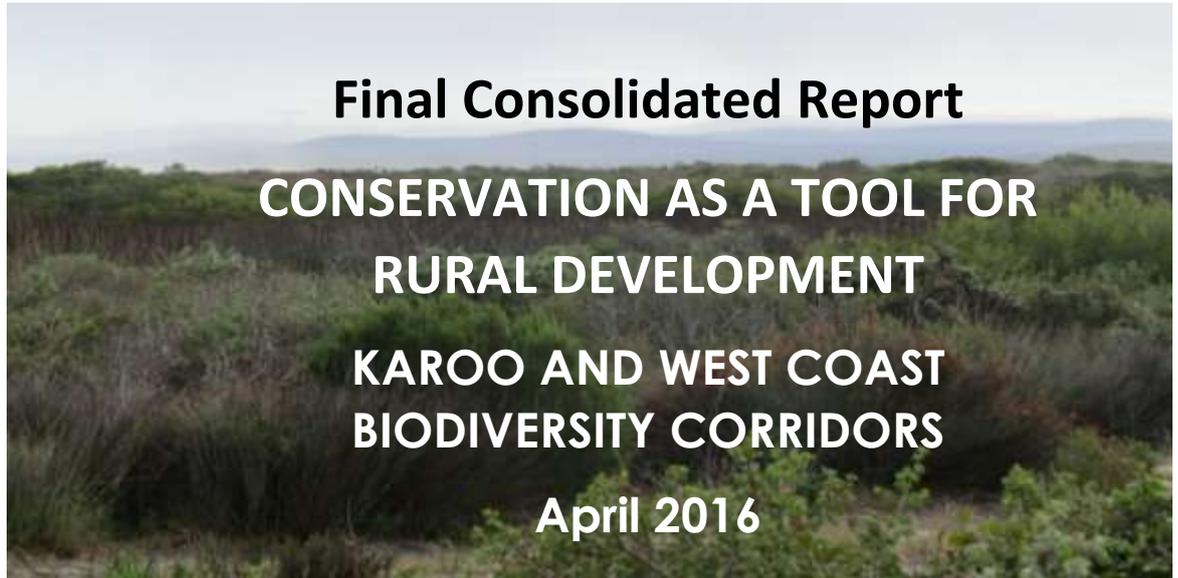




SANParks RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Park Planning and Development



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List of Abbreviations

BioNet	Biodiversity Network
CATHSSETA	Culture, Arts, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport Sector Education and Training Authority
CBA	Critical Biodiversity Area
CCDI	Cape Craft and Design Institute
CESA	Critical Ecological Support Area
CPA	Community Property Association
CoCT	City of Cape Town
CSAP	Camdeboo Satellite Aquaculture Project
CWCBR	Cape West Coast Biosphere Reserve
DBSA	Development Bank of South Africa
DCCP	Dassenberg Coastal Catchment Partnership
DEA	Department of Environmental Affairs
DEIC	Dutch East India Company
DoA	Department of Agriculture
DRD&LR	Department of Rural Development and Land Reform
DST	Department of Science and Technology
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EPWP	Expanded Public Works Programme
GEF	Global Environment Facility
IBA	Important Birding Area
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
IDZ	Industrial Development Zone
KCI	Karoo Corridor Initiative
LBSAP	Local Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
LUMS	Land Use Management Strategy
NDP	National Development Plan
NEMA	National Environmental Management Act
PA	Protected Area
PAA	National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act 57 of 2003
PSC	Programme Steering Committee
R27	Route 27
SANParks	South African National Parks
SDF	Spatial Development Framework
SLM	Swartland Local Municipality
SMMEs	Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
WCBC	West Coast Biodiversity Corridor
WCBCI	West Coast Biodiversity Corridor Initiative
WCDM	West Coast District Municipality
WCNP	West Coast National Park
WWF	World-Wide Fund for Nature

Executive Summary

The purpose of the SANParks Rural Development Programme and its two pilots – the West Coast Biodiversity and Karoo Corridor Initiatives - was to demonstrate the potential of conservation as an instrument of rural development. The programme was funded by the Green Fund for a two-year period between June 2013 and May 2015, and supported by the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA). The aim of the pilots was to show that the protection of biodiversity and heritage can result in job creation, SMME development, spatial integration, broad-based economic participation, inclusion and empowerment, and the improved living standards of marginalized rural communities. The pilots took place within the Buffer Zones of three national parks, namely West Coast, Mountain Zebra and Camdeboo. The identified pilot Corridors within these Buffer Zones are recognized as national biodiversity “hotspots”. SANParks’ mandate to promote conservation-led development outside the borders of its national parks comes from the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act 57 of 2003 and the National Buffer Zone Strategy (Notice 106 of 2012).

The pilots were implemented through broad stakeholder partnerships led by SANParks that included the relevant municipalities, other conservation authorities, landowners, communities and specific marginalized groups such as women and youth, and local businesses. The approach followed was to identify conservation-led development opportunities through an in-depth understanding of the broader regional economic context based on secondary research and ongoing stakeholder engagement and participation. A cyclical implementation process was developed that involved the: development of a shared stakeholder vision and set of objectives based on sound regional economic analysis; project conceptualization and sign-off by stakeholders; project development through stakeholder engagement; project implementation and resource mobilization; project handover to relevant institutions; review, reflection and re-design before re-entering the first step of the cycle.

Process facilitation was critical owing to the large number of stakeholders with their different interests and scope of influence. A process facilitator was appointed per pilot site and together with the SANParks programme manager, was responsible to ensure that all steps of the implementation process were followed and that broad stakeholder buy-in and commitment was generated and sustained. This also involved ensuring that the voices of marginalized communities were heard in the process and that their needs and interests were specifically addressed. The nature of development processes is uneven and changing and hence the process facilitator was required to ensure that the implementation of the programme remained responsive and flexible at all times.

The design of both pilots was informed by a Regional Socio-Economic Scoping and Base-Line Report. The KCI research identified a number of entry points for conservation-led rural development in the Corridor were identified. The opportunities identified related to:

- capitalizing on the north-south and east-west linkages – such as transport, roads, economic, social - that exist within the region,
- utilising local media, including radio stations, to generate conservation awareness amongst the broader community within the region;
- contributing to addressing service delivery pressures through investigating and promoting appropriate green technologies;
- promoting tourism activities as a means to protect biodiversity and cultural heritage in the region;
- addressing food security in the region through promoting small-scale agriculture on appropriate land portions within the Corridor and ensuring the protection of land portions of high biodiversity value; and
- Promoting early childhood development and skills development with the goal of sustaining conservation-compatible green industries and tourism activities within the region.

A project prioritisation process was followed with the PSC based on the following criteria:

- Project was included as a short-term project within a municipal IDP;
- Project required unblocking; and
- Project was linked to the identified entry points for conservation-led rural development within the Corridor.

Ten projects were selected, namely the:

- Pearston Urban Agriculture
- Graaff-Reinet Urban Agriculture
- Cradock Urban Agriculture
- Cradock Gateway Node Precinct Plan
- Fonteinebos Nature Reserve
- Karoo Corridor Landowner Database
- Karoo Corridor Fire Team
- Karoo Corridor Tracker Academy
- Camdeboo Township Tourism

The West Coast Biodiversity Corridor (WCBC) Scoping and Base-Line Report together with stakeholder input informed the design of the West Coast Biodiversity Corridor Initiative (WCBCI). The conservation sector, together with tourism and agriculture, were identified as the key drivers for the protection of biodiversity and heritage in the region. Eight projects in these sectors were identified and signed off by the Programme Steering Committee (PSC) that would result in the desired socio-economic outcomes of the programme. The basis for project selection was that the individual projects would demonstrate the potential for conservation to contribute to rural development and that they were implementable within a two-year time-frame.

A major project undertaken through the WCBCI was the Landowner Survey that was designed to engage individual land owners regarding a business case for establishing an integrated and extended protected area – a popularly-termed “mega nature reserve”- through private and public landowner commitments. The outcome of the Survey was a socio-economic profile of the Corridor and an indication by 82% of landowners that they

would be interested in exploring the establishment of an integrated and extended protected area. Their interest was linked to competitive business opportunities primarily within the tourism sector, and to co-operative management efficiencies. The recommendations from this report have been formally handed over to the Global Environment Facility (GEF 5) programme at a WCBCI Mile-stone event held on the 28th November 2014. The other projects implemented through the WCBCI included:

- Spatial and Biodiversity Management Planning alignment;
- Tourism route marketing and branding;
- Production of a tourism-sector investment brochure;
- Production of a Small Tourism Business Support brochure;
- Mamre Werf development;
- Atlantis Playpark development;
- Visitor, Science and Education Centre;
- Small farmer support including through land acquisition; and
- Production of a community conservation awareness drama.

The key successes of the pilots have been their ability to: demonstrate clearly the business case for conservation-led rural development; leverage resources from other partners or development financing institutions; sustainably hand-over projects to relevant institutions for further implementation; demonstrate practical ways of socially, economically and spatially integrating marginalized communities; forge partnerships and build trust; stimulate landowner commitment to the idea of an extended and integrated protected area; secure the buy-in and commitment of Park management to Buffer Zone implementation; increase community awareness regarding the benefits of conservation; and demonstrate ways to enhance the sustainability of national parks through increased tourism revenue and product development.

During the implementation of the pilots there have also been a number of challenges. The major challenge pertains to the relatively weak nature of the national Buffer Zone Strategy (“the Strategy”) and the fact that it is not being strongly championed by the responsible department. There is also a need for SANParks’ management to drive the roll-out of the Strategy in all its national park buffers and to create the internal capacity to do so. The current lack of leadership in the roll-out of the Strategy is resulting in a hesitance by municipalities to formally adopt the Strategy. Municipalities are concerned that declaring the Buffer Zone as a special management area may constrain their future development options and choices.

The final conclusion, however, is that the pilots have met their goal of demonstrating the potential of conservation as an instrument of rural development. The ongoing stakeholder involvement and conservation in the initiatives has meant that the business case for conservation-led development has emanated from the landowners, product owners and communities themselves. The handing over of the projects to relevant institutions means that this potential can be translated into a future reality. Furthermore, the approach and methodology adopted in the pilots have the potential to be replicated by SANParks within its different national park buffers and to dramatically boost the contribution of the organization to achieving the desired national rural development outcomes. The pilots have highlighted the possible institutional arrangements for the implementation of such an approach that

includes the building of new process facilitation capacity within SANParks as well as strengthening existing capacities within units such as “People and Parks”, “Tourism” and “Business Development” and strengthening and broadening the role of Park Forums. In addition to strengthening the role of SANParks within the buffers the pilots have also highlighted the need to strengthen the role of external institutions, such as the municipalities, landowner associations, community organisations, business platforms, the biosphere reserves and other conservation authorities.

The following have been identified as the key lessons learnt from the pilots as a means of assessing replicability and effectiveness.

1. The conservation of biodiversity and heritage can contribute competitively to rural development and the achievement of government’s economic, social and environmental development.
2. Conservation-led development should be informed by a sound regional economic analysis and understanding in order to unlock real economic and social potential and opportunities.
3. Utilising the conservation-lens to identify local potential and opportunity can result in innovation and creativity;
4. Certain sectors, such as tourism and agriculture, are more compatible with the conservation of biodiversity and heritage than others. It should be noted that some “green sector” activities, such as wind farms, may be less compatible. Multiple and appropriate land-uses need to be identified within biodiversity Corridors in order to be responsive to stakeholder needs.
5. Landowners and communities will generally participate in conservation based on a sound business case rather than simply on moral grounds.
6. The complex institutional and stakeholder environments within rural regions must be acknowledged and process facilitation should be a cornerstone of rural development initiatives.
7. SANParks visible management and championship of the programme was critical to building the trust and buy-in of stakeholders.
8. The methodology developed within the pilots proved successful in ensuring the participation of a broad range of stakeholders at all stages of programme implementation and is proposed as an applicable approach for implementation in all National Park buffers. The fact that the methodology is cyclical and not linear in nature must be understood. It requires ongoing commitment.
9. The pilot methodology was successful in leveraging substantial financial and non-financial resources into the Corridors. Indeed the leveraging approach built into the design of the pilots and followed by the process facilitators should be encouraged.
10. The Buffer Zone Strategy is a relatively weak instrument when it comes to securing municipal buy-in and adoption. Extensive work needs to be undertaken to secure administrative and political support for the strategy.
11. The involvement and leadership of SANParks within its buffer zones has the potential to greatly improve the public perception of the value of both conservation and the organization.
12. The need to adopt an approach to working within the buffer zones that draws on a different skills and knowledge set to that of working within the boundaries of the national parks. The experience in the pilots has demonstrated the need for

SANParks to build skills to undertake: stakeholder and process facilitation; off-set negotiation; community empowerment; facilitation of the establishment of private-led protected areas; and positive engagement with relevant municipal planning authorities.

13. The proper capacitation of Buffer Zone Strategy implementation by SANParks is required in terms of skills recruited or made available, time allocated, administrative support provided, and the buy-in of the organization as a whole.
14. The pilot has highlighted the possible institutional arrangements for the implementation of such an approach that includes the building of new process facilitation capacity within SANParks as well as strengthening existing capacities within units such as “People and Parks”, “Tourism” and “Business Development” and strengthening and broadening the role of Park Forums. In addition to strengthening the role of SANParks within the Buffers the pilots have also highlighted the need to strengthen the role of external institutions, such as the municipalities, landowner associations, community organisations, business platforms, the biosphere reserves and other conservation authorities.
15. The buy-in of senior management within SANParks’ to the proposed approach for the implementation of the Buffer Zone Strategy is critical to its success. Equally important is the visible support and resourcing of the approach by DEA.

Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to reflect on the performance of and lessons learnt from the SANParks Rural Development Programme piloted in the Karoo and West Coast Corridors between July 2013 and May 2015. The programme was intended to demonstrate the potential of conservation as an instrument for rural development. The Karoo and West Coast Biodiversity Corridors lie between Graaff Reinet and Cradock in the Eastern Cape and the West Coast National Park and the Blaauwberg Nature Reserve in the Western Cape respectively. The programme was funded by the Green Fund, which is hosted by the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA). This consolidated report is to be read in conjunction with the two detailed pilot-study reports attached as annexures A and B.

Background

South Africa's National Development Plan (NDP) has identified inclusive rural economies as a key driver for change within South Africa and the vision is that by 2030 "South Africa's rural communities should have greater opportunities to participate fully in the economic, social and political life of the country." Rural development is largely viewed as being driven by sectors such as agriculture, forestry and government. Little attention has been given to the contribution that the conservation sector can make to enhance socio-economic development in rural areas. This is a significant gap due to the fact that conservation is practised on 23% of the South African land mass, and particularly in the most rural areas of the country.

As such, the goal of the Karoo and West Coast Corridor pilots was to demonstrate the potential of conservation as an instrument for rural development. The objectives of the pilots were to:

- Pilot a rural economic development approach that promotes and protects conservation of biodiversity and heritage as a productive land use.
- Promote conservation-led development based on a sound analysis of the regional economic context and the identification, planning and implementation of a range of projects that can unlock related opportunities.
- Put institutional structures and arrangements in place that can sustainably manage the identification and exploitation of opportunities for the utilization of natural, social and economic resources focusing on the green economy.

Practically the pilots were to demonstrate the potential contribution of conservation towards government's development goals, namely:

- job creation;
- SMME development;
- spatial integration;
- broad-based economic participation, inclusion and empowerment;
- improved rural living standards of marginalised rural communities; and
- biodiversity and heritage protection.

The Green Fund enabled SANParks to contract a "process facilitator" per Corridor responsible for

- Undertaking a broad regional socio-economic analysis and adopting a strategic approach to project/business opportunity identification and implementation;
- Undertaking in-depth stakeholder engagement and management processes to ensure broad-based buy-in and participation in the programme;
- Mobilising resources for the identified projects/ business opportunities;
- Demonstrating the contribution of conservation land use to rural development through putting in place clear deliverables and monitoring systems; and
- Establishing the necessary stakeholder engagement platforms and institutional structures and arrangements to ensure the sustainability of projects.

SANParks' mandate to work outside the borders of its national parks emanates from both the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act 57 of 2003 (PAA) and the Department of Environmental Affairs' (DEA) Biodiversity Policy and Strategy for South Africa: Strategy on Buffer Zones for National Parks (February 2012) (Buffer Zone Strategy) which requires the gazetting of delineated buffer zones around the parks.

Section 41 of the PAA refers to the Management Plan of a protected area and the fact that a management plan may contain "development of economic opportunities within and adjacent to the protected area in terms of the integrated development framework" and also steps to develop local protected area "management capacity and knowledge exchange" and "financial and other support to ensure effective administration and implementation" of "co-management" agreements. Section 55 of the Act mandates SANParks to "participate in such further international, regional and national environmental, conservation and cultural heritage initiatives identified by the Minister".

The framework for the unlocking of economic opportunities as part of a protected area Management Plan is contained within SANPark's "Socio-Economic Beneficiation Strategy. The aim of this strategy is to co-ordinate SANParks' programmes and projects that contribute positively to community development and promote new initiatives in support of the same objective. A partnership approach has been adopted by SANParks in order to optimise resource and benefit flows to communities. SANParks vision is to recognise that people living within the footprint of national parks should have quality and stable livelihoods through reciprocal partnerships in managing ecosystem services in order to enhance economic development. The Strategic focus areas of this programme have informed the SANParks Rural Development Programme, namely: stakeholder engagement, environmental education, legacy programme, sustainable resource use, wildlife economy, ocean/marine economy, land claims, eco-tourism and cultural heritage.

The Buffer Zone Strategy is based on international best-practice and is aimed at protecting the integrity of the national parks within their broader spatial contexts. This approach is included in the operational guidelines of UNESCO's World Heritage Convention. The implementation of this Strategy, therefore, provides the ideal platform for SANParks to engage at a much broader spatial level with stakeholders regarding the promotion of conservation-led rural development.

South Africa's Buffer Zone Strategy is motivated by the fact that approximately 7.2 million hectares or 5.9% of the surface area of South Africa is recognised as a protected area in terms of the PAA. Fifty-six percent of the total area is made up of 21 national parks. These parks range in size from 1 915 671 ha (Kruger National Park) to 2 662 ha (Wilderness

National Park), with a total area (excluding marine areas) of 3.8 million hectares. Unfortunately, due to the rate and extent of development within the country, these national parks are becoming increasingly isolated from the wider natural area. This is negatively impacting the value of many of the national parks as they are increasingly affected by activities outside the parks, e.g. extinction of animal populations outside of a national park owing to their isolation from the national park populations; poaching and illegal harvesting of natural resources by neighbouring communities; and, excessive disturbance in a national park owing to development on its borders. The buffer's function, therefore, is to reduce or mitigate the negative influences of external activities on the parks and to better integrate the parks into their surrounding landscapes. A key part of integrating the Parks is through the promotion of conservation-compatible and/or led economic activity that directly benefits communities adjacent to and connected to the Park.

The Buffer Zone is a geographical zone delineated around a national park that should be declared and gazetted by SANParks and included in the relevant municipalities' Spatial Development Frameworks (SDFs) and Bioregional Plans as special natural areas. Planned developments within the Buffer Zones that require environmental authorisations in terms of the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA) (Act 107 of 1998) trigger consultations with the national Minister of Environmental Affairs as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process.

The pilots focused in two Corridors within the three national park Buffer Zones, namely:

- the Karoo Corridor – stretching between Graaff-Reinet and Cradock falling within the Buffer Zones of the Camdeboo and Mountain Zebra National Parks; and
- the West Coast Biodiversity Corridor - the so-called North-South Corridor between Bloubergstrand and Langebaan falling within the West Coast National Park Buffer Zone.

These Corridors were selected for their critical biodiversity and heritage value and for their inclusion within South Africa's Protected Areas Expansion Strategy.

Corridor Descriptions

The Karoo Corridor

The Karoo Corridor covers the Buffer Zones of the Camdeboo National Park near Graaff-Reinet and the Mountain Zebra National Park at Cradock. The Corridor study area is located within the jurisdictional areas of two District Municipalities, Cacadu and Chris Hani and two local municipalities, Camdeboo and Inxuba Yethemba.

The Cacadu District Municipality is situated in the western part of the Eastern Cape Province and is the largest district in the province. It comprises the local municipality areas of Camdeboo, Aberdeen Plain, Blue Crane Route, Ikwezi, Makana, Ndlambe, Sunday's River Valley, Baviaans, Kou-Kamma and Kouga. The Camdeboo Municipality is strategically located as the "Gateway to the Karoo" and includes the towns of Graaff-Reinet, Aberdeen and Nieu-Bethesda.

The Chris Hani District Municipality is located in the centre of the Eastern Cape Province and Inxuba Yethemba is the largest local municipality in the district. Its main towns are Cradock and Middelburg. Both the Camdeboo and the Inxuba Yethemba local municipalities

include extensive rural areas and are characterised by high levels of inequality. Agriculture is, by far, the major land use with activities ranging from intensive irrigation crop farming to dry land farming with livestock and game. The rural communities are generally impoverished with many households experiencing chronic hunger. Education and skills levels are low and a lack of sustainable job opportunities has resulted in a noticeable depopulation of the rural areas over the last decade.

The economies of the Cacadu and Chris Hani district municipalities are largely driven by the government sector. This sector, together with agriculture, finance and trade, is also the largest contributor to employment opportunities in the two districts. Whilst a relatively high percentage of residents in the KCI have access to all basic services, engineering services infrastructure is reported to be ageing and supply disruptions are not uncommon.

In addition to the serious socio-economic pressures, the region faces considerable environmental strains. The area is extremely important for species conservation as it forms an interface of very different biomes. The climate together with the very diverse topography and geology gives rise to a diverse array of vegetation types, some of which are threatened. The protection of the biodiversity and heritage within the region is considered very important for climate change resilience and for securing the long-term biodiversity of the two national parks. The ecological integrity of the area is threatened by unsustainable land-use practices (primarily poorly managed livestock farming) that cause the degradation of the vegetation and soil erosion. There is also increasing competition from prospecting and mining in the form of shale fracking. In order to mitigate these threats government aims to establish new protected areas within the Karoo/Sneeuberg Corridor that links the Camdeboo and Mountain Zebra National Parks in the western interior of the Maputaland-Pondoland-Albany biodiversity hotspot. A total of 45,000 ha is targeted for additional protection in this Corridor.

The existing 46,000 ha Mountain Zebra and Camdeboo National Parks form anchor points within the Karoo/Sneeuberg Corridor with 65,000 ha of private nature reserves and conservancies scattered between them. The KCI pilot has been preceded by the SANParks/Wilderness Foundation-CEPF project that had the intention of securing additional land for formal protection to consolidate the national park buffers and linkages. This project delivered on several goals, including landowner agreements and 'Intentions to Declare' protection for over 200,000 ha of land that lie in the national park buffer zones and Karoo Corridor. However, there is still significant work required to formalise the protection of this land and integrate the areas into the protected area network.

The tourism, green technology and agriculture sectors have been identified by the municipalities as the main drivers of job creation within the Corridor. These sectors are potentially compatible with the conservation sector and the intention of the KCI was to encourage conservation-compatible land uses within the buffer zones of the Mountain Zebra and Camdeboo National Parks.

[The West Coast Biodiversity Corridor](#)

The West Coast Biodiversity Corridor (WCBC) lies along the Cape West Coast bordered by the Atlantic Ocean (including Dassen Island) in the West, the West Coast National Park (WCNP) in the north, the Blaauwberg Nature Reserve in the south, and the Darling Hills to the east. It falls within four municipalities, namely: the City of Cape Town (CoCT), the Swartland Local Municipality (SLM), the Saldanha Local Municipality and the West Coast District Municipality (WCDM) and includes the economic nodes of Mamre, Atlantis, Darling

and Yzerfontein. The land within the Corridor is owned by the state, private sector, Moravian Mission and the Mamre Community Property Association (CPA).

The WCBC was identified as a pilot project owing to the historical interest expressed by stakeholders in conservation. This interest is reflected in the formal protection status awarded to prized biodiversity assets over time, such as: the proclaiming of the Langebaan Lagoon as a marine reserve in 1973; the proclaiming of the Langebaan National Park, later changing its name to the WCNP in 1985; and the declaration of the Langebaan Ramsar site in 1988. During this period, local stakeholders actively championed the idea of the southward expansion of the WCNP. This included a CapeNature led initiative in 2006/07 and a stakeholder workshop on the 18th October 2011, which gave impetus to the current pilot.

In addition to the above, the biodiversity of the Corridor has global, national and provincial significance as it is:

- Located within the Cape Floristic Region and forms one of the last intact lowland Fynbos biodiversity areas within the City of Cape Town;
- Identified by the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) as one of the two most important Climate Change Adaptation Corridors in the Western Cape;
- Located within the core area of the Cape West Coast Biosphere Reserve (CWCBR);
- Filled with abundant and wide-ranging bird life and species and two internationally Important Birding Areas (IBAs);
- Home to numerous cultural, historical and paleontological heritage sites;
- Bordered by an extensive coastline that includes a Marine Protected Area (MPA), the Dassen Island Nature Reserve and other off-shore islands;
- Offering critical ecological services, such as the Witsands, Grootwater and Langebaan Aquifers; and
- Inclusive of a large number of both declared public and private nature reserves.

Whilst there is an interest in conservation of biodiversity and heritage, this Corridor is situated between an expanding City of Cape Town Metropole in the south and a declared Saldanha Industrial Development Zone (IDZ) in the north placing competing development pressures on the land. Currently within the actual Corridor a significant portion of the land is being used either formally or de facto for conservation purposes¹. Some landowners in the western-side of the Corridor use their land primarily for the purpose of developing residential estates linked to private nature reserves, such as Grotto Bay, Jakkalsfontein and Tygerfontein. The most common economic activities within the WCBC are: bird-watching (15.00%), livestock farming (12.00%), restaurants (10.4%) and tourism accommodation (8.9%). Game-related activities are also common with 7.4%, 6% and 3% of landowners engaged in game viewing, farming and hunting activities respectively². The wine estates, such as Groote Pos, Cloof and Burgherspost offer conservation and game-linked attractions. Some landowners are in the process of extending their business activities. For example, two wind farm applications have been approved within the Corridor and some landowners, especially those partially located within an urban edge, offer serviced erven for sale in the residential market.

¹ West Coast Biodiversity Corridor Landowner Survey Report, 2014

² West Coast Biodiversity Corridor Landowner Survey Report, 2014

Whilst the land on the eastern side of the R27 (i.e. the main transport route dissecting the Corridor) is zoned agricultural, the majority of the land is currently being conserved or utilised for conservation-linked activities. The main reason being that the climate, soil conditions and water availability limit extensive agricultural activity. The land with the highest agricultural potential within the Corridor falls within the areas surrounding Mamre, Atlantis and Darling, previously known as the Groenekloof. This economic reality increases the attractiveness in engaging in conservation and tourism-related economic activities.

Unemployment (especially amongst the youth in the communities of Atlantis, Mamre and Darling) within the Corridor is high. The current direct WCBC economy demands a relatively low number of jobs, estimated at just under 1000 (including seasonal workers on the two wine estates surveyed). The jobs range from high to low-skilled. The skills in greatest demand are conservation management (14%), domestic work (13%), maintenance (13%) and invasive species (alien) management (11%)³. The few landowners who do intend to expand their workforces over the next few years demand similar skills to the current demand profile, although hospitality and fire management skills are growing in significance. Landowners have identified major potential to increase job demand through the establishment of a “mega game reserve” in the Corridor; the development of key biodiversity and heritage assets as major catalytic projects (e.g. Ganzekraal Resort and Homestead, Silverstroom Resort, the Langefontein military site, Corridor islands, Mamre Werf and Silverstroom Resort); and aggressively marketing the West Coast as a tourist visitor and investor destination.

Design and roll-out of the Pilots

The Karoo Corridor

A *Scoping and Baseline Study Report* was completed at the onset of the pilot to inform the design of the KCI. This report identified a number of proposed entry points for conservation-driven rural development within the region that include capitalizing on external spatial linkages, conservation awareness, stabilizing services infrastructure, heritage and other tourism initiatives, food security programmes and skills, and early childhood development.

The KCI adopted a 7-step approach to implementing the SANParks’ rural development programme. This approach included the: setting up a representative stakeholder forum; undertaking a baseline and scoping study; assessment of economic opportunities; identification of project; prioritization of interventions; development of project proposals and business plans; and, project implementation.

Ten projects were identified that were aligned to the strategic assessment of entry points to conservation-led rural development within the Corridor, namely:

- Pearston Urban Agriculture
- Graaff-Reinet Urban Agriculture
- Cradock Urban Agriculture
- Cradock Gateway Node Precinct Plan
- Fonteinebos Nature Reserve
- Karoo Corridor Landowner Database
- Karoo Corridor Fire Team

³ West Coast Biodiversity Corridor Landowner Survey Report, 2014

- Karoo Corridor Tracker Academy
- Camdeboo Township Tourism

The projects were identified through a consultative process with the affected municipalities. The aim was to identify projects compatible with the aim of the pilot that were contained within the relevant municipal Integrated Development Plans (IDPs). It was argued that given the short implementation time-frame of the pilot, the process would be fast-tracked if projects that already had municipal and other relevant stakeholder buy-in were implemented. As a result, a number of the KCI projects were already underway and required assistance to unblock processes and leverage further resources.

Amongst the projects there was a strong focus on food security given the high level of chronic hunger in the region. Existing and new food gardening initiatives were identified in the three major towns - Pearston, Graaff-Reinet and Cradock - in the Corridor. Project proposals and business plans were specifically directed at increasing the ability of existing and new food gardeners to provide for a sustainable supply of fresh fruit and vegetables to a wide range of beneficiaries. The urban location of these projects was a direct result of both the lack of access of the poor to productive land, and the need to ensure the protection of land with a high biodiversity value through focusing on disturbed or productive portions of land within the Corridor.

The business case for the urban agricultural projects was that if the immediate food security needs of the urban population were met, the pressure for agricultural development on rural land with high biodiversity value would be reduced and an appreciation for the value of conservation and natural resource management would be enhanced. The projects would contribute to the desired pilot socio-economic outcomes such as job creation, small business development, skills development and economic growth. A brief description of each project is provided below:

- The Pearston Urban Agriculture project is aimed at increasing the food security of marginalized communities within the Karoo Corridor. The project strengthens an existing food garden initiative within Pearston, *Isakhula*, supported by the *Sophakama Community Partnership* and the *Vukuzenzela People of Pearston Project*. It aims to provide institutional and technical support to home gardeners, school and Early Childhood Development (ECD) garden initiatives and the gardening groups that exist within the townships of Nelsig and Khayanisho. The KCI assisted *Sophakama* in securing R 200 000.00 from Food for Development, a US-Based donor, for the conducting of the required agronomic feasibility study. The study investigated the establishment of a commercial farming unit, a market hub for local small farmers and a value-adding processing plan. The KCI also facilitated a declaration by the municipality that 13ha of land would be made available for the project. The project remains the responsibility of the *Sophakama Community Partnership*.
- The Graaff-Reinet urban agriculture project aims to unlock public land – linked to public facilities and open space – for urban agricultural activities that contribute to food security and sustainable livelihoods for the poor. It plans to establish a network of trained urban gardening support workers to offer guidance and advice to local and regional projects. The KCI assisted in facilitating the: provision of service

infrastructure such as electricity by the local municipality; project site clearance by the local municipality and community development workers valued at R 15 000.00; the securing of R 15 000.00 and R 22 000.00 from a local Dutch benefactor for the drilling of a well-point and the erection of a small water storage facility. The Camdeboo local municipality is the custodian of this project.

- The Cradock urban agricultural project aims to facilitate small farmer development and household gardens within the town of Cradock. A business plan was developed collaboratively between the KCI and the agricultural extension officer of the Inxuba Yethemba local municipality and submitted to various funding agencies. For example, applications were made to the Multi Agency Grants Initiative (MAGI) for the Sivukile Agricultural Project, the Qhayiya General Co-operative and the Masizakhe Agricultural Project in Cradock.
- The Cradock Gateway Node Precinct Plan project aims to design a gateway to the Karoo Corridor and the broader Karoo region at the transport route intersection linking Cradock to Port Elizabeth, Queenstown, Graaff-Reinet and Middelburg. The Gateway will also form a linkage point for the residents of Cradock central, the suburbs of Michausdal, Hillside and Lingelihle. The gateway precinct will offer operating spaces for small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs), including tour operators and guides, that would support job creation for the unemployed. The project is intended to lead to regional spatial integration through the centralized marketing of tourism products and destinations that promote the conservation of biodiversity and heritage. This centralized approach aims to enhance the perceived value of both the tourism industry and conservation by Corridor stakeholders and to stimulate job creation, SMME development, business networking and economic growth. The project has mobilized both municipal and private planning skills during its implementation and the Inxuba Yethemba local municipality is responsible for implementation.
- The Fonteinebos Nature Reserve project, just outside the small Karoo town of Aberdeen, lies along the Kraai River banks and is approximately 1 500 ha in extent. The reserve is both beautiful and functional as its natural perennial spring (Die Oog) supplies the entire town and its agricultural sector with water. The municipality is responsible for the management of the nature reserve and R 3 Million is available for the upgrade of the entrance to the reserve. A management plan for the reserve exists but the reserve is not regarded as a core mandate or priority of the local municipality. This has resulted in weak management and the failure to realize its full potential as a Corridor tourism destination. The business case for the development of the Fonteinebos Nature Reserve is to demonstrate that the conservation of biodiversity could generate both direct and indirect business activity. For example, the economic potential of the nature reserve could be enhanced through internal product development and better management. The improvement of the nature reserve as a tourism destination within the region would act as a catalyst for complementary activity in the local and regional tourism, accommodation, retail, arts and crafts, and, transport sectors. The planning phase for the upgrading of the entrance to the reserve is underway by the municipality with an expected project completion date July 2015. The KCI has contributed in terms of motivating for the

allocation of municipal human and financial resources for this project. There is a further commitment by SANParks to include this reserve within the GEF 5 project that will be rolled out in the Karoo Corridor over the next five years.

- The Karoo Corridor Landowner Database Project was designed to fill a gap in the current information available to decision-makers such as municipalities, landowners and conservation authorities. The GIS database would provide Corridor-wide information on land ownership, farm names, land parcel numbers, title deed information, demarcation of critical biodiversity and protected areas, land cover, identification of livestock farming areas, and community and social facilities. The database is currently being verified through SANParks' Spatial Planning section. The users of the database have been informed that regular updates of the information will be required. The database will better position stakeholders to develop a shared conservation development plan that identified appropriate land uses to stimulate economic development and job creation. The database has been completed and handed over to SANParks for verification.⁴
- The Karoo Corridor Fire Team project was designed in response to the major threat of fire to biodiversity and landowners within the Corridor. The weak capacity of municipal fire services has meant that a collaborative approach amongst landowners, local government, communities and conservation authorities is required to address the threat. The business case for this project is that improved and shared fire management services would contribute to job creation and the protection of biodiversity and cultural assets within the Corridor. The Camdeboo National Park is the project custodian⁵.
- The Karoo Corridor Tracker Academy project aims to increase the capacity of the existing Graaff-Reinet-based Tracker Academy through resource mobilization. The South African College for Tourism (SACT)⁶ hosts the Tracker Academy, which operates under the auspices of the Peace Parks Foundation. The Academy is a non-profit organization (NPO) that trains disadvantaged rural people in the traditional skills of tracking. The training is accredited with the Culture, Arts, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport Sector Education and Training Authority (CATHSSETA). The business case for the Tracker Academy project is that there is a high demand in the region from both public and private conservation management authorities for the services of trackers but there are limited numbers of skills available. The Academy's trainees would benefit directly from jobs both within and beyond the Corridor. The trackers are currently trained in the SAMARA Game Reserve about 50 kilometres out of Graaf-Reinet. The proposal is to relocate the training to the Camdeboo National Park. This would consolidate the relationship between SANParks and the SACT and offer benefits for the park, such as additional ground staff for: combatting illegal activity within the park; environmental education; and gaining practical experience through participating in game drives. SANParks has indicated its willingness to

⁴ Peter Bradshaw was the responsible official for verification of the database.

⁵ Peter Burdett is the contact person.

⁶ The contact person for SA College of Tourism is Andre Killian. His contact number is 082 783 7943 and his email address is lecturersact@adsactive.com

provide a site for the training centre and the Rupert Foundation will provide operational funding.

- The Camdeboo Township Legacy Tourism Project aimed to unblock an existing project through packaging and resource mobilization. The elements of this project included: a Visitor Experience Centre; a Gateway Development; Township Route and Product Development; a Heritage Precinct; and, the setting up of marketing institutions. A business plan for the project has been completed and has been handed over to the Camdeboo municipality as the custodian of the project. The project is seeking alignment with the Liberation Struggle Icon Tourism Project of the Inxuba Yethemba Local and Chris Hani District Municipalities. Similarly, these joint projects will align with national government's Liberation Struggle Route Tourism Project that is intended to honour struggle heroes at national and international levels. The KCI business case for the promotion of township tourism is that the Karoo towns are important entry points into the broader more rural region. Increased visitor numbers, which result from township tourism product development, will create a stronger appreciation within the community for the value of conserving heritage. It will also be a linkage point for tourists to access tourism destinations and products within the surrounding rural areas. A business proposal has been developed through the KCI for this initiative.

Although some projects only entered the implementation phase towards the end of the two-year pilot period, all the projects were already demonstrating the potential to deliver substantial, economic benefit. These benefits included resource mobilisation, jobs and an increased skills base within the Corridor. In addition, the KCI has had a tangible social impact. Stakeholders from a wide variety of backgrounds and interests come together on a regular basis to discuss common concerns regarding economic development opportunities that are complementary to conservation. There exists a co-operative mood amongst stakeholders and the eagerness of local government institutions to participate in the process alongside landowners and the general public is clearly evident.

[The West Coast Biodiversity Corridor Initiative \(WCBCI\)](#)

The WCBCI was implemented through a broad-based partnership led by SANParks that included the relevant municipalities, CapeNature, landowners, communities, tourism product owners and the Cape West Coast Biosphere Reserve (CWCBR). The approach followed was to identify conservation-led development opportunities through an in-depth understanding of the broader regional economic context based on secondary research and ongoing stakeholder engagement and participation. A cyclical implementation process was developed that involved the: development of a shared stakeholder vision and set of objectives based on sound regional economic analysis; project conceptualization and sign-off by stakeholders; project development through stakeholder engagement; project implementation and resource mobilization; project handover to relevant institutions; and then review, reflection and re-design.

Process facilitation was critical owing to the large number of stakeholders with their different interests and scope of influence. The appointed process facilitator, together with the SANParks programme manager, was responsible to ensure that all steps of the implementation process were followed and that broad stakeholder buy-in and commitment

was generated and sustained. Particular attention was given to ensuring that the voices of marginalized communities were heard in the process and that their needs and interests were specifically addressed. The nature of development processes is uneven and changing and hence the process facilitator was required to ensure that the implementation of the programme remained responsive and flexible at all times.

The initial stakeholder engagement in August 2013 was focused on testing and building the credibility of the Scoping and Base-Line Report (completed by the process facilitator) and on the development of a shared vision and set of objectives for the WCBCI. The stated vision was:

“The West Coast Biodiversity Corridor: a vibrant region where appreciation of its rich biodiversity, cultural heritage and partnerships deliver sustainable jobs, skills and opportunities”

The specific objectives for the WCBCI were adopted as follows:

1. To facilitate the alignment of spatial and development planning for the Corridor amongst the relevant local authorities, provincial and national government departments and parastatals;
2. To strengthen existing and develop new tourism products linked to the region's biodiversity and cultural heritage;
3. To investigate the establishment of an integrated nature reserve within the WCBC that links the WCNP, private and state land in a manner that benefits all parties and promotes sustainable economic and social development within the region;
4. To investigate the potential for “Green Energy” production within the Corridor, or to investigate opportunities for development within the Corridor linked to Green Energy investments within the broader region;
5. To investigate sustainable agricultural, fishing and food security opportunities for small-scale farmers and households; and
6. To focus on education and skills development opportunities linked to developments within the Corridor.

Eight projects were initially identified and signed-off through by the PSC of the WCBCI that would deliver on these objectives. The approach adopted within the WCBCI to project identification differed from that of the KCI. Projects were identified through an extensive stakeholder engagement exercise building on the vision and set of objectives for the pilot. The municipalities were consulted as an important stakeholder grouping but projects were not selected on the basis of them already been contained within an IDP. Rather the basis for project selection was that the individual projects would demonstrate the potential for conservation to contribute to rural development and its desired outcomes; that they were aligned to the priorities of all three spheres of government; and that they were implementable within a two-year time-frame.

The tourism sector was identified by stakeholders as the most compatible sector with conservation-led development within the region. The tourism industry in the West Coast is largely based on the utilization and show-casing of the natural environment. For example, birding, flowers, local produce and cuisine, game, nature reserves, the coastal strip, the Langebaan Lagoon, water-related sports, and fossils are the main tourism attractions.

Hence, the protection of the Corridor's biodiversity and cultural heritage were in the direct interests of the tourism industry.

The agricultural sector was also regarded as a compatible land-use on productive land that was identified with high agricultural potential. The approach of the pilot was to work with relevant planning and land management authorities to identify the different and appropriate land uses within the Corridor. Land with high biodiversity value was targeted for formal protection. This flexible, multiple land-use approach enabled informed decisions by all stakeholders. For example the portion of the WCBC to the east of the R27 is largely being used de facto for conservation given the challenging climatic and soil conditions. Landowners in this section of the Corridor, therefore, are open to exploring conservation-sector driven economic activity. The Groenekloof area has been identified for the promotion of small-farmer activity given the fact that a large portion of this land is already productive and it has the highest agricultural potential in the Corridor. Facilitating appropriate land access to small farmers is regarded as a means of supporting sustainable livelihoods and enabling the protection of land with high biodiversity value.

A major project that was undertaken in 2014 was the WCBC Landowner Survey. It was designed to engage individual land owners regarding a business case for establishing an integrated and extended protected area – a popularly-termed “mega nature reserve”- through private and public landowner commitments. The survey was conducted successfully with the assistance of interns from both SANParks and the CWCBR who were trained and supervised in the process. The outcome of the survey was a socio-economic profile of the Corridor and an indication that 82% of landowners would be interested in exploring the establishment of an integrated and extended protected area. This interest was based on the identification of competitive business opportunities, primarily within the tourism sector, and co-operative management efficiencies. The recommendations from this report have been formally handed over to the Global Environment Facility (GEF 5) programme at a WCBCI Mile-stone event held on the 28th November 2014. Subsequent to this event nine landowners adjacent to the WCNP have formed an association and have approached a number of funders to pursue this idea, indicating a commitment to formally protect 4 130 hectares of land.

The other projects implemented through the WCBCI included:

- A planning alignment project aimed at facilitating the adoption by municipal Councils of the national Buffer Zone Strategy and ensuring the incorporation of the WCNP Buffer Zone as a special management area within municipal Spatial Development Frameworks (SDFs). Engagements at a technical and political level were undertaken with all four relevant municipalities, namely the City of Cape Town, West Coast District Municipality and the Swartland and Saldanha Local Municipalities.
- A tourism marketing project aimed at re-branding the Corridor and using collaborative platforms to significantly increase visitor numbers and spend within the region – thereby creating jobs and facilitating spatial integration within the broader region. A tourism branding and marketing vehicle, **West Coast Way**, was set up and formally launched at the WCBCI Milestone event in November 2014. West Coast Way operates as an independent business entity and is financed through membership and product sales.

- The production of a Tourism Investment brochure in partnership with WESGRO, the Western Cape trade and investment promotion agency. The aim of the brochure is to position the West Coast as a preferred tourism investment destination based on its biodiversity and heritage value. The brochure was developed in partnership with WESGRO's research team and WESGRO has taken responsibility for distribution and the "after-care" associated with the brochure. Tourism investment opportunities identified within the West Coast Biodiversity Corridor Landowner Survey are show-cased in the brochure.
- The production of a Small Tourism Business Support brochure that is focused on increasing the survival rate of small businesses in the West Coast through facilitating access to the relevant support institution at the appropriate stage of the business' development. Ensuring the survival of small businesses will result in increased jobs, small businesses and spatial integration within the Corridor and broader region.
- The facilitation and preparation of business plans for the development of tourism products within the marginalized communities of Mamre and Atlantis. The projects involve the development of the Mamre Werf as a regional tourism attraction through supporting small business activity, and the construction of a state-of-the-art Atlantis play-park that could act as a regional and local tourism attraction. Both projects have significant potential for both direct and indirect job creation and small business development.
- The entering into a partnership amongst SANParks and three tertiary institutions to explore two possible sites within the Corridor for the location of a Visitor, Science and Education Centre. The objectives of the Centre would be to: act as a catalytic project to draw repeat tourists into the region; show-case the region's contribution to sustainable development and the protection of biodiversity and heritage; and to stimulate the development and sharing of scientific knowledge within and beyond the region. The latter objective would contribute to addressing the significant skills gap within the region between industry demand and local supply. This project has been formally adopted by SANParks as a research project and the anticipated output will be an extensive scoping report undertaken through the volunteer services of under-graduate and graduate tertiary students in a broad range of environmental, built environment and museum studies skills.
- A small farmer support project that involves facilitating relevant stakeholders, such as the Departments of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRD&LR) and Agriculture (DoA), the City of Cape Town (CoCT) and CapeNature to identify suitable land parcels for small farmer development and to facilitate security of land tenure. The DoA has funding available for small farmer support once land access has been granted. The DoA has committed to leading the stakeholder process in this regard.
- The production of a community conservation awareness drama that is aimed at communicating the message that there are business opportunities and community benefits to the conservation of biodiversity and heritage. A partnership was forged amongst the Arepp Theatre for Life company and SANParks' People and Parks and Expanded Public Works Programmes (EPWP) for the roll-out of this initiative. Five EPWP workers and one People and Parks staff member were trained as amateur actors and will perform the play as part of the annual People and Parks environmental awareness events calendar.

The key successes of the WCBCI have been its: ability to demonstrate clearly the business case for conservation-led rural development; resource leveraging from other partners or development financing institutions; sustainable hand-over of all its projects to relevant institutions for further implementation; ability to demonstrate practical ways of socially, economically and spatially integrating marginalized communities; number of partnerships and level of trust developed; level of landowner commitment to the idea of an extended and integrated protected area; securing of the buy-in and commitment of the WCNP management to Buffer Zone implementation; increased community awareness of the benefits of conservation; and the demonstration of ways to enhance the sustainability of national parks through increased tourism revenue and product development.

Pilot Methodology

Given the complex regional economic and social context of the Corridors, the many competing interests, and relatively high levels of distrust amongst stakeholders it was necessary to follow a very participative process for the implementation of both pilots. In recognition of these complexities, a key feature of the design of the SANParks' Rural Development Programme was to contract the services of a process facilitator per pilot site. Process facilitation acknowledges that the complexity of a development context means that the final outcomes of a programme are unpredictable and that the process followed is, in many respects, as important as the final results. It also acknowledges that power relations and access to resources differ amongst different stakeholder groupings and that spaces need to be created for all "voices" to be heard and represented, especially those of the marginalised. In this respect process facilitation is not "neutral" as it actively engages and steers stakeholder interaction. Process facilitation by its nature is flexible and responsive to changing conditions. Process facilitation is necessary to unblock obstacles to the implementation of the programme through stakeholder interaction and problem-solving. The process facilitator is meant to drive the process towards desirable and fair outcomes on behalf of all stakeholders. This requires a process facilitator to have a range of other skills such as: strategy formulation, project management, resource mobilization, conflict resolution and communication. A process facilitator is required to be energetic and passionate to ensure that stakeholders will be willing to follow the process.

In both the KCI and the WCBCI the role of the process facilitator was critical to the success of the pilots. Both process facilitators managed to building strong relations with stakeholders. In the case of the KCI the relationship built between the process facilitator and the management of the respective municipalities was particularly strong. The approach towards process facilitation differed in some respects amongst the pilots. In the KCI the process facilitator focused on the mentorship of municipal planning staff and existing project teams. A large focus was on the process facilitator developing and submitting funding applications to relevant institutions and on the development of the landowner database. A challenge to the process facilitation in the KCI was the travelling distances that were required and the fact that the process facilitator faced a major personal health issue during his second year in the position, which complicated travel even further. In the WCBCI the process facilitator led a number of concurrent multi-stakeholder consultation process that led to the design and implementation of the various projects. The business plans submitted to prospective project partners and funders were some of the outputs of these processes. The process facilitator also designed and managed the WCBC Landowner Survey process and

drafted the survey reports. The processes followed in each pilot are detailed in the annexures to this report.

In addition to the process facilitation, SANParks as an organization was required to take the lead in the programme. In the pilots a SANParks official was appointed as programme manager. The process facilitators were appointed as part-time SANParks' employees reporting to the programme manager. The programme management ensured that SANParks remained accountable for the successful implementation of and provided visible championship for the pilots. SANParks' management and a number of its programmes added substantial value to the pilots. Managers responsible for the relevant national parks, regions, tourism, research, business development and Expanded Public Works' Programmes (EPWP) participated at various stages in the programme providing technical input, allocating resources and forging linkages. In particular, the commitment of the respective Park managers to the programme was critical for the success of the pilots and visibly increased over time. In the case of the WCBCI the Park Manager subsidized accommodation for project-related activities and allocated staff and EPWP worker time and resources.

The strategic approach adopted in the pilots was to consider conservation-driven development within its broader regional economic context. This meant that competitive business cases for projects identified through the pilots were developed. The projects needed to make business sense and have clearly positive socio-economic outcomes. This methodology was similar to that adopted by the DBSA in its Rural Economic Development Initiative that was piloted in the Ugu and Cacadu Districts and the Theewaterskloof Local Municipality between 2009 and 2012, and is outlined in some detail below. The process followed was informed by the Memorandum of Agreement amongst SANParks, the Green Fund and the DBSA. In instances where the sequence of steps differed between the pilots the reasons are discussed:

[Step One: Scoping of the Regional Economy](#)

At the outset of the pilot, the appointed process facilitator developed a detailed regional socio-economic base-line and scoping report. The purpose of the report was to provide an in-depth understanding of the performance of the regional economy and the socio-economic opportunities and challenges that existed. This information was used to identify development opportunities both within the conservation sector and within sectors that were regarded as compatible with conservation of biodiversity and heritage. The scoping report included a stakeholder analysis and institutional assessment of the region.

The findings of the scoping reports were presented to broad stakeholder workshops convened through the pilots in August and September 2013 respectively. The purpose of these workshops was to: test the credibility of the findings of the scoping report; develop a common vision and set of objectives for the pilots; and to agree on the proposed institutional arrangements for the pilot. The respective process facilitator facilitated the workshops.

[Step Two: Setting up of Pilot Institutional Arrangements](#)

Stakeholders within each pilot agreed to set up a PSC that was representative of all major stakeholder groupings, such as conservation authorities, the Green Fund and DBSA, municipalities, landowners and communities. The PSC acted as both an advisory and strategic decision-making body throughout the pilots through the holding of regular quarterly

meetings. The day-to-day management was undertaken by the SANParks programme manager and the relevant process facilitator.

In the instance of the KCI, the PSC was established as Step One of the programme, prior to the undertaking of the Scoping and Base-Line Report. This was considered possible and desirable in that a number of relevant institutional platforms were already in place, such as:

- The SANParks/Wilderness Foundation-CEPF project that preceded the pilot. At the commencement of the pilot the CEPF project was in the process of establishing a Landowner Committee representative of landowners across the Karoo Corridor and therefore provided an established platform for the KCI to engage landowners in the Corridor.
- The existence of the Camdeboo and Mountain Zebra National Park Forums established by SANParks provided a platform to engage other broadly representative grouping of stakeholders in the Corridor, such as District and Local Municipalities, Farmers' Associations, Focus Groups and South African Police Services

Additional representation by landowners, youth formations and other civic and community groupings were addressed by the KCI PSC after its formation.

Step Three: Project Identification, Conceptualisation and Sign-Off

Step three involved the identification of projects that would deliver on the aims and objectives of the respective pilots. The project identification and conceptualization process was different in each pilot. As indicated previously, the KCI identified projects within the IDPs of municipalities that it considered compatible with the aims and objectives of the pilot. An initial list exceeding 140 projects was drawn up of which ten were finally selected. A project prioritisation process was then followed with the PSC based on the following criteria:

- Project was included as a short-term project within a municipal IDP;
- Project required unblocking;
- Project was linked to the identified entry points for conservation-led rural development within the Corridor; and
- The project had a local champion organisation.

As stated previously, the motivation for this approach was that a two-year pilot implementation time-frame was tight and that it may be quicker to implement projects that already had municipal and other stakeholder endorsement.

The approach adopted by the WCBCI was to identify projects that would contribute to the achievement of the pilot's vision and set of objectives as agreed to by stakeholders. A process was followed to engage the relevant stakeholders per pilot objective and through this consultation to identify realistic and value-adding opportunities for the WCBCI. For example, an extensive engagement process with the tourism sector resulted in the identification and design of the tourism projects that were implemented through the WCBCI. The PSC agreed that the broad landowner consultative and research process would be a project in itself that would inform the planned five-year GEF 5 programme following the pilot. None of these projects was extracted from the municipal IDPs but they had the support of all stakeholders, including the municipalities, and complemented existing Corridor development processes.

Once the projects were identified a set of basic project concept documents was prepared by the respective process facilitator for approval by the pilot PSC.

Step Four: Project Development and Resource Mobilisation

The development and implementation of each of the identified projects required separate and ongoing stakeholder engagement and participation processes within the respective pilots. These processes have been detailed in the individual pilot reports that are attached as annexures. Detailed business plans were developed that were used as the basis for resource mobilization. Resource mobilization was not limited to the submission of funding proposals to potential donors/partners, but included the: mobilization of both public and private sector skills, e.g. planners, interns, innovators and researchers; the utilisation of subsidized facilities, e.g. the West Coast National Park accommodation; and access to the resources of various programmes of project partners, e.g. Expanded Public Works Programme employees and People and Parks programme staff and resources.

Step Five: Project Implementation

The original SANParks' Rural Development Programme design as signed off by the programme partners did not envisage actual project implementation within the pilots. In the KCI, for example, the focus was on the development of detailed project business plans and resource mobilization. Each project was then "handed-over" to its host institution to oversee implementation.

The process followed within the WCBCI differed slightly in that the projects were designed for actual implementation during the pilot period as well as ongoing development and further implementation through a relevant partner institution. For example, the tourism route development project resulted in the launch of the **West Coast Way** – a private sector initiative that will continue to market the West Coast region as a "green" tourism destination. The undertaking of the West Coast Landowner Survey Report resulted in fourteen recommendations to be implemented through the GEF 5 programme and the establishment of an independent landowner association. The production of a small business support brochure is aimed at sharing information regarding small tourism business support services available and to channel small businesses to the right agencies. The West Coast tourism investment brochure that was designed and printed is to be distributed and managed by WESGRO – the Western Cape trade and investment agency.

Step Six: Project Handover to Relevant Institution

Given the fact that the pilot was envisaged as a two-year programme, the approach adopted by the process facilitators was to work themselves out of a job and ensure that all projects had an appropriate institutional "home". The sustainability of projects in the pilot was secured through ensuring that the relevant institutions had assumed responsibilities for ongoing implementation.

The pilots held their final PSC meetings in May 2015 prior to the termination of their contracts and presented their respective pilot "Close-Out" reports. In both the KCI and WCBCI commitments were made that the GEF 5 programme would continue the stakeholder engagement process and that an over-arching programme co-ordination mechanism similar to the PSC may be necessary. Other institutional co-ordinating options that could be considered would be Biosphere structures (where in existence) and National Park Forums if they were geographically representative of the entire Corridor area.

Step Seven: Review, Reflection and Re-Design

The final step in the pilot process was the recording of the piloted experiences and the reflection on the lessons learnt. The individual pilot reports and this consolidated report are part of this process. In addition, SANParks intends to develop a research paper for publication and the Green Fund has requested a policy brief. The intention is for the pilots to be used as a basis for the development of a methodology for Buffer Zone Strategy implementation throughout South Africa.

However, the intention is that the implementation of the Buffer Zone Strategy will be cyclical and not sequential and adopted within the Management Plans of the various national parks. Towards this end **Step 7 of Review, Reflection and Re-Design** will lead back into **Step 1** of what is to be regarded as a continual cyclical process as illustrated in the figure below.

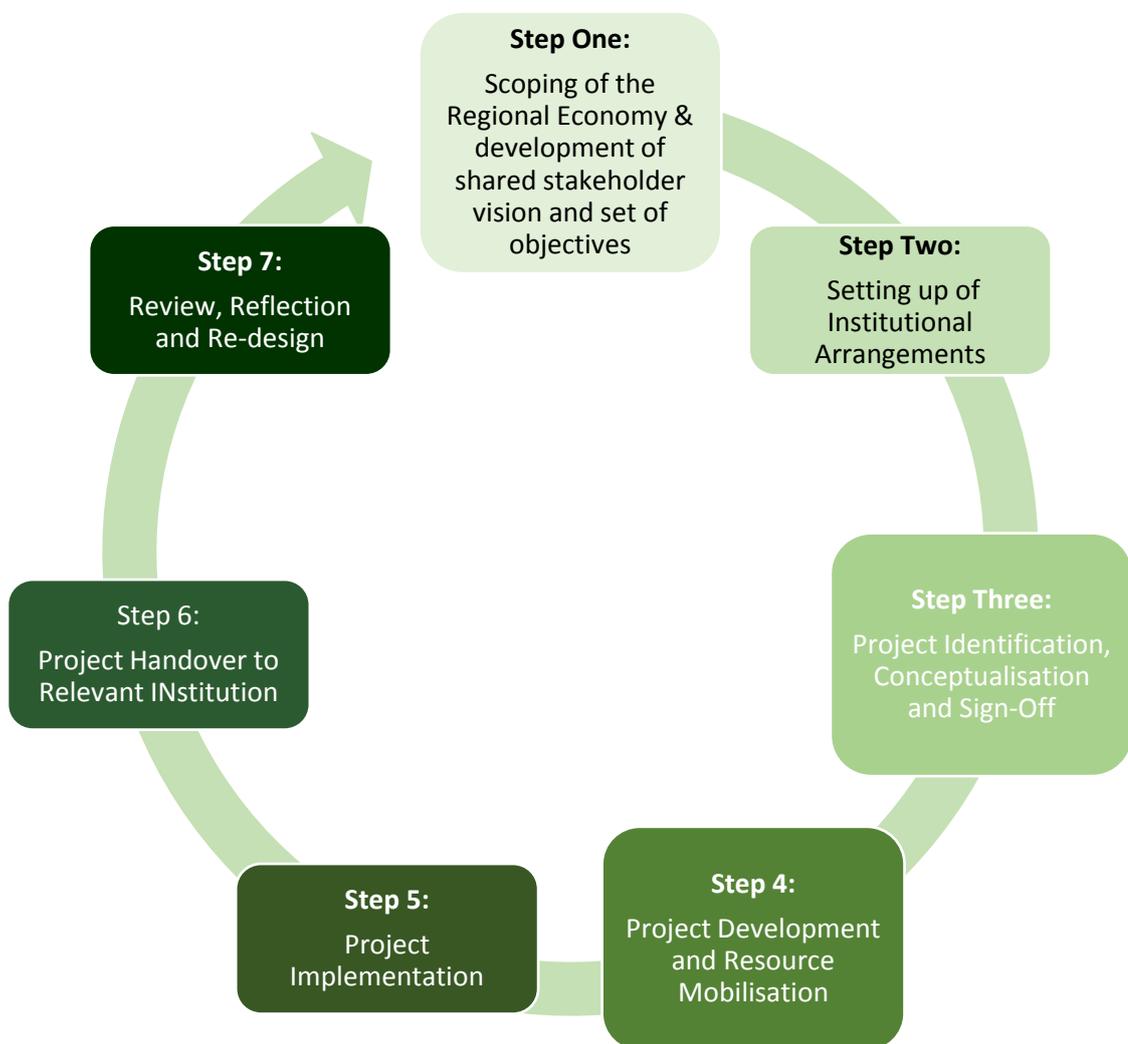


Figure 1 Pilot Methodology and Process

Programme Summary Performance Table

Table 1 summarises the overall performance of the two pilots in terms of the programme targets set as per the Grant Agreement and provides comments relating to the performance. In general programme targets were met or exceeded.

Table 1 Actual Performance Against Programme Targets

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	TARGET	ACTUAL WCBCI	ACTUAL KCI	COMMENT	SOURCE OF EVIDENCE
Programme Steering Committee	1	1	1	PSC meetings took place quarterly in both pilots	Signed PSC meeting minutes
Scoping report	1	1	1	Baseline studies and scoping completed in both pilots by October 2013	Scoping report
Stakeholder management	1	1	1	Stakeholder plans adopted as part of project concept documents	Minutes
Development planning alignment	3	3	3	In the KCI the projects included the Cradock Gateway Node precinct Plan, the Karoo Corridor Landowner Database and the Karoo Corridor Fire Team project. In the WCBCI the projects included development planning alignment with the four municipalities (Council decisions outstanding) and the completion of the Landowner Survey project	Minutes of workshops & meetings
Projects packaged	10	16	12	Sixteen and eight projects were identified & packaged in the WCBCI and KCI pilots respectively (see individual pilot reports for details)	Minutes & proposals
Number of projects referred	8	13	9	Thirteen and eight projects were referred in the WCBCI and KCI pilots respectively (see individual pilot reports for details)	Project proposals, minutes & reports
Rand value of funds leveraged	0	R 47 744 158	R 252 000	See table below for details	Financing communication
Conservation Outcome	0	4 130 ha of private land 7259,42 ha of state land		The hectares offered for conservation by the WCBCI landowners thus far are: 1 and 2. SMB and YFN together offer 530 ha 3. Rooipan: 30 ha 4. Soutpan: 140 ha 5. YFS: 500 ha 6. Koffiefontein: 1 275 ha 7. Uitkoms: 755 ha 8. Tygerfontein: 900 ha	Landowner Proposal to the Green Fund and IDC

Programme Impact

The direct and indirect economic, social, environmental and innovation impacts of the pilots are unpacked below. This is important in terms of demonstrating the potential contribution of the conservation-led development towards building the resilience and competitiveness of rural economies within the country. The pilots were meant to illustrate how conservation could contribute to national development outcomes such as: economic growth, job creation, skills training and transfer, SMME development and economic empowerment, spatial integration and biodiversity and heritage protection.

Economic Impact

Economic Growth

The pilots highlighted the potential direct and indirect contribution of the conservation sector to economic growth within rural communities through the identification of opportunities and implementation of projects both within the conservation sector itself and through initiatives within other sectors that were regarded as “conservation-compatible”.

An example of conservation-led development in both Corridors is linked to the objective of extending the formal protected area in a manner that directly benefits landowners and communities. The WCBC Landowner Survey Report showed that 82% of WCBC’ landowners believe that there is a serious business case for the extension and integration of the protected area within the Corridor. Tourism-linked business opportunities, management efficiencies and potential job creation were highlighted. Nine landowners have immediately responded to the survey findings by establishing a landowner association to pursue these possibilities. The provincial Minister responsible for Economic Development in the province, Alan Winde, gave his full support to the proposal saying that a “mega-nature reserve” located between the City of Cape Town metropole and the Saldanha IDZ would enhance the competitiveness of the province as a whole. The establishment of the Science, Research and Visitor Centre in the West Coast to show-case sustainable development and green technology within the region and the further development of catalytic tourism products within the Fonteinebos Nature Reserve and WCNP are other examples in both pilots that demonstrate potential for conservation-driven regional growth.

Both pilots identified opportunities within the tourism and agricultural sectors as compatible with the conservation of biodiversity and heritage. The identification, development and marketing of tourism assets within the Corridors enhances the public perception of the intrinsic social and economic value of biodiversity and heritage and in this way secures their protection. Within the KCI the Camdeboo Township Tourism Project and the Cradock Gateway Node Precinct were identified as projects that would: show-case local heritage; include economically marginalised communities within the formal tourism sector; offer opportunities to market the broader biodiversity and heritage of the region; spatially integrate the region through co-operative marketing; and, stimulate economic activity through increased visitor numbers and spend within the region. Similarly, the WCBCI included a cluster of tourism-related projects such as the launch of West Coast Way, the production of a tourism sector investment brochure and partnership with WESGRO, and a focus on small business support within the sector.

Within both Corridors there was an acceptance that multiple land-use was a reality and that the goal would be to focus on the formal protection of land with the highest biodiversity value. Land that was regarded as suitable for agriculture should be considered for this purpose. Land reform and land access by small farmers to such productive land should also be supported. Within the KCI, the focus was on the stimulation of small-scale urban agricultural activities given the availability of land for this purpose. It was argued that making urban land available for agriculture would decrease the pressure on rural portions of land with high biodiversity value. Projects of this nature were supported within Graaff-Reinet, Pearston and Cradock. These initiatives as well as the proposed development of a commercial farming entity in Pearston are regarded as important drivers of job creation, economic empowerment and social cohesion. Within the WCBCI, access to land was identified as a major constraint for small farmers. Within the Corridor the Groenekloof area was identified as the most productive land for agricultural usage within the broader municipal land-use planning frameworks. The WCBCI brought the needs of small-scale farmers within the Corridor to the attention of the relevant actors, namely the Departments of Agriculture (DoA) and Rural Development and Land Reform (DRD&LR) and the City of Cape Town. Agreement was reached that land access should be facilitated through facilities such as the DRD&LR's land acquisition fund and through co-operation with the Mamre Communal Property Association (CPA). The DoA took the lead and indicated that it is prepared to provide the other forms of technical and financial assistance that small farmers require.

Investigations into the compatibility of green industries with conservation-driven rural development were undertaken within the Corridors. Although significant interest exists within the Eastern Cape for the establishment of wind and solar energy producing plants, these have mostly been focussed on areas outside of the Karoo Corridor study area. Project specific efforts are, however, being made to reduce the impact and minimize the use of non-renewable resources. The Graaff-Reinet urban agriculture projects, for example, are concentrating their need for irrigation water on groundwater sources as opposed to municipal supply. Opportunities do, however, exist for exploration of green technology uses. The KCI Scoping and Baseline Study Report has highlighted the concerns of the Camdeboo Local Municipality with regard to its management of solid waste. The location of the Graaff-Reinet urban area within the boundaries of the Camdeboo National Park presents challenges related to the identification of suitable landfill sites. Although the pilot has not directly addressed this challenge, various alternatives including more focussed recycling efforts have been discussed with the Camdeboo Local Municipality.

In the WCBCI, there are a number of planned investments in wind energy such as in Mamre and on the Rheboksfontein Farm. Whilst these investments are being pursued by the respective landowners, there are mixed responses amongst Corridor stakeholders. The visual impact and ecological footprint of these investments is significant and the WCBCI has highlighted the need for landowners to consider a range of competitive and complementary land uses and for the consideration of such sustainable energy investment to be made on existing productive land portions where possible.

The establishment of a Science, Research and Visitor Centre within the West Coast has the potential to position the WCBC as a competitive location for contributing to global research and knowledge related to sustainable development and the use of green technologies. This will ensure that the rich biodiversity and heritage of the region will be further show-cased and that best-practices regarding biodiversity and heritage management and natural resource

utilization can be profiled. The development of this Centre within the Corridor will contribute to the economic diversity and resilience of the region.

Job Creation

Whilst few jobs have been directly created by the pilots, given the relatively short implementation time-frame and the fact that this was not anticipated, the most significant impact has been the identification of extensive job opportunities linked to the conservation of biodiversity and heritage as a result of the design and implementation of the projects. In terms of direct job creation it can be noted that the KCI facilitated the establishment of a formal catering company in Graaff-Reinet that is now registered on the municipal supplier database. The WCBCI has resulted in the launch of the *West Coast Way* company with full-time employees and the opening up of a community coffee shop at the Mamre Moravian Church Werf.

Both pilots demonstrated that conservation-led/compatible development could result in direct and indirect job creation. For example, a key objective in the design of tourism projects such as the Camdeboo Township Tourism Project, the Cradock Gateway Node precinct and West Coast Way, was the stimulation of visitor numbers, an extension of the length of stay of visitors, and tourism product development that would result in job creation primarily benefiting marginalised communities. Within the WCBCI, landowners identified significant job creation potential through a planned extended and integrated protected area in the following technical and skills areas: conservation management; invasive species management and beneficiation; fire management; hospitality; domestic work; security; coast-care; and infrastructure maintenance. In both pilots it was shown that significant job creating potential is linked to the sustained conservation of existing and new protected areas.

Furthermore, the potential of specific Corridor projects to create jobs has also been highlighted. For example, the Pearston Urban Agriculture Project is expected to create around 22 full-time job opportunities and approximately 130 casual / seasonal opportunities. The creation of approximately 100 short-term and 120 long-term jobs is estimated through the establishment of the proposed Science, Research and Visitor Centre in the WCBC.

Skills Training and Transfer

Skills transfer and training has also occurred through both pilots. The KCI was particularly effective in working alongside and further capacitating municipal planning officials. From the outset of the pilot it was clear that municipal capacity both in respect of human resources and budgetary allocation in the Karoo Corridor would be one of the key implementation constraints. A key component of the pilot has, therefore, been the building of the capacity of municipal officials without placing additional demands on restricted municipal budgets.

The KCI created platforms for the exchange of ideas and knowledge-sharing amongst municipalities and stakeholders within the Corridor. The representation of youth on the PSC means that unemployed young people are exposed to this and the opportunities created as a result of the KCI. Furthermore, the pilot facilitated the exchange of knowledge and skills amongst food gardening practitioners in Graaff-Reinet, Aberdeen and Pearston. A local NGO volunteered to draft a training programme that will enable skilled gardeners to be trained as trainers. The Tracker Academy project was aimed at increasing the capacity of the Academy to accommodate more trainees. There is potential for farm labourer training in fire-fighting skills through the Fire Team project.

Within the WCBCI the direct skills transfer took the form of the training of eight interns to participate in the roll-out of the WCBC Landowner Survey and the training of five EPWP workers as amateur actors for the conservation awareness drama roll-out. The interns were trained over a period of three days that enabled them to: participate in the actual survey roll-out; capture the data electronically; and, contribute to the landowner survey report-back session. The intern training covered the topics of: biodiversity, alien species management, environmental legislation, local government responsibilities, interviewing techniques, data capturing and, survey logistical management. Participatory learning techniques were employed to facilitate the skills transfer. The EPWP workers were trained in drama skills over a seven-day consecutive period. They will also be trained in logistical and event management skills during the roll-out of the drama linked to the WCNP “People and Parks” annual events calendar.

The planned West Coast Science, Research and Visitor Centre has been specifically designed to address challenges such as the skills gap between demand and supply within the region. The involvement of three tertiary institution partners (namely, the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT), George Washington University (GWU) and the University of Cape Town (UCT)) in the design of the Centre has huge potential to engage ongoing knowledge sharing and skills transfer amongst the programme and tertiary partners. Approximately 60 students – both under and post-graduate – will be involved in the research-phase of the programme. This student community services project will also provide an opportunity for students to engage directly with a “client” regarding the client’s needs and perceptions of their contributions.

Through participation within the pilots there has been some level of empowerment of all stakeholders in respect of rural economic development programme design and implementation; project development and management; process flow and facilitation; and stakeholder engagement.

[Business Development and Economic Empowerment](#)

Both pilots provided examples of opportunities for the development of new enterprises and SMMEs as a result of conservation-led development. For example, the West Coast Landowner Research project has identified numerous business opportunities from the establishment of an extended and integrated protected area, such as: game-related economic activity; eco-tourism and the hospitality industry; service products linked to the demand for greater fire protection, invasive species management and beneficiation; heritage restoration and management; poaching control; integrated waste management; security; road and property management; and, transport products linked to the demand for worker and visitor transport and logistical support to businesses within the Corridor. The nine landowners who have formed a West Coast Corridor landowner association have identified exciting potential for community and worker empowerment linked to equity investment agreements with development financing institutions.

The WCBCI has identified a number of major new business opportunities linked to the conservation of biodiversity and heritage such as the appropriate development and marketing of the: Silverstroom and Ganzekraal municipal resorts; SANParks’ Langebaan site; Mamre Werf; West Coast island and diving experiences; Science, Research and Visitor

Centre; and the Ganzekraal Homestead. Tourism sector workshops (conducted through the WCBCI focused on innovation and new business ideas and stakeholders) have identified a market for products such as: hot air ballooning; West Coast cuisine and coffee shops; cultural villages; and, hop-on-and-off buses. A large number of these projects have been marketed through the West Coast Tourism Investment brochure prepared through the WCBCI, and (where unavailable) project concept documents will need to be prepared by the relevant stakeholders.

The WCBCI responded to a need identified to provide targeted and sustained support to small and start-up tourism business in the region to ensure an increase in economic participation and the sharing of economic benefits. A specific output in this regard was the facilitation and production of a shared small business support information brochure by all relevant West Coast agencies that outlined the kind of assistance provided by specific agencies at the various stages of a firm's development.

Similarly, the KCI identified business and empowerment opportunities linked to the development of: township tourism experiences; regional "gateways" that could facilitate the promotion of specific products and communities; urban agricultural primary and secondary activities; co-operative fire management arrangements; and, the Fonteinebos Nature Reserve as a regional tourism attraction. In the Camdeboo Township Tourism project alone a number of catalytic projects have been identified, namely: a *Visitor Experience Centre* that includes a museum, tour guide station and retail space; a *Graaff-Reinet Gateway Development* offering craft stalls, a petrol station and budget hotel accommodation; *Township Route and Product Development* that includes a coffee shop/restaurant, crafters, cooking and Xhosa classes; and a *Heritage Precinct* that includes an amphitheatre, the collecting and recording of oral history and the improvement of infrastructure.

Resource Mobilisation and Investment Attraction

The pilots have been effective in resource mobilization both in terms of financial and non-financial commitments. It must be noted that direct resource leveraging for all the projects is ongoing through the responsible institutions. For example, the West Coast Landowner Survey project and the KCI have been handed over to the GEF 5 project for implementation and further funding leverage. Significant funds will be required for the associated infrastructure and service requirements for the proposed extended protected areas. Funds are required for investments in game fencing, eco-tourism infrastructure, accommodation facilities, signage etc. The funds need to be leveraged both from the private and public sectors. The West Coast Tourism Route is designed to be privately-funded and self-sustaining and ongoing efforts are being made to expand the subscription base and product take-up. The West Coast Tourism Investment Brochure is designed as one way to attract further funding into the region to be managed by WESGRO. The KCI municipalities have assumed responsibility to finance or co-finance a number of the projects following the completion of feasibility studies such as the agricultural and tourism projects. Ongoing efforts are being made to leverage resources for the Camdeboo Freshwater Fish Processing Plant. The KCI has encouraged stakeholders to source funding independently of the KCI and externally in order to augment existing budgets. This is a particularly significant achievement in a context of resource-constrained local government.

There is also huge potential for indirect leverage through these projects. For example the stimulation of the tourism sector through branding and co-operative Tourism Route

marketing; targeted tourism sector investment; small tourism support development and the proposed establishment of the Science, Research and Visitor Centre could have a major catalytic regional economic impact through related investments and increased visitor numbers and spend. The expansion of the tourism sector will stimulate growth in related sectors, such as retail, accommodation, transport and communication. Increased jobs in the region as a result of these initiatives will also boost local demand and stimulate new or expanded economic activity. The particular emphasis on the development of the tourism and agricultural sectors within marginalized communities in the Corridors will mean that the growth will be inclusive and the benefits more equitably shared.

The Grant Agreement allowed for the appointment of both a Process Facilitator and a skilled business plan developer. In both pilots the Process Facilitator had the capacity to perform both functions. Business plans were the outcomes of facilitated participative processes and as such the respective Process Facilitators proved best-placed to perform this role. This resulted in savings for the programme that will lead to further value-add in terms of a Grant Extension Agreement by the Green Fund and DBSA.

Table 2 below provides a break-down of the resources leveraged directly through the pilots and the ongoing leverage potential that has been identified.

Table 2 Resource Mobilisation within Pilots

Project	Project Resources /Funds allocated	Resources/ Funds Mobilised	Ongoing Leverage
KCI Resource Mobilisation			
Pearston Urban Agriculture: Agronomic feasibility study	SANParks Programme Manager's time SANParks Process Facilitator's time	R 200 000 from Food for Development, a US-Based funding agency	Possible further funding from Food for Development
Pearston Urban Agriculture: feasibility study for commercial component	SANParks Programme Manager's time SANParks Process Facilitator's time		Municipal investment pending outcome of feasibility study
Pearston: Urban agriculture – fresh produce market feasibility study	SANParks Programme Manager's time SANParks Process Facilitator's time		Municipal investment pending outcome of feasibility study
Cradock Gateway Node Precinct Plan	SANParks Programme Manager's time SANParks Process Facilitator's time		Municipality to budget or raise funds for implementation.
Graaff-Reinet Urban Agricultural project: wellpoint	SANParks Programme Manager's time SANParks Process Facilitator's time	R 15 000.00 from a local Dutch benefactor	Maintenance the responsibility of the municipality
Graaff-Reinet Urban Agricultural Project: feasibility for water storage dam	SANParks Programme Manager's time SANParks Process Facilitator's time	R 22 000.00 from a local Dutch benefactor	Maintenance the responsibility of the municipality
Graaff-Reinet Urban agricultural project: food garden site clearance	SANParks Programme Manager's time SANParks Process Facilitator's time	Local municipality provided services of the value of R 15 000.00	

Project	Project Resources /Funds allocated	Resources/ Funds Mobilised	Ongoing Leverage
WCBCI Resource Mobilisation			
Planning Alignment	SANParks Programme Manager's time SANParks Process Facilitator's time	Municipal planners' time DEA policy staff time	Public and private sector funding aligned to Buffer Strategy objectives
Landowner Research project for an Extended Protected Area	SANParks Programme Manager's time SANParks Process Facilitator's time	SANParks Cape Research Centre input into the questionnaire design valued at R 10 000.00 SANParks Cape Research Centre interns participating in the roll-out of the survey valued at R 12 000.00 West Coast National Park monitors participating in the roll-out of the survey valued at R 12 000.00 Cape West Coast Biosphere Reserve officials, board members and interns participating in the roll-out of the survey valued at R 25 000.00 West Coast National Park providing free accommodation for a week for 7 surveyors valued at R 10 000.00 GEF 5 allocation to the West Coast Corridor – R 1.5 M over 5 years Estimated total value leveraged: R 1 569 000	WCBC Landowner Association has submitted two applications to the value of R 240 Million to the Green Fund and Industrial Development Corporation Funding mechanisms within the DRD&LR will also be pursued.
Tourism Heritage Route	SANParks Programme Manager's time SANParks Process Facilitator's time R 150 000 project funds	West Coast Way has leveraged at least R 1 Million to date Estimated total value leveraged: R 1 000 000	Private sector marketing spend Visitor spend New & expanded business investment
Tourism Investment Brochure	SANParks Process Facilitator's time PSC members' time in commenting on the draft brochure	WESGRO Research team input valued at R 20 000.00 WESGRO's design team's input valued at R 20 000.00 WESGRO's printing of brochure valued at R 15 000.00 WESGRO's distribution budget valued at R 5 000.00 WESGRO's after-care support valued at R 50 000.00 Estimated total value leveraged: R 110 000.00	New & expanded business investment
Visitor, Science and Education Centre	SANParks Programme Manager's time SANParks Process Facilitator's time PSC members' time	Financial commitments from all 3 institutions to cover the logistical and time costs of their volunteer student and lecturer involvement valued at R 1 million Accommodation in the West Coast National Park for 30 CPPUT students from the 5 th – 6 th August valued at R 20 000.00 Elandsfontein Mine contribution to bursaries valued at R	Private, public, civil society investments Visitor spend

Project	Project Resources /Funds allocated	Resources/ Funds Mobilised	Ongoing Leverage
		100 000.00 Identification of a building within the WCNP for the purposes of the Science Centre valued at R 38 Million Estimated total value leveraged: R 39 000 120	
Small Tourism Business Support	SANParks Programme Manager's time SANParks Process Facilitator's time PSC members' time R 18 000.00 brochure design and printing costs	Participation in a day's workshop of all the small business service providers in the West Coast valued at R 25 000.00 Comment and input into the copy by all the small business service providers valued at R 5 000.00 Distribution of the brochure by small business service providers valued at R 8 000.00 Atlantis Play Park commitment from the City of Cape Town valued at R 5 Million Verbal commitment from the DRD&LR for the Mamre Werf for R 1 Million – still to be confirmed in writing Estimated total value leveraged: R 6 000 038	After-care support of small business providers valued at R 1 Million
Small Farmer Support	SANParks Process Facilitator's time PSC members' time	Time of the relevant officials from the Departments of Agriculture and Rural Development and Land Reform, the Cape West Coast Biosphere Reserve and the City of Cape Town to identify land available for small farmer development within the Corridor valued at R 30 000.00. Estimated total value leveraged: R 30 000	Small farmer support Land access for small farmers Land acquisition by the DRD&LR Small farmer project financing by the DoA
Community Awareness Drama	SANParks Process Facilitator's time R 50 000 from project funds allocated.	West Coast National Park allocating time of two People and Parks programme management staff to drive, direct and manage the production valued at R 25 000 West Coast National Park providing EPWP participants to audition and participate in the drama production valued at R 10 000 Estimated total value leveraged: R 35 000	Technical and funding partners Conservation awareness and protection of biodiversity and heritage in the region.

Social Impact

The pilots were intended to demonstrate the potential social impact of conservation-driven development on rural communities. In both pilots the Scoping and Base-Line Reports revealed high levels of social fragmentation, such as: racial spatial divides; economic divisions between landowner and dispossessed landowner classes; political party and/or factional allegiances; divisions amongst skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled populations; between the employed and unemployed; between large and small firms; gender and age group divisions; and discord within seemingly cohesive groups, such as land and business owners.

The design of the pilots recognised the social fragmentation and hence the emphasis on process facilitation. The stakeholder engagement platforms created through the pilots were critical in building trust and generating mutual and shared understanding of the challenges within the Corridors. In the KCI, stakeholders from a wide variety of backgrounds and interests come together on a regular basis to discuss common concerns. As a result there exists a tangible mood of co-operation amongst stakeholders. In order to ensure an inclusive process, the PSC in the KCI was deliberately broadened to include representation from marginalised groups such as youth and women.

Extremely encouraging was responsiveness of the local government representatives, both official and political, from the municipalities to the opportunities presented through the KCI. Local government was actively involved through:

- Identification and inclusion of projects in the various Integrated Development Plans (IDP's);
- Identification and facilitation of access to public land for urban gardening;
- Assessment of services infrastructure requirements for food gardens;
- Clearing of land and soil preparation for food gardens;
- Lobbying prospective funders / donors to fund infrastructural requirements of food gardens; and the
- Appointment of agricultural extension officers to provide ongoing support for food gardeners.

The process followed during the implementation of the KCI has provided the municipalities with an alternative for dealing with local economic development and planning processes that harnesses the collective knowledge of a wide range of stakeholders. The DBSA has, at the PSC meeting on 05 May 2015, proposed that the municipalities consider this facilitation methodology for planning and LED purposes as opposed to a desk-top driven consultant appointment.

Within the WCBCI the starting point of the pilot process was facilitating consensus amongst stakeholders regarding their understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing the Corridor and the articulation of a shared stakeholder vision and set of objectives. This vision and set of objectives remained the reference point throughout the pilot. Much attention was given to building inclusivity and trust amongst stakeholders by both the process facilitator and the SANParks' programme manager. This involved one-on-one engagements with landowners and landowner groupings; a series of workshops with the Mamre and Atlantis communities to address their concerns of potential marginalization from the benefits of the

initiative; the taking on of additional projects such as the Mamre Werf development as a gesture of goodwill and trust; ongoing feedback to stakeholders; and reassurance of stakeholders of the intention of the programme and respect for their rights.

Multi-stakeholder workshops were facilitated in such a manner that conflictual situations were managed and directed in a manner that the overall WCBCI was not derailed. An indicator of the success of the initiative was the fact that all programme partners were still on board at the close-out phase of the project and stated their support for the pilot. Indeed, the good attendance record at WCBCI workshops, meetings and events throughout the programme implementation is an indicator of both the commitment and willingness of stakeholders to participate in the process and the successful programme and process design. A detailed record of all these processes is contained within the Annexure: WCBCI Close-Out report.

Through these participatory processes, both pilots have resulted in networking amongst stakeholders and a greater understanding of each other's needs, challenges and resources.

A significant social impact has been that the pilots have enhanced the public perception of SANParks' within the community. During the final PSC of the KCI it was stated that stakeholders appreciated the new commitment shown by SANParks to rural development. In the WCBCI the Landowner Survey had revealed a high level of dissatisfaction amongst certain landowners with regard to SANParks and the management of the WCNP. Recently, however, the West Coast Landowner Association has approached SANParks to request the organization to facilitate and draft an equity application on their behalf to the Industrial Development Corporation. This is a tangible indicator of the shift in landowner perception of SANParks.

Finally, the pilots have also generated a broader social awareness and commitment towards heritage and conservation protection. Both pilots have successfully demonstrated to communities that conservation-led development offers direct and indirect benefits through jobs, skills development, economic growth and empowerment. Communities are identifying local heritage and biodiversity assets for protection and appropriate development as a result. Landowners in the WCBCI have identified 4130 ha of private land for protection thus far. In the WCBCI the conservation awareness drama has been used as a successful instrument to communicate the conservation message to a large portion of the community.

Spatial Integration

Spatial integration was promoted in both the KCI and WCBCI. This integration was supported at a number of levels. Local spatial integration was supported within towns, such as through the Camdeboo Township Tourism Project with an intention of linking township and town-based tourism products; and between towns in close proximity such as Mamre and Atlantis that still suffer the consequences of historical divisions and separate development. Spatial integration also occurred at a Corridor level through the promotion of extended and integrated protected areas and tourism linkage routes. Regional spatial integration was promoted through the understanding of the Corridors within their broader economic and social contexts. The current and potential role of the Corridors and their respective towns, nodes, assets and products was analysed and positioned from a regional economic competitiveness perspective. Importantly, the role of the National Parks within the pilots was also viewed in this way. National spatial linkages were also generated through tourism route

themes, potential markets and potential funders/investors. The pilots even generated global spatial linkages through resource mobilization, both financial and non-financial. For example, the West Coast Science, Research and Visitor Centre has the George Washington University as a partner. The Camdeboo Legacy Tourism Project has built alignment with the Liberation Struggle Icon Tourism Project of the Inxuba Yethemba Local Chris Hani District Municipalities and in turn alignment is being sought with National Government's Liberation Struggle Route Tourism Project that is intended to honour struggle heroes on both national and international levels.

Within the KCI a strong group of stakeholders from government, private sector and community backgrounds have over the past two years shared their diverse visions, objectives and needs. This has necessitated the adoption of a more holistic and inclusive planning approach from stakeholders and the need to "see the other point of view".

One of the specific aims of the pilot was to facilitate the integration of the Buffer Zones of the national parks as special management areas within the Spatial Development Frameworks (SDF) of the respective municipalities in accordance with the Buffer Zone Strategy. This would strengthen the implementation of the Buffer Zone Strategy within the Corridors. Engagements were undertaken at administrative and political/Council levels with the municipalities to share the Buffer Zone Strategy and request adoption of the Buffer Zone Strategy and inclusion of the Park Buffers within the SDFs. Unfortunately at the time of the completion of the pilots Council resolutions in this regard were still outstanding and the issue had been referred back to the respective municipal administrations for further technical advice. Although the programme has not succeeded in gaining formal approval for the SANParks Buffer Zone Policy from municipalities in the Corridor, enough goodwill and intent has been shown by relevant authority stakeholders to believe that there is significant buy-in to secure formal adoption in future.

Environmental Impact

It is clearly understood that both the KCI and WCBCI were intended to ensure biodiversity and heritage protection. The greatest impact of the pilots in this regard will be the securing of additional land for formal protection within both Corridors as per the GEF 5 targets and South Africa's Protected Area Expansion Strategy. The recently completed Mountain Zebra Camdeboo Corridor (MZCC) Project by Wilderness Foundation in collaboration with SANParks in the KCI has already added a significant extent of land to the protected area estate. Furthermore the Karoo Corridor Landowners Database Project, implemented through the KCI, will build on this success. The database is intended to provide a decision-making tool for government and conservation authorities.

The WCBCI has identified 7259,42 ha of state land for formal protection and thus far 4 130 ha of private land has been offered for formal protection by landowners. The twenty-eight private landowners have been included in the consultations for the WCBC protected areas expansion project and 82% of all landowners (i.e. public, private and community) are interested in pursuing the initiative. The extension of the protected area would also result in the improved management of ecological infrastructure and services throughout the Corridor. The project will visibly demonstrate the fact that conservation can directly support economic and social development and therefore offer similar approaches elsewhere in the country and result in increased environmental awareness in the region.

The implementation of food gardening projects in Graaff-Reinet, Pearston and Cradock will contribute to the protection of conservation-worthy land in the Corridor. As more and more vacant and under-utilized open spaces in urban areas are made available for agricultural purposes, the pressure will be reduced on non-productive and high biodiversity value land to be used for agriculture. This is particularly true in the case of Graaff-Reinet⁷ where there is a strong need to protect the integrity of the Camdeboo National Park. The identification of appropriate and multiple land uses within the WCBCI that accommodates the needs of small farmers, landowner interests and community needs for jobs and equity, has generated buy-in amongst landowners for extending and integrating the formally protected area within the Corridor.

Improved protected area management within the Corridor has also been an outcome of the pilots. For example, the upgrade of the Fonteinebos Nature Reserve will enhance the management of conservation estate within the KCI. There are opportunities to link the Reserve with the Camdeboo National Park and in so doing encourage landowners in the Eastern Buffer Zone area of the Park to become involved in conservation efforts. An upgraded Fonteinebos Nature Reserve will contribute to economic development opportunities related to biodiversity and conservation tourism that will increase conservation awareness on a broad scale. In the WCBCI one of the main advantages identified by landowners if the extension and integration of formally protected land in the Corridor is improved conservation management and improved services such as alien clearing, fire management, infrastructure maintenance and heritage restoration and maintenance.

Indeed, the WCBCI as a whole has generated a far greater public awareness of the value of biodiversity and heritage protection and has highlighted conservation as a competitive sector offering a vast range of business opportunities.

Innovation

The pilots have been innovative in a number of different ways, such as: demonstrating the possibilities for conservation-led rural development; piloting the implementation of DEA's Buffer Zone policy and demonstrating its replicability; undertaking an intensive and broad-based stakeholder engagement process to secure buy-in and inclusivity; tackling difficult development challenges within the Buffer Zones of National Parks such as the Elandsfontein Phosphate Mining application in a responsible and responsive manner that addresses both the challenges and opportunities that it presents; and introducing catalytic project ideas in the region that would have positive spin-offs for broader communities. The proposed Visitor, Science and Education Centre is intended to show-case such innovation and become a globally-recognised centre of learning and research.

Of particular importance is the innovation that has occurred in the pilots with regard to developing a methodology for the implementation of the national Buffer Zone Strategy. The Strategy has legally mandated SANParks to operate outside the borders of the national parks to promote conservation in areas determined as national park Buffer Zones. SANParks' mandate is to promote complementary economic activity within the Buffer Zone in order to protect the integrity of national parks. The table below summarises the shift required by the Buffer Strategy from a conventional to a new management approach.

⁷ Graaff-Reinet is unique in the sense that it is the only town in the world that is completely surrounded by a formally protected nature area.

Table 3 Buffer Strategy shifting the approach to National Park Management

Conservation Methods	Conventional	New Buffer Zone approach
National Park management	SANParks mandate to operate within the boundaries of the national park. Its management plan is limited to its boundaries	SANParks is mandated to work within the boundaries of the national park and a delineated Buffer Zone – its management plan must reflect this approach
	SANParks management responsible for park management in liaison with its Park Forum	SANParks is required to collaborate with a far broader range of stakeholders – the communities, landowners, product owners, municipalities, non-governmental organisations – within a broader geographical area
	SANParks is focused on conservation for conservation-sake	SANParks is challenged to engage with the contribution that conservation can make on the socio-economic livelihoods of communities. SANparks is required to build capacities with regard to socio-economic analysis in order to identify the value-add of conservation within economic regions.
	SANParks is focused on its national park boundaries as protected area; and for expansion on expropriation, purchasing or contractual arrangements	The Protected Areas Act enables the private sector to manage protected areas outside of the national park borders and to form contractual relations with relevant partners. In this way far more land can be protected and there can be cost sharing between the public and private sector for the management thereof.
	SANParks operates independently within a region	SANparks is forced to operate collaboratively and is held accountable by landowners and communities for its performance and contribution to the regional economy.
	SANParks focused on economic activity limited to the Park boundaries	SANParks is focused on the promotion of economic activity within its broader region and on forging linkages between economic products within and outside of the Park.

The WCBC has piloted a methodology for SANParks to work within its Buffer Zones in a manner that is highly inclusive and consultative. The approach is also based on an in-depth understanding of the broader regional economy in order to ensure that projects and business opportunities identified have a sound economic rationale. The approach has significant potential to impact on national policies and regulations. It could also be applicable to provincial and municipal governments interested in establishing buffer zones around provincial and municipal nature reserves.

A further innovation through the WCBCI has been the acceptance of the Corridor as a pilot for DEA’s Public Coastal Access project as requested by the West Coast District Municipality. The Coastal Access project aims to assess the capacity of municipalities and government as a whole to implement the relevant sections of the Integrated Coastal Management Act.

Main Programme Successes and Challenges

Overall, the pilots can be regarded as highly successful with some of the main achievements being listed as the:

- Demonstration that conservation-led development within rural communities can contribute competitively to desirable economic, social, environmental and innovation impacts;
- Partnerships created and trust generated amongst conservation authorities, the three spheres of government, biosphere reserves, communities and landowners;
- Landowner buy-in and commitment to extend the protected area within the Buffer Zones of the national parks;
- Positive attitude of stakeholders towards SANParks and the potential role of conservation in rural development;
- Identification of a large number of innovative and catalytic projects that will stimulate regional economic development;
- Securing of the buy-in, commitment and support of the relevant Park management teams for Buffer Strategy implementation;
- Demonstration of strategies to enhance the financial viability of National Parks within the pilots through product development;
- Significant and diverse financial and non-financial resource leveraging;
- Spatial integration of marginalised communities within the Buffer Zone with broader economic activities and assets;
- Pro-active and innovative approaches to conservation-linked development challenges within the Buffer Zones;
- Securing of sustainability of the pilot projects through their transfer to relevant institutions for ongoing implementation, including the GEF 5 programme vehicle; and
- Exploration of appropriate institutional arrangements to drive rural development within Buffer Zones.

Whilst the pilots have been successful, there have also been challenges. These challenges were experienced at both a programme and strategic level. The programme level challenges relate primarily to the operational and logistical challenges of implementing an ambitious two-year development programme. The strategic challenges offer lessons to conservation authorities and DEA regarding the positioning of conservation as a valued and recognised contributor to rural development, and also with regard to the national roll-out of the Buffer Zone Strategy.

Programme-level Challenges

The SANParks' Rural Development Programme Grant Agreement and scope of works was extremely bold for a 24 month implementation period. Development processes are lengthy, particularly within complex stakeholder environments. In some ways the restricted time-period created focus, innovation and energy as it was driven by the set deliverables. In other ways it may have weakened the programme as the time factor may have over-ruled other considerations. For example, some stakeholders argued that the KCI PSC was not sufficiently representative when first constituted and this had to be rectified over time. What was very clear, however, was that the time allocation of seven days a month per process facilitator was inadequate in relation to the actual time demands of the programme. The focus on process facilitation in the programme design meant that the programme had to be highly participative and responsive to stakeholder needs and this required greater flexibility in terms of time allocations.

The actual design of the SANParks' Rural Development Programme was restrictive in that it required the process facilitators to identify and package projects, but did not require actual implementation. This contributed to the different approaches adopted in the two pilot areas. In the Karoo Corridor Initiative the process facilitator adopted a more desk-top approach towards business plan drafting, whereas in the West Coast Corridor a more participatory and action-orientated approach was adopted towards project packaging that resulted in the actual implementation of a number of projects.

The physical extent of the Karoo Corridor area presented particular logistical challenges in the implementation of this pilot. The Corridor covers an area of approximately 578 890ha and includes in excess of 800 land parcels. This vast geographical area impacted on the ability of stakeholders to attend the PSC as in some cases it required a drive of more than 500 kilometers to the meeting and back. Similarly, it presented the Process Facilitator with a large area to cover for site visits and one-on-one meetings with stakeholders. Budgetary allocations for travelling did not take cognizance of the physical extent of the Corridor. This challenge proved difficult to remedy and played itself out in various forms, including:

- Travel time spent by the process facilitator that could not be booked as project time;
- Mismatch between the budgetary allocations for travelling disbursements and the real travel costs in the Corridor;
- Extensive pressure on stakeholders' budgetary allocations for travelling resulting in some being unable to attend PSC meetings on occasion; and
- Difficulty in fixing time and location of meetings as some stakeholders are required to travel in excess of 500km (Queenstown to Graaff-Reinet and back) in a single day

In both pilots the process facilitators were required to perform a large proportion of the administrative tasks related to the programme. This placed additional time demands on the process facilitators and the programme manager. Where administrative assistance was provided by Zoleka Vavedi, Charlene Liedeman, Charmain Simerie and Elmarie Walters from SANParks it was greatly appreciated. Dedicated administrative support in the roll-out of future programmes should be considered.

With regard to programme implementation there were some noteworthy challenges in the KCI. Most were successfully navigated by the process facilitator, local municipalities and

stakeholders represented on the PSC. Others present lessons to be addressed by future similar programmes in the Corridor. These include:

- The Fonteinebos Nature Reserve Project could not be brought to a successful conclusion as the skills and resources required to manage a conservation area of this nature are not easily available within the under-resourced local municipality. Commitments were made at the final PSC meeting held on 05 May 2015 that the Camdeboo Local Municipality will liaise closely with the Camdeboo National Park management with regard to the upgrading of the Fonteinebos Nature Reserve.
- Despite the sterling work completed during the preceding Mountain Zebra Camdeboo Corridor Project (MCCP), formal landowner representation on the PSC only materialized during the latter half of the KCI. This effectively ruled out any work on landowner-related projects during the first year of programme implementation.
- A key finding of the Combined Scoping and Baseline Study Report was the relatively high incidence of chronic hunger and malnutrition in the Karoo Corridor. This intentionally shifted the focus towards the identification of projects that addressed issues of food security and employment creation, mainly in the urban areas of Graaff-Reinet, Cradock and Pearston. This resulted in a lesser focus on the rural areas of the Corridor. It must be noted, however, that the town of Graaff-Reinet is surrounded by the Camdeboo National Park and its urban areas therefore constitute a significant proportion of this National Park's buffer zone.
- The high levels of poverty and unemployment in the Corridor and adjacent areas placed pressure for the programme to be extended to areas outside the Corridor, such as Pearston, Aberdeen, Nieu-Bethesda and Middleburg.

Whilst SANParks has driven the pilots and the support of the top management of SANParks has been visible - especially through their participation in the WCBCI Milestone event, there has been a slow take-up within the broader organization of the opportunities presented by the initiative. For example, the WCNP has not signed a membership agreement with West Coast Way, the branding and marketing vehicle established by the WCBCI. This undermines the confidence of stakeholders in SANParks' commitment to the current and any future collaborative initiatives and raises questions as to whether SANParks has recognized the full value of the projects emanating from the WCBCI.

Strategic-Level Challenges

At a strategic level the following challenges were presented. First, the Buffer Zone Strategy has been experienced as a relatively weak policy instrument when it comes to influencing municipal planning processes and frameworks. For example, some municipalities expressed a reluctance to come on board and adopt a strategy that could possibly delay the approval of development applications within their municipal boundaries. Municipalities are ambivalent about promoting or supporting conservation-led development. This is particularly relevant in areas where municipalities have a range of competing economic investment options and interests. In order to strengthen the Strategy, legislation and/or regulations are required. Unless further funding is provided for the implementation of the Buffer Zone Strategy, the lessons learnt from the pilots may be lost.

Promoting conservation-led development within a dynamic regional economic context is challenging. For example, given the threats to critically endangered biodiversity and heritage within the Corridors it is relatively simple to build a case for conservation. However,

the reality is that there is huge pressure for the Corridors to deliver in terms of social and economic opportunities for all its citizens given high poverty and unemployment levels. This means that conservation cannot be promoted without demonstrating the potential contribution of conservation towards rural development and the desired development outcomes. Conservation cannot be presented as a trade-off with development. However, it is possible to make obvious that the nature of development can either protect or destroy biodiversity and heritage. The pilots highlighted a *Window of Opportunity* for stakeholders to agree to collectively influence the nature of development within their respective Corridors in a way that shows that conservation can actually contribute collaboratively and competitively to the sustainable economic and social development of the region. This approach delivered on the objective of the pilots to demonstrate that conservation and economic development are not mutually exclusive but outcomes that can both be realized simultaneously. Throughout the implementation of the pilots it was necessary to emphasise that the development rights and interests of both communities and landowners need to be protected and respected.

SANParks has welcomed the Buffer Zone Strategy and has utilized the pilots to develop a buffer zone methodology that is aligned to provincial and municipal spatial and bioregional planning processes. However, ensuring the mainstreaming and ownership of the Strategy within the organization as a whole remains a challenge. In particular, the Buffer Zone Strategy requires SANParks (and indeed government as a whole) to understand and approach the organisation's contribution to rural development from a much broader perspective – not only considering the role of national parks within the rural economy, but also as to how SANParks can facilitate rural development processes outside its park borders that would impact positively on rural livelihoods and integrate the park into its broader regional context. It means that SANParks can no longer focus on conservation primarily from a scientific perspective, but increasingly from a social and economic perspective, thereby positioning conservation as a driver for regional social and economic development.

A challenge to SANParks has been that the implementation of the Strategy was not costed by DEA and additional funds have not been made available to the organization for the implementation of the Strategy. It was apparent that at this stage SANParks has adopted a cautious approach to engaging in broader rural development processes within its national park buffers owing to resource constraints within the organisation and the fact that no additional funding was forthcoming from DEA to assist with the implementation of the Buffer Zone Strategy. The implementation of the pilots has highlighted the need for additional capacity and skills sets within SANParks to work within the Buffer Zones and in the area of rural development. In particular, the need to develop process facilitation skills within SANParks has been highlighted through the pilot experience. Buffer Zones are large geographic areas with multiple stakeholders, often with complex inter-relationships. The piloted process facilitation approach within the Corridors has highlighted the necessity and value of such skills. It is understood that the original concept of SANParks "People and Parks" programme was to engage with stakeholders on a much broader basis. However, the current focus of the programme appears to be more restricted to public conservation awareness especially scholar education. Given this reality, SANParks may need to re-focus and/or recruit capacity for this purpose.

The pilots highlighted a need for the roll-out of a conservation-led rural development approach and the Buffer Zone Strategy to be championed by both DEA and SANParks.

Senior management buy-in is required and the visible commitment of DEA and SANParks to the approach and Strategy is required, particularly with regard to engagement with stakeholders. These stakeholders are located both within the public and private sectors. A SANParks' Capacity Building project is required to utilise the experience and knowledge gained in the implementation of the two pilot sites to support the roll-out of the Buffer Zone Strategy within additional pilot sites, and to work with other conservation authorities, such as provincial governments, municipalities and private landowners where possible to adopt similar approaches in the management of their conservation areas.

Lessons Learnt

This section of the report extracts the lessons learnt from the pilots as a means of assessing replicability and effectiveness.

1. The conservation of biodiversity and heritage can contribute competitively to rural development and the achievement of government's economic, social and environmental development outcomes.
2. Conservation-led development should be informed by a sound regional economic analysis and understanding in order to unlock real economic and social potential and opportunities.
3. Utilising the conservation-lens to identify local potential and opportunity can result in innovation and creativity;
4. Certain sectors, such as tourism and agriculture, are more compatible with the conservation of biodiversity and heritage than others. It should be noted that some "green sector" activities, such as wind farms, may be less compatible. Multiple and appropriate land-uses need to be identified within biodiversity Corridors in order to be responsive to stakeholder needs.
5. Landowners and communities will generally participate in conservation based on a sound business case rather than simply on moral grounds.
6. The complex institutional and stakeholder environments within rural regions must be acknowledged and process facilitation should be a cornerstone of rural development initiatives.
7. SANParks visible management and championship of the programme was critical to building the trust and buy-in of stakeholders.
8. The methodology developed within the pilots proved successful in ensuring the participation of a broad range of stakeholders at all stages of programme implementation and is proposed as an applicable approach for implementation in all National Park buffers. The fact that the methodology is cyclical and not linear in nature must be understood. It requires ongoing commitment.
9. The pilot methodology was successful in leveraging substantial financial and non-financial resources into the Corridors. Indeed the leveraging approach built into the design of the pilots and followed by the process facilitators should be encouraged.
10. The Buffer Zone Strategy is a relatively weak instrument when it comes to securing municipal buy-in and adoption. Extensive work needs to be undertaken to secure administrative and political support for the strategy.
11. The involvement and leadership of SANParks within its buffer zones has the potential to greatly improve the public perception of the value of both conservation and the organization.

12. The need to adopt an approach to working within the buffer zones that draws on a different skills and knowledge set to that of working within the boundaries of the national parks. The experience in the pilots has demonstrated the need for SANParks to build skills to undertake: stakeholder and process facilitation; off-set negotiation; community empowerment; facilitation of the establishment of private-led protected areas; and positive engagement with relevant municipal planning authorities.
13. The proper capacitation of Buffer Zone Strategy implementation by SANParks is required in terms of skills recruited or made available, time allocated, administrative support provided, and the buy-in of the organization as a whole.
14. The pilot has highlighted the possible institutional arrangements for the implementation of such an approach that includes the building of new process facilitation capacity within SANParks as well as strengthening existing capacities within units such as “People and Parks”, “Tourism” and “Business Development” and strengthening and broadening the role of Park Forums. In addition to strengthening the role of SANParks within the Buffers the pilots have also highlighted the need to strengthen the role of external institutions, such as the municipalities, landowner associations, community organisations, business platforms, the biosphere reserves and other conservation authorities.
15. The buy-in of senior management within SANParks to the proposed approach for the implementation of the Buffer Zone Strategy is critical to its success. Equally important is the visible support and resourcing of the approach by DEA.

Conclusion

The final conclusion of this consolidated report is that the pilots met the aim and objectives of the programme and clearly demonstrated the potential of conservation as an instrument of rural development. The focus on stakeholder participation has meant that the business case for conservation-led development has emanated from the landowners, product owners and communities themselves. The handing over of the projects to relevant institutions means that this potential can be translated into future realities. Furthermore, the approach and methodology adopted in these pilots has the potential to be replicated by SANParks within its different Buffers Zones and to dramatically boost the contribution of the organization to the desired national rural development outcomes.