

DRAFT

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08 – 11 September 2014



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6th PEOPLE AND PARKS CONFERENCE

DECLARATION



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PREAMBLE

- We, the delegates representing communities, national and provincial government departments, local government and government agencies, gathered at this 6th People and Parks Conference held from the 8th to 11th of September 2014 in Mthatha;
- Believing that communities are integral to the running of parks, have an intrinsic and cultural link to biodiversity and its associated benefits, have a historical relationship with conservation and in many instances are the rightful owners of the land;
- Noting the progress made at this 6th and previous conferences towards the achievement of a sustainable people and parks programme, while recognizing that challenges still remain in realizing the full potential of the People and Parks Programme;



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- Having gathered at this 6th conference and considered issues under the following focus areas:
 - Exploring sustainable financing mechanisms for the People and Parks Programme
 - Strengthening partnerships and relationships between Government and Communities
 - Expediting implementation of co-management, and facilitating access and benefit sharing strategies associated with protected areas
 - Addressing poaching of endangered species of fauna and flora



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HEREBY COMMIT OURSELVES AS FOLLOWS:

- In terms of 'exploring sustainable financing mechanisms for the People and Parks Programme' - to:
 - Provide capacity-building and sharing of best practice between beneficiaries, in line with needs assessments, including but not limited to the development of business plans, knowledge of indigenous herbs, the wildlife economy and eco-tourism
 - Develop viable community development plans and terms of reference for co-management forums.
 - Establish co-management forums to ensure appropriate consultation, performance management and reporting and management.
 - Integrate formal environmental education programmes into the national curriculum



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HEREBY COMMIT OURSELVES AS FOLLOWS:

- In terms of ‘exploring sustainable financing mechanisms and viable financial policies for the People and Parks Programme’ – to:
 - Establish formalized institutional arrangements in communities, including the creation of a National Financial Forum (NFF) inclusive of community representatives, government role-players, possible funders and funding facilitators;
 - Explore the formation of partnerships with investors;
 - Ensure all People and Parks projects within PA’s are included in Integrated Development Plans (IDPs), Environmental Management Plans (EMPs) and sector plans;
 - Develop open communication channels with neighbouring communities, for improved relationships;



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HEREBY COMMIT OURSELVES AS FOLLOWS:

- In terms of ‘exploring sustainable financing mechanisms and viable financial policies for the People and Parks Programme’ – to:
 - Ensure the development of appropriate procedures and policies for programme implementation, including but not limited to feasibility studies for projects and business and the development of compatible land-use management models for all PAs.



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HEREBY COMMIT OURSELVES AS FOLLOWS:

- In terms of “strengthening partnerships and relationships between Government and Communities” – to:
 - Develop and implement a comprehensive and integrated capacity development programme driven by skills audits within Parks and Protected Areas. Priority training areas should include skills development that would unlock employment and empowerment opportunities, governance, monitoring and evaluation and conservation capacity building interventions;
 - Raise awareness of biodiversity within protected areas with a focus on possible careers for communities with an acknowledgement of the role of indigenous knowledge systems and the need to protect the intellectual property rights of communities;



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HEREBY COMMIT OURSELVES AS FOLLOWS:

- In terms of “strengthening partnerships and relationships between Government and Communities” – to:
 - Improve communication, consultation and cooperation between government, communities and management authorities;
 - Strengthen monitoring and evaluation platforms to ensure accountability between stakeholders;
 - Ensure direct community representation on management authority boards and greater inclusion of community representatives on government forums.



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HEREBY COMMIT OURSELVES AS FOLLOWS:

- In terms of “Expediting implementation of co-management, and facilitating access and benefit sharing strategies associated with protected areas” – to:
 - Establish business management entities linked to Community Property Associations;
 - Monitor and evaluate co-management agreements and ensure adequate reporting on jobs created;
 - Develop community protocols for allocation and distribution of income for broader community beneficiation and benefit sharing;
 - Explore the commercialisation of biodiversity;
 - Leverage political will for implementation of co-management agreements;



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HEREBY COMMIT OURSELVES AS FOLLOWS:

- In terms of “Expediting implementation of co-management, and facilitating access and benefit sharing strategies associated with protected areas” – to:
 - Conduct feasibility studies and take stock of resources in the development of business cases for commercial projects in protected areas;
 - Establish common understanding of co-management agreements and benefits;
 - Develop terms of reference and performance standards for co-management committees;



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HEREBY COMMIT OURSELVES AS FOLLOWS:

- In terms of “Addressing poaching of endangered species of fauna and flora” – to:
 - Ensure political will and commitment for anti poaching, across all levels of government must be visibly expressed
 - Ensure that communities engagements focus on the need to take collective responsibility, understand and take protective ownership of natural assets.
 - Strengthen law enforcement and anti – corruption measures to discourage support, collusion and participation in illegal activities associated with poaching.
 - Develop proactive programmes that include strategies to prevent poaching activities, taking into account compensation parity for game farm workers.



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HEREBY COMMIT OURSELVES AS FOLLOWS:

- In terms of “Addressing poaching of endangered species of fauna and flora” – to:
 - Ensure empowerment and capacity development programmes include incentives, skills development, enterprise development, leadership development and community mobilisation.
 - Coordinate diplomatic initiatives with neighbouring countries - ensuring collaboration with the intent of eradicating poaching across geographic borders.



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FURTHER TO THIS WE RESOLVE TO:

- Focus the Recapitalisation and Development Programme on land claims settled in respect of protected areas - with the provision of government support to community role players in respect of the drafting of community development plans, provision of transaction advice and accounting / auditing requirements.
- Speed up land claims: addressing the backlog of claims in protected areas, with a focus on two categories: a) claims that require intervention of government and park authorities and b) claims requiring progress in terms of outstanding research (where necessary, exploring alternatives for professional resourcing)
- Revise and coordinate, integrated implementation of the co-management framework, to support delivery of tangible benefits to communities in protected areas.



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FURTHER TO THIS WE RESOLVE TO :

- Establish a knowledge management platform, to support the sharing of insights, best practice, challenges and solutions;
- Develop a monitoring and evaluation framework for the programme to track delivery and achievements, and to rapidly respond to obstacles/ challenges;
- Finalise and report on a capacity building and awareness strategy by 31 March 2015;
- Roll out the 'Training for trainers' on the People and Parks Programme toolkit in the current financial year, with a commitment to train 5 people per province;
- Include two community representatives on the Board of each conservation agency;



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FURTHER TO THIS WE RESOLVE TO :

- Develop a clear programme of action on the wildlife economy;
- Ensure monitoring and evaluation through Oversight Committees with support of the Monitoring and Evaluation programme;
- Include Communities in governance platforms to drive delivery and accountability;
- Support Communities from provinces to participate in and support the Minister during the World Parks Congress in Australia;
- Establish a framework on strengthening conservation of cultural heritage, ensuring greater reflection of conservation efforts focused on natural and cultural heritage in PA management plans;
- Strengthen collaborations with local government.



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