



## 1 INTRODUCTION

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The fourth People and Parks Conference convened from the 29<sup>th</sup> August to the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2010 in King Bekuzulu Hall at the University of Zululand, Richards Bay KwaZulu Natal Province. The conference follows on from the third conference held in Mafikeng, North West Province in 2008 as part of the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) programme of work on People and Parks.

The conference was convened to take stock of the progress made with the implementation of the People and Parks Programme since 2003, with a specific focus on progress made since 2008. The conference aimed to celebrate and showcase success stories from around the country for further replication in other provinces and to share lessons learnt from all projects as a means of addressing the remaining challenges. The conference also sought to acknowledge existing strategic partnerships and to develop new ones to support the People and Parks Programme.

The overarching goal of the conference was to reconfirm the centrality of the People and Parks Programme to the national transformation and development agenda for the Biodiversity Sector and provide to a platform for engagement amongst People and Parks stakeholders around ongoing concerns.

In summary, the conference aimed to:

- Take stock of the **progress**;
- Celebrate and **showcase** the success **stories** for future replication;
- Share **lessons learnt** as a means to addressing remaining challenges;
- Acknowledge existing **strategic partnerships** and develop new ones to support the People and Parks Programme;
- Reconfirm the centrality of the People and Parks Programme in the **national transformation and development agenda** for the Biodiversity Sector; and
- Provide a **platform** for People and Parks stakeholders to engage with ongoing programme concerns.

## 1.1 Conference Agenda

### 1.1.1 Day 1

The conference was opened by a gala dinner for all delegates. The gala dinner centred on addresses by the honourable Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs, Ms Buyelwa Sonjica and His Majesty, King Goodwill Zwelitini.

Prior to the conference, representatives from all community trusts and organisations met to discuss their concerns and co-ordinate their engagement with conference proceedings. This meeting was not minuted as part of the conference, but the resolutions of the discussion were presented by the community on Day 2 in the form of a list of community concerns.

The rest of the conference was divided into three plenary sessions on day two, a plenary session and three concurrent site visits on day three, and two plenary sessions on day four. The plenary sessions covered a broad range of themes and discussions, including presentations by international guests, provincial departments and community representatives and addresses by the Honourable Minister, Ms Buyelwa Sonjica and the Honourable Deputy Minister, Mme Rejoice Mabudafhasi.

### 1.1.2 Day 2

**Plenary Session 1:** Plenary Session 1 was opened by welcome addresses by the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Zululand Prof Fikile Mazibuko and the Mayor of Umhalthuze Local Municipality Mayor Zakhele Mngayi, who welcomed delegates to Richards Bay and the University. The session continued with presentations by the Honourable Minister and Deputy Minister and presentations from People and Parks strategic partners Pick 'n Pay, the National Lotteries Board and the Department of Basic Education. These presentations culminated in the re-launch of the Kids in Parks Programme and the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the Department of Environmental Affairs, the Department of Basic Education, Pick n Pay and SANParks. The People and Parks Publication was launched during this session.

Plenary Session 1	
Address of the People and Parks Programme and launch of the People and Parks Publication	Ms <b>Rejoice Mabudafhasi</b> Deputy Minister: Water and Environmental Affairs
Importance of education in the conservation of natural resources	Prof <b>Linda Chisholm</b> , Advisor to the Minister of Basic Education
Pick 'n Pay and Kids in Parks	<b>Gareth Ackerman</b> , Chairperson Pick 'n Pay
National Lotteries Fund	<b>Prof Nevhutanga</b> , Chairperson National Lottery Board
Land Reform and Conservation	<b>Ms Tumi Seboka</b> , Representative for the Minister of Rural Development and Land Reform
Governments Transformation Agenda on	<b>Ms Buyelwa Sonjica</b> , Minister Water and

Biodiversity and Conservation	Environmental Affairs
Signing of the Kids in Parks MoU	
Launch of the National Co-Management Framework	
Healthy People, Healthy Parks	<b>Dr David Mabunda</b> , Chief Operations Officer South African National Parks

**Plenary Session 2:** Plenary Session 2 included two case study presentations by international guests, Mr Ashish Kothari from the World Conservation Union (IUCN) in India and Ms Refiloe Ntsohi from the Ministry of Tourism, Environment and Culture in Lesotho. These presentations provided delegates with details of people and parks type programmes from around the world, giving the People and Parks Programme an international context.

Plenary Session 2	
Community Conserved Areas	Mr Ashish Kothari, International Union for the Conservation of Nature
Lessons from Lesotho	Ms Refiloe Ntsohi, Ministry of Tourism, Environment and Culture, Lesotho

**Plenary Session 3:** Plenary Session 3 was originally allocated to report backs from all provincial protected area management authorities on the status of People and Parks Programmes in their provinces. However, following community concerns regarding the failure of the Minister of Rural Development and Land Reform to arrive to note concerns about his departments role in resolving People and Parks related concerns, it was agreed that it was more important to address community concerns directly with the honourable members present. In light of this, the National Steering Committee of Community Representatives presented a list of community concerns from each province. Following the presentation of these concerns, representatives for the provincial management authorities were invited to respond. The honourable Minister, Ms Buyelwa Sonjica then closed the session with a response from the National Department of Environmental Affairs.

Plenary Session 3	
Community concerns from all nine provinces	Mr Mhlaba, Chairperson National Steering Committee for the Community Representatives from all provinces
Protected area management authorities responses to concerns from all provinces	
A response from the Department of Environmental Affairs	Ms Buyelwa Sonjica, Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs

### 1.1.3 Day 3

**Plenary Session 4:** Plenary Session 4 included a series of parallel discussion by delegates on the five themes selected as being of critical importance to the success of the People and Parks Programme. Delegates divided themselves into groups and participated in discussions on strengthening the protected area network; rural development in the context of protected areas; land reform and co-management; capacity building awareness and education; and financing mechanisms and partnerships for conservation.

Plenary Session 4		
Parallel Session 1: Strengthening the protected areas network	Co-Chairs: Mr Hastings Chikoko,(IUCN);Dr Tanya Abrahamse, (SANBI)	
Parallel Session 2: Rural development in the context of protected areas	Co-Chairs: Ms Tumi Seboka, (RLCC) & Mr Johan Mettler, (SALGA)	
Parallel Session 3: Land reform and co-management	Co-Chairs: Mr Tele Maphoto, RLCC & Mr Nathi Mpongose,(NHTL)	
Parallel Session 4: Capacity building, awareness and education	Co-Chairs: Dr Allan Boyd & Mr Andrew Zaloumis	
Parallel Session 5: Financing mechanisms and partnerships for conservation	Co-Chair: Ms Lucille Meyer, (CapeNature); Mr Kule Chitepo, (Resource Africa) & Dr Guy Preston (WfW)	

**Field Trips:** Following the parallel session, the delegates divided into groups to visit three sites near Richards Bay with successful people and parks related programmes. These included visits to iSimangaliso Wetland Park, Nselweni Bush Camp in Hluhluwe Imfolozi and Somkhanda.

Field Trips
iSimangaliso Wetland Park
Nselweni Bush Camp
Somkhanda

### 1.1.4 Day 4

**Plenary Session 5:** Plenary Session 5 provided an opportunity for feedback and discussion regarding the parallel sessions on Day 3. Representatives from each group presented the overall findings of each discussion group focusing on what has worked, what has not worked, and what is the way forward for each thematic area.

Plenary Session 5
Feedback from Parallel Session 1: Strengthening the protected areas network
Feedback from Parallel Session 2: Rural development in the context of protected areas
Feedback from Parallel Session 3: Land reform and co-management
Feedback from Parallel Session 4: Capacity building, awareness and education

Feedback from Parallel Session 5: Financing mechanisms and partnerships for conservation

**Plenary Session 6:** Plenary Session 6 closed the conference with an overview of conference proceedings by the Honourable Deputy Minister Mme Rejoice Mabudafhasi and a closing address by the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Zululand, Prof Fikile Mazibuko.

## 1.2 Conference Delegates

The conference was attended by a range of delegates from government departments, community trusts, nongovernmental organisations, donor organisations and the private sector. For a full list of organisations represented see Appendix 1

