Gauteng Biodiversity Stewardship Programme (GBSP)

National Biodiversity Stewardship Conference
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Introduction

The Gauteng Biodiversity Stewardship Programme (GBSP)

A Collaboration between the Gauteng Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (GDARD), the Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT) and the WWF Nedbank Green Trust.

Christina Seegers
Noza Mathebula
Natalie Horn
Petrus Links

1 August 2015 - 31 July 2019
(extended by 1 year).

Harriet Davies Mostert
Emily Taylor
Zethu Sibiya
Achieve “intent to declare” of at least **5,000 hectares**, as the catalytic foundation for achieving the target of 9,000 hectares set by GDARD for 2018-2019.
Overall goal of the project

To build a working model for biodiversity stewardship in Gauteng, in partnership with relevant stakeholders, that:

1. achieves protected area expansion in priority conservation areas and
2. improves institutional capacity for biodiversity stewardship implementation in the Gauteng Province.

Objectives

1. Better understand current and potential future environmental, social and institutional landscape of Gauteng
2. Identify, evaluate and adopt sustainable mechanisms for biodiversity stewardship in the province
Progress and achievements

✓ relationship with GDARD Rural Development Chief Directorate to clarify their focus areas and processes, and how we might collaborate;

✓ Whole team involved and capacitated in all activities;

✓ Variety of training interventions and a lot of trial by fire has created a really strong and effective team;

✓ Scientific Services unit has been hugely supportive and present (assessments and training), and have also gained from these experiences;
Progress and achievements

- Sessions with GDARD’s Corporate Legal Services (CLS) unit for them, and for the GBSP team, to better understand the legal contracts as they pertain to BDS in the Gauteng context;

- A member of GDARD CLS attended the SANBI Legal Capacity Workshop in April 2018, which focused on the declaration of PAs under NEM:PAA;

- Site visit to Klipkraal with GDARD museum curator to assess heritage value of property – reminded that we need to place more emphasis on heritage value of sites.

- Relationship with State Attorney’s Office to assist with title deed endorsements

Winner: 2017 Mail and Guardian Greening the Future Awards – Community Conservation Category
Progress against target of 5,000 hectares:

- Klipkraal proposed Protected Area (two sites) – 2,656 ha
- Devon proposed Protected Environment (eight landowners) - 7,979 ha
  
  = 10,635 ha signed by landowners

- Klipplaatdrift – 1,967 ha pending

  = 12,602 ha – more than double our target
Partnership

- Access to experience and expertise;
- Streamlined administrative and financial processes;
- Collaboration promotes a level of trust from landowners – landowners respond more favourably to NGOs (initially);
- Encourages and facilitates attendance of training and conferences;
- Opportunity for NGOs to contribute to best practice and collaborate with different GDARD units on other conservation endeavours, not just PA expansion;
- Better understanding of institutional governance;
- Strengthens funding proposals.
Lessons learned

- Our consistent presence and follow-up has borne fruit – the landowners’ attitudes have vastly improved as they realised we were going to follow up on our plans and respond to any of their queries;

- Awareness of political and social climate of areas in which we have sites, particularly those made up of multiple landowners;

- We have learned more about the land claim process, and under what circumstances we can safely continue. The same can be said for mining rights registered on the title deeds;
Expand on our ideas of extension services to ensure sustainability (assistance with agricultural aspects / damage causing animal control and training farm staff etc.). What does each farmer need or want?

Tailor our message for our audience (market the programme effectively) – for funders, municipalities, landowners etc.

Our early engagement with organised agriculture has proven very useful.
A better aligned partnership with the provincial Department of Agriculture is needed to adequately incorporate the objectives of agriculture and BDS in the province;

Continue engagement with GDARD Rural Development around implementing BDS in communally managed land;

Establish provincial BDS Technical Working Group;

Strategic, collaborative approach to integrating land reform and BDS in the province (and country at large);

Understanding of the land reform space in the province – where we are at, what is left?

Identifying opportunities in the Gauteng landscape for stewardship implementation (mechanisms, partnerships, etc.).
Implementing BDS in Gauteng land reform sites

Key deliverable for this programme - hold a workshop to investigate the implementation of BDS in land reform sites.

We combined forces with SANBI and DEA to host an all-in-one.

- Lessons from other provinces;
- Understanding the economic value of biodiversity and how biodiversity supports economic development;
- Investigate further our potential contribution to Rural Development objectives. E.g. capacity building, sustainability of natural resources, etc.;
- Identifying areas of opportunity between economic, agricultural and conservation objectives;
- Identifying areas of conflict between economic, agricultural and conservation objectives, and how we can address these.
GDARD and the EWT are very grateful to the WWF Nedbank Green Trust for their support of this project. By providing this support, the trust is facilitating capacity building within GDARD and the conservation of ecologically irreplaceable areas in Gauteng in the face of extreme economic pressures for the rapid development of natural open areas.