

Quarterly Report

Year 1, Quarter 2

January – March 2015

Local Action for Biodiversity: Wetlands South Africa



Full program Title: Local Action for Biodiversity: Wetland Management in a Changing Climate

Sponsoring USAID Office: USAID/Southern Africa

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DISCLAIMER

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

DEA	Department of Environmental Affairs
GEF	Global Environment Facility
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
LAB	Local Action for Biodiversity
LAB: Wetlands SA	Local Action for Biodiversity: Wetlands South Africa
LBSAP	Local Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
PSC	Project Steering Committee
SANBI	South African National Biodiversity Institute
SALGA	South African Local Government Association
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WfW	Working for Wetlands

1. Introduction and overview

This report presents progress made on the Local Action for Biodiversity (LAB): Wetlands South Africa project during the period January – March 2015. This second quarter of the project continues the project start-up phase, and initiation of project activities and is detailed below.

Project goal:

To protect priority natural wetland resources, thus enabling the supply of ecosystem services, and promoting resilient communities and sustainable local economies under a changing climate within South African local governments.

Objectives:

1. To improve local government and citizen knowledge and understanding (at the individual, organisation and policy levels) of the value of biodiversity and wetlands.
2. To initiate the process of integrating ecosystem services and biodiversity into local government planning and decision-making in a coordinated, multi-sectoral, gender-sensitive and participatory way.
3. To implement and pilot on-the-ground wetland projects and promote the development of bankable project proposals.

2. Activities undertaken this quarter

i. Brochure

To promote the project to external stakeholders, as well as provide a quick introduction to the project to municipalities, a two-page brochure was developed. The brochure provides a short introduction to the project that can be shared widely, and includes information on the project aims and objectives and the project partners. Both a 'screen' version and folded print version were created, and are shown in Annex 1.

ii. Inviting municipalities to the project

Following the determination of 11 municipalities to invite to the project (outlined in the previous quarterly report), the most pressing task of this quarter was the inviting of municipalities to the project. In order for each municipality to confirm their acceptance of the invitation to the project, it is necessary for each municipality to gain Council approval for their participation in LAB: Wetlands SA. Given that this requires a report to be submitted from the appropriate municipal department, making contact with an official from the environmental department is the first step in this process.

For each of the identified municipalities, the director or manager of the environmental department (or similar) was contacted, first by email, which was then followed up with a telephonic meeting, to

introduce the project to them, and to gauge their interest in the project. ICLEI Africa has contact details of its members, but since all but the two metropolitan municipalities are not ICLEI Africa members, sourcing the correct contact details was required. In this regard, the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) provided critical assistance. The Local Government Support Unit of DEA has posted an official in each of South Africa's district municipalities and these officials were the first point of contact.

All invited municipalities showed interest in participating from the outset, with the exception of Sarah Baartman (Cacadu) municipality. The Municipal Manager of Sarah Baartman replied to ICLEI Africa, informing us that there was no dedicated Environmental Department at the municipality that would be able to undertake biodiversity-focused work. The municipality has an Environmental Health Department, but it does not have any biodiversity capabilities or capacity to implement the project. Despite further efforts to persuade the municipality, the answer remained unchanged. The Project Steering Committee (PSC) was informed, and it was proposed to approach the next municipality on the list (see previous report), which happened to also be in the Eastern Cape: Amathole District Municipality. As a result of unanimous agreement from the PSC, Amathole Municipality was invited to the project.

iii. Inception Meetings

Once the 11 municipalities had been introduced to the project remotely, and had verbally confirmed interest in participating in LAB: Wetlands SA, inception meetings were scheduled. These meetings supported the council approval process and were not held up by the long timelines that gaining council approval requires. The inception meetings intended to provide more detail on the project, and importantly, provide ICLEI Africa with a better understanding of the local context in each municipality. This is an important consideration, as whilst the LAB methodology is tried-and-tested and has shown to provide success around the world, it is important to understand that each municipality has its own parameters and concerns, and that taking these into account will provide leverage that enhances both the uptake of the project and impact of the project in each municipality and overall.

At each meeting, the project was introduced, and discussions held surrounding:

- Local policies pertaining to biodiversity and wetlands.
- Current projects and programmes in the municipality.
- Key points of leverage, including threats and concerns.

During the reporting period, inception meetings were held at Ekurhuleni, West Rand, Buffalo City, Amathole, Ehlanzeni, Eden and Overberg municipalities. A project presentation was given at a Wetlands Workshop at Waterberg District Municipality; the project was also presented to the Municipal Manager prior to the workshop.

It should be noted that the range of stakeholders present at these inception meetings differed significantly between each municipality. Some meetings included external stakeholders and partners, some included local and district municipal officials, and other meetings included only officials from the municipality, from a variety of departments or even just from the environmental section. The decision of who to invite was discussed with the municipality, and a decision taken on who they felt most comfortable with inviting. Some municipalities (e.g. Eden) saw value in inviting all stakeholders from the outset of the project, whereas others such as Overberg, were not comfortable with external

stakeholders present, considering that they wanted to understand the project better first, before engaging with external parties.

Minutes of the meetings are presented in Annex 2. The main points to consider in tailoring the project to have maximum impact in each municipality are briefly mentioned below.

West Rand

Political awareness and support of environmental/biodiversity projects is already high in the district. One of the main issues in the area is the impact of acid mine drainage (AMD) on wetlands, which has a significant impact on the environment and the health of citizens. AMD is prevalent in the area, often an impact of old mines, and a complex issue to solve. However, given its significant impact on wetlands and the political buy-in surrounding the issue, it must be considered in the project. Another significant challenge is poor land-use planning, hence working with planners could be an important avenue to explore via the project.

A number of projects that align with LAB: Wetlands SA are currently underway, and it will be important to work with these stakeholders moving forward. West Rand Municipality has developed a Biodiversity Sector Plan; implementation of this plan is an important next step. There is also substantive work occurring within the fields of biodiversity and climate change within one of the local municipalities, Mogale City, this municipality could play a role in capacitating other municipalities in the area.

Ekurhuleni

Ekurhuleni has undertaken significant biodiversity planning work in the form of a Biodiversity Sector Plan and other projects, but there is limited awareness of this with decision-makers and across departments. A key area of leverage would be awareness-raising with councillors, so that they understand the value of biodiversity and wetlands.

The Wetland Assessment Report produced via the LAB: Wetlands SA project will be effective in pulling together the existing knowledge, policies and projects to move forward in a more coordinated fashion. Disaster risk and greening of the municipality are key areas within which this project can support current activities and enhance implementation.

Buffalo City

Buffalo City is currently working on a Climate Change Strategy and is to embark on the development of a Biodiversity Sector Plan; it will be important to align the LAB: Wetlands SA project with both of these plans. However, there is currently very little municipal knowledge of wetlands and minimal cross-sectoral understanding.

Key areas that the project can support are integrating biodiversity into the disaster management sector, increasing political support at the executive management level and working with the Wildlife & Environment Society of South Africa (WESSA), which is very active in the area.

Amathole

Discussions in Amathole concentrated on how the project could potentially align and support the proposed Biosphere Reserve – which covers a critically important area of biodiversity in the Amathole Mountains – and how the project could generate increased political support, by making the links between wetlands, biodiversity and local economic development. Given the high rates of poverty and

the climate vulnerability of the area, making these links will be critical for the success of the project in Amathole District Municipality, and support the development of public-private partnerships.

Ehlanzeni

Working with councillors was raised as the point of leverage in Ehlanzeni District Municipality. There are intense pressures on wetlands in the area, from pollution, dumping, forestry and land conversion. Furthermore, disaster management and flooding in some areas of the municipality are a massive concern. The provincial government has developed a Biodiversity Sector Plan for the entire province which includes information that can now be taken and used at the District level. Mbombela Local Municipality (within the Ehlanzeni district) is leading work on climate change adaptation and can therefore provide examples of what can be done moving forward. There is also a project being spearheaded by the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI), discussed below, that will be critical to align with and support.

Eden

Eden District Municipality has engaged with an extensive network of NGOs and civil society organisations for a number of years and therefore has access to significant support for wetland projects in the area. However, the impact of agriculture and urban expansion is resulting in the loss and degradation of wetlands in the municipality and therefore LAB: Wetlands SA must consider how to work with the municipality, NGOs and civil society, to enhance the impact of projects currently underway in the area.

Overberg

As with Eden District Municipality, there are a number of initiatives currently underway in the municipality and stakeholder mapping would allow closer cooperation and alignment of activities, which would likely result in municipal funds being better allocated across the municipality.

Given that local government mandate for environmental management is unclear (the mandate largely rests with national and provincial governments in terms of the National Environmental Management Act), Overberg District Municipality showed interest in 'making the case' for biodiversity and wetland conservation through linking wetland conservation to disaster management and municipal health. There is also a need to work with those involved in town planning across the local municipalities within this district.

Waterberg

As mentioned above, engagement with Waterberg District Municipality was at the Waterberg Wetlands Workshop. The LAB: Wetlands SA project was presented, as well as other initiatives in the area. The municipal area includes nodes that have been identified by national government for enhanced urbanisation, therefore working with town planners will be essential in ensuring that this urbanisation occurs sustainably. Political awareness of the value of wetlands is very low and urgently needs to be enhanced, particularly surrounding the importance of wetlands for future water security.

The Waterberg District Municipal area includes the Nylsvley Ramsar Wetland of International Importance, which spans three local municipalities. The management of the Ramsar site is currently poor, and requires better cooperation between these municipalities and the provincial government, who are the custodians of the area. The Nylsvley wetland could support local economic development through enhanced tourism, coupled with the Biosphere Reserve that spans much of the area. LAB:

Wetlands SA could therefore align and support these initiatives by enhancing political support for them and making the case for the value of biodiversity and wetlands.

iv. IDP reviews

The Integrated Development Plan (IDP) is a five-year plan which local governments in South Africa are required to produce. The IDP outlines the development needs of the municipality, and can be seen as the 'master plan' which directs the work of the municipality over a five year period, being reviewed annually. The IDP provides important information on how the municipality will enhance economic and social development, as well as sets a framework for how land should be used, what infrastructure and services are needed and how the environment should be protected.

The IDP is therefore a very important document that ICLEI Africa needs to take into consideration in implementing the project in that it provides background to the current activities so that the project can align with current initiative and respond to needs, and because it provides a baseline from which the impact of the project may be monitored. The analysis of IDPs has been included in the draft M&E plan (discussed below), accordingly the review of IDPs for each municipality is required at the beginning of the project.

A template was developed that could be used by various team members, to ensure that the same information is captured when the IDPs are reviewed each year. Work on IDP reviews commenced during this reporting period, but given the amount of work required in sourcing all relevant documents, and in reviewing both the five year IDP and most recent 1-year review, the final results are not available for this reporting period.

v. Profiles

As part of the project, each municipality will have a short, introductory profile developed by ICLEI Africa and project partners. The profiles will be printed and shared with various stakeholders, and will provide an accessible introduction to municipal officials as to why biodiversity is important in their municipality and will also introduce the LAB: Wetlands SA project. It will be important that the language and tone are attuned to the receiving audience (simple, non-jargon), and that they 'make the case' of wetland and biodiversity management at the local government level. These are being developed simultaneously to the IDP reviews, since the IDPs provide important background information about the social and economic drivers in the area, and may even include information on biodiversity that can be used in the profiles. Work on these profiles commenced during this quarter, and will continue into the next.

vi. Council Approvals

As discussed above, municipalities were invited into the project, and inception meetings held to provide more detailed information on how the project will be implemented in each municipality. In order to gain support for the project at a political level and increase awareness across departments, it is necessary for each municipality to gain Council approval. The due process (although this varies slightly between municipalities) is for the main point of contact to compile a report, which is tabled as an agenda item for a subsequent Council meeting. ICLEI Africa has been assisting departments in compiling reports. During the period of this report, reports were developed for iLembe, Buffalo City, Amathole, Overberg and Ehlanzeni. Council approval was obtained from West Rand.

vii. Business & Biodiversity Indaba

As part of efforts to raise awareness of the project, LAB: Wetlands SA was presented at the Biodiversity & Business Indaba, held by the Endangered Wildlife Trust on 25-26 February, at the Gordon Institute School for Business in Illovo, Gauteng. The audience was a mix of biodiversity and private sector professionals, and the project was used as an example of mainstreaming biodiversity into local government. The indaba was an excellent opportunity to connect with other projects and stakeholders, such as SANTAM who are working on a disaster-risk reduction project in a number of municipalities in South Africa, as well as other contacts who showed interest in hearing about the progress of the project.

viii. SANBI Inception Meeting for Mainstreaming Biodiversity into Land-use Planning project

One of the projects that has a great deal of alignment with LAB: Wetlands SA is a new project that is being implemented by SANBI, in which ICLEI Africa is a partner: the GEF-funded project 'Mainstreaming Biodiversity into Land-use Planning'. The project is working in three municipalities, Ehlanzeni is a municipality that both projects will be working with,, making alignment of work and support of both project's activities, of particular importance.

An inception meeting was held on 26 March at SANBI, in Pretoria, at which ICLEI Africa was present. The meeting introduced the project aim, objectives and work plan. With regards to Ehlanzeni, the SANBI project will be working with the Land-Use Planning Department to ensure that their plans and by-laws are compliant from a biodiversity perspective, with the new Spatial Land Use Management Act (SPLUMA), which provides a framework regulating municipal planning. One of the objectives of SPLUMA is to promote the sustainable and efficient use of land, by aligning land-use planning with environmental management instruments (for example, bioregional plans). As such, it is hoped that LAB: Wetlands SA project outcomes will feed into the SANBI project and support Ehlanzeni in the inclusion of wetland information in land-use planning.

To aid alignment between projects, the SANBI Project Manager has been invited to join the LAB: Wetlands SA Project Steering Committee (PSC), and ICLEI Africa is on the Steering Committee of the SANBI project.

ix. PSC meeting

A second PSC meeting was held with project partners on 26 January 2015. The meeting provided an opportunity to go through the work plan with partners in detail, and receive comments. The minutes of the meeting are given in Annex 3.

3. Project management

The following activities undertaken during the report period pertain to the overall management of the project.

i. Work Plan

ICLEI Africa received comments from USAID on the work plan that was submitted at the end of the first quarter and updated the plan accordingly and resubmitted. No further comments have been received and ICLEI Africa has been implementing the project as per the work plan.

ii. Monitoring & Evaluation

Comments were also received on the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) plan for LAB: Wetlands SA and in order to assist the development of the plan, an external consultant was secured to provide input. The consultant, Mr. William Sewell of People & Performance CC has worked with the South African national government on M&E processes and suggested making the plan pertinent to the South African context, so that it could be shared with participating municipalities and that all stakeholders understood the M&E requirements of the programme. As such, Mr. Sewell provided comments on the plan narrative. Further changes to the M&E logical framework and plan were, however, still required after this process. A meeting was also held with Alphonse Bigirimana and Dinah Zeltser of USAID, who provided further input into the plan. The M&E plan was still being developed at the end of the reporting period.

iii. Organisational Capacity building

Funds for the development of the organisation were spent during this quarter in the following areas:

- a) Pastel training for the financial department, so as to streamline project accounting.
- b) ICLEI Africa technical and strategic planning meeting: Human resources training, and strategic discussions between work streams to understand where each member of the ICLEI Africa team could support LAB: Wetlands SA, and how this project and others can be supported moving forward.

4. Planned Activities for the following quarter

The following activities are expected to be undertaken during the period April – June 2015:

- Undertake remaining inception meetings.
- Finalise municipal profiles.
- Develop Wetland Assessment Report Guidelines.
- Initiate web platform development.

List of Annexes

Annex 1 – LAB: Wetlands SA brochures

Annex 2 – Minutes of inception meetings held between January and March 2015

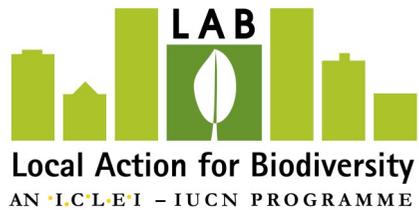
Annex 3 – PSC meeting minutes

Annex 1 – LAB: Wetlands SA brochures

Annex 1 – LAB: Wetlands SA brochures

1a: Screen version

1b: Print version, to be folded into 3-panel flyer.



In South Africa, 48%¹ of wetland ecosystems are critically endangered, despite being high-value ecological infrastructure, providing critical ecosystem services and acting as social safety-nets to the poorest communities.

¹NBA, 2011

Local Action for Biodiversity: Wetlands South Africa

Local Action for Biodiversity (LAB): Wetlands South Africa will enhance the conservation and management of natural wetland resources across South Africa by assisting 11 district municipalities to build institutional capacity and develop local policies for integrating biodiversity across local government departments.

The programme – implemented by ICLEI and key partners, SANBI, SALGA, Working for Wetlands and DEA – is based on the globally renowned LAB Pioneer methodology. The LAB programme recognises the critical role of local governments in biodiversity conservation and the value of biodiversity for delivering ecosystem services and enhancing local climate resilience.

A LAB programme for South Africa

LAB: Wetlands South Africa has been customised to the South African context, where wetlands are the most threatened of all ecosystems and where poverty and the delivery of basic services are critical issues at the local government level.

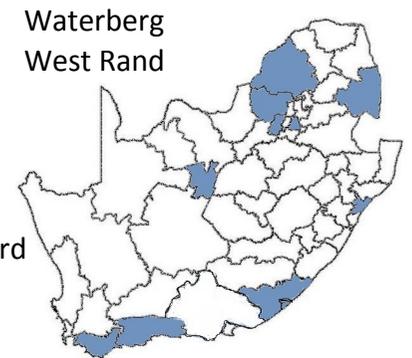
Biodiversity, and wetlands in particular, contribute to service provision and disaster risk reduction through ecosystem services such as flood attenuation, water filtration and water security, which are

increasingly important in a changing climate.

The programme therefore seeks to enhance the conservation and management of natural wetland resources through increased awareness of wetlands and the integration of biodiversity considerations into local government planning and decision-making.

Where are we working?

Amatole
Bojanala
Buffalo city
Eden
Ehlanzeni
Ekurhuleni
Frances Baard
iLembe
Overberg



Duration

Jan 2015 – Oct 2017



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SANBI
Biodiversity for Life
South African National Biodiversity Institute



Programme overview

Through enhanced awareness of wetlands, and the integration of biodiversity considerations into local government planning and decision-making, the project will build the capacity of the district municipalities to prioritise and effectively manage wetlands and biodiversity. The programme will focus on mainstreaming biodiversity across government departments and working with community stakeholders to increase awareness and community buy-in.

In the long-term, the programme seeks to contribute disaster risk-reduction and resilience to climate change through effective management of biodiversity and wetland and enhancing ecosystem services.

During the programme, each district municipality will:

1. Improve local government and citizen understanding of the value of biodiversity in the local context.

A core focus of the programme is the provision of training, information and resources that will develop awareness and

the capacity to identify problems and solutions.

Two workshops will be convened in each project municipality, bringing together municipal departments and key community stakeholders, ensuring that citizens are included in the learning process and improving community buy-in and ownership of biodiversity projects.

2. Boost political commitment

A core part of the programme is engagement with the mayor and other high-level officials to emphasise the importance of biodiversity and climate adaptation in the local government context and to promote local government leadership in this regard.

3. Integrate biodiversity into local government planning and decision-making.

Each municipality will be assisted in the compilation of a *Wetland Assessment Report* that will take stock of the municipality's wetland resources and the priorities for management into one resource. The assessment report will provide a basis for the development of a *Local Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan*, which is

a key implementation tool for biodiversity management across the municipality and integrating with the IDP.

Integration of biodiversity considerations across departments is a key factor, and the formation of multi-sectoral platforms within the municipality will enhance understanding and input from all departments.

4. Implement on-the-ground wetland projects and develop project proposals for wetland project funding.

During the development of the Local Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, wetland project concepts will be developed. As part of the LAB: Wetlands South Africa programme, three municipalities will be awarded funding to implement a project, based on a competition between participants.

Further information

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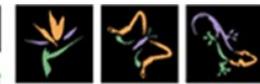
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AN ICLEI - IUCN PROGRAMME



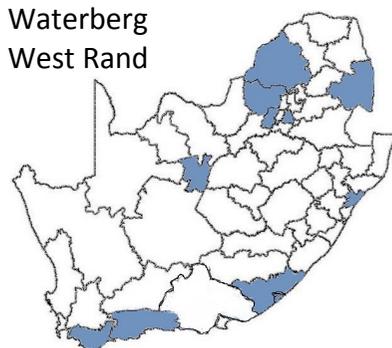
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iLembe



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Partners



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Local Action for Biodiversity: Wetlands South Africa

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The project is implemented by ICLEI and key partners, SANBI, SALGA, Working for Wetlands and DEA and is based on the globally-renowned LAB Pioneer Programme methodology.

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Further information

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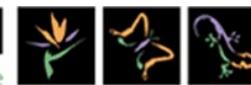
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South African National Biodiversity Institute

LAB
Local Action for Biodiversity
AN ICLEI - IUCN PROGRAMME

Annex 2: Minutes of inception meetings held between January and March 2015

Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality Inception Meeting

Date: 12 March 2015

Venue: 1st Floor Boardroom, Kempton Park City House, Cnr Margaret & Long Street, Kempton Park



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Participants

Name	Company
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Budu Maneka - BM	SANBI
Kengani Mangena	SANBI
Is'haaq Akoon - IA	EMM
Oyama Mdleleni - OM	EMM – Disaster Management
Lindelani Rhamadolela - LR	EMM – Disaster Management
Halima Latib - HL	EMM
Freddie Aucamp - FA	EMM – Strategy and Planning
Elsabeth van der Merwe - EvdM	EMM – Environmental Resource Management
Vuyelwa Bahlekazi -VB	EMM – Biodiversity
Gary Taylor	EMM Parks and Cemeteries
Mpho Molongoana	SALGA GP – Infrastructure Development
Olivia Davis	ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability

Minutes

Welcome and Introductions

The meeting was a first introduction to the Local Action for Biodiversity (LAB): Wetlands South Africa project for Ekurhuleni Municipality. It also intended to understand the context in Ekurhuleni, determining where the project fits with current activities and where points of leverage might be.

PS welcomed all and provided the context for the meeting.

Various departmental representatives invited at this early stage as they are critical stakeholders to the project and their assistance may be needed by them along the way.

Introduction to LAB: Wetlands South Africa

LM introduced the programme, as per the presentation (see [Annex 1](#)).

Questions arising from presentation:

Funding: This is a USAID-funded programme. This covers the costs of workshops and experts, with no financial implications on the participating municipalities. Funding of is available for 3 projects, to be determined by a competition between municipalities at the end of the programme.

Support from ICLEI: ICLEI provide support throughout entire project in the form of technical support and as project facilitators. Project costs include bi-annual visits

Other partners and stakeholders: PS: ERM will run with the programme and get inputs from other departments at relevant points. Mind map from ICLEI would help colleagues and partners understand where they fit into the process. EvdM: We will need other departments to support this project.

Political support: Council approval required to take project forward.

LM: Enhancing political support is a key part of the programme, enhanced through signing of the Durban Commitment and Durban Adaptation Charter.

Engagement with the other LAB: Wetlands SA municipalities: There will opportunities to share lessons learnt both during and after the project. Ekurhuleni already has experience of the LAB programme and can therefore provide valuable support to other municipalities.

Understanding the local context

LM: Ekurhuleni is cutting edge in South Africa with respect to their IDP and biodiversity planning.

Where does Ekurhuleni see the project fitting in, in terms of current needs? Who are the key stakeholders to engage with?

Existing strategies:

In our GDS there are five thematic areas; one is environmental wellbeing. In the end we try to serve the citizens, and Mayors and politicians that have to approve plans want to see that we are moving in the strategic direction they have in mind. There are 'Greening Ekurhuleni' by laws to ensure the environmental section is covering environmental issues. There is enough justification for this project. We can add leisure to the motivation of utility to the community which will add more substance.

Current projects:

We plan on becoming a city known for our lakes and dams, as we have many. To make this project fit into our bigger picture we should emphasise alignment. Piecemeal implementation we want to

avoid at all costs. The Mayor has a flagship project called Beautification of Lakes and Dams and is passionate about these.

HL is responsible for flagship projects, the most relevant being the 'Beautification of lakes and dams' project. Principles are to beatify for investment for water sports etc. Need to start changing the direction; to promote conservation and eco-tourism, not just beautification. The name 'beautification' doesn't fit with what metro should be doing. No real value attached to it.

AK: Need to make ecological infrastructure argument for other departments' buy in. Water sources contribute to funding. Huge opportunity to identify specific biodiversity features. We should look to broaden partnerships with other NGOs. Universities are doing excellent work on wetland boundaries and creating access routes into wetlands.

Points of leverage:

Enhancing political awareness:

FA: Ekurhuleni has separation of power: The Executive Mayor and MMCs form the executive committee. Oversight committees oversee activities in departments: wetlands have been mentioned but there is a lack of understanding about them and their value. This could be an important leverage point.

MM: SALGA's mandate is to provide capacity to municipalities. Can we look into programmes that will capacitate councillors? EVdM: We recently did presentation for councillors based on bioregional plan. Education important. Grasslands were emphasised and wetlands link to grasslands, especially those located in upper catchments. During the presentation it was clear that there is little understanding. A lot of documents have been written that are too technical for councillors etc. Bioregional plan meeting had 80 councillors. This type of meeting is a good way to meet councillors. Need to capacitate ward councillors, who then inform ward committees, who tell wards. Community members are so eager to receive environmental education. Now communities tell us what they need, not us telling them what they need.

LM: We could enhance awareness of the role of wetlands in disaster risk reduction when engaging with councillors. FO: Ekurhuleni has a Disaster Risk Forum, with all relevant departments.

Cross departmental awareness raising:

AK: Infrastructural departments (roads and storm water, water and sanitation) need to know wetlands and understand how their work is relevant to their environment. Can we advise them on sensitive environments? How do they expand infrastructure knowing about these sensitive areas? Often municipalities don't know about them.

PS: Compliance is a big issue. Projects can't just go ahead and build a pipeline. Divisional Heads don't know that they have a role in this process. AK: Municipalities outsource and contract people in to do a lot of the infrastructural work, which is part of the problem. PS: There needs to be awareness and education on this. Very important. We do not go out enough and provide this. Strong link between us, councillors and external partners. Capacity building is key. Many don't understand ecosystem services. Urban management and development departments fit in here. Strategy has no inclusion of natural space and sensitive areas.

FA: Increasing investment coming into the city could be part of this. Who's benefiting? The environment as well as our finances. . How do we bring businesses into the city to address protection of these sensitive areas?

EvdM: Awareness is the key word. Emphasis on awareness raising rather than physical project on the ground. Action plan can be wonderful but if there is no participation from other departments it doesn't come off the ground. 3 prong: community, political and departmental capacity building. Don't pass wetlands on to one particular group. Storm water and sewage drains into wetlands, trees fall in from parks and so on. Action plan and normal daily work will be much easier if that understanding and linkage is there. Propose updating LBSAP and wetland report, but then really look at councillors – do a lot of marketing. That can be the action plan.

AK: Social inclusion will make conservation happen. Need to understand people's role within conservation process. EvdM: More beneficiaries can be reached and this can be reported back to USAID and the IDP. We can use the same targets and reporting systems for this. Can utilise existing topics well in reporting, the ones we already have to use.

FA: What's very relevant is to report on jobs created, otherwise we lose potential funding. Even if it created jobs for one day. Halima responsible for this reporting on this as it can be a source of revenue.

Partnerships:

- There are many departments involved in affection Wetlands, they sometimes have conflicting objectives.
- RAMSAR site in the municipality, but has been de-proclaimed due to problems with, inter - alia, acid mine drainage.
- Gauteng City-Region Observatory has been mapping green infrastructure. Ekurhuleni is part of the task team.
- EWT & GDARD. Trying to secure ecological infrastructure sites through biodiversity stewardship. Very broad programme throughout Gauteng province.
- Blesbokspruit trust.
- Gauteng Wetlands Forum SA wetlands society - national academics with a lot of knowledge.

Way Forward

Core group and larger forum

LM: The project requires the identification of a core group that will lead the project and will be the point of contact for ICLEI can liaise with. Secondly, to ensure that the project works across sectors and levels of government, a forum is required. This forum will provide input into the project less intensively, but during the full duration of the project. Do any existing forums provide this and are they well-functioning? PS and FA: We will need a new forum as others are not day to day. Helps to get the right people as other forums have other agendas and forecasts. LM: This forum should have 'sustainability' outside of the project. Timeline: convene first meeting in May.

Council approval

Requirement for the initiation of the project. FO: propose presentation accompanies report to oversight committee. Will go to the SMT once the forum has been convened. Core team must sit and work out the processes. Decide what you want to achieve and devise a proper process to get there. If you create wrong impressions initially it won't work out.

Workshop (Jun-Aug)

Workshops need to be savvy and deliverables must speak to people. Are we targeting communities or councillors? Ekurhuleni and ICLEI to discuss this going forward.

Wetland Assessment Report (Jun-Dec)

ICLEI to provide guidelines in due course. Document should make the case for ecological infrastructure and outline the social benefits. Want to make it appealing so that it can be presented to politicians and communities. Not rehash info into the document that's not going to be useful e.g. we know the threats: how can we manage these? Key areas: Education & Awareness, Ecosystem Services.

Wrap Up

PS thanked the range of department representatives present and closed the meeting.

West Rand District Municipality Inception Meeting

12 March 2015

Venue: Infrastructure Boardroom, West Rand District Municipality, Randfontein.



environmental affairs
Department:
Environmental Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



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Participants

Name	Company
Liz Metcalfe - LM	ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability
Olivia Davis – OD	ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability
Susan Stoffberg - SS	WRDM
Musa Zwane - MZ	WRDM
Jackie Samson - JS	SALGA – Gauteng
Fumane Rakaibe FR	WRDM

Minutes

Welcome and Introductions

The meeting was a first introduction to the Local Action for Biodiversity (LAB): Wetlands South Africa project for West Rand District Municipality (WRDM). It also served to understand the context in West Rand, understanding where the project fits within current activities and where points of leverage might be.

Introduction to LAB: Wetlands South Africa

LM introduced the LAB: Wetlands SA project using the presentation in [Annex 1](#).

Questions/comments from presentation

MZ: This project will fit well with our plans. Last week we presented this project to political level (Section 80). They agreed for us to continue with project. Our mayor is very 'green' and is very supportive: he would want us to go a long way with this programme.

MZ: We require greater detail around the steps so we can prepare. A roadmap would be useful in this regard.

MZ: We've done so many studies and there are many gaps. Some might be very critical to fulfil objectives. LM: Wetland Assessment report stage will include an assessment of what the current gaps are by pulling together what's currently known in other studies and bringing all into one. This subsequent development of the Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan is key for closing those gaps. MM: Will there be no ground work? LM: No. There's a lot of information out there already. We understand that municipalities don't have the time and resources to do extensive field work. Working with local universities and project partners e.g. Working for Wetlands and SANBI, we can develop a through Wetland Assessment report.

What is the value of the funding for the 3 on-the-ground projects at the end of the project? LM: Currently have R100 000 per project. ICLEI will be looking to secure other revenue streams during the course of the programme, with the development of the proposals and business plans.

FR: Which countries can we refer to with similar conditions that have undertaken a LAB project? LM: Calgary and Edmonton in Canada are similar.

Understanding the Local Context

West Rand to become a Metropolitan Municipality in June 2016.

Challenges in WRDM

Acid Mine Drainage

MZ: We always want to respond to the real challenges, so we would like to link **acid mine drainage** (AMD) to this project. AMD could be linked to wetlands in future. Can we incorporate this? Politicians will see that we are trying to respond to those issues they see as important.

LM: What is the current situation with AMD? Are mine companies or government doing anything to address it? SS: There is currently a national Task Team. In WRDM, decant of acid mine drainage material has stopped as national government provided funds for a water treatment plant that was erected. On the Sibanye Gold's mine in Randfontein, the plant treated 35 Ml of water a day. In heavy rain season we get a bypass of 15 Ml a day, which pollutes river. A long term strategy still being developed. Rena from GDARD has indicated that the German government will fund a new treatment plant.

MZ: We need to look at those wetlands affected by AMD as it is the big local issue. We can see how we can rehabilitate those wetlands and help address this issue. Need to respond to agenda of higher political level instead of just working on our own agenda.

Radioactivity

Donaldson Dam: public has concerns over the radioactivity in the area, but measurements are within standards. At the moment it's not used effectively. There are proposals to enhance this area, but nothing has happened as of yet.

Flooding

Flooding is a problem, especially in Mogale Local Municipality. Mogale has examples of how wetlands can be beneficial in reducing flood risk and the negative impact of development on wetlands.

Development

SS: Wetlands in WRDM are an important issue because some of our industrial areas are built in wetland areas.

Current policies

This projects fits very well with our **Green IQ Strategy**, which is a Green Economy Strategy which has got a list of projects and programmes that we need to undertake. There is a section talking to water, biodiversity, waste and green infrastructure.

The **Biodiversity Sector Plan** is yet to be gazetted. This does not include an implementation plan: perhaps the Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan could support this?

The **Environmental Management Framework** does include a wetlands layer.

LM: With the Disaster Management Amendment Act, municipalities will have to update their disaster management plan to understand the role that ecosystems can play. Perhaps this project provides an ideal opportunity for technical capacity building? MM: Maybe we need to include Disaster Management as key stakeholders, perhaps on core team. Good relationship with them.

Mogale have a **climate change strategy and implementation plan**, launched 2 weeks ago. Mogale do their own thing, as they have environmental units that other LMs don't really have. They also have stronger financial resources. LM: We must bring them in to understand what they're doing so that we can integrate it all.

Current projects within WRDM

There is a R12 million DEA project in Randfontein, rehabilitating wetlands and building an education centre. Mr Dombo at the DEA would be relevant person to get in touch with. The LAB: Wetlands SA project can provide assistance in aligning with this project.

The Gauteng City-Region (GCRO) group at Wits: In areas at risk of flooding they do a feasibility study to see how they can use green infrastructure to assist with flood management. First meeting is in April.

Current forums:

Two forums that the project could make use of:

- GDARD Environmental Forum: Meet quarterly. Limited discussion around biodiversity but we can beef it up instead of forming another structure.
- Environmental Mining Forum with all mines present.

Moving forward

Council approval

Requirement for the initiation of the project.

Core Team

LM: A core group from WRDM must be determined, to drive the project. Composition of the core team should include Environmental Management, Disaster Risk and climate change representatives. Maximum 4 people, perhaps just 2 or 3 who will be ICLEI's main point of contact.

MZ: We've had situations where we have tried to put together a team, only to find that the people are not really relevant. Environmental and DRR reps are relevant but the team should be small.

Forum

The district must lead this project but should also include the local municipalities where possible. The existing forums mentioned above can be used to input in the project over the 3 years.

Awareness-raising workshop (Jun – Aug)

Awareness-raising workshop to take place June/July, to bring key stakeholders together, inform them of the project and to build capacity where it is most needed in the municipality. Where is this most required in WRDM?

MZ: To look after wetlands we need to enhance the awareness of wetlands to those people who affect them. If we only inform mayors, the project will die there. Gut feeling that should take the awareness to people who threaten the environment i.e. communities and mines. Those who pose negative pressures. Politicians are far away from wetlands. Assist communities in not destroying them.

Wetland Assessment Reports (Jun – Dec)

ICLEI will be preparing guidelines for the Wetland Assessment Report. We will give you something to populate with quite a lot of direction.

Wrap Up

All were thanked for their participation and the meeting closed.

Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality Inception Meeting

16 March 2015

Venue: Nahoon Point Nature Reserve, East London



environmental affairs

Department:
Environmental Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



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Participants

Name	Company	Position	Email Address	Cell number
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Siyabulela Kuse	SANBI	Municipal Support	s.kuse@sanbi.org.za	0437210375

Minutes

Welcome and Introductions

The meeting was a first introduction to the Local Action for Biodiversity (LAB): Wetlands South Africa project for Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality (BCMM). It also served to understand the context in Buffalo City, understanding where the project fits within current activities and where points of leverage might be.

NH welcomed all to meeting.

Introduction to LAB: Wetlands South Africa

LM introduced the LAB: Wetlands SA project using the presentation in [Annex 1](#).

Understanding the local context

Environmental plans in BCMM:

- Biodiversity Sector Plan to be developed for BCMM: ToR to be finalised ASAP, ICLEI would like to review. The BSP must include an implementation plan, and this will be key area for alignment with the project, and in particular, the 'Biodiversity Strategy & Action Plan' stage of the LAB: Wetlands SA project.
- Metro Open Space System (MOSS) Plan approved in 2010. Currently outdated, needs to take in to consideration what development has happened since 2010 and if the MOSS still performs intended function: urban infill is a critical issue in the metro. The MOSS doesn't necessarily consider wetlands.
- Integrated Environment Management Plan: this is currently being reviewed.
- Coastal Management Plan.
- Climate Change Strategy exists, but it does not necessarily speak to wetlands and their role in disaster risk reduction.

Environmental Forums

- Waste Management Forum
- Eastern Cape NRM forum has stopped running, but there have been discussion to revive this in the future.
- Amatole Environmental Forum

- Working Group chaired by the Speaker of BCMM and includes SALGA. Climate change, sustainability and energy are the focus areas.

There is a need to initiate a forum that brings the key stakeholders together moving forward, as the current are not aligned with the project outcomes. This forum should be applicable to biodiversity management in the municipality and therefore remain functioning beyond the project.

Disaster Risk Management

Disaster risk management in BCMM is currently reactive and not forward thinking. There is a need for more proactive disaster risk reduction in BCMM, and biodiversity needs to be integrated moving forward. This will need to be considered with the Disaster Management Amendment Act, but there is limited understanding of the importance of ecosystems in DRR in the department.

Key areas that the project can support BCMM

Knowledge of wetlands in the area is limited. No wetlands inventory exists for the area currently. Some wetland information resides in specialist studies that have taken place as part of the EIA process. Also, there is information from when BCMM was a local municipality under Amathole District, Water Services would be able to provide this. Aerial photography from 2001, 2006 and 2013 could be used to delineate wetlands in the area. DEAT also have some wetland information, at the provincial scale. There is an obvious need to collate this information and to assess gaps and the Wetland Assessment Report will therefore be an important output of the project.

Lack of integration between departments: Climate change, biodiversity and DRR need to be mainstreamed and integrated into land use planning and development planning. Education and awareness is critical, particularly for officials from other departments, especially land use planning and land administration.

Institutional capacity is an issue in biodiversity and wetland management in BCMM. Political-level workshopping in coordination with SALGA could be a key leverage point but it will need to be strategic and the message clear and consistent, both from internal and external stakeholders. This messaging is key to raising the profile of biodiversity and wetlands to the Executive Management and to integrating biodiversity into development planning moving forward.

Way Forward

Council approval

Council approval is a requirement for the initiation of the project and to highlight the project to the executive committee and municipal manager. NH to write a report for Council Submission. LM to provide support and assistance in this regard.

The LAB Wetland SA project steps should be flagged to the IDP forum. IDP process timelines for 5 year IDP to be sought.

Core group and larger forum

The project requires the identification of an 'Internal Working Group' that will lead the project and will be the point of contact for ICLEI can liaise with. Secondly, to ensure that the project works across

sectors and levels of government, a forum is required. This forum will provide input into the project less intensively, but during the full duration of the project.

Workshop (Jun-Aug)

BCMM, ICLEI and project partners to initiate workshop planning once council approval finalised, to determine the angle and target audience of the first awareness-raising workshop.

Wetland Assessment Report (Jun-Dec)

ICLEI to provide guidelines and to provide further detail in due course.

Meeting closed.

Amathole District Municipality Inception Meeting

18 March 2015

Venue: Amathole District Municipality, East London.



environmental affairs
Department:
Environmental Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



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Participants

Liz Metcalfe	ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability
Luyanda Mafumbu	ADM
Japie Buckle	DEA – Working for Wetlands
Honjiwe Mayapi	DEA
Pamela Ngabase	ADM
Pumlani Nbabeni	ADM
Bongani Mvulo	ADM

Minutes

Welcome and Introductions

The meeting was a first introduction to the Local Action for Biodiversity (LAB): Wetlands South Africa project for Amathole District Municipality (ADM). It also served to understand the context in Amathole, understanding where the project fits within current activities and where points of leverage might be.

Introduction to LAB: Wetlands South Africa

LM introduced the LAB: Wetlands SA project using the presentation in [Annex 1](#).

Questions/Comments

Amathole noted that the programme was very broad, but aligned with the WESSA Water Catchment Programme.

The LAB: Wetlands SA project should go into IDP operational plan, to provide support for the project.

Understanding the Local Context

Existing Policies

Integrated Environmental Management Plan: biodiversity is included as a theme in this. State of the Environment report feeds into this.

No budget for Biodiversity Management Plan in the next few years.

Climate Change Strategy Sector Plan, which includes a Vulnerability Assessment, Green Emissions Inventory.

Coastal Management Plan (not in SDBIP)

Provincial Biodiversity Plan exists for the Eastern Cape.

Projects

Biosphere Reserve is a key area for ADM, as this is included in the IDP, and hopes to support tourism and job creation in the area.

Already data surrounding this.

Currently trying to resuscitate this, in association with EC Parks.

Healthy Catchment Alliance (3 catchments). Coordinate requirements – WESSA, Wildlands Trust, WESSA are doing capacity building at schools and with local government.

Forums

ADM Chairs a quarterly district Environmental Management Forum, which includes local municipalities and external stakeholders.

DEADET: Coordinate Wetlands Forum – funding from province for inventory.

Moving forward

ADM requested a 'roadmap' for the project moving forward.

Council approval

Council approval is a requirement for the initiation of the project.

Core group and larger forum

The project requires the identification of an 'Internal Working Group' that will lead the project and will be the point of contact for ICLEI can liaise with. Secondly, to ensure that the project works across sectors and levels of government the project will make use of the ADM Environmental Management Forum.

Awareness-raising workshop (Jun-Aug)

ADM, ICLEI and project partners to initiate workshop planning once council approval finalised. It was suggested that the workshop should target councillors.

Wetland Assessment Report (Jun-Dec)

ICLEI to provide guidelines and to provide further detail in due course.

Meeting closed.

Ehlanzeni District Municipality Inception Meeting

25 March 2015

Venue: 1st floor Boardroom Ehlanzeni District Municipality, Nelspruit.



environmental affairs
Department:
Environmental Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



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Participants

Name	Company
Liz Metcalfe – LM	ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability
Olivia Davis – OD	ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability
Charmaine	Thaba Chweu Local Municipality
David Mkhabela - DM	Thaba Chweu Local Municipality
Brain Mdakane - BM	Ehlanzeni District Municipality
Funeka Bongweni - FB	Ehlanzeni District Municipality
Mandisa Mushwana - MM	Mbombela Local Municipality
Sibongile Tibane - ST	Mbombela Local Municipality

Minutes

Welcome and Introductions

The meeting was a first introduction to the Local Action for Biodiversity (LAB): Wetlands South Africa project for Ehlanzeni District Municipality (EDM). It also served to understand the context in Ehlanzeni, understanding where the project fits within current activities and where points of leverage might be. FB: We are looking forward to working with ICLEI to manage environment and the impact of climate change to development. We appreciate that the project is all encompassing in terms of stakeholders.

Introduction to LAB: Wetlands South Africa

LM introduced the LAB: Wetlands SA project using the presentation in [Annex 1](#).

Understanding the Local Context

Threats and issues

FB: Some local governments in the district have environmental departments. We try to prioritise municipalities that really need our help. Mbombela has an established climate change unit, with dedicated staff for climate change, and some environmental health practitioners that have moved to management. Their focus is on developing an environmental management programme on their side. Suggest focusing on where there is greatest need, to start with 2 or 3 local municipalities before focusing on the whole district.

BM: We are a disaster prone district, particularly flooding in Nkomasi and Bushbuckridge. From a research and development side we are looking to improve the information we have on floodline data to include it into GIS as this data currently doesn't exist. Our district is predominantly rural. People settle in areas where floodlines were not established. Ehlanzeni are working with SANTAM in this regard.

FB: Other issues include pollution of water resources, water treatment works for waste, illegal sand mining.

LM: Is there any connection with Forestry sector? Impact of forestry on wetlands could be important in conserving wetlands. FB: Local Economic Development unit would have stronger link with industrial sector. This is an area that still needs to be developed.

DM: Our councillors need to be involved first and understand. Need to have access to communities. We have some wetlands intruded by squatter camps. If practitioners understand this work it will help. Main obstacle is political. Councillors and mayors don't understand. If they are informed this project could be lined with service delivery.

MM: The issue is knowing what strategy we can use to tackle the problems. How to approach the challenges. If we have a strategy we will be able to do the work.

Policies

LM: Is there a **biodiversity sector plan** for Ehlanzeni? This has been mooted. BM: Provincial biodiversity sector plan is very comprehensive, and Ehlanzeni works closely with MP Park board. The provincial plan has data that can be used in the Wetland Assessment report.

Currently working in altering of the by-laws for all 5 local municipalities with respect to the new SPLUMA regulations, to be complete by 1 July. Drafts are to be finalised and sent to council in April for all municipality. Public participation will go ahead in May and be approved. Also, the Spatial development framework is currently being reviewed w.r.t SPLUMA compliance; a key area is biodiversity. The SDF review report will be a useful document for the Wetland Assessment Report.

There is no climate change strategy in Ehlanzeni District (though Mbombela LM has one), the Disaster Risk Management unit has raised it as a need for the District. It is one of the projects in the IDP. LM: The Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan could be aligned with this, using biodiversity to support climate resilience in the District.

DM: Need to get by laws and policies in order. We will be liaising with the district. The 5 step plan will help us develop a plan to submit to the DM. If we don't have by laws in place we will face problems with communities.

Projects and Partnerships

SANBI GEF-5 Landuse and Biodiversity project

BM: Interested in interface with SANBI project. We will have someone based in Ehlanzeni from SANBI and we'd have another official, an environmental planning person. SANBI are looking at aligning biodiversity into land use management. Project approved now so will go ahead in next 3 months. BM: SANBI programme. We discussed in our programme that person from SANBI should come and review our IDP before we develop the next one. Review it in terms of compliance and how to fill biodiversity gap. That part of the work plan could be integrated.

Catchment Management Agency deals with water management issues throughout the district. We have a strong working relationship with them. They provide us with water quality reports and assist with awareness programmes and support technically and in terms of resources.

Recently there was a project directly linked to wetland clean up and awareness campaigns in Schoemansdal as it related to rat infestation from illegal dumping.

We work with a few NGOs. There is an Environmental Services NGO in Schoemansdal.

Clean up campaign is project is part of the plan in the IDP.

BM: Appreciate that the programme not going to be an island on its own. Reforms on spatial planning and land use management are coming into place. We are developing bylaws for spatial planning for all 5 local municipalities in the district. We are working closely with Mpumalanga which has developed a biodiversity plan. Links in with program from SANBI. Hope we won't be compromising ourselves, we will need funding. There is a lot of work around biodiversity.

MM: We are running awareness programmes but in bits and pieces. We need more capacity, so this project could take us forward, with integration.

LM: WESSA do a lot of awareness raising so could work with them on local context.

Forums

There is an Integrated Environmental Management Forum running. It is supposed to be supported by monthly meetings with local municipalities. Integrated Management Forum is also within one of our KPAs in strategic plan. FB: Mbombela has one including external stakeholders. District can learn from them in the future.

LM: Do all the departments sit on the EMF (DRR etc)? FB: DEA does, DRR sort of involved. Meets quarterly. Local one also meets quarterly.

LM: Forums are key in bringing people together. It's best not to have too many meetings. Could this project be presented to that forum?

FB: We can share the schedule of meetings and plan to include it in next one. MM: This coming Friday there will be one of these meetings.

Moving forward

Council approval

LM: Need council approval. Once approved we need to identify a core group. Maybe 2 people as the key people driving it. Maybe your existing forum is a good place to do this. We would put together profiles on political commitment. The mayor should be presented with something informing them of

their natural resources and why the project is happening. Workshops may be on mayoral or community level.

FB: We did send through a report to introduce the project to political leadership. They sent it back requesting clarity on funding aspect. Must mean there's an interest! Issue of membership. Need to know if there is anything the municipality will be expected to prepare for the near financial year etc.

Awareness-raising workshop

LM: Can be tweaked to be what it needs to be locally. Could be quite a technical one. BM: Awareness targets depend on context of workshops. LM: We would make it relevant. Can bring in technical experts and so on.

Wrap up

FB: We are looking forward to this project and see it as a considerable benefit. There's a lot that is happening in different corners and a lot that can still be done and we need to pull it together and synergise approach. Then we can measure and improve impact. We should identify priorities in this area.

FB: Next council meeting will be during the course of next week. Report has already gone through.

Internally what will be important for next engagement would be for us to meet and brainstorm together. LM: Need someone to be driving that so it doesn't slip through the cracks

Thanks and goodbyes.

Eden District Municipality Inception Meeting

Date: 30 March 2015

Venue: Eden District Municipality, 54 York St, George



environmental affairs
Department:
Environmental Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



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Minutes

Welcome and Introductions

The meeting was a first introduction to the Local Action for Biodiversity (LAB): Wetlands South Africa project for Eden District Municipality (EDM). It also served to understand the context in Eden, understanding where the project fits within current activities and where points of leverage might be.

VG welcomed all and noted the excellent turn out, noting the project represents an exciting opportunity for Eden. The representation of people at the meeting illustrated the existing collaboration with stakeholders, which LAB: Wetlands SA can build on.

Introduction to LAB: Wetlands South Africa

LM introduced the LAB: Wetlands SA project using the presentation in [Annex 1](#).

Understanding the Local Context

Challenges and Threats in EDM

Agricultural Sector

Eden is heavily farmed and there is a lack of action, interest and funds from agricultural sector. We are failing to get the message out to the public and farmers that wetlands are important. Landowner engagement is one of the most challenging issues in terms of degradation of wetlands. It is therefore important for the agriculture sector to be involved in the project, even though agriculture is outside of a municipality's mandate.

Development

Municipality also extracts water from these wetlands. Abstraction and discharge huge issue in city. Urban engineers have very little understating of wetlands. Roads maintenance affects wetlands.

Opportunities and Support

Forums

The Southern Cape Wetlands Forum is administrated by Eden. Let's try and make that a more robust group with local municipalities on that forum.

Green Economy

Green economy is being unlocked with wetlands work in certain areas. People eradicating aliens in Wetlands which is aligned. Green economy = tangible benefits. Compliance is key.

Other

We are trying to align with SANBI and Working for Wetlands Projects. LBSAP will pull everyone in and those projects would be engaged with and involved.

This project can be presented to others by stakeholders. The more people involved, the better.

Roadshow coming up. Perhaps could do the mapping as part of that?

Universities help with digitalisation and mapping etc. There is help. Professors at Nelson Mandela University are doing research that could be relevant to this project.

There is also support from DEA (biodiversity policy side and local government support unit). There is support coming from national government.

DA has a Soil Conservation Act which requires Department of Agriculture to conserve wetlands. Still applicable.

There are initiatives in place looking at flood damage repairs but there's a huge gap in best practice with farming communities. New data layers on our Cape Map Programme.

Under NEMA there are EIA matters on wetland development. Explain legislation with respect to wetlands. Examples of damaged and disturbed wetlands grab people's attention more than the legislation.

WfW are busy within this area so there is relevant and recent information available. There is a lot.

Some municipalities have their own by laws which can be linked with agriculture. Must be links somewhere where by laws can be developed. Employ environmental law enforcement officers. Strategy and Action Plan could be to come up with these by laws.

Municipalities sit in important sphere doing planning and forward thinking. EIAs are reactive process. Spatial planning is looking into future. EIAs are too late.

LM: What about Disaster Risk Reduction? Eden has lots of flooding. Is there a unit? Are they aware of wetlands? Yes, a very good one! Early warning systems and such are there. There are a lot of DRR departments that don't have anything to do with wetlands at all.

In rural areas particularly there are conservation area land owners who look after and develop their wetlands very well.

Way Forward

Wetland Assessment Report and Information Gathering

Wetland Assessment Report has to be informed by attendees, not ICLEI, really. Eden DM has aerial photos of all wetlands in the district. A lot to inform the Wetland Assessment Report.

What does assessment report include? Largely desktop based and bringing information together. Not delineation and digitalisation. Rather about understanding how to move forward.

If anyone has identified anything important with respect to wetlands, bring that up and we can all look at it and other gaps to research and coordinate. There is a lot! All have their own issues. Issue is not getting information, but making it useful. Need intervention in it. Use the info when we've defined what we need. We are happy all this info is there! Suggestion: there could be a checklist with certain things to ask on each wetland. Some things are the same, some different.

Who's going to be writing Wetland Assessment Report? Liz: We need to define a core group that will coordinate that.

Your contribution to report must help municipality to maintain environmental integrity. You're helping government. Everyone's helping everyone.

Some info is just nice to have but methodological approaches with maximum traction is what should be focused on. From point of view of LM its understanding where you can have maximum impact with resources at disposal. In a way it becomes crucial before assembling info to know what it is going to be used for, and then sifting through info and gathering. What might help is to list the people here and what theoretical info we need that people here have. Call it situational analysis or gap analysis.

LM: From our side, so we can develop guidelines for assessment report, we'd like to find out what angle we're working from and where to focus. How do we support municipalities?

The first to be called when something happens to a wetland is the municipality. If municipality doesn't have much control over agriculture, assessment should talk about what leverage they have or what partnerships can be found to address this (farmer problem). Engage level where you look at MOU or close relationship of that work where cooperative governance framework comes in.

Assessment report can also carry a concise version for politicians with bigger picture and vision.

Awareness-Raising Workshop

What would we like to see informing our workshop and what would we like to showcase? Would like help identifying where gaps are. Might not be knowledge gap but a management / local authority by-in gap.

Landowners/farmers

Awareness-raising for farmers may be where we want to focus the project. Need to strengthen linkages and awareness-raising amongst small scale farmers and commercial.

Municipalities / Councillors

Many wetlands have been destroyed through ignorance here. Municipality and developers are ignorant. Planning department of municipality is where this project could focus at local municipality

level. DM can assist wherever they can. Climate change and adaptation plan was developed like this with plans and interventions that went forward.

When council is involved there should be a body with information that is correct. Council awareness is very important. Showcase wetlands to all councillors. They make big decisions that impact all of us. Must not underestimate value placed on council. To raise real council awareness, unlocking green economy is critical to get funding and raise awareness to do poverty alleviation through politicians.

General Notes

A lot of the urban wetland problems are historical problems. Parks were created on wetlands. Environmental Affairs and planning department to address this. Historical mistakes need to be targeted for rehabilitation and recreation of wetlands.

We do sometimes rely on NGOs helping municipalities that are under-capacitated.

Possible to look at joint services and arrangements where they don't have environmental officers.

VG: Look at most pristine wetlands and look at how they're being run. Then look at the most degraded wetlands, consumptive and non-consumptive wetlands.

Attendee wrap up comments:

At end of 3 years lots of awareness will be raised for politicians and all stakeholders, which is very exciting. It would be great to come up with some document showing off amazing work and the place we live in. That would be an outcome regardless of whether we win the competition or not.

From forestry side we do a lot of upstream and riparian zone works. Would be nice to see how this works downstream where the wetland is fed. So work upstream. We do a lot of conservation of wetlands in Tsitsikamma area.

Excited for landowners and others with an impact on wetlands to understand the value of wetlands and work with municipalities. If everyone knows what to do and what not to do they can work together and do a lot!

Important for municipality to employ their own environmental management officers in their own areas. They can handle things when they have their by-laws and regulations. If we get support from DWA and Agriculture we will be able to do a lot more.

Looking forward to seeing how this develops but want to know exactly what we need to do.

Youth and younger people also need to know. Puppet shows are an example. Local drama groups who can write scripts etc.

Excited about support for municipalities. Critical to support them from all the interdisciplinary accounts to create a community that is environmentally literate – from communities to policy makers.

In terms of awareness-raising, Cape Nature would like to be part involved as part of the group.

From DEA side we are excited about this. Less complaints would be nice. Would like stronger partnerships.

There is national legislation which controls conservation of wetlands. Just needs to be applied.

Keep up with energy of all the interested stakeholders. Keep up this cooperation. With respect to awareness-raising, big challenge is how to measure awareness creation.

There is real education going on. Lots of learning taking place. Would like to see pockets of wetlands flourish enough for school to take learning experience from it.

Wonderful programme to assist not only conservation but also on getting things right on the planning side and raising awareness. Have an action plan that is implementable and will assist with getting funding and extend further than wetlands.

VG: Thank you to everyone for coming. Importance of working together. Worked in coastal management programme and climate change, so let's start that way.

Meeting closed.

[Annex 1: LAB: Wetlands SA Introductory presentation](#)

[Annex 2: Participants List](#)

Overberg District Municipality Inception Meeting

31 March 2015

Venue: Overberg District Municipality, Bredasdorp.



environmental affairs
Department:
Environmental Affairs
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Minutes

Welcome and Introductions

The meeting provided an introduction to the Local Action for Biodiversity (LAB): Wetlands South Africa project to the staff of the Overberg District Environment Department. The meeting served to understand the context in Overberg, understanding where the project fits within current activities and where points of leverage might be.

Introduction to LAB: Wetlands South Africa

LM introduced the LAB: Wetlands SA project using the presentation in [Annex 1](#). A list of participants is given in [Annex 2](#).

Understanding the Local Context

Threats & issues

There are capacity issues with in the LMs since environmental departments do not exist at this level. Working with the local municipalities Disaster Management teams could be a way of aligning with and working with the LMs.

Agriculture has a big impact on wetlands in the area.

Existing Policies

The SDF contains some wetland information.

Existing projects

There are number of initiatives and stakeholders – mapping these would be a very useful first step in aligning work.

Agulhas Biodiversity Initiative (contact: Lesley Richardson) run by the Flower Valley Trust. Funding is required for longer term sustainability and for implementation.

Working for Wetlands have undertaken rehabilitation work in SANParks areas.

Department of Agriculture has a range of initiatives in the area.

WWF (contact Saskia Fourie) are working in the Theewaterskloof, Breede, Riviersonderend area.

Key areas

There will be a need to link the project to core district municipality functions, i.e. Disaster Management and Environmental Health.

Town planners should be included in the project, e.g. awareness-raising and increasing technical capacity.

Roles and responsibilities need to be defined, understanding the differences between LM and DMs w.r.t. wetland management.

Moving forward

Council approval

Council approval is a requirement for the initiation of the project. It was suggested that the most effective route would be to go via the Portfolio Committee, with a recommendation that the project goes to DCF on 23 June. This would enhance buy-in from Portfolio. After this, it would be sent to MAYCO.

Core group and larger forum

The project requires the identification of an 'Internal Working Group' that will lead the project and will be the point of contact for ICLEI can liaise with. This should include Disaster Management, Water Quality and Environmental Health.

Secondly, to ensure that the project works across sectors and levels of government the project will require the development of a district-level forum (as discussed above).

Awareness-raising workshop (Jun-Aug)

iLembe, ICLEI and project partners to initiate workshop planning once council approval finalised. It was suggested that the workshop should capacitate disaster management, planning and the environmental department.

Wetland Assessment Report (Jun-Dec)

ICLEI to provide guidelines and to provide further detail in due course.

Meeting closed.

Annex 3: PSC meeting minutes

LAB: Wetland management in a changing climate: Project Steering Committee Meeting

Teleconference: 26 January 2015



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Participants

Name	Affiliation
Umesh Badahur (UB)	Working for Wetlands
Intelligent Chauke (IC)	SALGA
Siyabulela Kuse (SK)	SANBI
Wilma Lutsch (WL)	Department of Environmental Affairs: Biodiversity Planning
Siphumelele Nowele (SN)	Department of Environmental Affairs: Local Government Support
Budu Manaka (BM)	SANBI
Liz Metcalfe (LM)	ICLEI Cities Biodiversity Center
Shela Patrickson (SP)	ICLEI Cities Biodiversity Center
Kamva Qwede (KQ)	SANBI
Apologies	
Farai Tererai (FT)	Working for Wetlands

Agenda

1. Welcome and adoption of previous minutes
2. Schedule of meetings for 2015
3. Work plan
4. Project update/next steps
5. Matters arising

Minutes

1. Welcome and previous minutes

All parties were welcomed to the meeting.

Alterations to the previous minutes: include apologies from Kamva Qwede.

2. Schedule of meetings for 2015

Given the mutual agreement of parties to hold PSC meetings on a Monday afternoon, the following dates for PSC meetings in 2015 has been set as:

20 April, 3-4pm

20 July, 3-4pm

19 October 3-4pm.

LM to send calendar invites to PSC participants.

3. Work plan

The work plan was sent to participants in November 2014. LM ran through the plan to ensure that all parties were up-to-speed with the plan and in agreement with the content. The following comments were made:

SN: DEA should be part of the signing of the Durban Commitment and DAC and can support this process.

TC: SALGA currently mobilising DMs through the Climate Change M&E Roadshow. ICLEI's Sarah Birch is a part of this process: LM/SP to liaise with Sarah and to engage with TC & SN bilaterally.

BM: With regards to publications and other products, who will sign-off on these, what is the protocol?

SP: The Wetland Assessment Reports and LBSAPs are the municipality's product and will be ultimately approved by the Council, albeit with input from the PSC. For other products such as the Wetlands Assessment Report Guidelines and the Urban Wetland Management Guidelines, ICLEI will develop these with input and review by the partners.

SP: Terms of Reference for the PSC will be developed. This will outline roles and responsibilities of the parties. This will not be a formal document between the head of each organisation, but a commitment between individuals of the PSC, and signed by each of the PSC members.

SN: The project is focused on wetlands – is the LBSAP speaking to wetlands specifically or will there be a need to develop an LBSAP for other elements in the future? LM: The LBSAP is a short-medium-term plan for biodiversity and should ideally provide a framework for biodiversity management across the municipality. However, given the variations in capacity and the current status of biodiversity management between municipalities, and the fact that the LBSAP provides a basis from which to build on in the future, there is flexibility to 'fit' the LBSAP to the needs and requirements of the municipality.

UB: FT will send comments on the work plan via email.

4. Project update/next steps

Thanks to SN for sending DEA LG Support contacts in each municipality. **SALGA and WfW to forward contact details of the provincial coordinators.**

LM currently contacting the DMs to invite them to the project, and will set up inception meetings in each municipality during March. Key stakeholders from the province (e.g. SALGA and WfW provincial

coordinators, SANBI, DEA LG Support Officers will be required. SN highlighted it was important that provincial government were included at this stage.

LM to forward the LAB: Wetland SA flyer to PSC.

5. PSC administration

LM informed the PSC that due to the cost-share component, timesheets and other documentation to illustrate the cost-share from project partners will be required.

KQ: SANBI has some travel budget but will require support for some travel (this is included in the budget) – to be discussed bilaterally. IC offered SALGA offices for workshops/meetings in each province.

6. Matters arising

IC suggested that the call quality was frustrating. BM supported this. LM to explore options for alternative methods. Meetings should also be held face-to-face, where possible.

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All were thanked and the meeting was closed.