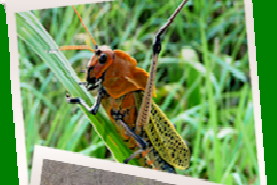
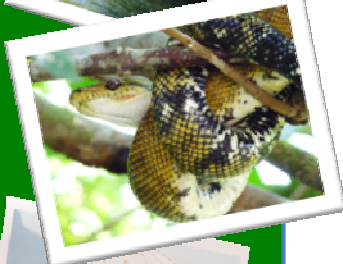
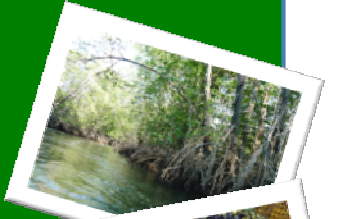




# LiveDiverse

## SUMMARY-REPORT FROM 1<sup>ST</sup> STAKEHOLDER FIELDTRIPS: SOUTH AFRICA, 21<sup>ST</sup>-30<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER, 2009



Seventh Framework Programme (FP7/2007-2013) under grant agreement No. 211392

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## Presentation of the fieldtrip

The South Africa field trip had a number of objectives, namely, i) to develop a common understanding between the LiveDiverse partners of the issues and challenges within the case study area, ie., an inter-case study and inter-partner exchange; ii) to raise awareness of LiveDiverse in the case area and to secure the interest of key stakeholders; iii) to identify existing initiatives and projects within the case study area that complement the aims and objectives of LiveDiverse; and iv) to contribute to a preliminary mapping of issues – from a stakeholder perspective – within the case study areas.

The field trip was organized by the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), Livediverse case-study partner and leader of WP4.

The field trip commenced from Pretoria on the 22<sup>nd</sup> October to the Makuya Community where there was an opportunity to visit a typical village community, Mutele Village, before arriving at the Makuya nature reserve. The Makuya nature reserve is located on the South-eastern side of the Mutale municipality, and covers three territories (Mutele, Makuya and Mphaphuli). The park is basically managed by the South African park authorities (provincial government, in this case) but because the land belongs to the Makuya there is a so called *Community Tourist Association* (aka ‘the Forum’) of village representatives who participate in the decision-making. A *knowledge café* was organized. The *knowledge café* was broken down into four separate themes dealing with public beliefs, perceptions, attitudes and preferences; socio-economic vulnerability, cultural and spiritual vulnerability; and governance and stakeholder participation. Present at the first stakeholders meeting in the Makuya provincial nature park were mainly villagers represented in the co-management of the park. A range of issues were discussed. A considerable amount of the discussion centred around livelihoods and in particular eco-tourism, where the groups discussed opportunities to increase the revenue from the Makuya game reserve and surrounding communities.

The 23<sup>rd</sup> October was devoted to exchanges between the project representatives and representatives of the village community

On the 24<sup>th</sup> October, the project team then travelled from Makuya Camp through Massisi and the Parfuri Gate to the Punda Maria camp in the Kruger National Park. The camp provided a base by which to explore the Kruger National Park.

During the 25<sup>th</sup> October, the project team travelled along the Mutale River, which provided an opportunity to informally engage with the communities living along the River.

On the 26<sup>th</sup> of October the group left the Kruger Park and travelled to Folovhodwe village which provided an opportunity to informally engage with communities there.

A *knowledge café* was arranged on the 27<sup>th</sup> October with members of the Folovhodwe community. As with the previous knowledge café, the Folovhodwe meeting was broken down into four separate themes dealing with public beliefs, perceptions, attitudes and preferences; socio-economic vulnerability, cultural and spiritual vulnerability; and governance and stakeholder participation. Around 20 community members from Folovhodwe, Gumela and Tshilamba attended the



Discussion of cultural-spiritual issues during Folovhodwe Community Meeting

meeting. The villages border the Nwanedi Nature Reserve.

Then on the 28<sup>th</sup> October the project group met with researchers at the University of Venda in Thohoyando to exchange ideas and experiences around livelihoods and biodiversity issues. The meeting brought together several academics, mostly from physical science disciplines, of the University of Venda to discuss how the project team might collaborate with researchers that are already active within the case study site.

During the 29<sup>th</sup> October the project team departed the case study area, returning to Pretoria and beyond.

### **Conclusions from the fieldtrip**

The South Africa fieldtrip provided an excellent opportunity for the LiveDiverse team to engage with key stakeholders within the case study area, in order to better understand the key issues and challenges within the region, raise awareness of the project, and develop a dialogue with key actors. Numerous challenges and issues were identified, as has been illustrated by the meeting notes. Central amongst these issues is how the most vulnerable in society can improve their livelihoods in a region where water shortages are a major constraint. Linked to the latter is the role that biodiversity conservation and the Kruger national park can play in facilitating the improvement of livelihoods.

A special thanks must go to the CSIR team for their effective organization of the fieldtrip.

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