challenge to sort out who controls what.

The project runs from the Kei Mouth to the Mtamvuna River, 30 kilometers from the coast inland. Project vision is that protected areas serve as reservoirs for biodiversity hotspots and catalysts for community growth and development. The assumption is that if the community has access to a protected area it can draw in funds, support, and interested people and use the area as an engine for development for socio economic growth.

From a conservation perspective, the project looked at the target priority areas in the national expansion protected areas strategy. We did some field work and developed a matrix to determine how high the biodiversity is in a specific area, as well as the threats and from there developed our immediate priorities. With this information we overlaid the settlements with the biodiversity maps and were able to focus our efforts more specifically.

Through the project 6 community field / forest rangers for each area, totalling 67 people are employed, with 137 people in invasive alien management. Northern Conservation Node: Tracor land (3,912) community agreed to be part of Mkambati, Lambasi (7, 935, 1) agreed to be proclaimed a reserve, Mtentu – this is the northern development zone and has a huge % of a particular grassland type here. South – there is Silaka and Mount Tesika. In the next 5 years Silaka which is now 250 hectares will expand to 3000 hectares and will include a large percentage of mango forest down south. There is also the southern Conservation node.

The project faced some specific challenges, such as : untangling management mandates; addressing land tenure issues e.g. settlement agreements, etc.; formalizing co-management agreements, and agency acceptance of communities as partners; infrastructure; alien vegetation and rehabilitation illegal activities that are drivers of degradation e.g. sand mining, roads, cottages, etc. Socio-economic: the socio-economic aspect of the project does not only focus on tourism but adopt a holistic approach as tourism is often seasonal.

6. Integrated local economic, biodiversity & catchment management By: Skumsa Mancotywa

The presentation gave a short overview of the work that the department(DEA) is doing in terms of land reform issues as well as the importance of biodiversity from the perspective of local economic development.

Protected areas are very critical for environmental conservation issues such as climate change, mitigation, etc. but they are also central to sustainable development, eco-tourism and social cohesion. Protected areas are globally recognized as areas of land or sea specifically dedicated to the protection and maintenance of biological diversity and of natural and associated cultural resources & managed through legal or other effective means. The National Environmental: Protected Areas Act (NEM:PAA) provides for different kinds of protected areas e.g. national parks, nature reserves, marine protected areas, world heritage sites, protected environments, mountain catchment areas, forest nature reserves. Protected areas are: globally recognized as the most effective means of conserving biodiversity; critical for achievement of the 2020 target to significantly reduce biodiversity loss – as articulated in the spell out strategic plan; and central to sustainable development efforts and attainment of Millennium Development Goals – MDG 7 (Protected Areas).

Contribution of PAs to sustainable development

- Environmental: provide a range of ecosystem goods & services (provision food, clean air, clean water) while preserving natural heritage; provide opportunities for environmental education & research; critical for climate change response due to their carbon storage and sequestration capacity including for adaptive measures to cope with climate change; and important for moderation of natural disasters e.g. floods, erosion etc. The more space we have that is untapped the better our potential to deal with issues of natural disasters.
- Social: preservation of cultural heritage, traditional healing and nation-building; contribution to poverty alleviation through job creation; support livelihoods of people living in and around PA's especially in marginal agricultural areas; provide opportunities for recreation and spiritual fulfilment; and Trans frontier Conservation Areas have had a profound impact in strengthening disease control, regional integration, peace and security (through cross border law enforcement).
- Economic: provide a strong foundation on which to build a tourist industry- create destinations for nature based tourism and providing a draw card for international interest; provide ecotourism spinoffs critical for local economic development; actively support land reform agenda and the diversification of rural livelihoods for mutual benefit of conservation and development; and ability to attract capital from private sector and donors (local and international) to generate conservation and economic spinoffs. Tourism is one of the fastest growing industries at present.
- Biodiversity & Protected Areas: The discussions held and still to be had during this learning exchange is critical, given the central role that South Africa plays globally. SA is 3rd richest country in biodiversity terms. SA's equally rich heritage – both naturally and culturally is of global significance with 8 world heritage sites, 13 sites on a tentative list. SA as a global leader: chair of Group of 17 Mega-diverse countries: Like Minded Mega-diverse Countries for 2 years. SA is also a member of World Heritage Committee. Sound policies developed by SA government, need to heighten implementation thereof. Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) target of 17% of land under conservation presents an opportunity to expand benefits of conservation especially in terms of unlocking biodiversity based livelihood opportunities given the fact that PAs have more secured and more sufficient forms of conserving our rich natural heritage.

- Protected Areas & Land Reform: Policies and strategies are in place to support balance between conservation of our rich heritage and land reform agenda. DRDLR Minister commissioned an assessment of land ownership in the country and the results showed that: 22% of land is under state ownership and 78% is under private ownership. This presents an opportunity to work with private landowners and therefore need to upscale Land Reform and Stewardship initiative. Thus this is a highly critical meeting for the country. In the President's 2013, government committed to shorten the time it takes to finalise a land claim. Action plans has been developed for the settlement of land claims against all protected areas. Proposed amendments to the Restitution of Land Rights Act in order to provide for the re-opening of the lodgement of restitution claims by people who missed the deadline of 31 December 1998. In his speech the President also reflected on the exceptions to the June 1913 cut-off date to accommodate claims by the descendants of the Khoi and San as well as heritage sites and historical landmarks. This will have an impact especially in areas such as Kgalagardi where there are National Parks, and Richtersveld which is also a World Heritage site, and part of the cross boarder conservation area with neighbouring countries. This could be an opportunity to work better with local communities in terms of expanding benefits beyond the boundaries of PAs. New approach to land re-distribution from "willing buyer/willing seller" approach which forces the state to pay more for land than the actual value to "just and equitable" principle for compensation" as set out in the Constitution. To explore provision of adequate post-settlement support to new landowners so that land continues to be productive – this is an area that has not been looked at previously.

7. UNDP Small Grants & biodiversity stewardship

By: Khathutshelo Neluheni

Since its inception, the GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP) has confronted very real challenges in working with communities to reconcile global environmental priorities with local community needs – this comes from the recognition that most of the poor and vulnerable communities, especially in rural areas are dependent on the natural resources. SGP recognizes that environmental degradation such as the destruction of ecosystems and the species that depend upon them, are life-threatening challenges that endanger us all. Vulnerable communities need be empowered to participate in addressing their developmental challenges. The Small Grants Programme is a product of the Rio Convention held in 1992.

The GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP) is rooted in the belief that global environmental problems can best be addressed if local people take ownership and there are direct community benefits. The programme operates on the premise that people will protect their environment when they: are organized to take action; have a measure of control over access to the natural resource base; can apply necessary information and knowledge; and believe that their social and economic well-being is dependent on sound long-term resource management.

SGP links global, national and local issues through a transparent, participatory and country-driven approach to project planning, design and implementation. The GEF SGP is a small programme and recognizes the need to work in partnership with other organisations. By doing this presentation at this forum the GEF SGP aimed at building relationships with the agencies present. The SGP is implemented by UNDP office in Pretoria. In the programme: projects are approved only at national level by a National Steering Committee (NSC). The NSC has representatives from civil society

organizations such as CBOs, NGOs, NPOs, etc.; government (GEF –OFP), academic institutions and other national stakeholders. The program is funded by the GEF from its replenishment agreement with recipient countries. In South Africa the programme received its allocation through the GEF Focal Point in the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) –

Over the past 18 years, the GEF SGP has invested \$450million and leveraged similar levels of co-financing for over 13,000 projects by communities in 122 countries. The programme provides grants of up to \$50,000 directly to local communities including indigenous people, community-based organizations and other non-governmental groups. The decentralized structure of SGP encourages maximum country and community-level ownership and initiative. In Africa, the programme is present in over 37 countries. In SA, since 2001, over US\$3.2 million invested with similar levels co-financing leveraged for 72 community projects. Programme Objectives: The GEF Small Grants programme aims to provide technical and financial support to civil society (and communities) to implement community based projects on conservation of environment and improvement of livelihoods. GEF SGP Focal Areas: Biodiversity conservation (BD), climate change (CC), land degradation (LD & SFM) international waters (IW), persistent organic pollutants (POPS/C), and capacity development (CD). Key Biodiversity Conservation outcomes for GEF 5 (2011-2014):

- Improve sustainability of protected areas and indigenous and community conservation areas through community-based actions (BD1);
- Mainstream biodiversity conservation and sustainable use into production landscapes, seascapes and sectors through community initiatives and actions (BD2);
- Maintain or improve flow of agro-ecosystem and forest ecosystem services to sustain livelihoods of local community (LD1);
- Support trans boundary water body management with community-based initiatives (IW1);
- Enhance and strengthen capacities of community-based and non-governmental organizations to engage in consultative processes, apply knowledge management to ensure adequate information flows, and implement convention guidelines (CD1); and
- Enhance capacities of CBOs and NGOs to monitor and evaluate environmental impacts and trends (CD2).

Country programme biodiversity niche: the programme works across the country but prioritise projects that are based in rural areas, focusing on community conservation of communal natural, sacred, cultural sites and production land – where the communities can generate an income – and protected areas.

Biodiversity Activities: projects that demonstrate community-based approaches to the conservation of natural habitats and ecosystems in and around formally gazetted protected areas; establishment and community co-management of protected areas that contain important pools of wild relatives of crops and animal breeds; appropriate recognition and support for the protection of indigenous and community conserved areas (ICCAs); strategic interventions to rehabilitate degraded areas in and around communities, e.g., restoration of native fodder species/vegetative cover which are crucial to pastoral economies; provision of alternative livelihoods for local and indigenous communities residing in buffer zones of globally significant biodiversity areas.

Key Information on SGP grants: Only NGO's and CBO's working to achieve global environmental benefits through rural community initiatives may apply. Applications from individuals, government agencies or private companies may apply; funding is up to a maximum \$50 000 per project in GEF phase.

Key aspects in considering funding proposals: address GEF's focal areas; involve local community action on environmental conservation; include capacity development, information dissemination and awareness; promote sustainable livelihoods and focus on marginalized and disadvantaged rural community groups; ensure stronger participation of women – addressing gender and equity issues; interventions should be replicable model or demonstration project or offer new approach to solving environmental problems; projects should encourage partnerships and networking with scientific, educational, private, government and other non-governmental institutions; ensure sustainability the project – aware that this is not always possible but through working in partnership this might provide solutions to project sustainability; address global environmental problems through innovative local solutions; contribute positively to national priorities and obligations; ensure that gender and equity concerns are addressed; proposals should be developed in a transparent and participatory manor through engaging the local community members in terms of development of the project.

This learning exchange platform was an opportunity to learn from the existing group as well as forge partnerships or working relationships as this work cannot be done independently. Some of the projects could be initiatives that are relevant to be supported by the GEF SGP.

8. Case study presentation on biodiversity – based development By: Steve Collins

The African Safari Lodge (ASL) Foundation works mostly in Namibia, Mozambique and South Africa. It is a Not for Profit company and also have a loan facility for community equity through Ford Foundation – a zero percent loan facility offering loans to communities that have ventures that needs funding. ASL Foundation is currently running a lotto funded Nature Guide Professionalization program – in rural communities gap year students (mostly from overseas) volunteer at lodges but this is taking jobs away from locals that could be professional nature guides. In the three countries ASL Foundation is currently working on 25 sites, cost of projects come to R427 Million of which the wages amount to R33.6 Million, and the income to communities tallies to the tune of R30 Million, through the different project.

The presentation described biodiversity based development as any kind of development that uses or improves the biodiversity or conservation status of an area. And highlighted the conservation of biodiversity as the golden egg – stressing the importance of implementing projects that do not undermine or destroy the conservation status of the area. . The focus of ASL Foundation is on ecotourism. NGOs have a very important role to play and this is where the ASL Foundation fit in by managing the relationships between the parties. In Mozambique the Foundation started a forum that brings all these role players together. Case studies: In South Africa – Makuleke, Mozambique – Chemucane and in Namibia – Grootberg.

Makuleke – Kruger National Park

This is one of the first land reform projects that were settled and the community owns the top part of the Kruger Park at the border of. In 1996 Makuleke CPA got 22 000ha of KNP back; 3 lodges developed since 2002; joint Management Board system with SANParks; and have a CPA represents around 16000 members. The Partnership Model is a Build-Operate-Transfer model, where an agreement is made with the private sector that they are going to invest capital into the project and run it for a pre-agreed period of time by which they should have made enough profit to make up for their investment. After that, the business is transferred to the community.

Pros and cons of model

Pros - the community does not need money, the private sector puts in the capital; the state is responsible for conservation – there is a management joint board in place and are in a process of concluding a service level agreement with SANParks to deliver conservation services in the area; and the state invests in biodiversity improvement – Makuleke has Ramsar status and World Wetlands gets celebrated here.

Cons - community landlord has responsibilities but limited capacity; turnover linked income is variable as it is linked to turnover and this meant no fixed income from month to month; JMB is time consuming and costly to run; and lodges often are special purpose vehicles with no value besides as trading business – this has not happen at Makuleke but happened at the other sites, thus the way agreements are structured is very important.

Chemucane

Is in the Maputo Special Reserve. There were three concessions awarded namely: Chemucane, Milibangalala and Dobela. Information on progress can be obtained from www.anvilbay.com Chemucane has a Community Association (AZC) that has a 50 year concession agreement with the government of Mozambique. In turn the AZC gave a 25 year agreement with a joint venture they established with the Bell Foundation. Partnership model - Bell Foundation and AZC have formed a special purpose joint venture “Companhia de Turismo de Chemucane. Ltd” (CTC) of which 60 % owned by Bell Foundation via Anvil Bay, Pty; and 40% owned by AZC is coming from a loan from the Foundation as well as a grant from the World Bank. Expected returns for community: the community investment is treated as a loan and will be repaid to the community. Use of equity repaid as loan of R4.5 million over 10 years for social development. Community levy R219 000 per year at 50% occupancy. Private sector covers government concession fees. Local purchases of R100 000 per year. Salaries and wages of R320 000 per year – once again this is a huge part of the benefits.

Pros and cons of model:

Pros - private sector and community does capital investment; state responsible for conservation; state invests in biodiversity improvement; and community is more involved in business.

Cons - community landlord has responsibilities but limited capacity; some risk attached to joint venture – as a loan facility the Foundation can step in and recover the loan if the project collapses; and turnover linked income is variable.

Namibia's conservancies

In Namibia they have a programme called community conservancies which could be useful for stewardship. Namibia's conservancies deliver income from CBNRM activities (hunting, harvesting, etc.) and income to conservancies. In 2010 R1 million rand went to the conservancies with a substantial amount of money going to local communities.

Grootberg – Namibia project

Here the community owns a lodge – they have money and they have grants - with 24 beds which have been extended to 36 beds now. #KHOADI //HÔAS (Elephants Corner) conservancy is 3366 square kilo meter, with 3200 members. They do hunting as well as ecotourism in the conservancy - hunting is more profitable. Their hunting quotas are set with the government and have professional hunters coming in to do the hunting. Partnership model: Have a management contract with Ecolodgistix as they own the lodge. The idea is that the conservancy will manage lodge by 2015. They also received EU grant money and ASL loan for expansion. Benefits: The meat from hunting is given to the community and the project keeps record of this. In one year the community got up to N\$211 000 pa; school renovations; improved stock purchased; soup kitchen for elderly; fenced of water holes for their cattle against elephants; subsidised diesel for water pumps for the community; jobs at Grootberg and Hoada camps; and income from the ecotourism facilities.

Pros and cons of model:

Pros - community does capital investment using grants – if you don't have grants you have a problem – tourism business is a lot more guts than glamour; conservancy responsible for conservation with state help; they are much more involved in the business than the Makuleke as they are living on the land and need to be involved; and where there's a functioning conservancies with a good constitution that is working they are given concession opportunities on state land.

Cons - community organisation bears most responsibility but sometimes have limited capacity – thus the conservancies have to be supported; and there is a risk attached to doing the business. In terms of lessons learnt, these are the critical success factors: clear rights framework – you must have the rights to do business. If you have the commercial rights from SANParks then you can do the business - if you go into stewardship you need to know what the rights are; competitive tenders to find best partner – this is difficult to find; you need a mix of grant and loan finance for community equity – you cannot do it on debt alone; you need strong and empowered community organization – if the community organisations are weak the projects will not work and will become sources of conflict in the communities; supportive government environment; and on-going support and advice for the CBO – you cannot just leave the projects at NGOs.

Useful websites

www.asl-foundation.org

After lunch the delegates went on a field visit to an Umngazana Trust project. The visit featured a bee farming project, funded by the Pick n Pay Foundation. At the beginning of the project there were 9 hives and the community had basic training but not practical training and no market. The Pick n Pay Foundation offered to put their product in its stores provided they met the standards. This required a revamp of the systems, quality standards had to be put in place and capacity building had to take place. This business belongs to the Umngazana co-op. Pick n Pay employed a consultant to provide advice and training on management. This relationship has been in existence for three years and has led to the increase in the number of hives. Now this project boasts about 500 hives. The passion and commitment from the community made Pick n Pay want to invest and is responsible for the progress made to date. There are still challenges of electricity which is currently running on a generator, as well as getting flowing water on a daily basis.

Day 2, 21 February 2013

Session Chair: Tsumbedzo Mudalahothe

10. Recap of Day 1

Tsumbedzo Mudalahothe provided a recap on the first day's session, and urged the delegates to persist on asking the difficult questions.

11. Kwazulu-Natal projects & lessons learnt

a. Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife

By: Greg Martindale

Presentation title: *KZN Biodiversity Stewardship Programme "Conservation in landowners' hands";*

This presentation provided an overview of the stewardship programme in KZN

the National Protection Area Expansion Strategy (NPAES) targets has been set for 842,000ha to be conserved by 2028; and studies showed that the most cost-effective way to achieve this is through biodiversity stewardship. The KZN Biodiversity Stewardship Programme is targeted at doing just that, getting priority biodiversity land under conservation.. The Programme is highly collaborative in nature and works with most of the major NGOs in South Africa as well as the KZN Department of Agriculture, the SANBI Grasslands and CREW programmes.

Achievements to date: The programme has on radar about nine land reform sites, totalling about 42,908ha. Although there are a small number of landowners, between the community owned and land reform sites which cover about 120,000ha in the Province, they are priority sites for achieving targets for protected area expansion in the Province.

Some of the sites that the Programme works on are Tshanini-Bhekula, which is South of Thembe Elephant Park in Northern KZN. The site has sand forest that is in amongst the best condition in KZN, and will make a substantial addition to the Thembe Elephant Nature Reserve. There are also development such as the Bhekula Sand Forest Lodge and other associated tourism infrastructure that will directly benefit the community. The bush baby – a grans bush baby - is the first of its kind found in South Africa.

The Umgano community project is located near Kraaiton in Southern KZN. The project has been very successful, consisting of 1,500ha of forestry. 180 people are employed in the reserve predominantly working on the forestry and the site is generating an income for the community from R2 to R3 million per annum. The forestry in the site alone are valued at R30 million. A lot of effort has gone into this site and is working well as a community owned site.

Highover situated on the Umkumaas River not far from Richmond. This site was always a priority for the biodiversity stewardship programme and was subject to a land claim that was successful; and the land claimants wanting to enter into the biodiversity stewardship programme. It is a critically important site for Blue Swallow conservation and securing it will be critical to conserving the species. The area has very high biodiversity value from grasslands, bushveld and very important ecosystem goods and services values as part of the river system. There is also a large well-established tourism operation based on adventure and natural values of the site.

Nambiti is located near to Lady Smith – a big 5 reserve of 8,556ha. There is a 40-year lease on the site for management and operation of the reserve. Two members of the community trust, who successfully claimed the site, serve on the Board of the Directors of the reserve. There are 10 commercially operated lodges and there is a lease fee that goes to the community from the lodges, as well as one lodge solely owned by the community. This site seems to be working well in terms of generating benefits for the community. Any employment opportunities must first be offered to the community before it can be advertised somewhere else. This site has also been targeted for black rhino range expansion.

b. WWF South Africa

By: Ayanda Nzimande

Presentation title of: *“Enkangala Grassland Project - Biodiversity Stewardship Officer, Land Reform / Black Farmers (WWF-SA)”*.

In Northern KZN there are two land reform and biodiversity stewardship sites. The first one is the Mabaso Community project that has 1400ha of land, and of which 123ha has been committed to conservation. This was the first Land Reform beneficiary to sign a biodiversity agreement. . Training in alien plants and fire control were provided to the community. A fire inspection with EKZNW staff – ecologist who advises on whether to and which areas should be burnt.

iNkosi Nzima is another site that is in the pipeline - together with EKZNW. The site is nested within head waters of Pongola next to the KPE, who are commercial farmers. They had a learning exchange to Mabaso site and had a detailed field trip with the community members. The area is very rich in culture, and they have the rain queen field and are very spiritual. There are four big rivers with running water originating from the area. The people are interested as they see what is happening at iNkosi Mabaso site. Site assessments are scheduled for March 2013.

In Southern Mpumalanga there are three Community Property Association (CPA) projects namely, Sigwinyamana, Bamabani and Ukuthanda Ukukhanya (2550ha). The primary goal is conservation through biodiversity stewardship and management of the land; capacity development; as well as facilitation of support for basic services. Even though the main aim is conservation, there are other issues that must be addressed, often of a social or service delivery nature, before the community can address the issue of conservation. Stewardship roll out with CPA's and field assessments with the

specialists was done. A Wakkerstroom Land Reform Task Team exists consisting of WWF, MTPA, Birdlife SA, municipality and other role players and stakeholders in the area.

Recent benefits to CPA projects and to the community at large were: increased environmental awareness; currently developing biodiversity agreement for all CPAs and translating these into isiZulu so that the community can read and understand better; through partnership with Nedbank, hippo rollers(water carrying devices) were donated which can carry 20 litres at a time; veld condition assessments in October 2012; show on 50:50 on Monday the 12th November 2012 on SABC 2; facilitated DoA Masibuyele Emasimini Programme in Southern Mpumalanga to plough for the CPAs – the CPAs just had to harvest. Through Nedbank we also got the Console Sola jar's for light and an Ukuthanda Ukukhanya CPA office.

Challenges: Land affairs grants or recap programme has not been rolled out to the communities; title deeds from rural development; lack of financial resources / budget; mining is a threat – we do not want a situation where people get their land and find that they are unable to graze their livestock on it because of environmentally unfriendly activity; and lack of basic services.

- c. Lessons learnt: The conservation sector has not comprehensively given the notion of rural development the attention that it so deserves. This is very crucial towards ensuring a successful stewardship programme in the future *Izanqawe Land Reform Project*
By: Steve Germishuizen

Izanqawe is a community project and an interesting case study on how conservation can support commercial production in the timber industry and also lead to assisting in capacitating and facilitating further agricultural development.

The project is in the Greytown area, 60 kilometers north of Pietermaritzburg.. It was identified in 2009 by the Grasslands Programme. The KZN Biodiversity Stewardship Programme engaged with the community and held community meetings in conjunction with the neighbouring farmers explaining the value of stewardship and the importance of conservation. The community was particularly interested from a perspective of improving their cattle management. A learning exchange was arranged for the community trust to the Umgano project by the stewardship programme that had the same elements such as the stewardship component, timber, grasslands, etc.

A partnership was formed between the community trust, the KZN Biodiversity Stewardship Programme, and the SANBI Grasslands Programme to work together towards mutual objectives. The SANBI GP appointed a mentor to work with the community and primarily on their most productive land use which was timber. Their only source of income was 200 hectares of timber which was being very poorly managed.

The mentor assisted the community to the point where the timber could be used to produce a sustainable income. The community successfully approached the Department of Land Affairs to fund the mentor. New farms have been added to the community landholding through subsequent voluntary land transfers – neighbouring farmers sold their farms to Land Affairs and been transferred to communities. The area was initially 3,500ha and is now up to 10,000ha land and 1,000ha of productive timber land. A partnership is also been started with the Van Rooyen Family

Trust which owns a saw-mill on the property. The saw-mill together with the 1,000ha becomes a huge income source for the trust.

Site Characteristics: total site is 10,000ha with about 3,000ha of Midlands Mistbelt Grassland, a critically endangered vegetation type spread out in patches with one block consisting of more than 1500ha. This was the target of the stewardship programme. There is about 7,000ha of Tugela valley bushveld and Tugela valley thornveld at the lower area. A lot of it is currently being used by Van Rooyen Trust for game farming and there is the potential to expand the game farming activities. . There are about 160 land reform beneficiaries who live in town and not on the land. There are 36 farm workers on the land. There are 12 community trust members of which, only half are active in the meetings and are motivated but since they are employed they have very little time and it is often difficult to have events and or activities as it must be scheduled around their availability.

Progress: A steering committee has been established and is effective; KZN BSP assessed the site for the stewardship programme and found it to be of nature reserve value, an interim agreement for a PE is to be introduced to get people familiar with the idea of stewardship. GP mentorship to develop forestry enterprise which has been of huge benefit; appointment of mentor by DLA; budget; annual plan of operation for forestry that can now be sustainably managed; improved marketing – mentor found better markets for the timber; revenues from forestry is going up; minimum wage for workers, previously workers were getting below minimum wage; a supervisor brought from the work force; pre-feasibility studies for vegetables, nursery and game farming.

The way forward: need to develop management plan for the potential protected areas we want to establish; need to develop Veld condition assessment to develop a decent biodiversity compatible grazing plan for the grasslands; revise land use plan as it is out of date and need to look at the policy and regulatory issues around the development of land; full feasibility studies for agriculture game farming, tourism, piggery and nursery; establish appropriate stewardship agreement (either BA or PE); once the timber plantations are at FSC level, we want to get FSC certification audit so that they can get the benefits of the premiums offered on their timber; source finance for fencing so that the cattle programme can be put in place; and training is a key issue.

d. *Somkhanda Nature Reserve*

By: Inkosi Gumbi

This Presentation was done in isiZulu and Ayanda Nzimande translated into English. When the Gumbi community received their land through the land reform programme, they decided to conserve their land for the benefit of future generations and to make a livelihood from the land through non-agricultural activities. 16000 hectares were put aside for conservation, and a stewardship agreement between the community and the EKZN Wildlife was signed. They also work in partnership with WWF-SA, Wildlands, etc. and have catalyzed several projects. They also have a lodge which is currently being in the process of being upgraded.

Benefits to community: the community is getting jobs; one of the main drivers of this project is to put food on the table. At present they do not allow hunting with dogs as they want to do this in an appropriate manner. Job creation is through the removal of invasive alien plants such as lantana. The group wants to make sure that their culture goes hand in hand with conservation – the

traditional attire is only worn by the high profile community members. They have their traditional ceremonies annually and would like to invite participants to the annual ceremony.

12. Western Cape projects & lessons learnt

CapeNature

By: Zolile Simawo & Sandra Waterboer

CapeNature is not directly affected by the land claims as none of the CapeNature priority areas were claimed through the land reform programme, however they work with the communities that live adjacent to protected areas. Currently there are three sites close to the reserves namely: Genadendal (over 5000ha), located in Cape Winelands District Municipality between Caledon and Grayton; Klipfontein (653ha), located in Cape Winelands District Municipality in between Gabouw and Villiersdorp; and Fynbos Wyn en Vrugte (40ha), Located in West Coast District Municipality near Tulbagh.

Status of the sites

Genadendal: This property has two portions of land with two different land owners. The first portion of the land belongs to the Moravian Church. The process of negotiating a stewardship agreement has been very slow and to date no agreement has been signed.. The church is located adjacent to CapeNature's mountain catchment area, where CapeNature is responsible for managing the alien invasive clearing programme, employing the local people. The second portion of the property belongs to DRDLR but under the management of the Theewaterskloof Municipality. The Genadendal Transformation Committee was established to facilitate the transfer of land from the DRDLR to the community and its work is moving at a snail pace. Stewardship negotiations will commence once this transfer has been completed

The second site is *Klipfontein*. The land consists of three portions. The first portion of the land belongs to Klipfontein Agricultural Trust (KAT) which is currently actively involved in producing essential oils. The second and third portion of land belongs to National Department of Public Works and managed by Department of Agriculture (mandated authority) but unofficially managed as a nature reserve by CapeNature. The sites are rich in biodiversity and CapeNature is currently facilitating the transfer of the land to the KAT so that an agreement to manage it as a nature reserve under Stewardship Programme can be signed – the process is slow due to red-tape.

The third site *Fynbos Vrugte & Wyn* was presented by Sandra Waterboer. Fynbos Vrugte & Wyn is owned by 116 farm workers at Bergsit Estate, one of the award winning wineries in the Breedekloof. The Winery belonged to the Lategan family wine farms since 1840. In June 2008, this project was the first BEE project to sign an agreement with CapeNature. The site is about 40ha, located near the Witzenberg Nature Reserve. The BEE project recently bought 140ha and is now owned by Fynbos Vrugte & Wyn. The farms has fruit orchards & vineyards, producing for Mountain Ridge Cellar and linked to the Bergsig Wine Estate, and are both Biodiversity & Wine Initiative (BWI) members. The area's been identified as the top priority site in the Upper Breede (excluding Slanghoek) by specialists and conservation staff in a workshop held to set local priorities for this area.

a. WWF South Africa

By: Natasha Wilson

The Land Programme is a national programme, active in the Northern, Western and Eastern Cape. The programme facilitates the expansion of protected areas by establishing new protected areas or expanding existing one. This is done through land purchases, donations, swaps and or stewardship.

Partnerships with conservation agencies are crucial. The Programme consists of two staff members facilitating the management of over 400,000ha that WWF_SA owns.. WWF would purchase land or land gets donated to WWF and contributed to the protected area where WWF enter into agreement with CapeNature or Northern Cape conservation or Eastern Cape conservation who then manages it on behalf of WWF.

She presented a case study of a community that got its land through the land reform programme. The land in question is approximately 9 000 hectares, but is now managed by the conservation agency in the Western Cape as part of a bigger, 80 000 nature reserve. The community got the land back in 1999, and there are strong emotional and cultural ties to the land.

The land is in the middle of a soon to be proclaimed protected area. The area is a global biodiversity hotspot with high biodiversity importance in terms of the levels of biodiversity, the endemism as well as the levels of threat. The provincial agency is in discussions with the community regarding a 99 year stewardship contract agreement.

If the community decides to contribute 5000ha to a contract nature reserve with title deed restrictions, WWF through the land trust will buy an alternative piece of land with the same amount of hectares the community contributes. Since the land is very sensitive, minimal grazing is allowed. The alternative piece of land will be given to the community to offset the land use rights that they are foregoing on the land that would be put under stewardship.

13. Northern Cape projects & lessons learnt

a. Northern Cape Department of Environment and Nature Conservation

By: Ralph van der Poll

The main focus area of this province's stewardship programme is the Succulent Karoo Biodiversity Hotspot, and more specifically, in the Namaqua District Municipal area. Most of the land in the area is communal land.

Main achievements

Through the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund Grant (CEPF) the Succulent Karoo Ecosystems Program (SKEP) consolidation allowed for an enabling environment to build the Northern Cape Biodiversity Stewardship program. The Consolidation consisted of SANBI, DENC, CSA, WWF and CapeNature – although CapeNature mainly operates in the Western Cape, they were also part of the consolidation.

The Programme focuses on Conservation Areas agreement, which is a voluntary agreement between the landowner and environmental authority. Currently the province is working with private landowners and commonage landowners in the Kamiesberg and Nama Khoi municipal areas.

Challenges and constraints

Biodiversity Stewardship remains a low budgeted priority in the Province. However, there are plans afoot to change this. The new Annual Performance Plans in line with the Outcome 10 priorities, and through this, the hopes are high for a budget allocation that is more favourable. Through the partnership with WWF the programme hope to access the Leslie Hill Succulent Karoo Trust (LHSKT) fund to secure biodiversity within the Namaqualand priority areas.

The Programme continues to build on the partnership between partners such as Conservation South Africa (CSA) which is an extension of the available biodiversity stewardship human resources - with their stewardship support role in the Kamiesberg.

b. Leliefontein Project

By: Jenniffer Cloete

The presenter spoke in Afrikaans but the presentation was done in English. Cloete is the chair of the Biodiversity and Red Meat Initiative (BRI) in Namaqualand in an area that is in the Kamiesberg Municipality.

What the project focuses on:

The management guidelines for the BRI were developed by CSA, ARC and the municipality. The initiative implements these management guidelines. Annual stewardship agreements are signed with CSA. The Initiative promotes good land management that takes into account the conservation needs of an area as sensitive as the Kamiesberg. In return, the community receives benefits in the form of incentives such as training, workshops etc.

Compliance Monitoring: Monthly compliance monitoring is being done by compliance officials and extension officer from CSA. These officials are responsible for wetland monitoring, rangeland monitoring and recording of damage causing animal incidents. Monitoring of wetland by compliance officials sometimes involve learners as part of environmental education, through the Eco-schools program run by the provincial conservation department.

The initiative also has an Eco Ranger project, which form part of the holistic livestock Project. Five Eco Rangers were trained and recruited by CSA. An additional five Eco Rangers were trained through the partnership with SANPARKS and CSA – these have been allocated to farmers in the area. Through this project solutions for alternative predator management are explored. This is a huge benefit and has shown that reverting to the old method of sheparding livestock minimises the chance of stock being preyed on by predators

Achievements of the past year

The Three Peaks voluntary Conservation Area registration document was signed on the 5 June 2012 by the MEC. The BRI continue to maintain the agreements with 45 communal farmers' part of the association. Two additional wetlands were restored with the support of Working for Wetlands. Future activities: The BRI is in the process of establishing a Cooperative. The main objective is to

secure development funding to ensure the sustainability of the initiative through green economic demonstrations.

c. Steinkopf Project

By: Jan Johannes

The Steinkopf project is a CSA initiated project, and aims to expand the biodiversity stewardship programme in Namaqualand through working with communal farmers

The entire Steinkopf communal area is about 329,000ha, and 17,000ha is targeted for stewardship

The focus of this stewardship model will be on environmental awareness and capacity; to encourage sustainable land use; promote the restoration of degraded areas and look for opportunities to develop alternative livelihoods and increase resilience to the impacts of climate change.

Developments thus far:

There is a process underway to facilitate an interactive and participatory socio-economic and legal/policy study of the proposed stewardship site in the Steinkopf region; there is also a proposed Advisory Committee to assist with planning and implementation.

14. Limpopo projects & lessons learnt

a. Limpopo Economic Development, Environment and Tourism

By: Dzivhu Mphaphuli

Status of the initiative

The status of LRBSI in the Limpopo Province is not fully fledged, or fully developed or matured because there are no ecologists in the programme. As with any biodiversity stewardship program, one must provide support to the communities if we want them to commit their land into stewardship. However, the province has to start somewhere and some of the projects the Province is involved with are the Molekwa CPA / Eco-Echo Foundation Waterberg and Moepel Farms. The Molekwa CPA / Eco- -Echo Foundation Waterberg consist of 10 000 ha.

Background information on Moepel Farms

The area consists of 28,000ha of Moepel farms, and is at the core of the Waterberg biosphere reserve. The area has been claimed by three claimants' communities which are the Legata, Motse and Molekwa. The claims have been finalized.

The department wanted to have a written agreement with the communities that states that they are committing their properties to conservation; this resulted in the community resolution being signed between the communities and the department, confirming that they want their property to be proclaimed a nature reserve. The department also developed a master plan to guide any development that will take place on the property.

Challenges: The department has been working with the community for a long time little progress has been made in getting the title deeds transferred to the community – but the community has not lost confidence in the department.

Plans for 2013/2014

Once the land is transferred to the claimants, the land will be proclaimed as a Nature Reserve; also to sign the biodiversity stewardship agreement with the Molekwa CPA. Negotiations with the Molekwa's together with their strategic partners are at an advanced stage and the department believes that at the end of the coming financial year that they would have signed the biodiversity stewardship agreement. It is not feasible to sign the biodiversity agreement now since there are no ecologists to support the communities and this programme of work. Hoping that through Groen Sebenza initiative the ecologist will be appointed. In addition the department wants to obtain a record of all restored land, in order to determine the biodiversity value of the land, with the aim of going into stewardship with the landowners.

b. Eco –Echo Foundation: Waterberg

By: Ahmed Cachalia for the Molekwa CPA

The presentation was done from a business point of view. The Molekwa farms, and other farms, were previously game farms before going through the process of restitution. The Molekwa farm is in the heart of the Waterberg Biosphere Reserve, which gives it the status of a world heritage site. The resource inventories in the area all points towards the direction of eco-tourism and protected areas. The grass vegetation in the area is mostly sour-veld, and the communities mainly use the area for cattle farming. The vision and mission is to establish and maintain a self-sufficient eco-tourism and rare and endangered species breeding programme for Eco-Echo Foundation Waterberg, to see savannah bushveld environment filled with wildlife and rare species roaming freely and thus contribute to the initiatives of the Waterberg Biosphere World Heritage Sites' guiding principles; and to protect, re-introduce and enhance the culture and heritage of the indigenous people of Waterberg.

The Molekwa CPA consists of 500 families with an elected board of trustees, together with the stakeholders, the Department of Rural Development and the Department of Economic Development Environment and Tourism; the Echo Echo Foundation has a vested interest in establishing economic revival and sustainable wildlife enterprises and develops the area as a tourism destination. The community wants to maximize the potential income of the farm in relation to the area's potential and thereby establishing themselves as a major role player in the tourism and wildlife ranching business. Beside the benefits that the community will get, it will also contribute to the economy and environment not only of the region but the Province as a whole.

The natural resource base that is available has been identified as a catalyst for tourism development that can and will address development and poverty alleviation through job creation. It has become important to implement a best practice policy to compete nationally and internationally that will force us to integrate our business into a single multi-functional component if we are to success in the global arena. The capacity for employees to move from one level to another is the pre-requisite for the success of this plan and requires people to be multi-skilled in terms of the many aspects of the business. However emerging from our particularly historical backgrounds, it is important to reconcile the tension between the strategic objectives of economic growth, redress and equity.

A comprehensive business model for the activities planned for the Molekwa land restitution site is available from the Echo-Echo Foundation on request

c. The Kondowe Nature Reserve & Selwane CPA

By Lerato Noko

The baPhalaborwa Selwane CPA lodged a land claim on an 18,000ha piece of land, and only 4557 ha have been given back to the community, meaning that only 5% of the claim went through. The Selwane borders the Letaba River, Olifants River and the Kruger National Park. The forefathers used the land for hunting and cattle farming. baPhalaborwa area used to be occupied by four communities namely the Mashishimane, Selwane, Mashete and Mashishimanes.

Of the 4,557ha that was restored back to the community 457ha is used for agricultural purposes, 1,000ha is used for irrigation scheme by the community and the rest is used for Kondwe Nature Reserve. The community decided to venture into eco-tourism and approached various stakeholders to assist as the community did not have the finances and knowledge to drive it. The community then partnered with a company to develop lodges, and developed a shareholders agreement with a strategic partner. This is going well as the strategic partner has a lease agreement and shareholders agreement with the community. Three of the CPA members are directors in the operating company.

Kondowe is only 4000ha, too small for a Big Five reserve that the community dreamt of. The community then decided to partner up with neighbouring communities to establish a reserve big enough to attract tourists and to provide sufficient habitat to the big five

The expanded area will be a 60,00ha Reserve, which will allow the community to attract guests and investment and develop a reasonable business from biodiversity. The Provincial Parks Board proposed the development of a corridor reserve that connects private, state and community owned land into one big reserve. However negotiations and plans for this are still underway

15. Mpumalanga projects & lessons learnt

By: Nomcebo Kunene

The land under land claim in Mpumalanga is mainly used for agricultural purposes and even the claimants are not tempering with the agricultural activities on the land. The responsibility of the sector is just to ensure that farming activities on the properties are in line with biodiversity conservation.

Land reform in Mpumalanga is mainly dominated by the two strands of the land reform programme, namely: land restitution and land redistribution. To help work with these communities, WWF-SA appointed a land reform stewardship officer who is working with the MTPA to help assist with stewardship on areas targeted for land reform.

Activities to date

The project convened a learning exchange with the Mabaso community project in KZN. The Mabaso community have signed a biodiversity agreement, so this provided a good opportunity for horizontal learning between the two projects.

More recently the ecologist conducted a veld condition assessment which focused on key grass species and grazing management on the community land. The ecologist will provide the community

with feedback on the assessment in due course. MTPA is also playing a coordination role with the DRDLR through the RECAP programme – which is aimed at supporting landowners with the post-settlement support.

The projects / areas were chosen from a list of 30 projects and were chosen on the basis that they contribute to the MTPA expansion targets. The Wakkerstrom CPA grassland is 2550ha and the claimants are Bambanani, Sigwinyamana and Ukuthanda ukhukhanya.

The Mokgaba project is a cross boundary project overlapping Mpumalanga and Limpopo of which the bigger section lies with Limpopo. However due to the fact that Limpopo do not have systems that are up and running Mpumalanga carries most of the responsibility; and appointed an ecologist to do a rapid assessment on the state of biodiversity game of Mokgaba because since it was unclear on what the biodiversity status of the game farm was.

The Mndawe project, consist of 836ha of land MTPA did quite a bit of work in this area and is now at the stage where the area will be gazetted as a protected environment.

Challenges include:

- Lack of funding as MTPA has serious financial constraints and was hugely dependent on funding received from SANBI, however this funding cycle lapsed.
- There is slow progress on the distribution of grants from the RECAP programme. It is not the mandate of MTPA to deal with issues of ensuring that the communities receive their grants but because we also want to see the communities being uplifted economically and become viable.

a. Mndawe Trust-Mpumalanga

By: Samuel Sithole

The Mndawe community is a community that successfully claimed 826 ha of Doornhoek 60 J.T of the farm in Lydenburg district and has been active since 2006. The farm was previously used for game farming and game breeding and this is what the trust and the community wishes to pursue. The Mndawe trust comprises of 35 household representing 189 beneficiaries.

Current status:

There is a biodiversity stewardship agreement between the Mndawe Trust and the MTPA. Since the establishment of the partnership the community is able to see progress on their land. There is also a tripartite agreement entered into between Mndawe, DRDLR and an experienced and qualified mentor to provide mentorship support to the community. A service level agreement is signed between the mentor and DRDLR. The mentor assisted with research and the development of a professional business plan that was submitted to DRDLR which aided in acquiring funding from the RECAP programme.

Where we want to be

Have an upmarket tourism facility (Comprising of a guest house, Conference and training facilities, restaurant, an upmarket bush lodge, predator park, game breeding-wildlife economy and ecological conservation); convert existing farm homestead into a 15-bed guest lodge, wedding and function venue; offer unique opportunities for Walking trails, Hiking, Mountain Bike, Horse trails as a

confluence of the property's unique nature and biodiversity features; and create 49 short term (6 months), 30 medium and long term jobs- skills transfer.

Key to success

The need to strengthen partnerships with all stakeholders particularly with DRDLR, MTPA, Local Business Community and other stakeholders; as well as the mining community in Lichtenberg as there are a lot of mines surrounding the properties. Want to work towards a fully established and extremely popular (Top 10) Eco-Tourism venue attracting not only the local but also the international clientele'.

The challenges since 2006 is the instability as officials are regularly being changed - more than five officials came and made promises and they disappeared. The second challenge is that there is a lack of co-operation by the officials in the Province. While the national DRDLR trying to unlock the rural economy the provincial department is doing total opposite that is why the national department were asked to intervene to get this project on the RECAP programmes priority list. Last but not least is the challenge of transfer of funds being delayed in all phases of a project and or development?

16. Eastern Cape project & lessons learnt

By: Tracey Potts

The aim of the presentation is to take Eastern Cape as a case study of the contrasts that we face in the Eastern Cape in terms of education, wealth distribution, transport, landscapes, and land-use – each of these contrasts present opportunities.

Learning from the learning exchange:

The three building blocks of a successful stewardship programme are trust, patience and respect.

Trust: when there are changes or fluctuations in a situation and we have the tendency to discount everything around us. The nature of trust has a lot to do with integrity – acting always with honesty and integrity and without hidden agendas; have openness in communication with everyone - transparency; keep your promises; and meet your obligations to meet other peoples interests as well as your own – as we need to work in partnership, to succeed we need to trust.

Respect: how do we build respect within our relationship: we respect the contribution of others; we acknowledge their potential to contribution using their abilities; create meaning and purpose in what we do; we let other people give off their best by creating an environment for success; and fully recognize other people's contribution? Patience is key – as none of the programmes achieve success overnight. Patience is not the lack of action but timing of when to act. 'Patience is not the ability to wait but the ability to keep a good attitude and my mouth shut while waiting!'

a. Umgazana Trust

By: Wiseman Sithuko

Umgazana Trust is a community development trust, aimed at catalyzing economic development in the village. The land they work on is not a land reform site, but land under the management of the Chief.

The objective for establishing the trust was to instil an ethic of conserving the natural resources of the area; as in the past the resources were damaged by outside sources and the community itself. The trust is attempting to change this by changing the attitudes of the people.

The aim of the trust is to increase job opportunities using natural resources and this cannot be done without the involvement of government. In addition, they plan to establish cooperatives under the trust that will act as key drivers of economic change in the village. At present they now have 9 cooperatives working under the trust, of which three of the cooperatives are doing well. They have divided the cooperatives into four sectors, which are tourism, manufacturing, agriculture, and marine culture.

The various fisheries will be brought together to ensure sustainable fishing takes place. Tourism, agriculture (bee-farming) and manufacturing (lock making) are doing well. In 2006, the marine culture received funds from DEAT to build the fish factory. But this did not succeed as the roads leading to the area are very bad which makes transporting things to and from the sites very difficult and costly. Other projects are not formed by the trust but by the Eastern Cape Park and Tourism Agency, such as the alien species removal project, and others that train people to become forest rangers - these two projects were formed due to encouragement from the trust.

Challenges

People do not want to be involved in starting a project but when the project is generating an income it attracts a lot of interest from people. There are also politicians who divide the people once they see that a project becomes successful. However they are still inviting all stakeholders including the politicians to their meetings as they believe that they will achieve more working in a team and in partnerships. This is still a young project that is in the process of learning but hope to have more to share next time.

b. Mbaza Makhosini

The area in discussion, Matatiele, is right next to the Ongelesnek Nature Reserve, and is about 970ha and was donated to the community by a church in 1996. The bishop bought the land about 119 years ago; and in 1996 the mission decided to donate the piece of land to people who were working in the mission.

From 1996 till now the process was started to register a CPA. In 2012 the Department of Environmental Affairs, as well as Environment and Rural Solutions unlocked the doors for the community. Since last year the community has been working with the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform; and together with Chief Lebenya as the chief of the village in the area, the mission and other departments who are willing to help in the growth of the trust.

The trust is aiming to develop a strong partnership with the Ongeleksnek Nature Reserve. The need to work together is important, as it will enable a more coherent approach to biodiversity conservation. The area has different species of grasses, birds, and natural vegetation.

A big concern of the trust at present is the wattle found in the area which affects the grazing land, water from the river proteas, caves with bushman paintings and the vegetation – which will be

damaged. Responding to this issue there is currently a CEPF funded project to help devise more suitable ways of managing the land.

17. Land reform & biodiversity conservation: opportunities for development

By Mazibuko Jara

Mazibuko Jara is from Ntinga Ntaba ka Ndoda. This was a very useful topic to connect with the lessons that we have listening to over the past few days. We need to look at land reform, biodiversity and conservation by understanding the question of systemic constraints to development; and understand what reproduces under-development 18 years after the end of apartheid.

It is useful to conceptualise biodiversity as not just conservation in a narrow limited sense but as a key foundation of life; as it provides communities with ecological services for life itself and subsequently development. This immediately recognize that the earth has real biophysical limits, which has been stretched for the past 400 to 500 years, destroying the integrity and regenerative capacity of the ecological web of life that society is dependent on.

Biodiversity conservation, for it to be relevant to land reform and development and it if is to make a difference, it need to have a systematic response to the destructive essence experienced over the past 500 years. Therefore biodiversity conservation in South Africa have to ask some critical questions when it comes to mining, the industrial model of agriculture, as well as the polluting manufacturing – it has to ask serious questions about the high carbon path we've seen over the years. In this moment as local government recognizes the impacts of climate change, does this not present an opportunity for a just transition to a zero carbon economy that sustains and re-generates the ecological web of life?

This is critical because if we do not look at biodiversity in a long term systemic structural sense then our actions are not going to the heart of the problem. This new logic is crucial for agriculture, land and agrarian reform in South Africa, given that commercial agriculture is the most polluted sector (of water, grasslands and our land) and destroyed biodiversity; thus we cannot continue with the industrial model of agriculture that predominates our society that is dependent on fossil fuel and use of chemicals.

When we think of biodiversity in relation to land reform, we need to recognize that the land reform programme from 1994 has inadequately realized the biodiversity destroying impacts of the land production patterns that we have and that of industrial agriculture.

Government reports prior to 1994, indicates the impact on the environments from the Betterment schemes, especially in the Ciskei, Transkei and other homelands where the capacity of the land to produce was destroyed by those schemes. The resultant land inequities need to be addressed in a systematic way. Biodiversity conservation can be better enabled if these former homelands are depopulated and de-densified alongside the resettlement of people on the redistributed land, primarily occupied by commercial agriculture. Biodiversity conservation is limited without extensive

wide spread and thorough going land redistribution as well as restructured agro-ecological approach for agricultural production.

This agro-ecological approach to agriculture production is a crucial question that must be used to challenge the agro-ecological system dominant in our country. If biodiversity conservation is to make sense there must be transformative approach to land and agrarian re-form through the re-distribution of land, transform agriculture away from the models that harm or destroy biodiversity as well as entrench new biodiversity logic to other non-agricultural rural economic activities.

This will set the next long term cycle of development on a sustainable biodiversity basis. In a report presented at COP17 the same logic was tabled in response to the climate crisis; highlight the need to re-think the structure and systemic foundations of the next long term cycle of development.

This perspective is a huge challenge as there are vested interests that are not interested in systemic structural change and have opted for limited reforms, which leaves the foundation of inequality and undermine biodiversity conservation. Biodiversity practitioners in the room were challenged to think of their work as traveling two lanes, one being working within the limited reforms that we have; but as we do so think about - to what extent are we integrating people into in-equitable systems – this is a crucial question. How do we foster new logics in what we are doing? The social, economic, political and ecological crises are deepening.

18. Way forward: LRBSI Draft Strategy

This presentation was mainly focused on the draft strategy for the LRBSI, which is firmly aligned with the National Development Plan. The strategy aims to revolutionize biodiversity conservation, and recognizes biodiversity as one of the often discounted economic agents in the country. The strategy has five components, namely:

SO1: Coordinate/Create a learning and innovation hub for nature based rural development and biodiversity conservation.

This can be done through case studies, culture and other means used to produce knowledge relating to biodiversity conservation, land reform and to strengthen the community on learning and sharing. Websites, emails, guidelines, handbooks, and other means of communication should be used to maintain communication with our partners; and there should be creation and strengthening of the partnership with all relevant partners.

SO2: Build capacity within partner communities to catalyze and sustain interventions.

There is a need to build capacity within community partners to sustain interventions, especially through skills development pre and post settlement of land reforms projects. Communities should be assisted on their skills development especially around business skills, grazing veld management, conservation agriculture management, etc. and be equipped not to sign settlement agreement that will not be beneficial to communities. Communities need to be able to sustain the project in future. He strongly emphasized that there should be establishment of strategic partners with private sectors for skills transfers.

SO3: Develop and expand the partnership for integrated programme and project management.

Two suggestions being to establish highly effective departmental institutional team to render strategic advice of land reform biodiversity stewardship coordination hub. In addition, SANBI hosted the coordination in a temporary manner but there is a need to establish nationwide stakeholder forum that meets twice a year to discuss progress made in implementing the strategic objectives and that can be expanded reference group.

SO4: Promote nature based sustainable rural livelihoods and economic development

This to be done through nature based tourism, green jobs etc.; linking programs with one that are already in existence like EPWP, RECAP, how to integrate the CBNRM practices and ethos into this programme, etc. and providing technical support to land reform beneficiary so that they can better utilize the ecological capacity within their land to promote socio economic. We need to development project enterprises to maximize benefits – just because tourism works in one area this does not mean that it will work in another area.

SO5: Strengthen conservation outcomes resulting from land reform and rural development projects.

At the end of the day the base that sustains all these well-functioning ecosystems also needs to be sustained. As the land reform community what can we do to improve biodiversity management and increase our protected area network? The target that we need to deliver on is 40,000ha which we can deliver but we can do more and do better. However we need to ensure that these practices are continuous in order to expand our protected areas and secure critical biodiversity areas. We need to better develop guidelines and practices for better land management, to improve agricultural output grazing management and sustainable harvesting. We need to develop stewardship agreements and sign the land reform beneficiaries with land owners in a manner that benefits conservation sectors as well as the communities.

This draft strategy still needs to be taken to the reference group and needs to be discussed but the presentation was a means to get the inputs from partners who are not part of the reference group. A reference group meeting will be held in March 2013 before the strategy can be ratified.

19. Synthesis of the learning exchange: lessons learnt & way forward

At the end of the proceedings, the Department of Environmental Affairs, represented by Ms Skumsa Mancotywa, the Department of Rural Development and Land reform, represented by Mr Magezi Mhlanga, and the South African National Biodiversity Institute, represented by Kristal Maze, re-emphasized the importance of this initiative on the mandates of their respective departments and institution. They all collectively committed their respective departments to working hard at looking at what more could be done to ensure a more sustainable and biodiversity based rural economy. Ms Mancotywa was particularly challenging to the other partners, urging them to meet as a matter of urgency after the learning exchange to devise mechanisms for a more grounded approach to this initiative that would leave lasting impacts on the lives of people the initiative touches

