Utilisation of Commonages for Sustainable Tourism Opportunities for the Poor in Namaqualand, South Africa

by

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Abstract

This paper investigates the impact of livestock farming on rural livelihoods on redistributed commonage land in Namaqualand post-1994. The paper contends that farming has been declining for decades, where its contribution to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has declined from 10% in the 1970s to about 3.5% in 2005, resulting in the loss of up to 400 000 jobs in the sector. The findings suggest that commonage users are barely able to sustain themselves from cash earnings gained from livestock farming and that there have been no visible improvements in terms of their quality of life e.g. improved housing or ability to educate their children. The findings further illustrate that while livestock farming is the only known and practiced means of livelihood available to most people in Namaqualand because of the arid climate and poor crop farming conditions, commonage users are receptive to alternatives to traditional farming such as sustainable tourism. In order to make a case for sustainable tourism, the study has investigated a sustainable tourism venture in the Richtersveld, Namaqualand. The study has found that the venture has provided both economic spin-offs (job opportunities, infrastructure development and increased spending by tourists in the area) as well as social (reduced unemployment, reduced alcoholism, increased capacity and skills and engagement of the youth in meaningful job creation). In view of the findings from the commonage case studies and the Richtersveld sustainable tourism venture, the study proposes that South Africa’s land reform strategy should offer other sustainable development options such as tourism as an alternative to rural people.

Introduction

Since 1994, the South African Government has developed, inter alia, two key strategic policies that embrace the principles of sustainable development: tourism and land reform. Both policies seek redress and economic development for previously disadvantaged people but both policies have been constructed and implemented in a vacuum. In terms of the land
redistribution programme (as one leg of the land reform programme), the commonage sub-programme, has primarily advocated an agrarian style development, even though agriculture’s contribution to the Gross Domestic Product has rapidly declined, thus ignoring other livelihood opportunities such as tourism while the tourism policy has recognised the limited integration of local communities and previously neglected groups as an impediment to sustainable tourism development in South Africa.

Tourism has been recognised as a priority sector for national economic growth and development in South Africa. The *White Paper on Tourism* (Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, 1996:3) provides the policy framework for tourism development and defines sustainable tourism as “tourism development, management and any other tourism activity which optimises the economic and other societal benefits available in the present without jeopardising the potential for similar benefits in the future.”

For decades, worldwide, land reform has also been identified as a key development issue (World Bank, 2003). Different approaches to land reform have yielded successes but there have been failures and the impact on poverty has often been limited. A successful land policy must respond to population growth and economic development. As cities expand and non-agricultural economies expand the pressure to convert land to new uses increases (Quan, 2002).

The study is important in demonstrating to public sector policy-makers that rural people do not have to depend on farming as the only mode of survival and that tourism could also provide sustainable livelihoods.

**Methodology**

The study employed the case study approach¹ in collating the primary and secondary data. In terms of the primary data collection,² the following projects were selected based on judgement sampling techniques³:

- Six commonage projects initiated by the Department of Land Affairs (DLA) in three Namaqualand towns (Steinkopf, Springbok and Richtersveld);
- And a sustainable tourism venture that was instigated by the Richtersveld community.

In relation to the commonage projects, the DLA has implemented twenty-one projects in Namaqualand. Six of these were selected based on the following criteria:

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¹ The case study is viewed as a holistic inquiry that investigates contemporary phenomenon within its natural setting (Harling, 2002).
² The primary data collection was made possible through funding from the Southern Africa Labour and Development Research Unit, University of Cape Town.
³ Judgement sampling is a form of purposive sampling that uses the judgement of an expert in selecting cases or it selects cases with a specific purpose in mind. In terms of the selection of the commonage case studies, the researcher’s five-year working knowledge of commonages aided in this process.
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The sustainable tourism venture is a pioneering project in Eksteenfontein, Richtersveld. Forty-two (42) face-to-face interviews (out of a possible 200) were conducted with adult (18 years and older) members of the Eksteenfontein community and management of the tourism venture over nine days in November 2004.

The results of the study are therefore presented in two sections:

- The first section provides an overview of the South African Land Reform Programme as an engine of growth and looks at empirical evidence on the sustainability of land reform as demonstrated through the commonage sub-programme in Namaqualand.
- Section 2 deals with the paradigm of sustainable tourism as a livelihoods option for commonage users through an examination of the sustainable tourism conservancy in the Richtersveld, Namaqualand.

Section 1: Sustainable land reform

1. Overview of land reform policy in South Africa since 1994

Prior to the democratic elections in 1994, the South African liberation movement had prioritised land reform because of the importance attached to the resolution of the land question in South Africa. For the African National Congress, land reform was utilised as an

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The emerging SNTR initiative is a community-based tourism route that is being developed on the basis of equitable, sustainable and responsible tourism in conjunction with local people from the route. The route stretches from Cape Town to Ganigobes in southern Namibia and consists of community tourism projects at various stages of development.
instrument to address the partiality of forced removals and the historical denial of land access. The land reform programme sought to address the tenure insecurity of rural dwellers, eliminate overcrowding and to provide residential and productive land to the poorest sections of the rural population.


“(a) The public interest includes the nation’s commitment to land reform, and to reforms to bring the equitable access to all South Africa’s natural resources; and

(b) Property is not limited to land.”

A three-pronged market-assisted land reform programme was therefore launched in 1994, aiming at, tenure reform, restitution and land redistribution (Ramutsindela, 2003).

1.1 Tenure Reform

The tenure reform programme seeks to validate and to harmonise forms of land ownership that evolved during colonialism and apartheid. It is an attempt to redress the dual system of land tenure where whites owned land as private property as opposed to communal land allocation among blacks (Ramutsindela, 2003). The majority of rural blacks lived and still reside on communal land that is registered as the property of the State under the erstwhile South African Development Trust. To further complicate the dual tenure system, tribal chiefs were installed as custodians of communal land (Department of Land Affairs, 2003a).

1.2 Restitution

Land restitution forms the second pillar of the land reform programme. It aims to redress the imbalances in land ownership that were created by draconian policies and legislation of forced removals such as the infamous Natives Land Act, 1913 (Act No 39 of 1913). The nature of restitution is informed by three broad categories of the effects of land dispossession, namely, dispossession leading to landlessness, inadequate compensation for the value of the property, and hardships that cannot be measured in financial or material terms (Department of Land Affairs, 1997). Some communities such as the Makuleke in the Kruger National Park have, through the restitution process, gained land rights in protected conservation areas that are embracing tourism development strategies.

1.3 Redistribution

Land redistribution was conceived as a means of opening up the productive land for residential and agricultural development. The government set itself a target of redistributing
30% of the country’s commercial agricultural land (about 24 million hectares) over a five-year period from 1994 to 1999 (Department of Land Affairs, 1997). This target has been extended since the review of the programme in 2000 to redistribution of 30% of agricultural land by the year 2014 and encompasses all agricultural land redistributed through all three programmes (Department of Land Affairs, 2003a).

The paper primarily focuses on the redistribution programme, in particular the commonage sub-programme given that the programme has had substantial land transfers in the Northern Cape primarily in the Namaqualand region of the Northern Cape.

1.3.1 The commonage sub-programme

A commonage can be defined as follows: “commonage or common pasture lands are lands adjoining a town or village over which the inhabitants of such town or village either have a servitude of grazing for their stock and more rarely, the right to cultivate a certain portion of such lands, or in respect of which the inhabitants have conferred upon them by regulation certain grazing rights” (Dönges and Van Winsen, 1953:303). It is essentially land set aside for communal agricultural usage but owned by a government body and in South Africa’s case it is municipalities.

There are approximately 150 commonage projects that the Department of Land Affairs (DLA) has implemented since 1997 and all of them are grazing or small-scale crop projects (Department of Land Affairs, 2004). Implementation of the commonage policy has primarily favoured agricultural projects even though the policy allows the DLA “to ensure that commonage land needed by previously disadvantaged communities for agricultural and other entrepreneurial business purposes is made available for such purposes” (Department of Land Affairs, 2000:8).

There should be a clear distinction made between traditional commonage and commonage purchased in terms of the land redistribution programme. In relation to traditional commonage, municipalities are sanctioned to set aside land they own for the pasturage of stock and for the purposes of establishing food gardens (Anderson & Pienaar, 2003). In relation to the DLA commonage programme, the primary aim is to provide access to land for supplementing income and to act as a ‘nursery’ for the emergent farmers. The underlying principles are as follows (Department of Land Affairs, 2000):
There must be an identified community (users), that articulates a need for additional land for a specified and identified agricultural need;

Land provided through the commonage programme is not for ownership but allows access to land;

This means that a legal person (i.e. the municipality) will be the legal owner of the land, with the identified user obtaining access to land for agricultural purposes;

Providing land for a municipality must be within the Integrated Development Plans (IDP); and

The land will vest within the municipality and a management committee will administer and monitor the use of the land.

1.3.1.1 Challenges for the South African Land Redistribution Programme in terms of commonages

Some of the criticisms levelled at DLA–driven commonage projects are:

- Municipalities do not integrate such projects into the IDPs;
- Municipalities do not have sufficient capacity to manage commonages in a sustainable way;
- There is no post land transfer support to enable beneficiaries to successfully farm on commonage land and to build municipal capacity to manage the land (Anderson & Pienaar, 2003);
- “They make municipalities poorer because municipalities now have to divert scarce resources to negotiate, organise and maintain the new asset” (Heartland and Karoo Research Institute, 2005:6);
- The commonage policy is inflexible and does not provide scope for a multiple/sustainable livelihoods approach; and
- There is no monitoring and evaluation system in place therefore users and free-riding non-users consequently overgraze the land and degrade the natural resource thereby encouraging Hardin’s ‘tragedy of the commons.’

While the government is chasing a target of redistributing 30% of commercial agricultural land by 2014, the question of the sustainability of land reform projects and its contribution to the socio-economic growth of rural people remains unanswered. The commonage sub-programme proclaims to act as a nursery to small and emergent farmers so that entry to another land reform sub-programme that primarily caters to the development of black

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5 Hardin (1968) postulated that pastures or public spaces such as national parks open to all without restrictions degrade the resource. In relation to agricultural commonages, Hardin contends that the tragedy lies in forcing individuals to increase their livestock without limit “in a world that is limited. Ruin is the destination toward which all men rush, each pursuing his own best interest in a society that believes in the freedom of the commons. Freedom in a commons brings ruin to all.” (1968:4) Hardin concludes that the commons should actually be privatised and felt that this would result in sound environmental and ecological management. However the study does not support Hardin’s sentiments; private property ownership does not equal sound environmental practices.

6 This sub-programme, called the Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development Sub-programme or LRAD, also falls under the Redistribution Programme. LRAD offers subsidies, on an individual basis to qualifying applicants to purchase agricultural land from white farmers. The subsidies range from R20 000 to R100 000 and are based on own contribution in kind, labour and/or cash.
commercial farmers is possible. However this linkage is yet to be established and only one known case of ‘graduation’ from subsistence commonage user to black commercial farmer exists.

The commonage policy is also silent on any other livelihood strategies that can be practiced on commonage land. What this means for policymakers and strategists is that any pro-poor development should first undertake a detailed analysis of social relations in a particular context and secondly understand that the modes of livelihoods that typically prevail both within households and between households are highly diverse. One of the most damning criticisms of the land redistribution efforts in South Africa is that it is executed in isolation of other livelihood strategies and economic sectors. Amongst rural farming communities, many derive a part-livelihood from farming, apart from migrant labour/mining and apart from other activities such as arts and crafts.

It has been observed that there is a close correlation between the diverse modes of livelihood and the idea of diversification and sustainability of livelihoods over time amongst farming communities. Bryceson (1999) contends that in sub-Saharan Africa, 60-80% of rural household income in the late 1990s was derived from non-farming sources. However it is not only poor households that are forced to diversify but also ‘richer’ households as for example in the case of businessmen who are ‘weekend farmers’. Such trends have led to the coining of the term ‘sustainable livelihoods’.

The phrase ‘sustainable livelihoods’ was formulated by Robert Chambers and others through a research programme undertaken by the Institute of Development Studies at Sussex (England), involving work in Bangladesh, Ethiopia and Mali. Scoones (1998:5) and Carney (1998:4) have adapted Chambers definition of the concept of sustainable livelihoods to read as follows “a livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (including material and social resources) and activities required for a means of living. A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks and maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets both now and in the future while not undermining the natural resource base”.

The sustainable livelihoods approach recognises the importance of policies and institutions in governing poor people’s access to livelihood assets and in influencing their livelihood strategies. Pasteur (2001) contends that livelihoods’ analysis involves identifying and understanding the assets and options available to poor people and the vulnerability context within which they operate.

Since the emergence of land reform in Southern Africa from the 1980s onwards (South Africa and Namibia in the 1990s), the question of sustainable land reform has plagued development planners. The South African government has made several attempts to develop a feasible development strategy. In 2003 the DLA developed a framework for accelerating land reform for ‘sustainable development’. This framework recognised the importance that the implementation of a sustainable land reform programme is dependent on an integrated approach to land reform in close collaboration with key government and non-governmental stakeholders (Department of Land Affairs, 2003b). A think tank on land reform in Southern Africa held in 2003 revealed that there is a general misfit between land policy and rural development, where the current government is pursuing a compensatory (30% target) rights-

Table 1: Comparing sustainable development components with land reform

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sustainable development component</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Current land reform policy in relation to the component</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Establishing ecological limits and more equitable standards</td>
<td>Values that encourage consumption standards that are within the bounds of the ecological possible.</td>
<td>While there are policy and guidelines for the integration of environmental planning into land reform, this is not practiced during project implementation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redistribution of economic activity and reallocation of resources</td>
<td>Meeting essential needs in part on achieving full growth potential and sustainable development requires economic growth.</td>
<td>Only 3 million hectares of land redistributed in the last eleven years of land reform instead of 12 million hectares.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservation of basic resources</td>
<td>Sustainable development must not endanger the natural systems.</td>
<td>Environmental guidelines are in existence but not implemented.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More equitable access to resources</td>
<td>Growth has no set limits in terms of population or resource use beyond which lies ecological disaster. Sustainability requires that long before these are reached efforts must be made to ensure more equitable access.</td>
<td>Land reform policy is currently criticised for its (allegedly) non pro-poor stance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community control</td>
<td>Community control over development decisions affecting local ecosystems</td>
<td>Very limited and executed only at a project level.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 demonstrates that land reform policy has not fully embraced the concept of sustainable development. Bruntland’s report (1987) primarily promoted the environmental factors in terms of sustainable development, while the report made only cursory mention of the economic and social sustainability factors.

Sustainable development clearly embraces the environment, people and economic systems (Swarbrooke, 1999; Murphy, 1995; Hunter, 1997).

Table 1 presents an adaptation of some of Murphy’s (1995) components for sustainable development based on the Bruntland Report in 1987 for the World Commission on Environment and Development entitled: *Our Common Future*. These components are examined against the current land reform policy in South Africa to obtain an overview of its sustainability factors. It should be noted that not all the components of sustainable development were tabled but only some factors crucial to land reform were used as indicators.
1.4 The DLA commonage sub-programme in Namaqualand

The DLA has adopted a more developmental approach especially in the Northern Cape through the commonage sub-programme. About 307 000 hectares of agricultural land was purchased in Namaqualand through this sub-programme to add to the existing municipal commonage for use by poor residents essentially for grazing and small-scale agricultural production (Department of Land Affairs, 2004). This amounts to an estimated 75% of all commonage redistribution projects in the Northern Cape as at March 2003. More than a third (36%) of these projects was implemented in the study area (Steinkopf, Springbok and Richtersveld). In relation to the study area a total of 26 farms, in extent of 111 000 hectares were purchased to make up six commonages for subsistence and emergent livestock farmers in the three towns (Figure 1). The farms were purchased after Namaqualand communities in the three towns expressed the need for land for livestock farming following mass retrenchments in the copper and diamond mining industries in Namaqualand.

“Commonage should be seen as having a dual purpose i.e. that of providing access to land for supplementing (subsistence income) and as a stepping stone for emergent farmers. This means that all commonage projects must accommodate both subsistence and emerging farmers” (Department of Land Affairs, 2000). However various organisations such as the Human Sciences Research Council, Surplus Peoples Project and Programme for Land and Agrarian Studies have criticised this policy because it allows for wealthier farmers to access the commonage at the expense of the subsistence farmer (Human Sciences Research Council, 2003a) but the study established that this was not the case in Namaqualand as people with virtually no income except social grants gained access to the commonages.

Hoffman and Rohde (2000) claim that national land redistribution policies are not effective in Namaqualand because land prices are high and private land ownership is almost impossible therefore commonage has been the principal mode of land reform implementation in this part of the province. In addition grazing and agricultural lands can be considered marginal in Namaqualand where vast tracts are showing signs of overgrazing and land degradation.

Poverty and lack of livelihoods are characteristics of these communal areas (Odendaal, 2002). Research conducted on livestock farming in the Paulshoek area of Namaqualand provide some indication that the net annual income per hectare is less than R10 per hectare for communal and commercial farming systems (Hoffman and Rohde, 2000). Anseeuw (2003) postulates that in order to obtain a net-revenue of R28 000 from livestock farming on Namaqualand commonages, according to different levels of own capital available on the different land types, a minimum of R57 500 is necessary. Most of the farmers accessing commonage land have utilised some of their retrenchment packages to start farming operations.

The Centre for Arid Zones Study in the United Kingdom also noted that livestock farming in Namaqualand does not have a sustainable future (Young, 2002:1) and one of the crucial reasons behind this finding is the lack of farm diversification strategies and the reluctance of people to let go of traditional livestock farming practices in the area. Young (2002) advocates conservancy development coupled with tourism as a possible livelihood strategy for some of Namaqualand’s communities.
Ainslie (2001) Colvin (1995) and Anderson & Pienaar (2003) have also identified the following constraints to livestock farming that are endemic to many reserve/communal areas across South Africa:

- A shortage of grazing resources;
- The large scale abandonment of arable production in many reserve areas has left livestock without a valuable source of winter forage;
- Poor quality livestock;
- Prolonged periods of drought;
- A shortage of labour for livestock herding and the labour costs;
- The socio-economic impact of HIV/AIDS on the livestock farming community;
- Livestock diseases and the faltering of the government's disease control programme in the area;
- Low beef-related prices;
- Poor transport networks to get cattle to sales and from the point of sale to feedlots and abattoirs; and
- A lack of knowledge on the part of rural people on current market prices and related quality.

Other livelihoods in Namaqualand have also not fared so well. The region has relied heavily on the mining sector but first the copper reserves and now the land-based diamond deposits
are diminishing. Large-scale decommissioning of mine workers means that many more families are without incomes.

1.5 An assessment of livestock farming conditions amongst selected commonage users in Namaqualand

All the commonage users gained access to the commonage farms from 1998 until 2004, with the bulk (20) of the users coming in from 2001. Most of the users (22) were either retrenched, medically boarded or had retired from the copper mines before embarking on full-time livestock farming and their only non-farm income were government pensions of about R740 per month. The pivotal reason for entering into this business was the same: there were no other livelihood options presented to them. Some ran small businesses prior to livestock farming and utilised profits from this business to cross-subsidise their livestock farming enterprises while only two users were actually farming elsewhere before entering into livestock farming on the commonages. One person was unemployed and had collected a disability pension and later old age pension to survive. The two users that were farmers prior to entering the commonages were women between the ages of 25 and 30 years old and had inherited the passion for farming from their fathers. Table 2 further illustrates how the users gained access to the commonages:

### Table 2: Determination of Access to the Commonage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How is access to the commonage determined?</th>
<th>Number of Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The numbers of livestock owned</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intention to start farming with livestock and need access to land</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intention to access land for other agricultural or agro-processing activities</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other procedures not listed</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Traditional livestock farming in Namaqualand involves primarily cattle, sheep and goats but some farmers have also acquired pigs and small livestock such as chickens. Only 3 of the users interviewed were farming with all five livestock species mentioned. However all 34 users preferred sheep as their livestock of choice as they were cheaper to purchase on auctions (for breeding purposes) than cattle, easier to maintain and had a higher sales turnover than cattle, pig or goats.

Table 3 below presents an outline of livestock farming activities on the selected commonages. The users gained in total R13 475 from the sale of goats, R207 750 from the sale of sheep and R8 400 from cattle sales from December 2003 to November 2004 or R229 625 in livestock sales. The livestock sales can be estimated at R6753.68 per user. While not all 66 users were interviewed to obtain a proper assessment the estimated turnover for all 66 users for the given year is R445 743.

No estimation of actual profit and loss could be determined, as the costs were not factored in as part of the assessment. What could be ascertained is that the users were paying for the following items in relation to livestock farming:
• Transport costs to and from the commonages;
• Medicine for the stock; and
• Food and water for the stock.

It should also be noted that stock numbers for each user varies and that the sales averages provided below will differ for each of the farmers, therefore only few of the farmers will actually earn profits from the sales. Only four of the users sold the animal skins and milk to earn extra income.

### Table 3: Livestock farming on Commonages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of animal owned</th>
<th>Total number</th>
<th>Number sold in last 12 months</th>
<th>Average(^7) selling price per unit</th>
<th>Total Number sold</th>
<th>Number slaughtered for automatic consumption</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goats</td>
<td>455</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>R275</td>
<td>R13 475</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheep</td>
<td>2825</td>
<td>554</td>
<td>R375</td>
<td>R207 750</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cattle</td>
<td>670</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>R1400</td>
<td>R8400</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pigs</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicken</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>4033</strong></td>
<td><strong>609</strong></td>
<td><strong>-</strong></td>
<td><strong>R229 625</strong></td>
<td><strong>259</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^7\) The Department of Agriculture was asked to verify the average prices.

It was also ascertained that the market for goat meat is not profitable therefore there is more consumption of goat meat amongst the users than sales.

The users were then questioned on the advantages and disadvantages (Table 4) of livestock farming on the commonages. The numbers in brackets next to each issue indicate the number of responses received.

While the disadvantages outweigh the advantages by far, the majority of the users (90%) did indicate that the drought, that has plagued the area from 2002, played a major role in their negativity towards livestock farming and that a rainy season would result in more profits. The rainy season effectively provides a livestock farmer with six months per year to earn a profit on these commonages, making livestock farming a seasonal livelihoods generator that is wholly dependent on the weather.

Studies carried out by the Centre for Arid Zone Studies in the United Kingdom also noted that the present conditions in Namaqualand’s communal grazing areas were far from ideal and grazing and trampling have damaged most of them (Young, 2002). The majority (30) of the users agreed that farming conditions were conducive for livestock farming with proper management and good rains but the current drought conditions were hampering livestock production (Figure 2).
Table 4: Advantages and Disadvantages of Livestock Farming on Commonages (N=34)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improves household income (10)</td>
<td>Commonage land is far from town and home (35 to 60 km) - (30)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free advice from surrounding white commercial farmers (14)</td>
<td>Drought and no drought relief.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grazing for animals (34)</td>
<td>Wild animals/predators such as jackal and ‘witkruis’ eagle that are protected (25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No expansion of livestock after accessing the commonages (10)</td>
<td>Brackish water and limited grazing fields (34)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some farmers have sole use of some of the 26 farms that were purchased for these six commonages (10)</td>
<td>Few boreholes on commonages (25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improves household food consumption (34).</td>
<td>Infrastructure on some of the farms is in poor condition such as the fencing and wind pumps (25).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Soil erosion (30)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Farms are divided into summer and winter farms and farmers felt that this disadvantaged them for six months of a year (30).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Poor rotational grazing practices (34)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No training or additional subsidies provided to farmers and therefore cannot expand livestock farming enterprise as they would like to (30).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Livestock restrictions (34)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.6 Quality of life since participating in the commonage programme

Table 5 below provides an overview on whether access to commonages has resulted in improving the users’ lives in relation to some identified factors. The opinions of the officials from municipalities, Departments of Land Affairs and Agriculture were also factored in.

The majority of the respondents indicated that there were no improvements in relation to housing and moveable assets and that they could not educate their children from the minimal earnings obtained from livestock farming. While most of the respondents indicated there was some improvement in terms of income, they asserted that this was only a slight difference. Respondents added that the money gained from livestock farming was often reinvested in the business either to buy food or medicines for the livestock. While all the respondents indicated that there were improvements in terms of access to land, they believed that land
ownership rather than land access would have provided a tangible benefit to them. However this would go against the policy principle of commonage that emphasises access as opposed to ownership.

### Table 5: Improvement/Non Improvement of quality of life (N=38)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Improvement</th>
<th>No Improvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Land access</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farming e.g. increase in livestock</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education of children</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other moveable assets</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.7 **Expression of interest for Tourism development on Commonages**

There are currently no tourism activities on the selected commonages. The farms were initially purchased from white livestock farmers and this practice has been pursued by the new users. Ten of the users stated that they have expressed an interest in tourism activities to the municipalities. They had wanted to establish guesthouses on two of the commonage farms, 4X4 routes, bird watching, conservation tours and wildlife and floral viewing but the ideas were never fully accepted. The municipalities also discussed these opportunities with the users but half of the livestock farmers were afraid to venture out of their traditional livelihoods mode. The others that replied negatively asserted that the reasons for the lack of interest in establishing tourism ventures on the commonages was because there was no subsidisation of these activities and that they also did not have the skills to start and/or sustain such activities.

The commonage case studies were evaluated on the basis of whether livestock farming has been a successful form of livelihood on the commonages. Respondents indicated that their livestock farming enterprises were barely successful. The commonage users also indicated that farming conditions on the farms were far from ideal and that lack of access to water and poor infrastructure were the key reasons for this. The study has further revealed that in relation to tourism, the commonage users overwhelmingly support eco-tourism and/or nature based tourism ventures on the commonages.

The next section provides an overview of the concept of sustainable tourism and attempts to link this paradigm to commonages through an examination of a sustainable tourism venture in Eksteenfontein, Richtersveld in Namaqualand.
Section 2. Sustainable tourism

2.1 Sustainable Tourism

The term ‘sustainable tourism’ was initially triggered after the concept of sustainable development became popularised, brought to prominence with the publication of the Bruntland Report alluded to in Section 1. It recognised for the first time the importance of international environmental policy and the connection between development, international debt and the environment (Brown, 1996). The Bruntland Report (1987:8) defined sustainability as “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs.”

Murphy (1995) adds that the Bruntland Report placed the concept of sustainable development firmly on the centre stage and promoted it as a vehicle for deliverance. Swarbrooke (1999:353) maintains that there is a need to start viewing sustainable tourism as part of a larger sustainable development system, an open system where every element affects the other elements. One example may be if regulations were proposed to reduce the number of tourists to areas consisting of fragile ecosystems, this may have a positive affect on the environment it may also reduce the economic benefits for host communities that live near or within that ecosystem.

The notion of sustainable tourism has different meanings for academics and governments. Sharpley (2000) postulates that definitions of sustainable tourism can be divided into two camps of thought: one that is ‘tourism centric’ that focuses purely on tourism as an economic activity and the other that attaches importance to tourism as an element of the wider sustainable tourism policies. Hunter (1997:859) has also referred to sustainable tourism as an “adaptive paradigm, encompassing a set of meta-principles within which several different development pathways may be legitimised according to circumstance.”

The concept of sustainable tourism is a very broad, imprecise developmental concept and it is not the intention of this paper to posit a definition but to harness the broad principles and relate this to land reform on commonages. The paper therefore supports the principles that underpin sustainable tourism management as advocated by Bramwell et al (1996) (Box 1). The ten principles mentioned below can also be used to describe land reform, as land reform is located within political, social, economic and cultural sustainability and also espouses some of the principles in theory. The primary aim of a land reform policy is to ensure that the targeted people use the natural resource (land) efficiently and for social and economic development.

Sustainable tourism through nature tourism ventures encourages productive use of land that may be marginal for agriculture, enabling large tracts to remain covered in natural vegetation. Environmentally sustainable tourism also demonstrates the importance of natural and cultural resources to a country’s economic and social well-being and this can help to preserve them.
Box 1: Ten Principles of sustainable tourism management

- The approach sees policy, planning and management as appropriate and, indeed, essential responses to the problems of natural and human misuse in tourism.
- The approach is generally not anti-growth, but it emphasises that there are limitations to growth and that tourism must be managed within these limits.
- Long-term rather than short-term thinking is necessary.
- The concerns of sustainable tourism management are not just environmental, but also economic, social, cultural, political and managerial.
- The approach emphasises the importance of satisfying the human needs and aspirations, which entails a prominent concern for equity and fairness.
- All stakeholders need to be consulted and empowered in decision-making, and they also need to be informed about sustainable development issues.
- While sustainable development should be a goal for all policies and actions, putting the ideas of sustainable tourism into practice means recognizing that in reality there are often limits to what will be achieved in the short and medium term.
- An understanding of how market economies operate, of the cultures and management procedures of private sector businesses and public and voluntary sector organisations, and of the values and attitudes of the public is necessary in order to turn good intentions into practical measures.
- There are frequently conflicts of interest over the use of resources, which means that in practice trade-offs and compromises may be necessary.
- The balancing of costs and benefits in decisions on different courses of action must extend to considering how much different individuals and groups will gain or lose.

2.2 Overview of Sustainable Tourism Development in South Africa

Tourism comprises an extensive range of economic activities and can be considered the largest industry in the world. In 2004, the South African travel and tourism industry’s contribution to the Gross Domestic Product, including induced and indirect effects, was R93.6 billion or 7.4% of the total and was expected to climb to 10% by 2010 (Department of Trade and Industry, 2005). It is projected that in 2010 the South African tourism economy will employ more than 1.2 million people directly and indirectly (Tourism South Africa, 2003). Ecotourism also shows great potential as a source of foreign exchange and investment, especially as South Africa is seen as part of a richly diverse region in terms of its abundance of natural wonders (Countryprofiler, 2003).

The White Paper on Tourism (Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, 1996) maintains that tourism is an engine of growth that is capable of rejuvenating other sectors of the economy but it also identifies a number of constraints that would hamper sustainable tourism development and its potential to achieve such objectives as job creation, black economic empowerment and small, medium and micro enterprise development.

Further the White Paper (Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, 1996:5-12) outlines the following factors constraining the expansion and transformation of the South African tourism industry:
• Limited integration of local communities and previously neglected groups into tourism;
• Lack of market access and market knowledge;
• Lack of interest on the part of existing establishments to build; partnerships with local communities and suppliers;
• Lack of information and awareness; and
• Lack of appropriate institutional structures.

It is argued that unless such impediments are addressed, tourism will remain a “missed opportunity” for the vast majority of South Africans (Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, 1996:4).

Despite the multiplicity of actions envisaged by the White Paper on Tourism, disadvantaged communities and population groups remain highly marginalised from the ‘mainstream’ tourism industry and the national, high profile initiatives that underpin its notable growth. Land reform recipients can be classified as being part of the disadvantaged communities that have been marginalised from sustainable tourism initiatives.

What are the commonalities of these two (land reform and tourism) national priorities? As outlined in the respective White Papers both policies are seeking redress and economic development for the previously disadvantaged communities of South Africa and both accentuate the sustainability issues. These are laudable but not easy targets and the targets become even more difficult to attain when policies are constructed and implemented in silos. The following section provides an assessment of a sustainable tourism venture in the Richtersveld area of Namaqualand.

2.3 Analysis of the Rooiberg Tourism Conservancy project in Eksteenfontein

2.3.1 Historical overview

The Richtersveld\(^8\) consists of four towns, Kuboes and Sanddrif in the North and Eksteenfontein and Lekkersing in the South. The Richtersveld forms part of Little Namaqualand. The original inhabitants of the Namaqualand were Khoi Khoi, but also included some San people. They were present in the area long before Dutch colonisation of the Cape. Over time, the San and Khoi merged, at least in Little Namaqualand, with each other and with white settlers who came to the area (Boonzaaier \textit{et al}, 1996). The product of this relationship was called the \textit{basters} (literal translation: bastards or people of mixed descent). At that time the Richtersveld was occupied mainly by Nama speaking Khoisan herders and the more recently arrived \textit{basters}. Most of the so-called \textit{basters} settled in Eksteenfontein (previously called Stinkfontein).

After unification and during 1925, the South African government appointed a commission to investigate the position of the Richtersveld. In 1925 diamonds were discovered near Port

\(^8\) The area was named after a teacher at the Renish Mission Seminary in Germany, the Reverend W Richter (Land Claims Court, 2001)
Nolloth. In 1927 a particularly rich deposit was found at the mouth of the Garib River at Alexander Bay. Many people moved into the area (Boonzaaier et al., 1996). Alluvial diggings were proclaimed and the Government awarded these permits because the land was considered to be unalienated Crown (State) land (Land Claims Court, 2001).

In 1930 the Minister of Lands issued a certificate of reservation in respect of the Richtersveld Reserve land under the disposal of Crown Lands Act in favour of the Minister of Native Affairs for the use of the persons residing therein. However certain pieces of land such as diamond rich areas and the Corridor farms were excluded from this certificate of reservation and this exclusion became the subject of the long-running land restitution court case between the Richtersveld communities and Alexkor Limited (Boonzaaier et al., 1996). In 1957 a fence was erected along the boundary between the Richtersveld Reserve and the Corridor farms. This prevented the Richtersveld people from using those portions of land for seasonal grazing and the watering of livestock.

In 1998, a land claim for 85 000 hectares of land in the Richtersveld (including the diamond rich land that belongs to Alexkor) was handed into the Land Claims Court by the four communities that comprise the Richtersveld namely Kuboes, Lekkersing, Sanddrift and Eksteenfontein. The communities lost the case but they appealed to the Constitutional Court in 2001 and the Court decided that those communities were the legal owners of the land and looked at the appeal in terms of the indigenous rights of the communities and felt that the erstwhile apartheid government and Alexkor had unfairly dispossessed the communities of their land rights because of the mineral wealth (Strauss, 2004).

The communities have registered the Richtersveld Communal Property Association (CPA) that will take possession of the land once the Minister of Land Affairs finalises the transfer of the property. In the interim, the Richtersveld Municipality are the appointed managers until the due processes with regard to the land claim are settled. The communities are also still awaiting a response in terms of the settlement/compensation package from the government and Alexkor.

2.3.2 Presentation of the results

Eksteenfontein is one of the thirteen towns along the SNTR. There are approximately 800 people in Eksteenfontein of whom 400 are adult members of this community. Some of the adult members are employed on the mines and some have left the area to pursue tertiary studies or seek employment in other provinces.

Eksteenfontein has two community-run guesthouses. In the centre of town is the “Kom Rus ‘n Bietjie” (“Come and rest awhile”) guesthouse. This guesthouse is fully electrified and has the simple comforts of home such as beds, shower, bath and fully fitted kitchen. There is no television or air-conditioning in the guesthouse and tourists would also have to contend with swarms of mosquitoes. There is a definite need for an upgrade of the guesthouse in terms of tiling, painting and bedding and management has mentioned that there are plans to do this. The area is malaria-free and safe and from the guest book comments, it was noted that most of the tourists found their stay quite pleasant. Four women from the Eksteenfontein

9 Observations from the field visit notes.
community were selected, based on their interest shown, catering abilities and good-standing within the community, to manage the guesthouses in relation to catering and cleaning services.

The Eksteenfontein community also initiated a conservancy project in 2002: the Rooiberg Conservancy project that is about 50 kilometres from the town. The conservancy is called “Rooiberg” because of the reddish hue that the mountains give off at sunset. The vision of the Rooiberg Conservancy Project is “to protect and manage the unique biodiversity and natural landscape to the advantage of the local people and all of humankind” (Richtersveld Community Conservancy, 2004). The conservancy also has a guesthouse and traditional Nama campsites with matjieshuts or mat huts. These facilities do not have electricity. The Rooiberg Conservancy Management manages these facilities but has not directly employed people on a full time basis. The Eksteenfontein Tourism Office manages the finances of both guesthouses.

The 42 people interviewed are beneficiaries of the conservancy development and were either directly or indirectly involved with the conservancy. Only 13 of the respondents were actually participating in the conservancy project and the levels of participation include management, cartography (mapping of the area), tour guides and cultural guides. The 29 people who were not involved in this project voiced the following reasons for their non-involvement:

- Little or no information on what is going on with the conservancy and what the future plans are;
- The conservancy is not fully developed therefore not everybody can be involved at this stage;
- Employed full time elsewhere;
- Community members are not always in Eksteenfontein;
- Only some members of the community are involved in the initiative; and
- There is not enough interest in that type of development even though there are community notices to attend meetings.

The respondents indicated that participants for the conservancy project were chosen on the basis of their residency in the Richtersveld and their age (must be 18 years and older).

2.3.3 Training and Development

Only 8 of the 13 members that are involved in the conservancy project have been trained (Table 6).

The conservancy management has indicated that some other members of the community received training in the following areas:
• Cultural guides (2)
• Pastel training (bookkeeping-1)
• Environmental engineer (1)
• Five members went for environmental impact assessment training (train the trainers’ course)
• Project management (1)
• Mari culture management (1)
• Sustainable development in protected areas (1)

Table 6: Training received

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conservancy management</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature conservation</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourist management/tour guide</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cartography</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It was pointed out that while training is important, people should not be trained unless there were specific roles for them to play within the developments in the area. One member of the community indicated that while some people were trained to be guides, they did not have the passion for the work and the wrong people were targeted for the job. Another person indicated that some of the training has not coincided with implementation and people were trained but not employed. The researcher observed that the proposed museum for the area has not opened due to a lack of funding and one person was trained but is currently unemployed.

2.3.4 Perceptions on the Conservancy tourism plans

People were also asked to provide their responses concerning the plans for the conservancy in relation to tourism (Table 7):

Table 7: Opinions on the Plans for the Conservancy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plan</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To expand the guest house business</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To develop nature conservation programmes for tourists</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To develop a four by four (4x4) route for tourists</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To protect the natural environment and animals for tourists</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To develop campsites for tourists</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To develop nature tours</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To develop bird watching for tourists</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To develop game viewing for tourists</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To develop game hunting facilities for tourists</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To developing eco-sensitive hiking trails for tourists</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The perceptions of the majority of the interviewees ties in with the management plans for the conservancy in relation to tourism namely; the development of 4x4 trails, eco-sensitive hiking-trails and conservation of the flora and fauna in the area.

### 2.3.5 Economic and Social Spin-offs

It is estimated that the conservancy receives 80% of its tourists from South Africa and 20% from outside the country. There are generally 4 tourists per day, off-season between October to March and in peak season, between April and September there are approximately 13 tourists per day.

**Table 8: Economic and Social Spin-offs from Conservancy Project**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Economic spin-offs of conservancy development</th>
<th>Social spin-offs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Creation of the following job opportunities:</em></td>
<td>Reduced unemployment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signage (Sign writers)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caterers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guesthouse managers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tour and cultural guides</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cartographers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rangers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upgrading of infrastructure and use of local skills.</td>
<td>Reduced alcoholism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased spending by tourists provided opportunities for the development of arts and craft and retail businesses.</td>
<td>Increased capacity building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More youth involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More community involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Educational improvements</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is likely that tourists spend an average of R750 per day per tourist in Eksteenfontein, supporting the two local shops, guesthouses and visiting the conservancy. Each tourist stays on average 3 to 5 days. The estimated income from the conservancy development therefore amounts to R549 000 (off-season) and R1 774 500 (peak season). This excludes the rental of equipment or vehicles. Table 8 below highlights the community’s views on the spin-offs received from this venture.

### 2.4 Tourism Development (Present and Future)

The majority (23) of the interviewees rate tourism as very important as compared to livestock farming and/or mining while the others (19) viewed tourism as an equally important livelihood activity to mining and livestock farming. There is a perception among a few of the community members interviewed that tourism can do more harm than good but this is a minority view. Some members raised the issue that with every livelihood activity (mining, livestock farming and tourism) there are advantages and disadvantages and that there should be plans in
place to minimise the negative aspects e.g. if community members feel that opening up the conservancy to more tourists might destroy the fragile ecosystem then commission an environmental impact assessment to determine what the carrying capacity of the area is and set clear guidelines for tourists.

Tourism is currently seen as the economic ‘saviour’ in response to the decommissioning of the mines and livestock farming in Namaqualand. It can be said that it may be idealistic to rely on tourism alone and there is a need to look at other economic activities that can be offered to community members that may not be interested in the tourism developments in the area.

The interviewees felt that the following sectors were vital to the success of tourism in Eksteenfontein:

- Community based tourism through guesthouse and conservation;
- Floral viewing;
- Birdwatching;
- Eco-tourism through conservation tours;
- Hiking trails; and
- Historical and cultural tourism.

The table below highlights the interviewees’ perceptions on tourism growth in Eksteenfontein:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sectors</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community based tourism through guesthouse and conservation</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Game viewing</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Floral viewing</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecotourism through conservation tours</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adventure tourism (4X4)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical and cultural tourism: History of the Eksteenfontein area.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunting</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiking trails</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bird watching</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: 1 = no growth; 3 = in between; 5 = strong growth.

The following reasons were stated for ratings of 3 and below:
• There is in reality no actual development or growth in the area except for the 4X4 routes;
• All the plans are still in the pipeline and implementation date is uncertain;
• Poor communication to community members who are actually owners of the conservancy;
• The roads are in poor condition therefore some 4x4 enthusiasts may come;
• Although marketing has improved few people know about Eksteenfontein and are interested in the area and culture;
• Too little rain and this can destroy some fauna and flora impacting on eco-tourism;
• There is a shortage of funds for development and that can hamper tourism development; and
• The place is too far and nearest major airport is in Upington.

The reasons for ratings of 4 and 5 were as follows:

• The 4x4 tourists bring in the money;
• The flora and fauna is unique and so is the culture and spirit amongst the community;
• More people know about the Richtersveld and Eksteenfontein;
• It is going slowly but tourism will grow;
• People are curious about our natural settings and unique culture;
• The locals are friendly and keep tourists entertained; and
• Tourists feel safe here because the crime rate is almost non-existent and no tourists were harmed or robbed here.

The respondents noted that the following factors could adversely affect the community’s development goals in relation to the conservancy:

**Table 10: Factors that could hamper the Conservancy’s future development**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Number of Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poor Management</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial losses</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor infrastructure such as roads, electricity</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community tensions</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No proper training given to people to manage the conservancy</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community members want other jobs</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community members will lose interest in the conservancy</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too many people involved</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too few people involved</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People will compromise their culture for money</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In relation to infrastructure development, there are plans to improve the roads, electrify areas where there is no electricity (except within the conservancy), improve the signage on the roads to the conservancy and Eksteenfontein and upgrade the guesthouses.

Interviewees stated that the conservancy tourism project could generate sustainable livelihoods for the Eksteenfontein community. There are community spin-offs and in 10 years tourism will offer full time livelihood opportunities.

The Richtersveld CPA, as owners of the Rooiberg Conservancy, plans to outsource all the tourism businesses to the community and this will include the guesthouses, campsites, tourism office and museum. Community members will be asked to tender for the businesses. Community members will be encouraged to form joint ventures with non-Richtersvelders to promote investment in the area. Community members who are currently operating some of the businesses are in a state of uncertainty and feel that they would not stand a chance of winning any of the tenders but improved communication channels between the management and the community could allay these fears.

The management committee noted that not all the members of the community could benefit from tourism opportunities but these realities should also be clarified with the community. Interviewees stated that the youth are developing with a culture of tourism and they have the potential to develop it and sustain it. Most of the older residents do not understand tourism and how tourism could provide benefits to them because they were either miners or livestock farmers. However these livelihoods should remain options for the community and become integrated with tourism activities in the area.

Generally, there appears to be some economic and social spin-offs in relation to the conservancy. The analysis illustrates that not all members of the community are well informed on the conservancy development and feel that there is nepotism with regard to training and/or job opportunities. The majority of the interviewees agree that the conservancy tourism project, if linked with other initiatives in the area, such as the establishment of the transfrontier conservation area with Namibia and mining, can create sustainable livelihoods for the Eksteenfontein community.

**Conclusion**

The study compared the sustainability aspects of six commonage case studies to one sustainable tourism venture in Namaqualand. The primary objective was to demonstrate that sustainable tourism should be considered as a livelihood strategy in terms of the land reform programme, especially the DLA's commonage sub-programme. The study has ascertained that livestock farming cannot provide sustainable livelihoods to people accessing commonages. While livestock farming has been the traditional livelihoods generator in Namaqualand, commonage users did express interest in tourism but this was never developed into a comprehensive strategy.

Comparatively, it would appear as if the tourism venture has a financial edge over the livestock farming enterprises (R445 743 income generated from livestock sales on the six
commonages versus R549 000 (off-season) and R1 774 500 (peak season)]. In terms of the tourism venture, majority of the spin-offs have been positive but further communication on the benefits i.e. social, ecological and financial must be candidly explained to the communities who are involved in such initiatives.

The Eksteenfontein case study has demonstrated that communities can create sustainable livelihoods through tourism on commonages but only if the following issues are prioritised:

- Open communication channels between the community and the management of such ventures to minimise misunderstandings and involve the community in all levels of decision-making;
- A comprehensive skills development plan should be in place that would emphasise the type of skills needed for the venture, indicate who should be targeted for courses and when skills training should commence. Skills development should ideally coincide with the period of employment;
- The development of a sustainable tourism strategy that fits in with the development vision of the area; and
- Finally, the development of a monitoring and control system should be in place to identify weaknesses in the venture and capitalise on the strengths.
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The Southern Africa Labour and Development Research Unit

The Southern Africa Labour and Development Research Unit (SALDRU) conducts research directed at improving the well-being of South Africa’s poor. It was established in 1975. Over the next two decades the unit’s research played a central role in documenting the human costs of apartheid. Key projects from this period included the Farm Labour Conference (1976), the Economics of Health Care Conference (1978), and the Second Carnegie Enquiry into Poverty and Development in South Africa (1983-86). At the urging of the African National Congress, from 1992-1994 SALDRU and the World Bank coordinated the Project for Statistics on Living Standards and Development (PSLSD). This project provide baseline data for the implementation of post-apartheid socio-economic policies through South Africa’s first non-racial national sample survey.

In the post-apartheid period, SALDRU has continued to gather data and conduct research directed at informing and assessing anti-poverty policy. In line with its historical contribution, SALDRU’s researchers continue to conduct research detailing changing patterns of well-being in South Africa and assessing the impact of government policy on the poor. Current research work falls into the following research themes: post-apartheid poverty; employment and migration dynamics; family support structures in an era of rapid social change; public works and public infrastructure programmes, financial strategies of the poor; common property resources and the poor. Key survey projects include the Langeberg Integrated Family Survey (1999), the Khayelitsha/Mitchell’s Plain Survey (2000), the ongoing Cape Area Panel Study and the Financial Diaries Project.