Enhancing Biodiversity Stewardship in South Africa

Dale Wright & Daniel Marnewick*

BirdLife South Africa
Giving Conservation Wings

[Image of birds in grassland]
BirdLife South Africa has a long standing involvement in BDS...

Including:

- 100 000 ha of new protected areas declared
- Management plan development and implementation support
- Implementation of tax incentives to support BDS sites
- Assistance with drafting the national BDS guideline
- Review of the sector and current project investigating emerging mechanisms for land protection

And finally...an interest in how to support innovation in the BDS sector.
Over decade of experience! Biodiversity Stewardship is proving to be a highly successful, cost-effective model for protected area expansion. 

>540 000 ha (68% of PA declared 2008-2016), and between 70 and 400 times less costly.

The landscape is constantly changing and we need to remain dynamic and responsive in our implementation.

This review arose in response to two primary factors:

1. Increasing role of Non-governmental organisations supporting and implementing BDS and a need to structure engagements.
2. Decreasing organisational budgets and capacity to undertake BDS and thus a need to think more creatively and innovate within the sector.

Objective: Challenges and Opportunities

Enhance the effectiveness of BDS by documenting all of the challenges, and drafting solutions to these challenges, with a particular focus on supporting government – NGO collaboration.
Two focus group discussions held at the Western Cape Biodiversity Stewardship Peer Learning Forums (Approx. 40 participants at each)

National Questionnaire circulated – focused on highest scoring challenge items and other questions (34 respondents).

Methods: Challenges and solutions generated from the ground up!
Enhancing Biodiversity Stewardship in South Africa

A review of the challenges facing biodiversity stewardship in South Africa and the opportunities which can be leveraged to enhance the sector.

Report for the Table Mountain Fund
Operational Model
For BDS

Ref: G. Mortimer; A. Purnell
## Results: Top 5 highest scoring Challenges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>NGO</th>
<th>Government</th>
<th>Peer learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>High level political will</strong> to support and adequately finance Biodiversity Stewardship is lacking.</td>
<td>4.65</td>
<td>4.61</td>
<td>4.67</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Funding</strong> for maintenance of established sites is a challenge.</td>
<td>4.60</td>
<td>4.57</td>
<td>4.60</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is a lack of <strong>succession planning</strong> in extension services.</td>
<td>4.55</td>
<td>4.48</td>
<td>4.73</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable, long-term funding for permanent staff is lacking.</td>
<td>4.55</td>
<td>4.39</td>
<td>4.80</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extension officers require a highly <strong>diverse skills set</strong>.</td>
<td>4.35</td>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>4.67</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Results: Top 5 highest scoring Opportunities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Total scores</th>
<th>NGO</th>
<th>Government</th>
<th>Ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Utilizing complementary capacity and technical strengths of various partners can enhance Biodiversity Stewardship.</td>
<td>4.64</td>
<td>4.65</td>
<td>4.73</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pro-bono advertising options in newspapers should be established to reduce costs for Biodiversity Stewardship.</td>
<td>4.54</td>
<td>4.60</td>
<td>4.53</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishing collaborative endowment funds will support Biodiversity Stewardship.</td>
<td>4.49</td>
<td>4.48</td>
<td>4.53</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-funding and sharing limited financial resources can enhance Biodiversity Stewardship.</td>
<td>4.46</td>
<td>4.43</td>
<td>4.53</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishing a pro-bono legal support platform will enhance Biodiversity Stewardship.</td>
<td>4.39</td>
<td>4.57</td>
<td>4.20</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Recommendations: Enhancing Government – NGO collaboration

- High level political support
- Partnerships / Shared Responsibilities
- Communication
- Cross-department support
- Financing & incentives
- MOUs – formalising partnerships
- Role differentiation
Logic model for enhancing collaboration

- Establishment/maintenance of provincial working groups to ensure open communication.
- Joint identification of spatial priorities and capacity strengths and weaknesses of partners.
- Collaborative development of provincial PAES and associated implementation strategy.
- Structured differentiation of roles and responsibilities captured in formal agreements.
- Shared lobbying for resources and/or distribution of tasks to improve efficiency.
- Project implementation and reporting.
Recommendations: Financial Opportunities

• Payments for ecological infrastructure services to landowners protecting and maintaining critical ecological infrastructure.

• **Revolving Trusts** – what are the challenges and opportunities for revolving trusts in SA?

• Establishment of a national **endowment fund** for BDS.

• **Pro-bono legal service** provision? Can this help cut costs and redirect resources?

• Support the implementation of existing **tax incentives** and potentially the creation of additional tax incentives.

• The role of **Biodiversity Offsets** in contributing to BDS?

• Investigate and leverage opportunities with **other industries** – game ranching, hunting sector, Corporate Social Investment.
Recommendations: Personnel Capacity

✓ Create a **common access information database** for all practitioners – to provide a networking and mentoring facility for practitioners and new entrants to the sector.

✓ Ensure **consistency of implementation** of BDS through regular communication and training initiatives, mentoring, and access to a common information database.

✓ Finalise a implementation **guideline** document to ensure consistency in BDS implementation.

✓ **Host annual learning events at both National and Provincial levels**, alongside other communications platforms such as quarterly National and Provincial Reference Group and Site review meetings.

✓ Encourage **mentoring, training or job shadowing from colleagues** to allow for skills to be transferred across institutions or conservation agencies.

✓ **Succession planning**, both for staff and organisations implementing BDS at specific sites.
Recommendations: Enhancing Political Support

- Educate and empower municipalities
- Conduct Advocacy events with officials at multiple levels of government
- Strengthen relationship with Department of Rural Development and Land Reform
- Strengthen relationship with Department of Agriculture
- Enhance the role of BDS projects in other large, landscape level government programmes
- Conduct Advocacy events with officials at multiple levels of government
Recommendations: Landowner Partnerships

- **Training for BDS landowners**, local community members or the staff working at sites might allow for maintenance activities to be implemented by the landowners themselves.

- Enhance the role of conservancies in landscape conservation

- Creating and maintaining social networks for BDS landowners

- **Succession planning for new landowners of BDS sites**

- Use surveys to understand landowner’s attitudes to conservation and their willingness to participate in BDS programmes
Acknowledgements:

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- Reviewers: G. Mortimer, D. Marnewick, C. Stevens
- Input: A. Purnell, ILCN

dale.wright@birdlife.org.za
daniel.marnewick@birdlife.org.za
**Topic 1:** BDS support for Land Reform in South Africa – especially in relation to the wildlife economy

**Questions:**

How can BDS support Land Reform?

Can we develop additional benefits for landowners, in particular focused on land reform beneficiaries and communal landowner associations?

Unpack the linkages between the two programmes and how a formal partnership may be developed.
**Topic 2:** Can we ensure that declared BDS sites are focal areas for the implementation of other large-scale government programmes?

**Questions:**
Discuss collaborative scheduling and investment of land management interventions between DAFF and DEA.

Is this possible?

How can it be achieved?

Who are the role players to take this forward?
Topic 3: Creating an enabling policy environment for payments for ecological infrastructure services to landowners and communities protecting and maintaining critical ecological infrastructure.

Questions:

What are the critical barriers to this programme?

How can these be overcome to effect this opportunity?

Tentative timelines to implementation and implementers?
**Topic 4.** Discussion regarding the establishment of a national endowment fund.

**Questions:**

Discussion regarding whether this is possible?

Where the seed capital/resources can be sourced,

Who would manage the fund?

How might funds be dispersed?
Topic 5: How can Biodiversity Offsets use BDS to contribute to PA Expansion.

Questions:

What is required to enable offsets to have a positive impact on PA expansion?

How does BDS fit into the Offset Policy?

What are the action points?

What are the relevant role players responsibilities?
Topic 6: Training and upskilling of landowners to implement aspects of their management plans and other aspects related to the maintenance of declared BDS sites.

Questions:

Is this possible and required?

How we could draw from / align with / contribute to existing initiatives (e.g. Conservancies)?

Does the sector feel this is a worthwhile investment?

How could it be structured to provide maximum benefit?
**Topic 7:** Have we capitalised on the potential employment opportunities which exist through BDS?

**Questions:**

How can we promote further job creation?

Job creation beyond communal land; also including individual private landowners.

How to resource potential additional job opportunities?

Assisting landowners to provide additional jobs or income generation opportunities for farm staff or other community members.