

Nuwejaars Wetlands

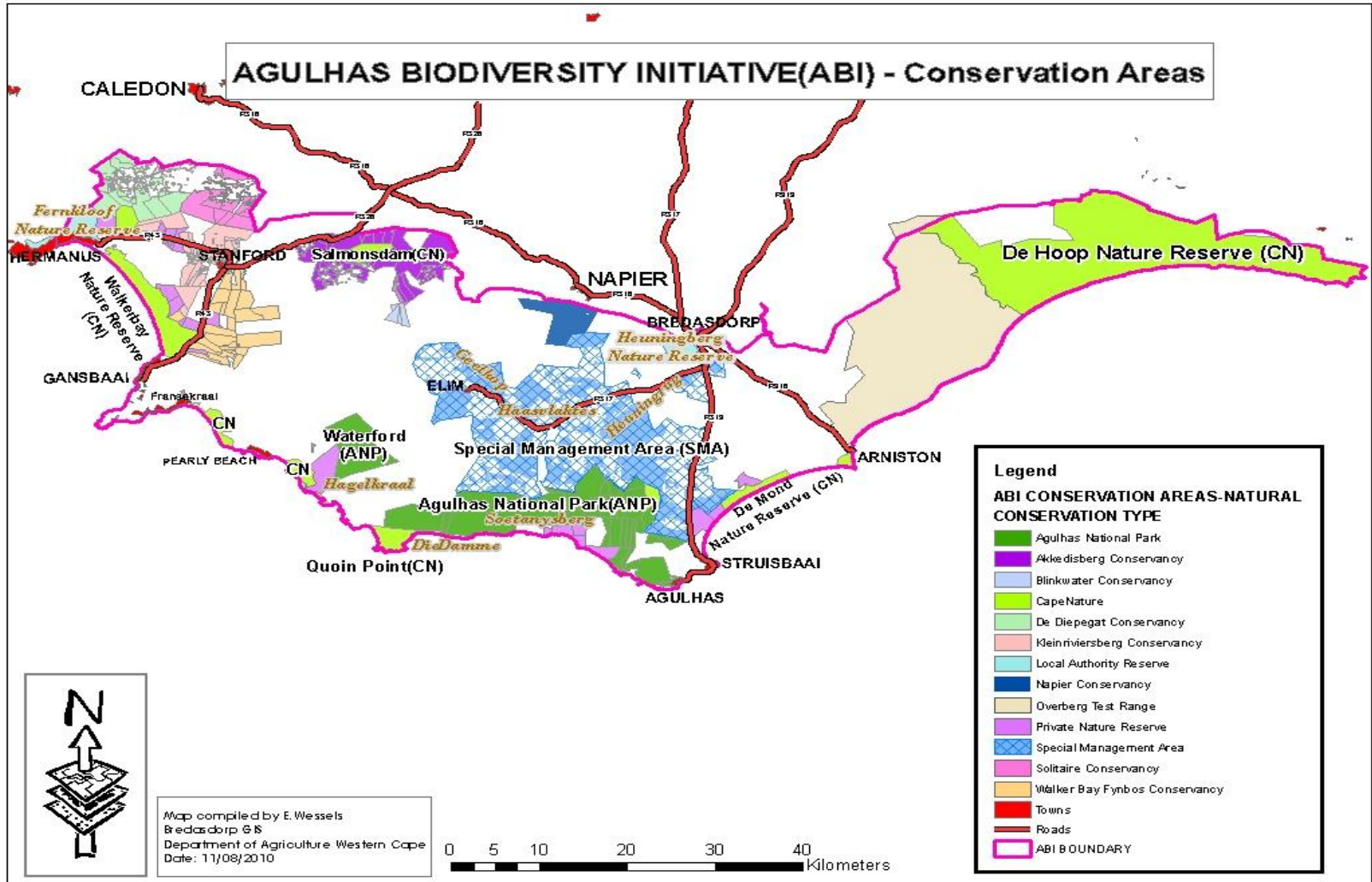
Using conservation as an instrument in rural development

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Location



Background information

- GEF, CAPE and Agulhas Biodiversity Initiative
- ABI : conserve living landscape & develop model for land stewardship
- Co-operation between land owners and govt
- Agulhas National Park (21 646 ha) and buffer zone (24 401 ha)
- Traditional farming practices not profitable ?

The site



Rationale for DBSA support

- GEF : conservation and development
- DBSA signed CAPE MOU
- DBSA Development Fund capacity building
- Farmers ready for support – wetland protection
- Private sector undertake conservation functions
- Potential for economic development and conservation of unique ecosystems.

Planning the area

- Restore wetlands to fulfill ecological functions
- Sustainable use of natural products
- Alternative land use to generate income
- Promote sustainable agriculture
- Promote well-being of all people in the area

Principles to guide the planning

- Ensure long term ownership of landowners
- Improve current levels of income for farmers
- Add value to the area to create a self sustaining system
- Use Biosphere Reserve principles

Results achieved

- Zoning : biodiversity conserved, while farming continue
- Formal commitment to conservation has doubled conservation land on Agulhas Plain
- Commitment to conservation : 2 Million Euro
- Environmentally friendly farming practices
- Reintroduction of wildlife - tourism
- Alien invasive clearing & wetland rehabilitation

Wetland rehabilitation



Tourism infrastructure



Development Impact (1)

- UNDP : model to be replicated world wide
- SANParks : doubled conservation land
- WCape Dept of Agriculture : replication
- Cooperation between farmers and partners : charcoal factory
- Job creation : alien clearing, tourism, charcoal
- DBSA grant leveraged more funding

Development Impact (2)

- 60% of wetlands on Agulhas Plain protected : clean water, aquatic life, wetland vegetation, Soetendals Vlei & De Mond estuary
- Lowland Fynbos conserved as ecosystem
- Ecological functions and movement of species
- Corridors facilitate species migration & climate change adaptation.

Success factors

- Visionary land owners, willing to cooperate with government and other partners
- Land adjacent to a nature reserve, which contains areas of high biodiversity value
- Support from conservation agencies

The way forward

- Use conservation as an instrument for rural development
- Partnership with SANParks to replicate the model at other National Parks
- Potential partnership with Department of Agriculture (Western Cape)
- Payment for Ecosystem Services as a means to fund conservation initiatives on private land