Working together for sustainable development

Environmental co-operation programme between South Africa and Norway

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NORWEGIAN MINISTRY OF THE ENVIRONMENT

The South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI) was established on 1 September 2004 through the signing into force of the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act (NEMBA) No.10 of 2004 by President Thabo Mbeki. The Act expands the mandate of the former National Botanical Institute to include responsibilities relating to the full diversity of South Africa's fauna and flora, and builds on the internationally respected programmes in conservation, research, education and visitor services developed by the National Botanical Institute and its predecessors over the past century.

The vision of SANBI is to be the leading institution in biodiversity science in Africa, facilitating conservation, sustainable use of living resources, and human wellbeing.

SANBI's mission is to promote the sustainable use, conservation, appreciation and enjoyment of the exceptionally rich biodiversity of South Africa, for the benefit of all people.

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Foreword

South Africa and Norway have a close relationship, historically rooted in the fight against apartheid. Sustainable management of natural and cultural resources is a key priority to both countries, and since the late 1990s bilateral co-operation has developed within the fields of pollution and waste, climate change, environmental governance, biodiversity, cultural heritage and tourism.

Today, a number of institutions are actively involved in the Environmental Co-operation Programme between South Africa and Norway. Furthermore, our two countries collaborate productively within various international environmental organisations, programmes and conventions.

This publication highlights some of the results achieved, lessons learnt and best practices of the Environmental Co-operation Programme between South Africa and Norway from 2000 to 2006. It is our hope and ambition that these experiences will benefit further environmental co-operation between our countries.

Pretoria and Oslo, April 2007

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Introduction

The current Environmental Co-operation Programme between South Africa and Norway reflects the extensive engagement that has taken place between the two countries since 2000. Co-operation in the field of the environment between the two countries is maturing and improving and this is reflected in a new, more strategic and focussed environmental co-operation programme which is nested within DEAT's strategic plans and with mutual benefits accruing to both sides.

The Norwegian-funded environmental co-operation programme had seven themes namely: climate change, cultural heritage, environmental rights and justice, biodiversity and water, pollution and waste and weather services as well as an additional project, the HIV/Aids wellness project. This represented some 34 projects and although, in monetary terms, the programme may have been considered small, its impact has been broad and far reaching.

The programme has been instrumental in supporting DEAT in delivering on its key focus areas and has provided DEAT with an opportunity to strengthen its capacity in the management and conservation of the environment, as well as contributing to enabling officials within the department to engage more effectively at the international level.

The development and strengthening of institutional co-operation between Norway and South Africa has been both beneficial and meaningful. The programme has not only addressed environmental issues but also contributed to addressing the greater challenges of sustainable development and poverty eradication. It has linkages and synergies with other projects and initiatives that were not only national and sub-regional but regional as well. There are also linkages and involvement of local communities and the youth in some projects.

The Programme has supported the establishment of an air-quality monitoring system in Durban. New South Africa's environmental legislation has been promulgated to comprehensively deal with the issue of air-quality management. Legislation requiring environmental impact assessment before conducting any major development has been developed. Development of important heritage sites like Mapungubwe and the Inanda Heritage Route on the outskirts of Durban is also a result of the Environmental Co-operation Programme. Projects within the fields of cultural heritage, wetlands and pollution and waste have created jobs, improved health and contributed to development in previously disadvantaged communities.

The programme continues to enjoy a high level of political support and involvement, bringing the Environmental Ministries of both Norway and South Africa together. It has also contributed to strengthening bilateral relations between South Africa and Norway within the bilateral and multilateral environmental arenas and played a role in building DEAT's capacity to effectively engage in the implementation of various Multilateral Environmental Agreements.

At the international level, Norway and South Africa continue to work closely together on various occasions and in several forums. During the period 2000–2005, South Africa hosted the World Summit on Sustainable Development, chaired the 11th Session of the CSD (Commission on Sustainable Development), the World Parks Congress and the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee session of the UNEP Global POPs Treaty (INC5). These relations have ensured a mutual appreciation of global challenges. Furthermore, solid political and ministerial contacts have given Norway, in particular, increased understanding of issues of importance to developing countries in Africa and beyond, as well as increased access to partners in the group of developing countries. Hence, the friendship and co-operation has been both strategic as well as very concrete, for example on the issue containing alien species.

In the post-apartheid period South Africa aspired to be a leading voice among the group of developing countries. "There were strong political forces in Norway which wanted close co-operation with South Africa after apartheid. Environment was an area that suited this aim," says Idunn Eidheim in the Norwegian Ministry of Environment. "The Johannesburg Conference was an international milestone. It illustrated to us the importance of the strong formal and informal relationship we have with South Africa," says Eidheim.

Today people and institutions in both countries build on this close relationship. The Environmental Co-operation Programme is a case in point.

Environ
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Environmental co-ordination and management

In order to improve management and make well informed decisions, the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT) needed readily available information on the state of the environment. A harmonised core set of environmental indicators for SADC was also needed. The aim of this programme was therefore to compile a National State of the Environment Report, as well as reports on the major metropolitan areas and provinces.

State of the Environment Reporting

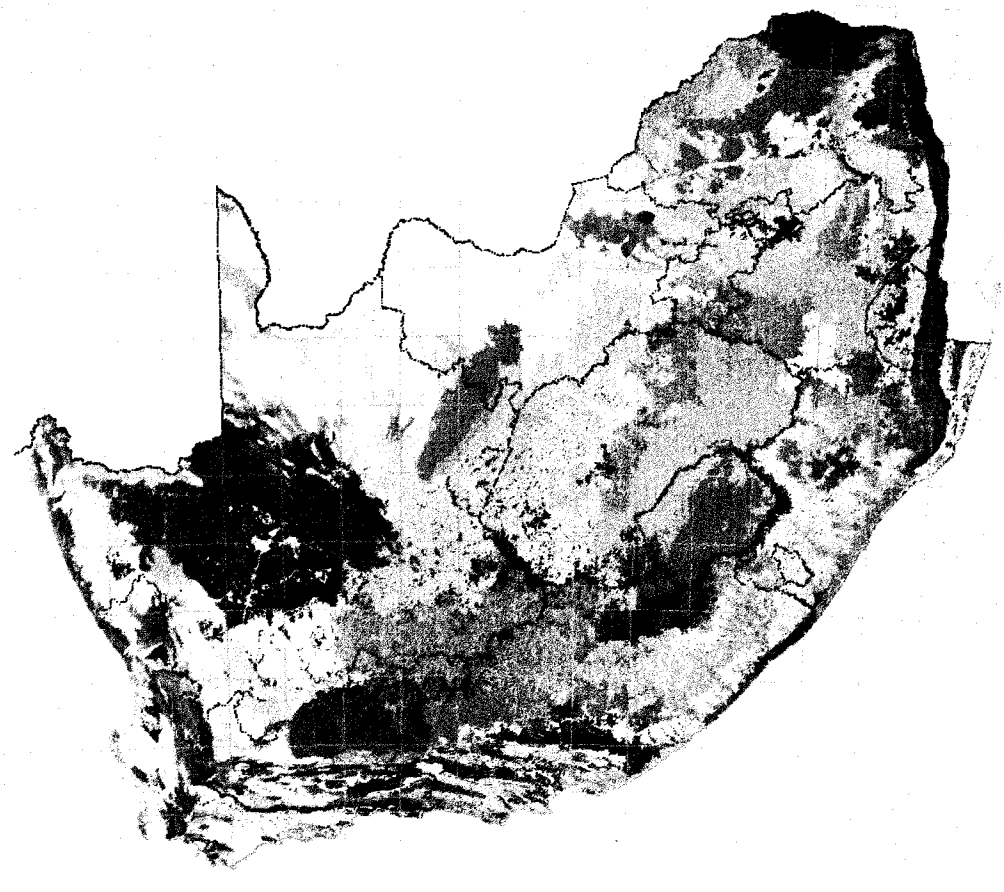
More than 20 State of Environment type reports have been published and the national report will be published soon. Numerous posters, guideline documents, resource materials for schools and Internet tools have also been developed through this initiative.

Training and capacity building reached an average of 30 government officials each year representing all three tiers of government. Critically important work on the state of vegetation in South Africa, which had started three years ago, gained momentum after financial support was channelled to meet desperate financial needs at the NBI (now SANBI).

"Without the financial support from NORAD, and the technical support from GRID-Arendal, the Norwegian Pollution Control Authority (SFT) and Statistics Norway, we would not have made such spectacular progress. Through regular visits to our Norwegian Partners, ideas could be exchanged and likewise, Norwegian partners visiting South Africa could share their knowledge with a significant number of stakeholders in South Africa," says Rudi Pretorius of DEAT.

DEAT also used the opportunity to establish, with the assistance of GRID-Arendal, the Earthwire WSSD Internet portal to provide easy access to newspaper reports and arti-

A new vegetation map, dividing South Africa, Lesotho and Swaziland into 435 vegetation types, has been produced by SANBI and is an invaluable tool for monitoring and conserving South Africa's biodiversity.



cles related to the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD).

The value of state of the environment reports has been demonstrated by municipalities such as Mogale City and Ekurhuleni. Information contained in the reports is used to develop Environmental Management Frameworks, to do strategic environmental assessments, and to identify areas where the environment presents particular opportunities for development or constraints to development.

A number of State of Rivers reports were also published with the financial assistance from NORAD. These reports have evolved significantly over the last years and provide valuable management options to environmental managers. These reports and the value thereof were instrumental in the roll out of the River Health Programme to the whole country. DWAF and DEAT are currently developing a Memorandum of Understanding in this area of work that will further contribute to institutional co-operation between these two departments. Furthermore, within DEAT there is a growing awareness of the value of State of the Environment reports. The fact that a State of Coasts report and a State of Air report were commissioned by other components within DEAT testifies to this.

South Africa's Business and Youth Communities get Involved in Environmental Assessment

The programme also contributed to the development of capacities in consultancies to carry out environmental assessments and to produce State of the Environment reports. There are currently more than 25 businesses operating in this field.

An exciting development during the last year was the development of a joint initiative between DEAT and the Youth Commission in the Presidency to involve youth groups in South Africa to develop a Youth State of the Environment Report. Youth groups in all provinces attended a national workshop in 2005, and several provincial workshops with youth groups were held. This initiative is seen as an important vehicle to build the capacity of the youth in South Africa so that they can play a more prominent role in both national and international environmental debates.

Regional Expansion

After a somewhat slow start, the SADC indicator initiative gained steady momentum, and a set of indicators is now available for the region. Apart from the regional benefits these projects had, it also exposed DEAT staff to regional issues, complexities and in that way contributed to the development of the staff in DEAT working on indicators.

In 2007 a book on the vegetation of South Africa, Lesotho and Swaziland has been released by SANBI, providing a detailed description of the status of vegetation types in Southern Africa. SANBI has also released the accompanying GIS data set and wall map. Inevitable delays have been managed vigorously with the result that all deliverables that were set out initially have been achieved and in some cases exceeded.

Successful Norwegian-South African Collaboration

"I would like to express my gratitude towards NORAD for providing the financial support, and towards all the Norwegian institutions willing to share their knowledge with us. I would also like to use this opportunity to thank the individuals at SARDC Imercsa who worked hard and diligently to get the regional indicators project on track, and in fact to deliver the harmonized set of indicators as originally planned for," says Rudi Pretorius of DEAT.

"From our point of view the co-operation has gone particularly well and been equitable. The team of 4–5 persons with whom we co-operated at DEAT were very competent. Often in projects like this we feel that the flow of knowledge and information is a one-way stream—from us to a recipient. In South Africa we came in with our experience and methods, and we got a lot of ideas in return," tells Morten Sorensen at GRID Arendal.

He says that the DEAT team had a unique ability to engage ordinary citizens and to communicate the results widely. "The South Africans were among the first in the world to publish a status report aimed at schools," says Sorensen, who is also impressed by how a small group of 4–5 people in South Africa compiled reports that almost a hundred people work on in Norway. He hopes that GRID and DEAT will continue their co-operation not only in a new agreement, but also perhaps in transferring South Africa's experience and knowledge to the neighbouring states.

Environmental rights and justice

Housing projects in Khayelitsha township, outside Cape Town, Western Cape.

In the field of environmental impact assessment (EIA) regulations, South Africa used to work according to outdated legislation. New EIA regulations were urgently needed in the light of the provisions of the new Constitution.

Due to a lack of capacity, DEAT was not able to draft new regulations in-house and asked Norway to assist in developing new regulations in terms of the National Environmental Management Act. The new EIA regulations were promulgated in the Government Gazette in July 2006. They are currently being implemented nationally and DEAT and the provinces meet regularly to ensure consistency throughout the country. These regulations define listed activities more clearly, to name just one of the technical problems that was removed. It also provides for more detail regarding public participation, process requirements and the contents of reports.

Comments from Norwegian partners:

"Ours was an example of good institutional co-operation," says Terje Lind from the Ministry of Environment (MoE) in Oslo who also spent a few weeks working within DEAT in Pretoria. A major component was supporting DEAT's revision of environmental law contained in the National Environmental Management Act and developing regulations on environmental impact assessments.

"It was easy for both departments to understand each other's thinking and to discuss issues of mutual concern. We learnt from each other," Lind underlines.

The two countries use impact assessments in different ways. Lind believes that this allowed the Norwegians to understand their own system better. He credits the South Africans' strength in both monitoring projects, and development of IT tools for allowing the provinces to exchange information on impact assessments.

Most of the funding of this part of the programme supported and strengthened the local South African partners—in government, research bodies and consultancies. The success of the initial programme has resulted in DEAT and MoE extending the programme for another five years.

Pollution & Waste

A clear view of Durban's central beaches.

air-quality problems and to engage specialist media consultants to promote it," says Mr. Chetty.

The goal of the co-operation programme between eThekwini Municipality and the Norwegian Pollution Control Authority (SFT) was to reduce the industrial pollution through an improved regulatory system. The permit structure and content as well as the system for annual reporting from industry to eThekwini Municipality has been revised, the staff have been trained and given the capacity to implement the revised audit approach.

"By the end of 2005 a new permitting system was in place that has been recognised as an example of best practice in the development of, for example, the format for atmospheric emission licences to be issued in terms of the new National Environmental Management: Air Quality Act. With its ambitious but practical outputs, the project has set the benchmark for legally binding, monitorable and enforceable authorisations to be used through command and control regulation to ensure the identification and reduction, substitution or elimination of priority pollutants. The environmental co-operation between The Norwegian Pollution Control Authority (SFT) and eThekwini played a key role in this significant advance in pollution governance," says Peter Lukey of DEAT.

"Unlike many development projects we were received by the highly qualified environmental staff of the eThekwini Metro. Our suggestions were not accepted automatically at face value, and we had to argue well for our ideas," says SFT's Rune Vistad, who was encouraged by the fact that their South African partners had clear visions and participated in the planning process in a very constructive way. Mr. Vistad was also impressed by the South Africans' ability to engage all the stakeholders.

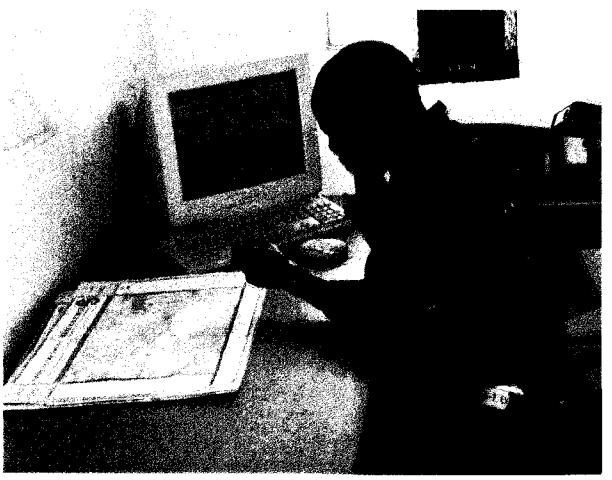
Svein Knudsen of Norwegian Institute of Air Research (NILU) has a strong interest in the South Durban Basin project. He praises the co-operation with both Durban Health and the NGOs in the area. He describes NILU's input as having a strong element of mentoring as well as documenting the situation.

"A prerequisite for positive change is the need to understand how things interconnect. Here Durban has come far," says Knudsen. He points out that the Metro was aiming at establishing a new environmental regime in three years, a process that had evolved over 30 years in Norway.

Another positive spin-off of the initial program has been NILU's ongoing co-operation with three local companies, independent of Norwegian development aid. The Institute also co-operates with South African research institutions and will continue working with DEAT on air-quality management and planning.

SFT now co-operates with South Africa and DEAT in the follow-up programme that runs until 2009, focusing on the handling of both dangerous and normal waste.

Air pollution measuring station in Durban.



Climate Change and Energy

In 2000, the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT) had little capacity to undertake work in the area of climate change, let alone lead South Africa's national and international engagements in this regard. Five years later, by the end of the period under review, the country's national and international work on climate change was globally recognised and respected. The capacity building that took place played an important role in this turn-around.

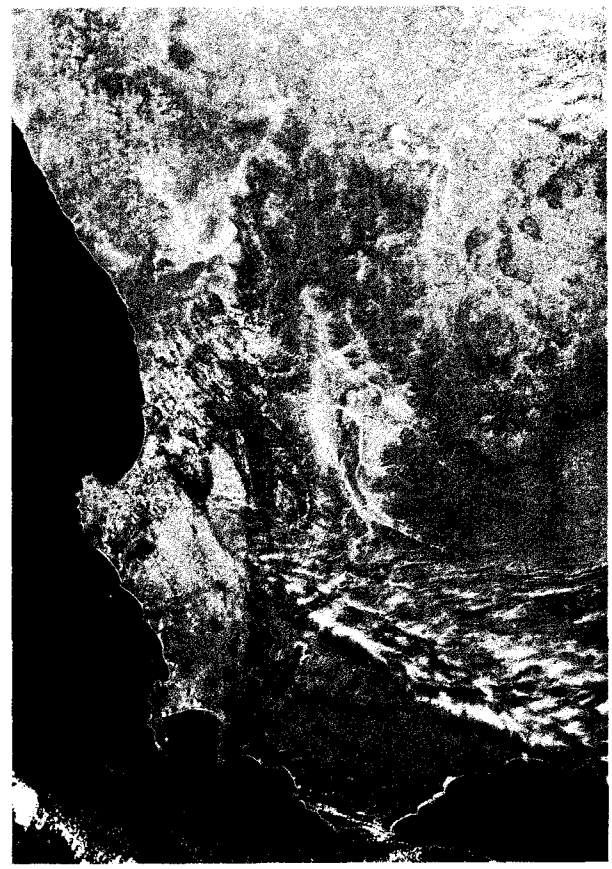
Apart from capacity building to contribute to the formulation of the national policy on energy and climate change, the projects under this theme were required to improve climate change observation and data management as well as to improve weather and disaster forecasting in the South African Development Community (SADC) region.

The project goals were to:

- Increase knowledge and understanding within DEAT, other government departments and non-governmental organisations on issues relating to climate change in South Africa as defined in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
- Provide support for international negotiations
- Assist in establishing a sound institutional structure for the management of climate change-related matters within the relevant departments and sub-national spheres of government
- Identify research needs and co-ordinate a research strategy

Although the project started looking at the development of an updated greenhouse gas inventory, lack of staff and funds has delayed further development. This element of the project has now become a substantial piece of work in its own right called the Greenhouse Gas Information Management Project.

The highlight of the last part of the period was the National Climate Change Conference which took place in October 2005. Over 600 representatives from government, business, the scientific and academic communities and civil society considered the science relating to climate change and key responses to the potential social and economic impacts associated with the compelling evidence of climate change.



Satellite imagery shows that the western parts of South Africa are becoming hotter and drier.

This project contributed to building the capacity and competence of the South African role-players to participate meaningfully in international negotiations on climate change. Mr. Peter Lukey, who headed this project, attributes the success of the project to three factors: the flexibility of the NORAD support allowing the project to evolve in alignment with the evolution of the climate change institutional arrangements and priorities, the dedication of climate change officials and recognition of the project by the top management level of DEAT.

"It became clear," he says, "that if a long-term vision is not already informing government plans to intervene, projects must be designed with flexibility and adaptability to evolving needs and priorities in mind."

Quiver tree (*Aloe dichotoma*) populations are declining due to regional warming.

The Nordic consulting group ECON, together with the Palmer Development Group in South Africa, assisted DEAT with this specific theme.

"The institutional co-operation has been successful, and it has contributed to the development of local capacity. In addition, as a result of our work with DEAT and NORAD, ECON has established an office in South Africa working independently of development funding," says Torleif Haugland of ECON.

Haugland adds that lack of staff stability was a recurring problem, but he points out that this was not surprising since lack of qualified personnel results in a high level of job mobility, especially in a country in a transitional stage like South Africa.

Kwa Mashu township, Durban.

Protecting SA's rich diversity of plants

CREW collecting data at the Bredasdorp airstrip, Western Cape Province.

CREW works with previously disadvantaged communities in the Western Cape Province.

The critically endangered *Moraea atropunctata*.

The Threatened Species Programme (TSP) is aimed at strengthening information bases, policy- and decision-making for the country's threatened species resources. It is housed and co-funded by the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI). SANBI is proud of the project's accomplishments and it has received further Norwegian funding to extend its efforts to the protection of specific vulnerable insect and animal species.

The impressive achievements of the *Threatened Species Programme* include:

- The largest, most extensive and authoritative National Red Data List of plants ever globally undertaken on any biodiversity group in the history of the IUCN. Altogether 99% of the 21 871 plant species in the country have been assessed so far, approximately 9% of which are threatened with extinction. This figure is high compared to those of other assessed countries.
- A database of essential conservation and threat information for plants
- Database software for Red Data Listing of all species that serves the needs of the TSP and other programmes in the Southern African Region
- Policy advice for decision-makers, including maps and tools to help manage and protect threatened plants
- A collaborative research programme has been conducted with SANBI's climate change group to determine the driving factors affecting vulnerability of SA's plants in this regard
- Ongoing provision of data and advice to researchers, consultants, educators, conservation authorities and members of the public regarding threatened species and their conservation

The TSP has enabled SANBI to play an essential role in meeting South Africa's commitments to national and international mandates and legislation, such as the National Environmental Management Biodiversity Act, State of Environment Reporting and particularly the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation.

CREW National Manager, Tilla Raimondo, teaches interns, Phuti Matlamela and Phetole Manyama, essential field techniques.

CREW

The Custodians of Rare and Endangered Wildflowers (CREW), an innovative new programme run through the TSP, involves volunteers from the public in the conservation and monitoring of our threatened plants. Over the past decade SANBI has come to recognise and value the contribution that volunteers can make to conservation of our flora. As a result, it is currently investing in building these individuals' capacity to support the Institute's mandate to monitor threatened species.

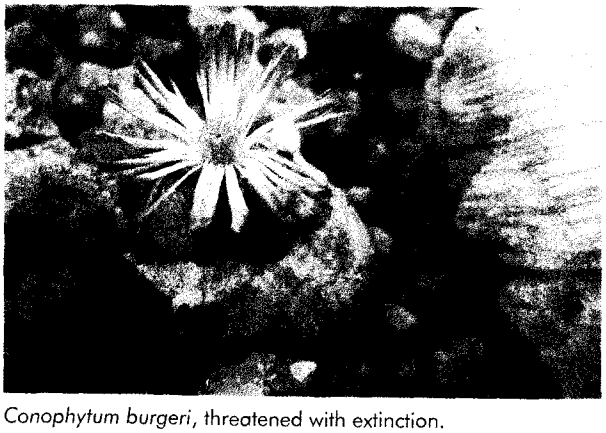
CREW works in areas with high concentrations of threatened plant species. In each area, groups of local people who are passionate about conservation (custodians) have been formed. These CREW groups survey remaining pieces of natural vegetation within their regions for species of conservation concern (threatened and endemic species). The information collected through these surveys helps the TSP to monitor the numbers and status of populations of threatened plant species. CREW groups are also involved in managing critical sites for the conservation of threatened species both by ensuring that new sites are conserved and by helping to manage existing sites.

The approach taken in each area has been developed to suit the nature of the threatened habitats and the existing conservation and botanical skills of the custodians. In many of the areas that contain high concentrations of threatened plants, the local communities are not conservation-aware. CREW has purposefully targeted these communities to ensure that their awareness of threatened plants is developed. This is a difficult and time-consuming task and involves working both with very conservative farming communities and with groups from previously disadvantaged backgrounds where large socio-economic challenges allow little time for consideration of issues such as conservation.

Despite these challenges, the project participants have all demonstrated incredible commitment to changing mindsets in their areas. Visits to farmers who have threatened patches of remnant vegetation on their land, publishing articles in the local press and exhibiting at local agricultural shows and

Volunteers from underprivileged Cape Flats communities receive training on monitoring their threatened plants.

Protea cynaroides (King Protea) in the fynbos surrounding Betty's Bay.



Conophytum burgeri, threatened with extinction.

flower shows are some of the many initiatives already taken to raise awareness of threatened plant issues. All the CREW community groups are currently working closely with their local municipalities and relevant conservation extension officers to ensure the long-term survival of priority sites for the conservation of threatened plant species.

Taking the TSP beyond plants

In 2005 the TSP hosted a workshop, attended by participants from a range of institutions, to distil best practices and lessons learned in Red Listing. The workshop successfully identified the priorities for further Red Listing in the country. This information spearheaded the TSP's strategy to extend SANBI's species conservation efforts beyond plants. Partnerships were formed with organisations focused on the conservation of a wide variety of species including reptiles, butterflies, spiders, fish and birds.

Challenges and lessons learned

Specific skills needed for conservation assessment must be learned through experience while working in the field and in the job and this means turnover of staff is crippling. Nevertheless the original allocation of three Red Listing staff has been more than doubled and five interns, nine students and more than 150 volunteers from the public have been trained to help carry out Red Listing activities.

Because pioneering work has been done, experience had to show which methods and approaches were fruitful. Ms. Wendy Foden of SANBI asserts that "the team has learned much and broken through many thresholds of learning and experience. We wish to take the methodologies and approaches that we have evolved to become effective and successful to address the gaps and priorities for Red Listing of all species of animals and plants in South Africa."

Capacity Building

On the human resources side, the TSP made huge strides in building capacity. "It has reconnected people with nature via our community outreach plant monitoring groups, which gave volunteers from all levels of civil society the opportunity to gain knowledge in plant monitoring and to conserve the natural areas in their own communities," says Ms. Foden.

Wetlands in South Africa

The lack of reliable wetland data in South Africa adversely affected conservation projects and resulted in wetlands not being incorporated into many planning and decision-making processes. Moreover, the unavailability of data on wetlands has indirectly caused significant degradation of these ecosystems.

"Today we know of 122 642 wetlands in South Africa, covering an area of over 9.3 million hectares which constitutes 7.2 % of the total surface area of the country," says John Dini, manager of the Working for Wetlands Programme. These statistics were gleaned from the National Wetland Inventory, a significant contribution to the conservation of the country's natural resources.

The wetland coverage map, including parts of Lesotho, Swaziland and Mozambique, generated the first systematic national overview of the country's wetland resources. This information is stored in a web-accessible database containing the attributes, functions and values of individual wetlands, and is linked to spatial data by a geographical information system (GIS). The national inventory permits a diverse range of analyses to be done on the data at national, provincial and catchment level.

The most suitable and cost effective methods for undertaking the wetland inventory, methodologies for mapping wetlands, as well as the kind of remote sensing to be used, were determined through a pilot study. In its recommendations, the project team identified an opportunity to integrate the first phase of the inventory into the National Land Cover 2000 (NLC) project.

DEAT joined the funding consortium of the NLC project, and interaction with the project team ensured the production of the most accurate and comprehensive wetland coverage possible, within the constraints of the methodology. Training on wetland identification was provided to the NLC team by DEAT and other wetland experts.

Erosion, usually triggered or exacerbated by human activities, is one of the major threats to South Africa's wetlands. The resulting high sediment loads decrease the storage capacity of dams and increases water purification costs.

With expertise provided by SANBI and City of Cape Town, the Working for Wetlands Peninsula Project was able to propagate *Erica verticillata*, a wetland-dependent species that has become extinct in the wild.

Rivers play essential roles in the provision of water, food and transport to rural communities.

Many wetlands in urban areas become dumping grounds or are filled for development.

Plants were reintroduced to rehabilitated wetlands in Cape Town, using labour-intensive methods.

A wetland classification system for the inventory has been developed and workshopped with relevant experts and co-funded by the Water Research Commission.

In view of the expanded mandate conferred on it through the Biodiversity Act, SANBI was identified by DEAT as the appropriate home for the wetland inventory. Within SANBI, the project is being implemented jointly by the Directorate for Biodiversity Planning, Policy and Programmes and Working for Wetlands. This collaboration allows the inventory to be positioned to support SANBI's functions relating to generating spatial data on biodiversity, undertaking systematic conservation planning and monitoring.

Standards were set for further wetland mapping and recommendations were developed regarding the resource requirements for updating the national wetland inventory every five years.

The national wetland maps which have been generated by the inventory enable a number of key new functions, including:

- The establishment of a baseline for measuring future changes in wetland areas, functioning and values
- The development of status and trends analyses to assess the need for, or effectiveness of specific wetland conservation policies and strategies
- The provision of a dependable planning and decision-making tool for various government departments and agencies
- The provision of a baseline for the development of monitoring and reporting frameworks
- Contributions to numerous research outputs

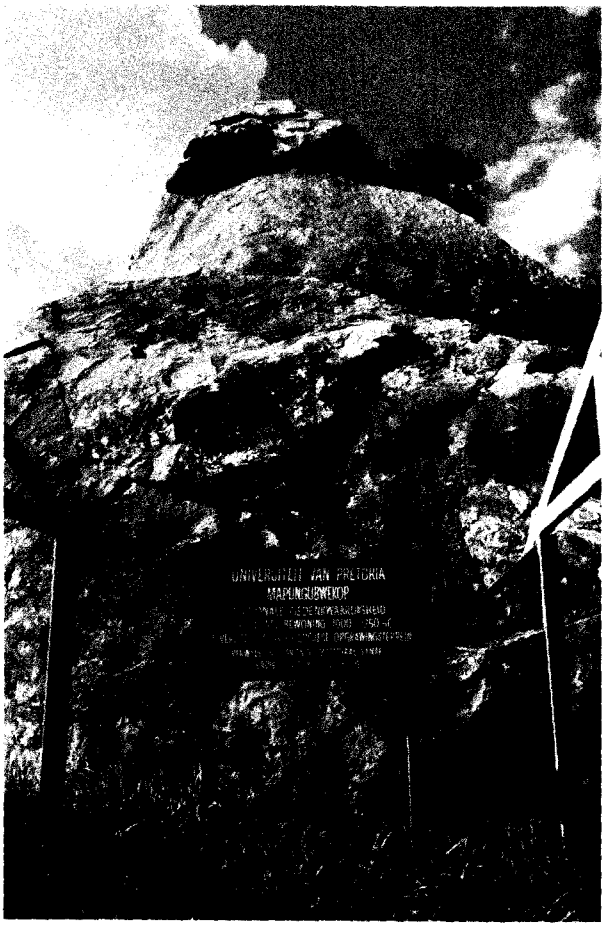
Knowledge of best practices gained is informing the design and implementation of inventory activities. An important lesson learnt was the value of building ownership of the inventory among crucial external stakeholders. This was done through the formation of an advisory committee for the project, which was also valuable in guiding SANBI on technical and institutional aspects of the project's implementation.

The results of this project will be incorporated into State of the Environment reports. Information generated through the inventory will also contribute to monitoring and reporting on the status of biodiversity in South Africa. This project, made possible by the South African–Norwegian co-operation, was hailed as a notable achievement in the South African press:

"The first detailed map of South Africa's precious wetland areas has been published, adding new impetus to the nationwide campaign to protect the rapidly disappearing 'water factories' of nature." said Tony Carnie (*The Mercury*, October 30th, 2006).

Cultural Imperialism

Cultural heritage and tourism development



Mapungubwe, Limpopo Province.

Visitors climbing the stairs to Mapungubwe Hill.

Dr. Janet Deacon talks about the rock art with a tour guide, Mapungubwe.

To establish an acceptable balance between conservation and the sustainable use of cultural heritage sites was the goal of this theme. Infrastructure has been developed to facilitate access to heritage sites, local people have been trained as tour guides as well as site managers, and the projects have contributed towards economic growth and social development.

Five projects were selected as pilots: Mapungubwe, Thulamela, Richtersveld, Inanda and the Southern African Rock Art Programme. The projects have all been successfully completed and constitute highlights in South Africa's tourism development as well as nation-building.

"Coming to South Africa in March 2007 on South African Airways I was pleasantly surprised to watch a film about the history of Mapungubwe, and to read about Inanda Heritage Trail in the Sawubona Magazine. Landing at O.R. Tambo Airport was also a new experience, the name change illustrates another important aspect of the South African heritage," says Inger A. Heldal of the Norwegian Directorate for Cultural Heritage.

Mapungubwe

The Mapungubwe Civilisation, which inhabited the area between about 900 and 1290 AD, was the beginning of the Zimbabwean Culture, and the forerunner to Great Zimbabwe. It was a sophisticated, class-based society built on the wealth generated by

controlling trade into the Indian Ocean trade network. At its peak there were probably 5 000 people living at Mapungubwe, and it has been called the "First Southern African Kingdom". In addition to the capitals, there are a large number of sites occupied by ordinary citizens of the Mapungubwe culture. More than 100 San shelters and rock art sites have been found in the area.

Preparing the World Heritage nomination for Mapungubwe was the main focus of this project, and in July 2003, Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape became a World Heritage Site. The submission highlighted the links between people, biodiversity conservation and cultural heritage, as well as the significance of cultural heritage within National Parks.

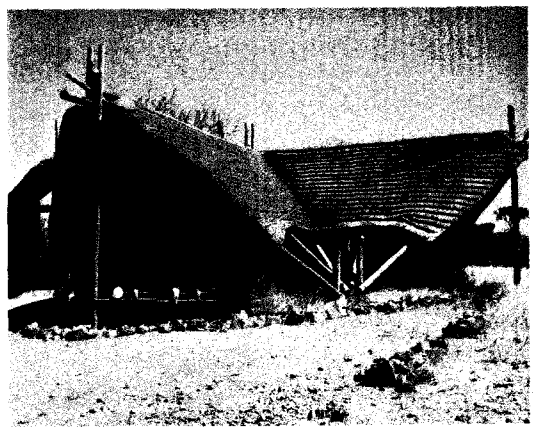
In spite of the importance of the area, awareness of the rich history of the Mapungubwe civilisation has been limited. As part of the documentation process, archaeological research and conservation was carried out, and the oral history research was done by Venda University. Nordic World Heritage Foundation assisted in the preparation of the nomination files.

"The history of Mapungubwe will play a key role in the African Renaissance and the rewriting of Southern African history, thereby promoting regional partnership," said Mr. Vally Moosa, the Minister of Environment at the time.

Due to its World Heritage listing, the development of facilities for tourists, and its location in the core of the Limpopo-Shashe Transfrontier Conservation Area with Botswana and Zimbabwe, Mapungubwe is becoming a major new tourism destination in South Africa. The additional tourism has contributed to job creation in this impoverished area. Extensive private sector investment and joint ventures have been initiated for the overall Mapungubwe project, but they do not form part of this specific project.

Thulamela

The rural heritage settlement, Thulamela, in the Kruger National Park is a remnant of one of the renowned stonewalled capitals of the sacred leadership culture that existed from 1400 to 1600 AD. The conservation of this site preserves the interaction of past cultures with the environment. The heritage value of the site and its surrounding landscape is substantial from an educational, scientific and eco-tourism viewpoint.



Mapungubwe entrance and reception.

Viewing platform at Mapungubwe.

Pafuri Gate, Kruger National Park.

Remnant stone walls from an ancient city, Thulamela, Kruger National Park, Mpumalanga Province.

DEAT and project partners visited Norway to study heritage and tourism development.

Officials and communities have learned that there are benefits but also responsibilities associated with World Heritage listing. UNESCO does not take control of properties that are put on the list, but recognises their outstanding universal value. Nominated areas are not the same as national parks, as the people continue to live there and practise their normal agricultural activities as well as traditional rituals.

The need for full participation from the local community through village government strongly came to the fore in the rock art projects. Involving the community in management with specific responsibilities and benefits from World Heritage listing and the resulting stimulation of tourism, increases the sustainability of efforts considerably.

Although hotels and tented camps might stimulate local economic activities such as the selling of produce, livestock and crafts, they should be planned with care so as not to impact negatively on the rock art sites. Because travellers are interested in local culture in addition to rock art sites, investment in hotels need not necessarily be by foreign investors. "Local people can set up guest houses provided they give good service. If the community works to protect their local cultural practices, this would become an additional asset for attracting tourists," says Dr. Janette Deacon, chair of SARAP at the time.

South Africa has formed a partnership with the Getty Conservation Institute in Los Angeles to train rock art tourist guides from Southern African countries, and regional training courses have taken place in Mapungubwe in co-operation with SANParks.

"The main criterion that should be borne in mind when planning for tourism is that all activities and developments must work together to retain the significance of the place and the rock art," maintains Dr. Deacon.

Comments on Cultural Heritage

"Working with South African heritage institutions has made me realise that cultural heritage must be seen in a broad historical and political context. Western aid organisations often ignore or fail to understand the importance of heritage in a society," says Mr. Lyder Marstrander of the Norwegian Directorate for Cultural Heritage (RA).

Even though cultural heritage is no longer part of the Environmental Co-operation Programme, RA has maintained its links with various South African heritage institutions such as SAHRA, SARAP, the Rock Art Research Institute at the University of the Witwatersrand and SANParks. South Africa and Norway are members of UNESCO's World Heritage Committee, and through Africa 2009, a capacity building programme for heritage management in Africa south of Sahara, the different institutions continue to co-operate.

"Through different networks we do get an insight into areas where traditions and modernity meet, and we see how heritage is managed democratically by local communities. Traditional authorities and locally elected representatives work hand in hand in order to safeguard their valuable heritage," underlines Inger A. Heldal.

This publication highlights some of the results achieved, lessons learnt and best practices of the Environmental Co-operation Programme between South Africa and Norway from 2000 to 2006. It is our hope and ambition that these experiences will be brought forward for the benefit of further developing the environmental co-operation between our countries.

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