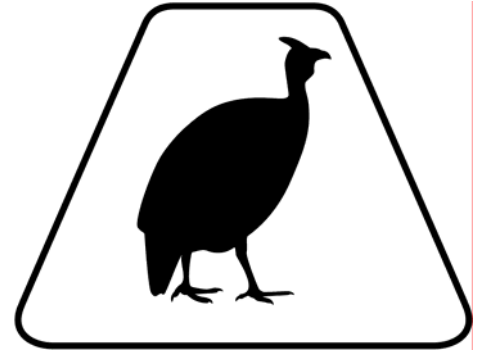


ESTABLISHING A RURAL CONSERVANCY. CONSERVANCIES IN AGRICULTURAL AREAS



There is a perception that conservancies *must* be established in ecological pretty areas where there are endangered species, the area must be fenced off and amounts of game and other wildlife must be introduced into these areas. This is absolutely not the case with conservancies. As said in the introduction, conservancies give the people in areas that are not suitable for nature reserves the opportunity to get involved in conservation and environmental management.

In the farming areas a conservancy can be established in all kinds of farming activities, like irrigation farms, intensive stock farming areas, desert areas, etc.

CONSERVANCIES CAN BE ESTABLISHED IN ANY AREA!!!

HOW DO I ESTABLISH A RURAL CONSERVANCY?

The most important thing is to believe in the conservancy concept. If you don't know the conservancy concept, Contact your provincial association for help.

When a community is interested in the formation of a conservancy and you are approached for information the following steps can be taken

1. Get a contact person and arrange a meeting with the interested parties. (This is usually after hours).
2. Make sure that you are at the venue at least 15 minutes before the scheduled time. This will give you time to arrange your equipment (if you have) and documents. It is important that you give an information talk and if you have audio-visual equipment, use it.

THE INFORMATION TALKS.

1. Begin your talk with background on conservancies, where did it start, types of conservancies, how many are there in your province and where they are.
2. If you have a slide projector use it to show the different biomes and farming activities and this is to indicate to the audience that conservancies can be established in any area. There does not have to be big game in the conservancy and the area does not have to be fenced off

DISADVANTAGES OF A CONSERVANCY

- Apathy amongst members
- bad conservancy management

HOW DOES A CONSERVANCY GET UN-INVOLVED?

- Personal differences
- Political differences
- Social differences
- Droughts and other natural disasters
- Apathy
- Bad communication
- Co-operation
- Lack of interest from the applicable authority
- Finances

Above mentioned is totally unnecessary and are not supposed to influence the existence of a conservancy. A conservancy can actually address these problems. These days it is so important to work together and when it is done in a socio economic way thus the better.

Conservancies in rural areas are a success even though great percentages are not that active, they still work together.

The question to be asked is why there are so many conservancies and why are so many being established in all the provinces and even abroad.

If the group of people that you are addressing is interested in the formation of a conservancy the following steps can be taken.

- Elect a steering committee
- Elect a facilitator
- Arrange a date for the next meeting

THE DUTY OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE IS TO SEE IF,

- The establishment of a conservancy is viable.
- To establish the boundaries of the conservancy.
- Arrange a meeting with the interested people.
- Inform the Provincial Association about the meeting.

ESTABLISHING MEETING

Usually a talk like the first one (be prepared) is necessary because there will be people that were not at the first meeting. At this meeting the conservancy can be established this all depends on the group of people attending.

The people decide that the conservancy must be established a name must be chosen for the conservancy. The conservancy will now be registered and a committee will be elected. This is where you can come in and explain that women can manage a conservancy just as well as men.

The committee can consist of a;

Chairperson Vice Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and Additional members

This committee will draft a constitution. This constitution will be handed to the rest of the members for their approval or so that changes can be made.

FINANCE

If the conservancy wants to generate finds, the following can be recommended;

- Try to get sponsors and donations.
- Membership fee

- Eco-tourism
- Farm holiday

One can look at a couple of Eco-tourism products;

- Farm holidays
- Hiking trails
- Mountain bike trails
- Horse trails
- Scenic routes
- Birding
- Cultural historical sites

With all these type of activities the disadvantaged communities can benefit from the conservancy as well by presenting their services by selling artifacts.

What type of administration is needed with the action to establish a conservancy?

- Attendance register
- Registration form of rural conservancies
- Provincial Association application forms
- A business plan

QUESTIONS ASKED AT THE MEETINGS.

- Q. What does it cost to establish a conservancy?
A. It cost nothing.
- Q. Will the establishment of a conservancy influence the farming practices?
A. Not at all.
- Q. Will the Authorities prescribe the farmers on farming practices?
A. No!
- Q. How much must the membership fees be?
A. This must be decided by the committee. A business plan must be drawn up to see what the needs are and then an amount can be set.
- Q. What if a farmer in the middle does not want to join?
A. He can be left out, he will join eventually.