



## Mobilizing Civil Society to Support Living Landscapes in the Kouga Catchment



October 2011

## Contents

Project Summary:.....	3
1. Project executor.....	4
1.1 Project leader.....	4
1.2 Team members.....	4
1.3 Close collaboration with.....	4
1.4 Duration of project.....	4
2. Project Description.....	5
2.1 Background and motivation.....	5
2.2 Project objectives.....	7
2.3 Project outputs.....	8
2.4 Project indicators.....	9
2.5 Project methods.....	10
2.6 Project schedule.....	13
2.7 Stakeholder support.....	15
2.8 Project sustainability.....	15
2.9 Budget.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
2.10 References cited in application.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Appendix 1: Letters of support.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Appendix 2: Letters from TMF for Co-funding.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>

## Project Summary:

The PRESENCE Learning Network has been active for the past four years within the Baviaanskloof Mega Reserve (BMR) planning domain, largely tackling issues relating to restoration, conservation and livelihood options in the area. The focus has been on applying the unique approach to restore a living landscape (both social and natural capital) using social learning technology to mobilize and engage with various stakeholders on the landscape. Substantial progress has been made in creating a better understanding of the ecological, socio-economic and institutional issues and conservation opportunities across the BMR planning domain.

After applying the process for a significantly enough time (4 years), the indications are clear that the lessons could be applied in other areas in the region. This idea stems from the observation of mindset changes in the Baviaanskloof area, which has built confidence in the ability of this process to produce desirable outcomes. The current project aims to embark on a social learning journey in order to facilitate the mobilization of civil society to promote, create and restore living landscapes in the Kouga catchment as part of the Baviaanskloof Mega reserve planning domain, thereby extending the scope and opening up space to apply the lessons learned in the western sector of the Baviaanskloof. The project will therefore undertake to reach the following 3 objectives:

1. The creation of a “collective” awareness and understanding of the socio-ecological and economical needs, challenges, values, norms, and behaviours of individuals, institutions, and organizations on the landscape.
2. The creation of “collective” intelligence around the socio-ecological and economical opportunities and constraints.
3. The creation of “collective” action to create and mainstream the common vision for a living landscape.

## 1. Project executor

### 1.1 Project leader:

#### **Dieter C.K. Van den Broeck**

Co-director  
Living Lands  
P.O. Box 237, Patensie, 6335  
Tel: 0422830242 or 0218139121  
Fax: 0865398805  
[broeck@earthcollective.net](mailto:broeck@earthcollective.net)

### 1.2 Team members:

#### **Marijn Zwinkels and Odirilwe Selomane**

Senior Project Manager and Co-director  
Living Lands  
Tel: 0422830242 or 0218139121  
Fax: 0865398805  
[marijn@earthcollective.net](mailto:marijn@earthcollective.net), [odi@earthcollective.net](mailto:odi@earthcollective.net)

### 1.3 Close collaboration with:

#### **Tracey Potts, Coordinator Stewardship Program**

Eastern Cape Park and Tourism Agency  
Tel: 042 2920465, Cell: 079 4967931, Fax: 086 5490957  
[Tracey.Steyn@ecpta.co.za](mailto:Tracey.Steyn@ecpta.co.za)

#### **Edwill Moore, Project Manager Working for Water**

Gamtoos Irrigation Board  
Tel: 042 2830329, Cell: 0828560417, Fax: 086 6750113  
[e.moore@lantic.net](mailto:e.moore@lantic.net)

#### **Michael Kawa, Regional Programme Leader: Natural Resource Management Programmes**

Department Environmental Affairs  
Tel: 043 7010328, Fax: 086 6142180  
[kawam@dwa.gov.za](mailto:kawam@dwa.gov.za)

### 1.4 Duration of project:

3 years

## 2. Project Description

### 2.1 Background and motivation:

The PRESENCE Learning Network<sup>1</sup> has been successful in applying their unique approach to restore living landscapes<sup>2</sup> (social and natural capital). The network has been active for the past four years within the Baviaanskloof Mega Reserve (BMR) planning domain, focusing in on the western section of the Baviaanskloof in particular. During that period, great momentum around the restoration and conservation of the area's natural capital and biodiversity has been built up. Landowners in the area, who were previously adverse, are now interested, willing and open to look at restoration, conservation and sustainable land-use. A collective awareness, understanding and intelligence has been created, not only amongst landowners in the area, but also other crucial stakeholders from and involved in the area. This entire process has resulted in the mobilization of the Baviaanskloof civil society to take collective action to achieve the vision of a living landscape. There are currently numerous restoration projects occurring in the area as a result of this mobilization. A few of the activities which are currently taking place due to the previous years' activities of PRESENCE include: The Working for Woodlands program is currently planting Spekboom on degraded farmland; restoration of the Baviaanskloof alluvial fans (in partnership with the Dutch Government) is underway; Working for Wetlands will soon start the restoration of the once existing wetland system; and ECPTA will sign their first Stewardship agreements in the area soon.

One of the major successes of this process was realised after the knowledge exchange between the western sector landowners and the Nuwejaars Special Management Area landowners. There was a great realisation amongst the Baviaanskloof landowners that they have to work together and with nature to create a sustainable future.

Substantial progress has also been made in creating a better understanding of the ecological, socio-economic and institutional issues and conservation opportunities across the BMR planning domain. One of the main challenges identified by PRESENCE partners is the long term financial sustainability to maintain the momentum of restoration, conservation, sustainable land-use change and Stewardship initiated by various initiatives and organizations. Given the momentum to date, there is now a significant opportunity to create a Rewards for Ecosystem Services (RES) scheme which will both support a nature-based economy, as well as create and catalyze public-private partnerships. This will have the synergistic effect of building social, natural and financial capital.

Another challenge that has been identified by PRESENCE partners is the fact that the mobilisation of civil society has only been occurring in the western sector of the Baviaanskloof Mega Reserve planning domain. It has therefore been identified that it is crucial to mobilise civil society in other areas of the BMR planning domain too. A similar process and approach will be followed as in the western sector of the Baviaanskloof; using the lessons learnt through that process and creating a similar mindset shift in other areas, such as the Kouga catchment. The same opportunities which

---

<sup>1</sup> **PRESENCE** (Participatory Restoration of Ecosystem SErvices & Natural Capital in the Eastern Cape) is a collaborative learning network established by partners such as: Department of Environmental Affairs, Working for Water/Woodlands, Eastern Cape Parks and Tourism Agency, Gamtoos Irrigation Board, Rhodes University, Rhodes Restoration Research Group, Stellenbosch University, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, R3G, Wageningen University (The Netherlands), Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, South African National Biodiversity Institute with Working for Wetlands, Alterra-WUR, Dutch Government, Ecofuture, Africa's Search for Sound Economic Trajectories and the German Aerospace Agency (Germany).

<sup>2</sup> Living Landscape is a variety of healthy eco-systems and land-uses and is home to ecological, agricultural and social systems which are managed so that they function sustainably. This ensures that natural and cultural resources are available for future generations.

exist in the western sector also exist in the Kouga catchment. With Kouga being a crucial catchment for the delivery of water to the Kouga dam, which provides water to the Gamtoos Valley and Port Elizabeth, there is a need for collective awareness and collaborations to create opportunities such as a RES scheme.

At the same time, the Eastern Cape Parks & Tourism Agency (ECPTA) together with Living Lands are investigating the benefits and opportunities of establishing a biosphere reserve as an effective platform to coordinate and implement the proposed strategy.

A crucial aspect in achieving RES, sustainable farming and the biosphere reserve is the close involvement of local stakeholders. Through Living Lands' long-term engagement with landowners and communities in the Baviaanskloof catchment, positive momentum and willingness has been - and continues to be - generated within the local community. The next step is to upscale this trend through further engagement with all the landowners and communities across the BMR. This project will mainly focus on the Kouga catchment, also known as the Langkloof.

The Kouga River Catchment is located in the western region of the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa. The area is surrounded by the Tsitsikamma Mountains from the South and the Kouga Mountains from the North, while also bordering the Baviaanskloof Mountain range. The Kouga covers an area of 282,040 ha (Mander et al, 2010), and falls within the mountain catchment area of the Langkloof valley (Hosking and Preez, 2002). The indigenous vegetation is Grassy fynbos, while dominant invasive vegetation is *Acacia* spp. (the dreaded Black Wattle), *Pinus* spp., *Hakea* spp. (Hosking and Preez, 2004).

The catchment is largely remote and not very densely populated. The majority of land is privately owned by farmers for agricultural purposes (69.0%). The state owned areas (30.1%) are used for housing and future expansion (Baselmans, 2011) and are characterized by the presence of untouched plant and animal communities (Plessis, 2003).

The main agricultural activity is fruit production– approx. 7000 ha (Jansen, 2008). Vegetable crop production is limited. Small area (12 ha) is intensively farmed with honey bush tea (*Cyclopia* spp.). 10 ha are taken for limited Buchu (*Agothosama* spp.) production. Finally, extensive livestock farming exist in the area (Mander et al, 2010), but the numbers are small. In most cases it is not the main source of income for farmers (Baselmans, 2011).

The problems that have been identified in the area in particular include:

- Alien invasive plant species. These alien species pose a threat to the functioning and productive capacity of land, and also constitute a threat to biodiversity.
- Wetland degradation. Wetlands are hosts to rare habitats, and healthy wetlands contribute to water purification and retention. Its degradation can lead to sedimentation flowing into storage dams, and to an increasing risk of floods. Erosion is one more issue related to wetland degradation (Plessis, 2003).
- Loss of water yield and fire risks (Plessis, 2003).
- Unsustainable land use.

## 2.2 Project objectives:

The project encompasses a **social learning journey** in order to facilitate the mobilization of civil society to promote, create and restore Living landscapes in the Kouga catchment as part of the Baviaanskloof Mega reserve planning domain.

The project consists of 3 objectives:

4. The creation of a **“collective” awareness and understanding** of the socio-ecological and economical needs, challenges, values, norms, and behaviours of individuals, institutions, and organizations on the landscape.
5. The creation of **“collective” intelligence** around the socio-ecological and economical opportunities and constraints.
6. The creation of **“collective” action** to create and mainstream the common vision for a living landscape.

Achieving these objectives will contribute to:

- the establishment “Kouga learning network” which will catalyse:
  - **Integration and coordination** of different local initiatives;
  - **Attracting and Involving** new partners;
  - **Ensure** open and continuous dialogue between stakeholders;
  - **Communicating** & disseminating new information, knowledge;
  - **Interfacing** to help bridge research-implementation gaps;
  - **Catalyzing** new ideas, opportunities & partnerships.
- the increase of stakeholder awareness and buy-in for:
  - recognising the impact of and clearing of alien trees (landowner incentives);
  - restoration of natural capital and biodiversity (wetlands and riparian zones);
  - sustainable farming and land-use;
  - the protection and conservation of biodiversity and prioritised terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems;
  - a stewardship programme;
  - the Baviaanskloof Liaison Forum;
  - the establishment of a biosphere reserve;
  - integrated watershed management and adaptation to climate change;
  - the establishment of rewards system for ecosystem services (RES).

### 2.3 Project outputs:

The project is based on the facilitation of a social learning process and being such will see its outputs come out of the five phases of the process:

#### Phase 1:

- *Inception report which includes;*
  - o Stakeholder Assessment (database); will include basic knowledge on the needs, challenges, willingness in the different outcomes (see above), social networks, activities and communication channels of individuals, institutions, and organizations in the Kouga catchment. This knowledge will help to identify (additional<sup>3</sup>) key stakeholders (persons and organisations) and champions of the area which need to participate in the “*working group*”. This will also contribute to the Social learning strategy. This is mainly being focused on what we know.
  - o Biophysical Assessment; (using existing knowledge) of the current challenges and land use, the location (and state) of aliens, biodiversity, wetlands, alluvial fans and dams.
  - o Social learning strategy; will inform the LL & working group on the different tools and methods to create a collective learning environment.
  - o Knowledge (applied research) gaps; is a summary of the key research questions which need to be answered to create a better understanding of the function, of the area (socio-ecological and economical).
  
- *Establishment of a working group;*
  - o Commitment and buy-in of key stakeholders in the process (if needed signing letters of intent to engage in the process).
  - o Possible organisations for the workgroup are: District and local municipality; Department of Agriculture; Landowners’ associations; ECPTA; Gamtoos Irrigation Board; Working for Water and Working for Wetland; Department of Environmental Affairs; Green choice; WWF / TMF; Land care; SANBI; Universities and Businesses.

#### Phase 2:

- *Workgroup meetings*
- *Learning event (4\* workshops and 6 \*learning journeys).*
- *Minutes of each learning event.*
- *Applied Research reports.*
- *Newsletter.*
- *Popular articles*
- *Portal (web based discussion and sharing platform).*
- *GIS Database.*
- *Progress report.*

*The following phases we believe are important for the process, but no funding is available at the moment. First connections have been made with funders and organisations to help.*

- *Reportages (video).*
- *Capacity building.*

---

<sup>3</sup> This proposal is developed in close collaboration with ECPTA, WfW, GIB,



**Phase 3:**

- Information booklet & Maps.
- Stakeholder group meetings.
- Minutes of Stakeholder group meetings.
- Wilderness trails.
- Strategy workshop
- Progress Report.
- Strategy document.

**Phase 4:**

- Action groups.
- Implementation plan and funding proposals.
- Implementation actions.

**Phase 5:**

- Kouga learning network.
- MoU: between the different stakeholder will be signed regarding the strategy and action developed during the process.
- Final rapport.

**2.4 Project indicators:**

These indicators are also related to the sub-sections of the main outputs.

1. **Co-initiating:** the indicator of this phase is the amount of key stakeholders and champion joining the workgroup.
2. **Co-sensing:**
  - Increase awareness and understanding with key stakeholders.
  - Successful hosting and facilitating of the proposed learning events.
  - Increase of number of stakeholders participating in the different learning events.
  - Increase in the amount of universities and researchers (students) undertaking research activities in the area.
  - The publication of at least 5 applied research reports.
  - Increase in the number of people providing feedback and input in the newsletter and portal.
  - The publication and distribution of at least 6 newsletters.
  - The launching of the web based portal by the year 2012.
  - A comprehensive GIS database which is accessible and available to partners by 2012.
  - Several popular articles published in local and regional news and media.
3. **Presencing:**
  - Publication of an information and map booklet and its successful distribution and positive response to it.
  - Minutes of the stakeholder group meetings, with positive attendance registers.
  - Good attendance of stakeholder group meetings.
  - Successfully organising 3 Wilderness trails for at least 25 to 30 key stakeholders.
  - The development of a Strategy document.

#### 4. Co-creating

- The creation of at least 4 action groups to further develop different opportunities.
- The development of 4 Implementation plans and funding proposals.
- Initiating the start of implementation for at least four different (prototypes) actions to mainstream the opportunities.

#### 5. Co-evolving

- The first Kouga learning network workshop; attended by at least 50 people.

### 2.5 Project methods:

The learning journey used in this project is based on the Presencing Journey (theory U). This social technology was developed by the Presencing institute based at MIT.

1. **Co-initiating (6 months):** (Common Intent - Stop and listen to others and to their needs and challenges.) During the co- initiating phase the main objective is to convene a constellation of players that need one another to take action and to move forward. This group of people, “working group”, must represent all the voices and key people who can create change on the landscape. It is of great importance to build trust and create an understanding what their needs are. This will be done through six activities:
  - *Individual meetings with key role players (see above):* will be organised to create a dialogue around their needs, interests and views of the area. Their role and commitment will also be discussed.
  - *Individual stakeholder interviews:* will be undertaken in the area to contribute to the stakeholder assessment and social learning strategy;
  - *Collecting and analysing exciting data and consulting with experts:* will be done to find out the basic biophysical assessment and knowledge (applied research) gaps;
  - *Inception report:* will be compiled and distributed for feedback from key stakeholders and experts;
  - *Inception meeting:* will be organised between the key role-players to discuss the inception report, the process (future plans) and get commitment and buy-in in the process.
  - *Establishment of a working group:* by signing the letter intent.
  
2. **Co-sensing (1 year):** (Observe, observe, observe). It is of great importance during this phase that learning is done in a collective and participatory manner. It is about creating collective awareness and understanding between all stakeholders (everybody has to walk in each other’s shoes). It is about creating empathy and compassion. This will be done through activities:
  - *Workgroup meetings:* will be organised to discuss the process and receive feedback.
  - *Four stakeholders’ (2) and spiritual leaders’ (2) workshops:* will be organised during the process to create a dialogue between different stakeholders and spiritual leaders to discuss results for different research, need, perceptions, challenges and other.
  - *Six stakeholder’s (2) and spiritual leaders (2) learning journeys:* will be organised where stakeholders and spiritual leaders will have the opportunity to interact with experts and researchers, around different challenges and key questions in the area.

- *Applied Research reports*: will be published for the various research to be undertaken in the area. The research will focus on the research gaps identified in the previous phase (e.g.):
  - o creating a better understanding of the types and locations of the biophysical features that provide ecosystem services,
  - o the impact and the benefit of clearing of alien trees on water, livelihoods and farming,
  - o the restoration opportunities and challenges for biodiversity, wetlands and riparian areas,
  - o how farmers can improve land management and water use,

At the moment there are several researches in development, to start in the coming months:

- o Dissonance in social learning in the Kouga catchment.
  - o Assessing possible effects of wetland restoration on streamflow and water supply in a semi-arid floodplain in the Baviaanskloof, South Africa.
  - o Land cover change and the complex balance of water resources in the Langkloof.
  - o Ecosystem services per land use in the Kouga catchment.
  - o Identifying wetland ecosystem services.
  - o Modelling the impact of land management strategies on biodiversity and ecosystem services.
  - o Analyzing the effect of land management on the services provided by nature.
- *Newsletter*: will be developed and published regularly. This will include announcements, progress and results of different research, initiatives and learning events:
  - *Popular articles*: will be published in different media.
  - *Portal (web based discussion and sharing platform)*: will be developed to facilitate better communication, dialogue, sharing of information (results of research, minutes of meetings) and interaction.
  - *Minutes of each learning event*: will be recorded and distributed to each stakeholder. This will include action points and decisions made. The learning events include the workshops, learning journeys and workgroup meetings.
  - *GIS Database*: will be build with exiting data of the area and maintain with new data what comes available during the process. This data base will be made available for partners and researchers in the area to assist them with their work. This will be done in collaboration with Wageningen University and SynBioSys programme.
  - *Progress Report*: will be made at the end of the phase to inform all the stakeholders and funders of the achievements, activities and progress made.
  - *Reportages (video)*: will be made of different facts, first-hand impressions and background stories, activities and interviews of stakeholders. This will be shared with all stakeholders to create better interaction, learning, communication and dialogue.
  - *Capacity building*: of local leaders in the area across the different stakeholders. This is important to maintain the momentum which is gained during this process.

**3. Presencing (6 months):** (Stop, Reflect and remind one another about why this matters): During this phase different workshops will be held to brainstorm and identify a way forward.

- *Information booklet & Maps*: will be published, distributed and discussed to create (more) awareness and understanding with all stakeholders around the opportunities and constraints. This will be a synergy of the applied research, workshops, dialogues and field

journeys' outcomes. It will represent the collective awareness, understanding and intelligence that was created during the previous phase by and within the workgroup and other participants.

- *Stakeholder group meetings*: will be organised for the different stakeholder groups to discuss their views on the different opportunities and constraints.
- *Minutes of Stakeholder group meetings*: will be recorded and distributed. This will include action points and decisions made.
- *Wilderness trails*: will be organised for the workgroup and other stakeholders (30 people).
- *Strategy document*: will be collaboratively developed with the workgroup and other key stakeholders during a strategy workshop. It will be contributed to by the outcome of the stakeholder group meetings and other learning activities. It will include the vision and objectives in the area, the strategy to realize the vision and objectives, and the instruments, tools and organisations needed to implement the actions.
- *Progress Report*: will be made and distributed at the end of the phase to inform all the stakeholders and funders of the achievements, activities and progress.

**4. Co-creating (6 months):** (Prototyping to explore the future by doing): In this phase the workgroup will commit itself to the innovations and actions identified. Their commitment creates an environment conducive to attracting more people, opportunities, and resources that enable the actions and interventions to happen. Together with the workgroup, different and new organisations will be identified to take part in the action groups. These action groups will develop, together, the implementation plan for the actions needed and what is needed to attract funding. Each action group is also responsible for under taking some pilot actions.

- *Action groups*: will be initiated for each of the different (groups) of actions and intervention.
- *Implementation plan and funding proposals*: will be develop for each of the activities identified in the strategy document.
- *Implementation actions*: different actions will be prototyped and undertaken.

**5. Co-evolving (3 months):** The focus during this phase is to create or strengthen infrastructures for the integrating of learning, actions and prototyping.

- *Kouga learning network*: first workshop will be organised.

## 2.6 Project schedule:

<b>Activities</b>	<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>
<b>Co-initiating: (6 months)</b>		
<i>Individual meeting with key role players</i>	January 2012	April
<i>Stakeholder interviews</i>	January	April
<i>Inception meeting</i>	June	June
<i>Inception report</i>	May	May
<i>Establishing of a workgroup</i>	June	June 2012
<b>Co-sensing: (1 year)</b>		
<i>4x working group meetings (each three months)</i>	July 2012	July 2013
<i>Individual meeting with all the stakeholders</i>	July 2012	July 2013
<i>Attendance of existing social activities/meetings</i>	July 2012	July 2013
<i>4 landscape workshops</i>	July 2012	July 2013
<i>6 Field journeys</i>	July 2012	July 2013
<i>Different applied research</i>	July 2012	July 2013
<i>Newsletter, popular article and Portal</i>	July 2012	July 2013
<i>Database</i>	July 2012	July 2013
<i>Progress report</i>	June 2013	July 2013
<b>Presencing: (6 months)</b>		
<i>Information booklet &amp; Maps</i>	July 2013	September
<i>3 Wilderness trails</i>	July	September
<i>Stakeholder group meetings</i>	October	November
<i>Strategy workshop</i>	October	October
<i>Strategy document</i>	October	December
<i>Progress Report</i>	November	December 2013

**Co-creating: (6 months)**

<i>Action groups</i>	January 2014	February
<i>Implementation plan and funding proposals</i>	February	May
<i>Implementation actions</i>	March	June 2014

**Co-evolving: (6 months)**

MoU	June 2014	December
Institutionalising Kouga learning network	June	December
Final Rapport	November	December 2014

## 2.7 Stakeholder support:

Name of Contact person	Organisation	Contact Details (Tel, Fax, E-mail)
Pierre Joubert	Gamtoos Irrigation Board	Tel: 042 283 0329 Fax: 086 675 0113 Email: Gamtoos@lantic.net
Japie Buckle	SANBI: Working for Wetlands	Tel: 082 8207083 Email: j.buckle@sanbi.org.za
Tracey Potts	ECPTA: Stewardship Programme	Tel: Email: Tracey.Steyn@ecpta.co.za
Sam van der Merwe	Eastern Cape Department of Rural Development and Agrarian Reform	Tel: 042 273 1342 Fax: 042 273 2657 Email: sam.m@agr.ecprov.gov.za
Wayne Erlank	Eastern Cape Parks and Tourism Agency	Tel: 042 283 0630 Fax: 0866 193 569 Cell: 072 430 6423 <a href="mailto:wayne.erlank@ecpta.co.za">wayne.erlank@ecpta.co.za</a>

## 2.8 Project sustainability:

The idea of the project is to mobilize civil society and the private sector to invest in the outcomes of the project so as to engage with civil society and the private sector in order to create an awareness and consciousness about the problems that are affecting their environment. In turn this rise in consciousness and awareness will help civil society to better understand and acknowledge how these problems affect them directly and how they affect them, so that they will take it upon themselves in the future to solve these problems themselves.