

GEF 7 PILLAR 2:  
CATALYZING FINANCE  
AND CAPACITY FOR THE  
BIODIVERSITY ECONOMY  
AROUND PROTECTED  
AREAS PROJECT (P170213)

SEPTEMBER 2024

# **RAPID SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

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## Table of Contents

<b>1. INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3. RELEVANT NATIONAL LEGISLATION .....</b>	<b>7</b>
3.1. Constitution Act 108 of 1996 .....	7
3.2. National Environmental Management Act (NEMA), 1998 (Act No 107 of 1998, as amended) .....	7
3.3. National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act 57 of 2003 .....	9
3.4. National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act 10 of 2004 .....	9
3.5. National Water Act (Act No 36 of 1998) .....	9
3.6. Conservation of Agricultural Resources Act (Act 43 of 1983) .....	10
3.7. Environmental Conservation Act (Act No. 73 of 1989) .....	10
3.8. National Environmental Management: Integrated Coastal Management Act 24 of 2008 10	
3.9. Restitution of Land Rights Act 2003 .....	10
3.10. Communal Property Association Act 1996 .....	10
3.11. National Forests Act, 1998 (Act 84 of 1998) .....	10
3.12. World Heritage Convention, 1999 (Act 49 of 1999) .....	11
3.13. National Heritage Resources Act, 1999 (Act 25 of 1999) .....	11
3.14. Tourism Act, 2014 (Act No. 3 of 2014) .....	11
<b>4. World Bank Environmental and Social Standards .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>5. METHODOLOGY OF THE RAPID SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>6. DETAILS ON THE BIODIVERSITY ECONOMY NODES .....</b>	<b>13</b>
6.1. iSimangaliso Wetland Park .....	13
6.1.1. Socio-economic overview .....	14
6.2. The Addo to Amathole Node .....	17
6.2.1. Socio-economic overview .....	19
6.3. Greater Kruger National Park Node .....	20
6.3.1. Socio-economic overview .....	21
<b>7. POTENTIAL SOCIAL IMPACT .....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>8. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION .....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>9. REFERENCE .....</b>	<b>29</b>

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BEN	Biodiversity Economy Node
BSP	Biodiversity Stewardship Programs
DFFE	Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment
DM	District Municipality
ECPTA	Eastern Cape Parks and Tourism Agency
EKZNW	Ezemvelo KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife
ESMF	Environmental and Social Management Framework
ESSs	Environmental and Social Standards
FPL	Food Poverty Line
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GVA	Gross Value Add
GWP	Global Wildlife Programme
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
IWT	Illegal Wildlife Trade
KNP	Kruger National Park
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
LBPL	Lower Bound Poverty Line
LEDET	Limpopo Economic Development Environment and Tourism
NBES	National Biodiversity Economy Strategy
NBSAP	South Africa's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
NBT	Nature-Based Tourism
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NPA	National Prosecuting Authority
NPAES	National Protected Area Expansion Strategy
PA	Protected Areas
PF	Process Framework
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SANBI	South African National Biodiversity Institute
SANParks	South African National Parks
SEP	Stakeholder Engagement Procedures
SIA	Social Impact Assessment
SMMEs	Small Medium and Micro Enterprises
UBPL	Upper Bound Poverty Line
UKDM	uMKhanyakude District Municipality
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The Republic of South Africa (RSA) is one of most biodiverse countries in the world, and its biodiversity contributes significantly to the national economy and to local livelihoods, in particularly through Nature-Based Tourism (NBT). With a varied geography ranging from plains and savannas to deserts and high mountains, South Africa's ecosystems support over 95,000 species. South Africa's ecological infrastructure also increases resilience to climate shocks, by reducing the impact of extreme weather events such as drought and floods.

However, South Africa Protected Areas (PAs) are increasingly under threat from i) insufficient financing for effective PA management and support for sustainable rural development; ii) rural poverty, and the absence of meaningful livelihood alternatives; and iii) fragmented, non-coordinated, and incompatible land use planning and management, leading to suboptimal land use management decisions. This results in adverse impacts on biodiversity and ecosystems on the rural population dependent on them, and on the broader regional and national economies.

A key threat to the integrity of PAs is poverty, as poor households living in the periphery of PAs, overexploit natural resources, including wildlife crime through poaching and overfishing.

South Africa sees its national parks and provincial reserves as important catalysts for socio-economic development. The vast system of PAs is managed by a range of national conservation agencies such as South African National Parks (SANParks) and the iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority; provincial conservation agencies (including Eastern Cape Parks and Tourism Agency (ECPTA); Limpopo Economic Development Environment and Tourism (LEDET); Ezemvelo KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife (EKZNW), and private and communal structures. South Africa's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) promotes the development of a Biodiversity Economy, defined as encompassing "the businesses and economic activities that either directly depend on biodiversity for their core business or that contribute to conservation of biodiversity through their activities", including the bioprospecting sub-sector which refers to the research on, or development or application of, indigenous biological/genetic resources for commercial or industrial exploitation and includes: the systematic search, collection or gathering of such resources or making extractions from such resources; the utilization of information regarding any traditional uses of such resources by indigenous communities; and the research on, or the application, development or modification of such traditional uses for commercial exploitation; the trading in and exporting of indigenous biological/genetic resources in order to develop and produce products, such as medicines, industrial enzymes, food flavours, fragrances, cosmetics, colours, extracts and essential oils and the Wildlife sub-sector which refers to live sales of indigenous wildlife; sale of game meat and products, and safari hunting. This includes access to and sharing of benefits with communities adjacent to national parks and provincial nature reserves as vital to the sustainability of the PA system.

Given the ecological and socio-economic relevance of the PA system, and the fact that the existing system does not yet include a representative sample of all ecosystems as well as key ecological processes, the Government established a 20-year National Protected Area Expansion Strategy (NPAES) in 2008. In addition to acquisition of new land and declaration of state land, the strategy places strong emphasis on contract agreements with private and communal landowners/users, developed through 'Biodiversity Stewardship Programs' (BSP), as the most cost-effective mechanism for government to adequately conserve land identified as having threatened ecosystems and as high priority for the achievement of PA targets. Such voluntary biodiversity stewardship agreements account for 90% of expansion of the terrestrial PA estate achieved over the past 15 years. Initially, stewardship efforts were focused on commercial farmers but in recent years several thousand land reform beneficiaries have participated in concluding stewardship agreements over more than 100,000 ha of land reform areas that have high biodiversity value. In so doing, more than 20 stewardship agreements have been signed between land reform beneficiaries and conservation authorities or Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), with co-management arrangements put in place to help manage the land.

## **2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) has provided financing for the project entitled "Catalyzing Financing and Capacity for the Biodiversity Economy around Protected Areas" (the Project) under the auspices of the Global Wildlife Programme (GWP). The project aims to strengthen South Africa's capacity to combat illegal wildlife trade and improve PA landscape management to increase benefits to communities. It is jointly supported by the World Bank and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). The Project follows the GWP's theory of change, which poses that Illegal Wildlife Trade (IWT) will be reduced if, among other things, communities are empowered in and around PAs to be stewards and beneficiaries of wildlife.

The Project comprises of two pillars of work that is supported by UNEP (Pillar 1) and World Bank (Pillar 2) respectively. These Pillars are defined through the following respective objectives:

- Pillar 1 focuses on strengthening South Africa's capacity to combat illegal wildlife trade, including through training, forensic and legal support. It is Implemented by UNEP and executed by the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE), the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI) and the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA).
- Pillar 2 focuses on leveraging financial resources to increase investment in three target protected area landscapes in order to grow the biodiversity economy and benefits to local communities. It also focuses on expanding protected areas under the Stewardship Programme. It is implemented

by the World Bank, and is executed by DFFE, SANBI, SANParks and iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority.

This document is the rapid Social Impact Assessment (SIA) for the three nodes included in Catalyzing Financing and Capacity for the Biodiversity Economy around Protected Areas, developed in accordance with the agreements made in the Project's Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP) for Pillar 2 activities. This rapid SIA should be considered in conjunction with the project's Process Framework (PF) prepared at project appraisal in May 2020. The PF was prepared as the project and associated activities was assessed to potentially impose restrictions in access to natural resources. The PF sets out the criteria to identify persons affected by project associated restrictions, measures to assist such persons in restoring or improving livelihoods, conflict and grievance resolution mechanism, administrative and legal procedures and monitoring arrangements. To clearly assess restriction impact, the PF requires the development of site specific SIAs with associated Action Plans which would be carried out as an integrated part of the project and activity implementation. The PF sets out procedures for:

- Devising reliable and equitable ways of sustainably sharing the resource at issue;
- Obtaining access to alternative resources available for use or functional substitutes;
- Developing alternative livelihood strategies to purchase resource substitutes;
- Providing access to resources outside the area committed to biodiversity stewardship; and
- Other opportunities to offset loss of access to resources.

This rapid SIA provides and complements the social baselines in the project Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) and procedures set out in the PF and project Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) to comply with the ESCP for the project, as tentative project affected persons cannot be identified at the current project stage. The exact impact from restrictions will be determined based on identification of the specific sites where the projects activities will be implemented, informed by the screening set out in the ESMF. The priority is to ensure avoidance of adverse impacts, including in relation to restrictions. However, this rapid SIA serves to identify key issues which must be considered in relation to determination of actual impact associated with planned activities.

The project has not, as of mid-2024, implemented or identified any activities or associated impacts which would require the development of site specific SIAs and associated Action Plans. However, there are five project activities identified that might trigger site specific SIAs in iSimangaliso Wetland Park:

- Kosi Bay Tourism Precinct Development
  - Facilities are in the process of being transferred from Ezemvelo
  - Assessment is being conducted to ascertain the feasibility of including this development to the commercialisation initiatives of iSimangaliso
- Bhanganek Community Tourism Project
  - Level 2 designs have been completed

- Community or beneficiaries have endorsed the designs
- Detail designs have commenced, including electrical
- Enterprise development programme is being implemented; all six (6) operators have started training
- Mabasa Community Conservation Area
  - Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife has been engaged on game donation; formal request will be done once the total land size has been ascertained.
  - Biodiversity Stewardship Workshop was conducted together with Ezemvelo
  - Community and Landowners consent has been solicited
  - Currently finalising appointment of land surveyor and biodiversity specialist to conduct biodiversity assessments
- Makhasa Community Conservation
  - Level 2 designs have been completed
  - Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife has been engaged on game donation, 6 giraffes will delivered
  - Biodiversity Stewardship workshop has been conducted
- Community owned and operated abattoirs and Laundry service
  - Concepts have been developed

Following the consulting firm's, Khapheni Consulting, initial assessments expected to be completed October 2024, it will be determined whether SIAs and associated Action Plans are required. The SIAs and Action Plan will be required where the Project activities lead to restrictions to natural resources by creating new protections and are required to be developed in a participatory framework led by or in close collaboration with the Land Reform and Biodiversity Stewardship Initiative. The PF builds substantively on the existing participatory framework for community biodiversity stewardship developed by SANBI.

Once the activity location and expected impact is known, this rapid SIA and the PF procedures will be used to develop site specific SIA(s) which will form part of the Action Plan(s). These SIA(s) must capture direct and indirect impact, livelihood status, list the affected persons and the impacts they are expected to experience, as well as vulnerabilities and mitigation options and it will be completed prior to commencement of restrictions. The Action Plan(s) will include succinct descriptions of, but not limited to, the following (as set out in the PF):

- Description of agreed restriction with extent and time frame;
- Background of the socio-economic status of the community;
- Boundaries of the access restricted land/resources;
- Detailed description of social and economic impacts (social impacts assessment) that will be imposed on the community/stakeholders affected by access restriction;
- Impact mitigation measures to assist access restricted affected community/individuals/stakeholders with time bound and financial sources, including special measures concerning women and vulnerable groups;

- Roles and responsibilities of implementers, collaborators, community, stakeholders, etc. and capacity building plan (of the implementing agencies, community, stakeholders);
- Grievance Mechanism; and
- Result indicators and participatory monitoring and evaluation arrangements.

### **3. RELEVANT NATIONAL LEGISLATION**

The concept of Biodiversity Economy is preceded on innovative economic initiative that seeks to strike a balance between sustainable production and sustainable exploitation of natural resources in meeting the needs of the current generation while minimizing environmental footprint and without compromising the needs of the future generations. To ensure that such a delicate balance is maintained, a range of legislations, as stipulated below, are applicable in the South African context. In the main these legislations make provisions for basic human rights, economic development as well as sustainable use and management of natural resources, such as land, water, and other natural resources. It is also based on this legislative environment and the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa that makes it possible for South Africa to interact and to participate in multilateral environmental treaties designed to address common challenges facing the globe and in particular human existence.

#### **3.1. Constitution Act 108 of 1996**

The Constitution of South Africa (Act No 108 of 1996) is the cornerstone of democracy in South Africa and under Chapter 2 it outlines the Bill of Rights which includes Section 24 that states:

Everyone has the right-

- a) to an environment that is not harmful to their health or well-being; and
- b) to have the environment protected, for the benefit of present and future generations, through reasonable legislative and other measures that-
  - i. prevents pollution and ecological degradation;
  - ii. promote conservation; and
  - iii. secure ecologically sustainable development and use of natural resources while promoting a justifiable economic and social development.

Section 24 thus requires that all activities that may significantly affect the environment and require authorisation by law must be assessed prior to approval.

#### **3.2. National Environmental Management Act (NEMA), 1998 (Act No 107 of 1998, as amended)**



The National Environmental Management Act (No 107 of 1998) (as amended) is the main piece of legislation in South Africa that governs all matters pertaining to the protection and conservation of the environment. This Act sets out in Chapter 1 the National Environmental Management Principles which amongst other things states that:

“(2) Environmental management must place people and their needs at the forefront of its concern, and serve their physical, psychological, developmental, cultural and social interests equitably.

(3) Development must be socially, environmentally and economically sustainable.

(4) (a) Sustainable development requires the consideration of all relevant factors including the following: (viii) that negative impacts on the environment and on people’s environmental rights be anticipated and prevented, and where they cannot be altogether prevented, are minimised and remedied.

(b) Environmental management must be integrated, acknowledging that all elements of the environment are linked and interrelated, and it must take into account the effects of decisions on all aspects of the environment and all people in the environment by pursuing the selection of the best practicable environmental option.

(h) Community wellbeing and empowerment must be promoted through environmental education, the raising of environmental awareness, the sharing of knowledge and experience and other appropriate means.

(i) The social, economic and environmental impacts of activities, including disadvantages and benefits, must be considered, assessed and evaluated, and decisions must be appropriate in the light of such consideration and assessment.”

NEMA also establishes the platform for ensuring Integrated Environmental Management (IEM) whose objectives include:

“23 -2(b) identify, predict and evaluate the actual and potential impact on the environment, socio-economic conditions and cultural heritage, the risks and consequences and alternatives and options for mitigation of activities, with a view to minimising negative impacts, maximising benefits, and promoting compliance with the principles of environmental management.”

24 (1) In order to give effect to the general objectives of integrated environmental management laid down in this Chapter, the potential impact on—

(a) the environment;(b) socio-economic conditions; and (c) the cultural heritage,

of activities that require authorisation or permission by law and which may significantly affect the environment, must be considered, investigated and assessed prior to their implementation and reported to the organ of state charged by law with authorising, permitting, or otherwise allowing the implementation of an activity.” From the above selections of the Act, it can be seen that there is a strong focus on addressing social issues in the quest to ensure sustainable environmental management.

### **3.3. National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act 57 of 2003**

The Act has the key objective of providing for the protection and conservation of ecologically viable areas representative of South Africa's biological diversity and its natural landscapes and seascapes the establishment of protect areas and a list of these areas and makes provision for the institutional structure to manage and oversee these areas. The Act is read in conjunction with the National Environmental Management Laws Amendment Act, 2022 (Act No. 02 of 2022), that provides revisions and amendments to the environmental legislation of the country.

It gives legislative effect to the principles, objectives and policy position, related to the protected areas in the country, as outlined in the 1998 White Paper on Environmental Management Policy for South Africa and White Paper on Conservation and Sustainable Use of South Africa's Biodiversity. In particular, the White Paper on Conservation and Sustainable Use white paper has the objective of promoting the conservation of the rich biodiversity and ecological infrastructure of the country to support ecosystem functioning for the livelihoods of people and the well-being of both people and natural biological resources.

### **3.4. National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act 10 of 2004**

This Act provides for the management and conservation of the country's biodiversity within the framework of the NEMA. The key objectives of the Act are to provide for the management and conservation of South Africa's biodiversity, offer protection to species and ecosystems that require national protect, provide for the sustainable use of indigenous biological resources and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from bioprospecting involving indigenous biological resources. The Act is read in conjunction with the National Environmental Management Laws Amendment Act, 2022 (Act No. 02 of 2022), that provides revisions and amendments to the environmental legislation of the country.

### **3.5. National Water Act (Act No 36 of 1998)**

The purpose of the National Water Act is "to ensure that the nation's water resources are protected, used, developed, conserved, managed and controlled in ways which take into account amongst other factors (a) meeting basic needs of current and future generations; (e) facilitating social and economic development."

### **3.6. Conservation of Agricultural Resources Act (Act 43 of 1983)**

To provide for control over the utilization of the natural agricultural resources of the Republic in order to promote the conservation of the soil, the water sources and the vegetation and the combating of weeds and invader plants; and for matters connected therewith.

### **3.7. Environmental Conservation Act (Act No. 73 of 1989)**

To provide for the effective protection and controlled utilisation of the environment and matters incidental thereto.

### **3.8. National Environmental Management: Integrated Coastal Management Act 24 of 2008**

The aim of the Act is to establish a system of integrated coastal and estuarine management, including norms, standards and policies, in order to promote the conservation of the coastal environment, and maintain the natural attributes of coastal landscapes and seascapes, and to ensure that development and the use of natural resources within the coastal zone is socially and economically justifiable and ecologically sustainability.

### **3.9. Restitution of Land Rights Act 2003**

To provide for the restitution of rights in land to persons or communities dispossessed of such rights after 19 June 1913 as a result of past racially discriminatory laws or practices; to establish a Commission on Restitution of Land Rights and a Land Claims Court; and to provide for matters connected therewith.

### **3.10. Communal Property Association Act 1996**

To enable communities to form juristic persons, to be known as communal property associations in order to acquire, hold and manage property on a basis agreed to by members of a community in terms of a written constitution; and to provide for matters connected therewith.

### **3.11. National Forests Act, 1998 (Act 84 of 1998)**

Provides for new forest law in the country, repealing any forest Acts prior to promulgation of this Act. It gives effect to the policy position outlined in the White Paper on Sustainable Forest Development in South Africa. The overall goal in the forest sector is to promote a thriving forest sector, utilised to the lasting and sustained benefit of the total community, and developed and managed to protect and to improve the environment.

### **3.12. World Heritage Convention, 1999 (Act 49 of 1999)**

Provide the legal means are available to discharge the country's responsibilities under the Convention, provide for cultural and environmental protection and sustainable development within World Heritage Sites. Promote, manage, oversee, market and facilitate tourism and related development in connection with World Heritage Sites in such a way that the cultural and ecological integrity is maintained; ensure that effective and active measures are taken for the protection, conservation and presentation of the cultural and natural heritage; encourage investment and innovation in connection with World Heritage Sites; encourage job creation in connection with World Heritage Sites; promote the development of culturally, environmentally and, if applicable, economically sustainable projects in connection with World Heritage Sites; and promote empowerment and advancement of historically disadvantaged persons in projects related to World Heritage Sites.

### **3.13. National Heritage Resources Act, 1999 (Act 25 of 1999)**

The Act aims to promote good management of the national estate, and to enable and encourage communities to nurture and conserve their legacy so that it may be bequeathed to future generations.

### **3.14. Tourism Act, 2014 (Act No. 3 of 2014)**

The Act makes provision for the development and promotion of sustainable tourism for the benefit of the country, its residents, and its visitors and for the institutional structure for oversight and management of tourism in the country.

## **4. World Bank Environmental and Social Standards**

The Project is required to implement activities with the World Bank Environmental and Social Standards (ESSs) of the Environmental and Social Framework (ESF) in accordance with the ESCP. Nine of the ten standards are considered relevant and application under the Project are set out in the ESMF, PF and the SEP. ESS5: Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement guides the potential development of SIAs and associated Action Plans where restrictions are necessary to achieve the desired activity outcomes.

ESS5 defines "restrictions on land use" as limitations or prohibitions on the use of agricultural, residential, commercial or other land that are directly introduced and put into effect as part of the project. These may include restrictions on access to legally designated parks and protected areas, restrictions on access to other common property resources, and restrictions on land use within utility easements or safety zones

ESS5 requires that projects “To mitigate unavoidable adverse social and economic impacts from land acquisition or restrictions on land use” by:

- providing timely compensation for loss of assets at replacement cost and
- assisting displaced persons in their efforts to improve, or at least restore, their livelihoods and living standards, in real terms, to pre-displacement levels or to levels prevailing prior to the beginning of project implementation, whichever is higher.

Restrictions of access to natural resources within protected areas require World Bank approved Action Plan(s) at the implementation stage before enforcing the envisaged restriction of access. The Action Plan(s) must set out the specific measures taken to assist people deprived of access to the natural resources within parks and protected areas and implementation arrangements.

## **5. METHODOLOGY OF THE RAPID SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

To ensure that the objectives of the rapid SIA are achieved, data had to be collected. Data mostly centred on a desktop study in which the following documents were scrutinised:

- Review of literature and desktop studies, confirming the social setting and characteristics of the three Nodes;
- Data, including census data, project maps and planning documents;
- Data from Integrated Development Plans (uMkhanyakude District Municipality, Amatole District Municipality, Mopani District Municipality, Sarah Batman District Municipality and Vhembe District Municipality);
- Data, including feasibility studies, situational analysis and social and development facilitation that have been conducted in the Nodes; and
- Review of relevant planning and policy frameworks.

The Project has a comprehensive stakeholder engagement program as set out in the SEP and actively implemented. In accordance with the SEP this rapid SIA will be publicly disclosed and all site specific SIA must be developed in accordance with the SEP principles of:

*Openness and life-cycle approach:* public consultations for the project will be arranged during the whole lifecycle, carried out in an open manner, free of external manipulation, interference, coercion or intimidation,

*Informed participation and feedback:* information will be provided to and widely distributed among all stakeholders in an appropriate format; opportunities are provided for communicating stakeholders’

feedback, for analysing and addressing comments and concerns. This will also be influenced by the communication and risk management strategy and the studies undertaken to understand community attitudes and modes of communication will inform this process,

*'Inclusiveness and sensitivity:* stakeholder identification will be undertaken to support better communications and build effective relationships. The participation process for the project is inclusive. All stakeholders are encouraged to be involved in the consultation process, to the extent the current circumstances permit. Equal access to information is provided to all stakeholders. Sensitivity to stakeholders' needs is the key principle underlying the selection of engagement methods. Special attention should be given to vulnerable groups, in particular disabled, women, youth, elderly, mobile populations like migrant labourers, refugees or internally displaced groups, and the cultural needs of diverse ethnic groups.

## **6. DETAILS ON THE BIODIVERSITY ECONOMY NODES**

The following sections will outline key socio-economic data and information for iSimangaliso, the Addo and Kruger Nodes. Information provided is based on available information.

### **6.1. iSimangaliso Wetland Park**

The iSimangaliso Wetland Park is located in region generally known as Maputaland, within the uMkhanyakude District Municipality, northern KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) province, South Africa. The Park stretches 80km from the Msunduzi River in the South toward the border of Mozambique in the North. The majestic park boasts a combination of natural jewels including, reefs, beaches, forests, savannahs, lakes, rivers, and mountains. all of which has for centuries attracted travellers from across the globe with interest in exploring South African wilderness treasures.

The terrestrial component of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park is approximately 332 000 hectares in size. The Indian Ocean forms the eastern boundary of the park, which extends from the Mozambican border in the north, to Maphelane in the south and includes the uMkhuze section in the west. It provides critical habitats for a wide range of species, including as the nesting sites for the Leatherback and Loggerhead Turtles; home to the world's oldest fish, the Coelacanth; providing access to one of the world's top 10 diving sites in Sodwana Bay; a significant population of Black and White Rhino, Elephant, Leopard, Buffalo, Lion, Cheetah, Wild Dog, Hippo, Crocodile, Dolphins, Whales and Whale Sharks; and the large numbers and breeding colonies of waterfowl such as Pelicans, Storks, Flamingos and Herons. The species list for iSimangaliso runs to over 6 500 species, including 530 bird species, 11 species that are endemic to iSimangaliso, and 108 that are endemic to South Africa, as well as 467 threatened species.

iSimangaliso has become one of the country's premier conservation areas, where extensive rewilding and rehabilitation of habitat is taking place.

For iSimangaliso, restoration and rewilding of the ecosystems has the dual purpose of protecting ecosystems and for communities to be able to sustainably participate in the economic and social benefits from the Park. The ecological resilience of the Park is managed in a manner that works hand-in-hand with more resilient livelihoods for the people dependent on it.

<b>1. Kosi Bay Mouth 5 Star Resort</b> - With community equity & majority business involvement	<b>A</b>
<b>2. Madlangula Boating Concessions (3 lakes system)</b> - Reserved for local communities to bid - Maximize revenue generation for community beneficiation	<b>B</b>
<b>3. Bhanganek Community Tourism Project</b> - Partnership with sister department (Tourism) - Owned by Community	<b>C</b>
<b>4. Mabaso Community Conservation Area</b> - Revitalization of existing land expansion project - Implementation of Biodiversity economy	<b>D</b>
<b>5. Makhasa Community Conservation Area</b> - Land expansion and other community businesses - Implementation of Biodiversity economy	<b>E</b>
<b>6. Community owned &amp; operated Abattoir</b> - Used by local private sector and State managed protected areas - Implementation of Biodiversity economy	<b>F</b>



The location of iSimangaliso is not only strategically important for conservation of diverse natural resources, but the part also neighbours various communities within uMkhanyakude District Municipality (UKDM). This area has less opportunity for economic development and job creation. As such, the area is also associated with poverty and high rate of unemployment thereby positioning iSimangaliso is also expected to contribute in improving socio-economic conditions and livelihood of many local communities.

#### 6.1.1. Socio-economic overview

Although growing from a small base, the economy in the UKDM experienced significant growth in excess of 9% per annum, especially in the period from 2000 onwards according to the [uMkhanyakude District Growth and Development Plan](#). The key economic structure and trends in the UKDM can be summarised as follows:

- (i) The two main sectors of economic activities are agriculture and tourism.
- (ii) Mtubatuba and Jozini Local Municipalities account for approximately R1.9 and R1.7 billion of Gross Value Added (GVA) in 2011 respectively, as they are the two dominant local economies within the district.

- (iii) Other economic sectors in UKDM as measured by GVA is the retail, catering and accommodation sector accounting for R1.45 billion in 2011, the manufacturing sector (R1.37 billion), and the general government services sector (R1.34 billion). The manufacturing sector increased its contribution to total GVA from 10.3% to 19.1%, and the retail, catering and accommodation sector its contribution from 13.5% to 20.3%.
- (iv) Agricultural sector showed some significant growth of approximately 5.5% per annum over the period 1995 to 2011.
- (v) There are undeveloped mineral resources that can contribute to future economic growth.
- (vi) There are identified economic opportunities to tourism and agriculture to the uMkhanyakude economy, with current projects and implementation plans already in place.
- (vii) UKDM is South Africa's nearest access point into Mozambique and is also close to Swaziland. This provides opportunity for tourism and other economic activity both directly and from spillovers/spinoffs.
- (viii) The number of formal employment opportunities in the agricultural sector remained relatively stable.

Tourism potential of UKDM exists in terms of the biodiversity, recreational opportunities, visual appeal, heritage and the culture of the district. This creates an opportunity for the existence of Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs) in the tourism sector. With its access to Mozambique and Swaziland, this provides opportunities for inflows and outflows of tourists and other economic activities. iSimangaliso is a large contributor to tourism and socio-economic related benefits in the district.

## **Settlements**

The uMkhanyakude district has three categories of household; formal, informal and traditional. Approximately 90.7 percent of households resided in formal housing according to the 2016 statistics.. The district has 151 245 households located within 71 wards and represented by 18 traditional councils, as per the table below.



Municipality	Number of households	Main Dwelling		
		Formal Housing	Informal housing	Traditional housing
Umhlabuyalingana	39 614	27 731	968	10 896
Jozini	44 584	29 196	1 681	13 111
Mtubatuba	41 792	31 439	1 843	7 442
Hlabisa – Big 5	25 255	17 724	536	6 856
DC27: uMkhanyakude	151 245	106 090	5 028	38 306

Source: STATSSA – Community Survey 2016

According to the latest census conducted by STATSSA in 2022, uMkhanyakude's population is about 738 437, of which people younger than 15 years constitute 247 376 (33,5%), people between 15 and 64 years 454 877 (61,6%) and 36 184 (4,9%) above 65 years.

The Human Development Index (HDI) of the district declined from 0.46 in 2000 to 0.44 in 2010 and is lower than the comparative provincial figure (0.44 compared to 0.49). Life expectancy at birth is lower than the average figure for KZN which currently sits at 56.1 years.

### Employment and income

The unemployed population in UKDM is similar to the overall figures for KZN. The total number of people unemployed increased markedly by 16.2% from 786 000 in the third quarter to 913 000 in the fourth quarter of 2018. This translates to an increase in official unemployment rate from 23% to 25.6%. Unemployment rate in the province is higher among females, and in 2017, unemployment among females was estimated at 24.1% as against 23.3% among males. The district has a youthful population and 35.2% of the unemployed population is younger than 25 years of age, with a further 34.9% between 25 and 34 years.

In 2012, Statistics South Africa published criteria for measuring poverty: the food poverty line (FPL), the lower-bound poverty line (LBPL), and the upper-bound poverty line (UBPL). In 2017 approximately 36% of the population of KZN were living below the FPL and unable to purchase food for the necessary balanced diet, the second-highest provincial level in the country. An estimated 51.7% of the KZN population has to sacrifice some food to get other non-food items such as airtime and transport, hence living within the LBPL, the third-highest provincial rate in the country. In 2017, the rate of people living below the UBPL was estimated at 66.1%, meaning those able to consume both food and non-food items

but unable to meet other basic needs such as shelter and education. This was the third highest rate in the country.

### **Education and skills**

Approximately 14% of the unemployed population in UKDM has received no formal schooling and only 19% has primary level education. A large proportion of the unemployed population has completed grade 12 education and approximately 30% has secondary education. Only a fraction of the unemployed population has completed any form of tertiary education and this is a pattern across the five local municipalities.

There is high level of adult illiteracy in the district. More than 27% and 22% of the adult female and male population, respectively, have not received any form of schooling. These figures are significantly higher as compared to the provincial figures of 13% and 8% respectively. The proportion of the adult population in the district with tertiary education is less than half the comparative figure for the province, which is 2.5%.

### **Health**

According to the District Health Plan for 2018/19, UMkhanyakude has five district hospitals, 57 clinics including five gateway clinics, 17 mobile clinics servicing 238 mobile stopping points, and seven high transmission area (HTA) sites (two fixed and five mobile). The new Jozini Community Health Centre (the first in the district) opened in the first quarter of 2018/19.

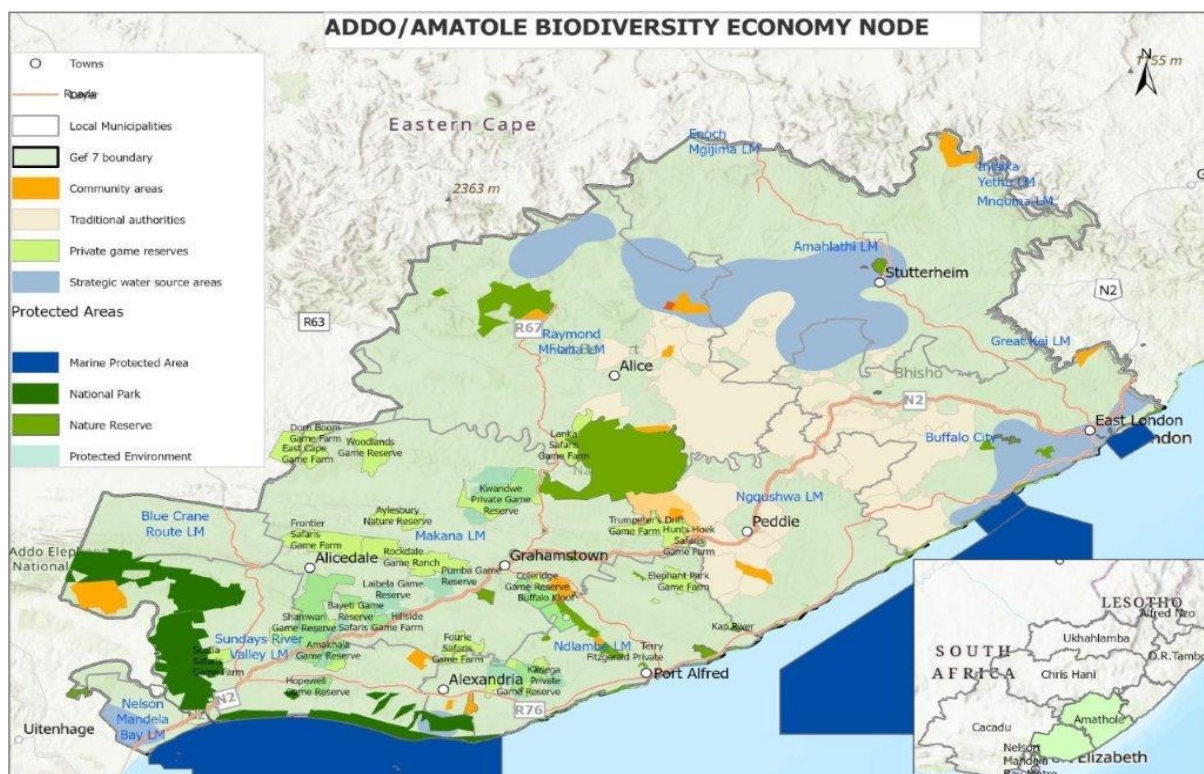
Social vulnerability in the province is said to be very high due to the following driving forces:

- (i) It has the highest malaria prevalence in the country;
- (ii) Twenty to thirty percent (20-30%) of adults are HIV positive. The HIV prevalence rate is at 41.1%, higher than both the provincial and national average of 37.4% and 29.5% respectively. UKDC is the second highest amongst the districts in the province;
- (iii) Tuberculosis is a major cause of mortality (In 2016, the TB death rate in KZN remained unchanged from that of 2015 at about 5.4 per cent – one of the lowest rates in the country, second only to the Western Cape at 3.8 per cent)
- (iv) The occurrence of severe malnutrition in children younger than 5 years
- (v) A large number of people from the neighbouring countries cross the border to receive healthcare in uMkhanyakude.

## **6.2. The Addo to Amathole Node**

To the north of the city of Port Elizabeth, in South Africa's Eastern Cape Province, lies the Addo Elephant National Park (AENP), a mosaic of landscapes defined by unique terrestrial and marine flora and fauna, spectacular scenery and deep cultural heritage. The AENP stretches across 180,000 hectares, from a

semi-arid zone at its northernmost end, across the Zuurberg Mountains, southwards through the Sundays' River valley to its mouth, then east along the coast of Algoa Bay to the Bushman's River Mouth, taking in the Woody Cape sections of the coast and including the Bird Island and St Croix Island groups. The park contains an impressive representative sample of the Eastern Cape's unique mix of biodiversity, scattered across marine and coastal zones and five of South Africa's nine terrestrial biomes: thicket, forests, fynbos, nama-karoo and Indian Ocean coastal belt. Grassland elements also occur in the area. This node is referred to as the Amathole - Great Fish Biodiversity Economy Node (BEN). It is located within the Eastern Cape Province. The Amathole BEN, approximately 249 855 km<sup>2</sup> in extent, includes a significant part of the Amathole District Municipality, that includes parts of Ngqushwa Local Municipality, Buffalo City Metro, Great Kei Local Municipality, Amahlathi Local Municipality and Raymond Mhlaba Local Municipality, and a portion of Makana Local Municipality (within the Sara Baartman District Municipality). The Eastern boundary is defined by the Great Kei River, stretching from Kei Mouth at the coast, inland to include Cathcart, Komani and Tarkastad to the North. The Western Boundary stretches from the coast, in the vicinity of Hambuta and includes the Great Fish Nature Reserve Complex, Bedford town and north to Tarkastad.



The Eastern Cape Province is globally recognised for its high biodiversity value and scenic beauty. It has the highest biome diversity of any province, comprising eight of the nine biomes found in South Africa: Forest, Fynbos, Desert, Nama Karoo, Savanna, Succulent Karoo, Albany Thicket and Indian Ocean Coastal Belt biomes (ECBCP Handbook, 2018). All eight Biomes are found in the Amathole – Great Fish

BEN. The southern and western portions, valleys along the Great Fish River extending from the coast to the Great Fish River Nature Reserve and along the eastern boundary of the Great Kei River are dominated by Albany Thicket. Areas along the coast and central/northern part of the study are dominated by grasslands of the Savanna and Indian Ocean Coastal Belt Biomes.

### **6.2.1. Socio-economic overview**

Eastern Cape is the poorest province in South Africa with 67% of the population living below the poverty line. It is considered a biodiversity hot spot and contains strategic water resources for the general area. In the Great Fish landscape, the unemployment rate is 36% (2016). Closer to the Addo Elephant National Park, the Enon & Bersheba community has 48% unemployment and 55% of the population has no more than grade two education. The Amatole District Municipality contributed 8.12% to the Eastern Cape Province GDP of R 391 billion in 2019 or 0.63% to the GDP of South Africa. For the period 2009 to 2019, the average annual growth rate of 0.4% of Amatole was the sixth relative to its peers in terms of growth in constant 2010 prices.

#### **Settlements**

The total population of the Amathole – Great Fish BEN is approximately 1 398 075 people (401 699 households). The Node is comprised of a predominantly young population. Two thirds of the population (65 %) fall within the working age category of 15 – 64 years. The Node is comprised of 2 048 rural settlements accommodating 437 507 people (approximately 125 002 households) constituting 31% of the total population. The urban population of approximately 960 605 people (274 459 households), accounts for 69% of the total population. A large portion on the land use is comprised of privately owned farms (15 579 farms). These range from low-productive small holdings to large scale commercial farms (including game farms). East London and King Williamstown are the main urban/industrial centre within the Amathole BEN. Smaller Urban towns that serve as key centres to the large rural hinterland include: Peddie, Fort Beaufort, Cathcart, Stutterheim, Tarkastad, Alice, Queenstown, Komga, Middledrift, Macleantown, Kei Road, Bedford and Adelaide, Keiskammahoek, Whittlesea, Hogsback, Seymour and Balfour. Numerous coastal towns are located in the Amathole BEN that serve permanent residents and seasonal holiday makers linked to family-owned beach cottages.

#### **Employment and income**

The economically active population (EAP) is a good indicator of how many of the total working age population are in reality participating in the labour market of a region. If a person is economically active, he or she forms part of the labour force. The EAP is defined as the number of people (between the age of 15 and 65) who are able and willing to work, and who are actively looking for work. It includes both employed and unemployed people. People, who recently have not taken any active steps to find

employment, are not included in the measure. These people may (or may not) consider themselves unemployed. Regardless, they are counted as discouraged work seekers, and thus form part of the non-economically active population.

Amatole District Municipality's EAP was 225 000 in 2019, which is 25.43% of its total population of 885 000, and roughly 9.60% of the total EAP of the Eastern Cape Province. From 2009 to 2019, the average annual increase in the EAP in the Amatole District Municipality was 2.73%, which is 0.18 percentage points higher than the growth in the EAP of Eastern Cape's for the same period.

Two thirds (70%) of households earn an annual household income of less than R38 200 per year. This amounts to less than R3 200 per month. Of the working age group (15 – 65 years): 32% are employed, 26% are unemployed / discouraged work-seekers, no longer looking for work. 42.5% are not economically

## KRUGER NATIONAL PARK NODE



active (scholars /students, full-time homemakers, retired, unable).

## Education and skills

More than two thirds (780 211 people: 79%) of persons aged 20-64 years are functionally literate (can read and write and do basic calculation).

### 6.3. Greater Kruger National Park Node

This node is located adjacent to Kruger National Park (KNP), which is a world-renowned tourism destination with approximately 1.8 million visitors annually (SANParks, 2016). The Park is the largest protected area in South Africa and comprises almost 20,000 km<sup>2</sup> in the provinces of Limpopo and Mpumalanga in northeastern South Africa. Despite the conservation successes, the early establishment

of the Park which took place during the Apartheid period, involved forced removals of people, supported by policies practically denied black South Africans entry to the Park.

Currently, approximately two million people reside in the seven South African municipalities bordering KNP, many of whom rely on subsistence agriculture and social grants due to high regional unemployment rates (municipal level unemployment rates range from 28.1 percent to 52.1 percent) (Stats SA, 2015). The area is typified by low agricultural potential (Lahiff and Cousins, 2009) and employment within KNP is very sought after. The 1073 km of KNP periphery abuts private and government conservation land, rural and urban towns and villages, agriculture and industry, the diversity of which would be hard to meet anywhere else in the world.

This Node includes a substantial part of the Mopani District Municipality that includes Ba-Phalaborwa Local Municipality and Greater Giyani Local Municipality. Some parts of this Node included Vhembe District Municipality that includes Collins Chabane Local Municipality.

Mopani District Municipality is situated in the North-eastern part of Limpopo Province, 70 km from Polokwane (main City of Limpopo Province). It is bordered in the east by Mozambique, in the north by Vhembe District Municipality through Thulamela & Makhado municipalities, in the south by Mpumalanga province through Ehlanzeni District Municipality (Bushbuckridge, Thaba-Chweu and Greater Tubatse), in the west by Capricorn District Municipality (Molemole, Polokwane & Lepelle-Nkumpi), and in the south-west by Sekhukhune District Municipality (Fetakgomo). The district spans a total area of 2 001 100 ha (20 011 km<sup>2</sup>), inclusive of the portion of Kruger National Park from Olifants to Tshingwedzi camps or Lepelle to Tshingwedzi rivers. There are 16 urban areas (towns and townships), 354 villages (rural settlements) and a total of 129 Wards.

The district is named Mopani because of the abundance of nutritional Mopani worms found in the area. By virtue of the Kruger National Park being part of Ba-Phalaborwa and Greater Giyani municipalities, Mopani District is part of the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park, the park that combines South Africa, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. The strategic location of the District embodies both advantages and disadvantages.

The Vhembe District Municipality is located in the Northern part of Limpopo Province and shares borders with Capricorn, Mopani District municipalities in the eastern and western directions respectively. The sharing of borders extends to Zimbabwe and Botswana in the northwest and Mozambique in the southeast through the Kruger National Park.

### **6.3.1. Socio-economic overview**

The agriculture, forestry and agro-processing sectors (including food, beverage and wood processing) contributed 4% towards the total GVA produced in Mopani District, somewhat smaller than its role in the

national economy (7%). The sector is, however, labour intensive and made a much higher contribution towards employment with a share of 17% in the total district's employment in 2019, just below the 19% share of these sectors in employment nationally.

- The agro-forestry production complex plays a larger role in Greater Giyani, Greater Letaba and Greater Tzaneen compared to Ba-Phalaborwa and Maruleng
- Primary agriculture production dominates the agro-forestry production complex in the District while food and beverage processing and the forestry and timber played a relative small role
- Greater Giyani and Greater Tzaneen, in turn, dominate primary agriculture production within the District
- Food and beverage processing activities industries, primary forestry and related wood processing activities, are mainly concentrated in the Greater Tzaneen
- Greater Giyani made the second largest contribution to the agro-forestry complex, mainly due to its large contribution to primary agriculture and forestry activities. Value addition to these primary activities, though, plays a small role in Greater Giyani.

The mining and mineral processing sector (including non-metallic mineral and metal products) contributed 35% towards the total GVA of Mopani District, substantially larger than its role in the national economy (11%). The sector is capital intensive and made a much lower contribution towards employment with a share of 13% in the total district's employment in 2019. The mining sector is specifically capital intensive in Maruleng contributing approximately 10% to employment in the local area.

- The mineral complex is dominated by Ba-Phalaborwa due to its dominance in primary mining productions. Phalaborwa Mining Company (PMC) is one of the largest copper producers in South Africa, and the only South African mine to produce refined copper.
- In terms of manufacturing sectors associated with mineral processing (non-metallic minerals and metal products) the hub of activities in the District in Greater Tzaneen with some activity recorded in Ba-Phalaborwa.
- Other mining and quarrying activities could possibly be more suitable for small scale mining. Ba-Phalaborwa records the largest potential for small scale mining in terms of the size of its other mining and quarrying activities, followed by Maruleng. Currently small scale mines exist in the Greater Giyani area, with their main focus being sand mining, stone aggregate, etc.

The tourism sector plays a relatively larger role in the economies of Maruleng, Ba-Phalaborwa and Greater Letaba compared to Greater Tzaneen and Greater Giyani (IHS Markit, 2020). Mopani District Municipality has good comparative advantage in nature-based tourism due its proximity to Kruger National Park (KNP). The KNP has one gate in the Mopani area, namely the Phalaborwa gate (Ba-



Phalaborwa), the busiest gate to KNP. The Shangoni gate (Greater Giyani) has been planned for the past 20 years but has not yet materialized. It is, however, listed in the District Development Plan as a catalytic project. The District also has various national parks, game reserves and provincial parks.

Other types of tourism include:

- Agri-tourism (visiting a working farm for the purpose of enjoyment, education), for example in Magoebaskloof (Greater Tzaneen) and Greater Giyani including visits to crocodile, organic fruit and dairy farms, essential oils processing, Mopani worms and Marula fruit
- Adventure tourism around Magoebaskloof, Heanertburg and Hoedspruit (e.g. abseiling, hot air ballooning, microlights)
- Culture and Heritage tourism e.g. the Muti Wa Vatsonga Museum near the Hans Merensky Nature Reserve (Ba Phalaborwa); Modjadji Royal Kraal (Greater Tzaneen)
- Mining tourism includes tours to the Phalaborwa opencast mine and mine museum.
- Township tourism is mostly limited to Maruleng and includes visits to sites and community projects in and around Hlokomela
- Tourism routes include the Bush to Beach Tourism Route that covers sites and sights between Phalaborwa and the east coast of Mozambique and the Kruger to Canyon Route links Phalaborwa to the Blyde River Canyon through the Kruger National Park

### **Settlements**

The reconciled total population of the Mopani District Municipality increased from 1 092 507 (Census 2011) to 1 372 873 in 2020, which is about 20% of the province's population (Census 2022; District Survey, 2020). The district has 338 425 households, which is about one-fifth of the number in the Limpopo province and about 10% of the total number of households in the country. According to the 2016 Community Survey, about 86% of the households in the district lived in a formal house and 2.2% of the households in the districts lived in informal dwellings (shacks), which is about half the rate in the province (4.8%) and about one-fifth of the rate in South Africa (12.96%). In 2019, there were 628 941 people living in poverty, or 54,7% using the upper poverty line definition, across Mopani District Municipality. This is higher than the 674 588 in 2009.

The district has median age of 23, 7 166 households are headed by children. A majority of the population in the district is black African, accounting for 98% of the total population, followed by whites representing 2% of the total population.

The population densities vary from one municipality to another, but the average is 23 people/ha, indicating sparsely distributed population. However, the land is primarily utilised for dwelling purposes leaving little land for new economic opportunities.



## **Employment and income**

The percentage of people living in poverty (UBPL) decreased from 82.4% in 2006 to 70.1% in 2011. However, in 2015 the percentage grew to 72.4%. Despite the decline between 2006 and 2015, the percentage of people living in poverty in Limpopo Province is still very high.

## **Education and skills**

The educational attainment in within Mopani District Municipality as significantly increased in the past decade. The number of people without any schooling decreased from 179 855 (2009) to 95 112 (2019), while in the same period the number of people within the 'matric only' category increased from 64 714 to 179 874. The number of people with 'matric and a certificate/diploma' increased from 20 417 to 44 066 in the same period, while number of people with a 'matric and a Bachelor's' degree increasing from 1 512 to 16 030.

## **Health**

The average life expectancy at birth in Limpopo for males and females increased from 51 years and 55 years for males and females respectively between 2001 and 2006, to an average of 58 and 64 years respectively for the period between 2011 and 2016.

## **7. POTENTIAL SOCIAL IMPACT**

The project is expected to lead to a higher number of households in selected PA landscapes with increased monetary and non-monetary benefits from the biodiversity economy. It is expected that the project will have positive social and environmental benefits at local, national, regional and global levels. At the local level, direct project beneficiaries include communities and their members in targeted landscapes, and particularly: individual entrepreneurs, small, medium and micro-sized enterprises, community-based organizations, such as co-operatives, communal property associations, and community trusts. Benefits are expected to include improved access to skills training for business development, finance and markets, improved local governance, and subsequently more profitable community or individually-owned businesses and increased household income. Benefits are derived from strengthened cooperation in managing ecosystems and overall better managed habitats. Casual labour and other livelihood opportunities will be created to benefit local communities.

Involuntary resettlement is not expected to occur through the project activities as the project will support the expansion of protected areas into community and private-owned areas following the Biodiversity Stewardship model championed by SANBI and takes into consideration the ongoing affirmative action programs and land restitution efforts in South Africa. However, the establishment of community conservations areas may induce voluntary restrictions of access to livelihoods and resources, such as

access to grazing areas and the harvesting of non-timber forest products. Adverse social impacts may include, but not be limited to:

- Benefits sharing challenges given the potential exclusion of either individuals or communities.
- Conflicts among the various stakeholder groups due to varying needs and interests.
- The number and complexity of the institutions involved in the implementation of this project, as well as their capacity to implement the ESF requirements alongside the national procedures.
- Potential impacts on local communities may be associated with (i) labor and working conditions of those engaged in the sub-project minor construction works and those directly engaged by the project to provide technical services; (ii) community health and safety related to the minor construction works and minor resultant risks of GBV/sexual exploitation and abuse.
- The poor, elderly, women, and persons with disabilities in the local communities are likely to be vulnerable as they are often more heavily dependent on agriculture, forest products collection and have less diversified income sources.

The project commits to, as a first step of assessment, design activities to minimise the potential impact through participatory planning of community conservation areas, and, as an integral part of project design, design and budget for alternative measures, in accordance with PF.

The project will ensure that any restrictions on resource use patterns must be voluntary and reached on a consensus basis facilitated through existing community governance structures based on the participatory engagement in the planning of the activity and any required SIA and associated Action Plan. The design of the project activities should consider the potential for benefits sharing challenges (e.g. exclusion of either individuals or communities) and conflicts among the various stakeholder groups (e.g. due to varying needs and interests) through a detailed mapping of eligible persons, in accordance with the PF.

To avoid benefit sharing challenges and potential exclusions of eligible persons, the site specific SIAs must be based on extensive mapping of resource use in the activity area. When developing the site specific SIA and associated Action Plan, the project will:

- Consider beneficiaries as equal partners and stakeholders in the management of natural resources for whom their views will be considered and respected.
- Observe beneficiaries' information requirements of vulnerable members such as women; elderly, disables and orphans.
- Approach various local organizations (interest groups) that may differ from place to place.
- Recognize that engaging local communities is a time-consuming process and that it requires time, consistency and a good planning and should be integral part of the overall SEP process

Community members facing access restriction will be supported to mobilize themselves in order to identify viable livelihoods activities in a participatory manner. The approach will help to ensure there is equity in the process and that all affected users including vulnerable groups have the opportunity to become involved in and benefit from assistance provided by the Project. Once eligible people for assistance support due to land and resource use limitations are identified in a participatory process, activities will continue as follows:

- Impact assessment that will assist to map out their affected persons resources and assets, identify and diagnose constraints and impacts due to access restrictions from household to community level, and identify the required support.
- Define the training and capacity building to sustain their affected livelihoods and way of transitions to alternative livelihoods.
- Define of co-management arrangements and alternative livelihood activities to be supported including pertinent training.

In order to minimise the effects on vulnerable groups, if not avoided, the Project will first ensure they have access to Project related information, including livelihoods assistance, in a culturally appropriate format and language; and secondly, alternative livelihood activities carried out in communities will ensure the inclusion and participation of vulnerable groups. The project is actively seeking to empowering youth and women by (a) ensuring their active participation in project consultation and decision mechanisms at the community level; (b); increasing their integration into and access to value chains; (c) promoting greater participation in credit and savings schemes and literacy training and all forms of capacity building; and (d) providing access to training opportunities and benefits to increase their capacity on leadership conservation schemes.

Where livelihood loss is identified, mitigation measures could include the following, among others:

- Employment priorities for project related jobs.
- Direct monetary support the welfare and cultural identity of affected local communities.
- Job training and facilitation of business development, including:
- Tourism: hospitality, marketing, tourism activities, services to the tourism industry (chefs, electricity technicians, etc.).
- Game ranching: animal husbandry, veterinary services, game processing, etc.
- Forest products: commercial forestry, veld and non-timber forest products.
- Agriculture: agronomy, post-harvest management, processing and commercialisation.
- Business services: IT (consulting, services, software development and programming.
- Financial services (including insurance brokers, accounting and tax consultant firms); and advertising, communications and marketing.

Any resource restrictions will be assessed following the provisions in the PF, and utilising the socio-economic baselines set out in this rapid SIA and in the ESMF to develop Action Plan(s) in accordance with the legal requirements for the project. Alternative livelihoods and resources must be provided to mitigate any adverse impacts to communities and/or individuals.

As part of the integrated project effort, community-level governance structures will benefit through strengthening of capacity for negotiation of land tenure security and co-management of natural resources to ensure equitable benefit sharing. Based on site visits to potential community conservation areas, the restrictions on existing uses of land are expected to be minor and can be managed with addition of specialist staff, overseen by SANBI. It is not expected that these restrictions would potentially affect informal users, tenants and workers, nor displacing informal or illegal activities to other nearby areas.

## **8. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

Prior to the commencement of project activity implementation, environmental and social impact analysis must be conducted in accordance with the instruments guiding implementation, the purpose of which is to identify mitigation measures for managing the potential risks and impacts. These instruments include an Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF), Stakeholder Engagement Procedures (SEP), Process Framework (PF) as well as this rapid SIA.

The Project, in socio-economic terms, has the potential to create employment opportunities wherefore proponents should consider appointing and training employees from local communities as far as practically possible.

Stakeholder consultation and community engagement are very important throughout the implementation of the project. Communities must be involved in decision making processes and they must feel ownership of the project to ensure that the project is sustainable beyond project closure. Project proponents must ensure that community values and protocols are always observed and obeyed. Project information must always be disseminated in a language that all communities and stakeholders understand.

With regards to objectives, it is recommended that a few months before the project closure, random community surveys are done in all three nodes to measure the contribution of the project to these communities, and where possible identify areas of improvement for future projects.

**The following principles should be applied throughout the implementation of the project:**

- **Direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts:** Consider all relevant direct and indirect social and environmental risks and impacts that may be caused by project activities not just in the immediate project nodes but also in the project's area of influence which will be identified as

part of scoping of the proposed activities in accordance with the ESMF. Also consider cumulative impacts from the project or from other relevant past, present and reasonably foreseeable developments in a geographic areas.

- **Adaptive management:** Utilize adaptive management techniques whereby lessons are learned from past management actions and are proactively utilized to predict and improve management as the project progresses.
- **Stakeholder engagement:** Engage stakeholders meaningfully in the process of identifying, reviewing, managing and monitoring potential impacts and risks. Stakeholder engagement is central to the assessment and management processes in that it promotes public participation in decision-making; helps identify the full range of a project's potential risks, impacts, and concerns; incorporates local knowledge and expertise in project implementation; and strengthens local support for project activities and maintaining project outcomes.
- **Transparency and access to information:** Ensure that relevant information on the project is disclosed in a timely manner, in an accessible place, and in an appropriate form and language to help interested and affected communities as well as other stakeholders to understand the opportunities, risks and potential impacts of supported activities. Access to project information is a prerequisite for effective stakeholder engagement. This includes providing communities and stakeholders with the relevant information on how and where they can lodge grievances should they have concerns regarding the project.
- **Compliance:** Comply with applicable national, provincial and local laws, legislations and regulations, the World Bank's Environmental and Social Standards and other relevant instruments. Comply with the reporting requirements and report all impacts (negative/positive) that may arise during project implementation.

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