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18

NINE YEARS ON THE LANDSCAPE

THE CURRENT STATE OF LIVING LANDS

livinglands

Collaborations working on living landscapes

WHAT

A brief history of
Living Lands

HOW

Approach and
Finances

WHERE

The landscapes
we work on

FOREWORD

As Living Lands, we would like to reflect on the past year, as well as look to what lies ahead. Through this document we would like to share our learnings and visions with everyone who is interested and involved in our work.

We are filled with a sense of pride. The progress made over the last year has been profound and we can share many achievements in our work on the landscapes. Last year, 2017, was the first year in which we implemented our new organisational strategy, with the Caretakers looking after the organisation and fully functioning Landscape Coordinators guiding our different landscapes. We can happily say that this structure is working well.

We have always said that Living Lands is a family. In this foreword, I would like to focus on this family because it is the team that make us who we are. In this document, we will give a thorough account on Living Lands as an organisation, but it is important to remember that Living Lands is nothing without the people making everything possible daily. I am proud to see the growth in the team. By working together every day, we were able to nurture a learning and innovative environment and put "Theory U" into practice.

This is also the platform to thank Odirilwe Selomane, the long-term Director of Living Lands. Odi has been with us since 2009, when he started as a student doing his master's degree. He has lived and breathed Living Lands throughout his career. He has been instrumental in holding the space and giving his critical and often vital input on where Living Lands should go and what it should hold back on. He has chosen to resign as a Director this year, and it is sad to let him go. Fortunately, he is still a Member and we are delighted to continue to have his guidance. He is currently holding a research position at the Stockholm Resilience Centre and I am very delighted to say that we continue working together to take our research to the next level. Liezl le Roux replaces Odirilwe as Director and we are excited to have another young, proud South African joining us as one of the three Co-Directors. Liezl has already proven to be invaluable with her multiple talents, creative insights and calm nature. Together with Liezl and Justin, we as the Living Lands Leadership have the aspiration to build an even stronger team and strive towards excellence in our work on the landscapes.

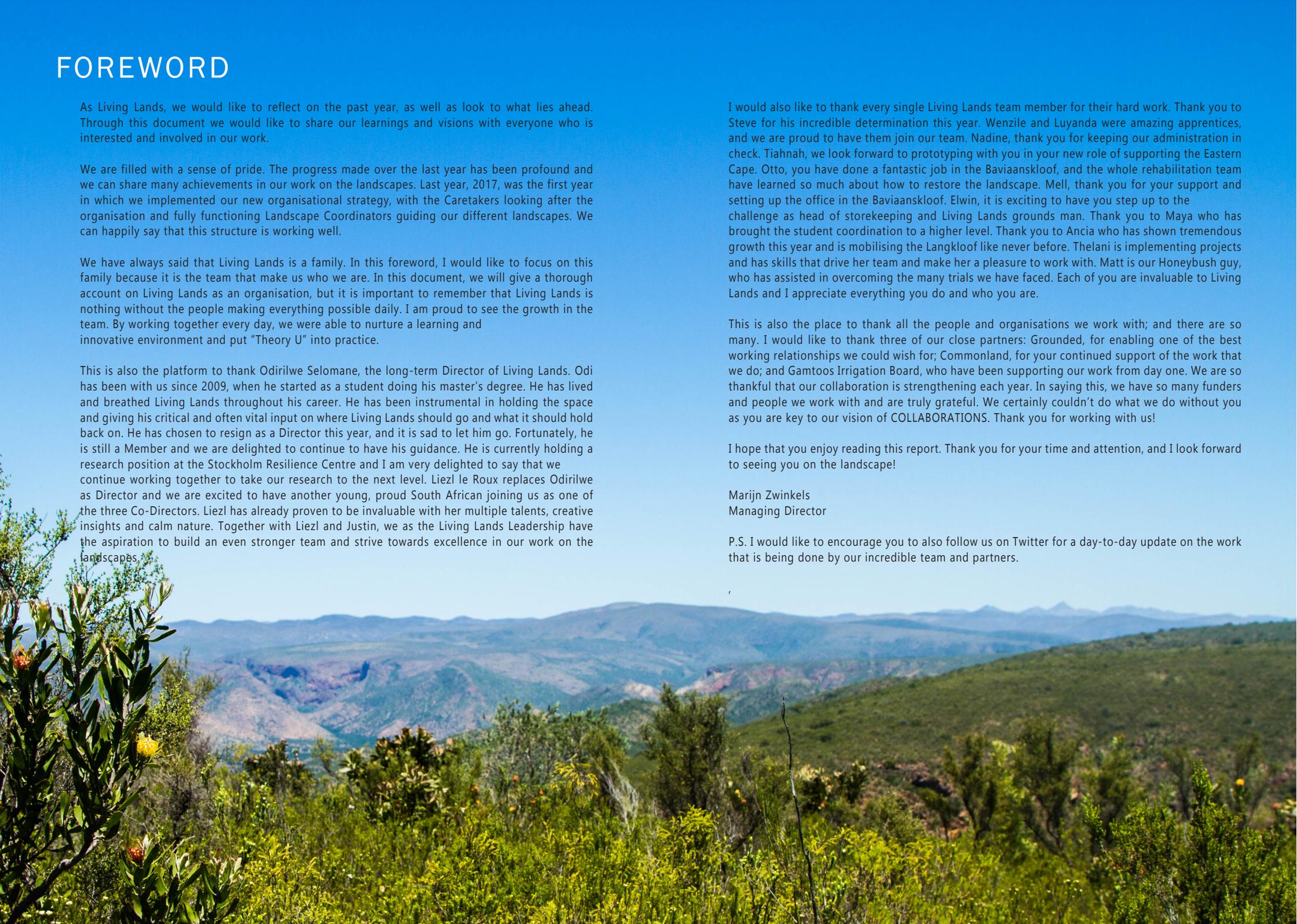
I would also like to thank every single Living Lands team member for their hard work. Thank you to Steve for his incredible determination this year. Wenzile and Luyanda were amazing apprentices, and we are proud to have them join our team. Nadine, thank you for keeping our administration in check. Tiahnah, we look forward to prototyping with you in your new role of supporting the Eastern Cape. Otto, you have done a fantastic job in the Baviaanskloof, and the whole rehabilitation team have learned so much about how to restore the landscape. Mell, thank you for your support and setting up the office in the Baviaanskloof. Elwin, it is exciting to have you step up to the challenge as head of storekeeping and Living Lands grounds man. Thank you to Maya who has brought the student coordination to a higher level. Thank you to Ancia who has shown tremendous growth this year and is mobilising the Langkloof like never before. Thelani is implementing projects and has skills that drive her team and make her a pleasure to work with. Matt is our Honeybush guy, who has assisted in overcoming the many trials we have faced. Each of you are invaluable to Living Lands and I appreciate everything you do and who you are.

This is also the place to thank all the people and organisations we work with; and there are so many. I would like to thank three of our close partners: Grounded, for enabling one of the best working relationships we could wish for; Commonland, for your continued support of the work that we do; and Gamtoos Irrigation Board, who have been supporting our work from day one. We are so thankful that our collaboration is strengthening each year. In saying this, we have so many funders and people we work with and are truly grateful. We certainly couldn't do what we do without you as you are key to our vision of COLLABORATIONS. Thank you for working with us!

I hope that you enjoy reading this report. Thank you for your time and attention, and I look forward to seeing you on the landscape!

Marijn Zwinkels
Managing Director

P.S. I would like to encourage you to also follow us on Twitter for a day-to-day update on the work that is being done by our incredible team and partners.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of how we began, what we have been working on and where we see ourselves in the future.

It provides a clear overview and summary of our organisational history, activities, landscapes and finances for the period from September 2016 to December 2017. This report also provides a preview of 2018 and our future plans.

HOW AND WHERE WE WORK

We see ourselves as facilitators on landscapes and strive to empower all stakeholders to reach their and the landscapes' full potential. Over the years we have developed and applied our Living Landscape Approach which draws on "Theory U": a tool and theory developed to help facilitate profound social and ecological change. We use a bottom-based and top-guided approach in our work as Landscape Mobilisers, Landscape Facilitators, Landscape Innovators, Knowledge Brokers and Business Developers.

We facilitate social learning and change processes with stakeholders on landscapes, develop knowledge systems which become key leverage points for landscape transformation and implement new ways of thinking and doing in socio-ecological rehabilitation.

We are currently working on and are committed to the following landscapes in the Eastern and Western Cape Provinces of South Africa: the Baviaanskloof, Langkloof and Cape Town catchments. Besides our work on the core landscapes, we also work on 'supporting landscapes' when invited by partnering organisations. Here the intention is to support these landscapes and collectives in their long-term vision. The 'knowledge landscape' is also in development. This landscape extends across all the landscapes and provides information to support implementation on the ground. Relevant research is translated to enable application on the landscapes and real-world challenges are brought to the academic world.

SMALL BEGINNINGS TO BIG VISIONS

The vision of wanting to restore degraded landscapes to living landscapes was imagined by a group of enthusiastic researchers and practitioners in the Baviaanskloof Valley about 12 years ago.

This initial idea was supported by Working for Water and Wageningen University. The vision grew bigger and we were officially founded in 2008 as a Not-for-Profit Company.

Our vision is: Collaborations working on living landscapes. We have a strong drive to put research into practice, to bridge the knowing-doing gap, and create a change on the landscape for long term sustainable livelihoods.

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1. INTRODUCTION

THIS REPORT

This report is a follow up on our 2017 report, Living Lands Eight Years on the Landscape: The Current State of Living Lands, which is available on our website. The 2017 and 2018 reports are developed to provide a clear overview and summary of our organisational history, activities, landscapes and finances. The 2018 report provides an overview and summary for the period from September 2016 to December 2017, as well as a preview of 2018 and our future plans. An overview of our history, our vision and mission, and the Living Landscape Approach which we developed to do our work is provided in this report. We continue by describing where we work, including the projects and activities we are involved in; who we are; and how our organisation is structured and guided. The Caretakers overview gives a reflection on the organisation and the plans for the coming year. The report is concluded with a financial overview and acknowledgements.

LIVING LANDS

It is sometimes hard to grasp and explain who we are and what we do, but we like to think of ourselves as facilitators on a landscape. We strive to empower all stakeholders to reach their and the landscapes' full potential. Together we generate ideas, co-create plans and exchange knowledge to conceptualise these plans. If nobody is able to do the job, we are willing to give it a try and innovate through implementation. We are committed to a landscape, which translates to us working with a long-term vision and living on the landscape as part of the community. We want to bridge the gap between knowing and doing by working with local and international universities and knowledge institutions. For long term social, ecological and financial sustainability we incorporate the 4 Returns Model of Commonland where applicable.

As an organisation we function as a family. We enjoy taking on challenges both big and small, from building a state of the art essential oil factory to discovering the mountains with honeybush harvesters over a weekend. Since 2008, we have matured and developed as an organisation and a family. Over time we have grown, taken on more projects, improved our in-house capacity and extended our experiences on a broader scale. The Living Landscape Approach is now being implemented across multiple landscapes within South Africa. In all, we strive towards a common vision: "Collaborations working on a living landscape".

2. IN THE BEGINNING

It is important to know our roots and remember how we started to know where we want to go in the future. As with beauty, history is often in the eye of the beholder. Over its nine-year lifespan, the organisation has seen many amazing people come and go. Each of these individuals has his or her own story of where and how the seed of Living Lands was planted.

About 12 years ago the potential to restore the socio-ecological landscape was imagined by a handful of students, practitioners and researchers in a house in the Baviaanskloof. As a collective, we then served as the secretariat for the established Participatory Restoration of Ecosystem Services & Natural Capital, Eastern Cape (PRESENCE) Learning Network. The first milestone for our group was the PRESENCE workshop in 2007. The workshop aimed to identify the research gaps and capacity needed to effectively restore degraded landscapes, whilst supporting poverty alleviation and rural livelihoods within South Africa's unique subtropical thicket biome.

In 2008 we needed an entity to house our ideas and vision. We founded Living Lands as a Section 21 Not-for-Profit Company (NPC). The name "Living Lands" was chosen, inspired by the term "living landscapes", meaning a landscape home to ecological, agricultural, and social systems which are managed to function sustainably. From 2008 onward, we facilitated and hosted the PRESENCE Learning Network and started the PRESENCE Learning Village (PLV) at the Kouga Dam, a research station for local and international students and researchers.

Since our germination we have grown in capacity, employing new individuals and further developing our unique role of landscape facilitator and enabler. We have continued to develop our bottom-based and top-guided landscape approach; facilitating social learning by hosting workshops and learning exchanges; and supporting research and implementing projects and programmes. We have extended our work from the Baviaanskloof to landscapes in the Langkloof and Cape Town catchment areas.



3.VISION

“COLLABORATIONS WORKING ON LIVING LANDSCAPES”

When speaking of ‘collaborations’, we see people working together to solve a common challenge and mobilise action and solutions based on collective understanding, trust and respect. In our work, collaborations mean partnering and facilitating relationships with farmers, landowners, businesses, government bodies, schools, universities and other civil society organisations.

When speaking of ‘working on’, it means we do our work on the landscape while living there as well. Here we implement ecological rehabilitation projects and innovate on the landscape while adopting various approaches to suit the context. We believe in learning by doing and use “fail fast, learn faster” as our motto here.

When speaking of ‘living landscapes’ we envision a variety of healthy ecosystems and land uses that are home to ecological, agricultural and social systems which are managed to function sustainably. We believe that if people are healthy, their environment will be healthy and vice versa, which is why we approach a landscape holistically as a living ecosystem.

MISSION

To bring synergies and collective action to the landscape through:

- Knowledge creation for Living Landscapes
- Mobilising civil society
- Implementing landscape innovation and rehabilitation
- Enabling and facilitating social learning processes
- Fostering mutually beneficial partnerships and participatory networks

We do this with a positive, creative, committed and honest approach.

OUR CORE BELIEFS AND VALUES INFORM OUR VISION AND MISSION

We all have the potential to solve our own challenges

To create collective action we need to build social capital

To create dialogue, deep listening and healing there is a need for personal healing and a mind-set shift

We need to create action and collaboration in all of the above

We have no preconceived plans

We work with all stakeholders on a landscape level

We believe that innovation and solutions need to emerge from and develop on the ground

We need to shift our awareness from Ego to Eco thinking

4. THE LIVING LANDSCAPE APPROACH

We see ourselves as facilitators on the landscape. We have developed, tested, refined and applied our Living Landscape Approach to all our landscapes. This approach, integrating the building blocks of Theory U and the 4 Returns framework, brings bottom-based and top-guided processes together to facilitate social learning and collaboration between local stakeholders. It builds ownership and willingness within local stakeholders and is supported by an integrated effort of the government and private sector to implement and mainstream policies and programmes. A knowledge and evidence base is developed which informs the programmes and policies that arise out of the process.

We embody five different roles on the landscape namely: Landscape Mobiliser, Landscape Facilitator, Landscape Innovator, Knowledge Broker and Business Developer (described on page 12).



4.1 THEORY U

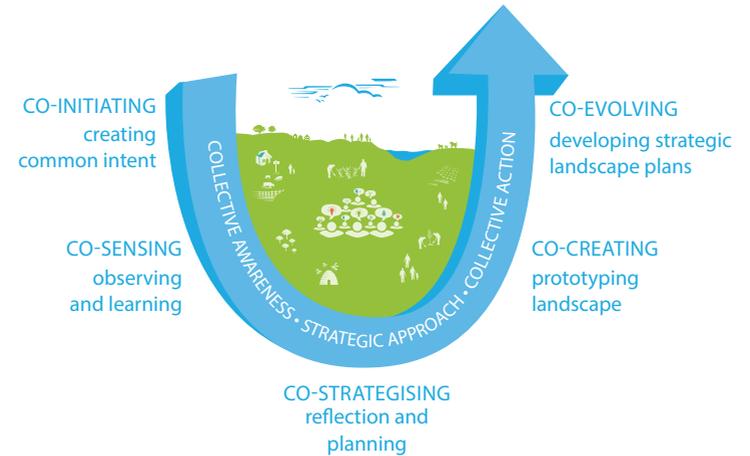
The Living Landscape Approach is founded on Theory U. This methodology allows for a deeper integration and understanding of systems that are foreign to oneself. This helps us and the stakeholders with whom we work, to immerse in experiences on deeper levels which then trigger greater emotion and action. Theory U was developed by the Presencing Institute at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) for leading profound change.

The process provides opportunities for all stakeholders to engage on a deeper level of reflection on the socio-ecological system, to identify and create viable community-based responses through theoretical perspective and practical social technology. This address underlying social problems on an individual, community and institutional level and informs behaviour to better reflect the values of inclusion, fairness and opportunity. We believe that when processes are developed in such a way, they reflect the truth of each system. By accessing situations through the perspective of Theory U, we can detect 'blind spots' in the system and therefore find 'acupuncture points' which allow the process to emerge differently. Focusing on the interior state of the intervener allows results of a higher quality to emerge. Theory U acts as a framework; as a method for leading profound change; and as a way of being, through connecting to one's more authentic and higher aspirations.

We are guided in our work by the steps of the U with five primary stages;

1. Co-initiating: creating a common-intent.
2. Co-sensing: observing and learning from the system in which we are working.
3. Co-strategising: reflecting on how we become part of the story of the future and plan ahead rather than holding on to the story of the past.
4. Co-creating, prototyping interventions and innovating on the landscape, and
5. Co-evolving by developing a strategic and holistic landscape plan.

This process is by no means linear and can include multiple iterations of the U through time.



4.2 THE 4 RETURNS

Commonland is an international foundation that believes landscape restoration offers tremendous untapped opportunities for sustainable economic development. Living Lands is a proud 4 Returns partner organisation. We develop and implement interventions with the intention to result in 4 Returns: The return of inspiration, social capital, natural capital and financial capital.



INSPIRATION



SOCIAL



NATURAL



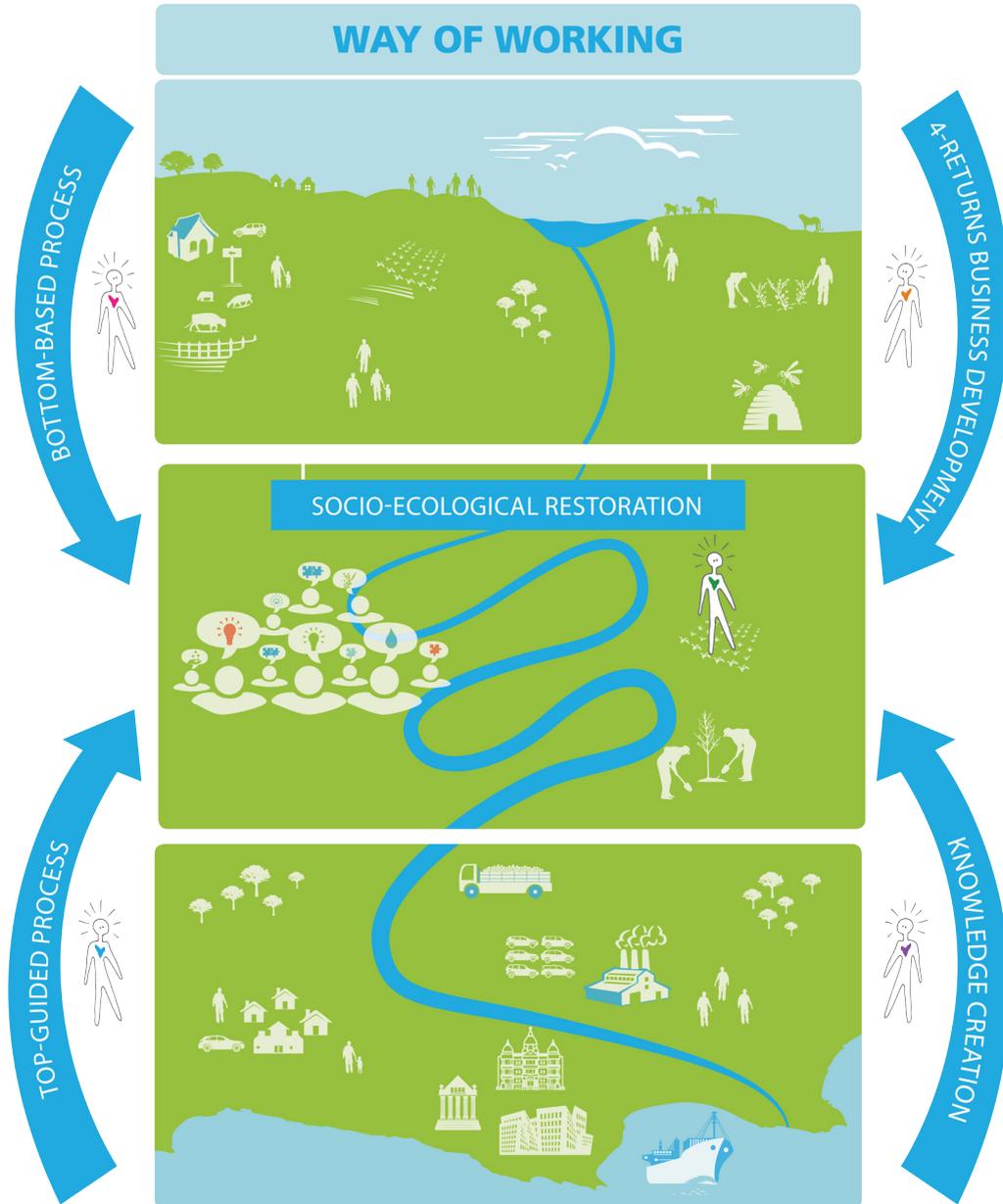
INVESTMENT

This enables long-term sustainability of projects to build a collective sense of place and move beyond the 'project lens'. Projects initiate action towards a broader landscape vision. This vision is where we focus our energy and deep-scale to ensure succession. The business component is as crucial as the rest - we believe that as a Not-for-Profit Company we need to be the bridge between business, social and ecological thinking. This is what inspires us.



THE LIVING LANDSCAPE APPROACH

Our top-guided, bottom-based approach is illustrated below:



4.3 LANDSCAPE ROLES

We embody the following five roles on the landscape;



Landscape Mobiliser

The Landscape Mobiliser facilitates the bottom-based process.

We seek to be grounded on the landscape with stakeholders guiding our work, so that the work stays deeply rooted in the cause. All decisions with regards to the landscape need to be co-created and made by the people affected on the ground. The Landscape Mobiliser facilitates social learning and social change processes with the stakeholders on the landscapes. This is done by building collective awareness and understanding of the current challenges, aspirations and opportunities for action.



Landscape Facilitator

The Landscape Facilitator facilitates the top-guided process to create an environment for change. This aims to build collaborations and mutual understanding of the various challenges facing the socio-ecological landscape. We therefore work with stakeholders such as government institutions, businesses and downstream water users.



Knowledge Broker

The Knowledge Broker generates and translates knowledge. The goal of the Knowledge Broker is to bridge the gap between theory and practice (Knowing-Doing Gap). Trans-disciplinary research informs our approach to build a strong knowledge base. Research is the voice of the landscape; it can open people's eyes to knowledge that was previously unknown or misunderstood. The Knowledge Broker builds partnerships with universities and other knowledge institutions to improve the knowledge base for socio-ecological restoration and innovation.



Landscape Innovator

The Landscape Innovator implements socio-ecological rehabilitation on the ground.

We, together with landowners, generate ideas and co-create plans. If the need is there, we can do the job and implement large scale ecological rehabilitation projects. We have a strong 'learning by doing' approach. When we work with landowners and communities during the implementation phase, we work to create additional capacity and long term sustainability. The Landscape Innovator is involved in the day to day work on site and is dedicated to project outcomes, deadlines and project finances as well as always looking for innovative ways to implement projects.



Business Developer

The Business Developer is responsible for the 4 Returns Business Development. In this regard, we work closely with our partner organisation, Grounded. Looking for long term opportunities and financial sustainability, we incorporate the 4 Returns Model of Commonland where applicable. We work with farmers to develop regenerative businesses. These businesses establish a healthier and more profitable balance between nature and agriculture. We explore and develop agricultural models that are markedly more sustainable and more profitable.



5. WHERE WE WORK AND WHAT WE DO

We work in and are committed to the Baviaanskloof, Langkloof and Cape Town catchments. The work and projects are diverse, but the central vision of working towards living landscapes holds our course firm in the sometimes turbulent rapids that this work brings. Our work centers on collaborating with different stakeholders towards restoring degraded socio-ecological landscapes. To follow is a brief snapshot of each landscape, detailing the physical landscape, the current work we are involved in, as well as our future aims.

Besides our work on the core landscapes, we also work on 'supporting landscapes' when invited by partnering organisations. We apply our expertise to support these landscapes and collectives in their long-term vision. We are also developing our 'knowledge landscape', where we translate relevant research into knowledge that can be applied on the landscapes.

5.1 BAVIAANSKLOOF

ECOLOGICAL

The Baviaanskloof, where we started working nine years ago, is still one of our cornerstone landscapes today. This unique environment is the source of water for the Gamtoos Valley as well as the Nelson Mandela Bay municipal area. Encompassing the Kouga and Baviaanskloof mountains, the Baviaanskloof catchment is significant for several reasons. As part of the Cape Floristic Region, it boasts an enormous botanical diversity and forms a meeting place of different biomes. The distinctiveness of the flora is complimented by the Baviaanskloof River and its network of tributaries which flow into the Kouga River, forming the catchment area. About 9 000 hectares of land have undergone rehabilitation in the Baviaanskloof. This has had a noticeable impact on the livelihoods of the residents in the area.

SOCIAL

The Western half of the Baviaanskloof, known as the Baviaanskloof Hartland, has been farmed for over 200 years and today there is a community of about 2 300 people living in the area. The majority of economic activities have revolved around agriculture with the past 50 years seeing a steady decline in agricultural production. This economic decline has been largely due to factors related to climate change, resulting in an increase in flooding and drought which caused other challenges such as overgrazing, erosion and wetland degradation. This has helped to create an atmosphere where rehabilitation innovations could be implemented on a trial basis. These innovations have shown promising results and have helped to generate a model for wide-scale implementation. Rehabilitation efforts in the past have contributed significantly towards creating employment opportunities and skills development within the community. We hope to keep this momentum going forward and to help increase the impact of past and future projects. Since 2007, we have fostered relationships with landowners, communities, local government and knowledge institutions and co-initiated a process towards sustainable livelihoods.

ECONOMIC

Our partners, Commonland and Grounded, have helped to develop alternatives to conventional farming practices which not only provide sustainable income opportunities but also create an environment for better land management practices and new economic opportunities for the area.

INSPIRATION

The work we have been doing for the past nine years is rooted in the Baviaanskloof and this provides a basis for our commitment to the landscape. Through earnest engagement, we have been driven to co-create an environment of stimulation and trust within the farming community and we envision future augmentation to extend throughout the area. This is in line with our goal to instill inspiration within the community to take ownership of the work and carry the vision forward.



PARTNERS AND NETWORKS

Our projects on the landscape involve different approaches to ecological, social and economic challenges present in the Baviaanskloof. In some cases, the focus is on monitoring and engagement but many of our projects have progressed towards the implementation phase.

Along with our partners at the South African Environmental Observation Network, we are part of an extensive hydrological monitoring project for the National Resource Management programme of the Department of Environmental Affairs. This project aims to establish a monitoring and research network for water resources to observe and understand the impacts of climate change, as well as land management on the quality and quantity of the water resources in the catchment area. Our bottom-based, top-guided approach to engagement has been supported for the past three years by The Table Mountain Fund. This project has functioned as a catalyst for successful engagement with stakeholders to build commitment towards a sustainable future and develop trust and relationships. Through this process, we have helped to initiate a dialogue around alternative livelihoods and facilitate a collective voice from the Baviaanskloof stakeholders.

The need to develop alternative livelihoods in the Baviaanskloof was addressed by our partners at Grounded and supported by Commonland, which resulted in the establishment of the Baviaanskloof Development Company (Devco). The goal was to create a sustainable business around essential oils; however, the establishment of the company was only the first step. Along with our partners, we identified the need to facilitate the day to day operations to ensure a smooth launch and continued feasibility. The Devco project has worked towards building the business from the ground up; investigating innovations; ensuring a quality and high-end product; and developing a scientific approach to the agricultural aspect.

The approach to diversification of livelihoods has paved the way for land degradation to be addressed on a catchment wide scale. This process has been supported by the Coca-Cola Foundation's 4 Returns in the Port Elizabeth Catchment Project. Through the implementation of erosion control techniques, coupled with revegetation and an innovative approach to land management, we are committed to addressing the problems associated with land degradation in a holistic way. Along with the Coca-Cola Foundation and the GEF5 Sustainable Land Management in Degraded Landscapes Project we seek to restore degraded land, with a focus on communal property. This project is currently progressing towards its operational phase and striving towards the goal of not only addressing land degradation but also capacitating communities to conduct effective and sustainable land management practices.

The projects in the Baviaanskloof are all directed in one way or another towards the common goal of holistic catchment management. The challenges faced with land management at the landowner level can be overcome when the process is facilitated by a collective movement. This led to the Baviaanskloof Hartland Bewarea being established.

LANDSCAPE VISION

As we have spent a considerable amount of time on the landscape, we find that most of our projects are being implemented at an operational level. This brings us to a stage of engagement where we are seeing the ownership of the vision transferred to the stakeholders. Through the establishment of the Baviaanskloof Hartland Bewarea and the integration of rehabilitation, land management, as well as economic and social development efforts, we hope to see the impact of the collective vision on the entire catchment. The time we've spent in the Baviaanskloof throughout the past nine years emphasises the need to extensively and continuously re-evaluate processes and presents a clear record of our ongoing commitment to the landscape.



5.2 LANGKLOOF

ECOLOGICAL

The Langkloof consists of the Kouga and Krom River catchments which are situated to the south of the Baviaanskloof. These catchments form part of the most important water sources for the Nelson Mandela Bay municipal area with the Kouga and Churchill Dams supplying significant amounts of the area's water demand. Being part of the Cape Floristic Region, the Kouga and Krom catchments are known for their unique aquatic and terrestrial biodiversity. The catchments are currently threatened by factors associated with human activities and climate change, which includes rapid invasion of alien plant species, unpredictable temperature changes, severe fire, hail storms, droughts and floods. The challenge in this area is to maintain healthy ecosystem functioning while supporting the livelihoods of the people living in the Langkloof. The government (Department of Environmental Affairs: National Resource Management (DEA: NRM)), together with the Gamtoos Irrigation Board (GIB) as implementing agency, have been removing alien invasive trees in the area through the Working for Water Programme since 1995. Loss of large natural wetlands which are well suited to the high-energy water of these mountainous river basins, is a major concern for flood mitigation of the area.

Living Lands, together with partners, sees the long-term value in improving agricultural water use efficiency in the priority catchments which the Nelson Mandela Bay depends upon. On-the-ground catchment management interventions, the support of economic development for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises and water-wise, climate-smart agriculture will further enhance a holistic approach to building a more resilient landscape.

SOCIAL

The Langkloof is unique in terms of its social diversity which is influenced by the variety of geographical and ecological landscapes. Several smaller valleys flowing out of the main river valley cause a variation in agricultural activities and social groups that are associated with specific needs and opportunities. In the past, small family-owned farms were dominant in the valley, but this gradually changed to large commercial fruit farmers becoming the major landowners.

This greatly affected the social dynamics of the area and the absence of shared cultural heritage resulted in isolation between social groups and a discontinuity in the stewardship of resources. The intricate complexity of this landscape poses challenges which include lack of social cohesion, knowledge exchange, integrated management and institutional fragmentation. However, this increases the capacity for change and diversity of opportunities in the area. For the past seven years, Living Lands has been based in the Langkloof, building relationships, and creating networks amongst farmers, communities, government and businesses to bridge the communication gap and to enhance understanding between diverse social groups.

ECONOMIC

In the past, the Langkloof was dominated by family-owned, subsistence farming with little movement of people through the valley. Opportunities in large-scale commercial fruit farming were noticed and upscaled at an early stage which became the main economic driver in the area. This resulted in the development of several other activities such as small trade businesses, processing and transport companies, as well as tourism. With deciduous fruit production dominant in the area, there is a lack of consistent jobs due to the seasonality of fruit picking/packing. This leads to loss of income and deterioration of cohesion in the community which increases poverty. Agricultural activities in the Langkloof are also highly dependent on weather conditions which are very unpredictable and the cause of immense damage due to floods, droughts, fires and hail storms. Opportunities in this area lie with building resilience within the agricultural sector and we have been exploring ways to address this. Our approaches include creating support for value-added industries from alien plants, composting, water-wise agriculture, regenerative farming methods and the cultivation of indigenous species, such as honeybush.

INSPIRATION

Degraded livelihoods as a result of fragmented governance, lack of resource management and climate change related effects, such as severe floods and droughts, have drained inspiration from the landscape. The unique complexity of social, economic and ecological resources in the Langkloof greatly contributes to its capacity for change and enhances the ability of this landscape to rise from the ashes, so to speak. Inspiration can be greatly increased by just connecting isolated individuals with similar goals. In these situations knowledge exchange can bring about innovative ideas which can lead to actions. Living Lands, together with our partners, has the capacity to establish a community of practice where the frequent connection with other people in the same farming practice can bring inspiration and motivation to each other on a regular basis. Also, through creating a platform through workshops where government, farmers and communities can connect. Improved communication of challenges and needs can create a sense of social cohesion and inform collective action.

PARTNERS AND NETWORKS

Under the Switch Africa Green Project, Living Lands is collaborating to facilitate investments and shifts towards a green economy. This can improve social wellbeing and provide ecosystem services through piloting new composting practices and honeybush farming. We work together with the Table Mountain Fund on establishing a compost site with the Haarlem Vroue Forum, making use of the alien vegetation. Together with Grounded, Stichting Doen and Commonland, we are supporting sustainability in the honeybush tea industry in the Langkloof. The Langkloof, with the natural occurrence of honeybush (*Cyclopia* spp.), is the heart of the honeybush tea industry. This industry results in honeybush touching the lives of many Langkloof residents. We are working with stakeholders from across the Langkloof to collectively work towards a sustainable model for the honeybush industry.



5.3 CAPE TOWN CATCHMENTS

ECOLOGICAL

The mountain catchments surrounding the City of Cape Town are important water source areas for the Western Cape Province. As Living Lands, we play a role in the top-guided space in this area. We support policy makers and bring implementers and researchers together. The Boland and Groot Winterhoek Mountains are the watersheds for three major rivers, namely the Berg, Breede and Olifants Rivers. These river catchments are the main source of domestic water supply for the city of Cape Town, and are important for agricultural, industrial and environmental purposes.

Our efforts have focused on the Berg and Breede catchments - a knowledge rich and activity dense landscape. The Breede River, and most of its tributaries, contain sensitive aquatic ecosystems and support ecologically significant wetlands and estuaries. An example is the Papekuils Wetland in the Breede which contains a variety of wetland and terrestrial flora that are not conserved elsewhere. The Breede River Estuary is one of the most valuable in the country but also the most threatened in terms of upstream development. The Berg River is in dire need of restoration with natural vegetation accounting for only 2% of the total area, and the water being classified as not 'fit for consumption' for humans or agriculture. The Berg River Estuary is one of the largest of South Africa's 279 estuaries and from a conservation perspective, very important, particularly in respect of its bird and fish fauna. The extensive floodplain that surrounds the middle and upper reaches of the system make it unique in the Western Cape. The extensive agricultural pressures and rapid urbanisation contribute to high levels of pollution in the tributaries and major waterways of the catchments. The threats to the catchments include infestation by invasive alien vegetation, river bank erosion and pollution by industry and residents.

SOCIAL

The Berg and Breede catchments, especially the upper reaches, is part of a renowned wine and fruit growing and exporting region. In recent years it has become a center of tourism in the winelands. It offers extremely beautiful scenery and is very rich in culture. However, it is also an area marked by poverty where a large proportion of people are reliant on insecure, informal and seasonal employment on farms, in the canning factories and in the surrounding towns.

Moving forward, we will be working with local harvesters, landowners and processors for the development of farm-specific management plans and harvester accreditation for the wild harvested honeybush. We will also support regenerative honeybush cultivation. Overall, the work is supported by business development; looking at a business model based on sustainability and traceability principles, and a business entity focused on retaining as much of the value-chain within the Langkloof and sharing this in a fair and equitable way.

Building on the monitoring in the Baviaanskloof we are working with the Water Research Commission, SAEON, the University of the Western Cape and local residents and institutions in developing a participatory Hydrological Model of the Baviaanskloof, Krom and Kouga catchments. This is aimed towards fostering social learning and group decision making in catchment management to restore and sustainably manage the landscape. The focus is not only on the accuracy and applicability of the hydrological models themselves, but also the process of model building as a dialogue facilitation and learning tool for stakeholders. To date, field data of several monitoring sites in the Baviaanskloof, Kouga and Krom river catchments have been collected and are being digitised and analysed.

Together with the Nature Conservancy and the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality we are prototyping the Algoa Bay Water Fund. The Water Fund is an innovative mechanism for improving catchment management, allowing for scaling of results over time. It is based on capitalising on public-private partnerships to ensure the long term sustainable implementation of catchment management. Many of these public and private institutions already invest in the area and have been working with us on other projects. The Water Fund will fundamentally address the water crisis in Nelson Mandela Bay and surrounding rural areas, by improving catchment management and improving agricultural water use efficiency in the priority river basins.

LANDSCAPE VISION

By being based in the Langkloof, we hope to continue building relationships with people on the ground and to strengthen these with trust in our integrity and commitment to a longterm vision. We also hope to create an environment for change by facilitating a top-guided process which entails deeper engagement with authorities who are committed to bringing change on the landscape. We aim to establish a learning network where individuals of different disciplines exchange knowledge and access to local resources is enhanced. Through several collaborations with committed organisations, we aim for increased water security, functioning ecosystems, and productive and sustainable land use.



In contrast, being close to knowledge and innovation centers such as Stellenbosch and Cape Town, the catchments have been study sites for diverse research topics. From integrative governance studies to piloting biochar innovations, there is a magnitude of information being generated in the area. For the past five years Living Lands has been based in Cape Town, where we have strengthened communication networks amongst farmers, local residents, government and businesses to facilitate knowledge exchange and initiate prototypes.

ECONOMIC

The primary land-use in the Berg and Breede catchments is agricultural crop production. The main agricultural products of the Berg River are grapes, mainly for wine, deciduous fruit in the upper catchment, and wheat and livestock in the lower catchments. The upper and middle Breede River is home to fruit farming, as well as table and wine grapes. Downstream is dominated by dryland pasture, grains and oil seeds such as canola. Apart from sustaining the agricultural activities, the Berg and Breede also plays a vital role in driving the tourism sector linked to water sports as well as the wine and brandy industry, and growth within the olive industry.

We have been exploring green socio-economic opportunities linked to tourism and conservation, as well as contributing to the community of practice linked to the alien biomass value-added industry.

INSPIRATION

The saturated nature of peri-urban landscapes such as the Berg and Breede catchments manifests feelings of overstimulation and frustration. The catchments are dense with strategic frameworks and plans functioning at different scales. We aim to facilitate relationships to mobilise implementation of these plans; stimulating collaboration towards collective action and creating renewed inspiration.



PARTNERS AND NETWORKS

Our collaboration with the Western Cape Government was initiated through working with the Netherlands Government on the Natural Capital Agenda, which translates the Aichi Guidelines into action. We implemented several Ecosystem Restoration projects from 2013 to 2016 with our partners in the Western Cape Province. The project was successfully implemented, and the relationships and work which were supported during the project still persist. Activities included supporting rehabilitation efforts along the Berg River – from wetland rehabilitation to building ecological waste treatment systems and setting up satellite nurseries.

In the Eerste River Catchment we supported the Stellenbosch River Collaborative in its conception phase as a secretariat and initiated several projects. We formed part of establishing the Enkanini Water Hustlers for local sanitation solutions and skills development. Here we worked in partnership with WWF, the Stellenbosch Municipality and the Enkanini Research Centre. Our work in the Berg River continues through collaboration with the Table Mountain Fund who is supporting efforts to build a collective in the Franschhoek Valley to mobilise green socio-economic opportunities and re-establish the sense of place in the urban green zones of the valley. We have faced multiple challenges during this process and learned more about the community-based work in the area. We are fortunate to also work with the local Khoi-San community and support their cultural heritage activities.

We gained a lot of knowledge through the collaborative review of the Western Cape Sustainable Water Management plan through intensive stakeholder engagement and participation workshops. Working closely with the Provincial Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning (DEA&DP), as well as local municipalities, ensured that we established a common understanding of the needs on the landscape.

Through engaging with researchers and practitioners active in the Berg and Breede catchment, it has become clear that there are several overarching planning and coordinating forums. There is also a need to engage on the topics of: research agenda setting, knowledge exchange and prioritisation to enable action on the ground. To elaborate, there is a need to facilitate the connections between research and implementation, connect specific researchers and practitioners, initiate pilot studies and effectively answer emerging questions and communicate findings which align to local, national and international priorities. This is being affected through working with the South African National Biodiversity Institute, the Department of Science and Technology, the Water Research Commission and the Department of Environmental Affairs in coordination of an Ecological Infrastructure knowledge platform. The aim is to improve communication between researchers and practitioners working in the field of ecological infrastructure and human well-being. The new Provincial Biodiversity Spatial Plan has been launched and has the potential to support positive planning within the critical socio-ecological systems in the Western Cape. Working together with Cape Nature and DEA&DP, we are co-creating the narrative and building capacity to develop with a living landscape in mind.

LANDSCAPE VISION

There is a magnitude of projects, programmes and initiatives being implemented in the Cape Town catchments. In this landscape we have found value in building bottom-based relationships, facilitating cross-sectoral knowledge exchange through top-guided engagement and initiating prototypes. The vision for the Cape Town catchments is facilitating and mobilising synergistic actions towards a thriving socio-ecological system.

5.4 THE KNOWLEDGE LANDSCAPE

Research is in the DNA of Living Lands. We see research as the voice of the landscape, articulating and reflecting the blind spots of our work. We need social science to develop new and better ways of social change; economics to understand how the new restoration economy can work; and of course we need ecological studies to understand the physical landscape. We aim to bring real world challenges to the academic world and to learn from the specialists.

Therefore we are prototyping something new, called the 'knowledge landscape'. The knowledge landscape extends across all the landscapes we work on and provides information to support implementation on the ground. It is a network where different information systems are linked to provide a platform where information can be exchanged, translated and collected. Trustworthy, fact-based storylines are needed to inform relevant action. The Knowledge Broker is the custodian of this landscape and enables the translation of relevant research for application. Each core landscape now has a dedicated Knowledge Broker who connects with the area specific knowledge networks and coordinates activities. Each Living Lander is in turn responsible for their personal knowledge database, housed in their minds, and is supported through the knowledge landscape to share this knowledge.

What is a Knowledge Broker?

The role of a Knowledge Broker is an intermediary or networker that aims to develop relationships and networks with and between universities and knowledge institutes and the landscapes we work on. The Knowledge Broker provides linkages, knowledge sources, and in some cases knowledge itself. The Knowledge Broker then facilitates the knowledge exchange and sharing among various stakeholders including researchers, practitioners and policy makers.

Why do we need Knowledge Brokers?

The purpose is to bridge the knowing-doing gap. It is important to create an interface where the practitioner and the researcher can connect and effectively exchange their experiences to ensure sustainable practice. Internal knowledge cohesion can empower thinking and learning within Living Lands, and external knowledge exchange create new narratives and enhance innovation.

How do we act as Knowledge Broker?

The gap between theory and practice is addressed by being interpreters and translators who provide insight, clarity and access to knowledge by using verbal communication, written text, maps, diagrams and other visual media. Mobilisation of research is also a way in which passive knowledge can be activated to improve implementation on the ground.

RESEARCH ASSOCIATES

We work closely with our research associates who form part of the knowledge broker collective. Research Associates are scholars and professionals that have an advanced degree and experience in a specific scientific field. This includes researchers and local students who have been working with Living Lands for a long period of time, where some research is funded through projects we are implementing, and have had a great influence on the work on the ground.

PRESENCE LEARNING NETWORK

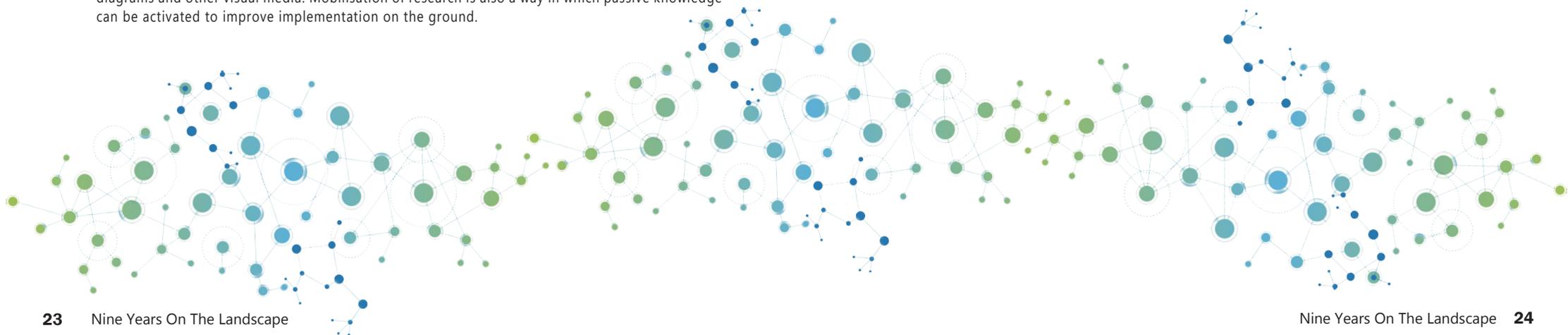
The PLN exists to support the needs on the landscape relating to research and field work. This network provides opportunities for students from universities all over the world to link into the learning environment created by every day activities of Living Lands and collaborators on the landscape. These students assist with building the knowledge capacity in Living Lands by collecting global knowledge and translating it to a landscape scale.

MORE NETWORKS...

To enhance external knowledge cohesion, Living Lands also collaborate with universities and public and private sector entities who are key role players in the landscapes we work on.

Collaborations with private sectors, such as Woodlands Dairy and Trace & Save, help us to share experiences and effectively communicate novel knowledge in practice to inform the process of implementation on a regular basis. By a "fail fast, learn fast" approach we can improve our experience and help each other to come up with fresh ideas and stay on top of what we do on the landscape..

We endeavour to start new projects as part of the knowledge broker collective to enhance the way we communicate our experiences with the scientific world. One of these projects is called the "Socially Integrated Living Landscapes, Yeah" project where we collaborate with The Arctic University in Norway and Wageningen University in the Netherlands, as well as the Stockholm Resilience Centre in Sweden. This partnership aims to share and publish the knowledge that has been gathered over the last 10 years of research within Living Lands.



5.5 SUPPORTING LANDSCAPES

Living Lands is committed to the landscapes we work on. This commitment means that we live on the landscape and aim to work there with a 20 year vision. We are committed to the Baviaanskloof, Langkloof, Cape Town catchments and the knowledge landscape. Additionally we have been invited by partnering organisations to support projects or landscapes with our Living Landscape Approach. To accommodate these requests, expand our research and give Living Lands the opportunity to work outside of our core landscapes, we have decided to create a separate strategy without a 20 year commitment for the landscapes that we support. This gives us the opportunities to scout new landscapes and see if and how we can support them. We keep our options open to engage, possibly for the long term, on these landscapes. We like to be upfront with the landscape's stakeholders and deliver what we promise.

SNEEUBERG

The Sneeu Berg region is centered around the Compassberg in the Eastern Cape. The small town of Nieu Bethesda lies in this area situated north-west of Graaf Reinet. We have been supporting this landscape since 2010. Since December 2017 we have not been implementing projects and research on the landscape but have taken on the role as an advisor to the Sneeu Berg Center for Sustainable Development.

ECOLOGICAL

The Sneeu Berg region is environmentally significant because of its value as a potential future refuge for species once the full effects of climate change has taken effect. The area is much higher in altitude than the surrounding low lying areas and therefore cooler in temperature that could provide an alternative habitat for many species if a temperature increase alter current low lying habitats. The vegetation is an ecotone between the Nama-Karoo and Grassland biomes and would serve as a refuge for species from both biomes. The area also has conservation significance in hosting endemic species such as the plain adder (*Bitis inornata*), the Compassberg skolly (*Thestor compassbergae*) and 33 species of flora.

During the early 20th century, stocking rates far exceeded the current recommended stocking rate. This led to severe environmental degradation and the creation of several gullies in the area. Multiple research studies were conducted on these cavities which included its effects and the prevention of further expansion.

We have supported the landscapes with rehabilitation. Some of the gullies sites were restored to showcase the possibilities for rehabilitation in the area. Landowners benefitted from gully restoration and subsequent water table rise, preventing future loss of grazing and increasing water availability. In other cases the reasons for gully expansion were determined. Reasons for gully expansion often went hand in hand with excessive animal stocking rates. Landowners were then advised on stocking rate reductions that would see a recovery in veld conditions and thus the prevention of gully expansion.

We supported the objective to collectively manage eland. Here Living Lands was called in as an advisor and possible research associate to the Compassberg Protected Environment (CPE). We had to draw up an off-take procedure and matrix for the 2015 off-take season. In order to draft such a document, individual interviews (telephonic, email and in person) were conducted to get inputs of all landowners and/or managers. Based on the research, an eland management plan or eland management recommendation document was created. The document recommends sustainable yields for three properties in the CPE which would ensure a zero percent population increase in upcoming years in an attempt to limit human-wildlife conflict in the area.

SOCIAL

We work together with Sneeu Berg Centre for Sustainable Development (SCSD) and in the Compassberg Protected Environment (CPE). The CPE and SCSD served as two close stakeholders for the project. The CPE is providing a working platform and identifying sustainability needs. Without the consent from CPE landowners, none of the objectives would have been achieved. Landowners were also instrumental in identifying sustainable needs for the area.

The land-use in large has changed from more intensive stock farming to less extensive stock farming; from small stock farming to cattle farming and from small stock farming to game farming, tourism and "lifestyle farms" where farming is not the primary income from the land. The farmers who have maintained traditional practices have resorted to securing a second income stream either from tourism or hunting.

Clearly there are structural processes that have led to changes in land ownership, usage and profitability of traditional farming in the CPE. All the farmers who have remained in the CPE have had to establish one or two extra income streams. The current farming landowners remain, because of their love for the land and because they have been willing to change their farming practices and lifestyles in response to the ecology of the areas.

We have engaged with stakeholders to conclude on the most appropriate practices for promoting biodiversity in a beneficial way for landowners. This involved spending a significant amount of time in the veld getting to know and understand ecological processes before consulting and engaging with landowners. Stakeholder engagement also entailed engaging with various partner organisations.

ECONOMIC

Due to farming and economic challenges, a large proportion of the land has been bought out by landowners with other sources of income who are attracted to the area because of its remoteness, wilderness quality, mountains, sense of nature and scenic beauty. New land owners are motivated by the area's potential for conservation. The value of these marginal areas is the natural services they provide to the local region. It is a value that, until now, landowners have not been able to invest in and use for their financial stability. The CPE is one of these marginal areas and the creation of a CPE offers a sustainable future for the landowners.

INSPIRATION

Working with the landowners is key to our work. Rather than imposing ideas as an outsider, landowners were consulted and together we decided on practices that would promote biodiversity. Research formed a core part of the project approach. The data and interaction with the researchers allowed for a better understanding of the area which aided in deciding on the best practices to promote biodiversity and landowner benefits.

VERLORENVLEI

We have been invited by BirdLife South Africa to support their work in the Verlorenvlei area. Verlorenvlei is situated about 250 kilometers north of Cape Town and stretches between the West Coast villages of Elands Bay and Redelinghuys.

ECOLOGICAL

Verlorenvlei occurs at the transition between fynbos and Karoo vegetation types and, as is typical of ecotonal areas, it holds a high diversity of species. The Verlorenvlei Estuary is one of the most important estuarine/lacustrine systems in South Africa. It is a proclaimed Ramsar site and an Important Bird and Biodiversity Area.

The development of a holistic management plan for the Verlorenvlei Estuary and surrounding urban and agricultural areas will contribute to maintain and enhance this valuable ecological asset. With the aim to establish additional conservancies and enhance the network of Biodiversity Stewards identified through the Verlorenvlei Protected Areas Project, the ecological assets of the area will be secured further. Through our social learning approach and bringing together diverse stakeholders, we aim to capacitate the institutions active in the area.

SOCIAL

We are working closely with the Greater Cederberg Biodiversity Corridor (GCBC) which forms an important ecological gradient from coast to the inner higher lying areas. The GCBC was developed in response to the threat of biodiversity loss posed by anticipated climate change impacts, fragmentation and associated habitat loss. The threatened ecological system mirrors that of the socio-economic system of Verlorenvlei. The bordering town of Elands Bay is one of the most impoverished towns in South Africa with a high unemployment rate, where most residents rely on the threatened coastal ecosystem for sustenance.

The success in the region relies on people working in collaboration and being mobilised around common goals and actions that address environmental rehabilitation and socio-economic development in their unique living landscape.

We support the project to address the following challenges:

- Social fragmentation
- Ecological degradation
- Economic stagnation of the Verlorenvlei landscape

ECONOMIC

Through diversifying the income of local residents by coupling environmental rehabilitation and management activities with job creation, investing in ecosystems and ecological infrastructure is promoted. Collectively exploring alternative, sustainable livelihood activities and buy-in for conservation agriculture is a core focus. We also aim to enable local stakeholders to realise the economic potential of the unique natural and cultural historical assets of the area such as Baboon Point at Elands Bay which is a listed Heritage Site.

INSPIRATION

On invitation of BirdLife South Africa we facilitated a landowners workshop to re-inspire the community and develop a common vision for the area. We looked at the barriers and challenges for the area, went on a learning journey and discussed opportunities. The workshop enabled the residents to reconnect and a follow up meeting took place with the official implementing agents in the area. We are working with the active parties to continue this engagement.

6.WHO WE ARE

PEOPLE ON THE GROUND

Now that you have an idea of what we do, how we do it and where we do it, let us introduce our team. We are a strong organisation with a young and vibrant team. We strive towards a flat organisational structure where individuals are well equipped, supported and motivated to work on their respective landscapes.

We currently have 16 full time Living Landers who work across three different geographic landscapes, a Rehabilitation Team of 8 in the Baviaanskloof and 4 Research Associates. Our Living Landers have grown into their roles and each landscape consists of a highly self-motivated and driven team. We aim to create an enabling environment for our team to grow within their field of expertise and interests with the goal to build long term commitment to the organisation. Through the WWF Environmental Leaders Programme we have added two highly skilled candidates to our team and look forward to support and learn from more young professionals.



Ancia Cornelius
Landscape Mobiliser
& Knowledge Broker



Elwin Malgas
Store & Groundsman



Faith Jumbi
Research Associate



Jessica Cockburn
Research Associate



Michael Jack
Rehabilitation Team



Michael Ruiters
Rehabilitation Team



Melloson Allen
Office Manager



Nadine Oosthuysen
Financial
Administrator



Nicoleen Jacobs
Rehabilitation Team



Otto Beukes
Landscape Innovator



Pam Sekese
Research Associate



Piet Windvogel
Rehabilitation Team



Julia Glenday
Research Associate



Justin Gird
Strategic Director



Justine Rudman
Landscape Innovator



Liezl le Roux
Knowledge &
Creative Director



Shalene Windvogel
Rehabilitation Team



Shelton Maarman
Rehabilitation Team



Steve Berry
Office Manager



Thelani Grant
Landscape Innovator



Luyanda Luthuli
Landscape Innovator



Marijn Zwinkels
Managing Director



Matt Sephton
Landscape Mobiliser



Maya Beukes
Student Coordinator
& Knowledge Broker



Tiahnah Göbel
Landscape Mobiliser



Trevor Philander
Rehabilitation Team



Valerie Visser
Rehabilitation Team

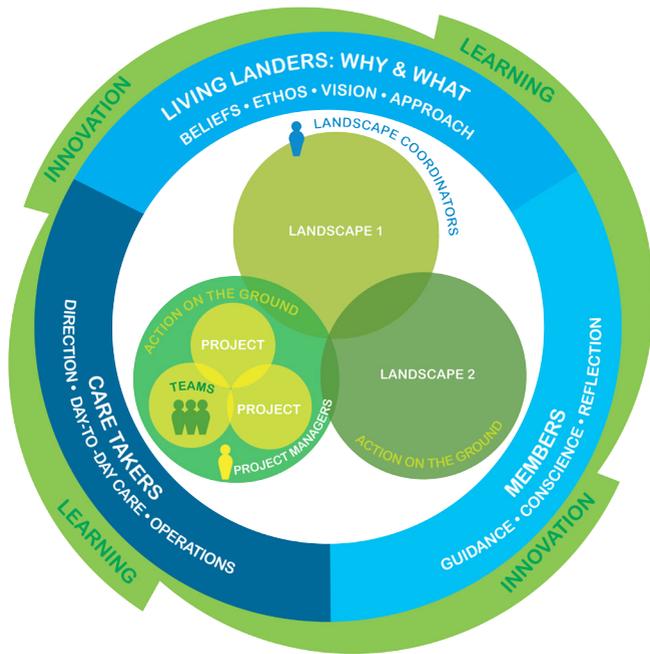


Wenzile Mbanjwa
Landscape Mobiliser

7. HOW WE ARE GUIDED

We each hold the responsibility for our organisation's success and seek to embody the same landscape approach we use in our work. As a result, while we work from a bottom-based perspective, we are also guided from the top. Each role has specific responsibilities and accountabilities. These clearly defined roles give the landscape teams the freedom to think and act collaboratively in line with our vision.

We identify five roles in the organisation with different responsibilities and decision-making authority namely: Members, Living Landers, Caretakers (including the Board of Directors), Landscape Coordinators (responsible for the work on the landscape and the landscape team) and Project Managers (responsible for a specific project). While these roles inform the decision-making authorities within Living Lands, i.e. organisational structure, they do not define the roles of the Living Landscape Approach.



7.1 MEMBERS

Members are influencing partners who support the organisation by maintaining the objectives and direction, i.e. Living Lands' "true north". Members are guided by our Constitution. They provide important strategic guidance and are entitled to vote on matters of strategic importance. Members support the Board of Directors in overseeing their yearly goals for the organisation and will often support the organisation by means of their complementary professional experience (e.g. legal, marketing, HR). We aim for 60% of our Members to be "senior" Living Landers, meaning that they have at least two years' experience within the organisation. This ensures that our organisational structure remains flat, making provision for feedback and reflection.

Directors and Caretakers cannot be part of the Members. This allows the day to day management of the organisation and "true north" role of the members to remain separate. The Members are responsible for the appointment of the Board of Directors, as stated in the Constitution.

At the Members meeting in March 2017, Ms. Thekla Teunis, founder of our partner organisation: Grounded, was voted in as a Living Lands Member. Ms. Lyndré Nel has left the Members as she is taking her career in a new direction. We thank Lyndré for her time spent with Living Lands and wish her all the best in her new career.

Our Members include:

- Mr. Dieter van Den Broeck (Chair) (Commonland & Living Lands Co-founder)
- Dr. Matt Zylstra (EarthCollective, Living Lands Co-founder)
- Mr. Japie Buckle (DEA, Natural Resource Management)
- Ms. Rienette Colesky (Gamtoos Irrigation Board)
- Dr. Nina Rivers (Independent Researcher)
- Dr. Julia Glenday (SAEON, Hydrologist)
- Dr. Odirilwe Selomane (Researcher, Stockholm Resilience Centre)
- Ms. Thekla Teunis (Grounded)
- Dr. Rudolf de Groot (Non-voting) (Wageningen University)

7.2 CARETAKERS AND DIRECTORS

In line with our vision, our management team sees themselves as the Caretakers of the organisation rather than management. The Board of Directors, as stated in our Constitution, consists of three individuals. Dr. Odirilwe Selomane resigned in 2017 as Non-Executive Director due to the opportunity to work at the internationally renowned Stockholm Resilience Centre. He still serves Living Lands as a Member. For the vacant position the Board of Directors nominated Ms. Liezl le Roux, who already served as part of the Caretakers. All Members voted yes, and since October 2017 Ms. Liezl le Roux is part of the three Executive Directors responsible for the day to day care, direction and strategy of the organisation.

Our Board of Directors include:

- Mr. Marijn Zwinkels (Managing Director)
- Mr. Justin Gird (Strategic Director)
- Ms. Liezl le Roux (Knowledge and Creative Director)

Caretakers are internally based and focused on the organisation. They play an important dual role in ensuring the wellbeing of the organisation internally (i.e. team members) and provide managerial oversight to ensure the organisation is delivering on the landscapes. The organisation has a day to day caretaking team consisting of the Board of Directors and Mr. Steve Berry (Office Administrator).

8. CARETAKERS REFLECTION

2017 was a year marked with growth and depth in both the organisation and each of its team members. Following the Indaba in 2016, our aim was to bring clarity about what it is that we do, why we do it, and how we can do it better. In addition, we desired that as a team, we would enable the passion we have for our work.

We have been encouraged to see that the organisation has transformed from a start-up to an established, thriving scale-up. We are proud to say that Living Lands is doing well, and we are committed to transform landscapes and make an impact. Looking forward, we know that we also make mistakes and we hope to learn from these. We always aim to improve instead of staying dormant.

A TEAM REFLECTION

Our team has experienced tremendous growth this year, in both the work done on the landscapes and in every team member individually. 2017 was the year of implementation, especially in regard to our organisational structure.

One of the primary goals of the organisation for 2017 was implementing our resilience strategy. We needed to reduce the turnover of team members we had experienced in previous years. After all, Living Lands would not exist without the people in it. We are proud to share that our team has strengthened this year and have become more established and confident in their individual roles.

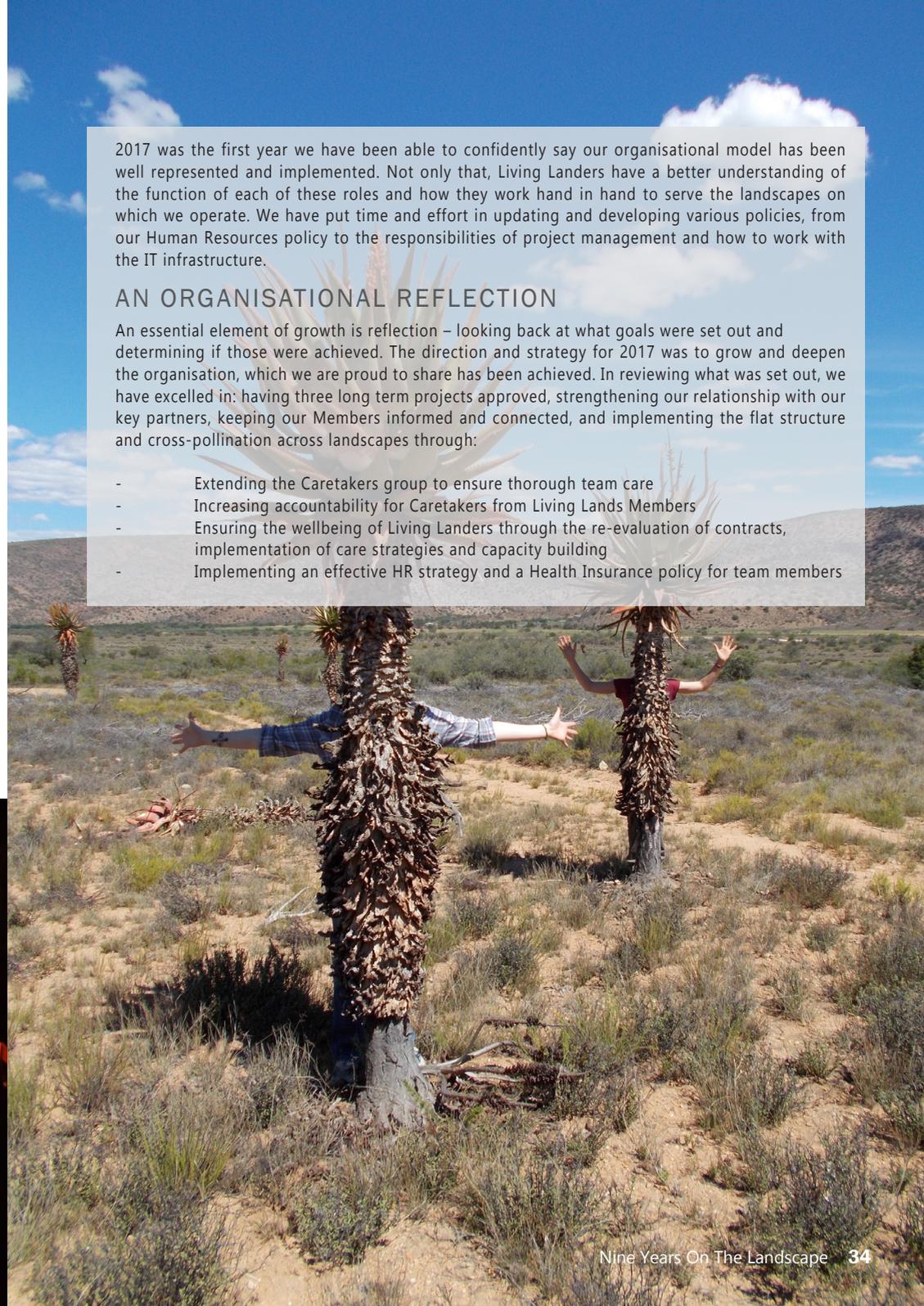
As a team, we took part in the Insights Training Course, which gave us in depth insight into one another's strengths, ideal communication methods and ways in which we can understand each other and work well together. This insight has transformed the way we communicate with one another and has enabled team members to fulfill roles they are able to thrive in.

2017 was the first year we have been able to confidently say our organisational model has been well represented and implemented. Not only that, Living Landers have a better understanding of the function of each of these roles and how they work hand in hand to serve the landscapes on which we operate. We have put time and effort in updating and developing various policies, from our Human Resources policy to the responsibilities of project management and how to work with the IT infrastructure.

AN ORGANISATIONAL REFLECTION

An essential element of growth is reflection – looking back at what goals were set out and determining if those were achieved. The direction and strategy for 2017 was to grow and deepen the organisation, which we are proud to share has been achieved. In reviewing what was set out, we have excelled in: having three long term projects approved, strengthening our relationship with our key partners, keeping our Members informed and connected, and implementing the flat structure and cross-pollination across landscapes through:

- Extending the Caretakers group to ensure thorough team care
- Increasing accountability for Caretakers from Living Lands Members
- Ensuring the wellbeing of Living Landers through the re-evaluation of contracts, implementation of care strategies and capacity building
- Implementing an effective HR strategy and a Health Insurance policy for team members



LOOKING FORWARD

As with any goal, there are areas in which we can continue to improve. Due to the vast amount of change within the organisation in 2017, there was not a lot of time for innovation and as a result, in 2018, we would like to develop a collective 5 year strategy, ensure Living Landers are supported and the organisation is financially sound.

We aim to explore other landscapes which we can support as well as implement a well-established knowledge arm of Living Lands. We aim to update the Living Landscape approach to ensure it is fresh, crisp and cutting edge. We are honoured to work within an incredible team, and desire that everyone will strengthen in their different roles within the organisation and in their lives personally. We remain confident that these and other goals will be successfully carried out, and that the team will continue to grow and thrive.

Since 2008, many lessons have been learnt from both failures and successes, and even more potential lies ahead for us. In terms of future goals, we aim to continue working as a family in our current landscapes, deepening and strengthening collaborations toward living landscapes, as well as expanding to other landscapes where similar needs have been identified.

9. FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

One of the most frequently asked questions we encounter is: "How do you get funding for your work?" The work we do requires financial support, and we are very fortunate to have received funding and support for our projects from various organisations over the years. We work on various projects on our different landscapes. These projects are funded by a wide variety of funders which enables us to do our work on the landscapes and implement our vision. We see our funding strategy as follows: we work in a similar way to a consultancy office where we have a client with a challenge. However, for us, the client is the landscapes we work on. Our client (the landscape) has a challenge and we take on that challenge and find funding elsewhere. This is done by writing project and funding proposals to possible funding organisations that have similar goals to Living Lands. There are a broad spectrum of funders, such as the South African Government, the private sector, international governments and landowners. The table below shows the success rate of our proposals for funding from 2014 to 2017.

	SUBMITTED	APPROVED	DECLINED	%APPROVED
2013	32	7	25	22%
2014	32	9	6	60%
2015	15	10	5	67%
2016	33	20	13	61%
2017	29	13	9	59%

The project funding supports the work on the landscape and supports the organisations' overheads. We are dedicated to keep our operational costs low. Our biggest expenses are staff salaries, which we consider to be the most important. Secondly, we have some operational costs which include development, learning and administration costs. The staff and operational budgets are drafted each year by the Directors and approved by the Caretakers and Members. The table below shows an overview of the growth in salary, operational and project expenditure from 2014 to 2017.

year end	EQUITY AND LIABILITES	PROFIT/LOSS	RETAINED INCOME
2014	R549,945	R182,470	R527,631
2015	R1,776,525	R1,090,216	R1,617,846
2016	R2,072,798	R416,756	R2,034,602
2017	R2,507,691	R465,496	R2,500,102
2018	R2,974,874	R257,691	R2,757,793

Each financial year, March to February, we are audited by Moore Stephens in Humansdorp, who supplies the organisation with an audit report. The audited annual financial statements are then sent to Members for review. We work closely with the Gamtoos Irrigation Board (GIB), who supports us with the administration of our financial records, manage bookkeeping and verify transactions. We consider the GIB Financial and Human Resource Manager, who is also one of our Members, our most important Financial Advisor. We are a financially healthy entity with increasing equity and liabilities over the past four years (2014-2017), as seen by the table below.

	SALARIES	OPERATION	PROJECTS*
2014	R736,057	R617,959	R953,675
2015	R1,512,980	R837,475	R1,646,300
2016	R2,220,704	R1,346,430	R3,401,672
2017	R3,007,500	R794,230	R4,603,511
2018	R5,234,000	R991,968	n/a

10. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Living Lands would not be as successful and vibrant as it is today without the people that have contributed and fed into the life of the organisation. We therefore take the opportunity to thank those who have been a part of the family, collaborated with us and learned with us.





