



Local Action for Biodiversity (LAB): Wetlands SA Wetland Strategy and Action Planning Workshop Frances Baard District Municipality

Date: 16 and 17 November 2016
Venue: Protea Hotel, Kimberley
Facilitator: Ryan Fisher

Workshop Report

SUMMARY:

Frances Baard District Municipality (FBDM) and ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI Africa) co-hosted the “LAB: Wetlands SA: Frances Baard District Municipality Wetlands Strategy and Action Planning” Workshop in Kimberley on 16 and 17 November as part of FBDM’s involvement in the Local Action for Biodiversity: Wetlands South Africa (LAB: Wetlands SA) project.

The workshop aim was to facilitate the development of the first draft Frances Baard Wetland Strategy and Action Plan (WSAP). With this in mind, the workshop had two main objectives: (1) identify and prioritise actions for improving wetland management within FBDM and (2) initiate the process for the development of a holistic strategy and action plan to mainstream wetland management into municipal structure. The workshop also provided an excellent opportunity to increase stakeholder engagement across the municipality.

The workshop was structured and conducted by means of presentations, break-away group activities and discussions between the attending participants. The discussions were facilitated by Ryan Fisher from ICLEI Africa. The sessions were highly focused and included key stakeholders from national Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA), Department Environment and Nature Conservation (DENC), Department of Agriculture, South African Environmental Observation Network (SAEON), Afrisam, South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI), Sun International’s Flamingo Casino, Sol Plaatje University, Frances Baard District Municipality and representatives from the local municipalities within Frances Baard District Municipality.

The Strategy and Action Planning Workshop was a successful workshop and a clear vision, strong values and focus areas as well as well-defined and realistic long term goals and associated actions were established during the process. These will feed directly into the Frances Baard Wetland Strategy and Action Plan going forward.



WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES:

The workshop is one of the core components of the LAB: Wetlands SA project (for background, see **Annex 1**) which aims to improve awareness and management of wetlands at the local level. Based on previous discussions with FBDM, the workshop was aimed at establishing a clear vision, goals and associated actions for the holistic management of wetlands across the district to feed directly into the Frances Baard Wetlands Strategy and Action Plan (WSAP).

The key aims of the workshop were to:

1. Identify and prioritise actions for improving wetland management within Frances Baard District Municipality;
2. Initiate the process for the development of a holistic strategy and action plan to mainstream wetland management into municipal issues such as land use planning.

The workshop also provided an excellent opportunity to increase stakeholder engagement across the municipality as well as for key stakeholders to discuss the opportunities and constraints relating to the incorporation of wetlands and wetlands management into municipal structure.

A copy of the workshop agenda is attached as **Annex 2**.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The workshop opening was done by FBDM Environmental Health Manager and LAB Wetlands SA main contact Mr. Kenneth Lucas, who welcomed all delegates and thanked them for their attendance. Kenneth reiterated the municipality's continued commitment towards ensuring the successful implementation of the project and also alluded to the importance of the multi-sectoral representation of the workshop, working as a collective to develop the WSAP for FBDM. . Thereafter, the facilitator introduced himself and the workshop participants were encouraged to introduce themselves to the rest of the delegation as well as share their expectations and/or objectives for the workshop. These are summarized and included as **Annex 4** of this report.

SETTING THE SCENE

Workshop Purpose and Expected Outcomes:

Ryan started proceedings by giving a short presentation which outlined the LAB: Wetlands SA project as well as the purpose of the WSAP workshop. The presentation illustrated what progress has been made with project implementation in FBDM to date, highlighting FBDM officials participation at the 2015 and 2016 National Wetlands Indabas coordinated through the project, and the current status of the Wetland Report, alluding to data gathering and bilateral meetings having been done together with the need for further stakeholder engagement and data gathering. The presentation then outlined the purpose for the Wetland Strategy and Action Planning Workshop. Emphasis was placed on the fact that the Action Plan that is developed as a result of WSAP workshop should be realistic, measurable and most importantly attainable.

BUILDING A SHARED VISION AND ESTABLISHING VALUES

Vision Exercise

According to the LAB: Wetlands SA Work Plan, the 'Vision' of the Wetland Strategy and Action Plan is intended to give direction to the plan as well as provide inspiration. The facilitator highlighted how the vision statement should embody the future desired state for wetlands within FBDM, and should be founded on realism, but not be mundane, be ambitious yet achievable and have clear social and economic relevance.

To establish a relevant vision for the FBDM WSAP, the participating stakeholders were broken up into three groups to discuss the vision for the district as well as ideal outcomes associated with the vision. After the break-away session, stakeholders were invited to present their thoughts to the room. Following a brief discussion period, the final vision for the FBDM wetlands was finalized as:

VISION:

"Healthy wetlands in Frances Baard District Municipality without the net-loss of value"

Establishing Values

Once the Vision was established, the participating stakeholders were once again broken up into the same groups and encouraged to discuss and decide on key values that would underpin the WSAP. Importantly, values should represent the broader philosophy that will underpin the approach of the WSAP in all circumstances. The values should therefore express a set of beliefs that set the tone for the WSAP.

The three groups engaged in deep discussion and established a variety of values. As such, to tease out the values for inclusion in the WSAP, the identified values were grouped into similar themes and thereafter the workshop participants were encouraged to vote (using sticky coloured dots) on the most important values for inclusion within the WSAP. Based on the outcomes of the individual voting, the values for the WSAP were established as follows:

Values:

- ✓ GOAL DRIVEN
- ✓ AWARENESS
- ✓ CONSERVATION
- ✓ OWNERSHIP (MULTI-SECTORAL)
- ✓ KNOWLEDGABLE
- ✓ ALIGNMENT
- ✓ COMPETENCY



Figure 1: Workshop participants voting for the preferred values for inclusion in the WSAP.

FROM VISION TO STRATEGY

Focus Areas

Focus areas were defined as the planned, deliberate and focused efforts required to achieve the vision. Emphasis was placed on the fact that the focus areas established by the stakeholders should reflect the priorities of the stakeholders within the context of the established vision. The workshop participants requested to be divided into two groups of multi-sectoral and discipline to develop the focus areas for the strategy. The group responses were then clustered into similar themes by the facilitator, with the input from the workshop participants. Responses were clustered and illustrated on flipchart paper and the workshop participants were asked to vote in order to prioritise the identified focus areas in terms of importance to the FBDM region. The six identified key focus areas for the WSAP were established thereafter as follows:

Focus Areas:

- ✓ RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT
- ✓ MONITORING & EVALUATION
- ✓ POLITICAL & COMMUNITY AWARENESS
- ✓ LEGISLATION
- ✓ PRIORITISATION & OFFSETTING
- ✓ IMPLEMENTATION

Note: On day 2 during the Goal setting session, participants decided to remove Monitoring & Evaluation and Implementation as Focus Areas through consensus that the two focus areas will be covered as goals and actions under the other focus areas, as well as being cross-cutting issues.

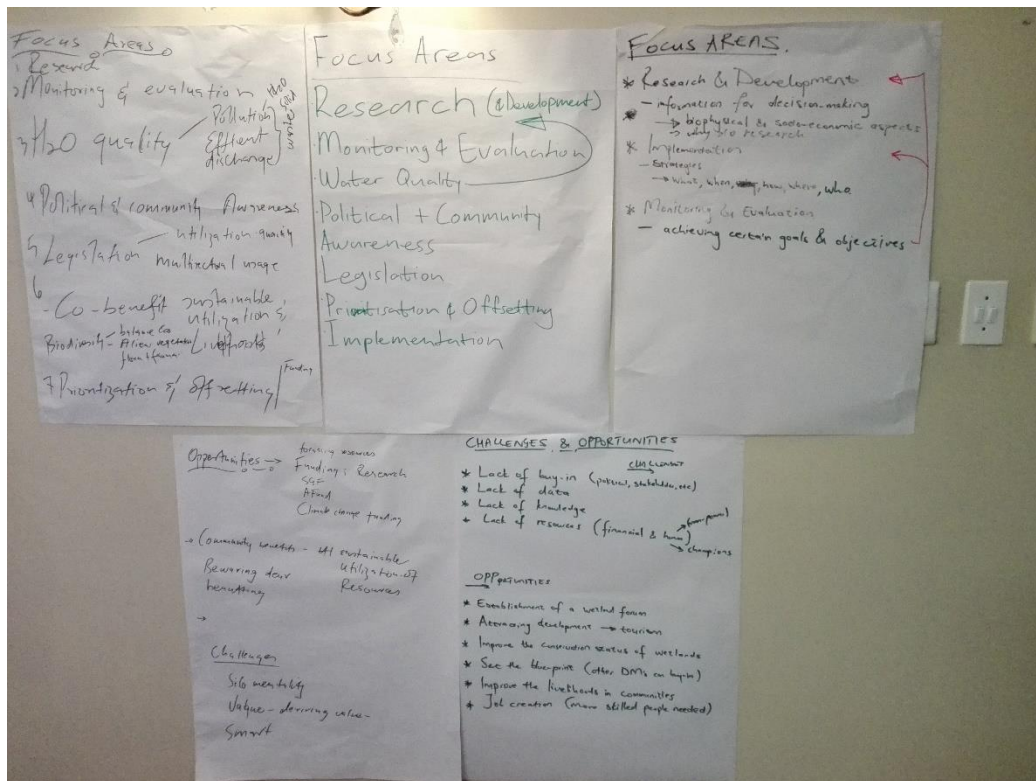


Figure 2: Established and agreed upon Focus Areas for inclusion in the WSAP.

GOAL SETTING

Developing Strategic Priorities into Goals

Goals are well defined targeted statements that give clarity, direction and focus which add to the vision and values and must align with the established focus areas as they feed directly into these. Goals should also have clearly defined outcomes and deadlines so that they can be used for measuring progress and performance. It was also highlighted that only two to four goals should be established for each focus area in order for goals to be realistically achieved.

The workshop participants were divided into three groups in order to establish goals for each of the focus areas. Group 1 were given Focus Areas 1 and 2, Group 2 were given Focus Areas 3 and 6 and Group 3 were tasked to establish goals for Focus Areas 4 and 5. Following the breakaway discussions and goal setting, the breakaway groups were encouraged to present their findings to the main group thereafter for discussion. Following additional input from the group, the semantics of the final goals were agreed upon for each of the Focus Areas.

Please Note: Agreed upon goals were too detailed for inclusion within this report and instead will only be included directly into the Frances Baard Wetland Strategy and Action Plan to be released by the end of 2016.



Figure 3: Breakaway group 1 discussing and agreeing upon goals to link to Focus Areas 1 and 2.

PRIORITISING ACTIONS FOR WETLAND MANAGEMENT

Developing actions for implementing the goals

The final activity for the workshop was to develop detailed actions for implementing the goals on the ground, allocate roles and responsibilities for those actions and establish timeframes for delivering on the actions. The facilitator advised that actions going forward would need to be achievable and a clear understanding of how these would be implemented, by whom, by when, and using what resources would need to be established.

The workshop participants remained in their groups as per the goal setting session and were encouraged to go into detailed action planning to ensure that each goal would be achieved on the ground. These were once again presented to the group and agreed upon before the closure of the workshop.

Please Note: Agreed upon activities, timeframes and responsible persons were too detailed for inclusion with this report and instead will only be included in the Frances Baard Wetland Strategy and Action Plan to be released by the end of 2016.



Figure 4: Group 3 discussing and agreeing upon actions to support the agreed upon goals for inclusion in the WSAP.

WRAPPING UP & WAY FORWARD

Following the development of actions for inclusion in the FBDM WSAP, Ryan highlighted in closing that the next step for FBDM in the LAB Wetlands SA project is the compilation and development of the Wetland Strategy and Action Plan (WSAP). The FBDM WSAP will pull together all the relevant information included in the Wetland Report as well as all the key outcomes captured during the WSAP Workshop. It was noted that the WSAP is scheduled for completion by December 2016. Ryan also outlined the project key deliverables for 2017, namely the facilitation of a Political awareness raising workshop, the co-establishment of a district/provincial wetlands forum for FBDM/Northern Cape, the development of Wetland Management Guidelines, an Awareness Raising Video as well as the development of bankable projects on the ground.



Figure 5: A group picture of participants of the FBDM WSAP Workshop on Day 1.

Annex 1: Project background

Wetlands are high-value ecological infrastructure, providing essential ecosystem services such as clean water, clean air, food, medicines, flood regulation, water storage and habitat for biodiversity. Wetlands also play a role in disaster risk reduction, and their effective governance could lessen the negative effects of climate change through, for example, flood risk reduction, temperature regulation and water and food security for communities.

However, wetlands are South Africa's most threatened ecosystems, with 48% of wetland ecosystems critically endangered, resulting in an urgent need to increase awareness of wetland importance; and to develop the capacity of local governments to incorporate natural wetland resource objectives into municipal governance mechanisms and Integrated Development Planning, as well as to implement and fund projects on the ground.

In South Africa, there is a wealth of national environmental policies, however, mechanisms for mainstreaming biodiversity through all spheres of government needs to be strengthened. Lack of staff capacity, budget constraints, absence of participatory governance, lack of political leadership and public awareness and support, as well as deficiencies in relevant guidance, tools and resources, make wetland biodiversity planning and management a neglected component of our country's municipal governance.

The Local Action for Biodiversity: Wetlands South Africa (LAB: Wetlands SA) programme's key goal is to protect priority natural wetland resources, thus enabling the supply of ecosystem services, and promoting resilient communities and sustainable local economies under a changing climate within South African local governments.

The key objectives of the LAB Wetlands SA programme are as follows:

1. To improve local government and citizen knowledge and understanding (at the individual, organisation and policy levels) of the value of biodiversity and wetlands.
2. To initiate the process of integrating ecosystem services and biodiversity into local government planning and decision-making in a coordinated, multi-sectoral, gender-sensitive and participatory way.
3. To implement and pilot on-the-ground wetland projects and promote the development of bankable project proposals.

The LAB: Wetlands SA programme is implemented by ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability – Africa Secretariat (ICLEI Africa), and funded by the USAID. This programme works in partnership with 9 District Municipalities and 2 Metropolitan Municipalities throughout South Africa.

Annex 2: Agenda



FRANCES BAARD DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY WETLANDS STRATEGY AND ACTION PLANNING WORKSHOP AGENDA

Date: 16th and 17th November 2016
Venue: Protea Hotel, Kimberley.
Facilitator: Ryan Fisher

Day 1		
09:00 – 09:30	Registration (Signing of the Attendance Register)	
Welcome & Introductions		
09:30 – 09:40	Welcome by the hosts	FBDM
09:40 – 09:50	Introductions	Facilitator
Setting the Scene		
09:50 – 10:10	Workshop purpose & expected outcomes – What is the WSAP	Mr. Ryan Fisher (ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability)
10:10 – 10:30	Highlights of the Wetland Report	Mr. Ryan Fisher (ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability)
10:30 – 10:45	Tea/Coffee	
Building a shared vision & establishing guiding principles		
10:45 – 11:00	Workshop process & housekeeping rules	Facilitator
11:00 – 13:00	Visioning exercise (Brainstorm in small break away groups with feedback to plenary to cluster small group contributions into common themes & vision statement.)	Facilitator
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch	
14:00 – 14:45	Guiding principles (Visual mapping exercise with plenary group)	Facilitator
14:45 – 15:00	Tea/Coffee	
From Vision to Strategy		

15:00 – 16:30	Prioritising strategic interventions / focus areas to support the Vision (Brainstorm in small break away groups with feedback to plenary)	Facilitator
16:30	<i>Day 1 closes</i>	

Day 2		
09:00 – 09:30	Registration (Signing of the Attendance Register)	
Recap from Day 1		
09:30 – 10:00	Reflecting back on Vision and strategic priorities	Facilitator
Goal setting		
10:00 – 11:00	Developing the strategic priorities into goals (Brainstorm in small break away groups with feedback to plenary)	Facilitator
11:00 - 11:15	Tea/Coffee	
Prioritizing Actions for wetland management		
11:15 – 12:30	Generating high level actions (targets) for implementing the goals (Brainstorm in small break away groups with feedback to plenary)	Facilitator
Wrapping up & way forward		
12:30 – 12:45	The WSAP so far	(ICLEI)
12:45 – 13:05	Filling the gaps	Facilitator
13:05 – 13:15	Way Forward	(ICLEI)
13:15	Lunch and Departure	



environmental affairs
Department:
Environmental Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



Strategic Planning Definitions and Purpose:

Biodiversity Action Plan: Identifies the priority actions and clearly outlines how these will be implemented, by whom, by when, and using what resources.

Biodiversity Strategy: An overarching vision of what will ideally be achieved in terms of biodiversity, including a statement of principles, clearly defined priorities and defined short, medium and long-term goals, as well as a set of targets to help guide implementation.

Goals: Goals are well-defined, targeted statements that give clarity, direction and focus. They serve to add content to the vision and strategic priorities / interventions. They are an expression of what is to be achieved (i.e. forward looking) in order to give effect to the vision. Goals also provide the basis for measuring progress and performance, thereby enabling the organisation to assess whether the vision is being achieved, achieved to some extent or whether it is not being achieved at all. Goals should be formulated in relation to each strategic priority. It is important not to overload the strategy with strategic interventions / priorities and goals. For example, if the strategic intervention / priority is: Degraded wetlands in areas of conservation priority, then possible goals are:

- To restore priority wetlands that are degraded.
- To facilitate the re-establishment of species of that have been lost in wetlands of conservation priority.

Guiding principles: These represent the broad philosophy and values that underpin the approach of the programme or organisation in all circumstances. Hence, guiding principles serve to express a set of values and beliefs that set the tone of an organisation, programme or plan and provide important parameters for specific goals, targets and actions. Examples are:

- Publicise and Promote Biodiversity - To regularly publicise and promote the work being undertaken to manage biodiversity.
- Effective Implementation - To ensure that plans, strategies and actions relating to biodiversity are being achieved.
- Partnerships and Collaboration - To build partnerships, where appropriate, that will assist in achieving effective resource utilisation and share information and ideas.
- Raising Awareness - To increase the community's understanding and awareness of biodiversity issues that affect the City and can impact on the lifestyles of residents.

Strategic interventions / focus areas: These are the planned, deliberate, and focused efforts required to achieve the vision. These should reflect the priorities of the organisation / project / programme within the context of the vision. Examples are:

- Degraded wetlands in areas of conservation priority.
- Alien vegetation control.
- Community involvement / support in wetland conservation.
- Mainstreaming wetland conservation into land-use planning.

Strategic Planning: The process of defining the direction of an organisation (path the organisation would like to follow) – this serves to assist decision-making with respect to allocation of resources such as budget and personnel. Typically strategic planning consists of setting of goals,

determining actions to achieve the goals, and mobilizing resources to execute the actions. A strategy describes how the ends (goals) will be achieved by the means (resources).

Vision: Vision statements give direction and should provide inspiration. The vision should define the desired future state. Effectively it is the 'mental picture of what an organization wants to achieve.' The vision should be founded on realism but not be mundane. It should be ambitious yet achievable, with clear social and economic relevance. It should be succinct / concise, clear and easy to understand.

Annex 3: Expectations

- Incorporate wetlands/biodiversity into the NC and FB Climate Change Response Plans
- FBDM wetlands to be included holistically in the National Biodiversity Assessment.
- Knowledge about wetlands and the links to communities, disaster risk reduction etc.
- Links between wetlands and the Conservation of Agricultural Resources Act.
- Learn more about wetlands in general.
- Share information and perspectives from the mining sector.
- Links between wetlands and environmental health.
- Links between wetlands and agriculture (and the role private land owners' play).
- Learn about wetlands and biodiversity protection.
- Improve wetlands through policy.
- Links to the development of the FBDM WSAP, wetlands work and the Free State province.
- Networking opportunities
- Learn about the importance of wetlands and how to educate communities.
- Engage with ICLEI and how they can assist with work in Sol Plaatje Municipality.
- Relationship building and explore opportunities for Sun International/Flamingo Casino to contribute to wetland conservation