

22nd September, 2009

Issue 7, 3rd Quarter 09



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Water security: looking down the barrel?

Eastern Cape (SA): Water. It's the source of life, the cause of conflicts and the backbone of agriculture. And when water is falling from the sky - or even when it isn't — it's a topic that can get any two strangers talking for hours.

It is a little like that here in the Baviaanskloof-Kouga-Gamtoos catchment zones (Eastern Cape, South Africa) at present. People are talking water. And they are talking a lot about having too little. That's not unusual in an area where agriculture is the lifeblood of the local economy and community. And where water supply and security are critical to the long-term viability of the region. It's also not unusual when there is a perception of inequity with water use, restrictions and allocation between water users.

But what is a little unusual is that between the expected and sometimes justifiable finger-pointing, there is an emerging sense of shared urgency. The situation is now serious and immediate action is needed for long-term solutions.

Landscape and catchment restoration naturally holds potential as a long-term solution. The general perception has previously been that rehabilitating landscapes is the luxury we can only afford when the economy is on the up, there is water aplenty and the basic concerns are under control. But with

improved understanding and a water crisis on our doorstep, this perception is changing. The linkages between healthy landscapes, water security, social well-being, community development and a strong resilient economy are now starting to be made.

We know that thirsty invasive species such as black wattle are responsible for running rivers dry. And we can better appreciate that landscapes with no vegetation not only affect water quality (e.g. increased erosion) but also play a role in water retention, falling water table level and even the local climate and rainfall patterns. All of a sudden restoration starts to look like a "Get out of jail" card. But note that there is no "free" written on that card. Restoration is a long-term investment which aims to replenish our depleted stocks of 'natural capital'. As shareholders of this natural capital, we must also press for a change in mindset and behaviour.

How do we then facilitate restoration and changes in behaviour related to, e.g. water use or land management? It is multi-dimensional and starts with a shared willingness. The PRESENCE research to date shows that willingness exists at various levels. The challenge now is to implement & institutionalise an equitable incentive scheme which can reward those acting as stewards for the environment (and natural capital).

Ministerial Visit: Given this emerging scenario, it is therefore highly relevant that Ms. Gerda Verburg, the Dutch Minister for Agriculture, Nature Food Quality (LNV) is scheduled to visit the Baviaanskloof region in November to officially open LNV's Water for Food & Ecosystem Programme. A key aim of this collaborative initiative, with the PRESENCE network, is to set up a form of incentive scheme for restoration and wise water use (also known as "Payments & Rewards for Ecosystem / Watershed Services" (PES)).

PRESENCE Workshop: The third annual PRESENCE network gathering is scheduled for 5th & 6th November. This is the two-days preceding the Ministerial visit (see above). The theme for this year's workshop is therefore aimed at designing the blueprints for an effective incentive scheme (e.g. PES) & marketing plan for catchment restoration. Please register your interest to attend by Friday 25th September. More details on the workshop will follow [online](#) soon.

Seasonal Supplement: You will notice that this quarter's newsletter has undergone a few cosmetic changes to enhanced readability. Hope it helps.

Website: The [EarthCollective webpage](#) is now back online...new & improved.

Feedback: info@earthcollective.net



Online (SA): With a growing PRESENCE network there is an urgent need for effective information exchange and news updates. To enable partners to do this, the **PRESENCE Online Portal (POP)** is currently being 'rolled-out'.

The portal can be accessed via www.livinglandscapes.co.za. During the past weeks, partners, students and researchers who (have) participate(d) in the PRESENCE network were invited to register or login on the web portal. Over 80 people now have an account with which they can log-in and use POP. Besides information exchange and news updates, the portal can be used for sharing opportunities, discussions, activities, calendar, feedback and more. When logged-in to POP, the page consists of four main sections: *Forum, Members, Library and Agenda*.

In the Forum you can participate in discussions or start them yourself. Three sub-fora have been created for discussions and opportunities. Depending on the subject you can post messages under; 1) Science, Students and Action Research; 2) Management & Implementation; or 3) Community & Land-owners. Portal members, especially students, are invited to post statements or ideas. You could think of research outcomes open to debate or questionable findings that need further attention. On the other hand, you might have a brilliant idea which helps restoration of natural areas. If you don't know where to go with it, you could post it on the portal and start discussing it with interested peers. In *Library*, you will find all relevant reference material. Here you can upload or download relevant

documents; posters, presentations, student theses, internship reports and other documents from researchers who have participated within the PRESENCE network. Finally, the *Members* section provides you with an overview of all POP members and the *Agenda* gives an overview of upcoming events/activities.

All is ready for you to start exploring and utilising POP to see what's possible. You haven't received an invitation email but would like to join? No worries! You can register yourself by going to the portal and creating an account. When using your first name for username, the POP administrators will approve your account so you can start right away. Questions, suggestions or comments: **email: portal@livinglandscapes.co.za**

Text/Contact: coen@earthcollective.net

» Recent News

[DLR collects field data around Kirkwood pt. 2](#)

[PRESENCE partners present at the Thicket Forum 2009](#)

[DLR collects field data around Kirkwood](#)

[Living Lands welcomes new member](#)

Some of the news you may be missing out on if you're not tuning into the PRESENCE Online Portal!

The PRESENCE Network Page

Snippets & updates from recent activities in the Baviaanskloof and beyond...



Above: As cold as it looks, Lindie (CSIR) and her team show dedication to field-work as the Baviaanskloof gets snow.

Right: Gloria asks land-owners to rank their preferences for various incentive scenarios



* PRESENCE: Participatory Restoration of Ecosystem SERVICES & Natural Capital, Eastern Cape (SA). PRESENCE is a collaborative & multi-stakeholder network aimed at guiding the restoration of 'living landscapes' in South Africa. PRESENCE is an initiative of EarthCollective; the SA Living Lands foundation acts as secretariat.



Anne Gerrit Draaijer (Dutch): Making an erosion vulnerability map & setting up a plan for monitoring ecosystem services in the western Baviaanskloof.



Heleen van der Zande (Dutch): Designing a marketing strategy for launching & implementing incentives for catchment restoration (PES) in the Baviaanskloof Mega-Reserve.



Abram Odilwe Selomane (South African): Doing an internship with WUR-LEI & spending 8 weeks in SA collecting data on water-crop productivity for the Kouga catchment.

NEW TOOLS FOR INTEGRATED CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT IN THE 'KLOOF

The CSIR and the [Geography Department of Rhodes University](#) in collaboration with [PRESENCE](#) and [Eastern Cape Parks](#) are carrying out an exercise known as "longitudinal zonation" in the Baviaanskloof river catchment.

The vision of the project is to develop local knowledge that in the short-term will contribute towards the Baviaanskloof Catchment Restoration Programme and in the long-term will assist with a monitoring programme. The project aims to improve knowledge on river, riparian zone and floodplain functioning and processes operating in geomorphological zones in order to assist understanding of multifunctional sustainable use for river management.

The study has four main objectives: 1. Determine historic land use impacts and channel/valley morphology and riparian vegetation changes; 2. Determine river channel and valley changes along the Baviaanskloof River; 3. Link zonal geomorphological change to fluvial land forms and riparian vegetation distribution patterns; 4. Training and capacity building. Bursaries were made available for students from the University of the Western Cape (UWC) to participate in the project.

A field trip was made to the Baviaanskloof catchment during June - August to obtain data on river and valley floor changes, vegetation and sediment sizes. The UWC students were present during the field trip and were trained in various aspects of data collection, processing and analysis.

Preliminary insights from the field trip include the following: the Baviaanskloof River is supported by groundwater whereas the numerous tributaries are fed by surface flow; Alluvial fans are important landscape features in the downstream areas whereas the flood benches in the upstream mountainous areas are linked to ecosystem services (e.g. in securing water availability).

Cooperation between farmers and researchers allowed the field trip to be very successful. Project results will be made available in a planned 'report back' meeting to the PRESENCE network and farmers in late 09/early 2010.

Text/Contact: Lindie Smith-Adao [mail to: LSmithAdao@csir.co.za]

GERMAN AEROSPACE CENTER (DLR) EXPLORES THE PERPLEXING THICKET

The Remote Sensing Data Center (DFD) of the [German Aerospace Center \(DLR\)](#) is currently hosting three PhD theses researching land cover and land changes in the Eastern Cape's Subtropical Thicket biome. With a focus on the PRESENCE Network area (i.e. thicket wide plot boundaries), the objective of these PhDs is to develop maps to facilitate understanding of land surface characteristics using satellite images.

During July, DLR researchers travelled to South Africa for their first field assessment. Christina Eisfelder, Anita Bayer and the field assistant Sebastian Roessler spent some weeks in the vicinity of Kirkwood and Somerset East assessing both soil and vegetation characteristics. Christina has been analysing vegetation cover of ecologically degraded and pristine vegetation (i.e. another keen "spotter" for fence line contrasts!) . Christina's aim is to better understand the landscape and to analyse e.g. the vegetation condition or the changes in occurrence of certain plant species. The eventual outcome is to be able to characterise biomass and carbon content in vegetation under different degradation conditions. Christina is grateful for the crucial field support from R3G expert Mike Powell.

Anita brought with her DLR's spectrometer (as did Marco Nocita in 09) for measuring reflectance of different soils in degraded lands and sampling for biochemical analysis. Her objective is to derive soil parameters to (e.g.) describe soil fertility and carbon below ground.

After this first assessment the researchers became more aware of the challenges a remote sensor can face when dealing with thicket: "the more I learn about the vegetation the more complex it becomes to me!" admits Christina.

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RISKS & REWARDS FOR RESTORATION

Gloria De Paoli ([Environmental Economics & Natural Resources, Wageningen University](#)) recently completed her MSc thesis titled: "Options for a Payment for Watershed Services (PWS) Scheme in the Baviaanskloof Mega-Reserve." This study is certainly highly relevant and topical given the current climate (literally). A short summary of this thesis does not do it the justice it deserves. But that is regrettably the best we can do for now.

Gloria looked at western Baviaanskloof landowner preferences for an incentive scheme for restoration of tributaries and floodplains in the valley. Key results include: financial incentives are land-owner's most preferred scenario followed by the creation of a tourism marketing plan— however, there is willingness for restoration even without incentives. Stability of income and profitability; impact on landscape; conservation of water resources over time; and community development are key criteria considered in land-owner decision-making. Potential risks of proposed restoration measures (e.g. occasional flood events) is currently not perceived as a source of concern. It is recommended that a PWS scheme promote income diversification through stimulating tourism or designing an innovative 'landscape labelling' (i.e. market certification) initiative. Such schemes must be coupled with long-term changes in land management.

Gloria's thesis and internship was carried out through a collaboration with [WUR-Alterra](#) and [Agricultural Economics Institute \(WUR-LEI\)](#).

For information on any of the above: mail: presence@livinglandscapes.co.za

9 Questions in 99 seconds with: Anne Gerrit; Heleen and Odi

Family? AG: "Home."
Heleen: "A big one(2 brothers, 2 sisters)"
Odi: "A big family" [bigger than Heleen's]
Food? AG: "It's great."
Heleen: "A lot."
Odi: "Two types: Food I like and food I don't like. Everything I like is a favourite."
Fears? AG: "Pain, agony and suffering."
Heleen: "Spiders!"
Odi: "I can't think of any. I don't have real ones. My main fear is ignorance, I think."

Free-time? AG: "At home, I like to go sailing, have a drink, party...busy doing something"
Heleen: "Fitness, holidays, music, relax"
Odi: "I spend most of the time outdoors"
Fitness? AG: "Swimming or exercise to use all my muscles...sometimes push-ups."
Heleen: "Sometimes."
Odi: "Not that fit but I run once in a while"
Favourites? AG: "Depends. Changes often."
Heleen: "Holidays"
Odi: "Things I like are favourites—simple."

Facebook? AG: "I don't use it"
Heleen: "Not on there a whole lot. Just like to check people out— their photos & stuff"
Odi: "I think it is a cool network to keep track of people. A good innovation."
Future? AG: "Whatever that might be... but the only moment is now."
Heleen: "Don't know. Long and happy...I think we'll see day-by-day."
Odi: "I'd like to travel a lot and do more research...but the very long-term dream is to operate a recycling unit somewhere."
Fieldwork? See profiles to left-side of page.

The Ideas Trust

Serving up a summer of activity

Wageningen (NL): EarthCollective has been actively paving the road this summer in Wageningen (WUR) to enable implementation of tangible [i:trust] activities. Highlights include:

June: Wageningen students presented results on research they conducted amongst 300 peers. Their questionnaire revealed that fellow students (over 50%) are eager to put their knowledge into practice and often already have certain ideas which they want to develop. Of those same students, 59% indicated (high) interest in the proposed [i:trust] concept aimed at supporting fresh youth initiatives for sustainability.

July: The [i:trust] working group shot creative video footage for designing an attractive promotional video. Hermes Arriaga devoted his time to prepare a professional video which will soon be available on the new [i:trust] website. Special thanks to Sander ter Meulen & Kyra Verhoeven ([South-Sea Exclusive](#)), Kealan Gell de Witt and Gloria de Paoli for inspired contributions to the video.

August: Synchronicity brought the [i:trust] team into contact with Rob Adams, CEO of [SixFingers](#). Rob, a marketing expert, has written a book about the 'branchmarking' concept. His eagerness to contribute to a good cause inspired him to voluntarily facilitate a creativity session for [i:trust]. This session provided an opportunity to engage active and interested people to form a core working group for the set-up of [i:trust]. Despite being mid-summer holidays, the workshop was well attended. This event also enabled the warm welcome of the first official [i:trust] intern: Heleen van der Zande (student of International Business & Languages); Heleen, who is now based with Living Lands (PRESENCE) in South Africa, will continue to assist [i:trust] in marketing related activities. Many thanks for her enthusiasm so far.

August: [i:trust] participated in the information market for the WUR Introduction Days; the first flyers and ecological pens were distributed and the concept promotional video was shown

to interested students passing by. The positive energy from that day resulted in [i:trust] being invited to participate in the 09-09-09 event: the national day of sustainability organized by student network [Morgen](#) and Young Leaders for Nature. In the Forum, [i:trust] presented to the student audience. Slowly, but effectively, [i:trust] is generating increasing attention...

September and beyond... [i:trust] will be organizing more working group meetings to help crystallize the organizational structure. Furthermore, applications for subsidies and investment are in full-swing, and strategic partnerships and cooperation are being further developed. Possibilities to integrate [i:trust] within a proposed new university degree are being tabled. Last - but certainly not least, the aim for the next quarter is to have the first member students and alumni become actively involved in utilizing [i:trust].

Thanks for WUF & WSO co-financing.

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Revealing Research: Positive thinking for a cooler world

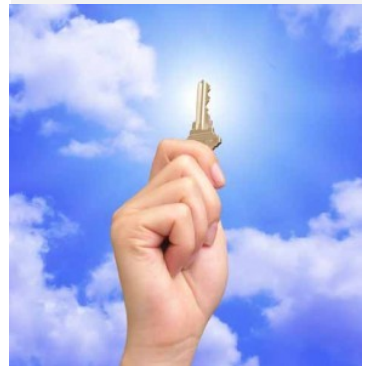
United States: The 22nd August issue of the respected [New Scientist magazine](#) broke new ground with a look at how a better understanding of our minds may assist in solving environmental issues. Drawing on the often neglected field of conservation psychology, the issue investigates how people can be encouraged to change their lifestyles to, e.g. cut greenhouse emissions. As well as showing what works, this research also tells us what does not. Much of what doesn't work has already been learnt the hard way by environmental NGOs.

For example, no one likes to be pushed or bullied and 'preachiness' is not a winning tactic. Positive campaigns like "We can solve the climate crisis", run by Al Gore's Alliance for Climate Protection, are a better idea. Seems obvious? Maybe - but other tricks are still being missed. For example, telling people about steps their peers are taking to make things better is often highly effective. Like it or not, most of us go with the herd. Meanwhile, other research suggests that human nature need not be as rapacious and short-

sighted as it sometimes appears: we are surprisingly ready to act in the interests of others and the natural world. Psychology, often denigrated as a "soft science", has a vital role to play as humankind grapples with a truly vexing problem of fostering sustainable behaviour. So it's better to employ its findings now than to turn to psychologists only when we need help in dealing with the distress of occupying a world that has passed dangerous social-ecological tipping points.

Text: Edited from "[Positive thinking for a cooler world](#)" (New Scientist: [Issue 2722](#))

For more information, tools, tips and discussions on how to foster sustainable behaviour through the use of environmental psychology, check out the [community-based social marketing website](#). They also host an excellent emailing list which facilitates quality discussion and information sharing on sustainability.



An example of the kind of cliché image which—whilst positive—probably wouldn't convince people to sign-up to your cause...
Image Source: <http://www.superiorcircles.com>

A collaborative COMPAS for cultural development

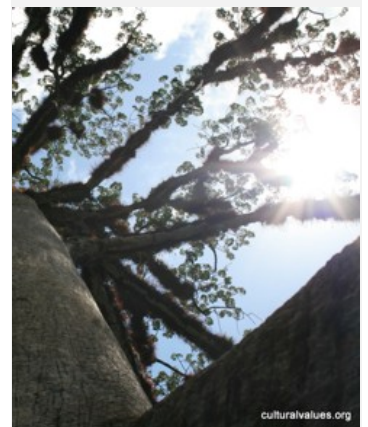
Netherlands: Cultural Values & Nature Initiative (CVNI) has been working with COMPAS since its conference on Endogenous Development and Biocultural Diversity in Geneva in 2006. At that time, CVNI itself was being created as a spin-off from research with IUCN focusing on integrating cultural and spiritual values in nature conservation strategies. Part of this work was published with COMPAS as part of a [book series on Worldviews and Sciences](#).

collaboration between COMPAS and CVNI. The two subsequently prepared a popular article outlining the importance of sacred sites in endogenous development and nature conservation. [The article](#) featured Guatemalan COMPAS partner Oxlajuj Ajpop. They had proposed a law for the recognition of Mayan sacred sites and worldviews with the Guatemalan Parliament. The proposal is currently in the process of being legalized and can be seen as a major achievement for indigenous peoples in their struggle for their right of self determination.

COMPAS is also contributing a case study to the sacred sites platform currently under development with CVNI. From collecting medicinal plants in sacred forests in Bolivia to cleansing bad spirits from people in sacred Zambian wetlands, the platform aims to bring out various forms of management of (a) sacred nature. As it turns out, almost all of COMPAS' global partners from South America, Africa and India have indicated the importance of sacred sites to their collective well-being.

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A common interest in the sacred dimension of nature gave rise to a closer



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EarthCollective is an affiliate of the Foundation for Sustainable Development

earthcollective.net

culturalvalues.org | eyes4earth.org | fsd.nl | ideastrust.org |
livinglandscapes.co.za

EarthCollective's Seasonal Supplement Newsletter is published four times per year on a seasonal basis. Your inclusion on this mailing list is either because you are associated with EarthCollective activities, have previously expressed interest in our work, or you know someone in the EarthCollective network. However, should you no longer wish to receive this newsletter or related updates, email: 'unsubscribe newsletter' to info@earthcollective.net. Any other feedback, comments, ideas for future news stories or newsletter subscriptions can also be mailed to: info@earthcollective.net (Seasonal Supplement Editor: Matthew Zylstra)

Poetry

RELISH OR PERISH
Scientific writing. Hardly overjoyed
"A means to an end"
A prerequisite to keep me employed
Publish or perish: the mantra rings loud
"Who will read this?"
Hush. All such questions cannot be allowed
Back of my mind thoughts not yet extinguished
"Must be a better way"
Or at least something that's more distinguished
Will it matter in the grand scheme of things?
"Keep your head down mate"
Eagles in a cage best not flap their wings
Unless one becomes a little more sage
"Go the Goethe way"
Pragmatic science for a coming age.

Piece

From the Collective Field:

A selection of photos from recent happenings



Quotes of the Quarter

Luck is preparedness meeting opportunity
- Unknown

Society is always taken by surprise at any new example of common sense
- Ralph Waldo Emerson

I suppose leadership at one time meant muscles; but today it means getting along with people
- Indira Gandhi

A true history of human events would show that a far larger proportion of our acts are the results of sudden impulses and accidents than of those reasons of which we do so much boast
- Myers Young Cooper



About EarthCollective

EarthCollective's vision statement is: to act as a catalyst for creating, enabling and facilitating initiatives that restore links between nature and human wellbeing. And simply to get positive ideas happening.

EarthCollective has formalised three inter-linking programmes: eye4earth, PRESENCE and the Cultural Values & Nature Initiative.

Cultural Values & Nature Initiative (CVNI):

CVNI is an action research project which aims to elicit cultural and spiritual perceptions of nature and the environment and integrate them into ecosystem management, nature conservation and policy.

eyes4earth:

eyes4earth.org is an education initiative aimed at creating awareness of the links between nature and our well-being. eyes4earth combines visuals and public participation to stimulate awareness and lasting pro-environmental behaviour.

PRESENCE (Living Lands - secretariat):

Participatory Restoration of Ecosystem Services & Natural Capital, Eastern Cape. PRESENCE functions as a collaborative South-North platform to support and catalyse new and existing programs for 'mainstreaming' the restoration of living landscapes to support rural livelihoods.

News in a Nutshell

South Africa:

Dieter Van den Broeck and Matthew Zylstra presented at the recent Thicket Forum. Dieter drew on former PRESENCE student Arjan Hassing's research on what are the key building blocks for a learning organization and how they might be applied to evolve PRESENCE in such a direction. Matthew introduced some basic marketing principles and looked at how these might be applied in order to better market thicket's true value ('worth').

Living Lands teamed up with CSIR (as part of their ongoing PRESENCE collaboration) to embark on an intensive interview process with municipal and district government representatives operating in the broader Baviaansklouf Mega-Reserve. The purpose was to gain insights into perceptions, priorities and planning for 'natural capital'. The team wishes to thank interviewees.

Matthew Zylstra presented his PhD proposal at Stellenbosch University in July. The topic of the talk was "Perceptions of synchronistic nature experience: a bridge for biodiversity conservation?" This research underpins the eyes4earth initiative.

Netherlands:

The proposed WUR Sustainability Minor is gaining momentum for a 2010 launch...

Events & Agenda

South Africa:

PRESENCE Workshop: 5-6th November 09.

Marijn Zwinkels will join Living Lands in mid-October. His role will be process manager for PRESENCE in the Baviaansklouf

The DLR researchers (see article Page 2) are returning to South Africa in September for the second phase of their fieldwork.

Matthew Zylstra & Dieter Van den Broeck will be engaged as co-instructors for the annual [Wildlands Studies Course](#) held in the Eastern Cape during October-November. The six-week course exposes U.S students to SA conservation fieldwork.

Netherlands:

Wageningen University's [Spearhead for Ecosystem & Landscape Services \(SELS\)](#) programme which co-funded PRESENCE in 2008 and 2009 will host a national symposium on ecoservices & policy on 29th Oct.

Bas Verschuuren will present [Diversity & Climate Change on Sacred Land. What can we learn from Aboriginal people?](#) 28th Sept

Moorea (French Polynesia):

Mahe Charles is investigating feasible financing options for implementing the local marine management plan. Due: Nov.