

Sustainable Sugarcane Initiative

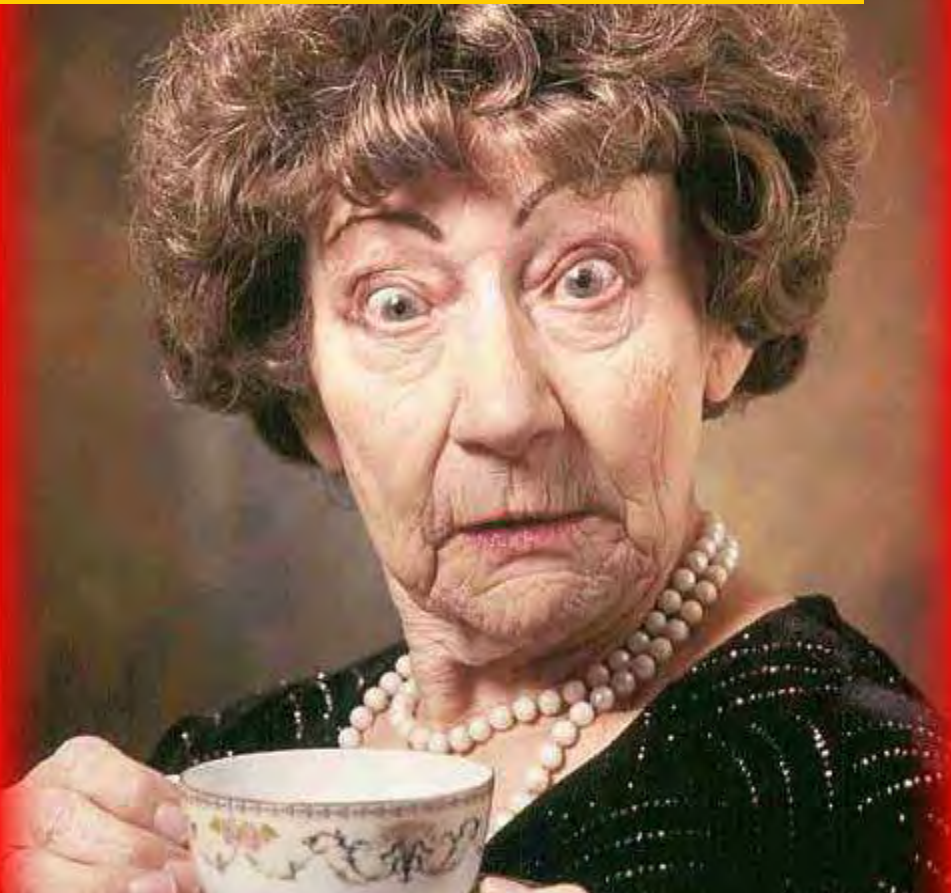

Using an eco-agricultural approach to Watershed management

The Sustainable Sugarcane Initiative is a project managed by the Mondi Wetlands Programme to bring together various role-players to develop partnership initiatives that strengthen responsible environmental, and to some degree social better practices within the sugar industry. It forms part of WWF's global efforts to reduce impacts of agriculture on our natural environment.



Millions of people around the world consume sugar everyday. How many of us realise the impact sugarcane has on our environment?

In South Africa the industry generates a direct income of R6 billion with approximately 1 million people depending on the industry for a living



Approximately 420 000 hectares of land is used to grow sugarcane in South Africa. As with any crop, sugarcane has an impact on soils, catchment hydrology, and terrestrial and aquatic habitats.

The pictures on this page illustrate some of the common environmental impacts associated with sugarcane agriculture



Draining of wetlands



Improper irrigation practices



Sugarcane growing in an estuarine floodplain



Planting within wetlands



Planting incorrectly on steep slopes



Soil erosion



Planting cane within riparian zones



The Sustainable Sugarcane Initiative has partnered with Noodsberg Canegrowers to develop, implement and audit better practices on their member farms.

Noodsberg has committed to implement and audit their adoption of better practices amongst their 180 growers covering 30 000 ha.

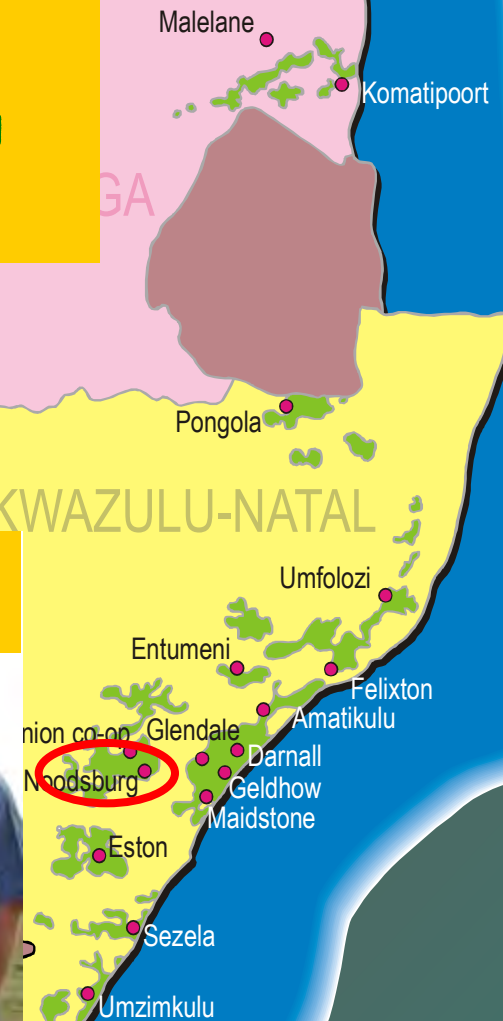
Experiences are being fed back into the sugar industry and into related WWF programmes around the world.

Working with interested and committed stakeholders is critical in achieving meaningful action



FREE STATE

KWAZULU-NATAL



To counter impacts, there are a range of better practices that can be used. A selection are illustrated here. The trick is to manage, monitor and report on such activities...



Riparian buffers



Contour roads



Trashing



Bio control



Contours



Alternate panel harvesting



Wetland & riparian delineation



Sharing knowledge & experiences



Better Management Practices

...So the Sustainable Sugarcane Initiative together with Noodsberg Canegrowers has developed a manual of better practice, together with a farm audit. This has been called Sustainable Sugarcane Farm Management System, or SuSFARMS. The initiative is providing support and training for farmers to use SuSFARMS.



Best available Knowledge

legislation

Research

S U S F A R M S

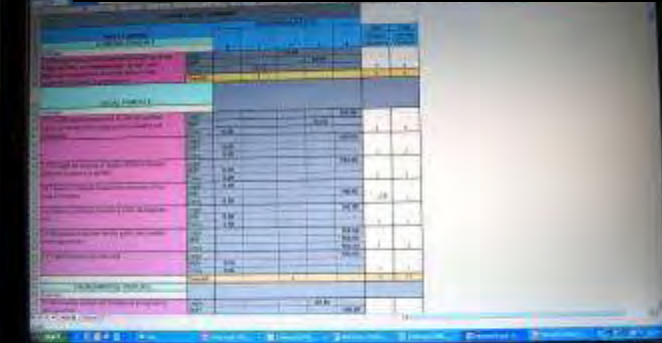
Environmental

Economic

Social

Field Audit sheet

Record keeping & reporting

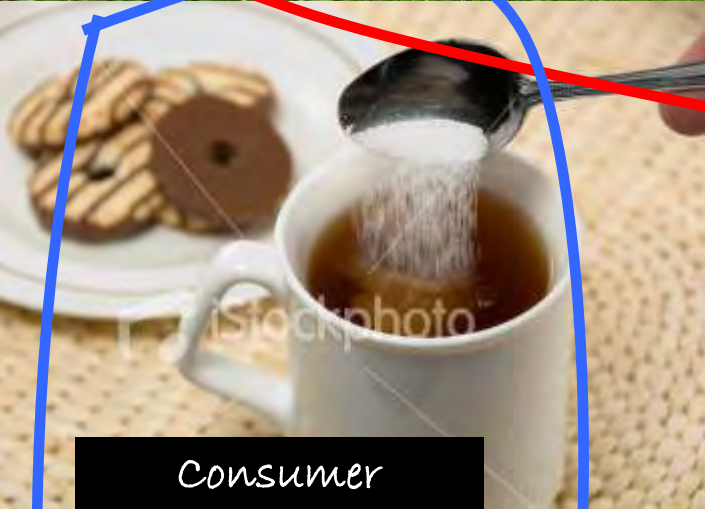


Better Management Practice manual

The Sustainable Sugarcane Initiative is also working to develop linkages along the value chain from farmer to miller to retailer to consumer so sustainable practice benefits and responsibilities can be realised and supported.



Worker



Consumer



Mill



Commercial Farmer



Retailer and manufacturer



For further information contact:

Extension Resource Manager
South African Sugarcane
Research Institute

Tel: 031 508 7492

email: sasri@sugar.org.za

OR

Mondi Wetlands Programme

Tel: 012 667 6597



Sustainable Sugarcane Farm Management System



SuSFarMS™

Version 1 February 2008

All rights reserved. No part of this report may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior written permission of the copyright owners.
To gain permission, contact:

Mondi Wetlands Project
PO Box 338
Irene
0062
South Africa
Tel: +27 (0) 12 667 6597
Email: info@wetland.org.za

Extension Department Head
PO Box 700
Mount Edgecombe
4300
South Africa
Tel: +27 (0) 31 508 7000
Email: sasri@sugar.org.za