

## CASE STUDY

### Facts and Figures:

- ▶ Wetland study on the 40 000 hectares of priority wetlands in Matatiele was completed in 2013, informing the strategy for the protection of the wetlands of Matatiele, which make up almost 10 percent of the municipal land area of Matatiele.
- ▶ A total of 70 volunteers at Mvenyane are now clearing alien invasive vegetation in five villages, for which CSA is incentivising with their livestock vaccination.
- ▶ The project is funded by the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF), to which the EU is one of seven donors. The CEPF provides grants to nongovernmental, civil society and private sector organisations to help protect global biodiversity hotspots.

### Total Cost:

18000000.00 €

### Partners:

- ▶ Conservation South Africa
- ▶ Environmental and Rural Solutions
- ▶ Other partners: Endangered Wildlife Trust
- ▶ Maloti Drakensberg Transfrontier Project

# Protecting South Africa's water for people and biodiversity - the Umzimvubu River Catchment Partnership Programme

## Securing water resources and landscapes in Eastern Cape Province

This project and its follow-on, 'Expanding Stewardship Across the Upper Umzimvubu catchment', involve working with local communities to secure water resources in a poverty-stricken region

*“ For local cattle herders, it is their rangeland that is important; their livestock. It is being able to afford to send their children to school. But our interest is catchment management, rehabilitation of landscapes and biodiversity protection. At the end of the day, what we achieve is going to benefit them, us and the landscapes. So we can name it different things, but our goal is the same. ”*



© European Commission

**Lipalesa Sissie Matela, Environmental and Rural Solutions Director**

## Context

In Eastern Cape Province, water resources are under threat from inappropriate land use and invasive alien plants. One of the most densely populated and poverty-stricken regions in sub-Saharan Africa, it is also home to the Upper Umzimvubu River Catchment, which provides water for many of the 1 million people in the area. The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund, a partnership of seven donors including the EU, is funding Conservation South Africa and Environmental and Rural Solutions to work with communities and local and national government to improve the catchment and human well-being.

## Objectives

- ▶ Restoration and maintenance of water, grazing and erosion control services through improved farm management, supporting more than 300 households within five years, and more than 1 million people living in the river basin within 20 years.
- ▶ Improved management of communal land areas and private farms, through agreements that offer incentives for improved farm management and alien plant removal.
- ▶ Development of a network of civil society, government and businesses to ensure coordination and lesson sharing within the network and with government and corporate policy-makers.

## Impact

- ▶ Established Umzimvubu Catchment Partnership Programme, a network of more than 30 individuals and organizations that coordinates government, traditional authorities, civil society and business.
- ▶ Conservation South Africa (CSA) worked with teams of eco-rangers in seven villages to establish stewardship agreements, and employed 28 eco-rangers to manage catchment rangelands. CSA also helped herders vaccinate livestock, and CSA and Environmental and Rural Solutions (ERS) organised stock sales.
- ▶ ERS employed residents to clear invasive plants in the Ongeluksnek Nature Reserve.
- ▶ Secured nearly 20 million rand for catchment restoration.
- ▶ Vulnerability assessment for climate change within Alfred Nzo district municipality was done to inform adaptation strategy for the catchment.

- ▶ South Africa  
Department of  
Environmental Affairs
- ▶ South African National  
Biodiversity Institute
- ▶ Eastern Cape Parks  
and Tourism Agency
- ▶ Department of  
Economic  
Development,  
Environmental Affairs  
and Tourism
- ▶ Alfred Nzo District  
Municipality

- ▶ Baseline study was done on veld or rangelands condition in the whole of Matatiele municipal land.

**Duration:**

-



## Testimony

### Volunteers see benefits of clearing invasive plants

*According to Mr Good-Friday Maqashalala of Mvenyane: "Before CSA came to our village we were living in wattle jungle which was hideout for vagrants and thieves that attacked women and children on their way to school. Now we are living in an open and peaceful environment, and we really appreciate the effort by CSA, that is why we are also joining in as volunteers, to clear wattle on our rangelands."*



