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GREEN DISPUTES? A French geographer perspective on KwaZulu-Natal coastal environmental conflicts

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Sylvain GUYOT

GREEN DISPUTES?



A French geographer perspective on
KwaZulu-Natal coastal environmental conflicts

To Béatrice and Jamie

Cover page: Picture from the author;
“In front of one hotel at St Lucia” © 2002

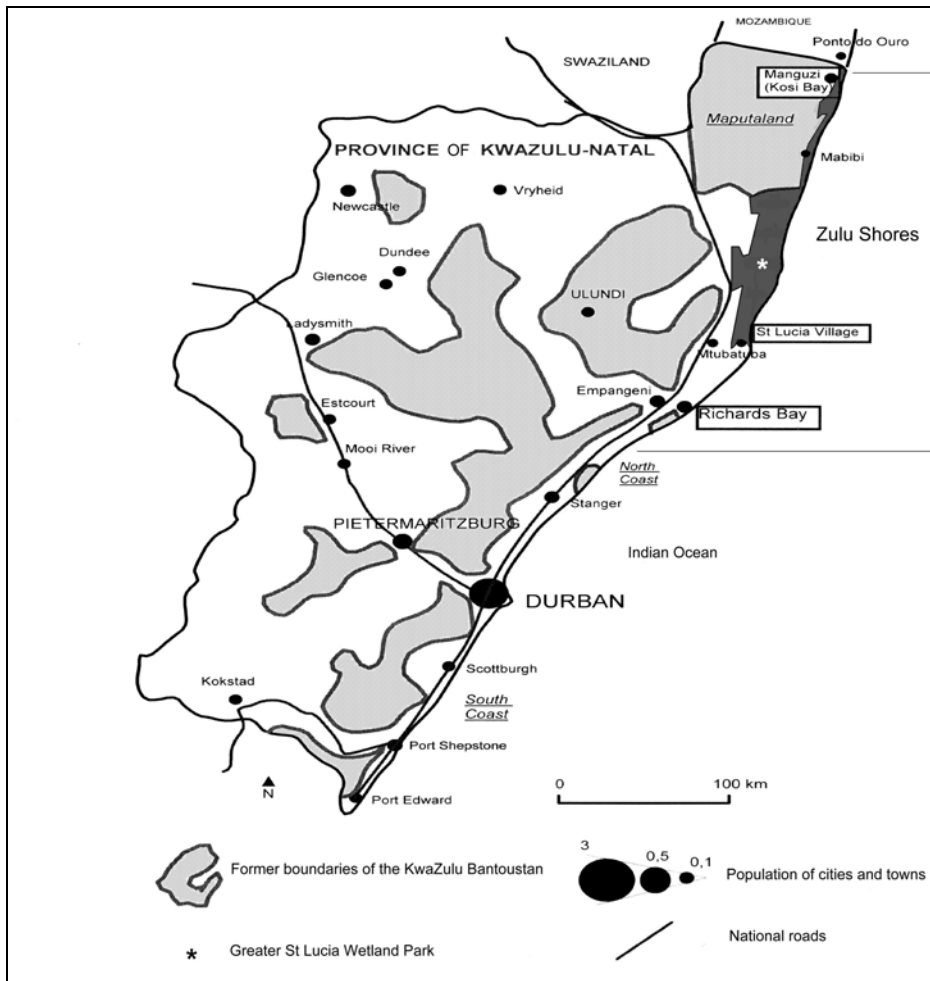


Figure 1: KwaZulu-Natal Province

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INTRODUCTION

Post-apartheid South Africa is a good 'laboratory' to study 'race' related topics. This unique country gives us the opportunity to look at the new relationships between the different groups (Whites, Blacks, Indians and Coloureds) that were forcibly segregated during the colonial and the apartheid eras. Racism did not end with the abrogation of apartheid laws in the beginning of the 1990's. Even if the country looks today superficially changed, evolution of mentalities and perceptions between the different groups are slow. Racism still exists but is sometimes concealed behind new politically correct statements and practices.

Most of environmental legislations and philosophies during the colonial and apartheid eras were orientated towards discrimination of non-white groups, both in urban planning and protected areas making. Today what can be done to manage this legacy? Our aim is to study coastal environmental conflicts in Zululand to look at current race relations, in a particular geographical context of urban, rural and marginal areas, coveted by various political and capitalist interests at various levels, e.g. international, national and local.

This work¹ is a contribution to the study of the littoral zone of the province of KwaZulu-Natal, in the framework of a South Africa in transition. Recently opened up to the world, South

¹ Introduction, chapter 1, chapter 3 and conclusions have been translated by L. Main. The entire book has been corrected by James Mitchell.

Africa is a genuine laboratory for territorial transformation after several decades of apartheid.

Zulu shores

The 'Zulu shores' refer to the Zululand littoral, or the coastal strip of the Indian Ocean between the Tugela River to the south, and the Mozambique border to the north. They correspond to the northern part of the KwaZulu-Natal littoral (fig. 1). Their capital, the industrial and port city of Richards Bay and its black township Esikhawini, is a recent creation of the 1970s. The other coastal cities are small seaside resorts, older and reserved for Whites² during apartheid (Mtunzini, St Lucia, Sodwana Bay). The rest of the littoral is composed of areas preserved for their delicate and noteworthy natural environment (rows of dunes and estuaries of the Umlalazi Nature Reserve and the St Lucia national park (GSLWP³), areas for mining extraction from the dunes (by the company Richards Bay Minerals) and Zulu rural areas (Mabibi, KwaDapha) connected to interior villages (Mbazwana, Manguzi). During apartheid, this littoral was shared between the KwaZulu Bantustan and the province of Natal, under the domination of Whites: English speakers from Durban, the provincial metropolis, and Afrikaners from the Transvaal, the capital province. Indeed, this littoral – in some places a port and mining area, in others a tourist-orientated protected area –

² Use of apartheid-era 'racial' categories (Blacks, Whites, Coloureds, Indians, and Asians) obviously does not imply support for the philosophy that presided over this classification, nor for the political regime that used it.

³ Greater St Lucia Wetland Park

had always been coveted by the divergent interests of Whites, at the expense of those of Blacks (evictions, isolation, etc.).

Ten years ago, apartheid was abolished. The Zulu shores, formerly coveted by Afrikaners 'seeking access to the ocean' faced with the British hold on the area, are now exploited by the ANC⁴ in order to reinforce its territorial power over the rural lands favouring the IFP⁵. However, the influence of Whites remains a reality in a spatial framework that is still very inert. Who can win this dispute over the littoral?

This littoral is thus divided between two logics: an environmental logic that makes preserving the environment a means to reserve the enjoyment of the area for a few wealthy individuals, and an industrial logic that gives the extraction and transformation of natural resources priority over economic development. Since apartheid's end, new political strategies accompany these two logics. Tourist development comes to the aid of the strictly environmentalist logic to try to create jobs and thus redistribute profits to the historically disadvantaged black populations. Social investment and 'environmental sustainability' seem to come to the rescue of industrial development in order to give it a less polluting and more social image. These Zulu shores crystallise conflicting uses of the littoral environment, systems of stakeholders opposing each other and a territorialisation shared between regulatory ambition and post-apartheid geopolitical appropriation. The ANC government tries to reinforce its territorial power whilst simultaneously disengaging

⁴ African National Congress, modernist party with an urban electoral base.

⁵ Inkatha Freedom Party, Zulu traditionalist party with a rural electoral base.

financially. The neo-liberal policy change of the new South Africa in 1996, with the adoption of GEAR⁶ - thus putting to rest the ANC's initial socialist aspirations during the RDP⁷ era (1994-1996) – also marks the renewal of South Africa's use of the environment as an economic asset (promoting and investing in natural parks, ecotourism) but without resolving the contradictions linked to a old industrial apparatus or to reprehensible territorial policies of the past.

However, it is not a mistake that the 'Rio + 10' Summit was held in Johannesburg in September 2002. The South African government - the 'good pupil' of the international organisations – must agree to a policy of continued wise use of resources in all their forms, and the environmental issue is now at the heart of the international community's preoccupations. The debatable question is also raised of the limited freedom of the South African rulers and the concerns of those who think that fighting AIDS and extreme poverty should largely prevail over 'environmental' considerations that can seem a luxury.

The choice of three coastal towns

This work is a resumed version of a doctoral dissertation. I selected here three of the four towns studied, in which I stayed on several occasions between 1996 and 2005. I used environmental conflicts as a methodological entry point – environmental conflicts over the legitimisation of a protected area, living heritage of green apartheid (Kosi Bay and St

⁶ Growth, Employment and Redistribution Programme.

⁷ Reconstruction and Development Programme.

Lucia), and the environmental problems rose by a segregated industrial-port area (Richards Bay). I will insist in this book on Kosi Bay and Richards Bay while referring sometimes to the work done in St Lucia (Guyot, 2003 a & b)

Manguzi is a large, black rural village⁸ running alongside a protected area (Kosi Bay Nature Reserve), in a border post position with Mozambique and surrounded by rural areas.

St Lucia⁹ is a small European seaside resort, surrounded by periurban and African rural areas enclosed within the St Lucia national park. A large national park¹⁰ now combines all these natural reserves between St Lucia and Manguzi – Kosi Bay, with an advertised desire for cooperation with neighbouring Mozambique.

Richards Bay¹¹ is a recently constructed industrial-port city¹². This medium-sized city's particularity lies in its being an administrative and economic capital for the northern coast of KwaZulu-Natal.

⁸ Despite the difficulty of differentiating between urban, periurban and rural in these areas, we estimate Manguzi's urban population to be 10,000 and the population of the rural areas between the city and the Park to be around 20,000. The new KZ 271 municipality brings together 141,000 inhabitants (Demarcation Board 2003).

⁹ The seaside resort incorporates around 1,000 permanent inhabitants. The periurban and rural vicinity includes around 8,000 inhabitants (Demarcation Board, 2003). The new KZ 275 municipality, incorporating the neighbouring city of Mtubatuba, includes 35,000 inhabitants.

¹⁰ Greater St Lucia Wetland Park.

¹¹ Richards Bay, strictly speaking, brings together 50,000 inhabitants, more than 120,000 with Esikhawini Township. The new KZ 282 municipality groups together nearly 290,000 inhabitants (with the city of Empangeni: Demarcation Board, 2003)

¹² Created in the 1970s.

Since 2000, these towns are integrated into large municipalities consisting simultaneously of rural and urban areas, in order to allow locally for a better redistribution of wealth.

Localised environmental conflicts

For me, the environment is a space altered by humans, whose natural (fauna, flora, morphology...) and social (residents, housing...) components, in dynamic interaction, are often destabilised. The environment 'can be endangered' by a human (a polluting industry, clearing a forest...) or physical ('natural' catastrophe) action: one speaks, thus, of 'environmental problems'. This dynamic definition of the environment implies that the researcher must take a position on the genuine seriousness and long-term implications of the destabilisation that is created. I have chosen – in this research, in this very particular South African context – a 'eco-social' position on the environment. For me, improving the individual's health and his or her social well-being (reduction in poverty) takes priority over the very only preservation of 'nature'. Social progress and environmental sustainability have to be really associated under certain conditions, but these conditions are rarely united.

Diverse groups of stakeholders, more or less well organised in shifting coalitions, position themselves differently on very precise and spatially well-localised environmental questions. The environment, as defined above, thus implies the existence of conflicts over the use of space, or spatial competitions, that

are matters of confrontation between stakeholders. The environment being a spatial dynamic, and conflicts between stakeholders covering processes that are not only well spatially defined (stakeholders, coalitions and networks of stakeholders), one can validate the concept of environmental conflict as a methodological tool for the joint study of space and stakeholders. In the field, it allows a process for compelling the stakeholders to take a stand both on problematic environmental questions and in relation to other stakeholders. Environmental conflict thus helps to bring to the fore representations, strategies, practices as well as coalitions linked to the stated problem. This tool – at once methodological and conceptual – is a means of analysis and must be necessarily linked with a tool for interpretation in order to yield enlightening results.

Territory – understood as a portion of geographic space whose delimitation and control aim to exert authority over a population or resources – can be used as a concept for interpreting environmental conflicts. Territorialisation, which is the process of shaping or moulding a territory, allows us to understand that environmental conflicts are first of all territorial conflicts, where hierarchy, prerogatives and territorial transformations have all their significance. Furthermore, territorialisation allows us to raise the issue of the resolution – or radicalisation – of conflicts by territorial regulatory bodies, their regulatory philosophy (solidarity, neo-liberalism) and more generally the management of the power struggle between dominant and dominated parties (factor of reproduction or change?).

All bibliographical references are consolidated at the end.

Methodology

This study is based on extensive, field-based surveys conducted on several occasions between January 1998 and May 2003. More than 120 representative stakeholders were interviewed by means of 'sociological'-type interviews and participant or passive observation. These surveys contributed to the completion of a PhD awarded in France in 2003 (Guyot, 2003-a). All interview writings, as well as the audio recordings, can be sent by the author upon request. Dates of the interviews with the persons cited in the text¹³ follow the bibliography.

One may ask why there is no concordance between the stakeholders' positions and practices (e.g. the logic of stakeholders and their choices). To answer this, it is essential to consider the temporary nature of their actions in order to find meaning in the acknowledged contradictions (i.e. the trinomial of recent past - present - future). The difference between 'words and practice' also has to do with the relationships between technical decision-making power (which mainly involves White South Africans); mastering skills; conserving acquired advantages; the elected political power (which mainly involves Black South Africans); and the transformation conquest

¹³ Interviews took place via the intermediary of a local translator for Zulu-speaking stakeholders. We will keep only positions of each stakeholder to respect their anonymous.

CHAPTER 1

Richards Bay: conservative 'far-east' or
post-modern growing city?

The case of Richards Bay, an industrial and port city, pertinently illustrates conflicts over the uses of space and environment between industrialists, a post-apartheid municipality, nearby residents with diverse priorities, and some environmentalists, who are often radical.

Richards Bay is located on the Indian Ocean, 160 km from Durban and 230 km from the Mozambican border (fig.2). It is a recently constructed city, designed in the 1970s by the Afrikaner nationalist government in order to control an opening onto the Indian Ocean. Durban is, in actual fact, a port controlled essentially by English-speaking interests. Richards Bay thus symbolised the access to the ocean so awaited by *Afrikanerland*¹⁴ (Nicholas, 1997; Guyot, Folio, Lamy, 2001; Pienaar, 2002). Today, around half the city's White population is Afrikaner (Demarcation Board, 2004).¹⁵ Richards Bay, including its townships, whose contours bear witness to apartheid's urban segregation, is a very spread-out urban ensemble consisting of 120,000 inhabitants (Folio, 2003). The new municipality of Umhlatuze, which includes the city of

¹⁴ Translator's note: 'Afrikanerland' designates the quasi-mythological notion of an ethnic and patriotic homeland for the Afrikaner *volk*, or people. This desire for a home reserved for Afrikaners, who historically considered themselves a tiny, threatened group in black Africa, was partially a determinant in creating apartheid, with its notion of 'separateness' that would ensure the economic, political and social survival of the Afrikaner minority.

¹⁵ Use of apartheid-era 'racial' categories (Blacks, Whites, Coloureds, Indians, and Asians) obviously does not imply support for the philosophy that presided over this classification, nor for the political regime that used it.

Richards Bay, consists of around 300,000 inhabitants. Territories separated under apartheid (white city centre, Indian and black townships, black rural chieftainships) are now combined in the same municipal territory. The social stake lies in upgrading the historically disadvantaged areas.

Richards Bay is the largest African port by tonnage (90 million tonnes), specialising in coal exports. Imports supply the powerful industrial area situated close to the port (two aluminium plants, a fertilizer plant, a paper pulp plant, a mine and a centre for titanium treatment: fig. 2). Most industrial products are exported straight away by ship (Lamy, 2003). The large industries and their subcontractors (web of small and medium-sized businesses) employ more than 10,000 people, or more than 50% of the city's formal jobs. They pay 75 % of all local taxes¹⁶. It is a paradise for industrialists, whose territory does not stop expanding with the extensions and newly created plants. With a concern for diversifying its activities and reinforcing a metropolitan image in the making, the Richards Bay municipality decided to promote, beginning about ten years ago, a tourism strategy that includes the construction of numerous infrastructures, such as a waterfront¹⁷, a marina and a casino.

¹⁶ The municipality existence depends on the industries. Industries (including small- and medium-sized businesses) contribute 75% to the municipal budget in property taxes and fees for city services (information provided by the municipal budget service, MD Kotze, 25 April 2003. The large industries, like Hillside (aluminium), buy their electricity directly from Eskom and not from the municipality.

¹⁷ Tourist waterfront with restaurants, hotels and yacht club.

The city and its residents, the industrial-port area and the tourist area under construction coexist in a problematic manner. Conflicts over the use of space exist between these different stakeholders: residents complain of air pollution, the beach is dirtied by water pollution. The city's image is defiled. Environmentalists mobilise to denounce these contradictions in Richards Bay's urban planning, but do not present a united front. Certain persons among them even use an environmental discourse for other ends, to question the necessity of sharing resources between Whites and Blacks or the multiracial character of certain recreational areas (Magi & Nzama, 2002).

This chapter is composed of two main sections.

At Richards Bay, pollution is one of the outward signs of industrial development. It induces negative representations. Furthermore, more efficient environmental regulation should be implemented to prevent certain catastrophes¹⁸ (Bethlehem & Goldblatt, 1997). However, the industries generate a rather beneficial local development in the context of a redistributive public policy in matters of revenue and equipment.

The preservation – nevertheless necessary – of the environment implies a reinforced spatial segregation at Richards Bay. In fact, rearguard battles override the necessity of adding value to attractive areas whose recreational potential could benefit the entire population.

¹⁸ On 16 July 2002, the manufacturing area for sulphuric acid of the Foskor (IOF) fertilizer plant suffered an accidental degassing of high concentrations of SO₂ and SO₃. 229 people had to be treated by emergency services in hospital for more or less serious cases of poisoning.

1. Pollution is money

1.1. How people perceive pollution?

Richards Bay's industries are unequally polluting, as the diversity of their manufacturing processes demonstrates. Certain liquid or gaseous effluents create a genuine threat of pollution for the land or marine environment, or for the residents¹⁹. Others imply only an aesthetic problem (unpleasant smells, colour, etc.).

These discharges, guided by the free movement of prevailing winds or by pipelines built for this purpose, are spatialised. The proximity of the industrial areas to the suburbs of Arboretum (between 0.5 and 1.5 km) and Meerensee (2 to 5 km) has as a consequence to expose residents to the risk of pollution (fig. 2). Most people do not differentiate between the smells of 'rotten eggs' (H₂S) – emanating from Mondi's plant morning and night according to the system of land breezes blowing across the land (blowing from the NW) – and sulphur dioxide or hydrogen fluoride pollution, less odorous but more dangerous to the health of children and the elderly, in particular. Mondi's environmental officer explains this confusion often made by people²⁰.

¹⁹ Not to mention the workers of the industry under consideration.

²⁰ Interview 23-10-2001

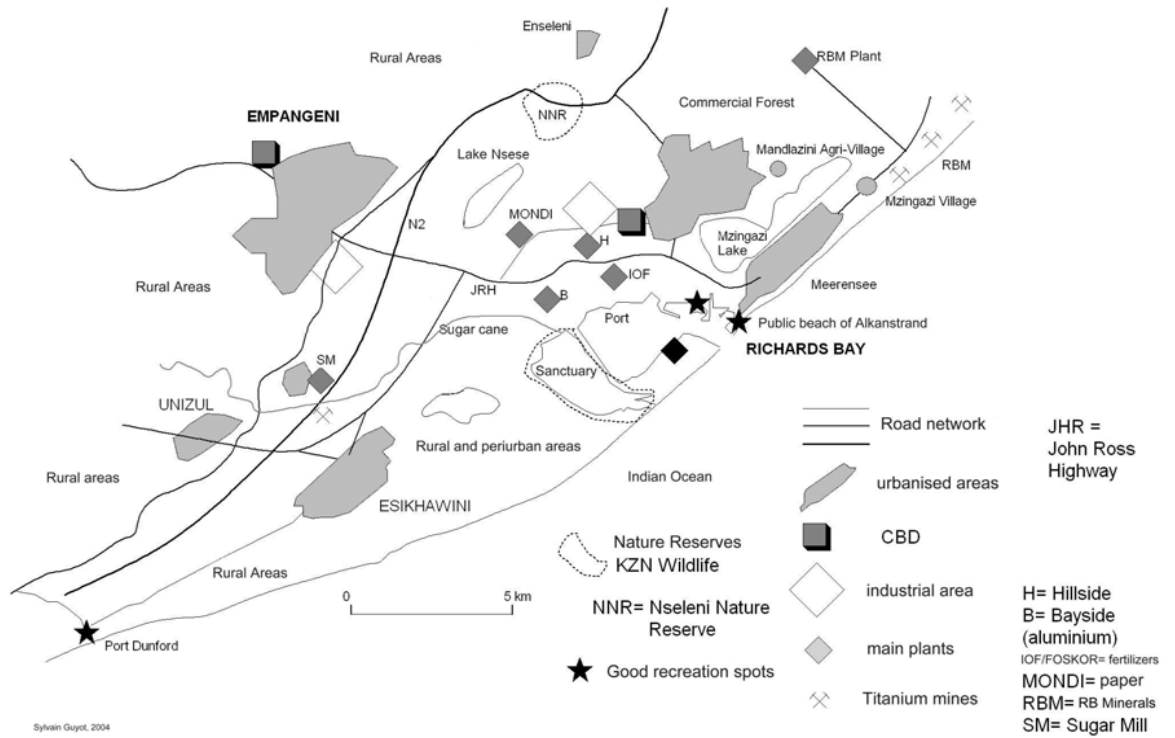


Figure 2: Richards Bay, the city and industrial-port area

People talk about the smell first. The odour people get from Mondi is reduced sulphates H₂S Hydrogen sulphide. This is not dangerous at those concentrations we emit. (...) It has been proven over and over that there's no negative impact but unfortunately it's got this aesthetic impact that it really smells bad.²¹

These SO₂ and HF pollutants intensify in winter during windless days (temperature inversion). When the wind blows from the SW or NW, they are particularly dangerous for Arboretum's residents.

All the residents interviewed – except certain ones working for the industry – mention air pollution as being one of Richards Bay's environmental problems. An elderly Arboretum resident seemed very preoccupied²²:

The pollution can be so bad. Especially the smell of Mondi and IOF. We can do something, I am sure, to reduce it.

A Meerensee resident, developed allergies since she began living in Richards Bay, at the beginning of 2000. The city's doctors attribute most of the sinusitis, rhinitis and other ORL allergy problems to the frequency of air pollution. However,

²¹ Translator's note: Excerpts from interviews conducted in English have been left unaltered and unedited in the translation of this article from French to English.

²² Interview 16-10-2001

there again it is a matter of perception. The scientific and statistical study on these correlations, underway for more than four years, does not yet seem complete.

In fact, the odours perceived by residents appear to be the main concern because they contribute to fixing the city's industrial image as 'a city that smells'. The Mondi paper plant, which causes this odour, is located on the Richards Bay access road. It is a detrimental location for all visitors who are not familiar with the city's industrial reality. Mondi's environmental manager explained that the problem of foul smells only can be resolved with difficulty²³.

There is no process to change the smell. (...)We don't know the amount of gas going out but that gas is extremely odorous. Because it is like an emergency valve we cannot put anything on the other side of it to reduce the smell.

How do local environmentalists react, organise themselves and confront each other when faced with these issues of industrial pollution? Is not pollution only an excuse for placing the motives of certain stakeholders ahead of the general interest they feign to defend?

1.2. Divided green stakeholders

Different residents' associations and environmental groups formed to attempt to pressurise industry to reduce their

²³ Interview 23-10-2001

emissions. These groups are scattered and not at all coordinated. Sometimes, they are even in opposition, placing rivalries between people at the centre of the issues.

1.2.1. Elected officials

One of them took action to oppose the construction of the Hillside aluminium plant in 1993. In 1995, she was behind the discussion group on pollution. She got herself elected in 1996 as municipal councillor of Meerensee on the list of the Richards Bay Ratepayers and Residents Association (RBRA), using the environmental theme. This was an easy election in an area where the majority of residents - wealthy and educated - give importance to environmental problems. The new municipal elections regulation of 2000 no longer authorises associations to run for election. She got herself re-elected under the banner of the DA²⁴ (Democratic Alliance). Since the interview she granted to me in 1998 (Guyot, 1998-a), where she passionately criticised all the city's industrialists, reproaching them for destroying everything, she seems to have tempered her discourse. Only just barely would she oppose the possible construction of an oil refinery²⁵.

I know that they would love to have a big oil refinery here but I would be a little bit reluctant on that one, they would have to put up a very, very

²⁴ Centre-right political party, heir of the old DP (Democratic Party), and which seeks to defend the interests of the most well-to-do Whites and Indians.

²⁵ Interview 22-10-2001

strong fight to get me on board on that one. I wouldn't be in favour of that at all.

The discussion group on pollution no longer functions. She seems to have other electoral arguments, such as the mandatory payment of public services by the destitute rural populations integrated under the new municipal boundaries in 2000.

No, I think it's totally wrong, this wall to wall municipalities. I have never seen it done anywhere else and people need to be educated first of all as to what it is going to cost to belong in the municipality. These are tribal people, they have their tribal customs, we have municipal rules and regulations and laws and bylaws that they cannot be accommodated within. (...) Your town or your city should be as big as the residential boundaries of the people that are paying. (..) No, it can't work because the people are too different. If we take 10 to 15 years to make people understand that if you have got a service you have got to pay for it.

This is a very conservative viewpoint. It challenges the post-apartheid political strategy, which aims to redress past injustices against the 'historically disadvantaged communities.' It is also accompanied by a host of negative representations on the incapacity of a portion of the population to behave like good citizens. Moreover, she also

openly criticises the existence of the Richards Bay Clean Air Association.²⁶

The Richards Bay Clean Air Association is industry-monitoring industry. It's paid for by industry, industrial people serve on it and as far as I am concerned it is industry policing itself.

1.2.2. Associations

Its main environmental opponent is another woman and environmentalist, who also have an interesting career. She began to get involved in the Richards Bay Ratepayers Association in 1994 and got herself elected municipal councillor on this association's list in 1996. 18% of elected municipal officials came from the RBRA, which demonstrates a popular will for independent politics. Since then, she wears two hats, that of President of the RBRA and Vice President of Clean Air. The Clean Air Association has a relatively complicated operation, including stakeholders from industry, civil society, the municipality and the provincial Department of Environmental Affairs.

Presently, only SO₂ is regularly measured, but the association envisages the measurement of fluorides (RBCAA meeting, December 2001). This association is largely financed by the industries with an objective of self-monitoring and assuming a sense of responsibility. Not all of Richards Bay's industries subscribe to this ethic of self-monitoring, promoted as one of

²⁶ Interview 22-10-2001

the new buzzwords in international debates on relations between environment and industry. This association has the merit of taking into account residents' protests in the goal of justifying the excesses perpetrated by the industrialists. It also has the possibility of becoming a local environmental regulatory authority, which does not seem to suit the theoretical regulatory authority, the provincial Department of Environmental Affairs²⁷.

My frustration with the RBCAA remains that we are not a regulatory authority. We don't have the power to enforce anything. It's not like if Hillside does something we can barge through their doors and fine them. All we can do is bring it to the relevant authorities, but the relevant authorities sit on the board. Department of Environmental Affairs. The Department of Environmental Affairs have finally come on board. Dr B. is going to be coming up. So they actually sit there. But at moment my concern is with DEA²⁸ is the conflict between the association and DEA. He's come to one meeting as an observer. He doesn't understand who we are and where we are coming from. I think he sees us as a threat to his power struggle.

The RBCAA does a good job in pushing to the forefront the government's dysfunctional performance in managing and regulating air pollution in the province. It is not at all a

²⁷ Interview 16-10-2001

²⁸ Department of Environmental Affairs.

government priority in light of the necessity of attracting new industrial investments, which create jobs and business.

1.2.3. Academics

A third environmentalist, committed academic at the University of Zululand, is part of the environmental association ZEAL (Zululand Environmental Alliance) based at Empangeni. He is a pillar for ZEAL at Richards Bay. He passes himself off as Richards Bay's leading opponent to air pollution. The air pollution scandalises him, so he tries to combat this. However, his action is not really acknowledged. The president of the RBRA acknowledges his expertise but criticises his style²⁹. Personal issues seem to use a lot of local environmentalists' energy. The respect of the difference needs to start among them.

If he sticks to what he knows I think he has a vital role to play. (...) When you see him in a meeting he doesn't take the bull by the horns. He doesn't go to a meeting and make a point and fight it. He will make a very soft comment and then he goes on his surfboard.

In reality, he now seems more preoccupied by the planning of recreational areas than air pollution, certainly because he acknowledges the important contribution of leisure activities in the local economy.

²⁹ Interview 16-10-2001

One criticises ZEAL more generally for having lost a great deal of time and energy in combating the mining extraction project at St Lucia in 1992-1993 (Guyot, 2003), as opposed to preventing the construction of the aluminium factory at Hillside – one of the city's largest contributors to SO2 pollution – on a site 500 m from the nearest white residential areas.

Richards Bay's environmentalists thus lead competing actions and do not all have the same objectives. The conservation body, Ezemvelo KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife, also tries to put pressure on the industrialists so that they will respect the green belts running alongside the industrial area. These actions have very little weight faced with the urban regime that has formed between the municipality and the industrialists.

1.3. A 'municipalities – industrialists' urban regime: Serving development needs?

The regimes are the decision-making and localised components of the networks. Locally, the 'regimes' are generally composed of members of the public- and private-sector elite. According to Stone 1984 (cited by Stocker, 1998), *'a regime is an informal but relatively stable group, having institutional resources at its disposal that allows members to participate on a long-term basis in the elaboration of important decisions. The members of a regime generally have an institutional base; that is to say, they have authority in a given domain. It is, thus, a centre for informal coordination without an overarching hierarchy. The establishment of a viable regime is the highest expression of*

governance in the new system of power.' At Richards Bay, the local authorities and industrialists form the urban regime. The environmentalists are excluded from it.

1.3.1. A dependent but perceptive municipality

The municipality recognises the pollution problems but cannot really be critical, because industry is the number one contributor to local taxes. The mayor is the former mayor of Empangeni, where he was an independent elected official. He is the director of an optics business, with points of sale across KwaZulu-Natal province. In 2000, the IFP asked him to present himself as mayor under its political label. It was the IFP's only solution for winning against the ANC (the previous mayor of Richards Bay was ANC) whilst having a recognised and experienced administrator at the highest level post. All the rural votes (integrated into the new municipal boundaries) thus were presented under its name. Nowadays this mayor must simultaneously satisfy conservative Whites who voted for him as well as rural Blacks lacking all basic services. Therefore, he must appear to be concerned with the preoccupations of one and the other. This explains why he advocates 'cooperative local government', where he can rely on the support of the DA or the ANC when necessary. With the new municipal system, an executive committee of ten municipal councillors (plus the mayor) makes decisions. For Umhlatuze municipality, there are 5 IFP's, 3 ANC's and 2 DAs, or 5 Blacks and 5 Whites. The coalitions are often more cultural than political, as was explained to this researcher by

the former mayor of Richards Bay and ANC executive municipal councillor³⁰.

There are issues that push Africans against white councillors in which case white councillors IFP siding with white DA. This is not always, as there is discipline and they can not always do that. Those are tensions that you normally find between parties where people feel morally that this should not happen. Particularly when black areas are targeted.

This is the case for environmental issues. White councillors, with the Meerensee councillor at the head, debate the environmental consequences of such and such a project to be authorised or refused. However, these discussions rarely lead to a development project being refused.

The mayor has a very positive image of the industrialists, who bring in positive and profitable results for the city, but also understands the need to diversify Richards Bay's economy and further the opportunities for tourist development³¹.

We have to move away from this image of being an industrial operation because tourism creates more jobs per Rand of investment than any other business and I am very sensitive to that matter, but within our tight budgets we have got to do things as we can and I think the balance between the

³⁰ Interview 18-10-2001

³¹ Interview 09-11-2001

environment and the industrial growth of the town is a very delicate.

To accomplish that, the city has a new logo since the beginning of 2002 (fig. 3).

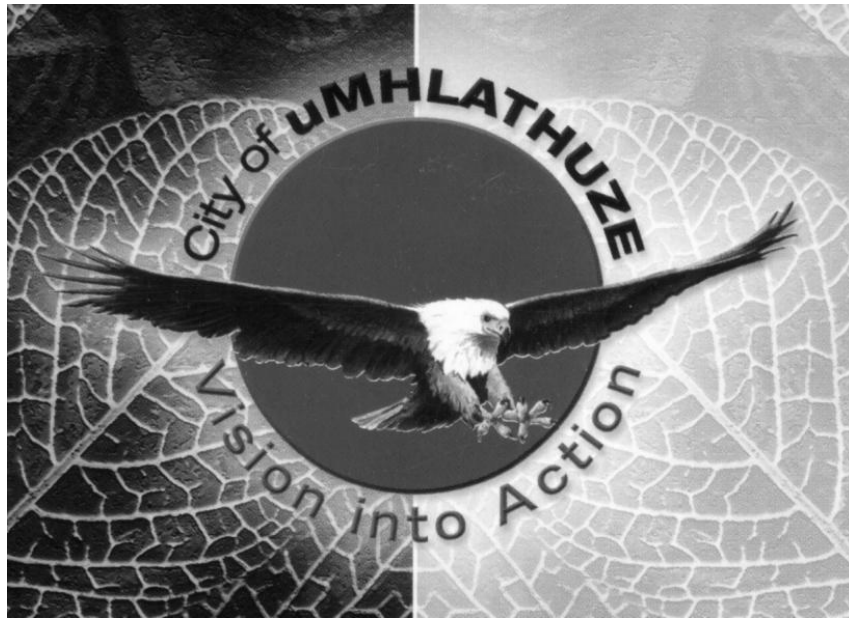


Figure 3: Logo of Umhlathuze municipality

Umhlathuze is the name of the river crossing the municipal territory and emptying into the estuary lagoon, made artificial since the port's construction in 1976. The fish eagle is a raptor that is very present on the coast. It symbolises

the efficiency and dynamism of a new, action-orientated municipal team.

Richards Bay's local government is not yet an environmental regulatory body and must safeguard the income it earns from industry.

1.3.2. 'Not all industries are dirty'

Richards Bay's industries are not identical. Differentiations must be made between internationally and nationally exporting industries. The products manufactured at Richards Bay are sought by Japanese, European and American clients. The Americans are more and more sensitive to the environmental context of industrial manufacturing. Labels are created in the 'countries of the Triad'³² to certify that such and such a process respected the environment. An informed consumer will no longer necessarily buy goods produced in Third World polluting plants...For example, 60% of Mondi's earnings – Mondi produces paper – come from exports to countries in the Northern hemisphere. Mondi's environmental manager explained that this configuration is more and more taken into account by the plant's management³³.

If you can assure a clean area it is much easier for other industries to come into the area and to create more jobs. They want to clean the air, but they

³² Translator's note: Term usually used to designate the European Union, Japan and North America.

³³ Interview 23-10-2001

want to do it quickly. It must not only be a picture on a brochure. I was thinking if the people direct from the industries start to put this as a first priority to satisfy people. This was the conclusion of the paper published overseas. In R/B if somebody has to take a lead it should be the industry. The industry should lead the way. You do your thing because it looks like there is a drive toward the right thing. We are putting a lot of money into getting a cleaner technology. We are putting in resources to get better conditions and to minimise the upset in the process. That is not a thing that one person on a company can do. It is a sort of a climate that comes from top management.

Hillside, built by P echiney between 1993 and 1996, produces aluminium exported directly to Asia from the port at Richards Bay. Its plant still gives off a great deal of SO₂, but resolved the problem of fluoride emissions through a highly effective recycling process (Guyot, 1998-a).

Not all the plants at Richards Bay attach as much importance to negative externalities as Mondi (which remains badly judged because of its odour problems). Foskor produces fertilizer and Bayside produces aluminium for the national market. They are very old (more than 25 years old) and polluting plants with a very poor reputation, as Mondi's environmental manager explained³⁴.

³⁴ Interview 23-10-2001

Some of the industries, because they are not international industries, might have a problem seeing that they have a history and background of bad environmental publicity and bad environmental performance. I am specifically referring to IOF. They have a history where the manager was someone that just wanted to make money. I am talking of years back and that is the history that will be brought up. To change that mindset is not an easy thing. As the younger generation goes in and the public pressure and department of environment increases they have to adhere to that. (...) It is difficult with IOF. They sit in the corner and always look disgusting. If you drive past there it looks like a lot going in to the air and doesn't look clean.(...) I am a firm believer that if you visit a plant and it looks untidy and dirty and unorganised, how can a plant like that be organised in an environmental way.

1.3.3. A recognised social investment policy

A consensus exists that recognises the heavy social and community investment by the large industrial groups at Richards Bay. Clinics, schools, housing and training programmes are placed at the disposal of Blacks in the townships and neighbouring tribal areas. Industry has a public assistance role that should be that of the public authorities. If one adds the local taxes paid to the municipality and the professional taxes to the District Council, the industrialists emerge as local development's top financiers.

Thus, the industrialists compensate, locally, for the municipal loss of earnings by participating in projects of local policing, 'cultural' programmes and through foundations. The Zululand Chamber of Business Foundation establishes numerous cultural and social projects and projects for the creation of small businesses to reinforce local development opportunities. The industries' powers in the interplay of local stakeholders, and their spatial autonomisation in the form of a concentrated area, are the constituent reasons for the emergence of a genuine industrial territory at Richards Bay, juxtaposed to the municipal territory. However, this power and spatial control, foundations of the process of industrial territorialisation, were not devoid of crises, such as the July 2002 explosion at the Foskor fertilizer plant that sent many people to hospital.

The industrial firms no longer escape their environment, in the sense that their more or less harmful discharges, but also their own products, are more and more subjected to the direct or indirect control of their legal, political and social environment. The territorialisation of the industrial establishment, and its extension to the coordinated management of the environmentalist stakes, does not go without saying. Particularly for the large firm, if there were territory, it could only be its own: the town owned by the boss, the company town, the exclusive concession, the monopolistic labour market³⁵, such were the only acceptable territories, designed according to their own plans (Baudelle, 1999). The labour monopoly exercised in the small dependent town, the 'city hostage to a polluting plant', never created preserved

³⁵ Such as at Richards Bay.

environments. The well-understood interest of the socio-economic, political and local tax system is always susceptible to polluting the debate over environmental protection. Is that to say that a positive territorialisation of the firm, via co-management of the environmental stakes, is not possible?

Air pollution is not the only problem handicapping Richards Bay in diversifying its economic base, in particular through tourism. Water pollution, spatial contradictions and the responses, out of touch with reality, of the 'greens' are a classic case – and very South African.

2. Preserved environment, selected inhabitants³⁶?

The beach at Richards Bay represents one of the city's main recreational and tourist assets, despite the diverse types of industrial water pollution. However, these problems do not represent the priority worry for Whites, who are rather more concerned by the beach's new 'racial' profile since the end of apartheid. So preserving the environment becomes, again, a major cause for concern, because it allows for controlling the space in order to save it for use by a minority.

³⁶ I intentionally set aside the pollution of the freshwater lake Mzingazi by its neighbouring black residents (Mzingazi Village, Mandlazini Agri Village) because I do not have data relating to this subject, or only a few value judgments by Whites who transfer the responsibility for Richards Bay's pollution problem onto its underdeveloped African areas, thereby overshadowing most of the industrial discharges.

2.1. The beach: a real environmental issue?

Waste water from the entire group of industries, as well as those of the municipality, is collected in two pipelines built in 1984. They discharge their effluents 5.3 and 4.3 km off the beach, at a depth of 30m. The last kilometre of each pipeline has diffusers that spread the discharge of effluents at a periodicity of 100 metres. The CSIR (Council of Science for Industrial Research) measures and models the impact of these discharges before sending on its results to the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry (DWAF).

The technical officer at the Mhlatuze Water Board assured us that the consequences of such pipelines on the marine environment are limited because of the very efficient ocean dispersion. He explained why the Mediterranean Sea requires purification plants whereas they are not necessary, according to him, along the ocean's edge³⁷.

The idea of sewage treatment plan is excellent for the Mediterranean Sea because it is a stagnant sea in general and because of the pressure of a world-class tourism. But here in Richards Bay the efficient oceanic dispersion and the low tourism market can't sustain such an investment. But maybe in 8 or 10 years because of the pressure of overseas market on products like paper you will see Mondi starting to realise that they have to recycle their water.

³⁷ Interview 17-10-2001

Water recycling by the industries still remains a costly process. The buying rate for 1m³ of water is only 1 Euro. The industrial price of water should thus be increased in order to favour resorting to innovatory recycling processes.

However, the potential impact of these liquid discharges on the beach does not seem to have been truly taken into account. A boat trip close to the mouths of the pipelines allows one to note that the water colour fluctuates between a yellowish brown and a blue-green, and that its odour resembles that of Mondi's air discharges. In general, Richards Bay's ocean water is characterised by an odour that one does not encounter on the beaches further north or south.

Is the water dangerous? The beach manager in charge of Alkanstrand beach since 1983 had his own indicators for environmental degradation. There is, thus, a real environmental problem³⁸.

The pollution is a problem. We need totally independent analysis rather than the one from the Mhlatuze Water Board or the CSIR. The mussel indicator is quite pertinent. Before along this jetty you had plenty mussels, now nothing, they all disappear, just after the building of the sea pipeline. You need to send someone independent to monitor.

³⁸ Interview 12-10-2001

The environmental officer of the Port of Richards Bay considered that the quality of the sediments at the port's entrance channel is compromised by the impact of the discharges from the two pipelines. He also recognised that the behaviour of the different vessels in the port varies. A portion of the primary materials transported always end up in the port by incident or out of carelessness. Certain vessels do not hesitate to pump out their effluents whilst in harbour.

The Port of Richards Bay has an entrance channel bound by two large breakwaters. As elsewhere in the world, the breakwaters trap the silt generated by the coastal drift upstream and create problems of erosion downstream. At Richards Bay, the upstream is the SW and the downstream the NE, the average coastal drift being from the SW towards the NE, 2001. South of the port, one finds a system of dunes, whereas the beaches north of Richards Bay are severely eroded (Mitchell, 2001; Mitchell & Jury, 2005). At the same time, the port's entrance channel must be dredged in order to maintain sufficient depths for the entry of massive bulk carriers. A dredger pipeline thus was installed, to clear the silt from the port's entrance channel and move it towards...the public beach at Alkanstrand (fig. 4), a technical process to compensate the accelerated erosion. The problem is that the dredger pipeline dumps directly onto the beach.



Figure 4: Outlet of the dredger pipeline

It carries the polluted and sandy waters of the port entrance back onto the public beach at Alkanstrand. To compensate for the very strong erosion due to the breakwaters trapping the coastal drift, this pipeline allows the regular fortification of the beach.

From an aesthetic viewpoint, such an operation contradicts the existence of a regularly frequented beach. The quality of the water and silt transferred from the port entrance are not guaranteed, according to the words of the port's environmental authority. Moreover the Mhlatuze Water Board's technical officer, even hands responsibility for the coastal pollution over to the port authorities³⁹.

³⁹ Interview 17-10-2001

Maybe the dredger pipeline is more concerning for the beach because of the water source which comes from an industrial harbour where the boats don't have any problem to clean themselves.

The dredging of silt occurs during the day – even on weekends – when the wind blows from the NE and the sediments can thus more effectively fortify the beach. The water is thus entirely brown, smells bad, and carries numerous coal particles that wind up completely dirtying the beach. The beach could be rescued from erosion in another way, certainly more costly, with a submerged pipeline passing through a purification plant, selecting the right-sized sediments, or such as in the United States (Miossec, 1998), where sand is taken by truckloads every night. Certain residents complained about this problem⁴⁰.

The dredger pipeline is also very bad; the water unfortunately smells a lot in Richards Bay.

Managing such a contradiction in the use of the space is tricky, because the dredging operations are a responsibility of the port and the southern part of the beach is port property. The rest belongs to the municipality. The financial priority lies in securing access to the industrial port for the vessels. The municipality cannot constrain the port, which represents a national – and local, it is well understood – interest. For most of the stakeholders interviewed, the problem of the beach's

⁴⁰ Interview 29-10-2001

attractiveness does not lie in potential risks of pollution that are not well scientifically proven.

2.2. The beach: Temptation of a new apartheid?

Alkanstrand was a beach reserved for Whites during apartheid. Since apartheid's abolition, black residents from the townships have enjoyed going there during the year, on weekends and during summer vacations on Christmas Day and, especially, New Year's Day (fig. 5).



Figure 5: Black recreation at Alkanstrand

This photograph, taken by helicopter on 1st January 2002, shows a record number of people going to the beach. Blacks

from the townships make it a point of honour in taking over a beach reserved for Whites during apartheid. They were around 40,000 that day.

The Meerensee municipal councillor and environmentalist, considers the number of people going to the beach to be a major problem⁴¹.

You see the majority of the population don't really worry about the facilities, they are quite happy to shit in the bushes and pee in the bushes (sic) and they are quite happy to sit and have no toilet facilities if necessary, that is not acceptable, that is really not acceptable. You cannot go down to the parking and park your car, because your car gets ripped off. It doesn't matter what time of the day or night you go there. So it's very sad, but what can we do, it's the new South Africa. Where the criminal is king and no justice. (...)

The smacks of racism in her discourse are representative of a very conservative, even extremist fringe group in the white South African population. Residents of Arboretum and Meerensee shared her viewpoint⁴².

But the worst near the beach is all this mess with the Black people, taxis, and buses. If you are a respectable family from Richards Bay you don't want to be there in the same time.

⁴¹ Interview 22-10-2001

⁴² Interview 29-10-2001

The solutions would be to privatise the beach and require an entrance fee, as councillors from the Municipality, key representative from the Richards Bay SDI⁴³ and still other stakeholders suggested to me, whilst simultaneously transforming the beach into a natural reserve⁴⁴.

It should not be a public beach. If we made that over to the Parks, they could upgrade it like they did in Mtunzini⁴⁵, they have a beautiful place there, very, very nice and many of the other resorts up and down the coast are controlled by Parks. They have got the background, they have got the knowledge, they've got the expertise, and they have got the know-how. I think they do a brilliant job, a very good job. We just haven't got the know-how and we haven't got the big bucks.

The environment comes to the rescue of forced cultural cohabitation! Privatisation (reserved preservation) of the beach would allow for sharply reducing the black frequentation and would encourage Richards Bay's white families to continue to go to the beach in peace. Neither the mayor, nor the official in charge of the SDI like to go on the beach. And many other residents are like them. The perception is that the beach is a place where one can get attacked by Blacks under the influence of alcohol. Fortunately, this can change.

⁴³ The SDI, or Spatial Development Initiative, is a government programme for designating priority areas for development, such as Richards Bay.

⁴⁴ Interview 22-10-2001

⁴⁵ Seaside resort 50 km south of Richards Bay.

Thanks to residents' pressures, the beach during the last summer vacations took on a new face. Alcohol was forbidden, security was reinforced and the sand, grounds and bathroom installations were regularly cleaned. Apart from the poor quality of the water, everything was brought together to make Alkanstrand the multiracial, pleasant beach of a South African municipality of more than 300,000 inhabitants. Unfortunately, the municipality does not have at its disposal a sufficient budget for realising other, more sustainable developments. Outside the holiday periods, insecurity seems to take back its rights.

After the beach, the lagoon attracts the most residents and visitors, with numerous possibilities for nautical sports. As a matter of interest, New Year's Eve 2001, all the Whites of Richards Bay were concentrated around the lagoon and marinas. Then the municipal authorities took stock of the situation. These 10,000 Whites caused more damage, because of alcohol, and left more rubbish than the 40,000 Blacks gathered the next day on the beach, thanks to the new security instructions. The environmental problems are also the consequence of personal behaviours. It is very common, in South Africa, to see people throw their rubbish out the windows of cars and 'combis'⁴⁶. Improving behaviour must start with basic education and must graduate the work of

⁴⁶ Translator's note: 'Combis' are a form of semi-private public transportation, by vans, that operate in a transportation network throughout South Africa, mainly but not exclusively transporting Blacks from the townships and outlying rural areas. The combi system's existence can be attributed to the lack of municipal transportation services to these areas.

different organisations – public or private – and the passage from an individualist to a collective type of outlook.

The negative externalities produced by industries are thus not necessarily the priority problem of white residents, who are more worried by the rise in crime and the loss of their traditional recreational areas, and not necessarily either the priority problem of Blacks, suffering from massive unemployment and receptive to all attempts to development.

Conclusion

Environmental problems seem only to concern a small, well-to-do fraction of the population that made them one of their battle horses without, however, being capable of presenting a united front. However, genuine contradictions exist in the spatial development strategy of the city of Richards Bay. The industrial area continues to densify whereas the residential areas are geographically very close. The incompatibility between certain liquid discharges and the recreational area is not resolved and is not in the process of being resolved, due to the financial tensions over the short term. The aesthetics of the city – in particular at the entrance – also causes a real problem of perception that can by itself nullify all efforts by tourist stakeholders to make the Meerensee area attractive. Coalitions of stakeholders thus are shared between divided environmentalists, with suspect motives, more or less allied to some of the stakeholders in the tourist and recreational sectors, who are actively opposed – sometimes in a constructive way – to the all-powerful industrialists whose impact on the economy and local social fabric remains very

positive. The municipality tries to please everyone in attempting to apply a coherent spatial development strategy. It seems rather preoccupied, and rightly so, by its new territorial boundaries and the immense work of upgrading that results from it, in attempting to resolve conflicts with traditional leaders.

Richards Bay is, thus, a confirmed industrial paradise and will become increasingly difficult for local environmentalists who are more and more trapped in their certainties.

CHAPTER 2

Manipulation of nature conservation
by political interests: A Kosi Bay
narrative

The aim of this chapter is to discuss on the significance of the post-apartheid governance system in the light of a legacy of major and ongoing environmental conflicts. We will consider in this chapter environmental conflicts opposing nature conservation to community and tourism development within the 'Kosi Bay Nature Reserve' (fig. 6), part of the Greater St Lucia Wetland Park.

Geographically, Kosi Bay, on the northern east coast of South Africa, includes the whole area between the Indian Ocean, the grasslands on the western and southern parts of the four lakes system and the Mozambican border in the north. Although it is a tribal land in the custody of the Tembe Tribal Authority, the major part of this land was a proclaimed nature reserve in the late 1980's by the provincial administration. The Kosi Bay area comprises many different scattered communities. Some of them are part of the nature reserve (Emalangeni, KwaDapha, and Enkovukeni), some others are excluded from it (KwaZibi, KwaMazambane, KwaGeorge...). Manguzi⁴⁷ is the only small town next to the Kosi Bay area and plays an important role of administrative and commercial centre.

In Kosi Bay, environmental conflicts oppose community-based extraction and nature conservation in the arena of competing tourism development. These conflicts occur now in a post-apartheid era characterised by new and complex governance.

⁴⁷ Despite the difficulty of differentiating between urban, periurban and rural in these areas, we estimate Manguzi's urban population to be 10,000 and the population of the rural areas between the city and the Park to be around 20,000. The new KZ 271 municipality brings together 141,000 inhabitants (Demarcation Board 2003).

Ten years ago, apartheid was abolished. The Kosi Bay area, formerly coveted by Afrikaners 'seeking access to the ocean' faced with the British hold on the area, are now exploited by the ANC in order to reinforce its territorial power over the rural lands favouring the IFP. However, the influence of Whites remains a reality in a spatial framework that is still very inert. Who can win this dispute over the littoral environment of Kosi Bay?

The Kosi Bay area is characterized by an environmental logic that makes preserving the environment a means to reserve the enjoyment of the area for a few wealthy individuals. Since apartheid's end, new political strategies accompany this logic. Tourist development comes to the aid of the strictly environmentalist logic to try to create jobs and thus redistribute profits to the historically disadvantaged black populations.

The Kosi Bay area crystallises conflicting uses of the littoral environment, systems of stakeholders opposing each other and a territorialisation shared between regulatory ambition and post-apartheid geopolitical appropriation. The ANC government tries to reinforce its territorial power whilst simultaneously disengaging financially. The neo-liberal policy change of the new South Africa in 1996, with the adoption of GEAR⁴⁸ - thus putting to rest the ANC's initial socialist aspirations during the RDP⁴⁹ era (1994-1996) – also marks the renewal of South Africa's use of the environment as an

⁴⁸ Growth, Employment and Redistribution Programme.

⁴⁹ Reconstruction and Development Programme.

economic asset (promoting and investing in natural parks, ecotourism).

Part 1 is giving some informative data about the Kosi Bay Area and is a flash-back to understand the history of the local environmental conflicts. The second part presents the complexity of the new post-apartheid governance system. Finally the third part interprets the political significance of this new system.

1. The contrasted reality of the Kosi Bay area

1.1. Human poverty versus natural assets

1.1.1. One of the poorest region in South Africa

Maputaland extends from 28° to 26° south along the eastern coast of South Africa. While it is rich in natural resources, this part of KwaZulu-Natal is poor when measured by socio-economic standards. For instance, according to the Demarcation Board, 89% of the population of the whole Maputaland⁵⁰ get less than R18 000-00 (≈2500 US\$) per year compared to 43, 46 and 27 per cent for the Durban, Johannesburg and Cape Town Metropolitan Areas respectively (Guyot, 2002).

Many physical constraints (e.g. subtropical humid climate and its related endemic diseases such as malaria and tick bite fever, natural obstacles such as lakes and dunes) inhibit the

⁵⁰ Umkhanyakude District Municipality [DC27]

development of the Kosi Bay area. Except in the swamp forest zones, the sandy soils are naturally poor and the method of cultivation that is traditionally used by farmers, exaggerates the natural lack of nutrients (Mountain 1990). Maize and peanuts are the major subsistence crops in the area. The remainder of the diet mainly comprises fish and shellfish and natural resource from dune forests. A more sustainable agriculture has to become an important activity locally to insure minimum standards of living for the population (Bulfoni, 2002).

The three communities inside the nature reserve are located between the Indian Ocean and the four lakes system. They are accessible only by four-wheel drive vehicle and by boat. There are residents who organise paying-shuttle services with their own four-wheel drive vehicles. All government infrastructures such as hospitals, library, post office etc. are available in Manguzi. The poor communications contribute to the isolation of the territory except for Manguzi which is now well linked with the South African roads network. Water supply in Manguzi is delivered through public taps, sometimes through individual boreholes. Basic services must absolutely be supplied to the people otherwise poverty and frustrations against nature conservation within black rural communities will continue to increase.

1.1.2. A range of natural assets

The study area – Kosi Bay - is found within Maputaland along its coastal belt. This coastal belt is, in many ways, the most attractive part of Maputaland and has great potential for

tourism development. It is characterised by five different ecosystems. The coastline comprising sand beaches and a tidal zone rich in corals and reef life. Dune forests consist of tropical and subtropical evergreen trees growing on dunes which reach 70 to 120 m in height. Grasslands are found between the freshwater lake system (which comprise a separate aquatic ecosystem rich in fish) and the dune forests. A major arboreal component of the grassland ecosystem is the Lala palm which is used traditionally to make palm wine. Swamp forests occur adjacent to the lake system. The indigenous population has settled in the grasslands which are, along with the swamp forests, the location of vegetable gardens. The dune forest has been used traditionally for firewood and the sea has provided marine resources, particularly fish and mussels. The recent development of tourism has meant that settlements have developed near the beaches.

Although poor in services, the Kosi Bay area is surrounded by valuable assets such as pristine subtropical dune forest containing many rare species (Govender 2001) and rich coral life offshore – including more than 30 species of tropical fish in the southern Hully Point. Other permanent attractions include the scenery and a year-round warm climate with temperatures ranging from 12-24°C in winter to 21-30°C in summer. The offshore water is warm (23-26°C) due to the effects of the Agulhas Current. The combination of these assets provides a tourist-friendly environment and attests to this the mushrooming of tourism developments that can be seen today around the area.

1.2. An history of local environmental conflicts

1.2.1. The apartheid context and the Bantustan issue

This historical background is necessary to understand the complexity of today's environmental conflicts.

These natural assets are first taken into account in 1950 with the proclamation of the first Kosi Bay Nature Reserve by the Natal Parks Board on the western banks of the lake Nhlange for the purpose of outdoor recreation activities. In the same time the Emalangeni swamp forest is declared *Indigenous Forest Reserve* by the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry. This zoning is done without taking into account that the land is tribal and occupied by different communities extracting natural resources on a daily basis. However no conservation regulations were enforced before the whole area was proclaimed as a nature reserve in 1989.

Prior to 1972, before the creation of the KwaZulu Homeland, the provincial government administers this part of Natal Province at a distance. It is considered as a 'black population territory' (see KwaZulu Bantustan boundary: fig. 7).

The administrative affairs of the people in the Kosi Bay area are controlled by the Ingwavuma Magisterial District based in Manguzi at this time. In the 1960s governance was handed over to the Tribal Authority⁵¹, especially with respect to infrastructure development. A Tribal Authority consists of a

⁵¹ During the apartheid era the traditional leaders were appointed by the government in Pretoria and received elusive grants for local development (Crouzel 1999).

chief (Inkhosi) who delegates his power, with the agreement of the people, to an *Induna*. The latter person is in charge of a ward - piece of land within the boundaries of the Tribal Authority (Crouzel 1999). The Tembe Tribal Authority is in charge of the whole Kosi Bay area with the support of forty nine Indunas.

After 1972, the area north of Sodwana Bay, which includes Mbazwana is integrated in the KwaZulu Government Territory – an officially named ‘self government territory’. The poor level of development in Maputaland indicates that this region was not a high priority for the KwaZulu government - based in Ulundi - at this time. The reasons for this may emanate from the high proportion of Tonga in the area in comparison to Zulus, and its geographically peripheral location. This government manages the area with the purpose of conservation.

In the 1980s, the KwaZulu government realised that it would be beneficial in terms of self government autonomy to have the control of its conservation areas and also to be able to proclaim new parks - as happened at Tembe Elephant Park in 1984. The control of the Kosi Bay Nature Reserve was passed from the Natal Parks Board to the KwaZulu Bureau of Natural Resources (KBNR) in 1989.

1.2.2. The environmental conflict around the proclamation of the Kosi Bay Nature Reserve, a manipulation partly orchestrated by white stakeholders: 1988-1994

The origins of the proclamation: a possible threat on the swamp forest?

In the mid 1980's the state of the Malangeni swamp forest is a source of serious concern only for conservation officials⁵².

"There was very heavy destruction of the swamp forests, and to us the swamp forests were very important to maintaining the system as it was, the clarity of the water, the nutrients, the sedimentation and silting up. We felt if we lost the swamp forests the whole area would change the fish and the ecology. So it is of critical importance and the easiest way to protect it is to make the area a nature reserve to protect the swamp forests and the integrity of the estuarine system. So we drew a line on a map to ensure it would cover as much of the swamp forest as possible. That was the primary reason for the proclamation, to protect the swamp forests, to protect the waters of the system. "

Before the proclamation a study was conducted on communities located inside the boundaries to show their different impacts on the ecosystems. Some groups of people had just a low impact on the natural environment, as for Enkovukeni and KwaDapha situated between the Ocean and the lakes. In return other groups appeared more problematical for white environmentalists: KwaZibi community using the

⁵² Interview with local conservation officials, Kosi Bay, 18-06-2001. Conservation official are close to conservative circles both within the Zulu and the English-speaking community (Draper, 1998).

swamp forest for cropping and KwaGeorge, KwaMazambane and Mahlungulu are too close to the lakes and the estuary.

The process of relocation and compensation

The extension of the territory of the Kosi Bay Nature Reserve in 1989 implies that 158 households living inside the new boundaries have to be relocated elsewhere, outside. These 158 families consisted of 1200 people. The original will of the KwaZulu Bureau of Natural Resources⁵³ was not to forcibly remove these people⁵⁴. Its aim was to consult the people with the intermediary of their Indunas⁵⁵ to compensate all of them with cash for lost houses, crops and productions. Two committees were established: the *Compensation Committee* and the *Swamp Forest Committee*⁵⁶.

"Each homestead was assessed for the type of building and the square meterage, then each banana plant was counted and the compensation rates were drawn up by the Dept of Agriculture. There was a list of the homesteads and the valuation, and cheques were issued of the amount. If the person went to the magistrate and said he'd moved out, then he would get the money. That basically happened 3 to 5 years after the

⁵³ Conservation agency of the Bantustan KwaZulu essentially managed by white conservationists under IFP influence (Inkatha Freedom Party).

⁵⁴ Natal Witness 27-06-1989, interview with former KBNR officials, Pietermaritzburg, 23-03-2001

⁵⁵ Headman of a Tribal Authority.

⁵⁶ Interview with local conservation officials, Kosi Bay, 18-06-2001.

proclamation. The money was given directly to the people. You got a cheque in your *sticky little paws*. As soon as you went to the magistrate and said I've moved everything out of the reserve the magistrate gave you a personal cheque."

Nevertheless in 1990, the KwaZulu Bureau of Natural Resources is accused by the Association for Rural Advancement (AFRA) –left civil society activists group close to the ANC⁵⁷) of forcibly removing the people without consultation and compensation. Some citizens started to resist. They didn't understand why certain communities can stay (e.g. KwaDapha) and why others must move out of the nature reserve (AFRA, 1990). Then, frustrations with the black rural communities have arisen.

The manipulation of the process by political interests

The political context of this conflict is given by the ecologist of the nature reserve⁵⁸.

"Politics got involved, IFP, ANC, the government, NGO's, there was a whole lot of political players, organisation for rural advancement. They were playing a political game; we were trying to do our responsibility. Yes: we said no to a lot of people. The politicians were trying to get votes of all parties. (...)"

⁵⁷ Interview with AFRA officials, Pietermaritzburg, 21-01-2001

⁵⁸ Interview with local conservation officials, Kosi Bay, 18-06-2001.

The KwaZulu Bureau of Natural Resources is directly managed by the government of the KwaZulu homeland and has to agree with the policies of the Inkatha Freedom Party. The interest of the IFP is that conservation must benefit Tribal Authorities and rural communities. That is why 25% of the revenues of the nature reserve went to the communities. A major part of the money was not given for community development⁵⁹. Same behaviours were observed during the compensation process. Some cheques were confiscated by influential people within the community and some people started to be violent. The erection of an electric fence eventually the last made the last people decide to move outside the new boundaries.

To understand this conflict at the end of the apartheid era, one must analyse the role of external non governmental organisations (NGO's: Association for Rural Advancement, CROP - Community Research Organisation Program, CORD - Centre for Community Organisation Research and Development) which decided to defend the oppressed citizens and to oppose the KwaZulu Bureau of Natural Resources and the KwaZulu homeland, pro-Pretoria government. They started a resistance committee, *ISIDISI* against the removal of the population. They lobbied for a proper consultation process with the local communities and for the respect of traditional agriculture. These organisations are linked with the ANC (African National Congress) and COSATU (Congress of South

⁵⁹ The Tembe Tribal Authority is vast with 49 Indunas. Consequently its management is costly.

African Trade Unions)⁶⁰, composed also by Whites academics, working in the anti-apartheid movements.

They opposed a conservative coalition composed by Whites having a long experience of conservation and close to the KwaZulu government. This conflict is highly politic using the unhappiness of local communities against the proclamation of a nature reserve as a pretext.

The chronological context of this conflict is very sensitive. The end of apartheid in the beginning of the 1990's has supported the work done by the NGO's but questioned the action of the KwaZulu government. The rural areas are at stake in KwaZulu-Natal especially with regard to the ANC - IFP vote when the urban areas are already concerned by political violence (Hessel, 2003).

The real protection of natural environment did not improve after this event: the residents perceived, as in the past, conservation as interfering with the use of their traditional land. High levels of poverty did not change with the proclamation of the nature reserve. Within Kosi Bay surroundings, the Banga Nek case study is a good example of what could be achieved by local resistance boosted by external support.

1.2.3. A multiplication of local "illegal" initiatives threatening the natural environment

⁶⁰ Natal Mercury 30-5-1990.

Banga Neck is the tourist name of the KwaDapha location. It is located between the lake Nhlange (the third lake of the Kosi Bay system) and the Indian Ocean. This area is populated by 300 inhabitants, originally Thonga speaking⁶¹. It is a traditional land managed by the Tembe Tribal Authority. It is also now one of the most beautiful coastal locations of the Greater St Wetland Park, recognised as a World Heritage Site.

D. Webster, an anthropologist from University of Witwatersrand, and anti-apartheid opponent, was one of the first Whites interested in the development of the people of KwaDapha. He was assassinated in Johannesburg on the 10 may of 1989 by a member of the apartheid police. This sad event terminated his research within the local community. At the same time other academics, students and NGO's were interested in KwaDapha during the conflict of the proclamation of the Kosi Bay Nature Reserve. One of the NGO members was Andrew Zaloumis (Community Research Organisation Program), the present acting Chief Executive Officer of the Greater St Lucia Wetland Park. They helped the local people to stay within the boundaries of the proclaimed area. Influenced by these organisations and by Webster's wife, it was decided to give the anthropologist's hut to the community and to start, around this "monument", a community camp directly managed by the locals, including the two neighbouring communities of Enkovukeni and Emalangeni.

⁶¹ Interview with KwaDapha resident, 28-11-2001

A rivalry started between the three communities for the benefits derived by this appropriation. Some Indunas from the western side of Lake Nhlange felt left out and jealous. These tensions were quite legitimate: the western communities (KwaGeorge, KwaMazambane) have been removed from the nature reserve and did not have the same tourism opportunities than the coastal communities. Even some murders between clans were reported⁶². In 1997, the KwaDapha community camp was bankrupt and had to be sold.

How the new post-apartheid governance system can resolve – or exaggerate – these environmental conflicts.

⁶² Interview with local senior conservation officials, Kosi Bay, 16-06-2001

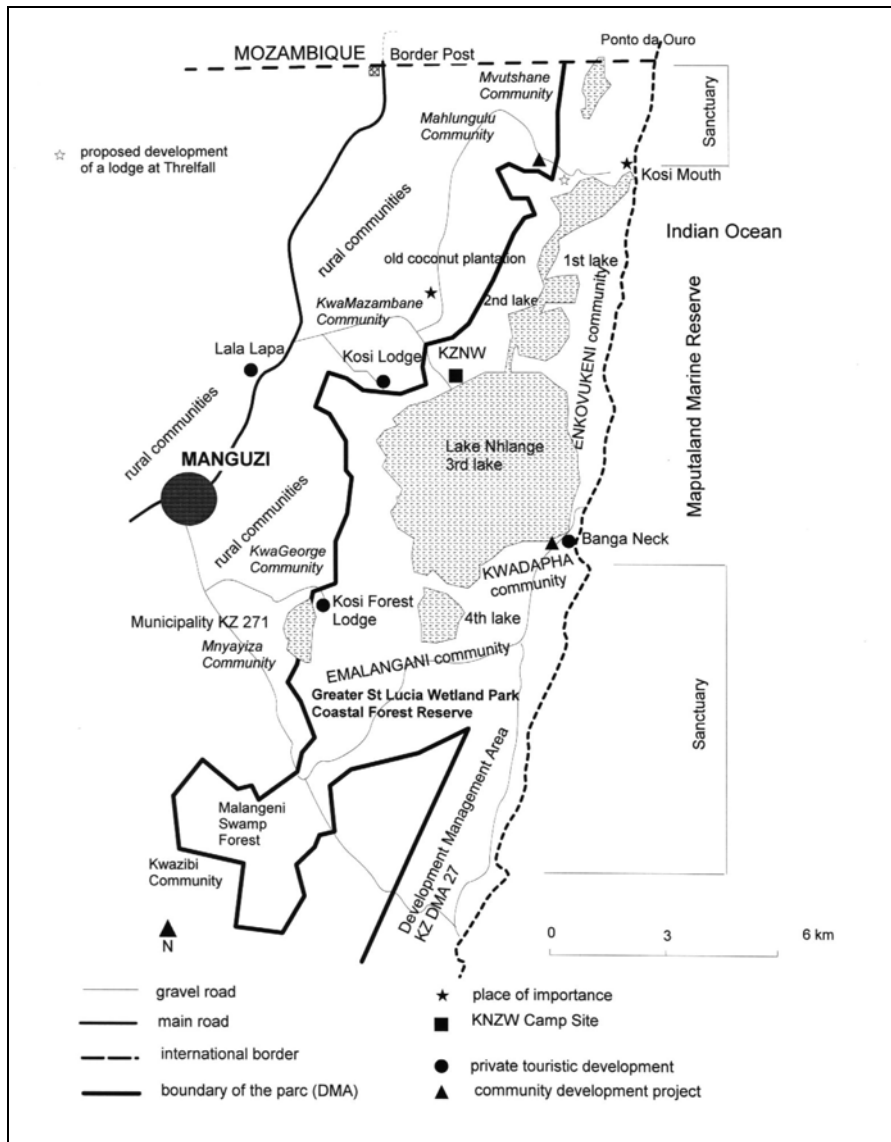


Figure 6: The Kosi Bay Area

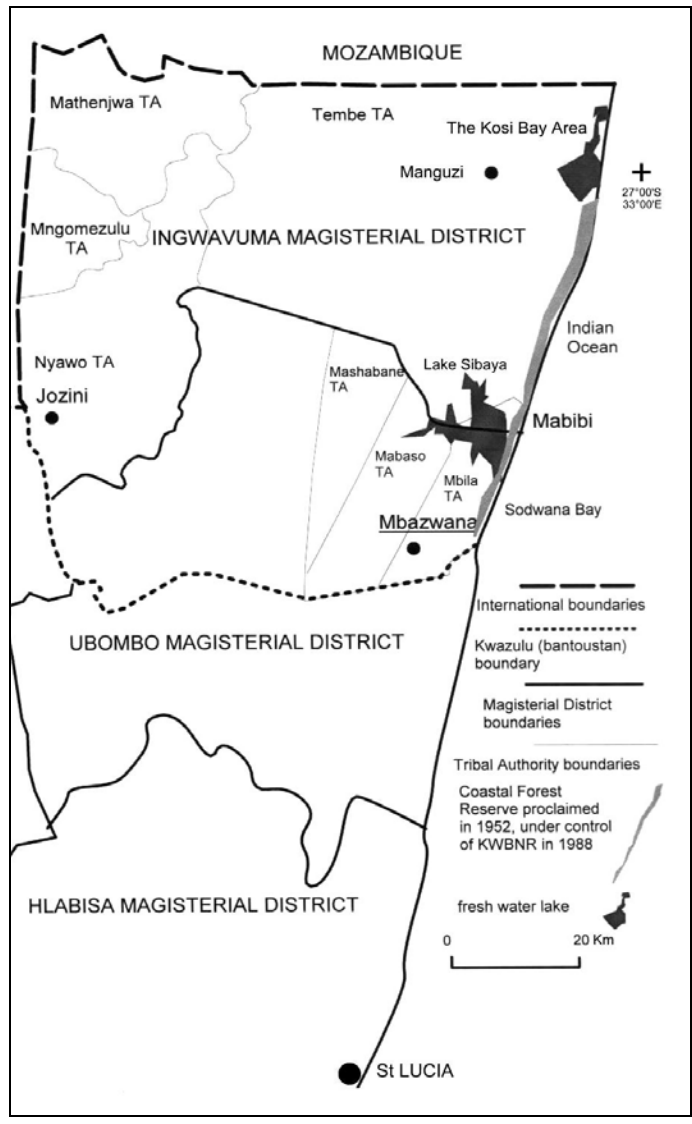


Figure 7: Maputaland during apartheid era
 Ingwavuma is part of the KwaZulu Bantustan



Figure 8: Rural houses at KwaMazambane



Figure 9: Kosi Bay and the dune forest system

2. The new governance system: post-modern complexity or political game?

Since the democratic elections in 1994, the national priorities for development are changing. The national policy of the reconstruction and development program indicates that an equitable share of prosperity should exist for all, especially in underdeveloped rural areas. However, since 1996, priority is given to capitalism and private development to attract investment in South Africa in a NEPAD (New Partnership for African Development) context (Bond, 2004). Thus, a complex and confused governance framework is institutionalised to hide two current fundamental tasks:

- ANC political power on IFP territories: “how to control politically Zulu rural areas?”
- Capitalist development: “how to make money with the environment?”

2.1. A complex governance framework recognising the natural heritage of Kosi bay

In Table 1 the complexity of the framework for the new governance for the Kosi Bay area is illustrated. All of the different levels of power noted in the table have some kind of management responsibilities for the area but with contrasting financial abilities to drive development and different levels of legitimacy in the eyes of the community. The national level (driven by the ANC government) is the only level at which development can be started. It means that it is difficult for local people to initiate development. The bodies that are close to the people (i.e. at the local level) do not have the financial

resources to promote real development alternatives. The political differences at the different levels, e.g. ANC nationally and IFP⁶³ locally, are a deep source of rivalry and competition over resources, especially areas with a majority of IFP voters. From an electoral point of view the ANC extended his vote support in this region from 10% in 1999 to more than 30% in 2004 (www.iec.org.za 2004). Vote in the new South Africa appears to be very much linked to delivery even if it is a minimal one.

Table 1: next page

- 1- The two main stakeholders, the residents and the tourists, who are part of the governance sphere, are not included in this table. The residents have powers through elections and popular protest. The tourists represent a (potentially) important source of financial inputs.
- 2- The full division of powers and functions between these different levels and bodies is still evolving.

⁶³ IFP (Inkatha Freedom Party) is the opposition party to the ANC at a local level in KwaZulu-Natal and not any more part of the governmental majority at a provincial and national level)

Table 1: The new governance framework for the Kosi Bay area

Authority level	Governance body	Financial ability to drive development	Legitimacy
1. Bodies in charge of the territory part of the protected area (GSLWP) ⁶⁴ . The normal prerogatives of national and provincial government occur for the territory outside the protected area.			
International	UNESCO	No development responsibility, but has a regulatory capacity with regard to the natural preservation of the site	International recognition
National	Greater St Lucia Wetland Park (GSLWP)	General management of the new park in collaboration with KZNW on the conservation side, the Provincial Minister of Economic Affairs and Tourism, and LSDI on the development side.	National government ((ANC)) agencies, No direct election from the people.
	Lubombo Spatial Development Initiative (LSDI)	High financial capacity. Infrastructure development agency plus leader in joint-venture tourism projects	
Provincial	KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife (KZNW), former KZNNCS.	Low financial capacity but new local involvement respecting new IUCN principles.	Provincial conservation agency, Low popular legitimacy at this stage

⁶⁴ Except for the LSDI which has the duty to develop infrastructures outside the protected area.
Except for KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife which has the duty to sustain natural resources outside the protected area.

Authority level	Governance body	Financial ability to drive development	Legitimacy
2. Comparison between territories inside and outside the protected area.			
Regional: inside the GSLWP	District Management Area	Low financial capacity (no base build on rates or levies)	Elected municipal council ((currently Inkatha Freedom Party - IFP))
Regional: outside the GSLWP	District Council 27		
Local: inside the GSLWP	Kwazulu-Natal Wildlife local board (Kosi Bay - Coastal Forest Reserve)	Some financial capacity with the collection of community levies on tourism	Board of representative stakeholders
Local: outside the GSLWP	Local Municipality (KZ 271)	Low financial capacity (no base built on rates or levies)	Elected municipal council ((currently Inkhata Freedom Party - IFP))
3. A single Tribal Authority for the whole area.			
Local traditional: Tribal Authority Management	Tembe Tribal Authority (land ownership and management): different Indunas per community directed by Inkhosi Tembe.	Few land rental rates	Legitimacy is a sensitive issue: either a high traditional legitimacy or a non-democratic autocracy

In 2000, the coastline between Kosi Bay in the North and Mapelane in the South was recognised as a World Heritage Site by the UNESCO (fig. 14). The protected area of Kosi Bay is located within this World Heritage Site. In the context of this newly acquired status, many conservationists now see an opportunity to implement a single conservation area that extends from the Mozambican border to St Lucia estuary, as opposed to the existing fragmented pockets⁶⁵. A new national authority was proclaimed for the management of the Greater St Lucia Wetland Park. This new authority is “an autonomous body legally established to manage the Greater St Lucia Wetland Park and take responsibility for conserving its World Heritage Status”⁶⁶. The Greater St Lucia Wetland Park is an ‘anchor’ project of the Lubombo Spatial Development Initiative (LSDI)⁶⁷ in consultation with KwaZulu Natal Wildlife (the new name for KwaZulu-Natal Nature Conservation Services) and the KwaZulu-Natal Tourism Authority. The close ties between the Lubombo Spatial Development Initiative and the new authority can be seen by the fact that the Lubombo Spatial Development Initiative manager is also acting Chief Executive Officer for the new authority (Andrew Zaloumis). As a consequence, new development is included directly within the context of the park; and the priority is to create infrastructure and tourist

⁶⁵ Kosi Bay Nature Reserve, Coastal Forest Nature Reserve, Sodwana Bay National Park, Maputaland Marine Reserve, St Lucia Marine Reserve, St Lucia Game Reserve, St Lucia Park, Mapelane Nature Reserve, Mkuze Game Reserve

⁶⁶ Government Notice 4477 of 2000, Government Gazette No 21778, vol. 425, Pretoria, 24 November 2000

⁶⁷ This Initiative is attempting to improve the road infrastructure and develop ecotourism nodes in the Maputaland Region.

accommodation to attract overseas visitors. The most pertinent question is: Who will (really) benefit from these developments (Guyot 2003)?

Since the second local elections in South Africa on December 5th 2000, the Municipal Demarcation Board changed all the areas of local government to improve service delivery and the redistribution of the prosperity. A District Council now represents the regional level. The former Regional Council was divided into two parts to create this District Council. The new District Council consists of five municipalities at the local level which have amalgamated rural and urban areas. A third level of local government is reserved for the less densely populated areas and the conservation areas. These are District Management Areas (DMA: fig.14) and they are managed directly by the District Council. One representative is elected from each District Management Areas as councillor to the District Council⁶⁸. The protected areas of Kosi Bay are now included in a District Management Area - KZDMA 27 - within the DC (District Council) 27. In the interviews, we noticed

⁶⁸ "People who voted in DMAs had two votes for parties of their choice: (i) for the District as a whole, and (ii) for the DMA representative. The DMA representative is not for a particular area, but for all the DMA voters throughout the District municipality. Given that there is no specific person for the DMA areas (no ward councillor) in practice what should happen is that the District municipality would appoint a person from their council (it could be the DMA representative or even another councillor as they have the right to delegate responsibilities in terms of the Municipal Structures Act.) The DMA is not a legal body, but rather the Category C (District) municipality has all the municipal powers for the DMA areas. There is no real conflict with the national Heritage Authority and I am working with them to sort out any perceived or real problems." (Interview with Mike Sutcliffe, head of the Municipal Demarcation Board 8-04-2001)

confusion amongst the local stakeholders concerning the boundaries of these new councils, about the actual existence of the District Management Area, and about the effective division of powers and functions. This confusion is not conducive to managing the existing conflicts (Guyot 2002). Perhaps, it is a tool to extend ANC political power within a neo-liberal economy context (Guyot, 2003)?

Added to this is the fact that the ownership of the land in question is still traditionally the property of the Tembe Tribal Authority (Ingonyama Trust). This tribal authority is now integrated in the Local Municipality, KZ 271 - Umhlabuyalingana Municipality. The main consequence of these changes in political structures for the Kosi Bay area is increasing complexity. People will have to deal with this complex governance and it is pertinent to ask the following question: what are the direct consequences for development and improvements to the quality of life for the majority of the population who live in the area? Here are some examples of this confusion at a local level.

2.2. A deliberated multiplication of bodies?

2.2.1. Outside the protected area

Since the end of the apartheid, some development initiatives in Manguzi seem totally disconnected one from the others. The groups of stakeholders appear segmented. The Maputaland *Development and Information Centre* (MDIC) is founded by NGO's. It has no link with the new elected municipality, KZ 271. KZ 271 has no link with the Tribal

Authority and no budget to sustain its service delivery prerogatives. The Tribal Authority has no resources to start any forms of development and is in conflict with the newly elected bodies which are seen as competitors for its "traditional" power⁶⁹.

At present no major progress has been made on attracting tourism to this area because these two local government structures (DC 27 and KZ 271) are very new⁷⁰. They await their normal amount of *equitable share* from national government. However, this has been delayed in part due to their IFP opposition status⁷¹. No formal infrastructure exists to accommodate these forms of governance and in order for development to take place, these new local government structures will have to develop their own infrastructures in terms of offices, equipment and financing first. In addition, many of the residents who did vote on the 5-12-2000 did not know that it was for a mayor (Guyot 2003).

2.2.2. Inside the protected area

The only effective level of decision-making taking place at Kosi Bay at the present time is inside the protected area with the new authority of the Greater St Lucia Wetland Park, aided by the Lubombo Spatial Development Initiative. A part of the

⁶⁹ Interviews with local stakeholders, Manguzi, 19/20-06-2001.

⁷⁰ And they have to find a way of integration for the Tribal Authority within the councils, a national debate between ANC and IFP.

⁷¹ Interview with municipal representatives, Manguzi 20-06-2001 and 02-05-2003.

development phase⁷² of Greater St Lucia Wetland Park includes Kosi Bay: the idea being to promote low intensity, high value ecotourism along the coast and around Lake Nhlange. This necessitates upgrading the sandy road from Manguzi to KwaDapha and the provision of a reliable water supply. This proposal is funded by national government as part of the Lubombo Spatial Development Initiative. However, the ranking of the aims of this project are interesting: The first aim is to promote ecotourism and then to provide benefits to the local community. Currently the Lubombo Spatial Development Initiative is trying to attract foreign tourism developers to the area. Unfortunately consultation between people and organisations at the national and local levels, especially related to the residents, is very poor⁷³. This poor level of consultation could be a source of future conflicts between the local residents and the authorities as new developments will not be accepted or properly used if the community is not part of the decision making process. For example, the majority of the residents were not informed about the Lubombo Spatial Development Initiative and about the World Heritage Status.

2.3. Is there a right side in those environmental conflicts?

We need to review existing legislative framework to understand current confusion.

⁷² Phase 2a infrastructure and water project

⁷³ Interview with legal opponents of LSDI, Durban 30-08-2001.

2.3.1. The legality aspects

The different categories of laws regulating the land use in the Kosi Bay protected area and especially in KwaDapha are complex. To be "legal" is not just a question of respecting one category of laws but all of them because they are not necessarily contradictory but complementary.

The traditional custody of the land is managed by the Ingonyama Trust as is 40% of the land of the KwaZulu-Natal Province. The permission of the Trust is necessary for any development on tribal land (Glavovic 1991).

The environment is covered by the NEMA (National Environmental Management Act). It indicates that any development must be preceded by an environmental impact assessment. Within a protected area rules and regulations from KZN Wildlife also occur. Since the area has been proclaimed World Heritage Site, other rules in respect with this new international status need to be respected.

The Development Act encourages all form of development that can benefit to the local communities and the national economy. This Act can not be enforced without respecting the previous categories of laws and regulations.

The Lubombo Spatial Development Initiative – Greater St Lucia Wetland Park Authority, even arm of national government, has to enforce all these rules and regulations.

2.3.2. The legitimacy side

The different categories of stakeholders concerned with the land use of the Kosi Bay area are not necessarily legitimated by the democratic rules of the new South Africa.

The real influential stakeholders, and recognised like this, at a local level (e.g. the traditional leaders) and at a national level (e.g. the national developers Lubombo Spatial Development Initiative) are not democratically elected.

The elected people at local and regional levels do not have sufficient budgets to be recognised by the majority.

3. Political manipulations

The example of Kosi Bay allows us to understand that political priorities are often the first considered.

Ecotourism development at Banga Nek, linked to the increase in levels of territorial management foreseen for Greater St Lucia Wetland Park (Guyot, 2002, 2004), conceals major political objectives, mostly tied to the apartheid era's unsettled legacies.

Stakeholders, grouped into two main coalitions, are sensitive to this context, which partly influences them. Apartheid's end implies the end of the Bantustans and an unprecedented loss of power for the IFP. The pro-ANC organisations know that democracy seems a credible alternative. Locally, the new enemy to beat is the IFP. Violence has already occurred in the townships between factions of the two clans (Hessel, 2003). Kosi Bay's rural areas are a sizeable stake due to the influence of the traditional leaders, who rather favour the KwaZulu government. Other bodies seem more attuned to residents' expectations. Certain Indunas, such as the one in the KwaDapha community, chose to support CORD and one of its

representatives feeling that the development needs of his 'community' were better understood.

In 2003, the failure of this part of the Greater St Lucia Wetland Park to open up to ecotourism was thus the result of a national political struggle perpetuated under another guise⁷⁴, whereby the ANC would capture the IFP's Zulu rural lands by means of major projects, in this case the Lubombo Spatial Development Initiative, and with a new national authority, the Greater St Lucia Wetland Park⁷⁵. It is worth noting that these two bodies are run by the same person who chose to support Banga Nek's residents during the park's extension in 1989. Moreover, the ANC government implemented a local-level land reform increasing the number of local institutions (Table 1). These institutions, however, lack sufficient financial means which undermines their credibility to the benefit of the national government. Creating elected municipalities (district-level within the park), killed two birds with one stone. It gave traditional leaders elected competitors from within the same political spectrum, the IFP, thus favouring a conflict between 'ancients' and 'moderns'. It also proved that the municipal structure cannot bypass the central State, for lack of sufficient budgets, to provide basic services to their people (Antheaume & Giraut, 2002; Guyot, 2003). At the same time, it sped up the completion of road facilities by the Lubombo Spatial Development Initiative, to demonstrate its development and intervention capacity. However, it neglected to consult the majority of residents, and only relied on intermediary stakeholders who, sometimes, were not very representative.

⁷⁴ 'Arms for ecotourism' ...

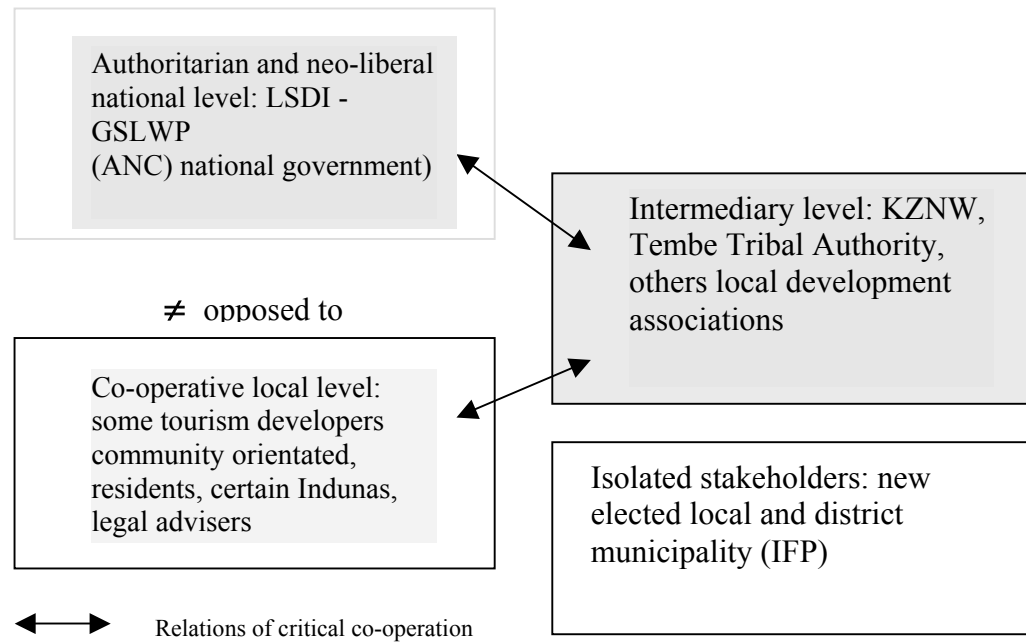
⁷⁵ Interview with ANC and Demarcation Board representatives, 19-01-2002.

Moreover, it silently favoured White elitist tourism, reinforced spatial discrimination, and did not settle the frustrations felt by residents in relation to the protected area.

In their favour, the IFP and its local networks try to stimulate their own ecotourism development projects and rely on traditional leaders' close relations with the population for legitimacy.

Competition between local authorities generates confusion, allowing certain stakeholders to achieve their goals. Certain influential Black residents – fairly influential, conscious of their role as intermediary – develop strategies, playing on different levels, allowing them to gain time whilst preserving, sometimes for the use of the whole community, hunting grounds and forestry and fish-breeding resources

Table 2. Different groups of stakeholders in Kosi Bay and their philosophy of action



Conclusion

Resolution of environmental conflicts necessitates new forms of co-operation between the Park Authority, the tourist developers and the residents in order to create a sustainable future for the area and to maximise benefits from any form of development to the community (Choudree, 1999). The new complex governance framework that is being implemented is not addressing the real needs of the people. Co-operation will be achieved only if the division of powers and functions are clear to all stakeholders, and if every level of governance has sufficient budget to deliver their services and respect the laws. In reality, however, the different organisations do not work together effectively (Guyot 2002). ANC will obviously win power within IPF land.

The question of legitimacy of traditional leaders and their possible participation within the local government also remains unresolved (Guyot 2002, Keulder 1998, Vaughan & Xaba 1996). Tensions were perceptible in March 2004 between IPF and ANC regarding 2004 national and provincial elections campaign.

Autonomy within the local community and its ability to drive its future does not seem to have improved. There is large gap between a costly and complex institutional framework and its ability to deliver improvements on the ground. Maybe every stakeholder needs time to be able to understand his or her real rights and duties. The priority should be to provide basic services to the whole population. Local and national governments should attract foreign investment to promote this scenically beautiful location as a unique ecotourism and

cultural destination under UNESCO rules and regulations. The World Heritage Site Status has perhaps given the Kosi Bay area an unexpected positive recognition. However, it is not yet apparent which philosophy is being used to drive the necessary development and the recognition of a pristine environment: participation or authoritarianism, legality or illegality, legitimacy or illegitimacy?

The future of the Kosi Bay area is still far from being written. Certainly, some trends are becoming apparent.



Figure 10: Fish traps on the Kosi Bay fish lake



*Figure 11: New Lubombo SDI road between
Mbazwana and Kosi Bay*



Figure 12: Informal market at Manguzi



Figure 13: New municipal buildings

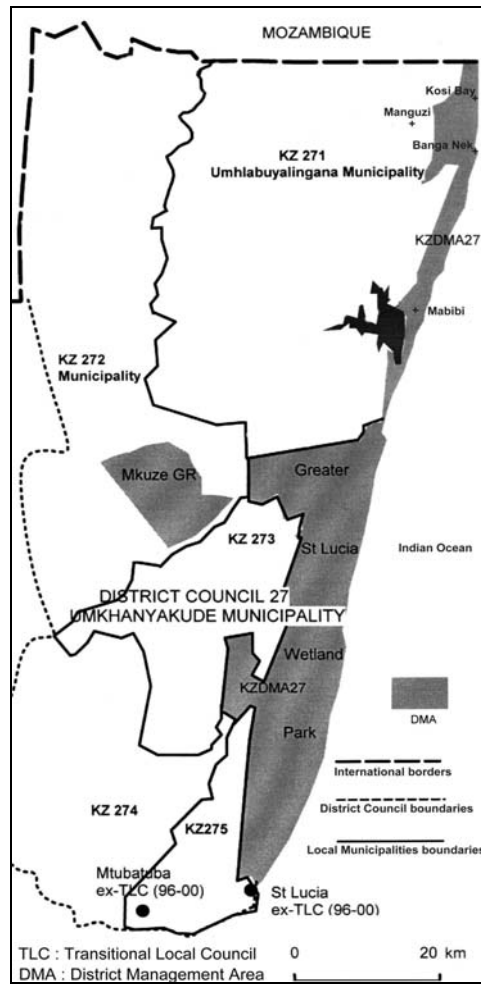


Figure 14: Maputaland post-apartheid
DMA and Greater St Lucia Wetland Park are World Heritage Site

CHAPTER 3

The hidden side of environmental
disputes is not always green

Nature conservation in South Africa (Compagnon & Constantin, 2000; Guyot, 2004; Rodary, 2001) historically constituted a green apartheid – and this long before the National Party⁷⁶ came to power in 1948, evicting and excluding numerous Blacks from their ‘ancestral’ lands (AFRA, 1990; Brooks, 2001; Carruthers, 1995; Dovers, Edgecombe & Guest, 2002; Fritz, 1996; Griffiths & Robin, 1997; Ramphele, 1991). Today, these protected areas are treated as tourist development areas in the midst of poor, marginal rural areas (Antheaume & Giraut, 2002). Conservation is not really often challenged, despite the frustrations present among the Black population, and development lies nearly exclusively in ecotourism projects, often serving wealthy Whites with ‘environmental motives’ that are sometimes extremist (Comaroff, 2001; Draper, 1998; Draper & Maré, 2003; Ellis, 1994; Ferry, 1992; Koch, 1998; Pelletier, 1993; Rossi, 2000). Furthermore, tourism development in South African parks falls within a new, eminently complex post-apartheid territorial management framework (Bond, 2002; Draper & Wels, 2002; Guyot, 2002). Local stakeholders are more and more numerous, but they have their little power with a State that silently perpetuates the centralised and politicised territorial control initiated under apartheid (Guyot, 2003-a, Guyot, 2004; Ramuntsindela, 2001). The ANC’s official line – that ecotourism’s profits would allow poor communities to have access to basic services – has not been put into practice

⁷⁶ Translator’s note: Right-wing political party that ruled South Africa from 1948 – 1994, characterized by its support of the Afrikaner minority and legal institutionalisation of the system of *apartheid*, ‘separate but equal’ development, based on a racial classification of the population, that affected all aspects of socio-economic, political and spatial interaction.

(Guyot, 2003-a; Tapela & Omara-Ojungu, 1999). What is the very nature of this hidden side of environmental preservation and more broadly of environment? What are the representations and practices of nature conservation for stakeholders in South Africa? Examples will be taken from KwaZulu-Natal (fig.1) and, more particularly, Greater St Lucia Wetland Park (fig. 14).

This chapter is composed of two main sections.

The first section demonstrates that South Africa's nature conservation spaces are lands reserved for a minority of users. Preservation is thus retained. Conservation's beginnings and its 'current reorientation' as a post-apartheid economic priority stake will be discussed using KwaZulu-Natal as an example.

The second section explains the stakeholders' variable perceptions on nature's protection and their ideological implications.

1. Green apartheid's [p]reserved territories

1.1. The origins of 'reserved conservation' in South Africa

British colonisation, bearer of spatial discrimination throughout Africa⁷⁷, used nature conservation as a segregative tool in the 19th century. This segregation was continued and improved by apartheid policies from 1948 onwards. Nature conservation allowed for the protection of vast hunting and leisure areas for Whites, by excluding Blacks from them. These

⁷⁷ On this subject, read Weulersse's account of travel in Africa in *Noirs et Blancs*.

latter were confined to reserves where authority was given (according to the principle of indirect rule⁷⁸) to their 'traditional' leaders (tribal authorities), then to administrators of pseudo-States from 1970 onwards (the bantustans). For example, in the KwaZulu bantustan, the authority of members of the Zulu political party, the IFP⁷⁹, and of friends of the Zulu royal family was in fact legitimised by the Afrikaner National Party. Rivalries were followed by anti-apartheid movements such as the ANC⁸⁰. In KwaZulu-Natal, as in other provinces, the creation of protected areas follow several chronologically distinct logics.

The appearance of nature reserves was motivated by a 'conservationist' ideological movement, in the 19th century, that became conscious of the environmental destruction perpetrated by the settlers, whilst simultaneously recognising that the most beautiful nature sites must not be abandoned to the indigenous populations. From that time on, conservation had as a consequence, firstly to protect nature and also, for settlers, to protect themselves from neighbouring native

⁷⁸ Indirect rule true to the slogan 'divide and rule'.

⁷⁹ Inkatha Freedom Party: Mangosuthu Buthelezi. Translator's note: The IFP is a provincially-based, traditionalist political party mainly of importance in KwaZulu-Natal province, the geographical centre of the Zulu nation, its traditional leaders and royal family. Although Buthelezi joined forces with the ANC in combating apartheid, the IFP considers the ANC its main electoral rival.

⁸⁰ African National Congress: Nelson Mandela, Thabo Mbeki. Translator's note: The left-wing ANC, founded in 1912, was outlawed during the apartheid era. Its leader, Nelson Mandela, remained imprisoned for 27 years until 1990, when the ANC officially rejoined the political sphere. The ANC has held power since its massive landslide victory in the first multiracial elections in 1994, first with Nelson Mandela, then Thabo Mbeki as President.

populations, with the appearance of recreational areas reserved for select clientèle. The protected natural areas were intimately linked to the internationalisation of environmental concerns, with colonising Europe's encounter with the tropics. The colonial dimension of the colonial enterprise was based notably on a social mythology for the search for Eden, that utopia place that became an area one could locate geographically thanks to the development of exploration (Grove, 1995). In the settlers' move to appropriate environmental areas, the search for a primitive world was correlated with the belief that truly established societies were absent from these newly colonised regions. Sanctifying exotic nature reintegrated it into Western Christian history, and excluded – or naturalised – the oldest populations (Grove, 1989). Edenic or savagely hostile, the newly colonised natural environment had to be controlled, and this control justified itself all the more since the environment was presented as pure, virgin territory (Rodary, 2001).

Hunting constituted an important starting point in the move to create protected areas. Game was a major food resource for the settlers. Preserving vast hunting grounds, at the end of the 19th century, permitted Whites to reserve for them access to game that traditionally was a component of the subsistence economy of Blacks. In the English colonies, a race-based spatial segregation was established: 'native reserves' for Blacks and 'crown land' for Whites. Lambert (2002) shows precisely how the English settlers, arriving in KwaZulu-Natal, took the best lands for themselves, by reassembling Blacks on small reserves that were not at all sufficient for meeting their traditional economy's climatic, soil demands, etc. and other

needs. This process of dispossession jeopardised the quality of life of the locals creating an increased dependency to the settlers.

At the beginning of the 20th century, hunting for sport gradually replaced hunting for food. The reduced amount in wild game resources, and its presumed role in the contamination of domestic livestock, progressively led to the passage from a strategy of utilitarian preservation to one of conservation. The Convention of the Preservation of Fauna and Flora in the Nature State in Africa, that gathered in 1933 in London, was devoted to the passage to conservation. The national park was envisaged as a State within a State⁸¹, destined to outlast changes in governments and the pressures of interest groups who might potentially oppose protective measures for fauna (Guyot, 2004).

Finally, the Convention defined tourism as a priority objective for national parks. The United Kingdom invented all types of tourism, and cultivated the art of travel. The protected area thus represents a very normative place of exotic tourism, placed at the disposal of British clientele and the residents of West and Southern Africa's populating colonies. It also incarnated the grandeur of the Empire, with its many wilderness areas for an exotic change of scenery, which one could finally frequent thanks to the nature of the established facilities. Indeed, the British protected area was a planning model combining comfort (tourist lodges, domestic staff) with the exploration of wilderness areas (such as the beginnings of

⁸¹ Affirmation reinforcing its 'territorial' nature.

the safari). However, whether one speaks of preservation or conservation, Blacks remained totally deprived of access to natural resources necessary to their daily survival (Rodary, 2001). 'Green apartheid' thus existed in South Africa, as in the rest of sub-Saharan Africa, and this well before the National Party's rise to power in 1948. It is reinforced by a conservation body such as the Natal Parks Board, created in the 1940s, in charge of Natal Province's protected areas.

From 1948, the apartheid governments adapted the use of parks to their own interests. The increase in the number of camping areas and fishing permits allowed for the arrival of numerous Afrikaner tourists, much more modest than their English-speaking counterparts. Certain parts of the border parks (Kruger, Ndumo, etc.) were transformed into military bases with the participation in Mozambique's civil war. For many black inhabitants expelled from their native lands (Guyot, 2003-b), the 'military' image came to strengthen an already very authoritarian representation of nature conservation (Elis, 1994).

The KwaZulu Bureau of Natural Resources – the KwaZulu Bantustan's nature conservation body created in 1983 at the initiative of Dr. Mangosuthu Buthelezi (IFP) – was the last to expel local populations during the extension of the Kosi Bay Nature Reserve in 1989 (Ramphele, 1991). Certain communities resisted (KwaDapha, Enkovukeni, Malangeni), thanks to direct ANC support later replaced by the indirect support of various NGOs (CORD: Community Organisation for Research and Development) and a few key figures from

political left, such as David Webster⁸² and Andrew Zaloumis (AFRA, 1990; CORD, 1991). Zulu nationalists made common cause with English-speaking conservationists like Nick Steele, Ian Player and John Aspinall. '(...) *Player's political expedience in the local [conservationist] milieu took him in the direction of Zulu ethnic nationalism. His "Zululand Wilderness" is dedicated to Dr Mangosuthu Buthelezi and the late Nick Steele. Together they led the way to a new understanding of conservation in KwaZulu-Natal'* (Draper, 1998, p816). Thereafter '*Both nationalist and environmentalist movements are 'interclassist', together they provide cosy refuges from the chilling winds of modernity that shatter people's identities. The link between conservation and ethnic nationalist notions of heritage is particularly strong in opposition: what is there to be proud of, if not the land and one's historical and cultural connection to it? Nationalism thrives on romanticism, not least romanticism about nature'* (Draper & Maré, 2003, p559). These English-speaking conservationists were against white academics, who were converting rural areas to 'progressive' urban ideas in the midst of bloody political violence between the IFP and ANC (Hessel, 2003).

In the 1980s - 1990s, the World Conservation Union advocated a new approach to nature conservation that would no longer operate in opposition to residents, but in consultation with them for financial profit-sharing. '*The prevailing notions that*

⁸² David Webster, an anthropologist at the University of the Witwatersrand and anti-apartheid opponent (ANC member), was one of the first Whites to take an interest in KwaDapha residents. He was assassinated in Johannesburg on 10 May 1989 by a member of the apartheid secret police (Guyot, 2003-a). One wonders about the links between this assassination and the services of the KwaZulu Bureau of Natural Resources (Draper, 1998).

followed one after the other in natural resource management policies in Africa were: conservation against populations, conservation for populations, conservation with populations, and conservation by populations' (Compagnon & Constantin, 2000). However, the post-apartheid authorities delayed putting in place these new policies.

1.2. Conservation and ecotourism: a post-apartheid economic stake

After apartheid's abolition, one imagined that the new government would favour the colonisation of these environmental sanctuaries by the displaced populations. This was not at all the case for several reasons. The ANC, realising the economic asset that the environment represented (and parks in particular), perpetuated the existing situation without really providing an answer to them. The laws were transformed in conformity with the principles adopted at the Rio Conference on Sustainable Development, without the spatial reality of green apartheid changing whatsoever (Guyot, 2004).

After 1994, South Africa also implemented an intense push to open up to an international tourist clientele. Kruger Park is still a 'must see' in South Africa.

Rather than being returned to the residents, the many reserves north of St Lucia were, on the contrary, extended and unified to form the Greater St Lucia Wetland Park. The unification of this large park was decided following intense opposition to the mining of titanium from St Lucia's dunes, opposition led at

the beginning of the 1990s by a heterogeneous coalition of Whites, Afrikaner residents⁸³ and English-speaking conservationists. The condition the ANC government gave in 1996 to officially justify this sudden environmental priority was the sustained development of ecotourism in order to give work and basic services to the poorest. The State wanted to set an example by turning this territory into a Spatial Development Initiative (SDI), the Lubombo SDI, of which one objective – now reached – was to develop road infrastructure. The Spatial Development Initiatives are the economic tools of the ANC government's GEAR (Growth, Employment and Redistribution) programme, a new, neo-liberal version of the RDP (Reconstruction and Development Programme). GEAR 'contributes to creating a favourable climate for national and international investors to help develop key sectors of the national economy with potential to contribute to rebuilding the national economy' (LSDI, 1998). The SDIs correspond to areas selected for public infrastructure development that would stimulate the arrival and partnership of private investors. In principle, they correspond to areas that are attractive for different reasons. These projects correspond to a strong, direct, national-level intervention in certain regions of the country.

⁸³ The majority of residents are Afrikaners working mainly in tourism (lodging, restaurant industry, fishing-based businesses, tour operators, etc.). St Lucia has a racist reputation. On 3 October 2000, at 4:25 pm on SAFM Radio, during an interview, Professor Kathy Govender, South African Human Rights Commissioner for KwaZulu-Natal, declared: '*A special committee has been set up to monitor racism at St Lucia. This was announced at the signing of the declaration against racism. Mike Mabuyakhulu, KZN MEC Minister for Economic Affairs and Tourism, has warned business people in the area that their trading licences could be withdrawn if they discriminate against black people.*'

A new national authority for park management was established in parallel, whose official authority is the same as the LSDI. Its objective is to manage this large, protected littoral area by trying to reconcile ecotourism development with conservation of a natural area recognised as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1999 (Guyot, 2002). The ANC government's main argument was that jobs created following the development of infrastructure adjoining these parks would benefit the majority of the population. Certain new Black notables even acquired the discourses of green apartheid's spokespersons – themselves making up a powerful lobby – who set out ecotourism as a unique means of economic development for these areas. Is that a way of upholding, indeed renewing, green apartheid?

Certain retributions were given to the populations expelled from their lands in the past ('land claims'⁸⁴) and Local Boards were created. To concretely change the relationship between parks and Blacks, and so that Blacks would truly benefit from the protected areas and become aware of their value, the

⁸⁴ A land claim was settled in 2000 by the Land Claims Commission at Pietermaritzburg over the 1950 expulsion of residents of the Eastern Shores (Greater St Lucia Wetland Park). The expulsion of these inhabitants was the doing not of the Natal Parks Board, but of the DWAF (Department of Water Affairs and Forestry). This latter body thus proposed a financial payout of ZAR 16.5 million shared between all 'claimants'. The claimants also obtained 4 hectares of the GSLWP World Heritage Site, near Lake Bhangazi, and hope to build a lodge there. Each year, a commemoration ceremony will be held to honour the ancestors who lived there. Members of the Eastern Shores community are much dispersed nowadays, and this money will benefit families living in Durban or Johannesburg.

KwaZulu-Natal Nature Conservation Management Act n° 9 of 1997 established the 'local boards' system for a protected area or group of protected areas. This system is an innovation in South Africa and even on the African continent; it can, in fact, 'give the opportunity to better harmonise the relationship between parks and Blacks and give them access to an optimal benefit from the park.' These meetings aim to represent all stakeholders concerned with the protected areas. This system's concrete objective is to promote local-level decision-making concerning nature conservation management in the protected areas, and discuss activities taking place in and around the protected areas. This meeting's strength is in developing a management plan submitted for final approval by the Ezemvelo KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife, the new post-apartheid body resulting from the merger of the Natal Parks Board and the KwaZulu Bureau of Natural Resources.

These measures were insufficient for resolving persistent territorial conflict.

In reality, ecotourism in those particular places allowed neither for tourism's democratisation in South Africa, nor an increase in job creation, nor the satisfaction of certain South African tourists, little concerned with environmental defence. On the other hand, it allowed to blossom the longings for the great outdoors of a few hedonists and the demands for environmental purity of some bio fundamentalists (Guyot, 2003-a). Adapting tourism to the masses undoubtedly would allow for a more rapid recovery of development differentials, but however poses the problem of preserving the 'stamp of originality' of the natural resource, which is sometimes

protected by several international treaties. Here, we are faced with ecotourism's chief inconsistency, as illuminated by Rossi (2000): *'It cannot constitute the basis for a potential development without significant revenue; that being the case, how can we generate important revenue without impacting on the environment, thereby excluding mass tourism? There is hardly any other way to do it besides making a small number of wealthy tourists pay a high price.'* However, South Africa still seems to hesitate between mass and elitist tourism, even if the two seem, nevertheless, possible.

How do stakeholders concerned with nature conservation in KwaZulu-Natal position themselves? This analysis can allow us to understand the slow progress in the evolutions we noted, whilst simultaneously putting in perspective the real underlying social stakes.

2. Behind the green, 'browns politics'?

2.1. Towards a perceptive categorisation

This classification (Table 2) is based on the very personal relationship (perceptions and practices) that individuals have with the necessary protection of the environment. One must understand the stakeholders' discourses, what they hide and what they reveal, even if it is sometimes disturbing. Between what is said and what is done, there is often a large margin that sometimes reveals numerous contradictions, it allows us to see beyond the usual distinctions and reveal problematic attitudes whose source is found in South Africa's troubled past

(Comaroff, 2001; Draper, 1998; Draper & Maré, 2003; Ellis, 1994; Guyot, 2003-a).

Table 2: How stakeholders consider nature conservation

<i>Typology</i>	<i>Characteristic :</i>
1. Realists	They try to reconcile development (tourist, industrial, etc.) and nature conservation locally, by minimising negative externalities and maximising positive externalities.
2. Indifferent	They are as unconcerned with the potentially negative environmental impacts of certain activities, as the harmful consequences that certain methods of environmental protection can have on society.
3. Destroyers	They contribute to substantially defiling the natural environment through their activities, but sometimes for reasons of sheer survival.
4. Nature lovers	They protect the environment for their own benefit, for their exclusive consumption of vast areas, without truly showing concern for others.
5. Racists	Their view favours nature conservation for limiting access to certain protected areas (like the debate on paid admission beaches, or controlled access to seaside resorts, etc.) and to certain population groups, whose geographical proximity they find it tolerable.
6. Bio-fundamentalists	These ecologists are ready to oppose any action endangering the least animal or plant species in a given territory. They are close from the deep-ecology.

Even if these categories are oversimplified and can appear caricatured, they are quite representative of the people you can meet in Zululand. For each category, I retained one example of a representative stakeholder among all those interviewed.

Realists

A VIP, Durban

He is in charge of the LSDI and the GSLWP. His tactics are to rapidly establish, from Durban, a very ambitious development programme, by building many roads, visible and concrete facilities, whose advantages will be quickly felt. Consultation of local stakeholders will allow him to experience – along with the ANC government that recruited him – the advantages of this programme's success, or else the many critiques, indeed failures.

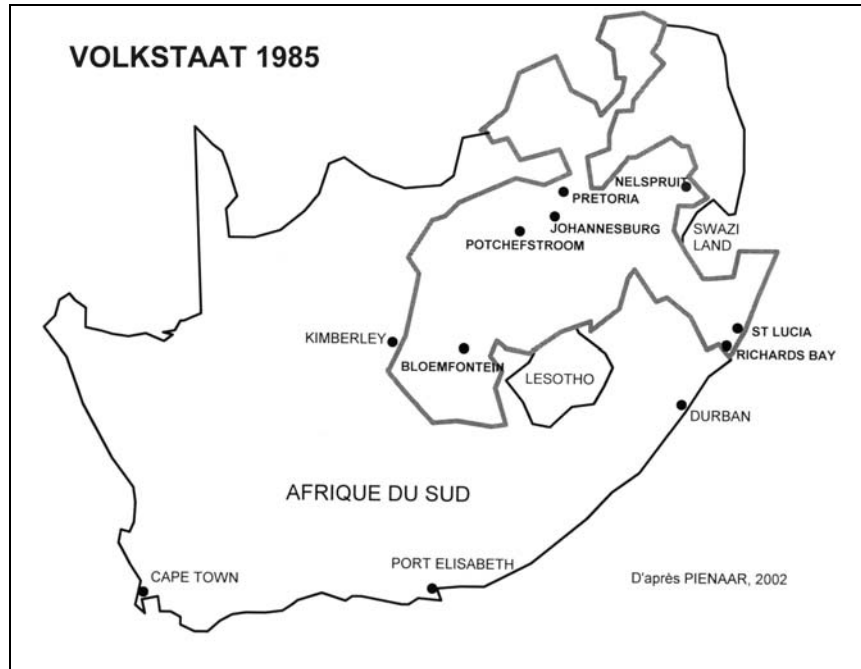
The LSDI's collective strategy is to diffuse a public relations campaign advertising Maputaland assets and development and use ecotourism's profits to create jobs and wealth directly benefiting the local communities.

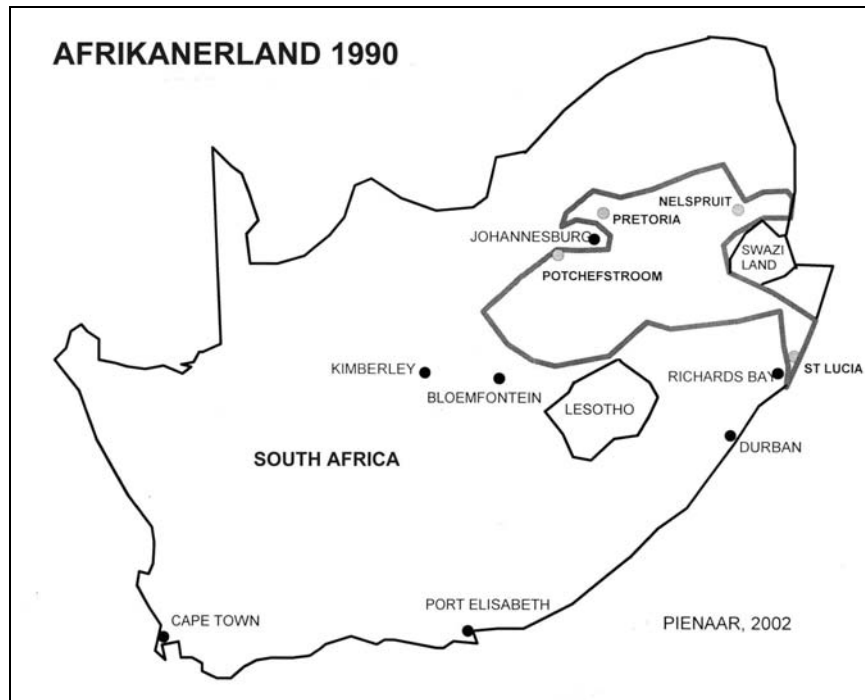
Indifferents

St Lucia

He was in charge of administration for St Lucia city hall before the 2000 elections. His top concerns lay in providing quality services for all Whites in the town as well as a secure setting facilitated for a limited time by the erection of a boom gate. The elected mayor between 1996 and 2000 wanted St Lucia to be a municipality that only encompasses the seaside resort. He is a sympathiser of the Conservative Party, political party on the extreme right. In 1998, the town, spurred on by its mayor, wanted to declare itself a 'private residential venture' in order to elude public regulations, following in the footsteps of the very media-friendly Orania in the Northern Cape Province.

Orania, as well as St Lucia, are two towns included in the Afrikaner Volkstaat territories (Pienaar, 2002; Schönreich & Boshoff, 2003). Here are two examples including St Lucia.





Figures 15 and 16: two examples of Volkstaat territories

Gentle destructors

Kosi Bay

This Manguzi resident undertook to build a small campsite and tourist lodges near the beach at Banga Nek. His tactics are to begin construction without waiting any longer, cutting down trees from the bordering dune. His unspoken strategy seems to this researcher to be personal enrichment and recognition by the village, thus allowing him to build up locally the status of a notable. In the eyes of the park's officials (GSLWP), his venture is entirely illegal, because he did not

carry out an environmental impact study. He contented himself with obtaining the traditional leader's permission, nevertheless necessary since the land is managed by Ingonyama Trust. He thus chose not to submit to the orders of the environment's protectors and the official developers (LSDI). However, he knows that he is not in a dominant position, because he can lose the court action taken and therefore be required to give up his space. His financial leeway is perhaps insufficient to allow him to impose his project on political and economic decision-makers.

Nature lovers: It refers to the Anglo-Saxon idea of enjoying nature or, to use a more common expression, a 'nature lover'. Nature lovers flock by the hundreds from Gauteng to the GSLWP during school vacations and public holidays. They are recognizable by their 4 x 4 vehicles with trailers (fishing and diving equipment, etc.). Certain nature lovers destroy (see 'Destructors' category), whereas others protect. In all cases, they like the areas reserved for them.

Richards Bay

This person enjoys the environment and defends the creation of new protected areas in Zululand. He is favourable to the grand national park incorporating Mabibi (Greater St Lucia Wetland Park, near Mbazwana), whilst also hoping for development of essential services and a road suitable for motor vehicles, water and electricity, because he hopes perhaps to build a house there.

Racists

Richards Bay

This lady no longer hides her desire to transform the municipal beach into a park with an entrance fee, managed by Ezemvelo KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife, due to the extensive degradation caused by Blacks. Thus, she opposes the mass exodus to the beach by township residents every year during year-end holidays. Heading the local SPCA, she fights energetically for animal rights.

Bio-fundamentalists

Port Shepstone

She has worked for WESSA (Wildlife Environment Society Southern Africa), whose primary mission is to manage issues related to fauna and flora. There is a touch of fundamentalism in opposing certain developments whose socio-economic consequences would largely compensate for environmental ravages. Her tactics are to expose all environmental damages in the province, by making accusations and instituting court proceedings one after the other. Her personality, which catalyses conflicts, is recognised by all stakeholders. She does not seek to really compromise; she seeks to accuse and bring down the guilty, if possible via the legal route, but not excluding critical articles in the newspapers. Her long-term strategy is double. She hopes to become a point of reference in environmental defence and thus become someone who cannot be ignored. The result is paradoxical. Wanting to be a key figure, she marginalises sometimes herself, because many stakeholders dread her. Sometimes, some of her actions made

judicial precedents. She was the first in the Port Shepstone region to denounce illegal building on the littoral area of the Admiralty Reserve. The municipality, now responsible through the government for applying the law, is now considering her work with interest.

These stakeholders, with their contrasting positions, demonstrate that conservation areas are disputed. The dangers of environmentalist abuses are real. They are found everywhere in the world, but sometimes in a more caricatured manner in South Africa.



Figure 17: The not politically correct entrance of a St Lucia hotel.

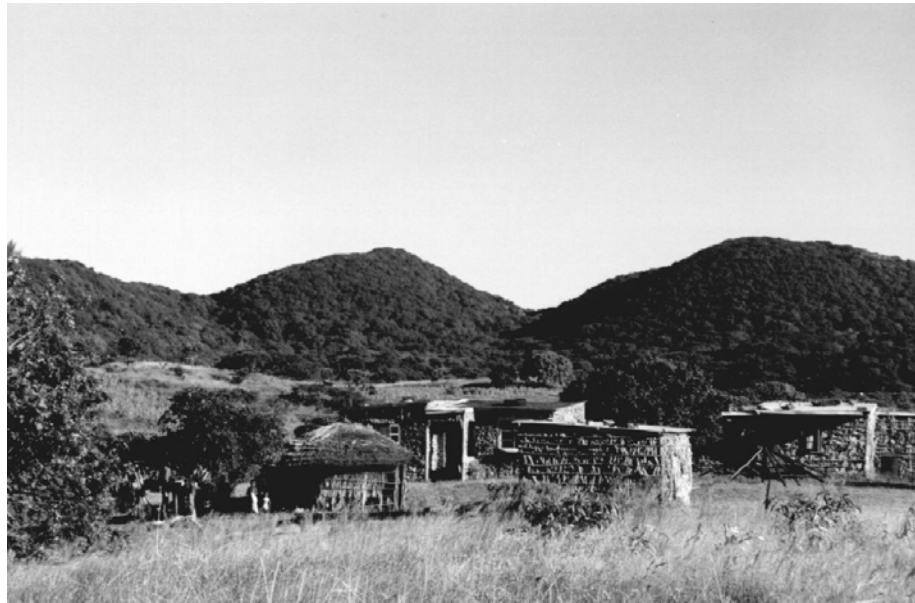


Figure 18: Rural houses at Mabibi in the heart of the Greater St Lucia Wetland Park

2.2. When the green is changing to brown politics

The discourses and positions favouring environmental protection are often considered constructive, good-natured, and full of good sense. In reality the world needs ecological values to be sustainable, and needs new practices. But the 'eco-freak' makes one smile rather than worry, and, unfortunately, is sometimes not always taken seriously by the general public. However, given the profusion of stakeholders claiming to be

'environmental defenders', a critical typology, even provocative, was necessary. Because some of the people who claim that they protect the environment, in reality they just manipulate it to improve their own quality of life.

Certain pragmatic discourses are absolutely necessary because they aim to warn against industrial hazards, climate change, and biodiversity loss. But others foolishly promote the only defence of the earth's small creatures whilst ignoring graver social and environmental concerns. There we find numerous impostures and exaggerations. An apparently good intention, at first sight innocuous, can reveal itself to be dangerous and highly manipulative.

It is advisable, first of all, to differentiate between 'ecology' and 'environmentalism'. Whereas ecology is the recognised science studying the functioning of ecosystems, environmentalism is an ideology using ecology as an economic, social and political spearhead. Certain ecologists, maybe the minority, are a little extreme in the theories they develop: *'Ecologist intellectuals do not propose more or less debatable ideas, but a total reversal of nature-culture relations, subordinating the latter to the former'* (Pinna, 1991). Their line of thinking is simple: owing to progress – incidentally by the fruit of intelligence and the sweat of the brow – humans separated themselves from nature (Rossi, 2000). Modernity has resulted in dominating and transforming it to the point of endangering humans. It is thus advisable to return to the original state, prior to the symbiosis with Mother Nature. These ideas were born during the 19th century in industrialised countries, as Gillot recalls (2002) in his thesis. *'Parallel to*

society's move to industrialisation, romanticism developed the romantic sensibility, recommended listening to one's emotions and dreamt of nature's original goodness, perfect counterweight to the cities (...) A very clear opposition was made between the unhealthy living conditions and stench of the city, and the natural scents and pure air of the country, which was expected to save one from urban suffocation. What is natural was associated with what is vital and healthy (...) This particular state of mind, making nature a universal remedy for the 'woes of the century', was favourable to an important artistic output (...), opposed to the city and its nuisances, it was judged as the only keeper of purity, freedom and, consequently, of happiness.' These are the foundations of 'deep ecology'. Pelletier (1993, 1999), recalling the bestselling works of a certain number of environmentalist exalters, who accentuate this return to nature, does not hesitate to speak, maybe exaggeratedly, of *'mild deliriums among urban-weary intellectuals'*. We are not very far from fascism when a certain number of small groups of militant environmentalist do not hesitate to designate the system of liberal democracies as foremost culprit in the assault against nature, and to praise the merits of a strong political authority. Here, we are close from Draper's statement on Ian Player's relationship based on 'race': *'(...) Player reveals a form of essentialism and racial stereotyping which, as Edwin Wilmsen has shown about van der Post's writing about bushmen, naturalises rather than dismantles racial boundaries, even if it is opposite to its intentions'* (Draper, 1998, p815) and Aspinall's extreme right commitments: *'The label of fascist has clung to John Aspinall ever since, notes his biographer admitting that Aspinall did little to disclaim it. (...) [In the beginning of the 1990's] he urged President de Klerk to 'abandon the election...and give the Afrikaners their Volkstaat and the Zulus*

and their English Speaking allies their own country in Natal...A greater Khosaland [sic] could include East London and no doubt Nelson Mandela will be its first president' (Draper & Maré, 2003, p563).

One remembers that extolling the virtues of a return to nature – capable of improving and purifying man – was a historic fact for France under Pétain, Italy under Mussolini and Germany under the Nazis. From 1933, Nazi Germany was first in the world to enact a nature protection law and launched the 'gardens to come' policy, which consisted in purifying them by removing all exotic plants from the Southern hemisphere, plants that were considered degenerate (Biehl & Staudenmaier, 1995; Pelletier, 1993). In South Africa, as in Australia, the policy of mass removal of 'alien plants' resembles this fairly closely. It is a fact that certain weeds destroy gardens and forests, and that one must rid gardens of them, like any peasant or gardener does around the world. On the other hand, wanting to entirely 'purify' the species to retain only indigenous types is not necessarily justified. Jacarandas, Pretoria's wooded symbol, are alien plants. Must one go as far as destroying all of them, when they give the city a colourful, aesthetic quality in spring and valued shade in summer? What would the French Côte d'Azur be without its exotic vegetation? And imagine that one must eat only indigenous fruit and vegetables? South African promoters of plant apartheid – some White environmental fundamentalists – should, then, make do with roots and plantains. Like humans, fauna and flora are affected by migrations.



Figure 19: How to destroy Alien Plants in South Africa (DWAF, 2001)

Wanting at all costs to prevent them is completely absurd. In South Africa, colossal budgets supply this 'plant apartheid' (Comaroff, 2001). Signs explain to the community which species to destroy (fig. 19). Maybe South Africans thus have designated the new common enemy to bring down. What if one razed plantation forests furnishing primary materials and jobs to numerous industries in the country? Dangerous plant must be absolutely destroyed, but they can be either alien or indigenous, the same for diseases.

And then what is natural, really? Has nature not been fundamentally touched and affected by humans for thousands of years?

One may ask what meaning the word 'nature' has, and what one considers 'natural'. *'Everything connected outside the human imprint would be natural. Under these conditions, there hardly exist any more 'natural' landscapes (...). One can note that the idea of nature varies in space and time. In Japan, one of the countries on the planet where the presence of humans has been most keenly felt, humans reconstruct and puts themselves back in an ideal and symbolic nature as they imagine it (...). In Europe, where spaces have been humanised for a very long time already, the idea of nature and the natural is confused in part with the countryside and places humans at the centre of the idea of nature (...). The physical environment is more and more often socially and economically determined'* (Rossi, 2000). The major South African nature reserves, which are supposed to give sanctuary status to very particular ecosystems with their wild fauna and flora, would not be viable without human intervention. Humans regulate the animal population to avoid overpopulation (Compagnon & Constantin, 2000) and treat animals in cases of epidemic. Moreover, they monitor flora by preventing the regrowth of impenetrable bush. Hence, one must use the idea of nature prudently. Conservation is a matter of great hypocrisy. Undoubtedly, protecting a certain type of environment from over-artificialisation may be justified. On the other hand, conserving an original pseudo-nature is a 'great fraud', first and foremost for the local communities.

Everywhere in the tropical world, the spread and imposition of the Western conception of protecting the wild, based on excluding humans, led to ludicrous situations ending in failure. *'The creation of reserves severs the territorial heritage in such a way that leads, at a minimum, to the dislocations of systems*

of spatial organisation and development, as well as local management practices' (Rossi, 2000). In South Africa, parks bring pleasure to tourists and some of the richer people from local communities, who find in them a peaceful and secure oasis outside the violence of the cities. On the other hand, Black communities amass frustrations, and often resort to illegal poaching practices. How can we reconcile conservation and development?

Conclusion

In South Africa, nature conservation hides issues of territorial competition (spatial and political). It is a system where the 'new' (municipalities, national government) has never truly replaced the former (traditional leaders, conservation authorities), so much so that the legacies from the past, linked to spatial discrimination policies (green apartheid, Bantustans), are difficult to settle. It is still difficult to denote winners and losers. Can South Africa thus promote several major parks when it limits access to tourism to the wealthiest (White or foreign) in this way? Is it not necessary to have a sustainable policy of opening up the tourist sector to Blacks? Establishing truly participatory policies and redistributing profits seems necessary to reconcile the populations despoiled by the creation of parks with the idea of the environmental protection. But at what price? Must participation be only a tool for challenging newly elected authorities who are still not well established?

Since 1996, the ANC government maintains that the environment is a tremendous asset for economic and social

development. It shows us, especially, to what extent it is a tremendous tool for political reconquest in a country where the transition remains sometimes fragile, faced with the tensions created by colonisation and apartheid. Is it not very hypocritical to assert that tourist development is a miracle solution to socio-economic problems, when so many ambiguities linger as to its real beneficiaries?

CONCLUSION

Hence, these Zulu shores are partially preserved, but especially reserved for a minority of well-to-do individuals having the possibility of living in the wealthy coastal neighbourhoods of Richards Bay or St Lucia or spending weekends or vacations in paid-admission nature reserves. The apartheid period institutionalised this 'reservation' of space by creating segregated territories, whether on a scale of city and townships, or province and Bantustans. From this implies a spatial inertia that is difficult to reshape.

The post-apartheid period is synonymous with changes. New territories replace old ones. The ANC perpetuates its power at all levels by trying to marginalise its opponents. New municipalities encompass white towns, black townships, and parts of Bantustans. A local level in the hierarchy is even dedicated to managing nature reserves. Creations such as the 'local boards' also allow for managing the interface between reserves and neighbouring rural areas. The political personnel are renewed (elected officials), even if the administrators (technical staff) often remain in place. Efforts are made to improve or develop basic services essential to the population.

The changes are also economic, and South Africa has now entered into the globalized economy. The ANC government, in order not to offend financial backers, potential investors,

large companies or hinder the return to growth, very rapidly put in place a neo-liberal policy delegating to the local level and private sector part of the effort of upgrading basic services to Blacks. This economic context tends to perpetuate old inequalities. Territories that are gaining economically stand in opposition to territories that are losing economically. Metropolitan areas (Cape Town, Johannesburg, Durban...) and well-connected medium-sized cities (Richards Bay) are more or less holding steady. The marginalised and isolated rural areas are instead left to NGOs financed by wealthy charity. It is thanks to the international importance of the logics of natural reserves and industrial development that this region finds its significance for the rest of the world, and the right connection to international networks in the current phase of globalisation. Making 'nature' (GSLWP), tourism (foreign tourists coming to admire St Lucia's hippopotamuses) or industrial and port transactions (the port of Richards Bay exports more than 80 million tonnes of coal) allows these Zulu shores territories to enter the winner's category. However, the black rural areas, a few kilometres from these attractive areas, are very poor. They suffer from a combination of malaria, sometimes cholera, badly damaged gravel roads, a lack of nearby services, massive unemployment...They sometimes collect the crumbs from the 'winners' table in the form of industrial paternalism (such as the construction of schools or clinics) or activism in terms of associations (such as rural tourism).

The current thinking (representations, perceptions) does not facilitate spatial reconciliation. Whites use the environmental struggle to avoid opening up space to others and perpetuate

'right to reserve admission', such as at Richards Bay or St Lucia. Conflicts over the use of space, often genuine, are exploited for other aims and thus are not resolved. Richards Bay remains a polluted industrial city without true tourist potential. The development of a potential and competitive ecotourism at Kosi Bay does not meet the expectations of a population that wishes, above all else, to live directly off its environment. Community participation becomes a preliminary to all action. But impact remains very limited, so long as the forums will not deal with real problems. Sustainable development does nothing but mask the sole desire for short-term profit driving most developers. Only a few large industrial groups, because it is in their interest, try their hand at social investment and substitute themselves for a State that is sometimes ineffective. Genuine political regulation based on a new social and environmental contract seems to be lacking.

The future of the Zulu shores is still far from being written⁸⁵. Certainly, some trends become apparent. Whereas the effort to democratise is certain, redistributing wealth seems uncertain in a neo-liberal context, except as guided by the mode of 'redistributive criminality'.

⁸⁵ This region's most uncertain trajectory relates to AIDS. The Zulu littoral holds the sad record for infection for South Africa, with around a 35 to 40% infection rate in the 15-50 year age group. If South Africa takes up the AIDS challenge – and it can – then all hopes are certainly possible for the future.

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ANNEXURE:

Field Work, interviews done

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GREEN DISPUTES? A French geographer perspective on KwaZulu-Natal coastal environmental conflicts

Post-apartheid South Africa is a good 'laboratory' to study 'race' related topics. This unique country gives us the opportunity to look at the new relationships between the different groups (Whites, Blacks, Indians and Coloureds) that were forcibly segregated during the colonial and the apartheid eras. Racism did not end with the abrogation of apartheid laws in the beginning of the 1990's. Even if the country looks today superficially changed, evolution of mentalities and perceptions between the different groups are slow. Racism still exists but is sometimes concealed behind new politically correct statements and practices.

Most of environmental legislations and philosophies during the colonial and apartheid eras were orientated towards discrimination of non-white groups, both in urban planning and protected areas making. Today what can be done to manage this legacy? Our aim is to study coastal environmental conflicts in Zululand to look at current race relations, in a particular geographical context of urban, rural and marginal areas, coveted by various political and capitalist interests at various levels, e.g. international, national and local.

Sylvain Guyot is currently a post-doctoral research fellow at the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies at University of Fort-Hare. He is also lecturing part-time at the Department of Social Geography at University of Grenoble 2 in France. This book was made with conclusions from a PHD successfully passed at University of Paris 10. Field work has been done through the Department of Geography of University of Zululand and the IRD (Institute for Research and Development) between 2000 and 2002.