Innovations in governance for biodiversity conservation

The case of the Conservation Stewardship Programme, Western Cape

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ABSTRACT

South Africa boasts one of the world’s richest and most diverse natural landscapes and is world renowned for its biodiversity. The Cape Floristic Region (CFR) is the world’s sixth and smallest floral kingdom and the only one housed within the confines of a single country and predominantly within the Western Cape Province. It is also the richest, with more than 9 000 plant species. This region is considered as one of the world’s 25 most threatened biodiversity hotspots and most of the priority areas fall outside of existing statutorily protected areas and are mostly on privately owned land.

This article focuses on the introduction of a new governance approach and policy instrument in 2003 to contribute towards the conservation of globally important “off-reserve” biodiversity remnants in the Cape Floristic Kingdom in the Western Cape, known as the Conservation Stewardship Programme. The governance paradigm is characterised by a growing use of non-regulatory policy instruments such as the so-called ‘new’ environmental policy instruments (NEPIs), which include economic and voluntary approaches as well as persuasion. These are proposed, designed and implemented by non-state actors, sometimes working alongside state actors, but sometimes also independently. The co-management solution rests on the assumptions that local people must have a stake in conservation and management, and that the formation
of partnerships between government agencies and resource users is essential. The programme will be described, analysed and evaluated as a case study before some concluding remarks are offered.

INTRODUCTION

South Africa boasts one of the world’s richest and most diverse natural landscapes and is world renowned for its biodiversity. The Cape Floristic Region (CFR), in particular, is the world’s sixth and smallest floral kingdom and the only one housed within the confines of a single country and predominantly within the Western Cape Province. There are more than 9 000 plant species in this region, which is half of South Africa’s total biodiversity in only 4% of the country’s surface area. This region is considered as one of the world’s 25 most threatened biodiversity hotspots, with 2 400 species considered threatened and another 300 species critically endangered. Most of the priority areas fall outside of existing statutorily protected areas and are mostly on privately owned land.

Conservation Stewardship is a co-management approach to biodiversity conservation based on a contractual agreement with government-backed economic incentives. For the purposes of this article it is prudent to focus firstly on the co-management model as a governance approach; secondly on voluntary agreements (VAs) as a so-called New Environmental Policy Instrument (NEPI) sub-type within the context of environmental policy instruments; thirdly on the enabling legislative and policy setting, before the Conservation Stewardship programme in the Western Cape Province will be described, analysed and evaluated as a case study. Finally, some concluding remarks will be made.

THEORETICAL POINTS OF DEPARTURE

The shift in terminology from “government” to “governance” signified, according to Salamon (2002:8), the central reality of public problem solving, that is the reliance of government on third parties to address public problems. Although the government plays an important role with regards to natural resource management policy formulation and implementation, an increasing amount of evidence shows the failure of state-centric resource management models (Hara 2003:20). The search for solutions led to a proliferation of tools of public action and of instruments or means used to address public problems, as well as to the realignment of relationships between the regulators and the resource users.
In the environmental sector the traditional regulatory instruments dating from the 1960s are typically understood as straightforward regulation and control through laws and enforcement by appropriate regulatory bodies (Connelly and Smith 1999:168). But lately the sector has seen the emergence of many types of 'newer' instruments or NEPIs, which include economic and voluntary approaches as well as persuasion. A particularly useful classification of NEPIs is that of Jordan, Wurzel and Zito (2005). They distinguish four main sub-types of NEPI, namely market-based instruments, eco-labels, environmental management systems and voluntary agreements (Jordan, Wurzel and Zito 2005:481-482). Depending on the purpose, voluntary agreements take on different formats, but most relevant to this discussion are the negotiated agreements in the form of formal contracts whose aim is to address quite specific environmental problems negotiated between public authorities and relevant stakeholders.

As far as realignment of relationships between the regulators and the resource users goes, one of the promising tools which has emerged is the co-management approach, which involves a sharing of management between the state and a responsible user group (Symes 1997:110-112). The co-management solution, according to Hara (2003:20), rests on the assumptions that local people must have a stake in conservation and management, and that the formation of partnerships between government agencies and resource users is essential. For co-management to be feasible, Hara (2003:25, quoting Berkes 1997) suggests that it should address the following four questions positively. Firstly, are there appropriate local and governmental institutions? Secondly, is there trust between the actors? Thirdly, is there legal protection of local rights. And lastly, are there economic incentives for the local communities involved to conserve the resource? To evaluate the success of co-management Conley and Moote (2003:375) suggest developing a set of criteria which could typically include process criteria (e.g. shared vision, inclusive participation, consensus-based decision-making), environmental outcome criteria (e.g. improved habitat or water quality, biological diversity preserved) and socioeconomic outcome criteria (e.g. building of relationships and trust, gaining of knowledge and understanding, improved capacity for dispute resolution, changes to, or creation of, new institutions).

**POLICY AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK**

According to Borrini-Feyerabend, Pimbert, Farvar, Kothariand and Renard (2004:342-344) locally negotiated and implemented co-management agreements are likely to be inefectual unless supported by enabling and coherent legislation and policies. The policy instruments that are of relevance
for co-management extend beyond the regulation of institutional partnerships or the protection of the environment; they deal rather with ecological sustainability, livelihoods, democratic and accountable institutions, social justice and equity in the political and economic arena.

Since democratisation there has been a flurry of activity in the environmental policy context in South Africa. Some of the environmental policy reforms and legislation introduced from the mid-1990s, and which are of particular importance for biodiversity protection, include the following:

• The National Environmental Management Act (NEMA) 107 of 1998 was promulgated in 1998 as the outcome of a three-year comprehensive participatory policy process. It created a fundamental, over-arching legal framework to ensure that environmental rights are adhered to by all spheres of government as well as private entities within South Africa, as set out in the Constitution. It also set out fundamental principles upon which all environmental decision-making should be based. The NEMA also promotes special attention to stressed, sensitive or vulnerable ecosystems at management and planning levels, especially where these ecosystems are specifically threatened by development activities. This obliges the identification of such areas and active execution of protective measures (RSA 1998);

• The National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act 10 of 2004 was promulgated to establish the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI) and provide for the management and conservation of South Africa’s biodiversity within the framework of the NEMA. According to Driver, Maze, Rouget, Lombard, Nel, Turpie, Cowling, Desmet, Goodman, Harris, Jonas, Reyers, Sink and Strauss (2005:22), this makes South Africa one of the few countries in the world to have a national public sector institute dedicated to biodiversity monitoring and reporting. The Act obliged the Minister to prepare and adopt a national biodiversity framework and to monitor the implementation of such a framework by reviewing and amending it at least every five years. This led to the conception and realisation of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Assessment Programme (NBSAP), which goes hand in hand with the National Spatial Biodiversity Assessment (NSBA), both completed in 2005. This Act therefore plays a fundamental role in the conservation of biodiversity, whether on- or off-reserve, as it allows for bioregional plans and for legislative management plans for maintaining biodiversity in ecosystems (RSA 2004);

• The National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act 53 of 2003 was promulgated with the aim of providing protection for those areas that are ecologically viable and representative of South Africa’s natural assets. The Act further allows the Minister or MEC to provide certain areas with
protection by means of a range of different options, from the declaration of such areas as special nature reserves, enjoying a high protection status, to more flexible agreements regarding management, subject to a process of public participation and consultation with organs of state. This means that any land, be it private or communal, can receive formal, statutory protection and the management authority can be assigned by the minister to the landholder/s, or any suitable individual or organ of state. This has had a major impact on the way we undertake conservation. No longer does it have to be the state, with all its capacity constraints, that ensures the protection of our natural resources, but this important responsibility can now also be delegated to private individuals or groups (RSA 2003);

- A recent innovation was the development of fiscal mechanisms to support biodiversity protection on private land by landowners. Following the publication of the draft policy paper on a Framework for considering market-based instruments to support environmental fiscal reform in South Africa in 2006, the Revenue Laws Amendment Act 60 of 2008 was promulgated at the beginning of 2009. The purpose of this policy reform process was to provide tangible incentives in recognition of landowners’ commitment to secure biodiversity (which is essentially a public good) on their respective properties for conservation purposes. These fiscal mechanisms aim to ease the financial burden of land management in assisting landowners to recover their costs and take the form of tax incentives (RSA 2008).

**CASE STUDY – CAPENATURE CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAMME**

This section describes the rationale of the Conservation Stewardship Programme as a novel approach to biodiversity conservation in the Western Cape in terms of its goals, what it entails, the key stakeholders involved and the different options for implementation.

**Main Goals and Objectives**

According to the manager of the Conservation Stewardship Programme of the provincial conservation agency in the Western Cape known as CapeNature, 80% of priority conservation areas in the Western Cape are situated on privately owned land (Martens pers.com. 2010). Since these areas (which are threatened by poor land management, invasive species and land transformation) consist of small and dispersed fragments of land, the existing networks of formal protected areas cannot adequately protect these threatened species and ecosystems
(Western Cape Nature Conservation Board (WCNCB)), [undated] and Martens & Hamman [undated]). Since existing networks of formally protected areas in the Western Cape are also not ideally situated in critical or priority biodiversity conservation areas, simply increasing the size of large protected areas will therefore not capture highly dispersed and fragmented pieces of land (Martens pers. com. 2010). The private landowner therefore plays an essential role in contributing towards sustainable conservation.

In an attempt to make provision for procedures and mechanisms to facilitate co-operative environmental governance and to harmonise environmental plans, policies, programmes and decision-making, CapeNature initiated a stewardship programme with the underlying goal “to secure and maintain the conservation status of land in high-priority conservation areas of the Western Cape” (Jackelman, Von Hase, Balfour and Ferreira 2008:11). This programme, known as the Conservation Stewardship Programme, or CSP, allows for land owners to enter into agreements with conservation agencies to conserve parts of, or entire, properties and is set to become an important mechanism for conserving these fragmented areas (Martens & Hamman [undated]:2). The CSP has a threefold vision: first, to ensure that areas with a high biodiversity value receive secure conservation status and are linked to outer conservation areas in the region to form a conservation corridor; secondly, to ensure that the landowners enjoy tangible benefits for their conservation effort; and lastly, to expand biodiversity conservation by ensuring good biodiversity management and practice in such a way that empowers the land owners to become responsible decision makers (CAPE 2008c and CAPE 2007).

**Defining Stewardship**

In broad terms stewardship refers to “the wise use, management and protection of what’s entrusted to you” (CAPE 2008c and CAPE 2007). In CapeNature's Conservation Stewardship Implementation Plan for 2009-2012 (Jackelman et al. 2008:11), land stewardship is referred to as carefully practising land usage to ensure that natural systems and biodiversity are maintained or improved for future generations. It is based on the principle that landowners are the custodians of the land that they occupy and have a responsibility to future generations to pass it on in the same or in a better condition by conserving and protecting the land (Martens 2008).

*Conservation stewardship* is a sub-component of land stewardship and entails securing the conservation status of private land. This ensures that natural resources are used in a sustainable manner, that threats to natural systems and biodiversity are managed effectively, and that important ecosystems are protected (Jackelman et al. 2008: 11). CapeNature refers to conservation
stewardship as “wisely using resources entrusted to you on your property, protecting important ecosystems, effectively managing alien invasive species and fires and grazing or harvesting without damaging the veld” (CAPE 2008c and CAPE 2007).

Stewardship is a completely voluntary commitment between landowners and conservation agencies and it is implemented in a bottom-up way through partnerships. It can take place on private, communal or state-owned land or a mixture of such land. The landowners in the stewardship agreement retain ownership of the farm and will remain the key managers and users of the land. Stewardship focuses on relationship building between landowners and conservation agencies with the intention of conserving land on off-reserve properties (Martens 2008). Stewardship forms part of the national protected area expansion strategy that has been adopted by the National Department of Environment Affairs (previously known as Department of Environment Affairs and Tourism, or DEAT). Stewardship has been implemented in South Africa over the past few years and is a powerful mechanism that supports the protection of land outside of formal reserve areas (CAPE 2008a).

**Key Stakeholders**

The Western Cape Conservation Stewardship Programme (CSP) is a Cape Action for People and the Environment (CAPE) initiative and is implemented by CapeNature, which is a public institution responsible for the protection of biodiversity in the Western Cape (Olen 2005:3). CAPE is founded on a partnership approach that ensures that local social and economic benefits are derived from elements such as biodiversity in a particular area. Although the key participants in the CSP are the landowners and the operational staff within CapeNature, other institutions and organisations also have a very important role to play. Among these institutions are provincial departments such as the Department of Environmental Affairs and Planning; Agriculture and the national Department of Water Affairs; Department of Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries; NGOs; CapeNature; the City of Cape Town and the Botanical Society of South Africa.

**The Different Stewardship Options**

Although there are currently more than 20 stewardship options available, the Western Cape Nature Conservation Board (WCNCB) has narrowed them down to three basic options. These options are entered into on a voluntarily basis and are customised to suit the specific needs of the property and the landowner (Martens and Hamman [undated]: 3). It is also important to bear in mind that the
owners in no way cede ownership rights to the WCNCB or any other agency; they remain the owners and main users of the land. The three options available for a portion of, or an entire, property are: contract nature reserves, biodiversity agreements and conservation areas. These options range in degree of land use limitations as well as associated benefits received (Western Cape Nature Conservation Board [undated]). The higher categories, i.e. categories with more land use limitations, offer more incentives and support by CapeNature (WCNCB [undated]). Contract nature reserves are legally binding contracts on private land to protect biodiversity in the long term. These sites enjoy increased benefits and assistance with increased limitations, and are recommended for critically endangered or priority areas. Biodiversity agreements are negotiated legal agreements between landowners and conservation agencies for protecting biodiversity on conservation-worthy private land in the medium term. These options receive benefits such as assistance in conservation management and limited conservation-friendly development can take place on these sites. Conservation areas are flexible agreements with no defined time periods where the land manager receives an above-normal level of advice and assistance, and only a few land use limitations are imposed on the land (CAPE 2008c and CAPE 2007).

DISCUSSION AND EVALUATION

Stewardship and the Organisational Paradigm Shift

The nature of today’s environmental problems is too complex, diverse and fragmented for traditional policy instruments and approaches applied by public agencies. Traditionally formal reserves were prioritised, leading to the failure of authorities to acknowledge the importance of putting policy instruments in place for engaging private landowners in biodiversity conservation efforts (Olen 2005:10). The formal organisational structures and culture of conservation agencies did not create space for significant innovation to take place in terms of biodiversity conservation (Olen 2005:14). One of the biggest challenges was the unwillingness/reluctance of top management to undergo change in terms of the formal reserve mindset to one where the focus shifts towards biodiversity conservation of off-reserve areas (Olen 2005:9). As Martens (pers. com. 2010) explains, the most significant stumbling block was overcoming the organisational culture and resultant resistance to change. Botha (2004:1) observes that stewardship “had to overcome a national resistance to working with landowners to conserve, and played a key role in changing national biodiversity and protected areas legislation to support stewardship approaches.”
The stewardship programme also encompassed new ideas and structures that took a lot of time to teach and explain to those involved (Martens pers.com. 2010). The traditional paradigm with its embedded bias towards formally protected areas was overcome and the CSP successfully changed the way in which CapeNature functions and approaches biodiversity conservation (Botha 2004:1).

Stewardship and Co-management

Without collaboration and the forming of partnerships between land owners and CapeNature, stewardship is impossible. Co-operation is an underlying principle and fundamental to the stewardship programme. It was found that relationship building with landowners was a key factor to the success of the programme, while the importance of sharing the responsibility for conservation also empowers people and allows for more innovation (Martens pers.com. 2010).

For example, in the Greater Cederberg Biodiversity Corridor (GCBC) an outreach programme has been successfully implemented to see to it that all role-players and communities are empowered and given the capacity to ensure meaningful participation (CapeNature 2008b). A civil society strengthening project has identified several farm workers in the Cederberg area to be empowered and given the capacity to become field guides or managers (CapeNature 2008b:18), and in the Paardeberg area near Malmesbury 20 farm workers and their families were given vocational training by CapeNature extension staff (CapeNature 2008b:22).

In the GCBC, where vegetation loss is occurring at an alarming rate and time is of the essence, it was found that a one-on-one approach was much more successful than trying to convince all the landowners to join the programme (CapeNature Stewardship Programme 2009 and CapeNature and the Greater Cederberg Biodiversity Corridor (GCBC) 2006).

The Conservation Stewardship Programme (CSP) can also be considered in terms of the four elements of successful co-management, as suggested by Berkes (1997, cited in Hara 2003:25).

- **Appropriate local and governmental institutions involved:** The environmental policy and legislative reforms introduced in South Africa from the mid-1990s, with their emphasis on co-operative governance and citizen participation, created a facilitating context for co-management to flourish. The CSP can also realise its targets through the formation of partnerships with other organisations and initiatives (Martens pers. com. 2010).

Important institutional **stakeholders** are the provincial departments of Agriculture and of Environmental Affairs and Planning, the national Department of Water Affairs, NGOs such as the Stewardship Association,
South African National Parks (SANParks), CapeNature, the City of Cape Town, the Botanical Society of South Africa, the Biodiversity and Wine Initiative, the Gouritz Initiative, the Greater Cederberg Biodiversity Corridor, and other CAPE teams. NGOs play an important role in promoting relationship and trust building between conservation agencies and landowners, as many of them already have good relationships with some of the landowners (Martens pers. com. 2010; CapeNature Stewardship Programme 2009).

A collaborative mechanism, the reference team on which the different stakeholders are represented, was created to generate co-operation across agencies and to support CapeNature and SANparks in implementing stewardship (CAPE 2008a). The reference team, which meets twice a year, also assists in finalising the project and setting special targets, and it facilitates stewardship by aligning resources (Martens pers. com. 2010). The engagement between the agency and landowners take place through specifically designated extension officers for the purpose of building relationships and brokering contracts with landowners (Cape Biosphere 2009 [online]). In most of the stewardship projects it was found that extension staff need to be equipped with people skills relating to relationship building, conflict resolution, land negotiations and knowledge in terms of conservation issues; they also need to be flexible and must be able to cope under pressure and be able to deal with diverse cultural groups, personalities and farming practices (CAPE, [Undated]b:3 and CapeNature 2009). In 2007 an extension course was developed that focuses on the softer skills needed to communicate and interact with communities and landowners, and for the successful finalisation of agreements (CapeNature2008:22).

- **Trust between the partners:** Building trust between the state and the resource-user group is a critical component in co-management and it is therefore not surprising that this was one of the biggest challenges CapeNature faced. Initially some landowners were sceptical about the stewardship programme and expressed fears about losing ownership or user rights to their land (Olen 2005:12, Martens pers. com. 2010), and CAPE [undated]b). As transparency is an important element in building trust and co-management, the extension staff found that they needed to be completely upfront with the landowners about their conservation objectives and have no hidden agendas (CAPE [undated]b). In one site (Agter Groenberg) the agency found that ‘success builds interest’; when hesitant landowners were referred to other landowners who had signed conservation stewardship contacts and received benefits, they will be more likely to consider the idea (Martens pers. com. 2010).

- **Legally protected local rights of people:** The legal system traditionally did not provide long-term or permanent protection of private nature
reserves. Although the stewardship programme is a completely voluntarily commitment, both Contract Nature Reserves and Biodiversity Agreements are legally binding contracts or agreements. In breaching any of the stewardship agreements, there are consequences and damages or fines that need to be paid to CapeNature by the landowner. But it is important to realise that the landowner remains the owner and key manager of the land and thus retains all ownership rights in terms of access or farming practices.

**Economic incentives to motivate local communities to conserve the specific resource:** The programme stands on the principle that although it is possible to convince people of the importance of their land in terms of conservation, incentives that offer more tangible benefits are needed to influence landowners’ decisions on how to utilise their land. Farmers basically donate the use of their land (but not their land itself) to conservation; they thus need something in return (Martens pers. com. 2010). The key advantage of the stewardship programme is the fiscal incentives involved for the land owners. In the case of ‘nature reserves’ the land is made exempt from property rates as provided for in the Property Rates Act 6 of 2004, while with ‘biodiversity agreements’ or protected environments rate rebates can be negotiated with the local authority (Martens pers.com. 2010).

The second fiscal incentive, made possible by the 2008 amendment of the Revenue Laws Amendment Act 60 of 2008, allows tax relief to landowners by creating mechanisms whereby management costs or the loss of right to use the land can be deducted from income tax. The fiscal mechanisms relating to the different conservation agreement options – each one more secure – have varying degrees of commitment and financial costs: the contracts of a minimum of five years are allowed to deduct conservation and management/maintenance expenditure (excluding capital expenditure) from income derived either off the conservation area or an area in its immediate proximity, meaning neighbouring property. The 30- to 98-year contracts can claim the same conservation and management expenditure, but as a deductible donation. This means it can be deducted from their gross taxable income instead of just their tradable income. Whereas the 99-year perpetuity contracts can deduct the same management expenditure as a donation as well as the value of the portion of the land secured for conservation (RSA 2008:69-72).

Other advantages to landowners include extension services in terms of advice and support, the mapping of farms, marketing exposure, discount at CapeNature accommodation sites and the provision of management plans (Olen 2005:5). The stewardship programme also gives assistance to farmers by publishing and distributing fact sheets that can guide landowners on different elements of environmental management.
PROSPECTS AND CHALLENGES

Various challenges have presented themselves in the development and implementation of the Conservation Stewardship Programme:

- The first and main stumbling blocks was the fact that in the beginning of the project the priority biodiversity areas outside reserves were not yet identified, recorded or mapped, and CapeNature could thus not direct attention to priority areas from the start. Fortunately, CapeNature could collaborate with CAPE, which conducted surveys and provided mapped information on the critical biodiversity areas (Olen 2005:8);

- Legal issues: the legal framework did not provide long-term conservation or protection on private nature reserves as these statuses could be renounced as the property changed ownership. It was critically important to get the right legal systems in place that could secure conservation on private properties (Martenspers. com. 2010);

- The lack of co-operation between the funding agencies and the conservation stewardship team in terms of conflicting expectations (Olen 2005:10). The funding agencies did not fully understand the issues at the ground level and were not flexible and adaptable enough to accommodate changes in the goals of the programme that became necessary after the implementation;

- Building trust between the partners was initially very challenging, but over time this has become easier as the landowners and the extension staff from CapeNature started to build solid relationships;

- The lack of institutional capacity in terms of human resources such as full-time dedicated extension officers to honour commitments made to landowners in terms of assistance and support and management interventions, considering the long-term nature of some of the stewardship options (CAPE [undated] b:39).

Research and experience to date have shown that the following factors also inhibit effective conservation on privately owned land: poor co-ordination; a lack of understanding in terms of the options available; limited conservation management skills and capacity; and lastly, a lack of experience at all levels (Martens and Hamman [undated]:2). Furthermore, there is a lack of complete understanding regarding the economic decisions that influence landowner behaviours (CAPE [undated]a).

To reflect on the advantages of the Conservation Stewardship Programme, the framework of Conley and Moote (2003:375), which includes environmental outcome criteria, process criteria and socioeconomic outcome criteria, could be utilised.
- As far as environmental outcomes are concerned, the Conservation Stewardship Programme provides a cost-effective and long-term alternative to acquiring land for reserves to expand protected areas by forming partnerships with landowners and allowing them to conserve on their properties (CAPE 2008a). The programme contributes successfully to the national targets for protecting threatened ecosystems and preserving the diversity of natural systems. More than 80 000 ha of land on private properties are now under conservation management made up of 13 Contract Nature Reserves, 13 Biodiversity Agreements and 11 Voluntary Conservation Areas (CAPE 2008a and Martens pers. com. 2010).

- The formulation of the management plans which were based on a collaborative approach, where the landowners and the conservation authority both make inputs and jointly decide on and share responsibility for biodiversity conservation, is an important process outcome of the programme. Co-operation across agencies is facilitated by the establishment of a stakeholder representative reference team as a new collaborative mechanism to generate co-operation across agencies (Martens pers. com. 2010).

- The building of relationships and trust between the landowners and the conservation agency so critical to the success of the programme can be considered as a key socioeconomic outcome. Other positive spin-offs include the outreach programme to empower all role-players and communities to ensure meaningful participation; vocational training for farm workers and their families; addressing poverty in local towns by employing project teams from local communities; and the tangible economic incentives the landowners receive upon signing on to the programme (Cape Nature, 2008).

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The indications are that the Conservation Stewardship Programme could provide a cost-effective and long-term alternative to acquiring land for reserves to expand protected areas by forming partnerships with landowners and allowing them to conserve biodiversity on their properties. The programme also successfully contributes to the national targets for protecting threatened ecosystems and preserving the diversity of natural systems, while providing social, political, economic and environmental benefits.

The introduction of voluntary agreements as one of the newer non-regulatory policy instruments (at least in South Africa) and incorporating the principles and characteristics of co-management signifies a paradigm shift in the governance
approach of public agencies to biodiversity conservation. The project has successfully changed the way in which conservation agencies function; it has attracted a new generation of committed conservation professionals, who operate in an extensive network of support and unity from the top down to grassroots level – the biggest advantage is that it secures a platform for a significant attempt to meet the extensive conservation targets set for the Western Cape Province in South Africa.

NOTES

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REFERENCES


CAPE see Cape Action for People and the Environment.


RSA see Republic of South Africa.


WCNCB see also Western Cape Nature Conservation Board


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