



Proceedings from UCPP 16th Quarterly meeting – 08th March 2017

Methodist hall, Matatiele

Theme: The way ahead

1. Welcome: Sinegugu Zukulu (UCPP chairperson) welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising

Matters arising:-

Tanya gave a brief overview of the EWT EGS training to follow the session. It is using citizen science tools to monitor ecosystem goods and services in the landscape. It is open to anyone.

Minutes read and adopted

Correction: Lumko presented on behalf of INR not LIMA

Introductions: Introductions done by everyone, see attached attendance register

Apologies: Joyce Loza (MDTP), DWS colleagues

a. Election of a new chairperson

Sine explained that the role of chairperson is open to anyone representing an organisation in the UCPP, neither it be from government organisation or municipality. The location of the person in terms of residence is not important, as long as the person will be able to fulfil their duties. Preferable for a civil society rep as not restricted by departmental protocols.

Suggestions for a person to be elected:-

- Sine to continue being a chairperson
- Should be someone who is constantly in Matatiele as the UCPP “headquarters” is here.
- Someone from civil society in terms of the autonomy of government departments.
- Someone with institutional support where they are working

- Someone local, multi-field orientated. Must be someone who is interested and active, not just one who understands the role.
- Someone who is respected and has a voice.
- Good mediator in terms of conflict
- Someone who is not afraid and can make things happen: an activist

Nicky McLeod proposed that Sine continue as chairperson, although contrary to MoU guidelines, as there is no-one who can replace and his qualities, and that partners provide any required support. Quorum agreed, and Sine was unanimously re-elected and agreed to continue being the UCPP chairperson, but requested to have at least 2 people who will be his succession plan or a deputy chairperson. Been chairperson since the beginning of UCPP in 2013. Grateful to Merida for driving the research forum especially because it can continue without him being present. Grateful to ERS for all the background secretariat and communication functions.

Nominated deputy chairpersons:- Dean (DEDEAT), Sissie (ERS), Thando (CSA), Basi (ANDM) and Nolufefe (SaveAct). Sissie declined because she is already part of the ERS secretariat.

Elected and accepted the challenge: Dean, Basi and Nolufefe as co-deputies.

WWF will support secretariat function through ERS for 2.5 years, and ERS will continue to support the chairpersons.

b. DWS classification process

Presented by Matome Mahashe for DWS national in Pretoria. Classification has been done for Mpumalanga and Western Cape. No clear public participation process for the RQO. Putting together a guide as a framework on how to involve the public effectively.

The RQO looks at the state of the ecological infrastructure and the catchment and what they desire their future to be like. It also looks at the level of protection and allocation of water. The study has started and will end in July 2018. All sub-catchments included, encouraging more participation from stakeholders. Ideally want catchments to be class A so that management requirements and compliance can be high. Working on strengthening public participation, government to have more effective stakeholder engagement and awareness to be able to influence the process.

The National Water Act aims to abide the human constitutional right to a healthy environment while pushing for the re-dress for the end users. The public should have more say in what the government is going to gazette.

Nicky: appreciate the efforts by DWS to keep UCPP stakeholders up to date and involved; had technical session here on Monday with Dr Patsy Sherma, the DWS consultant for the process. Encouraged everyone to please check website and submit inputs and comments to Patsy.

Robert Mnika: Understand the DWS implementing mandate. What action is DWS taking to prevent the proposed gas exploration application here in Matatiele, especially with the work that is being done to conserve water and as Matatiele the only water factory in SA? Are there any communications with PETRO SA? We see little that the department is doing to prevent dam siltation and water contamination, reducing water quality and quantity. Also, no interaction with DEA to prevent soil erosion, veld fires.

Matome: EC has not yet established a CMA where such matters can be discussed. There is currently a proto-CMA that consists of DWS officials. The proto-CMA is there to provide by-laws and management plans. Advises to engage with the DWS to organise awareness as they work well with civil society and can help to lobby DEA. Some of the problems identified are; projects are rushed and public participation is not effective. The local municipality's environmental section should work with DWS in order to pursue such awareness. Have civil society monitor with the process reviewed every 5 years.

3. Update and reports from partners

a. Summary of the next phase strategic planning on 7th March (Prof. Nick King)

The agenda was looking at the past, building onto its lessons into the future. Evaluating the key objectives and activities done over the past phase 1-5 years. Dartmouth college students also did a useful review of the strategy last October. Some of the objectives such payment for ecosystem services (PES) not yet happening for valid reasons. Many achievements and strengths and were noted, particularly strong collaboration.

As per the discussions yesterday, a "desired optimal" Vubu catchment summary from strategic plan recorded by groups is:- integrated planning; healthy ecological infrastructure integrity; optimal water management; happy, healthy and empowered people through adapted forms of PES; Green economy beneficiation. This is the 'high road' option.

What we don't want to see in the Vubu catchment (Low road):-extractive industries; degradation; fragmented planning and lack of enforcement; vulnerable communities; corruption; lack of recognition of ecological infrastructure and ecosystem services. Noted that ecosystem services not equal to ecosystem assets.

Identified key intervention for UCPP to provide: integrated management plans; integrated ecological interventions; catchment based info and support for communities and agencies; green economy promotion; broader participation and a working group.

The proposed future for the UCPP is to:-keep going along same process; re-ignite MoUs; have broader ownership and accountability from partners; explore becoming a CMF.

Nicky: how do we link upper and lower catchment? Do we replicate, expand or create another 'UCPP' sister downstream?

Sine: suggested that we get a forum in OR Tambo district, and maybe in Port St Johns. WESSA is already working there and they are also participating here. Has been trying to get them here to see what we doing. Currently working with them on climate change resilience, OR Tambo can maybe coordinate the downstream group.

Nick: decide whether you want several geographic sub-groups (upper, western, coastal), or working group, to be part of the bigger UCPP, if it would add value.

Robert: also make initiatives practical on the ground. Mobilise resources in terms of eco-tourism, making sure our communities benefit include recycling too. With the proposed mining application, need to strongly propose practical alternative initiatives to mining. Meat Naturally is already a working alternative that people are benefiting from.

Sine: suggested that one deputy can work/focus on green economy. Report process regularly and monitor the process.

Kennedy: how to keep financial flows? Green Trust and SANBI support for now, what beyond? Nicky said we have survived financial droughts between donors since CEPF start-up, and UCPP mainly operates on a voluntary basis. Funding support adds huge value as it allows for gatherings such as learning exchanges, quarterly meetings, communications, awareness events, etc. Partners good at in-kind 'sharing the load' but some carry heavier load like ERS and CSA.

Sine: regular liaison with UEIP and partners that are based here. Share opportunities where they are. Urged everyone with any helpful ideas that could broaden the work being done here.

b. ECPTA Stewardship: introduction and plans (Themba Nsibane, ECPTA)

The stewardship program started in November 2016 with funding from GEF5 SANBI and GEF5 PARKS. 5 sites selected, NE grassland and Katberg Amathole. Working with facilitators that will facilitate the stewardship process. The manager is Malaika working with an ecologist and a legal person.

The ECPTA has an annual target of achieving 197 000 ha PA. Eastern Cape committed to achieve 30 000 ha by 2019 from GEF5 SANPARKS, as proclaimed protected areas. The project was supposed to start in 2014. It is a voluntary process with willing landowners. The government used to purchase land but now there is not enough funds to continue. ECPAES (Eastern Cape Protected Area Expansion Strategy) are developed by ECPTA. SANPARKS funding for NE. Areas that Tracey has been working on that fall out of the focus for the purpose of this funding can be incorporated. Declaration is done by the MEC, ECPTA facilitates the process. For the PE (Protected Environment) declaration, landowners can come together into contractual agreement, join together like the Cedarville PE. Stewardship implementation procedure involves biodiversity assessment that done by an ecologist which

gives clear explanation whether an area qualifies as a nature reserve or a PE, but it is up to the landowner to decide which one they want.

Declaration process also involves public participation process for 60 days. Consultation with other stakeholders that may be affected is also done. Then it is gazetted in national and local papers for 60 days. NEMPA allows for process to happen and then areas are added onto the PA database, with management plans reviewed annually.

North Eastern Grasslands sites under negotiation:-

- c. Chevy Chase – communal land in Mount Fletcher area. The community had applied to declare the area as a Nature reserve but biodiversity study being conducted to determine if the area qualifies or not.
- d. Lady grey site – private landowner to declare a PA
- e. Potential watershed area along Lesotho boundary above 1800m contour as the source of the water factory.

Assistance needed for the UCPP area:-

- Identification of landowners that need support for declaration
- Information sharing with private/ communal landowner
- Establishment of relationship and building trust, collaborate with UCPP members in areas where they are working
- Landowner contact details that fall within the priority areas even those outside willing to join stewardship

There are challenges they face, such as area being under land claim exploration application.

Questions and discussions

Merida: what are the benefits to the landowner for proclaiming an area?

Themba: the benefit is that, ECPTA covers the declaration process; help with the drafting of management plans but this does not include funding for the maintenance process for example, alien clearing; and there is a lot of funding available/ assistance in applying for funds.

Robert: can ECPTA assist here in declaring this area as a PA. This will help reduce stock theft. Also there are benefits in gaming which will bring economic benefits, and stop fracking applications. Speed up the process in this area as it is under threat and provide future support.

Noti: who owns the land in communal lands and what are the benefits for them?

Themba: the land in a communal set-up belongs to community, can be presented by a trust or CPA. A community nominates committee responsible for management.

Merida: communal land is owned by the state hence there is no title deed. CPA is given a platform to represent the community.

c. Meat Naturally update (Gerbrand Nel, MNP)

Please refer to presentation annexed.

- Interim operations underway to establish business model, working with partners CSA, ERS and INR to establish supply from communities linked to managed grazing and agreements.

- Other future opportunities include mobile abattoir

Questions and discussions

Sissie: how far have you gone with countries outside South Africa?

Gerbrand: currently engaging with GIZ who ERS is working with in Lesotho, mainly trying to secure equipment. It has been done in the past where SA buys from Lesotho, still investigating other factors that need to be considered, such as animal health, cross border issues and other stuff. In Kenya, still engaging with the CSA staff working there. Looking at grazing systems and agreements.

Dr Kuriah: do you assist the farmer to get to market. How do you maintain weight condition?

Gerbrand: local NGO partners provide groundwork to build up grazing management plans and facilitate auctions and animal husbandry support.

Kennedy: its good to see the good relationship you have with farmers and working together with them especially in a communal set-up. This should maybe be incorporated into RDI as case study.

Gerbrand: NGOS and MNP have good relationship and working well with communities. There are challenges but the idea is to bring them together more effectively.

Nolufefe: are the MNP activities limited to areas where you working? What about other areas?

Gerbrand: MNP advertises to other partners and entities working in other areas, very flexible. Any community interested we can work with.

Matome: is the success because of the type of breed in the area, Nguni?

Gerbrand: the idea is to maintain the breed that is the resilient Nguni mix, introducing a different breed can be tricky, but exploring options.

Sine: success depends on the engagement with the communities. The aim is to help people visualise what they want. There are conservation NGOs with their own mandate and the community also has their own. Started with the wattle removal project, brought in livestock owners in order to use livestock as a restoration tool as the key partners in rangeland management. With better management, added more benefits beyond wages, and unlocking some of their constraints such as limited access to market. This is not just focusing on job creation for a few through wattle clearing for a short period but came in as other means to benefit wider rural land users for longer term.

Visualise the same future with them. Look at their willingness to conserve the environment through traditional practices such as rotational grazing which are some of the things that will underpin sustainability and attract MNP to that area.

d. WWF Nedbank Green Trust project update (Nicky McLeod, ERS)

Please refer to presentation attached. ERS is appointed as executants of a 2,5 year project with R4,6 million, based on objectives which emerged from UCPP efforts. The objectives for the WWF project include improved stewardship of water source areas along watershed (such as protected areas and grazing agreements with communities who can then supply MNP), building capacity of local government to protect ecological infrastructure, building green economy opportunities including involvement of youth excluded from tertiary opportunities, and supporting UCPP collaboration and advocacy efforts.

Nick King: commented that WWF project target 'blobs' are the Strategic water Source Areas, make up 8% of the SA land and produce over 50% of the water. Other 50% is scattered and difficult to conserve. WWF investment is thus concentrated in critical areas, and supportive of activities which benefit livelihoods and water security.

Nicky: the target area for this project links three blobs and ERS is pushing to have them revised to include the vital wetlands in the upper catchment and the watershed. WWF willing to explore their inclusion as Matatiele is endorsed as a water factory by the municipal council.

Dr Valph: can you explore other options such as adding game farming which has a lot of economic benefits for the communities

Nicky: yes, this has been mentioned with ECPTA colleagues.

Merida: re Ecofutures: are there any franchise opportunities for EC or KZN? Do they need agents? This could be an opportunity for young people to link up and become entrepreneurs. Be added to the Green economy innovations.

Nelson: is there a biodiversity database? Is it accessible especially to policy makers?

Nicky: all available data is captured on the UCPP website, including some spatial data where available with protocols how to reference it but lots of gaps. The www.umzimvub.org website provides people with opportunities to share data related to the catchment: please make use of it to share and cache projects and case studies: Tsoanelo is the website administrator.

e. Dartmouth College update: October 2017 (Sinegugu Zukulu, CSA)

Dartmouth College is an ivy league institution from the US. The students came to Matatiele last year for the first round of their African Foreign Study Programme. There were focusing on 6 topics and they gave great feedback of their findings. A second group of students are coming during first week of October 2017. UCPP research forum to come up with topics that they will work on, and students present them at end of week. From now until June meeting people can start thinking of topics they would like the students to work on and send them to Merida who will scan them down to 6 topics. On the day they are giving feedback, would like to have more stakeholders represented. Last year there was a poor turn-up when they presented. Maybe move the June quarterly meeting a bit further. The research forum to be around when they arrive so that they can present to them. Merida to co-ordinate.

Dr Kuriah: suggested that the focus to be on NRM project.

Nick: what level are the students?

Sine: undergraduate second year students. Proposes WSU students to work with them as great opportunity for them to partner. Their calibre of work is very high and would be a great benefit to our local students. It also an opportunity for Rhodes university to establish a relationship.

f. UCPP Research group update (Dr Merida Roets, SR)

Merida: Research forum provides platform to interact, and to collaborate on publishing articles. We have more focus on supporting better implementation practise. Have set up RESEARCH page on the website, which includes:

- Expertise across partners – upload your CV – sell yourself!
- Funding opportunities – call for proposals also shared through email posts
- Requests for collaboration between partners for research opportunities
- Progress tab – what's happening, current research progress such as chichi control

People to engage actively and share opportunities through Research Email group

Dartmouth college- topics must be something they will be doing within 5 days. Research within NRM (keep in mind the length of time when choosing topics)

4. Collaboration and Opportunities

a. SANBI RDI platform introduction (Dan'sile Cindi, SANBI)

Funding from DST and SANBI for 2.5 years. Focusing on ecological infrastructure in the uMzimvubu catchment. Aims at strengthening catchment forums. Promoting learning exchanges between catchments. SANBI have appointed ERS as the platform co-ordinator. Strengthens the research group and UCPP learning exchange efforts to reach wider uMzimvubu catchment.

b. NLEIP introduction (Mike Powell, Rhodes)

Water Affairs and DEA working with Rhodes in restoring and securing the proposed Ntabelanga dam catchment, which covers the Maclear, Ugie area, and is part of the uMzimvubu T3 catchment. Has similar problems to uMzimvubu, erosion, land degradation. Facing dam development where R12 billion is invested but not yet reinvested into ecological infrastructure. The vision does not incorporate communities effectively. Aiming to bring everyone into same understanding, and learn from UCPP partners' successes in community based restoration. Have a drafted framework: to be shared in more detail at RDI platform meeting this afternoon

5. Upcoming events and announcement from partners

a. National water week – “walking for water” on 14th March (Thando Msomi, CSA)

Planning to celebrate National water week at 3 areas with 9 schools. Currently working together with these stakeholders on the plenary ERS, CSA, ANDM, MLM, WESSA, and DEDEAT. The aim is to engage with schools in areas where we work, i.e. Mzongwana, Mvenyana and Ongeluksnek. Planning to do a river walk along a stretch of a river about 3 km doing the following activities along the way: pH, temperature, miniSASS, Riparian Health Assessment (RHA) and turbidity. Will have 3 teams consisting of team leader and assistants. Will engage with learners from grade 7 to 9, each school to bring 10 learners and 2 teachers. So far schools have been identified, only left with sending invitations to the schools. Anyone is welcome to join. Will be very hands-on, and provide some info on river status. Mainly as an awareness and active engagement activity, encouraging kids to get closer to water sources and respect and protect them.

b. Sustaining the Wild coast in the mouth of Vubu (Val)

SWC have been operating in the wild coast for 15 years, 5 years developing tourism development plan. The vision is focusing on how to use what is already there to strengthen it. Have 4 focus areas viz education; training; entrepreneurship and local job creation.

c. Reminder: EGS monitoring tool kit training participants to meet at hall after lunch

- d. **Reminder:** RDI and research group participants to meet at Resthaven guesthouse after lunch
- e. **Reminder:** EGS comparative analysis training and workshop will be held on 9th and 10th March, here at Methodist Hall, starting 9am tomorrow.

Next meeting date: 21st June 2017

Venue: Scientific Roets AgriSPACE near Kokstad

Meeting adjourned and lunch served! ☺

