

Off-Reserve biodiversity conservation in Gauteng

S J Taylor cell 082 383 7714

Suet@gpg.gov.za

Technological Services

Conservation Directorate, DACE

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Conservation on Private Land

- At present the system of formally protected areas is inadequate to protect all elements of biodiversity, as historically PA s were often located in areas that no-one wanted, or where large ungulates could be kept.
- Biodiversity elements are often in other areas, in Gauteng are in areas threatened with development, farming and industry
- Need a system THAT WORKS to capture biodiversity conservation on private land.

C-Plan software/inventory and biodiversity planning

- In Gauteng, we now have up-to-date, accurate information on where the important elements of biodiversity are located (irreplaceable and important areas)
- We would now like to use this information to target areas where conservation options on private land should be put in place to conserve biodiversity

C-Plan implementation

- Use of the conservancies approach would be an option.
- Protected Areas Bill to be explored for other more formal options
- C-Plan information to inform the local authorities where they need to play a greater role in securing biodiversity conservation (DACECEL's role)
- We will also be developing a promotional campaign to take the findings of the C-Plan work to a wide range of stakeholders (DACECEL's role)

Basic measures to conserve biodiversity on private land

- Areas containing biodiversity set aside, no ploughing (EIA required)
- Appropriate veld management (in terms of burning programmes, overgrazing/overstocking)
- No harvesting of medicinal plants allowed
- Reduction in use of pesticides/herbicides (protection of insect life, esp. pollinators) (Land care)
- No poisoning of jackal (results in poisoning of non-target species)
- Remove alien invasive vegetation (legislated)

Basic measures

- Do not farm with animals outside their natural range (eg. No Gemsbok) (provincial authority)
- Do not farm with two species that could hybridise (eg. The two wildebeest species) (provincial authority)
- Species specific management plan in place for the threatened species on the land (eg. Blue cranes, red data plants).
- No introduction of alien fish species for angling
- Protection of wetlands and riverine vegetation

Compliance

- How to get compliance with these basic requirements so that biodiversity protected on private land?
- What are the reasons most conservancies are formed? How can DACEL promote conservancy formation for biodiversity reasons?
- What are the major constraints to forming conservancies?
- How long do conservancies last? Is how sustainable is this approach?
- How is biodiversity managed on conservancies eg. Code of conduct?

Information as an incentive

- Website? What to place on the website?
- Information leaflets eg. Game bird farming
- Extension officers
- Customised ecological management plans to manage land in best practise mode (landowners to implement, DACEEL to monitor)
- Customised threatened species management plans (landowners to implement, DACEEL to monitor)

Incentives for private land owners to conserve biodiversity

- Much research has been done on incentives for conservation on private land eg. By Mark Botha of BotSoc, Melinda Swift DACEL
- *What would be incentivising, in Gauteng?*
- Rebates on land tax for unused land – promised by DEAT at the WPC??? (Melinda)
- Game guard training, conservancy registration/recognition by provincial authorities, certificates? How effective are these to motivate landowners to a) form conservancies b) to conserve biodiversity?
- Information on biodiversity under their custodianship – would it motivate landowners to know of valuable species/ecosystems on their land?

Other issues

- What happens/what is planned when landowner within conservancy sells out?
- What happens if one of the landowners doesn't follow the conservancy house rules eg. Any redress by other members?
- Redress by DACEEL?
- Legal status eg. Section 21 Company – investigation of benefits of this needed.