

SANPARKS SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH REPORT – 2006

The Social Science Research Unit saw dramatic changes over the year in order to play a more significant role in informing and guiding SANParks decision making in the People and Conservation division.

A social science research committee comprising academic specialists from a wide range of Universities was established. The Committee is functioning to satisfaction as constructive debates and quality recommendations are made, compiled and communicated to researchers. These recommendations are necessary in monitoring quality research and playing an educational role to researchers.

The Global Vision International and SANParks partnership has continued to provide top quality volunteers to the People and Conservation Units in Parks. The number of volunteers has doubled in the past year. An internship opportunity was created for members of the Richtersveld Community Conservancy in West Coast and Table Mountain National Parks to gain insight into Park management implementation.

Twenty-two Social Science Research projects were approved for implementation by University researchers in the following Parks:

Agulhas (1), Bontebok (1), Golden Gate (1), Kruger (8), Kgalagadi (3), Mapungubwe (2), Namaqua (1), Tsitsikamma (1), West Coast (1), Wilderness (1), Multi Park (2).

Five internal research studies were initiated internally.

The Treehouse project, which is a partnership between the Universities of Montana and KwaZulu Natal and SANParks, provided an additional fourteen, postgraduate, People and Conservation focused studies in Parks.

The Transboundary Protected Areas Initiative (TPARI) conference “*Social Research for Protected Areas*” was hosted in Skukuza by TPARI, IUCN, NRF and SANParks. Participants included senior researchers, (National and International), local Community representatives, academics, GO’s and NGO’s.

The 4th Kruger National Park Science Networking Meeting was held in Skukuza. The theme was “Understanding the future” and was hosted by SANParks and SAEON. This included the presentation of nine Social Science Research projects in Parks.

One internal academic research paper and five popular research articles were researched and written up.

Social Science Research opportunities and priorities, within the discipline of People and Conservation in SANParks, were promoted through conferences, tele-seminars and presentations to prospective researchers with particular emphasis on enabling access to Parks for research by students who come from previously disadvantaged backgrounds.

EXAMPLES OF CURRENT SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH IN SANPARKS

Algotsson, E.M. Wildlife conservation through people centred approaches to natural resource management and the control of Wildlife exploitation – Kruger and surrounding communities.

Arthur, C. Archaeological Survey of Bontebok National Park.

Dressler, D. Evaluating CBNRM along the Western boundary of GLTP, South Africa.

Hansen, H.S. Community Perceptions of the TEBA recruitment centre in Pafuri and the development of a public Cultural Heritage site in the GLTNP.

Kendal, A. Palaeolithic archaeology of the Geelbek Dunes, West Coast National Park.

Konrad, R. Peace Parks in Southern Africa and its influence on local, national and international relations – on the example of the Kgalaadi conservation area.

Karlsson, A. Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities of Women to Access Land through Land Reform in South Africa. – A case study of the Khomani San CPA and the effective participation of San Women.

Manyaka, M. The role of EE in promoting sustainable management of natural resources by rural communities neighbouring conservation areas – Makuleke –

Pickering, T & Kuman, K. Faunal Research, a component of K Kuman's ongoing project – Early stone age archaeology – Mapungubwe.

Poonan, U.U. A sociological analysis of the People and Conservation Directorate in SANParks 1994 to 2004.

Schmiedel, U. Protecting the endangered and locally endemic quartz field species on the Soebatsfontein commonage by participative research, exclusion of grazing and awareness rising.

Taljaard, S. SADC REEP research into environmental education responses risk and vulnerability.

Turner, R.L. States and Markets Revisited: Nature Tourism and the Local Political Economy in Botswana and South Africa.

Whande, W. Framing Biodiversity Conservation Discourses in South Africa: Emerging Realities and the Conflicting Agendas in the Great Limpopo Trans Frontier Conservation Area.