



## NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY AND BUSINESS NETWORK - SOUTH AFRICA

### Report on Activities 2015



## National Biodiversity and Business Network (NBBN)



DE BEERS  
GROUP OF COMPANIES



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The South African National Biodiversity and Business Network (NBBN) has had a successful year in 2015 which saw some notable growth and an increase in the networks reach, especially through the Inaugural NBBN Indaba (conference). The NBBN presently has the same 6 corporate founding partners, although not all have confirmed their membership for 2016, including Pam Golding Properties and Hatch Goba. The confirmed partners for 2016 are De Beers, Transnet, Pick n Pay and Nedbank. The NBBN has approximately 550 people subscribed to the network.

#### Update on the implementation of NBBN strategy objectives

##### Objective: Approach new partners for the NBBN

The NBBN has approached 25-30 companies in last few months including ERM, Coca Cola, Old Mutual and Santam, amongst others. A total of 12 proposals were prepared and two companies have indicated their willingness to become partners, including Digby Wells and Eskom. Two 'in-kind' supporting partners are confirmed for 2016 including ERM and the JSE. Many 'no's' received – mostly due to the current financial climate. Mines are particularly cash strapped at present.

##### Objective: Ensuring sustainability of the NBBN

The NBBN is currently working with IUCN and (ACTS) on developing concept notes to secure funding for three key activities in the NBBN strategy. The NBBN is also committed to reviewing other business and biodiversity initiatives worldwide in order to try and understand how their operating and financial models work, and to see what lessons we can learn from them. The NBBN has been in

contact with 12 other biodiversity and business initiatives and has gathered information from them. The NBBN will produce a report with the findings of this work and publish a paper along these lines. The NBBN is also committed to developing a communication strategy. This will be a priority in the second half of 2016.

Objective: Develop the business case for mainstreaming biodiversity

The IUCN, ACTS and the NBBN will be working together to develop an online South African business and biodiversity mainstreaming toolkit which will include a number of SA specific case studies.

The NBBN toolkit will be South African specific in terms of legislation and in terms of what existing biodiversity data is available. The plan is not to invent new tools but rather to make use of existing tools. The toolkit will showcase the biodiversity mainstreaming work of SA companies and can also be used by the NBBN to attract new partners.

Objective: Develop a monitoring and performance framework

The IUCN, ACTS and the NBBN will be working together to develop and test a biodiversity performance monitoring framework. External funding will be sourced for this work. A concept note is in the process of being developed.

Objective: Disseminate business and biodiversity information

Business and biodiversity related information is being shared through NBBN newsletters (distributed on a monthly basis) and through the events presented by the NBBN. The NBBN has presented the following events to date:

- Inaugural NBBN Indaba

In February 2015, the NBBN held its inaugural Indaba (conference) at the Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS) in Johannesburg, South Africa. The event was the first of its kind in South Africa and was primarily focussed on the importance of mainstreaming sustainability issues, amongst them biodiversity, into business. Large, medium and small businesses were encouraged to attend the Indaba as a proactive step towards furthering their understanding of the risks and opportunities that biodiversity presents to their bottom line and learning about how best to respond to them so as to remain competitive in our fast-changing world. Over 150 people attended the two-day event, including representatives from government bodies, large corporations, NGO's, the South African Chamber of Mines and financial institutions. There were a number of notable guest speakers as well as panel discussions around issues business and government are facing in terms of mainstreaming biodiversity into business.

- Event: Latest Developments in Natural Capital

The NBBN also hosted an event in Johannesburg, South Africa in June on the latest developments in natural capital. The event was aimed at presenting the latest tools and methods available to corporations for mainstreaming biodiversity into their business practices. There were around 40 attendees at the event, mostly from a couple of large mining companies as well as from two of the largest consulting firms in South Africa.

- Event: Investment in Ecological Infrastructure

The NBBN, in partnership with the uMngeni Ecological Infrastructure Programme, presented the NBBN's first ever event in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa on 1 October 2015 on the subject of investment in ecological infrastructure. The event aimed to introduce business to the concept of investment in ecological infrastructure and sought to broaden the NBBN's reach into KZN and increase the possibilities for the establishment of partnerships with companies based in that province. Well over 80 people attended the event and there was a very enthusiastic response to

the event from a wide variety of stakeholders in KZN including business, NGOs, natural capital specialists, academics and government.

The NBBN has also prepared the following documentation:

- Scoping Report: The NBBN, in collaboration with the South African Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA), prepared a report entitled 'Overview of current approaches and practices of South African businesses to the mainstreaming of biodiversity - A Preliminary Baseline Assessment' which was published and launched by DEA in November at the Biodiversity Economy Indaba Event held in KwaZulu Natal, South Africa. The NBBN will be holding its own launch of the document sometime in early 2016.
- Pam Golding Biodiversity Guide: The NBBN was also involved in developing a biodiversity guide for the real estate industry in South Africa. This document was launched at an event in November.

The NBBN will be present at the ESP conference in Stellenbosch in November. The NBBN has committed to assisting the South African Mining and Biodiversity Forum (SAMBF) for the next three years to help with two working groups. The NBBN is also committed to develop a one pager for SAMBF on the biodiversity and business case. This document is being developed for senior management, detailing why they should be addressing biodiversity issues. The NBBN is not currently aware of similar forums for other sectors as yet. The NBBN needs to ensure that the recommendations made in the break-away groups during the NBBN Indaba are put forward to the sectors that were involved.

The IUCN, ACTS and the NBBN are also looking at developing accredited biodiversity training courses in partnership with a South African university. A concept note is currently being developed for the purposes of sourcing the necessary funding.

#### Objective: Facilitate biodiversity mainstreaming into partner organisations

The NBBN has engaged with each of the partner companies on the proposed scope of work for this. The process of the NBBN assisting partner companies to mainstream biodiversity into their activities has begun and will be completed by June 2016.

#### Objective: Ensure biodiversity is mainstreamed into policy and regulatory framework

The NBBN, IUCN and ACTS propose to look at existing South African policy documents and legal requirements to identify opportunities to facilitate private sector investment in natural capital management, stewardship and restoration. A concept note has been developed to assist with securing funding for this work.

We want to identify all the legal barriers to investment in natural capital. We want to see through the legislation where we can provide better incentives for private sector to spend on natural capital maintenance. Currently all the money for natural capital restoration is coming from DEA and this is not sustainable. We need to make it financially viable for companies to invest in natural systems.

#### **NBBN 5-year Strategy**

In June 2015 the NBBN finalised its first ever five year strategy document. The document outlines the aim of the NBBN, as well as its governance structures, the activities of the network and the long-term strategic objectives. A detailed implementation schedule was also drawn up which details the

deadlines, targets and goals which need to be met by the NBBN going forward. The following long-term (3 – 5 years) strategic objectives were proposed for the NBBN:

1. Develop the NBBN as a sustainable platform to drive the mainstreaming of biodiversity into business.
  - o This could be done through broadening the network's reach (build on suggestions from Pan-African Business and Biodiversity Forum 2015)
2. Promote an understanding of biodiversity related business risks and opportunities amongst business, and the need to mainstream it into their strategies and activities.
  - o Develop the business case for mainstreaming biodiversity – this would have greater impact if it was private sector driven. There are some valuable case studies out there. To this effect, DEA would like to establish criteria for business and biodiversity initiatives which would eventually evolve into a clearing house mechanism. This is the intention in their strategic plan for the next few years.
3. Business and biodiversity information is shared and training programmes are developed and implemented to further the mainstreaming of biodiversity into business.
  - o The NBBN will consider future partnerships - in DEA there are many cross-cutting events, projects and programmes from other branches (e.g. climate change, air quality, etc.)
4. Capacity building interventions, biodiversity mainstreaming tools and pilot projects are implemented to support the mainstreaming of biodiversity into business.
  - o The NBBN may want to consider a barometer model, similar to the one presented by the Global Partnership, to measure impact. Need to put in place monitoring and evaluation process without creating additional reporting burdens.
5. Mainstream biodiversity into the activities and strategies of business.
  - o Ensure biodiversity is mainstreamed into policy and regulatory framework
  - o The NBBN will consider outcomes from the 2015 Finland B&B Forum and the draft recommendations for COP. In addition, DEA is in the process of amending NEMBA; therefore we need to ensure a provision that speaks to business and biodiversity is considered, possibly around standards, reporting and self-administration.

#### **Additional resources**

The NBBN may consider a resource mobilisation framework. South Africa is part of the BioFin Project and the Green Fund, which could offer opportunities for collaboration, since these organisations want to make the link with biodiversity.

#### **2016 Prospects**

The NBBN is hoping to participate in IUCN World Conservation Congress in September 2016. A proposal to present a poster at the conference has been submitted. The NBBN is also aiming to host a second Indaba in October 2016 after the success of its inaugural event. Three other events (especially a number of sector-specific events) will be held by May 2016. A property sector document that was produced with the assistance of the NBBN and is currently going to print will hopefully be launched in the first quarter of 2016.