PROCEEDINGS

Building capacity to catalyse a biodiversity based economy in land reform

10 – 12 February 2015

Ascot Conference Centre, Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal
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<td>CBO</td>
<td>Community Based Organisation</td>
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<td>CPA</td>
<td>Community Property Association</td>
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<td>CR</td>
<td>Critically Endangered</td>
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<td>CRDP</td>
<td>Comprehensive Rural Development Programme</td>
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<td>CREW</td>
<td>Custodians of Rare and Endangered Wildflowers</td>
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<td>CSA</td>
<td>Conservation South Africa</td>
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<td>DAFF</td>
<td>Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries</td>
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<td>DEA</td>
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<td>Eastern Cape Parks and Tourism Agency</td>
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<td>EWT</td>
<td>Endangered Wildlife Trust</td>
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<td>Global Environmental Facility</td>
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<td>LEDET</td>
<td>Limpopo Economic Development, Environment and Tourism</td>
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<td>LRBSI</td>
<td>Land Reform and Biodiversity Stewardship Initiative</td>
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<td>LUS</td>
<td>Land Use Scheme</td>
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<td>MoU</td>
<td>Memorandum of Understanding</td>
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<td>MPT</td>
<td>Municipal Planning Tribunal</td>
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<td>MTPA</td>
<td>Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency</td>
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<td>NDP</td>
<td>National Development Plan</td>
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<td>NEMA</td>
<td>National Environmental Management Act</td>
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<td>NFEPAs</td>
<td>National Freshwater Ecosystem Priority Areas</td>
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<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-governmental Organisation</td>
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<td>National Resource Management</td>
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<td>NWPTB</td>
<td>North West Parks and Tourism Board</td>
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<td>PE</td>
<td>Protected Environment</td>
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<td>PES</td>
<td>Payment for Ecosystem Services</td>
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<td>RECAP</td>
<td>Recapitalisation and development programme</td>
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<td>SAMIC</td>
<td>South African Meat Industry Company</td>
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<td>SANBI</td>
<td>South African National Biodiversity Institute</td>
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<td>SANDF</td>
<td>South African National Defence Force</td>
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<td>SANParks</td>
<td>South African National Parks</td>
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<td>SDF</td>
<td>Spatial Development Framework</td>
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<td>SKEP</td>
<td>Succulent Karoo Ecosystem Partnership</td>
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<td>SPLUMA</td>
<td>Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act</td>
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<td>TMF</td>
<td>Table Mountain Fund</td>
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<td>TOPS</td>
<td>Threatened or Protected Species</td>
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<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
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Introduction

The Land Reform and Biodiversity Stewardship Initiative

The Land Reform and Biodiversity Stewardship Initiative (LRBSI) is both a conservation and developmental initiative that was formed in partnership between the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI), the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) and Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR). Initiated in 2009, the LRBSI aims to address simultaneously the critical developmental and environmental challenges faced by South Africa. The unique and highly diverse natural environment is under threat from environmental degradation and unsustainable resource use. At the same time, South Africa needs to address the poverty and past inequalities of the country. Rural livelihoods are often dependent on the extraction and use of natural resources. The LRBSI strategy hopes to stimulate socio-economic development within land reform projects that overlap with areas of critical biodiversity, in a manner that allows for the use of natural resources, while preserving the functioning of important ecological infrastructure.

Biodiversity stewardship is an approach to entering into agreements with private and communal landowners to protect and manage land in biodiversity priority areas, led by conservation authorities in South Africa (SANBI, 2014). It recognises landowners as the custodians of biodiversity on their land. Biodiversity stewardship is based on voluntary commitments from landowners, with a range of different types of biodiversity stewardship agreements available to support conservation and sustainable resource use. Land reform biodiversity stewardship projects occur where land reform owners or users of communal land voluntarily agree to secure and sustain the natural resources of their land. Agreements are entered into to:

- protect important biodiversity
- create nature-based socio-economic benefits
- enable more sustainable use of natural resources
- manage threats to nature

Land reform stewardship projects contribute to rural development by stimulating rural economic activity through:

- Nature-based tourism, which creates enterprises, equity, green jobs and generates revenue
- Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES) is made directly to land owners / users
- Creates green job opportunities through extended works programmes such as the “Working for” programmes
- Community Works Programme green job opportunities for local communities such as land restoration and rehabilitation, and vegetable gardening
- Better land management and livelihoods through improved agricultural output, grazing management and sustainable harvesting
The objectives of the LRBSI are:

1. 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
2. To demonstrate the successful delivery of both socio-economic and conservation benefits at a project level.

**Theme of the 2015 learning exchange**

The theme for the learning exchange is:

*Building capacity to catalyse a biodiversity based economy in land reform*

The aims of this learning exchange are to investigate:

- How we optimise the return on investment for local communities linked to natural resource management and the wildlife economy in terms of biodiversity stewardship?
- What partnerships need to be strengthened in order to realise the associated benefits?
- What are the capacity gaps that need to be addressed?

The learning exchange will also provide an opportunity for sharing lessons and experiences from land reform biodiversity stewardship projects.
Objectives and overview

Introduction, objective and welcome – Kristal Maze, SANBI

The great interest shown in attending this LRBSI learning exchange is overwhelming and encouraging. Over 170 people from all over the country attended the event, including an incredibly diverse group of people and a number of experts in the various subjects. The organisers were especially honoured to welcome members of royal families, traditional leaders and community representatives. This event will help to harness the synergies between the biodiversity and socio-economic land reform agenda. Together, it is possible to grapple with the challenges of rural development, and investigate the benefits that biodiversity stewardship can bring to rural development.

There are currently about 24 land reform biodiversity stewardship sites around the country. The initiative is an unusual partnership, between various spheres of government, non-governmental organisations, civil society and communities. Through this innovative partnership, the aim is to harness the existing efforts that may be occurring in isolation and to investigate synergies so that we can gain more than the sum of the parts. We hope to share the lessons that have been learnt from the projects, connect with others and share experiences.

The LRBSI is relevant to two of the presidential delivery agreement outcomes:

- Outcome 7: Vibrant, equitable and sustainable rural communities and food security for all
- Outcome 10: Environmental assets and natural resources that are well protected and continually enhanced

There are also requirements within the delivery agreements for co-operation. This initiative is a platform for such co-operation.

Exploring synergies of land reform, biodiversity stewardship and spatial planning – Magezi Mhlanga on behalf of Sunday Ogunronbi, DRDLR

The Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act was enacted on the 5th August 2013. Dr Sunday Ogunronbi was an early champion for SPLUMA, the first to put pen to paper on its development. This presentation will explain how SPLUMA relates to biodiversity stewardship, and will provide all you need to know about this important piece of legislation. SPLUMA embraces environmental inputs, so the environmental sector should be reassured that SPLUMA will assist in biodiversity management.

Although SPLUMA was enacted almost 2 years ago, it is still not effective. The regulatory tools, guidelines, norms and standards that are required to administer the law are still being drafted. Once these are finalised, the President of South Africa will sign the date of commencement.
SPLUMA provides a framework for spatial planning in the country. It consists of Development Principles, which will be a guiding norm for development, as well as the relevant policies and legislation. This will shift the country from a master plan method of planning, to a principle or norm based type of planning. The Spatial Development Framework (SDF) is the second layer of SPLUMA. SDFs are completed at national, provincial, regional and municipal scales. The regional scale will include environmental management frameworks, which do not necessarily follow political boundaries. SDFs feed into lower levels of SPLUMA, including Land Use Management, and Land Development Management. Land Development Management encompasses the Environmental Impact Assessments and other applications for land use development authorisations.

Pre-1994 planning was designed to serve a different political idea, with segregation, differentiation, and privilege. Multiple laws, institutions and parallel processes were instituted by the pre-1994 legislation. Planning legislation was fragmented across the old boundaries of the then four (4) provincial administrations, homelands, and self-governing territories. In 1994, South Africa inherited complex and disjointed planning systems which manifest in unequal, incoherent and inefficient settlement patterns. The result is that there are multiple and conflicting laws and interests, thus parallel tools, systems and institutions. This means that regulatory systems are incoherent and uncoordinated. There is no protection for rural/urban poor and no place for former homelands. The existing system is only for the privileged, resulting in distorted settlement patterns, with poorest communities having to travel the longest distances.

Therefore, the reason for developing SPLUMA was to introduce a coherent regulatory framework for land use management. This would assist in ensuring constitutional synergy, with a clear delineation of powers and responsibility. Section 33 of the Constitution of South Africa deals with administrative justice. It aims to prevent unfair differences in requirements that may result in loss of legislative coherence between provinces. SPLUMA will provide a predictable and transparent regulatory system, with clear, rational and efficient inter-linkages between sectoral and inter-sphere planning tools and policies.

The five principles of SPLUMA are:

- The principle of spatial justice
- The principle of spatial sustainability
- The principle of efficiency
- The principle of spatial resilience
- The principle of good administration
Chapter 3 of SPLUMA deals with intergovernmental support. This details the various role and responsibilities for different levels of government. At a national government level, the Minister provide support and assistance (Sec 9(1)a), monitor compliance (Sec 9(1)b), and develop mechanisms to support and strengthen (Sec 9(2)) intergovernmental support. Provinces must develop provincial legislation, support municipalities, resolve differences and monitor compliance by municipalities.

Chapter 4 of SPLUMA relates to Spatial Development Frameworks (SDFs). An SDF is a framework that seeks to guide overall spatial distribution of current and desirable land uses within a sphere/municipality in order to give effect to the development vision, goals and objectives. The aims of SDF include promoting sustainable, functional and integrated human settlements, maximising resource efficiency, and enhancing regional identity and unique character of a place. All the three spheres must now make SDFs, which must give effect to National, Provincial or Municipal Planning. Section 12(1)(m) of SPLUMA takes cognisance of any environmental management instrument adopted by the relevant environmental management authority. It is at this level that the relevant environmental plans must be incorporated. Section 12(1)(n) give effect to national legislation and policies on mineral resources and sustainable utilisation and protection of agricultural resources.

SPLUMA advocates an Ecosystem Based Approach. Section 12 (1) states that “SDFs should include previously disadvantaged areas, areas under traditional leadership, rural areas, informal settlements, slums and land holdings of state-owned enterprises and government agencies and address their inclusion and integration into the spatial, economic, social and environmental objectives of the relevant sphere.” In this way, SPLUMA is made relevant to all in society, including the biodiversity sector.

Chapter 5 of SPLUMA deals with Land Use Management at the municipal scale. The municipality is responsible for Land Use Management, of which the primary instrument is the Land Use Scheme (LUS). The municipality must, after public consultation, prepare, adopt and implement a LUS within 5 years of the Act being brought into operation. The LUS must be consistent with and give effect to Municipal SDF. All land development applications must be determined within context of the LUS. They must (b) take cognisance of any environmental management instrument adopted by the relevant environmental management authority, and must comply with environmental legislation and (f) include land use and development provisions specifically to promote the effective implementation of national and provincial policies. An approved and adopted LUS has the force of law and binds all owners and users of land.

Chapter 6 deals with Land Development Management. Land development applications are determined by municipalities as the authority of first instance. Municipalities are required to establish Municipal Planning Tribunals (MPT) to discharge this function. Officials may determine limited applications as prescribed by Municipal Council. Municipalities may co-operate to establish Joint Municipal Planning Tribunals at the scale of district municipalities. The Tribunals must consist of municipal officials and suitably qualified external persons appointed by the Municipal Councils. Appeals lay to the Executive Authority from decisions of the Tribunals. Appeal to Executive Authority is made via the Municipal Manager against MPT decision. No Appeal may be lodged in terms of
Section 62 of MSA. The municipality may establish separate appeal body in terms of provincial legislation.

The concept of “national interest” is a very important aspect of SPLUMA for the biodiversity sector. This refers to World Heritage Sites and National Heritage Sites, even if these are located within the jurisdiction of a particular municipality. The national government may also have an interest in the management of these important sites. A land development application must be referred to the Minister where the outcome of the application affects the national interest (the National Environmental Management Act has a similar provision). The Minister is to publish criteria on National Interest after consultation. The National interest will includes matters within the exclusive functional area of the national sphere in terms of the Constitution; strategic national policy objectives, principles or priorities, including food security, international relations and co-operation, defence and economic unity; or land use for a purpose which falls within the functional area of the national sphere of government.

There are multiple areas for alignment between biodiversity and spatial planning management. Chapter 3 of the National Environmental Management Act (Act 107 of 1998) stresses the need for co-ordination and alignment when preparing bioregional plans and spatial development frameworks. According to the NEMA, the Minister must prepare and adopt a national biodiversity framework, bioregions and bioregional plans and biodiversity management plans. All the biodiversity plans must provide for an integrated, co-ordinated and uniform approach to biodiversity management by organs of state in all spheres of government, non-governmental organisations, the private sector, local communities, other stakeholders and the public. Any and all biodiversity plans prepared in terms of NEMA may not be in conflict with:

a) any environmental implementation or environmental management plans prepared in terms of Chapter 3 of the National Environmental Management Act;

b) any integrated development plans adopted by municipalities in terms of the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, 2000

c) any spatial development frameworks in terms of legislation regulating land-use management, land development and spatial planning administered by the Cabinet member responsible for land affairs; and affected.

d) any other plans prepared in terms of national or provincial legislation that are affected.

Ideally, biodiversity plans should be integrated into the spatial development frameworks as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spatial Plan</th>
<th>Biodiversity Plan</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Spatial Development Framework (NSDF)</td>
<td>National Biodiversity Framework (NBF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provincial Spatial Development Framework (PSDF)</td>
<td>Bioregions and Bioregional Plans within boundaries of a particular province</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Spatial Development Framework (RSDF)</td>
<td>Bioregions and Bioregional Plans within identified / declared region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipal Spatial Development Framework (MSDF)</td>
<td>Biodiversity Management Plan</td>
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Section 44 of the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act (Act 10 of 2004) states that the Minister may enter into a biodiversity management agreement with any person, organisation or organ of state identified in terms of section 43(2), or any other suitable person, organisation or organ of state, regarding the implementation of a biodiversity management plan, or any aspect of it.

The DRDLR encourages land reform beneficiaries to embrace the implementation of biodiversity management plan in areas identified by SANBI. It further encourages land reform beneficiaries enter into biodiversity management agreements and hence contribute to the National Protected Areas Expansion Strategy. Currently all land reform projects that lie in areas of biodiversity importance have been spatially identified by the LRBSI.

**Ecosystem restoration and land user incentives – Christo Marais, DEA**

The introduction about the legislative framework has been helpful in setting the scene. However, although money isn’t everything, it counts for a lot. Therefore, this presentation will focus on the demand for investments in ecological infrastructure and ecosystem services. It will look at how to close the gap between this demand and what is currently being invested by government. It will also cover the key success factors in accessing the market and the implications for land reform and biodiversity stewardship.

South Africa is already one of the countries with the highest expenditure on natural resource management as a proportion of GDP. A Green Jobs Fund report investigated the current status of natural resource management programmes, and what is needed for their expansion in the future. They investigated three scenarios, the most demanding of which could create 230 824 jobs by 2025, but would require R57 271 million rand. This is more than 5 times the amount currently being invested.

To close the gap in funding between what is currently being invested and what is required we can:

1. Improve efficiency
2. Use biological control for invasive species
3. Develop and enforce legislation
4. Unlock investments

A 3-day workshop in Italy helped to understand what business and government are looking for in an investment. Businesses are looking for opportunities that will improve their profitability, improve their sustainability over the long term or decrease risk. These three factors often go hand-in-hand. Government will invest if it sees relevance to its socio-economic priorities, including crime, education, health, job creation, rural development and food, energy and water security. Investments in natural resource management can contribute to the last three priorities (jobs, rural development and food-energy-water security). Energy in particular is currently very topical, and is strongly linked to food and water security since Eskom is the largest single water user in the country. The private
sector, however, does not like doing business with government. Reasons for this are a fear of voluntary participation becoming regulated, government inefficiencies and ideological differences.

In order to for land reform projects to access to the natural resource management market, there is a need for sound science. Research, monitoring and sound planning will help to ensure that projects are based on sound science. Investors are not interested in funding initiatives that cannot show, using sound science, that there is value to the investment.

There are three good investment opportunities for natural resource management that will show significant returns:

- **The upper end of the water value chain**: Natural resource management in upper catchment areas, especially the removal of invasive alien plants, can have significant downstream impacts on water security. Good land management upstream will result in improved flows (decreased summer storm flows, increased winter baseflow), reduction in sediment load and improvement in water quality. In an extreme example of the problem with high sediment load, the Mount Fletcher Dam was 70% silted up within 4 years of its construction.

- **Climate change adaptation**: Soils in grassland areas are significant for storage of carbon, as soils are eroded, this carbon storage capacity is decrease. Even more significant are the thickets of the Eastern Cape and the remaining natural forest areas. These have the potential to be included in the international carbon market. Increased desertification of thicket areas impacts significantly on the ability of aboveground biomass, litter, roots and soil to store carbon.

- **Disaster risk reduction**: Natural resource management can minimise the risk of disasters such as floods and fires. This has implications for the insurance, agriculture and food security. Activities that reduce disaster risk will help to limit damages to resources and built infrastructure.

There is significant potential to access private sector investment. It is estimated that the net profit of the corporate sector in South Africa is around R750 billion per year. 3% of this must be invested in Enterprise and Supplier Development (R22.5 billion), and 1% in Corporate Social Investment (R7.5 billion). If ecosystem services sector can access only 30% of this money, we can grow the sector by R10 billion. This allow a significant expansion of the current natural resource management
initiatives, including the Land User Incentives.

The Department of Environmental Affair’s Land User Incentives Programme aims to encourage landowners to make use of the programme’s investment to control invasive alien plants on their land. By doing this, alien clearing will be used as a tool for job creation and community development, while restoring natural ecosystems. There are obvious benefits from the Land User Incentives Programme for land reform communities. The Land User Incentives aim to enrich people, not by providing them with money, but by providing the investment to improve the quality of their land. Applications for Land User Incentives are assessed based on a number of criteria, as they are submitted. These criteria include aspects such as poverty and dependence on natural resources, which are common at land reform sites. Land reform communities will improve their chances of receiving a Land User Incentive by maximising wages and minimising oversight. Involvement with biodiversity stewardship will also improve the chances of receiving funding, as this proves a commitment to good land management and that systems of governance and management are in place. Land users living in balance with what the land can produce under optimum conditions.

What is biodiversity stewardship? – Pamela Kershaw, DEA

South Africa is one of the most biodiverse countries globally, situated at the southern tip of Africa. With more than 95 000 species recorded, the country contains between 5-8% of global biodiversity while representing just less than 1% of the global land mass. There are high levels of endemism in the country and particularly so in the Cape Floral Kingdom – a fully contained floral kingdom within the country.

South Africa’s protected area estate does not effectively represent the full range of globally important species and habitats in South Africa’s hotspots. Traditional protected area expansion through land purchase is no longer cost effective, and it is recognised that low cost mechanisms for protected area expansion and management need to be supported. The creation of private Protected Areas is seen as a critical means of protected area expansion to meet national and international targets. Of South Africa’s 8.7 million ha of terrestrial protected areas, some 35% are private protected areas.

Biodiversity stewardship is a programmatic approach to entering into agreements with private and communal landowners to protect and manage biodiversity priority areas in South Africa. The programmes are led by conservation authorities, often with the support of NGOs. The primary goal of biodiversity stewardship is to conserve and effectively manage biodiversity priority areas through voluntary agreements with landowners.

Within the Biodiversity Stewardship programme, a suite of agreement types exist, ranging from non-binding to long-term formally declared protected areas.

This allows for flexibility in the landscape, where less restrictive agreements can be put in place in certain areas, such as buffers and multiple use landscapes, while formal protected areas can be created in areas of high biodiversity importance.
The higher ‘types’ of agreements are formal protected areas, recognised and regulated by the Protected Areas Act, and contributing to the South Africa’s protected area estate.

Biodiversity Stewardship agreements for protected areas are only created in biodiversity priority areas, systematically identified at provincial and national level, in line with the protected area expansion strategies (provincial and national). In the Biodiversity Stewardship model, land ownership and management responsibility remains with the landowners, with support from state and NGOs. Annual auditing of the management of the land under contract is done by the conservation authority. Ten years since the Biodiversity Stewardship programme was first piloted, it is now operational in all 9 provinces, and has secured some 71 protected areas totalling around 450 000 ha. Another 540 000 are in negotiation through these programmes. South Africa now has tax incentives which aim to assist landowners with private protect areas. These incentives relate to both property rates, and income tax.

Biodiversity offers R150 billion worth of services. It is estimated that if the current loss of these ecosystem services continues, our national treasury will need to find an additional R17 billion to compensate for the loss of essential services biodiversity is providing for free. Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife is given a budget of R512 million to conserve biodiversity The return on this is R292.36 for every R1 invested by the province in Ezemvelo. This value could also be taken as the amount that treasury would have to fund should there be no ecosystems services provided.

Examples of land reform and biodiversity stewardship:

- **Umgano:** Nkosi L. Baleni has said “I would like to establish something of lasting value for my people”. To achieve this, the community has embarked on a 3-phase programme. Phase 1 includes a commercial forestry plantation managed by the community. Phase 2 is a Biodiversity Management Agreement signed for cattle project on 21 November 2008, at the launch of the KZN Biodiversity Stewardship Programme. Phase 3 is the declaration of the mountain area as a Nature Reserve, which is currently in the negotiation process.

- **Somkhanda:** On 1 July 2009 Nkosi Zeblon Gumbi signed the declaration agreement and Protected Area Management Agreement for the declaration of 11 600 ha as nature reserve. The Nature Reserve was declared on 17 February 2011. Rhino’s have been established on the nature reserve with the assistance of WWF.

While there is a cost to the conservation authority to implement these programmes, which requires dedicated staff to negotiate and maintain sound relationships with landowners, this cost is far less than the alternative model of land purchase. Through formally protecting the land and managing the land effectively for biodiversity conservation, the private sector essentially contributes significant resources towards national biodiversity conservation targets. Preliminary results from a study has
indicated that the cost to the conservation authority to get land formally protected though the biodiversity stewardship model is at least 90 times less costly than outright land purchase, and in some cases as much as 500 times less costly. Managing the land, once protected, is between 4 and 17 times less costly to the conservation authority than if it was managed purely by the conservation agency. Costs are often supplemented by NGO involvement, often a three-way partnership between landowner, state and NGO.

Biodiversity Stewardship in South Africa has received support from Global Environmental Facility (GEF). GEF funds were used to fund the first feasibility study on the stewardship mechanism, to develop the mechanism, and to pilot the first projects. South Africa’s GEF 5 Protected Area and Mainstreaming projects both include substantial investments in biodiversity stewardship, as well as specific investments to ensure financial sustainability of the protected area estate.

Despite the biodiversity stewardship model being substantially more cost effective than purchase, there remains a challenge to ensure sufficient funding for the provincial biodiversity stewardship programmes. Tangible support, particularly, but not limited to, biodiversity stewardship sites on communal land, needs to be increased. A recent study on the participation of biodiversity stewardship participants has shown that technical support from, and a maintained sound relationship with, the conservation authority is a major driver of continued landowner commitment.

Overview of LRBSI to date – Kamva Qwede, SANBI

Land stewardship is an ancient concept which refers to the wise use, management and protection of land that has been entrusted to an owner/user. Biodiversity stewardship is an approach to securing land in biodiversity priority areas through entering into agreements with private and communal landowners. Land reform stewardship occurs where land reform owners or users of communal land voluntarily agree to secure and sustain the natural resources of their land. Biodiversity stewardship is a voluntary process that cannot be forced on a landowner.

Biodiversity stewardship contributes to several goals:

- Conserving a representative sample of biodiversity
- Involving landowners as custodians of biodiversity
- Contributing to the rural economy
- Investing in ecological infrastructure
- Contributing to climate change adaptation and mitigation
- Supporting sustainable development

Legally binding agreements should only be developed on sites of high biodiversity value. Its implementation has occurred from the bottom up through partnerships between landowners, conservation NGOs and conservation agencies. The sterling work of the partners needs to be acknowledged.
The rationale for the LRBSI is that Land reform projects are often not successful due to a lack of post-settlement support. The LRBSI hopes to demonstrate that conservation can work hand in hand with land reform and support rural livelihoods, both of which are major priorities of government. The LRBSI provides a strategy to address the inequalities and injustices that the majority of South Africans were subjected to in the recent past.

LRBSI initiated in 2008/09 by DEA, DRDLR & SANBI to respond to specific challenges facing conservation in land reform areas and had two broad objectives:

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

Historical injustices underpinned by discriminatory land legislation has fractured communities, destroyed their relationship with their land, undermined traditional landownership and use patterns, deepened poverty, and created yawning caverns between conservationists and disenfranchised local communities. The country faces an ongoing challenge of simultaneously remedying the racial injustices of the past and alleviating widespread poverty, while conserving the nation’s rich yet rapidly dwindling natural resources and grappling with the effects of climate change. In an effort to overcome these challenges, government has introduced broad legal reforms in the land and conservation sectors. The LRBSI enables us to dispel the perceived dichotomy between conservation and land development.

The National Development Plan (NDP) acknowledges poverty reduction as a long-term challenge that involves difficult trade-offs, especially if the imperative of shifting to an environmentally sustainable development path is taken seriously. The NDP argues that successful land reform must be linked to rural job creation and rising agricultural production in an inclusive rural economy. The NDP also raises legitimate concerns about the capacity of the state to implement ambitious policies, and highlights the importance of ‘shifting from a paradigm of entitlement to a development paradigm that promotes the development of capabilities, the creation of opportunities and the participation of all citizens’.

The NDP states “The Department of Environmental Affairs, together with related departments such as Agriculture and Rural Development, should investigate the socio-economic implications and policy requirements of a system for requiring commensurate investment in community development and the protection of ecosystem services to mitigate environmental and social impacts of development.”
Update on LRBSI Guideline – Magezi Enoch Mhlanga, DRDLR

The Guideline Document provides the LRBSI and other parties with a simple, user-friendly analytical tool. It helps weigh up all relevant factors when choosing projects to invest in. There are complex interfaces between land reform, biodiversity conservation, livelihood generation, multiple stakeholder involvement and evolving institutional frameworks. The NDP calls for an inclusive and integrated rural economic development framework and well-implemented land reform projects to increase job creation. Land reform projects often lie in regions with high biodiversity importance. There is thus a need to support co-existence between biodiversity and livelihoods.

The identification of projects for the LRBSI looks at biodiversity status, the economic potential, the institutional arrangements and the social factors within the land reform project. These criteria are assessed on a case by case basis using an assessment tool. Criteria include:

- **Biodiversity assessment** may be done by a government officials with site assessment forms when conducting field assessments in order to ensure that the data obtained is standardised (Forms may be province specific and KwaZulu Natal and the Western Cape have much higher capacity and systems)

- **Economic criteria** include current livelihood strategies of the individuals or group or community, current land use practices and the potential economic use of the resources (highly diverse ones) for economic benefit (tourism, grazing or water ) and critical infrastructure.

- **Institutional arrangements** assessment that consider what structures are in place and how they may fit with opportunities available.

- **Social assessment** includes willingness and readiness of the local communities to take part in the LRBSI. Disputes with neighbouring communities or political disputes should also be looked at, particularly in terms of the right to use the proposed property. The social structures such as leadership and tribal structures should be assessed as well as the inheritance systems including land tenure and decision-making rights.

An Excel spreadsheet is the actual tool for evaluation. As you respond to a set of questions, a dot moves around the evaluation matrix to show where the project falls under certain categories. The different categories are based on the feasibility and impact to biodiversity conservation. A decision will be made on the inclusion of a project based on this assessment. Once an application has been submitted, it will be referred for a decision to the steering committee (DRDLR, DEA, SANBI) before resources are mobilised. Implementation can then go ahead.
Restoration case studies

The role of WWF-SA in land reform in Northern KZN and Southern Mpumalanga – Ayanda Nzimande, WWF-SA

The role of WWF in land reform in northern KZN and southern Mpumalanga has been conducted through the Enkangala Grassland Programme. The vision of this programme is to secure and better manage high priority Grassland catchments that deliver significant ongoing benefits to people. To do this, biodiversity and ecological infrastructure need to be protected and better managed. There are significant ongoing benefits, including continuing the legacy of service delivery from ecological infrastructure.

The approach of the Enkangala programme has been catchment stewardship, which means planning, securing and managing catchment ecosystems to sustain or restore delivery of ecosystem services. The programme was conducted in partnership with landowners and other stakeholders, to strengthen ecologically compatible land use activities, address threats and strengthen institutions to make decisions in support of more intact ecological infrastructure.

The Enkangala Grasslands are one of the largest continuous high altitude grassland zones (1.6 million ha). Large areas are relatively intact and support high levels of biodiversity and endemism. It is also a major water sources area, with the headwaters of the Vaal, uThukela, Usuthu and Phongola rivers occurring in the grasslands. The programme is an inter-provincial initiative which spans 3 provinces and is thus of national significance.

1. **Mabaso project, 1472 ha, approx 300 people:** This community has signed a biodiversity agreement, and an advisory forum has been established. Since the signing of the agreement, WWF has facilitated:
   - Certified training in invasive weed control
   - Certified training in fire management
   - A participatory rural appraisal
   - A socio economic study
   - An economic feasibility study
   - Development of a grazing plan (aligned with the Biodiversity Agreement management plan)
   - Implementation of a sustainable cattle farming initiative
   - Training in bull testing and pregnancy test
   - Bulls of good quality

They have also accessed a small UNDP grant for the sustainable cattle farming initiative. Within 1 year an agricultural mentor was appointed, the community herd finalised, the grazing plan implemented and infrastructure developed. The nutritional requirements of the herd have been met, as well as a vaccination programme.
implemented which has reduced mortality to less than 1.5%. There have also been jobs created, and facilitation of access to the commercial cattle market. This project has catalysed other community agreements through learning exchanges. When new land reform communities are identified as potential biodiversity stewardship landowners, they are taken to the Mabaso community to learn how the process can work successfully. The project is recognised as a successful land reform and livestock initiative in Amajuba District. It has resulted in effective partnerships between community and government department. The result is effective conservation of natural resources used by the community.

2. **Nkosi Nzima project, 3348 ha, approx 1300 people**: A number of incentives have been provided to the Ndlamlenze Community. These include hippo rollers for transporting water, the provision of solar lights that help school learners to study and vegetable gardens, as well as funding for jobs for Natural Resource Management and fire fighting.

3. **Mpumalanga projects: Bambanani CPA, 850 ha, approx 102 people and Ukuthanda ukukhanya CPA, 750 ha, approx 84 people**: The Community Property Associations (CPAs) for these two sites have been launched. There has been facilitation of access to basic service, land care engagement and fire fighting training. The communities have been involved in learning exchanges.

4. **Mr. Khanyile, commercial farmer, 5550 ha, one family with workers**: if successful, this will be the first stewardship site established with a black commercial landowner. It is adjacent to the neighboring CPAs, creating a conservation corridor. The landowner is willing to be part of the programme, and his properties have large areas of wetlands and rivers. The area has qualified for a Protected Environment.

Despite the successes of the programme, there have been several challenges and a number of lessons learnt. One of the primary lessons is that it is valuable to provide assistance in negotiating for basic services with the relevant government departments. This is more easily achieved given the status of an NGO, and is a good way to build trust with the community. There have been ongoing issues with the translation of documents into other languages, with safety issues and from the threat of mining. There has been little success in dealing with the DRDLR in this region.
Livestock for landscapes and livelihoods: alternative stewardship approaches for restoring communal rangelands
– Nicky McLeod, uMzimvubu Catchment Partnership Programme

Environmental and Rural Solutions is a small NGO that is part of the uMzimvubu Catchment Partnership Programme (UCPP). They are involved in securing investments for Natural Resource Management in the Matatiele area of the Eastern Cape. They are contributing to rangeland stewardship by restoring the traditional concept of maboella. The Oxford dictionary defines stewardship as “the act of taking care of or managing something” and incentives as “enticement, encouragement or motivation”. There are a bundle of incentive options that encourage rangeland stewardship, that are each appropriate to certain situations.

The project area is in the Lesotho-Maluti Drakensberg, within the Alfred Nzo District municipality. Land tenure in the area is 70% communal. It has high numbers of wetlands but the area has suffered lots of degradation, including substantial soil erosion and extensive wattle infestation. This has resulted in lost grazing lands. Despite NRM funding for clearance of alien invasive plants in the past, there is often regrowth.

Based on exposure to holistic livestock management successes in our region by commercial farmers, anecdotal evidence showed that grazing could be an effective tool for preventing expansion of aliens. Trampling by cattle prevents regrowth of invasive plants. This resulted in a mindset change, in which cattle were viewed as a tool for land management, rather than a problem. As cattle are such a central part of the landscape and culture of the area, a suite of other benefits were possible if cattle were better managed.

The establishment of the cattle project involved lots of negotiation with cattle owners and land owners. An agreed management plan has been drawn up. The grazing is managed based on a need for trampling, which breaks up the hard soil cap that is found under previous wattle infestations. A number of incentives have been use in the project, including employment, biomass processing of the wattle, animal health interventions such as licks and vaccinations, mobile electric kraals to assist with herding and assisted access to the meat market. As inaugural cattle auction raised over R400 000.00.
It is extremely important to interact closely with communities and the traditional leaders. Traditional leadership has to steer *maboella* revitalisation and must be involved from the start in the planning and governance systems. The project is also lucky to have received huge support and buy-in from the local municipalities and the Eastern Cape Parks and Tourism Agency.

Ultimately, rangeland stewardship results in healthier people, healthier livestock and a healthier environment.

**Land rehabilitation in the Upper uThukela** – *Steve McKean, Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife*

The upper uThukela region located between Cathedral Peak and Royal Natal National Parks. It is an important area for key watershed services. An early feasibility study found that there was a high overlap between the rural areas, those with high biodiversity and those with high ecosystem services potential. Poor communities own unrecognised wealth in ecosystem goods and services that the areas they live in supply to society. The project area, of approximate 188 000 ha, is largely community owned. The area is under the control of the Amangwane and Amazizi Traditional Authorities.

Watershed services that were identified included increased base flow, reduced storm flow, reduced sediment yields and increased carbon sequestration in grasslands. The key element to these services is improvement of basal grass cover. Basal cover is easily measurable and less susceptible to annual climate fluctuations than other indicators. It tracks the history of management of the land. Basal cover also has a known relationship with run-off, influencing infiltration, sedimentation and flows. Higher vegetation cover is also related to greater soil carbon content. Three primary management tools are available to improve basal cover: fire management, stock management and grassland restoration.

From hydrological modelling of the uThukela, estimates of improved baseflow and decreased sedimentation were calculated based on improved catchment management. Improved baseflow from the upper uThukela could be as much as 12 million m$^3$ during winter months, while sediment reduction of 1.9 million tons per annum could be expected. This would result in more allocable water, with an economic value of R18 016 886 per year for the lowest scenario. The comparison with the management costs required makes this a feasible cost-benefit option in favour of good land management. However, such a project would require political support, support from the Department of Water and Sanitation and from the DEA’s Natural Resource Management programmes.
The project thus aimed to conduct a pilot project for Payments for Watershed Services. The project received funding from the Natural Resource Management programme and was implemented in partnership with Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife. The current and initial focus of the project has been on grassland restoration, including alien plant clearing and donga restoration. Future work is expected to expand to fire and livestock management.

The project has met with some challenges. Approximately 40% less funding was obtained than was required and there were administrative delays with obtaining funding, signing agreements and administering the project – hence a delayed start. Only degraded land rehabilitation and alien plant clearing being done. Grazing and fire management still to be addressed. There have been issues with local political and “vested interest” issues that interfere with progress. Challenges with co-ordination of the project and implementing monitoring have had to be overcome. Finally, there is limited capacity at community level to manage a business relationship, contracts etc.

The way forward is to use this pilot to prove that better land management actually does provide the services that is claimed: improved baseflows, reduced stormflows and reduced sedimentation.

**Natural resource management and biodiversity stewardship in the Namaqualand Commonages – Rufus Hein, Conservation South Africa**

The objectives of Conservation South Africa’s Namaqualand natural resource management project are to restore degraded land that supports and sustains local communities. The restoration involves invasive alien plant clearing, mitigation of erosion damages and repairing key infrastructure. The aim is to restore 20 000 ha of degraded arid rangeland and to implement sustainable land management on 274 000 ha of communal farmland belonging to the communities of Leliefontein and Steinkopf.

The rationale for the project is that successful rehabilitation, management, and monitoring of natural wetlands and rangelands will involve extensive cooperation with livestock owners, creation of employment opportunities and implementation of quantifiable restoration projects showing agricultural benefits (e.g. increase in water quality and quantity, improvement in soil stability). A sustainable, participatory, and scientific approach will enable farmers to comply with national environmental red meat standards and so access new markets, increase production levels and achieve long term financial security.

The footsoldiers of the project are members of the local community who have been employed to implement the restoration and rangeland management. Employment has been generated for 42 people, improving the livelihoods of disadvantaged households and reducing poverty of vulnerable groups, targeting women, youth and the disabled beneficiaries. Many of those employed are local
women, contributing to gender equity. Women are now employed in non-traditional jobs such as livestock management and land restoration. They occupy leadership roles on site and are directly involved in governance of the community based farmers associations. The project also provides direct commonage management benefits to 67 communal farmers on the two stewardship sites (Leliefontein and Steinkopf).

A number of incentives have been made available to the communities, including assistance establishing management committees, capacity development, provision of fodder for stock, partnerships with local abattoirs, improved access to the meat market and introduction of stokvels.

The most important lesson that was learnt during the project was the importance of planning. Time management and the management of expectations during recruitment processes are also vital. Government also has lots of layers of capacity and it is important to expect delays. Logistics required around transport to the sites were really challenging, with few people owning roadworthy vehicles with the relevant insurance. Finally, stakeholder participation and roles need to be clearly defined to prevent duplication.

“All poverty alleviation work is hard and not paid well. It is not meant to be a job you want to do forever, but it is an opportunity to invest in the future of youth and women –through training for future work and through improving the condition of your environment.”

**Wildlife economy and tourism case studies**

**Nambiti – Greg Martindale, Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife/CPA Representative**

The Nambiti Nature Reserve is located near to Ladysmith in KwaZulu-Natal. It is a large site (8 223 ha) that is otherwise underrepresented in the protected area network. It contains important biodiversity features, including various vegetation types, NFEPA wetlands and several rare and threatened species. Black rhino have been introduced as part of the black rhino range expansion project and the Big 5 in the reserve are a tourism drawcard. The site was established a long time before the stewardship programme was developed.
The site is owned by the Senzo’kuhle Nkos’uNodada Community Trust, which represents 136 beneficiaries. There are 10 privately owned tourism lodges, the largest of which, Springbok Lodge, is owned by the community Trust. The community Trust also owns a further three undeveloped lodge sites. The part is leased on a 35-year lease agreement with the reserves management company, of which the lodge owners are 70% shareholders and the community own the remaining 30% of the shares. The reason for this equity split was that the lodge development was already well underway when the community became owners, and the private owners of the lodges had already invested much capital. The board consists of six directors, two of whom are community representatives. The monthly lease fee is R98 000, paid individually to each beneficiary, each quarter. This money is transferred directly into the personal bank accounts of the beneficiaries, ensuring equal benefit sharing. Preferential employment is given to beneficiaries within the reserve and lodges.

A new aspect of the reserves management is venison production. This was initiated with detailed rangeland assessments conducted in 2013. The KZN Biodiversity Stewardship Unit, together with the Department of Agriculture, assisted with these veld condition assessments. The results found that there was significant overstocking of a number of species that resulted in inadequate forage for key species, including the re-introduced Black Rhino. Significant de-stocking of several species was required. In order to expedite venison production, the reserve developed its own abattoir and butchery. These comply with the very strict veterinary and health standards are a very well functioning unit. The venison adds to the tourism experience for guests at the lodges and also provides affordable meat to the community.

Recent developments on the reserve include the employment of 10 additional field rangers trained by Nambiti and employed through the SANParks Environmental Monitors Programme. Two additional areas will be added to the reserve adding important habitat for Black Rhino and there may be further options to lease more land from surrounding communities. Further rangeland assessments have been conducted on the new areas to determine exact carrying capacities. The KZN Department of Agriculture and Ezemvelo Biodiversity Stewardship Unit have assisted in the development of the reserve’s Elephant Management Plan, which requires reduction in elephant numbers to within carrying capacity limits to avoid unnecessary competition with Black Rhino. Elephant contraception to be applied in 2015.

Nambiti provides an interesting model for community and private sector collaboration. There have been significant biodiversity conservation and community benefits at the site including:

- Provision of revenue to the community
- Job creation
- Business development
- Introduction of Black Rhino
- Employment of field rangers
- High levels of input into animal population and ecological management based on sound ecological data
- Provision of significant biodiversity conservation management inputs, advice and assistance
- Establishment of long-term ecological management monitoring measures

Tshivhula Projects – Simon Mafela, Tshivhula CPA

Tshivhula Communal Property association is comprised of the beneficiaries of the land restitution process done by the DRDLR in Limpopo province in the Vhembe District. This is a community of Vhatwamamba, who call themselves the big elephants of the great TSHIVHULA tsha Matshokotike tsha gumbo lofhelaho nga mipfa.

In the past, the Vhatwamamba community settled on the area which stretches from north of the Soutpansberg mountains to the Limpopo River and from the banks of the great Sand River in the east to the Mokgalakwena River in the west. They tilled the land and kept herds of live stock here, hunted, picked the Mopani worms and wild berries. They got their medicines from the shrubs, roots, reptiles and wild animals in the area. The community is the direct descendants of the great Mapungubwe kingdom, and was involved in the Mapungubwe reburial process with the University of Pretoria. When it was hot they would sit in the shadows of giant trees. However, the community was dispossessed of their land by the evil forces of apartheid and many of the people moved to other areas. In 1998, the community claimed the whole land area (more than 100 farms) under the land reform process, and has received four farms to date. This is a small area for a community which has more than 500 households.

The concept of biodiversity already had meaning for the community. To them biodiversity is nature. The term *mupo* means all of nature, the living plants and animals in their virgin natural habitat. Certain plants and animals were once protected by the customary and cultural laws depending on the value of the species to the community. The loss of the land also took away the instrument which could teach us the importance of nature. One cannot perceive the value of something which one does not have or has never seen. If people do not benefit from the land, they cannot see its value and cannot protect it as a result.

The four farms which were restored to the community are 7 km south west of Mapungubwe World Heritage Site. Expert opinion recommended that the farms are mainly suitable for game farming and ecotourism. They currently have 3 lodges and a bush camp. There are 14 permanent staff and 10 temporary workers to take care of the biodiversity which is our wealth. The game farm has elephants, lions, leopards, eland, kudu, gemsbok, water bucks, wildebeest and impala.

A significant hurdle for the community was the fact that although the government bought and restored the land, they did not buy the animals or any of the loose assets. There was no money available for running expenses such as expensive electricity bills, or to pay wages of the workers. As a result, the community had to lease the land to the previous owners, while waiting for the government to provide grant money to run the farms. The previous owners had to take away the animals as they were told that government does not pay for game. The community had to use the collected lease money to pay electricity and the workers after the white men had left. A number of
people and departments were approached looking for advice before the community could even hunt one animal. The period of consultation took almost a year.

After a long period of waiting for a grant, the community were told by DRDLR that they need to get a strategic partner so we could get a RECAP grant. They managed to find a strategic partner, but were then told to do a game count and develop a business plan. The game count required the R40 000 hire of a helicopter, and the business plan was developed. Despite all the efforts made since 2012, the community has not been given a RECAP grant.

Together with the strategic partner BONO HOLDINGS we have decided to go ahead and grow the business even though we are hampered by lack of capital. The Limpopo Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism (LEDET) has encouraged the community to go ahead with its plans and protect biodiversity as it is our wealth.

Despite the problems with raising sufficient funding, there have been some benefits to date. There are some permanent and temporary staff employed. The community has purchased four used vehicles and bikes to work on the farm. They have sources some basic assets and equipment to prevent the farms from decay, and are currently renovating and maintaining the lodges. They have a local client base and the bush camp has a very high demand. Plans have been developed for a 5 star lodge which should be completed as soon as possible, as there is interest from overseas clients. So, there is a market for the game farm, all that is needed is to meet the requirements before the clients can come.
Somkhanda – Nkosinathi Gumbi, Emvokweni Community Trust

Somkhanda Game Reserve is an 18 000 ha reserve located in northern KwaZulu-Natal, in Zululand. The community was forcibly removed from the land in the 1960s, after which a large portion of the land was settled by white game farmers. In 1995, the Gumbi people were restored the land and decided to keep the land under conservation and create a nature reserve as an economic engine for the community.

The reserve already had some basic infrastructure, and the community gained the skills needed to capitalise on this. They planned to transition to a green economy, in which the wild animals are assets. Somkhanda provides a sustainable income in an otherwise desperate rural environment. Rather than romantic ideals, the reserve is run with the aim of making a return on an investment. It is recognised that this means maintaining the land in an untransformed state so that healthy ecosystems can sustain the growing demand for venison, tourism and related products. Harvesting of game for meat and trophy hunting is a significant income producer. All development projects are run by the community members themselves, contributing to job creation and reducing the need for urban migration.

Although the reserve has been a victim of rhino poaching, preventative measures have been put in place, including dehorning of the rhino. These horns could possibly be sold in the future for a good reason.

The Gumbi community has established a significant partnership with Wildlands Conservation Trust. Wildlands provides the expertise and knowledge of how to manage the land and reserve. As an NGO, Wildlands does not have a financial interest in the reserve, but is motivated by the conservation of the environment and upliftment of the community. This makes them an ideal partner that has been very valuable in supporting the community to achieve its goals.

Umfolozi Biodiversity Economy Initiative – Lizanne Nel, South African Hunting and Game Conservation Association

The South African Hunting and Game Conservation Association is an organisation with 37 000 members and 74 branches across the country. Although its primary business is hunting, it has a strong conservation arm.

Of all the conservation land available, a large proportion is in private hands. This land requires viable conservation business models or the land will be lost to mining, forestry and other threats that bring the potential for economic growth and profit. Conservation needs to be able to compete with these land uses as a viable financial opportunity. The hunting association is worried about threats to conservation land because there is no viable conservation economy.
Although conservationists have much expertise in sustainability, they often do not have the financial expertise to advise on business matters. However, private game farmers are very good at doing business and by involving the private sector you can bring in the necessary business skills. The natural resource base can then become an asset that provides both ecosystems services and income. This is evident in the USA, where natural resource use (e.g. hunting) provides up to 80% of conservation funding. The answer lies in big biodiversity economies. These are large areas where conservation, hunting, tourism and other wildlife economies are concentrated in the landscape. This prevents the dilution of these economies from small initiatives all over the country.

The Umfolozi is an example of how a big biodiversity economy area could be created. An assessment of 28 land uses and 4 threats in KwaZulu-Natal conducted by Di Minin et al. (2013) highlighted the Umfolozi area as suitable for conservation business development. It is important to note that not all areas will be suitable.

The Umfolozi area is the site of a successful land claim that was restored to the community. The community consists of approximately 7000 rural people, with 900 direct beneficiaries. A management committee reports to the Kwasanguye Community Property Association and its 17 Trustees. Although the government promised money, the community has yet to receive any. Therefore, the community chose to partner with neighbouring landowners. Five agreements are currently in force, including sugar cane, cattle and forestry rental areas.

The game farming areas of the land are also supported by partnerships. Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife provides the environmental integrity to the project, the South African Hunters and Game Conservation Association provides technical expertise and models for economic growth, and the communities contribute the land. The close proximity of the Hluhluwe-Umfolozi Game Reserve contributes to the conservation economy in the area. The result is that the game farming areas can capitalise on economies of scale, which improve business opportunities and, importantly, allow conservation to viably compete financially with other land uses. Other results of the partnership include improved operational efficiency, improved profitability, transformation and development of small enterprises and sustainability. Partnerships also mean that risk is shared between the partners, reduction in risk is achieved by partnering with established commercial landowners.

There are also significant conservation achievement from the improved conservation economy. These include the increase in the conservation estate (Ophathe, 8 825 ha; Kwasanguye, 2 200 + 1 800 ha; Vriendschap, 840 ha). The bigger areas mean that ecosystems can be consolidated and can provide extensive habitat for threatened species such as wild dogs, cycads and rhino. Larger areas also mean that less management intervention is required, and that management can be co-ordinated for the entire area.
The Mndawe Trust Protected Environment is located in Sterkspruit, near Lydenburg. It consists of 826 ha of land that was restored to the community in 2006. The community is made up of 25 households, which encompasses 160 beneficiaries. The previous owner of the land practiced game farming and breeding on the property, and the community chose to retain this land use. The community was first introduced to the concept of biodiversity stewardship after requesting assistance with game donations from the Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency (MTPA).

The Mndawe Trust Protected Environment has now been declared, and was the first land reform protected environment established in Mpumalanga. The property falls within the Lydenburg center of endemism and contributes towards a large montane grassland patch with two threatened vegetation types (Long Tom Pass Montane Grassland and Lydenburg Thornveld). Close to 60% of the property contributes to the National Protected Area Expansion Strategy. The area is also critically important as a high yielding water catchment. The area has potential for further development of nature based tourism and the community intends to specialise in wildlife ranching to encourage job creation.

In order to access funds from the RECAP programme of the DRDLR, the community was instructed to find a strategic partner and develop a business plan. This was done and a 6 year plan was developed, although it unfortunately did not include any conservation issues. RECAP funding was granted and two tranches have been paid totalling R3.5 million. A task team was developed and a game donation application submitted to MTPA. This requires the development of a conservation management plan, which is currently being developed with support from MTPA, including veld condition assessments.

The money from RECAP has been used to refurbish the guesthouse from a 4 to 6-sleeper, re-gravel the entrance road and repair a bridge. Over R1 million rand was also used to erect an experimental tented camp. However, the camp is of poor quality and it is evident that this money was misspent.

Lesson that have been learnt include the importance of political will to support stewardship and protected area expansion. It is also critical to ensure that all legislative processes (such as public participation and consultation) are thorough to ensure maximum buy-in. The strengthening of partnerships between DRDLR, MTPA, the local municipality, local business community and other stakeholder is essential for success, as is a clear plan for job creation and development opportunities.

The challenges the project had to overcome included a lack of capacity within MTPA to provide the necessary technical expertise, especially from ecologists who are overworked. The exorbitant prices charged by the mentors for the business plan were an unexpected expense that resulted in little skills transfer and transparency. This is exacerbated by a lack of constant monitoring and evaluation by the DRDLR. There was also a delay in the release of the RECAP grant. Finally, despite the potential, there remains difficulties in linking biodiversity with socio-economic development through the establishment of a wildlife economy. Sadly, the champion of the project was killed, resulting in a loss of leadership and representation from the community.
Emerging/Different models case studies

**Blomfontein in the South Bokkeveld – Laurence Dworkin, Blomfontein Nature Reserve**

Blomfontein is a 2 750 ha farm in the farm on Bokkeveld Plateau, 45 km south of Nieuwoudtville in the Northern Cape. It occurs in a transitional zone between the Succulent Karoo and Fynbos Biomes. The area is largely in the hands of white commercial farmers with a historical anomaly of black communities that were not removed from the land. The farm is used for organic Rooibos tea production as well as wild Rooibos harvesting. The farm was introduced to the concept of Biodiversity Stewardship when a representative of the Northern Cape Department of Environment and Nature Conservation came around looking for landowners interested in joining the programme.

The farmer agreed to a Biodiversity Stewardship agreement, and 6 years later, in May 2014, the area was declared as a private nature reserve. The area falls within the scope and vision of the Great Cederberg Biodiversity Corridor, and is scenic and pristine with a large diversity of fauna, flora and rock art heritage. The reserve accommodates the exiting Rooibos tea lands of approximately 150 ha. This was an important point that persuaded the owner to agree to Biodiversity Stewardship.

The farm is closely associated with the Heiveld Rooibos Co-Operative. The Co-Op was formed in 2001 to assist the local small farmers to access the Rooibos market. The Co-Op currently includes approximately 60 members drawn from surrounding freehold farms and communities. The Environmental Monitoring Group, a local NGO, has been a significant support to the Co-Op, which produces organic, fair-trade Rooibos. The production and storage facilities for the Co-Op are located on the farm Blomfontein.

The Heiveld Co-Op has had an immense impact on uplifting the community, by allowing people to afford the basics. However, the Co-Op has become limited by access to additional tea lands. Most members have between 1 – 5 ha, which is not sufficient. Surrounding land is dominated by white commercial farms, which are highly priced when they come on the market. This challenge of access to land is the biggest impediment to improved livelihoods.

The current vision is therefore to transfer the Blomfontein Nature Reserve to a Trust that will be set up for the benefit of the members of the Heiveld Co-Op and their extended community. The Trust will manage the reserve, ensuring sustainable utilisation of land, water and biodiversity resources. Rooibos tea land units will be allocated to the most disadvantaged members.
The model has a number of factors that contribute to sustainability, including the fact that the declared nature reserve forms the basis for the project. A percentage of all income that is generated will go to the Trust for management and maintenance. There is already an established and growing market for organic Rooibos tea. There is solid ecotourism potential in the area, related to the flower season and Rooibos heritage route, as well as a rich biodiversity conducive to research and educational projects. Beneficiaries already have their own homesteads, so housing will not impact on the environment. Activities such as harvesting can be spread over the year to limit impact on the sensitive land. A wealth of indigenous knowledge is available about the land that has arisen from years of living on the land.

The Blomfontein project highlights the differences between land reform, in which communities are simply restored land, and agrarian reform, in which communities achieve socio-economic upliftment through innovative and sustainable farming methods.

**Scene setters**

**Land reform and rural development** – Thami Mdontswa, DRDLR

Colonialism and apartheid confined African people into undeveloped Bantustans, or, so-called ethnic homelands, and peri-urban areas called Bantu Locations. Various laws were passed to enforce spatial apartheid. The laws enabled government authorities in particular, and white people in general, to forcibly remove Africans into ethnic homelands and Bantu Locations. African people were confined to providing labour and were exploited with no intention of developing its productive capacity. Labour was confined to either single-men's hostels or in peri-urban residential locations, as temporary places of abode, until its usefulness would have served its purpose, and would be repatriated to its 'ethnic homeland'. These so-called ethnic homeland areas have been, and continue to be, dominated by traditional governance or 'patrimonial authority' sustained by some subsistence economic activity, driven, in the main, by women, as the men generally worked in the mines and white commercial farms.

The South African economy relies on resources from the land (raw materials). These are often found in rural areas were the poor live. Therefore, the poor people in rural areas are suffering, while subsidising the urban population. Various interventions have been implemented since 1994 in an attempt to correct spatial apartheid, and to develop rural areas – the ethnic homelands in particular. These programmes have met with varying levels of success.
In 2009, the government created a specific department dedicated to the social and economic development of rural South Africa. At the same time, the administration decided that there must be a National Development Plan (NDP). The NDP contains the vision for the country (Vision 2030). Chapter 6 of the NDP provides for “An Integrated And Inclusive Rural Economy”. It recognises that rural communities require greater social, economic and political opportunities to overcome poverty. It proposes a three pronged strategy for rural development:

1. **Agricultural development based on successful land reform, employment creation, and strong safeguards for the environment.** The driving force for this is the expansion of irrigated agriculture together with the expansion of dryland production in some areas.
2. **For areas with limited economic potential, the focus should be on providing quality basic services, particularly education, health care and public transport.**
3. **For areas with greater economic potential, in particular, denser rural areas, the development and promotion of non-agricultural strategies such as the promotion of agro processing, tourism where appropriate, fisheries for coastal areas and small enterprise development.**

The National Development Plan proposes a model for land reform that involves district based planning led by landowners in collaboration with government. 20% of the land will be identified for proactive acquisition. After beneficiary selection and land valuation, the land will be transferred to the beneficiaries, who, with the assistance of strategic partners, will receive pre- and post-settlement support. The NDP proposes the establishment of District Land Committees (DLC), whose broad objective will be to get all parties to come together and to identify land, reallocate it and redistribute it, and ensure that it remains or becomes productive. The committees will be involved in identification and selection of the land, co-ordination of land redistribution and approval of requests for financial and non-financial support. Potential members of such committees would include the DRDLR, Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF), Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS), Department of Human Settlements (DHS), district municipalities, communities, farmer organisations, commercial farmers, commercial banks and others from the private sector. The DLCs activities shall include the identification of 20% of land that should be transferred in each
district, in consultation with the stakeholders. They will then monitor the implementation of viable land reform programme in each district and updating land reform targets per district. The committees will establish good working partnerships with specialist agencies and Ministries, review and harmonising land policies. They will also be active in establishing landholding ceilings and floors for agricultural landholdings using a variety of economic, social and environmental criteria and addressing farm worker housing and other social conditions.

Cabinet adopted the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP) in 2009. It serves as the overarching policy trajectory and strategy for the DRDLR. The strategy of the CRDP is ‘agrarian transformation’, which is defined as a ‘rapid and fundamental change in the relations (meaning systems and patterns of ownership and control) of land, livestock, cropping and community’. The CRDP has a management system in which the operational level is at municipal scale, at which level a council of stakeholders will be established. The council of stakeholders will determine the projects that are necessary for rural development in their ward, municipality or district.

The agrarian transformation system sets out three rural development measurables, to further under-score the strategic importance of a comprehensive and inclusive approach to rural development and land reform. Agrarian transformation begins with a change in patterns of ownership and control, but is then followed by a 3 phase approach:

- Phase 1: meet basic human needs
- Phase 2: rural enterprise development
- Phase 3: developed of rural agro-industry

The background indicates that South Africa faces a triple legacy of colonialism, apartheid ethnic enclaves and patrimonial authority. Two models have been designed to reverse this triple legacy:

- **The Wagon Wheel** is a high-level static representation of the social, economic, cultural and political situation in the parts of South Africa that are dominated by communal landholdings and patrimonial authority. It describes a situation in which governance is separated from the rural economy. The Wagon Wheel describes a system in which a single title deed holder has a single governance structure decided by the community. This governance structure can take the form of a Trust, a community property association or a traditional council. Then within the land, development corridors are identified for economic development.

- **Institutional Roles and Role-relationships** is a high-level dynamic representation of an institutional framework that defines and streamlines roles and responsibilities of the key players in the rural economy transformation space – organs of the State, community-based governance structures, investors and communities represented by households. It also provides an accountability system by the governance structures to households and relevant organs of the State.

The two models are interconnected.

An Investment and Development Entity then carries out the development on the land. The Recapitalisation and Development Programme of the DRDLR supports this development. The strategy for the recapitalisation and development programme is strategic partnerships that range from mentorship, shared equity or joint ventures, to co-management.
The CRDP was initially rolled out at village level (pilots) and later at Ward level. A mega agri-park shall be established in all 27 priority districts as part of the CRDP roll out. These agri-parks shall have all the elements of the value chain for their dominant projects. They will be subsidised by the state for 10 years. They will ultimately lay the foundation for rural industrialisation.

The lodgement of land claims was re-opened for a period of 5 years: 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2019. Claims are lodged electronically, in one of the 14 lodgement offices nationally or at 6 mobile lodgement vehicles which will be rolled out in April 2015, visiting areas that are far from the lodgement offices. The mobile lodgement vehicles will be supported by communication vehicles that shall visit areas first to inform claimants of dates when the lodgement units will visit areas. The requirements for lodging a claim and who can claim are set out in a citizen’s manual on how to lodge a claim. Lodging a fraudulent claim is a criminal offence. More than 42 000 claims have been lodged since 1 July 2014. More information on lodging a claim can be obtained at 0800 007 095.

Wildlife economy based land reform and enterprise development support programme – Ngcali Nomtshongwana, DEA

There are several challenges to unlocking the socio-economic value of land reform and communal land. These include the tragedy of the commons, lack of skills, food security, inequality, lack of financial resources and access to markets. However, at the World Parks Congress in 2014, it was evident that there was extreme concern about the 9 billion people living in abject poverty around the world. It was clear that there was a strong focus on the importance of protected areas contributing to rural development, and on the dual role of protected areas in conservation and poverty alleviation. The Congress called for the involvement of local people, as a right, as shareholders in protected areas and as equitable stakeholders in decisions, management and sharing of benefits from protected areas. It also called for youth participation and empowerment. The international community is committed to an agenda for protected areas that do not just uphold the rights of communities affected by conservation initiatives, but ensures shareholding.

The Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) has committed to Vision 2024, with the aim of “rapid socio-economic transformation and growth of the wildlife economy while ensuring the entry and ascendance of the emerging game farmers into the mainstream of the South African economy.” The specific objectives of Vision 2024 include:

- Empowerment of community landowners and beneficiaries through fair access and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the wildlife economy
- Expansion of conservation areas through incorporation of community unproductive land and game reserves with a view to stimulating sustainable local economic growth and conservation.
- Development and restoration of the degraded environment and improvement of infrastructure and land use for community benefit and advancement
• Broadening and meaningful participation of youth and women in the mainstream wildlife economy through shareholding, skill training and entrepreneurship.

To this end, a guideline document has been developed, known as “Unlocking sustainable economic development potential on land reform projects that are located in areas of biodiversity importance.” Chapter 7 of the guideline document covers profiling of land reform projects for the development of nature-based tourism and wildlife economies.

South Africa leads the global fraternity of wildlife ranching and generates an income of R9.1 billion a year (or 0.27% of GDP). The industry is growing at an average of 20.3% a year. The number of game farms has grown steadily since 1960, with over 10000 game farms occupying 18.2% of the land. This is 3 times the size of state protected areas. The majority of these game farms (50%) are found in Limpopo province, with 19% in the Northern Cape and 12% in the Eastern Cape. 18,5 million heads of game are in private farms and this is four times more than the number in state protected areas. The industry employs more than 100 000 people, a larger number than either sugarcane or dairy.

A number of options are available within the wildlife economy market. Amongst these are the wildlife eco-estates which often surround parks, where land values per hectare are high. Trophy hunting is another significant wildlife economy that generates about R7.1 billion annually and is vital to the South African economy. While the slain animal’s head is kept as a trophy, the remainder of the carcass can be used to improve food security. The game ranching industry, which produces venison, is able to survive in areas with lower agricultural potential. An ABSA report has shown that there is currently a high demand for venison internationally, which is not being met by supply. Hence, this is an opportunity for growth in this wildlife economy.

Because of the opportunity for growth in the game ranching industry, it is a significant focus of Vision 2024. Game farming generates R220 per ha of economic output, in comparison to an average R80 per ha for livestock farms. It also employs 3 times more people than livestock farming as it requires more labour intensive care (fences, firebreaks). Game require less water, no grain feeds, fewer diseases and can grow faster and reach maturity earlier. Game also promotes biodiversity and conservation. Formal and informal livestock auctions generate as much as R500m each year. In addition, there is the possibility of alternative revenue from tourism. SANPARKs reported total revenue of R816m from tourism, retail and concessions in 2013. R5m invested in cattle over 5 years has a return on investment of 4.8%, for the same investment in sable antelope the return on investment is 45.2%. Currently, New Zealand is the largest producer of venison and it generates annual income of R4 billion.
Key deliverables for Vision 2024 are:

- Jobs: 60 000 beneficiaries and new sustainable jobs created in the whole wildlife economy industries
- Expansion: 2 million ha of communal land restored and developed for conservation and commercial game ranching
- Equity: R7 billion: R4 billion in game and R3 billion on fixed assets and infrastructure resulting in improved rural income, skills development, institutional capacity building, entrepreneurship and food and environmental security.
- Conservation and Game Improvement: 300 000 heads of wildlife under black empowered and owned ranches.

To achieve Vision 2024, an investment of about R3.0 billion is needed over the next 10 years. There are numerous opportunities available for achieving the Vision. Most emerging ranchers and landholder are already involved as livestock owners and labourers. By the end of 2013, almost 76 500 land claims had been settled, 54 of which were settled on protected areas. 101 claims are still outstanding on protected areas, including 17 claims on the Kruger National Park with approximately 10 000 potential beneficiaries. Some 400 000 ha of game farms are currently under land claim (some transferred and settled already). However, land ownership is not enough, and critical skills are needed to make the most of land that has been restored. These skills include commercial and operational skills (hostility, guiding, game management, breeding, negotiation). Focussed capacity building programmes are needed that not only transfer technical skills but also develop a new crop of managers. This can be assisted by building strong partnerships that support land reform communities with capital, skills and access to markets. Weak institutional capacity, poor governance, lack of resources and infighting between claimants can all result in failure of land reform communities to make successful businesses from the restored land.

The Department of Environmental Affairs, as per Vision 2024, thus advocates a shared commitment, in which community-private-public partnerships are developed at land reform sites. These partnerships will harness the skills and capacity of each of the partners. The private sector can provide sound game management, access to the markets, improve productivity and guarantee reliability, profitability and sustainability. The private sector can also be a source of upfront capital. Government can provide grant funds that can be used buildings and infrastructure, while mentoring new emerging farmers through skills development and extension services. The emerging farmers and land reform communities provide the land and labour.

There are a number of models that can be used to establish such a partnership:

- **Joint venture and shared equity**: The community landowner has minimum 50% equity option on all/some the business units depending on government/community investment (grant). While land ownership remains with landholders, both commercial partners and communities make joint decisions about operations and commercial risk.
- **Conservancy:** A model for commercial wildlife ranchers and neighbouring landowners or emerging farmers seeking to work together for higher returns than if work individually. The guiding principle is that land ownership is retained. Cost of development and management as well as benefits will be shared according to the level of investment by each participant.

- **Wildlife incubators:** Community beneficiaries must be landowners. They will receive donated game (nucleus herd) and infrastructure improvements for which a contractual commitment is to adhere to the program objectives for at least 5 years. The beneficiaries will over the agreed period return back or redistribute 50% of all progeny. The original game including the balance of progeny resulting from good management will remain with the beneficiaries.

Post settlement support is vital following successful land claims. This support takes a variety of forms, including assistance with management plans, business plans, lease agreements, fair commercial deal structures, empowered local institutions, veld conditions assessments, game counts and acquisition, contract management and infrastructure and buildings. The DEA is therefore going to be employing a team of transactional advisors. These transactional advisory services will prepare emerging wildlife ranchers and other community structures for engagement with the private sector. They will assist with mobilising and selecting private investors for commercial partnerships and or transactions. The advisors will provide clarity on the partnership proposal in terms of risk allocation, value of the beneficiary community institution assets, value of the private sector investment, value of the benefit accruing to the beneficiary community institution and the quality of the proposal. Advisors will then facilitate the negotiations and the signing of contractual agreements.

In summary, Vision 2024 is about building a robust wildlife economy that contributes substantially to the financial and economic climate in South Africa. It will promote sustainable rural enterprises and industries by enabling emerging wildlife ranchers and community landholders to participate in the mainstream wildlife economy as shareholders and entrepreneurs. It will further aim to create incentives to attract investment in rural areas through community private public partnerships without compromising land ownership or use rights. This will be achieved through developing game ranches and protected areas as new and alternative engines of rural economic development with strong emphasis on skills and human resource development, food security, good governance, entrepreneurship, job creation, reduction of poverty, wealth and planning. Vision 2024 calls for a paradigm shift that places wildlife as viable alternative for a business rural development model and land reform.
Wildlife ranching and communities – Lizanne Nel, South African Hunting and Game Conservation Association

It is important to note that there are many different options for wildlife economies, other than game ranching, hunting or tourism. For example, there is lots of money in bioprospecting, which investigates the pharmaceutical properties of traditional medicine. There are also many opportunities for payments in the water and catchments sector.

There are currently more than 10 000 game farms in South Africa, occupying approximately 20 million ha of otherwise agriculturally marginal land. The current return on investment for game is 13.5%, higher than that for livestock (5%). The hunting industry contributes R7 billion to the economy annually and tourism makes up a full 10.6% of the country’s GDP.

Communities often have high expectations as they have seen the potential income that can be generated by wildlife economies. However, it is important to remember that while making money is important, it is even more important that it be made responsibly. There is now much more land available to communities and many more options for funding. However, there are challenges in terms of capacity. As a result, when land is restored to communities, they expect that it will improve their livelihoods and wellbeing, but this is often not the case.
Section 24 of the Constitution of South Africa states that everyone has the right:

(a) to an environment that is not harmful to their health or well-being; and

(b) to have the environment protected, for the benefit of present and future generations, through reasonable legislative and other measures that

i. prevent pollution and ecological degradation;

ii. promote conservation; and

iii. secure ecological sustainable development and use of natural resources while promoting justifiable economic and social development.

The constitutional baseline, therefore, indicates that wildlife enterprises must be responsible. You cannot simply make a quick profit and leave the land degraded. Currently, cattle are an example of a single commodity, which has only limited uses and ways to make money. Wildlife enterprises can have many add on commodities, including tourism, hunting, meat and many more. If a move is made towards treating wildlife as a single intensive commodity, all the current add-ons will be lost. The risks to such a move include reduced sustainability, increased environmental degradation and even financial risk as profits are based on a single commodity that may lose value. For this reason, wildlife enterprises need to be responsible. Hunting should only be conducted with a fair chase. Tourism should be confined to large extensive wildlife areas, not small encampments more like zoos. Intensive breeding for genetic types and colour morphs should be avoided.

There is long experience and good examples proving that extensive wildlife systems operating responsibly are sustainable in the long term, profitable over the long term and have benefitted local communities. In order for wildlife enterprises to be both profitable and responsible, there is a need to encourage proper proprietorship (proper legal entities) and to internalise costs. Also required are partnerships that can address skills shortages. Specifically needed are financial advisors and partners who are proficient in business. Incentives for those who act responsibly would also be beneficial – these would originate from policy frameworks. The best way to create responsible wildlife enterprises is through the development of extensive wildlife economic nodes. These are extensive wildlife areas that will support a range of wildlife economies that can benefit from economies of scale. Similar to the SIPS programmes of government, such nodes would create synergies and growth by concentrating wildlife economies spatially.
There are many opportunities for communities to profit from wildlife. But wildlife is a national heritage, not simply a financial commodity. Therefore, landowners and enterprises need to take ownership for the responsible and sustainable use of natural resources.

**Wild Coast Community Conservation Programme – Curtis Maninjwa**

The photo you see here is from Lusikisiki, Eastern Cape. The whole area is full of fresh, clean water. If investment in such water could be found, the communities could potentially make a lot of money.

The aim of the Wild Coast Project was to conduct environmental education and assist communities in the area with conservation. It was funded by GEF and the CEPF, but funding unfortunately ended. Communities now need to continue the project themselves. There are seven communities involved: the Manyube, Sebeni, Nqabarha, Mgazana Caghuba, Lambasi and Mtentu. Some of these communities own land through land reform settlements, while others are involved through participatory forest management committees.

There have been a number of challenges with the settlement agreements, as a result of a rush to complete the settlements. Most importantly, there are important partners who are not signatories on the settlement agreements. For example, DAFF is not a signatory, delaying funding, and the Eastern Cape Parks and Tourism Agency has no policies for such funding. As a result funding to support the land redistribution claimants is delayed by a lot of red tape, including problems developing business plans.
It is fortunate that after the funding for the Wild Coast Project ended, support has continued in the form of Wild Side Environmental Services. This private company has been established to continue to assist the community with facilitation and mediation, management agreements, operational plans, the re-employment of community rangers, training and micro-enterprise development. By bringing a little extra money, this has helped to sustain the activities of the Wild Coast Project after its close. There have been a whole range of successes, including the reduction in poaching and illegal fishing and fewer veld fires. There have recently been visits from universities, who hope to make the Wild Coast into a living lab, so that research is left behind for the benefit of the communities.

A Wild Coast Foundation is planned, as well as broader land use planning for the communal land to include conservation and development. Building of partnerships between government departments, non-governmental organisations and private investors is the way forward. The communities welcome any who would like to participate in such partnerships.

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**Provinces update**

**Northern Cape Province projects and lessons learnt** – Mandy Schumann, DENC

The Northern Cape Province is very large – it can take 7 hours to drive to a meeting at head office! In addition, very little is known about the provinces, so some developers think that there is a lot of empty space available. The arid conditions result in tough living of those in the Northern Cape, which breeds resourcefulness, willingness, friendliness and enthusiasm.

With regard to biodiversity stewardship, the province is limited in terms of resources. There are only 3 staff members who are involved in biodiversity stewardship and they can spend much time travelling the vast distances between sites. There are also budget constraints and few to no incentives available. However, the department maintains an optimistic attitude and it has learnt to celebrate the small successes. They have been proactive in seeking partners with similar attitudes. The Northern Cape was one of the first three provinces to start a biodiversity stewardship programme and establish a pilot site, the Bokkeveld Stewardship Project. Research has been undertaken to prioritise where to focus in the landscape. Areas that have been identified include Springbok, Neiwoedville and Loxton.
The provincial department understood their limitations, and therefore sought partners that were already conducting similar work within the province. This resulted in the establishment of the Northern Cape Stewardship Forum, an umbrella structure to facilitate communication and collaboration between partners. Partner members of the forum include landowners, the Greater Cederberg Biodiversity Corridor, Greater Cederberg Fire Protection Agency, Working for Water, CapeNature, the Succulent Karoo Ecosystem Partnership (SKEP), the Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT), Conservation South Africa and WWF-SA. The EWT in particular has been a significant partner. They have helped to fill the capacity gap in terms of staff. The Riverine Rabbit programme uses this species as a flagship for water quality. This programme has spent a lot of time interacting with landowners, especially assisting with the development of management plans.

Wetlands are an important focus. Wetlands are threatened by illegal sand mining and invasive plants. Degradation of wetlands is a factor in the floods, which have impacted on communities in the part. A wetland assessment conducted in 2009 highlighted alien fish species as a particular threat to wetlands. They cause a reduction in biodiversity with consequent changes in water quality (drinking water) and river health.

Fire has also been continually raised as an issue, as there are not a lot of people on the ground to deal with fires and they can be very destructive. For this reason, the department has been facilitating fire training for communities over the entire area. Working on Fire teams have been established, and firebreak clearing has begun.

The LRBSI is a national objective recognised within DENC, but to date has received minimal attention because of the capacity challenges within the department. However, through the work of Conservation South Africa (CSA) a much deeper level of interaction with communal areas in the Kamiesberg and Steinkopf priority areas has been achieved. These lessons and approaches will be built upon and expanded, with CSA and other partners such as the Blomfontein project.

Western Cape Province projects and lessons learnt – Graham Lewis, CapeNature

The Western Cape Province has the privilege of protecting one of only six global floral kingdoms. The province has a number of biodiversity stewardship sites on communal land.

- Algeria Community Association: The Algeria biodiversity stewardship site is part of the Greater Cederberg Biodiversity Corridor. It consists of 42 households with about 300 people, who own a portion of redistributed land. The area contains 284 ha of Fynbos Riparian vegetation, Olifants’
Sandstone Fynbos and Cederberg Sandstone Fynbos. The community signed a Biodiversity Agreement and management plan with CapeNature in 2008. It currently employs 29 full time equivalent’s for alien plant clearing and site maintenance. These people are able to work on their own land and in the neighbouring reserve.

- **Fynbos Vrugte en Wyn:** This site consists of 34 ha of Breede Alluvium Fynbos, Breede Shale Fynbos and is critical habitat for the Geometric Tortoise. The farm workers own 60% share of the company, which signed a Biodiversity Agreement with CapeNature in 2008. 33 people from the surrounding communities were employed for 1 year through Pioneer Food Project (co-funded by the Table Mountain Fund (TMF)) and have received training in alien vegetation management and general site maintenance.

- **Klipfontein:** This site forms part of a large contiguous natural area, which includes the Critically Endangered (CR) Elgin Shale Fynbos. There are three portions of land, one of which is owned by the 26 members of the Klipfontein Agricultural Trust. The two other conservation portions are Public Works land, and have been under egotiation since the 1990’s. The solution is that CapeNature will manage the land and declare as a provincial Nature Reserve, with a beneficiary agreement with the Klipfontein Agricultural Trust.

- **Genadendal:** This is the site of a Moravian mission station, at which the Moravian church established communities with areas set aside as commonages. The commonage is a large intact area of approximately 5000 ha, with 2 Endangered and under protected vegetation types. It is connected to an existing CapeNature reserve. The Genadendal Transformation Committee was formed to reclaim the land from the State. However, the challenge is that a biodiversity stewardship agreement can only be signed with landowners, and the land has not yet been transferred to the community.

- **Thandi:** This site in Grabouw adjoins a stewardship Nature Reserve and CapeNature land. It consists of 27 ha of Elgin Shale Fynbos (CR). The Lebanon Fruit Farm Trust, with 233 farm workers and their families, own 55% of the company. A Biodiversity Agreement and management plan were signed in 2012. Farmer workers have received vocational training funded by TMF.

The **Dassenberg Catchment Corridor** is an exciting new project for CapeNature. It is located in the lowlands that have been almost totally transformed by agriculture. It therefore hosts some of the most Critically Endangered vegetation in the country. The government had originally planned to resettle a coloured homeland around Atlantis, but this was halted due to the biodiversity value of the land and the presence of an important aquifer. There is now an opportunity for biodiversity stewardship. Right in the centre of the site is the Mamre community, which was historically established as a Moravian mission. Should the project go ahead, the communal and land claim portion of land will contribute to an ecologically functional 30 000 ha climate change corridor. This project would have huge value from a number of perspectives: biodiversity, climate change, protected area expansion, protection of CR vegetation and working with comprehensive rural
development. The site has much potential for tourism revenue, including 4x4 routes, hiking, flower shows, heritage tourism and more. There are also a number of socio-economic opportunities, especially from job creation, as it is estimated that over 350 000 person days are required for alien clearing.

CapeNature has learnt through its land reform biodiversity stewardship work that there is a need to have joint focus areas between its biodiversity stewardship and People and Conservation initiatives. This ensures that effort is not diluted across a broad landscape, but focussed on priority areas. The partnership between CapeNature, the City of Cape Town and NGO partners is essential, particularly in joint interactions with the community. Despite the lessons learnt, land restitution delays can still stall biodiversity stewardship agreements. This does not need to happen, and can be addressed if all stakeholders work together.

Limpopo Province projects and lessons learnt – Eric Mmbengeni Ramatsea, LEDET

Limpopo is a centre of game ranching activity in South Africa, and these farms have changed hands a lot, with a number having been restored to communities under land reform. They are also often high biodiversity areas, so the Limpopo Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism (LEDET) has been undertaking studies to identify those land restitution sites that coincide with areas of high biodiversity. The National Protected Area Expansion Strategy has been used to identify these sites in the past, but the province has recently completed its own Limpopo Protected Areas Expansion Strategy, which identified all the current land reform and biodiversity stewardships sites as priorities.

The Molekwa Project is located in the core of the Waterberg Biosphere Reserve. The area, of approximately 10 000 ha is now owned by the Molekwa Community Property Association. The land included some infrastructure that was inherited from the previous owners, including a functioning crocodile farm. Unfortunately, some of the remaining infrastructure, included lodges and farms, will fall into disrepair if they cannot be used. For this reason, the community is currently leasing one of the farms. The community also needs to find strategic partners who will assist with capital to maintain the infrastructure and create viable businesses. The site is still in the negotiation phase as
far as biodiversity stewardships is concerned, as the concept is still new to the community. In the meantime, LEDET is assisting the community with the development of a management plan.

The **Batau Ba Ga-Mabelane** site, located in the Lydenberg area on the border of Limpopo and Mpumalanga, is owned by the Batau Ba Ga-Mabelane Community Property Association. This site was originally co-ordinated by Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency, but has been transferred to LEDET as the majority of the site is in Limpopo. The community is currently receiving some income of leases of the farms. RECAP funding was received by this community, and has been used to build chalets. However, these chalets are currently standing empty, as they need to be finalised before occupation. Also required is additional training in management and wildlife guiding for the community to make the most of the tourism infrastructure. To date, one community member has received Conservation Development Training from the South African Wildlife College (SAWC). A service provider has also been appointed to assist the community with developing a management plan.

The **Tshivula** project (see previous presentation) is the third land reform and biodiversity stewardship site in Limpopo. To date, the community resolutions have been signed. One beneficiary has attended Conservation Development Training at SAWC, and another is currently receiving Professional Hunter training. The contract negotiations for the biodiversity stewardship agreement have been initiated.

Limpopo’s land reform biodiversity stewardship initiatives have highlighted the dire need for partnerships between communities and the private sector. The majority of the CPAs require assistance from a strategic partner to build the relevant capacity of CPA members to maintain the businesses themselves. Such partnerships are able to make up for limited funding, especially to maintain infrastructure. For this reason, LEDET encourages communities to seek strategic partners. LEDET is also aware that the decision-making process can sometimes be very slow and that there is a need for improved co-ordination between government departments. Training for community members by the SAWC is valuable, and will continue to be facilitated in the future, with expanded training options to fill skills gaps. LEDET also undertakes to assist communities with funding applications. The department intends to concentrate its efforts on the current sites, rather than taking on additional sites with its limited capacity.
The North West Province occupies a total area of 118,800 km², which is 9.5% of the total area of South Africa. It has a wide array of biodiversity, ecosystem and habitat diversity both in the terrestrial and aquatic environments. The province consists of two biomes, the Savanna Biome, which occupies the majority of the province, and the Grasslands Biome. The North West Parks and Tourism Board was established in 1997 in terms of North West Parks and Tourism Board Act 3 of 1997. It is responsible for the management of 15 protected areas, tourism development and hospitality training through hotel schools.

About 80% of South Africa’s priority biodiversity is located on private land, which means that if the country is to reach its targets in terms of biodiversity conservation, it is critical to involve private landowners. Conservation strategies must involve private landholders/users, and this includes private farms, communal lands and land owned by government departments, municipalities, parastatals like Eskom and Spoornet and private companies.

The Province has a total of 15 provincial reserves within its borders. The total size of formally protected areas, is 283,308 ha which amounts to approximately 2.4% of the province. This does not meet the National Protected Area Expansion Strategy (NPAES) targets of protecting important landscapes. North West’s biodiversity is under threat due to various land use practices, and it includes a Critically Endangered vegetation type, the Western Highveld Sandy Grassland. Mining, agriculture and developments are major economic drivers in the province, but they cause negative impact to its ecosystems.

The North West Biodiversity Stewardship Program (NWBSP) concept has been drafted and presented to the Biodiversity Conservation Management Division: Chief Conservation Officer. The NWBSP implementation guidelines and tools have also been established. The NWBSP Operational Manual was finally approved on the 20 September 2013 by the CEO. Thirteen farms with forty portions within the Marico River Conservation Area totalling to 14,013 ha where recruited, visited and investigated and the desktop and field assessments forms were successfully tested on them. They were included in the NWBSP pilot site and a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed on the 17 September 2014. The assessments outcomes for the pilot site have been finalised and is awaiting evaluation by the North west Biodiversity Stewardship Assessment Task Team.

Further biodiversity stewardship sites visits and biodiversity outreach programmes are currently actively ongoing with the Bahurutshe Boo Sebogodi, Baberspan Landowners, Magaliesberg Boons Area and South African National Defence Force (SANDF) Potchefstroom sites. The Leeupan and Baberspan Landowners are highly targeted, as they are located within the CR Western Highveld Sandy Grassland.
Magaliesburg Boons area is a biodiversity site owned by a single lady. It is located in the Savanna Biome, with the Gold Reef Mountain Bushveld vegetation type. The site hosts *Aloe peglerae*, a red data listed plant species endemic to the North West Province. The SANDF sites fall within the Critical Biodiversity Areas and include the Gen Del Ray Training Area, 22 000 ha and Modderfontein area, 2 000 ha. The sites are the natural habitats for various Threatened or Protected Species (TOPS) animal species.

It remains difficult to help landowners to understand that the biodiversity stewardship process takes time. The NWPTB is limited by lack of funding for staff. What is needed is two negotiators, two facilitators, an ecologist and a legal advisor to assist with further implementation of the biodiversity stewardship programme. Consultation and negotiation are important parts of the process to ensure maximum buy-in. The programme has learnt that political will is essential to support biodiversity stewardship and protected area expansion. Job creation and development opportunities are equally important parts of biodiversity stewardship development.

**Mpumalanga Province projects and lessons learnt**

*Nomcebo Kunene, MTPA*

Mpumalanga province currently has 8 land reform and biodiversity sites at various stages of negotiation:

- **Mndawe Trust Protected Environment (PE):** An 826 ha site near Lydenberg. The site was declared as a PE in 2014 and has established a task team comprising MTPA, LEDET, mentors, DRDLR and the landowners. They are in the process of developing a management plan.
- **Manala Mgibe CPA:** A proposed PE of 13 920 ha near Witbank. Work on the site started in 2009 and the assessments have been done. There was been a delay in getting the community resolution signed due to internal leadership fights. The process began again in 2013 and assessments were redone in 2014. The category of PE has been allocated and the community resolution received. The submission on the Intent to Declare are being prepared, with the aim to gazette in 2015.
- **Khanyile properties:** A proposed PE of 4 700 ha near Amersfoort. This is a single black commercial farmer who has partnered with WWF-SA. The properties have been assessed, the allocated category and the notification letter forwarded. There has been a request for further clarification on the allocated category and this is taking time to respond.
- **Ukuthanda ukukhanya CPA and Bambanai CPA:** These two communities have partnered with WWF-SA to establish Biodiversity Agreements for two sites near Wakkerstoom of 865 and 932 ha respectively. The Biodiversity Agreements were signed in 2013 and launched in 2014. They have established a task team comprising of various roleplayers and have developed a management plan. MTPA is working with WWF-SA towards getting the beneficiaries trained in alien plant clearing and fire management.
• **Bambanani Sakhisizwe CPA:** This is a proposed PE of 650 ha near Sheepmoor. They have partnered with EWT and began working in 2013. The assessments have been done and the category of PE allocated. There has been a recommendation to declare a larger PE that includes both privately and communally owned land. The outstanding properties in privately owned areas still need to be assessed. The aim is to gazette and declare in 2015.

• **Barloworld CPA:** This is a proposed PE near Vaalhoek. It comprises 3 community property associations which results in complex community dynamics. A mediator has been appointed by DRDLR and the assessments were done in 2014. There is GEF funding available for land under better management. There has been training for beneficiaries in sustainable land use management.

• **Botshabelo:** This site has been put on hold due to internal conflicts between the community members.

MTPA has had significant successes in gaining the trust and willingness from landowners. Partnerships with other organisations have been particularly effective to work collectively towards conservation of natural resources. Challenges remain in ensuring support from government departments, including DRDLR, the Mpumalanga Department of Agriculture, Rural Development and Land Administration and local municipalities. As a result, there has been only limited realignment of functions and slow progress towards the release of grants through the RECAP programme. Similarly, there have been difficulties accessing funding from the DEA Natural Resource Management programmes. There are also community fears of restrictions and limitation, for example with regards to cattle stock, that remain to be overcome. Mining remains a significant threat to conservation in this region. As long as mining makes claims about job creation it will continue to be an attractive option for communities. This highlights the problem of limited tangible incentives for biodiversity stewardship in community areas.

**Eastern Cape Province projects and lessons learnt – Tracey Potts, ECPTA**

The land reform landscape in the Eastern Cape is characterised by high biodiversity value areas, but vastly differing capacity levels among landowners and institutions. The area has high levels of poverty with all the social ills that manifest as a result. There is poor service delivery and often conflicting priorities between various government departments. The numerous initiatives of government (including health, safety & security, education, food security, infrastructure development, land reform, agricultural projects, biodiversity stewardship, NRM programmes, etc.) are not co-ordinated. The Community Property Associations and traditional leadership are not always aligned.

Through a series of activities, the presenter highlighted the importance of simple communication. The purpose was to show that in order to avoid sending mixed messages to communities, there is a need for simplified structures and communication. One way to do so is to identify 3 broad categories of stakeholders, namely government, beneficiaries and NGOs and to search for commonalities amongst these groups with regards to high-level, long-term outcomes, medium term interventions...
and resources. By conducting a simple SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis on the stakeholder groups, you can find ways of working together.

A SWOT analysis comparison between the two possible groups for implementing biodiversity stewardship will help to align efforts and develop dovetailed reporting. It will also help to align efforts with beneficiary needs (not the other way around). Finally, it can be a way to manage expectations and maintain integrity and transparency. The strengths of NGOs are that they are often limited to the site, so fieldworkers are focussed solely on the stewardship outcome. The provincial agencies strengths are its mandate, ability to mobilise political will and high-level interventions. The weaknesses of NGOs are their short funding cycles and project staff that leave when a project ends. Weaknesses of provincial agencies are the multiple demands on staff who have to manage multiple sites, and departmental silo’s. The threats to an NGOs initiatives are that they cannot always commit to a full term and assume that the provincial agency will step in. Provincial agencies can have high staff turnover and can suffer from organisational changes in priorities. Finally the opportunities for both partners come from partnership with each other. In this way, NGOs can provide the focussed capacity, while the provincial agency can formalise the intervention.

In summary, it is important to be sensitive to how all the interventions are experienced by the community. It is also important to have a sound exit strategy before you begin a project with a community. Biodiversity stewardship in land reform sites can be improved by aligning interventions through partnerships and simplifying.

**Free State Province projects and lessons learnt (Witsieshoek CCA) – Joyce Loza, Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife**

Witsieshoek is a proposed Protected Environment in the Free State that is in close proximity to the transfrontier conservation areas. The community conservation area of 26 000 ha is located in the upper Vaal, where the source of the uThukela River arises in the Mont-Aux Sources area. It also includes the source of the Caledon River, one of the main tributaries of the Orange River.

This is an area that has a very high value for tourism. As a result, eco-tourism and scenic nature-based tourism have been promoted as an economic model to the community participants. Nature is considered the tourism resource, and the ecosystems should be properly managed to sustain this tourism value. The area also has a rich cultural history, which students from the University of the Free State have been researching. This history has been incorporated into a museum and interpretative centre to increase the number of visitors, whilst enhancing education and awareness. Tourism is already happening in the area, as the communities already own some tourism facilities.
For the biodiversity stewardship site thus far, the concept and boundaries have been developed. Research has been commissioned and the final drafts submitted. Consultations have been undertaken through public-private partnerships and participatory GIS. Capacity building on stewardship models and legislation has been conducted. Permission has been granted to conduct the community resolution.

The area is a strategic target for biodiversity and conservation. It includes the Maluthi Highlands Grasslands and will form a buffer to the World Heritage Site. It will help to create a network of protected areas. It is also a highly important area for water provision and regulation. Biodiversity assessments have highlighted a number of important species and high diversity.

The progress of biodiversity stewardship in the area has been undeniably slow. Lessons that have been learnt include the value of participatory planning with a community that makes use of traditional knowledge systems. In developing the draft concept, it was important to remember to use simple language, to demonstrate the benefits in a tangible way and to be sensitive to and willing to learn about the culture. Research has been very helpful in identifying and communicating the current status of biodiversity, historical knowledge and tourism potential.

There remain challenges related to land management, especially fires, overgrazing and pollution. The capacity of community structures needs to be strengthened. Youth unemployment remains a serious issue.

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KwaZulu Natal Province projects and lessons learnt – Greg Martindale, Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife

KwaZulu-Natal has been experiencing high rates of habitat loss over the last 20 years. Because of the high rates of land transformation, the province has to protect the remaining limited biodiversity. But 53% of important biodiversity is under private/communal ownership, outside of state protected areas. For the province to meet its 20 year protected area expansion target of 842 000 ha, it must work with private and communal landowners.

The KwaZulu-Natal Biodiversity Stewardship Programme has made some significant achievements. A total of 65 478 ha has been secured through biodiversity stewardship to date, including:

- Fourteen sites have been secured as proclaimed Nature Reserves, totalling 40 401 ha.
• Five Protected Environments have been proclaimed – 20 373 ha
• Four Biodiversity Agreements have been signed for 4 704 ha

A further 15 nature reserves and one protected environment are in the final stages of proclamation and will add a further 41 738 ha. Twenty-nine Nature Reserves, 11 Protected Environments and 6 Biodiversity Agreements are under negotiation – another 173 205 ha. Amidst these sites, important expansion of habitat has been secured for several charismatic endangered species including Oribi, Black Rhino, Wattled Crane and Blue Swallow.

Much of the land in KZN is under communal land managed by the Ingonyama Trust Board. Hence, 5 of the biodiversity stewardship sites (72 640 ha) are under this form of communal land ownership. A further 12 sites (72 718 ha) are on land that has been awarded to communities under land reform.

The objectives of conservation on communal land obviously include the conservation of critical remnant biodiversity. However, they also wish to establish conservation as a viable land use to assist with poverty alleviation in poor rural areas. Equally important is addressing the imbalances of the past by supporting rural development and land reform processes.

The KZN Biodiversity Stewardship Programme is not solely an Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife initiative. The success of the programme is highly reliant on its collaborative nature. Key partners include the KZN Department of Agriculture, the SANBI Custodians of Rare and Endangered Wildflowers (CREW) programme and all major NGOs operating in KwaZulu-Natal.

Babanango is an example of one of Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife’s land reform biodiversity stewardship sites. The site is owned by the Emcakwini Community Trust following a successful land claim of a large area of land in the Babanango region. The area includes an uninhabited area of 13 000 ha that runs from Mistbelt Grassland to the southern bank of the Imfolozi River. Landowners on the northern bank have committed a further 6 000 ha, which will lead to the creation of a new 19 000 ha Nature Reserve. The community has developed a business plan focussing on tourism and hunting. However, this will require fencing, the development of roads, lodges and the training of management staff. The project envisages the creation of 160 jobs.

It is clear that there are synergies between stewardship and rural development. If biodiversity stewardship is focussed on sustainable use, landowners can continue to derive benefits from the land. There is a high overlap between poverty and high biodiversity. For this reason, biodiversity stewardship is an obvious partner to rural development.
Retailer and NGO roles and opportunities in the LRBSI

**Woolworths strategic update on work with communities –**

*David Houghton, Woolworths SA*

In 2008, Woolworths made the decision that they wanted to be known as an ethical retailer. The meaning of this is to “do the right thing, even when nobody is looking and even when doing the wrong thing is legal”. Although they have not yet achieved this ideal, they are aiming to continue pursuing this goal.

In the past century mankind has created a highly complex and interdependent global economic system but it is broken in 2 key respects:

1. Our economic system is failing to meet the needs of hundreds of millions of people around the world, thus jeopardizing our license to operate. In 2015, we will reach a milestone in which the richest 1% of the population own more than the remaining 99%.
2. Our economic system is degrading the planetary services upon which we as a species depend: clean air, fresh water, nutritious food, rich biodiversity, stable climate, access to materials, security of energy sources, and so on.

These challenges are highly interconnected, each influencing others. The majority of us underestimate what needs to be done to correct this. The belief seems to be that gradually reducing the negative impacts of current business models is sufficient. However, Woolworths believes that being less bad is not good enough. Woolworths has therefore been searching for further opportunities to engage in enterprise development.

The aim of enterprise development is to increase procurement spend with black owned businesses and to build capacity of black owned businesses. It also aims to improve supplier performance, reduce costs, resolve quality issues, coach audit compliance and develop new products. Through enterprise development, Woolworths hopes to develop alternative sourcing for products.

In the main, the Woolworths Enterprise Development (ED) programme has been designed to support emerging black-owned organisations in the Woolworths greater supply chain, including primary and secondary suppliers. Through this strategy, Woolworths assists emerging black-owned
suppliers to become truly sustainable businesses through a balanced enterprise development programme implemented based on individual needs analysis approach. This would typically be by ensuring the ED beneficiary is on shorter payment terms to assist in cash flow; identifying development needs and assisting in ensuring that there is a programme of interventions to address those needs; and making finance available through the ED loan fund. The ED support is afforded to black enterprises for a 3 – 5 year period, after which it should be demonstrated that the enterprise has reached a certain level of sustainability. Woolworths has intensified enterprise development support to 40 businesses, which are receiving business development support and financial assistance. Woolworths has disbursed R4.3 million in loans, and also business opportunities worth R157 million from Woolworths were accessed by these small enterprises. Over 5 000 people are either employed or supported by the employees of these small enterprises.

Some examples of enterprise development include the establishment of new suppliers of gluten free bread to supply the high demand. Woolworths has identified an 85% black owned company to provide gluten free bread, which will be entered into the supply chain through its existing bakery suppliers. Projections include R10.1 million sales to the ED in the first year, as well as the creation of 13 new jobs. Through the Brassicas project, Woolworths discovered a 51% black women owned produce supplier. This supplier was linked to the current primary supplier to assist with entering the supply chain. The 5 year sales margin is estimated at R42 million, with the creation of 83 new jobs. Another ED project was the indigenous egg project. Indigenous chickens are more disease resistant and survive better. Although currently supplied indirectly to Woolworths, there are plans to increase the supply, leading to sales of R16 847 million and 5 new jobs.

Woolworths also has a number of sustainability projects. It is continuing to build farmer, abattoir and supplier relationships for long-term sustainable growth, and to identify opportunities for new sources of animals. There are definite immediate opportunities for free-range beef and game. The Shepherding Back Biodiversity project is an initiative of the Landmark Foundation that aims to promote biodiversity conservation on livestock farms through a return to human shepherding and the development of a wildlife-friendly produce brand, leading to payment for ecosystem services as a tool in conservation and local economic development. With Conservation South Africa, Woolworths is working on wildlife-friendly lamb that uses effective methods to resolve human-wildlife conflict in Namaqualand. Similarly, the EWT’s Wildlife Conflict Management project aims to promote good livestock husbandry and no inhumane predator control methods. WWF and Woolworths are currently conducting a research project to investigate whether free-range beef or feed lot beef is better for human health and the environment.
Funding community conservation areas – Steve Collins, RESILIM

Water is such an important resource that it is often at the centre of a nexus of biodiversity, climate change and livelihoods. As the population grows, there is less water for a greater demand. It is important to keep the limited water we have clean.

At the same time, Community Conservation Areas need to find ways to sustainably fund conservation effort. Community based organisations (CBOs) often spend income earned from ecotourism on community development, instead of reinvesting it in conservation management. The result is that the resource that is providing the income (natural areas) are not sustained. Private and state protected areas, on the other hand, have resource to reinvest their income on conservation and don’t have social development demands.

The Makuleke community is a land reform beneficiary who received a successful land claim within the Kruger National Park. They have elected to retain the area for conservation, as a contract park with SANParks, the first of this type of biodiversity stewardship. The land includes as much as 80% of the biodiversity of the KNP, including a Ramsar wetland site. The villages are already removed from the land, so the community chose to create tourism products on the land with private partners. However, there are 15 000 beneficiaries, so there are conflicts between reinvesting the money into conservation and getting benefits to the community. For this reason, a dedicated “conservation trust” has been set up that will be managed by all the key stakeholders.

The Makuleke Region Conservation and Development Trust will be managed by the community (CPA representative), the ecotourism operators and SANParks. The role of the Trust is to facilitate and support “Environmental Benefit Activities”, to receive and spend funds on conservation and to develop and maintain ecotourism related infrastructure. The Trust supported activities must be in line with the Conservation and Development Framework, which has been developed. The Trust is legally setup with clear objectives and accountability systems. The Trust needs financial management skills. Stipulation include that all conservation related income must be ring-fenced and paid to the Trust, including all park entrance fees paid by Makuleke tourists.
Venison Scheme – Greg Martindale, Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife

The Biodiversity and Wine initiative in the Western Cape inspired the idea for the venison scheme. The Biodiversity and Wine branding has helped in promoting South African wines overseas, where it serves to differentiate the products from others on the market. The venison scheme can be just one of the tools used to achieve the objectives of the biodiversity stewardship programme, forming part of the multi-faceted, value-added nature of game ranching in South Africa.

Venison products have a broad market appeal based on health considerations, sustainability and social value. Venison is also complementary to existing wildlife initiatives, such as tourism, trophy and biltong hunting and live game sale. It may help to establish ancillary industries such as abattoirs, butcheries, tanneries and taxidermy. The Absa Agricultural Outlook in 2012 estimated that the world demand for venison was 100 000 tons, with supply of only 40 000 tons. South Africa, despite its high potential in the market, exports less than 2 000 tons. The Outlook projects that between 2013 and 2020, growth in game meat products for local markets may be as high as 20%, and for export markets, 8%.

The concept being proposed is a trademarked brand, that is held within the biodiversity conservation fraternity, with a potential for certification. In order to qualify to receive the brand, the source area must be a protected area proclaimed in terms of the Protected Areas Act and must adhere to the standards set. The standards will include a protected area management plan, annual plan of operation, no extra-limital or hybrid species, adherence to ecological management principles and ecologically-based game management.

Benefits to biodiversity stewardship sites would include an additional income stream from value-added premium products. The scheme would also support the ability to leverage capital, employment, skills development and business development. The biodiversity stewardship programme could provide support, assistance and technical expertise with protected area planning and management. It could also assist with business planning, project development and sourcing of capital finance. Importantly, the biodiversity stewardship programme would undertake oversight and audit functions for the scheme. Benefits to retail partners would include both marketing options and consistency of supply. The biodiversity stewardship programme could supply an umbrella organisation that would ensure consistency of supply. Retail partners could also be sure that the standards are adhered to and oversight is implemented.

Two existing communally owned sites will be used as pilot projects for the scheme, Nambiti and ZuluWaters. These sites have Natures Reserves that have existing abattoirs. Using funding obtained from the Green Fund, the reserves will establish commercial game farming ventures. The funding will support employment and training of staff, purchase of equipment, installation of infrastructure and purchase of game. These two sites will be used to determine proof of concept for the development of a trademarked brand, discussions with potential retail partners and the development of the concept’s business model. If proven successful, the concept can be expanded to include national institutional arrangements. Ultimately the project should demonstrate a new approach to dealing with land, people and the food system in South Africa.
Sustaining livelihoods through landscape restoration and Livestock production – Sinegugu Zukulu, Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife

The region surrounding Matatiele in the Eastern Cape faces a number of challenges, including extensive invasive alien plants, soil erosion and high sediment load in rivers. The result of these challenges is poor rangelands, poor water quality and quantity, poor livestock condition and damage to infrastructure.

To address these challenges, in part, Conservation South Africa (CSA) aims to bring a balance to market access from livestock in communal areas. Currently, 53% of livestock is on commercial land, but this makes up 95% of the market. While the 47% of livestock on communal lands makes up only 5% of the market.

CSA has initiated several interventions in the region in furtherance of this goal: conducting baseline assessments, vulnerability assessments for climate change, established NRM clearing teams, employing ecorangers for rangeland management, improving livestock through vaccinations and improving community access to the red meat market.

Maps resulting from the baseline assessments have been particularly useful. These maps show important areas for water quality, climate change resilience and rangelands. The mapped rangelands have helped to re-introduce a traditional form of rotational grazing known as Maboella. Now 58 ecorangers have been employed over 3 years, reviving traditional skills. At first, it was a challenge to change the system and persuade people to graze their cattle together, but the benefits are now being seen.

Partnerships have been one of the most important parts of the projects, as each partners is involved for a specific reason. CSA’s partners in the project are drawn from the uMzimvubu Catchment Partnership Programme. Through CSA’s involvement in this project, the ideas and concepts tested can feed into broader policies, such as work with the South African Meat Industry Company (SAMIC) on meat grading categories and establishment of the Grassfed Association of South Africa. However, the communities remain the most important stakeholders, if you don’t meet their needs the project will fail.

Outcomes of the project have included: improved livelihoods, improved ground cover, reduced soil erosion, improved water quality and quantity, improved livestock production, improved ecological infrastructure and sustained biodiversity.
Panel discussion

1. How we optimise the return on investment for local communities linked to natural resource management and the wildlife economy in terms of biodiversity stewardship?

**Nomcebo Kunene, MTPA:** Sustainable use of resources is important for long term return on investment. Sustainability optimises the resources, improves stock and quality. Many communities still believe that ecosystem protection necessary for sustainability is the responsibility of the conservation agency. It is necessary to explain that the purpose of biodiversity stewardship is to manage the land that they own in a conservation prudent manner. In agriculturally marginal areas, conservation can be encouraged as a long-term benefit that can support sustainable livelihoods. Nature based tourism can be a source of beneficiation, in sites that apply.

**David Houghton, Woolworths:** Using free range beef as an example, Woolworths are currently trying to source more free range beef. At present, farmers sell cattle on the hoof and get a certain price. After the animal is sold, there are other potential values of the animal that are lost to the farmer. For example, a good Nguni hide can fully recoup the price of a live animal that is sold. To convert a live animal to steak, the product goes through 100 hands, with much of the value being lost to processing in urban centres. If some of these process and jobs could be reverted to the communities, they can achieve higher values per animal. However, this would require training and infrastructure for these additional jobs.

**Ngcali Nomtshongwana, DEA:** From dealing with participatory forest management committees, a range of possible benefits for communities have been indentified, both tangible and intangible, that can be used to motivate people to be good stewards of their land. These include meeting the expectations of the people in terms of job creation, and other forms of capacity building such as training. The Community-Based Natural Resource Management guidelines have been developed, and are used for training by the South African wildlife college. Other options to increase beneficiation include unlocking the value from land ownership, which needs the support of DRDLR, and assisting communities with access to the relevant markets. However, it is important to remember that communities are not homogenous entities, and that expectations may differ even within the same community.

**Kevin McCann, Wildlands Conservation Trust:** It is important that communities take ownership of the decision of what is appropriate for their land. Every land use has benefits and challenges, and the community must make the decision. Any further investment will be guided by their choices. It is also important to put structures in place so that the benefits flow into the community. Biodiversity stewardship is a good way to create a platform for land management, providing legal structures and
management plans. A trusted, well-respected partner can provide the capacity to develop such projects and platforms. Beneficiation from any land use should be assessed from a long-term perspective, as short-term beneficiation is often not sustainable.

Ahmed Khan, DEA: There is a need to increase the budget 10 fold to meet the requirements of natural resource management. However, this money cannot be sourced from National Treasury because of the accounting system in place. For this reason, we need to look at alternative beneficiation, for example from biomass uses of invasive plants. Biodiversity stewardship can help to improved the return on investment because it puts in place vehicles for implementation that help to improve efficiency. There are still potential improvements in co-ordination that would help to achieve efficiency gains. However, any return on investment from natural resource management will have a long-term time horizon.

2. What partnerships need to be strengthened in order to realise the associated benefits?

Nomcebo Kunene, MTPA: The success of the LRBSI is strongly dependent on partnerships, between DEA, DRDLR and SANBI. It is important to realise the differences in biodiversity stewardship approach between commercial privately owned land and communal land. Instead of the traditional top-down approach, communities need to be involved in projects from the planning stages. Identifying the key local roleplayers is important, including municipalities.

David Houghton, Woolworths: Partnerships with retailers will help to realise associated benefits. Also, the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries has many training programmes (for example for butchers) that could be valuable.

Ngcali Nomtshongwana, DEA: 20 years after democracy, the most important point is equitable partnerships, that are fair, based on trust and have a shared goal and vision.

Kevin McCann, Wildlands Conservation Trust: There need to be stronger relationships between land reform claimants and DRDLR. All government departments need to work together more, especially at sites that have the security of good management. A strong supportive partner is also very important. A Community Based Organisation or NGO is valuable, but must be based on trust. Although the private sector can be helpful, they are motivated by profits and may not always have the best interests of the community at heart. A partnership that definitely needs to be expanding is with colleges and training institutions, especially in the tourism and hospitality sector.

Ahmed Khan, DEA: Often, partners enter a community area with intentions already decided. It is better to involve the community earlier on, to explain the purpose of biodiversity stewardship and to ask communities what they need. Employment is a way to get the conservation started, but this needs to build into a longer-term picture.
3. What are the capacity gaps that need to be addressed? The learning exchange will also provide an opportunity for sharing lessons and experiences from land reform biodiversity stewardship projects.

David Houghton, Woolworths: Training is important, but also necessary are the equipment and infrastructure that will allow such training to be used. For example, communal cattle farmers may not have the resources to buy a chill truck, so butchery skills that may have been gained by communities cannot be used without additional equipment.

Ngcali Nomtshongwana, DEA: Training is necessary to allow people to seize opportunities. Training that has been conducted has not always translated into poverty alleviation. Training needs to be focussed within capacity building programmes that aim to produce a new crop of managers.

Kevin McCann, Wildlands Conservation Trust: There is a need to develop additional capacity for correct business structures including business planning and financial management. Training that helps to create real jobs is necessary. Learning exchanges are very valuable. Internal community relationships also need to be developed, including better understanding of how to engage with traditional leadership.

Ahmed Khan, DEA: Learning networks such as this one help to support partnerships and build capacity. Increased training will also help to address capacity gaps, but must have a learnership approach that includes graduation opportunities.

Field trip

Mayibuye Community Game Reserve – David Bozas, Mayibuye Community Game Reserve; Greg Martindale, Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife

The Mayibuye Community Game Reserve is part of a 5 000 ha area that was successfully land claimed. The project is currently working with four amaKhosi to manage an area of 20 000 ha. The centre of the land management plan is a game reserve. Other land uses will include a luxury housing estate, cattle farming lands and a factory for manufacturing, which will provide jobs. The community has found a strategic partner that is assisting with capital investment.
The response to the learning exchange was overwhelmingly positive. The vast majority of the attendees felt that their time was well spent, that the diversity of the exchange was excellent and that it was very informative. The learning exchange was judged a very worthwhile event. People left with a better understanding of how collaboration between land reform and biodiversity stewardship could be valuable in their own situations.

“The learning exchange was an eye opener, challenging and exciting.”

“I believe we learned more than anyone else because we are still in the process of the biodiversity stewardship programme.”

“...during the three days things that I haven’t understood in the past have become clear to me.”

The most commonly stated criticism of the event was that community representatives need to be more involved in giving presentations, joining discussions and possibly having separate, focussed workshops. It was felt that the learning exchange could be even more valuable if communities were able to voice their problems, discuss solutions amongst one another and seek solutions to their most pressing issues.

“More discussions amongst the beneficiaries would add value to the learning exchange.”

“It is suggested to have beneficiaries talking amongst each other and to the group to hear their views, taking into consideration different cultures and languages.”

**Shared experiences:** The value of shared experience was strongly raised in the feedback from delegates. By interacting with those in similar situations, people felt that their problems were understood and that others could sometimes provide solutions. The learning exchange helped delegates find out where to go for help and advice.
“The case study was valuable because I am having a similar challenge.”

“There are some methods that I can replicate on our projects.”

**Learning about conservation:** For those with limited previous experience with biodiversity and conservation, the learning exchange was helpful in improving understanding of these concepts.

“We are new to the nature conservation, so it was helpful.”

**Importance of communication:** The learning exchange highlighted the importance of communication. Delegates also felt that communication at the event was fair, constructive and with very little defensiveness from parties.

“Learners at school should know that there is such important information.”

**Government involvement:** While delegates were pleased to have some of the most relevant government departments present at the event, it was felt that there was a need for broader, and more intensive, government involvement. Suggestions included the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Department of Water and Sanitation, Department of Mineral Resources, Department of Traditional Affairs and national treasury.

“What I have learnt is the inability of departments to work together to make reform and conservation projects work.”

**Involvement from the private sector:** Throughout the event, people learned that involvement from the private sector can be beneficial and that economic viability was important. However, there were limited representatives from this sector at the event.

“You should bring a bigger diversity of funders or partners from the private sector”

**Partnerships:** Delegates left the event fully understanding the value of partnerships.

“Input from different stakeholders indicates that we can yield better in terms of green economy if we work together.”