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SECTION A: CONTEXT OF TRANSFORMATION

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION: RESEARCH AIM, BACKGROUND, METHODOLOGY AND THE POLITICAL CONTEXT

The aim of this dissertation is to describe and analyse the transformation of the South African National Parks (SANParks) with special reference to the Social Ecology Directorate (SED) during the period 1994 to 2004. The main challenge of transformation was the complex sociological process of linking the conservation of biodiversity to social justice. The transition to democracy in South Africa made fundamental change necessary to move away from the traditional authoritarian approach to conservation which characterised the colonial and apartheid eras, and emphasized the protection of biodiversity to the neglect of social issues. A crucial question is whether the establishment of the SED and the promotion of the ideas of social ecology contributed to the transformation of the SANParks through driving a paradigm shift away from the traditional style of managing conservation areas to a more inclusive, participative one marked by social and environmental justice.

The creation of a non-racial, democratic social order required a different, more inclusive approach to the conservation of biodiversity. It involved substantive change such as promoting human rights and eliminating sexism and racism within national parks, as well as addressing social needs which included issues of land restitution to neighbouring communities. This new approach was necessary to confront the apartheid legacy of repression, environmental racism and injustice. This involved the expulsion of black South Africans from lands later used to create national parks and their subsequent exclusion from physical access to and participation in managerial control of national parks.

The question of transformation of SANParks and specifically the role of social ecology is complicated by four factors:

(i) Firstly the broad context in which the national parks operated was extremely complex. In the period under review South Africa was undergoing a triple transition: a transition to political democracy, to a globally competitive economy, and attempting to remove the legacy of apartheid (von Holdt, 2002).

(ii) Secondly social ecology is ‘Janus-faced’ in that it has two aspects. On the one hand it refers to an ideological approach to natural resource management, and on the other it refers to an organisational entity within the national parks. In the period under review social ecology was not a coherent ideology. There was a clear distinction between a ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ version: the ‘hard version’ equated social ecology with social and environmental justice, whereas the

'soft' version centred on improving relations with communities living adjacent to the parks for largely instrumental reasons. As an organisational entity the social ecology unit was never a strong, stable structure. It was marked by minimal resources and a high turnover of personnel. Many of these employees were carriers of different understandings and commitment to transformation. It included reactionary elements from the apartheid regime who are referred to in the dissertation as "the old guard".

(iii) Thirdly the unit involved several name changes in the period under review. It was first known as the Social Ecology Unit and was later upgraded to the Social Ecology Directorate and then to the People and Conservation Directorate. In this dissertation it is referred to as the Social Ecology Directorate (SED), regardless of name and status changes since its inception in 1994.

(iv) Fourthly, 'transformation' was a contested concept both within the South African National Parks and within the wider society.

The contested nature of 'transformation'

As Marais observes, "There is nothing unanimous about social transformation; its meaning depends on the meaning it is assigned by the various actors involved" (Marias 1998:1). It has both deep and shallow connotations: to some it meant a deracialised capitalism with a degree of poverty alleviation. This vision of transformation involved a neo-liberal macro-economic policy agenda which emphasizes deregulation, privatisation, and low fiscal deficits. An alternative, deeper vision of transformation envisaged the establishment of a social democracy, grounded in human rights, with an emphasis on transforming the entire society and economy through strong state intervention to create a developmental state.

The much celebrated transition to democracy in South Africa between 1990 and 1994 appeared to mark a decisive, ruptural break from the apartheid era including a fundamental redistribution of political, social and economic power through the institutions of a constitutional democracy. But this redistribution has not occurred. As Terreblanche argues "the outstanding characteristic of South Africa, eighteen years after the transition, is the intensification of the country's social problems of poverty, unemployment and poverty" (Terreblanche 2012: ix). In his view because of the embrace of neoliberalism in 1996, transformation has been "a huge failure" (Terreblanche 2012:124).

As regards the transformation of SANParks to some powerful actors it simply meant 'deracialization', promoting black South Africans to positions of authority and (to varying degrees) improving the working conditions of black SANParks employees, and providing some benefits to neighbouring communities. To others transformation meant a completely different approach to natural resource management which

included the re-distribution of power and resources to create a more just and equal society. At the same time powerful people within SANParks in the period under review were opposed to any deep or meaningful change at all.

The study emphasizes four areas in which the transformation was attempted and in which the SED was involved: land restitution, the elimination of racism and sexism as part of broader organisational transformation to make the organisation more representative of the wider society, promoting nation building through an emphasis on a shared cultural heritage and fourthly relations with neighbouring communities. This involves an analysis of the organisational attempts to introduce and consolidate the social ecology structure and function as well as the complexities that arose, at the national office and at park level. In the study the park level focuses largely on the flagship Kruger National Park, one of the seventeen national parks inherited by the post-apartheid government in 1994, and the second oldest national park in the world.

Understanding the ideological changes involved is approached through questioning whether the SED promoted transformation through driving a paradigm shift. Drawing from Kuhn (1962, 1977) the concept of paradigm refers to a set of ideas, beliefs and understandings. A paradigm shift denotes a change of ideas, beliefs and understandings that informed the historical preconceptions of the authorities that manage national parks in South Africa.

The necessity of change

The pre-1994 paradigm that framed the management of national parks was based on the mandate to conserve and protect biological diversity, and its reservation for the racially exclusive enjoyment and appreciation of the white people. The following historical practices to achieve this were: i) people were removed from their land, sometimes forcibly; ii) the land was fenced off and flora and fauna were accorded statutory protection; iii) only white people were allowed access to the parks as tourists, scientists and students.

Once the transition to democracy became imminent in the early 1990s, the historical injustices that these communities suffered had to be addressed. The paradigm that framed the creation of national parks and conservation in general in South Africa has historically been linked to the apartheid system. National parks have been synonymous with the dispossession of land, natural resource and ancestral sites, and to a large extent, have been the precursor to rural poverty for people living adjacent to protected areas. Over many

decades black people experienced exclusion and witnessed international and white South African tourists enjoying national parks. These conditions created resentment, especially between national parks and the surrounding communities. Many black people came to the view that plants and animals were considered more important than themselves.

These conditions necessitated a paradigm shift in the post-apartheid era, requiring that national parks change their mandate. This change meant that in addition to its historic paradigm of conserving biodiversity, national parks have had to: i) grant equal access to all races as tourists, researchers, learners, employees; ii) change the social composition of employees and iii) include aspects of community-based conservation. This involved ensuring: a) community benefits; b) some level of community participation in the park's decision-making, and c) redress for past injustices such as co-operating in processes relating to land claims. This acknowledgement of social and environmental justice generally and community needs specifically was rooted in a new set of ideas, beliefs and understandings of what conservation should involve. The need for such a paradigm shift has been widely and prudently accepted by some elements in South Africa's conservation sector, because ensuring local community support for biodiversity conservation is important for the survival of protected areas.

The change in mandate was also necessitated by the role played by SANParks in the maintenance of apartheid. This was not only ideological, reinforcing a nationalist ethic specific to the white minority community as Carruthers (1989) has suggested. As she shows, during apartheid South Africa the Kruger National Park specifically played an important part in promoting Afrikaner nationalism. It also involved material support for the South African Defence Force (SADF). This was the key agency which – in alliance with the police services maintained apartheid by force.

A number of national parks were used by apartheid military and paramilitary personnel for operations such as weapons testing, as well as the training of specialist military personnel and private armies that were used to destabilise neighbouring countries (Network of Independent Monitors 1997; Koch 1994; Koch 1995; Cock 1993). Between the 1980s-1990s the SADF were also stationed in the KNP to stop the entry of illegal immigrants and freedom fighters from neighbouring countries (Honey 1999; Mckenzie 1998 in Cock and Mckenzie 1998). There was a historical relationship between the military and park staff; some park staff had served in the military and vice versa (Mckenzie 1998 in Cock and Mckenzie 1998; Network of Independent Monitors undated). Conservation personnel also used land in these areas to aid apartheid security operations in illegal actions such as the smuggling of weapons and other contraband (Network of Independent Monitors 1997; Network of Independent Monitors undated; Honey 1999). The military's land custodianship included some land within parks and nature reserves, which resulted in the "militarization" of conservation areas (Mckenzie 1998 in Cock and Mckenzie 1998: 84). A secret rest camp in the KNP, known as Jakkalsbessie functioned as a venue for clandestine ministerial and military

meetings with apartheid's allies. There was also a clandestine support base in the KNP for the right wing Mozambican National Resistance rebel army, Renamo (Honey 1999; Koch in Ceasefire Anti-War News 2004). This was the political environment in which South Africa's protected areas were embedded.

With this legacy the transformation of SANParks was essential for both ethical and pragmatic reasons. As Brechin has argued, "social justice enhances the conservation effort rather than diminishes it." (Brechin, 2003:xi). This transformation has to be located in the wider political context. Transformation was a complex process that involved a good deal of compromise and negotiation. It was "a political struggle to forge a new nation and new alliances that can ensure the broadest basis of social consent. The opposition is not sweeping aside the old institutions of state power. It has to try and shape the terms on which it is incorporated [:] Instead of revolution, negotiation; instead of uncompromising transformation, compromising concession; instead of violent struggle for the seizure of power, negotiation over the distribution of power; instead of sweeping aside the old order and all who had implemented it, dismantling the old order jointly with its old architects; instead of radical exclusion of the old to the benefit of the new, inclusion of both old and new in a newly created framework" (Marais 1998: 86-94). The transformation that did occur was incomplete, only the political dimension changed from white political dominance while the economic dimension became dominated by a form of neo-liberal capitalism.

The political transition

The transition period between 1990-1994 was marked by a mobilisation of energy, in a charged political moment. As Nadine Gordimer said, at the time, "Progressive forces in our country are pledged to one of the most extraordinary events in world social history: the complete reversal of everything that, for centuries has ordered the lives of all our people" (Cited by Cock 2004:315)

The decisive moment in the transition was the first democratic non-racial election when voters elected a constituent assembly that would both complete a new constitution and serve as the nation's first democratically elected parliament. This constitution provided the foundation of a new political community that celebrated difference and diversity, but not a mindless ahistorical pluralism. The central commitment was to extensive and deep seated change.

Habib shows that the new institutional architecture and governance arrangements developed in three distinct phases. "The first phase occurred in the negotiations process which produced the Interim Constitution of 1993. The second phase took place through the deliberations of the constituent assembly which produced the Constitution of 1996. The third phase comprised the institutional and administrative reforms introduced by Thabo Mbeki at the start of his presidential tenure in 1999 (Habib 2013: 27).

This transition to democracy was the result not of a "miracle" or the seizure of power by the liberation forces, but of mass action and a negotiated settlement that involved many explicit and implicit compromises. These compromises left key elements of apartheid power and privilege intact. This meant that the intractability of reform soon confronted the new post-apartheid state and all those who were intent on securing 'transformation' for "the benefit of all." The outcome was that changes in the SANParks did not reflect the deep and extensive change implicit in the notion of transformation articulated by Mandela on his release from prison. On that day, 11 February 1990 Mandela stated, "The white monopoly of political power must be ended, and we need a fundamental restructuring of our political and economic systems to address the inequalities of apartheid and create a genuine democracy in South Africa" (Cited by Terreblanche 2012:66).

The democratic transition refers to the negotiating process by which elites installed formal liberal-democracy, a process that involved many compromises (Marais 1998; Johnson 2004; van der Westhuizen 2007; Levin and Weiner 1996; Harvey 2001; Sparks 2003; Terreblanche 2012; Habib, 2013). It involved serious flaws. For example, Marais regards this transition as based on "a political reductionism that collapsed the political economy of privilege and deprivation into the form of the apartheid state" (Marais 1998: 2).

The ANC-led government conceived the state as the potential vehicle of concentrated power which, once in the control of the black population, would become the catalyst for transformation, meaning the restructuring of political, social and economic relations. However, the negotiated transition to a democratic state involved many implicit and explicit compromises in what Terreblanche has described as an "elite compromise". He writes, "The compromise that was ultimately agreed upon was one on behalf of the narrow class interests of each one of the participant elite groups, while the interests of the majority of South Africans, who were not represented in the secret negotiations, were terribly neglected" (Terreblanche, 2012: 67). Transformation was limited because the transfer of power was partial. The dominant liberation movement, the African National Congress (ANC) was assimilated into the formations of state power that existed under apartheid (Marais 1998; Johnson 2004; van der Westhuizen 2007).

By "…refrain[ing] from purging the civil service, … [the ANC left] intact much of the institutional culture and personnel of the old order" (Marais 1998: 92). After the negotiated settlement, the organisational implications for the SANParks were that it retained the leadership, key technocrat positions and organisational culture that were operational during apartheid. This was a major constraint for the transformation processes of SANParks as an organisation.

The ANC in Marais' view was "guilty of over-privileging the political reducing not only the oppression experienced by the majority but the entire system of exploitation to the political and ideological form of the

apartheid state–*once it changed, everything would follow."* (Marais 1998: 72 emphasis in original). Dinat maintains that the ANC did not have a clear plan after the negotiations and made up its plans as it went along (Dinat 2009). This imposed limitations on the extent to which any government conservation agency was able to change pre-existing dominant paradigms. It rendered any state conservation organisational transformation limited because it had to fit the design of the overarching national paradigm of partial change. The limitations of this transformation clearly favoured capital and the political and economic elite, regardless of colour, at the expense of the poor rural black population who were dispossessed of their land and resources for the formation of protected areas a century earlier.

Conservation institutions had to transform against the backdrop of the political economy of South Africa with its inherent limitations. This transformation had to contribute to and provide redress for past injustices for millions of rural people that Amin noted, live in areas that are some of the poorest of the "fourth" world, and as a result, barely manage to survive (Amin in Marais 1998: xi). Initially especially on the part of the ANC, there was a deep commitment to change to de-racialise the society and promote the interests of the black majority. For example, the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) was a crucial vehicle to achieve the fundamental transformation needed. One of the areas that the RDP focused on was the need to use environmental resources sustainably to: i) satisfy basic human needs; ii) contribute to improving the quality of life, and; iii) ultimately reduce pressure on the environment (ANC 1994).

Very controversially the RDP was replaced by the Growth Employment and Redistribution policy (GEAR) as South Africa's new neo-liberal economic policy in 1997. The GEAR was meant to stimulate growth to provide the basic services discussed in the RDP. GEAR's strategy for social and economic upliftment was to shift the responsibility of development to market forces, with the government concentrating on fiscal and monetary discipline to attract foreign investment. At the time the global trend was towards neo-liberalism; a 'market fundamentalism' which involved a shift towards systematic privatisation and deregulation. Although contested, this neo-liberal approach has become the dominant development strategy in South Africa. The broad social and economic policies of GEAR limit government's ability to address issues of rural poverty and inequality. After the second general election in 1999 the government's policy to submit to global capital's prescriptions for economic growth was entrenched within a national budget which perpetuated the insufficient allocation of resources to meet the needs of poor rural black people (Marais 1998; Johnson 2004; van der Westhuizen 2007; Levin and Weiner 1996; Harvey 2001; Sparks 2003). In summary the changes that took place in 1994 and onwards emphasised political transformation at the expense of social and economic transformation, a process which neglected the majority of poor South Africans.

It followed that organisational transformation had to be attempted within a political democratisation process that was linked to neo-liberal adjustments that allowed the sustained accumulation of wealth (Marais 1998; Johnson 2004). This neo-liberal framework had to develop and "incorporate a black

economic elite [in black economic empowerment ventures] as junior partners within the white run economy" (Marais 1998:5). This alliance gave rise to institutions that served the interests and aspirations of the most privileged sectors of South African society (Marais 1998; van der Westhuizen 2007; Klein 2007).

This context is necessary to understanding the particular challenges of transformation faced by SANParks. The section below analyses the conservation of South Africa's biodiversity within the legacy of apartheid, followed by the contextualisation of poverty and underdevelopment amongst large sectors of the black population. The history of the KNP is then described and six sources of pressure for change in people and parks relationships are analysed. This explains why it was important that the SED at national and park level had to build strong relationships with the communities neighbouring the parks and provide them with some level of participation in policy making as well as social and economic benefits. It will be shown that these 'benefits' fell far short of Wilshusen *et al*'s definition of social justice built on the right to self-determination. By this he means, "the right to participate at all levels of the policy-making process as equal partners, the right to self-representation and autonomy, and the right to choose one's political, economic and cultural styles. These rights imply responsibilities entailing politically constructive participation" (Wilshusen *et al* 2003:15) **.**

South Africa's Biodiversity

Biodiversity refers to "the number and variety of living organisms on earth, the millions of plants, animals, and microorganisms, the genes they contain, the evolutionary history and potential they encompass, and the ecosystems, ecological processes, and landscapes of which they are integral parts. Biodiversity thus refers to the life-support systems and natural resources upon which we depend" (RSA 1997a: 9). As is the case globally, it is under threat in South Africa.

South Africa's biological diversity has earned its place amongst the five highest megadiverse countries worldwide (Huntley (ed) 1989). It has been ranked third largely due to the species diversity and endemism of the vegetation (Algotsson 2009; Glazewski 2000; Kidd 2008; *On Track* 1995; Wynberg 2002). South Africa is the southernmost country on the African continent. It is bordered to the north (from west to east) by Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Swaziland, and the Kingdom of Lesotho is landlocked within. The Prince Edward and Marion Islands in the southern Indian Ocean and Gough Island situated to the southwest of Cape Town in the Atlantic Ocean are part of South African territory. It is one of 26 countries with a presence in Antarctica (DEAT 2005a). While South Africa occupies only 2% of the world's surface area, it is home to nearly 10% of the world's plants and 7% of the world's reptiles, birds and mammals. Its biodiversity is globally significant, because of the 25

hotspots[1] in the world, South Africa has three, namely the Succulent Karoo, the Cape Floral Kingdom and the Maputaland-Pondoland-Albany centre of endemism (DEAT 2005b; DEAT 2003c).

By 2004 there were 420 provincial and national protected areas in South Africa, comprising 6,6% of the land surface area under government protection. However, if privately owned land that was currently protected were taken into account, the total land surface area of protected areas in South Africa would be over 10%, complying with the World Conservation Union's (IUCN) stipulated criteria that each country should strive to attain. The majority of protected areas fall within the savannah biome (DEAT 1996d; DEAT 2003c; Fakir 1996). South Africa has proclaimed 17 sites on the Ramsar List of Wetlands of International Importance, and two more sites were being finalised at the time of writing (Informant 1, Pretoria, 8/4/2007). In addition, five more sites of cultural and natural heritage are inscribed on UNESCO's World's Heritage list. A total of 91% of South Africa's biodiversity exists outside protected areas (DEAT 1996d; DEAT 2003c; Fakir 1996).

Conservation is generally regarded as the best economic use for marginal land and ecotourism is the fastest growing economic sector in the country. South Africa promotes itself as a "world in one country", and much of the attraction is based on natural features such as the Cape Floral Kingdom, the Garden Route, Namaqualand's flower spectacle, the savannah ecosystems with the 'big five' mammals among a wealth of other animal species, wetlands, the coastline with its whale route and turtle beaches, coral reefs, and mountain systems such as the Drakensberg, Soutpansberg and the Cape fold mountain system. Biodiversity therefore forms the basis on which much of the country's tourism industry is built (DANIDA and Pemconsult, March 2002; DEAT 2003d; Wynberg 2002).

Other natural resources such as fish, flowers and medicinal plants have also been valued. Monetary gains from these natural resources were US $15 million per annum of which 80% was earned as foreign exchange in 2000 (Younge 2000 in *UPDATE*). The medicinal plant industry generated US $60 million from raw products alone (Mander 1998 in *UPDATE).*

Habitat destruction and over-utilisation of these resources for fuel, medicinal plants and grazing has placed South Africa's biodiversity at risk, with 15-40 % of species in different groups being listed as threatened (DANIDA and Pemconsult, March 2002). South Africa cannot afford to lose its biodiversity and a concentrated strategy for ensuring this continuance of conserving its biodiversity is needed (DANIDA and Pemconsult, March 2002; Wynberg 2002). The challenge lies in finding the right balance between protecting nature and social justice, which means providing for the needs of poor people and

[1] The term 'hotspot' was used by the British ecologist Norman Myers in 1988. It refers to specific areas that have "a disproportionate number of endemic species which are losing habitat at a high rate" (The Environment Literacy Council. www.enviroliteracy.org).

economic development in developing countries, while simultaneously conserving and utilising biodiversity sustainably (Brechin *et al.* 2003).

Historical Perspective on Conservation in South Africa

While South Africa has an extensive and well-managed protected area network, the country's conservation sector is deeply marked by the legacies of apartheid. The historical relationship between people and parks in South Africa focused on nature conservation and not on the social needs of the poor people neighbouring protected areas.

In many ways South Africa's history mirrors the imperial legacy throughout the continent. As Beinart and Hughes write, "Imperial expansion transformed and destroyed nature in many areas: yet. it also contained conservationist impulses" (Beinart and Hughes, 2000:289). But it was an exclusionary form of conservation. "With regard to wildlife and protected habitats, settler and colonial governments placed greater emphasis on the exclusion of people in their conservation strategies" (Ibid). This approach is illustrated by the establishment of the Sabie Reserve in the 1898, which later became part of Kruger National Park and is discussed below.

Colonisation in South Africa meant that white settlers had political and economic power which they used *inter alia* to establish national parks (Beinart 1984; Koch 1993; Anderson and Grove 1987; Carruthers 1989, 1993, 1995; Brooks 1992; Brinkate 1997; Cock and Fig in McDonald (ed.) 2002). Through this process, black people were alienated from their land and were denied access to their natural and cultural resources (Steenkamp 2001**;** Anderson and Grove 1987; Armstrong 1991; Walker, 2015).

In the early part of the twentieth century large tracts of land were appropriated for conservation purposes with black residents often forcibly removed with no or inadequate compensation (Carruthers 1995; Koch 1993). The reserves were fenced off and patrolled by armed game rangers under militaristic conditions (Armstrong 1991; Cock 1991; Cock 1994; EDA 1993; Koch 1993; Matlala 1991; Munnik 1991; Khan 2002; Wynberg 2002). The 1913 Land Act formed the cornerstone of the dispossession of black South Africans, though much dispossession preceded it (Beinart and Delius, 2015). For many decades the state's main interest was to procure agricultural land for settlers and cheap labour for mining and industry, resulting in deeply inequitable land distribution and the characteristic underdevelopment of black, rural South Africa (Anderson and Grove 1987; Beinart 1984; Carruthers 1989, 1993, 1995; Brooks 1992; Brinkate 1997). This inequality favoured whites as the main beneficiaries of access to land, development and natural resources. The policy actively undermined black people's ability to survive on the land and

coerced them into seeking wage labour in the towns. This 'forced proletarianization' was the pillar on which the racialised inequality of South Africa's society was built.

Many conservation projects degraded human needs, rights and dignity, and environmental concerns were divorced from development (Cock 1991; Cock 1994; Wynberg 2002). Local people were denied access, not only to land earmarked for conservation, but also to related resources, such as firewood, medicinal herbs or game for the pot (Steenkamp and Hughes 1997). Communities were also denied access to their cultural heritage such as visits to ancestral sites and graves within conservation areas (Anderson and Grove 1987; Armstrong 1991). Thus the apartheid attitude and practices of conservation authorities was racist and undermining of local communities. It was described by one informant as "a form of environmental racism". (Informant 5, Pretoria 25/5/2005).

Environmental racism took many extreme forms in apartheid South Africa (Cock and Fig 2000). The notion of environmental racism originated in the United States of America. Environmental racism is "…any policy, practice or directive that differentially affects or disadvantages individuals, groups or communities based on race or colour" (Bullard 2002: 16). National, provincial and in some cases, private parks were protected by paramilitary force and were, both in law and in practice, for the enjoyment of middle-class, white South Africans (Poonan and Massyn 1997; Koch 1993).

South African conservation authorities ignored black people's needs, rights and dignity because they understood their mandate was specifically and exclusively to conserve nature. Generally there were well preserved conservation areas run by efficient managers, surrounded by overcrowded and degraded rural areas inhabited by residents biased against conservation (Jacobsen 1991; Poonan and Massyn 1997). This meant that until recently in South Africa black rural people living around game reserves and nature conservation areas were victims, instead of beneficiaries of conservation. These experiences prompted many people to come to an understandable conclusion that in South Africa animals, plants and wilderness areas were more important than people (Armstrong 1991; EDA 1993; Koch 1993; Matlala 1991; Munnik 1991; Cock, 20).

The transition to democracy in the early 1990s meant that SANParks official's understanding of their mandate as exclusively to conserve biodiversity was challenged. Park officials were forced to acknowledge this historical legacy of dispossession and exclusion. They had to begin a paradigm shift away from the old, authoritarian conservation ideology which neglected the needs of black South Africans, towards a new approach linking the conservation of biodiversity to social justice.

The map below locates the twenty national parks that were proclaimed by 2004. South Africa comprises a total of 1 221 040 square kilometres, 6 percent (73 262.4 square kilometres) of which is conserved by the state in the form of national and provincial parks. A total of 60 percent (43 945.44 square kilometres) of this area set aside for conservation by the state is managed by SANParks (South African National Parks. Annual Report 2004-2005).

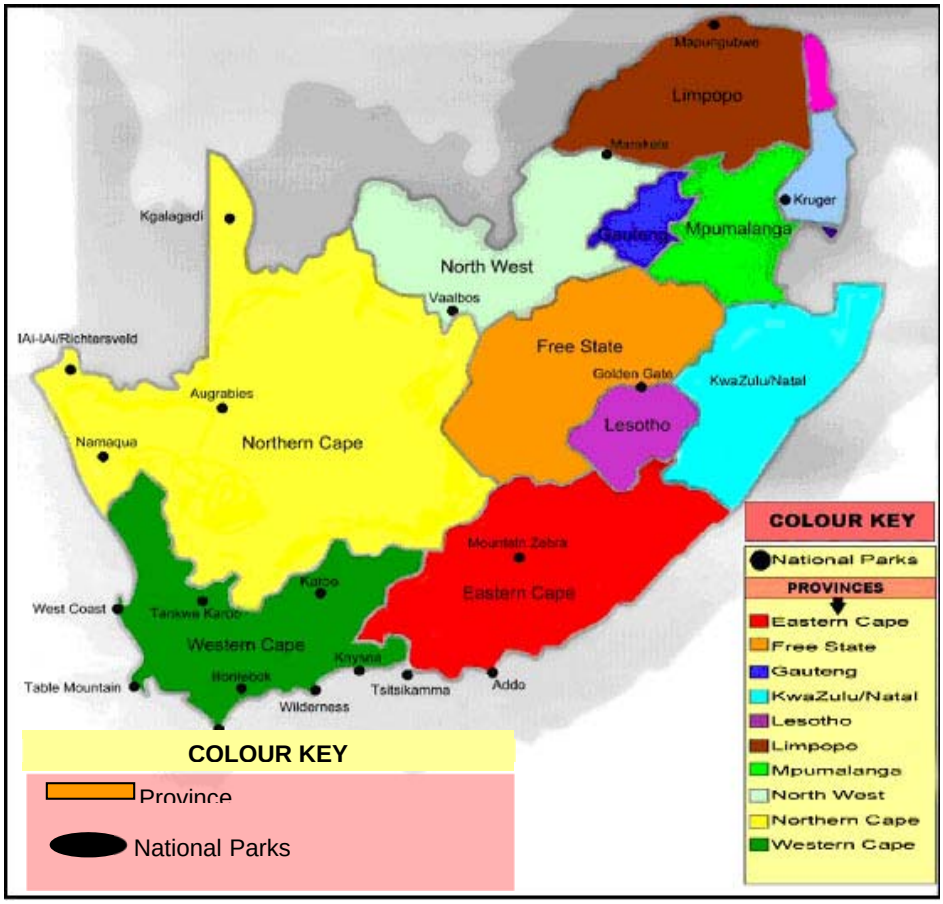


Figure 1 - Map illustrating the names and location of national parks in South Africa. (Adapted from South African National Parks Annual Report 2004-2005)

The flagship is the Kruger National Park.

The Formation of the Kruger National Park

With a history dating back to 1898, the Kruger National Park (KNP) is one of the oldest national parks in the world. Formally proclaimed in 1926, the creation of the KNP began with merging two provincial game reserves, the Sabi and the Singwitsi, established in 1898 and 1903 respectively, on land that was regarded as disease ridden, as well as agriculturally and minerally worthless (Carruthers 1993; South African National Parks. undated. KNP Business Plan; Dlamini 2012). The KNP was established because of the decimation of wildlife due to unsustainable hunting during the South African War, and commercial and sport hunting

thereafter (Carruthers 1989). European settlers also threatened biodiversity through the clearing and fencing of land for ranches, agriculture, mines, and towns (Honey 1999; Dlamini 2012). By declaring the KNP a protected area, dwindling game populations could regenerate (Carruthers 1989; Carruthers 1993). Prior to this, both the president of the Transvaal, Paul Kruger, and the park's first warden, Major James Stevenson-Hamilton were avid hunters who ironically made their fortunes through ivory hunting. After 1926 they cast themselves in the roles of caretakers of wildlife (Carruthers 1993).

The KNP is regarded as one of the most well-managed and renowned parks in the world, because of its size, biological diversity, and the number of tourists it attracts. These increased from 27 in 1927 to 1.3 million in 2004. Since its inception it has expanded and is presently one of the biggest national parks in the world, measuring over 2 million hectares. Nature conservation was the only objective since its establishment. For the next 30 years the management philosophy in the reserve emphasised restoring the area through wildlife management programmes such as anti-poaching, veld-burning, road construction and the control of the predator population (South African National Parks. undated. KNP Business Plan; SANParks Annual Report 2004).

The creation of the KNP occurred against a political backdrop of emerging Afrikaner nationalism and white nation-building (Carruthers 1995; Dlamini 2012). Other manifestations of this nationalism during this period, included the adoption of Afrikaans as an official language, the resurgence of Voortrekker traditions and republican feelings, as well as the beginning of rescinding the relationship with imperial Britain (Carruthers 1995). The national status of the KNP wrested the dominant relationship with wildlife from sportsmen and old-style game wardens and placed it within mainstream white South African politics, serving its white nation-building purposes. Over time national parks became increasingly important as a universal symbol for South Africa's white population (Carruthers 1995). To some extent the establishment of the KNP contributed towards merging the disparate groups of English and Afrikaans-speaking whites by providing them with a common white South African identity, along with the process of adopting a new national anthem and flag. In this sense the creation of the KNP served to unite these two culturally different, but economically converging groups. The KNP represented the commemoration of a white South African heritage, symbolised by their sentimental and aesthetic appreciation of wildlife, replacing their earlier unsustainable commercial hunting practices. The establishment of the KNP also represented a change of white people's attitudes to nature. Game shed its purely economic status to a broader encapsulation "of [a] growing, sentimental, romantic and aesthetic view of nature" (Carruthers 1989: 48). The creation of the park also coincided with the growth of economic state intervention that resulted in the establishment of parastatal industries (Carruthers 1989; Dlamini 2012).

Formed during this phase of white nation-building, the KNP became a symbol of the systematic domination and alienation of Africans and their land in a part of the Transvaal Province, now known as the Limpopo and Mpumalanga Provinces. Above all, the KNP became another form of white domination over blacks (Carruthers 1989; Dlamini 2012). The process of establishing the KNP robbed thousands of Africans of their land and

natural resources. In some areas attempts to evict African owners from their land failed, and they were allowed to remain but were forced to pay rent as tenants, in the form of cash or labour, effectively subsidising the development of the park (Carruthers 1995).

During this time new forms of legislation and governance were introduced that curtailed African access to wildlife by declaring it *res nulllis*, which bestowed the right on landowners to protect wildlife on their property against "trespassers" (Carruthers 1993: 13). The early function of Africans in the Transvaal as the hunting partners of whites was replaced by their new roles as "poachers" or "labourers" (Carruthers 1989: 189-190). This according to Dlamini, "… had a materiality that reflected South Africa's colonial and apartheid race relations regime….they also fixed ideas about who or what dwelt there, who owned the space, and who could migrate in and out of the park." (Dlamini 2012:24). Especially " for people long used to valuing game as a source of food, new forms of value ... ushered in new and conflictual people-parks relations. This is because the creation of the park increased land alienation as certain African communities were either forced off or voluntarily moved to make way for the park" (Dlamini 2012: 24).

This brief background of the establishment of the KNP questions the frequently cited notion that "…the prelude to the National Parks Act, of 1926 was a contest between the forces of 'good' (those in favour of national parks) and 'evil' (those antagonistic or apathetic to the idea)" (Carruthers 1989: 188). James Stevenson-Hamilton compared the passing of the act to a fairy tale with a happy ending (Carruthers 1989).

There are different opinions regarding access to the park for blacks (Africans, Coloureds and Indians) as tourists. One opinion is that since its inception, the NPB's regulations, guided by apartheid's principles, excluded black people as tourists. This changed marginally in the 1980s, when black visitors to the KNP were allowed accommodation in a basic tented camp known as Balule (Cock and Fig 2002). The accommodation of black tourists in separate facilities reserved for them, were to avoid "incidents" (Honey 1999: 348). However others claim that there always was differential access and facilities for them since the park was established (Dlamini 2012).

While South Africa eventually became an international pariah because of its apartheid policies, its national parks were always recognised and applauded as one of the best managed in Africa if not the world, and were regarded as quite separate from apartheid in their undertakings. For most white South Africans and much of the western world, its wildlife protection became synonymous with a righteous cause, with excellent scientific and technical professionalism.

The Formation of the National Parks Board

The establishment of the KNP necessitated the parallel development of the National Parks Board (NPB). The name was used for the Board of Trustees consisting of ten white males nominated by the Wildlife Society and the four South African provinces, as well as for the entire organisation (Cock and Fig 2002). Answerable to the Minister of Lands, its policies, rules and regulations were guided by the National Parks Act of 1926.[2] Representing state, provincial and private wildlife conservation interests, its primary aim was the creation and protection of national parks. As its role was to "control, manage and maintain all aspects of South African national park policy, it consequently had considerable power" (Carruthers 1995: 68).

With the achievement of the democratic political dispensation in the early 1990s, the NPB along with other parastatal institutions, had to begin the slow process of internal organisational transformation to meet the needs of its historically disadvantaged staff and its impoverished neighbours (South African National Parks, 1998). The NPB's treatment of its black staff, its dominant administrative and management culture that favoured whites, its occupational structures that showed gross racial and gender inequalities across the entire spectrum of skills, and the employment of large numbers of semi-literate and illiterate African people to fill menial jobs, had to be confronted (National Parks Board, Sensitising Workshops for the Transformation Process undated; Informant 14, Midrand, 27/5/2006). "The National Parks Board faces a greater test now than at any time since its formation in 1926. The new South Africa is bringing with it new challenges, new threats and new opportunities. International acceptability has brought the promise of a flood of international tourism but, for the first time in its history, the [National] Parks Board is being forced to justify the existence of a national parks system" (*Business Day* December 1 1992 National Parks Board Corporate Survey1992: 5). The history of the formation of the KNP and the NPB shows that the NPB's biggest challenge was to shift its management focus, from being historically dominated by conservationists, whose management strategies exclusively focused on ecologically-threatened flora and fauna, to prioritise and respond appropriately to policy and legislative land-related redress regarding land alienation of its neighbouring communities and community participation in the management of park resources. In short the challenge was to build support from neighbouring communities for biodiversity conservation. In addition these communities were in desperate need of economic development.

Contextualising Poverty and Underdevelopment in South Africa

[2] Later revised as The National Parks Act of 1962 and the National Parks Act of 1976, discussed in chapter three.

Poverty and underdevelopment amongst large sectors of the black population is largely due to South Africa's history of colonialism and apartheid. Under race based apartheid policy and legislation the majority of South Africans were systematically dispossessed of their land and denied access to resources and adequate services, including healthcare, housing and education.

By 1994, it was estimated that nearly half of South Africa's adult population were either unemployed, under–employed or living in poverty. Between 17-18 million people were living below the minimum income level, with 11 million living in rural areas (Cock 1994). There were more than 12 million South Africans without access to clean drinking water in 1994 (ANC 1994). Millions of Africans did not have access to a toilet of any kind, one third relied on pit latrines, and 14 % had no form of refuse removal whatsoever (RSA 1995).

By 2004 South Africa's democracy was ten years old and the country was still trying to transform the political order created by colonialism and apartheid. In 2003 it was estimated that 48% of its population (21.9 million) lived below the national poverty line (UNDP 2003 South Africa Human Development Report). Unemployment rates were estimated as high as 40% and political expectations were growing. The number of South Africans without adequate services remained in the millions, and many infrastructure schemes established after 1994 had fallen into disuse because of a lack of operating funds, technical problems, and/or cut offs for non-payment. As many as 90% of the water delivery schemes provided by government since 1994 were no longer operational (RDSN 2000). Rural areas were worse off than urban areas in terms of the number of people who did not have services (McDonald 2002). The poverty, unemployment, lack of services and inadequate infrastructure in rural areas included the people that lived on the borders of national parks (DANCED and SANParks 2002). At park level, the KNP was under pressure to begin addressing these problems in the early 1990s, and at national office level, the NPB later renamed the SANParks, were similarly under pressure to establish specific organisational structures to drive fundamental change.

Sources of pressure for change

Between 1992 and 1996 in what might be called the transitional phase of democratisation, there was a new impetus for change in conservation practice and policy. Six pressures combined to cause the conservation community to shift its position towards a recognition that the protection of biodiversity can only succeed if the social needs of neighbouring human communities are met, and to redress historical injustices (Armstrong 1991; Cock and Koch 1991; Loader 1994; Brinkcate 1997; Poonan and Massyn 1997; Steenkamp and Hughes 1997; Fakir 1996).

The Group for Environmental Monitoring (GEM) a small NGO, was the first source of pressure. Through their People and Parks Project they functioned as an intermediary between conservation agencies and neighbouring communities, to champion the interests of the latter (Group for Environmental Monitoring 1996). These activities contributed towards the emergence of the environmental justice movement, discussed in the next chapter. The second source of pressure was the emergence of alternative voices and practitioners who promoted different understandings and models of conservation. Media coverage which focused on a number of incidents in the KNP generated pressure, as did the neighbouring communities themselves. These were constituted by people living in abject poverty, alienated from their land and natural resources. The fifth source of pressure related to the potential changes in the national policy and legislative framework. The sixth source of pressure was the World Parks Congress (WPC) held in South Africa in 2003. This was straddled by a national process to prepare communities for the WPC, the Cape Vidal Workshop (2003) as well as post WPC process, and the Blyde River Canyon (2004) workshop. These events comprised opportunities to resuscitate communication, and to learn and share both nationally and internationally regarding relations between people and parks.

The Burgeoning People and Parks Movement

There is consensus from several interviews with key informants that the Group for Environmental Monitoring (GEM) was a key node in the developing people and parks movement in (Informant 6, Johannesburg, 7/3/2005; Informant 4, Telephonic, 8/3/2005; Informant 33, Johannesburg, 1/8/2005; Informant 24, Pretoria, 14/6/2005). The organisation played a major role in the reconfiguration of the discourse of environmentalism. It was explicitly committed to environmental justice and challenged conservation agencies' policies and practices (Group for Environmental Monitoring 1996). GEM asked critical questions in their awareness raising workshops and conferences that began in 1992-1993 about conservation agencies' lack of involvement with neighbouring communities: What was the KNP doing for historically disadvantaged people on it borders? What was it doing to address the wrongs perpetrated by themselves in the past? The redress of past injustices in the relationship between neighbouring communities and parks was raised in GEM's workshops and conferences (Marais and Venter undated; Cock and Fig 2002; Honey 1999; Group for Environmental Monitoring. May 22–24 1993; New Ground May 21–23 1993; Group for Environmental Monitoring. Regional Workshops Proceedings 1994; Group for Environmental Monitoring. 30 September–2 October 1994; Informant 3, Johannesburg, 25/2/2005; Informant 4, Telephonic, 8/3/2005).

GEM was the first source of pressure through their People and Parks Project that involved lobbying, research, monitoring, education, networking and facilitating campaigns to champion the interests of SANParks' neighbours' (Group for Environmental Monitoring 1996). These activities developed the awareness of the SANParks' management that led to the establishment of a new organisational structure

charged with transformation, the Social Ecology Directorate (SED) in 1994. This shift in thinking marked the beginning of the changes in the relationships between the SANParks and its neighbouring communities. The GEM process was challenging for SANParks' white staff because they felt singled out and exposed to considerable "verbal bashing" by being publicly reminded in these workshops and conferences of the organisation's human rights violations over decades in the process of establishing national parks (Informant 24, Pretoria, 14/6/2005). "As NPB representatives we went to these workshops and conferences and we were nailed as the bad okes [guys] from the KNP" (Informant 24, Pretoria, 14/6/2005). Driven by a survivalist strategy, these experiences exerted pressure on the KNP to appease neighbouring communities for the historical injustices that they had endured.

In this way, GEM formed part of what Brosius *et al* described as "A loosely woven … movement that has emerged, based particularly on advocacy by nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) working with local groups and communities, on the one hand, and national and transnational organisations on the other, to build and extend new versions of environmental and social advocacy which link social justice and environmental management agendas" (Brosius *et al* 1998: 158).

Alternative Voices

GEM activists also connected with the second source of pressure in the form of the academic writings of various Southern African scholars who promoted alternative understandings of conservation. One outstanding scholar who contributed to this was Jane Carruthers who debunked the historical myths around the creation of national parks in South Africa, in a series of publications referred to throughout this thesis (Carruthers 1988; 1989; 1993; 1995; Marais and Venter undated). She argued that the KNP was established because of the decimation of wildlife due to the hitherto unsustainable hunting led by white commercial and sport hunters. As a result dwindling game populations had to be regenerated. Another reason for the creation of the KNP was to place it in mainstream politics to foster and symbolise white nation building to unite English and Afrikaans speaking people after World War I (Carruthers 1989; 1993; 1995). The significance of the publication of her writings was its timing which coincided with the political transition to democracy. It was also revolutionary that a respected white academic was publicly questioning the protected status of national parks, and the KNP in particular.

The reconfiguration of environmentalism was also stimulated by the publication of *Going Green. People, Politics and the Environment in South Africa* (Oxford University Press) edited by Cock and Koch in 1991. This argued that environmental issues are deeply political, reflecting the distribution of power and resources; they cannot be confined to the preservation of wilderness areas or endangered species and must link the conservation of biodiversity to social justice.

Another significant scholar, Marshall Murphree, promoted community-based conservation in Zimbabwe. He noted that the twentieth century was both the era during which most of the southern African subcontinent's parks were formed, as well as the era that underwent "vast changes" (Murphree 2004: 217). The KNP was historically recognised as a laudable symbol of South Africa's achievements, regardless that the country had one of the most repressive regimes in the world.

Another alternative which challenged the conventional thinking was the experience of implementing Integrated Conservation and Development Projects (ICDPs) internationally and elsewhere in Southern Africa. Some innovative early experiments were implemented by South African conservation agencies and commercial enterprises (Armstrong 1991; Jacobson 1991; Mwenya 1993; Poonan and Massyn 1997; Steenkamp and Hughes 1997).

Media Pressure

Media coverage which focused on a number of incidents in the KNP comprised the third source of pressure. The media fuelled pervasive community tensions related to the experiences of historical injustices incurred to establish the KNP. The imminent political change created an openly expressed bravado, when angry urban youths neighbouring the KNP protested against the unfair treatment of subsistence poachers screened in a 1992 BBC documentary (Informant 24, Pretoria, 14/6/2005; Marais and Venter undated: 4; Honey 1999).

Community Pressure

The fourth source of pressure came from the communities themselves as people felt alienated from their land and resources in several ways. Unemployment was rife in the overcrowded areas bordering the KNP, which resulted in dire poverty. As a result, people resorted to subsistence poaching and illegal harvesting of natural resources in the park. This created substantial tensions between themselves and the KNP management. Another source of alienation was that rich mainly white, foreigners and South Africans visited the park from which they, as the rightful owners, were excluded. It was broadly understood that much of the park was composed of land from which people were forcibly removed. As discussed below, by the early 1990s, there were community demands for redress in the form of land restitution along the borders of the KNP (Honey 1999; Cock and Fig 2002). Local civic organisations, working towards democratic mobilisation, found in this combination of factors, ample opportunity to do what Brosius *et al* refer to as the "…empower[ment of] local groups in their conflicts with state resource management agencies…" (Brosius *et al* 1998: 158).

The political democratisation process strengthened the views of civil society broadly, including people living adjacent to protected areas. Collectively they began a period of advocacy and lobbying for change that emphasised a people-centred and participatory approach to the environment. Thus a reconfiguration of environmentalism in South Africa began that attempted to incorporate the needs and basic human rights of people living adjacent to protected areas.

Pressure from Proposed Legislative Changes

The fifth source of pressure for transformation related to the potential changes in the national policy and legislative framework. These were supported by the pro-human rights conservation/environmental sectors and new, powerful non-traditional stakeholders. They echoed the most pervasive, contemporary southern African conservation-related question, "Who and what are parks for in transitional societies?" (Murphree 2004: 217).

These changes were formulated in a number of proposals released to the media in July 1993 by the ANC's spokesperson for agricultural affairs, Hanekom and an ANC member, Liebenberg. Later, these proposals were developed into policy papers by the Land and Agricultural Policy Centre (LAPC), the policy think-tank for the ANC (Liebenberg and Grossman 1994). The policy papers provocatively suggested a number of hitherto unconventional land use options in national parks to benefit neighbouring communities, such as the generation of revenue from controlled trophy hunting, and cattle grazing during drought periods in areas of parks that were not utilised for tourism (Hanekom and Liebenberg 1993; Liebenberg and Grossman 1994). The media also highlighted statements that Hanekom had made in an interview prior to the April 1994 elections regarding the KNP. The basic message was that the KNP was irrelevant in relation to the plight of its poor black neighbours and therefore the park should cease to exist so that the land could be used more productively (National Parks Board Survey. November 25, 1994). The English and Afrikaans media widely publicised these ideas because Hanekom was the incumbent ANC Minister of Land Affairs and Agriculture (Hagen H. ANC park proposals need negotiating– Wildlife. *The Citizen* 16 July 1993; Du Toit, J. Putting man back into the wilds. *Saturday Star* 12 June 1993; (no author printed) Eie Kantoor. ANC wil Wildtuin vir alle jagters oopstel. *Die Burger* 15 July 1993; (no author printed) Eie Kantoor, ANC se jagplan in Wildtuin gekap. *Die Burger* 16 July 1993; Staff Reporter, Paper on Kruger Park 'not ANC views'. *Cape Times* 16 July 1993; (no author printed), Is die natuur 'n luukse? *Vrye Weekblad* 5 Augustus 1993; Liebenberg, L. Beeste in the leeuhok. *Vrye Weekblad* 22 July 1993).

These policy statements alarmed the established leadership and structures of the KNP and NPB, while fuelling protest against the parks' existence and unfair practices that spanned almost 100 years. These issues stimulated the process to overhaul the KNP's policies, which included prudently pursuing

consultations with the ANC, previously considered tantamount to cavorting with the devil. Hanekom (who became the Minister of Land and Agriculture) and a delegation of 18 ANC representatives had "…discussions with the KNP officials, which set the ground for the beginning of a relationship of understanding to develop and for the way forward" (Informant 24, Pretoria, 14/6/2005).

There was also international pressure, such as the 1992 Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) ratified by South Africa which was unambiguous about the need to put more land under conservation.

Renewed National and International Communication between People and Parks

As discussed above, between 1992-1996 GEM facilitated communication between people living along the borders of game parks and nature reserves in South Africa. This was the beginning of a process to reverse centuries of land dispossession, alienation from natural resources and ancestral heritage. When GEM stopped convening these provincial workshops and national conferences, a gap in communication between conservation authorities and their neighbours was created. This gap was briefly filled by the 2003 Cape Vidal Workshop, the 2003 World Parks Congress (WPC) and the Blyde River Canyon Workshop 2004 and collectively these formed the sixth source of pressure.

Preceding the WPC, a workshop was held in Cape Vidal, South Africa. It renewed the opportunity for these communities to share experiences on a national scale, to learn from each other and to formulate a request to the government to prioritise land restitution and the accrual of benefits to them (DEAT 2003). A Cape Vidal Memorandum was presented to the international community at the World Parks Congress of 2003 held in Durban. The memorandum was a clear set of actions for the WPC to materialise its theme 'Benefits Beyond Boundaries'. As far as the organisers were concerned, South Africa was the only country to have gone through such a collaborative process. It outlined three preconditions to address important issues for communities affected by land dispossession. These were, firstly that clear land ownership and rights was the basis for secure access to natural resources and the ability to unlock the benefits that stem from partnerships. One of the targets of the WPC was to address the restitution of indigenous people's lands that they, in most cases, were forcibly removed from to establish protected areas. This is pertinent in South Africa and was discussed in detail. Secondly, that building capacity in communities and conservation agencies is important because without it, effective co-management is a challenge. And thirdly that tourism can play a key role in delivering economic benefits linked to the conservation of biodiversity (Ibid).

The director general of DEAT and the WPC fully endorsed and supported the memorandum (Ibid). The response from community representatives at the WPC was that regardless of the historical and current problems experienced with protected area authorities, they pledged their commitment to retain the land

for conservation, provided they were actively involved in the management thereof. Their appeal to the WPC was to implement programmes to bring real benefits from protected areas and its associated tourism to rural communities (Ibid).

The WPC outcomes established a number of best practice targets against which progress would be measured in ten years' time, when the next WPC was to be held. These outcomes were tabled at a meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 7) to the (1992) Convention of Biological Diversity, to which South Africa, as a signatory is bound (Ibid).

In October 2004, over 150 South African representatives, with rights or interests in protected areas, met with officials from government departments and conservation agencies in the Blyde River Canyon, in Mpumalanga Province, South Africa.[3] The DEAT convened this workshop in response to pressure from communities with land claims in protected areas who had attended the 2003 Cape Vidal process discussed above. The request was for an annual meeting of conservation stakeholders.

Discussions at the workshop focused on addressing five people and parks priorities. These were: i) access and benefit sharing; ii) co-management; iii) community public private partnerships; iv) land reform and conservation, and v) strengthening and extending the protected area network. It was stressed that if these actions were implemented, it would enable South Africa to make progress towards its domestic and international obligations described above (DEAT 25-27 October 2004).

These six pressures for change, emanating from different sources, resulted in the creation and maintenance of a new structure in SANParks, the SED to drive transformation. They were the decisive events in promoting a reconfiguration of environmentalism in South Africa. The core of this reconfiguration was the incorporation of the needs and rights of people living adjacent to the parks. This was understood to be central to linking the conservation of biodiversity to social justice.

The Creation of the Social Ecology Directorate

Given its history of injustice and dispossession, the SED represented an important part of redress for the national parks system. It was envisaged as the driver of fundamental change, the organisational agent tasked with instituting the necessary paradigm shift which would drive the transformation of the SANParks.

[3] The workshop comprised of 43 community representatives, relevant national, provincial and local government departments, national and provincial protected area agencies, private sector, donors, NGOs and interest groups (Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, 25 -27 October 2004. 'Conservation for the People, with the People').

Discussed in detail in chapters five and six, the SED focused on developing policies and programmes that would establish social ecology – both as a set of ideas – and as a core structure and function within SANParks. The official statement declared that, "The concept and programme of social ecology was defined as the development of strategies and processes that ensured the linkage of conservation with socio-economic development. It was envisaged that capacity building projects for income generation and environmental awareness-raising would build community consensus and support for the conservation of biodiversity in national parks. In addition, developing and nurturing good relations with previously disadvantaged communities adjacent to national parks involved taking full account of local cultural values and resources in park development and management" (South African National Parks and Danish Cooperation for Environment and Development (DANCED) pamphlet on Social Ecology, 2001). It will be shown below that the reference to 'socio-economic development' did not always appear in official statements.

The approach of the SED since its inception in 1994 was interdisciplinary, community-oriented and educational in nature. The changes in the political dispensation in 1994 and the emphasis placed on poverty alleviation in rural communities, meant that the SED was able to attract donor funding to implement projects. The key performance areas of the SED since 1994 with varying emphasis were: I) Environmental Education and Cultural Resource Management; ii) Economic Empowerment; and iii) Liaison and Partnership. These key performance areas were manifested in community projects facilitated by the SED in most parks concerning environmental education, cultural heritage, pilot forestry nurseries, field guide and tracker training courses, arts and crafts projects (pilot pottery training, textile printing and product development training) and performing arts and drama projects. Other activities aimed at providing benefits to adjacent communities involved a feasibility study for an Open Vehicle Tourism Project as a community ecotourism initiative in the KNP, community based conservation initiatives with the Makuleke and in the Richtersveld and concessions programming for communities to operate lodges in the park.

SED structures also established community forums as participatory structures for bordering communities such as access to employment, and park forums to serve as platforms for broader stakeholder involvement on key issues. They also assisted with infrastructure development with funds received from the Expanded Public Works Programme though (not strictly SED administered), small medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs), and job creation and skills development programmes.

In these various ways the SED sought to facilitate mutually beneficial partnerships between national parks and local communities adjacent to the parks, by attempting to build institutional and community capacity to effectively benefit and participate in managing South Africa's natural and cultural heritage.

The implication is that from the outset of the establishment of the SED it carried a minimalist conception of change. It will be shown below that the SED was never a strong, or stable and cohesive unit. This instability reflected ideological differences in the leadership of the SANParks and other contributing factors such as low staff morale and a relatively high staff turnover. The research methodology of this thesis has had to take cognisance of these complexities.

Methodological Approach

The methodological approach of this dissertation is eclectic drawing from a range of different perspectives including political economy. This is explicitly interdisciplinary; it has been defined as "the study of society as an integrated whole that identifies and analyses social relations as they relate to the economic system of production (Dracho 1978). The dissertation also draws from the phenomenological approach. A phenomenological approach to the question of whether the SED drove the transformation of the SANParks through establishing a paradigm shift which percolated throughout the organisation rests on recognising the importance of "how individuals understand the social world" and how "knowledge is socially produced within a community" (Seidler 1994: 78). This particularly qualitative approach was used because it regards the social world as "not fixed or static but shifting, changing and dynamic". Social reality is not an "external force, objectively identifiable and independent of man [*sic*]" (Filstead 1979: 35). I regarded my informants as "active agents in constructing and making sense of the realities they encounter[ed]" (Ibid). This methodology was used to study the SANParks as a social institution involving a set of norms, social practices and social relations organised around a particular function. It subscribes to the principle that we can only describe and understand that which we know through our observations and experience of the world (Williams and May 1996; Schutz 1962a).

My experiential evidence derives from having been employed as the GEM co-ordinator for the People and Parks Project mentioned earlier, between 1994-1998. I had regular interaction with the SED during that time. Over a 21 year period, I was able to develop relationships with the SED and other external stakeholders. I had established close relations with my key informants over an extended period and there was mutual trust between us which meant accessing in-depth information on the transformation of SANParks that may have been inaccessible to an outsider.

To guard against my limitations and biases that may have resulted from using the phenomenological approach, I used the triangulation method. Triangulation is often used in the social sciences to promote accuracy and reliability. It involves using a variety of methods to gather data such as interviews, observations, questionnaires and primary documents. Crosswell (2008) stresses that it draws out multiple viewpoints on a theme. Triangulation is a methodology that was initially used in land surveys using

trigonometry (Robson 2003; Bruins and Zwanenburg 1992). It is a method of verifying where something is by getting a "fix on it from two or more places" (Robson 2003: 290). The triangulation methodology has been imported into social science by Denzin (Robson 2003; Punch 2005). It cross checks research results by using many and different "*sources* (e.g. informants), *methods*, *investigators* or *theories"* (Robson 2003: 290 emphasis in original). In addition to using different methods I verified my observations, analysis and approach with key informant interviews with various individuals that were or had served as employees and in leadership positions in the SED. They were asked to review specific chapters, and some were asked to comment on the completed thesis. I also consulted with community members and experts who were knowledgeable about the issues but were external to SANParks.

Research strategy

An important research question is whether the establishment of the SED promoted the transformation of the SANParks through driving a paradigm shift away from the traditional authoritarian style of managing conservation areas to a more inclusive, participative one marked by social and environmental justice. This involved inter alia investigating organisational restructuring to eliminate racism and sexism, SANParks attempts to address crucial injustices from the apartheid area through the land claims process, and provide benefits to impoverished and excluded neighbours, and attempts to promote nation-building through developing cultural heritage sites. A dramatic paradigm shift was clearly necessary given the historic emphasis on the protection of biodiversity and neglect of human needs by the SANParks.

There are four levels to the question of whether there was a paradigm shift:

1. Was there a deep or superficial understanding of the linkages between conserving biodiversity and social justice?
2. Was this change expressed in new organisational structures, policies and practises?
3. Were the new organisational structures and policies strong or weak?
4. What new strategies, especially regarding redress as well as community participation in management and benefits, were instituted and did these represent a shift in power relations?

The data gathering processes at both the levels of the national office and at park level with special reference to the KNP were guided by the following questions:

1. What were the fundamental injustices suffered by employees and neighbouring communities?
2. How have these fundamental injustices been addressed?
3. What kinds of organisational restructuring, projects and policies were established at the national office and at KNP level to implement a paradigm shift?

4. What kinds of projects, structures and policies offered redress?
5. Have redress oriented projects changed the nature of the institution of the SANParks and specifically the relationship between the KNP and its neighbours, and what is the nature of the changed relationship?
6. Do the changes amount to a fundamental transformation in the sense of shifting from an exclusive focus on the conservation of biodiversity?

The questions test the proposition that an important measure of success of the SANParks transformation was the level and extent of redress attempted through land claims, internal processes in the organisation to eliminate racism and sexism, the promotion of cultural heritage and the involvement of and benefit for the previously disadvantaged neighbouring communities through job creation, skills development, economic empowerment and other community development programmes.

Two data collection methods were used in this research. These were a survey of the relevant secondary and primary sources and semi-structured in-depth interviews.

Review of Primary and Secondary sources

The primary literature consisted of all the relevant unpublished data I obtained from the archives of the SED at the national office in Pretoria, and the KNP. It cconsisted of material generated by the organisation and its relationship with its neighbours from 1992-1994, under the SED's precursor, the Department of Community Development (DCD), as well as the SED between 1994-2004. I reviewed workshop and conference proceedings, training manuals, policy papers and academic papers, correspondence and other documents, such as the SED's mission statement, planning documents, project documents, programme/project evaluations, studies commissioned, board reports, public speeches, organisational and newspapers/articles, copies of articles from journals and periodicals, internal organisational correspondence and other relevant SANParks literature. This data generated an understanding of the philosophy, mission and vision of the SED before and after the attempts to establish it. It helped to explain how the organisational structure was altered over the ten year period under review and the support it received to implement this vision.

Key informant interviews

The primary data gathering method also used in-depth, structured and semi-structured interviews with key informants inside and outside of the organisation. I conducted a total of 71 in-depth semi-structured interviews that included 40 SANParks employees and 31 individuals from external organisations and structures. These were informants from communities neighbouring the KNP, government departments, NGOs, CBOs, donor agencies, private companies and parastatals that interacted with SANParks and the KNP

and who are stakeholders in the conservation sector. They were selected for their specific expertise on SANParks during the period under review, 1994 – 2004.

Interviews were also conducted with individuals and families that lived along the western boundary of the KNP. Community interviews also included traditional authorities, community development structures, older people, women, youth, and people that may have or may not have been involved/benefitted from projects initiated by the SED. Some of the interviews were done individually and some were group interviews. Some of the interviews in the community were conducted in Tsonga, SePedi SeSwati and some in English. I had to use interpreters for the non-English interviews. Although questions were prepared, the interviews sometimes deviated from these questions in order to explore certain themes more in-depth, and to allow for spontaneity. Telephonic interviews were conducted with some individuals for clarification and detail. A detailed list of informants is provided at the end of this thesis. Names have been changed to protect confidentiality.

Structure

The thesis is divided into three sections:

SECTION A. THE CONTEXT OF TRANSFORMATION
Chapter 1: Introduction: Research Aim, Background, Methodology and the Political Context
Chapter 2: The Ideological of Transformation: Changing Approaches to Conservation
Chapter 3: The Changing Policy and Legal Context of Transformation

SECTION B. ORGANISATIONAL TRANSFORMATION
Chapter 4: The Transformation of the South African National Parks in Relation to Internal Policies and Practices 1994-2004
Chapter 5: The Establishment of the Social Ecology Directorate at the National Office Level
Chapter 6: Social Ecology and the Establishment of the Social Ecology Directorate at Park Level

SECTION C: THE IMPACTS OF TRANSFORMATION
Chapter 7: Land Restitution
Chapter 8: Changing Relations with Neighbouring Communities
Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage and the Shift Towards Greater Inclusivity
Chapter 10: Conclusion

SECTION A: THE CONTEXT OF TRANSFORMATION

CHAPTER 2: THE IDEOLOGICAL CONTEXT OF TRANSFORMATION: CHANGING APPROACHES TO CONSERVATION.

Introduction

After 1994 SANParks came to see the concept of social ecology' as the core of a reconfiguration of the discourse of conservation. At its simplest it was understood as a people-oriented approach to the conservation of biodiversity. The dominant approach to conservation at that time was a neo-liberalism that emphasized the market.

Neo-liberalism

After the democratic elections in 1994, South Africa adopted a neo-liberal economic framework in which the role of the market dominated (Marais 1998; Bond 2002). Within this framework, protected areas that were established before 1994 were retained and maintained, new parks were established, and existing parks were expanded (Murphree in Child (ed.) 2004).

Within this neo-liberal framework the concept of sustainable use was dominant. According to this view opportunities have to be created to allow poor rural people access to natural resources that could contribute to their livelihoods. Sustainable use with sustainable development includes income from natural resources that could take many forms, such as safari hunting with game cropping, photographic safaris, ecotourism ventures, pastoral and arable agriculture, and subsistence agriculture (Hulme and Murphree (eds). 2001).

Influenced by the marketised approach of neo-liberalism, one of the strategies to use environmental resources sustainably was to pursue ecotourism as a development option. This prompted the various ministers of Environmental Affairs and Tourism since 1994 to focus on ecotourism as a popular approach to sustainable resource use. Ecotourism was claimed to be an important way to promote development while simultaneously managing and protecting conservation resources (Steenkamp and Hughes 1997).

Earlier examples were the establishment of the Pilanesberg National Park in 1979, and the Madikwe Game Reserve in 1991, in the former homeland of Bophuthatswana (North West Province); the Mthethomusha Game Reserve, neighbouring the KNP in the former Eastern Transvaal (Mpumalanga Province) in 1984; the Kosi Bay Nature Reserve in Natal (KwaZulu–Natal) in 1986. The Conservation Corporation's privately owned Phinda Game Reserve was established in the early 1990s and since its inception invited the participation of neighbouring communities, through which it generated its community development projects (*Mail and Guardian* 24 to 30 August 2001). Early in the process of

establishing these ecotourism ventures, the policy was to use nature conservation as a way to promote rural development so that local people benefited from and were part of the process (Grossman and Koch 1995; Magome 2004; Magome and Fabricius 2004; Informant 5, Pretoria, 25/5/2005).

The process of redefining conservation started before 1994. It essentially became a way for the democratic South African government and for conservation agencies to gain political legitimacy and stability with the neighbouring communities living adjacent to parks, after the transition to democracy. The political process meant that the government had to avoid "protected areas" once more becoming "protested areas" (Murphree in Child (ed.) 2004: 220). The key question that had to be answered regarding the paradigm shift that conservation agencies had to undergo was "Who are the parks to serve?" (Child 2004:3). On one level, conservation agencies had to accept that parks are common pool resources that have to be managed for the good of society. On another level that was implicitly neo-liberal for conservation organisations, was that they could no longer rely exclusively on state funding. They had to establish a market-dominated strategy to generate their own additional income.

One of the fundamental tenets of neo-liberal thinking is that market-based and market led economic growth is governed by international principles of private property, and is the only and most effective and efficient option for development and to distribute benefits (Hallowes and Munnik 2006; Sachs 1995).

Hulme and Murphree emphasize that it is a key tenet of neo-liberal thinking that markets should play a greater role in shaping conservation policy. This dominant economic paradigm prescribed that effective conservation of species or habitats must happen within the market, because its "uniqueness and scarcity lead[s] to high valorization and [will] thus promote conservation" (Hulme and Murphree (eds). 2001:4).

Some authors have defended this neo-liberal perspective on the grounds that it has in some respects, resulted in positive conservation outcomes in some countries in southern Africa, as well as in South Africa. For example Child *et al* (2004) argues that the survival of national parks depends on their adjustment to the neo-liberal framework. They argue that reliance on market forces mean the avoidance of bloated and inefficient government bureaucracies. Also it is claimed that neo-liberalism promotes localisation in that it has transformed the financing of conservation from a situation where governments previously had complete control over natural resources, [with the exception of minerals], to the devolution of decision-making to local level, enabling conservation managers to be guided by markets (Steiner in Child 2004). It has also led, it is claimed, to social and institutional changes, such as increased transparency, accountability and decision-making to ensure that economic benefits are accrued to local people.

This has promoted the establishment of self-funded and semi-autonomous conservation agencies. Steiner, however, does caution that this market-dominated policy which emphasises performance management and

commercialisation will only succeed if one considers the relationship between the protected area and society simultaneously (Steiner in Child 2004).

It has been claimed that governance that "links positivist science and technocratic rationality to a Weberian mode of administration" limited transformation (Masiwa 2002; Chitsike 2000; Mamimine 2002 cited by Murphree in Child 2004: 220). Many bureaucratic entities are resistant to change (Albrow 1970; Thompson and McHugh 1990 cited in Marks 2005). This applies to conservation organisations. Despite the shift of political power to a democratic government in South Africa, bureaucratic and technocratic approaches to conservation prevailed.

This is similar to environmental policy in Zimbabwe, where it is claimed that "bureaucratic attitudes and practices shaped in turn by science, provides the basis for the persistence of particular styles of state response to environmental and land management issues…because this serves the interests of an entrenched bureaucratic-cum-scientific elite and reinforces the power of the state". (Keeley and Scoones 2000 in Murphree in Child (eds). 2004: 220-221).

However during this time in South Africa a reconfiguration of the discourse of environmentalism was underway. This involved several contradictory perspectives on conservation incorporating elements from sustainable development, environmental justice and community-based conservation.

Sustainable Development

While, the notion of sustainable development has been extensively criticised for its vagueness which means it can easily be incorporated into a neo-liberal framework, the concept of environmental justice presents a powerful critique (Bond, 2002).The Brundtland Commission, also known as the World Commission for Environment and Development, instituted by the United National General Assembly in 1983 provided a "canonical" definition of sustainable development as, "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the future generations to meet their own needs" (Butler and Hallowes 1998: 2).

The Brundtland Commission's definition of sustainable development resulted in two approaches. The first approach espouses the western development model, with a focus on protecting nature (Sachs 1999). This approach was informed by increasing environmental degradation in the name of growth and progress (Butler and Hallowes 1998). This model does not always acknowledge the necessity for social justice for the developing world's poor, and the need to develop synergy between people and nature (Sachs 1999). Nonetheless, it remains the dominant discourse (Sachs 1992).

The discourse of the developing world of the South is critical of the notion of development. A particularly influential source of this critique was Sach's *The Development Dictionary* (1993). The contributing authors, mostly "unconventional third world scholars, practitioners and activists" grappled with the concepts and practice of "…development archaeology, tracing the complex mapping procedures by which the iron cage of development was put together" (Watts 1993:260).

The central theme of the book is that the western model of development is misguided "…as a particular cast of mind. For development is much more than just a socio-economic endeavour; it is a perception which models reality, a myth which comforts societies, and a fantasy which unleashes passions" (Sachs 1992:1). Critics argue that the western conceptualisation and implementation of development has not been successful and is clearly unjust (Sachs 1992; Sachs 1999; Escobar 1995). This analysis highlights that the western model of development has produced immense poverty as well as great wealth (Butler and Hallowes 1998: 2). This discourse believes that any analyses of environmental degradation and economic instability must begin with social injustice as both the cause and the symptoms (Middleton and O'Keefe 2001:16 in Ageyman *et al.* 2003: 2). The discourse has to consider unequal power relations between the northern hemisphere and the poor people of the southern hemisphere (Sachs 1993b).

Furthermore, sustainability is a contested concept (Ageyman *et al* 2003). The varying interpretations both invoke conflict over development policy, and provide a guide for the formulation and evaluation of development policies and programmes (Villiancourt 1995; Hawkins and Buttel 1992). Sustainability is not about "green and democratic development" (Sachs 1992:17). It is about a worldwide citizenship (Sachs 1999). The developing world's discourse advocates that a fully-fledged sustainable society will incorporate social needs, welfare and economic opportunity, with environmental concerns (Ageyman *et al.* 2003: 2). One solution to the crises of justice and of nature is to source ways to prosper without the need for permanent growth. The problem of poverty stems from wealth creation, and the problem of nature stems from over-development (Sachs 1999: 41).

The post-World War II model of development has been designed and dominated by transnational corporations (TNCs) and local businesses, where the market is paramount (Peet and Watts 1993). TNCs have used their economic power to harness political power on local, regional and global levels (Bryant and Bailey 1997). These key actors designed and implemented human divisions, as well as divisions between humans and nature, that replicated itself in every country. Within each country, these actors created a dominant economic class comprising a small section of the population, as well as large sections of socially and economically excluded people (Sachs 1999).

This polarisation is also reflected in the relationship of the dominant economic class's relationship with nature. In each country, they created a shift away from the protection of nature to the protection of the

rights of capital to control the use of natural resources for economic gain (Sachs 1992; 1999). Up until the 1970s, bio centric values of nature dominated the industrialised world, and nature was conserved for nature's sake. This attitude towards nature contrasts with the prevailing attitude towards development, which has to be protected *from* nature (Sachs 1999). Within this unequal power relationship, TNCs and local businesses have conceptualised sustainable development as a strategy to sustain development, and not to protect and support nature and people on an equal and sustainable basis (Sachs 1992; Bryant and Bailey 1997). It is ironic that presently, these actors have morphed into "partners in sustainable development"…. [Likened to] "putting the foxes in charge of the chicken coop" (Bryant and Bailey 1997).

The Sustainable Development Discourse in South Africa

In 1994, the newly elected Government of National Unity in South Africa committed itself to sustainable development as prescribed and defined by the Brundtland Commission (Butler and Hallowes 1998). Munslow and Fitzgerald explain the general sustainable development challenge inherited by the new dispensation as two-fold. The positive features are that the country is rich in natural resources, is relatively large with a relatively low population and compared to the rest of Africa, it has a relatively well developed infrastructure. The negative scenario is that it has one of the highest rates of inequality in the world. Overcrowding is a problem in urban townships, squatter camps and environmentally degraded rural areas. Millions still lack access to clean air, piped water, land and adequate sanitation. The national task is to convert policies, strategies and implementation from separate development, to sustainable development. The specific goal is to enhance the livelihoods of the poor (Munslow and Fitzgerald 1994).

Thus, sustainable development featured prominently in the Reconstruction and Development Programme, the White Paper on Environmental Management Policy July 1997, and the National Environmental Management Act No. 107 of 1998 amongst others, discussed in the following chapter. At a policy level, sustainable development also became central to national transformation in terms of redress for historical and prevailing environmental injustices (Butler and Hallowes 1998). However, in strategy, implementation and budget, the ANC government has not prioritised sustainable development. Sustainable development has not been an integral part of GEAR - the national economic strategy, nor industrial development strategies, such as the Strategic Development Initiatives (Fig 2000).

The concept of sustainable development relevant to this research includes the notion that the species, habitats or biodiversity to be conserved should be regarded as natural resources that can be used both for development and conservation goals inclusively if properly managed (Kangwana in Hulme and Murphree 2001; Hulme and Murphree 2001; Scherl *et al* 2004).

The polarised development discourses of the developing world and the industrialised world are glaringly reflected in South Africa. This is evident in the division of the broad environmental movement in South Africa, into two main camps: "those organised around the discourse of sustainable development, and those organised around the discourse of environmental justice. Both of these are powerful discursive strategies" (Cock 2007:174). With its rejection of market based solutions to environmental problems, the discourse of environmental justice represented a powerful challenge to neo-liberalism.

Challenges to the neo-liberal approach: environmental justice

The shift away from the conservative, authoritarian approach to conservation which marked the apartheid era began in the late 1980s. Although banned, political organisations such as the African National Congress (ANC), the Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO), the Pan African Congress (PAC) and others gradually began to accept that environmental issues could form a legitimate part of their agenda (Khan 1992 in McDonald (ed.) 2002). The traditional confined notion of conservation that only included the protection of fauna and flora, began to change (EDA, 1993; Cock 1991; Butler and Hallowes 1998; Mittleman 1998).

This created discursive and institutional space to redefine the concept of ecology more appropriately and holistically to South Africa's development to include the basic needs of human beings and their rights to a clean, safe and healthy environment (Peek in McDonald (ed.) 2002; Cock 2004; Wenz 1988; Bullard 1990; Capek 1993; Bryant 1995; Cutter 1995; Goldman 1996; Harvey 1996; Heiman 1996; Dobson 1998; Schlosberg 1999; Bowen and Heynes 2000). A wide range of trades union, non-governmental organisations, civic associations and academics became involved in the new environmental discourse. In this way. the emerging environmental justice movement became rooted in a political agenda (Cock 1994; 2004; 1991; Peek in McDonald (ed.) 2002; Butler and Hallowes 1998).

Thus a political commitment emerged to address environmental inequalities and injustices as a holistic part of the new dispensation's plans for development (ANC 1994; Cock and Koch 1991; Ramphele and McDowell 1991; Hallowes 1993; Lukey in McDonald (ed.) 2002). Within this political context, the environmental justice movement emerged in South Africa with "a clear and strong commitment to social transformation", which was based on changing South Africa's history of "…unequal access to power and resources…" (Cock 1991:1). It was recognised that environmental concerns are indicative of wider developmental issues that reflect unequal relations to resources and power (Castells 1997; Ageyman *et al.* 2003; Brechin *et al.* 2003).

There are various interpretations of environmental justice. According to Hallowes and Butler:

> "Environmental justice obtains where relations between people, within and between groups of people, and between people and their environments are fair and equal, allowing all to define and achieve their aspirations without imposing unfair, excessive or irreparable burdens or externalities on others or their environments, now and in the future." They clarify this definition further: 'Empowered people in relations of solidarity and equity with each other and in non-degrading and positive relationships with their environments' (Hallowes and Butler 2002 in McDonald (ed.) 2002: 52).

The first such champion of environmental justice was Earthlife Africa, and they introduced the concept to South Africa at the 1992 Earthlife Africa (ELA) conference. At this conference the concept of 'environmental racism' was introduced by a US speaker and resonated with the South African black experience. (Cock in *Mail and Guardian* May 6 to 12 2005; Cock 1991; Cock 2004; Fig 2000). Formed in 1988 ELA is an essential part of the environmental justice movement working on local, national and international levels. It is a national civil society alliance of volunteer activists, with smaller local branches, and it focuses on climate change, nuclear and energy issues (Cock 2004; Fig 2000). The Environmental Justice Networking Forum (EJNF) was initiated at the conference mentioned above, and two years later in 1994, it was formally launched. The ELA was affiliated to the EJNF and is now defunct (Cock 2004; Fig 2000).

As part of the redress process, the definition of environmental justice required social transformation as central to fulfil the basic human rights and needs of poor people. It is about ensuring "economic equality, health care, housing, human rights, environmental protection, and democracy", and that people have the right to be part of environmental decision-making at all levels (EJNF 1997 cited in McDonald in McDonald (ed.) 2002; Cock 2004). It fosters the interests of the majority and not the minority (Bullard 1993 in Cock 1994). One of its goals was to develop the ability of the black majority to use their democratic rights to understand and implement democratic environmental policies (Peek in McDonald 2002). According to Ruiters "[Environmental] Justice is a process - a complex product of existing local knowledge, identity, the balance of class and collective forces, experience, and the definition of future goals. And finally, as part of a counter-hegemonic struggle, justice means the creation of new institutions to mediate particular claims" (Ruiters 2002 in McDonald 2002: 123). As well as capacity building, within this redefined conservation framework, the concept of participation was emphasized. This involved "empowering people to mobilise their own capacities, be social actors, rather than passive subjects, manage their own resources, make decisions, and control the activities that affect their lives" (Cernea 1985:5).

These definitions clearly emphasise the centrality of people, instead of the exclusive conservation of plants and animals. People were placed at the centre of "a complex interlinked set of social, economic, political and environmental relationships". Inherent in this definition are the "environmental *in*justices of these relationships" and the processes of redress and ensuring that the injustices are not repeated in the future (McDonald in McDonald 2002: 3).

This involves the recognition that the relation between environment and society inherently involves a set of power relations and does not exist in isolation of each other (Brechin *et al.* 2003; Brosius and Russell 2001; Brechin *et al* (eds). 2003; Castells 1997). Development is about the nature of the establishment of these relationships, its continuity, the powers that these relationships serve and represent, and its limitations to improve the lives of people that live under difficult environmental conditions (Hallowes and Butler in McDonald 2002 (ed.)

Environmental injustice therefore refers principally to the experience of those who are excluded from the benefits of development. It is the poor and – in the South African case- the black majority who experience such exclusion. (Hallowes and Butler in McDonald 2002; Hallowes and Butler 1998; Hitchcock 1996; 2002a; Fortwangler 2003; Bond 2002). Exclusion can be imposed by markets and governance institutions (Hallowes and Butler in McDonald (ed.) 2002; Cock 2004; Bond 2002; Ageyman *et al.* 2003). At the same time the poor bear the brunt of the externalisation of environmental costs. (Hallowes and Butler in McDonald (ed.) 2002; Hallowes and Butler 1998; Ageyman *et al.* 2003).

Environmental justice is determined by the power relations at play and how it influences development outcomes (Hallowes and Butler in McDonald (ed.) 2002; Cock 1991; Brechin *et al.* 2003). Environmental injustice is obtained through a process of unequal and unfair distribution of benefits and costs, borne by the poor and marginalised (Portney 1994 in Ageyman *et al* 2003). The key development questions to be asked are: "Who benefits, who loses, and who *did* it – that is, who are the beneficiaries, who are the subjects, and who are the agents of environmental injustice?" (Hallowes and Butler in McDonald (ed.) 2002: 52 emphasis in original). These issues raise questions about the struggle for power, resource allocation and extraction, risk taking, the accrual of benefits and accountability. The questions also reveal the sets of relationships that frame the understanding of how environmental injustice is created (Hallowes and Butler in McDonald (ed.) 2002; Levine 1982; Roberts 2003).

A central challenge lies in finding the right balance between protecting nature and social and environmental justice. In other words, providing for the needs of poor people and of economic development, while simultaneously conserving biodiversity (Brechin *et al* 2003).

This emphasis on environmental justice was influential and implied that SANParks had to transform its policies and culture from the narrow traditional confines of conserving flora and fauna exclusively. SANParks had to be part of this redefinition to remain politically, economically and socially relevant (Cock and Fig 2000; Honey 1999).

Community Conservation

Community conservation in its broadest sense is "…part of wider processes of social change and about attempts to redistribute social and political power. It is shaped by these wider social processes and, at the same time, contributes to those wider processes. In particular, while the community approaches promises to 'empower' communities they may be seen as threatening those who have reduced control over resources or flows of benefits" (Adams and Hulme in Hulme and Murphree (eds). 2001: 14).

Three approaches to community conservation have been evident in the South African context. The first is the conservation and development projects of protected areas that have been established to involve local people to a minimal degree. The second approach is collaborative management which is based on "agreements between local communities or groups of resource users and conservation authorities" who normally have well defined property rights in a conservation area, to jointly benefit from and manage a protected area or a part of a protected area. In South Africa this model has resulted from successful land claims in statutory conservation areas. The third approach deals with land and natural resources that are owned by the local people who have devolved control of these resources and who use them sustainably for income generating activities (Adams and Hulme in Hulme and Murphree (eds). 2001). This model is not prevalent in South Africa.

The key issues here are those of 'participation' and 'benefits". Participation in development at a local level is an important issue for conservation agencies but does not guarantee success. The concept of benefits for communities has entrenched various forms of competition at community level. This has usually been biased in favour of elites who wield power in their communities, such as "traditional leaders, local officials and business people" who tend to use their power to reap an unfair share of new sources of income, and who resist any attempts to change their positions of power" (Hulme and Murphree in Hulme and Murphree (eds). 2001: 282).

The concept of defining community is difficult as there are "some serious conceptual and practical problems [that] constrain most definitions" (Murombedzi in IIED 1994:5). The concept has "consistently defied precise definition" (Barrow and Murphree in Hulme and Murphree (eds). 2001:24). In the context of this research, community is defined as having a common spatial, social, cultural, and economic context, as well as the experience of a common history (IIED 1994). Communities are not "organic, homogenous entities with few problems in self-regulation" (Leach *et al.* 1997: 12 cited in Hulme and Murphree 2001: 34-35). Agarwal notes that naive notions of community "disregards the multiple interests harboured within communities, neglects the fact that different actors within communities have differential access to resources and channels of 'influence' and ignores both intra-communal and community/external political processes" (Agarwal 1997: viii cited in Hulme and Murphree 2001:34-35). Generating benefits and sharing is a process that happens over a period of time. Often, "The perceived value of the benefit is equal to the difference between what is expected and what is received" (Bergin in Hulme and Murphree (eds). 2001: 102). Benefits are also embedded in a complex and dynamic web of relationships and interaction between cultural values, livelihood issues, human relationships and economic benefits (Kangwana and Ole Mako in Hulme and Murphree (eds). 2001: 102).

This stress on 'participation' and 'benefits' implied a challenge to the 'fences and fines notion of conservation', the idea that one of the greatest threats to biodiversity or the integrity of a protected area comes from the people living closest to it. This had to shift to incorporate a different view of people and embrace the notion that people are an intrinsic part of ecosystems, and could be partners rather than threats in protecting natural resources (Western 1989 cited in Kangwana in Hulme and Murphree (eds). 2001; Larson *et al.* 1997; Seymour and Fuller 1996; Western, Wright and Strum 1994; Brosius and Russell 2001; Brechin *et al.* 2003). Brechin stresses that the such a shift is necessary for both pragmatic as well as ethical reasons.

This shift to re-conceptualising people as potential partners rather than threats was at the centre of the approach termed 'social ecology' The different approaches to the conservation of biodiversity described above constituted the ideological context from which social ecology emerged in a somewhat inchoate form to become the foundational concept in the transformation of SANParks.

Social Ecology

The 'Janus-faced' nature of social ecology meant that it was both the organisational and the ideological driver of transformation. Social Ecology was both a set of ideas and an agency within the SANParks structure. A major source of confusion in the transformation process was that there was no clear, shared understanding of the concept and for many the Social Ecology Directorate lacked legitimacy. For one informant it was associated with the writings of the anarchist and radical ecologist Murray Bookchin.

Bookchin's formulation of social ecology

In the mid-1960s, Bookchin began elaborating on the notion of "social ecology". His central idea was to insist that environmental problems are social. "What defines social ecology as social is its recognition of the often –overlooked fact that nearly all our present ecological problems arise from deep-seated social problems. Conversely, our present ecological problems cannot be clearly understood, much less resolved, without resolutely dealing with problems within society" (Bookchin, 1993:11).

The ultimate cause of both sets of problems was "the blind social mechanism of the market". Bookchin emphasized that social and ecological problems were linked, "the real battleground on which the ecological future of the planet will be decided is clearly a social one" (Bookchin, 1993: 12). Addressing both involved the abolition of all forms of domination, "... the way human beings deal with each other as social beings is crucial to addressing the ecological crisis. Unless we clearly recognize this, we will surely fail to see that the hierarchical mentality and class relationships that so thoroughly permeate society are what has given rise to the very idea of dominating the natural world". (Ibid).

He argued that nature is continuously present in the human condition, yet the [western] world denies its presence in all social relationships. He regards nature as "creative, directive, mutualistic, fecund, and marked by complementarity" from which ethics of freedom should emanate as opposed to domination (Bookchin 1987: 55). Nature has non-hierarchical relationships in an ecosystem that could serve as role models for relationships in human society, free from domination (Bookchin 1982; 1965). There is no "king of the beasts" [lion] and no "lowly serf" [ant] in ecosystem relationships, they are projected human concepts based on our own social relationships of domination, hierarchy and power relationships (Bookchin 1987: 65). Thus the human conception of nature as "blind" "mute", "cruel", "competitive" and "stingy", has prompted humans to oppose and fight it (Bookchin 1978: 52). Yet nature is always with us, and is "the parody of our self-image" (Bookchin 1987: 54). In 1987, when his essay entitled "What is Social Ecology?" was published, he observed that the discourse on modern ecological and social crises disregarded two pervasive and foundational relationships, that of human domination of nature and of man dominating man (Bookchin 1987: 50).

Bookchin's notion of social ecology shifts the focus from marketplace domination to an ecological image of nature. He does this by providing an important comparison between ecosystems and human societies, and by challenging the purpose of hierarchy and how it deals with the human creation of order, based on differentiation and variation, an "otherness". Hierarchy in human society is so pervasive, it is more problematic than economic exploitation. According to Bookchin, "the domination of women by man precedes the exploitation of man by man and the formation of social classes" (Bookchin 1987: 67). This earliest sexist form of domination was followed by class and statist forms of exploitation based on "age, gender, race, physical qualities, and often quite frivolous and irrational categories". Therefore human

liberation should focus on ending hierarchy and domination in addition to the more traditional focus on class and exploitation (Bookchin 1987: 67). Social ecology's intention is to break the association of order with hierarchy. It questions whether we can refashion and experience society as it occurs in ecology, underpinned by variety which forms "the unity of phenomena, enriches wholeness, and more closely resembles a food web than a pyramid." Social ecology is a fresh look at these problems in human society, and presents fresh options to resolve them (Bookchin 1987: 67).

Bookchin's writings on social ecology were a response to ecological crisis precipitated by the exploitation of and pollution of the planet, caused largely by the prevailing competitive market economy. The philosophy and rationale for the human domination of nature is that limitless growth is a synonym for "progress" and the historically portrayed human "mastery of nature" is akin to "civilisation", and by extension the "domination of man by man." (Bookchin 1987: 48-50).

Bookchin was opposed to what he termed the "...present market society." "Unless we realize that the present market society, structured around the brutally competitive imperative of 'grow or die', is a thoroughly impersonal, self-operating mechanism, we will falsely tend to blame other phenomena – technology as such or population growth as such – for environmental problems. We will ignore their root causes, such as trade for profit, industrial expansion and the identification of progress with corporate self-interest." (Bookchin 1993:12.)

His anarchism informed his writings on social ecology in that he aimed to retrieve local political power by advocating for direct popular democracy. His writings lobbied against the strengthening and growing centralisation of the nation state. However he also emphasized the need for "a sweeping change in existing spiritual values", from hierarchy to complementarity. (Ibid)

Since the publication of his writings in 1987, there has been considerable development of these issues, particularly in the sub-discipline of environmental sociology. This emphasises the social nature of the relationship between human beings and natural resources. As Brechin writes "nature protection is more a process of politics, of human organisation, than of ecology. Although ecological perspectives are vital, nature protection is a complex and social enterprise" (Brechin *et al.* 2003: x).

Social ecology in the African context is used very differently from Bookchin's work, to include elements of sustainable development, neo-liberalism, environmental justice, and community development linked to biodiversity (Bell 1998; Butler and Hallowes 1998; Cock 1991, 1994; Kovel 2007; Dunlap and Catton Jr 1994, 1979; Goldblatt 1996; Yearly 1996; Mehta and Ouellet (eds) 1995; Barry, 1999; Freudenberg and Gramling 1989; Murphy 1995; Paehlke 1990; Jones 1987).

Social ecology in the African context

As Fig stresses, "Social ecology is a set of practices, and not a distinct discipline" (Fig 2000 in SANParks, DANCED and GTZ 15-19 May 2000: 268). The concept has been operational since the early 1980s in other parts of Africa (Western 1982 cited in Hulme and Murphree (eds). 2001; KWS 1991 cited in Hulme and Murphree (eds). 2001). The notion of social ecology in the African conservation context involves, as Child explains, the complex task of ensuring that parks deliver to people (Child, B. in Child (ed.) 2004). This refers especially to poor people living in or on the borders of protected areas. At a minimal level conservation authorities attempted to conserve biodiversity by seeking the support of local people through income generating and service oriented project activities. These covered a wide area from extension services, education projects, and access to benefits and resources. Often the main objective of social ecology was to minimise pressure placed on protected areas by creating a buffer zone around the protected area where wildlife is conserved (Kangwana in Hulme and Murphree (eds). 2001; Adams and Hulme in Hulme and Murphree (eds). 2001).

Social ecology as the driving notion in the transformation of SANParks

What formed the basis of a new conception of conservation in the form of social ecology was the inclusion of social issues, the acknowledgement that the effective protection of natural resources had to include social questions of people's needs interests and understandings. Apart from this element of 'the social', within the SANParks social ecology was a contested notion. It included both minimalist and more radical or transformative understandings. Official publications frequently defined social ecology very narrowly in terms of relations with neighbours. For example according to the CEO in 2000, It is "a process and a strategy that actively engages local communities neighbouring national parks in an open dialogue to build positive relationships and identify opportunities for mutually beneficial partnerships" (Letter from chief executive SANP introducing *Visions of Change* publication January 2000). A slightly broader definition from another park official states, "Social ecology supports strategies and processes that ensure establishment of mutually beneficial partnerships and dialogues with communities neighbouring National Parks, in pursuit of conservation and socio-economic development. This is fulfilled by the overall objective of developing and nurturing good relations with communities adjacent to National Parks, and to take full account of local cultural values and resources in park development and management" (South African National Parks and Danish Cooperation for Environment and Development (DANCED) pamphlet on Social Ecology, 2001).

In a different official publication, social ecology is described in more comprehensive terms as " a new philosophy and approach to conservation in which ecological, cultural and socio-economic issues are recognised as critical to the management of national parks. The process is interdisciplinary, participative, community-oriented and educational. It seeks to facilitate partnerships that are beneficial to both national

parks and their neighbouring communities. It is capacity building at its best." (Social Ecology, Visions of Change 2000: 20)

A 2001 draft paper on Social Ecology commissioned to "guide social ecology activities in SANP", refers to the "four key functions of social ecology as: "promoting environmental sustainability (including environmental education), community liaison and facilitation, economic empowerment and cultural heritage management…" (Fabricus 2001:8) This document goes on to define 'economic empowerment' in terms of persons from neighbouring communities being awarded contracts to clear invasive vegetation. While there is a reference to "accepting past wrong and injustices, and making amends for them" no actions are specified (Fabricus, 2001:5). There is no mention of human rights or of environmental justice. References to 'participation' involve a 'soft' version of imparting information rather than the 'hard' version of participation in decision making. It is stressed that "SANP is not a development agency" and the 'community benefits 'envisaged are extremely limited. (Fabricus 2001:8).

On the basis of research involving interviews with SANP staff, the author of this paper claims that "SANP staff is beginning to subscribe to a new vision which accepts that South Africa's National Parks should contribute to environmental sustainability….(as well as) societal wellbeing..…all people, but especially those who are considered neighbours, should love and cherish our National Parks, neighbouring people should respect and be respected by the individuals entrusted to manage South Africa's National Park (Fabricus, 2001:2).

This is a minimalist definition of social ecology, with strong instrumentalist overtones. The reasons for improving relations with neighbouring communities are pragmatic rather than ethical or framed in terms of environmental justice. From this perspective the relationship is forged "to enhance the biological integrity of parks by working to educate and benefit local communities…" (Barrow and Murphree in Hulme and Murphree (eds). 2001: 31). It illustrates how the conservation of biodiversity is the primary objective, and social ecology objectives, meaning primarily community benefits, are secondary (Kangwana in Hulme and Murphree (eds). 2001).

However in its 1998 Corporate Plan SANP describes social ecology as more than the four functions cited above as " a strategy and process that conveys the philosophy and approaches of the SANP to neighbouring communities and establishes mutually beneficial dialogues and partnerships with these communities. …The key SANP strategy and responsibility resides in the social ecology staff. Social ecology is more than environmental education, community development and public participation: it is the custodian …and bridge between national parks and people (Ibid: 20).

A stronger statement was issued by the Director of the SED who referred to social ecology as a 'paradigm shift in conservation'. "The new approach seeks to establish partnerships that are mutually beneficial to all stakeholders. In addition, whereas the traditional conservation approach was the domain of natural scientists with emphasis on pristine, fenced protected areas, the new approach is now multidisciplinary with emphasis on the holistic, integrated approach. It recognises and supports the promotion of sustainable utilisation of national resources by previously disadvantaged neighbouring communities. Equity, transparency…, the promotion of the culture of human rights and environmental sustainability are the key values and principles that ground this new conservation approach" (Ngeleza 1999:1). While there are positive elements such as the reference to 'equity' and 'human rights', noticeable here is the absence of any mention of 'development or 'economic empowerment'. It contrasts with other statements such as that of Nelson Mandela on the occasion of the centenary of the KP in 1998, when he referred to wanting to "see SANP promote and build viable partnerships with communities living adjacent to protected areas. The dual objective of such a partnership must be to achieve improved economic conditions for neighbouring communities and encourage among them a culture of conservation" (Cited in Social Ecology, *Visions of Change* 2000;9).

"The importance of Social Ecology"

Social Ecology was intensely discussed in Conservation Sub-Committee meetings of the new SANParks Board. A member provided a more academic definition in a memo on "The importance of social ecology"' in 1999 which is quoted at length below: "The central focus of Social Ecology is the inter-relationship between human beings and natural resources, or between 'culture' and 'nature. The key feature of this new paradigm is the understanding that biodiversity is framed by social interactions and cultural meanings… The traditional preservationist paradigm focused exclusively on the preservation of biodiversity – of wilderness areas and particular threatened species of plants and animals - to the neglect of human needs and interests.

This was the predominant perspective in South Africa but was not unique to us. Taylor has noted how environmental organisations throughout the world still tend to focus on survival issues "as they pertain to endangered species, national parks, preserves and threatened landscapes. These survival debates are not linked to rural and urban poverty and quality of life issues." (Taylor 1992 cited in Harvey 1996:386). This narrow preservationist notion of conservation was established throughout Africa by colonial authorities and it has been argued, is exemplified in the notion of national parks (Adams and McShane, 1996). Throughout Africa the establishment of national parks and conservation areas involved the removal, social dislocation and exclusion of indigenous communities. As Carruthers writes, "In the African version of wildlife conservation history, the experience has been that game reserves are white inventions which elevate wildlife among humanity and which have served as instruments of dispossession and subjugation" (Carruthers 1995:101). The diverse social needs and understandings of human beings are central to the new conservation paradigm that is emerging internationally. This is not only concerned with providing human benefits such as the

employment of communities adjacent to national parks, or their access to the sustainable utilisation of resources within the parks. It is also concerned with the different meanings and interactions between different cultures and within cultures.

Cultures are not monolithic involving a uniform set of values and practices. This understanding of culture, together with the recognition that communities are not homogeneous, but involve different (and often competing) interests and groupings means that the new conservation paradigm requires social scientific knowledge. This knowledge draws from disciplines such as Sociology, Economics, History, Political Science and Social Anthropology. It follows that the new conservation paradigm involves a close relationship between social and natural scientists. As the head of Social Ecology has pointed out, "Whereas the traditional conservation approach was the domain of natural scientists, the new approach is now multidisciplinary.....Knowledge of the social structure, cultural beliefs and practises of particular communities is crucial to securing the effective communication with fully representative and accountable structures. Social ecology also promotes an inclusive approach which emphasizes partnerships with diverse constituencies. This is particularly valuable in situations such as that in contemporary South Africa where the conservation community is extremely fragmented. The controversy over the Brits elephants illustrates this fragmentation. Elephants are variously viewed as threats to domestic stock, as pests who should be exterminated (as was the case in Addo National Park in 1931), "as generating R1,5 million worth of economic activity per annum "(Kerley and Boshoff 1997:22), as performing circus animals, or as sentient beings with elaborate social organisation and complex emotional lives. (Mason and McCarthy, 1995). Part of the task of the social ecologist is to recognise these different understandings and promote partnerships and coalition building with a wide range of interest groups. For all of these reasons the Department of Social Ecology is far more than an agency of environmental education, community development or public participation. It represents an approach which is central to the promotion of both a new conservation paradigm and a transformed SANP which could make an important contribution to both the preservation of biodiversity and the creation of a united South Africa. This approach to social ecology was not shared throughout SANParks.

A feature of a more transformative understanding of the concept emphasised popular participation (Cock undated; Western, Wright and Strum 1994; Western and Wright 1994; Adams and Hulme in Hulme and Murphree (eds). 2001). This was the view that neighbouring communities should be included in conservation management and policy formulation. It was supported by a minority of elements within the new post-apartheid Board. It will be shown below that this involved limited attempts to establish park forums consisting of representatives of both neighbouring communities and SANPark authorities.

Another feature of the more transformative approach was an emphasis on the need for redress. In the early 1990s a view among proponents of environmental justice outside the SANParks structures emphasised that

this was necessary because beginning in 1926 the mandate of national parks in South Africa had been exclusively the conservation of biodiversity which had involved at best the neglect of social needs and at worst the dispossession of indigenous peoples. From this perspective not only benefits to but the inclusion of, and redress for communities neighbouring national parks were essential to transformation. For others social ecology emphasized human rights and a rejection of marketised approaches to conservation.

During the period under review the concept of social ecology was intensely contested. There were different understandings of the concept among SANParks employees at both national and park level structures. They ranged from a focus on restitution and environmental justice, to environmental education for the youth from appeasement of traditional authorities to support conservation, such as providing them with free visits into the parks, or meat from culled animals, to emphasizing real benefits to neighbouring communities such as job creation in the parks. Other elements stressed an interdisciplinary, participatory, community-oriented approach to reverse historical injustices. At the same time there was resistance to any understanding of social ecology which threatened the organisations historical exclusivist mandate of simply maintaining biodiversity (Informant 14, 27/5/2005 Midrand; Informant 24, 14/6/2005, Pretoria).

The most common themes in the official documents on social ecology were: improved relations with neighbouring communities, participation, (mostly unspecified), environmental education and – less frequently – community development. However it was constantly stressed in official documents that the SANP was not a development agency. There are numerous references to the importance of persuading neighbouring communities of the legitimacy of national parks, to ensure their survival.

The concept developed slowly during the period under review to incorporate the elements cited above. In the practical implementation of SANParks projects, the emphasis was pragmatic and instrumental ; the emphasis was on a thin notion of obtaining the support of neighbouring communities for conservation. "The over-arching role of social ecology is to educate, economically empower and encourage neighbouring land users to embrace the SANP's conservation ethic" (Social Ecology, *Visions of Change*, 2000:21).

The following statements from informants illustrate the predominance of this 'thin' notion:

i) that social ecology means that if the people neighbouring a protected area support that
ii) protected area, the conservation of biodiversity will be enhanced (Informant 4, 8/3/2005, Telephonic; Informant 8, 20/5/2005, Johannesburg)
iii) that social ecology involves economic or social projects that will benefit communities (Informant 36, 10/5/2005, Pretoria; Informant 7, 25/5/2005, Telephonic; Informant 41, 26/5/2005, Pretoria)
iv) that under the rubric of social ecology the culture of neighbouring communities will be

v) integrated into the systems that conserve natural resources, strengthening support for the protected area (Informant 22, 20/5/2005, Johannesburg; Informant 32, 3/10/2005, Oliver Tambo International Airport ; Informant 37, 18/6/2007, Skukuza; Informant 47, 12/9/2007, Skukuza);

vi) that implementing social ecology projects will foster good relationships between the protected area and neighbouring communities (Western 1989 cited in Kangwana in Hulme and Murphree (eds). 2001; Informant 9, 11/10/ 2005, Johannesburg; Informant 13, 13/9/ 2007, Skukuza);

vii) that an awareness of the value of the conservation of biodiversity will encourage people to protect it (Informant 56, 17/9/2007, Punda Maria; Informant 59, 20/9/2007, Phalaborwa; Informant 38, 3/10/2007, Telephonic; Informant 68, 19/9/2007, Benfarm);

viii) that support from neighbouring communities keeps the cost of law enforcement low (Informant 24, 14/6/2005, Pretoria; Informant 33, 1/8/2005, Johannesburg; Informant 32, 3/10/2005, Oliver Tambo International Airport);

ix) that the process of implementing social ecology projects will promote tolerance; the conservation authority will acknowledge the different understandings of conservation that a wide range of protected area stakeholders will have and will build partnerships with them (Informant 35, 30/5/2005, Johannesburg; Informant 17, 30/5/2005, Pretoria; Informant 34, 26/5/2005, Pretoria);

x) that the newly claimed paradigm of social ecology is greater than the sum of its parts, to name a few: environmental education, community development, [and] public participation (Informant 41, 26/5/2005, Pretoria; Informant 18, 2/5/2005, Johannesburg; Informant 33, 1/8/2005, Johannesburg; Informant 17, 27/5/2005, Pretoria);

xi) that social ecology includes various interactions and inter–relationships between a myriad of stakeholders (Western 1989 cited in Kangwana in Hulme and Murphree (eds). 2001; Informant 17, 27/5/2005, Midrand; Informant 18, 2/6/2005, Johannesburg; Informant 5, 25/05/2005, Pretoria);

xii) that successful implementation of social ecology will require interdisciplinary approaches of implementation (Informant 17, 30/5/2005, Pretoria; Informant 35, 30/5/2005, Johannesburg; Informant 6, 7/3/2005, Johannesburg).

xiii) that social ecology is fundamental “to the transformation of cultural, heritage and environmental agencies in building a democratic” society (Galla 1997:1).

xiv) that social ecology essentially involves a sociological perspective on natural resources, meaning that it recognises power differences among social actors who hold different understandings of nature (Informant 2, 2/5/2005, Johannesburg).

The only common factor in these comments is the stress on an acknowledgement of the relevance of people to the conservation project. According to the majority of sources within SANParks, obtained from both interviews and official documents and statements, social ecology was the set of ideas to direct the way in which the transformation principles of the conservation sector were to be implemented. It was claimed to be part of a new paradigm in which the concept of biodiversity included the social and economic and cultural needs of the people living in or adjacent to protected areas. This generally meant the need to ensure that the people living in physical proximity to protected areas – especially those who may have property rights or other types of claims on the land, such as spiritual and cultural claims - benefit from the management of the protected area. In its minimalist form, social ecology simply meant benefits to neighbours.

Critics of Social Ecology

The observations of the proponents of social ecology contrast with those of mainly conservation biologists. Some of the latter have been arguing for a resurgence of a protectionist conservation paradigm on the grounds that people oriented approaches to conservation have largely failed to achieve their main goal, the protection of biological diversity" (Wilshusen, Brechin, Furtwangler and West, 2002:171). In a review of four recent works advocating a renewed emphasis on strict, authoritarian conservation practices, Wilshusen *et al* demonstrate that their conclusions are "operationally unrealistic and morally questionable as policy proposals"(Wilkshusen *et al*, 2002:18). They attribute this to the author's "significant blind spots that overlook the deeply politicized nature of nature protection" (Ibid). The controversies regarding conservation in South Africa described in this thesis, provide a powerful illustration of this 'deep' politicization.

Since the beginning of the implementation of the concept of social ecology in Africa and elsewhere in the world, there have been doubts regarding its efficacy (Alcorn 1997; Brosius and Russel 2001; Roe 2001; Brechin *et al.* 2003). Studies that assessed social ecology projects noted the lack of coherent connections between development activities and the achievement of biodiversity conservation objectives as a weakness of these projects (Wells *et al* 1992 cited in Hulme and Murphree . 2001). Some social ecology programmes have not been clearly planned and it is not clear whether they complement conservation and development goals. As a result organisations such as the World Wide Fund for Nature stated that it has not seen much conservation-related benefits in ICDPs (Kangwana in Hulme and Murphree (eds). 2001: 256; World Wide Fund for Nature. 1997).

One argument attributes the depletion of biodiversity to macro-level economic and environmental policies (Carley and Christie 1997 cited in Kangwana in Hulme and Murphree (eds). 2001; Kramer *et al* 1977 cited in Wilshusen *et al* 2003). Therefore, action by a protected area authority at local level may have little impact on biodiversity conservation (Kangwana in Hulme and Murphree (eds). 2001). The real test of whether or not a social ecology programme of a protected area meets the conservation agenda would lie in clear evidence of

biodiversity benefiting from social ecology activity (Kangwana in Hulme and Murphree (eds). 2001). Child points out that this may prove difficult to do retrospectively, because by 2004, no social ecology projects in Africa were methodically and comprehensively monitored and audited. Biodiversity monitoring seems unsystematic, and has been focused exclusively on large mammals. In addition, the primary role of protected areas are not clearly defined, neither have proper audits been done (Child, B. in Child (ed.) 2004). No clear indicators to measure conservation impact has been developed, and the direct opportunity costs that conservation demands from local residents are still unknown (Kangwana in Hulme and Murphree (eds). 2001).

The views expressed mainly by conservation biologists have been: i) that biodiversity loss warrants a resurgence of a protectionist paradigm, because ii) social ecology projects have generally led to biodiversity loss, and iii) international, national and local conservation organisations worldwide have been overly concerned about social rather than conservation issues, therefore: iv) conservation and development should not be combined; v) protected areas should be extended, and vi) buffer zones should be used to strengthen control of a protected area (Brandon 1997; Soule and Lease 1995; Kramer *et al.* 1997; van Schaik and Kramer 1997; Oates 1999; Terborgh 1999)

Between these contrary views, lies an acceptance that conservation and development projects do imply some costs to biodiversity (Kangwana in Hulme and Murphree (eds). 2001). The conservation biologist's argument that proposes a resurgence of a protectionist conservation paradigm outlined above, does not alter the reality that a global challenge lies in finding the right balance between protecting nature and social justice. This has to provide for the needs of poor people and economic development in developing countries, while simultaneously conserving and utilising biodiversity sustainably (Brechin *et al.* 2003; West *et al.* 1991). This makes the argument for a continuation of endeavours to include the social aspects of conservation, which remain an underdeveloped research area (Brosius and Russel 2001; Brechin *et al.* 2003).

This chapter has shown that social ecology, as a set of ideas inscribed in number of practices driving the transformation of SANParks, was a complex and contested notion. It will be shown below that the lack of a coherent and shared ideological framework was a major obstacle to a radical form of transformation which linked the conservation of biodiversity to social justice. It must be understood within the context of – not only the political transition – but the changed policy and legislative context of post-apartheid South Africa.

SECTION A: THE CONTEXT OF TRANSFORMATION

CHAPTER 3: THE CHANGING POLICY AND LEGAL CONTEXT OF TRANSFORMATION

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the changing conservation policy and legislation relevant to the period 1994 – 2004. It indicates that some innovations, particularly the land reform programme, had positive implications for the transformation of SANParks.

However an analysis of the post-apartheid policy environment must acknowledge that the initial period 1994 – 1999 was marked by confusion and contestation. South Africa was emerging from a period of intense struggle for power and resources (Cock 1998). For many the priority was to balance transformative change to create a just and non-racial society with the maintenance of stability and social order. Environmental concerns were not a priority compared to nation building. In addition environmentalism was contaminated by the apartheid-era practice of focusing on the protection of threatened plants, animals and wilderness areas to the neglect of social needs.

This forms the background to any analysis of whether the post-1994 spate of conservation-related national policies and legislation enabled the transformation of SANParks. A crucial and more specific question is whether the new policy context enabled the SED to promote transformation in the sense of a shift in a fundamental sense away from the traditional authoritarian approach to conservation which characterised the apartheid-era, and which emphasized the protection of biodiversity to the neglect of social issues.

A number of policies and laws were introduced to create new ways to manage the environment and how people should relate to it (RSA 2003). Although laudable, these policies and laws had to contend with fragmented, polarised and inefficient administrative structures created by apartheid (van der Linde 2009; Kidd 2008; IDRC 1995; Wynberg 2002; Fakir 1997; Algotsson 2009; Müller 2009). This involved no fewer than 17 government departments that had primary responsibility for nature conservation prior to the 1994 general election (DEAT 2005b; Wynberg 2002).

The Interim Constitution contained the principle that nature conservation would remain a dual or concurrent mandate, between the national authority represented by SANParks and provincial government. This was retained in the 1996 Constitution which reaffirmed the legal status of national parks and stipulates that SANParks are a national competency accountable to the national legislature, and other protected areas are the responsibility of provincial government authorities (Magome 2004; Glazewski in McDonald 2002; van der Linde 2009). The second post-1994 attempt to address appropriate legal and

institutional arrangements for managing protected areas, and biodiversity in general, was through a board of investigation headed by Judge Kumleben in 1998 (Kumleben *et al* 1998; Wynberg 2002; Strydom 2009; Glazewski 2000). This recommended that the existing institutional arrangements should prevail. It meant that the institutional structures should not be centralised into one authority, neither should it be replaced by decentralised provincial structures (Kumleben *et al* 1998; Magome 2004; Strydom 2009; Glazewski 2000). Müller argues that this "perceived [institutional] fragmentation is a reflection of the complexities of environmental management and therefore probably by definition precludes simple unified answers" (Müller 2009: 92).

A key innovation in the period under review was the entrenchment of environmental rights.

Environmental Rights

The foundational document was Section 24 of the Bill of Rights in the Constitution, which provides for the right to a healthy environment and environmental protection while promoting justifiable economic and social development. It states that:

> "Everyone has the right –
> (a) to an environment that is not harmful to their health or well-being; and
>
> (b) to have the environment protected, for the benefit of present and future generations, through reasonable legislative and other measures that -
>
> (i) prevent pollution and ecological degradation;
> (ii) promote conservation; and
> (iii) secure ecologically sustainable development and use of natural resources while promoting justifiable economic and social development" (RSA 1996b: 11).

Recourse to environmental rights was provided for in a number of other legal ways such as the National Environmental Management Act 107 of 1998, the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act of 2003 (DEAT 2005a; Butler and Hallowes 1998; Cock 2004; Bond 2002). In addition the Human Rights Commission also has an environmental component (McDonald 2002; Whyte 1995). Every year the Human Rights Commission requires relevant organs of state to submit to them, information on progress to realise the Bill of Rights, which includes environmental rights. (www.acts.ca/constitution/184_functions_of_south-african_human rights_commission.htm. Date accessed: 2 November 2012).

Policy and Legislation Relating to Land: the White Paper on South African Land Reform and Land Claims

After 1994 the government developed many policies to reduce and alleviate poverty and social inequality, and one of the most demanding tasks was the development of the land reform programme (DLA and DEAT 1998; DANCED 1997b). The White Paper on South African Land Policy (White Paper on Land Reform) was approved by Cabinet in April 1997 (RSA 1997b). Three strategies to contribute towards redress for three hundred years of social, political, economic deprivation that land dispossession created were: land redistribution, land restitution, and tenure reform (DLA and DEAT 1998).

The Restitution of Land Rights Act, 22 of 1994 and its amendments was the most important component of the land reform programme for the SANParks. This was because it provided for the restitution of land rights to persons or communities that lost their land since 1913 so that game parks and nature reserves could be established. This enabled a number of land claims, such a, the Makuleke Region of the KNP, as described in chapter seven.

The Communal Land Rights Bill and the Communal Land Rights Act

The Communal Land Rights Bill (CLRB), and the Communal Land Rights Act (CLRA) No 11 of 2004 was pertinent to the transformation of SANParks because it determined the relationship between protected areas and previously disadvantaged neighbouring communities on issues of governance, rights and benefit-sharing as well as the future expansion of protected areas (DEAT 25 -27 October 2004). “The CLRA is a key determinant on how social ecology will unfold, and how the rights of the rural poor will be entrenched” (Informant 8, Johannesburg, 23/5/2005).

Prior to the 1999 general elections, the CLRB sought to address ways that the government could give the African majority living on 13 % of the country’s surface area classified as communal land, appropriate land tenure (as stipulated in the Constitution). The CLRB also attempted to modernise the structures of traditional administration operating in communal land.

However, when Minister Didiza replaced Hanekom as the Minister of DLA in 1999, the redraft of CLRB proposed that communal land be transferred to “tribes” or “African traditional communities”, and not to individuals. Critics, most notably Cousins, from the University of the Western Cape’s Programme for Land and Agrarian Studies, claimed that the CLRB was reminiscent of apartheid policy to consolidate traditional leaders’ power over land. It could also lead to apartheid style land dispossessions, because land transfers could be negotiated directly with traditional authorities, who served on undemocratic community structures, without consulting ordinary people who had no recourse if their existing rights were

threatened, or if there were counter claims. This could disadvantage people, most significantly women, because these structures could be dominated by powerful, unaccountable and patriarchal traditional leaders. The DLA defended the role proposed for traditional leaders in the undemocratic community structures because the role of traditional leadership is guaranteed in the Constitution and other applicable laws. Part of the problem was that there was no White Paper to define the role of traditional leaders (Kindra in *Mail and Guardian* November 23 to 29 2001).

Also problematic was that the CLRB defined land rights holders by their membership of a community, in terms of shared rules rooted in customary law, ignoring the basic principle and recognition of current occupier's *de facto* rights, which are occupation and land use. By emphasising communities, the CLRB precluded the rights of people who do not consider themselves as members of a community (Cousins in *Mail and Guardian* November 23 to 29 2001; Kindra in *Mail and Guardian* November 23 to 29 2001).

Although the Communal Land Rights Act (CLRA) was passed in 2004, by the end of the year it was not promulgated, because it was criticised as being insufficiently consultative and certain aspects conflicted with the Communal Property Association Act 28 of 1996 discussed below (RSA 2004). The upshot was that by 2004 government failed to implement legislation against land dispossession, despite the fact that the 1997 White Paper on Land Policy clearly states that permits must be replaced with enforceable rights within a unitary non-racial system, and people must be able to choose tenure systems appropriate to their circumstances. All systems must be considered within the Bill of Rights in the Constitution and ownership of communal land will be transferred from the state to its current occupants, the users of the land (Cousins in *Mail and Guardian* November 23 to 29 2001).

Although the CLRA is pertinent for millions of the rural poor including people living on the borders of national parks in South Africa, it did not impact rural development efforts substantially by 2004. Except for a few success stories such as the Makuleke, by 2004 the impact of the CLRA on protected areas, the future of expansion thereof and the relationship with previously dispossessed neighbouring communities on governance, rights and benefit-sharing remained unclear (DEAT 25 -27 October 2004). This legislative gap created implementation problems for the community-based natural resource management sector (Informant 8, Johannesburg, 23/5/2005). This was because disputes over land and governance resulted in long delays in planning and implementation. Potential investors were unclear about who they should negotiate with: central government (who owned the land), local government (responsible for integrated development planning) or traditional leaders (who claimed to represent communities). Furthermore local residents were often excluded from decisions about the land they occupy (Cousins in *Mail and Guardian* November 23 to 29 2001; Kindra in *Mail and Guardian* November 23 to 29 2001).

The White Paper on Environmental Management Policy 1997 and the National Environmental Management Act No. 107 of 1998

In the early stages of democratisation there was an intense civil society mobilisation to participate in policy formulation, including environmental policy. One of the most exciting occasions was the country's first Conference on a National Environmental Policy (CONNEP 1 in 1995 attended by 500 people which was followed by CONNEP 11 in 1996 to discuss the contents of a Green Paper (See Fig, 2000). However although donor funded processes to develop a policy for the environment resulted in The White Paper on Environmental Management Policy 1997, government ignored the recommendations of the drafting team for broad sectoral representation and participation as well as specific recommendations. Instead government decided on "a single framework law", the National Environmental Management Act No. 107 of 1998 (NEMA) (Fig 2000: 9).

The NEMA is relevant to the transformation of SANParks because Section 2(2) "must place people and their needs at the forefront of its's concern and serve their physical, psychological, developmental, cultural and social interests equitably". Section 2(3) states that "Development must be socially, environmentally and economically sustainable". Section 2 (4)(a) states that "Sustainability requires the consideration of all relevant factors". Section 2(4) (*c)* provides legal recognition of environmental justice, and provides potential transformation-oriented shifts away from the historical emphasis on conserving natural non-human environment, towards taking account of people and their developmental needs (RSA 1998e).

NEMA was promulgated as the overarching framework law including every aspect of environmental governance and management in South Africa. It enforces international agreements such as the 1992 United Nation's Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) discussed below, creates institutional structures and legal mechanisms to establish nationwide standards on environmental issues, and provides for the development of integrated development plans, environmental management plans, the integration of cross-sectoral environmental activities, and co-operative governance. It generated laws pertinent to government natural resource management agencies, such as the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act 10 of 2004, discussed below, and the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act of 2003, also discussed below (RSA 1998a; RSA 1994; RSA 2003; RSA 2004; Magome 2004; Fig 2000; Glazewski and Paterson 2000; Van der Linde 2009; Roberts 2003; Algotsson 2009; Müller 2009).

The National Environmental Management Act in 1998 contained clauses that included civil society participation in environmental governance (Müller 2009; van der Linde 2009; Kidd 2008). This was to take

place through the National Environmental Advisory Forum. This was to be a "multi-stakeholder advisory forum, representing organised labour, organised business, NGOs, CBOs, women, the disabled youth and persons with relevant specialist skills and knowledge which provides the DEAT Minister with strategic advice on issues of environmental management and governance and compliance with the principles set out in NEMA" (Müller 2009: 81-82). It also made provision for Environmental Co-operation Agreements, access to environmental information and protection of whistle blowers, as well as legal standing to enforce environmental laws, and private prosecutions (Fig 2000; Müller 2009; van der Linde 2009; Kidd 2008). However the Act was not specific enough to catalyse organisational transformation on its own. It was an overarching framework law governing every aspect of environmental management, focusing on legal mechanisms and institutional structures to establish nation-wide standards on environmental issues (RSA 1996b; RSA 1998a; RSA 1998c; RSA 1994).

Notwithstanding the constraints regarding democratic policy and legislative formulation processes discussed above, as a foundational statute NEMA is theoretically, an excellent South African environmental law. The challenge, however, was effective implementation by the relevant state agencies. These were sadly lacking (Fig, 2000).

The White Paper on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of South Africa's Biological Diversity and the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act 10 of 2004

In the period under review NGOs and CBOs successfully lobbied parliament to ratify the 1992 United Nation's Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). Thereafter a national CBD policy development process was undertaken to develop the 1997 White Paper on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of South Africa's Biological Diversity (White Paper on the CBD). The White Paper on the CBD was a democratic policy-making process involving consultation and public participation that led to "innovative environmental policy developments" (Fakir. 1997:15). However it also involved "…turf battles, institutional conflicts and conflicts over limited resources…that manifest[ed] at various levels: within government, between government departments and organs of civil society and within civil society itself." (Ibid)

Since government committed to implement the White Paper on the CBD within the context of the reconstruction and development of South Africa three overriding priorities were: i) the eradication of poverty; ii) sustainable development of its economy, and; iii) the social development of its people. These were to be attained through the conservation of biodiversity, the sustainable use of biological resources, and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits which result from the use of genetic resources (RSA 1997a; RSA 2003; Algotsson 2009; Strydom 2009).

The National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act 10 of 2004 (NEMBA) is relevant to the transformation of SANParks because it provided a framework for biodiversity conservation planning and benefit-sharing for protected areas (RSA 1994; Magome 2004; Glazewski and Paterson 2000; DANIDA and Pemconsult 2002a; Glazewski 2000). Although the NEMBA was promulgated in 2004 to implement the biodiversity aspects of the White Paper on the CBD, successful implementation of conservation legislation was constrained because numerous issues identified in the CBD were not covered in other legislation such as the National Forests Act No 84 of 1998, the National Water Act No 36 of 1998 and the Marine Living Resources Act No. 18 of 1998. The outcome was that despite this legislation there was inadequate "protection and sustainable development of areas adjacent to protected areas as well as the protection of ecosystems and natural habitats" (Algotsson 2009: 105-106).

Although a requirement of the White Paper on the CBD was the development of a National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), which is a detailed implementation strategy; the eight year gap (1997-2005) between the 1997 White Paper on the CBD, and the National Environmental Management Act No. 107 of 1998 (NEMA) and the development of the NBSAP (2005) was wide. By 2004 therefore the NBSAP implementation had not addressed the alleviation of poverty and historical injustices that people living on the border of national parks had to endure. Despite the lauded public participation policy development process, the lack of structural implementation logic and action on the part of DEAT was a weakness that displayed once more, that environmental officials in all tiers of government lacked a common purpose and goal (Roussouw and Wiseman in Muller 2009; DANIDA and Pemconsult 2002; Magome 2004; Bond 2002; Magome 2004; Wynberg 2002).

Despite efforts to overhaul the legislative framework for protected areas, enabling effective implementation was predicated on the development of empowered and effective institutional capacity, as well as a transformation-orientated outlook. Implementing the post-1994 policy and legislative framework in protected areas was a huge implementation challenge for all state natural resource management agencies, including SANParks.

National Parks Act of 1926 and Subsequent Amendments

The structure of the National Parks Board of Trustees was guided by the National Parks Act of 1926, which was later revised as the National Parks Act of 1962 and the National Parks Act of 1976. Continuing this metamorphosis, since 1982, the Act was amended 12 times to facilitate the realisation of income generation objectives (Magome 2004; RSA 1926; RSA 1962; RSA 1976). All this legislation constituted national parks as a corporate structure and did not encourage the organisation to undertake any socio-economic upliftment of its neighbouring communities because the emphasis was on the importance of conserving biodiversity

(Magome 2004; Magome and Erasmus 2001). The Act therefore did not include any of the post 1994 international obligations, policies and laws discussed thus far (Magome 2004). It also restricted the goal of ensuring that national parks were essential components of integrated environmental governance in South Africa (Child (ed.) 2004). This necessitated a legal review which was undertaken by SANParks in 2001 (Magome 2004).

SANParks presented a draft legal framework to the DEAT Minister for approval. Simultaneously, the DEAT had started a comprehensive legal review process which included legislation that was relevant to SANParks (Magome 2004). Besides the existing tension between DEAT and all the provinces, the DEAT draft legislation also created tensions between DEAT and SANParks because it subjected SANParks to the management of DEAT. After an appeal was made to the Minister, SANParks was allowed to draft its own legislation between January 2002-May 2004. The process enabled SANParks to incorporate the socio-economic upliftment of communities into its mandate of conserving biodiversity (Magome 2004).

The DEAT and SANParks legal review process resulted into two separate laws that were passed, one dealing with biodiversity, known as the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act 10 of 2004 discussed above, and the other dealing with protected areas, known as the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act No. 57 of 2003 (NEMPA), which had an amendment known as the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act No. 31 of 2004 (NEMPAA). All the post 1994 legislation mentioned in this paragraph replaced the National Parks Act of 1926, the National Parks Act of 1962 and the National Parks Act of 1976 (RSA 2004; Magome 2004; Strydom 2009; Glazewski 2000).

The National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act No. 57 of 2003.

The NEMPA provides for an integrated system of national, provincial and municipal protected areas, according to a typology, to protect species, habitats and ecosystems. It appoints SANParks as the custodian and managing authority of South Africa's national parks. It also allows for the protection and management of land, sea and rivers that are part of South Africa's biodiversity. It sets out the legal framework for locating and establishing a network of protected areas on state land, private land, and communal land (Magome 2004; RSA 2004; Strydom 2009; Glazewski 2000). It provides the framework, norms and standards for the conservation, sustainable use and equitable benefit sharing of South Africa's biological resources in provincial and national parks (RSA 2003; Magome 2004).

The power to make regulations is vested in the Minister or the Member of the Provincial Cabinet (MEC), equivalent to a national deputy minister, and not SANParks or the provincial conservation agency. However, all state management authorities can make internal rules for their respective protected areas to

regulate day-to-day operational matters (Magome 2004). The relevance of this, according to Kidd, is that the challenges of implementing biodiversity legislation lies in "fleshing out the skeletons provided by the Acts that apply to biodiversity, by means of regulations, lists and so on. Delays in this regard result in many important aspects of the legislation essentially being a dead letter. The second challenge is to implement and enforce the legislation effectively in the context of limited resources, which is a concern for South African law generally" (Kidd 2008: 126).

The NEMPA promulgated in 2003 provided the legal framework for the transformation of SANParks. (RSA 2003). It included the sustainable use and equitable benefit sharing of all natural resources in national parks and it invoked the concept of public participation which according to one source, forms the "cornerstone of a social ecology approach" (Fabricius 2001: 11). In this regard, the NEMPA outlined procedures for equitable public participation of all stakeholders in decision-making and co-management of protected areas to feed into Park Management Plans (PMPS) in all 20 national parks by 2004. It includes consultation processes to be undertaken with municipalities, organs of state, communities and other interested and affected parties. Amongst the many requirements stipulated by s42 of the NEMPA, is the development of a resource plan that guides general access to natural and biological resources, that includes a community based nature-resource management plan and community based natural-resource utilisation. Although by 2004, SANParks initiated arrangements to develop public participation processes to formulate PMPs so that communities were afforded the opportunity to influence and benefit from parks regarding CBNRM, economic opportunities, capacity-building and support for co-management, park management were not legally bound to incorporate all their suggestions (RSA 2003; South African National Parks. August 2006. Consultants Briefing Notes).

Although the NEMPA clearly allows for the development of a resource use policy, the development thereof took place subsequent to the period under review. Un-adopted, and an indication of the organizational ambiguity towards social ecology in 2001, Fabricius was commissioned by SANParks to develop it as part of a social ecology policy. It is useful to consider Fabricius' draft resource policy contained in his draft social ecology policy, and the list of resources that could be harvested without compromising the biological integrity of national parks. Although it warns against allowing neighboring communities consumptive use of biological resources as a means of solving and/or appeasing conflict or buying goodwill, the following resources could be used sustainably: i) "plants and animals that are being targeted for clearing, reduction or extermination as part of the parks' management strategy"; ii) "parts or carcasses of culled animals"; iii) "parts or carcasses of animals that have been killed to reduce crop or livestock damage in local communities"; iv) "plant material or earth that has to be removed as part of 'mopping up' operation after major disturbances such as floods" (Fabricius 2001: 19). The policy also warns that community expectations of benefit sharing should be realistic and park specific (Fabricius 2001:19). Although NEMPA requires all protected areas to contribute to government related local economic development efforts to combine resources and energies to reduce poverty by 2020, this requires

careful negotiation because Fabricius and Magome concurred that SANParks was not a rural development agency, and should not assume responsibility for social development (Fabricius 2001; Magome 2004).

Intended to facilitate and support partnerships to implement and enhance conservation and development programmes, the NEMPA allows for the signing of formal agreements between any person or community and the relevant conservation authority, to proclaim a piece of land they live in a protected area. It also upholds the land rights of communities that have existing contracts before the law was passed, such as the Makuleke agreement with SANParks, to co-manage protected areas according to the environmental principles contained therein (DEAT 25-27 October 2004; RSA 2003; Kidd 2008). This aligns the management of South Africa's protected areas with international trends of consultation and benefit sharing with neighbouring communities. The shift also encompasses new financial arrangements, moving away from protected management agencies relying on government funding exclusively, to generating their own income generation through a business approach (Magome 2004; RSA 2004).

The Act contains provisions for the development of local management capacity and knowledge exchange (RSA 2003). However, developing the capacity of communities living adjacent to national parks, remained a challenge for SANParks' staff and other relevant state agencies, as discussed below. This was important because as one informant said, " if they cannot understand and implement the legislation effectively, it renders the legislation obsolete" (Informant 9, Johannesburg, 11/10/2005).

National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Amendment Act No. 31 of 2004

The National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Amendment Act No. 31 of 2004 (NEMPAA) was controversial. On the surface it provided a comprehensive list of all national parks, special national parks and heritage sites under SANParks' management. It also provided for the dissolution of, and winding up of some national parks (Strydom 2009; Kidd 2008). A perception existed that this legislation enabled SANParks to "cherry pick" protected areas that may be managed by, for example, a provincial conservation agency, to be declared a national park (Kidd 2008: 105). This could impact negatively on provincial conservation agencies, especially those that have managed conservation well. Despite this, the concerns of the provincial conservation agencies were ignored and the legislation was passed (Kidd 2008; Magome 2004). Thus historical tensions between SANParks and provincial conservation authorities were perpetuated and exacerbated because SANParks has higher revenue and capacity than provincial conservation authorities (DANIDA and Pemconsult 2002).

Other Legislation and International Agreements Affecting SANParks and Neighbouring Communities

Any land development regarding *ex-situ* CBNRM and reclaimed conservation land has to comply with the provisions of the Development Facilitation Act No. 67 of 1995. The aims and objectives of the Act are to: i) enable and fast track the implementation of reconstruction and development programmes and projects connected to land; ii) establish a Development Planning Commission to advise government on policy and laws concerning land development nationally and provincially; iii) establish provincial development tribunals to make decisions and resolve conflicts regarding land development projects; iv) formulate and implement land development objectives by which local government performance can be appraised; v) create national unitary procedures for subdivision and development of urban and rural land, and; vi) promote security of tenure and ensure that beneficiaries of restituted land receive finance as early as possible during the land development process (RSA 1995).

The Communal Property Association Act 28 of 1996 is enforced when a community is successful in a land claim. The Act enables members of disadvantaged communities to collectively acquire, hold and manage property in terms of a written constitution. It also recognises that many black people in rural areas hold land through communal systems, which exist informally outside the law. All restituted conservation land is therefore handed over to a newly formed Communal Property Association, which functions as a juristic person in whose name the land is registered (RSA 1996). This is discussed further in chapter three.

The World Heritage Convention Act No. 49 of 1999 and its regulations provides for the establishment of a mandated authority to manage world heritage sites, exemplified by the Greater St Lucia Wetland Park in KwaZulu Natal. A total of two national parks have world heritage status, the Mapungubwe National Park and the Table Mountain National Park (SANParks. Policy on the Conservation, Management and Promotion of Cultural Heritage. undated; DANIDA and Pemconsult 2002; RSA 1999a; Glazewski 2000).

The National Heritage Resources Act No. 25 of 1999 provides legal impetus for the introduction of cultural resource management (RSA 1999b; Glazewski 2000). SANParks intended to conserve and manage the cultural heritage of all South Africans efficiently and sustainably, and defines cultural resource as "…any physical and spiritual property associated with past and present human use or occupation of the environment, cultural activities, and history" (SANParks. Policy on the Conservation, Management and Promotion of Cultural Heritage. undated: 3).

The Marine Living Resources Act No. 18 of 1998 provides for the control, conservation and long-term sustainable utilisation of marine ecosystems, in a fair and equitable manner to the benefit of all the citizens of

South Africa (RSA 1998b: 2). By 2002 nearly 60 marine and coastal protected areas were designated in South Africa under national and provincial legislation, covering about 5% of the coastline and a very small percentage of marine waters. Some of these areas are managed by the national authority, known as Marine Conservation and Management (MCM) under DEAT. The Table Mountain National Park is a SANParks marine park, proclaimed in 2001 (DANIDA and Pemconsult 2002a).

The Public Finance Management Act No. 1 of 1999 (as amended by Act 29 of 1999) (PFMA) enforces sections 213, and 215 to 219 of the Constitution. The Act reinforces tighter financial management in the public sector. And the Board of Curators of SANParks (Board), as a juristic person, is accountable in terms of the PFMA, for the financial management of the organisation (RSA 1999c; Magome 2004).

The Local Government Property Rates Act No. 6 of 2003 has significant financial implications for all protected areas including SANParks. Every national park has to negotiate and formally agree on rates payable to the relevant municipality. Accordingly land in national parks is exempt from tax, unless it has been developed or is used for residential, agricultural or commercial purposes (Magome 2004; DEAT 2003c).

Constraints on Institutional Transformation of the SANParks

In addition to this focus on rights in contrast to the apartheid era, since 1994 the government introduced new policies and laws to promote the interests of communities neighbouring SANParks, and to reverse historical policies and laws that emphasised the conservation of biodiversity at the expense of their interests. However SANParks' attempts to transform were limited through the initial phase of power sharing (1994-1999) with the previous government (RSA 2003; Marais 1998; Fig 2000; Marks 2005). This meant that the elements from the previous government, the 'old guard' retained key positions in the political and administrative hierarchy of conservation institutions. On a political level, the power-sharing Government of National Unity (GNU) allocated the environment ministerial portfolio to the National Party (Magome 2004; Fig 2000), implying that it was not an important portfolio for the ANC (Fig 2000).

There were four other political constraints that compromised the development of a transformed people-centred environmental policy framework. Firstly, although between 1996-1999 the ANC assigned the environmental portfolio to Pallo Jordan, an ANC minister, he did little to change environmental laws. Secondly, the ANC's acceptance of donor aid through which it established environmental policy centres and missions after 1994, were short lived because environmental issues were not prioritised nationally. The third constraint was the decision to reinstate the apartheid structure, the Council for the Environment which was made up of reactionary elements. Fourthly, some government officials were allegedly involved in corruption

relating to toxic waste imports. The ANC was unwilling to establish a commission of enquiry in the interests of supporting the GNU (Fig 2000).

Coupled with this political backdrop the 1996 Constitution confirmed the retention of the pre-1994 civil service which restricted transformation in government administration, including SANParks. It is important to explore the positive aspects of the Constitution, which states that the public service should be "non-partisan, career-oriented, and guided by fair and equitable principles. It should promote an efficient public service broadly representative of South African communities. Public servants should serve in an unbiased and impartial manner and loyally execute the policies of government" (McLennan 1997: 109). In addition, the Constitution emphasised the need for a transformed public service by guaranteeing "the right to collective bargaining, to strike, to freedom of expression, speech and assembly, to privacy, equality before the law, access to information and to sexual orientation" (McLennan 1997: 109). These ground-breaking Constitutional principles were reflected in the 1995 White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service and it provided a transformation-oriented mission and vision for the public service (Marks 2005).

However implementation depended on whether the old guard, who retained leadership positions in SANParks, accepted transformation. Between 1994-1999 this was the key to whether SANParks was able to use the post-apartheid spate of conservation-related national policies and legislation to enable the SED to promote organisational transformation and shift the focus from the protection of biodiversity to at least include historical redress for communities living adjacent to national parks. Specifically the promotion of social ecology, as the carrier of transformation of SANParks was dependent on broader institutional transformation and available, empowered and effective institutional capacity.

Magome who served on the executive management structure of SANParks confirmed that there was no transformation-oriented leadership in SANParks to implement these policies at the time. "Given this false sense of security, the executive management of the NPB [SANParks] remained completely confused by not knowing what to change, why, when and how" (Magome 2004: 122). This confusion was because the traditional conservation approach during the apartheid era created a singular SANParks focus on fulfilling international and regional obligations to a multitude of agreements and conventions that South Africa had ratified. None of them included any of the elements of social ecology such as socio-economic development or people-orientated approaches. It was understood as crucial to comply with the conditions laid out by the IUCN's (1994) categorisation of protected areas, the KNP for example, is a Schedule 1 park which affords it the highest protection against consumptive human activities. The IUCN's Species Survival Commission clearly sets out the KNP's obligations to conserve endangered species; the Convention on Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (1973) affects SANParks' management of, for example, elephants. The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (1972), made the SANParks reluctant to abide by land reform legislation that could have

meant handing over a large part of the northern KNP to the Makuleke community because it contained a wetland that had gained Ramsar status (SANParks August 2006 Draft KNP Park Management Plan; Scherl *et al* 2004).

The retention of the old guard in leadership positions in conservation bureaucracies included the national Director-General of DEAT, to whom provincial park management (also old guard from the apartheid era), were ultimately accountable (Fig 2000). Many national parks were neighbours of many provincial parks, so organisational transformation and proper management of both was important.

Institutional constraints were evident in the absence of old guard experience and commitment to implement organisational transformation, and lack of skilled black staff in leadership positions. The situation was further exacerbated when DEAT unilaterally announced its intention to be the lead agency for national environmental management (Fig 2000). This created tensions with other national departments/agencies that managed natural resources, including SANParks, the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry (DWAF) and the Department of Agriculture (DoA), because DEAT had historically not done well in coordinating terrestrial conservation (DEAT 2005b). Nevertheless the DEAT retained its position as the primary custodian of the environment in South Africa. Its role in protected areas was to set policy, norms and standards, monitoring and evaluation, and it determined the conservation relationship between provinces and agencies, such as SANParks (DEAT 2005b). Tensions were understandable given that the 17 government departments that had primary responsibility for nature conservation prior to 1994 were not only retained in post-1994, they remained fragmented, polarised and inefficient administrative and legislative structures created by apartheid (van der Linde 2009; Kidd 2008; IDRC 1995; Wynberg 2002; Fakir 1997; Algotsson 2009; Müller 2009; DEAT 2005b).

Besides DEAT's inadequate national leadership, Algotsson and Kidd concur that the primary reason for the difficulty in implementing conservation laws in post-1994 South Africa was the fragmentation of responsibility and legislation between national and provincial government departments (Algotsson 2009; Kidd 2008). Ineffective legislation enforcement was a major problem in 1995 (Müller 2009). By 2002 the various government agencies responsible for national and provincial protected areas (excluding municipal and private protected areas), attempting to implement 11 national laws and nine provincial laws, did not improve law enforcement. This led to public confusion, conflict between the agencies, lack of organisational capacity, under-funding of provincial protected areas, exacerbated by frequent re-organisation and downsizing, as well as inconsistent management approaches. Provincial conservation budgets were insufficient because they were lowered and the savings were allocated to other provincial priorities. Although the focus was on fragmented institutional structures, Müller heeds Carlie and Cristie's warning that "over-reliance on institutional reform assumes that if the 'right' institutional arrangement can be brought into being, adequate management will result" (Carlie and Cristie in Müller 2009: 92). This

is underscored by Algotsson who argues that other factors also contributed to this inefficiency, and that implementing conservation laws remained problematic because government lacked the required political will (Algotsson 2009). This inefficiency limited change in SANParks, DEAT and provincial conservation administration and bureaucracy between 1994-1999. Implementing historical redress for poor people living adjacent to national parks was not prioritised because attention was focused post-1994 on nation building and on attempts to address appropriate legal and institutional arrangements for managing protected areas and biodiversity in general.

Rather than creating new structures and institutions, the transformation process took as its starting point the existing structures of the public service. Woolridge and Cranko argue that the premise for change was to "rationalise old structures into new ones", meaning that change was limited to overhauling existing structures, within the confines of the sunset clause. Not much account was taken of the external context of an organisation or its internal context of culture or capacity; "the process of public sector change [consequently became] a technocratic process cast in terms of existing frameworks, institutional practices and procedures. Existing frameworks and vested interests [dictated] the pace and nature of change" (Wooldridge and Cranko 1997: 337). This made fundamental bureaucratic and administrative change for SANParks and other conservation agencies difficult to achieve from the outset.

Sectoral policy and legislative transformation was initiated only after the 1999 elections, when Moosa, an ANC Minister, replaced Jordan. At this point the environmental policy and legislative context was a mixture of elements of the apartheid past, interim arrangements, and democratic changes for a better future (Glazewski 2000). Minister Moosa, and his Director General, Olver, began a two-year law reform programme (LRP) analysed below that was highly effective in replacing pre-1994 environmental laws, but not necessarily implementing them (Magome 2004).

Under apartheid policy making was the preserve of government strongly influenced by powerful corporations (Fig 2000; Müller 2009). Civil society was only granted a 30 day period to respond to a near complete policy document (Fig 2000). Although the Constitution which underpinned the democratisation process in South Africa allowed for increased civil society participation in the environmental policy formulation process, it did not guarantee transformation because, as stated above between 1994-1999: implementation of transformation related policies was proportionate to the acceptance of the old guard. Since DEAT had suffered international isolation in the apartheid -era , its leadership had limited understanding, experience and lacked the political will to implement public participation policy formulation processes. This resulted in the continued domination of powerful interests from business and industry (Fig 2000; Wynberg 2002). Furthermore the overall neo-liberal policy environment secured and prioritised the interests of the powerful (LAPC 1996). Therefore business, industry and "key state-owned corporations in power, steel and transport, influenced the final [natural resource] policies in their own interests" (Fig 2000: 4).

The rights discourse introduced by the post-apartheid government was criticised by some on the grounds that protection could generate passivity, and a gap between 'formal' and 'substantive' rights be entrenched. Mackinnon argues that the rights discourse can "keep people passive and dependent on the state, because it is the state which grants them their rights. The rights discourse may therefore be as paralysing as it is enabling. It may mobilise, but also immobilise; it delimits the range of programmatic options, thereby narrowing its outcomes" (Schneider 1991 cited in Ruiters 2002 in McDonald 2002 :118). Cock notes that the focus on "rights" must be contextualised in a framework of growing "unsatisfied social needs" (Cock 2004: 22).

Although in theory legal recourse existed for communities who were negatively affected by SANParks, the law as an instrument of redress was limited for a number of reasons (Informant 18, Johannesburg, 2/6/2005): Communities neighbouring national parks were part of the neglected black majority of South Africans. Secondly, although the Bill of Rights provides for litigation, legalistic routes to resolve social conflict does not address unfair resource distribution (Kidd 2008; Marais 1998; Lake 1996 cited in Ruiters in McDonald (ed.) 2002). Linked to this, the third problem was that communities could not afford the high litigation costs, nor did they have the capacity to use the courts effectively (White 1991). Communities often had to live in dangerous environments after and/or while the damage was done, while enduring lengthy legal processes (Ruiters in McDonald (ed.) 2002).

Conclusion

These post-apartheid legislative changes should have provided a powerful impetus towards a deep form of transformation of SANParks. The emphasis on rights, including environmental rights and on community participation in park management were especially important. However, the following chapter points to serious weaknesses within the organisation which constrained the capacity to change.

SECTION B: ORGANISATIONAL TRANSFORMATION

CHAPTER 4: THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL PARKS IN RELATION TO INTERNAL POLICIES AND PRACTICES 1994-2004

Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of SANParks' internal transformation policies and processes that were initiated in the early 1990s. During this period a central thrust of the post-apartheid state was to eliminate racism and sexism to change state institutions into bodies that were more representative of South African society as a whole. The chapter describes transformation policies and the establishment of two transformation structures: a Transformation Task Group and a new Board of Curators. The most important of the new structures was the Social Ecology Directorate which is analysed in the following two chapters referring to both the national and the park level.

The SANParks was never a homogeneous or monolithic body. Especially during the period under review it incorporated persons with very different ideological orientations and personal histories. In this context transformation was a hotly contested issue. The principal policy document guiding the transformation of the SANP was the Corporate Plan, prepared in 1998. Besides vision and mission statements this defined a "set of core values:" including "environmental ethics, quality service, transformation ("with regard to organisational development and our relations with external stakeholders"), respect, engagement with the community, open communication, honesty, initiative and economic empowerment".

The chapter focuses on five questions relating to internal transformation: i) was there a change in understandings of what conservation should involve?; ii) was this change expressed in new practices and organisational transformation structures and policies? iii) were the new organisational transformation structures representative? (iv) how effective were they ? and (v) was racism and sexism eliminated from the organisation?

The first question relates to the notion of a 'paradigm shift' from the ideas, beliefs and understandings that informed preconceptions of the apartheid-era authorities that managed national parks in South Africa. During this period the management of national parks was based on the mandate to conserve and protect biological diversity, and its reservation for the racially exclusive enjoyment and appreciation of the white population. The following historical practices to achieve this were: i) people were removed from their land, sometimes forcibly; ii) the land was fenced off and flora and fauna were accorded statutory

protection, and iii) only white people were allowed access to the parks as tourists, scientists and students. These practices failed to address rural poverty and created hostility between the park and surrounding communities. During the negotiated elite transition to democracy described in chapter one, the recognition spread that these racialised injustices had to be addressed.

This chapter draws on Child's theoretical framework which consists of three main components of a paradigm shift to assess whether conservation institutions in transitional societies in southern Africa have transformed. The first component of the paradigm shift that has to occur is that protected areas have to be regarded as 'common pool resources' that are reserved on behalf of society (Child B., *et al.* in Child (ed.) 2004:129). Several societies in southern Africa are grappling with issues such as poverty and are aiming towards creating sustainable livelihoods. To make parks relevant to these societies in transition, they have to provide for social needs, such as employment and economic growth, while conserving biological diversity (Child B., *et al.* in Child (ed.) 2004). This paradigm transcends traditional conservation values that prioritised the conservation of flora and flora, a sense of place, as well as pristine wilderness, exclusive of the needs of its poor neighbours. It rests on the hypothesis that if parks can be of service to society conservation will be supported. (Child B., *et al.* in Child (ed.) 2004).

The second component of the paradigm shift for parks in transitional societies is the concept of 'performance accountability'. On a political level, because parks have to position themselves as a common pool resource, they have to be answerable to society, "while avoiding the problems of elite predation" (Child B., *et al.* in Child (ed.) 2002: 4). The questions to be asked are: "What do parks deliver and to whom? How well do they deliver?" (Child B., *et al.* in Child (ed.) 2004: 128-129). The accountabilities have to be clearly defined, beginning with a clear mandate (Ibid). The other accountabilities are setting clear objectives and goals; focusing on a few priorities; defining measurements and performance; instituting feedback and control systems; formally auditing objectives and results to enable adaptation and to reduce redundant functions, as well as the prioritisation of the uses of scarce resources (Drucker 1973 cited in Child B., *et al.* in Child (ed.) 2004). Leadership is an important pre-requisite for accountability, particularly in defining the institution's mission and purpose, and for setting and focusing on priorities (Child B., *et al.* in Child (ed.) 2004). The third component of the paradigm shifts that parks have had to undergo is to recognise that their management systems and structures have been inefficient, myopic and inward looking and have not considered the needs of the poor people living in and /or on the boundaries of the protected areas. (Ibid)

To successfully integrate the three components of a paradigm shift into the institutional fabric of national parks, the shift has to be made explicit and must be managed proactively (Child B. *et al.* in Child (ed.) 2004). An assessment of some of these protected areas in southern Africa has shown that the demands that the paradigm shift posed for them were so overwhelming, that they lost focus (Ibid). Part of the problem in implementing these three components of the paradigm shift was that implementation necessitated a complete

change of orientation for conservation bureaucrats (Ibid). According to a park warden in Uganda this was "…a bitter pill to swallow" (Budiansky 1995: 247 cited in Hulme and Murphree (eds). 2001: 282).

This chapter argues that attempts to transform the organisation were characterised by a pervasive duality: the first aspect was that organisational change was accompanied by a continuation of embedded notions and attitudes that were reminiscent of the apartheid era. The second aspect was the continued weakening of organisational transformation structures under newly appointed black leadership, which made it difficult to implement and strengthen transformation policies.

Constraints on organisational transformation

The partial nature of the transfer of political power meant that there were significant constraints on institutional transformation. The ANC was assimilated into the formations of state power that existed under apartheid, and a particularly significant political compromise reached during the negotiations, was the 'sunset clause' that guaranteed apartheid era civil servants their jobs. This meant that because the ANC had agreed to retain the security forces and civil service that were appointed during the pre-negotiations period, the transformative potential of the civil service was limited (Marais 1998). Thus implementing meaningful organisational change in SANParks was curtailed (Fig 2000; Fakir 1997). The implications of this for SANParks were that for the five-year duration of the sunset clause, the organisation retained much of its leadership, key technocrat positions, organisational memory and culture that were operational during apartheid. This reinforced the attitudes of the reactionary 'old guard' who were on the newly constituted Board, as well as all levels of the existing white staff.

Another factor that inhibited the transformation agenda was the need to reach a level of financial independence to supplement the national government subsidy. The result was that the leadership focus shifted towards fiscal alternatives, to increase financial viability and effective cost management, as well as promoting the commercialisation and outsourcing of some park services, while strengthening the core mandate of conserving biodiversity. In the process the transformation agenda was surpassed by the imperatives of financial survival and the historical core competency and *raison d'etre* of conserving biodiversity.

The subsidy received by SANParks from national government for operational expenses in 1993/1994 was ZAR 50 530 000, although the figures were higher for the fiscal years 1997/1998 (ZAR 59 296 004) as well as 2004 (ZAR 74 823 000); (South African National Parks. Annual Report 1993/1994, 1997, 1998, 2004; Email correspondence. Dirk Fourie. Director of Finance. 4 March 2012) According to one source the organisation claimed a shortfall compared to their expectations in 1998 (Nyambe 2005). As a result, the organisation felt it had to concentrate on fiscal and monetary discipline to generate income and become a

successful profit-generating institution. Thus a key performance area for SANParks leadership at national office and park level became financial viability. Issues of business plans, outsourcing and commercialisation became organisational preoccupations (See Cock and Fig, 2002).

Grants received for SANParks' operational expenses 1993 - 2004

Year	National Government Subsidy	Provincial Government Grant	Local Authority Grant
1993/1994	50 530 000		
1995	49 308 738		
1996	50 449 000		
1996/1997	57 897 000		
1997/1998	59 296 004		
1998/1999	50 000 000	9 258 333	
1999/2000	51 000 000	10 380 867	
2000/2001	51 000 000		10 746 000
2002	63683 000		11 530 000
2003	60 752 000		11 506 000
2004	74 823 000		962 000
Sub-Total			
Total	423 867 738	19 639 200	34 744 000

Figure 2

(South African National Parks. 1993/1994. Annual Report; South African National Parks 1995; South African National Parks. 1996 Annual Report; South African National Parks. 1997. Annual Report; South African National Parks. 1998. Annual Report; South African National Parks. 1999. Annual Report; South African National Parks 2000. Annual Report; South African National Parks. 2001. Annual Report; South African National Parks 2002. Annual Report; South African National Parks. 2003. Annual Report; South African National Parks; South African National Parks. 2004. Annual Report; South African National Parks. 2004 -2005. Annual Report; E-mail correspondence. Dirk Fourie. Director of Finance. South African National Parks. 4 March 2010).

These figures reflect the grants received for SANParks' operational expenses. It excludes the land acquisition grant which was received from 2002 to the tune of R8,0m,in 2003 R8,0m and in 2004 R32,0m. It also excludes the monies received for the Expanded Public Works Projects (EPWP). It is clear the government subsidy did not decline during the period under review. However, it did not increase in proportion to inflation.

Another constraint was that the prevailing organisational culture was resistant to change. "Culture is to the organisation what character is to the individual" (Schein 1992:196). Organisational culture is the accumulation of learnt experiences that members of an organisation share. An organisational culture

develops when members have to deal with challenges and problem-solve. This includes the understandings gained that comprised the basis of decision-making. Learning therefore is a dynamic process, it grows with time and experiences that stem from the shared reality of dealing with challenges that are posed by a particular environment. As problems are dealt with, some aspects or principles repeat themselves and begin to form a framework for solution seeking. These principles become central to implied assumptions which impact on perceptions, thoughts, beliefs and to a certain extent, actions. Thus a model for problem solving is developed, which does not always respond positively to the need to adapt (Schein 1992).

Relating Schein's theory to SANParks means that racial discrimination, sexism, inequality and the absence of respect for human rights were intrinsic to the organisation's historical culture. In the pre-1994 period these norms and values were embedded and shared; they were taken for granted implicit assumptions. Post-1994 SANParks these notions were carried forward by reactionary elements who formed 'the old guard'. They remained entrenched within the culture of the organisation and comprised the basis on which the established structures and white leadership resisted the introduction of a 'deep' transformative organisational culture. Applying Schein's theory to SANParks means that to initiate successful transformation, the organisation had to challenge its basic assumptions about the world and the workplace (Schein 1996). Analysed against this backdrop, introducing organisational transformation was indeed a challenging task.

In addition, the organisational culture in the conservation sector more broadly in South Africa was largely dominated by exclusion and authoritarianism. Conservation organisations were controlled by white people and the organisational culture was largely reflective of the repressive apartheid system (Cock in Cock and Koch 1991).

This was the context in which new transformation structures were established comprising a new Board of Curators and a Transformation Task Group. The most important of these new structures, the SED, is discussed below.

Transformation Structures

(i)The Establishment of the Transformation Task Group (TTG) 1995 – 2001 and Ombudsperson

In 1995 the new Board of Curators appointed a Transformation Task Group to drive organisation transformation at every level in the organisation as a whole, and specifically to eliminate racism and sexism. This was a small and short-lived structure. A year later **the** TTG structure had a national office

based co-ordinator, Tlhothlo, and two regional TTG coordinators, situated in the KNP and the Addo Elephant National Park respectively. The TTG established a Programme of Action (PoA), which included change teams which were established in all the national parks to communicate transformation issues to all workers, and to raise the awareness of park managers, camp managers, rangers and all other park staff regarding the impact that their racist, sexist and discriminatory behaviour had on the transformation agenda. In the bigger KNP camps, there were volunteer five member change teams (South African National Parks. Board papers. 16 September 1996; Honey 1999; Informant 15, Skukuza, 12/9/2007). This involved a devolution of the POA function to the park level. It marked the beginning of a limited transformation process, but it incurred some resistance. Given that SANParks employed almost 2 000 people at this time, this was an ambitious programme.

Another role assigned to the national co-ordinator was to function as an internal auditor for forensic transformation issues. Her third role was to serve as Ombudsperson to mediate in conflict situations (South African National Parks. *Kiewiet*. November 1998; South African National Parks. Staff memorandum. 8 July 1998; South African National Parks. Board Papers. 12 March 1999).

At the beginning of 1996 there were bottom-up participatory processes to sensitise and raise levels of awareness amongst all levels of staff (including executive and senior park management), to promote the transformation and diversity management agenda, and to begin to determine what the organisation's new values were. These workshops were facilitated by an externally contracted agency. It was the first time that park staff members of all races and levels met and communicated with each other. The fact that these sensitising workshops were unprecedented, suggests that a limited organisational paradigm shift had begun. Previously no opportunity was provided where the grievances of black workers regarding racial discrimination and human rights abuses could be expressed. Thus the PoA began a limited reversal of the historical organisational culture by providing a platform for workers to report incidents of abuse such as beatings by sectional rangers and even abuse by very senior corporate staff. Extensive reports of other abuses and discrimination also emerged, including verbal racial slurs. Although the workshops also served as a platform to express anger and frustration that emanated from both black and white employees in the transformation process, they simultaneously elicited resistance from some white employees whose understandings remained embedded in the previous era (South African National Parks. *Kiewiet* November/December 1996; Informant 15, Skukuza, 12/9/2007; Informant 14, Midrand, 27/5/2005; Honey 1999; Cock and Fig in McDonald (ed) 2002).

This resistance manifested firstly, when the camp managers and rangers in the KNP did not attend these workshops (South African National Parks. Board papers. 21 November 1997). Secondly it surfaced through the continuation of some white employees' old habits of using racial slurs such as "kaffir" and general

abusive language such as “houtkop” (Informant 15, Skukuza, 12/9/2007; Informant 14, Midrand, 27/5/2005). Although this was done in the absence of black staff, it made some white staff who disagreed with this practice uncomfortable (Chairperson’s Committee Meeting, 14 August 1998). In addition, according to two informants while the director of the KNP was purportedly supporting transformation in his reports to the Board, he thwarted deep change, for example by deliberately delaying meetings to discuss and resolve issues relating to transformation. (Informant 15, Skukuza, 12/9/2007; Informant 14, Midrand, 27/5/2005).

This highlighted a weakness in the TTG structure: it had no disciplinary authority. Nonetheless, efforts to communicate the transformation agenda and process to staff continued through a bi–weekly newsletter titled *Lesedinyana,* and *Kiewiet*, an internal SANParks newsletter that included information on transformation. The latter published a pledge to reverse “normal organisational practice of top-down decision-making in such matters [referring to transformation and new values) and to initiate a bottom-up approach” (*Kiewiet*, January 1997: 1). The SED Director, Ngeleza stressed that transformation involved ‘greater participation’ from all (*Kiewiet*, January 1997: 1*)*. However the emphasis in these publications was on improving standards of service and achieving equity in the sense of ‘equal treatment.’ “If equity is the essential outcome of transformation, it is going to change our culture, the way we deliver our services and our overall performance. We are dead serious about empowering people on the ground, the frontline worker toiling away in the parks. They are directly and most immediately involved at the heart of our business, that is, managing biodiversity, bringing people into parks, forging good relations with adjacent communities and providing services to our esteemed visitors. Tourists are our benefactors; we as employees depend on them for our livelihood” (*Kiewiet*, November 1998:1).

By the end of 1996, organisation-wide value sharing award ceremonies were held to encourage employees to commit to and embrace the eight new values of transformation in relation to standards of service within the organisation (South African National Parks. *Kiewiet* November/December 1996; Honey 1999; Informant 15, Skukuza, 12/9/2007; Informant 14, Midrand, 27/5/2005). These values were identified through a participatory process involving workshops of all staff in every park. They were “equal treatment as the driving value, in addition to participative decision-making, quality(sic) of service, honesty, transparency, shared information, consistency and interdependence” (*Kiewiet* January 1997: 1). The award ceremonies were open to all staff, regardless of race, yet some lower level black staff reported their exclusion from the events and experienced them as racially discriminatory (Informant 15, Skukuza, 12/9/2007). This was understood to indicate that SANParks had not fundamentally transformed its historical organisational culture characterised by racial discrimination.

The national TTG office (and ombudsperson as a stand-alone entity) was short-lived. It was absorbed into the Human Resources Directorate (HRD) by 2001 (Informant 14, Midrand, 27/5/2005; South African National Parks. Board papers. 15 May 1998). Subsumed within the HRD’s broader mandate its function

was diluted, and specific transformation-related organisational development planning, implementation and evaluation processes ended (Informant 15, Skukuza, 27/9/2007). This was part of an organisation-wide financial austerity measure in 2001, known as "Operation Prevail". The question has to be asked: Why was this allowed to happen?

The answer lies in the weakness at two levels within SANParks: firstly a constrained new black executive leadership. The first black person who was appointed the CEO of SANParks in 1997, stated that transformation was a "defining characteristic and motivational force in contemporary post-1994 South Africa" (Msimang 2000: 11). However there were significant constraints on radical institutional change. These constraints were rooted in the nature of the negotiated transition to democracy which not only involved the retention of reactionary elements in key positions, but in addition many new appointments to state institutions involved the confirmation of elite interests (Magome, 2004). "This confluence of elite interests between the old and the new guards ensured opposition to radical changes in park management" (Maguranyanga 2009: 107). By 2004, a key informant concluded that "Transformation was always full of lip service, because the organisation was driven by a financial struggle, and park managers had to meet the bottom line [that is financial viability] (Informant 16, Pretoria, 11/5/2005).

Two members of the board agreed**,** "While the Transformation Task Team has been monitoring and evaluating the transformation process within the SANP, it is clear that there is a long way to go before fundamental transformation as opposed to a shallow restructuring is achieved. Leadership of this process must take place at the highest level, so that the values of the new organisational culture can be infused throughout the institution." (Cock and Fig 2002:150).

It is shown below that a second source of both strength and weakness lay in the social composition and functioning of a third transformation-oriented structure a new Board of Curators (the Board), appointed in 1995.

(ii) Appointment of a New Board of Curators

The crucial questions are whether the new Board was more representative in race and gender terms, and whether it was effective in driving the organisational transformation process? Before 1994 board members included provincial administrators and were exclusively white men, often connected to the Nationalist government (Carruthers 1995). "The organisation as a whole was therefore white controlled and largely reflected the culture and practices of apartheid" (Cock and Fig, 2002:132).

The new national democratic framework required a reconfiguration of the antiquated national parks structure into a democratically appointed and demographically represented one. As a result, the new Board of Curators was constituted through a process of nominations according to the National Parks

Amendment Act of 1995, passed by the democratic Government of National Unity. This Act allowed for nine provincial representatives nominated by each provincial premier, and nine cabinet-approved public nominees, after the Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism had invited interested parties to submit names of suitable persons.

Compared to 1991, when 11 white males comprised the full Board complement, by 1995-1996 there were 18 Board trustees that were more demographically and gender representative; it included six black people, and six women. By 2004 the number of women increased to seven (Carruthers 1995; Msimang *et al* in Hall-Martin *et al* ; SANParks 2004; South African National Parks Annual Report 1995-1996). Thus organisational change was also structurally expressed in a new Board which was demographically and gender representative compared to its predecessors. For some Board members transformation was limited to appointing black leadership and affirmative action policies. This racialized focus neglected other aspects of transformation involving the redistribution of power and resources.

It is debatable whether the political composition of the new board reflected the interests of the majority of South Africans. It was politically diverse but, with three exceptions, the majority came from what Terreblanche terms “the old white corporate elite and the emerging black elite.” (Terreblanche, 2012: 67). Thus, the majority of members of the new board reflected the elite compromise that formed the basis of South Africa’s transition to democracy and was expressed in the Government of National Unity. “The compromise that was ultimately agreed upon was one on behalf of the narrow class interests of each one of the participant elite groups, while the interests of the majority of South Africans who were not represented in the secret negotiations were terribly neglected.” (Terreblanche, 2012:67). This compromise led to the failure of new post-apartheid institutions such as the new SANParks Board to drive a deep transformative agenda to create a more just and equal society.

The focus of the Board was on organisational governance and accountability within the emerging democratic, political system. The aim of this new structure contrasted with the organisation’s historical aim of exclusively protecting and conserving biodiversity since its inception in 1926 discussed above. Its new vision stated “the National Parks Board will be the pride and joy of all South Africans”. Its mission was, “To acquire and manage a system of national parks that represents the indigenous wildlife, vegetation, landscapes and significant cultural assets of South Africa for the pride and benefit of the nation” (South African National Parks 1998: 4). Its transformation statement encapsulates the aims and mission and reads: “South African National Parks is striving to transfer power and control of resources from the minority that had been appointed and privileged by an undemocratic system, to the majority that participates in the new democratic process. It is also directing the benefits of its activities to providing for all South Africans, rather than the more wealthy and privileged sections of society” (Cited in Cock and Fig 2000:134). The new vision and mission clearly incorporated the concept of protecting cultural as well as biological assets while benefiting and instilling pride in all South Africans. The new Board had to

"[promote] a new, holistic conservation paradigm and the transformation of our organisation" (Cock 1999:1). These statements signalled a dramatic shift towards transformation in the deep sense of linking conservation to social justice.

However the first Board (1995-1999), despite its role of being the custodian of human and moral values in the organisation, was not a strong or cohesive structure. It was not able to function with one voice (South African National Parks. Board papers, 12 March 1999; South African National Parks. Land Claims Committee. 6 November 1998; Informant 35, Johannesburg, 30/5/2005; Informant 18, Johannesburg, 2/6/2005; Informant 17, Pretoria, 30/5/2005). According to one informant, "The new Board was marked by confusion, for example over what the new and unfamiliar concept of social ecology involved, as well as very different political orientations" (Informant 2, Johannesburg. 2/6/2005).

Furthermore, on the Board there were tensions regarding the distinction between operational and policy issues. A serious source of difficulty was resistance from some officials who were defensive about "… interference of the Board in management issues" (Informant 2, Johannesburg, 2/6/2005).Overall the board was marked by a lack of cohesion with different understandings of transformation which reflected different political allegiances.

The new Board included members of the 'old guard' and only three of the new members had any understanding of the relation between social and conservation issues. In addition, they were inexperienced in relation to management issues. Many informants stressed that the SED did not receive the support it needed from both the new Board and the executive leadership of SANParks to drive transformation in any deep sense. According to one source, "Dr Ngeleza's aggressive approach to 'transformation' and demand for radical change in the racial profile of management as well as meaningful engagement with African communities neighbouring national parks made her unpopular with white leadership. She felt strongly that the SEU (SED) should be treated as an agent of transformation" (Maguranyana, 2009:83). In terms of executive leadership support for the transformation agenda in general, and the SED specifically, Ngeleza first experienced resistance from the CEO (Wainwright) who was followed by the first black CEO appointed in 1997. It was during the latter's tenure that she resigned (Informant 14, Midrand 27/5/2005).

One view regarding Board level recognition and support of the SED was that "…. Board members who came from historically disadvantaged backgrounds were very marginal in their level of support of organisational transformation and the SE unit (SED) and in some cases even opposed by latter, by arguing for a demotion of its status. Some white members who were from the previous Board opposed organisational transformation and the concept and implementation of social ecology. There was at best marginal support for the SE Unit (SED)" (Informant 18. Johannesburg 2/6/2005). Several informants maintained that in the context of neo-liberalism and elite-pacting, the newly restructured Board and black executive leadership were merely symbolic of transformation.

However, two important new Board sub-committees were established; one on conservation and social ecology and one on land claims. The second one chaired by Dr Fig was people centred and redress-related. "Its major achievement was the development of a land claims policy and approach that enabled the communities such as Makuleke and the Kalahari San and SANParks to agree on land claim settlements. It was not an easy process but we succeeded in opening up negotiations that took into consideration the interests of the communities and SANParks" (Informant 14, Midrand 27/5/2005). However, it is significant that by 2004 there was no SED representation on the Land Claims Sub-Committee or on the land claims negotiations team (Informant 17, Pretoria. 30/5/2005).

There was some opposition from the Board to the formation of the conservation and social ecology sub-committee on the grounds that it would take up many resources and capacity relative to the size of the Board. Shahid, the director of the SED (2003 onwards) had to write several documents to justify having such a Board subcommittee. It was termed 'the social ecology and conservation committee' and sometimes 'the conservation committee'. The sub-committee was eventually established in 1998 "to provide outward-looking strategic leadership... to champion the maintenance of adequate standards in the natural and social sciences … reconciling conservation with human development needs" (SANParks Conservation Committee meeting 19 and 20 August, 1998). It was intended to promote a "new philosophical approach to conservation ... involving a synergy between the traditional view of conservation and the conservation of cultural and social aspects in the management of natural systems" (Committee minutes 14,15,16 October, 1998). In addition, some social ecology issues were dealt with in the land claims sub-committee – also a structure reluctantly retained because the organisation had so much of this to deal with" (Informant 35, Johannesburg, 30/5/2005).

By 2004 Board sub-committees on conservation and land claims were reluctantly retained. Despite professed organisational change that included social ecology as one of the three interconnected and foundational pillars of SANParks, alongside tourism, and the conservation of biodiversity, one informant maintained that "a business outlook is trying to mainstream conservation. It is clear that social ecology is not important when particular issues creep in, it is the softer option in the bigger scheme of things. There is no apparent financial interest in social ecology, we talked previously about poverty relief but it was a finance discourse rather than on poverty. Social ecology is viewed as educating the masses and doing goodwill for the organisation in terms of the media, but it does not do much more" (Informant 17, Johannesburg, 30/5/2005).

By 2004, Board acceptance and support for organisational transformation and the establishment of a strong SED was not unanimous because there were still ideological barriers to these concepts and financial sustainability remained the key organisational priority:

> "There has not been much transformation with the change of the Board since 1999. There is some disillusionment within the PCD [SED] regarding the role of the board. Support for social ecology varies across the Board but conservation and tourism are dominant. This is despite the fact that the World Parks Congress in Durban in 2003 and the World Conservation Union's Congress in Thailand in 2004, had as its theme *Conservation Beyond Boundaries.* It is evident that there is an international move to prioritise social ecology along with the conservation of biodiversity. Yet in SANParks, tourism is the obvious financial driver of the organisation. Groupings on the Board have other priorities that exclude social ecology, because the ideology is new. Although SANParks' discourses are on social ecology issues, it does not make it a reality in practice, it just makes nice marketing but there is a big gap" (Informant 35, Johannesburg, 30/5/2005).

The Board Sub-Committee on conservation and social ecology was a working group appointed on a permanent basis (for the three year tenure of Board members) to deal with regular matters, make recommendations and provide high level strategic, policy, vision, planning and positioning direction for Board approval (South African National Parks. undated. Directorate: People and Conservation. Charter of the Sub-Committee of the Board for People and Conservation; Informant 17, Johannesburg, 30/5/2005). While it was chaired by Desai a board member, there were four other board members that served on it whose occupations were meant to match the required skills - the provincial representatives from the Western Cape and the Eastern Cape, a representative from a conservation area in the Limpopo province and a representative who also worked for the national energy regulator. Its membership also included the CEO, the executive manager of the CEO's office, the Board secretary and the designated directors for the SED, Conservation Services, Parks, Marketing and Tourism and the KNP, all in advisory capacities. While the sub-committee had to meet a minimum of once every quarter, meetings could be convened on special request if a majority of members so required. However, a highly placed informant disdainfully declared that, "After having to fight for a space and budget for the sub-committee, we did not have the required skills nor did members attend meetings, and this included the CEO. The PCD [SED] was not strongly nor uniformly supported by the Board." (Informant 17, Johannesburg, 30/5/2005).

By 2004, the limitations of implementing transformation policies emerged clearly as resistance from the old guard who were based in some parks and some regional offices (South African National Parks. Board papers. 14 August 1998; South African National Parks. Board papers. 16 September 1996; South African National Parks. Board papers. 21 November 1996; Informant 17, Pretoria, 30/5/2005). A Board member explained why this resistance was allowed to persist "There was Board support for conservation and tourism, but transformation was not uniformly supported, and was excluded by particular groupings on the Board" (Informant 18, Johannesburg, 2/6/2005).

The support for the ideas of social ecology, as well as the structures and functions of the SED needed to be made stronger and clearer by the Board. As Drucker argued, one of the roles of a Board is to function as the conscience of an organisation (Drucker 1909). Several informants stressed that the Board was not fully committed to empowering the social ecology structure and function. Instead, between 1994-2004, they maintained that it was clear that at Board level, the social ecology structure was consistently weakened and contested, suggesting that organisational transformation was hindered from the very top.

TRANSFORMATION POLICIES

The SANParks transformation process required not only the establishment of structures to drive transformation but the development of a spate of transformation policies. This was a bureaucratic aspect that Brechin *et al* considered important for conservation agencies to reorient themselves. Their suggested methodology is to adopt a "generative, learning culture…" (Brechin *et al* 2003: 160). This included organising and transforming an organisation's "…*core technology."* (Thompson 1967 cited in Brechin *et al* 2003: 162). Applying Thompson's theory to SANParks' transformation process meant that since the organisation's core technology historically centred on conservation, it had to reorient itself to "…[transform] its inputs, such as materials, energy, labour, creativity, and information into some kind of good or service" (Ibid). For the first time in SANParks therefore, these goods or services had to include an ethos of social responsibility.

During the 1990s it became recognised that a key aspect of responsible change was to create more demographic representivity. The outcome was that one of the most important changes driven by the new transformation structures was the introduction of Affirmative Action Policies.

Implementing Affirmative Action, Race and Gender Policies

In South Africa as a whole the transformation process included the development and implementation of Affirmative Action (AA) according to national policy and legislation guidelines, to transcend historical disadvantages and exclusion. Affirmative Action involved corrective measures to ensure representation in the workforce of all races, of women and of people with disabilities. In addition, gender policies were introduced that aimed to address issues that negatively affected gender equality and the relationship between men and women in the workplace (RSA 1998; Office on the Status of Women. undated). This was necessary because apartheid labour market policies had restricted access to skilled work for these three categories. In SANParks it meant that all new appointments, promotions, in-service training, succession, skills and career development had to be equally open to all races and gender (Msimang *et al* in Hall-Martin *et al* 2003; South African National Parks. Board papers. 20 February 1998). Affirmative

action was introduced by the new board in 1998 but was slow to percolate through the white dominated organisation.

Nevertheless, there was a growing recognition that a crucial aspect of the transformation of SANParks was to make the organisation both more representative of the demographic composition of the wider society and to change the racial composition of those wielding power and authority. Therefore more executive and senior black appointments were made according to AA policies.(See below)

The SANParks used the Paterson job evaluation system for grading positions. It is commonly used in South Africa, and recognised internationally through the International Labour Organisation. The SANParks categorised jobs into six groups or bands: Band F executive management; Band E senior management; Band D middle management; Band C skilled/supervisory; Band B semi-skilled/clerical, and; Band A unskilled (*Kiewiet*. November 1998). The data in the two graphs below depicts employment trends in SANParks for whites and blacks for almost every year between 1994-2004. Subsequent graphs show employment in various categories for the years 1997, 2003, 2004 and, 2004-2005 only. This is to ensure consistency and comparability for the same years, and was also dependent on the availability of data. The annual reports from which this data was compiled referred to the previous year. The 1995-2005 reporting period is therefore the 1994-2004 period.

In 1994, white employees overwhelmingly occupied executive leadership, senior management, middle management, and skilled and supervisory positions. As shown in the graph below, white employees occupied less than 10% of semi-skilled positions and no white employees held unskilled positions.

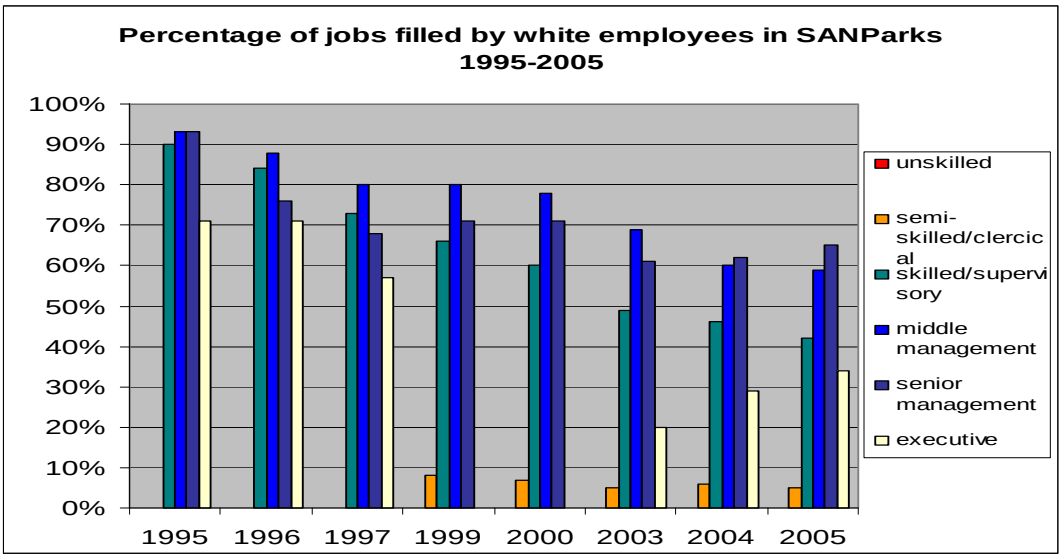


Figure 3

(South African National Parks. Annual Reports 1993/1994; Annual Report 1995; Annual Report 1996; Annual Report 1997; Annual Report 1998; Annual Report 1999; Annual Report 2000; Annual Report 2001; Annual Report 2002; Annual Report 2003; Annual Report. 2004; Annual Report 2004-2005).

The graph reveals a steep drop in positions occupied by white executives beginning in 1997, a preamble to the promulgation of the Employment Equity Act(EEA) in 1999. Yet the graph also shows a rebound of white executives from 2003 which an informant suggested could have reflected a change in policy to attract scarce technical skills. (Informant 16, Pretoria. 11/5/2005). The graph also shows the rapid increase in the number of black employees in executive positions. In 1999-2000 black employees held all executive positions reflecting the effect of the expiration of the sunset clause and the implementation of affirmative action. The fall in black executive numbers from 2003 – 2005 was possibly due to the increased opportunities that arose as a result of EEA requirements.

However the number of black employees in unskilled and semi-skilled positions remained constant. While there was growth in the numbers of black managers (middle and senior) they did not constitute more than 40% in either band. The increase in black skilled employees mirrors the decrease of white employees at the same level.

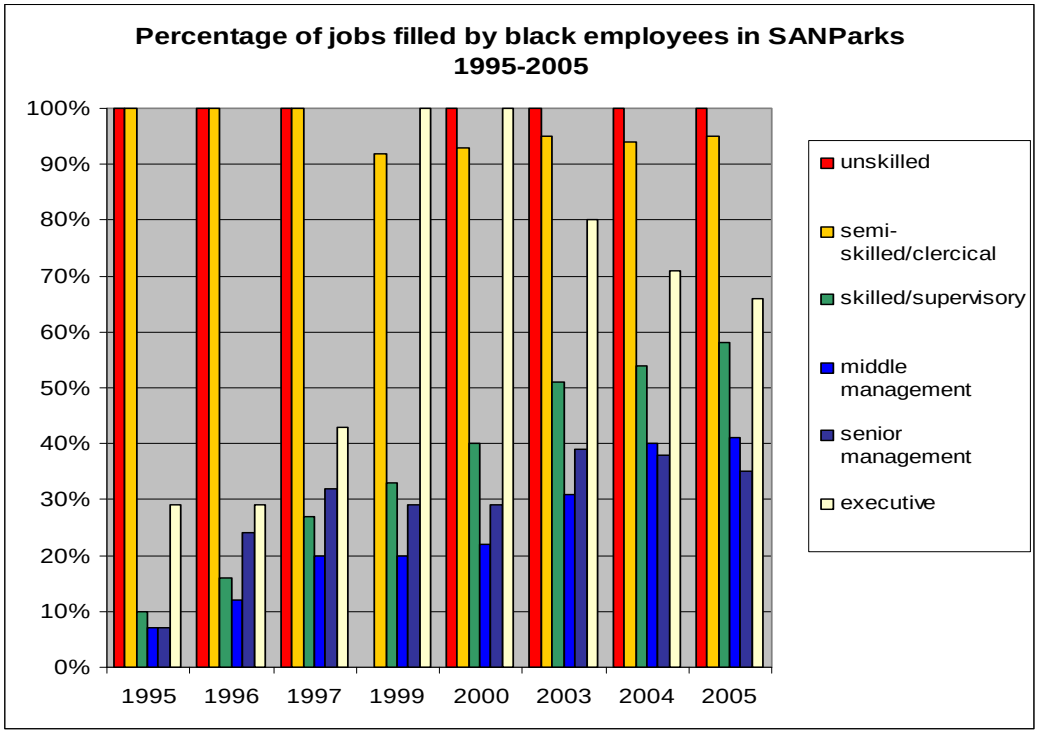


Figure 4

(South African National Parks. 1993/1994; Annual Report 1995; Annual Report 1996; Annual Report 1997; Annual Report 1998; Annual Report 1999; Annual Report 2000; Annual Report 2001; Annual Report 2002; Annual Report 2003; Annual Report. 2004; Annual Report 2004-2005).

Leadership Appointments

The majority of Board members considered appointing black leadership to be an important aspect of transformative change. As a result the Board appointed the first black CEO in 1997 and the first black director of the SED 1998.

According to one source, this was necessary because white leadership could not be relied upon to implement change. In his view, Wainwright, the CEO from the apartheid era who remained in place until 1996, "managed to change observable characteristics (eg. organizational structure, policies and procedures etc) and symbols (uniforms, names etc). However, he did not transform the basic ingrained assumptions of park management and therefore stifled the development of a new vision of park management and "mutually beneficial partnerships between parks and rural black communities" (Maguranyanga 2009: 89). The CEO left SANParks in 1996, but, according to a key informant, "the system had already kicked him out. He had no credibility with the Board or the transformation process" (Informant 14, Midrand, 27/5/2005). He differed with the majority of the Board, on a number of issues. For example, he opposed the policy of granting concessions to private companies to operate the tourism aspects of national parks (Informant 19, Johannesburg, 2/6/2005; Magome 2004). There were also other criticisms of his leadership such as "narrow vision, failure to back senior black staff members, and paranoia about his more conservative enemies inside the parks…" (Honey 1999: 351).

Affirmative action appointments at national Office and the KNP 1996 – 2004

At national office level in 1997, Mandla's appointment as the first black male CEO of SANParks was hailed as a step in the direction of transformation. Rammutla, a black male was appointed the director of marketing and communications. In addition, between 1997-2005 there were three black women, comprising just below 20% of the national office's Executive Management structure by 2005. Since the establishment of the National Parks Board in 1926, these positions had always been filled by white men (Informant 14, Midrand 27/5/2006). Ngeleza, a black female, was appointed the Director of Social Ecology when it was upgraded in 1996. Dlamini was appointed the Director of Human Resources in 1997 replacing Mokatle, who was the first black male director appointed before the transformation process had begun in 1994 (Informant 14, Midrand, 27/5/2006). Shahid, a black female, was appointed as Director of Social Ecology in 2003 (Informant 17, Pretoria, 30/5/2005). Prior to Shahid's appointment two other black appointments were made to head the SED.

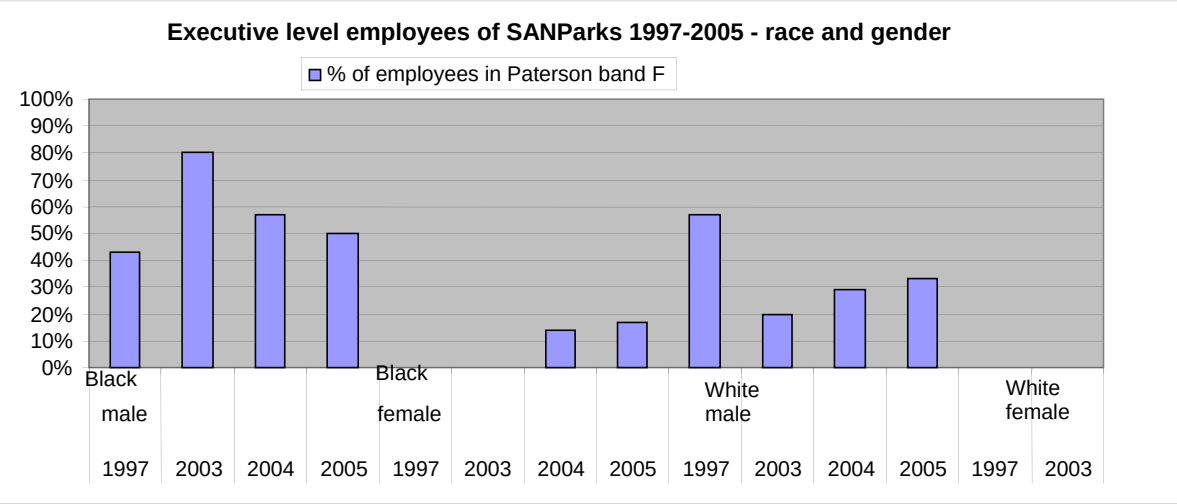


Figure 5
(South African National Parks. Annual Report 1997; Annual Report 2003; Annual Report. 2004; Annual Report 2004-2005).

Included in the graph above, at the KNP a black male was appointed the director in 2003 (Informant 14, Midrand, 27/5/2005).

In the graph below, three women were appointed to positions that were previously filled by men in the KNP since its establishment. Van Wyk, a black female, became the Senior Conservation Manager. Freitag, a white female was appointed the Resource Manager in Conservation Management. And Mashego, a black female, filled the Human Resources Manager position (South African National Parks. Board Papers. 20 February 1998).

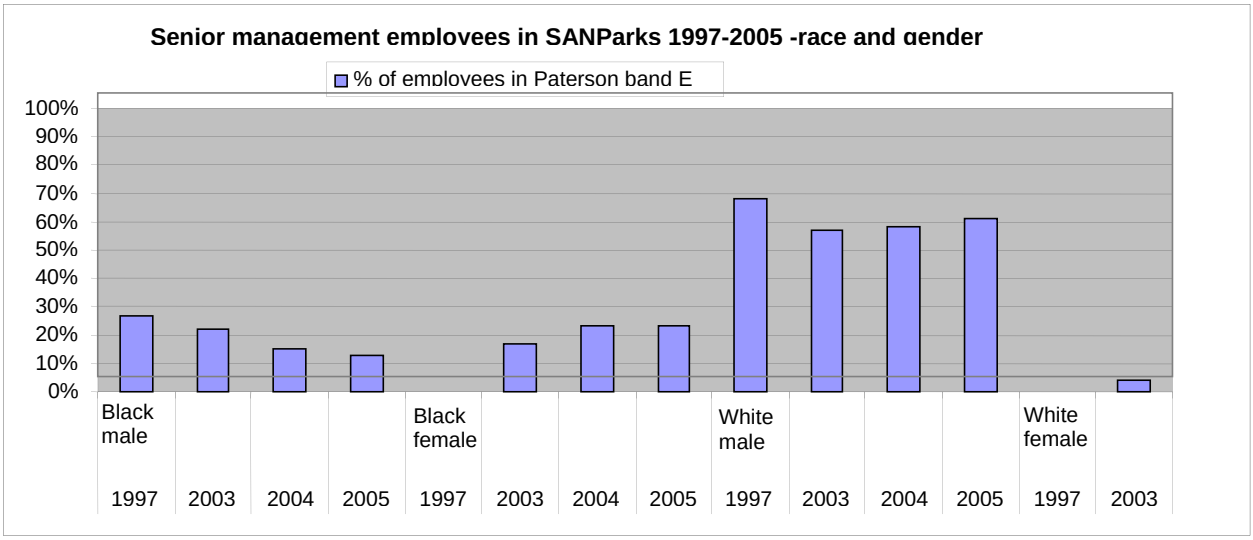


Figure 6
(South African National Parks. Annual Report 1997; Annual Report 2003; Annual Report. 2004; Annual Report 2004-2005).

While the CEO promoted transformation by increasing senior AA and gender sensitive appointments, which are Paterson Bands ranging from C-F, over the five years of his tenure (1997-2003), this did not miraculously translate into fortifying the transformation agenda. One reason was that white males still occupied a considerable portion of executive and senior level posts. As shown in the graph above the percentage of white males in senior management (which is band E on the Paterson scale) remained fairly constant, while there were marginal increases in the number of black and white females. There was a decrease in the number of black males employed in senior management roles between 1997-2005. This indicates that (i) white senior management had fewer options in the job market and despite the AA agenda, SANParks retained them for their technical skill and experience; (ii) black senior management served shorter tenures because they had greater mobility and were not actively retained because they did not have the same level of technical skill and experience as white senior managers. (iii) the low number of white females employed was because they did not have the same level of skills, education or experience as men.

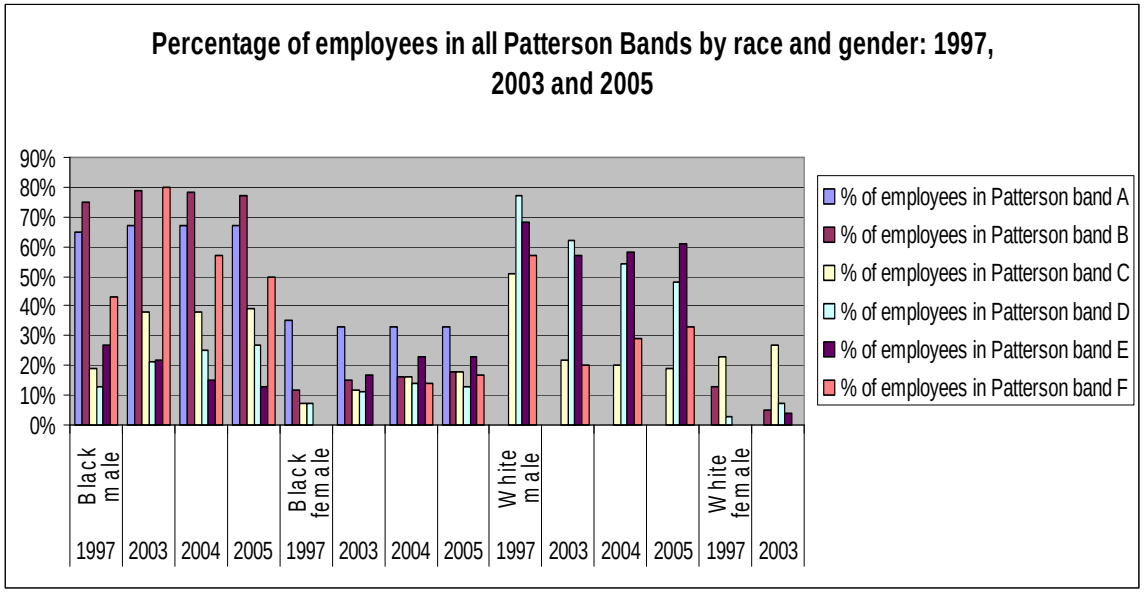


Figure 7
(South African National Parks. Annual Report 1997; Annual Report 2003; Annual Report. 2004; Annual Report 2004-2005).

The executive leadership weakness in implementing the broader transformation agenda, prompted Maguranyanga's summation of Mandla's era as follows: "While SANParks made progress in [appointing black staff in leadership positions] racial transformation, other organisational markers of discrimination in park management practice continued and reflected colonial social relations between parks and local communities" (Maguranyanga 2009: 100).

Middle Management and Technical Appointments

Clearly there were serious attempts to eliminate racial discrimination within the organisation as part of institutional transformation. By 2004, ten Employment Equity and Skills Development Forums (EESDF) had been set up and representatives from each forum constituted the central EESDF. The role and function of the EESDF was to monitor and ensure that all forms of discriminatory employment practices were eliminated. It was also tasked with ensuring that staff development complied with applicable national legislation. It was intended to address the dearth of the relevant skills pool that excluded previously disadvantaged social groups in these posts. It was expected to change the racial profile of managerial and technical positions, which were historically skewed towards white males, towards an equitable future through AA and gender sensitive appointments. The objective was to "develop the skill of its workforce, increase the level of investment in education and training, and encourage employees to participate in learnerships, thus rendering employees competent, effective and more productive in the workplace. By the end of 2003 a total of 1 730 employees had attended skills training programmes and 92 managers were trained in various fields" (South African National Parks. Annual Report. 2004: 15). However, the EESDF as a politically motivated measure to promote internal transformation of SANParks was not matched by a budget for effective implementation.

By 2004, despite the graph below indicating a small but gradual increase in the number of black males and females in middle management roles and a steady decline in the number of white males in the same category, the technical positions remained a white male preserve in SANParks for two reasons. The first was because of the unavailability of suitably qualified black technical candidates. Therefore most of these technical and middle management positions were retained by 'old guard' white males, despite the lapse of the sunset clause. Secondly, the AA system created a huge demand for AA candidates, creating rapid and high mobility for skilled black and female employees. SANParks therefore could not compete with other employers at attracting and retaining the limited national pool of suitably qualified blacks and females.

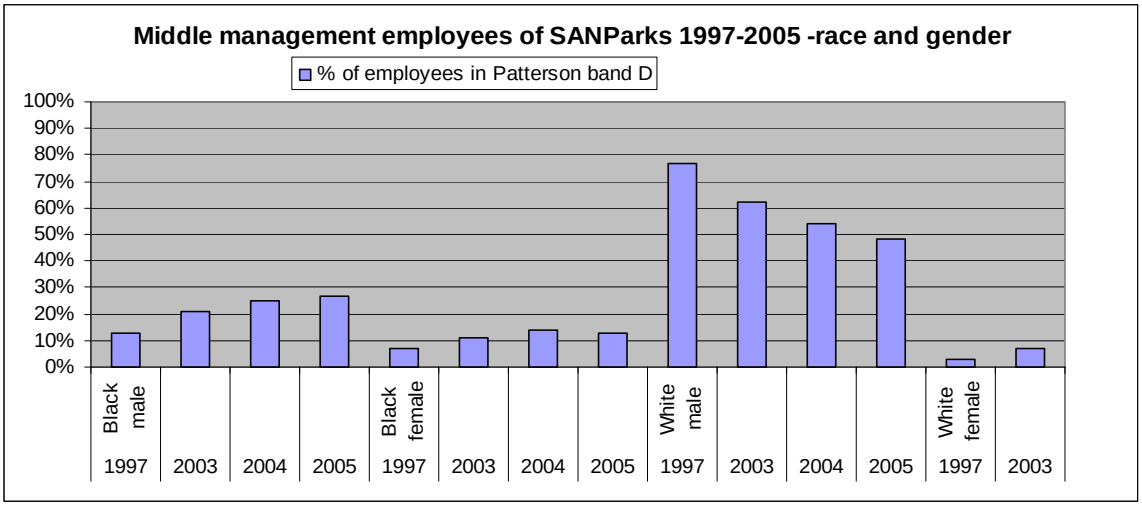


Figure 8

(South African National Parks. Annual Report 1997; Annual Report 2003; Annual Report. 2004; Annual Report 2004-2005).

Ranger Appointments

Before 1994 rangers were the external white-dominated face of the organisation. As part of a 'fences and fines' model of conservation they contributed to levels of antagonism between themselves and the surrounding communities. This pattern changed dramatically in the period under review. It signalled how employment opportunities for Africans were opening up within the park: "most people in the surrounding villages would not have dreamt of getting a position as a ranger before 1994, because their colour and the law barred them from the opportunity" (Informant 15, Skukuza, 12/9/2007). Sourced from ex-poachers within the KNP's surrounding communities, approximately 70 % of the field rangers (as opposed to the higher grade of 'sectional ranger') were black by 1997, increasing to 100% by 2004. This was a significant transformation milestone, because it was achieved through the KNP's own training programme, which involved a 14-day camp to undergo physical fitness tests, firearm handling, law enforcement (which included patrolling for poachers), and monitoring, for example, animal mortality and checks at water points. Rangers also had to pass a written theoretical examination that had to meet standards set by the National Qualification Framework.

Implementing the gender policy in the KNP for lower level appointments, such as the field ranger position was still a challenge by 2004. The 'macho' culture of the pre-1994 rangers was not broken easily, although behaviour such as walking into a shop or camp carrying a gun and intimidating people was discouraged. Added to this masculinist culture were the physical demands of the job, such as law enforcement and monitoring, checking of water points, patrolling to detect poachers, and reporting animal mortality (Informant 15, Skukuza, 12/9/2007; Informant 22, Johannesburg, 20/5/2005). With inadequate

support, the female field rangers did not occupy these positions for long, and by 2004, no new female appointments were made (Informant 13, Skukuza, 13/9/2007).

By 2004, it had become clear that constraints to transformation were not only pertinent to gender issues, but also to reverse racism. A lone white male field ranger appointed in the KNP did not work long because of resistance from his black colleagues. Between 1994–1997 except for one white female, all the section rangers, who were managers in charge of a section of the park, were white males (Informant 13, Skukuza, 13/9/2007). Changing gender relations was understood to be beyond SANParks, as one informant said, "…because gender relations have to be transformed at a more holistic personal and domestic level in the way men relate to their families and wives. Transformation is a long journey and the process has to start from within an individual. The workplace alone cannot change attitudes." (Informant 15, Skukuza, 12/9/2007).

Additional constraints to implementing the organisational development process were that although the AA and gender policies were noted by the Board in 1996, by early 1999 the AA guidelines were not finalised, no implementation plans were developed, nor was it strictly enforced by the Human Resource Directorate (South African National Parks Board Papers 12 March 1999). Furthermore the gender policy was not finalised by June 1999 (South African National Parks. Board papers. 17 and 18 June 1999). Moreover, there were no succession planning or performance appraisal systems linked to transformation (South African National Parks. Board papers. 20 February 1998). Ironically the appointment of black executive leadership did not expedite the finalisation and implementation of these policies. Although transformation was clearly necessary, the new leadership structures regardless of race, were weak because they lacked the necessary political will. For this reason Maguranyanga maintains that,"[t]he contradiction is that merely increasing black managers will not automatically translate into different park-people relationships and emergence of a new park philosophy. Hence, the argument has been that transformation has to go beyond skin colour or de-racialization." (Maguranyanga 2009: 110).

Related to the issue of changing the social composition of the SANParks workforce was a range of issues of working conditions and remuneration policy. There was an improvement in wages for workers doing menial labour compared to the pre-1994 era . "By 2004 things got better over the years. Also all the workers received pension funds by 1996, something they were previously excluded from." (Informant 37, 18/6/2007, Skukuza). However, other informants suggested that this was due more to the achievements of the South African Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers Union (SACCAWU) than the TTG. "The TTG was more focused on bridging the gap in the sense of race and class discrepancies, rather than actual wage negotiations" (Informant 47, 12/9/2007, Skukuza).

Implementing the policy on discriminatory procedures and codes of conduct

Despite the Board's approval of changed disciplinary procedures and codes of conduct to deal with racism and discrimination in 1997, there were reports of park-level transgressions submitted to senior executive leadership at the national office and to the Board (Informant 15, Skukuza, 12 September 2007). Senior management and the Board were aware of reports that there was inconsistency at disciplinary hearings, and white staff received lenient verdicts compared to black staff (Board papers. 14 August 1998). Racial discrimination was still practiced and often no disciplinary action was taken against white staff (Board papers. 16 September 1996).

The KNP as a park level study also exemplified the implementation weaknesses of these policies. The KNP's apartheid-era Director was described as a "loose leader" who did not want to offend anyone by openly supporting or opposing transformation. This fed the prevailing attitude of white management that transformation processes were a waste of time and money, and they used "delay tactics" to thwart any attempts to implement transformation plans and actions (Informant 15, Skukuza, 12 September 2007).

Although white staff that hindered the transformation process were frequently reported to management for disciplinary action, it became standard practice to disregard disciplinary hearing procedures in the KNP. To conceal evidence of this, the TTG co–coordinator and change teams were barred from such hearings, and shop steward attendance was reluctantly granted, pending formal permission (South African National Parks. Board papers. 20 June 1997; Informant 15, Skukuza. 27/9/2007).

Transformation processes clearly needed stronger support from the Board (Informant 15, Skukuza, 12/9/2007). The suggestion that black managers be trained to chair the hearings would not have substantially increased procedural and just outcomes. Distracted by profit generating imperatives, discriminatory practices continued under black executive leadership and the newly configured Board. Explaining transformation lapses in SANParks, Maguranyanga argued that these leadership structures had to adopt "enlightened pragmatism [which] refers to efforts to balance strategic self-interest and shared interests against situational contingencies, and recognizing the relativity of transformational choices and importance of behaving socially appropriate in the new dispensation. In other words, strategic policies and approaches to transformation have to be pragmatic and well informed by conditions on the ground rather purely driven by ideological values and populist demands." (Maguranyanga 2009: 4). Instituting fair disciplinary hearings and procedures became a source of conflict and contestation within SANParks

In addition to these disciplinary procedures and codes of conduct, other transformation policy development processes, discussed below, started in 1994 but by mid to late 1998 they already experienced limitations in guiding and galvanising a common transformation vision among staff and management in

11 parks, including the KNP (South African National Parks. Board papers. 14 August 1998; Informant 15, Skukuza, 27/9/2007).

Implementing Symbolic Changes

As part of its symbolic attempts to transform, the organisation changed its dress code from a para-military uniform, to casual wear. Its name was changed from the National Parks Board to the South African National Parks in 1996. Ironically the TTG reports referred to the organisation by its old name of the National Parks Board (South African National Parks. Board Papers 20 June 1997). The Latin name of the organisation's conservation publication *"Custos"* (custodian/keeper) was changed to *"Timbila"*, which is the Xitsonga word for drum (Informant 13, Skukuza, 13/9/2007; Magome 2004; Maguranyanga 2009). It can also mean a small rabbit-like animal (Informant 13, Skukuza, 13/9/2007).

Despite the need for the organisation to respond appropriately to a changing political context, according to informants, white staff were generally fearful and insecure about the transformation process. This fear was inflamed by the proposal in 1998 for the KNP to change its name as part of the organisational transformation process. It was suggested that the renaming of the KNP could attract opposition from right wing–terrorist organisations and other conservative white South Africans. A SANParks Board member summed up the situation aptly, "The name is a betrayal and just another reason why changing the name after President Paul Kruger is an obvious part of the necessary transformation." (Informant 18, Johannesburg, 2/6/2005). The CEO at the time maintained that the old name was "offensive in the new South Africa" (Tweedie, 1998: 3). The proposed name change was also intended to attract more black visitors to the park, to compare favourably with the visitor profile of foreigners and white South Africans, who jointly comprised approximately 900 000 tourists per annum (Brand 1998). Some informants maintained that the failure to change the KNP's name was indicative of the Board's weakness to support and oversee the implementation of transformation. Other Board members concurred with the rejection on the grounds that it would damage the marketing appeal of the park, and was of superficial concern, compared to the substantive challenge of deep transformation.

Delays in Removing Racially Discriminatory Practices

Although historically institutionalised race based discrimination was the core of what needed to be changed internally at park level, and despite the Board's approval of structures and procedures to deal with such practices in 1997, which included park managers submitting regular reports to the Board on implementation, these practices still continued six years after South Africa became a democracy (South

African National Parks. Board papers. 21 November 1997). By as late as 1994 there were still signs of ambivalent responses to non-racialism within the organisation. For example a "whites only" sign remained displayed at the staff shop in the Skukuza camp. In 1994 a black visitor was refused service at the shop for tourists and was directed to the shop for black staff members. Only in 1995, one year after the first democratic elections, were black visitors allowed to shop in the former whites–only visitors' shop (Informant 15, Skukuza, 12/9/2007) By late 1997, black visitors and the Premier of the Mpumalanga Province observed that racial discrimination was still evident in camp restaurants and during game drives when black and white staff were on duty together (South African National Parks. Board papers. 21 November 1997).

Yet there was both a slow and delayed initiation of some aspects of transformation such as black worker's families access into the park and its facilities, staff leave, housing, employment, promotion transport and medical policies.

Access, Leave and Transport Policies

The KNP TTG succeeded in improving conditions of service generally for black employees such as leave, family access and transport. Previous policies prevented them from taking leave when they wanted. After 1996, immediate family members received park entry permits for visits, and the practice of conducting security checks on black staff exclusively was stopped. In addition, black staff were allowed to use sports facilities under the same conditions as whites by 1997.

In as late as 2000, the practice of transporting black staff in open trailers with no seating, and exposure to extreme weather conditions over long distances ended, and was replaced by a bus with comfortable seating and air conditioning. A fairer bicycle policy that guided the purchase, maintenance and usage reimbursement rates for both black and white field rangers was also passed by the Board (Informant 15, Skukuza, 12/9/2007).

However discriminatory practices continued. For example, by 1997, some park lower level African staff members still did menial labour in their supervisor's homes. Only by as late as 1999 were the following practices abolished: cutting up worker's old shoes before issuing new ones, and compelling black female workers to wear "doeks" (headscarves) while on duty (South African National Parks. Board papers. 21 November 1997; Informant 15, Skukuza, 12/9/2007; South African National Parks. *Kiewiet* November/December 1996).

Medical Services

Racial discrimination at the KNP's doctor's surgery ended as late as 2000, before which there were two separate entrances for different race groups, black and white (Informant 15, Skukuza, 12/9/2007). It was, however, replaced by a different discrimination, manifested as separate waiting rooms for staff on medical aid and those who were not. By 2004 there still was unequal access to medical aid, lower level workers were excluded – those in Paterson Bands A and B (Informant 47, 12/9/2007, Skukuza). So "for the rank and file it [medical aid] came very late and definitely not by 2004" (Informant 37, 18/6/2007, Skukuza).

The medical aid facility had a pleasant waiting room with proper furniture, and good administration service. Although most non–medical aid patients sought treatment for malaria, the reception facility consisted of a bench situated near shrubs which were infested with malaria bearing mosquitoes, and the administration services were poor. The quality and type of medication dispensed in this dual system also differed. As a result, most workers sought treatment from the government administered primary health care centres outside the park (Informant 15, Skukuza, 12/9/2007). This situation was partly mitigated by 2004, when the formation of a Malaria Action Group was followed by the formulation of a Malaria Policy. The South African government's Department of Health allowed the KNP to assume responsibility for spraying insecticide and larvicidal control (South African National Parks. 2004. Annual Report; Informant 15, Skukuza, 12/9/2007).

The historical ambulance service policy that allowed only whites to be transported to hospital in the KNP camp ambulance, was reversed as late as 2000. Until then, black staff were transported in the back of open vehicles (Informant 15, Skukuza, 12/9/2007). It was clear that by as much as six years after the advent of democracy discrimination continued.

Housing Policy

One of the most pressing needs identified by SANParks' black employees, as part of the internal review of the organisation that needed to be changed, was housing for those who lived and worked in the parks: "In staff villages large (developed for white employees), spacious family homes have up to 5 bedrooms; single employees have comfortable flats with a bedroom, kitchen, bathroom/toilet and living room. At Skukuza there are additional social amenities such as schools, churches and sports clubs. In comparison staff quarters (for black employees) mostly consist of one small, cramped room or dormitories for up to 8 individuals, with shared ablution (not always in sanitary, working condition) and kitchen facilities. Up to

20 individuals have to share one kitchen with one stove and no effective storage space. Very limited family-type accommodation is accorded, more along staff seniority lines than family considerations." (Board Papers 22 May 1995, Housing Policy: 1-2).

By 1999 "there was still a hall with 8 people living in it. People had to sleep in open, communal spaces with no privacy and the ablution facilities were outside. Later it was demarcated into four sleeping spaces and then into two sleeping areas. Over time rooms were added. So some people stayed in a room and had ablution inside, but this was not before 2004. There was also cooking facilities in a communal area (Informant 37, 18/6/2007, Skukuza).

In 1998 ZAR 3 million was authorised by the Board for the KNP to improve housing, ease the crowded conditions, upgrade the ablution facilities, and provide adequate electricity and water for lower level black staff . (South African National Parks. Board papers. 20 February 1998). A housing policy was developed and approved by the Board in April 1999 to assist lower level employees from historically disadvantaged backgrounds to acquire homes of their own. The policy included a non-pensionable subsidy payable to all staff who were not housed in official park accommodation, and a negotiated pay out for staff living outside a park was possible.

Although there was a slight improvement in official park accommodation for lower level employees from historically disadvantaged backgrounds, implementing the policy was inconsistent, because some staff living in the parks who were close to retirement, did not receive a subsidy and were unable to provide housing for themselves outside the park on retirement (Informant 15, Skukuza, 12/9/2007; South African National Parks. Board papers 22 May 1995; South African National Parks. Board papers. 14 March 1997; South African National Parks. Board papers. 20 June 1998; South African National Parks. Board papers. 17 and 18 June 1999). However, some black staff took the housing allowance (especially from the Paterson C level) and opted to live outside the park in the neighbouring villages and towns with their extended families because it safeguarded them after their tenure at the KNP was over. White staff on the other hand mostly opted to stay in the park (Informant 47, 12/9/2007, Skukuza).

In addition to the ZAR3 million for KNP, the Board approved an additional ZAR 1 million to improve employee accommodation in the Southern Parks. (South African National Parks. *Kiewiet* November/December 1996; South African National Parks. Board Papers. 17 March 1997; South African National Parks. Board papers. 20 February 1998). However the housing policy was criticised for inconsistent application across all parks, because the "allocation criteria tend[s] to favour certain race groups. Although seniority and grade are accepted as useful criteria, there was perceived discrimination on the basis of colour" (South African National Parks. Board Papers 22November 1996). In general, the allocation of official housing in the parks continued to favour white employees regardless of the new

policy, and housing for lower level black staff was still a problem by 2004 (South African National Parks. Board papers. 22 November 1996; Informant 15, Skukuza, 12/9/2007).

Language and Education Policies

Although the official languages of apartheid South Africa was English and Afrikaans, the latter was dominant in the organisation. The development of a policy that respected all South African languages and cultures was considered to be imperative for the organisational transformation process (South African National Parks, 1998; Msimang *et al* 2003 in Hall-Martin *et al* 2003). However, with 11 official languages in the country this was difficult, so English became the sole official organisational language. Front-line staff received special training to deal with customers that may have objected to English as the official language (South African National Parks. Board papers. 20 February 1998; South African National Parks. Board papers. 21 November 1997). [4]

Although an adult basic education programme (ABET) was initiated to enable black employees to acquire basic literacy and numeracy skills, and to communicate in English, this was not very successful. In some parks, the dropout rate was attributed to lack of affordability for the examination ZAR 35.00 fee, and problems with the service provider (South African National Parks. Board papers. 20 February 1998; Informant 15 Skukuza, 12/9/2007).

By 2004 the KNP's Human Resources Department's progress was slow in changing all the worker's contracts into their preferred language of choice according to the language policy, and changing employment application forms from Afrikaans to English (Informant 15, Skukuza, 12/9/2007).

The question arises of why SANParks was unsuccessful in transforming some relatively simple and attainable aspects of the language and education transformation programmes, when the organisation was under black leadership? Maguranyanga maintains that, "The biggest challenge in transforming the inherited system of national parks is dealing with park culture and residues of institutionalized inequalities" (Maguranyanga 2009: 111-112). These inequalities prevailed years after the advent of democracy, because they were deeply woven into the fabric of an increasingly class based society. This created difficulties for the organisation to progress beyond rhetorical statements of change. At national government level there were other, externally driven, efforts to build the capacity of SANParks personnel.

[4] The 1993-1994 Annual Report was printed in Afrikaans. The English Annual Reports from 1995-2004 has a CEO Review insert in the other official ten languages.

Conclusion

This chapter has argued that the appointment of black leadership, the establishment of various transformational structures, such as the TTG and a new Board of Curators, in addition to different transformational policies, particularly regarding affirmative action, the improvement of working conditions and the elimination of racism, did mark the beginning of an organisational paradigm shift.

While these were significant changes, the negotiated nature of the transition to democracy, in particular the 'sunset clause' imposed major constraints on the organisational transformation processes of SANParks. It meant that for the first years of the political transition, it retained its leadership, key technocrat positions, organisational attitude, memory and culture that were operational during apartheid. It was difficult to shift the attitudes of the old guard who were on the newly constituted Board, as well as on all levels of the existing white staff.

Although the implementation of AA and gender policies were approved by the Board in 1996, by early 1999 the guidelines were not finalised, no implementation plans were developed, nor was it strictly enforced by the Human Resource Directorate. Neither was there succession planning, nor performance appraisal systems linked to transformation. These were indicative of a shallow and uneven commitment to the organisational change process. The new leadership structures, regardless of race, were weak. They generally lacked the political will to implement transformation on a deeper level and their priority was to ensure organisational financial survival. The outcome was the organisational transformation of SANParks itself was largely thin and incomplete by 2004. The establishment of the SED at both national and park levels specifically as the carriers of the transformation project provides further evidence of this.

SECTION B: ORGANISATIONAL TRANSFORMATION.

CHAPTER 5: THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE SOCIAL ECOLOGY DIRECTORATE AT THE NATIONAL OFFICE LEVEL.

Introduction

The first major step in the transformation process of SANParks was the establishment of the SED under Ngeleza's leadership in 1994. Although Magome refers to Wainwright, who was the CEO of national parks in the early 1990s, as the driver of the organisational transformation process, research for this thesis suggests that the main actor that drove organisational transformation was Ngeleza (Magome 2004).

The SED was intended to drive the transformation process. It was described as having five functions: community facilitation, economic empowerment (defined as "empowering local communities to tender effectively for business contracts with the Parks"), environmental education, cultural resource heritage management and research and monitoring." and was called "the engine for transformation". (Social Ecology, 2000:13-28). Beginning in mid-1994 SANParks' attempted to establish the SED at national office level within the framework of a democratic South Africa, as an urgent response to the changing political climate. The organisation had to hastily define a new set of goals that incorporated social justice into their traditional goal of biodiversity conservation, and hoped to accomplish this through the SED.

This challenging process of linking social justice and conservation is not specific to South Africa. As a more sociological understanding of conservation has developed, Brechin *et al* point out that the process to incorporate social justice as an organisational goal, became a necessary part of transformation in many conservation organisations. However Brechin *et al* acknowledge that most organisations lacked the adaptive ability and they therefore have to embark on a learning process called "Bureaucratic Reorientation" (Brechin *et al* 2003:169). This is generally a difficult process because it requires a "…complete overhaul of their goals, structure, technical capacity, and culture. This is particularly true of many natural resource management agencies that have maintained top down, authoritarian approaches to conservation." It involves reforming an organisation from the bottom up (Ibid).

During the establishment of the SED at the national office in SANParks between 1994-2004, the organisation underwent many changes as part of positioning itself within the new democratic framework of South Africa, free from the legacies of apartheid. The crux of transformation involved a fundamental

shift away from the traditional authoritarian approach to conservation which characterised the apartheid era, and emphasised the protection of biodiversity to the neglect of social issues. Improving relations with the communities neighbouring national parks was seen by powerful forces within SANParks as a crucial aspect of transforming the organisation. This was understood to be necessary to ensure the survival of the organisation in a changed political environment. The SED was established to drive this change.

However this chapter will argue that during the period 1994 – 2004 the SED was never a strong and stable unit. On the contrary it was marked by a lack of strong, continuous leadership, high staff turnover, organisational shifts, low staff morale, confusion about different roles and responsibilities, and ideological incoherence. There was no shared understanding of the social ecology perspective or how it could contribute to transformation in a democratic South Africa. This weakness was partly due to the SED's failure to secure sufficient support from within the organisation regarding human resources. It lacked the resources to recruit and develop highly skilled personnel as well as management support such as job descriptions, structural stability and affirmation from key SANParks structures.

At the same time this chapter will point to certain achievements. For example limited funds were raised for initiating an organisational development and change management framework to integrate the SED into the SANParks' core operations at the national office and at park level. As a result the SED to some extent successfully integrated social ecology's concepts into the organisational strategic plan - at least on paper. Some staff were employed and with the assistance of a donor, their job descriptions were compiled. Ten social ecology structures were established in as many parks. Thus a SED platform was imitated and discussion and debate on social ecology was introduced. A social ecology best practice conference was held which audited projects, shared experiences, stimulated debate and disseminated information. External expertise was commissioned to assist the drafting process to replace apartheid legislation, to align SANParks with a democratic South Africa. The draft social ecology policy described in chapter three was developed but not finalised. In addition a small working group was established to deal with communication and management problems between parks and the SED at the national office.

This chapter deals with the role of the SED in four phases. The different phases are defined by two criteria: different leadership styles exhibited by five different individuals appointed to head the SED, as well as different levels of organisational support, in terms of human resources, structural stability, affirmation from key structures and endorsement of an alternative transformative vision.

(i)**The first phase: the establishment of the Social Ecology Unit (1994 – 1999)**

This first phase was marked by strong leadership. A consequence of this was that "feathers were ruffled" as one informant said (Informant 8, Johannesburg, 23/5/2005). When the Social Ecology Unit was first introduced the Director Ngeleza and her staff achieved limited organisational transformation in that the establishment of the SED did initiate a shift away from the traditional authoritarian style of managing conservation areas, to being more inclusive, participative, and benefit-sharing with previously disadvantaged neighbours.

However the process was disparate, arbitrary, contested, contradictory and inconsistent. SANParks was not a homogenous, monolithic entity and powerful forces within the organisation were initially unwilling to institute deeper and fundamental change, such as developing a broader transformation-oriented organisational development framework, structural and cultural integration, and a clearer vision and strategies. Also there was a lack of support for implementing Ngeleza's approach.

As discussed above in chapter one, there were six sources of externally imposed pressures for SANParks to transform. The core of this was to incorporate social justice into its traditional agenda of biodiversity conservation. However SANParks lacked the executive leadership capacity and ideological cohesion to achieve this. The outcome was three contrasting organisational approaches, two of them focused on improving relations with neighbouring communities and one was concerned with deeper, rights-based more meaningful transformation.

Different Approaches to Social Ecology

The first approach unfolded at the KNP, emphasized an outreach programme, (discussed in chapter six and eight). The second approach was grounded in the CEO's neighbour relations policy. The third and most ideologically contested approach was Ngeleza's, which was a more rights-based approach.

The development of the Neighbour Relations Policy (NRP) was led by Wainwright, the CEO of SANParks. Wainwright contracted a consultant to develop the NRP, to align SANParks' objectives with the changing political and social climate in South Africa, as well as international trends that recognised the inevitability and necessity of the integration of conservation with human needs and aspirations (Wainwright 1994). However, both the process and the background analysis were flawed and exacerbated the tense relationships within SANParks.

Regarding process Wainwright failed to consult with two key stakeholders, the neighbouring communities, and the KNP's DCD who were involved in implementing neighbour relations projects (Informant 23, Johannesburg, 1/8/2005). Thus the arbitrary formulation of the NRP precluded participatory policy formulation processes with affected neighbouring communities, and key internal and external stakeholders. At the same time it was alleged that Wainwright was "lifting" sections of several papers written by KNP staff without proper referencing, resulting in tensions (Informant 23, Johannesburg, 1/8/2005). It was also a missed opportunity to foster new networks to develop an organisational transformation strategy. The Neighbour Relations Policy was a survivalist initiative driven by the communities themselves and groups such as GEM and the environmental justice movement to traditional conservation practices which had neglected social needs, particularly those of neighbouring communities.

The tensions that involved Wainwright's' flawed approach was also evident in the statement below where he misrepresented the impact on the African inhabitants when they were dispossessed of their ancestral land in order to establish the KNP. His ahistorical understanding was prompted by the need to dispute aspects of Hanekom's and Liebenberg's provocative policy proposals that threatened the survival of the KNP discussed in chapter one (Liebenberg and Grossman 1994). "The statement that local communities were forcibly removed from their land without adequate compensation, that they were denied access to the resources of the conservation area, and that they were denied access to their ancestral graves … is not entirely true. Local people within the conservation area at the time of proclamation [of the KNP], were given "squatting' rights." It must further be borne in mind that at the turn of the century, human populations were at extremely low densities and the only formal access to the Lowveld was by means of the Selati Railway Line, which was completed during the 1880's. The entire Lowveld area was therefore still wilderness and it is incorrect to allege that the residents were alienated from their natural environment." (Wainwright, in a letter to Hanekom 2 August 1993). In other words, Wainwright failed to appreciate the violation of basic human rights of African people in the Lowveld area, by equating their ancestral rights to land with subsequent 'squatting rights', and by justifying land alienation because of low population densities.

Although the NRP was largely a public relations exercise, full of rhetoric which did not anticipate radical changes to SANParks' modus operandi**,** it was arguably the first organisational policy shift spurred by the reluctant recognition that the dispossession and poverty of communities neighbouring national parks represented a threat to conservation. For national parks to survive in a 'new', democratic South Africa Wainwright recognised that the organisation had to attempt to shift away from its historical policies of excluding their neighbours towards establishing a mutually beneficial neighbour relations policy (Wainwright 1994) At the same time SANParks emphasized that it was not a community development organisation. Armed with this rationale, the policy aimed to protect SANParks interests by contributing in

a very limited way to the economic, institutional, technical and educational development of its neighbours (Wainwright 1994). (See chapter eight).

The reconfiguration of SANParks' policy was prudent for two reasons. The first was the realisation that without the co-operation of neighbouring communities, conservation would fail. The second was that by being proactive SANParks could design their own neighbour relations agenda, by shifting from law enforcement to social and economic upliftment (Wainwright 1994). The SED was established to drive this process.

Differing approaches to establishing the structure and functions of the SED

The appointment of Ngeleza, with a PhD in organisational development, to head the SED (termed the SE Unit at this time) raised the possibility of fundamental transformation, as she had a more radical conception than Wainwright. However she had to work with a five person SANParks team led by the CEO who were committed to introducing superficial organisational change. This meant that Ngeleza did not have a team to support her transformation-oriented vision, role and values (Informant 14, Midrand, 27/5/2005).

During an inception workshop to conceptualise the social ecology structure and programme, the participants agreed firstly to name it the "Social Ecology Unit", and secondly that the structure's purpose was to change the organisation's goals from being exclusively biodiversity conservation-oriented to include social justice. However workshop participants had divergent views on the precise nature of this goal and how to accomplish it. Three different approaches emerged: firstly led by Stevens who had an environmental education background. He wanted to bus people, especially the youth, into the KNP for environmental education and establish more environmental education centres throughout the other parks (Informant 14, Midrand, 27/5/2005).

The second differing approach articulated by Martin, the head of the park level community relations, "wanted to make people happy and to celebrate with chiefs in the traditional way with meat and get them to buy into SANParks concepts of what the new relationship should be like**"**. According to one informant this official was not concerned with civil society organisations, and simply wanted the chiefs to tell people that SANParks was good (Informant 14, Midrand, 27/5/2005). This informant thought that Martin had, "a welfarist and patronising approach to appease the communities by establishing forums, and slaughtering three or four springbok to bribe communities with. They wanted to create a dependency and for park neighbours to think that the SANParks was a good neighbour, they did not want to develop partnerships with mutual dependencies" (Informant 14, Midrand, 27/5/2005).

The third differing view was that of a highly placed SANParks official, Smith the Director of Conservation, Research and Development whom Ngeleza reported to. He explicitly resisted the inclusion of social justice in the traditional goal of biodiversity conservation, and according to several informants was widely known as anti-social ecology (Informant 25, Johannesburg, 24/5/2005; Informant 29, Johannesburg International Airport, 3/10/2005). He confirmed this in 2000, when he resigned from SANParks and announced that his priority was biological conservation because he was, "not particularly concerned about communities and people and all that stuff" (*Getaway*, September 2000:55 in Magome 2004**)**. The outcome of these different individual approaches was a weak and disparate team driving the SED.

During this inception phase of the SED, Smith pursued what Brechin *et al* describes as "an informal goal" (Brechin *et al* 2003:161). His informal but explicit goal was to maintain a strong biodiversity focus that precluded non-biodiversity organisational learning. "Being old guard he did not subscribe to the new thinking in terms of including neighbouring communities in organisational affairs, and did not take the SE Unit [SED] seriously because he did not believe that it would work, nor did he want it to work" (Informant 14, Midrand, 27/5/2005). He resisted the incorporation of social ecology into the organisation by not adopting what Brechin has described as "flexible structures and instilling a 'generative, learning culture 'or' **establishing** strong collaborative arrangements" (Brechin, *et al*. 2003:161).

In this context Ngeleza was the lone transformation-oriented actor who had to contend with opposition from powerful actors within SANParks. Nevertheless Ngeleza represented a formidable challenge. She was African, female and highly educated with a social sciences background, contrasting with the white, male, and science-dominated organisational culture that had existed over seven decades in an oppressive political system. Her radical approach to achieve the objectives of the SED and by proxy, deep organisational transformation, threatened traditional conservation interests. This prompted resistance from SANParks' older structures to the establishment of the SED and to broader organisational transformation.

SANParks had a history of employing white males in leadership positions until 1994. By the end of 1995, there were two affirmative action appointments in leadership positions – Ngeleza the General Manager of Social Ecology and Rammutla the Director of Marketing and Communications, out of a total staff complement of 3 962 (National Parks Board Annual Report 1994 -1995).

Regarding Ngeleza's efforts to establish social ecology structures in national parks: by 1997 31 full-time SED personnel were employed with six vacant positions. On average there was one social ecologist for each of the 18 national parks (SANParks Board Meeting, 14 March 1997).

Ngeleza embarked on a change management framework to integrate the SED into the SANParks' core operations at the national office and at park level. The aim was to establish a platform, and design and create an organisational development framework. Although SANParks' contribution towards establishing the SED regarding office space, stationery, computers, personnel salaries and benefits such as pension plans and medical aid were necessary, deeper and more extensive support was needed. A highly placed SANParks informant argued that the SED had to be supported as a key driver of transformation, alongside and equally with tourism and finance, "which were the obvious and powerful drivers of transformation within the organisation. Although there was a conceptual shift to include and ensure benefits for people previously excluded from national parks, the shift occurred in the social ecology structure, not in the organisation" (Informant 35, Johannesburg, 30/5/2005). Another informant echoed this argument, "There needed to be deeper support for the SE Unit - a moral and ideological commitment, but instead there was huge cynicism and even resentment which over time transformed into tolerance, but never full commitment, never embracing and pursuing transformation objectives progressively" (Informant 25, Johannesburg, 24/5/2005).

To function at national office and park level in 1998 Ngeleza received significant external support to develop an organisational development framework, as well as the capacity of her staff, through the DANCED project. In partnership with SANParks the DANCED project's overall objective was, "developing and nurturing good relations with communities adjacent to National Parks, and to take full account of local cultural values and resources in park development and management." (South African National Parks and Danish Cooperation for Environment and Development, Social Ecology pamphlet, 2001: 2). The objective also intended to, "Enable SANP to competently facilitate dialogues, be engaged in problem resolution, and establish mutually beneficial partnerships with communities neighbouring the national parks." (South African National Parks and Danish Cooperation for Environment and Development. First Progress Report. 1 October 1998-31 March 1999: 7). The key performance areas to implement these objectives were environmental education, cultural resource management, economic empowerment and liaison and partnership. Liaison and partnership entailed, "Creation and management of partnerships and networks with appropriate stakeholders in support of the Social Ecology programme and goals. [And] Participation of stakeholders and communities in planning, management and monitoring of issues relating to specific parks." (South African National Parks and Danish Cooperation for Environment and Development, Social Ecology pamphlet, 2001: 2).

In an attempt to reverse the earlier superficial changes mentioned above, the new approach was "interdisciplinary, participatory, community-oriented and educational in nature" (South African National Parks and Danish Cooperation for Environment and Development, pamphlet on Social Ecology 2001: 2). The SED approach was marked by seeking inclusiveness and representivity in their interactions with local communities, because it acknowledged the diversity of their needs. Also it recognised SANParks as a

national stakeholder with special needs, interests and aspirations in natural resource management (SANParks Social Ecology Quarterly Report January - April, 1996).

Thus Ngeleza embarked on a process to establish a framework for a change management system. As a component of this system, the organisational development framework was intended to set clear objectives, approaches, aims and mission for the SED at national office level and park level (Informant 14, Midrand, 27/5/2005). Attempts to institute change management to transform the organisation began, despite the fact that the SED was initially comprised of only three persons.

The establishment of the SED was envisaged by Ngeleza as a key transformational structure to develop policies and programmes that would establish social ecology as a core function within the organisation (Informant 14, Midrand, 27/5/2005). Its main aim was to link social justice to the traditional goal of biodiversity conservation for black communities living along the borders of all national parks. However, as early as 1994, Ngeleza realised that "for the Social Ecology Unit [SED] to be a success, I had to look at broader organisational transformation rather than changing a small piece only, because the Social Ecology Unit could have been marginalised" (Informant 14, Midrand, 27/5/2005). Early in the process, Ngeleza came to the view that three members of the senior staff including her immediate boss, were not committed to a thorough organisational transformation (Informant 14, Midrand, 27/5/2005). Instead, while paying lip service to transformation they undermined the process.

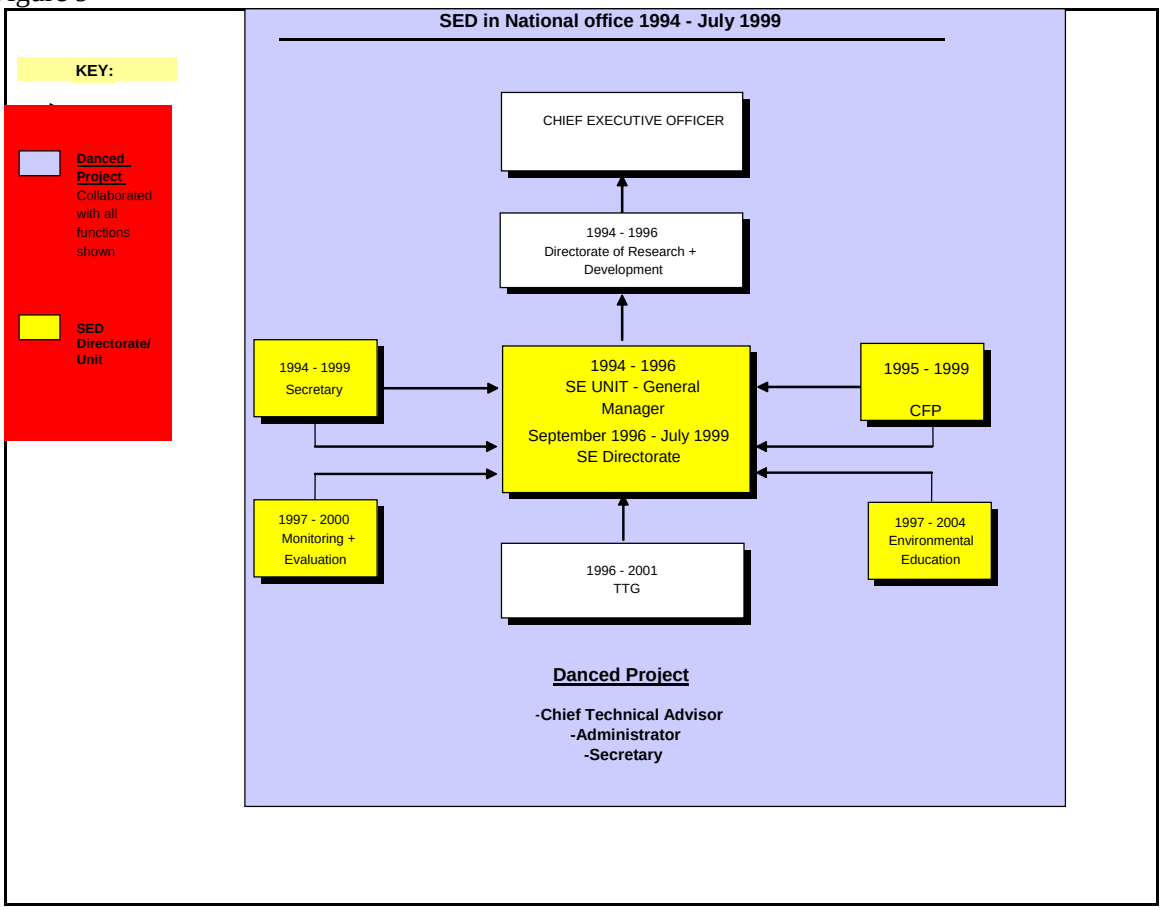
Ngeleza appealed to higher authority and referred the problems in organisational transformation to the attention of Jordan, then Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism and the Deputy Minister Holomisa. Holomisa contacted the CEO of SANParks, who was Wainwright at the time. Wainwright expressed anger but responded by appointing Ngeleza as chair of a newly constituted structure described in chapter four and known as the Transformation Task Group (TTG) in early 1995 (Informant 15, Skukuza, 12/9/2007; Informant 14, Midrand, 27/5/2005). After the SED the establishment of the TTG was the second transformation-oriented structure, and it resulted from Ngeleza's efforts as a change agent supported by political leaders.

Ngeleza had three major initial tasks. The first was to establish social ecology structures and functions at the national office as depicted in the organogram below. Although Ngeleza reported to Smith, the Director of Conservation, Research and Development, the relationship between them was symptomatic of the established structures' inherent resistance and the un-coordinated approaches to social ecology. Ngeleza's interaction with Smith was minimal, and no attempt was made to integrate the SED structure into the rest of the organisation (Danish Cooperation for Environment and Development and South African National Parks. December 1999).

Undeterred by the obvious power differences in the relationship, Ngeleza was able to pursue her goals because, “Although he was generally uncomfortable with the [social ecology] concept, he left me to do my thing, and the interaction was at a level where he would sign my mileage requests etc.” (Informant 14, Midrand, 27/5/2005).

The organogram below shows that the SED initially comprised three persons, including Ngeleza, Ngwane and Williams. Ngwane led the community facilitation programme (CFP) to set up community forums and economic upliftment projects with neighbours of all national parks. The monitoring and evaluation and environmental education positions were filled later, and the DANCED programme began in 1998. The organogram also shows positive fluctuations in the status of social ecology from Unit /General Manager to Director/Directorate.

Figure 9



Ngeleza's second task was to develop a clear SED organisational mandate and mission. The mandate was to build healthy relationships with neighbouring communities so that they supported the conservation of biodiversity in national parks. The mission was to build acceptance of national parks through the economic empowerment of its previously disadvantaged neighbours. However, since the inception of the SED, its place in the organisation was complicated by the continued lack of agreement regarding its mandate, which was constantly compromised in practice (South African National Parks and Danish Cooperation for Environment and Development May 2001). A key informant elaborated on this, "all parastatals have social commitments, for example land claims and black economic empowerment. SANParks has to revisit their mandate to accept that they do more (to promote transformation) than the needs and rights-based approach to neighbouring communities, while at the same time realising their corporate commitments." (Informant 35, Johannesburg, 30/5/2005). According to another informant, "It is a given that the Constitutional, policy and legislative environment in post 1994 South Africa demanded that SANParks accommodate the rights of its neighbours in terms of law, ownership and a host of other rights defined in various statues. It encompasses positive and constructive elements in terms of outreach, redress and recognition of rights. Yet SANParks needed its own reconstruction programme. Wainwright and Smith grappled with issues of transformation, the new order and emerging policy from the ANC think-tanks. But they were ill-prepared, naive and they took on a huge challenge…but lacked experience. It [social ecology] was not their core business, they did not have the capacity, and there was no buy-in. The social ecology function and structure was doomed because of their lack of insight. The implications were that they took on the huge and overwhelming burden of rural development but were ill-prepared, they lacked empathy and there was a lack of trained personnel to do the job effectively. In the process Ngeleza was marginalised. They were in denial of the realities of the time" (Informant 25, Johannesburg, 24/5/2005). Senior leadership in SANParks had to devise and implement a clearer programme for organisational transformation regarding its relationship with neighbouring communities.

Ngeleza's third task was to build relationships with external role players and stakeholders such as local, provincial and national government, NGOs and CBOs (South African National Parks, Social Ecology Department Business Plan 1998-2001). Several informants maintained that Ngeleza was not successful in this respect. While she introduced significant and transformative organisational changes, she was considered authoritarian in her management style and was criticised as being suspicious of outsiders and of white people in particular. In this sense she compromised the development of the SED by not inviting outsiders with expert knowledge to enrich the development of social ecology (Informant 24, Pretoria, 14/6/2005; Informant 26, Pretoria, 27/9/2005). According to several informants her central weakness was at the intellectual level, to develop a coherent understanding of social ecology as a set of ideas.

Although as mentioned above, Ngeleza's position was eventually elevated to Director when the SED was upgraded, before the CEO resigned in March 1997 he appointed a consultant to restructure SANParks.

One informant interpreted this as a pretext, “a veiled attempt to get rid of Dr Ngeleza” (Informant 14, Midrand, 27/5/2005). Several informants maintained that the CEO was uncomfortable with Ngeleza as the leader of the SED because of her strong leadership, her views on social ecology and its implementation, and the implications regarding organisational transformation. Ngeleza believed that, “initially on hiring me Wainwright thought that he would be able to manipulate me, so that I could be the excuse for his public relations policy. He wanted to say that we have a good programme with our neighbours with a black woman with a PhD doing the job. He did not want someone to challenge him with real transformation ideas in mind, because he did not expect a radical change in profile” (Informant 14, Midrand, 27/5/2005). This restructuring led to Ngeleza’s resignation.

Several informants maintained that the resignation of Ngeleza was a huge loss for social ecology and the broader SANParks transformation process. Except for Shahid (discussed below) no other subsequent SED leader demonstrated the same level of organisational capacity, energy and ideological commitment (Informant 20, Pretoria, 10/5/2005; Informant 31, Johannesburg, 20/5/2005; Informant 26, Pretoria, 27/9/2005; Informant 32, Johannesburg International Airport, 3/10/2005).

However Ngeleza failed in her most important task: to develop a shared understanding of a social ecology policy within SANParks as a whole. Due to lack of organisational clarity, as well as ideological differences internal to the organisations well as the absence of national guidelines and legislation, no consensus was reached on the precise content of social ecology and the policy implications. Although the formulation of a South African national environmental management policy had begun, that would have included community-related conservation issues such as benefit sharing and participation in natural resource management organisations, it was finalised after Ngeleza’s tenure (1994-1999) (South African National Parks 1998: 8 of CFP Section).

The gains and resources garnered by Ngeleza included raising funds to develop a change management framework which included an organisational development framework to introduce and integrate the SED into the organisation. She also introduced discussion and debate on social ecology. Although she ultimately succeeded in clarifying and reaching consensus on the aims, objectives, approaches, mission within SED structures, both the national office and at park level, this occurred within the SED structures exclusively and not within SANParks as an organisation.

Ngeleza was a lone, ‘deep’ not ‘soft’ transformation actor and was regarded with suspicion by the established structures as adopting a radical approach to transformation. She also represented a precedent and ideological figurehead in that she was female, black and a strong, fearless leader. Her core gains did indeed mean the establishment of a platform for the SED.

One of Ngeleza's achievements that were not reversed was the successful integration of social ecology's ideals and concepts into the organisational strategic plan (1996-1998). Several components of the strategic plan's mission were unprecedented such as : i) "… to acquire and manage a system of national parks that represent the indigenous wildlife, landscapes and significant cultural assets of South Africa for the pride and benefit of the nation"; ii) "… to represent the will of the people of South Africa"; iii) "…to encourage partnerships between national parks and our neighbours"; iv) "to foster national pride in the national parks of South Africa" (National Parks Board of South Africa. Strategic Plan (1996-1998): 7)

The strategy included the need to: i) "Identify, prioritise and implement biological and socio-economic research and monitoring projects that are of direct relevance to environmental management and to community liaison and development"; ii) "Special attention will be paid to appropriate forms of sustained use of natural resources and, because of its current public significance, to reviewing elephant management policy"; iii) "Undertake social and economic impact assessments of each national park, involving baseline research and regular updating of information. This research will be aimed at providing an understanding of social and economic dynamics in the region, in order to realise the goal of developing fuller participation of neighbouring people in conservation and tourism, and in order that the national parks may contribute more fully to regional economic development." (National Parks Board of South Africa. Strategic Plan (1996-1998): 17). Finally, the marketing strategy set an objective to transform the visitor profile by increasing the number of black visitors to parks (National Parks Board of South Africa. Strategic Plan (1996-1998).

(ii) The second phase: Social Ecology between August 1999-April 2000

In the second phase (August 1999-April 2000) powerful forces were threatened by the SED's potential as an agent of organisational transformation, and explicitly resisted its growth. The outcome was that this phase involved a retreat from the transformation agenda. It was fundamentally an attempt to reverse Ngeleza's gains.

Instead of enabling institutional support in the form of an ideological and a moral commitment to drive a strong social ecology structure and function, there were explicit constraints that aimed to weaken it. Notwithstanding, as the organogram below shows, the SED had grown since its inception in 1994, retaining the secretarial position and allocating an acting leadership role to the (structurally downgraded position and structure discussed below) – the SE Section Coordinator, Ngwane who was also the CFP Manager. The structure included: a manager for Imbewu (a youth-ranger development project); an economic empowerment manager; a research and publications manager, a manager for cultural resource

management, a manager for monitoring and evaluation and a manager for environmental education. The DANCED Project was also operational. Another change reflected in the organogram was that the SE Section Coordinator reported to the Director of Parks and not the Director of Research and Development. Informants that held positions in the SED at both national office level and at park level concurred that the dominant organisational strategy was to weaken the structure (Informant 36, Pretoria, 10/5/2005; Informant 47, Kruger National Park, 12/9/ 2007; Informant 5, Pretoria, 25/5/ 2005; Informant 32, Johannesburg International Airport, 3/10/2005; Informant 37, Skukuza, 18/6/2007).

The CEO, a white male was replaced by Mandla in 1997. Several informants maintained that this appointment was hailed as a step in the direction of transformation because as he was the first black CEO of SANParks, it signalled a commitment to non-racialism. (Informant 14, Midrand, 27/5/2005; Magome 2004; Msimang *et al* 2003 in Hall-Martin *et al* (eds) 2003; Cock and Fig 2002 in McDonald (ed) 2002; Honey 1999). Yet it was during Mandla's tenure that SANParks continued to institute ambiguous organisational changes that were sometimes intended to weaken the social ecology structure. The first change that weakened it was structurally downgraded from its previous Directorate status, to a Section. The second source of weakness was that it was placed under the Directorate of Parks, James who was known to be anti-social ecology, and was resistant to broader organisational transformation.

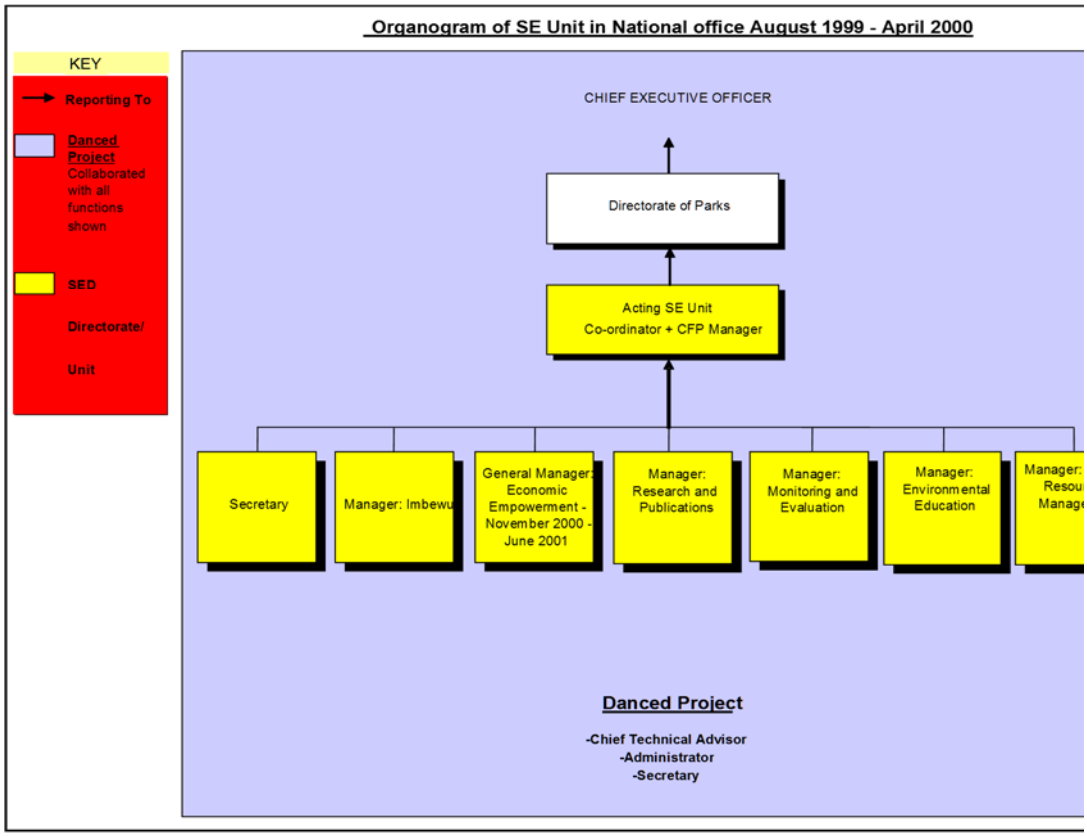


Figure 10

Since Ngwane was ideologically aligned with and was part of Ngeleza's team, she was used to "baby-sit" social ecology until Beja returned from the United Kingdom (Informant 26, Pretoria, 27/9/2005). As the organogram above shows, she was the acting Coordinator of the SED during this time (Informant 26, Pretoria, 27/9/2005). The organogram also shows that while seven staff members at the national office reported to her, she was also the Manager of Community Facilitation. Yet she was, "…not given a chance." (Informant 21, Pretoria, 27/9/2005). The extent to which the social ecology leadership and structure was weakened was evident when James told Ngwane, "… she was a manager without a portfolio, and that his job was to squeeze us and put us in our place so that social ecology would never emerge again in a position of power like when it was under Ngeleza's leadership" (Informant 21, Pretoria, 27/9/2005). At the same time the Board was misinformed that, "…an effective interim leadership arrangement has been put in place while options for the future management of the department are being considered" (South African National Parks, Board Meeting, 17 September 1999: 4 of Report from the Chief Executive. October 1998 to September 1999: 3).

Yet, according to another informant the SED also contributed to its own erosion of power because there was a widespread lack of professionalism amongst social ecology staff generally, especially during this phase (Informant 33, Johannesburg, 1/8/2005). Despite the fact that the SED had eight staff members at the national office (as shown in the organogram above as including Ngwane), it was a weak structure in a state of flux which translated into low staff morale and productivity, as well as eventual high staff turnover.

During this phase the DANCED Project's Chief Technical Advisor became the informal but *de facto* manager of the SED (Informant 22, Johannesburg, 20/5/2005; Danish Cooperation for Environment and Development May 2001: 13-14). The DANCED project also performed the functions of the Human Resources Department who were not supportive in developing staff capacity within SED. By 1999 there were no job descriptions, staff recruitment plans, training, performance appraisals, staff development policies, strategies or plans for career advancement in the SED at national office and park level. By 2000 the DANCED project successfully filled the gap to strengthen the human resources of the social ecology structure, by facilitating and funding the compilation of job descriptions for the SED at national office. However, a key DANCED outcome was compromised because it's training programmes were not assessed or accredited within the National Qualifications Framework (South African National Parks, Danish Cooperation for Environment and Development, German Technical Cooperation. 2000; South African National Parks and Danish Cooperation for Environment and Development May 2001; South African National Parks and Danish Cooperation for Environment and Development. Draft Social Ecology Strategic Plan December 1999).

The SANParks senior management's intention was to constrain effective implementation of social ecology by sifting and controlling all aspects of implementation (Informant 36, Pretoria. 10/5/2005), "The lack at the time of a culture of professionalism and productivity [in the SED] undermined the cause of social ecology from within, and this was very bad and serious at the time. The leadership of social ecology was also weak … [Ngwane] did not have the necessary qualifications or qualities to do the job effectively" (Informant 22, Johannesburg, 20/5/2005). The effect of this organisational resistance towards social ecology, combined with its self-defeating behaviour, was that the traditional paradigm that focused on the exclusive conservation of biodiversity as the organisation's goal, was more easily retained as an organisational priority, while social ecology "…was dying a slow death" (Informant 5, Pretoria, 25/5/2005).

The irony was that the board members who were deeply committed to social ecology and to transformation were largely unaware of this process of suffocation. There was also tension involving social ecology between the board and members of the directorate. It was noted that there was, "…a general lack of trust, unitary vision and team spirit between board and directorate members (and also the Chairperson and the CEO)" (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 1 February 1999: 5).

During this phase the organisation reiterated that social ecology was accepted as, "…complementary to conservation." (South African National Parks, Board Meeting, 17 September 1999: 4 of Report from the Chief Executive. October 1998 to September 1999: 3). However the Director of Conservation noted in response to a position paper on social ecology cited above, that it was a clear well-written paper, but there were, "…reservations regarding certain elements of the paper submitted by Prof Cock." Social ecology was, "internationally debated and in most cases communities could not relate to/manage natural resources properly" (South African National Parks, Board Meeting, 17 September 1999: 4 of Report from the Chief Executive. October 1998 to September 1999: 3).

Implementing social ecology also threatened conservative Board members who prioritised biodiversity and commercialisation. For example, "I also think that too much time is presently being spent on the albeit very important socio problems, whilst not enough time is given to flora and fauna. It has taken many years to create a commercial division and our financial situation desperately requires this to work successfully" (Personal correspondence from Rattray to van Riet, 19 July 1999). This sentiment was repeated by senior management when the Board was informed that, " …there is concern that social ecology be not treated as a preserve of an exclusive elite [the staff]; or an isolated function operating almost independently of the rest of the organisation" (South African National Parks, Board Meeting, 17 September 1999 of Report from the Chief Executive. October 1998 to September 1999: 3). This phase was clearly about constraining the social ecology structure and function and asserting more control over it.

(iii) The third phrase: Social Ecology between April 2000 – June 2003

The third phase (April 2000-June 2003), involved two organisational developments that potentially enabled the SED to act as a strong agent of organisational transformation.

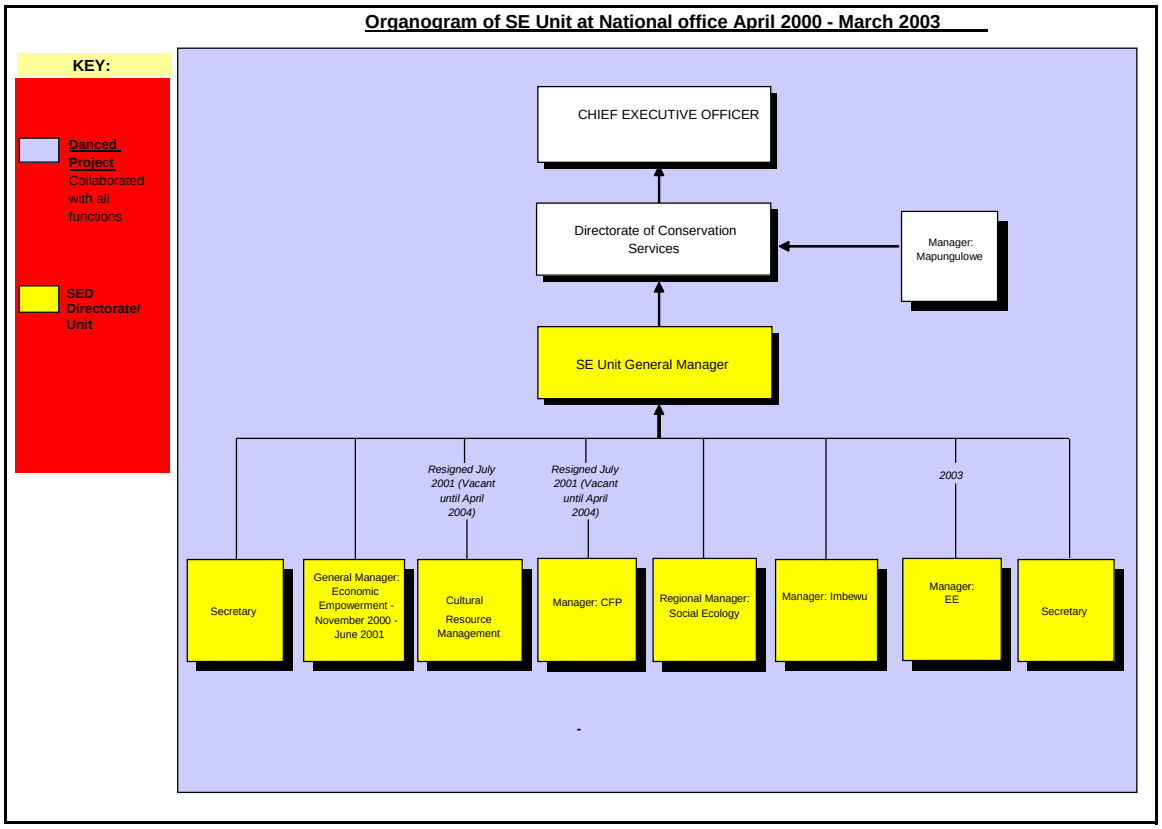


Figure 11

The first was the appointment of a well-qualified General Manager Beja, in April 2000, on his return from his PhD studies in the United Kingdom. The second was that the SED structure was upgraded to a 'Unit' (having previously been downgraded from a Directorate to a 'section'). Beja reported to a different Directorate compared to Ngwane, known as the Directorate of Conservation Services, who in turn reported to the CEO. In addition, informants referred to Beja's laissez-faire style of management which weakened the organisational transformation process. A senior member of the SED at the time interpreted Beja's appointment by the senior organisational leadership as a Machiavellian strategy because it was, "…payback time for the scholarship he received from the organisation for his PhD, also because they felt safe with him [Beja], knowing that he would not rock the boat nor pursue a strong transformation agenda" (Informant 21, Pretoria, 27/9/2005).

According to several informants Beja's position as the general manager of the SED during this time was a *de facto* holding exercise, because he was a favourable candidate for the position of Director of Conservation Services. These informants also observed that Beja spent most of his time campaigning for the position of Director of Conservation, while completing his PhD and writing books (Informant 16, Pretoria, 11/5/2005; Informant 26, Pretoria, 27/9/2005; Informant 29, Johannesburg International Airport, 3/10/2005).

Despite the negativity created by Beja's lack of strong leadership, focus and direction, a social ecology best practice conference was held in mid-2000, which audited projects, stimulated debate and disseminated papers (South African National Parks, Danish Cooperation for Environment and Development, German Technical Cooperation. 2000). The conference brought together practitioners, academics and community representatives to review SANParks' and several other organisation's practices and lessons learned over a six-year period of attempting to advance and implement beneficial relationships with their neighbours. It was positive in that it motivated participants by creating an opportunity to interact and learn from "geographically distant and even close projects." (South African National Parks and Danish Cooperation for Environment and Development, German Technical Cooperation. 2000: 307).

Deployed from the Directorate of Human Resources, Ngcobo was appointed as the general manager of the SED, now a SE Unit in June 2001 (Informant 16, Pretoria, 11/5/2005). According to several informants her SED colleagues did not accept her, because she did not have specialist expertise (Informant 16, Pretoria, 11/5/2005; Informant 2, Pretoria, 25/5/2005; Informant 29, Johannesburg International Airport, 3/10/2005). According to one informant this phase was marked by no strong leadership, poor social relations with internal fighting and gossip (Informant 16, Pretoria, 11/5/2005). A significant vacuum was created when two staff members resigned: Ngwane (who had reverted to being manager of the Community Facilitation Programme), with the longest institutional memory, and Setumo, the manager of Cultural Resource Management and Environmental Education, who was well qualified and dynamic (Informant 26, Pretoria, 27/9/2005; Informant 29, Johannesburg International Airport, 3/10/2005). General working conditions and levels of professionalism also worsened because of minimal support from Beja who succeeded in becoming the Director of Conservation Services. One informant commented, Beja was, "…never available, he kept writing books and did not give direction to social ecology. Managing social ecology was an issue of what do you want to do? As opposed to what does SANParks want to achieve. My experience was that social ecology had to be qualified [explained] all the time. It was always a pull and a struggle, we did not have a right to exist, and our presence was not clear cut. The different departments still boxed themselves. How does the leadership convince an organisation not to box itself when they as individual senior leaders in the organisation box themselves?" (Informant 16, Pretoria, 11/5/2005). According to another informant there were hopes that because Ngcobo reported

to Beja up until 2003, there would be increased support for social ecology because he was black and because he had previously been the General Manager of the SED. However, this did not materialise (Informant 30, Pretoria, 11/5/2005).

Furthermore there was structural confusion about different roles and responsibilities within the SED. The organogram above shows that during this phase most of the positions were retained from the previous phase, but there was conflict between the General Manager for Economic Empowerment, Nkululeko, and the newly appointed General Manager for Social Ecology, Ngcobo. This confusion was directly attributed to Beja, and was illustrative of the weaknesses of his tenure as the Director of Conservation Services**.** The distinction between these two positions under Beja's Directorship was not clear, Ngcobo was to oversee social ecology as the general manager, which included parks (Informant 16, 11/5/2005). Nkululeko was redeployed from the KNP (while Beja was the manager of social ecology), where she was general manager of social ecology, to the national office to focus on the economic empowerment of the neighbouring communities of all national parks. Nkululeko became frustrated with the confusing process and unclear structures and resigned in 2001.

Beja admitted that a history of a lack of clarity regarding the role of the SED's structures and functions at national office and at park level was responsible for the problems related to the implementation of social ecology policies (Magome 2004). When the DANCED project ended in 2001, it noted that despite its investments of resources to promote organisational development, there was little success in integrating the SED within the rest of SANParks. According to coordinators of two donor-funded programmes this was because a culture of hidden institutionalised agendas was rife which interfered with project processes and benefits (South African National Parks, Danish Cooperation for Environment and Development, German Technical Cooperation. May 2000). One informant stressed that SANParks needed to deal with its culture of hidden agendas and the lack of commitment to transformation. Instead the SED's relationship with, "The Board, the CEO and other, older more established directorates, such as the Directorate of Conservation Services was weak…. Beja was seen as window dressing by key external stakeholders, because he was the new face of colour leading it, but with little transformation" (Informant 27, Johannesburg, 7/5/2005).

In addition there was resistance from some conservative members of the Board to the SED (Informant 36, Pretoria, 10/5/2005). "The influence of the progressive members of the Board did not make much of a difference and enable social ecology's progress at this time. What difference did a social ecology directorate or unit make when there is no clear direction from senior management or the Board? It always was and still is lip service in relation to social ecology." (Informant 16, Pretoria, 11/5/2005). For powerful forces within SANParks the SED was dealing with social issues that were extraneous to its mandate of

conserving biodiversity. “Although the institution had to respond to a changing external world, it did it reluctantly and clumsily at times” (Informant 18, Johannesburg, 2/6/2005).

The Director of Conservation demonstrated an ambiguous attitude towards SED. Several informants reported that he regularly failed to invite SED personnel to meetings of mutual relevance (Informant 16, Pretoria, 11/5/2005; Informant 20, Pretoria, 10/5/2005; Informant 16, Pretoria, 11/5/2005). This deepened uncertainties regarding its place and purpose in the organisation (Informant 8, Johannesburg, 24/5/2005).

However the Director, Beja attempted three tasks to change SANParks’ organisational culture. The first was assisted by the DANCED project and key SED staff when he commissioned external expertise to draft legislation to replace apartheid legislation to align SANParks with a democratic South Africa (South African National Parks, Danish Cooperation for Environment and Development, German Technical Cooperation. 2000). “Knowing full well that park managers were using legislation to resist change, I started analysis [of] the National Parks Act of 1976” (Magome 2004: 140). The second task proposed publishing the achievements of the SED in a book commissioned by his Directorate to “…review [SANParks’] key strategic achievements for the fifth World Parks Congress in Durban 2003, whose theme was *Benefits Beyond Boundaries”*. However, this plan was abandoned because the information on social ecology was considered “so weak” by the organisation (Hall-Martin *et al* 2003 in Magome 2004: 146).

The third task was also a failure, his attempts to develop a social ecology policy (Fabricius June 2001; Moyo October 2001; Informant 16, Pretoria, 11/5/2005). Considerable resources were invested in contracting two highly regarded consultants. Fabricius wrote a new comprehensive social ecology policy (Fabricius, June 2001). This was later reviewed by Moyo who noted that a serious methodological and data-gathering fault on SANParks’ side was that Fabricius was not guided regarding the: “…scope of the work to be undertaken in the consultation process. There is mention of the need to interview key Park managers and other key role players in SANParks, as well as a core sample of its partners. Surely there is a need to be very specific on who these partners are. One is clear that reference should be made to the local communities as key stakeholders in the process. Having said that one notes that the report does not mention of (sic) any consultations with representatives of local communities. In addition there are other key stakeholders like the local authorities under whose administration the parks fall, locally based development agencies and relevant private sector business. These will have both a direct/indirect impact on the policy reform process. The terms of reference should have been more explicit about the need to consult with the relevant local communities” (Moyo, October 2001:4). Furthermore Moyo pointed out that the draft policy did not include dealing with land claims and the consumptive use of natural resources in parks:

> "In socio-political and economic terms, managing, (sic) the demand for land resources within parks, whether through legal claims or on the basis of local need is the most critical opportunity or threat of future of SANP, tourism and S.E. in general. The demand for consumptive use of natural resources is tied up to the degree to which communities control or co-manage resources in the SANP or in neighbouring areas. The S.E. policy document does not show how this demand is central to the S.E. policy of SANP in terms of the integration of these aspects into the care [core] functions of S.E. and in terms of the importance attached by this report to these two demands. The space devoted to and the location of these subjects in the report are evidence of a callous approach to an issue which is being filled [fuelled?] by related conflict in the region…" (Moyo, October 2001:13).

Omitting data-gathering and methodological details in the terms of reference regarding consultations with crucial stakeholders, land claims and the consumptive use of natural resources were very serious flaws indeed. This begs the question: Was the vague nature of the terms of reference and the outcome intentional on the part of SANParks? Or was it symptomatic of a lack of leadership capacity to guide the process and outcome of the policy development? The answer lies somewhere in between: "There were two things. Under the most senior management and the immediate management of social ecology, there was a, "…carefree attitude, with the goal of delegating responsibility and not interfering and with a hands-off approach. Also there was no person at the level of decision-making because social ecology was side-lined" (Informant 36, Pretoria, 10/5/2005).

The fourth phase Social Ecology between 2003- 2004

During this period an external actor, McKinsey & Co, a very conservative renowned international management consulting company, was responsible for initiating the resuscitation and strengthening of social ecology. Their overall recommendation was that SANParks build broader support from the South African population (McKinsey & Company 2002). As part of SANParks' social responsibility programme, they made four recommendations. Firstly, that the organisation continue to develop relationships with communities neighbouring national parks; secondly that they incentivise black people from different economic backgrounds to visit parks to increase profits and to encourage a more demographically representative visitor profile; thirdly that they appoint a highly qualified and experienced Director. The fourth recommendation was that the social ecology structure be upgraded to a Directorate. No reference was made to considerations of social justice.

The appointment of Shahid as the Director of Social Ecology in July 2003 was considered appropriate, because her qualifications included a PhD and her experience as environmental advisor to the Minister of Education, Kader Asmal. She was also the key actor responsible for developing the National

Environmental Education Programme that assured that the environment was included in all national education and training programmes in South Africa (Informant 21, Pretoria, 27/9/2005).

At the outset of her appointment the ambiguity that characterised Shahid's tenure meant that she did not receive enabling and uniform institutional support to strengthen the fragmented social ecology structure, "I had to narrow the gap and the schisms [in the unity and morale of the staff that remained] that existed in the PCD [SED] on my arrival" (Informant 17, Pretoria, 30/5/2005). There was no induction process prepared for her; on arrival Shahid found an empty office, with no access to basic information, such as the filing system, and her requests for these yielded no positive response. Neither was there an exit strategy in place for Ngcobo (Informant 16, Pretoria, 11/5/2005). Ngcobo's role in the SED remained unclear when she became general manager, under Shahid (Informant 16, Pretoria, 11/5/2005).

The situation created differences between Ngcobo and Shahid which affected the smooth running of the SED. On her arrival the organisation as a whole was also "in turmoil", in its recruitment drive for a new CEO. However Shahid thought that the vacuum gave her "*carte blanche"* to set up a Directorate from the start (Informant 17, Pretoria, 30/5/2005).

The organogram below indicates a change in the wording of most positions, but not necessarily a change in the actual work that they were meant to do. This was intended to ward off the negative stigma of the past; social ecology, for example was known as People and Conservation and was once more elevated to the status of a Directorate, the Imbewu manager was now managing the youth outreach programme, which was essentially the same programme. Essentially there was continuity in the retention of most of the positions, including the confusing position of Ngcobo. Two new positons were created, a social science research manager and a manager of community based conservation, previously named economic empowerment. The triple box refers to one person who held different positions and combinations thereof during this phase.

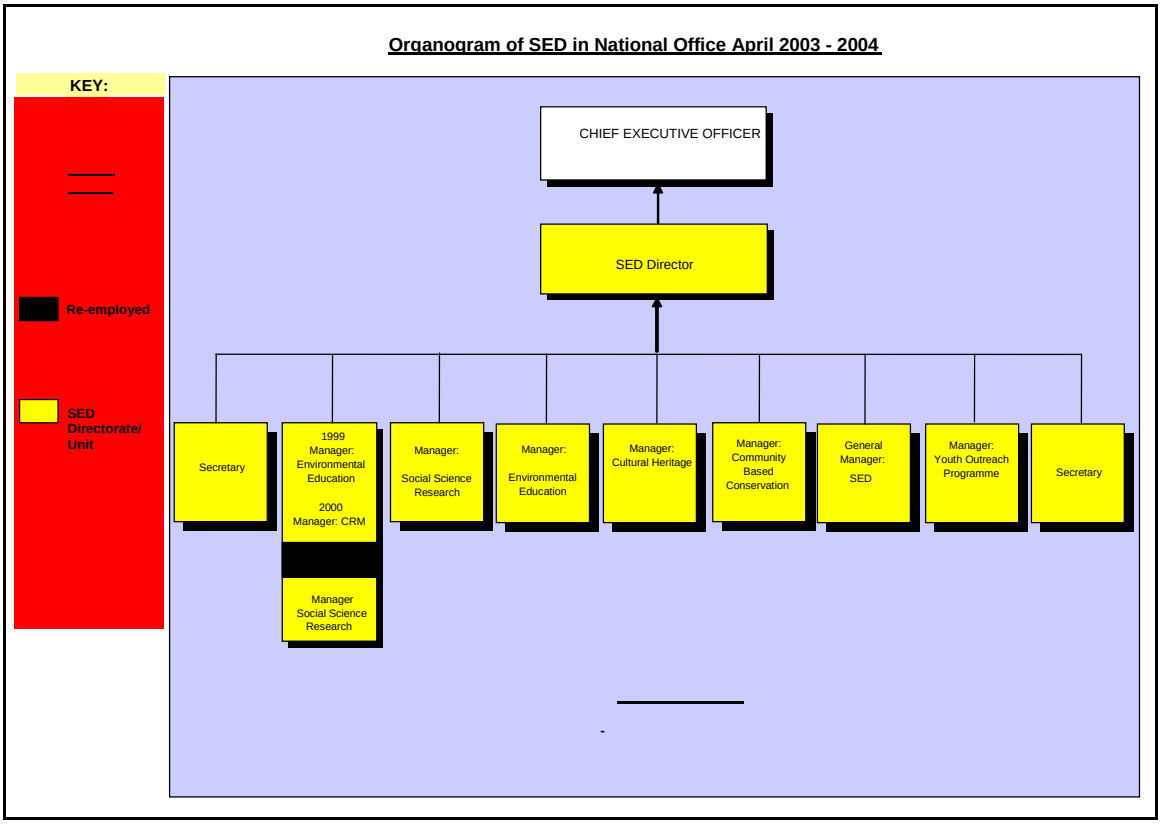


Figure 12

Informant's descriptions of the relationship between the SED and SANParks' second black male CEO Mokwena, suggests organisational ambiguity. One informant claimed, "There is one hundred and twenty percent support from Mokwena for social ecology" [then called 'People and Conservation'] (Informant 16, Pretoria, 30/5/2005). However there was no strong relationship between the CEO and the chair of the conservation/social ecology sub-committee of the Board. "By May 2005, Mokwena had not attended a single meeting, chaired by Desai" (Informant 35, Johannesburg, 30/5/2005).

It was therefore not surprising that these developments led to informants describing Shahid as **"**demoralised". She was described as "…being in a slump, she has to convince herself that it is working for her to stay in it, so that she does not get despondent." (Informant 21, Pretoria, 27 September 2005). Another informant said, "Shahid has been brought down by the organisation, she came in eager and energised, but now the energy is sapped out of her and she is only one example of the fact that a lot in SANParks is covered up. When you look at the corporate culture, good people leave making the staff turnover high." (Informant 7, Pretoria, 30/5/2005). Amongst the senior officials in SANParks, only the Chief Operations Officer, Erin and the Chief Director of Parks, Dwight with whom she developed an

excellent working relationship, supported her. “I have the full support of Dwight and Erin. For Dwight especially, the PCD [SED] is close to his heart, there is not a single occasion that he did not support me. There is organisational fragmentation, but it does not come from Dwight, but from the old guard regional managers and park management” (Informant 17, Pretoria, 30/5/2005).

Negative attitudes and lack of support for Shahid was evident from the outset of her tenure when she approached several people for information. It was a combination of, “…withholding of information, no response because the organisation was disorganised, a ja, okay [yes, okay]”, but nothing was forthcoming…. Essentially the thrust was that I had to do what I had to do, regardless of the antagonism. The expectation was that social ecology was the softer option in the bigger scheme of things and my role was viewed as the education of the masses and doing goodwill for the organisation in terms of the media. Yet my role involved so much more” (Informant 17, Pretoria, 30/5/2005).

Despite these difficulties there were several achievements that can be attributed to Shahid’s leadership. She was able to resuscitate Ngeleza’s organisational development efforts to integrate social ecology into the rest of SANParks. This included establishing a working group to improve communication within the organisation and she developed a detailed business plan.

But despite the cooperative relationship between Erin, Dwight and Shahid, there was ongoing resistance to social ecology that remained deeply embedded in the organisation (Informant 17, Pretoria, 30/5/2005). In addition, the executive leadership’s lack of commitment to build a strong social ecology structure was symptomatic of a wider lack of organisational integration and prioritisation of social and transformation issues (Informant 36, Pretoria, 10/5/2005). An informant observed that, “Although Shahid was appointed to start up a Directorate, she was watched very carefully from the start and the organisation had not prioritised integrating the PCD [SED]. “This was the big issue - to see if Shahid was going to work like Ngeleza and be as strong” (Informant 41, Pretoria, 26/5/2005). A different informant repeated SANParks’ cautionary attitude, “They employed Shahid thinking that because she is an environmental education expert, she would push this aspect of her work harder than redress and social and economic justice issues, and therefore they would be safe. But she was not short-sighted and was committed to organisational transformation and the PCD [SED]” (Informant 21, Pretoria, 27/9/2005).

The upshot was that this was linked to poor strategic management and planning that, “…created a problematic silo attitude as well as a lack of conditions and mechanisms for cross-functional working in general” (Informant 36, Pretoria, 10/5/2005). This pervasive absence of organisational cohesion, “Practically translated into the fact that the Directors at corporate level have no idea of what each other’s business plans are like” (Informant 36, Pretoria, 10/5/2005). At park level this lack of organisational cohesion manifested in the fraught relationship between the SED at all levels and park level management.

By 2004 the SED at national office level had "…no direct communication with social ecologists in parks, we have to communicate with the park manager who in turn communicates with the social ecologist" (Informant 17, Pretoria, 30/5/2005).

The weakness of SE structures was also related to the obfuscated line management reporting in all the other parks, except the KNP. Since 1994 the SED at the national office reported to the Directorate of Research and Development, yet at park level, it reported to the national Director of Operations (Informant 14, Midrand, 27/5/2005; NPB Annual Report 1994 -1995). By 2004 the combination of confused reporting lines and ideological resistance to transformation impeded the functioning of the SED in all parks. Firstly, social ecologists had to report to their park managers, who may be someone who was totally opposed to social ecology and more interested in, for example, tourism and other profit-generating activities. This resulted in some parks being satisfied with the structural and reporting arrangement, and some parks not, depending on how individual personalities collaborated. By 2004 "…work remains to be done to streamline the reporting procedures to increase our transformation efforts" (Informant 36, Pretoria, 10/5/2005). For all national parks, except the KNP during this phase, there was a second level of reporting required: to the regional managers. "The structural integration of social ecology was dismal, all managers of national parks, except for the KNP, had a second level of reporting to do, they reported to a Regional Manager, who reported to Dwight, the national Director of Parks. The problem is that regional managers were still old guard, and they blocked progress for us [the SED]" (Informant 17, Pretoria, 30/5/2005).

The third reporting complication for all national parks, excluding the KNP, was between senior SED staff at the national office and park-level SED. The SED Manager of Community Based Conservation (CBC) based in the national office, worked closely with park level social ecologists, but had no authority over them. She could only respond if the social ecologist in the park requested assistance. The convoluted operational procedure for the CBC was: i) to approach the SED Director, ii) who would approach the Director of Parks, iii) who would approach the relevant regional manager, iv) who would approach the park manager, v) who would approach the social ecologist. The CBS manager had to "… focus on gaining the trust of the social ecologist and the park manager, and was happy if it works otherwise you can forget about it" (Informant 41, Pretoria, 26/5/2005).

These convoluted reporting lines for all national parks, excluding the KNP, showed that SANParks was a behemoth bureaucracy that lacked clear lines of authority and information sharing, as well as innovative and dynamic problem-solving skills (SANParks December 1997). The organisation struggled to adapt its outdated practices to new challenges (Van Damme and Meskell undated). This was part of a wider problem: Wallis, commenting on bureaucracies in democratic South Africa, noted that they were unable to develop institutional capacity for innovative development planning and management (Wallis 1997).

This organisational incoherence was compounded by the historical resistance to social ecology. According to one informant, "There is a continuation of a huge diversity of understanding and opinions of social ecology from people of different backgrounds in SANParks at regional and park level, ranging from resistance, to acknowledging social ecology and trying to move on, it differs from park to park." (Informant 17, Pretoria, 30/5/2005). Several informants reported that SED personnel often felt marginalised. By 2004, the SED, "Still does not get invited to meetings convened by other Directorates regularly. When we are, we are happy to be invited, but when we have to push to be invited no one is happy. Some things we hear about after the event, some while it is in process. It could be a lack of understanding of how we work with these people. Or it could be a combination of factors such as pockets of resistance or the structure of social ecology. Everything is in a box and we do not feed into each other's work, for example, projects that relate to each other, making the work difficult especially with meagre financial resources" (Informant 34, Pretoria, 26/5/2005). It was therefore a major achievement when Dwight and Shahid cooperated to establish a small working group in 2004 to deal with these problems. The outcome was a very minimalist interpretation of SE which failed to link conversation to any radical notion of social and environmental justice.

By 2004 SANParks had not established the SED as a strong and integrated structure. The SED staff and other informants interviewed in the course of this research were highly critical. They maintained that the SED was grudgingly implemented as a politically correct and weak idea that SANParks paid lip service to. They identified an absence of any deep commitment to transform the organisation (Danish Cooperation for Environment and Development and South African National Parks 1999). The outcome was that the SED lacked the capacity to drive the SANParks transformation process. As several informants pointed out, SANParks' transformation leadership should have been rooted at board and CEO level, not in the SED. On the contrary, as a number of informants maintained, at the executive level, several powerful actors obstructed transformation rather than leading it (Informant 15, Skukuza, 12/9/2007; Informant 14, Midrand, 27/5/2005; Informant 16, Pretoria, 11/5/2005; Informant 17, Johannesburg, 30/5/2005). Transformation should have been the responsibility of the Board and the senior management team. The SED was overloaded and primed for failure (Informant 2, Johannesburg, 2/6/2005).

Conclusion

This chapter has shown that a potentially strong platform for social ecology was established within SANParks. This platform could have been a powerful driver of a set of transformative initiatives. However this potential was lessened by ideological resistance to transformation within the organisation, the persistence of complicated social dynamics, personalised tensions and organisational incoherence.

Ultimately it is an account of the failure to integrate the SED structures and thinking into the organisation and build a strong and effective unit to drive fundamental change. A large part of the problem was that the pressures for transformative change came from external social forces, rather than from within SANParks. The organisation lacked any clear internal understanding and acceptance of the changed political context, and the need to link the conservation of biodiversity to social justice.

Although there was some progress towards transformation in that the social ecology structure was indeed established and represented - at board, national office and parks levels - there were several operational challenges. Progress regarding the appointment of social ecology staff was slow, and most lacked the community development skills to be effective. This lack required long term training and continued although the social ecology capacity building manager had initiated courses to enhance the knowledge and skills of park wardens and social ecologists in participatory community-oriented approaches (Board papers, 16 September 1996). A serious source of difficulty was lack of strong leadership from the board, some of whose members were defensive about "…interference of the board in management issues" (Informant 2, Johannesburg. 2/6/2005). In addition, "Social ecologists are in quite a vulnerable position. They constitute one of the youngest professions within the South African National Parks; in most parks they do not have adequate resources; their professional status has not yet been firmly established; they are working in a new discipline without detailed guidelines, and; in some parks they are experiencing considerable resistance from more established members of staff" (South African National Parks. Board papers, 12 March 1999: 1). Using the KNP as a case study, in the following chapter these complexities are explored at the park level.

SECTION B: ORGANISATIONAL TRANSFORMATION

CHAPTER 6: Social Ecology and the Establishment of the Social Ecology Directorate at Park Level

Introduction

To further the understanding of the role played by the SED in SANParks' transformation process, it is necessary to understand how the SED operated differently at the national and park levels. This chapter focuses on the social dynamics regarding the KNP SED, operating within the flagship park between 1994 and 2004. These dynamics involved complex processes of contestation which undermined the establishment of a strong and coherent unit with the capacity to promote the transformation of SANParks.

The chapter is divided into two main parts: the first part analyses the establishment of the KNP SED in three phases: the precursor phase, the phase of explicit resistance and the phase of partial acceptance. This is followed by a discussion of the constraints – both external and internal – on the development of the KNP SED which limited its ability to contribute to the transformation of SANParks as a whole.

The Three Phases of Developing the KNP SED

(i) The Precursor Phase: The Establishment of the Department of Community Development (1992 – 1994)

This phase involved the establishment of the KNP's Department of Community Development (DCD) which was the precursor to the KNP SED. The DCD was established in 1992 by the reactionary social forces within KNP employees referred to as the 'old guard'. Their intention was to address what they understood to be the immediate threat to the survival of the KNP, namely: i) alternative voices and practitioners who promoted different understandings and models of conservation, largely emanating from the environmental justice movement; ii) media coverage which focused on a number of protest-related incidents involving neighbouring communities; iii) pressure that emanated from the communities themselves, who lived in abject poverty and who were alienated from their land and resources, and; iv) the potential changes in the national policy and legislative framework. During this phase the contribution to the transformation of the SANParks was extremely limited, being largely confined to a superficial improvement of the park's relations with neighbouring communities and a minimalist programme of environmental education.

The DCD approach to neighbouring communities was primarily defensive. According to informants the dominant view of the DCD during this phase was that they had no orientation to inform a development-

focused redress programme to benefit and include neighbouring communities in the affairs of the park. Instead KNP authorities established relationships with the elites within the communities - the traditional authorities - as a way of attempting to appease them to ensure the survival of the park.

Thus the establishment of the DCD represented the KNP's approach to ensure its survival. However the changes introduced by the DCD were extremely thin and superficial, involving three main reforms: the introduction of minimalist environmental education, projects to improve relations with communities and promoting access to the park for neighbouring communities. Even these superficial changes provoked some resistance based on the notion that as an institution of the state, SANParks was exceeding its historical mandate, the protection and conservation of biodiversity.

Furthermore the KNP had scant experience of undergoing significant change. Since its inception when the Sabie Game Reserve was proclaimed in 1898 until 1992, the KNP had only introduced two main changes: i) the introduction of eco-tourism game viewing opportunities which were reserved for the racially exclusive enjoyment and appreciation of the white middle class, and; ii) an interventionist, conservation-focused management philosophy based on research (SANParks August 2006 Draft KNP Park Management Plan; Du Toit *et al* 2003).

The prioritisation of organisational survival is the first task of management in changing political times, as Drucker emphasizes, so the establishment of the DCD made sense. However, the absence of organisational cohesion was evident and many white employees were critical of the establishment of its establishment. As explained, "So we did this in an atmosphere of a changing organisational mandate which caused confusion, and the entire organisation was opposed to what we were doing. The concept of making an effort to include black people in the affairs of the park was entirely foreign." (Informant 33, Johannesburg, 1/8/2005). Admittedly no effort to include black people in the affairs of the park had been previously attempted. This reaction was typical of many South African bureaucracies who were historically controlled and dominated by the white minority and were opposed to change (Picard 2005). As a bureaucratic structure of a repressive state, the KNP's mandate was confined to the conservation of biodiversity for the racially exclusive enjoyment of the white middle class. The authoritarian nature of KNP management meant that it had no history, experience or competence to initiate, participate or consult with external stakeholders regardless of class and race. This was the context in which the DCD's singular goal was to rapidly reverse the effects of a long, contested and inherently antagonistic relationship with their neighbours to protect their own interests.

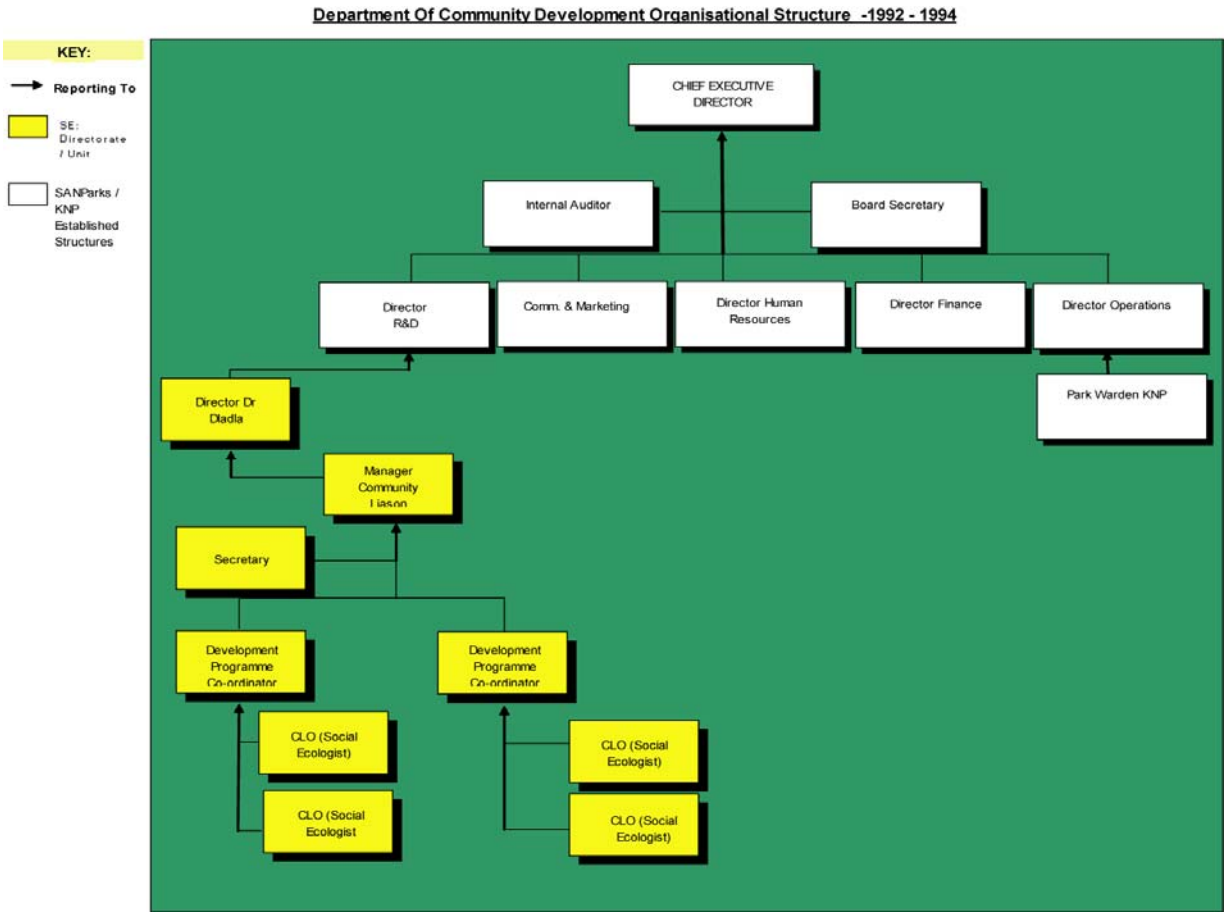


Figure 13

The Director of the KNP, Johannes, hurriedly appointed Martin from the KNP's Tourism department to manage the DCD. His approach was to develop patron-client relationships with traditional elites (Informant 14, Midrand, 27/5/2005). The staff complement to achieve this, according to the organogram above, was that Martin as the Manager of the Department of Community Development, reported directly to Johannes. In addition there was a secretary and two Development Programme Co-ordinators, each of whom were responsible for two Community Liaison Officers who worked in a total of four community forums discussed in chapter eight (Informant 33, Johannesburg, 1/8/2005).

The DCD programme was intended to secure the survival of the park, by replacing the historical relationship of uncertainty and antagonism through understanding, "The real issues affecting the daily lives of people" (Informant 24, Pretoria, 14/6/2005). The DCD officials admitted the lack of any previous social development experience, "Not knowing how to do this, we began by attempting to build a relationship with the tribal chiefs to develop mutual support and understanding. We allowed some personal benefits for tribal chiefs such as free visits to the park. The rangers attempted to build relationships with neighbouring communities to exchange information [to inform on poachers]. We also called a meeting with communities, their chiefs and local civic structures who were preparing for the 1994 elections" (Informant 24, Pretoria, 14/6/2005).

Thus the DCD's strategy and modus operandi was to appease the traditional elites in positions of power, and not necessarily to promote social development or uplift its surrounding communities through a rights-based approach. The individuals involved were products of the apartheid system, which Mc Lennan described as carriers of "…an authoritarian, hierarchical, non-consultative and non–participative ethos…" (Mc Lennan 1995: 525). The new relationships with neighbouring communities were conceptualised as an instrument to, "…make the chiefs happy, to get their buy-in, so they could tell their people that we are good people" (Informant 24, Pretoria, 14/6/2005). Another informant regarded Martin's strategy as problematic because his, "…welfare-patronising approach was only meant to appease the community. He would order the slaughter of three or four springboks, to be given to the chiefs as gifts, to create a dependency" (Informant 14, Midrand, 27/5/2005). Further complicating this approach was that the traditional leadership in some cases were not legitimate representatives of the community they presided over (Poonan 2000). This was part of a broader pattern. As Ramphele writes of traditional leaders, they were, "…reinvented over the years to reward loyalists of the old regime, while authentic leaders were in some cases exiled or demoted" (Ramphele 2008: 98).

Consequently the DCD's attempt to ensure the KNP's survival by appeasing local communities through their traditional leadership, exposed them to negative criticism from progressive development-oriented NGOs and individuals working in the natural resource management sector (Informant 8, Johannesburg 23/5/2005; Informant 25, Johannesburg, 24/5/2005). The DCD's new, minimalist approach to improve relations with neighbouring communities generated intra-organisational antagonism and tensions.

ii) Establishing the KNP SED: A Period of Explicit Resistance to Social Ecology (1995–2000)

During this period the KNP DCD promoted organisational transformation mainly through various community programmes but was weakened by explicit resistance from reactionary elements within the organisation. Although the DCD attempted to protect and position the KNP within the changing political context as they understood it, Ngeleza (Director of the SED at national office) opposed their approach. She redefined the aims and approach of the parks' responsibility to its neighbouring communities and people of colour in general. In addition to its historic mandate of conserving biodiversity, according to her understanding of transformation the KNP had to: i) grant equal access to all races as tourists, researchers, learners, employees and ii) include aspects of community-based conservation. The latter involved ensuring: a) community benefits; b) some level of community participation in the park's decision-making, and c) redress for past injustices such as assisting in land claims processes (Informant 14, Midrand, 27/5/2005). The process to implement these aspects of social justice into the traditional goal of conserving biodiversity was fraught with tension.

Introducing the KNP SED under Martin: 1994 -1995

Between 1994-1995, Martin worked as the Manager of the KNP SED under Ngeleza. The organogram below shows a dispersed reporting structure between the national office and the KNP. While Martin reported to Ngeleza, the social ecologists reported directly to the senior ranger in whichever section of the park they worked in, as well as Martin. An informant stated that Ngeleza did not agree with Martin's approach because it was, "… more of a public relations exercise and did not include a transformation, rights-based approach in relation to the communities that lived on the border of the park" (Informant 14, Midrand, 27/5/2005).

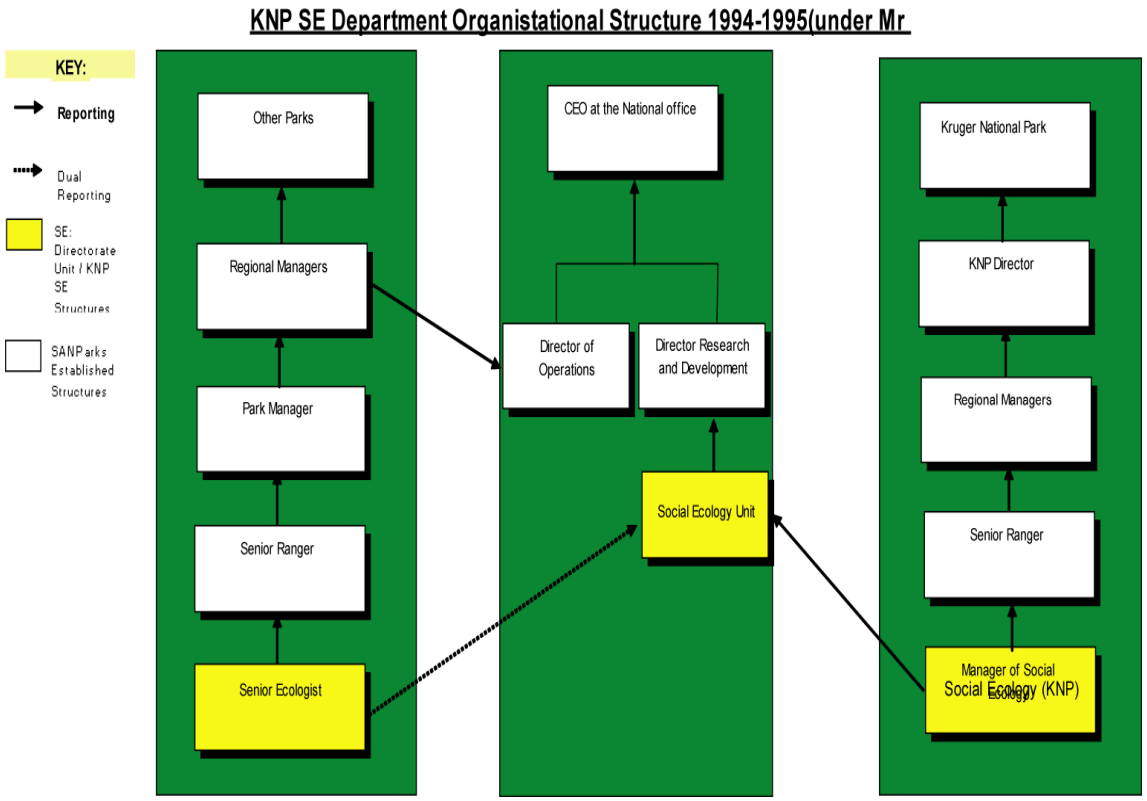


Figure 14

Establishing the KNP's SED under Nkululeko: 1995-2000

By 1995 Ngeleza replaced Martin (who returned to the KNP Tourism Department), with Nkululeko as the manager of the KNP SED. Ngelelza's aim during this period was to establish the KNP SED as a strong structure in the KNP to drive the organisational transformation process and to incorporate social justice for African communities living along the borders of the park into the traditional goal of biodiversity conservation (SANParks December 1997).

The establishment of the KNP SED has to be contextualised more broadly within SANParks: It was a partially separate but parallel process to the establishment of the SANParks national Transformation Task Group (TTG), as well as the KNP TTG, discussed in chapter four. Regarding Ngeleza's efforts to establish social ecology structures in national parks, by 1997, 31 full-time SED personnel were employed with six vacant positions, on average there was one social ecologist for each of the 18 national parks (SANParks Board Meeting, 14 March 1997). At its inception as the organogram below shows, the KNP SED was expanded and structurally integrated into the KNP when three other sub-sections namely, Environmental Education (renamed Interpretation and Information), Cultural Heritage Management (renamed Cultural and Heritage Resource Development) and Community Facilitation were merged with the KNP SED (SANParks. undated. KNP Business Plan). Since the KNP was the largest park it had eight social ecologists, including Nkululeko that worked with communities directly, serving 70 communities. The community development programmes they attempted to implement is discussed below in chapter eight). It also had a relatively large support staff complement, such as the secretary, an administrative officer, interns, librarians, a display technician, assistant display technicians and interpretation assistants as well as guides (SANParks Board Meeting, 14 March 1997; Social Ecology Quarterly Report, August – October 1997).

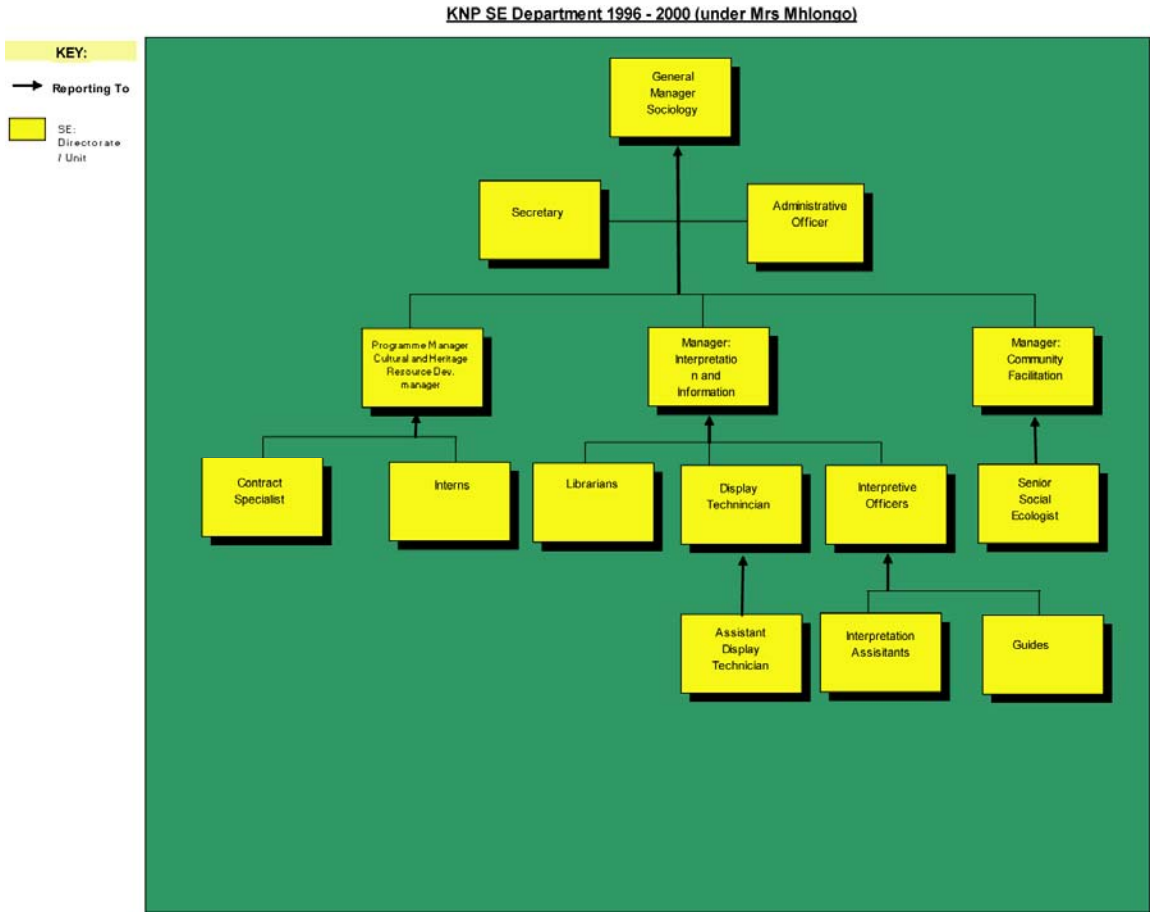


Figure 15

Resistance to Organisational Transformation in the KNP

Notwithstanding this structural expansion and integration, the KNP SED's inception was characterised by an absence of functional and inter-personal integration, as well as inadequate managerial support and limited access to resources. This was because, "Social ecology was side-lined and looked down upon, because as a new transformative structure, it threatened people in the organisation because it was attempting to implement a paradigm shift, to include their African neighbours in the affairs of the park and to assist them to accrue benefits from the park" (Informant 33, Johannesburg, 1/8/2005). It was within this hostile organisational environment that the KNP SED was simultaneously introduced and weakened.

At the core of this process was the conviction of the KNP "old guard" that a strong KNP SED was unnecessary because SANParks did not require fundamental transformation. Their first strategy which was deliberately adopted to achieve this was to limit the allocation of resources to the KNP SED which affected their ability to function efficiently. An informant described this, "The KNP SED was an adopted child and all resources and support required for its operations only materialised after extensive battles" (Informant 37, Skukuza, 18/6/2007). Since 1995, despite the availability of unused offices, all of the KNP SED staff were crowded into a mobile home, with no air conditioning, in an extremely hot climate. The KNP SED also only had one telephone with one line, and it was a battle to obtain basic stationery.

Addressing this resistance to the establishment of a strong KNP SED was complicated because of its largely obscure nature, "… it was not verbally expressed, making it hard to clarify or confront problems openly and pre–emptively" (Informant 33, Johannesburg, 1/8/2005). Some level of reluctant and limited organisational change did occur when in 1996 Ramodibe, a senior executive member based at the national office observed that the unit operated in unsatisfactory, cramped conditions, and issued a directive to the KNP management to correct it (Informant 37, Skukuza, 18/6/2007).

This situation in the KNP reflected the limitations of the national transition of political power from the 'old guard' to new transformative African leadership. Despite the introduction of the 'sunset clause' which protected jobs and pensions for the 'old guard', the shifting power base created concerns among them relating to their job security. After Ramodibe's intervention nevertheless, "Nkululeko still had to fight on a daily basis to the end of her tenure for an organisational space and role for social ecology, so it never was a strong structure" (Informant 37, Skukuza, 12/9/2007).

Although the changing national context required that the KNP transformation-oriented structures had to devise change management strategies**,** this phase of attempting to establish a strong KNP SED was fraught with internal dissonance (Informant 22, Johannesburg, 20/5/2005). One source emphasized that, "The manner in which conservation institutions were established, the different management models and

the philosophies that informed such management principles continue to have tangible residual power, even in the face of new management strategies" (Masuku Van Damme and Meskell undated: 1).

Another strategy of the 'old guard' to resist the establishment of a strong KNP SED was to limit intra–organisational communication and collaboration to a minimum (Informant 38, Telephonic, 4/10/2007). On a superficial level, lateral communication and collaboration existed between the KNP SED and other KNP structures to promote community development, for example, "…the celebration of successful inter-departmental project implementation such as the Poverty Relief Working for Water Project, the Thulamela Heritage Site Development Project, and the Numbi Gate Arts and Crafts Project discussed in chapter eight (Informant 37, Skukuza, 18/6/2007). These projects were not driven by the KNP SED because of the attempt to minimise their role. As income generators, these projects had the potential to incorporate the KNP SED into the core functioning of the KNP, and to compensate for the lack of the KNP SED's contribution to park planning and implementation of operational plans (SANParks and DANCED March 2000). However, "We only played the role of sourcing labour from the local communities. Cooperation with other KNP structures that were involved in implementing these projects was second class, and collaboration only occurred if the relevant person in the other department had nothing else to do" (Informant 37 Skukuza 18/6/2007). According to one informant, "The KNP SED felt that the other departments looked down upon them, and found any excuse not to cooperate with them" (Informant 38, Telephonic, 4/10/2007). Sometimes, "… heated arguments erupted because of the lack of cooperation between social ecology and other departments." (Informant 22, Johannesburg, 20/5/2005).

Overall this period was characterised by a lack of inter-departmental cooperation, respect and trust because the organisation, as an apartheid structure, was historically grounded in racial and cultural distance and distrust. Social relations reflected apartheid attitudes of racial dominance. This presented a challenge because as Wilms notes, change in organisational culture will only materialise when the manner and ways in which people relate to each other are transformed (Wilms 1996).

The SANParks' Board had approved a restructuring process in the KNP to align it with the organisation's transformation-focused vision and mission. The organogram below depicts the results of this restructuring process that in early 1996, elevated the KNP SED to a Division within the Operations Department, which automatically upgraded Nkululekos' status to General Manager (SANParks. undated. KNP Business Plan). Certainly on a policy level the Board's acknowledgement of the KNP SED as a potentially important driver of organisational transformation contradicted the second development in the restructuring process that followed (Memorandum from the KNP Manager of Social Ecology to the KNP Park Warden. 15 January 1997; SANParks. KNP Social Ecology Annual Report. 1 April 2000–March 2001).

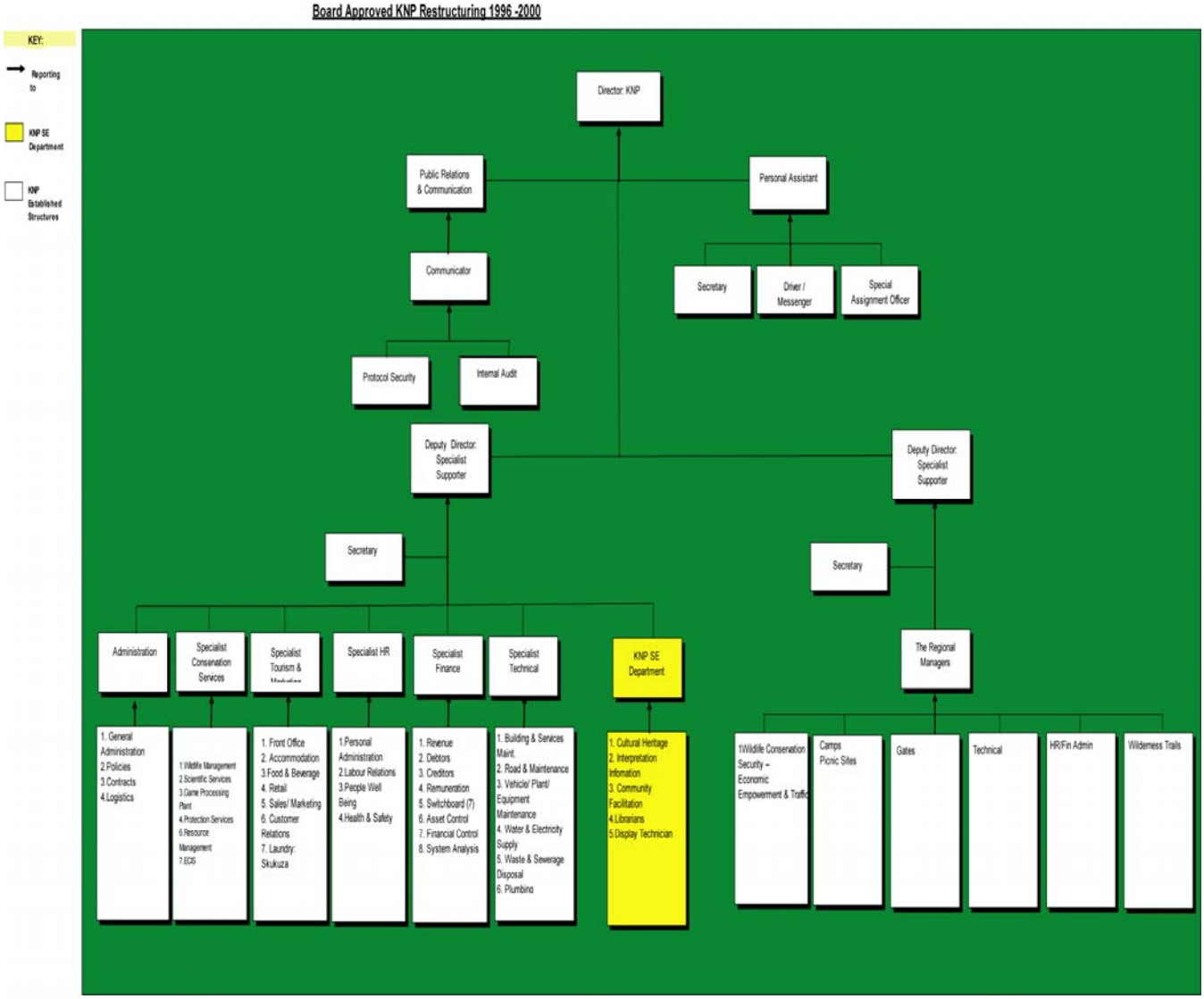


Figure 16

However as the organogram below shows, in December 1996 while Nkululeko was on leave, the KNP SED was arbitrarily demoted by the KNP management, to a sub-unit within the Nature Conservation Division - a Division of the Operations Department (Informant 38, Telephonic, 4/10/2007). When Nkululeko raised the issue with the KNP Director and the Director of Operations at the national office, the restructuring was reversed on paper, but continued in practice. This action was tantamount to resistance not only to the establishment of a strong KNP SED, but to the Board-supported transformation workshops and policies designed to promote participative decision-making in all the organisational structures, from the relevant Directorate at the national office, to a Section of the smallest camp in a park. This occurred despite the aim of the Board to inculcate a culture of mutual respect and equality amongst all employees (SANParks. December 1997. Workshops on the Implementation of the Transformation

Principles. Report to the Chief Executive. Metplan (Pty) Ltd; SANParks undated. KNP Business Plan; SANParks, DANCED and GTZ 2000).

Subverting this highest policy-making structure of the organisation in this way suggested that the Board, because it was so deeply divided, was not as strong as it could have been. This weakened its ability to function as the "…conscience…" of the organisation, and the "…keeper of human and moral values…" (Drucker 1909: 114). However, as explained in chapter four, the Board was not unanimous in its support for transformation. The reactionary "old guard" forces occupied powerful positions within the organisation as a whole. An informant noted that this restructuring debacle occurred because, "… the resistance of old guard actors who held senior management positions in SANParks and the KNP, to transformation, was equal in extent to old guard elements on the Board" (Informant 14, Midrand, 27/5/2005). This attitude of the old guard on the Board, also surfaced in the KNP, "…because the other established departments, such as marketing, finance and tourism saw the African dominated social ecology staff as intruders" (Informant 14, Midrand, 27/5/2005). The evidence for this 'African domination" is indicated below.

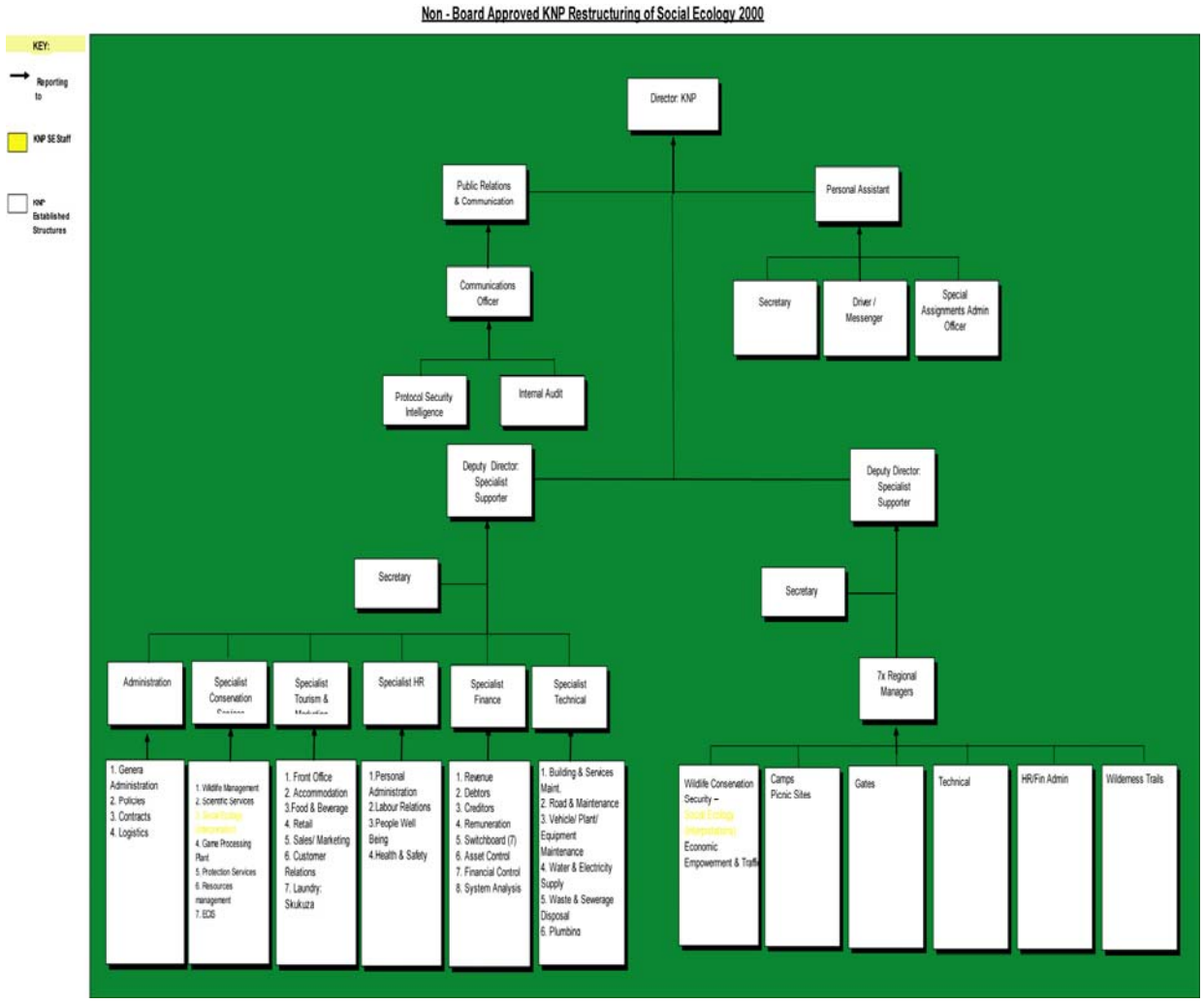


Figure 17

During this phase resistance to the establishment of a strong KNP SED peaked and its structural de-stabilisation was compounded by Nkululeko's transfer to the national office in early 2000, as well as the resignations of the manager of the CHM, and a social ecologist. These setbacks added to the national office problems associated with Ngeleza's resignation in mid-1999, and the ensuing dissonance, additional resignations and hostility amongst those who remained in the SED (Informant 38, Telephonic, 4/10/2007; Informant 39, Pretoria, 11/10/2005; SANParks. KNP Social Ecology Annual Report. 1 April 2000–March 2001). These developments demotivated social ecology staff (Informant 36, Pretoria, 10/5/2005). However they also stimulated debate questioning the role of social ecology. For example, "…it is unclear what role and function the South African National Parks (SANP) wants SE [SED] to perform. This is despite the fact that SE [SED] has already identified core functions for itself ….It is imperative for proper planning of SE [SED] activities that the SANP resolve what new role, *if any*, SE [SED] should play" [emphasis added] (Magome 2004).

iii) A Partial Acceptance of the KNP SED (2001–2004)

Apart from improved social interactions between the social ecology personnel and other employees, the strongest evidence for this periodisation of 'partial acceptance' was that an Adaptive Management System was adopted and the KNP SED manager, Moeti, was promoted to serve on the executive committee, the senior-most management structure of the KNP. During the 2001-2004 period the KNP SED experienced an ambiguous position within the organisation, which one informant described as an "in-between co-existence between acceptance and rejection" (Informant 42, Skukuza, 12/9/2007).

The KNP's Adaptive Management System and Improved Inter-Personal Relationships

Although externally generated, both the legislation discussed above and exposure to global trends in new people and parks relationships facilitated the KNP's subscription to an adaptive management system. Based on years of research and monitoring, the adaptive management system promotes learning by doing while seeking knowledge to manage a changing environment (SANParks August 2006 Draft KNP Park Management Plan; Du Toit *et al* 2003; Informant 40, Skukuza, 14/9/2007; Informant 42, Skukuza, 12/9/2007; Informant 38, Telephonic, 4/10/2007). This included the less fraught attempt during this stage to include black South Africans in general, and the historically disadvantaged neighbouring communities bordering national parks specifically, in the affairs of the park. Adopting an adaptive management system was necessary for conservation authorities in southern Africa, as a whole. To include a "broad and dynamic range of aspirations…for their own various constituencies, [the parks] need a set of policies that are themselves dynamic and adaptive" (Murphree 2004: 224 in Child, 2004). An indicator of change in this regard was that the KNP's senior natural science staff began attempting to understand and accept the ideas, as

well as the structure and function of social ecology (Informant 40, Skukuza, 14/9/2007; Informant 41, Pretoria, 26/5/2005; Informant 42, Skukuza, 12/9/2007; Informant 38, Telephonic, 4/10/2007).

An additional factor was that the General Manager of the KNP SED, Moeti's personality encouraged acceptance through the initiation of good inter-personal relations, which improved working conditions between the old guard and the KNP SED (Informant 41, Pretoria, 26/5/2005; Informant 40, Skukuza, 14/9/2007; Informant 42, Skukuza, 12/9/2007). Some old guard individuals in the Scientific Services Division and the Technical Services Department spoke positively about the leadership of the KNP SED (Informant 40, Skukuza, 14/9/2007; Informant 42, Skukuza, 12/9/2007). By 2004, a KNP SED informant observed that the KNP SED had generally "…demolished racist attitudes towards social ecology at the KNP, and our organisational approach is more racially integrated. We generally are beginning to see things from the same point of view" (Informant 37, Skukuza, 18/6/2007). This was confirmed by one member of the 'old guard', "There is a re-education, and a shift in the KNP" (Informant 40, Skukuza, 14/9/2007).

By beginning to subscribe to the theory and practice of the adaptive management system, the 'old guard' and the KNP SED were beginning to include people-centred knowledge management and group learning which indirectly increased acceptance of the structure and ideas of social ecology (SANParks August 2006 Draft KNP Park Management Plan; Informant 40, Skukuza, 14/9/2007; Informant 42, Skukuza, 12/9/2007; Informant 38, Telephonic, 4/10/2007). Old guard individuals in the KNP Scientific Services Division began reading social science publications and attending international conservation conferences that articulated the need for increased conservation attention to socio-economic issues. This contrasted with "… the early days when the ideas of social ecology was introduced. There was no unifying paradigm and the first phase of its introduction in the KNP was spent laying into each other" (Informant 40, Skukuza, 14/9/2007).

There were three external factors that promoted the acceptance of the KNP SED. The first external factor was the promulgation of transformation-oriented legislation that included stakeholder engagement and participation as well as affirmative action appointments. Furthermore the KNP were legally obligated to include participation through the promulgation of the National Environmental Management Protected Areas Act of 2003 (NEMPA), analysed in chapter three, which clarified the role of the KNP SED and influenced the increased acceptance of the KNP SED (RSA 2003; SANParks 2006. Park Management Plan Participation Programme. Facilitators Report). Forced to comply with this "external legitimacy" (Murphree 1994: 405), the old guard had to collaborate with KNP SED to strengthen and empower stakeholder-park relations by "consult[ing] municipalities, other organs of state, local communities and other affected parties, which have an interest in the area" (RSA 2003). An example of a participatory and consultative process that they had to follow was the development of Park Management Plans, and strict submission deadlines to the DEAT Minister (RSA 2003). The NEMPA of 2003 was thus explicit and binding in its transformation-orientation (RSA 2003).

Likewise the Employment Equity Act of 1998 was also an external imposition that influenced the beginning of the "old guard's", acceptance of the KNP SED (RSA 1998). By 2002 the racial and gender demographics of management positions in the KNP were 36 white men, 20 black men, 11 black women and four white women (SANParks Annual Report 2002 in du Toit *et al* 2003). By 2004 the KNP SED was strengthened by the appointment of the second African Director of the KNP, Mosimane. An informant described him as "Supportive, encouraging and passionate towards us, and he advised me on ways to improve my work. He attended all our functions, even the small ones. When we have no budget for specific projects, he would re-allocate funds from his own budget towards this, provided my motivation for this was sound" (Informant 37, Skukuza, 18/6/2007). By 2004 a total of two white males, one black male and five black females (including Moeti), occupied senior management positions, in a structure known as the executive committee. The middle management profile consisted of nine white males, two white females, seven black males and one black female (Minutes of the KNP Executive Committee Meeting 25 February 2004; Informant 37, Skukuza, 18/6/2007).

The second external factor that promoted an ambiguous acceptance of the KNP SED was the KNP SED's elevated status and relative structural coherence and autonomy compared to other parks within the national organisation, discussed in chapter five and shown in the organogram below. An informant noted that the KNP SED was structurally integrated into the KNP because it had its own General Manager who was part of the KNP executive committee, and she reported directly to the KNP Director. Structurally this eased the working relationship between the SED personnel at the national office and the KNP SED staff, while enabling a level of autonomy that the other SED staff did not enjoy in other parks. On a purely structural level therefore, "The working relationship between the manager of Community Based Conservation [based at the national SED] and the social ecologists in the KNP was eased by its autonomy that the other parks did not have… it also means the KNP did not have to do anything against its will" (Informant 41, Pretoria, 26/5/2005). This contributed positively towards acceptance of the role and function of the KNP SED during this period and helped dispel some of the lingering negativity towards it (Informant 37, Skukuza, 18/6/2007).

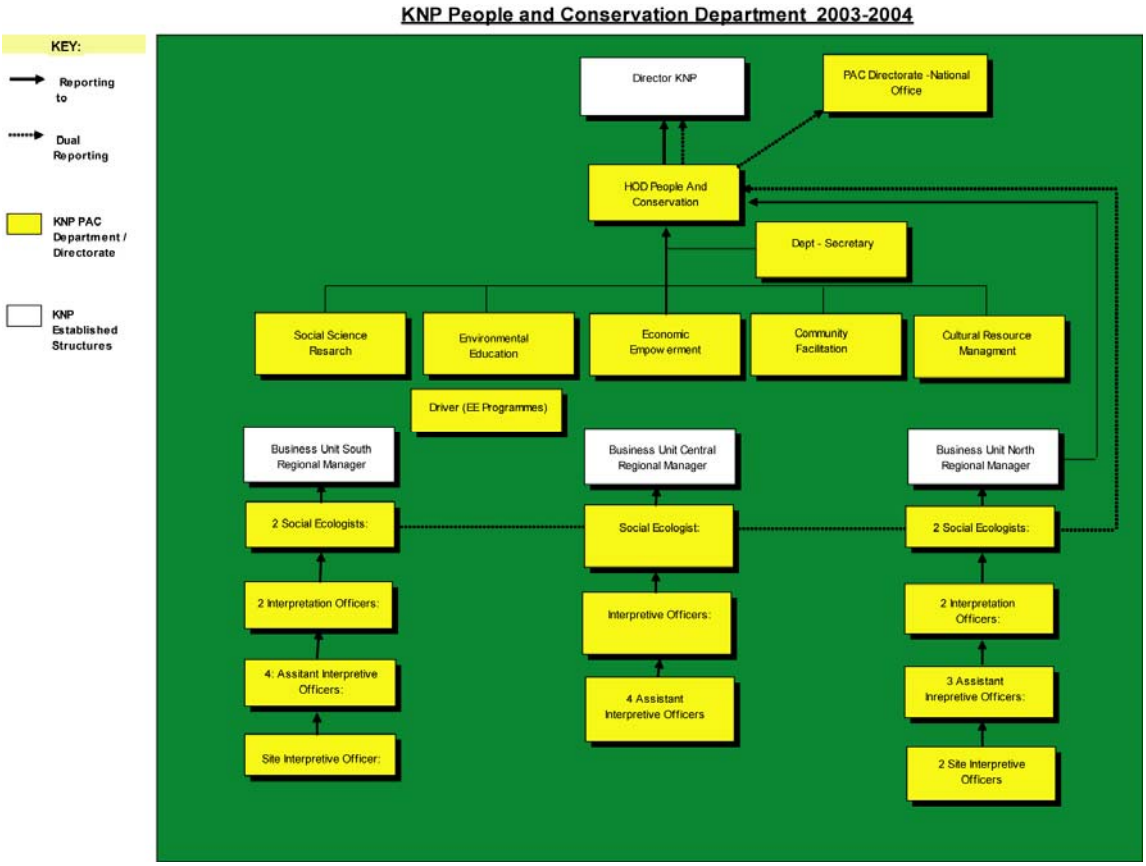


Figure 18

However acceptance of the KNP SED was not entirely smooth or homogeneous. It "Still struggled with a lack of co–operation from the Head of the KNP Human Resources Department, who ironically, was African, so it is not a race issue. "Resistance to the social ecology structure and function was also about personalities, and this applied to individuals holding senior positions, it therefore does not always stem from racism or white people" (Informant 36, Pretoria, 10/5/2005). "Structural integration, reporting procedures and the inadequate budget for social ecology were not the only issues" (Informant 37, Skukuza, 18/6/2007.

Factors Constraining the Development of the KNP SED (1995 – 2004)

The main factor constraining the development of the KNP SED and its capacity to contribute to transformation was that on a national level, while the legal structures of apartheid were being disbanded, political control of state organisations remained in the hands of the old regimes' civil servants, so they continued to wield social and institutional power (Picard 2005). The "old guard" structures and the KNP SED did not share a common set of values or worldview. At the time, the organisation's white staff on all levels were fearful and uncertain about their job security. Simultaneously, the KNP SED staff were attempting to assert themselves as agents of transformation, yet they lacked proper training, professionalism and high work

ethics. The result was an extremely unstable and weak structure marked by a lack of inter-departmental co-operation and the withholding of key resources such as office space.

External Constraints

Other factors constraining transformation until 1997, related to the external policy and legislative environment, specifically the absence of a specific transformation-orientated natural resource management policy and legislative framework, the adoption of a neo-liberal macro-economic framework as well as the fear generated by fundamental political change and the shifting of power relations in the wider society. The absence of specific, appropriate, enabling policies and legislation to implement organisational transformation was a major hindrance to the establishment of a strong KNP SED, throughout most of Nkululeko's leadership. Although both the White Paper on Biological Diversity and the White Paper on Environmental Policy provided the policy framework for communities to benefit and participate in conservation, they were finalised only in 1997, in the middle of Nkululekos' tenure. Specific SANParks organisational transformation-related legislation was promulgated after Nkululeko's era in the KNP SED: the National Environmental Management Protected Areas Act in 2003; the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act of 2004 and; the National Environmental Management Protected Areas Amendment Act in 2004.

Although a transformation-led agenda was bolstered by the appointment of the first African KNP Director, Mokwena in 1998, he was faced with challenges posed by the macro-economic, neo-liberal policy agenda that shaped state institutions. This involved a focus on profit-making to compensate for declining budg*et al*locations from national government. There is a tension between the commitment to development and to environmental justice, which is central to social ecology, and the centrality of the market in neo-liberalism. Neo-liberal logic necessitated decentralisation and the creation of concessions and outsourcing of some park services and assets to private business. This neo–liberal policy contributed to the resentment generated towards the KNP SED as consumers of a declining (in terms of inflation) and limited park budget, without adding value (Informant 22, Johannesburg, 20/5/2005). This, "… disabled his [Mokwena's] ability to mediate the intense struggles between the agents for and against transformation in the KNP, which continued unabated during his directorship" (Informant 22, Johannesburg, 20/5/2005). Although organisational transformation requires strong management commitment and involvement of senior leadership, Mokwena's competing priorities of biodiversity conservation and financial sustainability indicates that one person, even in a position of power, cannot implement organisational transformation alone.

Internal Constraints

The internal constraints experienced during the introduction and attempts to establish the KNP SED as an agent of transformation during this period involved a myriad of complex relationships characterised by conflict on ideological, cultural, inter-personal, structural, professional and racial grounds. Firstly, Ngeleza's arbitrary disbanding of the community forums, established by the DCD and discussed in chapter eight, were based on the following: i) conflicting ideological differences between the ex–DCD staff and the leadership of the KNP SED, ii) Martin's community approach was considered by Ngeleza as relatively informal and paternalistic, iii) the community's relationship with the park was not rights-based, iv) communities were not expected to play a role in park management of protected areas, and v) the forums were developed only to deal with difficult neighbours and to inform on poachers (Informant 18, Johannesburg, 2/6/2005; Informant 14, Midrand, 27/5/2005). This contrasted with the KNP SED's approach in 1995, which involved a general shift in paradigm - that black neighbours had to be involved in conservation on rights-based principles (Informant 22, Johannesburg, 20/5/2005).

Another obstacle blocking the development of a strong KNP SED was the cultivation of a culture of exclusion, which took two forms. Informants, regardless of race, made it clear that Nkululeko endeavoured to exclude white KNP SED staff and white staff from other departments, despite the willingness of some white staff to work as a team to achieve social ecology goals: "In the KNP social ecology was seen as an African department, where every opportunity was given to Africans. Nkululeko did not want to have anything to do with white people, for example, she gave her own white staff: Gerda, the librarian, Wellington, the displays designer, and Rawlings, in charge of EE [environmental education] a difficult time. That was her only weakness, she did not see the professionalism in the white staff in her department regardless of their race" (Informant 37, Skukuza, 18/6/2007). Discrimination and racism in the organisation was therefore not only white on black, but black on white. In organisational development theory, Drucker emphasised the important role and responsibility of leadership to earn employees trust to, "…create human energies and human vision…" (Drucker 1992: 102-103). Such a vision did not exist and white staff saw social ecology as "…building a black empire in a white organisation, representing the political wing of the ruling ANC party" (Informant 38, Telephonic, 4/10/2007). In the KNP this black on white racially-driven negativity curtailed potential cooperation from white staff in the KNP who were willing to contribute towards organisational transformation. "Nkululeko displayed unprofessional attitudes and behaviour towards her white staff which increased social ecology's isolation. Her attitude was "this is *our* work, and this was what *we* needed to do" (Informant 22, Johannesburg, 20/5/2005).

The cultivation of a culture of exclusion prevented the establishment of a strong, integrated KNP SED despite the fact that a significant senior staff component in the KNP was African. These appointments were in line with the Employment Equity Act of 1998 that promoted affirmative action in the workplace

to transform the national demographic profile in terms of gender equality and equal opportunities (Hirsch 2005; Marks 2005; Employment Equity Act of 1998). Mokwena was appointed as KNP director discussed above, to replace Ziemen, a white man. Other African upper management appointments were Nkululeko, Kwesi, the personal assistant to the Director, and two African males - the Head of the Human Resources Department, and the Head of Conservation Services (Informant 15, Skukuza, 12/9/2007).

In addition there was a lack of management support, conflict over resources and unprofessional behaviour, particularly in the far north of the park between 1997-1998 (Informant 22, Johannesburg, 20/5/2005; Informant 38, Telephonic, 4/10/2007). Inter-ethnic discrimination and prejudice that existed amongst the KNP SED staff, was a phenomenon Ramphele described as a by-product of South Africa's history (Ramphele 2008). VhaVenda-speaking people perceived Tsonga-speaking people as more advantaged and vice versa (Informant 22, Johannesburg, 20/5/2005; Informant 38, Telephonic, 4/10/2007). An informant explained this, "Since Nkululeko was based in the southern KNP, the senior ranger in the far north who managed the KNP SED staff based there, paid scant attention to them, leaving them to their own devices. However, the lack of supervision and conflict over the office car and the telephone on the one hand and managing poorly disciplined, poorly trained staff on the other made it difficult to attribute responsibility entirely to the white senior ranger because the situation was generally challenging." (Informant 22, Johannesburg, 20/5/2005). These complexities increased the white staff's dismissive attitude and resentment towards social ecology (Informant 38, Telephonic, 4/10/2007). An informant also thought that the limitations of, and conflict over resources, "…sharpened the ambivalence about social ecology throughout the organisation. It was like having a new pet in the house and you did not want to feed it too much in case it got fat" (Informant 25, Johannesburg, 24/5/2005).

Another problem which weakened the potential of the KNPSED to contribute to the transformation of SANParks was a lack of professionalism. One informant referred to their, "Lack of professionalism, which often did not do their own cause a lot of good. They were extremely unreliable. They regularly did not pitch for meetings and they did not do things that they promised, including small stuff, both within the organisation, and outside with neighbouring communities. The lack of professionalism that was most frustrating, was their relationship with communities, often poor people spent time and money to get themselves and their wares, for example curios, to a central place, only to have the social ecologists not pitch, not just once, but in one instance three times for the same meeting. The group of women this related to give up after that. These kinds of problems cannot be justified by a lack of support from the organisation or poor funding, although it is often ascribed to a lack of capacity. "Unfortunately, the consequences for people who are resource poor are sometimes high" (Informant 33, Johannesburg, 1/8/2005). This lack of accountability to communities neighbouring the KNP occurred, "…oftentimes during this period, and negated its [the KNP SED's] mandate to promote organisational transformation" (Informant 22, 23/5/2005). Thus, as discussed in chapter eight, the KNP SED failed to fulfil its

obligations of, "…dynamic engagement with the larger community on whose behalf we are stewards of the nation's natural and cultural heritage" (SANParks 1998 undated. KNP Business Plan: 15).

"The gap created by the absence of a basic work ethic displayed by some social ecology staff, such as not turning up for an appointment cannot be blamed on a lack of capacity." (Informant 10, Johannesburg, 23/5/2005). Proper training is only one component of professionalism, "Ultimately, the most important factor that will ensure social ecology succeeds depends on the work ethics of each social ecologist employed." (Informant 3, Johannesburg, 25/2/2005). Organisational transformation led by the KNP SED had to be based on a culture of professionalism and respect that had to be earned, "At Skukuza, social ecology meetings would start three hours after they were scheduled to, staff would filter in leisurely amidst a party-like atmosphere. This kind of overall unprofessional way of operating dominated the intra–organisational/divisional dynamics and prejudices. This kind of behaviour caused mainly white rangers to also behave negatively towards social ecology" (Informant 22, Johannesburg, 20/5/2005).

Thus the lack of professionally trained staff and the lack of high work ethics in the KNP SED were serious constraints limiting the capacity of the unit to contribute to transformation. The imperative for SANParks to embark on organisational transformation processes to respond to the needs and rights of communities neighbouring national parks was not met by an existing, readily identified pool of social ecologists with university training and experience in subjects such as development administration, sociology or human geography to name only a few (Informant 4, Johannesburg, 8 March 2005). As mentioned in chapter two the training and recruitment of appropriate staff was a prerequisite for organisational transformation because social ecology is a set of interdisciplinary practices and not a distinct discipline, unlike the traditional natural science/finance/management expertise that SANParks was accustomed to recruiting. The pioneering generation of social ecologists discussed here was insufficiently institutionalised and lacked a dynamic approach to their work (Fig 2000 in SANParks, DANCED and GTZ 15-19 May 2000).

Integrated development training could have capacitated social ecologists to provide support for their constituencies in the following ways: i) identify job possibilities, training options and business partnerships; ii) provide information on development agencies and processes that provided community services; iii) assist to access development finance through national, local and international sources. As a fledgling and poorly appreciated profession in SANParks, proper training, "to stake a claim within institutions" was essential to convince and garner internal and external support for social ecology (Fig 2000 in SANParks, DANCED and GTZ 15-19 May 2000: 267). Likewise the professional status of social ecology could have been strengthened by the establishment of a professional association such as that exemplified by the Environmental Education Association of Southern Africa, formed in 1982 (Informant 36, Pretoria, 10/5/2005; Van Damme and Meskell undated).

Instead, social ecologists were recruited from inappropriate academic backgrounds, predominantly ex-teachers and ex-social workers, without the required skills. Race also played a key role, "There was a culture in South Africa at the beginning of the 1990s, that if you were black then you deal with your black people. Black staff are asked to deal with anything to do with black people-related issues. It was more about being black than dealing with environment-related, or development-related issues" (Informant 36, Pretoria, 10/5/2005).

Between 2001 and 2004 the KNP SED's budg*et al*location was another crucial factor which inhibited its efficacy. Several informants noted that the KNP SED's budg*et al*location was meagre and that this was a reflection of the level of acceptance and integration of the KNP SED into the organisation (Informant 41, Pretoria, 26/5/2005; Informant 17, Pretoria, 30/5/2005; Informant 35, Johannesburg, 30/5/2005; Informant 37, Skukuza, 18/6/2007). According to one informant, "The insufficient financial allocation that the KNP SED receives means that there was still no genuine paradigm shift to accept the ideas of social ecology in the organisation. There were still too many silos, boxes and divisions in the organisation." (Informant 17, Pretoria, 30/5/2005). "On the surface, the ideas of social ecology were therefore still used to suggest that things have changed, at park and national office level, but the acceptance was not reflected in financial support" (Informant 36, Pretoria, 10/5/2005). Acceptance of the ideas of social ecology was therefore still in the, "lip service" phase of its development in the KNP because the budget was inadequate (Informant 16, Pretoria, 11/5/2005).

One of the key determinant of the sub-optimal financial allocation for all levels of the SED stemmed from the state's adoption of a macro-economic neo-liberal policy, which lowered national government's budget allocation to SANParks (Informant 17, Pretoria, 30/5/2005). Clearly the "dwindling [budget] allocations from the national organisation's coffers to the parks remained a stark reality" (Van Damme and Meskell undated: 14). The KNP SED's budget was only adequate for salaries, administration (telephone, computers, printing, stationery etc), and not for projects (Informant 34, Pretoria, 26/5/2005). They had to fundraise independently for projects.

The spread of neo-liberalism meant that parks in most parts of the world face these new financial challenges, and will only survive if they are financially viable (de la Harpe *et al* 2004. in Child 2004). Like any other park worldwide, the KNP SED had to adapt to a global conservation trend - to fundraise from external donors for project implementation (Informant 41, Pretoria, 26/5/2005; Brechin *et al* 2002; Singh and van Houtum 2002; Maguranyanga 2009; Magome 2004; Nyambe 2005). Managing the tension between a conservation organisation's financial survival and benefits to society (Child *et al* 2004) remained a challenge in the KNP by 2004.

In order to implement development projects, the neo-liberal policy was forcing the KNP SED to adapt and contribute towards revenue generation, in the same way that other structures in the park had to. This was a necessary challenge that the KNP SED had to meet to off-set the perception of other KNP departments, divisions and sections that it was a consumer, rather than a contributor of value to the organisation. This was a pervasive message that emerged, especially in the KNP's finance executive meetings (Informant 37, Skukuza, 18/6/2007). The predicament of the KNP SED was not unique during this phase because managerial decisions regarding, "…accounting, budgeting, and controlling …. signal to the organisation the degree to which subordinates are or are not trusted" (Schein 1969: 74). In the KNP the structures that had such trust were the departments of tourism, nature conservation and finance. Inadequate KNP SED capacity to raise external donor finance for its project implementation remained a serious constraint (Informant 33, Johannesburg, 1/8/2005). Cautious and productive use of the budget allocation from SANParks' coffers, combined with successful fundraising would have contributed towards promoting the acceptance and recognition of the KNP SED, structurally, functionally and professionally. However, in relation to national parks, "Financial survival should be a means to an end, not and end in itself" (Child 2004: 244).

Conclusion

This chapter has argued that the establishment of the KNP SED did mark the beginning of an organisational paradigm shift but its ability to contribute substantially to the transformation of the KNP was limited. The contribution made by the precursor to the KNP SED, the DCD (1992-1994) was minimalist, limited and largely confined to a superficial improvement of the park's relations with neighbouring communities. Between 1995-2000 the ability of the KNP SED to establish itself as a strong structure to promote organisational transformation was weakened by the lack of specific policy and legislation to support its transformation-oriented role for half of the period of its existence, as well as explicit resistance from reactionary elements within the organisation, white on black racism, withholding of resources, poor inter-personal relations and restructuring that undermined its status. The KNP SED also undermined its ability to contribute towards organisational transformation meaningfully through a culture of excluding positive contributions from its own white staff, black on white racism, inter-ethnic discrimination, lack of capacity and a strong work ethic as well as unprofessionalism. The result was an extremely unstable and weak structure. Between 2001- 2004 there was ambiguous progress towards the KNP SED's contribution towards organisational transformation. The enabling factors were the promulgation of specific transformation-orientated legislation, the structural elevation of the KNP SED, improved social interactions between the social ecology personnel and other employees, the adoption of an Adaptive Management System and the "old guards" exposure to international experience, literature and conferences that facilitated acceptance of the concept of local people's involvement in, and the accrual of benefits from the park. However the KNP SED's low budget allocation and lack of professionalism and work ethics and its lack of

capacity to fundraise for project implementation, raises the question of how much it was valued within SANParks as a whole.

SECTION C: THE IMPACTS OF TRANSFORMATION ON THE WIDER SOCIETY.

CHAPTER 7: Land Restitution

Introduction

The question of land restitution was at the centre of the transformation of both SANParks and the country as a whole. As the minister of Land Affairs, Derek Hanekom said in 1994, "The resolution of the land question …lies at the centre of our quest for liberation from political oppression, rural poverty and under-development" (Cited by Walker 2005:805). However the four goals of the original 1997 White Paper on Land Policy, to redress the injustices of apartheid, foster national reconciliation and stability, underpin economic growth, and improve household welfare and alleviate poverty have not been met." (Shackleton and Shackleton, 2015:191) As regards SANParks the issue of land restitution dramatically illustrates the challenges of linking conservation to social justice.

It is argued in this chapter that between 1994-2004 SANParks did embark on organisational and wider social transformation regarding land claims. It demonstrates that the Land Claims Sub Committee established by the new Board in 1997 was a powerful catalyst in this process. The chapter discusses the most successful land claims case in the period under review, that of the Makuleke, as a case study. It pays special attention to the role played by SED structures in the process. The expansion of conservation land is the other side of the coin to land restitution and it will be demonstrated that the Kruger National Park made efforts in this direction, not only in relation to Transfrontier Conservation Areas (TFCAs).

The chapter refers to eight national parks, including the KNP that had land claims in response to post-apartheid policy of land restitution. This included the resolved land claims in four parks by 2004: the Richtersveld National Park (RNP), the Augrabies Falls National Park (AFNP), the Kalahari Gemsbok National Park (KGNP)/Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park (KTP) and the Vaalbos National Park. By 2004 there were four parks that had unresolved land claims in: the Tsitsikamma National Park (TNP); the Mapungubwe National Park (MNP); the Addo National Park (ANP) and the Kruger National Park (KNP.) Walker's warning about inconsistent figures for the number of land claims is particularly pertinent to the unresolved claims in the KNP estimated at between 19 (excluding the Makuleke claim) and 37 (Informant 37, Skukuza, 18/6/2007; Dlamini 2012 ; Mail and Guardian 18-24/02/05 in Walker 2006: 68).

Social justice demanded that the claims of dispossessed communities should be addressed. The historical process of dispossession predated the iniquitous Land Acts of 1913 and 1936 which restricted African land ownership to 13% of the country (Beinart and Cousins, 2015). Thus the issue of land restitution is key to whether the organisation changed from an instrument of racial exclusion and domination to one

which promoted redress and social justice as well as conservation. It was the most important indicator of transformative change for many informants from local communities. At the same time the issue was deeply threatening to SANParks officials. For example, according to one informant, "In 2009 almost half, 40% of the Kruger National Park, was under land claims". This threat provided the impetus to make, "…an important paradigm shift without which the future of the KNP will be in jeopardy" (SANParks undated. KNP Business Plan: 15).

The KNP had the largest number of claims compared to the other seven national parks in the period under review which essentially threatened its survival (Informant 37, Skukuza, 18/6/2007). At the park-level the chapter focuses on how the KNP SED contributed, not only to the organisational transformation of SANParks, but to the transformation of the wider post-apartheid society through its efforts to assist the land claims process between 1994-2004.

The Legislative and policy framework

The post-apartheid government land reform policy rested on three pillars: redistribution, security of tenure and land restitution. Land rights are rooted in several forms, firstly in the Bill of Rights in the Constitution (Fig 2000; Müller 2009; van der Linde 2009; Kidd 2008). Secondly, the White Paper on South African Land Policy was approved by Cabinet in April 1997 to set the framework to undo the wrongs of three hundred years of social, political and economic deprivation and to reverse land dispossession through specifically, the Land Restitution Programme. The enabling legal mechanism for the resolution of land claims is provided in the Restitution of Land Rights Act, 22 of 1994 and its amendments. The relevant institutions that exist are the Land Claims Court and the Land Restitution Commission (RSA1994b; DLA and DEAT 1998; RSA 1996b; RSA 1997b).

Although resolving colonial land alienation was central to a liberated democratic South Africa, the process nationally "…has proved very complex and difficult" (Kariuki: 2003: 2). From 1994 the redefinition of conservation, to move beyond plants and animals to encompass human development, had to include "fairness and justice for individuals, communities and the country" to effect reconciliation and development processes (DLA and DEAT 1998: 7). Since historical, and to a certain extent, contemporary livelihoods of SANParks' neighbours were dependent on the use of their land and other natural resources, enabling land restitution policy, legislation and institutions would have provided a much needed framework for SANParks to implement meaningful transformation.

Constraints on Land Restitution

The first extra-organisational constraint for people living on the borders of the eight national parks that had land claims, stemmed from the neo-liberal macro-economic framework that marginalised and worsened their socio-economic conditions. Declining socio-economic conditions for the rural poor characterised both the presidencies of Mandela and Mbeki because it emanated from the national process of partial political change explained in chapter two (Marais 1998; Habib 2013; Hart 2013; Saul 2005). However, the first phase (1994-1999) of the new democracy did attempt to subscribe in principle to the 1994 Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) that contextualised the national land reform programme as:

"… the central and driving force of a programme of rural development. Such a programme aims to redress effectively the injustices of forced removals and the historical denial of access to land. It aims to ensure security of tenure for rural dwellers. And in implementing the national land reform programme, and through the provision of support services, the democratic government will build the economy by generating large scale employment, increasing rural incomes and eliminating overcrowding" (ANC 1994: 19-20).

However, the government's intensification of its neo-liberal macro-economic GEAR policy by mid-1996 retained these RDP principles, "…only as a rhetorical device, and invocation of the ANC's supposed pact of the electorate" (van der Walt 2000:13-15 in Kariuki: 2003: 241). This was exacerbated by the fact that claimant communities neighbouring the eight national parks that had land claims did not have the capacity, adequate support (except the case of the TNP) to use the policy and legislation to drive their own land claims processes. Their historical and contemporary human and economic resources to do so were limited (Turner 2000; Cousins 1997). Their rights were affected if they could not "…actively use new legal frameworks to successfully press their claims to land and natural resources – on a daily basis within their livelihood systems and strategies, in gaining access to new land via government programmes…" (Cousins 1997: 2).

The shift to a neo-liberal macro economy intensified when President Mbeki and the Minister of Land Affairs, Didiza (1999-2004) replaced the leadership of President Mandela and the Minister of Land Affairs, Hanekom (1994-1999) (Kariuki 2003; Ibsen and Turner 2000). Thus for land claimant communities living on the borders of the eight national parks that had land claims the resultant worsening socio-economic conditions intensified along with, "…the consistent marginalisation of the concerns of ordinary rural people" (Kariuki 2003: 8). Walker reinforces this, "…what my overview of the restitution programme has revealed is the discontinuities between land reform's founding vision and its practice…[which] has certainly not been matched by the ANC's government's commitment to land reform as a programme of government since 1994." (Walker 2008: 230-231).

The second extra organisational constraint was also national government related, in terms of its institutions, policy and budget. Although the Land Claims Court and the Land Claims Commission (LCC) were established to deal with all claims, both institutions lacked capacity to process claims timeously and deal with conflicting land claims and intra-community conflict (DLA and DEAT 1998). In addition by mid-1999, also a consequence of the adoption of GEAR, these institutions were rapidly changing regarding budget, structural and personnel shrinkage (Kariuki 2003). This occurred while the government's policy in relation to land claims in the KNP and perhaps in the MNP were not clearly defined. These conditions hampered the extent of land restitution implementation.

Government policy under the Minister of Land Affairs, Hanekom (1994-1999), on land claims in conservation areas was supportive of land restitution. It recognised that restitution was not the mere restoration of land as a commercial resource, but also should address, "…the social degradation and loss of identity suffered as a result of the dispossession and subsequent removal" (Gilfillan 1998:2). Also that it is possible through equitable redress, such as financial compensation, to preserve the environmental integrity of nature reserves and ecologically sensitive areas, provided the claimant community agreed. Ownership rights were a "bundle of rights" determined by the ecological sensitivity and importance of the land being claimed, which could vary between and within protected areas. For example rights could include: a) full ownership rights of a commercial development within a park; b) limited access and collection/harvesting of natural resources, performance of cultural activities and organising game drives (Ibid), or, c) rent or revenue-sharing agreements (KZN Land Claims Commission, GSLWPA, DEAT and DWAF 27 June 2001).

However, Hanekom admitted that restitution delivery was slow, due to "…the crisis of capacity currently experienced by the South African state…" (Cousins 1997: 3). Therefore a comprehensive donor-funded review was instituted in July 1998 to improve the situation (*Land Info* Aug./Sept. 1998; Wynberg and Kepe 1999). The study of these institutional and capacity weaknesses to implement policy and legislation involved the Department of Land Affairs (DLA), the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT), and the South African office of the IUCN (World Conservation Union). It recognised inherent complexities and difficulties, and acknowledged the need to reconcile the restoration of land rights to people who had valid land claims, with simultaneous efforts to ensure well managed protected areas for present and future generations to benefit (Wynberg and Kepe 1999). Several recommendations included revised institutional arrangements to hasten the processing of land claims in protected areas. The gist was to adopt an administrative approach for relatively uncomplicated claims, to lessen dependence on the Land Claims Court and to seek flexible approaches and alternative options to settle land claims (Ibid).

Despite these recommendations by 1999 under the government minister "… the current land reform policy has been negatively affected by this underlying ideology of neo-liberalism, which calls for higher fiscal discipline." (Kariuki 2003: 205). This resulted in an unstable governmental institutional framework, budget,

structural and personnel shrinkage which hampered the extent of land reform implementation at national and provincial levels of the DLA, as well as levels of the national LCC, and the Regional Land Claims Commissions (RLCCs) (Kariuki 2003; Turner 2002; Hall 1998). This included the fact that the LCC lost its independence as stipulated in the Restitution of Land Rights Act 22 of 1994. Its national office merged with the DLA and the Chief Land Claims Commissioner reported to the Director General of DLA. This was intended to forge closer working relationships between the LCC and the DLA, as well as to facilitate communication between conservation authorities and the DLA (Ibid).

By 2004 these government budget, structural and personnel shrinkages caused slow and cumbersome processing of land claims. "One of the striking aspects of restitution policy has been the disjuncture between the wide and unreflective public support for the idea of restitution and the messy, conflictual and unsatisfactory nature of implementation" (Bond 2013: 17). Nevertheless, according to Walker, "By March 2005 a total of 57,908 claims were reported as settled, some 73 per cent of the 79,696 claims lodged." (Walker 2005:817) Many of these claims were urban and many of them involved cash compensation rather than the restoration of property.

SANParks received support from a land claims reference group that comprised DEAT, DLA, the RLCCs and relevant provincial government departments. However by 2004 confusion regarding the relatively large number land claims in the KNP was compounded by the fact that the exact size of the land claimed was unknown because land surveys were incomplete. The status of each land claim varied from needing to be investigated, to requiring the resolution of disputes amongst communities claiming the same area, and those finalised in the government gazette. The impact of these delays and hindrances was that claimant communities, the majority of whom were poor, suffered (Collins 2010; Informant 41, Pretoria, 26/5/2005; Informant 13, Skukuza, 13/9/2007; Informant 49, Telephonic, 30/10/2007; SANParks internal correspondence. Lisa Hopkins. HOD: Legal Services, Lena Lukhele, Co-ordinator: Land Claims, Delsey Monaledi. Manager: Land Affairs to colleagues in general. 4 May 2006).

The third constraint was political interference in land claims policy which resulted in confusion and uncertainty. This took the form of the 2002 Cabinet Memorandum, after an agreement was reached between national government and SANParks to resolve all outstanding land claims in the KNP through "equitable redress" and "…not to restore the park to the claimant communities because it is both a national asset and an international icon" (Decision on KNP land claims. 28 January 2009; South African Department of Rural Development and Land Reform. October 2009. Press Release). This meant that full ownership rights would not be restored to a claimant community, according to the Makuleke model discussed below (Maguranyanga 2009; Collins 2010). Instead successful claimant communities amongst the unresolved, outstanding estimated 19-37 land claims in the KNP were meant to only have, "…a host of

rights and development opportunities after agreeing [to] a once off payment or alternate land as compensation for not getting back ownership" (Collins 2010: 3).

This 'equitable redress' policy contradicted government policy on land restitution. Dlamini suggests that in this decision SANParks' focused on its international priorities because "…the Kruger National Park had, shall we say, moved. The park had been transformed from a national park expressive of South Africa's national heritage, whatever that was, to an international icon whose mission was to preserve its biodiversity for the benefit of the international community" (Dlamini 2012: 264). Although by 2004 SANParks and Cabinet had not formalised the memorandum as a replacement land claims policy, it does question firstly, "…the content and strength of the rights defined in law, and thus of the terrain of struggle within which these rights-based laws are drafted and then enacted. [Secondly it asks] …how these formally defined rights intersect and interact with other institutional frameworks, both formal and informal, in the real world contexts of the prospective rights holders " (Cousins 1997: 3).The decision reflected
"…fears on the side of senior [SANParks] management" (Informant 37, Skukuza, 18/6/2007). The fear was rooted in the organisation's ability to retain their asset base (namely land), without which it was unable to fulfil its mandate to conserve biodiversity (Informant 13, Skukuza, 13/9/2007; Informant 49, Telephonic, 30/10/2007). There were also, in the potential case of the KNP and the MNP, it's international obligations regarding Trans frontier Conservation Areas (See Appendix 1)

The outcome was that SANParks discontinued the proactive, consistent, conflict resolution-orientated national land claims policy that guided the Makuleke land claim described below. However the cabinet memorandum did not deter the first black CEO, Mandla, from stating that "the resolution of valid land claims presented an opportunity for historical redress [with neighbouring communities], as opposed to being a threat to the conservation of biodiversity" (Msimang *et al* in Hall-Martin *et al* (ed) 2003: 161). Nor did it deter the second black SANParks CEO Mokwena, to pronounce in 2003 that the organisation would not contest any land claims in national parks (Maguranyanga 2009).However SANParks admitted that by 2003 they had not realised their objective to resolve valid land claims consistently and coherently, (Msimang *et al* in Hall-Martin *et al* (ed) 2003).

In terms of organisational transformation, land claims presented the most significant and enduring opportunity to catalyse a shift in organisational behaviour and practice, to realise and reinforce the organisation's verbal and written pledges to address past injustices between them and their neighbouring communities. Informant opinion suggested that the SANParks was, "…still threatened because people were removed to establish nature conservation areas. These removals in some national parks were done forcibly even though the occupants owned the land. Since 1926 to the present the SANParks had difficulty in relating to the human rights violations and did not see resolving the matter in any other way as their responsibility,

this stemmed from their inability to empathise, analyse and make the long term links concerning the issue" (Informant 3, Johannesburg, 25/2/2005).

Regarding the park-based SEDs role to implement post land restitution transformation in the unresolved land claims in four national parks, they were also hampered by the Development Facilitation Act 67 of 1995, which stipulates that no development projects can be undertaken on land under claim until the claim has been resolved. In many instances therefore, unresolved land claims complicated and obstructed the implementation of development projects that these park-based SEDs could have attempted (SANParks and DANCED March 2000).

Similar to the state's responsibility for the formulation of policy and the promulgation of legislation, land claims justifiably provided the imperative for SANParks to seek implementation advice. It was imperative that "…national guidance on the settlement of land claims on protected areas is obtained. SANParks as custodian of national parks on behalf of government was hesitant about an 'awkward position' because it may find itself taking a position on a particular land claim that is different from government" (Mavuso Msimang, letter to Dr Crispian Olver, 25/8/2000). "Whether SANP as non-owner of land has indeed authority to do that is open to debate. We take the vision that while SANP has the obligation to speak on the conservation value of land, it is really the responsibility of Government and in particular DEAT and DLA to decide on behalf of government on the validity of the land claim and the form of restitution which can take place" (SANParks letter to Dr Fitzgerald, 18/9/1998). These requests to the state showed that the SANParks' organisational transformation process was dependent on other state agencies. The power of whether or not to comply with national policy and legislation regarding land restitution rested with both the state as the overarching framework institution and SANParks as the immediate, vested, interested and affected state agency. Yet simultaneously the complexities regarding most of the land claims created an organisational prudence to view the state as the key driver and decision-maker in land restitution. However this did not exempt the SANParks from developing its own structures and policies to deal with land claims, discussed below.

Land Claims in SANParks

The SANParks' Board's Land Claims Sub-Committee (BSCLC), was a powerful catalyst for both organisational and social transformation processes, and important parts were played by the national and the park-based SEDs. During the 1994 – 1996 period the organisational response was largely preservationist and defensive. Since there was no clear land claims policy the head of the Legal Department operated with no policy guidelines, and in the view of claimant communities, he reflected an 'old guard' conservationist approach and undermined the national policy framework. However power relations began to shift profoundly when in 1997 the new Board established the Land Claims Sub-Committee (BSLCC).

Chaired by Dr Fig it developed a policy document that committed to "settling claims by negotiations, mindful of the need to balance social justice and the conservation of biodiversity. ((South African National Parks 1998a in Cock and Fig in McDonald 2002:136; Informant 17, Johannesburg 30/5/2005) While the committee had some difficulty in securing relevant documents it followed a conciliatory approach both to claimant communities and within the organisation. The policy was intended to facilitate both redress and reconciliation and increase the legitimacy of SANParks amongst communities forcibly removed from their land to create national parks. The BSLCC gave claimant communities unprecedented opportunity to give evidence directly to the Board. It committed the organisation to integrating social and ecological considerations and to liaise and seek mutually beneficial solutions with communities who had valid land claims". (Informant 18. Johannesburg. 2/6/2005). The policy was designed to facilitate the process of restitution for communities who were dispossessed of their land after 1913 (SANParks 1998; Poonan 2000; Hall-Martin 2003; Cock and Fig 2002; Wynberg and Kepe 1998; Steenkamp 2001).

The policy recognised that the creation of national parks had disregarded people's rights to land and natural resources, their interests in managing their broader environment, and their subsequent exclusion from participating in and benefiting from national parks. The policy was meant to facilitate reconciliation and increase the legitimacy and credibility of the organisation amongst communities who were forcefully removed from their land to create national parks (Fig in Poonan 2000; Informant 18, Johannesburg, 2/6/2005; Honey 1999; Steenkamp 2001). Regarding SANParks' relations with external stakeholders this policy generated a more cooperative organizational policy position. The BSCLC created access to key actors including government officials, Land Claims Commissioners, progressive community rights-oriented advocacy groups, and the lawyers of the claimant communities (South African National Parks 1998a in Cock and Fig in McDonald 2002:136).

Some of the SANParks management were not initially supportive, a fact revealed by the difficulty that the BSCLC had in securing documents. In an unprecedented practice the BSCLC's draft policy document was circulated to top officials and Board members for comment; these comments and views were integrated into the final policy document, reflecting broad support and consultation (Informant 4, Telephonic, 8/3/2005; Informant 48, Johannesburg, 1/6/2006; Informant 18, Johannesburg, 2/6/2005; SANParks Board Meeting. 14-15 March 1997. Session II. Transformation Task Group Report & Directorate – Strategic and Action Plans). However the chair of the Board at the time was aware of the importance of the issue and pushed hard for the establishment of the committee. Its members, chaired by Dr Fig, included the CEO, Macgregor, Mabuza, Modise, Player, directorate and support staff, the board secretary and other members by invitation.

Immediately after the BSCLC's land claims policy was proclaimed the organisation's official views on land claims forced the 'old guard' officials to oblige and change their position in conformity with the policy and to cease to project their personal position. The implications within SANParks were that the organisation's power

in terms of land claims shifted from the Director of the Legal Department, Delvers, to the Board. This caused a rapid turnabout of the organisation's negotiating position in all land claims from 1997 onwards (Informant 18, Johannesburg, 2/6/2005). Yet as discussed below, each land claim outcome unfolded differently, depending on how soon after 1994 the process began.

By 2004 the 1997 SANParks BSCLC's policy on land claims that was commensurate with national land claims restitution policy and legislation began to wane. From "… 2003 onwards SANParks failed to develop a strong human rights ethos that was a prerequisite to resolve land claims and land claims remained a challenge to the organisation" (Informant 17, Pretoria, 30/5/2005). "Current attitudes are that they [SANParks] are not at the forefront of the recognition of guilt, which is necessary to effect redress. Often the leadership are good at rhetoric but are unable or unwilling to implement" (Informant 18, Johannesburg, 2/6/2005).

Various land claims are discussed below to illustrate different aspects of this complex and contested process. The Richtersveld National Park (RNP) is an example of a community retaining its land and preventing an apartheid-style land grab to establish a national park in the lead up to the political transition in the early 1990s.

i) The Richtersveld National Park

In February 1994 the Riemvasmaakers became South Africa's first successful land claimants when they got back 70 728 hectares of the park which constituted land from which they had been forcibly removed in 1974 (Khan in Mc Donald 2002: 30; McKenzie 1998b; SANParks Annual Report 1996-1997: 29; Magome 2004). The RNP is also the first example of a 'contract' park ' managed by a Joint Management Body on which park authorities were represented.

With the support of civil society in 1989 a court interdict prevented the NPB (later renamed SANParks) from grabbing Nama stock farmer's grazing land in the Richtersveld region of the Northern Cape. This action represented the beginning of a shift in community thinking countrywide, "…they were no longer prepared to be the victims of the harsh conservation policies and poor environmental decision making so typical of previous years" (Khan in McDonald 2002: 30). This refusal not only introduced the concept of South Africa's first community-owned and co-managed (with SANParks) national park in 1991, it forced the organization to consider the need to change from an instrument of domination and oppression to a rather reluctant governmental agent grappling with alien notions of social and economic justice (Cock and Fig in McDonald 2002; Khan in Mc Donald (ed) 2002; Surplus People's Project. Undated; Group for Environmental Monitoring. May 22–24 1993; New Ground May 21–23 1993; Group for Environmental Monitoring. Regional Workshops Proceedings 1994; Group for Environmental Monitoring 1994, 1995).

The Richtersvled Park Agreement prescribed a model that provided for joint decision-making by a joint management committee. However nothing could be done to reverse open cast mining rights and activities which pre-dated it's proclamation. Furthermore, by 2004 the Richtersveld community had not yet received their title deeds from the Department of Land Affairs which illustrates how land restitution-related transformation in the widest sense was not only a SANParks responsibility.

The establishment of this contract park was a complicated process but it did indicate SANParks' shift from fortress conservation to include community-related redress. This simultaneously benefitted conservation when the community supported the establishment of a conservancy bordering the park (SANParks Annual Report 2002: 53). A number of community structures were created to manage the Richtersvelders communal land, of which 20 percent constituted the park, as well as the establishment of an environmentally responsible grazing strategy and policy. In addition the international profile of the park increased when in 2003 a treaty was signed that combined the Ai-Ais Hot Springs Game Park in Namibia and the Richtersveld National Park in South Africa to form the Ai-Ais Richtersveld Transfrontier Park (SANParks Annual Report 2002: 53; www.peaceparks.co.za /Ai-Ais Richtersveld Transfrontier Park 10 March 2014. Accessed 28 March 2014). (See Appendix 2).

ii) The Augrabies Falls National Parks

The history of land dispossession for the Riemvasmaak communities benefitted two government agencies, one in charge of national parks and the other the South African Defence Force (SADF) during the apartheid era. In 1982 4 500 hectares of Riemvasmaak was incorporated into the AFNP situated in the Northern Cape. In 1988 an additional approximate 60 000 hectares of Riemvasmaak was added to the AFNP as a contractual park, according to an agreement between the SADF and the NPB. One of the AFNP's key features was to protect a small population of black rhino (SPP 1993:20 in McKenzie 1998b).

According to Magome, "The Riemvasmaak land claim was badly handled and this led to a breakdown of trust between the claimants and the park authorities. Perhaps this is why the Riemvasmaak case study is less publicized" (Magome 2004:126). There were five problematic issues in this land claim.
The first was that there was a ten year gap between the first successful land claim in the park in 1994 and the resolution of the outstanding land claim of a section of the park known as Melkbosrand in 2004 (Magome 2004). This was a protracted process to resolve the outstanding 4 137 hectares that constituted Melkbosrand (SANParks Annual Report 2003: 9; Staff reporter, Riemvasmaak: the land of wine and honey. Mail and Guardian. 16 January 2006. Mg.co.za. accessed 3 March 2014; SANParks Annual Report 1996-1997). This caused relationships between the community and the SANParks to remain "relatively fragile", throughout this research period (SANParks Annual Report 1999-2000: 41).

The second was that although progressive members of the DCD (the precursor to the SED) did attempt to establish co-operative and constructive relationships with this community, it was a challenge at the outset of the land claim process. Since 1994 progressive staff within the DCD sought a collaborative approach despite a rising level of community antagonism. Similar to land claims elsewhere, the situation needed "..brokerage with NGOs and others mediating between the land claimants, landowners and the state" (Fay and James: 1). The DCD staff asked GEM to share information pertaining to the community's demands, so that they could respond appropriately.

Thirdly the lack of mutual trust was aggravated by the absence of a clear SANParks land claims policy until 1997. Similar to the Makuleke case below, the 'old guard' senior staff refused to assist claimant communities with information on their removal. Several organisations including the Land Claims Commissioner also complained about Delvers' style in conducting the negotiations (Informant 18, Johannesburg, 2/6/2005). Fourthly the restitution process created intra-community tensions. The fifth issue was that, due to the success of the land claim, the military on leaving their portion of the park, which was used for military training, stripped it of infrastructure such as water pipes. Finally, embroiled in this first formal land claims experience, the paramount objective of the park authorities was to protect their mandate of conserving nature above all else. Initially they removed high value wildlife such as the black rhinos (Magome 2004)

Gradually the SANParks supported the land claim because they hoped to protect the conservation status of the land for future generations by proclaiming it a contractual park (SANParks letter to Dr Fitzgerald, 18/9/1998). This land claim illustrates the residual resentment and anger regarding forced removals and punitive conservation actions taken in the past, as well as the extent of the poverty and underdevelopment which still existed by 2004. It shows that [SANParks] continued to face an enormous task in gaining the trust and support of the majority of South Africans (Khan in McDonald 2002). Antagonism focused on the unresolved land claims and a dispute over the fence between Riemvasmaak and Waterval North" (SANParks Annual Report 2002). This antagonism was expressed by some community members cutting the park boundary fence, removing infrastructure and driving livestock into the park (SANParks Annual Report 2002: 51). By 2004, the 498 hectares that was de-proclaimed from the AFNP, according to Section 23 of the National Parks Act, was entrusted to the Riemvasmaak Development Trust, in whose name the land was registered, completing the return of land claimed to the Riemvasmaak community.

The SED did not play a major role in the actual land claims negotiations process but contributed to several development projects. (SANParks Annual Report 1998-1999: 27). Community plans to explore community-based ecotourism as a land use option, 4x4 and hiking trails, hot springs and accommodation which they hoped would contribute towards easing local poverty, exceeds the period of this research

(Parliamentary Monitoring Group. Exclusion of Augrabies Falls National Park: adoption. 24 February 2004. www.pmg.org.za. Accessed 3 March 2014).

iii) The Kalahari Gemsbok National Park/Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park

The Kalahari Gemsbok National Park was proclaimed in 1931 and involved the dispossession of the Khomani San which lasted the duration of the apartheid era. It is a powerful example of how "…protected areas reflect[ed] the relations of power and privilege that have shaped South African society" (Cock and Fig in McDonald 2002: 132). Numbering some 600 people they submitted a land claim to the Department of Land Affairs in terms of the Restitution of Land Rights Act of 1994. There was also a claim from the Meir community consisting of some 5,500 people living in six settlements. Private land was acquired for both the San and the Mier and 50 000 hectares of national park land used to create a contract park.

The Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park was the first transfrontier park to be formally established in post-apartheid southern Africa in 2000. The South African side of the park, comprising the Kalahari Gemsbok National Park had been subject to the land claim by the Khomani San described above. According to Ramutsindela," The Khomani San claim was settled in favour of the conservation status of the claimants' restored land being retained. What this means is that the settlement of the land claim had to fit into the conservation plans that the two countries (South Africa and Botswana) had already put in place – hence my argument that in areas designated for TFCAs, conservation pre-empts the outcome of land reform – in this case, of land restitution" (Ramutsindela, 2015:188).

This claim illustrates the significance of the reality that "land dispossession had largely taken place before the Native Land Act of 1913. Alienation of land from Khoisan and Africans to whites resulted from conquests in the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries, as settlers and colonial states expanded their authority into the interior of southern Africa" (Beinart and Delius 2015: 25). In the settlement a co-management agreement, including SANParks, the Khomani San and the Mier communities was achieved. SANParks benefits included a net gain of land safeguarding the conservation of biodiversity and securing a basis for the country's first transnational park. Yet these transformation gains were diminished when SANParks rushed the finalisation of the land claim for international recognition, followed by meagre efforts to initiate and implement the terms of the co-management agreement. The SANParks' BSCLC policy had not yet been finalised and adopted. The park-based SED's transformation-oriented attempts resulted in the establishment of a community forum that held regular meetings by 2004 and the initiation of several development projects fostered a culture of parks-community contact, communication and development assistance - hitherto unprecedented. However these community development projects

established by the SED were marginal compared to the needs of the Khomani San, and the level of impoverishment.

There were multiple human rights travesties involved in the establishment of the KGNP/KTP that dislodged the Khomani San (also known as the Bushmen) from land they had occupied for more than 20, 000 years ((Bosch www.foa.org/docrep/006/jo415t/0a.htm. Accessed 14 April 2014). The first travesty was a state-driven land grab to ostensibly protect the Khomani San's culture and ecosystem, while facilitating the proclamation of the park in 1931 (Chennels 1999). The second travesty was that in the post-apartheid era, the Khomani San were legally barred from accessing their land rights, because the Land Restitution Act of 1994:

"…(as amended in 1996) limits government responsibility for land restitution to that which was expropriated after the Native Land Act of 1913, and where displacement can be shown to be linked to racially biased laws. This means that land restitution primarily affects land expropriated from people classified as *"Native"* or later as *"Bantu"* or *"African"*. This leaves the San people without recourse for their losses despite the similarities despite their experience" (Crawhall 1998: 26).

SANParks was therefore not exclusively guilty regarding its response to this claim lodged in 1995 which it dismissed as, "…vague, with no clearly defined area which is claimed…. it would seem as if there was no prima facie evidence to support the continuation of the land claim. While history has not been kind to the San in general, it must be emphasized that they were not deprived of their ownership of land nor evicted in a manner which is provided for in the Restitution of the Land Rights Act, 1994" (NPB. Land Claim. Kalahari Gemsbok Community. Undated: 11-12). Notwithstanding, for SANParks this case still, "…force[d] the moral principles of restoration and justice to confront the difficult practices of determining ownership, defining legitimate claimants and establishing evidence for claims"
(Fay, D. and James, D.
http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/30980/1/Giving_land_back_or_righting_wrongs_(LSERO).pdf accessed 12 July 2014).

As indigenous inhabitants of the sub-continent, the Khomani San's 15, 000-25, 000 year old culture and history and their nomadic lifestyles, pre-dated modern forms of property ownership involving clearly demarcated land use areas and/or title deeds (Leader – Williams 2004). Legally barring the Khomani San from accessing their land rights strongly suggests that the state was the primary and key actor that excluded them as equal citizens. This was symbolic of what Fay and James's refer to in other contexts as, "…[their] second class status in society. Landed property in cases of restitution, offers the promise of citizenship in the modern state, but is also a site where citizenship is fiercely contested" (Fay and James 2010 : 2). Magome argues that these travesties occurred because they involved state land in the form of a

national park, which provides support for the argument that the South African state has to share the responsibility for redress. “A distinction has to be drawn between the legal requirements to succeed in a land claim (eviction as a consequence of implementation of race based legislation), and the moral and ethical responsibility that society in general and the state in particular have towards the San…[However] they do not have any justified legal claim against the land held in trust by the National Parks Board in the form of the KGNP” (NPB. Land Claim. Kalahari Gemsbok Community. Undated: 11-12).

The Khomani San’s claim for half (400,000 hectares) of the KGNP/KTP and most of the adjacent Mier area, as well as the claim of the Mier community (discussed below) were later recognized as valid and uncontested by the state (Grossman and Holden undated; SANParks Draft Submission on Land Claim by the Chief Executive of the NPB. 26 August 1997; Khomani San: History of the San, www.khomanisan.com. Accessed 20/2/2014); . Having credited the SANParks with a semblance of a social conscience above, the organisation responded inappropriately. Initially they did not agree to compensation or restitution, instead they considered assisting the San to “…integrate their activities with the management of the park where possible and feasible”, such as employing and training them as field guides and conservationists, assisting with tourism facilities and establishing a contractual national park with them on land that they may purchase adjacent to the KGNP/KTP (NPB. Land Claim. Kalahari Gemsbok Community. Undated: 12). SANParks’ disregard of a rights-based approach to the claim showed that they were not committed to deeper organizational transformation which, “creat[ed] negative feelings” between themselves and this community (SANParks Annual Report 1995-1996: 28)

However, the four-year long protracted negotiations with this community resulted in two positive outcomes (Bosch 2003). In March 1999 the Khomani San CPA received 34, 728 hectares of farming land, outside the park (SANParks Annual Report 1998-1999). In terms of land acquisition and other rights, after 1999 they were granted preferential tourism rights over 80 000 hectares in the park and a further 473 830 hectares was to be used for symbolic and cultural practices (Khomani San: History of the San, www.khomanisan.com Accessed 20/2/2014; www.shrcorg.za’ Ellis in Walker *et al* 2010; Cock and Fig in McDonald 2002: 139; Grossman and Holden. undated).

The Khomani San claim lodged in 1998 for land in and outside the KGNP/KTP benefitted the Mier community although the latter did not initially claim land in the park. The final outcome of the claim also included the Mier farming community who live on the southern edge of the park and who also lost land to it. A further 57, 903 hectares was conditionally ceded to the Khomani San and the Mier in May 2002, as a contractual park, the !Ae!Hai Kalahari Heritage Park. This was to be divided equally between the two, who gained title and agreed not to alter the land use of the area. Bought by the Department of Land Affairs, the Mier community sold 30 000 hectares of their land for residential purposes to the San. In return they were compensated with 30 000 hectares of substitute land to add to their commonage, to avail

land to extend the contract park. Thus with a co-management agreement including SANParks, the Khomani San and the Mier communities the organisation had a net gain of land (Khomani San: History of the San, www.khomanisan.com 20/2/2014; www.shrcorg.za' Ellis in Walker *et al* 2010; Cock and Fig in McDonald 2002).

This supported "SANParks' official approach to land claims and land restitution that they do not jeopardise the conservation of biodiversity" (Social Ecology and SANParks 2000 in Grossman and Holden undated: 11). Although highly contested on many levels, the final agreement was instrumental for SANParks two reasons. Firstly because the communities consented to participate in ecotourism and conservation, dubbed "strategic partnerships" (Lahiff 2009 in Stickler undated: 4). Secondly because the park later formed the basis for the first trans-national parks (discussed in Appendix 2) including Botswana and Namibia, known as the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park (KTP) (Reid, H., Fig, D., Magome, H. and Leader-Williams, N. Co-management of National Parks in South Africa: Lessons from Australia. Conservation and Society.org Soc [serial online] 2014 cited 2014 Feb 25; 2:377- 409. Available from http//www.conservation and society.org/text.asp?2004/2/2/377/49335, and Leader-Williams 2004; Land Claim: Kalahari Gemsbok/San Community; Grossman and Holden. Undated).

Although the Mier, Khomani San and SANParks formed a Joint Management Board (JMB) to manage the contractual park, initially the JMB did not factor in a clear role for the Khomani San in the management plan (Cock and Fig in McDonald 2002). Part of the problem was that a considerable gap occurred between the de-proclamation of the park as a Schedule I National Park and its re-proclamation in terms of Schedule 2(b) of the National Parks Act as a Contractual National Park. Motivated to showcase the land claim and the co-management agreement just before South Africa's hosting of the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development, the signing ceremony was held in August 2002. "This was viewed by some as being rather cynically opportunistic in timing, especially given that whilst the event was touted as indicating the success of land reform and conservation initiatives in the country, the 'on the ground' reality of the matter was, and continues to be somewhat different. Furthermore, once the fan-fare died down and to date, little more has transpired with respect to implementing the terms of the agreement and initiating co-management of the Park" (Grossman and Holden undated: 12). Although SANParks did provide for a role for the Khomani San by 2004. this delay diminished the transformation gains the SANParks may have achieved earlier (Grossman and Holden undated).

After the land claims negotiations, SANParks' transformation-oriented attempts to "…deal with the needs and problems of the San people and to create opportunities for both these people and members of the Mier community" resulted in a community forum (see chapter eight) established by the park-based SED (SANParks Annual Report 1995-1996: 28). Longer term attempts to fulfil the organisation's transformation goals of establishing relations and communicating with its neighbours, meant that regular

forum meetings were held by 2004. These involved a level of contact and communication hitherto unprecedented (SANParks Annual Report 1995-1996; SANParks Annual Report 1999-2000).

Park-based SED development projects included an honorary rangers project; the establishment of an information centre in the park; advisory services rendered to the community regarding management of money received from filming crews; the initiation of a bridge-building process between the San and Mier communities; San handicraft was displayed at the tourist shops and the facilitation of medical assistance for both communities (SANParks Annual Report 1996-1997). With DANCED assistance, some members of the Mier and San communities received tracker training and accreditation. The San were taken on fact-finding tours in Namibia for curio business development (SANParks Annual Report 1999-2000; Khan in McDonald 2002:34). An Environmental Education Committee was established to deal with interpretation (day and night drives, walks, slide shows and talks), study tours and a survey to identify cultural sites (SANParks Annual Report 2002). By October 2004 schools in neighbouring communities had environmental education programmes and a cultural centre/museum opened at Auchterlonie (SANParks Annual Report 2004).

While it could be argued that the role of the park-based SED during the land claims negotiations was peripheral; their role of convenor for discussions between the SANParks and the Khomani San and the Mier regarding the ceremonial handing over of the land in 1999 and in 2002, was organisationally unprecedented. Securing the provision of a gemsbok and transport from SANParks, albeit gestures, were overtures to establish a relationship with this community (SANParks Annual Report 1995-1996; SANParks Annual Report 1996-1997; SANParks Annual Report 1998-1999).

Although the SED made attempts to facilitate these community development projects, the development challenges were still huge by 2004 exemplified by "poverty and malnutrition, substance abuse, HIV/AIDS and TB, low literacy levels and poor education, limited government support to the community and lack of service provision. "Although the situation has improved over the last few years and we are in the process of establishing livelihood and economic opportunities for the community and its members, we are still in need of assistance and technical and financial support in a number of respects." These include housing and a community centre, schools, health and welfare (Khomani San: History of the San, www.khomanisan.com 20/2/2014; www.shrcorg.za). Overall "…little development had occurred with growing social decay and disintegration, lack of post-restitution support from South African authorities, divisions within the now disparate community, and no significant improvement in the welfare of most community members being the order of the day." (Khomani San: History of the San, www.khomanisan.com accessed 20/2/2014). When development projects were initiated, lengthy implementation processes were exemplified by Grossman's statement, "We're in year 15 of a 6-month project" (Grossman in Dugmore: www.farmersweekly.co.za 6/2/2013, accessed 24 June 2014).

iv) The Tsitsikamma National Park

By 2004 the only valid (but unresolved) land claim was lodged in 1996 in the Tsitsikamma National Park (TNP) located in the Western Cape. It related to the less than 200 Coloured individuals known as the 'Covie community'. There was a similarity between the protracted and gradual loss of their land rights and the process of regaining them.

The land and resource alienation process was initiated between the 1960s -1970s when they were forcibly removed from 733 hectares of Farm 287 that comprised residential plots, arable land and commonage. Although the commonage gave them access to the sea and fishing, they lost angling rights but retained grazing rights in 1978 when Covie was declared a Coloured area under the Group Areas Act of 1969. When the government expropriated this land in the early 1980s, each owner was paid R50.00 as compensation (Kleinbooi and Lahiff 2007; Mavuso Msimang, letter to Dr Crispian Olver, 25/8/2000; SANParks Annual Report 2003: 9; Kleinbooi and Lahiff 2007; Conway and Xipu in Walker *et al* 2010).

The protracted negotiations process began in 1996 when the community claimed 765 hectares of un-surveyed, un-fenced and un-alienated state land, a claim which remained inconclusive by 2004. A total of 140 hectares, incorporated into the park involved some debate on how the land would be used (Mavuso Msimang, letter to Dr Crispian Olver, 25/8/2000; SANParks Annual Report 2003; Kleinbooi and Lahiff 2007; Conway and Xipu 2010 in Walker *et al*). Although initially the RLCC in George agreed to settle the claim and the Minister of Public Works had signed a Cabinet Memorandum of Understanding to transfer 748 hectares to the claimants, this community delayed the settlement. With hindsight, by doing so they benefitted from lessons learnt regarding other land claims processes nationally, that hurried settlements creates conflict and problematic post-settlement community expectations. International land restitution studies have shown that successful restitution relies on healthy support from key relationships (Fay, D. and James, D.

http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/30980/1/Giving_land_back_or_righting_wrongs_(LSERO).pdf
accessed 12 July 2014).

In this case, with support, approval from all three spheres of government and NGOs, they embarked on a unique phased approach by not signing the Settlement Agreement before the development plans, institutional arrangements, funding, community participation and skills transfers were in place (Kleinbooi and Lahiff 2007; Staff Rider, 14 April 2009. Covie Land Returned to Families. www.iol.co.za. accessed 22 March 2014).

Outstanding issues by 2004 were disputes regarding potential beneficiaries, interesting proposals for alternative land for development, as well as legal, institutional and land use options that were pertinent to the community's relationship with SANParks (Kleinbooi and Lahiff 2007). These included: i) joint management of the Commonage that is part of the TNP; ii) annual rental for the Otter trail that crosses the Commonage; iii) access to the sea; iv) negotiations regarding eco-tourism opportunities (SANParks Annual Report 1998-1999). SANParks were not always co-operative. By 2004 they were disputing community requests to access the sea for fishing in the final settlement (Maguranyanga 2009). The SED's somewhat minimalist role in this process was to convene a number of meetings to discuss the land claim (SANParks Annual Report 1998-1999:61).

v) The Mapungubwe National Park

The special significance of this national park lies in how the park authorities dealt with the various and conflicting land claims lodged by the Vhangona, Tawanamba, Leshiba, Machete and Lemba ethnic groups. It also unique presented a particular set of challenges. Established in 1995, the Vhembe/Dongola National Park (renamed Mapungubwe National Park in 2004) is situated in the Limpopo Province, shares a border with Zimbabwe and Botswana and comprises the Greater Mapungubwe Transfrontier Conservation Area TFCA (See Appendix 2). In 2003 it gained World Heritage status under the United Nation's Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). It was created by combining several pieces of land owned by the Peace Parks Foundation, De Beers, the National Parks Trust and the World Wildlife Foundation South Africa, to consolidate South Africa's portion of the TFCA (Chirikure *et al* 2013; Greater Mapungubwe. The Peace Parks Foundation. In www.peaceparks.co.za. Accessed 26 March 2014).

Between 2000-2004, SANParks understood that resolving this land claim on the entire park would be a complex, protracted undertaking but it pledged an open approach (SANParks Annual Report 2000-2001; SANParks Annual Report 2003; SANParks Annual Report 2004-2005; Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism. January 2002. Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape – World Heritage Nomination Dossier – Submitted to the World Heritage Committee. www.sahra.org.za. Accessed 4 March 2014). The complications were that this land claim posed" major challenges to SANParks land claims policy and restitution approach. What the government has to determine is the criticality of Mapungubwe as part of not just South Africa's national cultural heritage but southern Africa cultural heritage. The park transcends national cultural boundaries, and therefore might require creative restitution models that do not necessarily entail granting the land claimants rights to land but rather compensatory benefits. It is really a matter of balancing national and individual communities interests interviewees appeared confident that the restitution model for Kruger and Mapungubwe national parks would not involve allocating land to

communities, and de-proclaiming the land from national parks status" (Interviewee in Maguranyanga 2009: 142). Although the 2002 Cabinet Memorandum discussed above proposed a no restitution approach to the KNP exclusively, it also seemed to be invoked in relation to land claims in the MNP. "There is a principle decision of Cabinet that says, in addressing land claims in protected areas, people should not be settled in national parks but rather alternative settlement arrangements be made" (Magome 2004 in Maguranyanga 2004: 142). The land claim was unresolved by the end of the period under review.

vi) **The Vaalbos National Park**

This land claim is unusual in that it led to the deproclamation of the park. In 1998 land in this park, situated in the Northern Cape was claimed by the Batho-Pele Empowerment Group representing the Sydney-on-Vaal and Vaalbos claimants (SANParks Annual Report 2003). Officially gazetted in 2002, SANParks accepted the validity of the claim (Ramaswiela *et al* 2013).

SANParks did display several positive transformation-oriented ways of handling this land claim. It was successful in its mediation-oriented responses to community's actions early in the land claims process, when in 2001 they persuaded seven people who invaded the park to leave on the same day. Its successful marketing strategy to minimize any negative effect of the land claim involved providing positive information to the media (SANParks Annual Report 2004-2005).

By 2004, "Due to the healthy cooperation between the Land Claims Commissioner and SANParks [it was agreed that the park should be] de-proclaimed" pending the approval of the National Assembly (SANParks Annual Report 2004: 61). SANParks' transformation-friendly planning processes included handing over the Than, Mozib and Droogvlei sections of the park to the Sydney on Vaal claimants. It was acknowledged that "The handover of these lands pose a challenge for SANParks as funding will have to be sourced to purchase more land in an environment of escalating property prices. However, suitable land has already been identified for the new park" (SANParks Annual Report 2004: 61). The deproclamation, translocation of animals and from the proceeds of a pay out, the establishment of a new national park, the Mokala National Park situated on a former hunting property, falls out of this research period (Media Release: Animals Relocated to Establish a New Park. www.sanparks.co.za. Accessed 28 February 2014; Scott. 18 July 2012. Mokala National Park – Where Endangered Species Roam. www. the year in the wild – accessed on 28 February 2014)

Similar to other parks under claim the SED facilitated communication and information-sharing between neighbouring communities, landowners and the park regarding deproclamation (SANParks Annual Report 2000-2001).

vii) The Addo National Park

In 2003 to facilitate the restitution of the only land claim in the Addo National Park, Portion 1 of Farm Henderson (approximately 706 hectares) situated on the northern park boundary was purchased by the state to restitute the claimants (SANParks Annual Report 2003;Parliamentary Monitoring Group. "National Parks: Withdrawal of land under Protected Areas Act www.pmg.org.za accessed 28/2/2014). Although plans included the exchange (with no monetary compensation from SANParks) for a more fertile, but smaller area of approximately 400 hectares, Portion 5 of the same farm, south of the park, the matter was unresolved by 2004. This was because approval of the National Assembly according to the Protected Areas Act of 2003 was pending. However the claim of a group to access the park for religious rights was settled amicably (Ibid)

viii) The Kruger National Park

While dealing with land claims on a considerable scale, SANParks attempted to extend the area of land in the Kruger National Park on two occasions. The first involved proposals for park expansion, in the form of buffer zones involving restituted land belonging to neighbouring communities. This was unsuccessful (SANParks Annual Report 1995-1996; Annual Report of KNP Social Ecology April 2001 – March 2002; Informant 38, Telephonic, 4/10/2007). The decision reflected a negative view of buffer zones on the grounds that they represented colonial conservation practices with negative socio-economic and political effects on local communities, and expanded state control into *ex- situ* conservation areas (Neumann 1997; Brown 1991 in Alcorn 1997). Although the KNP SED were not directly involved in the negotiations, they facilitated contact with the traditional leadership in potentially affected communities (Annual Report of KNP Social Ecology April 2001 - March 2002; Informant 38, Telephonic. 3/10/2007).

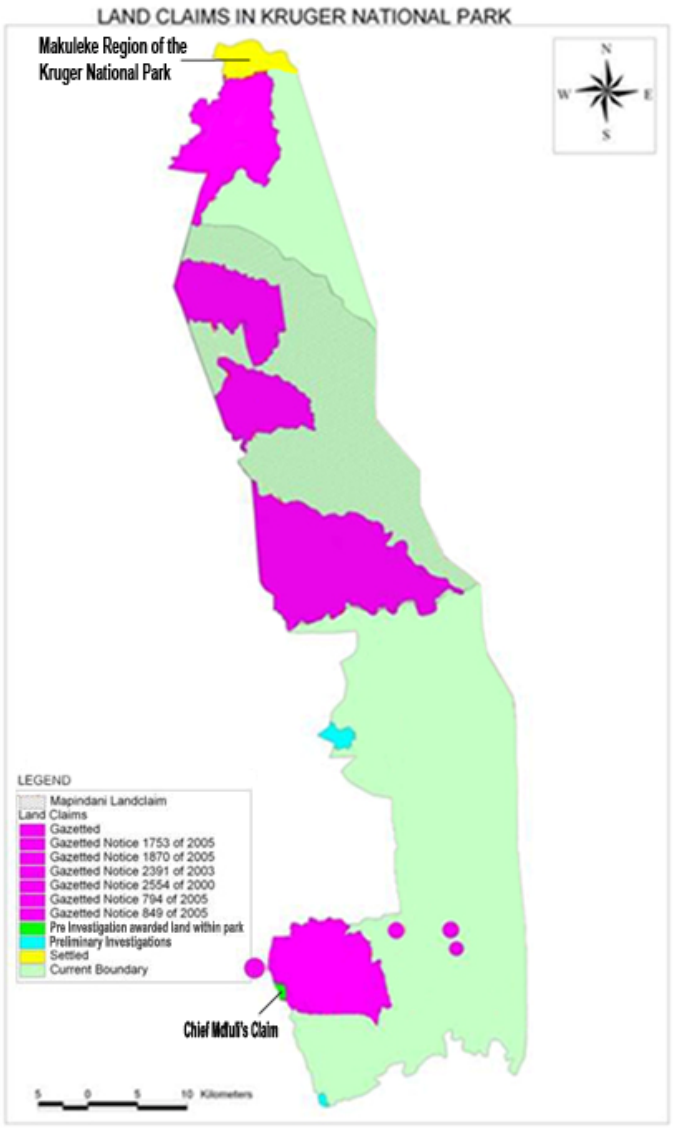


Figure 19 – SANParks Legal Department, 2007

The second occasion pre-dated the national land restitution process and stemmed from the building of a railway line in 1969 along the western side of the KNP. It formed a convenient demarcation of the park boundary. However approximately 1600 hectares of land, Daanel Farm 33JU in the Pretoriuskop area of the KNP, belonged to the Mdluli Tribal Authority (MTA). SANParks' request to the state to incorporate this land into the park and to compensate the Mdluli's for the equivalent of this land outside the KNP was agreed to by both the MTA and the KNP. However, since the state did not formalize this legally, in 1992 the KNP was forced to confront organisational transformation hitherto unprecedented, by heeding the demands of its neighbours in two ways. Firstly when Chief Mdluli threatened to cut the KNP fence to access what he regarded as the land of his community. Secondly when the Department of Land Affairs informed the KNP that Daanel Farm 33JU had to be returned to the MTA. In this process, the DCD (the precursor to the SED) played a positive role in this reluctant organizational transformation process by organising several meetings between the MTA and the KNP authorities to reach an amicable settlement

(Informant 24, Pretoria 14/06/2005; Informant 37, Skukuza. 18/06/2007; Informant 13, Skukuza. 13/9/2007).

The DCD's role of playing the convenor and engaging this community in their forum meetings (the forums are discussed in the next chapter), to begin organizational change, and; the subsequent role of the KNP SED too, was limited regarding this community. This was because the tentative agreement in 1994 that the land be managed by and retained as part of the KNP, in the hope of developing it as a contractual national park, was stalled. The first reason for this was legally determined because the land remained registered as state land, "…per definition … the land cannot be included in the park as 'private' land on a contractual basis" – because it will have to go through legal processes to transfer the land as a Trust in the name of Chief Mdluli's community (Bertus de Villiers, letter to SANParks senior executive staff. 29 October 1997).

By 2003 despite SANParks acknowledging that the MTA had an approved land claim on approximately 1 600 ha located within the southern part of the KNP, the same land as discussed above (SANParks Annual Report 2003); the agreement between the KNP, the MTA and the state did not consider that this land ownership may be disputed by the Mahashi community in the Nyongane area – a community also living adjacent to the KNP (Informant 37, 18/6/2007, Skukuza; Informant 47, 12/9/2007, Skukuza; Dlamini 2012); "found to be prima facie valid" (South African Department of Rural Development and Land Reform 2009: 2). The reality is that "… [land] claims themselves are almost always syntactically associated with other claims" (Bunn in Karp *et al*. 2006: 377). Bunn's observation that Chief Mdluli was "cooperative" is most likely true but only after SANParks ceded the land to his community (Bunn in Karp *et al*. 2006:377). Certainly "powerful" (Bunn in Karp *et al*. 2006:377); initially "Chief Mdluli threatened to cut the fence between the KNP and the land that lay immediately adjacent to his villages", prompting SANParks' reaction to give him the land (Informant 47, 12/9/2007, Skukuza). Although the Mdluli's were successful in reclaiming this land in 2003 (Braun 2008; Ramutsindela 2005); the settlement "…was bitterly contested and is still the subject of controversy especially around community plans to hand out hotel and casino rights for construction rights for the area" (Bunn in Karp *et al*. 2006: 390-391). Nevertheless the Mdluli's retained the land use option for nature conservation and the land remained within the KNP boundaries (Informant 47, 12/9/2007, Skukuza). Discussion of community benefits from ecotourism on this land exceeds the period of this research (Ramutsindela 2005; Spencely 2003). By 2004 the status of other land claimed in the KNP by the MTA, the Vaalribbok 547JU, Ingrid 591JU and Rooiduiker 19JU remained unresolved (Gazette No. 28122. Notice No. 1870 of 2005).

It could be argued that the Mdluli community contributed to SANParks' attempts at social transformation in that it involved seeking a "…social solution…to the hostile and embittered communities to the west [of the KNP]" (Bunn in Karp *et al*, 2006: 381). This is an example of early community pressures that led

to the SANParks and the KNP establishing the KNP SED's capacity-building for their neighbouring communities to understand: i) the relationships that had to be developed between the community, SANParks and the potential developer/s, and ii) the meaning of obligations, roles and rights in co-management agreements regarding a potential contractual park (KNP Social Ecology Quarterly Report-December 2001; KNP Social Quarterly Report. April-June 2003; Annual Report. People and Conservation. April 2003-March 2004).

The section below examines the successful Makuleke land claim, the development projects and the role of the SED and the KNP SED.

Case study: the Makuleke Land Claim in the KNP (1994 – 1998)

This was the first, most substantial and successful land restitution case in the KNP during the period under review. The Makuleke community were removed by force from their traditional land between the Limpopo and the Levhubu rivers in the Pafuri area in 1969. This area is considered a tropical ecological 'hotspot 'with the highest biodiversity value. It was a particularly horrific removal which has been captured on film. Three thousand people were forced to burn down their own homes and their land was subsequently incorporated into the KNP. At the time the secretary of the SANParks warned. "I foresee in this gain of today, if we acquire the Pafuri, the future germ of destruction of the whole park" (Cited by Carruthers, 1995:98). This was a prescient statement which illustrates the level of anxiety the issue of land restitution raised among conservation officials.

In 1994 the Makuleke demanded that their rights to the Pafuri area be reinstated. In 1998 their claim was successful and today they are proud owners of the internationally recognised Makuleke Region of the Kruger National Park (MRKNP). Their claim was successful because of several factors. The first was the supportive role played by Hanekom, the Minister of Land Affairs. The second was the supportive role of the LCC, particularly in levelling the playing fields and not allowing SANParks to dominate and control the process. The third was the legitimacy of the claim. As one member of the community said, "Our claim was a strong one that happened forcefully within our living memory, so it was hard to dispute recent but historical facts" (Informant 48, Johannesburg, 1/6/2006). In addition to the tireless work of the Makuleke leadership, there was the support of progressive national environmental organisations and the core group of advisors to the community, known as the Friends of Makuleke (Poonan 2000; Steenkamp 2001; Kaupilla 2007). The fourth factor involved the chair and the few progressive members of the new SANParks Board's BSCLC (Informant 4, Telephonic, 8/3/2005; Informant 48, Johannesburg, 1/6/2006; Informant 18, Johannesburg, 2/6/2005). Immediately when the organisational land claims policy they formulated was put in place, the BSCLC guided the Makuleke claim that was finalised in May 1998 (Steenkamp, 2001Informant 18, Johannesburg, 2/6/2005). The fifth was the powerful role played by Ngeleza, as the leader of the SED

discussed below .The sixth factor that paved the path for the success of this claim was that SANParks was also under pressure because the Makuleke land claim negotiations was taking place, "… just before the centenary celebrations of the KNP were due to commence. SANParks wanted to show the world how it had transformed. It desperately needed an amicable settlement with us to get lots of mileage in the media and in the eyes of the world. This was because before then SANParks' operational agenda was led by a truly apartheid approach, and it now had to showcase that it had transformed" (Informant 48, Johannesburg, 1/6/2006).

During the initial stages of the land claims process in 1994, the relationship between the Makuleke's and SANParks was tense, antagonistic and suspicious. In the Makuleke's view SANParks were responsible for their removal from their land (Poonan 2000; Steenkamp 1998; Steenkamp and Uhr 2000; Steenkamp 2001; Cock and Fig 2002; Magome and Murombedzi 2003; Fabricius *et al.* 2004). During the initial stages of the negotiations the voice of Wainwright, Delvers (SANParks' chief negotiator and legal expert) and Gerard (the General Manager of Conservation in the KNP) were dominant. "There was no one with a social background on the SANParks team and neither did anybody understand the political history of South Africa" (Informant 48, Johannesburg, 1/6/2006).

Delvers resisted the claim by justifying the removal of the Makuleke's in 1969. He argued that in the 1950s the Department of Bantu Affairs declared the community were squatters and as a result they lost residential rights in the Pafuri area of the park (25 000 hectares). As compensation they received Ntlaveni which was 6 000 hectares of KNP land excised from the park. In addition, a total of 19 000 hectares was given to Chief Mhinga because, according to the NPB [SANParks], he was the paramount chief. However, the relationship between Chief Mhinga and the Makuleke's was fraught with tension. Chief Mhinga considered the Makuleke's his subjects and submitted an unsuccessful counter land claim for Pafuri. Therefore, from Delvers perspective, the 25,000 hectares that the Makuleke's gained was offset by the 25 000 hectares that they had lost in the removals (Poonan 2000; Steenkamp 2001). At this time the new Board had not been appointed and there was no formal land claims policy. The organisation refused to assist with information on the removal, exemplified by denying the Makuleke's access to their files. Several organisations including the LCC also complained about Delvers' style in conducting the negotiations (Informant 18, Johannesburg, 2/6/2005; Steenkamp 2001). Instead of restitution, SANParks proposed financial or alternative land as compensation (Informant 4, Telephonic, 8/3/2005; Informant 48, Johannesburg, 1/6/2006).

The Role of the national SED and the KNP SED in the Makuleke Land Claim Negotiations and Post Settlement Process 1995-1998

The director of the KNP SED Ngeleza contributed significantly towards tipping the balance in favour of the Makulekes. In this sense she was a catalyst to the organisational transformation process.

> "Before [Ngeleza], the leader of social ecology at the national office, joined the negotiations team as part of the SANParks team, the negotiations process hit rocks many times. This was in 1995. She joined and led social ecology [SED] at the right time for us. The negotiations team up until then, was very conservation biased. When [Ngeleza], the only social ecology representative on the team, joined the negotiations team and the formal negotiations process started in 1996, she changed the focus and discussions altogether, and [Wainwright], [Delvers] and [Gerard] were bound to consider the social aspects of the KNP. This was helped when at the same time, SANParks' appointed its first black CEO, [Mandla]. He supported [Ngeleza] and she played an important supportive role for the Makulekes in the negotiations, because she conducted herself from a position of power. She was a black woman who understood the political background of South Africa, her high academic status, and her mandate to lead social ecology. Therefore SANParks was no longer arrogant in addressing the issue, the process needed common ground with equality between conservation and social issues. This was another value that [Ngeleza] brought to the process. Together with key experts that supported us such as the Friends of the Makulekes, she played a key role in the compromise that was reached between us and the SANParks – to combine the restitution of our land with the retention of the area as conservation land. This is how we reached middle ground with SANParks" (Informant 48, Johannesburg, 1/6/2006).

After the land was restituted to the Makulekes the KNP SED was marginalised (Informant 48, Johannesburg, 1/6/2006; Msimang *et al* in Hall-Martin *et al* (ed) 2003). The allocation of responsibilities regarding all land claim legalities, negotiations and policies were the core competencies of the Conservation Services Division, and the Department of Legal Services at the SANParks national office in Pretoria. At KNP level, this task was allocated to the Strategic Conservation Planner and Environmental Manager. These structures were recognised as negotiators that would not compromise the asset base and geographical integrity of national parks and the KNP respectively (Informant 50, Telephonic, 29/10/2007; Informant 23, Johannesburg, 1/8/2005).

Between 1999-2004, the SED's exclusion from the land claims negotiations team was a step backwards compared to the role that Ngeleza had played (Informant 50, Telephonic, 29/10/2007). Besides the brief period (April 2000 - June 2000) when Beja was appointed and the last few months of 2004 after Shahid's appointment (April 2004 - December 2004), the SED did not have the capacity, skills or professionalism to

play a major role in land claims related issues subsequent to the Makuleke and claim process (Informant 48, Johannesburg, 1/6/2006). The KNP SED duties regarding claimant communities were confined to: i) provide information to the KNP regarding claimant communities, and vice versa; ii) facilitate the appointment of claimant land claims committees and representatives in each of the forums, (discussed in chapter eight); iii) explain the role of conservation and the park's existence to claimant communities; iv) ensure that the community understood the final settlement; vii) introduce the community to prospective investment/development partners, and; v) organise community study tours to sites of successful claimants (Informant 37, Skukuza, 18/6/2007).

The role that Ngeleza played in the Makuleke land claims negotiations process was therefore not strengthened during the post land claim settlement and the development of the land use option. The subsequent addition of Nkululeko, the leader of the KNP SED team (1995-2000), and her successor, Moeti (2001-2004) - to the JMB (described below), was not useful to the Makulekes due to capacity constraints and intra-organisational tension:

> "[Nkululeko] came from a social worker background. If you remember social ecology staff were mainly recruited from this background. Initially she sat in the SANParks team that constituted the JMB [the Joint Management Board]. She played a good role in the JMB, but she was not as instrumental in the process to support us as Ngeleza]was. She did not say much during meetings and I think it was because of the conflict she was facing in the organisation and her work schedule was too heavy. The only problem was that the situation in the KNP was not smooth sailing for social ecology to play a strong role. There was a lot of trouble there, and the tug of war was between conservation and social issues. To fight the old conservation regime was not simple. Nkululeko was unable to influence decision-making, because she was not in a position of power like Ngeleza. She did not have a conservation background either. This neutralised the positive role that she could have played on the JMB. And then she was moved to Groenkloof [the national office in Pretoria]" (Informant 48, Johannesburg, 1/6/2006).

> "Moeti was also a social worker, and it took time for her to grasp the issues when she sat in the JMB meetings. She had much to learn as she was new to conservation and had not acclimatised as yet. Between Nkululeko and Moeti, they did not play a strong role in the post land claim settlement and in the development of our land use option that retained the land for conservation. Their influence was minimal to influence the minds of the conservation leadership in the park. As advocates of social issues of the park, they were a just a physical appearance for social change but their role was difficult in the system" (Informant 48, Johannesburg, 1/6/2006).

Thus once the Makulekes had their land restituted, the role of the KNP SED was minimal in assisting them realise their land use option. This was a crucial opportunity to develop their land " as an asset for sustainable livelihoods for the entire community" (Poonan 2002:46). Based on community consensus the land use option agreed upon was a contractual park known as the Makuleke Region of the Kruger National Park (MRKNP), owned by the Makuleke community, yet managed and executed by a Joint Management Board (JMB), on the basis of a co-management agreement between SANParks and the Makuleke Communal Property Association (CPA) (Informant 48, Johannesburg, 1/6/2006).

The restitution of the Makuleke's land "…ended up symbolising the 'community conservation' paradigm internationally" (Kaupilla 2007: 108). The KNP SED could have been part of maximising community development, promoting organisational transformation and contributing towards and adding value to the national land restitution programme. This was important the restitution programme's "…achievements thus far have been modest indeed" (Walker 2006: 87). In terms of "Historical reach, developmental impact, contribution to land reform – in all these areas the programme has fallen short of what was hoped. The goals of social justice, redress and rebuilding communities have turned out to be more elusive than previously imagined" (Ibid). The KNP SE should also have played a role in the complex political issues involved in relation to chiefs and other traditional leaders and land ownership (Kaupilla,2007). As Walker has pointed out in relation to land restitution generally, "Part of the challenge lies in the extraordinary dense tangle of issues that restitution encompasses, dealing as it does not only with rural and urban histories of dispossession and reconstruction, but also with the intersection of the symbolic and the material, of rights and development, of the local as well as the national" (Walker 2006: 87).

Community Benefits from the co-management model

After tough negotiations the agreement returned full ownership and title of 25,0000 hectares of land to the Makulele. It was also agreed that the conservation status of the land would be retained and protected, allowing no mining, farming or permanent settlement to take place without the permission of the SANParks. A 'contract park" was established for a period of 50 years to be managed by a Joint Management Body. The agreement also provided for 5,0000 hectares of land outside the KNP to be included in the contract park, thus extending the size of the land under conservation. The agreement has been described as " a unique attempt to harmonize the protection of biological diversity with the interests of rural people." (Koch, 1998:71).

A Community Property Association (CPA) was formed to promote development. After 1998 conditions were conducive to develop amicable relations between the Makuleke community and the KNP SED. Although the Makulekes were antagonised by the violation of their human rights during their removals

and they refused to interact with the KNP and the KNP SED prior to the commencement of the formal land claim negotiation process, these feelings subsided as a result of the success of their land claim and the establishment of a number of development projects. These were concessions granted to the private sector for the construction and operation of two ecotourism lodges; the construction of a training camp that strengthened their youth training programmes; trophy hunting concessions; the purchase of a car and home for their Chief; the construction of a multi-purpose cultural interpretation centre; payment of operating costs for the CPA and the Traditional Authority Office as well as the purchase of a motor vehicle for the use of the CPA executive committee.

The contractual Co-Management Agreement between the SANParks and the Makuleke CPA provided for the commercialisation of some aspects of the MRKNP, which included the granting of concessions to Matswani Safaris to construct and manage 'The Outpost', a luxury lodge in the MRKNP, worth between ZAR 10-15 million. The lease fees this lodge was expected to generate was 10% of turnover, and an additional 2% was earmarked for a social development fund, also referred to as a workers trust or youth development fund. A second lodge was constructed by Wilderness Safaris valued at approximately ZAR R30 million and was expected to generate an 8% of turnover lease fee. The lease or annual concession fee was directly linked to tourist throughput or turnover, which had a direct impact on community revenue earnings (Collins 2010). Since both lodges were operationalised after 2004, discussion of the potential benefits accrued to the community and the nature of the business relationships falls outside of this research period (Steenkamp 2001; Informant 48, Johannesburg, 1/6/2006).

Training related projects were the oldest and most successful. Since 1996 the Makuleke youth were offered training in business management, hospitality, tourism and conservation through leadership from Steenkamp (a member of the Friends of the Makulekes). They were assisted by several NGOs, tourism businesses and government education institutions, to eventually manage their restituted land and development projects on their own. By 2004 a training camp was constructed by Eco-Training Camp, valued at ZAR 5 million, which secured a lease and concession fee of 10% of gross earnings (Poonan 2001; Steenkamp 2001; Informant 48, Johannesburg, 1/6/2006).

Although by 2004 these projects were still in their infancy, and it was difficult to quantify their benefits and the number of people involved , if the KNP SED could have significantly engaged in this community, they would have gathered valuable, replicable extensive learning and experience in dealing with challenges of development project implementation. Instead they were not even represented on the Joint Management Committee. Likewise between 2000-2003, the KNP SED if fully capacitated, active and available, could have made valuable contributions towards the heated and controversial trophy hunting and benefit-sharing debates in the natural resource management sector. Trophy hunting concessions within the MRKNP were granted to Wayne Wagner Safaris. Although each household received equal portions of

venison from the hunts, it has been the only benefit from their restituted land that accrued to the *entire* community. However, pressure from the lodge development companies not to combine hunting and tourism ended trophy hunting by 2004, thus the 'high value added' from safari hunting that Hulme and Murphree discuss in the Zimbabwean context, was short-lived in the Makuleke context (Hulme and Murphree 2001: 287). Although photographic tourism earned some revenue, it was minimal (Poonan 2001; Steenkamp 2001; Informant 48, Johannesburg, 1/6/2006; Collins 2010).

Although 2% of gross earnings from all the MRKNP developments were ear-marked for the community development fund mentioned above, the fund was not operational because the revenue accrued was still negligible. Instead the approximate ZAR 1.8 million earned from the 2001-2002 trophy-hunting quota was only sufficient for two investments, firstly to purchase a community- approved car and house for their Chief Makuleke. Some informants were of the opinion that the chief owning a car constituted a manifestation of asset building that the community was proud of. The community's pride was elevated because combined with the restitution of the land to Chief Makuleke, instead of to Chief Mhinga, their former independent status was restored (Poonan 2000; 2002; Steenkamp 2001; Informant 48, Johannesburg, 1/6/2006; Collins 2010; Kaupilla 2007). In the view of the community, the highest ranking manifestation of community redress was restoring land rights and the deeper, intangible non-material value of reinstating their traditional leadership and their ancestral ties to cultural and natural resources (Informant 48, Johannesburg, 1/6/2006).

The second investment from income earned from the trophy hunting concessions was supplemented by funding from the national Department of Public Works to complete in 2004 a multi-purpose cultural interpretation centre. This was used to showcase Makuleke culture, for community festivals and gatherings, and for tourist's and visiting researcher's bed and breakfast accommodation. Although a total of 36 community members benefited from short-term contracts as construction labourers, the bed and breakfast component earned inadequate revenue by 2004, because the occupancy rate for tourists, researchers and community exchange visits were low (Poonan 2000; 2002; Steenkamp 2001; Informant 48, Johannesburg, 1/6/2006; Collins 2010).

Other expenditure derived from all the MRKNP conservation-generated revenue were: operating costs of the CPA and the Traditional Authority office, the Makuleke component of the JMB office, and the purchase of a motor vehicle for the use of the CPA executive committee (CPA exco). Although the community agreed the benefits should accrue to the Chief as part of asserting themselves, only a few other people benefited from all of the above mentioned endeavours, especially through job creation in construction, tourism, hospitality and conservation management (Poonan 2000; 2002; Steenkamp 2001; Informant 48, Johannesburg, 1/6/2006).

Regarding the Public Works Programme by 2004 the KNP SED played a supportive role to secure short-term employment in the MRKNP for 33 people earning ZAR 30 per day through the Working for Water Project. This ironically did more to develop a positive and hopeful Makuleke community attitude towards the KNP than any other efforts of the KNP SED in their social ecology endeavours in this community (Poonan 2001; Informant 48, Johannesburg, 1/6/2006).

Understandably, by 2004 some Makulekes were of the opinion that the community benefits were not substantial enough, and that numerous promises made regarding the benefits of retaining conservation as a land use option during the land claims negotiations had not materialised (Informant 48, Johannesburg, 1/6/2006; Steenkamp 2001). The key issue regarding building community assets from restituted land is to find ways to generate benefits for the *entire* community, so that there is a tangible difference relative to their history of loss of livelihoods when their land was alienated to expand the KNP, and the hardships they faced through that process. Thus Hulme and Murphree emphasise that "…economic benefit of 'new' income or resources" must be significant " for community conservation (Hulme and Murphree 2001: 281).

Recommendations for a more active prominent role that the KNP SED could have played in this community were to assist in gaining access to more start-up capital; learn how to market community-related products; develop and maintain good management practices, especially for tourism and conservation; create and ensure women's meaningful employment and leadership opportunities; strengthen existing institutions, such as the CPA exco, and; and improve the capacity of Makuleke representatives on the JMB. Most essentially, the Makulekes had to find new ways to conserve the biological diversity of their reclaimed land while generating more economic benefits and equitable distribution from those natural assets (Poonan 2000; 2001; Steenkamp 2001; Informant 48, Johannesburg, 1/6/2006). The absence of strong involvement of the KNP SED in all these developments suggests that,

"Even though the SANParks and the KNP formulated stances on what the relationship with neighbouring communities meant and the different approaches to be used, on the park's side the relationship was still tentative and they were insufficiently committed and had not fully understood the development imperatives" (Informant 18, Johannesburg, 2/6/2005).

As argued above, although organisational transformation did occur through the Makuleke land claim process, a constraint was the lack of stronger organisational commitment towards redress for land related injustices to demonstrate goodwill to catalyse secondary and more intensified engagement and forms of redress, such as assisting with project implementation. Capitalising on the implications of restoring community ownership of land were immense because, "Control over assets gives people the independence necessary to resist oppression, pursue productive livelihoods and confront injustice" (Ford Foundation: 4).

Conclusion

This chapter focused on the Makuleke as a case study of land restitution with an overview of the seven other national parks that had land claims lodged in response to the post-apartheid policy of land restitution. Land restitution is a key indicator of whether the organisation changed from an instrument of racial exclusion and domination to one which promoted not only organisational transformation, but wider social redress and justice. The complicated and contested processes involved in land claims showed how "The SANP, formerly an unquestioning arm of the apartheid state, which allowed the demands of that ideology to be subordinated to the aims of conservation, had slowly but inexorably begun to address the problem of the exclusion, and alienation of black South Africans" (Khan 2002: 33).

This chapter argues that between 1994-2004 SANParks did embark on organisational and wider social transformation regarding land claims, but it was constrained**.** Despite the post-apartheid government's legislative and institutional provisions for land reform, the 2002 Cabinet Memorandum signalled attempts to reverse the proactive, clear and consistent national land claims policy. This recommended 'equitable redress' rather than the restoration of full ownership rights to claimant communities and caused delays and confusion. Despite the 2002 Cabinet Memorandum, the first and second black CEOs of SANParks stated that the resolution of valid land claims presented an opportunity for historical redress with neighbouring communities, instead of being a threat to the conservation of biodiversity, and; that the organisation would not contest any land claims in national parks. To their credit SANParks admitted that by 2003 they had not realised their objective to resolve valid land claims consistently and coherently.

Nevertheless, a significant shift within SANParks that strengthened organisational transformation occurred in the form of the powerful, catalytical role played by the SANParks' BSCLC. This key agency of change developed a land claims policy, fostered a cooperative organizational policy position, promoted interaction with supportive external stakeholders and diluted intra-organisational opposition to land claims. The outcome of each land claim differed considerably depending on whether the process was initiated and completed prior to 1994-1997 before the BSCLC policy and structure was in place.

The leadership of the SED between late 1994-1999 also played an important role in organisational transformation regarding land claims processes and outcomes, especially during the tenure of Ngeleza as Director. However although the KNP SED did contribute towards organisational transformation during the Makuleke land claim, the extent and ways that they were able to do this was limited. Since the KNP SED was established one year after the Makuleke land claim surfaced and prior to the BSCLC as a structure and its policy, it was a new, weak and highly contested structure in the park. This early phase contrasted starkly with 1998, when the land was restituted, catapulting the SANParks into organisational and social transformation mode because the outcome fundamentally challenged previous notions of conservation. The

ground-breaking land-use plan that married conservation with community development were previously antithetical concepts for SANParks with the exception of the Richtersveld National Park.

The contribution of the KNP SED to the negotiations and post-settlement process was as facilitator of communication between the park authorities and the community, and remained by 2004, a relatively marginal role-player. It was largely confined to information-sharing, the facilitation of conservation education and social development projects Diminishing Ngeleza's role and position within the organisation as a transformation actor after the land was restituted and her resignation, SANParks' and the KNP's structural responsibilities regarding subsequent land claims reflected a wariness to fully engage the SED and KNP SED in the negotiations team.

SECTION C: THE IMPACTS OF TRANSFORMATION ON THE WIDER SOCIETY

CHAPTER 8: CHANGING RELATIONS WITH NEIGHBOURING COMMUNITIES

Introduction

By 2004 SANParks had 20 national parks and was in the process of developing another seven. Of the 20, the five financially viable parks cross subsidised less profitable park. Declining allocations of resources discussed in chapter four, lack of institutional cohesion, lack of political will and failure to successfully prosecute offenders, negatively impacted communities neighbouring protected areas.

A crucial aspect of the transformation of SANParks during the 1994 – 2004 period was the changed relationship between SANParks and neighbouring communities. During apartheid this relationship was marked by exclusion and negativity. After the transition to democracy these communities continued to be characterised by high levels of poverty, unemployment and in desperate need of development. However this chapter will demonstrate that the 'benefits' provided to them largely, but not exclusively. by SED agencies, were minimalistic forms of paternalistic 'social upliftment'. However, the projects described in this chapter represented a shift away from the 'fortress and fines' model of conservation which avoided social and developmental issues. In the case of SANParks this avoidance was grounded in a view of neighbouring communities as threats rather than potential partners.

Changes in neighbour relations were predominantly instrumentalist: they were motivated by the park authority's priority concern with protecting biodiversity, rather than with social and environmental justice. The intention was largely appeasement, to avert threats and lessen the hostility from neighbouring communities. As one official stated "..the resources that we dedicate to conservation, particularly to social issues, is almost pacifying to soften the way…park neighbours view conservation. " (Cited in Maguranyanga 2009: 149). In the official discourse, "The question is no longer about whether SANParks should promote local socio-economic beneficiation but rather what strategy serves its best interests" (Maguranyanga 2009: 152).

The significance of these changes lay in how new institutional structures such as community forums were established as part of "… an important paradigm shift without which the future of the KNP will be in jeopardy," (SANParks undated. KNP Business Plan: 15). Towards the end of the period under review, in 2013 the establishment of participatory structures was prescribed by NEMPA . This legislation required plans to include the local community in its affairs, particularly in the review process of its Strategic Management Plan. The 14 Park Forums established by 2004 were "important platforms to enable community and stakeholder participation" (SANParks, Annual Report 2004: 16). However, it will be

demonstrated below that these forums were not strong, stable, well-resourced structures with high levels of community participation and decision-making authority. They were primarily consultative bodies.

Improving relations with neighbouring communities involved various projects initiated to generate income and environmental education (EE). While providing some limited benefits these did not amount to full redress and social justice. These changes were driven largely by social ecology personnel. The "… strategic objective of the Social Ecology programme... [was to] to promote environmental and biodiversity education…among historically disadvantaged communities that live adjacent to National Parks" (SANParks Annual Report, 2002:10). This restricted focus involved the neglect of questions of social justice and redress in practice. However, there was some ambiguity in the official discourse. For example, a clear statement that acknowledged elements of social justice in the need to establish the social ecology structure to communicate and benefit its neighbours in all national parks was, "The basic assumptions behind the social ecology programme are that South African communities are the custodians of national parks, and that the successful conservation of natural resources can only be achieved if local communities have access to national parks, are fully involved in the decision-making processes, and derive tangible direct benefit" (SANParks Annual Report 1994-1995: 31). However a key question is: In practice did the employment of 60 social ecology staff by 2004, stationed in various agencies in all but three parks, fundamentally change the relations between the park and its previously excluded neighbours?

The answer differed for different parks. An overview of SANParks' changing relations with neighbouring communities in national parks between 1994-2004 suggests that there was a distinction between general engagement with communities living adjacent to parks and the scope and extent of social ecology projects. These projects over-privileged parks that had land claims, those that generated profit, as well as those that needed additional protection of particular species – the succulent biome, fynbos and abalone compared to parks that did not have these attributes. Furthermore, as Dlamini writes, "Africans [did not] engage with the park as an undifferentiated mass" (Dlamini 2012: 9). There were differences amongst various neighbour communities who were also internally differentiated. In addition not only the social ecology structures but donor and other external actors contributed towards this change substantially (SANParks Annual Report 1996-1997: 44-45;SANParks Annual Report 2003: 14;SANParks Annual Report 2004:55; SANParks Annual Report 2004-2005: 60).

The following section focuses on changed relationships with neighbouring communities in the SANParks flagstaff, the Kruger National Park. The changes driven by community forums and projects is discussed in two periods: 1993 – 1996 and 1996 – 2004.

Changing relationships with neighbouring communities in the Kruger National Park,

The analysis of the formation of the DCD's first community forums and Integrated Community Development Projects (ICDPs) in the KNP represented the initiation of a change from the park's historical exclusive, protectionist model. The change was driven by the understanding that social change was necessary to guarantee the existence of the park and to maintain its ecosystems (Kruger National Park Community Liaison Sub-Department Motivation undated; Marais and Botha undated). It was "…born out of the recognition that no National Park can function in isolation from its surrounding environment … [and that it was a] "…sincere attempt at meeting the challenges of a changing world in which conserved areas are increasingly threatened and their survival is dependent on winning the hearts and minds of the people" (Venter, Marais, and Breen, undated:9). However, none of these efforts linked the conservation of biodiversity with social justice and redress. What was practised was a very 'soft' or minimalist version of social ecology, dedicated to appeasing the parks' neighbours to ensure the conservation of biodiversity.

Establishing the DCD, forums and ICDPs was a diversion from the KNP's strategy prior to 1993 when thin overtures were made towards neighbouring black South Africans. Careful not to exceed its historical mandate of exclusivist biodiversity conservation during apartheid, the KNP authorities grudgingly offered environmental education (EE) to black school learners. The discrepancy between the standards of EE for black, compared to white learners was substantial. "The visits of black learners to the park were very brief, lasting between 30-40 minutes, and they were only shown a movie and the library. The content was not EE in any thorough or comprehensive sense, but a brief exposure to what the organisation was doing in the park. In contrast the KNP's EE system advantaged white schools, with extensive lectures, visits to sites in the park such as ' bomas '[enclosures] where elephants were kept, as well as old chalets, and much more." (Informant 38, Telephonic, 4/10/2007).

In the early 1990s a changed political context drove the KNP to attempt to change its relations with neighbouring communities. Charged with protecting the park, the DCD had to reach out to its previously excluded neighbours, by offering a fledgling delivery of what in people-parks parlance were "public goods" and benefits (Child in Child *et al* 2004: 245). The DCD's forums and projects represented an attempted, "…mechanism for linking the park to the political system…and the mechanisms for holding the [park] agency accountable [within their own understanding] …" (Child *et al* 2004: 132). The implementation of forums and projects required new social science oriented staff and engagement with new concepts such as 'community benefits',' community,' 'localisation' , resources, 'indigenous knowledge' and 'tradition authority'.(Brosius *et al* 1998; Jones and Murphree 2004). By implementing ICDPs and communicating with its neighbours, the DCD did indeed initiate organisational change, away from an exclusivist conservation approach. However the DCD's community outreach and organisational approach

was not fundamentally transformation-oriented. The main driver was to protect biodiversity conservation in a changing society.

The implementation of forums and projects required communication, dialogue and consultation with their neighbours. Methodologically it involved convening meetings in the surrounding villages and townships. The social dynamics within these forums were extremely complex given the diversity of the participants. Not only did the DCD's physical presence create tensions, these unprecedented face-to-face discussions revealed multiple sources of contention that were as old as the park itself. These included the fact that people and livestock were killed and crops destroyed by predators, termed 'damage causing animals' (DCAs) that strayed from the park. The legal provisions that absolved the park of all responsibility, were invoked by the much hated legal clause *res nullis* (Anthony *et al* 2010). An indicator of the DCD's ability to self-criticise, *res nullis* was considered a KNP excuse because it had the power to lobby and advocate legal changes (Informant 24, Pretoria, 14/6/2005). Other grievances raised in these meetings included land claims (a major grievance,), denials of access to ancestral sites and access to natural resources such as water, grazing land, firewood, thatching grass and medicinal plants. The slaughter of domestic animals as a preventative measure against foot and mouth disease was interpreted as arbitrary confiscation of community property. Though the KNP historically offered local people limited employment in the park, it was always menial, cheap and exploitative labour. Yet it was presented by park authorities as evidence of the organisation's commitment to neighbour's well-being (Wainwright, 1994). Resentment in neighbouring communities was compounded by the perception that the park preferred to employ Mozambicans, and that job vacancies were not advertised in the communities. (Informant 24, Pretoria, 14/6/2005; KNP DCD. Action Minutes of the Lubambiswano Forum. 22 November 1995).

The tone of these meetings was generally tense for all parties and threatening and confusing for the DCD. "There were hard words from the communities and we were accused of attempting to build a relationship with them to protect our image" (Informant 24, Pretoria, 14/6/2005). Yet this was the formative attempt, however contentious, that initiated the KNP's institutionalisation of community relations.

The Establishment of Community Forums and Projects in the KNP in the period 1993-1996

By 1994 four community forums were established along the KNP boundary, shown in the map below (Venter 1998). These forums were the "technical apparatus" to formalise park-community relations (Brosius *et al* 1998: 160).

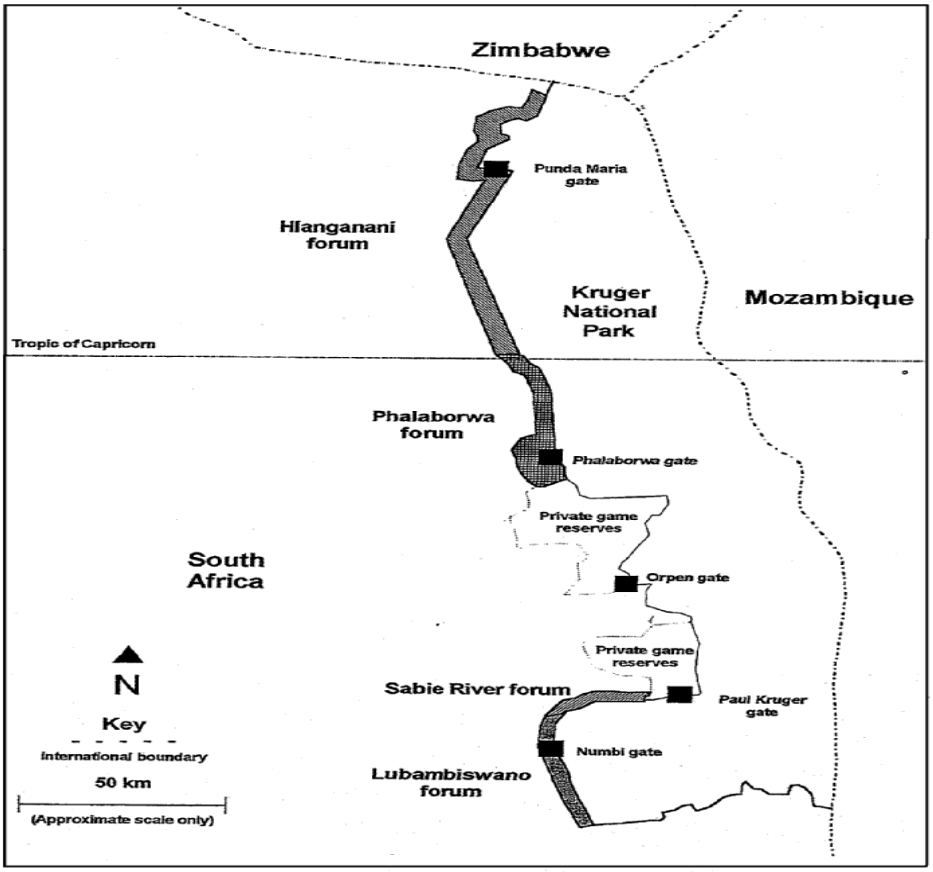


Figure 20 (Venter1998).

The DCD was clearly motivated to establish structures which in other contexts involved what is known as, "…means-end sequencing" (Jones and Murphree 2004: 63). They astutely pursued, "…the primary objective of facilitating the improvement of the quality of life of…neighbouring communities [because it was] a way to enhance the regional, national and international recognition of the park's long term conservation value" (Venter, Marais, and Breen, undated: 3). The DCD i) conceptually rooted the forums as co-management institutions; ii) wanted to catalyse the socio-economic development of the area through the co-ordination and facilitation of ICDPs; iii) aimed to evaluate their work according to their participatory vision, mission and operational goals; iv) sourced finance from the public and private sectors to establish small business enterprises; vi) actively promoted community environmental education, eco-tourism, controlled access and sustainable utilisation of resources in the park, as well as; vii) operated with no forum constitutions to foster dynamism, uniqueness and change-responsiveness determined by the participants (Marais and Botha undated; Kruger National Park Community Liaison Sub-Department Motivation undated; Kruger National Park Integrated Conservation and Community Development Programme Sponsorship Proposal to Glaxo SA (Pty) Ltd. 1994; Venter 1998; Venter, Marais, and Breen, undated).

The DCD also applied Participative Rural Appraisal (PRA) techniques, increasingly used throughout the developing world. These were aimed to lessen the dominant role of development facilitators, by allowing groups of illiterate, semi-literate and literate people to communicate, exchange ideas and express their development needs effectively (Chambers 1992; Chambers 1994; Chambers Newsletter No.15/16; Warburton 1998). This was the first move towards incorporating previously disadvantaged community relations into the affairs of the park. To "…facilitate the integration of the protected area into the surrounding landscape", it involved "a totally new style of management based on transparency and co-operation, as well as a holistic approach to problem solving…" (Marais and Botha undated: 2).

According to the DCD's understanding, to further their participatory approach to establishing the forums as representative they had to include the homeland/Bantustan administrations and their representatives, the traditional authorities (TAs), provincial and private nature conservation authorities, civic and youth leaders, educationalists, village development committees, NGOs, the South African Police Service (SAPS) (in some cases) as well as neutral observers (Informant 47, Skukuza, 12/9/2007). Prior to the 1995 local government elections, the TAs of the four former homeland governments (Kangwane, Gazankulu, Lebowa and Venda), combined with the administrations of the former "white" areas, previously situated in the Northern and Eastern Transvaal, to form the post 1994 transitional local government councils (TLC) in this area. After the 1995 local government elections these TLCs were replaced by Regional Councils (RC) - generally a mixture of TAs and new members such as civic bodies, responsible for overseeing development in the area.

Based on their historical alliance, the DCD leaned towards the TAs after the formation of the democratic state. Yet the TAs were the apartheid state's localised form of coercion, oppression and domination. Generally understood as puppet regimes to legitimise control over their African subjects, they were authoritarian, corrupt, and dismal at delivering basic services to people (Levin and Weiner 1996). By the early 1990s they remained, "…spatial and institutional legacies (of apartheid) … in contemporary South Africa" (Phillips, Lissoni and Chipkin in The Mail and Guardian, July 11-17, 2014: 30). The new governance system merged "…clerically trained bureaucrats from [the homelands], aging and cynical members of the old Transvaal Provincial Administration and large numbers of new, inexperienced officials" (Picard 2005: 304). After 1994, these structures are referred to as the provincial conservation agencies (PCAs).

The DCD retained its approach of "… telling the illiterate' indunas' [headmen in the TAs] what they wanted, so that they then rubber stamped their decisions" (Informant 47, Skukuza, 12/9/2007). This occurred despite the fact that the TAs were "…traditional clan authority systems…" (Anthony 2010:1). They were also generally threatened by the new democratic governance system (Ntsebeza 1999 in Anthony 2010). Political tensions developed in most of the forum areas because the RCs were dominated by civic

organisations affiliated to the South African National Civic Association (SANCO) (Informant 44, Telephonic, 25/5/2006).

Despite these problems of representivity and legitimacy there was an attempt to use the forums to solve some of the problems of neighbouring communities (Informant 18, Johannesburg, 2/6/2005; Informant 8, Johannesburg, 23/5/2005). The identification of needs and solutions across all the forums, with minor variations were: i) meat from the KNP's culled animals should be sold to the local villagers; ii) a part of the annual KNP profits should be invested to start a bursary fund and/or credit scheme for local people; iii) a traditional healers project to harvest medicinal plants sustainably from within the KNP should be established; iv) establish community based project such as eco-tourism (eg. training local taxi drivers as tour guides), curio sales outlets at the KNP gates, theatre and dance groups performances in the park's rest camps should be established; v) there should be small business development (eg. bush-clearing in the park); vi) a buffer zone along the park-communal land boundary should be established; vii) the facilitation of, teacher training/villager vocational courses for pre-school and EE, and lastly viii) a dental health care project should be built (Venter 1998; Venter, Marais and Breen undated; National Parks Board Annual Report 1993).

The DCD had to grapple with another pervasive issue, the management of damage causing animals (DCAs). Similar to land claims, this was an old, emotionally charged grievance against the KNP and PCAs in all the forums and was a major source of tension. DCAs are animals, mainly predators that leave park boundaries and kill or injure people and domestic animals, as well as cause damage to property such as crops in neighbouring communities. DCAs were a consistent challenge for rural black neighbours since national parks were first established. Although Müller observed that the post 1994 policy and legal environment pertaining to protected areas was complex and "highly technical", the key issue of whose responsibility it was to enforce the policies and legislation prevailed (Müller 2009: 970). The shared and confusing responsibilities regarding DCAs have been shuffled between provincial agencies and SANParks ever since protected areas were established in South Africa, and losses suffered by these neighbours had not abated by 2004. The issue of DCAs highlights the need to link biodiversity conservation with the needs of national parks' poor neighbours. Combined with land claims, and access to jobs through the EPWP, DCAs were a foremost concern repeatedly raised by the KNP's neighbours. (Informant 6, Johannesburg 7/3/2005; Informant 7, Telephonic, 9/3/2005; Informant 8, Johannesburg, 23/5/2005). However resolving this issue rested higher in the organisational hierarchy.

The first and largest of the structures which attempted to deal with these problems was the Hlanganani Forum.

The Hlanganani Forum

A total of 26 remote villages located on communal land in the pre-1994 homeland of Gazankulu, was later merged into the re-structured Limpopo Province. This forum had one elected representative per village. Showing a flexible and fair approach, the DCD included a village located outside the forum boundary because it was affected by DCAs (Venter, 1998) The DCD's attempts through the TAs to increase community representation in meetings did not change the weak participation levels in this forum (Informant 33, Johannesburg, 1 August, 2005). This was probably due to the failure to solve the DCA problem. The community made several suggests to deal with the issue: (i) the provision of training and equipment for villages to monitor and communicate about DCAs; (ii) electrification of the KNP fence, and (iii) the accrual of the DCA's carcasses and skin (minus elephant tusks) if killed, to the livestock/crop owner as compensation (Venter, 1998; Venter, Marais and Breen, undated; National Parks Board Annual Report 1993-1994). However none of these suggestions resulted in any concrete action. The CDC up scaled their efforts politically as well as within the organisation and convinced Wainwright to approach the Premier of the Limpopo Province to mediate DCA related disputes through involving all role players. However inter-agency tensions "failed to produce a DCA regime that is efficient, effective and that had social legitimacy… In other words, DCAs are as much a conflict over institutions as over animals". (Anthony *et al*, 2010:1)

Three other development related goals were requested by the villagers: (i) facilitation of additional teacher training course in mathematics, science and EE (Informant 33, Johannesburg, 1 August 2005; Veneter 1998), Subsequently an EE officer was employed. Two other projects were developed jointly with the Lumambiswano Forum, discussed below, the development of community benefits through a wood worker and art association and for traditional healers.

The Lubambiswano Forum

Formed through public meetings in 1993, this KNP forum represented 18 Seswati-speaking villages, situated on communal land on the south western boundary of the KNP, in the apartheid homeland of KaNgwane (NPB Annual Report 1994-1995; Informant 24, Pretoria, 14/6/2005). Just before the 1994 elections, the Head of the DCD (Martin) and his team ignored police warnings about entering the Malelane/Matsulu area. We "…prioritised our own visibility and listening to people's complaints. We were called names in the meeting and on our departure, our vehicle was stoned by angry youths" (Informant 24, Pretoria, 14/6/2005). Despite this level of community aggression, the DCD repeatedly returned to the area, to sustain their efforts to convene the forum (Informant 24, Pretoria, 14/6/2005). Despite official claims of, "democratically elected representative per village…" contradictory statements nullify such claims (Venter 1998: 54). The representatives were "…either self-nominated or nominated by the tribal authorities, provincial conservation agencies or the KNP…" (Venter 1998:72).

The coercive environment in which the KNP was forced to resolve the land claim (discussed above) prior to the establishment of the SANParks Land Claims Sub-Committee and the prevalence of youth-fuelled aggression, demonstrated the heightened people-park tensions in this area. Tensions involved issues such as access to ancestral sites. Although the KNP had adopted a policy for communities to visit ancestral graves and sacred cultural sites, they failed to inform local people. There was also a request for process facilitation regarding KNP claims that their rangers had killed a suspected poacher in self-defence (Venter 1998; KNP DCD. Action Minutes of the Lubambiswano Forum. 22 November 1995; Venter, Marais and Breen undated). Since the KNP barred the villagers over which Chief Mdluli presided from accessing the Nsikazi River, to ostensibly prevent the spread of animal diseases, the DCD facilitated access to water through the installation of boreholes in communal areas. Other successes were: i) fund-raising and the establishment of water committees to cooperate with the provincial government agency ii) organising pre-school teacher training courses; iv) study tours; v) subsidised access to the park; vi) production and sale of tablecloths to KNP restaurants and shops and; vii) theatre group performances in KNP rest camps. (Venter 1998);

The most successful projects were the flagship curio and traditional healers projects, discussed below. These included people from the Hlanganani Forum (Venter 1998; NPB Annual Report 1994-1995; Venter, Marais and Breen undated; KNP DCD. Action Minutes of the Lubambiswano Forum. 22 November 1995).

Historically artisans in the Mpumalanga and Limpopo Provinces sold their wares on the roadside leading to the KNP entrance gates. Their meagre livelihood ensured that they were amongst the most marginalised and powerless both in their communities and in their relationship with the KNP authorities. “During the [19] 60’s, Skukuza people used to hit us and take away our curios. There was a ranger called Thuys, who used to call the police to hide in the bushes, and then chase us away and hit us. He [Thuys] died in 1987” (Botha and Venter 1994: 3). The DCD made a concerted capacity-building, marketing and sales effort to assist these artisans (Steenkamp, DANCED and SANParks. Capacity Building in SANParks: KNP Social Ecology February 2000). They fundraised to associations of traditional weavers, potters, and woodworkers known as the Mhala Woodworkers Association in the Hlanganani Forum, the Nyonga Art Association and the Salabinza Artists Association (Marais and Botha undated; Venter, Marais and Breen undated; NPB Annual Report 1993-1994). The DCD facilitated the sale of their wares in the KNP shops (Informant 45, 14/9/2007; KNP DCD. Action Minutes of the Lubambiswano Forum. 22 November 1995). Between 1993-1996, the combined turnover increased from ZAR 16 000 to ZAR 110 000 (KNP Draft DCD submission National Parks Board Annual Report 1993-1994; KNP Draft DCD submission National Parks Board Annual Report 1994-1995). Additional benefits included the facilitation of an ecology course to minimise environmental risks associated with sourcing materials, as well as the

construction of a permanent sales structure within the park, completed in 1997 under the KNP SED's tenure (Informant 45, 14/9/2007; KNP DCD. Action Minutes of the Lubambiswano Forum. 22 November 1995).

Between 1994-1998, traversing into the KNP SED's era, but led by the same project staff, the DCD also implemented a traditional healer project involving people from both the Lubambiswano and Hlanganani Forums, known as Ukukhanya Kwemvelo ('Light of Nature') Nursery (Informant 23, Johannesburg 1 August 2005). This was a significant innovation. Motivated to reduce poaching of medicinal plants from the KNP, the DCD provided an alternative based on the sustainable use of local resources. A level of public participation was initially achieved when a nursery was constructed for 180 healers. The process included planning processes, fundraising, PRA methodologies, a market survey, capacity-building courses, an exchange visit and the development of a constitution (Botha 1998; Botha 1998a; Botha 1998b; South African National Parks and Danish Cooperation for Environment and Development August 1999; South African National Parks, Danish Cooperation for Environment and Development June 2001). This is an example of how the DCD did contribute towards shaping "…" a new cultural and political terrain in which social justice and rights are linked to saving trees and biodiversity, on the one hand, and respecting the cultures, rights, and livelihoods of minorities and other marginal[ised] populations, on the other…" (Brosius *et al* 1998: 164).

A serious problem for the nursery was that, although project members donated plants from their gardens, it was inadequate to propagate the nursery. By 1998 well into the KNP-SED era, intra-organisational differences regarding the interpretation and implementation of the neighbour relations/social ecology policy, coupled with the fact that SANParks had not finalized its sustainable resource utilization policy discussed in chapter three, meant that the KNP refused to donate plants to the project (Botha 1998a; Botha 1998b; Fabricius June 2001).

Despite DCD attempts, inconsistencies and fractures between policy and implementation led to what in a different context has been called "…cosmetic and co-optive 'participation'…" (Jones and Murphree 2004:63). The resource utilisation policy ranked topmost in the organisation's policy hierarchy because it safeguarded its original mandate, the conservation of biodiversity. Yet the policy was applied inconsistently, as when the KNP removed the fences between themselves and high-value, elitist private nature reserves (Turner 2005). Under cover of shifting governance during the national political transition, the organisation expanded and moved the park. This was an appropriation of sorts, a resource grab intended to benefit biodiversity conservation and private business. Compared to the nursery project, this was an arbitrary, unfettered, up-scaled donation of a national and internationally cherished and valued resource to private business.

The Sabie River Forum

Changing local government in this forum area demonstrated the effect of misplaced and poorly analysed local policies. Since the RC in this forum area was dominated by ANC SANCO affiliates, it diminished TA power compared to the pre-1994 period. For the DCD political rivalry represented a loss of historical allies (Venter 1998; National Parks Board Annual Report 1994-1995).

During its brief existence, this forum consisted of XiTsonga-speaking villages and squatter camps (informal housing settlements) along the Sabie River, in what was the homeland of Gazankulu. Unlike other forums, there were no village-to-village visits and information-sharing processes, so no village count occurred (Venter, Marais and Breen undated; Venter 1998). The DCD's community relations appeasement strategy did attempt to contribute towards resolving the DCAs issues and they established an African farmer's committee to access in-situ resources. Despite the fact that the National Parks Act of 1926 stipulated that eligible African farmers on the edge of the Sabie River were allowed to catch fish and pump water from the river, the KNP not only ignored the law and community requests, they arrested people if they were caught pursuing these activities. White farmers however, used these same resources freely (Venter 1998). Intra-organisational tensions developed when the DCD pressurised the relevant KNP department to comply with legislation. Teacher training courses were successful and the park contributed bricks for the construction of three school classrooms (National Parks Board Annual Report 1994-1995).

Two incidents resuscitated the forum that the DCD staff responded to rather well. The first incident was that although a ranger had not pursued prosecution of a villager for allegedly fishing illegally in the park, he arrested and repeatedly assaulted him. The second was when two women, arrested by the rangers for allegedly stealing firewood from the park, were forced to walk through a crocodile infested river (Venter 1998). The TA who was unable to resolve the matter, approached the DCD for help. The DCD staff convened all parties, including the SANCO affiliated organisations and the rangers apologised (Venter 1998). Facilitating a process that combined civic bodies and TAs was a landmark. While apologies post-1994 may be viewed as insignificant, this interaction and display of ranger humility was hitherto unprecedented. The rangers represented historical symbols of power and impunity to neighbouring communities. It was a small testimony that the DCD in this politically contested arena was somewhat functional and recognised albeit for a short period.

Functioning in unfamiliar geographic and demographic terrain, as an external agent the DCD were forced to engage with shifting political power and institutions, and they were not adept at this. "[Since] it had taken a full year to get a forum established for the Sabie Region… [the DCD] decided to start working with the forum and to try and improve forum representation as the forum progressed. However, the internal political

problems which characterised the communities involved in this forum undermined this process…" (Venter 1998: 64). Eventually political rivalry led to the dissolution of the forum (Venter 1998; National Parks Board Annual Report 1994-1995).

The Phalaborwa Forum

Despite initial hostility from the ANC and the Pan African Congress (also a liberation movement) youth leagues, the DCD attempted to establish a forum and development-oriented partnerships with the local community (National Parks Board Annual Report 1994-1995). The forum comprised rural villages, discussed in the KNP SED section below and two large townships, Namakgale and Lulekani. The townships supplied the rapidly expanding mining town of Phalaborwa with labour since the 1980s (Venter 1998).

The DCD was accepted in this area as a sub-structure of the Greater Phalaborwa Development Forum (GPDF), an independent initiative focused on capacity-building and coordination of community development, established in 1994. As a separate entity, DCD forum membership comprised the KNP ranger assigned to the area, DCD staff, one TA representative and two representatives from each of the following community groups: youth, women, education associations and civic organisations (Venter 1998). Prior to the dissolution of this very weak forum because of Ngeleza's decision to disband the DCD's forums mentioned above, a combination of GPDF/DCD forum members undertook information-sharing community visits in the Greater Phalaborwa area and individuals participated in community/KNP exchange visits (Venter, Marais and Breen undated). Discussed in chapter six and below the DCD faced intra-organisational constraints in their attempt to establish forums and projects.

Constraints on the forums

The DCD faced three intra-organisational constraints at the outset (Venter, Marais, and Breen, undated: 9). The first was the institutional nature of the KNP's established structures that fuelled resistance towards the DCD's mandate of driving transformation. This was rooted in the KNP's traditional leadership dominated by generations of white, mainly Afrikaner men. However constrained its implementation at this stage, the introduction of a social science paradigm, related methodologies and the inclusion of its black neighbours were alien. This earned the DCD a reputation as "communists", symbolic of the apartheid regime's fears rooted in the Cold War (Informant 23, Johannesburg, 1/8/2005). Logically therefore, instead of an enabling institutional environment, the DCD's attempts to develop functional and operational synergies intra-organisationally regarding planning, co-ordination and line function were limited (Kruger National Park Community Liaison Sub-Department Motivation undated).

The second politically charged reason was the DCD's estrangement from the liberation struggle discourse. As a result the DCD largely maintained the historical apartheid relationship between the KNP and the TA leadership. In this sense the DCD's neighbour relations approach and mandate though organisationally unprecedented, maintained a continuum with apartheid practices.

The third constraint by late 1994, were political and ideological differences, when Ngeleza was appointed. The DCD established "…relationships that were too focused on traditional ways of dealing with communities, and was therefore too paternalistic. The community's relationship with the park was not conceptualised as rights-based, nor were communities expected to play a role in the management of protected areas. The forums were developed just to deal with pesky neighbours, with the notion that as long as it was broadly representative of communities it was an important structure" (Informant 18, Johannesburg, 2/6/2005). "They [the KNP SED] had set themselves the task to accomplish transformation goals so our hard work in setting up the forums and projects was discontinued" (Informant 33, Johannesburg, 1/8/2005).

The Establishment of Projects and Community Forums in the KNP (1996-2004)

In 1996 Ngeleza disbanded the DCD's forums in KNP. A crucial questions is whether Ngeleza's disbanding the DCD's forums to establish new ones to balance the objectives of protecting nature while promoting social justice succeeded? Another crucial question is whether the forums were participatory structures that enabled community inclusiveness and communication with the park authorities?

Establishing Forums as Participatory and Communication Structures

By 1996 the DCD's forums had certainly not evolved into rights-based development-oriented structures. There was a reluctant retention of the concept and practice of forums in order to continue the initial instrumentalist motivation to seek support for the conservation of biodiversity to ensure the survival of the park. Under Ngeleza's leadership, some individuals within the KNP's established structures reluctantly began understanding and accepting the ideas of including its neighbours in park affairs, influenced by their exposure to international examples (Brechin *et al* 2003; Kangwana 2001; McCabe *et al* 1992; Jones and Murphree 2004).They slowly began to understand that protected areas had to consider the socio-economic development of their poor neighbours alongside the conservation of biodiversity (SANParks 1998: 8 of CFP section; SANParks. *Kiewiet.* November 1998).

Detailed objectives of the new approach to forums were to: i) establish the KNP SED as the facilitator, communicator (based on equity and mutual respect) and mediator of the relationship between the park

and the communities; ii) develop community identification, ownership and commitment towards the KNP; iii) disaggregate communities into smaller groups to address their issues in detail, and; iv) develop community capacity to participate, control and benefit from projects (Informant 41, Pretoria, 26/5/2005; SANParks, DANCED and GTZ 2000; SANParks *Kiewiet*. November 1998; SANParks and DANCED pamphlet on Social Ecology 2001; SANParks 1998: 4 of CFP section; Informant 14, Midrand, 27/5/2005; Informant 37, Skukuza, 18/6/2007; KNP. undated. Proposed Structure for Social Ecology Division). While the forums represented, similar to those in Madagascar, the "…institutional mechanism[s]" that acknowledged local people's needs so that conservation could succeed", there were limitations (Marcus 2001:383).

Implementing concepts of public participation in a fledgling neo-liberal-oriented democracy were difficult goals to achieve. "…building a participatory, inclusive democratic culture is a long term process of cultural change (Ramphele 2008: 113). However some progress was made. To enable the development of project partnerships, some public and private organisations, NGOs and CBOs were initially part of some of the community forums. Slowly the KNP's management philosophy began to shift, beginning with more social justice-oriented attempts to relate to its neighbours

The park authorities did not operate with a homogenous, undifferentiated notion of 'community' but their categorisation was extremely crude. The KNP SED's conceptualised four categories of neighbouring communities: By 2004, the first category meant previously disadvantaged communities that the KNP impacted on most (including land claimants), within a 20 kilometre radius. Differing estimates ranged between 95-100 villages with an average population of 15 000 per village; 187 communities in villages and towns, to 224 villages broadly depicted in the map below. It was difficult to confirm the number of rural and urban areas included within a specific period because much of the relevant documentation was undated (SANParks undated. KNP Business Plan; KNP. Undated. Proposed Structure for Social Ecology Division; KNP. undated. Rationale for the Proposed Structure; KNP SED Business Plan. Key Performance Areas. 1 March 2004; SANParks and Metplan December 1997; Informant 37, Skukuza, 18/6/2007; SANParks and DANCED. March 2000).

A contemporary example of second category neighbours was The Association of Private Nature Reserves (APNR) mentioned above that benefited from their proximity to the KNP. Third category neighbours were small and large scale commercial farmers, mines and businesses (Turner 2005; SANParks and Metplan. December 1997; Informant 37, Skukuza, 18/6/2007; SANParks and DANCED March 2000). Fourth category neighbours were groups and individuals based anywhere in South Africa, that had historical links with a cultural heritage site in the KNP (Informant 37, Skukuza, 18/6/2007).

The establishment of Community Forums

Between 1996-2004, the KNP SED's Community Outreach Unit established seven community forums mapped below (KNP. undated. Proposed Structure for Social Ecology Division). These were mainly consultative structures.

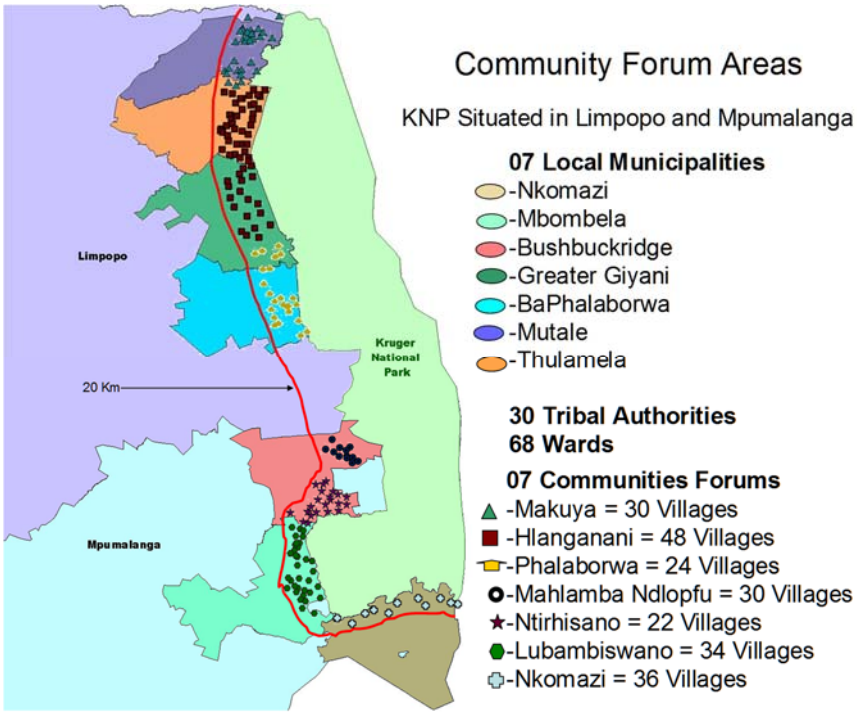


Figure 21 (SANParks 2004)

The forums engaged with a wide range of issues.

Table of KNP Forums, Projects and Community Issues

Forums	Arts and Crafts	Cultural Heritage Site/Traditional Healers Project	Damage Causing Animals –	Biosphere/ Buffer Zone Projects	Contested, confirmed & unconfirmed land claims by community names	Environmental Education	EPWP/Poverty Relief Contractor Development Programme	Access to KNP resources	Other Income Generating Projects
Makuya Forum	Attempted but unsuccessful	Thulamela,a flagship project	Key rationale for forum creation	Biosphere est.by college		Established in schools			
Mahlamba Ndlopfu			Key rationale for forum creation		Mnisi	Established in schools			
Nkomazi Sukumani					Siboshwa, Maqheza, Lugedlane and Hoyi	Established in schools	Successfully implemented by Technical Services dept; some aspects facilitated by KNP SED		
Lubambiswano	Yes, but some unsolved issues existed by 2004	Nkayikayi/Albasini Site and Chief Nyongane site-– work-in-progress. Traditional Healers project est. but discontinued.	Key rationale for forum creation		Mkhabela; Ntimane; and several other claims made by Chief Mdului	Established in schools		Access to water from Nsikazi River - successful	Egg production and sewing; traditional healers project; Community Open Vehicle Project – unsuccessful
Ntirhiswano	Yes, but some unsolved issues existed by 2004	Traditional Healers project est. but discontinued.	Key rationale for forum creation			Established in schools	Successfully implemented by Technical Services dept; some aspects facilitated by KNP SED dept.	Access to Sabie River	
Hlanganani			Key rationale for forum creation - income generating trophy hunting projects initiated	Buffer Zone Project- attempted but abandoned	Makahane-Marithenga; Madonsi-N'wazeku-dzeku; Ndindani, Muyexe & Mahlathi claims and counter claims. Makuleke claim resolved.	Established in schools	Successfully implemented by Technical Services dept; facilitated by KNP SED.	Villages of Altyn and Titi wanted arts and crafts village at KNP gate entrance-determined unviable	Fresh produce project
Phalaborwa	HACP – flagship project	Masorini, but contested by other groups. Remained unresolved by 2004.	Key rationale for forum creation			Established in schools			Fresh produce project

Figure 22

(Informant 37, Skukuza, 18/6/2007; Informant 52, Skukuza ,13/9/2007; Informant 53, Skukuza,. 14/9/2007; Informant 22, Johannesburg, 20/5/2005; Informant 47, Skukuza, 12/9/2007; Informant 54, Skukuza, 11/9/2007; Informant 55, Nyongane village, 11/9/2007; Informant 49, Telephonic, 30/10/2007; Informant 5, Pretoria, 25/5/2005; Informant 18, Johannesburg, 2/6/2005; KNP Minutes of the Mkhabela-

Nonyangane Family Meeting. Undated; Minutes of a Meeting between the Lubambiswano Executive Committee, Representatives from the Traditional Healers Programme and the KNP Undated; Minutes of the KNP's Lubambiswano Forum Meeting. 22 March 1996; 15 May 1996; 24 November 1998; KNP. Minutes of the KNP's Hlanganani Forum. 23 June 2000; 13 September 1995; 26 May 2000; Steenkamp February 2000, March 2000; Poonan 2000; Poonan 2002; Grossman and Holden, in preparation; Annual Report of KNP Social Ecology April 1997-March 1998; April 1999-March 2000; April 2000- March 2001; April 2001-March 2002, April 2003- March 2004; SANParks and DANCED March 2000. Strategic Framework for Park-People Facilitation. Based on Pilot Projects and Socio-Economic Research around Pilot Parks; SANParks and DANCED May 2001; SANParks. *Kiewiet* March 2001, November 1998; Government Gazette 28122. Notice number 1870 of 2005; RSA Government Gazette: Notice No 2554 of 2000; Land Claims in National Parks: 6 July 2006; SANParks. KNP SED correspondence 22 August 2005; KNP Land Claims Report October 2000; LRC Review-Newsletter of the Legal Resource Centre– May 1998).

Overview of Five Forums

The Makuya Forum comprised mainly VhaVenda-speaking people, situated north of the Levhuvhu River in the Limpopo Province close to the Zimbabwean boundary (SANParks. KNP. undated Forum Areas and Leaders Contact Numbers). Although the villages were the direct neighbours of the provincial Makuya Nature Reserve, the KNP SED tried to include these communities when the KNP's flagship Thulamela Cultural Heritage Project (TCHP) was initiated. However the forum became inert because of low participation rates and the SED's efforts to establish an arts and crafts project failed (Informant 38, Telephonic, 4/10/2007).

The Mahlamba Ndlopfu forum, situated between Acornhoek and Bushbuckridge north, was populated predominantly by Tsonga and a SeSotho-speaking minority (SANParks. KNP. undated Forum Areas and Leaders and Contact Numbers; Informant 38, Telephonic, 4/10/2007). The villages were situated on the border of the Greater Kruger National Park (GKNP), a contractual park which included the Southern African Wildlife College and private game reserves represented by the APNR. Besides land claims and villagers' exposure to DCAs that emanated from the GKNP, these communities served the KNP's interests, as college field work sites (Informant 38, Telephonic, 4/10/2007; SANParks. KNP. Land Claims report October 2000).

The Nkomazi Sukumani forum comprised SeSwati, and a minority of Tsonga-speaking people. Located in the Onderberg, between Malelane and Komatipoort, it was close to the Mozambique border (Informant 38, Telephonic, 4/10/2007; SANParks. KNP. Undated. Forum Areas and Leaders Contact Numbers). Although situated approximately 40 kilometres from the KNP, with sugar cane farmers and private game

lodges as their immediate neighbours, the KNP SED were obligated to establish this forum because of land claims (Land Claims in National Parks: 6 July 2006; Informant 47, Skukuza, 12/9/2007; KNP Land Claims report. October 2000; Informant 49, Telephonic, 30/10/2007).

Comprising mainly SeSwati-speakers, the Lubambiswano forum is located near the KNP's Numbi Gate, stretching between the Sabie River and Crocodile River bridges (SANParks. KNP. undated Forum Areas and Leaders Contact Numbers; Informant 47, Skukuza, 12/9/2007; Informant 38, Telephonic, 4/10/2007).

Close to the town of White River in Mpumalanga Province, villages in the Ntirhiswano forum were populated by Tsonga and a SeSotho-speaking minority. The forum was established because of community demands for access to the Sabie River, and exposure to DCAs (Informant 38, Telephonic, 4/10/2007; SANParks. KNP. undated Forum Areas and Leaders Contact Numbers; SANParks. KNP. Tribal Authorities Neighbouring the KNP; Informant 22, Johannesburg, 20/5/2005).

The rationale for choosing to discuss the Hlanganani and Phalaborwa forums in depth below, in relation to public participation, as the analytical focus of the KNP SED's attempts to improve relations with neighbouring communities and implement public participation, is the contrast between the two. The former is in a predominantly remote rural area with a relative demographically homogenous population and sources of livelihoods, while the latter is more demographically heterogeneous with more diverse sources of income.

The Hlanganani Forum and public participation (1996-2004)

This forum was located in the Limpopo Province and was jointly administered by the Thulamela and Giyani Municipalities and the Mhinga, Mtititi, Makuleke, Madonsi, Magona and Xiviti TAs (Forum Areas and Leaders Contact Numbers; SANParks KNP. undated; SANParks KNP. Minutes of the Hlanganani Forum. 26 May 2000; Informant 38, Telephonic, 4/10/2007). Initially under the DCD, this forum was the weakest but by the late 1990s became the strongest with vision, commitment, activities and relative consistency in meeting attendance. Although forum participation was increased by mostly semi and illiterate male farmers' hopes of terminating DCA-related problems, as well as the broader community's employment-seeking opportunities in the park, the KNP officially focused on anti-poaching activities (Informant 56, Punda Maria, 17/9/2007; Informant 38, Telephonic, 4/10/2007).

In terms of the social characteristics of participants the forum was male dominated; forum participation and the election of representative processes were controlled by elite male TAs as well as men in general. Participation was also determined by class because mainly men owned property and their livelihoods –

livestock and crops - were most threatened by DCA's, which needed protection from DCAs. Men were also able to afford transport costs to attend forum meetings. Although community organisations in some villages contributed to their two village representatives' transport costs to attend meetings, individuals mainly paid their own fare. Suggestions to increase female forum representation from one since 2001 yielded no increase by 2004. The youth also remained a marginalised group (Informant 27, Johannesburg, 7/3/2005; Informant 8, Johannesburg, 23/5/2005; DANCED and SANParks 1999; Informant 56, Punda Maria, 17/9/2007; Informant 38, Telephonic, 4/10/2007; Informant 57, Mhinga Tribal Authority, 17/9/2007; SANParks Minutes of the KNP Hlanganani Forum Meeting. 9 February 2001; SANParks Minutes of the KNP Hlanganani Forum Executive Meeting. 15 June 2001; SANParks KNP. undated; SANParks Minutes of the KNP Hlanganani Forum Executive Meeting. 22 June 2001; SANParks Minutes of the KNP Hlanganani Forum Executive Meeting. 17 August 2001). Attempts to encourage female participation in the forums was important, because of their subordinate social position. Women's status was always inferior compared to men because the "…imperatives of divide and rule reinforced patriarchal control within the tribal/ethnic authority structures that became tools of the colonial administration" (Ramphele 2008: 99-100).

Although tentative by 2004, a source of this forum's strength was potential community access to economic opportunities in the KNP. The EPWP, launched in 2004 in the part of the KNP close to this forum, offered sought-after temporary, labour–intensive jobs to upgrade infrastructure and eradicate alien vegetation (McCord 2004; Philips 2004 in Rogerson 2006). This was not a KNP SED project, but because it was administered by the park, it boosted forum meeting attendance and community participation. However, given historical and post 1994 lack of development, both the EPWP's and the KNP SED's project benefits were minimal compared to the level of need in the area (SANParks KNP. Minutes of the Hlanganani Forum. 10 April 1996; Informant 56, Punda Maria, 17/9/2007; Informant 38, Telephonic, 4/10/2007; SANParks Minutes of the KNP Hlanganani Forum Meeting. 21 October 1999).

The Phalaborwa Forum and Public Participation (1997-2004)

The area was administered by the Ba-Phalaborwa and Giyani municipalities, for both white and African communities in the urban and the greater Phalaborwa (rural) areas, and four TAs serving the SeSotho and Tsonga population (Informant 38, Telephonic, 4/102007; SANParks. KNP. Undated Forum Areas and Leaders Contact Numbers) The possibility of employment in mining phosphate, copper and sulphur in the area meant that neighbouring communities were less dependent on the KNP than in more impoverished areas (Informant 58, Phalaborwa, 20/9/2007; Informant 59, Phalaborwa, 20/9/2007).

Initially seven factors compromised community participation in this forum. The first was the role of the regional ranger for the KNP's Letaba area as it was known then, as well as the DCD's forum liaison

person. He operated as a thinly disguised anti-poaching agent. The park's focus was on , "…arresting poachers and people involved in other criminal activities" (Informant 38, Telephonic, 4/10/2007). , "Local African people were aware that his motive for reconstituting the forum was to get African people in one place, so that he could find ways to stop them from poaching. Consequently they rejected the forum" (Informant 38, Telephonic, 4/10/2007).The second factor was the intact park-patron client relationship with TAs since the DCD's tenure. This involved practices such as "…giving an impala to the local chief, effectively bribing him to get what the KNP wanted" (Informant 38, Telephonic, 4/10/2007). The third factor was the emphasis in this section of the park on EE project implementation to enhance its popularity as a tourist destination, which meant profit-generation, while other potential transformation-related projects were ignored. "In the Letaba Elephant Hall, [Rawlings] in charge of EE, got 110% support, because the ranger understood that elephants were important for attracting tourists." (Informant 38, Telephonic, 4/10/2007). The fourth was the pervasive relationship between park managements' ideological resistance and lack of support for the KNP SED. The fifth was that land claims explained below created a standoff with some communities. The sixth was the failure to resolve DCA issues (Informant 38, Telephonic, 4/10/2007) and lastly the existence of a strong rural-urban divide surrounding the park.

The outcome of these factors was that Mashiane, the newly appointed social ecologist's initial efforts to resuscitate the forum failed. His attempts to diversify and narrow urban-rural participation gaps were constrained. There was low to no significant public participation increase when he tried to rotate forum meetings between urban and rural settings. The same applied to his attempts to, "…develop a separation strategy…" based on the economic, educational and infrastructural disparities between the rural, SeSotho-speaking Letaba population and the urban and semi-urban Phalaborwa-based Tsonga-speaking villages of Majeje (Informant 38, Telephonic, 4/10/2007).

Further but initial constraints occurred while attempting facilitation of the non-racial, urban-based Hlanganani Arts and Crafts Project (HACP). Intra-racial dynamics developed as a result of, "… increasing disputes between white Afrikaans and white English speaking people." These Afrikaans speaking people's refused to transfer skills to African project participants, because it was suggested by one informant, that they retained historical notions of exclusivity regarding ownership of the park and project (Informant 38, Telephonic, 4/10/2007). This resulted in "Afrikaners staying away from the forum" (Informant 38, Telephonic, 4/10/2007). Eventually these tensions eased and the project included African and white English-speakers. "General public participation in the forum after 1998 was average [in urban areas] depending on meeting locations and the agenda …and the Hlanganani Arts and Crafts Project … became the most successful community project in the park" (Informant 38, Telephonic, 4/10/2007).
It demonstrated skills transfer and capacity building.

KNP SED's role in establishing the HACP and the forum was not understood by all involved. Only one African woman, amongst three white members of the HACP Executive Committee (EC) interviewed, was aware of the forum-project link. Originally it was a social ecology project established during the tenures of both KNP SED's social ecologists mentioned below. The HACP was advantaged because by 2004 its executive committee was intact since the beginning of the project. The white interviewees understood the HACP as the parks' economic empowerment project, that aimed to transfer skills from white people to black people, and they were proud that regardless of race, all members earned a living from the project. Since the HACP was a KNP SED project, the EC had to submit monthly reports and financial statements to Malaza, who replaced Mashiane. (Informant 61, Phalaborwa, 19/9/2007.) Despite limited and fluctuating public participation in the forum, the HACP did demonstrate the KNP SED's efforts towards social transformation and their attempt to increase public participation in park affairs.

From October 2003 onwards when Mashiane was replaced by Malaza, forum participation dropped. Inefficient human resources processes meant that Malaza was constrained by a lack of management support, when she met her direct regional supervisor Stuart, as well as Moeti the head of the KNP SED, one month after assuming duty (Informant 59, Phalaborwa, 20/9/2007). In addition, of the six people that Malaza supervised, five comprised cleaners and an untrained heritage site guide, only the EE officer had formal training (Informant 59, Phalaborwa, 20/9/2007; Informant 38, Telephonic, 4/10/2007). This section of the park was a significant contributor to the park's revenues that included the Masorini cultural heritage site and an emphasis on EE. The KNP SED staff appointments were intended to maintain the site, and minimal delivery options. This limited the hiring and deployment of field worker social ecologists. For both Mashiane and Malaza these constraints were exacerbated by unresolved land claims.

Unresolved land claims had a significant impact on public participation in this forum. The Ba-Phalaborwa had an unresolved land claim by 2004, and their TA representative rated this particular community's public participation in park's affairs as low throughout the DCD and KNP SED eras (Informant 62, Phalaborwa, 20/9/2007). Mirroring the strategy of the Makulekes discussed in chapter seven, pending the resolution of their land claim, the Ba-Phalaborwa regarded "…a relationship with the KNP SED as impractical and of no use" (Informant 64, Phalaborwa, 20/9/2007). It was evident during the interaction between members of the Phalaborwa TA and a member of the KNP SED, that the former disrespected and neutralised the latter because they were not charged with significant organisational responsibility in land claim processes (Informant 64, Phalaborwa, 20/9/2007; Informant 59, Phalaborwa, 20/9/2007; Informant 62, Phalaborwa, 20/9/2007). The KNP SED would have gained the respect of this community only if they were charged with a key role in their land claims process, because it was seen as a key indicator of social transformation. Public participation in this forum therefore, was not entirely dependent on changes in the racial or cultural profile from the DCD to the KNP SED. It was powerfully redress-related.

However the KNP SED was powerless to influence the slow pace of delivery of the National Land Claims Commission and its provincial counterparts. The slow rate at which land claims were processed set off hyper-sensitivities about other injustices perceived by communities as inflicted by the park, such as lack of employment opportunities. But the central issue which created negative community perceptions was that of redress through outstanding land claims (Informant 47, Skukuza, 12/9/2007).

Conversely the Makhuva people forged a better relationship and willingness to engage with the KNP SED. This was influenced by the fact that the KNP attributed Masorini, the cultural heritage site discussed in the following chapter to their ancestors. This strengthens the assertion made in chapter seven, that culture and land claims were inseparable. However the Makhuva people's relationship with the KNP SED was tentative, pending resolution of the land claim. The Ba-Phalaborwa counter claimed the land that is home to the cultural heritage site (Informant 58, Phalaborwa, 20/9/2007; Informant 38, Telephonic, 4/10/2007; Informant 59, Phalaborwa, 20/9/2007).

Since its formation in 1984, the Majeje TA remained an artificial construct of the apartheid government's Gazankulu homeland by 2004. The TA presided over the Tsonga-speaking people that lived in a rural settlement on the periphery of the town (Informant 64, Phalaborwa, 20/9/2007). Ndaba the TA CEO interacted with the KNP SED when park officials informed him that they were seeking participants for their vegetable garden projects and when they invited him to attend meetings regarding the privatisation of the parks' operations. Ndaba acknowledged that the concept of the forum espoused good intentions grounded in "…good policies and legislation. Yet all of my interactions [with the KNP SED] was more of a talk show because nothing was realised." (Informant 63, Benfarm, 19/9/2007)

The KNP SED had a diminished role in this community after Mashiane's deployment. He was certain that by 2004 only a few people in the area were aware of the forum, because it was not widely publicised. This view was confirmed by four inhabitants who by 2004 lived, interacted and served the majority of the community, as employees of the Multi-Purpose Community Centre in Benfarm, on the outskirts of Phalaborwa town (Informant 65, Benfarm, 19/9/2007; Informant 66, Benfarm, 19/9/2007; Informant 67, Benfarm, 19/9/2007; Informant 68, Benfarm, 19 /9/2007).

Clearly the KNP SED had a complex task in an area where there were intra-African schisms based on urban, rural, ethnic and ideological lines. These were fuelled in some cases by conflicting land/cultural heritage site claims. There were deep racial divisions between urban African and urban Afrikaans-speaking whites. Aware of these tensions, Mashiane's attempt to address them through his "separation strategy" resulted in incremental public participation levels in urban areas . This represented process-

specific implementation of social transformation, especially regarding the HACP, that was not sustained or improved upon when Malaza replaced him.

An Overview of Relationships Established with Communities in Other National Parks

In all of the parks the presence of SED staff indicated a transformation orientation in the sense of a more people-centred approach to conservation. The neighbouring communities were extremely diverse. Specifically the communities that surrounded the Ai-Ais Richtersveld Transfrontier Park, the Augrabies Falls National Park and the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park, all situated in the Northern Cape, did not share a common historical, spatial, social, cultural, and economic context, with the neighbours of parks in other parts of the country. This was because all three parks had originally belonged to the Khomani San (amongst others), who had a nomadic lifestyle (Crawhall, 1998 in SANParks). This challenges the understanding of the relationship between conservation and neighbouring communities as a "static [model] …where rural people are sedentary, primarily reliant on arable agriculture and where population mobility and migration are at low levels" (Barrow and Murphree 2001: 25-26). Implicit in the SED's understanding of its neighbouring communities regarding these parks was the pre-1913 displacement of some of them, upheld under the apartheid system.

Improvements in relations with neighbouring communities, apart from the iconic Kruger National Park varied a great deal.

The Augrabies Falls National Park (AFNP)

At the dawn of the democratic era, SANParks was forced to change the way it related to the Riemvasmaakers, the first community to lodge a claim for land in a national park. The "…special emphasis…" the organisation was forced to place on this community was both a steep redress-related lesson and a pioneering, reluctant focus on community relations in parks that had land claims (SANParks Annual Report 2003: 9). Considerable effort in the form of EE, income generating and heritage projects were intended to develop community awareness and benefits as potential co-managers of a part of the park because this park was a high income generator (Informant 70, Telephonic, 2/3/2015; SANParks Annual Report 2003; SANParks Annual Report 2004; SANParks Annual Report 2004-2005).

The activities driven by the SED included: community-park visits to understand the role of the park; income generation and community participation projects such as hiking, canoeing, stargazing, convening a teacher's forum, innovative soccer based on nature conservation rules, celebration of special environmental events and public holidays; networking for career guidance, white water rafting, a pilot donkey cart programme; film production, study tours and arts and crafts projects, HIV/Aids related

services, and completion of a cultural heritage resource management plan inclusive of indigenous ethno-botany knowledge and services (SANParks and DANCED, November 2001; SANParks Annual Report 1995-1996; SANParks Annual Report 1998-1999; SANParks Annual Report 1999-2000; SANParks Annual Report 2000-2001; SANParks Annual Report 2004-2005). Although the SED's contribution towards the establishment of the Riemvasmaak Development Trust in 2004 falls within this research period, the outcomes of its land use programme on a reclaimed 498 hectares does not (Parliamentary Monitoring Group. Exclusion of Augrabies Falls National Park: adoption. 24 February 2004. www.pmg.org.za. Accessed 3 March 2014). The SED was not the sole agency involved. The Expanded Public Works Projects (EPWP) contributed towards labour intensive job creation.

The Kalahari Gemsbok National Park/Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park (KGNP/KTP)

The process illustrates how early in the democratic era SANParks was forced to deal with heightened community-park tensions in what was described as the "severely dysfunctional" outcome of this complex and difficult land claim (SAHRC in Walker 2006: 68). This prompted the urgency to establish community forums and communicate in "…regular meetings …", to help the negotiations process as well as secure the eventual development of a contract park (SANParks Annual Report 2002: 50). The idea to "…create opportunities for the San and the Mier people" was fairly new and continued well into 2004 (SANParks Annual Report 1995-1996: 28). SANParks pledged to provide human resources for the conservation management function of the park (Grossman and Holden undated; Reid 2001) and an assistant coordinator was appointed to manage the Khomani San's affairs. Efforts were made to include community members in park management. A Joint Management Board was appointed which consisted of three SANParks officials and between three to five representatives of both the communities and decisions had to be agreed upon by all. It was "… responsible for the formulation, implementation and monitoring of an effective framework for the management and development of the Park." the JMB met bi-monthly as part fulfilment of the management requirement with SANParks (SANParks Annual Report 2004).

Project activities for the San included: fact-finding for appropriate business development; donor funded tracker training and accreditation; sale and display of handicraft at various locations; access to international indigenous people's fora, as well as; a cultural site survey and the development of a cultural centre/museum. Despite funding shortfalls, by the end of 2004 a community-owned and operated guest lodge was built and managed according to a trilateral agreement between SANParks, the Mier and the San (SANParks and DANCED, June 2001; SANParks Annual Report 1999-2000; SANParks Annual Report 2002; Khan in McDonald 2002; SANParks Annual Report 2003; SANParks Annual Report 2004).

In this case social tensions, demographic complexities, dire poverty and harsh, infra-structurally poor, difficult geographic terrain explained the need for additional external role players to contribute towards social benefits, in varied configurations alongside the park-based SED. The GEM, the local Honorary Rangers and Friends of the Kalahari were crucial enablers of communication and community benefits. The EPWP too, proceeded well into 2004 (Grossman and Holden undated; SANParks Annual Report 1995-1996; SANParks Annual Report 1998-1999; SANParks Annual Report 2003; SANParks Annual Report 2004). Park-based SED assistance resulted in positive and appropriate transformation-oriented activities, regarding financial management assistance for individuals within claimant communities to obtain plots of land to improve living standards; San and Mier (owners of parts of the contract park) bridge-building processes, and facilitation of medical and HIV/Aids awareness (de Villiers 2008; SANParks Annual Report 1996-1997; SANParks Annual Report 1999-2000; SANParks Annual Report 2002).

The Richtersveld National Park/ IAi-/IAis Richtersveld Transfrontier Park (IIRTP)

This was considered "one of the SANParks" most complex areas to manage. The challenge was to ensure that the park was managed to preserve and sustain the biodiversity, as well as the unique cultural heritage of the area" (SANParks Annual Report 2004-2005:63). Although not strictly a land claim park, initial support from external actors, such as the Surplus People's Project early in the 1990s ensured that by 1994 this became a contract park that pioneered joint Richtersvelder-SANParks governance structures and community development projects (Khan in McDonald 2002).

Community land ownership was a foundational concept in the genesis of SANParks' attempts to implement transformation measures in this park. Though the post of senior social ecologist was erratically filled, regular park-based SED programmes were ongoing throughout the research period (SANParks Annual Report 2004-2005). Stock farming, a traditional livelihood, offset high unemployment rates which resulted from "…downscaling of mining in the area" (SANParks Annual Report 2004-2005). In addition SED staff drove cultural, environmental, lifestyle and communication-related projects which indicated organizational and donor efforts. Training and employment creation to produce linguistic, culture-specific and EE-related income generating products included venue upgrades and services, as well as facilitation of community-park visits to understand the parks system, road safety, combating drug abuse, awareness-raising regarding the responsibilities of mining companies, English classes(Nama being the indigenous language and Afrikaans their lingua franca) as well as an intra-community newsletter. With the exception of the manager and senior social ecologist, the fact that for most of the research period, all other park staff were locals, was a transformation-oriented indicator. This was in intended to preserve linguistic, cultural heritage and a strong tradition of indigenous natural resource management. Despite its promise of employment, an EPWP project was suspended until consensual understandings for cooperation were reached with community structures. (SANParks and DANCED, June 2001; SANParks

Annual Report 1995-1996; SANParks Annual Report 1996-1997; SANParks Annual Report 1998-1999; SANParks Annual Report 1999-2000; SANParks Annual Report 2000-2001; SANParks Annual Report 2003; SANParks Annual Report 2004; SANParks Annual Report 2004-2005).

The Mapungubwe National Park (MNP)

By the end of the research period, no park-based SED staff had been appointed in this park. This was related to its status as a World Heritage Site, and potential for income generation for SANParks. A Park Management Plan in the immediate aftermath of its proclamation alongside a stakeholder analysis was finalised. (SANParks Annual Report 1998-1999; SANParks Annual Report 1999-2000; SANParks Annual Report 2000-2001; SANParks Annual Report 2003; SANParks Annual Report 2004; SANParks Annual Report 2004-2005). A Park Committee was (SANParks Annual Report 2002: 61) established to fill the role of the non-existent park-based SED, and a functional EPWP meted out community benefits (SANParks Annual Report 2004-2005). However, these structures were unable to replicate EE related service delivery to the surrounding communities, as it did regarding other parks with land claims (SANParks Annual Report 1998-1999; SANParks Annual Report 2000-2001; SANParks Annual Report 2004; SANParks Annual Report 2004-2005).

The Tsitsikamma National Park

Safeguarding this asset was important for SANParks because it was one of their "…leading tourism icons" (SANParks Annual Report 2004: 43). Consequently the park-based SED contributed towards community development through assistance and facilitation of the establishment of a community arts and crafts market, the formation of associations with external groupings, economic opportunities, training of local guides, skills development and first aid training for some locals, employment from signage/construction/maintenance, research and conference visits pertinent to the land claim and cultural heritage, an oral community audio-visual history project used in the information and interpretive centre, as well as marketing. By 2004 community-park-related benefits were also supplemented by the EPWP (SANParks and DANCED, June 2001; SANParks Annual Report 1995-1996; SANParks Annual Report 1996-1997; SANParks Annual Report 1998-1999; SANParks Annual Report 1999-2000; SANParks Annual Report 2000-2001; SANParks Annual Report 2002; SANParks Annual Report 2004; SANParks Annual Report 2004/5).

The Vaalbos National Park

No concrete developments projects were initiated with the surrounding communities due to the imminent de-proclamation of the park because of a successful land claim. Nonetheless the argument that SANParks engaged constructively with communities neighbouring parks that had land claims was evident. There was a "focus on positive media coverage…[and the fostering of] …a good relationship … with surrounding communities" (SANParks Annual Report 2004-2005: 70). While EE programmes were comparable to other parks, other park-based SED contributions included an essay writing competition to find a suitable indigenous name for the park. While seemingly trite, this encouraged public participation. Literacy training for park employees and some locals, were hitherto unprecedented benefits prior to 1994 (SANParks Annual Report 1995-1996; SANParks Annual Report 1998-1999; SANParks Annual Report 2000-2001; SANParks Annual Report 2003).

The Addo National Park

This was a park affected by both a land claim that was relatively easy to resolve, as well as the need to protect it as a high-value profit generator. "In fact this was one of the first parks to receive donor assistance to set up a community forum and train the park staff to do their social work" (Informant 70, Telephonic, 2/3/2015). All seven communities bordering the park were characterised by high unemployment, poverty and low literacy levels. They were briefed on park expansion, commercial opportunities and were part of donor-funded park-based SED projects and networking. These included research, an arts (including performance) and crafts project and an upgraded curio sales structure within the park, an evaluation of a dysfunctional community programme; skills training for project management and development of SMMEs, ABET, tour guiding and hospitality (Geach 1997; Fourie 1994; SANParks and DANCED, November 2001; SANParks and DANCED, June 2001; SANParks Annual Report 1995-1996; SANParks Annual Report 1996-1997; SANParks Annual Report 1998-1999; SANParks Annual Report 1999-2000; SANParks Annual Report 2000-2001; SANParks Annual Report 2003; SANParks Annual Report 2004; SANParks Annual Report 2004/5).

However the impact of these projects was limited and uneven. The 20 local women trained with donor funds to produce arts and crafts to generate sustainable incomes was unsuccessful by 2001 (South African National Parks and Danish Cooperation for Environment and Development. June 2001. SANParks and Community Projects; South African National Parks and DANCED. November 2001. Evaluation of DANCED Funded Pilot Park Projects). The performing arts training and actual performances in this park on the other hand, benefited "the park…by being of value to the community in reinforcing a sense of

collective identity (South African National Parks and DANCED. November 2001. Evaluation of DANCED Funded Pilot Park Projects: 20).

Environmental education was promoted and by 2000 there was acknowledgement of the necessity to incorporate indigenous knowledge. An appreciation of such knowledge was expressed in references to, for example, "The flightless dung beetle is the doctor or king of the world…something not to be tampered with, which is the same status the Park gives it… A well-known Xhosa click song is associated with the flightless dung beetle of Addo" (South African National Parks and Danish Cooperation for Environment and Development. 2000. Visions of Change: 41). Workload relief for SED staff was provided when game-drive duties were outsourced so that they could focus on EE and interpretation.

A needs analysis of the residents of the immediate urban neighbourhood identified and prioritised increased job opportunities. However "unrealistic" expectations of contributing to local infrastructural development was articulated (Geach 1997: 49). This was testimony to the pressure the park was under to both deliver social goods and promote conservation (Geach 1997). Some job training was achieved, despite the fact that the first cohort of community candidates failed their field-guide training examinations, because the second cohort not only succeeded, but were subsequently employed in the park (SANParks Annual Report 1998-1999).

The Table Mountain National Park

As one of five most profitable national parks (including the KNP, ANP, TNP, and AFNP), the Table Mountain National Park (TMNP) distinguished itself in several other ways: as South Africa's first urban park "…completely bound within the limits of the City of Cape Town. A population of 3.5 million people have free access to the park and impact on it" (SANParks Annual Report 2004: 35). It is one of two (the other being the KNP) of South Africa's most internationally visited parks, a World Heritage Site – because it is one of the core sites of the Cape Floral Kingdom, threatened by farming and climate change, and host to a Marine Protected Area (MPA), because it had high rates of abalone poaching (SANParks Annual Report 2004/5; Informant 70, Telephonic, 2/3/2015; de Villiers, 2008).

For this relatively newly proclaimed park, initiated in 1998 but incrementally expanded, community participation efforts could not be entirely attributed to the efforts of the park-based SED (SANParks Annual Report 1998-1999). The establishment of this park revealed a deep division between the interests of the advantaged white communities and poor people. Before the proclamation of the park, the Table Mountain area was "… passionately protected by affluent white people for well over fifty years; they lived in up-market areas like Noordhoek. No people were represented in the various volunteer groups or committees from the Cape Flats, a poor Coloured area" (Informant 70, Telephonic, 2/3/2015). White

affluent people not only offered their skills as volunteers, they formed the active core of a "… comprehensive public consultation process…" (SANParks Annual Report 2004: 36). This involved the renaming of this park in 2004 from the Cape Peninsula National Park, as well as the proclamation of the MPA. Public participation methodologies involved "…public notices in the press, a phone-in poll, street surveys, and canvassing the opinions of identified organizations and interest groups… It also involved awareness-raising posters and notices of venues where brochures were available" (SANParks Annual Report 2004: 36). So the park-based SED had to differentiate between developing relationships with the full participation of well-off white people, while encouraging poor people of colour to attend meetings to explain to them why the park is important. It was a learning process for SED staff:

> "Social transformation we learnt, is a long, hard road to follow. We are dealing with a human problem and everybody thinks their needs are the most important. For example, we learnt that we cannot have a meeting about the park in the middle of the day. Poor people are working during the day or otherwise unavailable. We also have to address the issues that are relevant to the people that are there. So rich white people and poor people cannot be in the same meeting, so we had to have different meetings. Poor people want jobs, clinics, roads and schools and fishing rights. Rich people want to walk their dogs, are interested in the animal rights of tahrs on the mountain and stopping abalone poaching. In fact most poor people's demands should be directed at local government, because it concerns service delivery. Their needs are a major diversion from our mandate to deliver EE. So we have to network with other service providers to deliver what the people want – we cannot do it alone" (Informant 70, Telephonic, 2/3/2015).

Processes were created to establish a Park Forum, and from the outset there was an understanding that the park should promote local socio-economic benefits. The strategy to achieve this required securing financial support from the City of Cape Town, a conduit for international aid (SANParks Annual Report 1998-1999). These funds were used to create employment through the EPWP for people sourced from six Peninsula townships (SANParks Annual Report 2000-2001; SANParks Annual Report 2003; SANParks Annual Report 2004/5). Other community benefits included the creation of economic opportunities such as the production of a tender manual and the development of local contractors, who each employed other previously unemployed people. There was also training to develop products from the clearing of alien vegetation. In a bid to develop and attract a large portion of previously disadvantaged communities, who had no relationship with the park, or who had had their interactions with the mountain severed, a strategy was developed that encompassed environmental experience and EE programmes, volunteer management, communications, a youth programme, drama performances, cultural mapping, auditing, interpretation and heritage (SANParks Annual Report 1996-1997; SANParks Annual Report 1998-1999; SANParks Annual Report 2000-2001; SANParks Annual Report 2004; SANParks Annual Report 2004/5). (SANParks Annual Report 2004: 35).

The Tankwa Karoo National Park(TKNP)

By 2002 the TKNP, a newly proclaimed park had not appointed park-based SED staff. This park was part of organisational plans to expand state protected areas from 6% to 8% by 2010 (SANParks Annual Report 2006 in Maguranaynga 2009). At the time, "The succulent biome … [was] still under-conserved with only about 2% under formal conservation" (SANParks Annual Report 2004: 42). Until the end of the period under review the park was still in a development phase with no infrastructure or SED programmes other than a" community needs analysis" (SANParks Annual Report 2004: 42).

The Bontebok National Park

Besides the TKNP, there were also no park-based SED staff appointed in the Bontebok National Park (BNP) between 1994 and 2004 to implement transformation policy. An informant suggested that this was because the park "… did not face any social pressures from its surrounding communities … [the population] was miniscule, compared to other parks like the KNP" (Informant 70, Telephonic, 2/3/2015). "Informal liaison… [was] still the most valuable form of communication with the community as there were no formal structures in the neighbouring township (SANParks Annual Report 1999-2000: 44). Besides, "The normal practice in parks with no social ecology staff was that the ranger takes over the function" (Informant 70, Telephonic, 2/3/2015). Any ad hoc community-related activities were the responsibilities of the park manager (SANParks Annual Report 2004: 40). The EPWP did provide some employment but even EE was lacking "Activities … [were] severely hampered by lack of capacity, so much so that it is difficult to handle the basic EE requirements of visiting interested school groups and others" (SANParks Annual Report 2000-2001: 55).

By 2003 three issues forced SANParks to re-position the park within the mainstream national parks system: firstly the requirement in NEMPA to include the local community in park affairs. Secondly the park had to deal with the needs of the relatively new influx of people living in the adjacent informal settlement. The third was to fulfil the park's core biodiversity mandate - the urgency to protect the rapid depletion of fynbos (SANParks Annual Report 2000-2001; SANParks Annual Report 2004).

Cross Cutting Issues in all the Community Forums

Organisational claims that the forums were effective and empowering communication structures through which SANParks could effectively reach its surrounding communities was an over-statement (SANParks. People and Conservation Business Plan (KPAs). 1 March 2004). In addition there were common constraints that the KNP SED faced in all the forums.

Although the KNP SED departed from the DCD's approach of over-privileging the voices of TAs and sought to cultivate more inclusive relationships with a wider range of stakeholders, their efforts to include marginalised groups (female and youth) was not entirely successful. Given the prevalence of TA and general male dominance in rural African society in the post democratic era, the KNP SED cannot be singularly blamed for their limited impact. Mainly male forum representatives did not always communicate effectively between the park and the community (Informant 6, Johannesburg, 7/3/2005; Informant 8, Johannesburg, 23/5/2005; DANCED and SANParks 1999; Informant 47, Skukuza, 12/112007). This was not unique to the KNP, communities neighbouring parks in general are, "…highly differentiated in terms of socio economic status and power and …different interest groups within communities are engaged in a 'struggle' for power and influence over the allocation of various resources." (Murphree and Jones 2004: 81).

Given the continued levels of poverty and unemployment in neighbouring communities employment opportunities was a major issue. There was a scarcity of unskilled jobs and the KNP, for example, was constantly accused of not complying with the agreement reached in the early 1990s that job advertisements be placed in public places in the forum areas. Doing so was the responsibility of the KNP Human Resources Department not the SED. (SANParks. KNP. Minutes of a Meeting held between KNP Director and the Executive Committee of the Hlanganani Forum. 26 May 2000; Informant 55, Nyongane village, 11/11/2007; SANParks Minutes of the KNP Hlanganani Forum Meeting. 21 October 1999). (Informant 42, Skukuza, 12/9/2007). (Informant 27, Johannesburg, 7/3/2005).

Other government agencies played an important role in this regard, especially the Expanded Public Works Programme. This went some way to supplement the efforts of the SED.

The Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP)

Two programmes to implement the new approach enshrined in NEMPA which contributed towards the transformation of SANParks within the EPWP. The SED was side-lined in all these initiatives. Ironically these programmes did more to promote a positive understanding and acceptance of the role of SANParks than the efforts of the SED. This affirmation largely stemmed from the capacity of these programmes to create jobs (See Appendix 3)

The EPWP was a RDP poverty alleviation, job creation and empowerment programme for poor and marginalised communities all over the country. The objective was to create jobs through labour intensive methods to create community assets, while protecting the environment and upgrading infrastructure in parks. The EPWP was managed by the Department of Public Works (DPW), who disbursed funds to

various government departments to implement the programme. SANParks submitted proposals to the DEAT Social Responsibility Programme to access funds. The KNP used these funds for infrastructure development through its Emerging Contractor Programme (ECP), and the removal of alien vegetation through its Working for Water (WfW) programmes. A total of ZAR 440 million was allocated to poverty relief programmes in SANParks, mainly for the removal of exotic vegetation (Child 2002). The SANParks corporate office housed the co-ordinating office for the WfW since 2000, and it in turn disbursed funds to the various national parks Although the EPWP was quite separate from the KNP SED, it was a functional component of alleviating poverty in the park. It was certainly a cross-functional responsibility as many KNP departments shared the responsibility of implementing the programme.

This programme created SMMEs, employment opportunities and skills development by involving and empowering local communities. The Working for Water Programme was successful in creating job opportunities for 564 local people in 2005. (SANParks DANCED and GTZ 2000; Key Informant Interview People and Conservation Directorate Manager of Cultural Heritage Pretoria 26 May 2005; Key Informant Interview Ex-GEM People and Parks Project advisor and community advisor Johannesburg 24 May 2005; DANCED May 2001; Key Informant Interview General Manager of People and Conservation KNP. Skukuza. 18 June 2007; DEAT 2005 a; Educational Support Services Trust. undated; DEAT 25 -27 October 2004; Key Informant Interview Manager of EPWP in SANParks. Telephonic. 27 March 2007; SANParks *Kiewiet* undated; SANParks *Timbila*. Volume 2 Issue 7).

The Emerging Contractor Programme

The Emerging Contractor Programme (ECP) began in 1998, with funding from the Poverty Relief Fund. It was implemented by the KNP' Technical Services department, and was assisted by the KNP SED and the Department of Labour. A transparent process to select 12 eligible trainees from neighbouring communities was undertaken and training was completed by the end of 2002 (KNP Social Ecology Quarterly Report. April – June 2002). The second phase of the programme, involving another cohort of 12 trainees was completed by September 2003. These 24 community members were fully trained for 3 years in construction and civil engineering, reaching a level of capacity building which had not been equalled by any other department in the KNP. The programme employed 45 additional workers while the 12 trainees were undergoing their learnerships. By 2004 the ECP was in the middle of its third cycle of funding and operations (Key Informant Interview Kruger National Park Head of Department for Technical Services. Skukuza 12 September 2007; KNP PaC department Quarterly Report. July – September 2003; KNP PaC department Annual Report. April 2003 – March 2004; Key Informant Interview Kruger National Park. People and Conservation Department Co-ordinator of Community Facilitation. Skukuza. 12 September 2007).

A tender was awarded to one of the graduates of the ECP to restore the staff living quarters and the Dingler guest house in Skukuza that were damaged in the floods in 2000 (KNP PaC department Annual Report 1 April 1999 – March 2000). Another eight contracts worth R28 500 were awarded to graduates of this programme that employed 10 people, for the SeSwati, SePedi, Tsonga and VhaVenda ethnic painting of 30 tourist huts that were damaged during the floods in Skukuza (Key Informant Interview Kruger National Park. People and Conservation Department Co-ordinator of Community Facilitation. Skukuza. 12 September 2007; KNP PaC department. Annual Report April 2001 – March 2002).

This was regarded as a positive development in the transformation process of the park. It assisted in the process of local people beginning to take ownership of the park, because the design and painting was done by elderly people from the community under the direction of the KNP's Technical Services department. The recognition that full community ownership of projects and the signing of formal contracts with the contractors as partners was important, was a non – KNP department social ecology lesson learnt (SANParks, DANCED and GTZ 2000). The EPWP implemented this principle for each of its training programmes and built genuine community capacity in this way (Key Informant Interview PCD Community Facilitation Officer 12 September 2007).

Although the EPWP was specifically a social responsibility programme, the SED national directorate in general regarded it as untouchable because 'it is the park manager's pot of gold' (Key Informant Interview People and Conservation Director Pretoria 30 May 2005). As a result the programme was managed and administered separately from the KNP SED. They did not have the financial and human resources of its own to initiate such projects. The KNP SED did play a role in the programme by informing neighbouring communities about the project, and they assisted in the selection of candidates for the programme. In so doing they attempted to ensure representivity of all the communities bordering the KNP in the programme. This is also one example of inter-departmental co-operation between the EPWP, the Technical Services department and the KNP SED (Key Informant Interview General Manager of People and Conservation KNP. Skukuza. 18 June 2007; Key Informant Interview Kruger National Park Head of Department for Technical Services Skukuza 12 September 2007).

In the event of disputes regarding access to the ECP amongst communities, the KNP SED 's forums were used to communicate with the EPWP in general. An example of this was in the Hlanganani Forum when questions were asked about whether VhaVenda speaking people were more advantaged than other ethnic groups in the job selection process (Correspondence from the Hlanganani Forum Social Ecologist to the KNP Social Ecology Manager. 17 April 1998; KNP Social Ecology Annual Report April 2000 – March 2001). The forums wanted the selection process of employees for the WfW to be processed by the forum, evidence that this particular forum was strong and had legitimacy (SANParks. Minutes of the KNP -

Lumbambiswano Forum Meeting. 24 November 1998; SANParks. KNP. Minutes of a Meeting of the Hlanganani Forum. 6 October 2000).

Poverty alleviation funds were also allocated to a pilot project ECP for the construction and maintenance of the western boundary fence. Community members were in the process of being trained at the time of writing up this research, and functions were still to be outsourced. The forums were also used to as a channel of communication, and candidate selection for this opportunity (KNPSED Annual Report. April 2003 – March 2004; Key Informant Interview Kruger National Park General Manager of People and Conservation Department KNP. Skukuza. 18 June 2007).

Although the KNP SED were only peripherally involved, the EPWP was a huge drawcard that began a slow but sure change in perception of the local communities towards the park. It offered a tangible economic benefit. This was particularly true for the more remote rural areas of the Hlanganani Forum in the north of the park. It also helped to boost attendance of forum meeting in the Phalaborwa forum because the youth were interested in attending meetings because of the opportunities presented by the ECP.

Conclusion

To conclude, the relationships between SANParks and its neighbours changed significantly from being historically exclusivist and negative during the period under review. Despite an initial instrumentalist motivation, the establishment of community forums which, in the case of the KNP especially, attempted to promote community participation and inclusiveness, the provision of environmental education and concrete benefits in the form of income generating projects were all significant changes away from the "fortress and fines' model of conservation pursued previously. Government programmes, such as the EPWP contributed to limited forms of 'development'. In all the parks the SED structures had limited responsibility and resources to implement transformation. Given the constraints under which they operated what was achieved was the softer, minimalize version of social ecology and not deep transformation change. However it will be shown below that cultural heritage projects, established as part of changing relations with neighbouring communities, had a wide significance.

SECTION C: THE IMPACTS OF TRANSFORMATION ON THE WIDER SOCIETY

CHAPTER 9: CULTURAL HERITAGE AND THE SHIFT TOWARDS GREATER INCLUSIVITY

Introduction

One of the crucial aspects of the transformation of SANParks during 1994 – 2004 was a shift to greater inclusivity and the promotion of national parks as a shared public resource available to all South Africans. This shift involved a strong contrast to the apartheid era when Africans were denied access to the parks and the Kruger National Park particularly, was used to promote a narrow Afrikaner nationalism and pride in an exclusively white South African heritage (Carruthers 1995; Dlamini 2012). Since 1926 the KNP had been defined as a 'national heritage'. Transformation therefore required close examination of "…who exactly constituted the 'nation' and whose heritage was to be enshrined in the park?" (Carruthers 1995 in Dlamini 2012: 18). This was a complicated and contested process that involved reversing the ethnic particularism and traditional notions of conservation enshrined under apartheid, re-instating ownership and pride in local communities and challenging some of white South Africa's historical myths, such as attributing ancient archaeological sites to the Phoenicians (Informant 14, Midrand, 27/5/2005). Under apartheid "…rather than being a means of nation building, the parks worked against national unity to reflect and maintain the privileges of the white minority. Clearly after 1994 this had to change" (Cock and Fig, 2002:133). People's needs to access their cultural sites was acknowledged in NEMPA passed in 2003. The new Board of Curators of SANParks emphasized in their vision statement that the organisation "will be the pride and joy of all South Africans" and its mission statement referred to the protection of both natural and cultural "…assets of South Africa for the pride and benefit of the nation" (SANParks, 1998:4). This commitment has been expressed in developing both cultural resources and historical sites within the parks. The shift to promoting this inclusivity involved two linked strategies: developing the tourism potential of the parks and promoting cultural heritage as a form of redress.

Cultural Heritage

Various SANParks statements on social ecology stressed the connections between natural and cultural heritage. This drew on the "… fact that the African land ethic does not distinguish between natural and cultural resources because these have become so intimately interwoven within the same land space through time" (Dladla, 1999:2). Dladla acknowledged the recognition of this in the World Heritage Convention, adopted by UNESCO in 1972 which links the concepts of nature conservation and the preservation of cultural sites. She envisaged this as part of the transformation project to be driven by the SED at both national and park levels.

The KNP's focus on the policy development and implementation of a Cultural Heritage Management (CHM) programme after 1994 was an indicator of an intention to transform and implement redress for past exclusions and injustices. It was done on an ad hoc basis. An early (undated) SANParks attitudinal survey revealed overwhelming management support to develop a CHM programme, catalysed by its revenue generating potential (Isacson and Tema. undated. SANP Research Report. Attitudes and Commitment of South African National Park's Managers: 7-8; South African National Parks. People and Conservation Business Plan (KPAs). 1 March 2004; Informant 8, Johannesburg, 23/5/2005).

Under Ngeleza's guidance by 1997, the CHM policy was followed by social ecology staff training and programme development in relation to heritage conservation in all the parks (Informant 34, Midrand, 26/5/2005; Informant 71, Pretoria, 14/6/2005; Informant 32, Johannesburg International Airport, 3/10/2005). The value of cultural heritage held the promise of the restoration of community identity and ownership, alongside with land restitution. Clearly this was an extensive and complicated transformation-oriented undertaking, especially for the KNP SED.

The important aims of the KNP CHM were: i**)** to focus on conserving the history and culture of the area for future generations, that '…distracts as little as possible from the wilderness qualities of the KNP" (South African National Parks. undated. KNP Business Plan: 15); ii**)** ensuring consultation with relevant communities so that they could reclaim and interpret their sites and convey this to visitors; iii**)** the development of a cultural heritage map and management plan, integrated into the Park Management Plans (PMP). The first participatory PMP occurred beyond this research period so it is not discussed (South African National Parks and Danish Cooperation for Environment and Development. March 2000. Strategic Framework for Parks–People Facilitation. Based on Pilot Projects and Socio-Economic Research around Pilot Parks, South African National Parks. undated. Draft Position Paper on Social Ecology: A framework for the people and parks biodiversity support programme, South African National Parks. Undated; KNP Business Plan; South African National Parks. People and Conservation Business Plan; Informant 34,Pretoria, 26/5/2005; Annual Report of Social Ecology April 1997-March 1998).

In 1998 the SED hosted an important international symposium, 'Voices, values and identities' which was aimed at the integration of cultural heritage into the management of all the parks. By 2004 a number of significant cultural and archaeological sites were identified in the KNP. Global Positioning Systems were recorded and desk top research undertaken, which contributed towards the park's cultural map (SE Quarterly Report – December 2001; South African National Parks, Danish Cooperation for Environment and Development, German Technical Cooperation 2000; Annual Report. People and Conservation. April 2003 – March 2004).

By 2004 the following sites were developed in the KNP: Thulamela in the north of the park, close to the Punda Maria gate entrance; Masorini in the Phalaborwa area, approximately in the middle of the park; the Albasini ruins in the southern part of the park, and Chief Nyongane's gravesite in the area closer to Skukuza rest camp (Kruger National Park. Undated. Social Ecology Division: 5; KNP Social Ecology Department. Exit report. Undated. Cultural Heritage Management Unit; South African National Parks. undated. KNP Business Plan). Various programmes were established in the other parks such as a cultural heritage programme in the villages neighbouring the Richtersveld National Park in 1997. This was aimed at deepening an appreciation of Nama culture, and specifically their language which is in danger of disappearing. This was done in partnership with TRANSFORM, the co-operation project between the Department of Environment and Tourism and German Technical Co-operation (GTZ).

In all the parks, as a core responsibility of SED employees promoted local expressions of cultural heritage including song, dance, myths, legends, storytelling, traditional healing and religious practices (Social Ecology 2000). They were also involved in limited forms of economic empowerment such as facilitating the production and sale of local arts and crafts. These were of varying success, through the Skukuza Alliance in the KNP initiated by the SED and it supported some 400 participants.

By 2000 a total of 254 cultural heritage sites had been identified in the KNP (Social Ecology 2000). While SED structures played an important part in the promotion of these cultural heritage sites, their development was largely driven by the KNP's Tourism Department. The drive to generate profit seems to have been more important than issues of human rights (Informant 34, Pretoria. 26/5/2005). Nevertheless the development of several sites involved both recognition and redress. Two examples are discussed below.

The Masorini Heritage Site

Masorini is a relatively recently discovered Iron Age site near the Phalaborwa gate entrance to the park. It consists of stone walls, hut floors, grinding stones, granaries, pottery remnants, household artefacts and implements as well as a nineteenth century iron smelting furnace. Livelihoods depended on mining and smelting of iron ore and the manufacture of spears, hoes and arrow heads. Besides their advanced technologies, the site indicated the existence of a trading economy and social evolution independent of foreign influence (KNP Social Ecology Department. undated. Exit Report. Cultural Heritage Management Unit; Informant 64, Phalaborwa, 20/9/2007)

Although three ethnic groups claimed the site as their own heritage, archaeological evidence pointed to a mixture of Tsonga and Se-Pedi-speaking people (Informant 48, Johannesburg, 1/6/2006). The KNP SED

acknowledged that the Se-Pedi-speaking Ba-Phalaborwa had the "…closest affinity to the site" (The KNP Social Ecology Division Annual Report 1 April 1999-March 2000). Despite the Ba-Phalaborwa's contributions in 1974 to reconstruct the site into a museum complex, by 2004 their land claim was unresolved and the KNP's retention of the site as a "… Tsonga interpretation of a Se-Pedi heritage" meant that neither their ancestral nor contemporary rights and full redress was achieved. (Informant 64, Phalaborwa, 20/9/2007). More recently (1999-2002), when the KNP SED resumed engagement with the community for the museum displays, the sporadic nature of communication and consultation generated bitterness and a sense of marginalisation (The KNP Social Ecology Division Annual Report 1 April 1999 – March 2000; Annual Report of KNP Social Ecology April 2001 – March 2002; KNP Social Ecology Department. undated. Exit Report. Cultural Heritage Management Unit; Informant 64, Phalaborwa, 20/9/2007). According to one informant:

> "The park does not know our culture and is misrepresenting the image and history of the Ba-Phalaborwa. Our tribal court is angry because of this. The furnace for example, has been incorrectly reconstructed. There has been poor communication since 1974, particularly in the last 10 years. This poor consultation was raised with the head of the social ecology department Mrs [Nkululeko] in the mid-1990s. And she was made aware of what the historical Se-Pedi names of the kopjes and rivers were, but no action was taken. The process of removing us from our land began in 1926 and was completed in the 1960s. Since then, we also took a resolution never to work in subservient positions in the park. Since our removal, the employment positions open to us would have been as field rangers. However, since we were deprived of our right to hunt our own animals, we cannot work as servants on our own land. So the site went to Shangaan [Tsonga] people and the park employed them as rangers and that is how the park has used a Shangaan interpretation of our history. But the Shangaan's were recent arrivals from Mozambique. Masorini is the name of a Shangaan ranger, who died there and was buried there" (Informant 64, Phalaborwa, 20/9/2007).

According to a member of the social ecology staff "When Masorini was originally excavated there was very little consultation with the descendants (still living in the area) and it was interpreted from a white perspective" (Social Ecology, 2000: 92).

Another informant expressed strongly the failure to promote the CHM as a form of recognition and redress for past injustices, especially the removal of the community from their ancestral land.

> "This is one example once again - so much effort has been put into EE, while issues of redress have not been attended to. Rights based issues are a different set of imperatives, CHM and indigenous knowledge hold the potential of redress for past injustices. The potential will be lost if

> the organisation keeps doing the same thing, despite the fact that the information is out there. It is not only about redress, but about recognition and giving it a voice. This voice is important because these people can still recall the removals from their homesteads and cultural sites when the parks were established. For now SANParks still does not give back what was taken away" (Informant 35, 30/5/2005, Johannesburg).

The outcome was weak participation in the KNP SED's forum. The Ba-Phalaborwa TA maintained that they did "…not want to climb the train as it is running" – meaning that their strategy for engagement with the park authorities (like the Makulekes) was dependent on the outcome of the land claim. In the meantime the community were encouraged by their traditional leader not to attend forum meetings, because the KNP SED "… were unable to make decisions by themselves", and were a weak park structure. The traditional authorities were of the opinion that when (not if) they are successful in their land claim, they are prepared to maintain the biodiversity status of the park as long as they own the land, and will be part of the decision-making." (Informant 64, Phalaborwa, 20/9/2007).

The Thulamela Heritage Site

In 1991 the KNP became aware of Thulamela (place of giving birth) heritage site that is the ancestry of the present day Vha Venda speaking Makahane people. It is situated in Pafuri in the far north of the KNP near the confluence of the Levuvhu and Limpopo Rivers (Thulamela Heritage Site undated). This stone-walled settlement was a vital link in extensive trade between communities in the Limpopo Valley and Arab traders from the Eastern African coast. Local people traded ivory, gold, copper and tin with the Arabs.

The site is marked by a number of unusual features: i) it is archaeologically a prehistoric dwelling (between 135 and 1650 AD); ii) it is an environmental, natural and cultural museum as well as the oldest restored national monument, and iii) marks a departure from the KNP's Eurocentric history. Two graves and a skeleton in a royal enclosure sparked national, regional and international interest because it validates the early history and settlement patterns of southern African people. Other valuables included gold bracelets, cowrie shells, ivory, metal rings, Chinese porcelain, several large boulders with long grooves cut into them, whetstones for the sharpening of spears, hoes and other metal implements, such as spearheads and hoe blades, copper rods, wire and foil (Steyn, M., Nienaber, W.C., Loots, M. 1997. *Report on the two gold burials from Thulamela.* Department of Anatomy: University of Pretoria. in Janine Smit "Evidence of a forgotten past" in Custos September 1997: 8-12; South African National Parks. February 1997; The Way Forward: Harnessing Cultural and Heritage Tourism in South Africa held in Pretoria 5-7 February 1997; Social Ecology Department. Thulamela Heritage Site. undated; Social Ecology Department Thulamela Heritage Site. undated).

The site involved a unique arrangement in the history of archaeology, linking local cultural wishes for respect for the ancestors with scientific inquiry. Members of the local community were actively involved in unearthing the history of the site. After extensive consultations between the archaeologists and the local people it was agreed that the graves should be excavated and the skeleton remains studied and sent for radiocarbon dating, but they then had to be returned to the site for reburial, so that the necessary respect for the ancestors could be maintained.

Community participation in the development, marketing, research and management plan of the site was ensured through donor funds, the Thulamela Deed of Trust, and representation in the project committee. Representation was broadened beyond the Makahanes to include other neighbouring villages leaders, the old, youth and professionals, representatives of the former homelands of Venda and Gazankulu, the Mhinga TA and tertiary educational institutions like the Universities of: Pretoria, Venda, the Witwatersrand and Rhodes, as well as interest groups (Site Unseen: 33-34; National Parks Board. Thulamela Heritage Project. Draft Corporate Plan – Outcomes of the Planning Workshop. 31 January 1997 – 1-2 February 1997). The site represented the Makahane people's identity and history, yet the KNP involved the area's Tsonga-speaking Chief Mhinga and his representatives in the site's development. (The KNP Social Ecology Division Annual Report 1 April 1999-March 2000; Site Unseen: 34; Social Ecology Department. Thulamela Heritage Site. Undated; Steyn, M., Nienaber, W.C., Loots, M. 1997. *Report on the two gold burials from Thulamela.* Department of Anatomy: University of Pretoria. in Janine Smit "Evidence of a forgotten past" in *Custos* September 1997: 8-12). This was because, similar to the case of the Makulekes, the KNP succumbed to Chief Mhinga's presentation of himself as a paramount chief with authority over the Makahane (Informant 48, Johannesburg, 1/6/2006). This inclusion was particularly insensitive and inappropriate. (Informant 34, Pretoria, 26/5/2005). Although the site did represent potential social and organisational transformation (pending the unresolved land claim by 2004), these SANParks actions were confusing and the primary descendant's cultural heritage claim was diluted (Informant 48, Johannesburg, 1/6/2006).

While intangible benefits accrued through the community's oral history inputs, material benefits included employment during site development, an arts and crafts sales point at the nearby KNP gate entrance, free EE tours and the use of local researchers. The Thulamela education trails were launched in 1997 employing local guides. Some of the projects were funded from the Thulamela Deed of Trust funds projects. The Makahanes celebrated and felt connected to their heritage when the site was formally launched in 1998 (Thulamela Heritage Site. Undated; The KNP Social Ecology Division Annual Report 1 April 1999-March 2000; South African National Parks; Draft Agreement. Regarding the Establishment of the Thulamela Management).

The Thulamela case provides significant evident of a transformative shift in SANParks policies and practices to protect both cultural and biological diversity and to incorporate people in these processes. Several informants maintained that this greater inclusivity promoted a sense of national pride.

Tourism

Under apartheid SANParks reflected the culture and practices of white exclusivity and domination. African people not only experienced forced expulsion from their land, as in the case of the Makulele described above, but were in practice excluded from access to the parks even as tourists. For example, "until the1980s black visitors to KNP were only allowed accommodation at Balule, a tented camp established in 1932 with very rudimentary facilities." (Cock and Fig, 2002:132) Africans, as Dlamini writes, "did not react to the park in mass", different social classes had different experiences, but the levels of poverty and the requirements of park entrance fees and transport costs, made the parks inaccessible for the majority.

Making the parks more accessible to the majority of South Africans as a key component of transformation involved improving visitor services and changing park culture. Under apartheid the KNP "was operated as a highly subsidized tourist playground for whites in general and Afrikaans-speaking civil servants in particular" (Cock and Fig, 2002:144). While no racialized statistics are available, the social composition of visitors to the park changed somewhat during the period under review, though the majority continued to be white or foreign amounting to a total of ZAR 1,8 million in 2004. The newly opened archaeological sites described above attracted considerable numbers of visitors with numbers reaching more than one million per year. A number of projects have been established to provide wilderness experiences for urban youth particularly.

A number of informants and board documents (see the 1999 Memo on 'The Importance of Social Ecology" cited above in chapter two) stressed the connection between 'culture' and 'nature' in Social Ecology. They pointed to how through tourism and cultural heritage programmes SANParks could contribute towards nation building and the creation of a common society. This has happened in other societies. For example, the establishment of national parks in the US (which also involved displacement and dispossession) has been described as "an attempt to forge a national identity out of national grandeur"(Beinart and Coates, 1995:75). As the 1999 Board memo stated, the Social Ecology approach "is central to the promotion of both a new holistic conservation paradigm, and a transformed SANParks which could make an important contribution to both the preservation of biodiversity" and to a more united and stable society.

SECTION C: THE IMPACTS OF TRANSFORMATION ON THE WIDER SOCIETY

CHAPTER 10: CONCLUSION

Introduction

SANParks was never a homogeneous or monolithic entity during the 1994 - 2004 period. It contained persons of very different ideological persuasions and personal histories. With this diversity transformation was always hotly contested. The main challenge of the transformation of the SANParks was the complex, sociological process of linking the conservation of biodiversity to social justice. Writing of a global perspective Brechin (2003) shows this was necessary for both pragmatic and ethical reasons. Research for this thesis suggests that a central difficulty was the absence of a shared and coherent notion of what this linkage involved. While the issue of land restitution implied a strong conception of social justice, there was also a minimalist understanding of social ecology which was largely limited to the recognition of social needs of neighbouring communities.

The ideas formulated as 'social ecology' and the SED structures were established to drive the transformation of SANParks. The central argument of this thesis is that neither the ideas or the structures were strong or coherent enough to do so. The predominant understanding of social ecology within the organisation was mainly limited to recognising social factors and improving relations with neighbouring communities through the provision of minimal benefits. The SED structures in all the parks were weak and understaffed.

The establishment of a non-racial democratic social order required a different approach to the conservation of biodiversity which involved substantive change. This change involved SANParks confronting its role in the apartheid legacy of dispossession, environmental racism and injustice. However there were serious constraints on the degree of transformative change possible within SANParks during the period under review. Some were related to the context, particularly the negotiated nature of the transition to democracy and the retention of reactionary 'old guard' elements in positions of power within SANParks to resist transformation policies. Furthermore the shift to neo-liberalism in the form of the GEAR was an overarching constraint that promoted growing inequality and continuing poverty, unemployment and marginalisation for black South Africans living in rural areas. The changes that took place since 1994 emphasised political transformation, at the expense of social and economic transformation to address the needs of the majority.

Nevertheless it is argued that during the period 1994 - 2004, in a series of complex and contested processes, constrained but significant change was achieved in four areas: a shift to a more 'people

oriented' ('people oriented' would be too strong) approach to conservation which was grounded in the concept of Social Ecology, institutional representivity to eliminate racism and sexism, land restitution, improved relations with neighbouring communities and greater inclusivity and openness to all South Africans through the promotion of tourism and cultural heritage sites. The establishment of the new Board of Curators with its powerful Land Claims Sub-Committee, the Transformation Task Team and the Social Ecology Directorate at national office and at park level together with external agencies, such as the Group for Environmental Monitoring, drove these changes to different degrees.

The three components of Child's theoretical framework for institutional and organisational change were used to assess whether SANParks had transformed: that protected areas had to be regarded as common pool resources that were reserved on behalf of society, performance accountability, meaning that parks had to be answerable to society, and thirdly that conservation agencies had to acknowledge that their management systems and structures were inefficient, myopic and inward looking and had neglected the needs of the poor people living in or on the boundaries of protected areas. To some extent the changes instituted during the 1994 – 2004 period met these three criteria.

Indicators of transformation

Summarising the transformative changes involves addressing four questions: Was there a paradigm shift? This occurred to some extent but research showed that in practice the potentially powerful notion of Social Ecology was not fully realised in the period under review. It was a contested notion which lacked broad legitimacy within the organisation and includes both minimalist and more radical or transformative understandings. In practice the elements of social and environmental justice were diluted to mean that, in order to be effective, conservation should shift to include a more people-oriented approach to include social needs, understandings and development issues. Official publications frequently defined social ecology very narrowly in terms of improved relations with neighbours involving shallow interactions with park authorities and limited benefits.

Deracialisation in the sense of changing the racial composition of individuals in position of power was (and still is) a widely supported aspect of transformation. Did SANParks achieve black leadership, demographic representivity and dismantle the deep-seated racism and sexism within the organisation? Several new structures were established to drive transformation: the Social Ecology Directorate, a new Board of Curators and a Transformation Task Group (TTG). Affirmative action policies were formulated by the new board and blacks were appointed to positions of power such as CEO and SED Director. However the negotiated nature of the transition to democracy , in particular the five year long 'sunset clause' which retained the employment of 'old guard' civil servants, were a major source of constraint on

organisational transformation. It meant that key organisational positions were retained by apartheid era personnel, many of whom were deeply resistant to transformation policies and practices. While elements of racism and sexism remained deeply embedded in the organisational culture some progress was made. While there was growth in the numbers of black and women managers (middle and senior levels) by 2004 this did not reach 50% and the number of black employees in unskilled and semi-skilled positions remained constant during the research period of 1994 – 2004. Although the implementation of AA policies were approved by the Board in 1996, by 1999 the guidelines were not finalised and no implementation policies developed. Nor was it strictly enforced by the Human Resources Directorate.

In 2004 ten Employment Equity and Skills Development Forums (EESDF) were established to monitor and eliminate discriminatory employment practices and ensure staff development in compliance with national legislation. There were improvements in medical, housing and disciplinary policies and in wages for unskilled workers. But overall the organisational transformation attempts were disparate, arbitrary, contested, contradictory and inconsistent. Nonetheless, the establishment of the ephemeral TTG, the existence of the SED and the reconstituted Board did mark the beginning of an organisational paradigm shift.

Were relations with neighbouring communities improved during the period under review? These communities lived in “overcrowded and degraded rural areas” reflecting “the worst aspects of colonial conservation”. (Cock and Fig, 2002:133) Propelled by NEMPA which forced park authorities to engage with neighbouring communities, this was an area where SANParks could demonstrate how they were transforming from a ‘fortress and fines’ model of conservation in which neighbouring communities were perceived (and treated) as ‘threats’. Research shows that there was improvement demonstrable in terms of increased interaction and communication in various forums, the provision of limited benefits and opportunities for employment, development projects and information-sharing. The employment of 60 social ecology staff by 2004, stationed in various denominations in all but three national parks changed park-community relations. Some of the short term gains were increased community participation in the affairs of national parks, through the establishment of community forums in ten national parks. However a very ‘soft’ version of participation was involved, meaning formal interactions involved information sharing rather than participation in decision-making. The project activities involved were largely driven by SED structures and involved an unprecedented level of contact and communication between SANParks and neighbouring communities. However the priority need was for employment and hence the role of other state agencies in job creation, specifically the Expanded Public Works Programme contributed massively to changed community perceptions.

Land restitution is a key indicator of whether the organisation changed from an instrument of racial exclusion and domination to one which promoted not only organisational transformation, but wider social justice. Did

SANParks address land claims adequately? As in the case of the discourse of Social Ecology, land claims had considerable potential to link conservation to social justice. However research shows that change in this respect was constrained, uneven and limited. Successful land restitution in the period under review was achieved in four national parks, including the case of the Makukleke in KNP. Clearly this was an extremely complicated area which for SANParks represented a potential loss of crucial assets, upheaval and administrative complications. In the eight land claims against national parks analysed research showed that any redress was only partly due to the SED at national and park level. Individual board members working through the Board Land Claims Sub-Committee (BSCLC) drove transformative, catalytic change in this area between 1997-1999. This was because during this period the BSCLC policy was operational and because the Board members that drove it were still on the Board to ensure its implementation. They conceptualised and drove the land claims policy and contributed significantly to the land claims negotiations. This was done despite widespread 'old guard' resistance throughout the organisation to land claims. Agencies such as the SANParks Legal Department controlled the land claims process throughout and were a source of strong resistance to land claims as redress. A further constraint was how government policy changed from strong support for land claims in national parks through promulgated laws and policies, to proposing restrictions in the 2002 Cabinet Memorandum. This involved a retreat from restoring full ownership rights to claimant communities, according to the Makuleke model. Despite the Memorandum both the first and the second black CEOs of SANParks stated that the resolution of valid land claims represented an opportunity for historical redress and that the organisation would not contest any land claims in national parks. With between 19 to 37 (estimates from different sources vary widely) outstanding , unresolved land claims in the KNP by the end of the period under review, success in this area was clearly limited. SANParks admitted that by 2003 they had not realised their objective to resolve valid land claims consistently and coherently. Furthermore the proposals for park expansion in the form of buffer zones (between 2001 – 2002), involving restituted land belonging to neighbouring communities were unsuccessful. However some progress was made through the establishment of Transfrontier Parks.

The last questions are whether the parks became more inclusive and open to all South Africans in the period under review? Was the value of cultural heritage made explicit in all the national parks ? In all of them arts and crafts projects and performances such as traditional dancing, involved forms of recognition of ethnic traditions and attracted tourists. Inextricable from the restitution of land, the development of cultural heritage sites such as Thulamela and Masorini were the significant markers of redress. These moved beyond ethnic particularism and contributed towards a redefinition who constituted the South African nation.

Agencies which drove transformation

The SED was the agency charged with the design, promotion and implementation of organisational transformation to institute a paradigm shift which emphasized 'social' issues. This 'shift' was broadly

understood as a fundamental move away from the traditional authoritarian approach to conservation, characteristic of the apartheid era, which served the white minority and emphasized the protection of biodiversity to the neglect of social issues. Research showed that the national SED was an agent of transformation. At park level SED structures played an important role in land restitution through facilitating communication between SANPark authorities and neighbouring communities. However both the SED and the TTG could have been stronger structures. There could have been more support from the Board, 'old guard' staff, and the newly appointed executive black leadership. Research showed that throughout the 1994 – 2004 period more effort was invested in restraining the development of a strong SED, compared to supporting it. Structurally, however, the mere existence of the SED and the TTG did represent the beginning of a weak and reluctant organisational change in beliefs and understandings of what conservation should involve. The new Board was too politically diverse to be a strong and coherent structure.

Overall, during the period 1994-2004 the SED was never a strong and stable unit. On the contrary it was marked by a lack of continuous leadership, high staff turnover, organisational changes, low staff morale, confusion about different roles and responsibilities, structural instability, inadequate integration into the organisation, transformation rhetoric unmatched by action, the absence of a clear mandate, a lack of communication and ideological incoherence. There was no shared organisational understanding of the social ecology perspective or how it related to transformation in a democratic South Africa. A draft social ecology policy was developed but never got beyond a drafting phase. Despite the investment of external resources to promote organisational coherence and a change management framework, there was little success in integrating the SED with the rest of SANParks. The leadership of the SED between late 1994 – 1999, despite constraints, played an important role in organisational transformation , especially in land claims processes. However after 1999 they were neither formally represented on the BSCLC nor involved in any of the negotiation teams relating to land claims. It was shown that the Makulele land claim for example, was made a year after the KNP SED was established. The KNP SED facilitated communication between park authorities and neighbouring communities, but despite strong leadership between 2000 and 2004, at national office level the SED was not a strong or stable structure. This was despite the fact that the establishment of the SED was envisaged by its first director (a strong, black woman as a key transformation structure to develop policies and programmes that would establish social ecology as a core function within the organisation. The SED was responsible for the establishment of the TTG but this was a weak and ephemeral structure with no authority to enforce policy and at national office and park level was absorbed into the Human Resources Directorate by 2001. However during the two years of its existence, regional TTG co-ordinators were appointed in the KNP and in Addo Elephant National Park and change teams were appointed in all parks to raise awareness about non-racialism and non-sexism as key transformation goals. These were unprecedented, participatory processes. Through the TTG eight 'new values' of service were formulated, a Programme of Action established as well as a diversity management agenda.

A discussion of the drivers of transformation should include acknowledgment of the role of particular individuals operating within SANParks structures. The first SED director Dr Ngeleza's leadership was inspirational according to many informants. At the same time it was reported that Dr Ngeleza was intimidating to senior management who were afraid of the extent and rate of transformation espoused by her. Initially they sought to dilute her strength by not supporting her adequately, later they attempted to oust her as a desperate measure to obstruct transformation. When this resulted in Dr Ngeleza's resignation, the established structures continued to dilute the strength of the SED and of organizational transformation in subsequent leaderships.

Other significant drivers of transformation were external agencies particularly the Group for Environmental Monitoring (GEM), a small environmental justice NGO. Through their 'People and Parks' Project they functioned as an intermediary between conservation organisations, such as SANParks and neighbouring communities to promote the interests of the latter. Informants reported that it was a key driver which led to the formation of Social Ecology structures and ideas.

To conclude, the dissertation argues that during this period, in a series of complex and contested processes, constrained but significant change was achieved in four areas: a shift to a more people-centred and developmental approach to conservation which was grounded in the concept of Social Ecology, institutional representivity to eliminate racism and sexism, land restitution, improved relations with neighbouring communities and greater inclusivity and openness to all South Africans. These changes potentially laid the basis for more deep and radical change which links the conservation of biodiversity to social justice.

Much has changed both in SANParks and South Africa as a whole since the period under review. Many hopes for a transition to a just and equal society have been dashed. Since 2004 social inequality and environmental degradation have deepened. Thus one commentator has referred to South Africa's "unfinished revolution". Another has described the transformation of South Africa as "a huge failure….We did not succeed in properly addressing the apartheid legacy of abject poverty, high unemployment and growing inequality" (Terreblanche 2012:124). Obviously the extent to which SANParks was able to promote radical, transformative change was limited by the wider social and political context in which there was a failure to transform power relations and redistribute resources. The partial nature of the transfer of political power in the transition meant that there were significant constraints on the transformation of South African society and all the institutions within it. If the transformation of SANParks is defined in terms of the linking of biodiversity to social justice, then it must similarly be defined as a failure. But the research reported in this thesis could also suggest that

during the initial period of the transition to democracy, between 1994- 2004 tentative, but significant changes occurred which could take the organisation in this direction.

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List of Confidential Informants

(The names of key actors have been anonymised in the text to protect confidentiality. Key informant interviews are indicated numerically.)

1. Key Informant Interview. Assistant Director Biodiversity Planning DEAT. Pretoria. 8 April 2007.

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Appendices

Appendix: 1 Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT). Cape Vidal Workshop 2003.

Discussions at a 2003 DEAT workshop attended by government representatives conservation agencies and local communities focused on addressing priorities at the centre of the relationship between 'people and parks'. Key issues were identified for each priority, followed by a set of necessary actions, which, if implemented, would enable South Africa to make progress towards deep and comprehensive transformation.

- ***Access and Benefit Sharing***

  Identification of beneficiaries:

  - Guidelines needed to assist identification of beneficiaries

  Secure access to benefits from natural and cultural resources:
  - Consistent policy and participatory management plans on resource use in parks
  - Formalise relationships with resource user groups
  - Address over-harvesting through licensing and training
  - Address benefits to communities from hunting 'problem animals'

  Secure access to economic opportunities and jobs:
  - Ensure communities can participate in tourism tendering processes
  - Tourist facilities and parks to use local produce and support local companies
  - Skills training to ensure communities are shareholders in park development business

  Secure access to education and recreational opportunities:
  - Parks to facilitate community access / visits to protected areas

  Institutional arrangements in place to secure benefits for communities:
  - Establishment of park forums, address weak community structures, involve local government

  Communication and information needed regarding accessible areas

- ***Co-management***

  Cohesiveness and consensus within communities is needed for co-management:
  - Develop management plans in participatory manner
  - Awareness raising to reduce conflict
  - Recognise different / conflicting community structures

  Skills and capacity:
  - Skills and capacity building needed for effective conservation management and decision-making at community level

  Clarity needed on:
  - Mandate, roles and responsibilities for co-management
  - Co-management on communal, state and private land

  Policy:
  - Guidelines and mechanisms needed for monitoring implementation

- ***Community Public Private Partnerships***

Negative impact of 'trustee' role of Department of Land Affairs on partnerships with regards to communal land:

- Agree on a way to fast-track legitimate conservation and tourism applications
- Agree on and develop a manual for existing CPPP procedures
- Clarity on the implications of the Communal Land Rights Act for partnerships

Lack of pre and post settlement support undermines partnerships

- Conservation agencies need to assist DLA and LCC to give pre and post settlement support that facilitates partnerships

Stalled or delayed projects

- DEAT to intervene when projects are unfairly blocked by conservation officials
- DEAT to intervene and ensure that THETA and TEP provide promised training for project implementation

- ***Land Reform and Conservation***

The deadline to settle land claims by Dec 2005 will lead to rushed settlements:

- Land Claims Commission to prioritise the settlement of land claims in protected areas as they affect of national heritage

Urgent information needed on policy issues:

- Clarity on the impact of the Communal Land Rights Act on governance, rights and benefit sharing by previously dispossessed communities
- DEAT and agencies to communicate the implications of the Cabinet Memorandum on restitution claims in protected areas and its impact on land use

Slow settlement of claims:

- Build capacity in the LCC to ensure smoother/faster settlement of claims
- LCC to ensure communities have a better understanding of the claims process
- LCC to ensure regular communication to claimants on status of claims

Conflict around land claims and settlement agreements:

- Appoint facilitators to mediate conflict around claims and settlement agreements
- Better communication of different benefits and rights
- Regular feedback to claimants on status of claims
- Monitor progress on claims and implementation of settlement agreements

Limited capacity of claimant groups to participate equitably in all stages of claims:

- Capacity and skills training needed for all stages claims, with a particular emphasis on post-settlement skills, including exposure to other claimant groups

Poor institutional linkages in the land claims process affect negotiation and implementation of settlement agreements:

- Bring all relevant institutions into the process earlier
- Policy and specific MOUs needed to guide institutional roles and responsibilities in settlement process

DEAT was urged to convene a bilateral meeting with the Department of Land Affairs and the Land Claims Commission to agree on a way forward on this central issue.

- ***Strengthening and extending the Protected Area Network***

Resettlement policy:

- Avoid physical resettlement at all costs

- If resettlement unavoidable, it must improve human well-being and be voluntary and achieved through free, prior and informed consent, upholding rights
- Mutual agreements on land swaps needed that benefit communities and conservation

Community involvement in expansion of PA network:

- Communicate biodiversity priority areas and socio-economic implications of protected area expansion to all communities
- Communicate relevant sections of policy and legislation
- Greater use of indigenous and traditional knowledge in new parks

Capacity for protected area expansion:

- Capacity needs to be build in local government, affected communities and conservation agencies to plan protected area expansion
- Robust institutional arrangements at all levels needed for establishment of parks

Benefits:

- Degraded ecosystems restored for protected area expansion as a means to job creation and poverty alleviation
- Regulations need to specify clear use options for each zone in protected areas
- Ensure short term costs are offset with slow phasing in of development benefits of new parks and re-skilling programmes

Legislation:

- Clarity needed on implications of Communal Land Rights Act regarding expansion of protected areas
- Regulations and law reform is needed to for community conservancies and biospheres

Conflict resolution:

- Training and facilitators needed to manage conflicts around protected areas
- Demonstrate the value and benefits of conservation as a land use

Commitment to joint action

The participants of the workshops from government departments, conservation agencies and communities committed themselves to working together to address these issues. There is agreement that a forum of this nature should be an annual one where progress can be assessed and new priorities agreed. Together they agreed on a theme for the workshop that encapsulated both the attitude of participants as well as the content of the action plans, it is **CONSERVATION FOR THE PEOPLE WITH THE PEOPLE."** The following statement was issued:

Statement from the 2004 People and Parks Workshop

"Conservation for the People with the People"

We, the representatives of:

- 43 local communities with rights or interests in protected areas,
- national, provincial and local government,
- protected areas agencies
- interest groups, private sector, donors and NGO's

having met over the last four days in the Blyde River Canyon and would like to record the following:

We recognise the:

- Importance of communities and implementing agencies as equal partners with shared rights and responsibilities.
- Importance of equitably sharing of costs and benefits with communities from all spheres of parks.
- Access to natural and cultural resources within parks is a right not a privilege.
- Land claims in protected areas affect national heritage and prioritising the settlement of these claims is essential.
- Inclusion of all relevant stakeholders into the process for land claims settlement at an early stage.
- Need to ensure regular feedback to claimants from key agencies regarding the status of land claims on protected areas.
- Ongoing monitoring and enforcement of agreements between claimants and conservation agencies by a team of independent facilitators.
- Communicating the implications of the Cabinet Memorandum on land restitution in protected areas and other land use issues to all claimants
- Streamlining of park activities with local government's Integrated Development Plans.
- Importance of including communities that only have access to communal land from entering commercial partnerships that generate economic benefits.
- Capacitated and strong local structures are essential for effective participation in park management
- Collaboration between the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, South African National Parks, conservation agencies, government departments, municipalities and NGO's are essential for achieving the objectives of People and Parks
- Expansion of protected areas is a development opportunity.
- Facilitating the implementation of the many stalled commercial projects on community owned land in protected areas is necessary.
- Involving private sector as partners.
- Support systems for communities to access resources and information.
- Developing guidelines to support implementation of legislation affecting people in parks is critical.
- Drafting regulations should facilitate the achievement of community benefits as set out in the objectives of the Protected Areas Act.

- Raising awareness for improved understanding between all stakeholders is key to sustainable use of natural resources.

We also recognise:

- Financial and capacity restraints within implementing agencies for implementing the recommended Action Plan for People and Parks within the proposed timeframes.

We are deeply concerned about:

- The impact of the Communal Land Rights Act on community rights, governance and benefit-sharing of previously dispossessed communities
- The impact and costs of the December 2005 deadline for settling the large number of outstanding land claims

We acknowledge the need for:

- A Ministerial bilateral meeting between Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism and the Department of Land Affairs to address issues raised in the recommended Action Plan for People and Parks
- A bilateral meeting between the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism and the South African National Parks, and also the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism and the Provincial Conservation Agencies to address issues raised in the recommended Action Plan for People and Parks
- The inputs from this workshop on the regulations in terms of the protected areas act to be submitted to Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism by mid November
- The Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism to hold provincial workshops with communities on draft regulations when these are published for public comments in January 2005 and should allow more than 30 days for input.
- The recommended Action Plan for People and Parks to be rolled out at a local level through ongoing engagement between the relevant communities and conservation agencies
- A process through which representative of conservation agencies present take back these recommendation to their senior management to discuss and agree upon this recommended Action Plan for People and Parks
- A formal structure to monitor the implementation of the recommended Action Plan for People and Parks and to facilitate an ongoing and structured dialogue with all relevant stakeholders
- A national charter for communities, Government Departments and conservation agencies which would contain guiding principles for people and parks.

We welcome commitments on the following:

- The Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, South African National Parks, IUCN (World Conservation Union), GTZ and Greater St Lucia Wetlands Park Authority to convene two steering committee meetings during 2005 with community representatives to monitor progress on the recommended Action Plan for People and Parks
- The Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, South African National Parks, IUCN (World Conservation Union), GTZ and Greater St Lucia Wetlands Park Authority to convene an annual forum of

communities and conservation agencies to assess progress on the recommended Action Plan for People and Parks

- South African National Parks to take the recommended Action Plan for People and Parks to their Park Forums
- The Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism to take the recommended Action Plan for People and Parks to the Protected Areas Forum
- Legal Resources Centre to compile and make available settlement agreements and other relevant documents on land claims in protected areas
- Commitment from community representatives to effectively communicate back to their communities

Appendix 2: The Kruger National Park's Expansion

There are three primary aim of Transfrontier Conservation Areas (TFCAs): "to conserve biodiversity by establishing consedrvatin areas that straddle the borders of adjacent states; to foster cooperative environmental governance; and to create conditions for locak, national and regional development through ecotourism". (Ramutsindela, 2015:184) Most conservationists regarded the establishment of the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park TFCA in the KNP as having "enormous potential benefits" (SANParks Timbila. Volume 2 Issue: 60). The park is not a complete natural ecosystem, its ecological processes were interfered with when political boundaries were established during colonialism. The creation of the TFCA therefore would allow animals to roam freely between the countries involved (SANParks *Timbila*. Volume 2 Issue: 60). Besides the inclusion of various game farms and reserves in the Limpopo National Park, the translocation of animals was one of the main activities contained in the TFCA agreement with the KNP's Mozambican partners (SANParks. *Go Wild*. November/December 2004: 4).

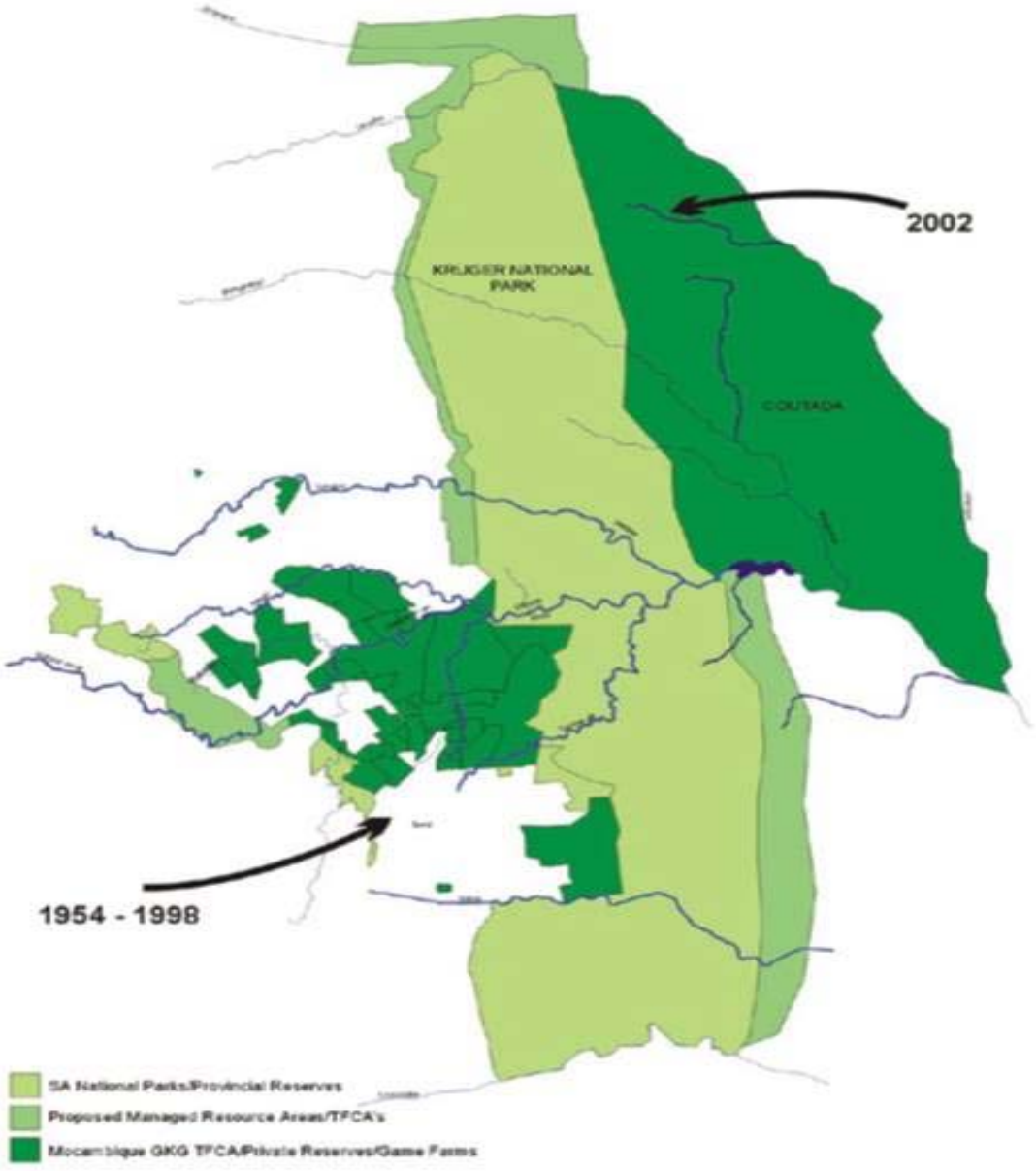


Figure 23 – SANParks 2004

In addition to conservation benefits,benefits for peoplewere also envisaged through the formation of TFCAs and TBPAs. For example, promoting the sustainable use of natural resources could benefit the poorer rural inhabitants of South Africa, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. Benefits could also accrue from ecotourism, because tourists had direct access to communities in each of these countries. These benefits, however, were envisaged as "a slow process and will be implemented step by step" (SANParks *Timbila* Volume 2 Issue 7; Transfrontier Conservation Areas.

Constitution of the Gaza/Kruger/Gonarezou TFCA Subcommittee. First Draft for Discussion. 2-3 February 1999; Internal report. Third Meeting of the Gaza/Kruger/Gonarezhou Technical Subcomittee. Xai-Xai 29 April 1999).

The Great Limpopo TFCA was signed in 2002 and celebrated as the first TFCA in post 1990 southern Africa. It is "home to some 2,000 plant species, 505 bird species and 147 mammal species, including a population of white rhino which is the largest in the world". (Ramutsindela, 2015:187). As regards community participation, the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park Community Representative Committee (GLTP–CRC) was formed. Similar to the Gaza–Kruger-Gonarezou (GKG–CWG) discussed below, a community executive committee was formed, which comprised of six community representatives, one from each of the six KNP SE Department's forum areas. The GLTP–CRC was formed to foster local community participation, regional co-operation, and cross–border socio–economic development (KNP Social Ecology Quarterly Report December 2001; KNP Social Ecology Annual Report of April 2001 – March 2002; KNP Social Ecology Quarterly Report October 2002 – January 2003; Massyn. Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park. Community Representative Committee. Strategic Planning Workshop Outcomes Report. 2-4 November 2001; Great Limpopo Transfrontier Conservation Area. Summary of the Key Issues Raised at the Meeting held on 10 August 2004 at SANParks, Pretoria; Strengthening Community Participation in the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park. 18–20 October 2002; Limpopo Transfrontier Conservation Area. Tri-nation community working group workshop. 12-15 November).

The creation of jobs that stemmed from the establishment of the GLTP-CRC was a benefit for the KNP's neighbouring communities. It involved providing labour for various infrastructural projects, such as the upgrading of the Punda Maria rest camp, the Pafuri gate, and building and maintaining road networks in the north and far north of the park However, because most jobs were temporary its social and economic impacts were limited (Key Informant Interview People and Conservation Directorate Manager of Cultural Heritage Pretoria 26 May 2005). (SANParks. *Go Wild*. November/December 2004: 4).

In 2001 the KNP SE Department, GtZ and AWF established the South African Community Working Group for the CWG-GKG Transfrontier Park. The main aim of the CWG–GKG was to conserve the environment and stimulate sustainable development processes in the forum areas. An executive committee was formed which comprised of six male representatives, one from each

of the six forum areas. In some cases these representatives were not members of the forum, but they were included because they represented other interest groups in the area. The KNP SE Department facilitated workshops with communities, to maximise the role that the CWG–GKG could play in terms of forum and interest group participation to:

- survey the needs of people;
- provide information about GKG developments;
- participate in the planning of the GKG;
- source livelihood opportunities from businesses and infrastructural developments, and;
- diversify land use options and improve property rights;
- increase cross border collaboration between ethnic and cultural groups that were historically divided because of the creation of the KNP;
- promote EE education for the youth; and
- participate and promote cultural heritage sites in and outside the KNP (Nkatini 17-18 October 2003).

The CWG–GKG was different from the KNP's community forums in two ways. Firstly it coordinated and represented the interests of communities across the KNP's six forum boundaries, and secondly some of its representatives had other interests, not necessarily related to the KNP forums (Draft Minutes of the GKG - CWG Meeting. 28 May 2001).

Several key informants raised concerns about the ability of the KNP SE Department's ability to meet community needs during the expansion of national parks. The KNP SE Department also had a huge task to explain and garner community support for the creation of TBPAs and TFCAs (SANParks, DANCED and GtZ. May 2000; Key Informant Interview Chair of the SANParks Board's Sub - Committee for People and Conservation Johannesburg 30 May 2005; Massyn 2-4 November 2001). An example of the extent to which community participation was genuinely encouraged was in the case of the Makuleke community. Mr Leo Braak, the co-ordinator of the GKG at the time, made a fair suggestion to include the participation of the Makuleke CPA on the South African Unit of the technical committee that oversaw planning of this particular TBPA. Mr Braak's rationale for this suggestion was because the Makuleke CPA owned the land between the Luvhuvu and the Limpopo Rivers that was to be included in the plans for the GKG TBPA. The South African Unit of the technical committee did not support the proposal and suggested that the Makulekes be represented on the GKG–CWG instead. This decision was not the only one that

defied the reassurances that the planning process of the development of the park was not to be a top–down process. Community delegates stressed that they did not want to approve decisions that were already *fait accompli*. "We are for it [the transfrontier park] but not as zombies. We have to make our presence felt" (Informant 48 Johannesburg, 1/6/2006). There were many complaints that the parks' planning processes proceeded without proper consultation with communities. (Draft Minutes of the GKG Community Working Group Meeting. 28 May 2001).

Although the KNP SE Department were prepared to play a facilitation role by assisting both the community working groups discussed above, by 2004 a joint ministerial decision involving all three countries stipulated that each country should deal with its own community development issues (Key Informant Interview General Manager of People and Conservation KNP Skukuza 18 June 2007).

Despite these efforts, it has been concluded that communities have been marginalised: "so far TFCAs have sidelined local black populations and impacted negatively on their land rights" (Ramutsindela, 2015:186). Overall Ramutsindela concludes that "In South Africa the land restitution programme has complicated the singleminded drive to expand nature conservation areas in the form of TFCAs. The state's response has been to settle land claims in a manner that prioritises nature conservation…Issues of land rights were marginal to the planning and establishment of the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park, the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park and the Greater Mapungubwe RFCA" (Ramutsindela 2015:190).

Appendix: 3 The Expanded Public Works Programme and TRANSFORM

The EPWP was implemented by the Department of Public Works (DPW), by funding from government departments working in natural resource management, such as the DEAT's Social Responsibility Programme who in turn disbursed funds to SANParks for a number of its programmes. With a budget of ZAR 440 million , since 2000 the EPWP disbursed ZAR 250 million over three years for SANParks' People and Parks Programme (P&P) (Child 2002; DEAT 2005a; Educational Support Services Trust. undated; DEAT 25-27 October 2004; Informant 12, 1/3/2007).

With revenue that eclipsed that of SANParks' SED, the EPWP did more to mend the historical rift between the organisation and neighbouring communities because of its potential to create jobs (South African National Parks. August 2006. Consultants Briefing Notes). This was astute engineering on the part of the second African CEO of SANParks, Mokwena. To ward off constant pressure from community demands for in-situ resource extraction as a foundation of community empowerment, participation and benefit-sharing, he sought this as an alternative to safeguard biodiversity conservation in all national parks. The EPWP was part of a government policy on black empowerment and local economic development.

As part of the RPWP the P&P received the bulk of SANParks' funding for community upliftment projects, compared to the other EPWP projects mentioned below. Between 1994-2004, all 22 national parks participated in the P&P to develop tourism infrastructure by creating labour intensive construction employment to upgrade and build rest camps, tourism road networks, park fences, bulk services, staff accommodation, the rehabilitation of old farmlands and archaeological sites, and the establishment of TFCAs (Informant 12, 1/3/2007). See Annex 5 for a discussion of the P&P in the Kruger National Park.

Another EPWP, managed by the Department of Water and Forestry (DWAF), was the **Working for Water** programme (*WfW*) initiated in 1995. It prevents and controls the spread of invasive alien species, especially woody species from river systems and catchment areas. It is the country's and indeed, Africa's biggest single and most successful job creation and environmental rehabilitation programme. It created 24 000 temporary jobs per annum in 313 projects, with a budget that grew from ZAR 25 million in 1995-1996, to R 442 million in 2003-2004. SANParks implemented this programme in 17 of the 22 national parks (DEAT 2005a; Educational Support Services Trust.

undated; SANParks Annual Report. 1998; 1999; 2002; Informant 12, 1/3/2007; Müller 2009). See Annex 5 for a discussion of the *WfW* in the Kruger National Park.

Also managed by DWAF, the **Working on Fire** (Wofire) programme was launched in 2003, involving a number of public-private-civil society partnerships, aimed at promoting an integrated approach to veldfire management, poverty alleviation, training and job creation. Besides training poor communities to prevent and manage wildfires, it creates jobs for them to clear alien species and build firebreaks. It has effective fire-fighting teams and helicopter crews (Educational Support Services Trust. undated; Mohamed 2003). SANParks partnered with Wofire in Golden Gate Highlands National Park (Informant 12, 1/3/2007).

The **Working for Wetlands** (WfWetlands) programme uses labour intensive methods for the conservation, rehabilitation and sustainable use of sensitive wetlands. Managed by the South African Biodiversity Institute on behalf of DEAT, it also creates jobs for poor unemployed people to clear alien and invasive species, while providing education and training for them to establish their own businesses. SANParks implemented this programme in four national parks by 2003 (Mohamed 2003; Informant 12, 1/32007).

Working for the Coast (CoastCare) is another DEAT programme that attempts to alleviate poverty by developing awareness, education and the rehabilitation of coastal areas. SANParks received funding for a second cycle of project implementation (2004-2007), in seven national parks (Informant 12, 1/3/2007).

Although the EPWP has been successfully implemented, it has been claimed that one of its limitations was that government conceptualised and implemented pro-poor rural development and environmental programmes primarily through welfare and expanded social services instead of building market-related assets and support for wealth-creating productive activity (Cousins 2000a).

Capacity Building for Community Based Natural Resource Management

Although in post 1994, there were attempts to create institutional capacity to implement new policies and laws to benefit poor rural people, by 2004 government personnel and communities still had difficulty in understanding, engaging and implementing pro-poor frameworks (Turner in

SANParks, DANCED and GTZ 2000). Added to old guard resistance to transformation of the conservation sector including SANParks, this continuing disempowerment presented obstacles for effective governance, and delivery of promises contained in their official pronouncements.

South Africa does not have many examples of initiatives to build community and governmental capacity to engage with post 1994 policy and legislation to implement CBNRM projects, defined in chapter two. The biggest endeavour in this regard was the TRANSFORM project (Training and Support for Natural Resource Management). It was a joint project between the DEAT[5] and the German Agency for Development Co-operation (GTZ)[6], funded by the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany. For 12 years, TRANSFORM supported environmental policy formulation for national, provincial and parastatal conservation authorities, as well as training community representatives and some local government officials to implement CBNRM projects (Mitchell *et al*. undated). This was important for SANParks' constituency building aims to garner multi-level stakeholder support, in which national government ranked highest, followed by communities immediately adjacent to protected areas (DANIDA and Pemconsult 2002).

TRANSFORM initiated three pilots projects to conceptualise and test methodologies for social facilitation and conflict management (1996–2000) in protected area co-management where communities had successfully claimed land rights: Makuleke (Limpopo Province), Kosi Bay (Kwa-Zulu/Natal Province) and the Richtersveld (Northern Cape Province) (Project Progress Review Report 2007; Mitchell *et al*. undated; Fabricius undated). These in-situ models "shifted the conservation paradigm toward projects that integrated conservation and sustainable natural resource management within a new democratic and human rights framework - hence including a focus on people" (Collins and Snell in Mitchell *et al* undated).

TRANSFORM developed an integrated approach to implement CBNRM projects, and training for in-situ conservation at community level was aimed at assisting the formation of partnerships between the private sector and the three communities to establish community-based eco-tourism ventures. After completing feasibility studies, community-based legal entities, multi-stakeholder project advisory committees, local project liaison officers, investors and tourism operators were set up and appointed through rigorous processes. Skills and economic development initiatives through Small

[5] This was part of DEAT's Social Responsibility Programme that commenced in 1999 with a budget of R77million and that subsequently grew to a programme with a budget of R447million in 2006/7.

[6] TRANSFORM was initially partnered with the Department of Land Affairs (DLA).

Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMME) were developed to service and benefit from the ecotourism projects (Mitchell *et al* undated).

Regarding ex-situ community conservation, between 2000-2003 a resource book, Community Based Natural Resource Management Guidelines (CBNRM Guidelines) was developed. It contained lessons learnt from *in-situ* conservation, to empower and provide economic incentives for communities including those residing next to parks, to benefit from the utilisation of natural resources. The CBNRM Guidelines were disseminated to new pilot projects, government departments, NGOs and rural communities and private land owners (Mitchell *et al*. undated; Cundill 2008; Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, 25-27 October 2004; CBNRM Guidelines 2003).

However, the TRANSFORM approach to CBNRM had by 2004, benefited mostly the private sector (Mitchell *et al*. undated). Other analysts confirm that rural people and community based organisations in general still had difficulty understanding and engaging with the new policy and legislative framework, there was limited organisational transformation and the sustainable use of natural resources did not result in benefit-sharing, instead continuing community disempowerment created obstacles for effective governance of nature conservation areas. Although the in-situ Makuleke example discussed in chapter? was an isolated case, it demonstrated that progress in community-based conservation was dependent on access to consultants (Turner in SANParks, DANCED and GTZ 2000). Thus the promotion of community based tourism remained a challenge especially in ex-situ areas (Turner and Meer 2001; Wynberg 2002).

Later TRANSFORM also focused on capacity building for government officials. Although coinciding late with period of this research (2003-2007) relevant national, provincial and local government personnel were trained to generally raise awareness, implement and institutionalise the lessons learnt from the TRANSFORM about CBNRM (Mitchell *et al*. undated). In addition, national departments were guided to formulate their own CBNRM policies to implement their own projects (Mitchell *et al*. undated). Despite this, the national DEAT still suffered from low personnel capacity, it was also unable to provide decentralised service structures to provide guidance, impetus and implement CBNRM projects at municipal and community level. At provincial level, with the exception of the Gauteng, KwaZulu/Natal and the Western Cape, the lack of capacity for effective project implementation and governance not only existed, it was intensified at local

government level (Mitchell *et al* undated; Müller 2009). During TRANSFORM training sessions, SANParks' staff also clearly had difficulty in understanding post 1994 policies and legislation (Informant 9, Johannesburg, 11/10/2005).