

TRANSBOUNDARY PROTECTED AREAS-RESEARCH INITIATIVE

PROJECT PRINCIPLES FOR VISITING RESEARCHERS

Creating synergies between researchers Principles for collaboration

December 2003

This is a working document – an accumulation of ideas derived from discussions with various participants in the TBPARI (the Initiative). We would welcome any further ideas that might assist in further developing this document. In short – ideas as to how to develop synergies between researchers are welcome.

A large number of researchers pass through the area each year. Though a diversity of approaches and perspectives is evident, there is a lot of duplication – also an overemphasis of themes like “participation” at the cost of a broader understanding of the GLTP process. Further, with notable exceptions, little of the work done is retained locally.

The practical value of the research is thereby limited and often adds to research fatigue on the part of many communities and GLTP actors. Community-based and other actors become tired of being “mined” for graduate and other research.

Accordingly, a key objective of the TBPARI (the Initiative) is to promote collaboration and exchange between researchers. We thereby aim to reduce at least some of the negative impacts of research and to generate synergies to the benefit of all parties concerned. Thus a key principle for benefiting from the Initiative is expressed by the phrase “nothing for mahala” (“mahala” is the local Tsonga word for “nothing”). You get something, you give something. TBPARI therefore requires a negotiable *quid pro quo* from researchers participating in our programme that is commensurate with support received (E.g. recognition to TBPARI and the Centre for Integrated Study of Human Dimensions of Global Change in papers).

On this basis the Initiative offers researchers support with the following:

- Membership of the transboundaryPA-list (look at the main menu for further information).
Quid pro quo – alert other GLTP researchers of the list.
- Participation in our teleseminars (look at main menu for further information).
Quid pro quo – facilitate the participation of your institution in our teleseminars (preferably through a local telecentre – only sound needed).
- Assessment of your research proposal: This assists in properly contextualizing your research proposal and to avoid duplication of work done by others.
Quid pro quo – you become part of the circle of evaluators and help to assess the proposals of newcomers.
- Access to our small but growing literature list.

Quid pro quo – you continue to do your own literature survey and add any new material to our list. Also information about new and useful links to other initiatives of this nature would be welcome.

- Identifying GLTP-actors that are relevant to your research.
Quid pro quo – You help us further develop our list of GLTP-actors.
- Identifying understudied case study areas and themes.
Quid pro quo – You produce useful work.
- Logistics and easy access to field stations along the Kruger National Park and in Mozambique. This refers to accommodation, research assistants and translators, and information. The TBPARI's offices in Johannesburg and Wits Rural Facility would also provide administrative and logistical support concerning travel arrangements, accommodation, access to resource material, and access to offices.
Quid pro quo – as with all else dealing with logistics depends on one's network of contacts. The quid pro quo is accordingly to assist us in further developing our own network.
- Access to local field training courses (look under "training courses" on website) that would make it easier for you to adapt to the local circumstances and reduce the negative footprint of research.
Quid pro quo – payment for the courses to the parties concerned.
- Twinning arrangements: We are keen to twin local researchers with visiting researchers. This could mean being twinned with a junior researcher with local knowledge and language skills – or the other way around. It all depends on the specific combinations that are possible.
Quid pro quo – if a junior researcher is the partner, then you may be expected to contribute toward his field costs/ pay him/her for services rendered.
- Financial support for field work: TBPARI does not provide visiting researchers with any funding, but will assist such researchers to leverage funding from elsewhere where appropriate. In a limited number of cases funding may be available directly from our main sponsor, the Centre for Integrated Study of Human Dimensions of Global Change.
Quid pro quo – obviously work in which we are really interested.
- Visiting researchers need to arrange visits well ahead of time to ensure availability of accommodation and other resources. Please contact the project administrator, Daniel Marnewick, to do so (MarnewickM@geosciences.wits.ac.za)

Ultimately we are interested in creating **real synergies** between the participating researchers. The following is an option:

- Joint papers by researchers that would otherwise not have worked together. Yet again, depending on circumstances it may be possible to make limited funding available for such joint ventures.

Please discuss your participation with Dr Conrad Steenkamp at cis@andrew.cmu.edu. Any ideas or proposals are welcome and could be discussed with other researchers.