



**Country:** South Africa  
**Sector:** Agriculture  
**Project:** Collaborating to facilitate investments and shifts to a green economy that can improve social wellbeing and the provision of ecosystem services in the Port Elizabeth western catchment areas.  
**Grantee:** Living Lands

## Acknowledgements

The SWITCH Africa Green programme was developed by the European Commission to support African countries in their transition to an inclusive green economy, the main objective being to promote sustainable development. This is based on sustainable consumption and production (SCP) patterns, while generating growth, creating decent jobs and reducing poverty.

This impact sheet on 'Collaborating to facilitate investments and shifts to a green economy that can improve social wellbeing and the provision of ecosystem services in the Port Elizabeth western catchment areas' provides a snapshot of results and achievements of the project under the Green Business Development Component of Phase I (2014-2019) of the SWITCH Africa Green programme. This component supported micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) in applying and adopting SCP practices within their business operations.

The project was implemented by Living Lands with the support of the SWITCH Africa Green National Focal Point Dr. Jenitha Badul - Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) and National Coordinator, Wakhile Mkhonza, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), South Africa. The grants were managed by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) and coordinated by Celia Marquez with support from Mercy Gatobu.

Supervision and coordination for development of the impact sheet was carried out by Rhoda Wachira and Patrick Mwesigye and programme support was provided by Carolyne Kilel and Sylvia Munuhe, Africa Office, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

The impact sheet was compiled by Sheila Karue, consultant, UNEP. Editing, layout and design was coordinated by the communication division, UNEP.

UNEP is grateful for the financial support provided by the European Union (EU) for implementation of the SWITCH Africa Green programme.

## Background

The project was implemented in the Langkloof region in the Eastern Cape, South Africa to facilitate the development of a green economy by collaboratively developing business models for sustainable agriculture and environmental restoration, as well as promoting value addition. The intention of the project was to ensure that the landscape is organised, prepared and investment-ready, so that MSMEs practising sustainable agriculture and environmental restoration can develop in the area .

The Langkloof region faces risks such as droughts, floods and fires which in turn have a great negative impact on the livelihoods of local communities. Additionally, land degradation presents a serious threat to ecosystem function in the area. The ecosystem is threatened by invasive species as well as agricultural activities. The region is prone to rampant fires, whose intensity is exacerbated by the invasive species making them hotter and causing more destruction and land degradation. The region is characterized by lack of employment opportunities because of the seasonal nature of deciduous fruit farming; income to smallholder farmers is limited to specific months in a year.

The SWITCH Africa Green supported project focused on four core themes, namely sustainable agriculture, environmental restoration, value-added businesses and stakeholder participation to promote sustainability.

## Beneficiaries

The project supported 126 MSMEs to promote sustainable agriculture and environmental restoration.

## Objectives

- Create sustainable agricultural and environmental restoration and complementary value-added businesses in the Langkloof region through public and private partnerships
- Facilitate engagement between stakeholders to promote sustainable agriculture and environmental restoration and identify complementary value-adding business plans and set up a collective organization to coordinate implementation of the plans
- To mentor and build the capacity of historically marginalized farmers and residents
- Facilitate and support the collective development of viable and marketable business models
- Identify and engage willing external investors from government and business to invest in the landscape green business models developed

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**126 MSMEs were supported to build their capacity in sustainable agriculture practices and environmental conservation.**

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## Outputs

### Improved awareness on sustainable agriculture among smallholder farmers

Through the project 126 MSMEs were supported to build their capacity in sustainable agriculture practices and environmental conservation.

### Improved institutional coordination to promote green business development

Through project support, a water fund was established which consisted of a steering committee and working group. The water fund served as a platform to identify priority areas for rehabilitation and directing funds towards ecosystems conservation.

### Improved capacities of smallholder farmers in SCP and green business practices

The smallholder farmers were trained on sustainable agriculture



and green business development through eight training workshops. Skills that they were trained on include composting, rehabilitation, nursery building, honey bush ecology and first aid.

### Informational toolkits developed

A total of 10 toolkits on eco-entrepreneurship were developed and provided to the beneficiary MSMEs. The toolkits included modules on honey bush cultivation, composting, seedling nursery, first aid, erosion control, riparian species, wild honey bush and fixed-point photography.

### Improved capacities of green businesses to develop bankable projects

With the support of SWITCH Africa Green, beneficiaries developed three business plans: honey bush cultivation, honey bush seedling nursery and composting facility.

### Outcomes

#### Improved access to finance for green MSMEs

One of the beneficiaries, Garden Route Biosphere Reserve, received funding of USD2,600 for their proposal on making compost and demonstrating the value of composting to the community. The project will be implemented in Haarlem together with the Haarlem Women's Forum, who indicated great interest in composting, specifically with materials derived from invasive species.

The DOEN Foundation donated USD 427,000 to implement the proposed business plan to establish a sustainable honey bush enterprise. Of the amount, USD177,000 was a grant for on-

the-ground support to capacitate and mentor farmers and harvesters and drive sustainable practices and USD250,000 was a convertible loan to set up the proposed company that will process and market honey bush.

### Impacts

#### Environmental impacts

Water conservation and waste management was improved through skills development on composting provided to MSMEs. This aided water conservation as the compost forms a top layer which acts as an effective barrier against evaporation of soil moisture. Composting also helped the farmers convert organic waste from their farms such as animal waste and leaves into compost.

#### Social impact

Occupational health and safety practices were improved through training project beneficiaries on first aid. They received basic skills to equip them in handling emergencies to which the honey bush harvesters are highly prone, as they work in the fields away from health facilities.

#### Economic impact

The project had a great impact on women. One of the beneficiaries, Haarlem Women's Forum, set up their own nursery where they produce their own seedlings. They no longer have to travel over 1,000 kms away to Knoll to procure seedlings. By producing their own seedlings, the cost per seedling decreased drastically, thereby increasing their profit margins.

### Lessons learnt

- Training MSMEs on sustainable agriculture practices and green business development in smaller groups located within the same area is more effective as it can be tailored to their respective contexts
- Leveraging on existing platforms to engage with stakeholders involved in agriculture to promote SCP and green business development was effective and reduced the burden of duplicating working groups
- Review of project monitoring and evaluation framework helped to make improvements which enabled better reporting on project implementation and results
- Lack of security of tenure hinders the ability of smallholder farmers to generate income from agriculture, therefore affecting continuity of sustainable agricultural practices



“It is wonderful to use available waste material to make something good for the soil.”

Mr. Stanlake Kasinamoryi, farmer, Eastern Cape, South Africa.



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