



UNIVERSITY OF
KWAZULU-NATAL



Supporting Nature-Based Enterprises at the Ntafufu, uMngazi and Mngazana Estuaries

A Short Description and Progress – September 2015

Introduction

With the support of the national Department of Environmental Affairs and CapeNature stakeholders in the Port St Johns Municipality have established estuary management plans for the Ntafufu, uMngazi and Mngazana Estuaries. It has been recognised by all that in poorly resourced municipalities external support for implementation of these estuary management plans is necessary. With that in mind, we applied for funding from the Critical Ecosystems Partnership Fund to support implementation efforts.

PJ Fielding (FieldWork) and Duncan Hay (University of KwaZulu-Natal) obtained a grant from the CEPF to institute activities that would help support nature-based enterprises that provide socio-economic opportunities to local communities and individuals. A set of criteria was established to guide the choice of enterprises, related primarily to practical issues of project implementation.

Following consultation with a range of business and community stakeholders in the Ntafufu, Port St Johns, uMngazi and Mngazana areas, we agreed that support would focus on the following:

- Improve the internal management and operation of the Mngazana estuary canoe trail that winds through the mangrove ecosystem
- Expand the Mngazana Mangrove Honey business to Ntafufu estuary
- Through the Port St Johns Forest Users Association, support craft enterprise development in the area (some raw material used in crafting is derived from estuaries)
- Determine the feasibility of a linked guided canoe trail and flyfishing enterprise at Ntafufu

The project has been running since April 2015. Progress is outlined below.

Progress

Canoe trails

Investigation indicated that the principal problem with the Mngazana canoe trail was the lack of serviceable canoes. The number of canoes was adequate but most of the canoes either had holes in the bottom or broken seats and gunwales. Guests at the uMngazi River Bungalows would book a mangrove canoe trail tour and then arrive at the mangroves to find that only three or four guests could be accommodated on a tour. This gave rise to complaints. In addition community members were stealing and damaging the canoes, and the operators were unable to repair them. Together with the four canoe operators, a two day fibre-glassing workshop was undertaken to make the entire canoe fleet serviceable and teach the operators to repair them when they break. All four

operators can now repair canoes using fibreglass and all the canoes are serviceable. All the materials required for canoe repair were left at the house of the chief operator. We have suggested that the guides and ourselves arrange a community meeting to bring to the attention of the chief the damage that vandalism causes to the canoe trail business.

The canoe trail operators at Mngazana are extremely knowledgeable about the environment and are capable of providing a wealth of information to clients on the trail. However, their delivery of information is poor and for a variety of reasons, few of the clients get to actually hear what the trail leader is saying. The two chief tour guides have been tutored in improving their delivery and a guided tour has been undertaken with each of them. One is now very good and the other one is improving. Through the CEPF project, the two chief canoe tour guides have been registered with the Field Guides Association of South Africa (FGASA). They will be tutored in the required course content and after the mandatory two month registration period arrangements will be made to have them sit for the Level 1 Nature Guide qualification. A First Aid certificate is mandatory and has been arranged through uMngazi River Bungalows.

Bee-keeping

Mngazana (Cwebweni) is the centre of a well-established beekeeping operation with hives located in the estuarine mangroves and surrounding area. Mangrove honey is a unique brand. The Cwebeni centre has all the necessary facilities and the permits to extract, process, and bottle honey. There are eight active, committed beekeepers and a local operations manager. The proposal funded by CEPF revolves around extending beekeeping operations to the mangroves of the Ntafufu estuary. The Ntafufu communities (Mtambalala Lujasu and Luphoku) would be responsible for the management of the Ntafufu hives. Extensive discussions have already been held between the Cwebeni beekeepers and potential Ntafufu beekeepers and these have included a one day beekeeping workshop at Cwebeni which was attended by five Ntafufu community members. Further discussions have been held with commercial beekeepers in the Eastern Cape, Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal. There is strong support for a beekeeping industry at Ntafufu. Ntafufu beekeepers need to be trained in the establishment of working hives and basic hive management procedures, and particularly in the science of maintaining healthy working hives. Three major problems must be addressed: The cost of purchasing beehives; the logistics of mentoring and managing Ntafufu beekeepers from Cwebeni when transport is not readily available; the necessity to locate hives in a place where they will not be vandalised.

Applications to the Ackerman Foundation and the Eastern Cape Development Corporation for hive funding have not been successful. However, we have determined that with judicious use of the CEPF funding we can probably purchase about 25 operational hives. Arrangements with a local Ntafufu farmer (Gordon Date) and a commercial beekeeper (Gary Edwards of Assagay Honey Farm) with interests in the Ntafufu area were made to supply hives, locate them in a safe place, train local beekeepers, and manage the hives and honey production process.

The first 10 hives have been placed on a hill on the Date farm where they will be safe and are relatively protected from the wind. From here the bees can easily access the mangroves along the estuary banks, the tomato fields that form the major Date cash crop, as well as a variety of indigenous forest vegetation. The hives appear to be healthy and active and supers have been placed on eight of the ten. The bee populations in two hives need to grow a little larger before the addition of supers. Arrangements have been made to buy ten more working hives from Assagay Honey Farm and five empty hives into which locally captured swarms will be introduced.

Three local beekeepers (one each from the communities of Mtambalala Lujasu and Lumphoku) have been chosen to carry the beekeeping forward. The necessary beekeeping protective gear has been purchased and the prospective beekeepers were employed in the initial setup of the hives. Arrangements have been made through the project to pay the prospective beekeepers for their work until such time that the sale of honey will provide sufficient financial incentive. Gary Edwards will return in December with honey extraction equipment. Gordon Date has agreed to provide a room for the processing activities. Assagay honey farm will buy all the honey.

It must be understood that beekeeping necessarily involves quite long periods when the bees must be left to get on with the honey production process, followed by periods of quite intense activity when the honey is extracted, hives cleaned and repaired and any adjustments made to the individual bee populations. Gary Edwards and Gordon Date will involve the local community beekeepers in all activities relating to honey production and hive maintenance and in this way their skills and knowledge base will be built.

Fibreglass Workshop: Repairing broken canoes at the home of Nyaniso Albert Lazola with Nyaniso Lazola, Nkululeko Dambusa, N. Bongisizwe and Donto Nyameko.



Prospective Community beekeepers in their protective gear prior to unloading and siting the first Ntafufu bee hives.





Beehives sited on Gordon Date's farm at the Ntafufu estuary.

Two meetings have been held with representatives of the Port St Johns Tourism Forum. The beekeeping activities at Mngazana will be advertised on the website and negotiations with the Ackerman Foundations and the Cwebeni Project Manager are under way to make tours to the Cwebeni Honey Centre available to tourists in Port St Johns. The beekeeping activities at Ntafufu will also be advertised but at this stage there is not sufficient infrastructure to undertake tours to the site.

Craft

Two meetings/working sessions have been conducted with Port St Johns craft producers and marketers. The group comprises about 30 individuals and is fairly well-organised and is trading through a retail outlet at Port St Johns. It also supplies product to third parties who market it in the Western Cape. The major needs are training in the management of a small business, product diversification/refinement and increased markets. All this requires a long term approach. In the short-term:

- Further working sessions will be conducted with the group focusing on business management and product diversification.

- A potential new market has been identified in Durban. The crafters will be linked to this market.
- A proposal to support this group and four others in KZN and the Eastern Cape has been submitted to the Lottery.

Ntafufu fly-fishing and canoe trail operation

The feasibility of this is dependent on the cooperation and leadership of the local land-owner, Gordon Date, who is able to supply accommodation, boats and coordinate local logistics. While initially enthusiastic he is now of the view that the fishing potential is limited and would not sustain a catch-and-release fly-fishing business. The option to develop this and a linked canoe-trail operation has not been dismissed entirely but will be pursued in the long term.

Any queries please contact Dr Peter Fielding (fieldwork@mweb.co.za).



Field Guides Association of Southern Africa (NPC)



Physical Address:
343 Surrey Avenue
Petrob House
East wing, 5th floor
Ferndale

Postal Address:
Postnet Suite 111
Private Bag x04
Fontainebleau
2032

Reg No: 2004/003844/08
024 - 773 - NPO
VAT Reg No: 4400224855

Email: membership@fgasa.org.za
Tel: 011 – 886 8245
Fax: 011 – 886 8084
Website: www.fgasa.org.za

SOUTH AFRICAN MEMBERSHIP (2015) (For individuals 18 years and older)

The purpose of this membership form is to obtain from you the information we need to register you as a member of FGASA. We also need to collect information from you which is required by CATHSSETA for statistical and registration reasons.

PLEASE FILL IN THE FORM PROPERLY BY:

- Completing all sections of the form **CLEARLY** in **CAPITAL OR block letters** (Illegible forms will NOT be processed). If you are international but are LIVING in SA, please fill in the SA membership form.
- Signing the form including the Code of Conduct section.
- Attaching to the form your **proof of payment**. **ALL** bank charges are to be for **YOUR** account.
- Attaching to the form your **certified copy of ID or passport and proof of highest education**.
- Attaching to the form your valid First Aid certificate if you already have one (required for FGASA qualification).
- Emailing a recent Jpeg photo or attaching to the form a passport size photo for your membership card. **DO NOT** fax photos.
- Marking the Nature Guide or Marine Guide tick box according to which study material you require.
- You need to register as a member with FGASA at least TWO months before being allowed to write the FGASA exams.
- Exam fees are NOT included in the registration fee. Please see exam application form.
- When making a payment/deposit **CLEARLY state your name** so that your payment can be located on the bank statement.
- All prices are inclusive of VAT.
- Annual subscription fees are payable 1 year from registration date, otherwise membership will no longer be valid.

<input type="checkbox"/> LEVEL 1 NATURE GUIDE	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registration (including Logbook and General information guide) • Annual Subscription • Level 1 Nature Guide Training Manual • Workbook & Support Pack • Guiding Skills Manual • Postage 	
TOTAL amount payable	R1365

<p align="center">BANKING DETAILS</p> <p align="center">FIRST NATIONAL BANK Branch 260 231 ACC NUMBER: 6249 6791 346</p> <p align="center">ALL BANK CHARGES TO BE FOR YOUR ACCOUNT.</p>
--

Exam fees **excluded**: R380 (See separate exam application form)

<input type="checkbox"/> Name of Training Provider (if attending a course): _____ Start date of the course: _____ End date of the course: _____ <p align="center">OR</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Distance Learning (if not attending a course) Start date: _____ End date: _____ <small>(Registration date) (Estimated)</small>



Directors: Vernon Cresswell (Chairman) • Nicolette van Brakel (Managing Director) • Brian Serrao (Std. Director) • Juan Pinto (Director) • Stephen Beal (Director) • Christa Panos (Director) **Executive Committee:** James Steyn (LN) • Brian Colling (Gaut) • Chris Reynecke (EC) • Mark Broodryk (LS) • Christa Panos (KZN-N) • Siegfried Schäfer (WC) • Bennet de Klerk (NW) • Nils Kure (KZN-S) • Grant Hine