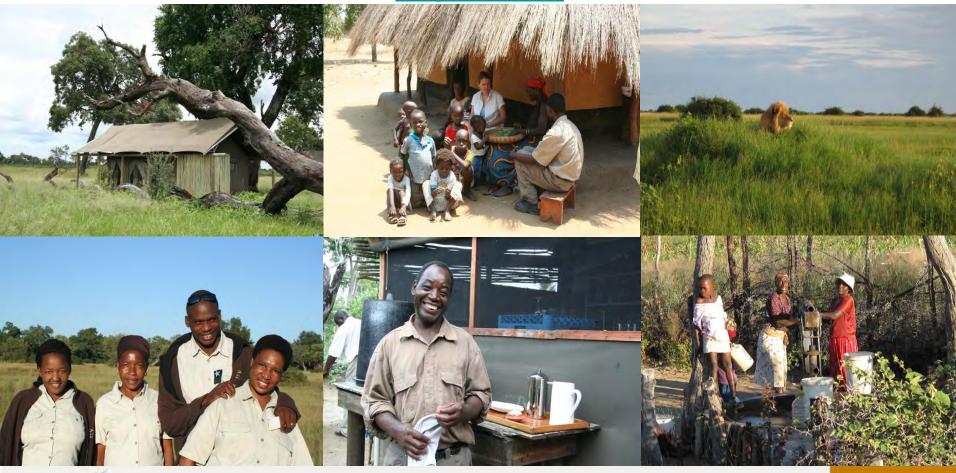
# HIGH-END ECOTOURISM AS A SUSTAINABLE LAND USE OPTION IN RURAL AFRICA:

THE ROLE OF EMPLOYMENT IN POVERTY REDUCTION & SOCIAL WELFARE

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# INTRODUCTION

#### Rural Communities characterised by:

- > Remote locations
- ➤ High levels of poverty & unemployment
- Low level of skills & education
- High dependency on natural resources for survival

#### New threat of climate change



Alternative income-earning opportunities that are sustainable



High-end Ecotourism



#### Problems:

- Declining biodiversity
- Increasing populations
- Immediate human needs
- Declining ecosystem resilience





# **BACKGROUND**

Subsistence Agriculture – focused on utilizing the land & natural resources in the area

**Protected areas** – can result in restrictions on land use being imposed on local communities

Climate change is resulting in a declining ability of traditional subsistence lifestyles to sustain rural populations



Need for <u>diversifying rural livelihoods</u> to reduce the risk faced by these households, reduce poverty and to improve social welfare





#### **METHODOLOGY**



Structured one-on-one questionnaire interviews

#### Study sites:

Botswana: Okavango Community Trust, Okavango Delta & Kwedi Concession

Namibia: Palmwag concession

Malawi: Liwonde National Park & adjacent communities

**Zimbabwe**: Hwange National Park & adjacent communities

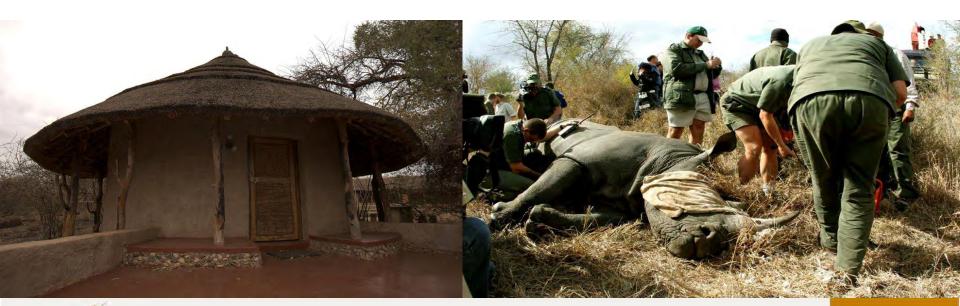
South Africa: Kruger National Park (Pafuri Camp) & Makuleke community

iSimangaliso National Park (Rocktail Beach Camp) & Mpukane community





- Questions on demographics, social welfare, education, employment, income, expenditure patterns, health, attitudes to conservation & tourism
- ❖ All tourism study sites were located in protected areas
- High-end category due to accommodation rate charged (USD 220-USD 484pppn)
- Communities were chosen as a result of their proximity to the ecotourism operation and/or conservation area or as a result of a relationship with the ecotourism operator
- Study sites had varying GDP per capita (USD 200-USD 10 866)
- ❖ 325 staff surveys conducted in 14 high-end ecotourism camps
- ❖ 1225 community surveys conducted in at least 30 different villages, covering more than 19 different ethnic groups





# **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

#### **DEMOGRAPHICS**

Age: On average, community respondents were older (M=39.97) than staff respondents (M=34.57). This difference was statistically significant.

#### **Gender:**

Gender	Staff	Community
Male	65%	38%
Female	35%	61%

Highlights the importance of engaging specifically with women in communities in terms of education about biodiversity conservation & the impacts of deforestation, etc.

Community respondents had, on average, more **children** (M=3.53) than staff respondents (M=2.54). This difference was found to be statistically significant [t(1539)=-5.52, p<0.05]





# Significant difference in mean number of years of **education**: **staff** mean of **9.28** years; **community** mean of **6.09** years

Respondents in countries with high *GDP per capita* had, on average, a higher mean number of years of education (M=7.33) than countries with a low GDP per capita (M=5.78), but this difference was not statistically significant



Illustrates an important role for the private sector in assisting in rural education – building schools, crechés, scholarships, etc. – in countries with a low GDP per capita & limited government social & financial support e.g. Malawi & Zimbabwe





#### HOUSEHOLD INCOME IMPACTS

Only 26% of community respondents had ever had a permanent job before For 59% of the staff respondents their current job in ecotourism is their **first permanent job** 



Importance of high-end ecotourism employment in remote rural areas in term of employment, skills training, development & empowerment

For 95% of the staff their salary from ecotourism is the MAIN source of income in the household & for 63% of them it was the ONLY source of income in the household.





#### HOUSEHOLD INCOME IMPACTS

No significant difference in the <u>number of household income sources</u> (M=1.00 for community & M=1.51 for staff)

#### Main community household income sources:

- > salaries of employed family members or spouses
- > farming
- > selling livestock
- pensions (in Namibia)
- ➤ social grants (South Africa)
- casual labour/piece jobs (Zimbabwe & Malawi)



Security of one permanent income source gives households financial security & allows them to invest in non-essential goods and services, such as higher education, better homes, generators, etc.

Clearly evidenced in an analysis of the expenditure patterns

Improved access to transport, communications, access to markets, etc:

Motor car in the household: 22% of staff; 7% of community

Mobile phone in the household: 80% of staff; 49% of community





## **HEALTH ISSUES**

#### **Respondents Aware of HIV Status:**

Country	Staff	Community
Zimbabwe	68%	46%
Malawi	74%	49%
South Africa	79%	57%

Health Status - Community respondents	%
Excellent	38%
Good	27%
Average	26%
Didn't Answer	0.5%
Poor	10%
Very poor	4%
Total	100%

Health Status - Staff respondents	%
Excellent	39%
Good	35%
Average	20%
Poor	5%
Very poor	1%
Total	100%













#### **ATTITUDES TO TOURISM & CONSERVATION**

#### **Problems with wild animals**

79% of community respondents & 61% of staff respondents 76% of women had problems with wild animals 75% of men had problems

#### Tourism camps create jobs for local people

65% of community respondents & 90% of staff respondents

#### Tourism camps help to reduce poverty in the area

80% of staff respondents & 54% of community respondents



#### Results indicate:

- ✓ that employment in high-end ecotourism has a positive effect on perceptions of conservation & ecotourism
- ✓ Widespread belief that tourism does help to create jobs & reduce poverty in rural areas associated with the conservation area







### **ATTITUDES TO TOURISM & CONSERVATION**

86% of community respondents feel that conservation is important & 8% said that it is not important

99% of staff respondents feel that conservation is important & only 0.9% said that they feel it is not important

Reasons given for the importance of conservation included: for tourism, jobs, income, animals provide meat, trees are life, trees bring rain, get meat from animals & firewood from trees and for the future/children



The tourism-related reasons given for the importance of conservation highlight the fact that the community & staff respondents DO value tourism as a land use in their area & perceive that there are benefits that can be derived from it











#### PAFURI CAMP – MAKULEKE CONTRACTUAL AREA







#### PAFURI CAMP – MAKULEKE CONTRACTUAL AREA

Size: 20 tents
No. of beds: 52

Permanent Staff: 52 - more than 85% of which come from the Makuleke community

Average number of dependents: 6.18

More than 270 people impacted by the employment at Pafuri Camp

73% of respondents had never had a permanent job before



Importance of skills training and development

Staff at Pafuri Camp spend the majority of their salary on food (30%), accounts (10%), savings (8%), casual labour (6%) and education (5%)





#### PAFURI CAMP – MAKULEKE CONTRACTUAL AREA

#### **Community Livestock**:

Average number per household:

Cattle: 0.94 (min. 0; max. 51) Goats: 0.66 (min. 0; max. 25) Chickens: 3.2 (min. 0; max. 36)

#### Community main household income sources:

Government grants (47%); family/spouse (24%); job (12%); piece jobs (6%)

# % community respondents who would like to visit the Park 92%





#### March 2008-March 2010 (2 financial periods)

- Makuleke bednight levies: R1.42 million
- Total staff costs: R7.5 million
  - Total contribution to the local economy/communities: R9.95 million

#### Improved social welfare:

- ✓ HIV testing for staff increases awareness
- ✓ Balanced/regular meals at work
- ✓ Ability to build better houses
- ✓ Afford tertiary education for children & other family members
- ✓ Children in the Wilderness programme & Environmental Clubs
- ✓ Community infrastructure Makuleke B&B; Hydroponic tunnels
- ✓ Pack for a Purpose





# **CONCLUSIONS**

Limited employment opportunities in many rural communities due mostly to the remote nature of the areas, lack of development & lack of infrastructure these are the qualities appealing for high-end ecotourism

<u>Poverty & unemployment levels</u> in these areas are often *very high* & the consequent opportunity costs of using the land for conservation and high-end ecotourism are also very high

It is therefore critical that *rural communities receive tangible benefits* that outweigh the costs that they have to bear: loss of livestock & crops to wild animals & loss or limitation of access to natural resources & land for agriculture

Results have shown that rural communities are relying heavily on the market economy in the form of high-end ecotourism for financial, and from there, social support.

<u>Importance of education</u> in securing permanent employment & from there creating a greater possibility of having a higher household income.



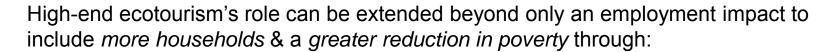




## **CONCLUSIONS**

- ➤ Amongst other things, the results indicate that countries with a <u>low GDP per capita</u> and a <u>high population density</u>, such as Malawi, would benefit greatly from projects relating to education: scholarships, stationery donations, environmental talks, etc.
- Participation of associated communities in development is critical to the long-term success
   & sustainability of any land use
- Accountability on the part of the ecotourism operator, as well as the communities involved, is also essential to sustainability
- Management of community expectations, as well as the empowerment of local people, is critical to sustainability







- > the use of local suppliers (expanding the multiplier effect)
- > selling of crafts
- > philanthropy of tourists
- sustainable community development projects that impact directly on social welfare

# Results show that high-end ecotourism does have the potential, if managed correctly, to assist in poverty reduction and in the improvement of social welfare in rural Africa





# THANK YOU

Data in this presentation is currently unpublished.

Please contact Sue Snyman (sues@wilderness.co.za or 011 257 5145) should you wish to cite any of the information in this presentation.



