

**RECONCILING POVERTY REDUCTION AND BIODIVERSITY
CONSERVATION: THE CASE OF EXPANDED PUBLIC WORKS
PROGRAMME (EPWP) IN HLULEKA AND MKAMBATI NATURE
RESERVES, SOUTH AFRICA**

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**A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree
of Master of Philosophy in Land and Agrarian Studies**



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DECLARATION

I declare that Reconciling Poverty Reduction and Biodiversity Conservation: The Case of Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) in Hluleka and Mkambati Nature Reserves, South Africa is my own work. All other sources, used or quoted, have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references. This thesis has not been submitted for a degree at another university.

Siviwe Kobokana

May 2007

Signature



.....

Supervisor: Dr. Thembela Kepe (University of Toronto, Canada)

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Uzuko kuwe Qamata. Makube Camagu, kube Chosi!!!!!!

ABSTRACT

RECONCILING POVERTY REDUCTION AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION: THE CASE OF EXPANDED PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME (EPWP) IN HLULEKA AND MKAMBATI NATURE RESERVES, SOUTH AFRICA

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MPhil Thesis, Land and Agrarian Studies

This study aimed at analysing the South African government's attempt at reconciling poverty reduction and biodiversity conservation in the context of the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP). The study analyses this using the cases of Hluleka and Mkambati Nature Reserves in the Eastern Cape Province. To achieve this aim, the study used qualitative research methodology, which employed a three pronged-approach. Firstly, a literature review on the Expanded Public Works Programme was done. Secondly, policy review on poverty and conservation was done. Thirdly, two case studies on Hluleka and Mkambati Nature Reserves are presented. These case studies focus on the Expanded Public Works Programme in these two Protected Areas. In addition to literature review of mainly government documents and journal articles, a total of 25 people who were involved in the EPWP project in Hluleka were interviewed, while 22 people were interviewed in Mkambati. The study dealt with five main issues. Firstly, it wanted to find out the extent to which beneficiaries of the project understood or had knowledge of the goals of the specific EPWP. Secondly, the study wanted to explore the beneficiaries' understanding of environmental goals of the EPWP. Thirdly, it sought to understand the beneficiaries' perceived importance of the stated goals of EPWP (environmental and poverty reduction). Fourthly, it wanted to find out how the beneficiaries view the project's contribution to their livelihoods. Fifthly, the study wanted to find out the views of beneficiaries about whether the project is progressing well or not. The study has three main conclusions. First, it is clear that the EPWP projects are appreciated by the beneficiaries, as they make a significant, short-term contribution to their livelihoods. Second, rural people who work in the projects have very little understanding of the EPWPs' goals in their areas. They view these as mainly poverty reduction projects. Thirdly, the agency implementing EPWPs in these areas has clearly fallen short in terms of meeting its goals in terms of timely delivery of equipment, explaining the goals and offering timely and needed skills to the beneficiaries. The study proposes that when projects such as this one are initiated, they need to be taken more seriously by respective implementing agents, including making sure that local people fully understand what the project aims to achieve.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1. INTRODUCTION

It is now widely accepted that the majority of South Africans, especially those who live in rural areas, experience extreme forms of poverty (Kepe, 2004). Over half of South Africa's 44 million people live in poverty, with over 70% of these living in rural areas (Aliber, 2003). Research from various fields has constantly suggested that poverty is the root cause of many undesirable factors challenging the post-apartheid government, including violence (Aliber, 2001), theft (Randall, 2004) and environmental degradation (Hoffman and Ashwell, 2001), to mention a few. In South Africa's new democracy, therefore, poverty reduction is a stated policy goal. Section 27 of the South African Constitution¹ commits the government to eliminating poverty, as it states in sub-section 1 that

Everyone has the right to have access to (a) health care services, including reproductive health care; (b) sufficient food and water; and (c) social security, including, if they are unable to support themselves and their dependants, appropriate social assistance.

In the same Section 27, sub-section 2 states that "the state must take reasonable legislative and other measures, within its available resources, to achieve the progressive realization of each of these rights."

In the midst of the poverty reduction goal is a concern that the environment may be a victim.

"It is widely accepted that biodiversity loss and poverty are linked problems and that conservation and poverty reduction should be tackled together. However, success with integrated strategies is elusive. There is sharp debate about the social impacts of conservation programs and the success of community-based approaches to conservation" (Adams et al, 2004:1146)

¹ See The Constitution of South Africa, Act 108, 1996.

Even the President of the Republic of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki, in his speech at the opening ceremony of the Vth IUCN World Parks Congress held in Durban, South Africa, in September 2003, pointed out that:

The mere search for food among poor people, who have limited access to the various means to sustain life available to people in the developed world, has put pressure and will continue to put pressure on the national parks in poor countries.

Hence the constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996, Section 24 commits the government to biodiversity conservation and 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.

Biodiversity conservation scientists face a dilemma. There is increasing concern that global efforts to maintain biodiversity are in conflict with those to reduce poverty (Sanderson and Redford, 2003). Additionally, the linkages between biodiversity and conservation are poorly understood (DFID, 2002), leading to numerous conflicts between supporters of biodiversity conservation and those of human rights. Studies have indicated that human rights and poverty reduction are often seen as threats to biodiversity conservation, and, likewise, biodiversity conservation is sometimes seen as a barrier to people's resource rights and poverty reduction (Kepe *et al*, 2004). The Government is, therefore, in a dilemma in that it must reduce poverty, while at the same time trying to conserve the country's biodiversity. It must find ways of reconciling the two. Several poverty reduction programmes that seek to also protect biodiversity have been planned and implemented, but these have not been analyzed to a point where one can say something is working (Kepe *et al*, 2004). This study, therefore, is one attempt to analyze EPWP, a programme that seeks to reduce poverty, while also contributing to biodiversity conservation.

1.2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of this study is to analyse the South African government's attempt at reconciling poverty reduction and biodiversity conservation in the context of the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP). The study will analyse this using the cases of Hluleka and Mkambati Nature Reserves in the Eastern Cape Province.

To achieve the above aim, a number of objectives have been formulated to guide the rest of this study and these are:

- ✓ To describe and analyse poverty reduction policies of South Africa
- ✓ To describe and analyse the EPWP as it applies to the rest of South Africa
- ✓ To evaluate successes and challenges of EPWP in reducing poverty, while at the same time contributing to biodiversity conservation in Hluleka and Mkambati Nature Reserves
- ✓ Based on the findings of the case study, to draw out implications for policy development and research.

1.3. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The government is investing a lot of money in an attempt to reduce poverty, while at the same time conserving biodiversity. This study should help government in better understanding the successes and challenges of multi-purpose programmes, such as the Expanded Public Works Programme, in reducing poverty while at the same time contributing to biodiversity conservation. More specifically, the study could assist the implementing agents of the programme in determining whether the programme is reaching the intended beneficiaries and whether the goal of conservation is being achieved in the process of poverty reduction. In other words, it is intended that this study should assist the government departments that have EPWP's in identifying the factors that hold back the successful implementation of these programmes and thus hinder the achievement of objectives. It is hoped that this study would

assist policy makers, conservationists, as well as social scientists, in understanding how reconciliation could be made between the old problem of poverty reduction and biodiversity conservation. Local people could benefit from this study in that, they will have more understanding of how the programme works and how it benefits poverty reduction and biodiversity conservation, and may be able to seek more funding from government. Local people may find the findings of this study useful as it is the intention of the study to highlight the reasons for the failure of these programmes. If social dynamics lead to this failure, this could be highlighted. It should, hopefully, partly attempt to answer a question that is asked by Sanderson (2003) as to what would a more successful poverty alleviation strategy look like, and how can conservation agencies help?

1.4. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

While not intended, the study is likely to have been limited by a number of factors. Firstly, the fact that the researcher is not from the study areas could have been a problem since the poor in these areas tend to be suspicious of strangers who ask questions about their livelihoods (See Kepe and Wynberg, 2002). Secondly, the case study areas are no less than four hours from the researcher's place of residence, meaning that much time was spent traveling, which could have been spent in the field. Thirdly, while the people of the study areas and I all speak Xhosa, there are dialectical differences as they speak isiMpondo. This meant that care was always needed in discussions and note-taking. Even then, there is a slight possibility that some things might have been lost in the translation. Fourthly, budgetary constraints were a limitation to the breadth of the study in terms of covering more areas. This, in turn, possibly limited the extent in which generalizations could be made. Fifthly, 2006 was a year when local government elections were conducted. There was always a possibility that local people would be economical in terms of being totally honest, as they are often suspicious of strangers asking questions close to elections. Sixthly, with the researcher being an employee of the Eastern Cape Parks Board, which is the implementing agent of these projects, community members may have expected answers to their queries and dissatisfaction

towards the implementing agent. Lastly, the study is of limited scope, meaning that it had to be undertaken and completed in less than one year. Having listed all these limitations, the researcher did all he could to minimize their negative impact on the study.

1.5. RESEARCH DESIGN

1.5.1. Rationale for the choice of the case study areas

South Africa, like many other emerging economies, is characterized by a dual economy, with a progressive first world economy, which is globally competitive, as well as a second poverty-stricken economy (MBB Consulting Services, 2005). Cousins (2005) notes that we continue to live in one of the most unequal societies on earth, albeit one in which inequality does not coincide with race as closely as it did in the past. President Thabo Mbeki suggests that the two economies are 'structurally disconnected', which means that economic growth in the 'first economy' does not automatically benefit those in the 'second economy', and that integration will require 'sustained government intervention', including resource transfer and the infusion of capital (Mbeki, 2004:10-11). The second economy is generally the larger of the two, in that it is the black population majority who fall into this category, and they are greater in terms of numbers. Therefore, interventions are necessary to support it through enabling economic participation of citizens falling within this category. The economy of the Eastern Cape is characterized by extreme levels of uneven development. This is evident through a number of dualisms between the urban industrial manufacturing centres and the poverty stricken and underdeveloped rural hinterland. This is particularly so in the former homeland areas of the Transkei and Ciskei; between a developed commercial farming sector and a floundering subsistence agricultural sector; and between concentrations of fairly well developed and efficient social and economic infrastructure in the western parts of the province and its virtual absence in the east. Government intervention is most needed in these areas that have been chosen as the study area, as this is revealed in the Provincial Growth and Development Plan (PGDP). Both study areas fall within the OR Tambo District Municipality, one of the poorest districts

in the province. The growth levels of absolute poverty between 1996 and 2001 have been more pronounced in the Eastern Cape than is the case nationally. Statistics show that poverty in the province increased dramatically between 1996 and 2001 (Eastern Cape PGDP 2004-2014). The poverty rate is estimated to be 67.4%, compared to 34.3% in 1996. Even though poverty is highly evident throughout the Province, very large pockets of poverty are found in the OR Tambo, Alfred Nzo and Chris Hani District Municipalities, which include the bulk of the former Transkei (Eastern Cape PGDP 2004-2014). The South African government has embarked on the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) as a short to medium term intervention for creating employment. The premise of the programme is that the temporal employment will not only provide income that can contribute to positive social activities, but provide a skills development that can be used later towards meaningful participation in the economy (MBB Consulting Services).

The Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism is currently implementing a number of these EPWP under various operation areas that include Working for the Coast, People and Parks, Working on Waste, and others. These projects typically have two clear deliverables, a benefit in the form of employment creation, as well as a benefit to the environment. This bias towards the environment has led to an opportunity for an institution like the Eastern Cape Parks Board (ECPB), because of its parks management responsibility to harness the EPWP in its People and Parks category of interventions (MBB Consulting Services, 2005).

Hluleka and Mkambati Nature Reserves have been selected as case study areas because; firstly, there are EPWP activities which take place in communal area settings. Secondly, as an employee of the implementing agent for the EPWP, the Eastern Cape Parks Board, the researcher has a regular access to the two sites. Thirdly, the thesis supervisor, Dr. Thembela Kepe, has done extensive research in Mkambati area and the Wild Coast in general. His familiarity with the area, coupled with the fact that basic data that he has collected over the years is available for this study, is of crucial importance to the study. Fourthly, Mkambati area ranks as one of the top biodiversity hot spots in

the world, with numerous rare plants, many of which are endemic (Kepe, 2004). As this area is of global significance, by doing some studies here, there is a possibility of contributing to existing knowledge and interest in the area. Lastly, Hluleka area has been chosen since fewer studies of this nature have been conducted in the area. Many of the studies that have been conducted in the Hluleka area have been conducted by zoologists who are primarily interested in the marine life of the area (Attwood *et al*, 2000; Bolton *et al*, 1987; Hockey *et al*, 1986). It is hoped that this study will contribute to existing knowledge and studies on this subject. This study is also important for young organizations like the ECPB and communities neighboring the nature reserves in, not only evaluating effective implementation of the organization's mandate, but also assessing poverty reduction impacts.

1.5.2. Summary of methods

An attempt is made in this research to analyse the South African government's attempt at reconciling poverty reduction and biodiversity conservation in the context of the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP). Here there is no attempt to measure poverty. This section of the chapter focuses on the research design, problems encountered and specific methods used. This research was conducted primarily through qualitative research methods. This included reviewing of some literature on poverty reduction and biodiversity conservation. More specifically, secondary literature review was done, including an internet search for more information on poverty reduction and biodiversity conservation, and a review of other government documents, historical documents, and journal articles. Examples of documents reviewed are the Eastern Cape Provincial Growth and Development Plan, project business plans, budgets, project implementation plans, and the like. Due to the limited scope of this thesis, the literature review focused less on theoretical and scientific writings, but more on policy documents and project related writings held at the two sites.

Using an interview schedule to guide questioning (See Appendix 1), semi-structured interviews with project beneficiaries (including labourers and

supervisors in the project) in the case study areas, were carried out. The interview schedule had five thematic questions, and these were (i) Knowledge of goals of the specific EPWP, (ii) Understanding of environmental goals of the EPWP, (iii) Perceived importance of the stated goals of EPWP (environmental and poverty reduction), (iv) Project contribution to the livelihoods of beneficiaries, and (v) Whether the project is progressing well or not. In Hluleka a total of 25 people who were involved in the EPWP project there were interviewed, while 22 people were interviewed in Mkambati. The interviews were carried out in group settings, but individuals who had more to say were further followed up immediately after the group discussion and solicited for more feedback. Using interviews, particularly semi-structured ones, allows both the researcher and the interviewee to engage in broad discussions. This may lead to the respondent raising issues that could not have been anticipated (Chambers, 1997; Flowerdew and Martin, 1997). Again, due to the limited scope of this research project, as well as the quality and nature of responses that were envisaged, a detailed survey was decided against.

In addition to project beneficiaries at the sites, some of the information used in this thesis was gained from local government officials. However, rather than targeted interviews, the information gained from these officials was opportunistic and rather more about providing helpful details about what they know about their areas and the project. This was also the case for community leaders such as project steering members and headmen in the neighbouring villages.

In addition to the interviews described above, the researcher familiarized himself with the landscape and various local activities, through engaging in transect walks with local informants. These took place over time, including before the actual research exercise². Transect walks are described as systematically walking with local guides and analysts through a given area, making observations, asking questions, listening, discussing, learning about different zones, soil, land uses, vegetation, crops, livestock, local technologies,

² As noted earlier, the researcher, by virtue of his employment with Eastern cape Parks Board, had made several visits to both Hluleka and Mkambati prior to initiating this research project.

introduced technologies, seeking problems, solution and opportunities; and mapping and diagramming the zones, resources and findings (Chambers 1997). However, the level of detail for any transect walk tends to differ from study to study. For example, in this present study the focus was on knowing more about the nature reserves, the existing projects and the villages where beneficiaries lived.

1.6. THESIS OUTLINE

This thesis comprises six chapters. These are described below.

Chapter One: Introduction. This is an introductory chapter which discusses aims and objectives, significance of the study, limitations of the study and the research design.

Chapter Two: The Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) as a poverty reduction as well as environmental conservation strategy. This chapter discusses the Expanded Public Works Programme. It starts by looking at the programme as a poverty reduction strategy followed by the discussion on the programme as environmental strategy. It also traces the origins and the implementation phases of the entire EPWP programme.

Chapter Three: The Eastern Cape and the Wild Coast: description and background. This chapter gives a description and the background of the Eastern Cape Province, as well as the description of the Wild Coast. It also discusses the state of poverty in the province, Wild Coast and the O.R. Tambo District Municipality jurisdiction.

Chapter Four: Expanded Public Works Programme Case Study One – Hluleka. This chapter presents the implementation of EPWP in Hluleka Nature Reserve. It particularly presents the views of project implementers and beneficiaries about EPWP in their area.

Chapter Five: Expanded Public Works Programme Case Study Two – Mkambati. This chapter presents the implementation of EPWP in Mkambati

Nature Reserve. It particularly presents the views of project implementers and beneficiaries about EPWP in their area.

Chapter Six: Conclusion. This chapter presents a summary of key issues that emerged from the study.

1.7. CONCLUSION

This introductory chapter outlined the context in which this study was conducted. It also provided the research question and gave a motivation as to why it is necessary to be researched. This chapter also discussed the objectives of the study, the research design, the significance and limitations of the study.



CHAPTER TWO: THE EXPANDED PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME (EPWP) AS A POVERTY REDUCTION AS WELL AS ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION STRATEGY

2.1. INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter presented the research problem, aim and objectives of the study, as well as what the study aims to contribute, in particular, to policy makers, conservationists, and social scientists (See Chapter One). A mention was made in Chapter One, of the government's commitment to eliminating poverty, as enshrined in the constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108, 1996). This chapter presents a review of the Expanded Public Works Programme as one of several poverty reduction strategies adopted and implemented by government. In addition to introducing the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP), the chapter also looks at policies and legislation that enhance poverty reduction, as well as those dealing with environmental conservation.

This chapter has five sections. Following this introduction, the first section focuses on policies and legislation enhancing poverty reduction in South Africa. The second section presents environmental conservation policies. The third section presents the foundation and the rationale for the Expanded Public Works Programme. The fourth section presents four sectors, namely, Infrastructure, Environment, Social and Economic, which have been identified as opportunities for implementing the EPWP. In the last section, conclusions of the chapter are presented.

2.2. POLICIES AND LEGISLATION ENHANCING POVERTY REDUCTION IN SOUTH AFRICA

Makweya (2004) suggests that the post-apartheid government took over a national economy that had been stagnant for many years. According to Sparks (2003) the crux of the problem is that South Africa has a double-decker economy — its first-world sector and its third-world sector, and that what is

working for those on the upper deck is not working for those on the lower deck. The result is that unemployment is increasing and the wealth gap is widening. Skills have been identified, among other things, as one of the key differences between these two levels of the economy, with those people in the upper economy level having advanced skills and those on the lower level having inadequate skills and rapidly becoming unemployable (Sparks, 2003).

With the post-apartheid government facing such realities with regard to the poverty of its people, it came up with a number of strategies. According to Kepe (2002), there were three broad policy frameworks that could be seen as constituting the government's attempt to outline a development strategy to reduce poverty, and these were the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP); the Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR), and the Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Strategy (ISRDS). Firstly, following its introduction as a key policy framework of the African National Congress (ANC), which is the current ruling party (See ANC, 1994), the RDP was outlined in a White Paper on the Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP) in 1994. The intention of RDP was to integrate growth, development, and reconstruction in order to provide access to basic services to poor people. This strategy spelt out how to transform South African society from the ravages of colonialism and apartheid, particularly that of inequality that favored Whites and left many Blacks destitute. It emphasized the importance of operating at the grassroots level and stressed the principle of community-based development (Government of South Africa, 1994a). It can be argued that many of the current programmes seeking to uplift poor people, including free housing, extensive social assistance programmes, land redistribution, amongst many, are a manifestation of the RDP.

Secondly, the Growth, Employment and Redistribution strategy is a macro-economic framework that was introduced in 1996, two years after the implementation of the RDP. However, as GEAR was being introduced, the RDP, and many of the principles that go with it, was slowly being abandoned (Kepe, 2002). One of the guiding principles of GEAR is that poverty reduction over a long term is not possible without sustained economic growth. It saw

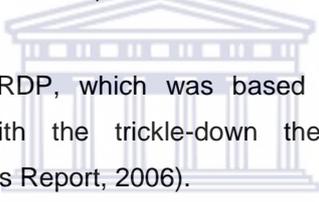
private sector investment as key to economic growth. Critics of GEAR blamed it for abandoning the poor. Ironically, these are the people that the programme was intended for. More specifically, GEAR has been criticized for being too concerned with boosting investor confidence than with embracing the main goals of the RDP, which included economic growth, employment and redistribution (Adelzadeh, 1996). There has been the assertion that GEAR is unlikely to make inroads into reducing rural poverty. Critics maintain that GEAR abandoned the poor and mostly concerned itself with boosting investor confidence than with focusing on economic growth, employment and redistribution (Mather and Adelzadeh, 1998; Blake, 1998). Despite these criticisms, government proceeded with spearheading with GEAR related programmes, such as the Spatial Development Initiative (SDIs). SDIs targeted areas in the country, having both unrealized economic potential and great need, with ecotourism as a primary focus. During the inception of the SDIs in 1996, it was envisioned that rural people would benefit from employment created through these efforts. However, these SDIs had been faced with many challenges. This is also the case for the Wild Coast SDI (Kepe, 2001). On the other hand, SDIs have been criticized for not having clear implementation strategy and being rural-poor unfriendly (Pithers, 2001; Kepe, 2001a; Kepe *et al*, 2001).

Thirdly, the government formulated a ten-year plan, the Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Strategy (ISRDS), which aims to bring real change to South Africa's poorest areas. It is the intention of this programme to look at the existing departmental initiatives and programmes in these poorest areas and to play a coordinating function. The office of the Deputy President is responsible for planning, implementation and monitoring of the ISRDS. The ISRDS seeks to make use of development nodes for the purposes of implementation (Government of South Africa, 2000). According to Minister Sydney Mufamadi, ISRDS's vision is:

To attain socially cohesive, resilient and stable rural communities that are economically empowered and productive, contributing substantially to South Africa's growth and global competitiveness.

These ISRDS nodes in the Eastern Cape Province are found in O.R. Tambo, Chris Hani, Ukhahlamba and Alfred Nzo District Municipalities (Media Briefing, 2001).

More recently, in February 2006, yet another programme, the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative of South Africa (ASGISA) was launched. ASGISA promises to create more jobs and halve poverty by 2014. The majority of union leaders hailed this initiative with the National Union of Metal Workers of South Africa giving the assertion that it is a major breakthrough signaling the creation of more jobs. The South African Communist Party “welcomed the broad strategic perspectives” outlined in ASGISA. This programme has not been welcomed by everyone. For example, the South African Municipal Workers Union referred to ASGISA as repeating much the same mantra as the GEAR document 10 years ago, that growth came before redistribution. SAMWU’s general secretary, Roger Ronnie, commented



GEAR replaced the RDP, which was based on redistribution leading to economic growth, with the trickle-down theory of growth leading to redistribution" (Business Report, 2006).

The Deputy President of the Republic of South Africa, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, announcing ASGISA, reiterated that ASGISA is not a new policy nor does it replace the Growth Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) strategy, and that it is not an industrial policy. The Deputy President further emphasized that the initiative is not a sum total of all government’s responses to issues of poverty and unemployment; it is selected interventions, which are as follows: infrastructure, sector strategies, education and skills, interventions in the Second Economy, Public Administration Issues, Macro-economic (Media briefing, 2006).

With government struggling to decide what poverty reduction framework works best or which they should implement, there is a clear need to deal with this problem urgently. Table 1 presents poverty indicators by province. As it can be seen from this table, Eastern Cape takes the second position as poorest province with 4.6 million poor persons, placing it at number two after KwaZulu-

Natal with 5.1 million poor persons. This table indicates that 72% of the Eastern Cape Province's population is in poverty with a R14.8 billion poverty gap.

Table 1: Poverty indicators by province

Province	No. of poor persons (million)	% of population in poverty	Poverty gap (R billion)	Share of poverty gap
Eastern Cape	4.6	72%	14.8	18.2%
Free State	1.8	68%	5.9	7.2%
Gauteng	3.7	42%	12.1	14.9%
KwaZulu-Natal	5.7	61%	18.3	22.5%
Limpopo	4.1	77%	11.5	14.1%
Mpumalanga	1.8	57%	7.1	8.7%
North West	1.9	52%	6.1	7.5%
Northern Cape	0.5	61%	1.5	1.8%
Western Cape	1.4	32%	4.1	5.0%
South Africa	25.7	57%	81.3	100.0%

Source: HSRC, 26 July 2004

In addition to or as part of the many government poverty reduction frameworks discussed above, there are numerous other programmes that are more visible in terms of implementation. This study focuses on one of those, the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP). Background on this is discussed later in this chapter. Before the discussion on the EPWP, however, it is important to present a brief review of policies and legislation relating to biodiversity conservation. After all, this study seeks to explore the successes and challenges of EPWP with regard to poverty reduction and environmental conservation. The discussion on environmental policies follows next.

2.3. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION POLICIES AND LEGISLATION

The Constitution (Act No. 108 of 1996): Section 24 of the Bill of Rights (Chapter 2) provides that everyone has a right to an environment that is not harmful to their health or well-being and to have the environment protected for the benefit of the present and future generations, through reasonable legislative and other measures that (a) prevent pollution and ecological degradation (b) promote

conservation and (c) secure ecologically sustainable development and the use of natural resources while promoting justifiable economic and social development. The section continues by illustrating government's duty in protecting the environment, including providing for matters such as a marine protection contingency plan (The South African Constitution, Act 108 of 1996, Section 24b (ii)). South Africa has also signed a number of international agreements as a testimony that conservation is of utmost importance in this country. Some of the key international environmental obligations to enhance environmental protection include Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora 1973; United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity 1992 which, according to Kepe and Wynberg (1999), is the most important and overarching of these agreements; Convention to Combat Desertification 1992; Convention Concerning the Protection of the Worlds Cultural and Natural Heritage 1997 and Southern African Development Community Protocols, such as SADC Protocol on Wildlife Conservation and Law Enforcement 1997.

It is important to note that conservation is not only important to the South African government for the sake of conservation, but is seen as a way of ensuring sustainable development that will address the extreme poverty that exists in the country. New policies, therefore, have mainly moved away from strict conservation that has characterized South Africa, to include social justice and economic development (Kepe, 2002). For example, a number of national and provincial policies and strategies embrace economic and rural development as well as sustainable use of the environment, including the Provincial Growth and Development Plan (Eastern Cape); Provincial Biodiversity Strategy (DEAET, 2004); Eastern Cape State of Environment Report (CSIR, 2004) and the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2005 (DEAT, 2005).

A number of the post-apartheid government's legislative changes clearly assume a certain value for natural resources. These changes seek to regulate environmental use so as to improve the welfare of people. These are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Key Environmental Legislation for Sustainable Development

Environmental Legislation	Description
National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act 10 of 2004	This Act deals with the management of South Africa's biodiversity, protection of species, and ecosystems and provides for sustainable use of biological resources. It provides for a planning and monitoring regime through a national biodiversity framework, bioregional plans & biodiversity management plans and the co ordination and alignment of these management planning instruments.
National Environmental Management : Air Quality Act 39 of 2004	It provides a regulatory framework for the monitoring and prevention of air pollution through air quality management plans, and for the licensing of listed activities. It further provides for prevention of ecological degradation.
The Provincial Parks Board Act 12 of 2003 (Eastern Cape)	This is the Act which establishes the Eastern Cape Parks Board. It provides for the management of the Eastern Cape's provincial parks or nature reserves, and matters related thereto.
National Environmental Management : Protected Areas Act 57 of 2003	It provides for a national system of protected areas. It further provides for protected area management planning and declaration of protected areas.
National Heritage Resources Act 25 of 1999	This is the framework for the management of South Africa's Heritage Resources. It provides for basic principles for heritage resource management.
World Heritage Convention Act 49 of 1999	This is a framework for the management of world heritage sites in South Africa. It regulates and provides for management plans and for the conditions of management.
Marine Living Resources Act 18 of 1998	This is the framework for the management of the use of marine resources. It provides for the declaration of Marine Protected Areas and the protection of various marine species.
National Water Act 36 of 1998	This provides for water management strategies and for the classification and protection of water resources, as well as sustainable management of South Africa's water resources.
National Forests Act 84 of 1998	Protection and Management of Indigenous state forests are covered under this Act. It provides for sustainable use of forest resources and access to forests.
Veld and Forest Fire Act 101 of 1998	This is the framework for the management of veld fires and the prevention thereof. It places obligations on land owners to maintain firebreaks and for the establishment of fire committees.
National Environmental Management Act 107 of 1998	This Act provides a framework to set national norms and standards, alternative dispute resolution procedures and comprehensive environmental management principles, integrated environmental management and sustainable use.

Game Theft Act 105 of 1991	This is designed to protect owners from the theft of wild animals within the parks.
Criminal Procedures Act 51 of 1977	It provides a framework for lawful arrests and search and seizures. It is a mechanism to ensure compliance with environmental management through criminal prosecution of offenders, while ensuring that basic rights are not violated.
Mountain Catchment Areas Act 63 of 1970	It provides a framework for the management of Catchment Areas. It also provides for the declaration of management of mountain Catchment Areas and the conditions for the management thereof.
Animal Protection Act 71 of 1962	This affords all animals protection against cruelty. Wild animals within Protected Areas are also afforded protection.

Source: Eastern Cape Parks Board Five-Year Strategic Plan 2004 – 2009

This section made an attempt to look at different environmental policies and legislation. It still needs to become apparent, whether these live up to the promise of improving people's livelihoods and economic development.

2.4. THE EXPANDED PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME (EPWP)

The 51st National Conference of the African National Congress (ANC), the ruling party, held on 16-20 December 2002 at the University of Stellenbosch, noted that the ANC in government has sought, and continues to seek, to confront the challenges of poverty and underdevelopment, and to ensure a better life for all, through a comprehensive people-centered, as well as people-driven programme of social transformation. Regarding infrastructural development, this conference resolved that the Expanded Public Works Programme must be a major priority and be designed to make a significant contribution to reducing unemployment and providing livelihoods for the poor, women, youth and people with disabilities (ANC, 2002).

The Expanded Public Works Programme is one of the South African Government's short-term programmes aimed at the provision of additional work opportunities coupled with training. It is a national programme covering all spheres of government and state-owned enterprises. President Thabo Mbeki formally announced the programme in his State of the Nation Address in February 2003. In his announcement he went on to say:

To address this investment in social infrastructure, the government has decided that we should launch an expanded public works programme. This will ensure that we draw significant numbers of the unemployed into productive work, and that these workers gain skills while they work, and thus take an important step to get out of the pool of those who are marginalized. (Mbeki, 2003)

The decision to spearhead this programme was taken at the Growth and Development Summit (GDS) held in June 2003. At this summit, it was argued that EPWPs can provide poverty and income relief through temporary work for the unemployed, and can carry out socially useful activities. They would be designed to equip participants with a limited amount of training and work experience, which should enhance their ability to earn a living in the future (GDS Agreement, 2003). It is a key element of Government's comprehensive approach to ensure that the poor can participate and benefit from a growing economy, mainly through the creation of jobs coupled with training for future employment (Sowetan, 2004). The conceptual framework of the EPWP was finally adopted by Cabinet in November 2003.

McCord³ and Borat (2003) make the assertion that compared to global unemployment levels; South Africa is facing an extreme situation with regard to unemployment, with levels significantly in excess of those found in other developing and developed countries. Lewis (2001) concurs, arguing that South Africa's labor market situation has been characterized as one of high unemployment and negligible job creation. This Day newspaper published an article under the title '*Mbeki promises a million new jobs*', which read:

'A million unemployed people will get jobs over the next five years because of a dramatically expanded government public works programme' President Thabo Mbeki said yesterday; "The EPWP is a nation-wide programme that will draw significant numbers of the unemployed into productive employment, so that workers gain skills while they are gainfully employed, and increase their capacity to earn an income once they leave the programme".

³ Anna McCord is public works research programme manager in the Southern Africa Labour Development Research Unit and visiting research fellow at the Centre for Social Research in the School of Economics, University of Cape Town.

According to the newspaper, the programme would “help to move people off social grants into public employment “(This Day, 2003)⁴. In February 2004, the President made an announcement in his State of the Nation Address that the programme would create at least one million work opportunities in its first five years.

McCord (2004) points to some of the statements made pertaining to the EPWP and its ability to link the second and first economies. These are mainly excerpts from the launch speeches of the EPWP around the country:

The EPWP is an initiative to [...] take the marginalized poor people out of the spiral of poverty. (S. Sigcau, Minister of Public Works, 3 September 2004).

The Expanded Public Works Programme [...] would eradicate poverty [and] contribute to the overall realization of the socio-economic goals of this government. (N Kganyago, Deputy Minister of Public Works, 31 August 2004).

The EPWP [along with other policy measures] represents a product of ten years of organic thinking, [...] to eradicate poverty, improve the standard of life, reverse the effects of apartheid social planning and overturn apartheid economic policies. (N Kganyago, Deputy Minister of Public Works, 31 August 2004).

‘From today, let us stretch a helping hand to one another and rollout the extended public works programme to all corners of our country. Through our practical actions, working together in a people’s contract, we must make the statement that we will ensure there are no “surplus” (sic) in our country.’ (President Mbeki, Limpopo, 18 May 2004. Address at the launch of the Expanded Public Works Programme).

This programme is labor-intensive in nature and is aiming at promoting economic growth and sustainable development by offering people part-time jobs while they gain various skills. While aiming at creating job opportunities and improving the level of education and training, the EPWP is not the first or ultimate solution to the problem of poverty in South Africa. The EPWP works

⁴ This speech was given on the occasion of President Thabo Mbeki’s address to the National Council of Provinces, 11 November 2003.

hand-in-hand with various other existing poverty relief programmes, which have related foundations and ways of operation. EPWP is funded through the Department of Public Works. The programme also looks to the private sector for additional support (BuaNews Online, 2005). As part of the private sector involvement, a leading banking group, Absa, added its weight to the mammoth undertaking by supplying financial services to the EPWP. It provides asset finance to students and contractors to buy small equipment and vehicles, also bridging financial gaps (Tshivhidzo, 2005).

2.5. EXPANDED PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME IN DIFFERENT SECTORS⁵

The ambitious Expanded Public Works Programme is set to, according to President Thabo Mbeki in his State of the Nation address, develop the social and economic infrastructure, build human resources, boost enterprise and alleviate poverty (Mbeki, 2004).⁶ There are four lead departments through which EPWP is implemented. One of them is the Department of Environment and Tourism. This department managed to use its poverty relief funding for the financial years 2001 – 2004 for the following departmental functions: tourism infrastructure and product development; environmental conservation; waste management and coast care. An amount of R715 million, allocated to the department for this programme, was utilised to create 17,910 jobs. As training is a requirement in EPWPs, 268,920 training days were given. A total of 1024 Small, Medium and Macro Enterprises (SMMEs) were also created (Environment and Culture Sector Plan, 2004).

A second division is the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry. This department managed to use its poverty relief funding for the financial years 2001 – 2004 for departmental functions such as the Working for Water, Working on Fire and Working for Wetlands programmes. These entailed removal of invasive alien plants, rehabilitation of wetlands and veld and forest fire management. An amount of R950 million was allocated to the department for this programme, together with R271.2 million allocation from other departmental

⁵ Information on EPWP sectors has been taken from the EPWP website (www.epwp.gov.za).

⁶ See State of the Nation Address, 21 May 2004.

resources, including R22m through the Department of Labour. These funds were utilised to provide 38,403 job years and 362,870 training days. A total 1000 SMMEs were also created (Environment and Culture Sector Plan, 2004).

The third is the Department of Arts and Culture. This department managed to use its poverty relief funding for the financial years 2001– 2004 for departmental functions such as craft production, community arts and music, cultural infrastructure and tourism and heritage development. An amount of R97 million was allocated and utilised to create 2870 job years, both temporary and permanent. Unaccredited training was given, resulting in 161,763 training days. A total of 150 SMMEs were created (Environment and Culture Sector Plan, 2004).

Another division is the Department of Agriculture. During the 2001 – 2004 financial years, the department utilised its R120 million allocation in the Land Care Programme and the Special Programme for Food Security, which are addressing the degradation of natural resources and improving the socio-economic status of rural communities, as well as attempting to ensure household food security. In all, 4000 job years were created, 63,000 training days were given, and 36 SMMEs were created (Environment and Culture Sector Plan, 2004). Environment and culture sector has clustered its programmes into a number of core programmes, namely Sustainable Land Based Livelihoods, Working for the Coast, People and Parks, Working for Tourism, and Working on Waste. These are briefly discussed further below. Along the lines of these lead departments, the EPWP programme is divided into the four sectors, namely, environment and culture sector, infrastructure sector, social sector and economic sectors. These are discussed below, beginning with the environment and culture sector.

2.5.1. Environment and culture sector

The environmental sector is composed of the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, Water Affairs and Forestry, Arts and Culture, and Agriculture. The lead department is the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism. There are departmental programmes that are targeted and

should create jobs through several programmes, including Department of Agriculture's Land Care programme; the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism's People and Parks, Coastal Care, Sustainable Land-based Livelihoods, Cleaning Up SA, Growing a Tourism Economy programmes; and the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry's Working for Water, Wetlands, and Fire programmes. This programme is planned to result in 200,000 hectares of land cleared of aliens, 40 rehabilitated wetlands, 20 fire protection associations, 700 kilometers of coast cleaned with adequate infrastructure, 10,000 hectares of rehabilitated land, 32 waste management programmes and 150 historical and community tourism projects. At least 30,600 network opportunities were created in the third quarter in this sector. This figure rose in the fourth quarter to almost 58,800. The average duration of employment for environment projects is approximately six months (EPWP Fourth Quarterly Report, 2005). Programmes under this sector are outlined below.

2.5.1.1 Sustainable land based livelihoods

Sustainable Land Based Livelihoods includes funding of Working for Water, Working for Wetlands, Working for the Land, Working on Fire, and Community Based Natural Resource Management programmes. The programme also includes the application of science and technology to create high value commodities that underpin the establishment of enterprises that yield sustainable employment opportunities and measures to combat desertification (www.epwp.gov.za). According to Kaiser (1999), invasions by alien species are considered to be one of the largest threats to the ecosystem of the earth. This is evident in some alien tree species that are used in commercial forestry and agro forestry as they cause major problems as invaders of natural and semi-natural ecosystems. This problem has increased over the past few decades, with a rapid increase in afforestation and changes in land use (Richardson, 1997). de Wit *et al* (2001) emphasizes that the species that cause the greatest problems are those that have been planted most widely, and for the longest time. Work that is in progress in Mkambati Nature Reserve shows how the South African government is serious about addressing the negative impacts of

alien invading species on the natural and environmental resources of the country.

2.5.1.2. Working for the Coast

Working for the Coast programme intends benefiting coastal communities as it supports those programmes that use coastal resources for the promotion of these communities, while at the same time protecting and rehabilitating these resources. This programme provides jobs and training for these communities. It covers coastal areas of South Africa and incorporates the following coastal components: beaches, estuaries, lagoons, wetlands, dunes, public facilities (parking areas, picnic sites, and ablution blocks), informal settlement areas and storm water systems. Working for the Coast operates in the following areas: Kosi Bay, South Peninsula, Kommetjie and Port Nolloth. It is the responsibility of implementing agents to manage the work on the ground. There are project teams that carry out Working for the Coast tasks. These project teams are recruited from the locally unemployed local people and are trained. When recruiting, the following ratio is used: 60% female, 20% youth (between the ages of 18-25), and 2% disabled persons. Preference is given to female-headed households (www.deat.gov.za).

2.5.1.3. People and Parks

The focus of People and Parks programme is on projects that involve communities in conservation of protected areas and seeks to maximize the benefits to poor communities of SA's parks and other protected areas. As this thesis shows, projects falling under this programme include, though not limited to, fencing of protected area, removal of alien vegetation in the protected areas, skills training of neighboring communities and many other projects that could benefit both conservation and livelihoods of local people. Between 2004 and 2007, the total budget for this focus area is at R254 million.

2.5.1.4. Working on Waste

This programme supports waste management and recycling initiatives, while on the other hand it builds SMMEs involved in this programme in order to create local jobs and entrepreneurship. One of these projects is Siyacoca Recyclers Community Project that is based in the O.R. Tambo District Municipality, Eastern Cape Province. The project has thus far managed to put in place a management structure, acquired a truck, machines and equipment, and created 80 jobs for local community. According to the municipality, it is the intention of this project to create a friendly tourist environment through collection of waste, creating jobs and developing skills for all the previously disadvantaged communities. The main activities of the project reported to date include collection of waste for recycling purposes, bailing of waste and sending it to end-users, glass cutting, manufacturing of toilet papers, door to door collection of recyclable waste, and provision of skills to youth and women. This project has shown progress and some benefits to local people by creating jobs, ensuring environmental cleanliness and awareness. Despite this progress, the closure of the railway line between Umtata and East London and non-acceptance of paper and boxes by the local companies caused concern in terms of markets, transport and sustainability of the project (DEAT Portfolio Committee Report, 2005).

2.5.1.5. Working for Tourism

According to Kepe, 2002, ecotourism is internationally recognized as the single most important land use for making the country's natural resources a profitable commodity. The eco-tourism sector is rapidly growing in South Africa (Eco Africa Environmental Consultants – www.ecoafrica.co.za). This programme uses this prospect to generate revenue for local communities and to involve them in the tourism economy. It funds tourism enterprises that create jobs and benefit local communities (Environment & Culture Sector Plan – 25 February 2004 & PPP Toolkit for Tourism, Module 3, Annexure 1. National Treasury PPP Unit, undated).

2.5.2. Infrastructure sector

The lead department in the infrastructure plan is the Department of Public Works. Other departments are the Departments of Transport, Housing, Provincial and Local Government; Water Affairs and Forestry; Public Enterprises and Education. The Independent Development Trust and Eskom, both parastatals, form part of the plan. Driving values of the plan are efficiency, cost-effectiveness and quality of products. This is applicable to EPWP labor-intensive construction methods in civil works. All work carried out should comply with industry standards. The programme involves ring-fencing a portion of the existing conditional infrastructure grants to provinces and municipalities. This programme looked at low-volume roads, trenching, storm water and sidewalks as areas where construction, rehabilitation and maintenance could be done using labor intensive methods. The infrastructure sector funded programmes, such as Provincial and Municipal Infrastructure Grants (PIG and MIG). This sector has projected that, through projects, provinces and municipalities would construct 31,000 km of pipelines, 1500 km of roads, 1500 km of storm water drains and 150 km of urban side walks over the next five years, meeting the requirements of the EPWP (Infrastructure Sector Plan (www.epwp.gov.za)).

The break-down of the sector for the fourth quarter, with regards to the number of work opportunities, show that most network opportunities were created in the infrastructure sector (at least 109,400), with the gross number in this sector being at least 158,000. The average duration of employment on infrastructure projects is approximately four months (EPWP Fourth Quarterly Report, 2005). According to Lieuw-Kie-Song (2006), the infrastructure sector seeks to maximize the primary impacts of construction in government funded infrastructure. Citing an example of using labor intensive methods of construction and maintenance, Gundo Lashu⁷ in Limpopo increased the number of jobs by 400%; on the same type of projects it created 11,481 instead of 2800 jobs. Lieuw-Kie-Song (2006) describes construction as the fifth largest

⁷ Gundo Lashu is isiVhenda phrase for "Our victory". It is government's roads maintenance project.

employment category in the country, and it is set to grow, with vast government investments in infrastructure in the years ahead (Daily Dispatch, 2006).

It is envisaged that 900,000 employment opportunities would be created in this sector, which is seen as the largest employment generator. A joint process with DPW, the Department of Provincial and Local Government (DPLG) and National Treasury (NT) ensured that a total of R15 billion over the next 5 years is targeted to the EPWP through the provincial and municipal conditional grants for infrastructure (Macozoma, 2004). This is a huge budget which requires professionalism and capacity. As it is the intention of the EPWP to achieve poverty alleviation, reduce unemployment, develop skills and training through delivery of services, the question remains as to whether these departments have the capacity to manage and deliver on such cumbersome budgets.

2.5.3. Social sector

The social sector consists of three departments, namely the Department of Social Development, Department of Health and the Department of Education. Keeping in mind that one of the aims of the Expanded Public Works Programme is the creation of work opportunities, it needs to be known that, while there is recognition that a number of programmes present a range of these opportunities, two programmes, those being Home Community Based Care (HCBC) and Early Childhood Development (ECD), had been selected as lead pilot programmes for the social sector EPWP for 2004/5 financial year. Arrangements, in the form of research, have been made to explore other programmes which form part of this sector.

HCBC provides comprehensive services, including health and social services, by formal and informal caregivers in the Home and Community Based Care and Support Programmes. This is a response to AIDS-related hospital care. The programme hopes to equip thousands of unemployed people with the foundation skills and experience to enter into a Community Health and Development Worker (CH&DW) training programme. Early Childhood Development is the process by which children from birth to nine years are nurtured to grow and thrive physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually, morally

and socially. The focus on EPWP in this case is from birth to six (6) years. In both programmes, a number of practitioners have been targeted in order to develop their skills. The national departments are responsible for policy and other necessary regulatory frameworks to enable the realization of the programme, while at the provincial level; provincial departments should identify opportunities and allocate the conditional grants based on national priorities to partnering organizations at local level. The Education, Training and Development Practices Sector Education and Training Authority (ETDPSeta) is responsible for the ECD training. Health and Welfare SETA (HWSeta) is conducting the HCBC training. Each SETA would procure service providers to conduct these training at local level (Social Sector Plan). Given the new government initiative, ASGISA, EPWP is a key pillar to implementation of this initiative, as public sector investment projects create much-needed jobs, while improving the infrastructure in under-serviced areas, particularly rural areas (Social Cluster Briefing, 2006).

2.5.4. Economic sector

As indicated earlier (Chapter Two, Section 2.5.), EPWP intended to utilize public sector budgets to create additional work opportunities coupled with training. After training, productive employment opportunities would be created and ultimately enhance the ability of workers to earn an income after they leave the programme. Income would come either from the labor market or through entrepreneurial or cooperative income-generating activities. The EPWP economic sector focuses on entrepreneurial and cooperative income-generating activities. Learnerships⁸ form the central part of the Expanded Public Works Programme. It is the responsibility of the Department of Trade and Industry (the dti) to coordinate the EPWP economic sector (Economic Sector Plan). This sector aims to develop 3000 sustainable businesses in various sectors over the period 2004/05 – 2008/09. These businesses will be developed through a

⁸ A Learnership is a route for learning and gaining a qualification within the National Qualification Framework (NQF) from level 1 to 8. It is a qualification based on Unit Standards. Learnerships include both structured work experience (a practical component) and instructional learning (a theory learning component).

programme known as “venture learnerships”. This is described as a route for learning and obtaining a qualification in business management (www.epwp.gov.za). Claire Bisseker, of the Sunday Times, wrote that the Government's initiatives to transform the second economy have been relatively ineffective. In this report, she refers to a *2005 Development Report: Overcoming underdevelopment in SA's second economy* released by the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA), the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) and the United Nations Development Programme, giving a critique of EPWP. She goes on to say that:

The rhetoric occasionally touted by politicians that the EPWP will create one million jobs in five years is misleading, given that most of these jobs are temporary and that at any given time there are likely to be no more than 200,000 of them (Sunday Times, 2005).

Several people and organizations have critiqued the Expanded Public Works Programme. Among these is Anna McCord (2003), who wrote that the Extended Public Works Programme was launched after the demise of the National Community-Based Public Works Programme, which created only 20,000 temporary jobs in its short life. She further argued that given that eight million South African are jobless and more than 20 million people live in poverty, the EPWP represents a minimal response to a massive social and political problem. McCord went on to caution that it is an illusion to think the EPWP can have the impact anticipated in the policy rhetoric. At worst, she argued, it is politically dangerous, as it reduces the space for the policy discussion urgently required to address poverty and unemployment. Likewise, the Democratic Alliance (DA)⁹, in its response to the launch of EPWP by President Thabo Mbeki in Limpopo, alluded to the fact that the programme was good news, but should not be seen as the ultimate solution for unemployment. Public Works Programmes are not the solution to the unemployment problem in South Africa but should rather be perceived as one of an assortment of short to medium-term interventions aimed at alleviating the poverty associated with unemployment.

⁹ Democratic Alliance is an official opposition political party in the government of the Republic of South Africa.

These programmes should be seen as complimentary rather than as an alternative to social grants (Phillips, 2004). The DA spokesperson, Sakkie Blanche, said in a statement:

The EPWP will provide work for less than 3% of the unemployed per year and only 20% of the work opportunities will last longer than four months; how many workers can survive on a third of a year's income? (Sowetan, 2004).

Other low and middle-income countries have used public works programmes to great effect. Some have absorbed more than 20% of the labor force, offering guaranteed employment to those seeking it (Mail & Guardian, 2004). McCord (2003) cites the initiative of the Maharashtra Employment Guarantee Scheme in India and the New Deal Programme during the Great Depression in USA. Both of these programmes managed to take up to 30% of the unemployed. Anuradha Joshi¹⁰ indicated that most research on the poverty impacts of the experience from Maharashtra indicates that it has helped to provide income to the poorest during lean periods and to reduce seasonal migration, while the landed classes have benefited from the infrastructure created. It is further stated that the Maharashtra Scheme guarantees unlimited employment to all rural adults, provided there is a recognized need in the locality and people are willing to appear for work regularly (The Hindu, 2005).

It should be borne in mind that the challenge of reducing poverty, especially in rural areas, is a universal one and remains a challenge. Strategies for addressing poverty of the rural poor, including industrialization and agriculture, are important factors in how local natural resources can be utilized in improving poor people's livelihoods (Makhado, 2004). Another challenge still lies ahead for the current South African government. Most of the wealth and resources of this country fell into the hands of the white minority, while the majority black population lived in poverty or were vulnerable to becoming poor (Shepherd, 2000). Reversing this situation lies squarely on the shoulders of the government. In the ANC plans for the second decade of democracy, entitled

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Vision 2014, halving of unemployment, halving of poverty and winning the battle against HIV/AIDS are fundamental to the 'Vision'. Realization of this very ambitious plan and positive response by government could remove poor South Africans from this dire situation.

The Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) has created 223,400 gross work opportunities in the first year of its programme, according to its fourth quarterly report. These jobs were created from 3400 EPWP projects nationwide, yielding at least R823m in total wages paid. Of those who benefited from these projects, 38% were women, 41% were youth and 0.5% were disabled. If the EPWP continues at this rate, it is going to well exceed its target by 2009 (EPWP Fourth Quarterly Report, 2005).

2.6. THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY (SADC): COUNTRIES IN NEED OF SHARED VISION

At a three day conference held in Pilanesburg, South Africa, in April 2006, member countries attending the conference agreed that their countries are in need of a shared vision and a common approach towards the development, transformation and growth of the construction sector. Skills development and capacity building are some of the challenges, particularly in the construction industry. The South African perspective indicated that its Expanded Public Works Programme is not sufficient to address the country's long-term job creation objectives (SABC News, 2006).

2.7. CONCLUSION

In this chapter an attempt was made to explain what the Expanded Public Works Programme is. This chapter discussed legislation enhancing poverty reduction as well as biodiversity conservation. It looked at the programmes being done by sector departments as well as achievements of sector departments. The next chapter will define the study area; discuss biophysical background, historical background and circumstances of land dispossession.

CHAPTER THREE: THE EASTERN CAPE AND THE WILD COAST: DESCRIPTION AND BACKGROUND

3.1. INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter of this thesis presented a discussion of the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) as both a poverty reduction and an environmental conservation strategy. The chapter looked at policies and legislation enhancing poverty reduction in South Africa, environmental conservation policies and legislation, and an in-depth review of EPWP, before concluding with a discussion on the Southern African Development Community countries. The objective of this chapter is to describe the Eastern Cape Province and the Wild Coast area, including environmental and socio-economic issues. It is hoped that by taking this route, this will give a clearer understanding of this study, especially the findings based on two case study sites located in the Wild Coast of the Eastern Cape Province.

3.2. THE PROVINCE IN BRIEF

The vision of the Eastern Cape Province, as stated by the provincial government, is that of an Eastern Cape which is devoid of the inequalities of the past, unified through an integrated and sustainable, economic, social and cultural development; thus providing acceptable quality of life for all its people in the context of a united, non-racial, non-sexist and democratic South Africa. The Eastern Cape Province lies on the south eastern part of South Africa. It covers an area of approximately 170,600 square kilometers, representing 13.9% of South Africa's total land mass. It is the poorest province in the country (Eastern Cape PGDP, 2004; www.demarcation.org.za). The capital, Bisho, is located 60 kilometers from East London. East London and Port Elizabeth are the two current ports in the province, and soon a third one at Ngqura, near Port Elizabeth, to serve the Coega Industrial Development Zone, will all give the province access to markets all over the world. The Eastern Cape Province lies approximately equidistant from the major market centers of South Africa, Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban, and is linked by a modern network of

air, road and railways. The Eastern Cape borders the Western Cape, the Northern Cape, the Free State, and KwaZulu-Natal provinces, and the small mountain country of Lesotho in the north. Its coastline is over 820 kilometers in length, and extends from the Groot Wes estuary in the south, to the Umtamvuna estuary in the north (Coastal and Environmental Services, 2004). It heads north-east from Port Elizabeth, past East London and along the unspoiled Wild Coast, taking in the town of Port St Johns, as well as the culturally and environmentally rich Pondoland (www.ecdc.co.za). The Eastern Cape Province is made up of six district municipalities and one metropolitan area. These are Cacadu, Amatole, Chris Hani, Ukhakhamba, O.R. Tambo and Alfred Nzo. The only metropolitan municipality is Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Municipality and previously known as Port Elizabeth and Uitenhage Municipalities (www.demarcation.org.za). Figure 1 shows the Eastern Cape Province. Figure 2 shows the Eastern Cape Province and its Municipal boundaries.

Figure 1: Map of South Africa showing the Eastern Cape Province

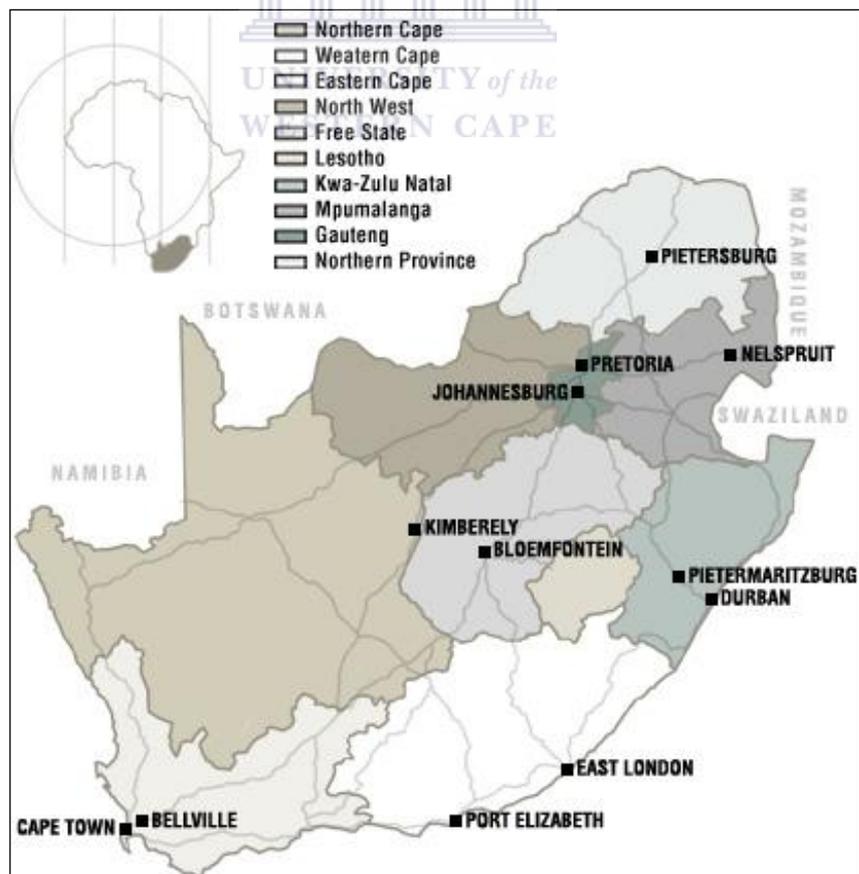


Figure 2: Map showing the municipal boundaries in the Eastern Cape Province (www.ecsecc.org)



3.2.1. Climate

The climate of the province varies according to the distance from the ocean, from mild temperate conditions ranging between 14 and 23 degrees Celsius along the coastal areas, to slightly more extreme conditions with temperatures of 5 to 35 degrees Celsius in the inland areas, with the inland mountain areas experiencing winter snows and summer rainfalls. Along the coastal areas, the climate is mild warm temperate to sub-tropical. The climate and temperature gradually changes from a temperate, winter rainfall 'Southern Cape' climate south of Port Elizabeth, through a warm coastal belt between Port Elizabeth and East London, to a humid zone beyond East London. The lowland coastal belt, extending 30 to 60 kilometers inland, can have rain all the year round. It becomes sub-tropical in Pondoland beyond Port St Johns. Conditions inland are in contrast to the stable climate of the coast and conditions can become extreme with snowy mountainous areas in winter (www.ecdc.co.za).

3.2.2. Biophysical environment

The Eastern Cape is the only one of South Africa's nine provinces that has the highest number of biomes and vegetation types within its boundaries. Seven biomes and twenty nine Acocks veld types are found (Acocks, 1988). These biomes are Forest (2%); Fynbos (6%); Grassland (39%); Nama Karoo (26%); Savanna (10%); Succulent Karoo (0.01%); and Thicket (17%) (DEAET, 2003). The Province is home to 316 threatened plant species (see Table 3).

Table 3: Threatened Eastern Cape Plants (PRECIS – National Herbarium Pretoria Computerized Information System)

No.	Category	No. of Species
1	Endangered	16
2	Extinct	1
3	Intermediate	44
4	Insufficiently known	70
5	Vulnerable	54
	Sub Total	185
6	Rare	132
	TOTAL	316

Source: CSIR, 2004

The Eastern Cape is also home to four endemic freshwater fishes, eight threatened marine fish species, six threatened frog species (of which four are endemic), and 19 threatened reptile species. Invasive alien plants, notably *Lantana camara* (Lantana), *Cestrum laevigatum* (Inkberry), *Eucalyptus* sp. (Gum Tree), Bamboo, a variety of conifers and other exotic ornamentals, cover some of the provincial surface area. National or provincial conservation areas cover 4.7% of the province's surface area (CSIR, 2004). A number of species are present; namely Plants (6164), Mammals (156); Birds (384); Amphibians (51) and Reptiles (57). Besides many sensitive areas found within the province, more areas of conservation importance are found within its regions, such as the subtropical thicket, wetlands, river systems, cultural sites, rare and endangered species and its coastal areas. Eradication of alien vegetation, erosion control, pollution and land use still remain a challenge (Cape Action Plan for the Environment, 2000).

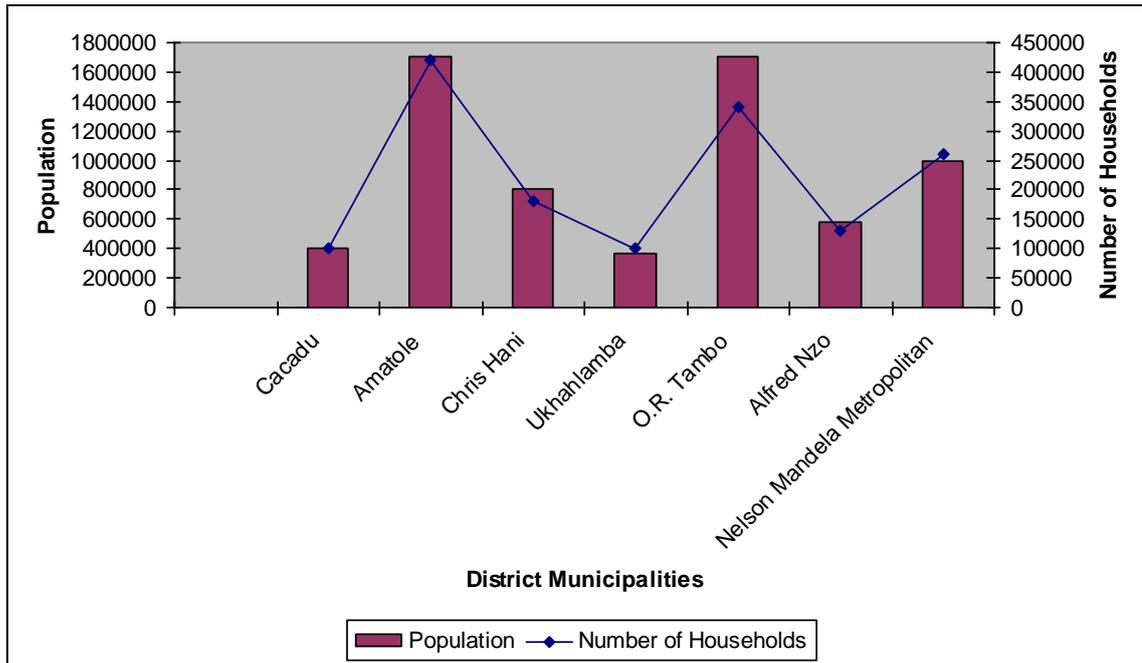
3.2.3. Demography

The Eastern Cape population grew by 1.6% between the censuses, from 6.3 million in 1996 to 6.4 million in 2001. This represents 14.4% of the total South African population, making this region the third largest province in South Africa (Statistics South Africa, 2003). Of South Africa's 11 official languages, three are predominantly spoken in the Eastern Cape. These are isiXhosa, Afrikaans and English in that order.

O.R. Tambo District Municipality, where the study areas are located, is situated in the north-eastern part of the Eastern Cape Province, which incorporates large portions of the former Transkei inland areas, and along the Wild Coast. This district municipality has the largest population in the Eastern Cape and has the second highest population density, with 24% of the province's 6.4 million people living here. It is the poorest district in the Eastern Cape in terms of all poverty measures. The number of people living in poverty is also high in this district (64.6%). Women (55%) outnumber men (45%) in this district municipality. Unemployment rate lies at 65.6%, with 76.3% of the population not economically active. There are 339,283 households in existence in the O.R. Tambo District Municipality with the public sector or government being the biggest employer (www.socdev.ecprov.gov.za).

Figure 3 shows the population in each district municipality in the province as well as the number of households. It is clear from Figure 3 that the study area, O.R. Tambo District Municipality, forms the highest proportion of the Eastern Cape Population.

Figure 3: Population and number of households per District Municipality in the Eastern Cape Province – 2001 (Municipal Demarcation Board, 2003)



3.2.4. Economic activities

According to Statistics South Africa (2000), the Eastern Cape Province is the poorest province in terms of average monthly expenditure. A total of 68% of the people of the province have a per capita expenditure of less than R250 per month. The Eastern Cape State of the Environment Report states that this province is afflicted by poverty and unemployment, which is explained by the relatively high rural population, high proportion of young people, low literacy rate, low proportion of employed people and high proportion of poorly paid employees (CSIR, 2004). However, the province is also characterized by a strong, dynamic and diversified productive sector. Table 4 presents a breakdown of provincial sector production and employment.

Table 4: Sectoral Production & Employment in the EC economy

Production Sector	Value of Output (R M)	% of Total EC output	No. of Employees	% of Total
Agriculture, hunting, forestry & fishing	2,063	3.6	70,470	13.2
Mining & quarrying	57	0.1	7,154	1.4
Manufacturing	14,783	25.8	97,035	18.1
Electricity, gas & water supply	974	1.7	5,598	1.0
Construction	1,892	3.3	43,635	8.1
Wholesale, retail trade & accommodation	9,339	16.3	83,818	15.7
Transport, storage & communication	5,501	9.6	32,851	6.1
Financial, insurance, real estate & business services	7,048	12.3	35,181	6.6
Community, social & personal services	15,643	27.3	159,453	29.8
Total:	57,300	100.0	535,195	100.0

Source: StatsSA

Factories in the Eastern Cape are generally available in the following areas: Butterworth, East London, Port Elizabeth, Queenstown, Uitenhage and Umtata. The reason for this urban bias could be because all these areas are served by an efficient transport network. No manufacturing sector is based in rural areas, where there is history of poverty. In other words, people from rural areas have to migrate from these rural villages to the already overcrowded urban areas in order to benefit from manufacturing sector employment.

3.3. STATE OF POVERTY IN THE EASTERN CAPE

Statistics South Africa (2003) states that more than two-thirds of the Eastern Cape households are classified as suffering from poverty, and 32% are unemployed. CSIR (2004) further states that the Eastern Cape Province is faced with widespread poverty, with rural areas being the worst affected. This report also throws in a positive note that there is, however, a potential in this province to reduce poverty, pointing out human and natural resource wealth that could be used in poverty alleviation programmes, pending favorable institutional environments. The Eastern Cape government also believes that the province has plentiful human and natural resources, and these are employed below their productive potential (www.ecprov.gov.za).

On the other hand, Navy Simukonda, the director of the Transkei Land Service Organization (TRALSO), believes that natural resources (land, forests, water, and so forth) in the Eastern Cape, and in the Transkei in particular, have been degraded to the point where they can no longer fulfill their potential as a pillar for sustainable development in the province to alleviate poverty. Simukonda further argues that poor people in the Transkei, in their struggle to survive, have often used land and other resources unwisely.

Although Simukonda's statements are a cause for concern, the picture that is painted here is not that bleak, as a further example is given alluding to the fact that the nature reserves of Dwesa-Cwebe, Mkambati and Hluleka have abundant resources to benefit the local communities, research institutions, private organizations and meet the interest of government departments (Daily Dispatch, 2006). It can be argued that having many stakeholders and beneficiaries concentrating towards and wanting to benefit from the same resource, or wanting to exploit natural resources to their fullest capacity, could lead to further degradation and increased poverty levels. Without overemphasizing contribution of natural resources to poverty alleviation, Kepe (1997) describes in detail the importance of natural resources such as medicinal plants, thatch grass, wood products of various kinds, fuel wood, grazing for livestock and wildlife and the significant contribution these natural resources make towards poverty eradication.

As the case study areas for this study, Hluleka and Mkambati, are located along the eastern coast, the next section presents a brief review of the Wild Coast.

3.4. THE WILD COAST AREA

The Wild Coast is a coastline area of about 300 kilometers, which is between the Great Kei River to the south and uMtamvuna River to the north (Kepe, 2002). It forms part of the former Transkei and has, since 1994, become part of the Eastern Cape Province. The Eastern Cape Province premier, Nosimo Balindlela, describes the Wild Coast as one of the world's most spectacular coastlines (De Villiers *et al*, 2006). She further creates a picture of the area:

the traditional African huts dotted on the undulating green hillocks, sandwiched in between the Indian Ocean and the Drakensberg mountain range, is reminiscent of the past untouched and undiscovered heritage of our province (De Villiers *et al*, 2006:9).

The Wild Coast area is one of the main tourism attractions of the province and has been noted to have the potential of becoming one of the major ecotourism attractions of the former Transkei. The Provincial Growth and Development Plan mentions that the development of provincial tourism has a high potential to create jobs and raise incomes in rural areas through community tourism programmes. (PGDPPLan 2004-2014). However, in Kepe (2002:21) it is argued that:

...while protected environments might encourage a steady flow of tourists in the area, there is often no guarantee that local people will reap benefits from the local environment.

Nevertheless, the district municipality has a number of nature reserves, most of which have indigenous forests and form the main attraction for eco-tourism in the area. These include Mkambati Nature Reserve (7281 hectares); Silaka Nature Reserve (263 hectares); Hluleka Nature Reserve (445 hectares) and Dwesa-Cwebe Nature Reserves (5410 hectares). These protected areas have rich biodiversity, breathtaking scenery and accommodation for visitors. These are also marine protected areas (De Villiers *et al*, 2006). The hills beyond the coast rise to levels of up to 1500 meters above sea level. The district has many rivers and is well-watered, with an average of 700mm of rainfall each year. The coastline between Port St Johns and the Mtamvuna River and the adjacent offshore area has a unique mix of tropical and temperate eco-systems. There is a high rate of species turnover within similar habitats, and a high proportion of species are endemic to the region. The area also includes a range of marine and coastal habitats, with two substantial estuaries being fully protected for the first time in South Africa (www.southafrica.info).

The O.R. Tambo District covers most of the Wild Coast area. Two systems of governance are found in the Wild Coast, namely; the local authorities

represented by democratically elected councilors, and traditional authorities represented by chiefs and headmen. With regards to relations, this differs from area to area, but generally good relationship has developed between them (CSIR, 2005).

O.R. Tambo has a fairly small formal economy compared to the rest of the province, but the Transkei has a major subsistence and informal economy that is not measured by statistics. In this district, agriculture is the major private sector activity and contributes eight percent of formal employment. The chief formal agriculture enterprise is forestry (www.ectb.co.za). In the O.R. Tambo, 71% of the economically active population is unemployed and 88% of households live below the minimum poverty level. About 93% of the resident population has no formal sanitation services, hence the cholera outbreak which this district municipality had experienced. Of the 10 urban areas within the municipality, only four are either fully or partially served by a waterborne sanitation system (www.dplg.gov.za).

The Wild Coast is described by Kepe (2004) as an economically depressed area but one that has promise of great economic development potential at the same time. This contradiction led to the idea of the Spatial Development Initiative (SDI) in 1996. The intention of the SDIs was to target areas of the country that have both unrealized economic potential and great need. It was envisaged that rural people would benefit from employment created through these efforts. However, these SDIs had been faced with many challenges. This is also the case to the Wild Coast SDI (Kepe, 2001; See Chapter 2 Section 2.2.).

The Wild Coast has also seen the establishment of illegal developments in prime areas. Proclamation No. 174 of 1921 allowed white people to occupy sites on State Land for recreational purposes. Proclamation No. 26 of 1936 was to provide holiday facilities on tribal land along the coast for Transkei residents who would otherwise have no access. In 1990 a moratorium was placed on granting of land to outsiders. This move was followed by proclaiming a coastal conservation area extending 1000 meters inland of the high water

mark. This did not deter chiefs in granting this privilege, in contravention of Section 39 of the Transkei Environmental Decree. In 2000, Eastern Cape Department of Economic Affairs, Environment and Tourism laid criminal charges against owners of these illegal cottages. This resulted in imprisonment of several people leading to a reduction of these illegal activities. These efforts are still continuing (De Villiers *et al*, 2006).

Another issue that affects the Wild Coast is mining. De Villiers *et al* (2006) mention that the recent prospecting by an Australian mining company has revealed the presence of rich titanium deposits within the red sands. In 2005, the Wild Coast Project¹¹ commissioned Grant Thornton to conduct a consolidated financial and socio-economic assessment of proposed tourism investment in the Xolobeni area in order to be able to compare the benefits from the proposed tourism investment with the proposed mining operations. The purpose of the study was to provide a decision-support system to local communities, local authorities, provincial agencies and national departments in responding to the application for a heavy minerals mining right at Xolobeni (the coastal strip between Mzamba River and the Mtentu River). The study concluded that tourism investment will have significant financial, economic and socio-economic benefits for the study area that will remain long after the 22-year lifespan of the mining operation (Grant Thornton, 2005). Nothing has happened about mining up to now.

Another controversial issue in the Wild Coast is the construction of a toll-road linking environmentally sensitive areas of the coast with the existing N2 road. There has been much opposition from different quarters. Independent Online (2006) reported the poorly-attended meetings about the proposed N2 Wild Coast toll road, leading to a claim that the public participation process is "totally flawed". Environment and Tourism Minister Marthinus van Schalkwyk has been

¹¹ The Wild Coast Project is a project management unit acting on behalf of the National Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism and the Provincial Department of Economic Affairs, Environment and Tourism and funded by DEAT, DEAET, DBSA and UNDP to develop the bioregional planning framework for the large-scale implementation of a conservation and sustainable development program across the Wild Coast (an area bounded by the Umtamvuna river and Kei river and, stretching roughly 30km inland and 3km out to sea).

asked to halt the second round of the Wild Coast toll road approval process because of growing concerns about the objectivity and legality of the latest environmental impact assessment (EIA) process. The first EIA process, which sanctioned the project, was ruled illegal when it emerged that there were financial conflicts of interest between the environmental consultants and the private sector consortium which hopes to toll the Durban to East London route (Independent Online, 2006). According to DEAET (2004), the proposed N2 toll road will have major impacts on local migration patterns, probably placing more pressure on consumptive resources from particularly, forest ecosystems by making them more accessible to outsiders.

In addition to the above, there are plans for a new park, part of the Wild Coast Conservation and Development Programme, which were announced in September 2005 by Environmental Affairs and Tourism Minister Marthinus van Schalkwyk, after a meeting with the Eastern Cape government in Bisho. The Pondoland centre of biological diversity and endemism is of international ecological importance, and has been added to the list of 26 global floristic hotspots. The park will offer a combination of beaches, marine and estuarine escapes and African cultural heritage, in addition to wildlife viewing. It will build on the Pondoland Marine Protected Area proclaimed in 2004, and will ultimately extend the development corridor running along the KwaZulu-Natal south coast into Pondoland. In the longer term, the goal is to link it to the Western Cape's Garden Route development corridor. The Pondoland Marine Protected Area will be one of South Africa's largest, and arguably the most spectacular. Including 90km of coastline and extending approximately 15km out to sea, it is planned to cover 1300 square kilometers. The plans for this park are going ahead (Daily Dispatch, 2005).

3.5. CONCLUSION

This chapter looked briefly at the province, its poverty characteristics, possibilities for development and its natural beauty. It has also provided background information on the Wild Coast area, including a discussion of some controversies ranging from potential mining to toll-road construction to the

establishment of a national park. The following chapter presents the case of the implementation of EPWP in Hluleka Nature Reserve and its surrounds.



CHAPTER FOUR: EXPANDED PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME CASE STUDY ONE – HLULEKA

4.1. INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter dealt with the Eastern Cape and the Wild Coast, presenting their respective descriptions. More specifically, it discussed the state of poverty in the province, as well as the strategic position of the Wild Coast in terms of the environmental contribution to the fight against poverty. A report on strategic assessment of biodiversity in the Eastern Cape states that poverty in the province is one of the main causes of biodiversity loss, because impoverished people in rural areas are heavily dependent on exploiting natural resources (DEAET, 2004). The report goes on further to say that this is exacerbated by the collapse of traditional institutions during the previous political dispensation, as well as very high population densities in the area (See Section 3.2.3., Chapter Three). This is important given that this study is conducted in one of the poorest rural areas of the Eastern Cape Province (DEAET, 2004) – the Wild Coast. This chapter consists of four sections, which are the description of the study area, EPWP in Hluleka, views of people about EPWP, and the conclusion in that order.

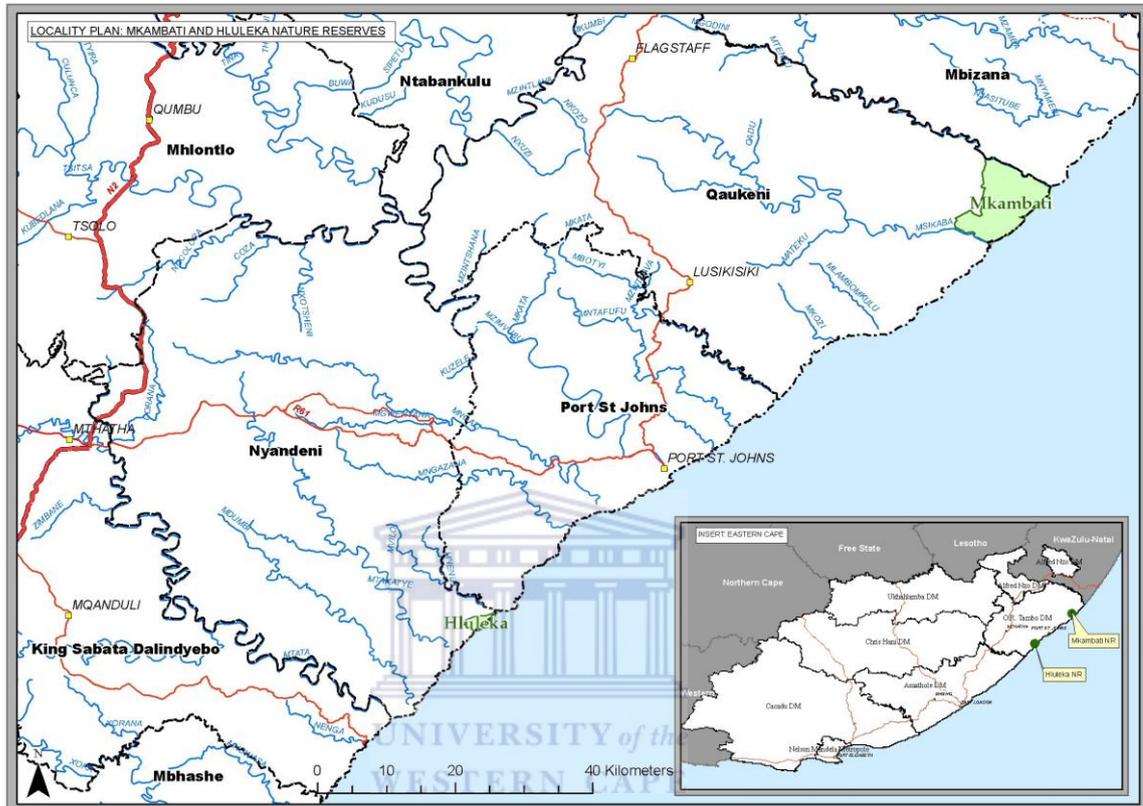
4.2. DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY AREA

4.2.1. Location

Situated between 31°49.00'S and 29°19.4'E, Hluleka Nature Reserve is the southern-most of the several nature reserves along the Pondoland Wild Coast. Also on the southern Wild Coast is Dwesa and Cwebbe Nature Reserves, although they are not within the Pondoland region (De Villiers and Costello, 2006). Hluleka Nature Reserve is situated in one of Southern Africa's former Bantustans, the Transkei, which, since 1994, falls under Eastern Cape Province. It is in the magisterial district of Ngqeleni and is approximately 87 kilometers (by road) south east of the main Wild Coast town, Umthatha. It falls under the Nyandeni Local Municipality in the Eastern Cape Province (DEAET, 2003). It covers an area of 800 hectares and has rich marine life and wetlands

(De Villiers and Costello, 2006). Two forest reserves, Congwane-Mtombo Forest Reserve and Ndabeni-Hluleka Forest Reserves, make up most of Hluleka Nature Reserve. The two study areas are shown in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Locality plan – Mkambati and Hluleka Nature Reserves.



4.2.2. Historical background

Hluleka Nature Reserve was proclaimed as a Wildlife Reserve in 1976 (Proclamation No.31/1976). In fact, Hluleka has an interesting history. This was recorded on a yellowing, moth-eaten piece of paper stuck to the wall of the nature reserve's office, compiled by Hawkes, undated. What one would wish to ascertain from the history of a reserve is the reason for its establishment as a conservation area. As in many cases in the country where land has been granted to conservation organizations for a multitude of other reasons, so is it with Hluleka. Mrs. Heard, the former owner of the farm, wished for her heritage to be one where conservation played a major role, thus the legal establishment of this protected area.

Hluleka owes its existence to William Thomas Strachan. “Ubili”, as he was affectionately known to all Africans of the Transkei, was closely associated with the Pondo people of this area and had the complete confidence of the chiefs and the people during the period of about 1860-1919. Billy Strachan once intervened in a conflict of local chiefdoms. For this, he was given a gift of about 1040 hectares stretch of the coast from the Umtakatyi River in the south to the Umnenu River in the north, by Chief Gwadiso. This was known as “Strachan’s Grant” and was shown as such on all maps. The size of the grant was eventually cut down by the authorities and eventually measured about 320 hectares in extent. Upwards of 50 people (friends and relations) used to journey down from Umthatha by ox wagon to Hluleka for holidays. William Thomas Strachan died in 1919 at the age of 70.

In 1927, Hluleka was sold to a Johannesburg stockbroker, Mr. L.G. Heard, who with his wife, Mona, set about building a magnificent home. The Heards used to spend few months a year at their seaside villa, and Mona Heard, an avid gardener began to create a stunning garden. L.G. Heard in the meantime had negotiated with the government on the boundaries and had them extended to the size of the present-day nature reserve. He began breeding Afrikaner cattle and later introduced a Hereford strain. This was a hobby rather than a business, and he maintained that local people stood to gain as he would only sell the progeny to them at very reasonable prices. This, of course, improved the stock of the locals. Eventually, due to old age and ill-health, Mrs. Heard was persuaded to negotiate a sale of the property to the Transkei Government to whom one had to sell at that time. However, she was steadfast in her resolve that their creation should become a wildlife sanctuary.

In 1971, Dr. Woodridge made representations to the Director of Nature Conservation in Cape Town for the preservation of the property in its present state as a nature reserve. In 1975, the farm was eventually made available to the Transkei Government to establish a nature reserve, which together with

adjoining Hluleka-Congwane-Mtombo Forest Reserve, was proclaimed by the Minister of Agriculture and Forestry in March 1976.¹²

4.2.3. Biophysical description

The goals of the reserve are to protect forests and biodiversity in general, as well as the provision of overnight accommodation and other facilities to visitors. On October 24, 1991, Hluleka Nature Reserve was declared a marine reserve. The goals of this reserve are the protection of marine vertebrate and invertebrate, fishes and plants, seaward of high water mark, except for limited angling for finfish from certain stretches of shore (Hluleka File, DEAET Regional Office, July 1996). It is bounded by the Mnenu River to the north and the Mtakatye in the south. The Hluleka River drains into the sea within the boundaries of the reserve. The nearest towns are Libode and Umthatha. The reserve boundary is fenced, except along the coastline. The width of the terrestrial reserve is approximately two kilometers. The reserve includes approximately five kilometers of coastline which is protected as a marine reserve.

Hluleka is a hilly coastal reserve with a combination of rocky seashore, lagoon and evergreen forest. The Hluleka River flows through and out of the forest into an open area where large coral trees, quinine trees and Natal figs grow along its banks. Before fanning out into a long lagoon, the river widens to provide an ideal habitat for black duck, dabchick and African jacana, which tread delicately across the watery lily pads. The reserve has accommodation in wooden chalets on stilts overlooking the sea. From the balconies, dolphins could be seen. The reserve itself is a wanderer's paradise, with hundreds of meandering paths. This small, hilly reserve contains patches of indigenous forest and grassland. Hluleka's main appeal for the naturalist is the abundant bird-life. The forest is rich in incredible bird-life reverberating through the trees – sunbirds, canaries, herons, and the jewel in the crown, the fabulous, elusive narina trogon. The

¹² Extracted from the motivation by G.M. Zide, Project Leader, dated 21 October 1998, to the Deputy Permanent Secretary: Environmental Affairs and Tourism. Hluleka file Umthatha DEAET Regional office.

rocky coastline provides excellent fishing and attracts large numbers of fishermen during holiday periods (www.hluleka.wildcoast.org.za). The following are all resident at Hluleka: blue wildebeest, Burchell's zebra, bushbuck, blue duiker, large spotted genet, vervet monkey, bush pig, African civet and rock dassie (Eastern Cape Parks Board Brochure, Undated).

The climate is subtropical with plentiful rain of 1000 - 1200 mm annually that falls predominantly in spring and autumn. Annual average temperature range is between 15°C and 21°C. Temperatures vary between 8°C and 39°C. Extreme conditions of wind and salt spray occur. Rainfall can, however, fall in any month of the year, and the area generally receives 90 days or more when rainfall in excess of 1mm falls. The average summer monthly temperatures seldom rise above 21°C, while average winter temperatures seldom drop below 16°C (Lubke *et al.*, 1986; 1988).

The area that Acocks classified as coastal tropical forest and thornveld is definitely not all forest today. Acocks describes typical coast-belt forest from the Umtakaty River, which is the next river south of Hluleka, and one can safely assume that this is the dominant forest type for Hluleka (Acocks, 1988). There is a narrow strip of dune forest between the accommodation complex, parking area and the mouth of the Hluleka River, and isolated patches in other spots. The thornveld, which replaces coastal forest is scrubby, full of bush clumps and various stages in the succession between grassveld and forest. There is, however, no open grassy savanna or open grasslands. Small areas of the reserve have been cultivated in the recent past. Except for the presence of guava trees, which now appear to be invading on the local vegetation, no other signs of cultivation are evident.

The history of Hluleka and the fondness of past owners for gardening with exotic vegetation have led to a long list of alien plants¹³. The most obvious being bamboo, banana, and cactus species. The infestations of alien invasive

¹³ The Heards used to spend a few months a year at their new home, and Mona Heard, an avid gardener began to create this magnificent garden. She spent practically every hour of the day in the garden. There were times when one would find her gardening half way down the Kranz overlooking the river with a rope around her waist tied to a pillar of the back verandah (Hawkes, V.E., undated).

species within Hluleka are concerning. The wooded grasslands thickets found at Hluleka are infested with a variety of alien invasive species. The dune forest and grasslands are generally free of these infestations while the coastal forests have isolated occurrences, especially in the drainage lines and river courses. The majority of the invasive species were found within the 'wooded grassland' or thicket areas, contributing to the densification of these areas. These infestations are, without any doubt, threatening the integrity of this reserve (DEAET, 2003). Alien species found at Hluleka are presented in Table 5.

TABLE 5: Alien species found in Hluleka

Species	Infestation	Area found in
<i>Lantana camara</i> (Lantana)	Widespread - clumped and dominating	All wooded grassland/thicket areas and riverine
<i>Chromolaena odorata</i> (Paraffienbos)	Widespread - clumped and dominating	All thicket areas, riverine areas and isolated in lower lying coastal forest areas
<i>Solanum mauritianum</i> (Bugweed)	Widespread – isolated patches	All areas including coastal forest areas
<i>Caesalpinia decapetala</i> (Mauritius Thorn)	Widespread - clumped and dominating	Upper and mid-slope areas of north-facing slopes, associated with the densification of the wooded grassland component
<i>Cestrum laevigatum</i> (Inkberry)	Widespread – isolated stands	Wooded grassland and riverine areas
<i>Psidium guajava</i> (Guava)	Widespread	All wooded grassland areas
<i>Eucalyptus sp.</i> (Gum Tree)	Localized	Area adjacent to the estuary in old Eucalyptus stand
<i>Acacia mearnsii</i> (Black wattle)	Localized	Area adjacent to the estuary in old Eucalyptus stand
<i>Bamboo</i>	Localized	Around main camp next to estuary
<i>A variety of conifers and other exotic ornamentals</i>	Localized	Around main camp and office

(DEAT 2003:11)

Vast areas of grassland have already been lost particularly to *Lantana camara* infestation (DEAET, 2003).

4.2.4. Political structure

The reserve is within Nyandeni Local Municipality, in the O.R. Tambo District Municipality (Manona, 2005). The traditional institution is still recognized in the Hluleka area. The study area belongs to the Khonjwayos under Chief Dumisani Gwadiso. Hluleka is situated at Elucingweni Administrative Area. Inkosi

(Headman) Mathintela Gwadiso is in charge of Elucingweni. He took over from his late father Chief Masinda Gwadiso in 1983, after working in Gauteng since 1973. Elucingweni falls under Ward 20, with its own local municipality councilor. *Elucingweni* (Administrative Area 41A) has five *izigodi* or *amaploto* (sub-villages), namely; *Elucingweni*, *Mdzwini*, *Bhucula*, *Iganga* and *Xhuthudwele*, which are further divided into fifteen village neighborhood sections (*izithebe*). These are: *Elucingweni*, *Xhuthudwele*, *Iganga*, *Ingebhe*, *Amabhonxothi*, *Umzinto*, *Idumase*, *iBhoyzin*, *Umda*, *Udlangatho*, *Uthuthu*, *Umthala*, *Umdzwi*, *Intab'omthala* and *Koloni*¹⁴. It is important to note that these sub-villages are the communities that form part of the Hluleka community for the purposes of development projects originating from the reserve.

4.3. EXPANDED PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME (EPWP) IN HLULEKA

Eastern Cape Parks Board is the implementing agent for the Hluleka Nature Reserve's Expanded Public Works Programme. The project business plan describes the aim of the project as upgrading the Hluleka Nature Reserve and Coffee Bay camp site infrastructure, facilities and associated services. The project was scheduled to commence on the December 1, 2004, and to be completed by March 31, 2007, with an estimated duration of 121 weeks, 4 days. It started late due to the implementing agent's institutional complications. Hluleka forms part of the Wild Coast Conservation and Sustainable Development Project that aims to create a planning framework to support the establishment of a consolidated conservation estate across the Wild Coast. The project budget is R11 million. The DEAT funding would provide a capital investment to support the ongoing management of Hluleka as an integral part of the greater conservation estate, raising the regional profile of Hluleka, establishing a functional and meaningful relationship with local communities and, importantly, demonstrating national commitment to supporting the creation of the Wild Coast conservation area (Hluleka Project Business Plan, 2004).

¹⁴ Interview with Inkosi Mathintela Gwadiso, April 2006, Elucingweni.

Temporary Jobs

Table 6: Planned jobs (as per business plan)

Category	Rate (R)	Person Days x Rate	Number of Actual People	Total P-Days	P-Days by Women	P-Days by Youth < 25	P-Days by Disabled	P-Days by Local People
Clerical	65	19,890	1	306	184	61	6	306
Laborer	45	2,480,850	180	55,130	33,078	11,026	1,103	55,130
Managerial	480	734,880	5	1,531	919	306	31	1,531
Semi skilled	90	110,250	4	1,225	735	245	24	1,225
Skilled	120	36,720	1	306	184	61	6	306
Supervisor	70	214,410	10	3,063	1,838	613	61	3,063
All Occupations		3,597,000	201	61,561	36,938	12,312	1,231	61,561

Source www.thelapa.com

Table 6 shows that the project is targeting women, youth, and the disabled. It is also clear from the table that there are salary differences on the proposed salaries between project employees, for example, the laborer earns R45 per day while the managerial position is budgeted at R480 per day. Justification for this is explained in the discussion of Table 7. Contracts for workers range between 6 –24 months. As it will be seen later, these shorter contracts are not popular among the beneficiaries of the project.

Table 7: Actual jobs created

Category	Rate (R)	Person Days x Rate	Number of Actual People	Total P-Days	P-Days by Women	P-Days by Youth < 25	P-Days by Disabled	P-Days by Local People
Clerical	120	29,400	1	245	0	245	0	245
Laborer	45	465,030	56	10,334	8,434	7,012	0	10,334
Managerial	200	45,000	1	225	225	225	0	225
Semi skilled	90	60,120	3	668	412	524	0	668
Skilled	65	1,365	0	21	0	21	0	21
Supervisor	70	49,770	4	711	0	0	0	711
All Occupations	590	650,685	65	12,204	9,071	8,027	0	12,204

Source www.thelapa.com

The difference between the proposed and actual salaries in the number of positions is very evident. Clerical has been pushed from R65 to R120 per day, with the justification from management being that these are people are doing the bulk of administrative work, and their salaries should reflect their

responsibility. Additionally, it is argued that the job requires certain skills such as typing and bookkeeping, which are not easily acquired. Managerial has been dropped from R480 to R200 per day. This is in line with other EPWP managerial positions managed by the Eastern Cape Parks Board. Skilled position has been dropped from R120 to R65 per day. No justification has been given for this case.

The statistics on which this table is based were taken from the report to DEAT of May 31, 2006. According to this report, there is very slow progress, which is attributed to a late start of the project. This is also reflected by the fact that only 18% in wages had been spent by May 31, 2006 and only 32% of staff complement had been achieved. Masses of people in these communities are still living in dire poverty; they are still unemployed while poverty relief funding is not being spent in good time.

4.3.1. Skills Training

Expanded Public Works Programme requires that those employed should have both accredited and non-accredited training as part of skills transfer so as to enable employees to find their feet even after the project has ended. Table 8 and Table 9 respectively show planned training as well as what had been achieved by May 31, 2006.

Table 8: Planned training (as per business plan)

Category	No. of Modules Offered	No. of Learnerships to be Completed	No. of Participants to Complete NQF credits	No. of Skills Programmes to be Completed	Non-Accredited Training Days	Accredited Training Days	No. of People to Attend
Literacy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Numeracy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Life Skills	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Instructors	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vocational and Task Related	1	0	0	0	3415	0	197
Business and Management	1	0	4	0	0	360	4
Environmental	1	0	19	0	0	1710	19
Leadership	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Training	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	3	0	23	0	3415	2070	220

Source: www.thelapa.com

Table 9: Actual training received

Category	No. of Modules Offered	No. of Learnerships to be Completed	No. of Participants to Complete NQF Credits	No. of Skills Programmes to be Completed	Non-Accredited Training Days	Accredited Training Days	No of people to attend
Literacy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Numeracy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Life Skills	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Instructors	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vocational and Task Related	1	0	0	0	172	0	64
Business and Management	1	0	4	0	0	5	2
Environmental	1	0	19	0	0	0	0
Leadership	0	0	0	0	0	17	20
Other Training	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	3	0	23	0	172	22	66

Source: www.thelapa.com

This report reflects that 30% of the staff complement has been trained. One of the special conditions laid by the EPWP project funder is that before any training can take place, a training plan should be submitted to DEAT for approval. In this case, training targets have not been met due to late completion and submission of the training plan. The project staff was hopeful that training would pick up speed and that it would take place as planned.

4.3.2. Focus projects

When the project began, it had a number of activities and milestones. These included the upgrading of reserve buildings, roads and services. This implied completion of five kilometers of road; a concrete causeway, a bridge and an operational waste management system. The second milestone was the construction of 10.2 kilometers of fencing around the reserve. The third important milestone was the construction of an environmental centre in the reserve. The last milestone was the upgrading of the camp site. As the EPWP in Hluleka is aimed at alleviating poverty, it is imperative to reflect on the budget how much of it goes to employees' salaries. Table 10 shows the project expenditure by item.

Table 10: Main budget items

Item	Budget (R)
Implementer fees	770,000
Professional fees	154,000
Training	526,527
Administration	505,200
Materials and equipment	3,913,371
Wages	3,687,025
Community facilitation	93,000
Output VAT	1,350,877
Total	11,000,000

Source: www.thelapa.com

Table 10 shows that 33.5% of the budget goes to salaries. This is the sizable amount that will go into this impoverished area.

Project deliverables with their budgeted amounts are going to be discussed in this section. At Coffee Bay, there are 36 camp sites, five hikers' huts, free standing drop toilets and an ablution block. All these are in a poor state of disrepair with no signage, poor water, waste and electrical services, and no office facilities. This camp site has been budgeted for R2,334,810. It was planned that a multi-purpose environmental education centre would be build at Hluleka Nature Reserve at the cost of R1,288,054. The reserve has a bonnox fence which does not meet Certificate of Adequate Enclosure standards as required by the Department of Economic Affairs, Environment and Tourism. The new perimeter game fencing was planned to be erected at a cost of R1,396,566. Funds in the amount of R2,580,966 has been set aside to upgrade 7.5 kilometers of road, the concrete bridge, the causeway on the public road, the hiker's huts, and the waste management system. In-situ training, mentoring and skills development, management fees of implementer, community facilitation, and administration have been budgeted at R2,048,727. The VAT for the entire budget comes to R1,350,877. As can be seen, most of the plans contained in the business strategy were based on existing needs, in terms of infrastructure. Similarly, the amount budgeted, to include allocation for local

labor, was a resource that is always needed in rural areas. This positive outlook, however, cannot be taken as an absolute case of a win-win situation. How the project is implemented, and what various stakeholders feel about it, is most important. The discussion in the next section explores these different views of the people in the area.

4.4. VIEWS OF PEOPLE ABOUT EPWP

4.4.1. Knowledge of goals

During field work, a plan was to get views from a representative number of people employed in the project. An interview schedule (See Appendix 1) was drafted in order to guide the researcher when posing questions to respondents. In the end, a total of 25 people were interviewed using the interview schedule. Semi-structured interviews, as well as other qualitative forms of research, were used. These included participant observation and focus group discussions.

On the question of whether people knew the goals of the EPWP project in Hluleka, 23 people out of 25 interviewed (92%) could not explain the goals of the project, except to say that it was about job creation, thus leaving out the environmental goals. The two respondents who knew what the goals of the project were, were people working in the supervisory capacity of the project. When pressed further, all the informants who confessed to not quite knowing the goals (92%), their guess was that the project is there to provide them with jobs. Instead of elaborating on this, one of the respondents, accompanied by nods from others, raised other burning issues. For example, the respondents went on to say:

I am aware of the goals (job creation), but there are outstanding issues to be resolved regarding the land claim on the reserve. Many years ago, we were promised, by the reserve authorities, that we would get 10% of income generated from reserve activities, but nothing has happened thus far. We feel

that there should not be any further development of the reserve until such time as the land claim is settled.¹⁵

It can be concluded from this apparent ignorance about all the goals of the project, as well as the example of the question about the land claim, that the decision to implement the project was externally driven, and that the project was implemented without necessarily engaging local people in both their needs and the goals of the project. I return to this in the concluding chapter.

4.4.2. Understanding of environmental goals

When the respondents were told that one of the key goals of the project is about promoting environmental conservation, and were asked to express their views, it became very clear that they were never informed about these goals prior to implementation. Again, only two people – the supervisors in the project - (8%) could articulate the environmental goals of the project. The rest of the people (92%) were adamant that when they were told about the project, only job opportunities were mentioned; meaning no environmental goals were set out. When people were challenged to speculate on what the environmental goal of the project was, at least four of the 23 who did not know the goals decided to offer wild guesses and said:

I know the importance of this reserve as it creates jobs through tourists that are coming in. This project is going to bring more income to our coffers.¹⁶

The environmental goal is preservation of Hluleka by the government. This preservation is only about the reserve and not about areas outside its borders.¹⁷

Environmental goals of the project are about maintaining the environmental status of the reserve as well as conservation of its biodiversity, not only to be enjoyed by the present generation, but also for future generations. We hope by the erection of the environmental centre in this reserve, many people, young

¹⁵ Interview with the local Chief, April 2006, Elucingweni

¹⁶ Interview with a laborer in the fencing team, May 2006

¹⁷ Interview with the team leader in the building section, May, 2006

and old, will benefit from biodiversity education lessons that are going to be offered here.¹⁸

It is clear from these interviews that workers are not fully aware about environmental goals, but when they were pressed for answers they were able to link the goals to the nature reserve, whose function they were vaguely familiar with.

4.4.3. Importance of goals

The respondents were asked to comment on the importance of the stated project goals, including both the environmental and job creation goals. The most popular response was that job creation was the most important goal, as it was a strategy for poverty reduction by the government. On this, all respondents, including the supervisors of the project (100%) agreed that the job creation goal of the project is extremely important, as there were high levels of poverty locally. In their view, while conservation of biodiversity is important, it came second to job creation in the EPWP projects. Further probing revealed that those respondents who had been in the employ of the EPWP project for several months had gained increased appreciation of conservation. One person confessed that the reason she even has an idea about the importance of Hluleka is that the immediate surroundings, meaning the nature reserve, have influenced her over several weeks. At least one respondent was skeptical about the linking of conservation and job creation, when he said:

If this reserve was not here for conservation, we would not be here and employed. So, government knows where to pump in money. So we are benefiting because of this reserved area. Before I joined the project, I was not sure about what was happening inside the reserve, but now I strongly feel that nature should be conserved. Maybe government had a plan to use jobs to get us interested in conservation¹⁹

The statement by this respondent indicates that nature conservation ideas can and do spread among the people who previously did not appreciate them. It

¹⁸ Interview with a project beneficiary, May, 2006.

¹⁹ Interview with a project beneficiary, April 2006

appears that the length of time working in the reserve, even in the absence of a targeted effort to educate them, villagers have adopted the conservation narrative.

4.4.4. Project contribution to beneficiaries' lives

All twenty five respondents (100%) regarded this project as a positive move towards poverty reduction by government and a step in the right direction toward improving local people's lives. The following are some of their responses:

I have acquired new skills since I have worked in this position. I have worked here for almost a year now. I have been able to pay school fees for my siblings and managed to build a two roomed house, also contributing to family groceries every month. I am planning to save for my studies in Nature Conservation as working here has inspired me, if my contract is renewed.

My lifestyle has changed. Now, there is no need to pay rent as I am working closer to home, not in Durban like before, which used to cost me R150.00 in transport every month. Currently, I am rebuilding my house that was demolished by the recent storm. If only government could extend our employment period, our lives could be better off. More jobs must be created as most youth indulge in drugs.²⁰

It is not because of ignorance that I know nothing about the project, but the reserve does not communicate with us as community members and business people. Although I make some profit from the project workers, reserve management should improve communication with us, even to the extent of putting up notices in our shops. We make lunch packs for some workers and often many of them buy on credit, and they pay back when they get their monthly pay. This is project has improved our profits to a certain extent.²¹

In an informal conversation with eight youth from the neighbouring village, it also became clear that perceived benefits from the projects are so strong that they are causing discord among community members. According to these

²⁰ Interview with EPWP employee-building team member, May 2006, Hluleka Nature Reserve

²¹ Interview with a local shop owner, May 2006, Hluleka

youth one of the major concerns was nepotism by village authorities when it came to job opportunities. They revealed that some people have been on the employment waiting list since the start of the project, but they remain unemployed. They argue that some people have been fraudulently placed on top of the list ahead of those who were supposed to be employed first. Other complaints are that older people have been employed leaving youth behind; some people employed in the project are from well-off families; employment of more than one person from a single household and the perception that providing jobs to the youth does not contribute to solving poverty problems. The employment of more than one member in a single household is actually in contravention of the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, 1997, on beneficiaries of Special Public Works Programmes which stipulates in Section 4.1 and 4.2 that:

The beneficiaries of the programmes should preferably be non-working individuals from the most vulnerable sections of disadvantaged communities who do not receive any social security grant.²²

In order to spread the benefits as broadly as possible in the community, a maximum of one person per household should be employed, taking local circumstances into account.²³

4.4.5. Perceptions of community leaders

Unlike the other sectors of the community, leadership seemed to have a sound understanding of the project goals, the importance of these goals, and the contribution to people's lives. Two levels of community leadership were interviewed²⁴, including two ward councilors and ten community representatives in the project steering committee. My own deductions are that, firstly, these individuals have a higher level of education than other people in the community, and secondly their exposure to the reserve activities had an influence on their positivism. Two ward councilors interviewed as well as eight out of ten community representatives were aware of the contents of the business plan and

²² Department of Labour. Basic Conditions of Employment Act, 1997, Section 4.1.

²³ Department of Labour. Basic Conditions of Employment Act, 1997, Section 4.2.

²⁴ Telephone interviews with community leaders, August 2006

of the community share of the budget in terms of wages to the community. They are engaged at a more advance level with the project team. There was agreement among respondents (83%) at this level that there was not enough progress on the ground, and they understood causes as being bureaucracy. There was negative feeling voiced by one steering committee member, about his dissatisfaction on the appointment of the project co-coordinator who is not from their immediate community. Although the recruitment process was open, seven of the ten steering committee members felt that a local candidate could have been hired, while the remaining three welcomed the candidate irrespective of his or her background. Except this, the general perception among these community leaders was that the project and its benefit were positive for their community.



4.4.6. Project progress as per people's perceptions and actual delivery on site

The perception of the supervisors of the project, including the manager, coordinator and field team leaders is that there is very little progress when considering the goals of the project. Bureaucratic red tape is one of the reasons given as the main problem. More specifically, delays in the implementation of the project have been a source of frustration for the project supervisors in the field. Apparently it has taken some time to get working equipment because of the tedious implementing agent's procurement procedures. The community temporary workers have been forced to perform jobs that are not related to or prescribed in the project. For example, some temporary workers have helped as game rangers, gate guards and in alien vegetation removal, all of which were not part of the business plan for Hluleka. However, signs of progress were visible here and there and the supervisors acknowledged these. By the end of May 2006, over and above the creation of temporary jobs, digging around the whole perimeter fence in preparation for the new fence had at least been completed. New poles covering a distance of four kilometers had been planted. The contractor for road construction had been appointed, with the heavy machinery on site. All five old mud hikers' huts had been demolished and replaced with concrete brick rondavels. For these rondavels construction was at the roof stage.

4.5. CONCLUSION

This chapter showed how slowly the project has been progressing in and around Hluleka Nature Reserve. With about ten months before project completion being March 31, 2007, not much had been achieved both in terms of jobs created, training provided and actual work on the ground. It discussed the views of the workers in the project, as well as of those not working in the project.

The chapter discussed what has been achieved on the project. The next chapter presents the case study of Mkambati Nature Reserve's EPWP.

CHAPTER FIVE: EXPANDED PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME CASE STUDY TWO – MKAMBATI

5.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a brief description of the study area, Mkambati Nature Reserve, covering the biophysical and social aspects including history and political issues. The background of the Expanded Public Works Programme in Mkambati is presented. This is followed by a discussion of the views of the people about EPWP in their area. Lastly, a conclusion is presented.

5.2. DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY AREA

5.2.1. Location

Located at 31°13'–31°20'S and 29°55'–30°4'E, Mkambati Nature Reserve is 7000 hectares and situated in the Wild Coast of the Eastern Cape Province. It is situated in north-eastern Pondoland, between two rivers, Mtentu and Msikaba, in the magisterial district of Lusikisiki. Mpondo speaking people have inhabited this area for centuries. Mkambati is about 250 kilometers from Durban and the nearest town is Flagstaff, which is about 70 kilometers away. Hluleka is about 285 kilometers away from Mkambati (See Chapter Four).

5.2.2. Historical background²⁵

Mkambati has a history worth noting. The nature reserve started out as a leper colony. This dates back to 1899 when Paramount Chief Sigcau, who was the King of the Mpondos, agreed to the proposal that he allocate an area of land in the Eastern Pondoland for use as a leper colony. It was only at the end of 1920 that the leper institution was erected on the coast between the Msikaba and Mtentu rivers, and it was given the name of Mkambati. Before the building of the colony could commence, local residents were forcibly removed. Seeing a

²⁵ This section draws substantially from Kepe (1997b) and the Mkambati Settlement Agreement: Land Claims Commission, 17 October 2004.

boundary fence erected, enclosing a huge grazing area, which was not initially agreed upon, led to a lot of dissatisfaction from the neighboring Khanyayo and Thahle people. Mkambati later was stocked with cattle and other livestock to provide meat for the lepers; this led to further dissatisfaction.

In 1948, the Department of Health proposed the erection of the Sea-Side Holiday Home for the “European” leprosy patients from Pretoria Leper Institution on the estate of the Mkambati Leper Institution, and this was done despite the outcry and opposition from Paramount Chief Botha Sigcau and his subjects. That resort is now the popular seaside cottages named Gwegwe. In 1951, the Minister of Lands made an application for a certificate of Registered Crown Title to be issued in favor of the Republic of the Union of South Africa. The certificate was issued, and the land was registered under Crown Title 91/51. In 1966, the rights to Mkambati were transferred and vested in the Government of Transkei Constitution Act, Act No.48 of 1963. The rights to Mkambati were later transferred to the Transkei Department of Health in terms of Section 67 of the same Act.

In 1976, the leprosy institution was closed, and the land was transferred to the Department of Agriculture and Forestry of Transkei. In 1977, the inland two-thirds of the land, about 11,000 hectares, was earmarked for a sugarcane plantation, while the seaward third, approximately 6130 hectares, was proclaimed a nature reserve by Government Notice No.45 of April 27, 1977, in terms of the Transkei Conservation Act No.6 of 1971. In 1978, a company called Mkambati Game Reserve (Pty) Ltd was formed by the Transkei Department of Agriculture and Forestry to run the reserve. This was approved and endorsed by the Cabinet of Transkei resolution 23/42/78. It was envisaged that this reserve would be mainly for tourism and would attract the wealthy overseas visitors. The Transkei Government would hold 51% shares in the company and would contribute the land and infrastructure, whilst the other partner would hold 49% shares and would be responsible for the required finances. In 1982, the Transkei Government terminated the partnership, and the Mkambati Game Reserve (Pty) Ltd reverted to the Transkei Department of Finance. This department took full control and management of the reserve. In

1991, the company dissolved, returning the nature reserve to the control of the Department of Agriculture and Forestry (Transkei), as was required by the Transkei Nature Reserve Act No.6 of 1971. At the same time, a government parastatal known as Transkei Agricultural Corporation (TRACOR) was allocated the inland two-thirds which had comprised an area of 11,000 hectares, for the purposes of planting sugarcane. In 1983, the sugarcane project commenced, but used only 50 hectares, and this was increased to 400 hectares in 1986. In 1990, TRACOR introduced a cattle-farming scheme for breeding purposes.

Conflicts over the use of land and its resources resumed between the TRACOR officials and the villagers over the collection of medicinal plants and firewood, and the harvesting of thatching grass. People were required to pay for these activities, and TRACOR started to impound cattle from the nearby villages for “illegally” grazing on the land. However people continued to use the land and its resources as before.

Following years of protests, including escalating tensions during the early 1990s, several neighboring communities (Khanyayo, Mtshayelo, Khamzi, KwaCele, Thahle, Ngquza and Vlei) lodged a claim for restitution of land rights in accordance with the Restitution of Land Rights Act No.22 of 1994. In 2004, the ownership of the land reverted to the residents of the above-mentioned villages. The communities have, in the course of subsequent meetings with the State Departments and the Regional Land Claims Commission (RLCC), committed the use of the reserve area for conservation, in partnership with the state, in perpetuity, subject to the terms of the settlement agreement (Land Claims Commission, 2004).

5.2.3. Biophysical description

Mkambati has rich biodiversity. Many of the plant species found in the area are endemic or near endemic species, including those used for medicinal purposes and for plant-based craft-making (Kepe, 2002). Mkambati is a summer rainfall area, with a mean annual rainfall of about 1200mm, of which at least 50mm is expected every month of the year. The area is characterized by sandy soils, resulting in limited crop production. The area has an average temperature of

20 degrees Celsius (Kepe, 1997). Vegetation of the area is dominated largely by grasslands. Patches of subtropical forest are found in riverines and coastal dunes. Highly regarded vegetation is found on Mkambati and TRACOR land (Prinsloo, 2000). In addition to this highly valued biodiversity, there are numerous alien species found on this reserve. Eucalyptus, or blue-gum is perhaps the most abundant forest tree present. Other species that have invaded Mkambati are lantana (*Lantana camara*), inkberry (*Cestrum laevigatum*), morning glory (*Ipomoea congesta*), bugweed (*Solanum mauritanium*), guava (*Psidium guajava*), silky hakea (*Hakea sericea*), long-leaved wattle (*Acacia longifolia*), *Periskia aculaeata* and Seringa (*Melia azedarach*) (De Villiers and Costello, 2006).

5.2.4. Political structure

Mkambati Nature Reserve is within the Qaukeni Local Municipality, in the O.R. Tambo District. There are municipal councilors representing the community. The areas considered the community of Mkambati are Khanyayo, Mtshayelo, Rhamzi, KwaCele, Thahle, Ngquza and Vlei villages. These are the villages involved in the successful land claim for Mkambati. With the exception of Mtshayelo, these villages fall under Thaweni Tribal Authority, under Chief Mhlanga. Kepe (2002) gives a clear picture of leadership structures in Mkambati. Each administrative area is headed by a senior chief, who in this case is the head of Thaweni Tribal Authority. *Izithebe* (*isithebe* – singular) or neighborhood groupings have villagers who appoint their leader locally called oonozithetyana – or sub-headmen. All the sub-headmen report to the headman (inkosi). Kepe (2002) writes about this political complication and elaborates that:

When people require land or have disputes, they cannot go to the inkosi by themselves. The unozithetyana must decide if the case is worth being dealt with by the inkosi and amadoda akomkhulu (the chiefs' councilors) or not.

Each village is led by a headman, and is further divided into sub-villages (izigodi). Mkambati political structures are not as simple as one would assume. Over and above the scenario that has been presented already, there is the

Mkambati Land Trust which deals with land related matters. The Trust is also involved in negotiations in Public Private Partnership initiatives in the area. The project steering committee deals specifically with Expanded Public Works issues. Two members from each village make this committee.

5.3. EXPANDED PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME IN MKAMBATI

Mkambati EPWP project is one of several implemented by the Eastern Cape Parks Board. This project's aim is to upgrade Mkambati Nature Reserve, Msikaba Camp Site, infrastructure and associated services. It is also aimed at rehabilitating the reserve's ecological integrity. Originally, the project life cycle was to extend from December 1, 2004 to March 31, 2006, and has been estimated to last 121 weeks, 4 days. Like in Hluleka, discussed in the previous chapter (See Section 4.3., Chapter Four), the start of the project was delayed by institutional challenges such as the unavailability of staff to manage this programme at head office. Only ad hoc arrangements were made five months after the project was supposed to have started. Support services, such as finance and administrative staff, were hired seven months later. While funding from the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism was not delayed; the second payment was delayed due to slow spending of the first payment. Payment of R2,075,202 was made on January 11, 2005 into the Eastern Cape Parks Board's account who is the implementing agent. It took 17 months to spend these funds as the second payment of R585, 228 was received on July 10, 2006, only 8 months before the end of the project. The project budget is R9 million (Mkambati Project Business Plan, 2004).

Prior to this project, Mkambati had the Working for Water project from 1999 to June 2006, which aimed at alien plants eradication, with the Department of Water Affairs as the lead department of these projects. That project can be defined as a relative success, as large tracks of cleared land can be seen within the reserve. The current EPWP in Mkambati was initiated by the Eastern Cape Tourism Board, Conservation Division. Business plans were done by senior management with little or no input from the reserve manager at Mkambati. When the Eastern Cape Parks Board took over from the Eastern Cape Tourism

Board, Conservation Division in 2004, it signed contracts with the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism as the implementing agent. As part of EPWP, jobs are very crucial. Tables 11 and 12 respectively show the number of jobs that have been planned and those that have been achieved.

Temporary Jobs

Table 11: Planned jobs (as per business plan)

Category	Rate (R)	Person Days x Rate	Number of Actual People	Total P-Days	P-Days by Women	P-Days by Youth < 25	P-Days by Disabled	P-Days by Local People
Clerical	65	17,680	1	272	163	54	5	272
Laborer	45	1,898,460	155	42,188	25,312	8,438	844	42,188
Managerial	480	653,280	5	1,361	817	272	27	1,361
Semi skilled	90	195,930	8	2,177	1,306	435	43	2,177
Skilled	120	65,280	4	544	326	109	11	544
Supervisor	70	304,850	16	4,355	2,613	871	87	4,355
All Occupations		3,135,480	189	50,897	30,537	10,179	1,017	50,897

Source www.thelapa.com

As in all Expanded Public Works Programmes, this project targets women, youth and the disabled. Salary gap is very clear in the project business plan. It is planned that a laborer would get R45 per day, while people at the managerial level would get R480 per day. Rational is given on the discussion of Table 12. Contracts range between three months and the entire life of the project.

Table 12: Actual jobs

Category	Rate (R)	Person Days x Rate	Number of Actual People	Total P-Days	P-Days by Women	P-Days by Youth < 25	P-Days by Disabled	P-Days by Local People
Clerical	120	31,920	1	266	0	266	0	266
Laborer	45	479,205	151	10,649	7,245	6,312	0	10,649
Managerial	200	48,600	1	243	0	243	0	243
Semi skilled	90	49,500	2	550	0	550	0	550
Skilled	90	19,980	3	222	0	222	0	222
Supervisor	70	73,640	9	1,052	945	0	0	1,052
All Occupations	615	702,845	167	12,982	8,190	7,593	0	12,982

Source www.thelapa.com

In terms of the number of people employed in the project, the reflection is that of May 2006, when 88% of the staff complement had been employed. This is remarkable given high population density and high poverty rate in this area (See Section 3.2.3., Chapter Three). At the managerial level, there is one position that was created at the rate of R200 per day, not R480 per day as planned. Management tasks did not need five personnel, therefore one youth male was appointed in the position. Skilled position rate has been dropped from R120 to R90 per day. No justification has been given by the implementing agent for this case. Workers who are at the level of income that has been dropped voiced their disappointment as this is much needed income by the local people.

The statistics on which Table 12 is based were taken from the report to DEAT of May 31, 2006. According to this report there is a very slow progress, which is attributed to the late start of the project. Twenty-two percent in wages has been spent by May 31, 2006. One of the concerns raised by staff of the project is that at managerial level of the project, the capacity of the implementing agent was unclear. It is very apparent from the project progress that there is a great need for the implementing agent to be strengthened in terms of skills and strategic management in order to be able to deliver as expected. Some people who were hired, and whose contracts had expired, left the employ of the project with no training at all. This is due to the late submission of the training plan to the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism. This is in contravention of the requirements of EPWP, as it aims are to provide skills to employees by the end of their contracts. I argue here that the Eastern Cape Parks Board has room for improvement in the area of communication, as almost all the respondents complained about not being fully informed of the goals of the project and when the project had problems with the procurement system, which resulted in delays in purchasing materials and uniforms for staff. As one of the managers in the Eastern Cape Parks Board's head office puts it, "my feeling is that we took these projects being an infant organization, which is why we made so many mistakes."

5.3.1 Skills Training

One of the benefits of getting employed within the Expanded Public Works Programme is that accredited and non-accredited training is offered to employees in order to empower them before they exit the project. Table 13 and Table 14 respectively show planned training as well as what had been achieved by May 31, 2006. Table 14 shows that 56% of the project staff members have been trained. As in the case of Hluleka Nature Reserve, the implementing agent was not able to submit and get approval of training plans to DEAT in good time.

Table 13: Planned training (as per business plan)

Category	No. of Modules Offered	No. of Learnerships to be Completed	No. of Participants to Complete NQF Credits	No. of Skills Programmes to be Completed	Non-Accredited Training Days	Accredited Training Days	No. of people to attend
Literacy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Numeracy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Life Skills	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Instructors	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vocational and Task Related	1	182	0	6	3152	976	182
Business and Management	12	0	16	4	0	375	16
Environmental	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Leadership	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Training	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	13	182	16	10	3152	1351	198

Source: www.thelapa.com

Table 14: Actual training

Category	No. of Modules Offered	No. of Learnerships to be completed	No. of Participants to complete NQF credits	No. of Skills programmes to be completed	Non-Accredited Training Days	Accredited Training Days	No of people to attend
Literacy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Numeracy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Life Skills	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Instructors	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vocational and Task Related	0	0	0	0	273	0	90
Business and Management	0	0	0	1	0	10	2
Environmental	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Leadership	0	0	0	0	0	17	20
Other Training	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	0	0	0	1	273	27	112

Source: www.thelapa.com

5.3.2. Focus projects

The EPWP project in Mkambati focuses on activities and milestones which include the erection and repair of 17 kilometers of the reserve perimeter fence at R1,239,813. This fence had to be repaired as it did not meet the requirements of adequate enclosure as required by the Department of Economic Affairs, Environment and Tourism. Ten kilometers of access road would be upgraded. This reserve is popular to tourists, and it needs good access roads. The Eastern Cape Parks Board has game rangers who have different functions ranging from law enforcement, tour guiding to biodiversity protection. These rangers are accommodated far from the main office and have to concentrate on the “hotspots”, such as Msikaba river.. The project aims to build reserve outposts in order to fulfill this function. A new main entrance gate was to be relocated from the existing one and built at a new site. Water reticulation would be upgraded. Reserve buildings, infrastructure and services upgrade were to be done at a cost of R2,643,691. As it has been shown in Section 5.2. of this chapter, alien vegetation is a problem in Mkambati. Therefore, eradication of invasive plants was planned to be one of the project milestones and is budgeted at R1,095,782. The Msikaba camp site will be improved with a development of a new office and upgrading of the ablution block, and water reticulation at R1,166,016. Training, management and overheads would cost R1,749,435. Table 15 shows the project expenditure by item.

Table 15: Main budget items

Item	Budget (R)
Implementer fees	540,000
Professional fees	171,200
Training	486,436
Administration	458,800
Materials and equipment	2,921,237
Wages	3,224,064
Community facilitation	93,000
Output VAT	1,105,263
Total	9,000,000

Source: www.thelapa.com

Table 15 shows that 35% of the budget goes to salaries. Only five percent of the budget goes towards training. It is not easy to comprehend this allocation, since training and transfer of skills to employees is crucial to these projects. If all the planned number of employees are training, it means that only R2317.17 per employee is available for training. The question is, how far can this go, what skill can one be trained in for this kind of budget?

5.4. VIEWS OF PEOPLE ABOUT EPWP

5.4.1. Knowledge of goals

A similar procedure as in Hluleka was followed in gathering information (See Section 4.4, Chapter Four). The same interview schedule that was used to guide the researcher's interviews with the respondents in Hluleka, was used in Mkambati (see Appendix 1). In the end, a total of 22 people were interviewed using the interview guide. In addition to the project supervisors, the beneficiaries interviewed were involved in alien vegetation removal, fencing of the reserve, building and renovation and in clerical work.

When people were asked what they thought the goal of the EPWP in Mkambati was, the most popular response, which is similar to that of respondents in Hluleka, was the project is there for reducing poverty among communities closer to Mkambati Nature Reserve. In other words, 18 out of 22 people (81%) gave this answer. The four people who had more knowledge about the project were the project supervisor, clerk and two field team leaders. One of the respondents, over and above the response that the project is primarily for poverty reduction, elaborated by saying:

It is good for the government to create these poverty reduction projects in the reserve rather than in our communities. Previous attempts by government in job creation by means of self help projects have resulted in the collapse of

these projects due to mismanagement. We hope that these monies (EPWP budget) will be taken good care of; no monies will be misappropriated.²⁶

5.4.2. Understanding of environmental goals

When respondents were asked what they thought were the environmental goals of the project, the response greatly differed from that of respondents from Hluleka, in that it widely varied. In Mkambati the responses to this question tended to be related to the tasks that people were doing as part of the project. Thus, the supervisory team (4) had a clearer understanding of environmental goals. Next was the alien vegetation clearing team (12 people) who all agreed that saving the environment from being contaminated by alien plants has to be one of the environmental goals. One person in this alien vegetation clearing team even added that “Given that the government is investing so much money in clearing these alien plants, then this goal is probably very important. Government does not just spend money for nothing”. But another person wondered, loudly, when he asked “What is confusing is why government only cares about the alien plants in and around the reserve, but not so much about those in the villages where we live. Are not all environments important?”

Likewise, the fencing team provided a response that was related to their task, in that all five of them believed that if the project has any environmental goals, then that would be the one of protecting game from escaping from the reserve and, eventually, safeguarding it from poachers. The two men who were involved in the building and renovation task in the reserve simply said they have no idea what the environmental goal could be. All they know is that they have to make the reserve look neat.

5.4.3. Importance of goals

As in the case of Hluleka (Chapter Four), the questioning concerning the goals of the EPWP project was taken a step further by asking them to comment on what they think are its most important goals. This of course followed a

²⁶ Interview with an alien vegetation eradication team member, April, 2006.

summary of the goals that the researcher presented to them, but also largely drawing from their own understandings of the goals, as presented above. As can be expected, all the non-supervisors, 81% of the respondents that is, saw the poverty reduction goal as the most important. One of the respondents had this to say:

What is important to us is that jobs are now available. Even if it was not at the reserve, what matters to us is that employment has been created, and at least we will gain experience and training, and will be employable somewhere after the project has ended.

At least one member of the project management team did not hesitate to say the environment is and should be the superior goal of the EPWP in Mkambati, compared to the other three members who saw both goals (poverty reduction and environmental protection) as important. The one member had this to say:

The environment is key to this project. In this area, we depend, for our living, on this important resource, which is the nature reserve. To me, conservation goal comes first. Through the project's goals, people will be employed and get an income and skills as they will be trained while employed. The nature reserve will have better relations with neighboring communities as poaching incidents will be reduced. Some poachers have been employed by the project; this is a good neighbor relations programme. From Madiba community, which has high poaching rate, 11 people have been employed from that community. The reserve has started seeing good results. Medicinal plants that have been poached here are smuggled to places as far as Durban and are sold at give-away prices.²⁷

Where there was consensus by all the people interviewed was on the question of sustainability of the jobs. All the respondents were concerned that the jobs are short-term and are only available to a few members of the community at any one time. During the discussion it became clear that while jobs are seen as an important part of the EPWP, people wondered why government did not simply provide permanent employment instead. The younger respondents were more vocal on this point.

²⁷ Interview with a project administrative staff member, April, 2006

5.4.4. Project contribution to beneficiaries' lives

All the respondents, including those in the supervisory team, agreed that by working in the project, a lot has changed for the better in their lives. There were several testimonies of how livelihoods improved. The following are some of their responses:

I am now able to buy groceries for my family. I have already bought a cellphone for myself, settled some debts and bought toys for my kids. This is better income than the seasonal job I had before, helping other people with minor renovations in their homes²⁸

My family life has improved. I have sent my daughter to complete grade 12 this year. I have done computer training through the project. I have gained more knowledge on alien plant removal. I am also building a two roomed house²⁹

It is not only the project workers who are benefiting from the project; our neighbors as well. I am now able to assist two kids from my neighborhood whose parents died of HIV/AIDS. I was able to buy them school uniforms, together with my children.³⁰

I worked in Tongaat sugar fields for years until 2001, earning R1000 per month. From that income, I had to pay rent and groceries, and send money back home at Madiba village. Now I earn R945 every month and do not have to pay rent. My wife is expecting our ninth child.³¹

5.4.5. Project progress as per people's perceptions and actual delivery on site

In terms of the progress of the project, by May 31, 2006, over and above the creation of jobs, about 379 hectares of alien vegetation had been removed. Secondly, seventeen kilometers along the existing fence have been cleared of unwanted vegetation. Thirdly, three-and-a-half kilometers of poles had been erected in preparation for the erection of the new fence. Fourthly, there were two rondavels built. Fifthly, twenty-five hundred bricks were made for the

²⁸ Interview with a building team staff member, April, 2006

²⁹ Interview with alien vegetation team staff member, April, 2006

³⁰ Interview with a team leader, alien vegetation removal, April, 2006

³¹ Interview with a fencing team staff member, April, 2006

building project. Lastly, a contractor for road construction had been appointed. The question that remains is whether these accomplishments constitute significant success of the Mkambati EPWP or not. Thus, respondents were asked what they thought about this question. The responses could be divided into three categories.

First, all the respondents in the supervisory positions (4) indicated that they were frustrated with many things in the project. The two main issues were the fact that they were working in a project that they were not involved in during its planning, and indeed its implementation, and that they are not provided with the full complement of the tools, or other equipment and chemicals that are needed by the workers. They noted that the workers were employed first, followed by the project coordinator, then the administration clerk three months after the labourers were employed. The rest of the positions were only filled 11 months following the commencement of the project.

Second, all twelve labourers working in the alien vegetation removal task complained that they have worked for months without proper protective clothing, or are deployed in alien vegetation eradication without training and tools. The workers argued that they continually feel very unsafe under these conditions, but they claim to persevere for the sake of the cash income that they need. Third, female workers complained that the way the project is designed is not sensitive to local cultural issues. One of the issues that married women complained about was the requirement by the project management that they wear pants as uniform. One woman put it this way: "My husband is not happy about me wearing pants; I am married to a Mpondo man. I have been beaten and accused of strange behavior". The other cultural issue is that women, particularly married ones, are expected to be at home everyday. However, due to the absence of transport from Mkambati Nature Reserve, most women have to spend many days without going to their homes. One woman had this to say:

“I am widowed; I live here in Mkambati the whole week as transport to my village is not available. My five kids are left alone to fend for themselves.”³²

A slightly different assessment was offered by one community leader³³. He indicated that he was happy with the fact that jobs were created, therefore there is no reason to complain about the progress of the project, so long people are earning money. This view was clearly politically motivated, as the leader did not want to engage with the complaints presented by the workers, but was strongly supporting what he knows people complain about on regular basis, which is jobs.

5.5 Conclusion

This chapter presented the case of the Expanded Public Works Programme in Mkambati. Like in the case of Hluleka (Chapter Four), the views of beneficiaries about the different goals of the project were presented. In short, while the respondents were not very clear on other goals, other than job creation, of the project, the fact that there was an alien vegetation clearing project, many workers did not struggle to conclude that the project has an environmental goal as well. The chapter also discussed the various complaints about things that did not go well in the project, including poor training of people who use herbicides for clearing alien vegetation.

The next chapter will focus on the broader discussion of the research and give conclusion.

³² Interview with two women working at the project, April, 2006

³³ Telephone interview with a community leader, August 2006

CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

6.1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of this thesis was to analyse the South African government's attempt at reconciling poverty reduction and biodiversity conservation in the context of the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP). To analyse this, two case studies where EPWP is currently being implemented were used, and these are Hluleka and Mkambati Nature Reserves. This study identified a number of objectives, and these were: to present an overview of poverty reduction policies of South Africa; to describe and analyse the EPWP as it applies to the rest of South Africa and in different sectors; to evaluate successes and challenges of EPWP in reducing poverty, while at the same time contributing to biodiversity conservation in Hluleka and Mkambati Nature Reserves. To achieve these objectives, two processes were followed. Firstly, literature review was done to discuss the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) as a poverty reduction, as well as environmental conservation strategy (See Chapter Two). Secondly, empirical research in the form of two case studies of the Expanded Public Works Programme projects was undertaken in Hluleka and Mkambati Nature Reserve respectively (See Chapters Four and Five). The case study research involved interviews with project implementers and community members involved as workers or as unpaid leaders. Additionally, the case study research meant reviewing project documents, such as business plans and project progress reports.

This concluding chapter of the study seeks to summarise major findings and provide a brief summary of some critical issues that have emerged from the literature review and from the analysis of the case studies. Challenges facing these EPWP projects are discussed in the latter part of this chapter. The last section proposes some solutions for each of the constraints identified. It ends with a brief conclusion.

6.2. THE POVERTY – CONSERVATION CHALLENGE

Makhado's study (2004) on the Wild Coast area confirms findings by other researchers that poverty is one of the key challenges that face post-apartheid South Africa today. Earlier in this thesis, it was pointed out that it is now widely accepted that the majority of South Africans, especially those who live in rural areas, experience extreme forms of poverty (See Chapter One, Section 1.1). It has been confirmed once more that in South Africa the majority of the poor are the Africans who live under conditions of extreme hardship and livelihood insecurity (NFAP, 1997). This study confirms these findings by other researchers. There have been constant suggestions by the research from various fields that poverty is the root cause of many undesirable factors, in this case challenging the post-apartheid government, including violence (Aliber, 2001), theft (Randall, 2004) and environmental degradation (Hoffman and Ashwell, 2001), to mention a few. This poverty scenario is exacerbated by the fact that South Africa is characterized by a dual economy, and as President Thabo Mbeki suggests, these two economies are 'structurally disconnected', which means that economic growth in the 'first economy' does not automatically benefit those in the 'second economy', and that integration will require 'sustained government intervention', including resource transfer and the infusion of capital. The majority, which is the black population, falls within the second economy, the larger of the two in terms of numbers (Mbeki 2004:10-11, See Chapter One, Section 1.5.1.). Apartheid practices ensured that the wealth of the country remained in the hands of the minority of whites, who belong to the 'first economy' (Shepherd, 2000).

6.3. ARE EPWP PROJECTS THE BEST WAY TO RESOLVE POVERTY-CONSERVATION DILEMMA?

6.3.1. The challenges and constraints

Many researchers accentuate the fact that the majority of the country's poorest people reside in rural areas, and that the majority of all rural people are poor (See Chapter Three, Section 3.2.3.; May and Roberts, 2000, cited in Kepe and Cousins, 2002). While doing field work at both Mkambati and Hluleka Nature

Reserves, and from years of exposure in this area, it was observed that all the communities closer to these protected areas are impoverished (personal observation 2000-2006). These rural communities are characterized by population growth and poverty which can place increased pressure on these protected areas (See Chapter Five, Section 5.4.). On the other hand, people in these case study areas have a great need for jobs and value a lot, all the attempts towards job creation. This was raised in most of the interactions that the researcher had with workers and those not working in the project (See Chapter Four, Section 4.4; Chapter Five, Section 5.4.) Having a job has an inexpressible meaning to many people in the Wild Coast area. Some people regard having a job as means of accumulation of wealth (Kepe, 2002).

This case study sought to evaluate the successes of and the challenges for EPWP in reducing poverty, while at the same time contributing to biodiversity conservation in Hluleka and Mkambati Nature Reserves. In this thesis, it is argued that integrated conservation and development projects for the benefit of communities living adjacent to reserves are critical to ensuring the continued existence of reserves. Putting this notion into reality will, of course reduce pressure on the natural resources. It is also important to note that “natural resources are a key to growth and fighting poverty in developing countries.” It is also reported that “a number of World Bank-executed projects are demonstrating that sustainable management of natural resources can contribute to a better life for poor people (Business Day, August 2006).

Before addressing some of the more specific concerns, it is necessary to view the Expanded Public Works Programme in the People and Parks sector within its proper context, that is furthering sustainable development, conserving of biodiversity, reducing levels of poverty and improving the quality of life of the country’s citizens. Training is an important aspect of the Expanded Public Works Programmes. These projects are meant to contribute in providing employees with skills, so as to enable them to be employable even after completion of these projects.

Another challenge with these projects in question is that of qualified staff at the project level. For proper implementation of these projects, and for them to succeed at the end of the day, one needs qualified staff that have experience in project management, have an idea of how the Expanded Public Works Programme works and what it hopes to achieve. On the job training can only be given on certain skills, not the critical ones.

This thesis clearly shows that the EPWP in the two study areas was going through many upheavals. First, with regard to the goals of the project, it is a serious failure to have people working for months without knowing what the project is about. In both Hluleka and Mkambati most people did not know much about the environmental goals of the project. There could be two possible reasons for this. One could be that the implementing agent simply did not have a good communication strategy in place. Alternatively, there could have been a political motive to let local people only know about the job provision goal, as it is one of the most important areas that the post-apartheid government has been struggling with. It is possible therefore, that state institutions would go along (willingly or unwillingly) with a politically motivated strategy. Other minor justifications could be related to the fact that at the initial stages of these projects, the implementer had problems at head office with staffing. This can be attributed to the fact that the Eastern Cape Parks Board was at an infancy stage, but proper strategies could have been made long before the implementation stage.

6.3.2. The positives of the Expanded Public Works Programme

As one drives down the dusty roads of Hluleka and Mkambati, traditional dwellings and homesteads of this region depict poverty, but interactions that the researcher had with workers and non-workers in the Expanded Public Works Programme painted a different picture than these homesteads would suggest. Although the people may be living in dire poverty in their humble homes, the researcher was impressed by their warmth and their readiness to accept you as one of their own. The government should be commended for the role it has played in the past decade in sustainable development. This has been made

possible through setting macroeconomic policies, investing in infrastructure and expanding basic services. All of this is largely considered to be essential in developing South Africa, its people, economy and resources.

Investment in the form of Expanded Public Works Programme funding to the Eastern Cape Parks Board can be regarded as a positive move since ECPB is a new organization and, like many other parastatals, is always under-funded. This is much needed investment in the areas that are overpopulated and poor (See Chapter Three, Section 3.2.3.; Section 3.3.). In Hluleka and Mkambati, infrastructure, in terms of fencing, roads, water reticulation, ranger outposts and lodges, had been dilapidated from years of neglect and a lack of budget from the former government (See Chapter Four, Section 4.3.; Chapter Five, Section 5.3.). Lives of workers and non-workers in the projects have been positively affected by the introduction of these projects and the creation of jobs (See Chapter Four, Section 4.4.; Chapter Five, Section 5.4.).

6.4. PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS TO EPWP PROJECTS IN PROTECTED AREAS

There is a great need to develop creative approaches to resolving conservation and poverty challenges simultaneously. Some infrastructural projects of EPWP require Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) to be done. There are no short cuts; it is required that all established protocols during the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) phase of the project be followed. The essence of any EIA process is aimed at ensuring informed decision-making and environmental accountability, as well as ensuring environmentally sound and sustainable development. Therefore, negative impacts on the environment and on people's environmental rights (in terms of the Constitution, 1996 (Act No. 108 of 1996)) should be anticipated and prevented, and where they cannot be altogether prevented, at least minimized and remedied. In many cases, these processes delay the implementation of projects. If the provincial departments responsible for EIAs can only prioritize EPWP projects, and not compromise the process to be followed, this could lead to better implementation of these projects, thereby delivering in good time with few bureaucratic delays. It is proposed that more

money be put into biodiversity rehabilitation, not concentrated largely on tourist infrastructure.

During research, it was discovered that some employees' contracts expired before they could get necessary skills training that was part of the business plan (See Chapter Four, Section 4.3, 4.4, 4.6; Chapter Five, Section 5.3.). Training plans could be submitted in good time to the funding department so that training can be provided to employees and arm them with necessary skills before they leave the job. Training budgets per employee should also be carefully handled so as to provide quality training which does not always come cheap (See Chapter Five, Section 5.3.).

Most of the respondents at both sites, Hluleka and Mkambati, did not give a clear response when asked about the environmental goals of EPWP (See Chapter Four, Section 4.4; Chapter Five, Section 5.4). More could be done to educate all the neighboring communities next to the reserves about the goals of conservation. Biodiversity education can also be provided to workers in the EPWP projects during their employment terms. There is also a need to coordinate EPWP efforts in infrastructural improvements with those of broader development initiatives. These improvements that are budgeted for in EPWP should not be treated in isolation, but could be dealt with in conjunction with other initiatives, like the Wild Coast project, SDI, development of Pondoland National Park and so forth.

6.5. CONCLUSION

An attempt was made in this chapter to extract some observations and key arguments emerging in this thesis, regarding an attempt by the Expanded Public Works Programme in reconciling poverty reduction and biodiversity conservation. This chapter has reemphasized the complication of dealing with poverty and conservation issues, and it attempted to answer the question as to whether EPWP projects are the best way to resolve this dilemma. It proposed some improvements to EPWP projects in protected areas, including strengthening institutional arrangements of the implementing agent and better

planning of these projects. By way of conclusion, and agreeing with Valli Moosa, the current President of the World Conservation Union (IUCN), who said “Our biggest weapon in battle to protect nature is the citizenry of the world” (IUCN, 2004:11), I argue that EPWPs are well placed to involve people in conservation while also helping them to survive. Such projects need to be supported but they need to be more strategically planned. The current EPWP in Hluleka and Mkambati is clearly falling short of what is envisaged on paper.



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APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR HLULEKA AND MKAMBATI

1. Do you know what the goals of the EPWP in your area are?
 - If yes, what are they?
 - If no, can you say what you think is the main purpose of the EPWP in your area?
2. The EPWP has a number of goals, including environmental ones. Can you suggest what you think are environmental goals of this project?
3. Now that you are aware that there are both poverty reduction (through job creation) and environmental goals in the project, which of these two do you think is the most important? Say why and give examples where possible.
4. Is the project going well? Why or why not? Give examples.
5. Any other information coming from the discussion?

Thank you for your time