



PARTICIPATION AND KNOWLEDGE IN SUSTAINABLE WILDFLOWER HARVESTING

A Case Study of South African Multi-Stakeholder Initiatives

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AIMS

- Paper explores a very particular, local articulation of neo-liberal forms of governance—an initiative for sustainable wildflower harvesting in the Western Cape of South Africa.

- Focus on the forms of participation and knowledgeable practices constituting the work of the Flower Valley Conservation Trust (FVCT), a multi-stakeholder initiative working towards the conservation of the unique *fynbos* ecosystem and the socio-economic empowerment of marginalized people in the region through engagement with the market.



OUTLINE

- Introduction: practice-based and geographical perspectives on multi-stakeholder initiatives
- South African wildflower harvesting, the Flower Valley Conservation Trust and sustainability standard setting
- Defining and operationalizing sustainability through networks of multi-stakeholder initiatives
- Multi-stakeholder knowledges of sustainable harvesting and the challenges of participation and inclusion



INTRODUCTION: PRACTICE-BASED AND GEOGRAPHICAL PERSPECTIVES ON MULTI-STAKEHOLDER INITIATIVES

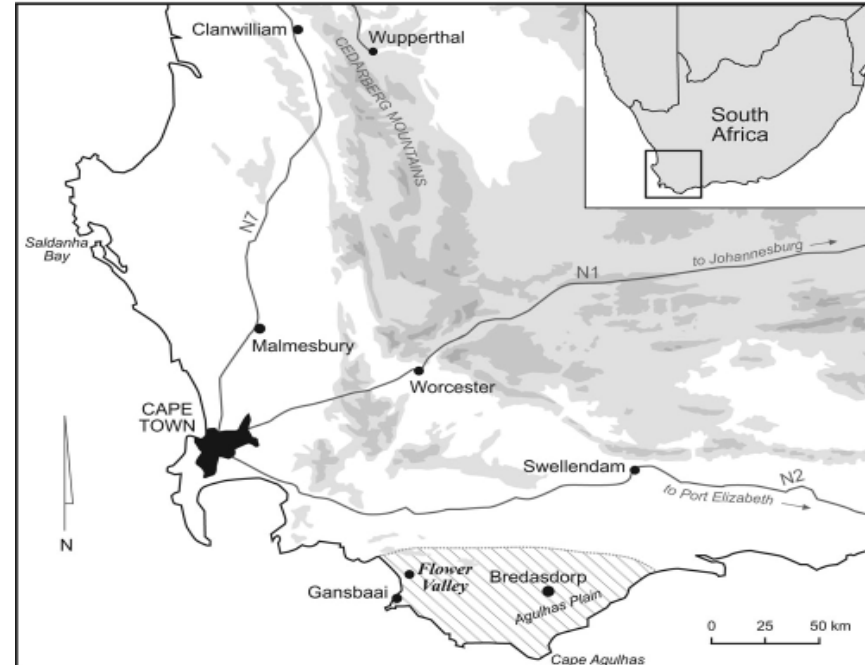
“Ethical trade (and corporate social responsibility more widely) is a form of governmentality that advances the project of neo-liberalism, not by force but rather through the technologies of voluntary regulation – standards, audits and protocols”
(Blowfield and Dolan, 2008: 3)

Practice-based and geographical understandings of this form of governmentality ...



SOUTH AFRICAN WILDFLOWER HARVESTING AND FLOWER VALLEY

- Flower Valley in Cape Floristic Region & home to *fynbos*
- Flower Valley Conservation Trust & Fynsa
- Flower Valley as *cause célèbre* among donor community
- Development success story (conservation, empowerment and upliftment)
- Fynbos threatened, but significant domestic and export markets (conservation and empowerment through 'the market')
- Key retail markets in UK and South Africa (M&S, Sainsbury, Pick'n'Pay)
[Fynsa sold 489,000 bouquets in 2011, >80% to M&S]
- Sustainable Harvesting Code of Practice



DEFINING AND OPERATIONALIZING SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH NETWORKS OF MULTI-STAKEHOLDER INITIATIVES



AGULHAS
BIODIVERSITY
INITIATIVE



FRUIT SOUTH AFRICA
ETHICAL TRADE PROGRAMME



MULTI-STAKEHOLDER KNOWLEDGES OF SUSTAINABLE HARVESTING AND THE CHALLENGES OF PARTICIPATION AND INCLUSION

- Multi-stakeholder knowledge about sustainable harvesting is neither uniform, nor uncontested
- History of wildflower harvesting
- Field work by expert botanists (off-take levels)
- Species Vulnerability Index
- Sustainable Harvesting Code of Practice (SHCP)
- Training of pickers in SHCP via Agri-SETA
- Regulation by Cape Nature
- Resource Base Assessment system (GIS database)
- Evolving *fynbos* knowledge



MULTI-STAKEHOLDER KNOWLEDGES OF SUSTAINABLE HARVESTING AND THE CHALLENGES OF PARTICIPATION AND INCLUSION

- Marginalised knowledge
 - Pickers' knowledge
 - Farmers' knowledge
- 'Frictions' of code construction and implementation (Ouma, 2010)
- Limits to participation
 - Challenges for empowerment and upliftment



CONCLUSION

- FVCT, as a local multi-stakeholder initiative, is part of wider regional and transnational networks
- Problematizing sustainability through the multi-stakeholder initiative
- Practices of reflection, research, experimentation, conversation and negotiation are at the heart of multi-stakeholder initiatives and often integral to their legitimacy

