

Project: Alliance for Wetland (AllWet RES) 2012-2015

MSc Thesis for the field season 2013/2014:

Landscape Planning On the Edge

Possibilities, limits and conflicts of applying planning instruments for sustainable land use and nature conservation in rural areas in South Africa



Supervisors:

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Advisors:

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Background:

The large parts of the coastal plains of Maputaland (Kwazulu-Natal, South Africa) is inhabited by the Tembe people, one of the tribes in the country with still very strong and powerful tribal structures and hierarchy. Due to the specific historical development together with the adverse natural conditions of the region (poor sandy soils and variable rainfall with evapotranspiration exceeding precipitation) the Tembe community is of the poorest in South Africa with very high levels of unemployment. This is the main reason why the small-scale subsistence farming is still very frequent in the region.

Because of the sterile dune sand soils, people use the interdunal wetlands for farming and gardening. Outside of the strictly protected areas (as the World Heritage site iSimangaliso Wetland Park) the majority of the wetlands are either already destroyed or are seriously affected by the subsistence or semi-commercial farming practices. The deep drainage and the non-sustainable use of peat soils cause accelerated wetland destruction and contribute to the overall desertification of the area.

Even though there are in South Africa well developed legal instruments for wise landscape use and nature protection (National Environmental Management Act, , National Water Act, Conservation of Agricultural Resources Act and various land use planning instruments) and even though there is very advanced policy on the protection and management of wetlands, they are applied mainly in developed areas, commercial agricultural areas or in areas with

insignificant tribal power. The enforcement of land planning instruments for sustainable land use and nature protection in areas with still strong tribal culture is very difficult and significantly limited due to the existing dual governance system of South Africa. The implementation of the state governance system and decisions fails often due to the resistance of the tribal authorities and there is very often no the will to force the implementation of policies by law because of political reasons.

In the region around Manguzi (which is also the location of the Tembe Tribal Authority) land use planning does not apply at all. The land is used either arbitrary or by the decision of the Nkosi (King of Tembe) or the Indunas (members of tribal council), who have the right to give the communal (tribal) land to persons for long term use. Not the usual criteria for the land use such as nature conditions, vulnerability of the area, or protection status are decisive for the selection of plots for farming or living but their criteria of accessibility, distance to the housing area or the actual fertility of the soil.

This practice, together with the substantially increasing population density in the area, cause an immense unplanned urban sprawl (Zersiedelung) and the non sustainable land use leads to the overall land destruction. In case of wetlands these damages are often irreversible or only hardly reparable.

Successful attempts took place recently in Swaziland to involve tribal authorities and the local communities in the land use planning process using a sensitive participative approach (refer to LOWER USUTHU SUSTAINABLE LAND MANAGEMENT PROJECT – a Government of Swaziland initiative housed by SWADE) that are very encouraging.

Main aim of the study:

It is hardly possible to enforce land use planning and nature conservation policies in the tribal areas just by applying the law. An intercommunicative and participative approach is essential for mutual understanding of needs, values and limitations. Only a harmonized and cross-sectoral approach may lead to an acceptance of planning tools within the tribal life.

The main aim of the MSc study is

- to show the obstacles caused by the dual governance system in South Africa on the example of conservation and land use planning (in the area of Manguzi, KZN)
- to test the potential accessibility of the tribal authorities for the idea of the intercommunicative & participative development of land use plans in their region.

(If applicable, the results of this “feasibility study” shall be used for the preparation of a larger international long-term project)

Working steps:

1. Review all relevant existing policies and legislation related to the sustainable land management and nature conservation across all government departments and local authorities
2. Prepare an ideal (theoretical) land use management plan for a defined land segment in the Manguzi area as a basis for the further discussions with stakeholders

3. Get know criteria and limitation for land use from the local community (meetings with the tribal authority; workshops with local community, dialogs with locals)
4. Discuss the possibilities and limits of the development of land use & management planning tools that would be accepted also by tribal authorities on the long-term.
5. Propose further steps for research and practical activities

Time plan:

1st field campaign in Manguzi (obligatory): **04 October 2013 – 08 December 2013**

- Working steps 1.-3.

2nd field campaign in Manguzi (facultative – if needed): 2-3 months in 2014 according to the research needs

- Working step 3. (4-5)

Completion of the MSc Thesis in 2014 according to the University time plan

Requirements

- Outstanding knowledge of the landscape ecology and ecological restoration, especially in the African South
- Intercultural and social competence and sensitiveness
- Fluent English
- Good GIS skills
- Capability and will to work in KwaZulu-Natal in rural area for at least 3 months (within a small team of colleagues or alone)
- Capability of independent handling and decision making
- Driver license
- Experience in working in African countries is advantageous (but not obligatory)

Financing: Stipendium 860,00 €/month (for the working time in S.A.)

Logistics:

The MSc study will be carried out within the scope of the AllWet RES research project (2012-2015).

Please refer to <http://www.roek.wzw.tum.de/index.php?id=162&L=1> for more details.

The student will work within the team of four MSc students and two PhD Students (TUM, HU Berlin) together with South African technicians (University of the Free State) and local field assistants. The necessary field equipment will be provided and the accommodation is organized for the entire research group at the premises of the Christian Mission in Manguzi (Kwangwanase).

<u>Application</u>	Please send your application together with a short statement of motivation (max 1 DIN A4 page) and your recent curriculum vitae by email to: sliva@wzw.tum.de	
<u>Deadlines</u>	Deadline for the submission of applications	- 05.08.2013
	Deadline for the selection of the MSc candidate	- 15.08.2013

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