

A SUCCESSFUL CORPORATE/NGO PARTNERSHIP

Project partners



Mondi Ltd (a global paper & packaging company)
&

Mondi Wetlands Programme (A WWF/WESSA run programme)



WWF®



WESSA

PEOPLE CARING FOR THE EARTH



Mazda
Wildlife Fund



Our mission:

To bring about **social change** that encourages wetland users and owners to manage their wetland resources in a more environmentally relevant manner

In the beginning
there was a
PROBLEM



Plantation/wetland issues

- In 1996 the Mondi Wetlands Programme (then called the Rennies Wetlands programme after its corporate funder at the time) had a problem with the commercial forestry industry **incorrectly planting trees** in wetlands and their adjacent buffer zone.
- The plantation trees were not indigenous to South Africa, and used more water than the wetland plants, often **drying up the wetland** and destroying it.
- Since South Africa is a very **water stressed** country, this was important for national water security, and **wetland biodiversity**

Commercial plantation trees in a wetland

SOLUTION

Wetland delineation



A practical field procedure for identification and delineation of wetlands and riparian areas



water & forestry
Department:
Water Affairs and Forestry
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



Correct buffer between wetland & commercial tree plantation

Wetland delineation

- The MWP, Mondi, and Dept of Water Affairs and Forestry headed up a group of wetland conservationists, representatives from the South African forestry industry, government departments, soil scientists, and the University of KwaZulu-Natal to develop **guidelines for delineating wetlands and riparian areas**.
- This resulted in the correct delineation of wetlands and riparian areas, and the commercial forestry industry taking the environmentally responsible action, of **removing thousands of hectares of incorrectly planted trees from wetlands and the buffer zones surrounding them**, costing the industry approximately R800 million.



Cutting incorrectly planted trees out of wetland and buffer zone

Wetland delineation



Ron Traill, CEO of Mondi's South Africa Division, is auguring to check soil samples to find wetland borders and thereby delineate wetlands, ensuring that commercial trees are only planted outside the buffer zone and not in the wetland.



Soil samples clearly demonstrating the different composition as you move from the dry grassland soils into the waterlogged wetland soils. Notice the colour changing from red to dark brown/grey as the iron content is reduced and the organic material increased, indicating a wetland soil

There are three indicators, which allow us to decide whether a piece of land is a wetland, or not:

1. A high water table
2. Waterlogged soils
3. Plants adapted to living in waterlogged soils

Since it is often hard to see a fluctuating water table, wetland delineation concentrates on those attributes of a wetland which reflect the movement of the water table - the soils and plants. Some parts of the wetland are saturated to different degrees than others. The permanently saturated zone is waterlogged for 12 months of the year. The seasonally saturated zone is waterlogged for 5 - 11 months of the year, and the temporarily saturated zone, for 1 - 4 months. The plants and soils both reflect this.

Delineation issue raised Mondi's interest in wetland management

Guidelines were developed to do this better



Wetlands in commercial forestry areas need to be burnt carefully, especially if used as firebreaks. eg Timing, frequency & type of fire are important. Poor fire management leads to gully erosion, reduced biodiversity & wetland destruction.

Old drains, often dug by previous landowners, need to be blocked to re-flood the wetland.



Roads crossing wetlands, and over trampling/excessive grazing by livestock needs to be managed to prevent gully erosion such as this. Gully erosion dries out and kills the wetland.

...and rehabilitation



And better wetland planning



During: The drains (going away from the photographer) were blocked by clay "plugs", the tops of which can be seen as grass strips.

Before: Zoar wetland was totally dried out by drains dug by a previous landowner for growing maize



After: The re-flooded wetland to which numerous bird species returned including the endangered wattled crane. Incorrectly planted commercial trees were also taken out of the buffer zone (brown in photo).

Gully erosion is controlled by building rock filled gabion structures at the active face of the erosion, as well as in the gully to stabilise further vertical erosion.

MWP helps Mondi develop a company wetland policy

www.mondibp.com



MONDI WETLAND POLICY

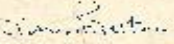
In recognition of the importance of wetlands for the natural functions they perform, and the values we place on them, such as:

- WATER PURIFICATION,
- FLOOD ATTENUATION,
- STREAMFLOW REGULATION,
- GROUNDWATER RECHARGE,
- EROSION CONTROL,
- BIODIVERSITY in association with other ecosystems.
- PLANT MATERIAL FOR COMMUNITY PRODUCTS,
- LIVESTOCK GRAZING,
- TOURISM and,
- ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION.

MBPSA FOREST OPERATIONS WILL:

- Minimise the impact of all forestry and other operations on wetlands, by applying best management practices.
- Map and prioritise for management all key wetlands, irrespective of size, which provide significant ecological and hydrological functions on land that it owns, leases or manages on behalf of others.
- Delineate the boundaries of all key wetlands and appropriate buffer distances by December 2010, and when necessary remove all plantation trees that have been planted incorrectly in these zones
- Manage key wetlands appropriately by December 2007 by compiling and implementing management plans for them and their surrounding buffer zones. These plans should include correct burning practices, road planning and maintenance, alien plant control, sustainable utilization, the rehabilitation of those degraded by past activities, and procedures to monitor wetland health.
- Promote and facilitate the sustainable utilization of its wetlands.
- Encourage the conservation of wetlands on neighbouring land.

These policy actions will be implemented by using the "Guidelines for Managing Wetlands".


JOHN BARTON CEO - Mondi Business Paper: South Africa
JULY 2005



In 2002, Mondi were the first company in South Africa to develop a policy in recognition of the importance of wetlands for the natural functions they perform.

This was updated in 2005.

This policy gives clear actions and deadlines for managing wetlands sustainably on property that Mondi either owns or manages.



RESULT: FORMAL PARTNERSHIP WWF & MONDI

- After working with Mondri over a four year period to help pilot wetland delineation and rehabilitation, both parties decided to formalise the partnership.
- In 2000, Mondri took over from Rennie as the main funder and gained the naming rights of the programme
- As previously, funding of the Mondri Wetlands Programme was secured for a 5 year period. This has now been extended till 2013.
- To Mondri's credit, the funding came with the freedom of independence on what and with whom the MWP wanted to work.

MWP: STRATEGIC BENEFITS



- **Funding** for programme operations.
- The MWP has a partnership with one of the **largest landowners** in South Africa who is willing to manage it's wetlands better.
- Mondi has played a key role of influencing other companies in the commercial **forestry industry** to manage their wetlands better.
- Mondi has the business **muscle** to help push government on wetland issues.
- A funding partner who the MWP could develop a **meaningful relationship** with, where both parties worked together on issues of common concern and benefited equally.

MONDI : STRATEGIC BENEFITS

- Demonstrates **active stewardship** by Mondi of land and biodiversity.
- An opportunity to **engage with environmental agencies** both NGO and government.
- Being **part of the solution**, as opposed to just the environmental problem.
- A link to the **bigger environmental picture**.
- Demonstrates active protection of **water resources** on Mondi land.
- Delineation of wetland and buffer zone helps **mitigate impacts** on water and biodiversity.
- Re-dresses **past practice** when trees were incorrectly planted in wetlands and buffer zones.
- Important for Mondi's environmental **reputation**.



MWP/MONDI LESSONS LEARNT



- Vital to have a corporate who's **core business** is relevant to MWP's work
- Need 2 **champions** within the corporate & NGO to push from both sides.
- Work closely together, but not to compromise **integrity**
- **Agree to disagree** at times
- **Water** not biodiversity is the key
- **Long term** investment needed (5 years min)
- The **right attitudes** on both sides is NB
- Nothing works better than "**example**" and **learning by doing**
- Progress must be **measurable** in some form
- Funding is only part of the **process**
- Supporting **science and experience**