



Introducing the Soutpansberg Protected Area Programme



Introducing The Soutpansberg



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- It has over **2,443** vascular plant species; nearly the same amount of species as the whole of Canada.
- The Soutpansberg is also remarkable for its tree and shrub species, with **594** species identified. **This is a higher number than in any other area of comparable size in South Africa.** For example, one property, **Leshiba, (2,540 ha) alone has more tree species than the whole of greater Kruger National Park (nearly 2.3 million ha)!**
- **21 scorpion** species, of which 2 are endemic. The **Soutpansberg Rock Scorpion**, is one of the biggest scorpions in the world, with males reaching more than **20 cm** in length.
- **Over 550 different spider species**, many of which are undescribed, and **six of which are known endemics.**
- **Over 140 reptile species**, including **16 endemics** such as the Soutpansberg Dwarf Gecko and Soutpansberg Rock Lizard.
- **152 mammal species**, which includes **63% of all mammals found in South Africa**, and is comparable to the Kruger National Park, despite being only a third of its size.
- Cultural heritage sites, including multiple San and Khoi Khoi Rock Art sites
- Incredible views and sense of place



Introducing The UNESCO Vhembe Biosphere Reserve

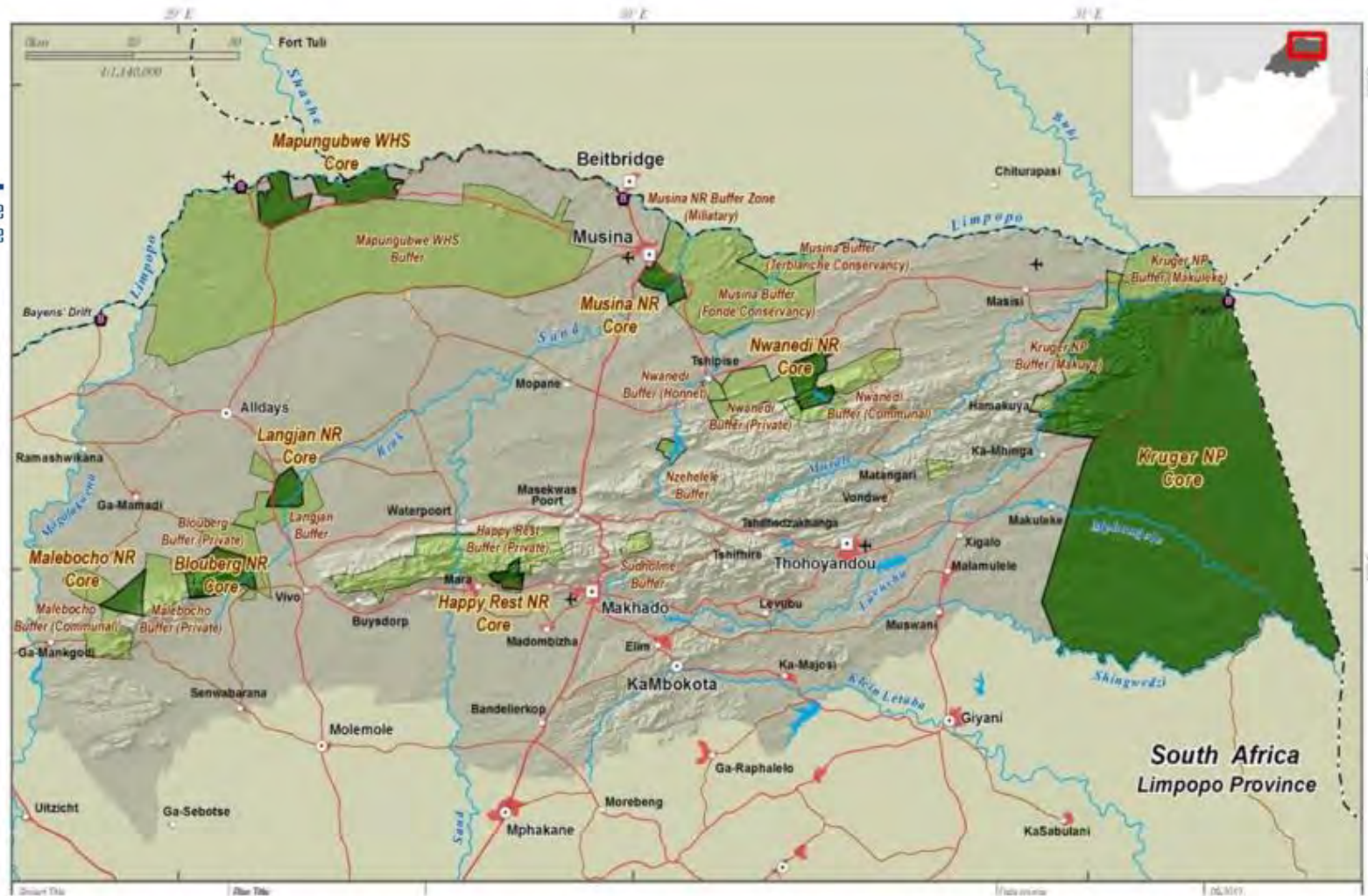
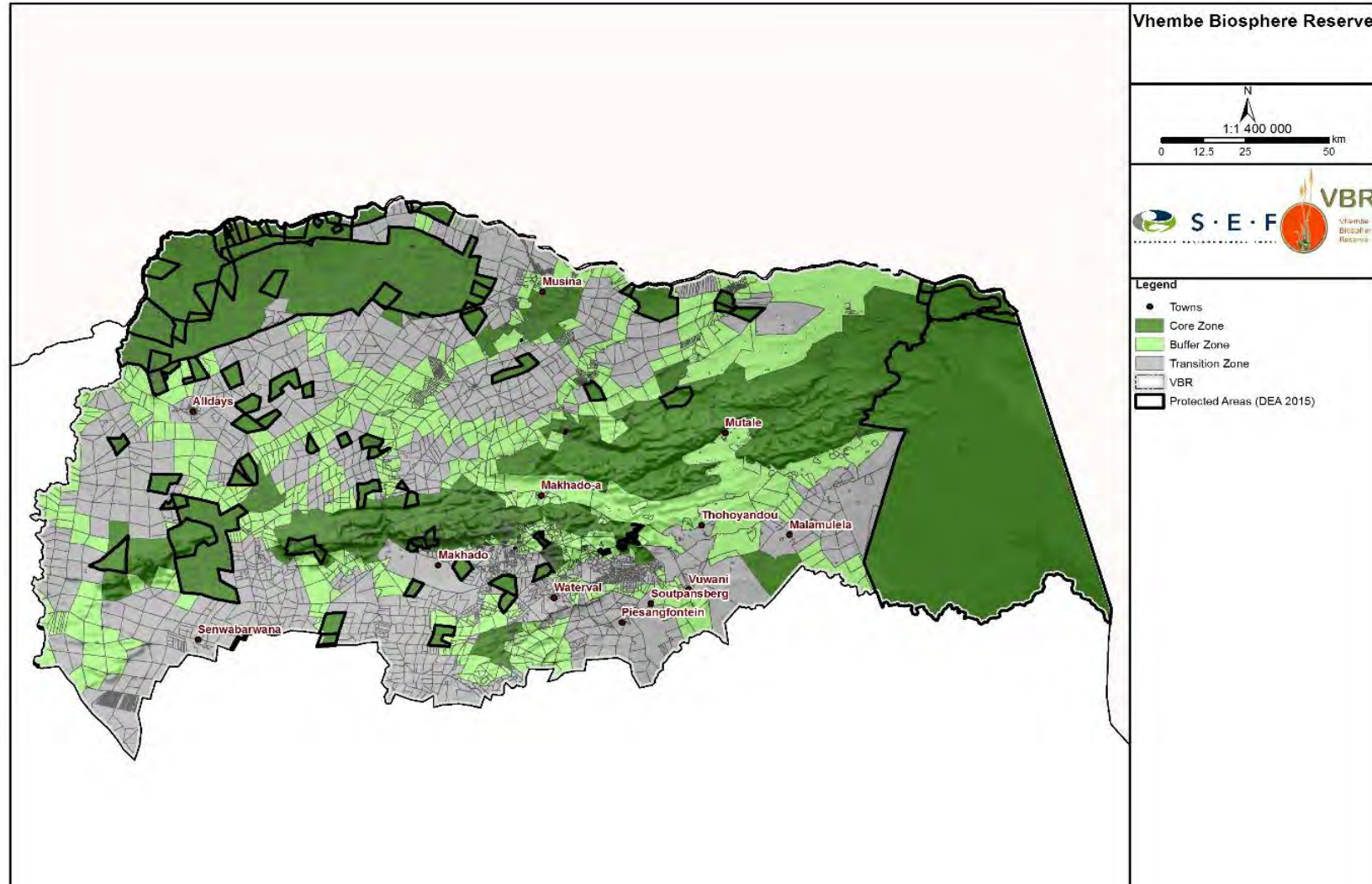


Figure 1: The Vhembe Biosphere Reserve with Core Areas in dark green Buffer Zones in lighter green and Transition Areas in grey

The UNESCO Vhembe Biosphere Reserve SEMP



SEF (2016): DRAFT VBR Initial Strategic Environmental Management Plan (SEMP), Desired State and Environmental Management Guidelines

National Protected Area Expansion Strategy

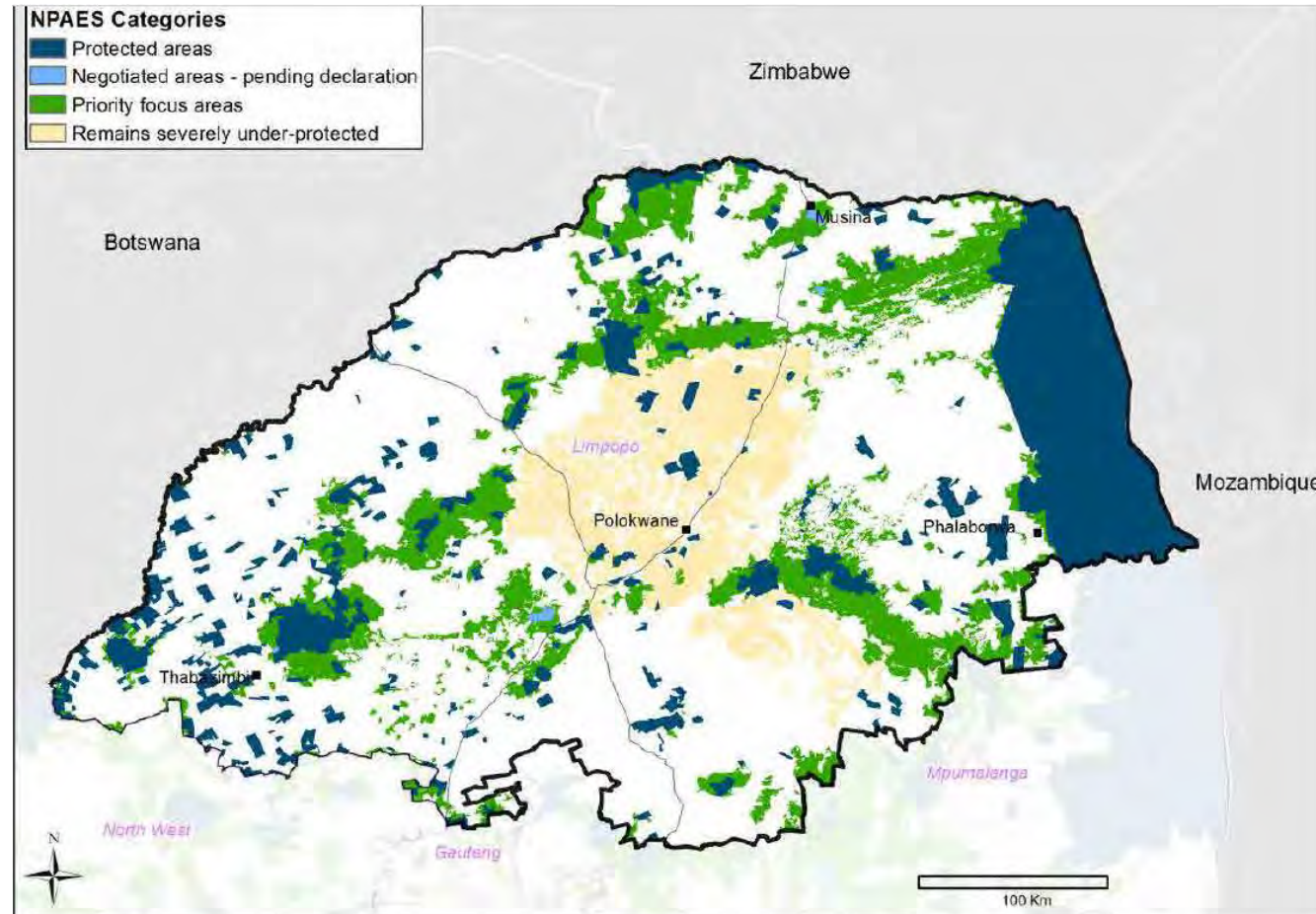
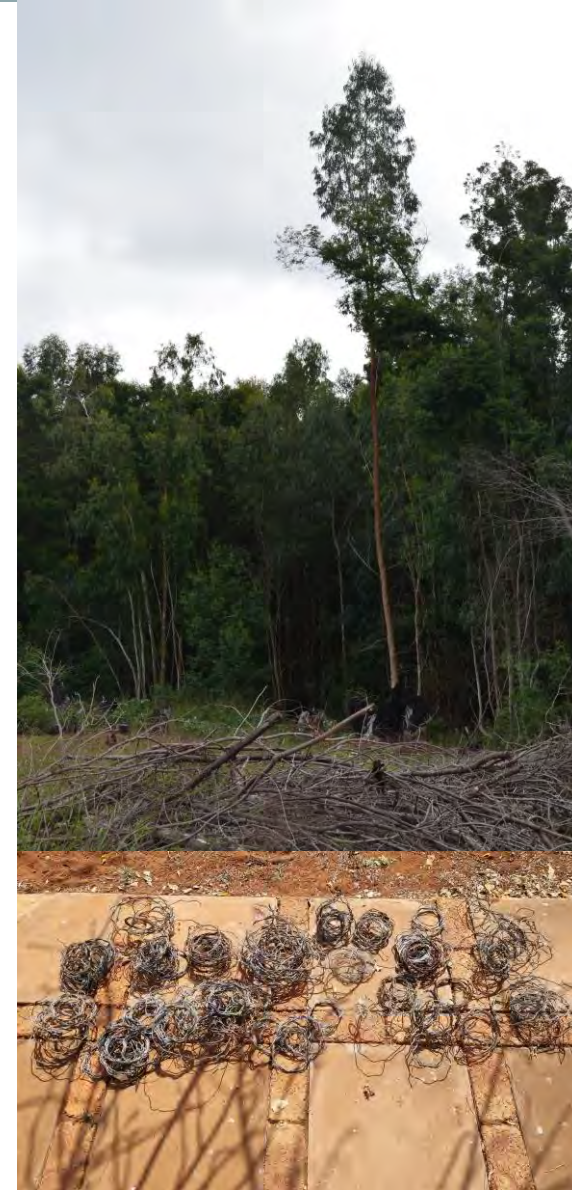


Figure 15: Priority areas for protected area expansion in Limpopo

Threats to the area



- Land transformation for unsuagricultural development
- Poaching
 - Bush meat – snaring
 - Illegal trade (animal plants)
 - Illegal un-sustainable medicinal plant harvesting
- Invasive alien plants
- Bush encroachment
- Illegal sand mining for housing construction
- Legally, only 2% of the Soutpansberg is formally protected in reserves



What we are doing about it:



Vision: Secure the Western Soutpansberg through collective impact for ecological integrity and human wellbeing

Protect

- Protected Area Expansion through Biodiversity Stewardship (NPAES)
- Property ownership and management
- Participation in EIAs
- Environmental Sustainability
- **Anti-poaching programme**

Restore

- Alien plant control
- Bush encroachment control
- Erosion control
- Waste management

Sustainable Living Lands

- Regenerative and Conservation compatible agriculture (permaculture, organic) (JB)
- Water, Sanitation and Hygiene training (WASH)
- Job creation – Ranger Programme
- Enterprise Development

Sustainable Financing Options

SPA: Conservation Consulting Services Eco-Tourism Development, Fundraising events

Research, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

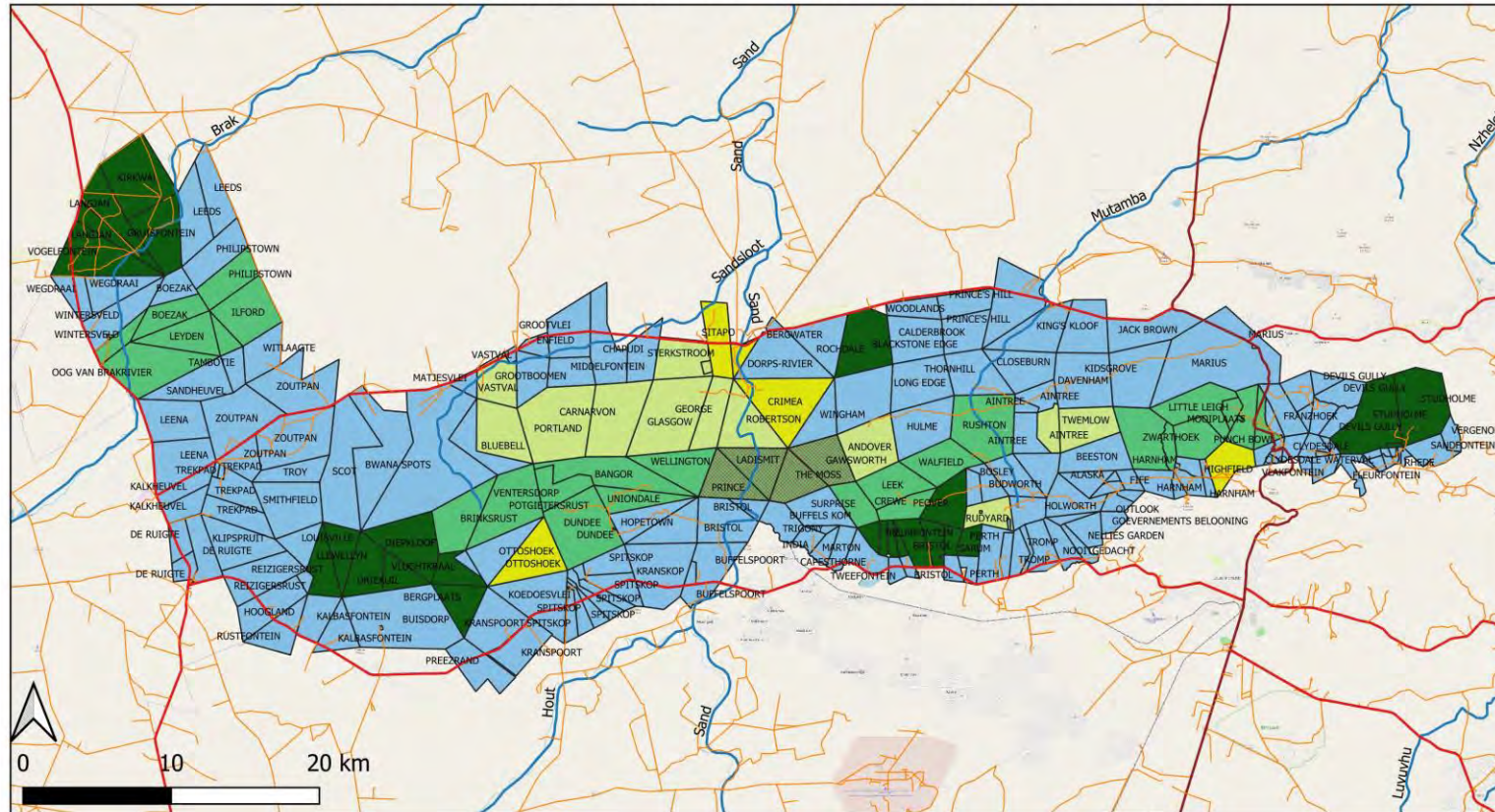
1. Protect: EWT Medike Nature Reserve



1. Protect: the Western Soutpansberg Nature Reserve



Western Soutpansberg Protected Areas Expansion Progress



Legend

- W Soutpansberg Protected Areas 2023
- Private or provincial nature reserve
- Phase 1- Notice of Intent Gazetted Dec 21
- Nature Reserve Status 14 March 2019
- Committing to Stewardship
- Landowner to be contacted
- EWT Medike Nature Reserve
- Rivers
- Roads
- Main Road
- National Road
- Secondary Road



1. Protect: Anti-Poaching Unit



Snare sweeps:



Vision: Introduce a Dog Unit to detect snares



2. Restore: Alien clearing



BEFORE: 2018



AFTER: 2021



PROGRESS TO DATE:

- 56 ha *Eucalyptus sp.* and *Acacia mearnsii* cleared within riparian zones on Stewardship Sites
- 16 people employed
- 18 Million Liters replenished to catchment

Biomass utilised for firewood:



Alien clearing progress



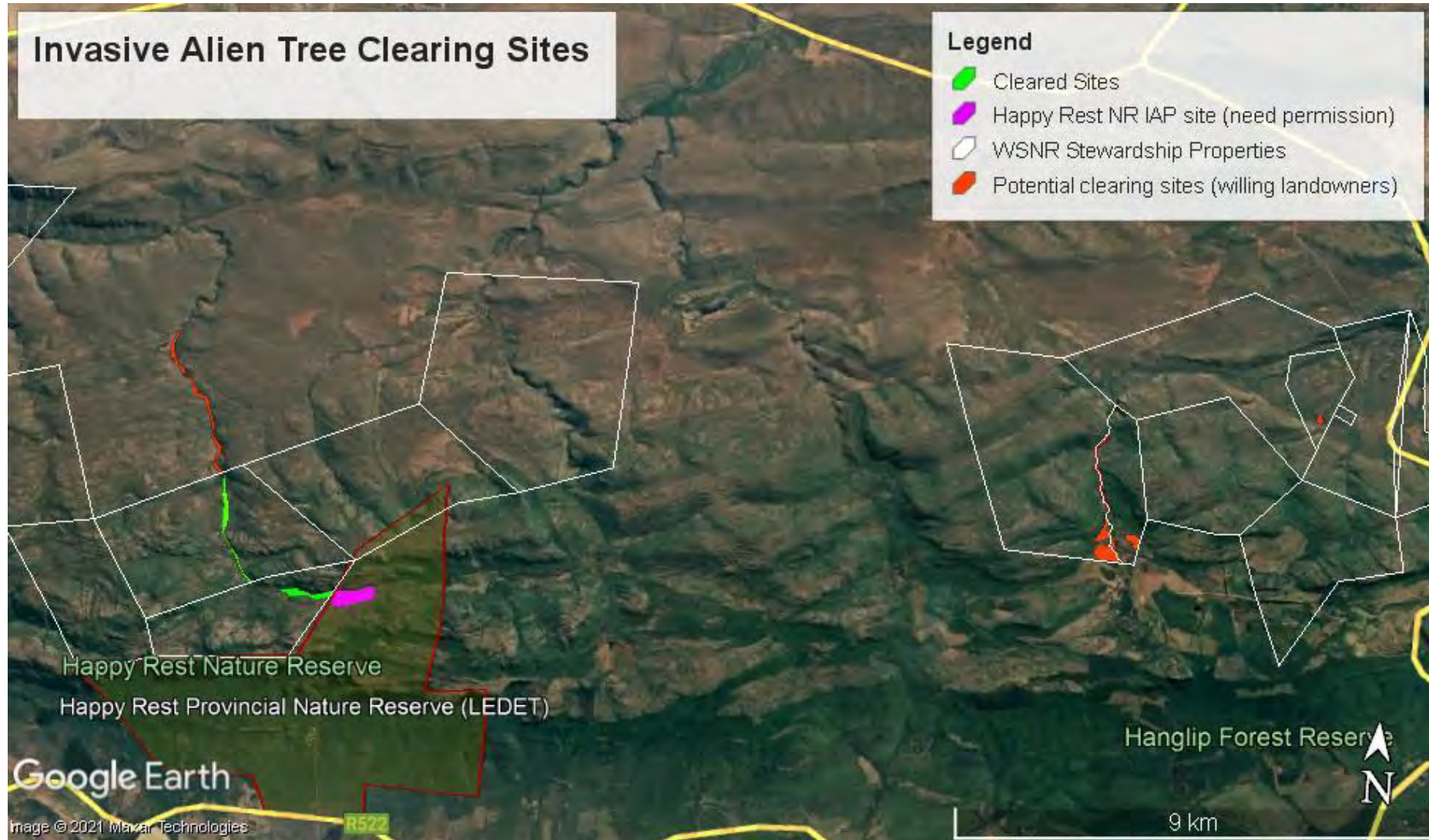
Before:



After clearing:



2. Invasive Alien Tree clearing sites – East WSNR



3. Sustainable Living Lands: Ranger Programme



Skills Development and training:



Reserve maintenance and infrastructure upgrades:



Anti-poaching:



Alien clearing:



Research & monitoring:



3. Sustainable Living Lands - WASH



3. Sustainable Living Lands – Farmer Training



3. Sustainable Living Lands – Regenerative Agriculture



4. Sustainable financing - Eco-tourism development: The Old Salt Trail

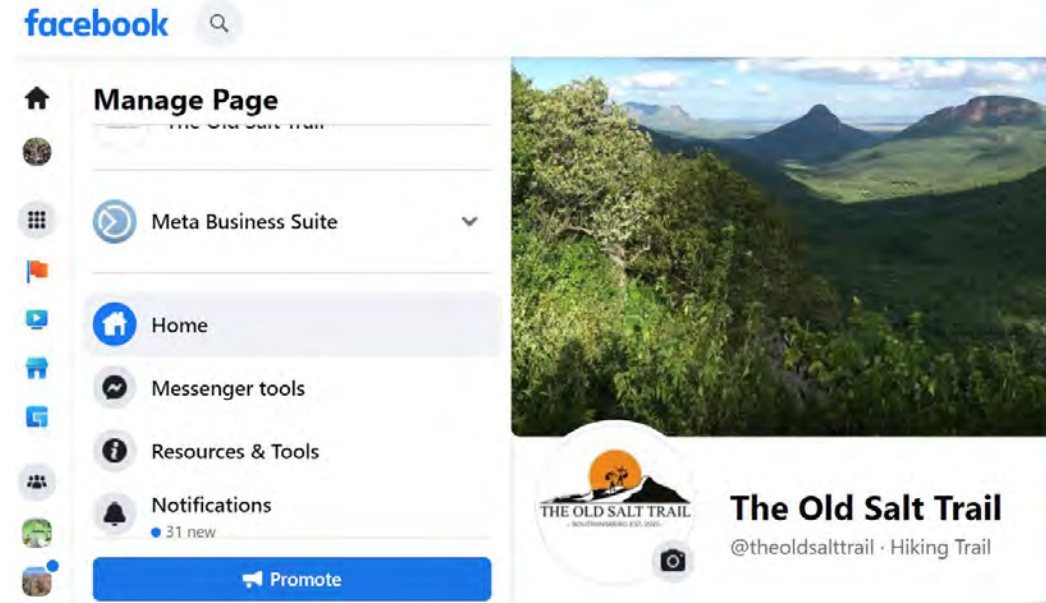




Find out more and spread the word:



Website: <https://www.ewt.org.za/old-salt-trail/>
EWT website, under 'Destinations' tab:



4. Soutpansberg Mountain Marathon



4. Eco-tourism development: 4x4 trails and camp sites



Research and Monitoring



Samantha



Thor



Unidentified



How you can support:



Donations: section 18 A certificates and exposure

Brand Alignment with EWT

Support a Ranger

Ranger Sports Development

Equipment and Training

Infrastructure Development and Upgrades

Support our Research



Come and visit the Soutpansberg!



Contact: Cath Vise

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Thank you!

