

Investigating the impact of Phinda Private Game Reserve on the livelihoods of the community of Mngqobokazi, KwaZulu-Natal



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Abstract

In South Africa, there has been an increase in the development of policies, investments into sustainable rural development, poverty alleviation and the protection of natural resources. Rural communities are mostly dependent upon natural resources such as arable land for agriculture, aquatic systems for aquaculture and many other resources. In this regard, the conservation of natural resources to develop rural areas has come to the fore. However, there are some observations that the objectives of achieving these two may differ. Questions arise whether these systems can be considered to represent conservation and if the customary users can be entrusted with the management of resources. With this in mind, this study explores the impacts of the Phinda Private Game Reserve on rural livelihoods in the Mngqobokazi community. This study aims to investigate the impact of community based conservation by Mngqobokazi Community Based Conservation Park on the rural livelihoods of community of Mngqobokazi. In depth surveys were conducted for the purpose of this paper and three participants interviewed. preliminary results show that Phinda private Game Reserve does give back to the community, however, benefits are not always shared equally.

Key words: Community-based Conservation, Livelihoods, Environmental Conservation, Community Based Natural Resources Management.

Methodology

For the purpose of this paper, in depth interviews were conducted with the local authorities. Two participants were selected from the tribal authorities and one from the Qhubekani Mngqobokazi Community Trust. Content analysis of the data collected was done to get the results.

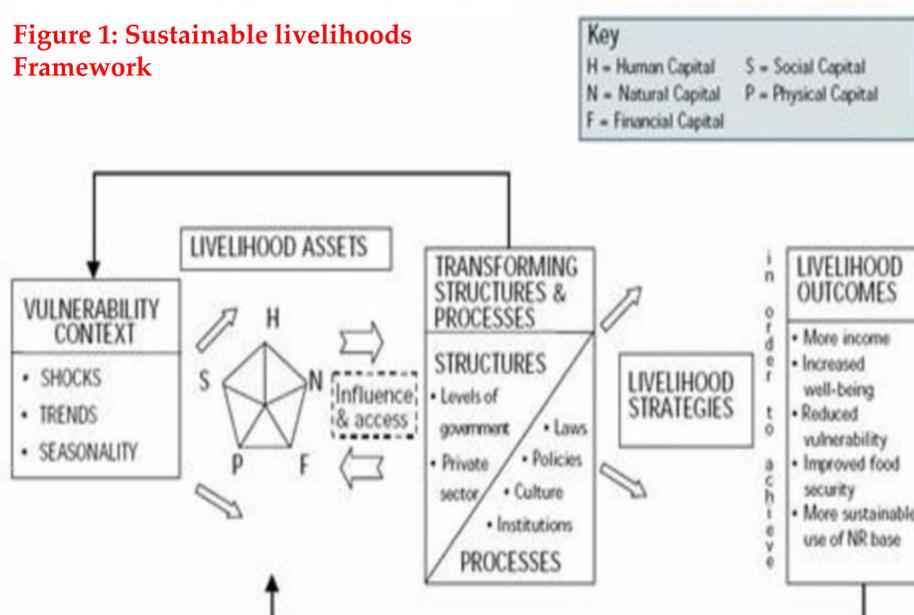
Preliminary results

Three participants were interviewed for the purpose of this paper. One from the Qhubekani Mngqobokazi Community trust and two leaders from the local traditional council (Izinduna). From talking to the local authorities, the results show that Phinda Private Game Reserve does help improve the livelihoods of the local community. The reserve has help build schools, Provide the youth with bursaries, and create job opportunities to the local people. The money that is paid by the reserve goes to the Qhubekani Mngqobokazi community trust and is the one that is used to build schools and offer bursaries to the youth. The local community does have indigenous knowledge for conservation. Even though the community benefits from the trust and the reserve, local people don't actually have a say in the everyday activities of the game reserve. Therefore, the indigenous knowledge possessed by the local community is not used in the reserve. It was also evident that the benefits are not shared equally within the community.

Introduction

Ecological management is seen to have the potential to link nature conservation and people's livelihoods to an extent of achieving a symbiotic relationship between the two (Nzama, 2009).

Figure 1: Sustainable livelihoods Framework



Source: <http://www.managingforimpact.org/tool/sustainable-livelihoods-security-framework>

This is the context within which this study examines the impact of Phinda Private Game Reserve on the Mngqobokazi Community

Phinda is one of the game reserves and shares a fence with Makhasa and Mngqobokazi communities (Muzirambi, 2017). Recently, 1 140 hectares of land was returned to the Mngqobokazi community as a result of a land restitution deal.

Conclusion

There is a general lack of communication amongst the local authorities. This leads to benefits not being distributed equally within the community. The decision making and distribution of powers within the community affects the distribution of benefits to the community.

References

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