

**Balancing??? Ecotourism and Livestock Production– Implications for livelihoods and the environment in Limpopo Province, South Africa**

By

**Cheryl McCrindle and Petronella Chaminuka and other Partners**

**Collaborating Partners**

- Competing Claims project of Wageningen University
- University of Limpopo, University of Pretoria
- Mhinga Traditional Authority, KNP
- **The Team: Agric Economist, Public Vet Health, Environmental Economists, Animal Production Systems**

**BACKGROUND**

- GLTFCA considered an opportunity for diversification of livelihoods and multiple land use practices
- Adjacent rural areas characterised by;
  - High poverty , >40% unemployment, high dependence on social grants
  - Marginal agricultural potential
- Competition over NR and conflicts - obstacle to development and sustainability

**Background**

- Ecotourism flagship of TFCA's, emerging land use
- Communities expected to shift from marginal agriculture to ecotourism
- Ecotourism vs Tourism:
  - Biodiversity conservation, community involvement, improvement in incomes and employment at local levels, awareness of visitors to environmental and cultural conservation

## The Problem

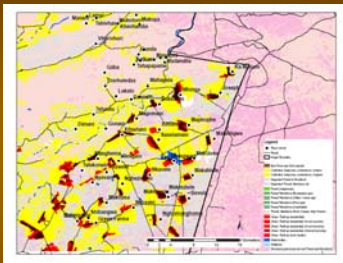
- Limited information on opportunities for ecotourism- what options?
- Related economic benefits?
- Are communities interested, are tourists interested?
- What implications for current land use- livestock production? What scope for balancing & related livelihood and environmental implications?

## Objectives

- Determine household income benefits of ecotourism through assessment of consumers' willingness to pay and communities' preferences for ecotourism projects
- Analyse the incentive structure to engage in ecotourism and/or livestock and the related trade offs for alternative scenarios of livelihood options in consultation with stakeholders through spatially explicit bio-economic modelling

## Study Area

- Northern side of KNP, next to the Punda Maria gate
- Mhinga TA, 11 villages
- All within the redline area,
- 2 share a boarder with KNP fence



## Methods

- **Choice modelling** to estimate demand and benefits of specific ecotourism alternatives
- Accommodation? Cultural Tours? Traditional Food? Crafts?



## Methods

- **Bio-economic modelling** to evaluate land use options and related benefits.
- Suitable to explore temporal and spatial scales in land use

## Some Preliminary Results

- Most tourists (>60%) would opt to sleep in KNP than community owned lodges outside even if prices and standards are similar
- Most (>60%) would opt to stay in the KNP even if it's cheaper outside by up to R50/night
- Some (50%) would pay up to R150 for 3-4 hour village tours and cultural experience
- Most tourists (>65%) agree that conservation efforts will not be sustainable if there is no rural development around KNP

## Data Collection

- Questionnaire interviews with tourists
- PRA techniques
- Community workshops to explore scenarios in land use and related benefits
- Constant presence in community and continuous engagement of different stakeholders

## Expected Outputs

- Information on ecotourism opportunities in the TFCA to aid community decision making
- Create platforms for groups in communities to debate and negotiate issues
- Spatially explicit bio-economic land use model that can be adapted and applied elsewhere around the TFCA



- Thanks to AHEAD and sponsors for supporting this work through the seed grant
- And for your attention