

**Succulent Karoo Ecosystem Programme  
Phase 2**

**2009 - 2014**

*“Consolidation and Securing Programme  
Sustainability”*

**A Strategic Plan of Action for South Africa  
August 2008**



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Succulent Karoo Ecosystem Programme (SKEP) is a long term, multi-stakeholder bioregional conservation and development programme, with four strategic focal areas: increasing local and international awareness of the unique biodiversity of the Succulent Karoo, expanding protected areas and improving conservation management, supporting a matrix of harmonious land uses and improving institutional co-ordination.

SKEP is a partnership programme with government and non-government partners. Whereas the first five years of implementation was funded by the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund and focused on catalyzing and programme start-up, the next five years will focus on programme consolidation i.e integrating SKEP objectives into national and regional government programmes and thereby ensure programme sustainability.

This phase of the SKEP will be guided by the strategy set out in this report. This strategy was developed in a participatory manner with programme stakeholders and partners via three aligned processes:

- the CEPF five year impact assessment process,
- the in-depth key programme informant rapid appraisal process and
- the SKEP strategic planning process.

The SKEP strategic planning process resulted in the development of the eight strategic programme components with their accompanying objectives, key interventions and targets that need to be addressed over the next five years. These strategic programme components are:

1. Securing land in priority areas.
2. Expanding the SKEP partnership.
3. Linking livelihoods and biodiversity.
4. Building local government capacity.
5. Enhancing the role of science in SKEP.
6. Climate change and renewable energy.
7. Involving the mining sector.
8. Raising awareness.

To ensure continued implementation of the programme, the SKEP needs strengthened partnerships, continued good governance, and the resources to match. The SKEP partnership will thus be expanded to include relevant government agencies and programmes to ensure coordination among funding sources, and synergy between conservation and development initiatives. It will also re-affirm its existing partnerships through a re-commitment

by partners to their roles and functions with respect to oversight of the SKEP and the operation of the SKEP's South African Implementation Committee. The programme will adopt a multi-pronged approach to funding and resource mobilisation and seek to ensure that sustainable sources of funding are secured. The SKEP will also place stronger emphasis on catalysing pilot projects, providing strategic guidance to partners and facilitate learning exchanges as well as better information and knowledge management.

## INTRODUCTION

### Succulent Karoo Ecosystem Programme: The Background

The Succulent Karoo biodiversity hotspot extends from the southwest through the north-western areas of South Africa and into southern Namibia. Noted for its exceptional succulent and bulbous plant species, high reptile and invertebrate diversity, bird and mammal life, it is one of the most diverse arid environments in the world. This biodiversity is under significant pressure from a range of human impacts, notably mining, crop agriculture and overgrazing, and increasingly also from climate change.

The Succulent Karoo Ecosystem Programme (SKEP) is a long term, multi-stakeholder bioregional conservation and development programme. SKEP began as a bi-national initiative between Namibia and South Africa, with the aim of defining a way to conserve this ecosystem, and to develop conservation **as** a land use rather than **instead of** land use. This approach is encapsulated in the SKEP Twenty Year Strategy developed in 2001/2002, based on the following broad vision:

***"The people of the Succulent Karoo take ownership of and enjoy their unique living landscape in a way that maintains biodiversity and improves livelihoods now and into perpetuity."***

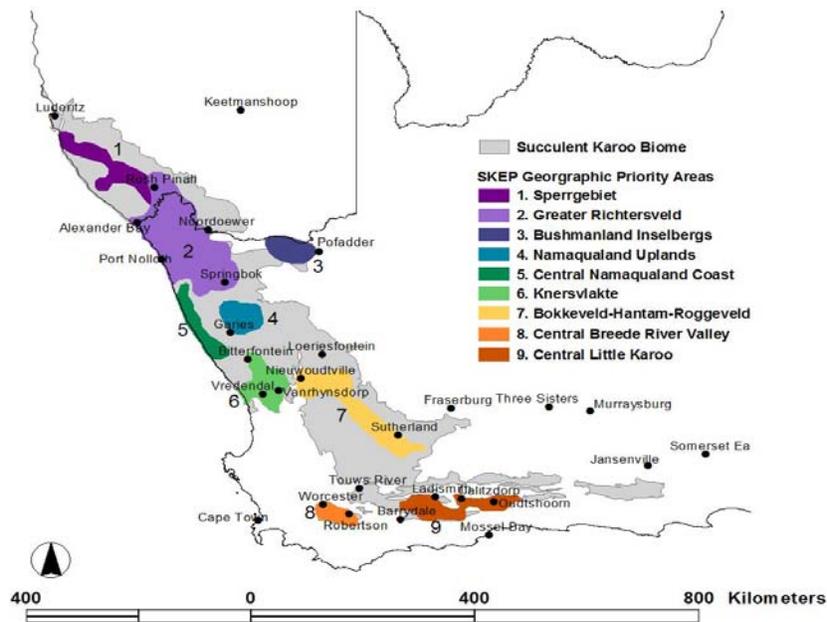
The long-term strategic focal areas for the programme are:

- Increasing local, national and international awareness of the unique biodiversity of the Succulent Karoo
- Expanding protected areas and improving conservation management, particularly through the expansion of public-private-communal-corporate partnerships
- Supporting the creation of a matrix of harmonious land uses
- Improving institutional co-ordination to generate momentum and focus on priorities, maximize opportunities for partnerships, and ensure sustainability

Achieving these will ultimately result in a conserved, yet lived in and worked in landscape. In 2002/03, the programme focused on nine geographic priority areas that needed to be conserved and sensitively developed if its biodiversity and ecosystem value was to be safeguarded. These areas

contained and still contain important habitats that are most vulnerable to land use pressures (see map).

The 2009 – 2014 strategic plan is focussed on the South African part of the SKEP planning domain and thus on eight of the original nine geographic priority areas. The South African SKEP will however, continue to maintain relations with its Namibian counterpart.



**Figure 1. Geographic priority areas in the Succulent Karoo (South Africa and Namibia)**

Part of the strategic review saw a revision of the IUCN Red Data plant species for the geographic priority areas within South Africa. This was due to the fact that the original Red Data plant lists generated for these areas was based on Quarter Degree Square (QDS) data which is far more coarse than currently available data. This strategic planning process was seen as an opportunity to refine SKEP data, to allow for effective comparisons in the future. The SANBI Threatened Species Programme initiated in 2003 has added more than 3000 plant species to the original National Red Data lists over the past five years. Thus while the Red Data list has grown, the SKEP priority area lists are somewhat lower than those estimated at the outset of the programme. This is due to the methodological considerations noted above which confound opportunities to use the original Red Data plant lists as any measure of programme impact. The revised lists generated in conjunction with SANBI's Threatened Species Programme will however, ensure quality data and will

allow for effective measures of change into the future. See Appendix B for the summary table of the IUCN Red Data list plant species for the eight SKEP geographic priority areas in South Africa.

#### *Greater Richtersveld*

The Greater Richtersveld which includes the Gariiep region has a staggering 2700 plant species, of which 560 are endemic. Since 80% of the plant species are succulents, this is the area with the world's highest succulent diversity. A total of 194 plant species in this priority area are Red Data list species.

#### *Bushmanland Inselbergs*

The Bushmanland Inselberg area is located on the northeast margin of the Succulent Karoo Hotspot. This 31,400ha area includes 429 plant species, of which 18 are Red List species.

#### *Namaqualand Uplands*

The Namaqualand Uplands encompass the highlands of central Namaqualand in the Northern Cape. Its 33,500ha area includes 1109 plant species, of which 286 are Succulent Karoo endemics and 71 are Red Data List species.

#### *Central Namaqualand Coast*

This 34,600ha area along the coastline includes 432 plant species, 85 of which are Succulent Karoo endemics and 74 are Red Data List species.

#### *Knersvlakte*

The Knersvlakte, which has the greatest percentage of threatened endemics in the entire hotspot, is in the centre of the Succulent Karoo hotspot. The 48,500ha area is extremely rich in plant species, with a total of 1324 species, 266 of which are Succulent Karoo endemics and 121 are Red Data list species.

#### *Bokkeveld-Tanqua-Roggeveld*

Centred on the town of Calvinia, the Hantam-Roggeveld area encompasses both the Bokkeveld and Roggeveld escarpments. The total plant species tally in this 86,600ha area is 1767, of which 357 are Succulent Karoo endemics and 102 are Red List species.

#### *Central Breede River Valley*

The Worcester/Robertson Karoo Centre, which includes the Middle Breede River Valley, has approximately 1500 species of plants of which 115 are endemic and 19 are Red Data list species

#### *Central Little Karoo*

The Central Little Karoo lies in the valley between the Langeberg and Swartberg mountain ranges in the south of the Succulent Karoo Hotspot.

There are 1325 species in this 51,000ha area, including 182 Succulent Karoo endemics and 73 Red List species.

## **NATURE AND ROLE OF SKEP**

A defining feature of SKEP is that it is a partnership programme made up of government and non-government partners and governed by a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). Any organisation that subscribes to the SKEP vision and goals, and believes it can contribute to achieving the SKEP Twenty Year Strategy can be a party to the MoU. All MoU signatories are members of the South African Implementation Committee (SAIC), the governing body with final authority on the programme's policy and priorities.

SKEP is a twenty-year programme. Whereas the first five years of implementation has been characterised as the start-up and catalytic phase, the next five years can be seen as the phase of consolidation i.e. the integration of SKEP objectives into national and regional government programmes and relevant departmental mandates, and securing programme sustainability. Through key characteristics of mainstreaming SKEP actions and objectives into government programmes, the SKEP will ensure that its conservation actions become part of government business. Thus finding new ways of working with government programmes will be a central feature in the coming years and will have a positive impact on biodiversity.

Integration and alignment with government led programmes will help to secure long-term programme sustainability and this is especially important in a region with high levels of poverty where the focus is on socio-economic development. It will also strengthen the notion that conservation and development initiatives are reconcilable and that it is not conservation or development, but rather where and how development takes place that is at issue. Thus more attention will also be given to identifying interventions that take into account sustainable livelihoods and that can play an important role in achieving the ideal of conservation as land use. Actions such as these will also serve to expand the programme's partner base and involve programmes and government bodies whose policies and programmes impact on biodiversity but whose core business is not biodiversity conservation.

In the past five years, SKEP has largely been a civil society and private sector driven programme. Robust civil society action will continue to be an integral part of the programme and the strengthening of existing partnerships will include exploring with partners the conservation actions that they are best placed to perform within their current organisational mandates and also how to link them with the resources available.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The SKEP philosophy of conservation as land use intimates an understanding that biodiversity conservation interventions must take account of local circumstances and conditions. To give effect to this commitment, the programme is guided by certain principles, many of which have until now been implicit. By explicitly stating the principles by which the programme operates here, those participating in the SKEP Partnership will know what is expected of them and can be held accountable in relation to these principles.

With regard to biodiversity, the SKEP partnership endorses the principles governing the National Environmental Management Act of 1998 and the Biodiversity Act of 2004. With regard to the people-centred nature of SKEP, it further commits to the following principles:

- **Inclusiveness and collaboration** – involving a broad-based participation by civil society (including local community structures), the private and public sectors in both the development and operational aspects of the programme
- **Diversity** – acknowledging the diversity of experiences and situations of stakeholders and programme participants and actively finding ways to ensure that policies, programme interventions and structures reflect and are able to respond to these variations
- **Responsiveness** – that the programme and its interventions are able to respond in a participatory and realistic way to the challenges, opportunities and needs of its stakeholders and programme participants
- **Appropriateness of approach in creating empowering environments** – that the programme provides an environment that allows participants to develop their potential and skills, and that the programme's approach will complement people's efforts and enhance their independence and self-respect.

## CONSERVATION TARGETS

The SKEP Twenty Year Strategy set key biodiversity conservation targets based on scientific assessment of vegetation types to identify conservation priorities. Notably, the strategy commits to securing 100% of conservation targets for Succulent Karoo vegetation types under formal conservation management regimes controlled by state, communal, private or corporate entities. This would effectively conserve 75% of the species in the hotspot.

The protected area targets for SKEP vegetation types have been updated in accordance with the National Protected Areas Expansion Strategy and aligned with the recently revised national South Africa vegetation types (Appendix A). These protected area targets have been disaggregated to indicate how much and by when (specific intervals of 5, 10 and 20 years)

SKEP aims to achieve these targets. Disaggregating and monitoring the twenty-year targets in this way will serve to better reflect our changing knowledge of the environment.

## FROM PHASE 1 TO PHASE 2

### What was achieved during Phase 1?

The five years which have passed since the adoption of the SKEP Twenty Year Strategy have been characterised as the 'catalytic phase'. During this first phase, the focus has been on catalysing projects and processes to improve biodiversity conservation in the Succulent Karoo region over the long term while at the same time enhancing local livelihoods. Funding for this phase was provided through the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF), with a particular focus on engaging civil society organisations in safeguarding the spectacular environment of the Succulent Karoo global biodiversity hotspot. Some of the highlights of progress made during these first years are captured below.

- *Biodiversity results*

Expanded protected areas: In South Africa, almost half a million hectares have been added to the formal protected areas network in the SKEP planning domain, taking the percentage under formal protection from 3.4% to 6.3% or nearly double in just five years. This reflects a 41.2% increase in vegetation types under formal protection, with a shift from 29 vegetation types in formal protection in 2002 to 83 in 2007. 63% of the vegetation types in the area now receive some degree of formal protection. SKEP has been instrumental in driving and guiding conservation land purchases (see Table 1). In addition, there have been considerable further gains in informal protected areas through instruments such as private contracts. These additions increase the total protected area network to 572,831 hectares.

**Table 1. Increases in formal protected areas in SKEP priority areas in 2002 – 2007**

PRIORITY AREA	Total area (ha)	Protected area (ha) 2002	Protected area (ha) 2007	Protected area gained (ha) 2002 - 2007	Protected area (%) 2002	Protected area (%) 2007
· Bokkeveld-Hantam-Roggeveld	932 717	10 966	39 315	28 348	1.2	4.2
· Central Breede River Valley	206 808	2 679	5 711	3 032	1.3	2.8
· Central Little Karoo	548 430	8 937	17 834	8 897	1.6	3.3
· Central Namaqualand Coast	372 587	2 043	26 323	24 280	0.6	7.1

PRIORITY AREA	Total area (ha)	Protected area (ha) 2002	Protected area (ha) 2007	Protected area gained (ha) 2002 - 2007	Protected area (%) 2002	Protected area (%) 2007
· Greater Richtersveld	2 071 054	13 137	343 253	330 116	0.6	16.5
· Knervlakte	522 234	7 492	29 529	22 037	1.4	5.7
· Namaqualand Uplands	361 127	315	37 169	36 854	0.1	10.3

Biodiversity-friendly land use practices: Considerable work has been focused on improving land use practices to ensure a more biodiversity-friendly approach by various landowners including private people and municipalities. The total area of land brought under biodiversity-friendly land use (over and above the expanded formal protected areas) is 541,984 hectares. This has been achieved through diverse initiatives such as stewardship agreements (see box 1), the generation and implementation of biodiversity-informed management plans, provision of detailed vegetation maps to reserve managers to inform management strategies, and a range of smaller initiatives.

#### **Box 1. Stewardship agreements options**

Landowners wishing to set land aside for conservation or to utilize their land sustainably in the Succulent Karoo have four stewardship options available to them:

1. **Contract National Parks** are established when privately or communally owned land formally becomes part of a national park. Conservation-worthy land usually adjacent to a National park is formally proclaimed as National Park and enjoys all the legal protection associated with this status.
2. **Contract Nature Reserves** are legally recognized contracts or servitudes on private land to protect biodiversity in the long-term and can be created either by 'agreement to declare a nature reserve and consent to the assignment of the management authority' through a contract between landowner, the Provincial conservation authority and the Provincial MEC, or by means of the 'protected area management agreement', which is signed between the landowner and CapeNature.
3. **Biodiversity Management Agreements** are negotiated legal agreements between the conservation agency and a landowner for conserving biodiversity in the medium term, done through the protected area management agreement contract listed above.
4. **Conservation Sites Agreements** are a more flexible option negotiated on a case-by-case basis, with no predetermined period of commitment.

Fine scale plans have been, or are presently being generated for the Bushmanland Conservation Initiative and the Greater Namakwa District Municipality. A municipal level management plan is currently being done for the Richtersveld and detailed vegetation maps have been produced for the Namaqualand uplands (including information on insect diversity), the Hantam-Tanqua-Roggeveld region, and the Central Little Karoo (including degradation). In addition to these initiatives, management plans have been developed for a number of the new formal protected areas. The fine-scale map of the Little Karoo have been used as a basis to develop a variety of useful products for agriculture (e.g. grazing potential, ostrich farming maps), local government (e.g. maps of erosion, carbon sequestration and restoration

potential, threatened and biodiversity sensitive areas), and fire protection associations (e.g. fire threat and flammability maps) to guide decision-making. Various stakeholders are already using these maps.

Species indicators: While SKEP predominantly followed a landscape-level agenda, a number of smaller projects have had a species focus. One project has specifically targeted forage species, including the red-listed grass *Secale africanum*; preliminary results on establishing this species can be used to improve its establishment on reserves in the Roggeveld, with the possibility of multiplying its seed at the localities. Other projects have furthered scientific knowledge of the Tent Tortoise (*Psammobates tentorius*), the Kokerboom (*Aloe dichotoma*), the Porcupine (*Hystrix africaeaustralis*) and the Leopard (*Panthera p. pardus*). Several inventory projects have looked at larger taxonomic groups such as insects and plants in the Kamiesberg Uplands. The insect project in particular has seen a significant contribution to science with the description of two new genera and five new species of monkey beetles, and two new species of lacewings. The same project has found an ancient stonefly that is a Gondwanan relic and two highly endemic monkey beetles that are restricted to the Fynbos of the Kamiesberg Uplands.

Numerous plant and animal species have benefited through the expansion of formal protected areas. Fourteen of these are known IUCN Red Data Listed species and are now included in the expanded protected areas. Examples include the vulnerable Red Lark (*Certhilauda burra* in the Bushmanland Black Mountain Mine Conservation Area, safe habitat expansion for the Cape Mountain Zebra (*Equus zebra zebra*) through stewardship agreements in the Central Little Karoo, and the plant species *Clivia mirabilis* in the expanded Oorlogskloof Nature Reserve. In the Knersvlakte, at least five Red Data species and numerous endemics have been secured since 2003.

- *Socioeconomic impacts*

Improving livelihoods: Close to 400 local short- to medium-term jobs were created, more than half of them biodiversity-based jobs in the tourism sector. The SKEPPIES small grants facility, focused on conservation and local economic development, played a significant part in this. In Namaqualand, the Roodebergskloof stewardship initiative combines conservation of 1220 ha of land with the creation of socioeconomic opportunities for 14 land reform beneficiaries through nature-based tourism and improved grazing practices. A new restoration business established with start-up capital co-financed by CEPF and De Beers is harnessing a local workforce. The new venture, fully owned by Namaqualanders, has to date employed 15 people from local communities and this number is set to increase as operations expand.

Strengthening social capital: Civil society involvement in biodiversity conservation in the Succulent Karoo has increased significantly, growing from fewer than five organisations in 2003 to over fifty today. In some areas, local

conservation steering committees initiated through SKEP have grown in stature as well as membership, into credible and sustainable local fora with real potential to outlast external donor support. SKEP has provided a platform for strong stakeholder networks to emerge.

▪ *Creating an enabling environment*

Institutional development: Good progress has been made during the catalytic phase in building an institutional framework for long-term conservation of the region. SKEP has been formally institutionalised as a bioregional programme within the South Africa National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI), thereby increasing its potential to achieve systemic change in the long term. Through SKEP, the provincial statutory conservation agencies in the Western and Northern Cape were enabled to play a stronger role.

Raising awareness: Using extensive stakeholder engagement, interactions with government, awareness campaigns and environmental education, SKEP has raised the profile of the Succulent Karoo and catalysed significant conservation interest and awareness across the region. The SKEP process has also generated a new cadre of conservation champions, with good conservation knowledge and vital skills in project management.

Industry practices: Mainstreaming biodiversity into industry practices has been a priority, particularly in the mining sector. Examples include the Black Mountain mine in the Bushmanland Inselberg area, and the restoration practices of mine dumps in Namaqualand. A newly formed company NM Restoration engages mine operators by bringing in restoration expertise and scientific field experiments to develop novel restoration methods. Best practice guidelines for the potato, rooibos, wine and 4x4 industries have also been developed, and are underway for the ostrich industry. In the Klein Karoo, guidelines for the game industry have been developed together with carrying capacity and vegetation condition maps.

## Strategy development process undertaken for Phase 2

The first phase of SKEP reached its conclusion in 2008. To prepare itself for the next phase, the SKEP partnership initiated a process that would lead to the adoption of a strategic action plan for the period 2009-2014. The objectives of this process were fourfold:

- To conduct an appraisal of the overall programme and the impact of SKEP's first five year strategy
- To identify key biodiversity challenges and opportunities facing the programme over the next five years
- To develop a strategic plan of action and key interventions to address the issues identified in this process

- To ensure that the strategic planning process secures the engagement of a broader set of stakeholders, with particular emphasis on government programmes that have the potential to assist in achieving SKEP objectives.

The process kicked off in April 2008 with an Assessment Workshop involving 63 participants, drawn from civil society implementing partners, government departments at provincial and local level, researchers, local experts and donor representatives. This included a participatory reflection process on achievements and lessons learnt in the past five years. The workshop was followed by a detailed assessment of gains in terms of land in priority biodiversity areas, and interviews with 27 key stakeholders from around the SKEP community. Perspectives and insights gained in this way were captured in a Rapid Appraisal Report and used to identify key strategic issues facing the programme in the years ahead. In June 2008, SKEP convened a strategic planning workshop in Springbok, with the primary goal of developing a draft strategic plan which sets out overall priorities for action for the period 2009 – 2014. This workshop brought together over 60 representatives of existing partners, resource persons as well as a substantial number of new stakeholders from a range of relevant government departments and programmes. The strategic themes set out in this document are a direct output of the deliberations in the Springbok workshop.

The scope of this strategic plan is limited to SKEP in South Africa, and does not include Namibia. The latter is now the statutory responsibility of the Government of Namibia, and has developed its own strategy for the next five years of SKEP Namibia.

## **SUMMARY OF THE RAPID APPRAISAL FINDINGS**

### Programme Strengths and Weaknesses of SKEP Phase 1

The Rapid Appraisal Report identified the following strengths of the first 5 years of the SKEP programme:

- A significant expansion of the formal protected area network
- Substantially increased local awareness and stakeholder buy-in
- Capacity development of a small but impressive cadre of local conservationists
- Establishment of the SKEPPIES small grants facility
- Engagement with the mining industry

A number of gaps were identified, the most important of these being the need for:

- Stronger scientific leadership to inform programme implementation
- Improved knowledge and information management
- Better linkages with key government departments and programmes
- Greater political visibility at higher levels

- More focus on strengthening local government capacity
- More attention to communal and commercial farmers.

## Challenges and Opportunities for SKEP Phase 2

The Appraisal went on to identify challenges and opportunities facing SKEP in the years ahead. The major challenges related to:

- Limitations in institutional capacity in local government structures
- Job losses associated with mine closures leading to increased livestock grazing pressures in communal areas, while new mining enterprises have negative impacts on plant and animal species
- Illegal ploughing of virgin land, especially for tea
- Illegal harvesting for commercial exploitation, especially *Hoodia* species
- Shifts to game farming, especially in the Little Karoo, often using extralimital species and with little concern for carrying capacity
- Climate change threatening ecosystems, plant species and the spatial extent of the Succulent Karoo Hotspot
- Pervasive poverty and population dynamics across the region.

At the same time, SKEP is presented with opportunities to:

- Build a stronger scientific agenda to inform programme implementation
- Focus on climate change adaptation for land users and biodiversity
- Promote investment in renewable energy as alternative land use
- Build institutional capacity in local government structures
- Link and align with other government programmes
- Strengthen the SKEP brand through enhanced communications strategy
- Develop a cadre of young Karoo ecologists through skills training and environmental education
- Expand and institutionalise the SKEPPIES small grants facility.

## What strategic issues should SKEP address in Phase 2?

A new strategic action plan must build on the programme's strengths, act on its weaknesses, deal with external challenges and take advantage of identified opportunities. The assessment of these forms the basis of identifying key strategic issues that face SKEP as it enters its next phase. These emerging strategic issues are framed in the form of questions that SKEP can and should address.

1. ***In view of the extent to which the conservation estate has been expanded in the first phase, what should SKEP do in the next five years to secure its conservation targets in relation to land acquisition, commercial farm land, and communal farm land?***

### **What makes something a strategic issue?**

- It must be a **fundamental policy question** affecting the programme's mandate and mission; and,
- Failure to address the issue will significantly compromise the programme's ability to achieve its goals.

- 2. What should SKEP do to harness other government programmes in support of biodiversity and sustainable livelihood outcomes?**
- 3. How can SKEP foster a developmental approach to conservation that enhances livelihoods of marginalised groups, such as communal land users, farm dwellers, women, youth, and empowers them to use natural resources in a sustainable way?**
- 4. In view of the limited capacity at local government level and the lessons emerging from our engagement with municipalities in the first phase, what more should SKEP do to ensure that biodiversity priorities are taken into account in a systematic way in local government decision-making for priority areas?**
- 5. Given the dynamic nature of the socio-ecological system in the Succulent Karoo, how can SKEP provide scientific leadership and ensure that its work is properly informed by, and is able to support, good natural and social science research on an ongoing basis?**
- 6. Given the potentially negative impacts of climate change on environmental resources, livelihoods, infrastructure and economic growth in the Succulent Karoo, what role can SKEP play to help the region adapt to climate change and make its people and biodiversity less vulnerable to these impacts?**
- 7. How can SKEP take advantage of the opportunities around renewable energy and climate change-related funding to ensure that they become a positive force for biodiversity conservation in the Succulent Karoo?**
- 8. Given that we now have biodiversity best practice standards for mining, relationships with some of the main mining houses, and have initiated talks with the DME, how can SKEP scale up its efforts to make the mining sector a positive force for biodiversity conservation in the Succulent Karoo?**
- 9. How should SKEP build on the increased awareness mobilised in the first phase, to ensure that momentum is maintained and political visibility is improved?**

## **STRATEGIC COMPONENTS OF PHASE 2**

The strategic components of the SKEP Phase 2 were determined at the Springbok workshop held in June 2008, derived from the participants' deliberations in relation to the strategic issues listed above. This five-year plan of action consists of eight strategic issues, their accompanying objectives and sets of key interventions for each objective. Together they respond to the strengths and weaknesses, challenges and opportunities that were identified

in the Rapid Appraisal, and essentially shape the SKEP agenda for the period 2009-2014.

As a programme that coordinates conservation actions amongst its partners in the Succulent Karoo, the SKEP takes cognizance of the National Biodiversity Framework (NBF). Required in terms of the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act (Act 10 of 2004), this framework provides for the coordination and alignment of biodiversity management and conservation actions in the country in support of sustainable development over the five year period ending in 2013. Developed by representatives of non-government conservation organisations as well as state representatives under the leadership of the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, this framework contains the agreed set of priorities that will guide the work in the biodiversity sector over the next five years.

The priority conservation actions outlined by the SKEP strategic plan are aligned with that of the National Biodiversity Framework and like the NBF, the SKEP provides a framework for conservation and development in the Succulent Karoo. This alignment is a big step in the process of mainstreaming the programme into government led programmes as well as those departments whose core mandate is not biodiversity conservation, but whose policies, programmes and actions impact directly on it. Alignment with the NBF puts the SKEP squarely on the conservation and development agenda in the country.

## Strategic Component 1: Securing Land in Priority Areas

At the end of the first phase, 6.3% of land in the SKEP planning domain is under formal protection. In South Africa, which will form the focus of the next phase, 5% of the land is now under formal protection. Unless this protected area network is further consolidated, these gains could be jeopardised. Hence it is important to engage with the agencies - state, semi-state and non-government - and private individuals engaged in securing land for conservation. These organisations include WWF South Africa (through the Leslie Hill Succulent Karoo Trust), SANParks, CapeNature and Northern Cape Government's Department of Tourism, Environment and Conservation.

It is also suggested that prioritizing land purchases be based on three elements. These are with a view to consolidate current and past purchases so that existing conservation efforts may be strengthened. To initiate new conservation areas in those places with high biodiversity (or irreplaceability) not currently incorporated in areas of conservation activity, and finally with consideration to the current protection status of the vegetation type (Appendix A).

Securing high value biodiversity land takes the form of acquisition through purchase, proclamation and/or various types of stewardship arrangements and/or agreements. Targets for expanding protected areas and conservation areas need to be aligned with the NBF 2013 protected area network targets. Land acquisition should also take into account and be appreciative of the history of land holding in the Succulent Karoo and work towards ameliorating the fears of the previously marginalized groupings. To this end, a concerted effort should be made that aims at building stronger relations with other land use sectors and gaining their cooperation when acquiring land. The Department of Land Affairs should be engaged in order to ascertain their priority areas and identify areas where their priorities and important biodiversity areas overlap. To this end strategies for a more complementary relationship between conservation and land reform should be built.

Stewardship must be complementary to land acquisition – it is not an ‘either or’ approach. However, the lack of government capacity to support stewardship initiatives remains a major obstacle, particularly in the Northern Cape. Indigenous knowledge needs to be incorporated into stewardship initiatives, for the SKEP vision of people of the Succulent Karoo taking ownership and control of biodiversity conservation to be realized.

Support for stewardship amongst farmers is higher than anticipated, but incentives are still needed. Work in this sphere is currently underway through the Botanical Society of South Africa. The experiences of SKEP partners also suggest that incentives could include technical support such as extension services in grazing and veld condition and links to social development programmes. In the case of communal farmers, there is also an urgent need to take into account in developing conservation initiatives, the role that communal livestock plays in providing a social safety net in poor rural communities. A further investigation on the services provided by grazing land in particular should be made. The investigation should take cognizance of both livelihood and cultural use of land and identify how stewardship agreements could support them. If stewardship supports the sustainability of these production systems it will go a long way to developing biodiversity conservation actions that are acceptable to the people of the Succulent Karoo,

Government programmes such as LandCare and Working for Water can support stewardship programmes by prioritising in their own programmes those areas where stewardship projects are being undertaken.

A major challenge is improving co-ordination between different role players. A priority for SKEP is to provide mapped information on critical biodiversity areas for inclusion in all forward planning, and to promote learning exchanges between government departments, parastatals, local communities and NGOs involved in land, development and conservation issues in order to develop a common understanding of what is appropriate in

these areas, both in terms of conservation and socio-economically. SKEP should encourage collaboration by extension officers from all relevant departments in providing a comprehensive and co-ordinated extension service.

Strategic Objective:

By 2014, securing and safeguarding land for conservation is effectively coordinated, capacitated and operational in the Succulent Karoo.

Key interventions:

- Ensure alignment of the strategic activities of the Leslie Hill Succulent Karoo Trust with the broader SKEP programme.
- Promote effective coordination and alignment of activities, funding and lessons sharing between all relevant departments, NGOs and local communities
- Build capacity in terms of staffing, extension services, legal skills, technical skills in conservation planning, and train young people from the region in conservation
- Develop appropriate tools, including maps of critical biodiversity areas with guidelines (bioregional plans), incentives and stewardship partnerships
- Prioritise land purchases according to protection level status of each vegetation type (Appendix A)
- Build awareness with regard to potential synergies and benefits between conservation and agriculture / development, and in rural communities, municipalities, agriculture and other government departments with regard to stewardship opportunities, taking into account indigenous knowledge systems and the opportunity they present to strengthen biodiversity conservation actions
- Engage with key industries, especially agriculture and mining, to facilitate best practice and ensure that conservation opportunities are taken up.

**2014 target:**

1. 8.5% of the high value biodiversity land in the SK is included in a protected area and conservation area network.
2. Active stewardship programmes that meet the needs of both the land user and the conservation sector are operational in SKEP priority areas in the Northern and Western Cape provinces.

## Strategic Component 2: Expanding the Partnership

Given the predominant civil society focus of the first phase, SKEP has yet to develop strong programmatic links with key government departments. Harnessing government programmes that either have an impact on biodiversity or the potential to help achieve SKEP's vision and goals will need

to be prioritised in the coming years. This will require high-level political commitment to the SKEP Memorandum of Understanding by all partners, as well as negotiating more specific operational agreements with relevant departments. A communications strategy specifically targeting the various political spheres will be key to acquiring the buy-in from decision makers.

Possibilities for an expanded network can be readily identified. For example, the Department of Agriculture has employed new extension officers who could benefit from training and mentoring on biodiversity issues and specifically on holistic predator management. A working relationship with the regulatory services section of DTEC could tackle the problem of illegal clearing of virgin land. Poverty relief projects could have stronger environmental and biodiversity criteria built in. Strategic engagement with the Department of Minerals and Energy around a range of issues including mine closure, rehabilitation standards and renewable energy; working with the Department of Land Affairs to find ways of promoting conservation as a tool for land reform; gaining support from the Department of Justice with biodiversity related court cases, Working for Water, Working for Wetlands; all offer potential for anchoring SKEP priorities more firmly in ongoing processes of the state, improving policy decisions that affect sustainability, and generally ensuring that different programmes do not work at cross-purposes with SKEP strategic objectives.

Strategic Objective:

By 2014, there will be

1. an increase in the range of organisations committed to the SKEP partnership, and
2. Improved understanding of the roles and responsibilities of each partner organisation (public and private) in addressing SKEP priorities, and how these roles link to their own strategic objectives.

Key Interventions:

- o Consolidate present relationships, identify gaps and potential new partnerships, and build new relationships
- o Revitalise the commitment of partners to the SKEP Memorandum of Understanding
- o Negotiate inclusion of SKEP objectives in partners' strategic/business plans
- o Clarify roles and responsibilities of partner organisations via operational agreements.

**2014 Target:**

1. Pilot programme with National Public Works Programme to scale up and expand the Namaqualand Restoration Initiative model for mine rehabilitation in the SK

2. As part of the SKEP's mandate of institutional strengthening and coordination of conservation action in the SK,
  - i) The DEAT is supported in the development and implementation of an optimal model for world heritage sites; and
  - ii) Environmental officers within the DME's Northern and Western Cape Provincial Mine Environmental Management Directorates access and effectively apply SKEP biodiversity information and products when coordinating mine application decision making and biennial performance assessment processes.
3. A new Memorandum of Understanding developed in participation with and signed by key partners

### Strategic Component 3: Linking Livelihoods and Biodiversity

The ability of SKEP to realise its stated vision depends on striking a balance and finding synergy between biodiversity conservation and sustainable livelihoods. The prevalence of poverty across the region demands that the programme fosters a developmental approach to conservation – one that enhances livelihoods, particularly of marginalised groups such as communal land users and farm dwellers and empowers them to use natural resources in a sustainable way. Conservation advocates and natural scientists can benefit from understanding the methods used by local communities to conserve biodiversity. A multidisciplinary approach that puts the communal farmer and rural community at the centre of biodiversity conservation - sustainable livelihoods programme development is imperative.

Stronger engagement with communal farmers and emerging farmers in the land reform process in order to influence land use in sustainable directions is an opportunity, where proper veld management becomes recognised as an ecosystem service that provides a safety net for poor and vulnerable communities. Stewardship agreements with commercial farmers need to consider the wider farm community such as farm dwellers (esp. women) to identify opportunities for positive impact on the latter. Properly structured eco tourism initiatives could play a strong role in certain parts of the region. The SKEPPIES Fund has been a central pillar in supporting projects with a conservation and development impact, and SKEP will explore ways of strengthening this small grants facility in the next phase.

#### Strategic Objective:

By 2014, sustainable utilisation of the unique environment and resources of the Succulent Karoo will have improved local livelihoods, through good planning and creating awareness of opportunities.

### Key Interventions:

- Identify, create awareness of, and facilitate support for alternative economic opportunities, especially in marginalised communities
- Identify funding opportunities for conservation-related livelihood initiatives (e.g. microfinance, DEAT Social Responsibility programme, EPWP) that strengthen local production systems and improve livelihoods and the resilience of rural communities to local and regional economic shocks
- Expand and institutionalise the SKEPPIES small grants facility
- Undertake or support research on the relationship between biodiversity and ecosystem services (e.g. grazing, water, medicines, tourism)
- Support planning at local and district level for that links biodiversity conservation and improving livelihoods, including LED strategies
- Work with the Department of Land Affairs to promote conservation as a tool for land reform, supporting 'emerging conservationists' and protecting ecosystem services
- In partnership with communities, develop and implement capacity building programmes with respect to resource management and sustainable land use.

### **2014 target:**

1. The assessment and economic valuation of SK ecosystem services has been completed, presented effectively to key decision makers and the public and has made the case for biodiversity conservation as an imperative for sustainable development.
2. The municipal biodiversity support programme is operational in four municipalities in the Succulent Karoo
3. In cooperation with the National Expanded Public Works Programme, Department of Land Affairs and DEAT's World Heritage Site programme develop pilot projects that demonstrate the job creation potential of conservation action.

## Strategic Component 4: Building Local Government Capacity

There are significant variations across municipalities in the region in terms of environmental staff capacity, the extent to which environmental planning has been undertaken, and in how far biodiversity guidelines inform decision-making. A good way to increase local government capacity is to support the establishment of an environmental unit in each local authority, or a shared facility between municipalities. Experience in Eden District has shown how funding a post at district level for an initial period of two years can set a foundation that convinces both district and local municipalities of the value of such a function.

Local government spatial development frameworks are a key tool to coordinate the plans of different departments, and SKEP partners have an important role to play in ensuring that fine-scale maps and other environmental information are mainstreamed into these decision-making processes.

Environment is now a key performance area for local government. SANBI, in conjunction with the Department of Provincial and Local Government and DEAT, has recently launched a new Municipal Biodiversity Support Programme. These are important platforms for SKEP to build a programme of support for municipalities.

Strategic Objective:

By 2014, all municipalities in the SKEP planning domain will have prioritised the SKEP programme in their IDPs and will be implementing specific projects in collaboration with all relevant stakeholders.

Key Interventions:

SKEP structures and partners will assist municipalities, where needed, in

- o Creating an enabling environment
- o Enhancing awareness and increasing political support
- o Improving coordination and funding for key staff (optional shared services across municipalities)
- o Building capacity through training, advanced decision-support systems and other measures
- o Assessing IDPs to ensure that SKEP priorities are adequately addressed.

**2014 target:**

1. The municipal biodiversity support programme is operational in six municipalities with high numbers of threatened ecosystems and species in the Succulent Karoo.
2. Bioregional plans published in terms of the National Biodiversity Act for four municipalities.
3. Integrated development plans (IDP) for six municipalities reflect projects that address biodiversity priorities.

## Strategic Component 5: Strengthening linkages between natural and social science and management in the Succulent Karoo

During SKEP's first phase, the role of biodiversity science and research was quite limited and opportunities to foster scientific research and to better link

scientific inquiry and findings with practice on the ground were missed. A lesson from this period is that scientific research should be considered as necessary to inform programme implementation – scientific comment and expert view is needed across the programme as a whole to establish a stronger scientific research agenda and to improve rigour in practice and direction. SKEP is not a research programme, but is in a position to identify research opportunities and to make effective linkages between researchers and local practitioners. The needs will differ from one area to another, and priorities for research should be determined through dialogue with local stakeholders and scientists. SKEP can play a useful coordinating role in this. In the coming years, such efforts will be more effectively supported. Institutionalising the role of science through a dedicated function in the SKEP Coordination Unit will be one measure towards this.

Strategic Objective:

By 2014, the role of science in SKEP will be more rigorous and there will be stronger linkages and collaboration between researchers and those in management or policy roles in the Succulent Karoo.

Key Interventions:

- Review the science behind SKEP (e.g. conservation targets) through a forum of scientists, particularly Succulent Karoo experts, with consideration of the research needs of users
- Package scientific information for consumers in an accessible form and language, and facilitate good communication between stakeholders and researchers working in the Succulent Karoo
- Support existing and new research forums (e.g. AZEF) and area-based research advisory groups (e.g. Klein Karoo Study Group)
- Contribute to building local capacity of extension staff, and secure future capacity by supporting and nurturing young local scientists
- Improve scientific knowledge management, in terms of BGIS, the programme database, capturing local knowledge and expertise, and creating an inventory of past and current research in the Succulent Karoo
- Facilitate both pure and applied research in the Succulent Karoo by linking land users and researchers, and leverage research funding from NRF, SANBI, WRC, etc.
- Identify research needs for the area, guided by the strategic objective, and develop a research strategy based on this.

**2014 target:**

1. The SKEP research strategy for the Succulent Karoo is developed, accepted by stakeholders at local, provincial and national level and is implemented as part of the national biodiversity research strategy.

2. The SKEP Monitoring and evaluation framework feeds into the national monitoring and reporting framework and thereby informs annual reports to Parliament, policy direction and implementation with respect to the SK biome.

## Strategic Component 6: Climate Change and Renewable Energy

Climate change presents both threats and opportunities to the Succulent Karoo. Threats include those to species survival and to ecosystem services like grazing and water due to rising temperatures, changing rainfall and the disappearance of fog. This affects biodiversity and land-based livelihoods. Both are central to SKEP's mandate. Enhancing the resilience of both people and biodiversity becomes even more critical in the light of climate change impacts. Enhancing scientific understanding of these trends in the Succulent Karoo, and supporting adaptation strategies of its rural people will, therefore, be a SKEP priority. Given the long-term nature of this change, securing key landscape components in perpetuity is vital. This has to be done in a way that meets the needs of the local community, economy and biodiversity conservation. Enhancing connectivity and allowing for species movement through formalized 'climate corridors' and 'grazing reserves' will be investigated to determine whether and how these can serve as appropriate adaptation responses for poor rural people and for biodiversity.

Climate change project and funding opportunities are tremendous. SKEP will actively pursue new resources and leverage additional government commitment associated with climate change adaptation.

Against the backdrop of climate change, renewable energy production may offer potential as an alternative land use with new investment and livelihood opportunities. Large swathes of the Succulent Karoo are eminently suitable for solar and wind power generation.

### Strategic Objective:

During the period 2009-2014, SKEP will

1. collate information, including indigenous knowledge, about the likely impacts of climate change in the Succulent Karoo and how people respond to climate variability, and build capacity in all sectors to adapt to the changes, and
2. assess the status quo and feasibility of various forms of renewable energy in the Succulent Karoo in order to mitigate the pressure to supply fossil fuel-based energy to SKEP communities and to promote community benefits.

### Key interventions:

- Establish two task teams, for climate change and for renewable energy, to assess current knowledge (including indigenous), information and activities, to chart a way forward, raise awareness and facilitate broad-based knowledge exchange
- In partnership with local communities and stakeholders, investigate the feasibility of 'grazing reserves' and biodiversity corridors designed to reduce vulnerability of the region's livelihoods and biodiversity to climate change impacts
- Identify a range of indicator species and utilise them to monitor and publicise the rate and extent of climate change in the region
- Investigate adaptation methodologies / strategies and implement guidelines in terms of water use, renewable energy and land use
- Promote use of appropriate standards, such as the Climate, Community and Biodiversity Standards (CCB) to reduce impact on biodiversity and garner resources for SKEP initiatives
- Assess the ecological, technical and socioeconomic feasibility of establishing community or multi-household scale renewable energy projects through research and input from energy sector experts, and catalyse partnerships to develop these options
- Link with provincial government initiatives promoting community-scale renewable energy pilot projects and showcase project results for future implementation across the landscape in priority areas (use SKEPPIES platform); develop within these community projects a training programme for the long-term servicing of renewable energy installations
- Investigate renewable energy-linked job opportunities as an alternative to agricultural livelihoods, especially in terms of reducing livestock grazing pressure on the environment.
- Encourage decision-making authorities a) to include conditions in authorisations which facilitate saving energy, limit water use, etc. (e.g. using solar panels, installing rainwater tanks, low-flow shower heads, dual flush toilets, etc) and b) to plan pro-actively for climate change (e.g. to not allow development below the 1:100 year floodline nor in fire-prone areas or areas where there is a high risk of erosion).

### **2014 target:**

1. A Succulent Karoo ecosystem climate change adaptation programme has been developed in consultation with SKEP partners and stakeholders and is operational in the region.
2. At least six SKEPPIES interventions address community-scale renewable energy pilot projects.

## Strategic Component 7: Involving the Mining Sector

During Phase 1, SKEP made promising inroads in its engagement with the mining industry, with some innovative initiatives including business development around restoration. In the coming years, these efforts will be scaled up to encourage the mining sector to serve as a positive force for biodiversity conservation in the Succulent Karoo. A biodiversity standard for mine closure and rehabilitation has been developed, but this needs to be integrated into the regulatory framework in order to have systemic impact. Another regulatory issue revolves around the financing of rehabilitation. Under existing rules a company developing a new mine is required to pay a rehabilitation deposit in advance. Currently only 30% of mine rehabilitation costs are allocated to biodiversity. Lobbying for an increased deposit could provide more money for biodiversity rehabilitation. All this will require a structured dialogue with the Department of Mining and Energy (DME). In this respect SKEP and its partners could combine forces with other bioregional programmes in a coordinated approach to the DME.

### Strategic Objective:

By 2014,

3. a mining biodiversity standard for mine rehabilitation will be in place to ensure minimum biodiversity loss across the whole lifespan of the mine,
4. a system of independent environmental auditing will be developed in collaboration with the DME, industry and SKEP partners in government and civil society, and
5. the process of applying for mining and prospecting rights will be better regulated and mining Environmental Management Plans suitably reviewed by environmental authorities.

### Key Interventions:

- o Develop a task group of civil society organisations and government programmes concerned with conservation issues related to mining in the Succulent Karoo
- o Ensure that relevant stakeholders participate effectively in mining rights applications, through input and feedback meetings, dissemination of rehabilitation research, discussion of environmental audits, etc.
- o Ensure that mining enterprises and landowners have fine scale plans and other biodiversity information for use in mining planning.
- o Ensure that SKEP priority areas are clearly understood and reflected in DME approvals at a national and regional level to recognize the sensitivity of high value biodiversity areas.
- o Develop models for biodiversity management with the mine operators and targeted stakeholders such as DME.
- o Develop and operationalize a set of biodiversity standards for mine rehabilitation that ensures minimum loss of high value biodiversity across the life span of the mine.

2014 target:

1. Minimize transformation from mining in all SKEP priority areas through thorough integration of biodiversity guidelines within the mining process, particularly the site environmental management plans and closure strategies to ensure best practice for extraction and restoration.
2. Mining operators and regional offices of the DME in the Northern and Western Cape have adopted a set of biodiversity standards for mine rehabilitation that ensures minimum biodiversity loss across the whole life span of a mine.
3. CSR managers of companies in the SK engaged and aware of SKEP project priorities that could use their support.

## Strategic Component 8: Raising Awareness

Good impact was achieved in the first phase in raising local awareness, but SKEP has, to date, had relatively little political visibility. A targeted strategy is needed to raise its profile at ministerial level. Awareness and support from this level is important if the programme is to entrench itself more firmly in state structures. A strong communications function is a vital means to this end and should particularly target the various political tiers of governance in order to get buy-in from key decision makers.

The communications strategy needs to make the case for the value of ecosystem services to the local economy and rural communities, as well as society at large. To succeed in increasing awareness at government level, it will also be important to highlight the economic benefits of the SKEP program, especially the creation of jobs and the economic development impact. The SKEPPIES Fund and the partnership between CEPF/CI and DBSA demonstrate this very successfully.

The communications strategy that underpinned some of the gains in the past years will be re-energized. Regular meaningful engagement with heads of department is key, and could be undertaken as part of a joint strategy with SANBI's bioregional programmes, to avoid duplication, build on the existing progress with government and thus maximise impact. Raising the overall profile of the SKEP programme in this way is a prerequisite for securing the resources necessary to implement this five-year plan.

### Strategic Objective:

By 2014, every person and organisation who has an interest in, benefits from, impacts on, or is accountable for biodiversity and society in the Succulent Karoo, is aware of SKEP.

### Key Interventions:

- Revitalise and implement the SKEP communications strategy, disaggregating different target audiences (heads of government departments, politicians, local government, farmers, schools, tourists, general public, etc.) and developing messages, methods and approaches tailored to each group
- Build on previous successes and lessons by evaluating the awareness campaigns and communications undertaken in Phase 1
- Manage and maintain the integrity of the SKEP brand by ensuring that all partners use the same language and branding guidelines
- Work with relevant officials in government departments to raise the profile of SKEP at political level.

### **2014 target:**

1. All municipal managers, planners and environmental officers are aware of the SKEP strategy and understand how it can be linked with and supports their IDPs.

## **MAKING IT HAPPEN**

The key interventions set out above will form the focus of implementation of the SKEP Strategy in Phase 2. To ensure the programme's successful implementation, SKEP also needs strengthened partnerships and governance, and the resources to match.

### Strengthening SKEP Institutions and Governance

SKEP's Co-ordination Unit (CU), a CEPF funded project scheduled to end in March 2009, currently plays a very specific role with respect to the implementation of the SKEP: it is responsible for raising awareness about SKEP and the importance of the Succulent Karoo; facilitating links and lessons-sharing between SKEP partners; co-ordinating information management; monitoring and evaluation and linking SKEP initiatives to appropriate resources. The existing coordination unit also provides project development support and coordinated the project review process associated with the CEPF investment. SANBI manages the CU on behalf of the CEPF and the SKEP Partnership, in terms of its legal mandate to co-ordinate bioregional conservation activities and programmes.

To ensure that implementation of Phase 2 is driven effectively, the governance and the co-ordination of the programme will need to be strengthened in the following ways:

- The Memorandum of Understanding needs to be revisited and revitalised through formal commitment by existing and potential new signatories.
- More explicit commitment is needed from SKEP partners, and ways to achieve this should be explored. Possible options include the conclusion of service level agreements with each partner regarding their contribution to programme implementation.
- The Partnership itself needs to be expanded to include, in particular, relevant government agencies and programmes, as set out in Strategic Component 2.
- Awareness-raising, communications and knowledge management need to be given more attention in Phase 2.
- To meet the specific requirements of Phase 2, the CU will place a stronger emphasis on resource mobilization, promoting, fostering and expanding the SKEP Partnership, mobilising and strengthening civil society involvement, catalysing pilot projects, and ensuring strategic guidance is available to programme partners.
- Consideration needs to be given to the form that SKEP coordination should take. Investigations should include geographically decentralising some (as yet unidentified) aspects of programme coordination to the Northern Cape and the Little Karoo, synchronising functions with SKEP's sister bioregional programmes, and reviving the SKEP champions approach.

## Learning, sharing and review

Many of SKEP's achievements during Phase 1 were due in large part to the programme's emphasis on building capacity through learning and lesson-sharing. Phase 2 will build on these achievements and take them even further. Key aspects include:

- Providing regular opportunities for learning exchanges, lesson-sharing and peer reviews amongst partners and programme participants.
- Creating a central archiving mechanism so that all resources and information about SKEP and the Succulent Karoo are held and disseminated from an easily accessible central point.
- Producing annual reports reviewing the progress of the programme and reflect on lessons learnt, supplementing the SKEP newsletter which provides informative updates on projects and events.

- Establishing working groups around each of the strategic components, with clear responsibilities and relevant role players. This will bring synergy between activities, strengthen links between government and civil society and raise the profile of SKEP. The working groups should be supported by a Working Group Forum for cross-pollination between the managers of the various working groups.
- Collaborating with SKEP Namibia to ensure biome-wide review and lessons-sharing at appropriate points.

## Resource mobilisation

SKEP's success in Phase 1 was attributable in large part to its access to a pool of funding that enabled multi-year projects to be implemented. One of the biggest challenges facing SKEP over the next five years is securing the funding and resources necessary to sustain programme implementation. SKEP will need to adopt a multi-pronged approach to funding and resource mobilisation in Phase 2. Key elements of this approach would include:

- Securing commitment from government, through SANBI, to funding core SKEP co-ordination functions.
- Continuing to rely on the support of major NGO partners to catalyse priority initiatives and develop innovative solutions, such as tapping corporate social responsibility programmes.
- Seeking new donor funding for key aspects of the programme, particularly in relation to climate change and initiatives to combat desertification.
- Collaborating with relevant government agencies and programmes to achieve common goals, seeking the alignment of policies and programmes in support of SKEP's vision and strategy; using small amounts of donor funding as a catalyst to developing government departments' capacity and alignment.
- Ensuring that the SKEPPIES Fund is further strengthened in terms of its financial resources, legal status and ability to support projects that help to achieve SKEP's goals.

A key factor in all of these is the need to raise the profile of the SKEP programme, its vision, goals, achievements and plans, and of the international significance of the Succulent Karoo. It is also crucial for SKEP to engage with non-conservation sectors, land users and local communities in a participatory manner, underpinned by a human rights approach that enables the development imperatives of the region and its peoples to be realized.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Developed via an inclusive and participatory approach, this plan represents the experiences and lessons of five years of intensive biodiversity conservation actions and initiatives in the Succulent Karoo.

The SKEP Coordinating Unit would like to acknowledge the work of all the SKEP partner organisations and individuals who participated in the June/July 2008 Springbok strategic planning and strategic plan document review process workshop process (Appendix C). This plan is a culmination of their hard work and dedication. Our grateful thanks to those who tirelessly participated in the CEPF five year assessment process in April 2008 and April/May 2008 rapid appraisal process. Last but not least, to Amanda Young-Hayes and Wendy Crane, our two fearless facilitators and guides throughout this process.

## APPENDICES

**Appendix A:** The National Biodiversity Target\* and National Protected Area Targets for each vegetation type in the Succulent Karoo Biome.

These are given in the context of the existing areas already conserved in category 1 conservation areas with the remaining area required to meet these targets over the next 5, 10 and 20 years. These are given as a function of remaining land available for conservation.

Vegetation type - old SKEP vegetation type names	Vegetation type - new names based on the recently revised South African vegetation map	Total area	Biodiversity target	Protected area target [20 yr]		Currently conserved	Protected area target met	Remaining area required to meet protected area target [20 yr]	Remaining area required to meet protected area target [10 yr]	Remaining area required to meet protected area target [5 yr]	Required to meet target as percentage of available [20 yr]	Area available**	Protection level
		(ha)	(ha)	(ha)	(%)	(ha)	(%)	(ha)	(ha)	(ha)	(%)	(ha)	
Eastern Bushmanland Quartz And Gravel Patches	Aggeneys Gravel Vygieveld	6200	1116	614	10	0	0	614.0	307.0	153.5	10.0	6147.6	Completely unprotected
Agter-Sederberg Succulent Karoo	Agter-Sederberg Shrubland	90600	17214	9433	10	877	9	9423.7	4711.9	2355.9	10.7	87693.9	Poorly protected
Harras Quartzite Succulent Karoo	Anenous Plateau Shrubland	23400	6552	3595	15	0	0	3595.0	1797.5	898.8	15.4	23371.3	Completely unprotected
Eastern Bushmanland Quartz And Gravel Patches	Bushmanland Inselberg Shrubland	63800	21692	11878	19	0	0	11878.0	5939.0	2969.5	18.7	63678.5	Completely unprotected
Rooiberg Quartzite Succulent Karoo	Central Knersvlakte Vygieveld	29200	8176	4486	15	4081	91	4395.0	2197.5	1098.8	17.5	25164.2	Partially protected
Central Richtersveld Succulent Karoo	Central Richtersveld Mountain Shrubland	120000	33600	18418	15	83915	456	-	-	-	-	-	Targets met

Vegetation type - old SKEP vegetation type names	Vegetation type - new names based on the recently revised South African vegetation map	Total area	Biodiversity target	Protected area target [20 yr]		Currently conserved	Protected area target met	Remaining area required to meet protected area target [20 yr]	Remaining area required to meet protected area target [10 yr]	Remaining area required to meet protected area target [5 yr]	Required to meet target as percentage of available [20 yr]	Area available**	Protection level
Outside SKEP planning domain	Citrusdal Vygieveld	12700	3556	1943	15	543	28	1915.1	957.5	478.8	29.0	6609.4	Partially protected
Die Plate Succulent Karoo	Die Plate Succulent Shrubland	12800	3584	1957	15	0	0	1957.0	978.5	489.3	15.4	12745.6	Completely unprotected
Doring River Succulent Karoo	Doringrivier Quartzite Karoo	47200	8968	4914	10	0	0	4914.0	2457.0	1228.5	12.7	38822.8	Completely unprotected
Central Little Karoo	Eastern Little Karoo	155600	24896	13639	9	230	2	13637.3	6818.7	3409.3	9.8	138674.1	Very poorly protected
Eenriet Quartzite Succulent Karoo	Eenriet Plains Succulent Shrubland	26100	7308	4001	15	0	0	4001.0	2000.5	1000.3	15.5	25887.2	Completely unprotected
Goariep Mountain Succulent Karoo	Goariep Mountain Succulent Shrubland	17100	4788	2620	15	16962	647	-	-	-	-	-	Targets met
Hantam Karoo	Hantam Karoo	746400	134352	73620	10	868	1	73618.8	36809.4	18404.7	10.0	734525.0	Very poorly protected
Namaqualand Alluvia	Kamiesberg Mountains Shrubland	42500	11900	6526	15	144	2	6523.8	3261.9	1630.9	15.4	42233.1	Very poorly protected
Southern Knersvlakte Lowland Succulent Karoo	Klawer Sandy Shrubland	12600	3654	1997	16	0	0	1997.0	998.5	499.3	18.4	10879.9	Completely unprotected
Troe-Troe River Quartz Patches	Knersvlakte Dolomite Vygieveld	5800	1624	889	15	0	0	889.0	444.5	222.3	16.1	5526.3	Completely unprotected
Knersvlakte Quartzfields	Knersvlakte Quartz Vygieveld	121200	33936	18589	15	21104	114	-	-	-	-	-	Targets met
Knersvlakte Shales	Knersvlakte Shale Vygieveld	88500	24780	13580	15	0	0	13580.0	6790.0	3395.0	15.6	87097.9	Completely unprotected

Vegetation type - old SKEP vegetation type names	Vegetation type - new names based on the recently revised South African vegetation map	Total area	Biodiversity target	Protected area target [20 yr]		Currently conserved	Protected area target met	Remaining area required to meet protected area target [20 yr]	Remaining area required to meet protected area target [10 yr]	Remaining area required to meet protected area target [5 yr]	Required to meet target as percentage of available [20 yr]	Area available**	Protection level
Laingsburg-Touws Succulent Karoo	Koedoesberge-Moordenaars Karoo	471500	89585	49087	10	1346	3	49084.3	24542.1	12271.1	10.5	466746.0	Very poorly protected
Southeastern Richtersveld Succulent Karoo	Kosiesberg Succulent Shrubland	61200	17136	9393	15	47	0	9392.5	4696.3	2348.1	15.4	61130.6	Very poorly protected
Lekkersing Quartz Patches	Lekkersing Succulent Shrubland	81500	22820	12501	15	15109	121	-	-	-	-	-	Targets met
Vanwyksdorp Gwarieveld	Little Karoo Quartz Vygieveld	11500	1840	1008	9	525	52	955.9	478.0	239.0	10.9	8790.3	Partially protected
Namaqualand Arid Grasslands	Namaqualand Arid Grassland	70400	18304	10030	14	14158	141	-	-	-	-	-	Targets met
Namaqualand Klipkoppe Flats	Namaqualand Blomveld	380900	106652	58447	15	4372	7	58439.5	29219.8	14609.9	16.0	364866.0	Poorly protected
Namaqualand Coastal Dunes	Namaqualand Coastal Duneveld	98300	25558	14012	14	1766	13	13999.4	6999.7	3499.8	16.0	87754.9	Poorly protected
Namaqualand Red Sand Plains	Namaqualand Heuweltjieveld	253600	71008	38910	15	26659	69	38841.5	19420.7	9710.4	17.5	222140.0	Partially protected
Namaqualand Sandveld Dunes	Namaqualand Inland Duneveld	31200	8112	4446	14	6293	142	-	-	-	-	-	Targets met
Namaqualand Klipkoppe	Namaqualand Klipkoppe Shrubland	1093600	306208	167802	15	37169	22	167779.8	83889.9	41945.0	16.4	1022627.0	Poorly protected
Namaqualand Klipkoppe	Namaqualand Shale Shrubland	66800	16032	8789	13	0	0	8789.0	4394.5	2197.3	13.3	66320.9	Completely unprotected
Namaqualand Spinescent Grasslands	Namaqualand Spinescent Grassland	52200	13572	7441	14	3541	48	7393.4	3696.7	1848.4	15.5	47628.2	Partially protected
Namaqualand Red Sand Plains	Namaqualand Strandveld	391600	101816	55800	14	13386	24	55776.0	27888.0	13944.0	15.8	352381.0	Poorly protected

Vegetation type - old SKEP vegetation type names	Vegetation type - new names based on the recently revised South African vegetation map	Total area	Biodiversity target	Protected area target [20 yr]		Currently conserved	Protected area target met	Remaining area required to meet protected area target [20 yr]	Remaining area required to meet protected area target [10 yr]	Remaining area required to meet protected area target [5 yr]	Required to meet target as percentage of available [20 yr]	Area available**	Protection level
Northern Knervlakte Lowland Succulent Karoo	Northern Knervlakte Vygieveld	151400	42392	23229	15	293	1	23227.7	11613.9	5806.9	15.4	150420.0	Very poorly protected
Northern Richtersveld Lowland Succulent karoo	Northern Richtersveld Scorpiontailveld	36400	10192	5592	15	12367	221	-	-	-	-	-	Targets met
Northern Richtersveld Yellow Dunes	Northern Richtersveld Yellow Duneveld	54700	14222	7800	14	0	0	7800.0	3900.0	1950.0	14.3	54411.1	Completely unprotected
Augrabies Sandveld Grassland	Oograbies Plains Sandy Grassland	12300	3198	1757	14	0	0	1757.0	878.5	439.3	14.3	12306.1	Completely unprotected
Outside SKEP planning domain	Piketberg Quartz Succulent Shrubland	200	52	34	17	0	0	34.0	17.0	8.5	Less available than required	1.0	Completely unprotected
Gamoep Quartz and Gravel Patches	Platbakkies Succulent Shrubland	97800	27384	15005	15	0	0	15005.0	7502.5	3751.3	15.5	96775.0	Completely unprotected
Prince Albert Succulent Karoo	Prince Albert Succulent Karoo	258300	41328	22646	9	6119	27	22619.0	11309.5	5654.7	9.1	248165.0	Partially protected
Richtersveld White Dunes	Richtersveld Coastal Duneveld	48300	12558	6886	14	1009	15	6871.3	3435.7	1717.8	18.5	37174.0	Poorly protected
Southern Richtersveld Red Dunes	Richtersveld Red Duneveld	53700	13962	7646	14	796	10	7635.6	3817.8	1908.9	14.4	52872.1	Poorly protected

Vegetation type - old SKEP vegetation type names	Vegetation type - new names based on the recently revised South African vegetation map	Total area	Biodiversity target	Protected area target [20 yr]		Currently conserved	Protected area target met	Remaining area required to meet protected area target [20 yr]	Remaining area required to meet protected area target [10 yr]	Remaining area required to meet protected area target [5 yr]	Required to meet target as percentage of available [20 yr]	Area available**	Protection level
Southern Richtersveld Yellow-Loam Dunes	Richtersveld Sandy Coastal Scorpionstailveld	37700	9802	5367	14	0	0	5367.0	2683.5	1341.8	14.3	37460.4	Completely unprotected
Riethuis Quartzfields	Riethuis-Wallekraal Quartz Vygieveld	13300	3724	2033	15	8315	409	-	-	-	-	-	Targets met
Robertson Karoo	Robertson Karoo	61300	9808	5375	9	955	18	5357.2	2678.6	1339.3	10.8	49538.6	Poorly protected
Roggeveld Karoo	Roggeveld Karoo	565600	101808	55786	10	2839	5	55780.9	27890.5	13945.2	10.0	555270.0	Poorly protected
Southeastern Richtersveld Quartzites	Rooiberg Quartz Vygieveld	12900	3612	1984	15	5957	300	-	-	-	-	-	Targets met
Rosyntjieberge Succulent Karoo	Rosyntjieberg Succulent Shrubland	5100	1428	776	15	5055	651	-	-	-	-	-	Targets met
Southern Richtersveld Lowland Succulent Karoo	Southern Richtersveld Inselberg Shrubland	36600	10248	5609	15	0	0	5609.0	2804.5	1402.3	15.5	36227.7	Completely unprotected
Southeastern Richtersveld Succulent Karoo	Southern Richtersveld Scorpionstailveld	72100	20188	11069	15	22	0	11068.8	5534.4	2767.2	15.5	71353.9	Very poorly protected
Southern Richtersveld Yellow Dunes	Southern Richtersveld Yellow Duneveld	33300	8658	4751	14	7647	161	-	-	-	-	-	Targets met
Camdeboo-Aberdeen Karoo	Steytlerville Karoo	79300	12688	6956	9	0	0	6956.0	3478.0	1739.0	9.1	76464.0	Completely unprotected
Stinkfonteinberge Lowland Succulent Karoo	Stinkfonteinberge Eastern Apron Shrubland	6600	1848	1011	15	6587	652	-	-	-	-	-	Targets met

Vegetation type - old SKEP vegetation type names	Vegetation type - new names based on the recently revised South African vegetation map	Total area	Biodiversity target	Protected area target [20 yr]	Currently conserved	Protected area target met	Remaining area required to meet protected area target [20 yr]	Remaining area required to meet protected area target [10 yr]	Remaining area required to meet protected area target [5 yr]	Required to meet target as percentage of available [20 yr]	Area available**	Protection level	
Swartruggens Sandstone Karoo	Swartruggens Quartzite Karoo	55900	10621	5824	10	3050	52	5771.6	2885.8	1442.9	10.9	52838.7	Partially protected
Agter-Sederberg Succulent Karoo	Tanqua Escarpment Shrubland	132100	25099	13757	10	16234	118	-	-	-	-	-	Targets met
Tanqua Karoo	Tanqua Karoo	698800	132772	72761	10	60499	83	72677.9	36338.9	18169.5	11.5	631915.0	Partially protected
Richtersberg Mountain Desert	Tatasberg Mountain Succulent Shrubland	300	102	61	20	327	535	-	-	-	-	-	Targets met
Umdaus Quartzite Succulent Karoo	Umdaus Mountains Succulent Shrubland	43300	12124	6642	15	0	0	6642.0	3321.0	1660.5	15.4	43195.9	Completely unprotected
Upper Annisvlakte Succulent Karoo	Upper Annisvlakte Succulent Shrubland	19200	5376	2943	15	1271	43	2899.8	1449.9	725.0	16.4	17678.5	Partially protected
Southern Knervlakte Lowland Succulent Karoo	Vanrhynsdorp Gannabosveld	97100	27188	14903	15	0	0	14903.0	7451.5	3725.8	19.3	77179.5	Completely unprotected
Richtersveld Southwestern Foothills Succulent Karoo	Vyftienmyl se Berge Succulent Shrubland	1800	504	282	16	1563	554	-	-	-	-	-	Targets met
Bushmanland Basin	Western Bushmanland Klipveld	229700	41346	22659	10	0	0	22659.0	11329.5	5664.8	9.9	228658.0	Completely unprotected
Vanwyksdorp Gwarrieveld	Western Gwarrieveld	76000	12160	6660	9	3977	60	6600.3	3300.1	1650.1	9.4	70413.1	Partially protected
Western Little Karoo	Western Little Karoo	420100	67216	36837	9	36338	99	36738.4	18369.2	9184.6	10.0	368905.0	Partially protected

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Eastern Gwarrieveld	Willowmore Gwarrieveld	231100	36976	20260	9	346	2	20258.3	10129.1	5064.6	8.9	226621.0	Very poorly protected

\* biodiversity targets represents ultimate long term goals, while 20 year protected area targets set out in NPAES strive to meet just over 54% of this biodiversity threshold

\*\*includes natural, fragmented and degraded land

**Appendix B:** Summary table of IUCN Red Data list plant species for the eight SKEP geographic priority areas in South Africa. These data were generated in conjunction with the SANBI Threatened Plant Species Programme.

<b>IUCN Red Data list status</b>	<b>CR</b>	<b>EN</b>	<b>VU</b>	<b>NT</b>	<b>DD</b>	<b>Declining</b>	<b>Rare</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Greater Richtersveld	10	6	47	10	12	3	106	194
Bushmanland Inselbergs	1	1	4	1	1	0	10	18
Namaqualand Uplands	0	1	16	4	8	1	41	71
Central Namaqualand Coast	1	2	20	6	3	3	39	74
Knersvlakte	3	10	45	8	9	2	44	121
Bokkeveld-Tanqua-Roggeveld	5	2	30	8	10	1	46	102
Central Breede River Valley	1	3	9	1	1	1	2	18
Central Little Karoo	8	13	32	2	4	2	12	73

Key to IUCN Terminology

CR – Critically Endangered

EN – Endangered

VU – Vulnerable

NT – Near Threatened

DD – Data Deficient

**Appendix C:** List of partner organisations and individuals who participated in the SKEP strategic planning process via attendance of the June 2008 Springbok workshop and/or input into the Draft SKEP strategic plan 2009 – 2014 report emanating from said workshop.

1. Northern Cape Department of Tourism, Environment and Conservation
2. Cape Winelands District Municipality
3. Northern Cape Department of Agriculture and Land Reform
4. CapeNature
5. Richtersveld Cultural and Botanical Landscape
6. Surplus People's Project
7. Working for Wetlands Expanded Public Works Programme
8. Cape Action for People and Environment
9. Conservation International
10. Richtersveld Municipality
11. Richtersveld Community Property Association
12. WESSA
13. Eden District Municipality
14. Black Mountain Mine
15. Western Cape Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning
16. SANParks
17. Northern Cape Department of Economic Affairs
18. South African National Biodiversity Institute
19. Ecological Solutions
20. Agricultural Research Council
21. Northern Cape Department of the Premier
22. Northern Cape Regional Office of the Department of Minerals and Energy Affairs
23. De Beers Consolidated Mines – Namaqualand Mines
24. Western Cape Department of Agriculture
25. Succulent Karoo Knowledge Centre
26. SKEP Coordination Unit

27. WWF – SA
28. Development Bank of South Africa
29. Phil Desmet
30. Helga van der Merwe
31. Christy Bragg
32. Brent Corcoran
33. Pippin Anderson
34. Timm Hoffman
35. Stephen Holness
36. Karsten Feuerriegel