

MOVING FORWARD WITH WOODLANDS – THE PROGRESS AND PROCESS OF GIVING EFFECT TO THE MANDATE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF WATER AFFAIRS & FORESTRY

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Abstract

Woodlands were introduced explicitly into forestry policy through its inclusion in the White Paper on Sustainable Forestry Development of 1996, with the intention of creating a unified forestry policy. This was the first national forestry policy of the fully democratic South Africa and it was developed in the post-UNCED era. Its provisions were therefore aimed towards addressing the social and political aspirations of the new Government as well as giving effect to South Africa's ratification of a number of International Environmental Agreements that were established since the UNCED in 1992.

When the Department published its National Forestry Action Programme (NFAP) in 1997, woodlands and natural forests were addressed together in this very ambitious strategy. Although good progress was made with its implementation for natural forests, there was less progress for woodlands. There could be various reasons for this. However, consistent with the White Paper and the NFAP, the National Forests Act (NFA) of 1998 provided comprehensively for the implementation of the policy in terms of woodlands and for regulation thereof.

Between 1998 and 2003 there were a few noticeable achievements for woodlands, some of which provided a platform for later progress. A new framework strategy specifically for woodlands was developed and approved during 2005. DWAF now stands on the brink of implementing this strategy. It recognises various roles that centre on regulation as well as creating and enabling policy and institutional environment. These include policy development, protection and law enforcement, resource monitoring, national and international reporting, research and the rendering of advisory support services.

Although the White Paper of 1997 attempted to create policy unity, there still exist (and will remain) a diverse range of policies and mandates that apply to woodlands. There are many role players and a diverse set of stakeholders involved as well. Implementation of the new woodlands strategy recognises these complexities and puts much emphasis on co-operative governance. For the implementation of the framework strategy there will be a need to develop some detailed strategies. The woodlands represent a forest resource that should be addressed through various established forestry functions. Woodlands will be reflected again in the NFP that DWAF is in the process of developing. The challenge for DWAF at this point is to put the organisational framework in place and to implement the work outlined in the strategy.

1. Introduction

Natural woodlands cover a substantial portion, estimated in the order of one third of the land surface area of South Africa, depending on the classification system and land cover data that is used (e.g. Shackleton *et al.*, 1999; Willis 2002). Its extent and a variety of benefits for society, rather than commercial timber yield is an important reason for recognition as a forest resource, similar for example to some woodland types in North America and elsewhere in the world (e.g. Gottfried, 1991, Thomas 1996, Burley, 2001). The woodlands in South Africa provide a wide range of forest products that are important for poor rural people for supplementing their livelihoods, as well as environmental services of value to local people, the entire nation and global society (Shackleton *et al.*, 1999).

Protection measures for woodland tree species can be found in forestry legislation dating back as far as 1888 and possibly even before (van der Zel, 2000). However, woodlands have not received much other attention in forestry policy or practice during the 1900s. Woodlands can thus be viewed as somewhat unfamiliar functional territory for Forestry. With the development of new policies after the political reform of 1994, woodlands became an explicit element within forestry policy. This paper reflects on the objectives of forestry policy for woodlands and examines the progress made with implementation over a period of about ten years since 1996.

2. Methodology and approach

The paper is based on the work done within the Department: Water Affairs and Forestry (DWAF) to develop a strategy and implementation guidelines for Woodlands. Fundamental to this was an analysis of the forestry policy and legislation in terms of its mandates and requirements for woodlands, focussing on the National Forests Act (1998) and to a lesser degree on the National Veld and Forest Fire Act (1998). Standard principles of legal interpretation were used, including:

- Literal interpretation
- The intent of the Legislature

Much emphasis was placed on the intent of the Legislature approach, also called the 'Golden Rule' (Cockram, 1987). Therefore due attention was given to the White Paper on Sustainable Forestry Development (DWAF, 1996) in order to understand the policy underlying the legislation and its explicit reference to woodlands. Some of the International Environmental Agreements that were ratified by South Africa during the 1990s were also studied to determine whether there is synergy with the White Paper and how national forestry policy incorporated our international commitments. This provided basic understanding of mandates and roles of the Department, which was supplemented with findings from various relevant research projects, proceedings of policy workshops with external stakeholders and DWAF staff, various unpublished reports and relevant literature.

3. Policy background

Policies are purpose oriented (Booyesen, 2006) and implemented through legislation, regulations, information and financial instruments. Strategies, organisational design and operational budgets should facilitate policy implementation. Detailed procedures, prescriptions, guidelines and tools may be required to ensure correct interpretation and application of some policy provisions. Policy objectives provide a reference against which results can be evaluated. Baseline data about forest resources also informs forestry policy objectives and policy evaluation (Figure 1).

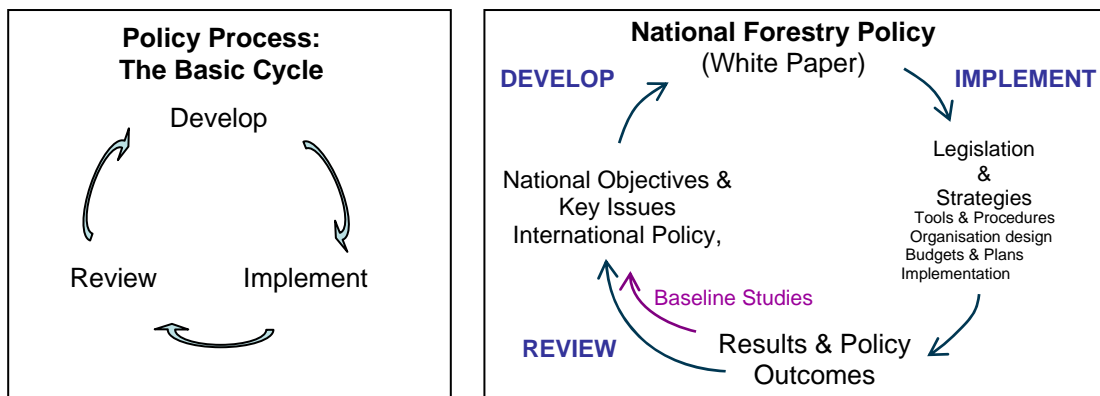


Figure 1. Public policy making is complex. Essentially it can be viewed as a three stage process, consisting of development, implementation and review¹. Booyesen (2006) provides a comparison of five slightly more detailed representations of the process.

Current national forestry policy is contained primarily in the White Paper on Sustainable Forestry Development in South Africa (DWAF, 1996), which was developed to address the imperatives of the political dispensation post 1994 as far as it affected Forestry (Van der Zel, 2000). The white paper had to provide a unified forestry policy for the entire country which could replace the various segregated policies of the former homelands and RSA. Furthermore the White Paper was developed in the period after the UNCED in 1992 in Rio de Janeiro, when a number of international policy processes were unfolding around

¹ The policy cycle as discussed here and reflected in Figure 1 (The Basic Cycle) is based mainly on SIDA (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency) and the Swedish National Board of Forestry: International training programme on Development of National Forest Policies and Strategies, 2004-2005

global concern about the environment. These included the Forestry Principles agreed at Rio and the emergence of international forestry forums as well as the UN conventions relating to biodiversity, desertification and climate change. Analysis of these international agreements revealed consistency and synergy with the White Paper. There is also explicit reference to Agenda 21 in the White Paper that confirms intent to accommodate these agreements in national forestry policy.

It is worth noting that globally there was a greater awareness of the non-timber values of forests and greater recognition of the diverse types of forest ecosystems during the 1980's and 1990's (Gottfried, 1991; Burley, 2001). In South Africa there were concerns about the impact of harvesting on the indigenous woodlands, especially in the former homeland areas (DWAF, 1997), while concerns about wood fuel shortages for rural energy supply led to the Biomass Initiative that was implemented in 1992 (DME, 1996; Gandar, 1994). The latter were to become incorporated into community forestry through the new forestry policy. Against this background it is of fundamental importance that the White Paper explicitly stated that woodlands are included in the policy:

“Government policy in South Africa is formulated to include “forests of all kinds”, that is, the indigenous forests, ... natural woodlands, where tree cover may be as little as 10%, plantation, and community forests. This accords with the Food and Agriculture Organisation's (FAO) definition of forests.”

(DWAF, 1996: paragraph 1.1)

For the effective implementation of policy, it is important to understand its objectives. It is therefore important to understand what the policy aims to achieve in terms of woodlands. The forestry policy in general aspired to achieve two main objectives, i.e. promotion of sustainable use and protection (DWAF, 1996, par 2.2). Some of the specific objectives are reflected in Table 1.

Table 1. Summary of some of the key issues and objectives of the forestry policy that are relevant to woodlands (based on DWAF, 1996)

Issues and Policy Objectives	White Paper References
Provision of access to forest resources for local people, especially for subsistence use by the rural poor	Par 1.4.1. Par 2.6
Provision of sustainable fire wood supplies as part of integrated energy programmes	Par 1.2
Promotion of the development of economic activity based on woodland resources	Par 1.2
Improved (more efficient) land use planning to prevent environmental degradation and counteract social inequities	Par 1.4.13
Protection of forests and biodiversity e.g. for meeting global obligations	Par 2.7
Rehabilitation of woodlands to halt and reverse desertification	Par 2.7
Maintenance of national accounts and reporting on the state of the forests	Par 2.8

Consistent with the poverty objectives of Government after 1994, the White Paper recognised the economic value of woodlands (DWAF, 1996, par 1.4.1). It endeavoured to ensure that people, especially the significant numbers of poor and disadvantaged households in rural areas, have access to a sustainable supply of timber and non-timber forest products. The sustainable management of natural woodlands is recognised for this purpose as a principal element of community forestry (DWAF, 1996).

“Government recognises that natural forests and woodlands play a vital role in the household economies of many of these communities. The benefits arising from the sustainable management of these resources should accrue to local communities. Community forestry will have as a principal element the community-driven conservation and management of these resources on land owned by the community. ... Government will support communities and local authorities to develop and implement management of this kind.”

(DWAF, 1996: paragraph 2.6)

Subsequent studies suggested that the value of wood products, e.g. firewood, building and fencing poles may possibly match the annual value of commercial round wood sales. FSA (2005) estimated the value of roundwood sales from commercial plantations at R4.216 billion. In comparison Shackleton (2004) estimated the value of consumptive use of fire wood alone (i.e. excluding fencing and building poles) in the order of R3 billion per year. The substantial value of non-timber forest products that are harvested

from the woodlands, including traditional medicine, fruit, wild vegetables and other food products needs to be added to the equation. Shackleton *et al.* (2002) estimated this value at R3.634 billion, noting that for most of these products national value estimates are hampered by data constraints. Thus the estimates reflected above suggest that the economic value of woodlands justify its inclusion in forestry policy and necessitates that it receives adequate attention and further investigation.

The values reflected above for goods derived from the woodlands mostly relate to subsistence use and informal sale without much addition of value. The White Paper (DWAF, 1996, par 1.2) recognised the potential for development of income earning opportunities, i.e. commercial enterprise. Commercialisation of woodland products may take time and present a variety of challenges. However, tourism and hunting within the woodland biome is of significant importance already, reflecting the environmental service value of the resource for recreation. The national accounting system does not provide adequate information to enable reliable calculation of the fraction of the total GDP contribution of Tourism that can be ascribed to the woodlands. This emphasises another policy objective, i.e. to ensure better accounting of the value of forests (DWAF, 1996, par 2.8). Traditional medicine derived from the woodlands and other biomes are traded in informal markets and there are estimates of substantial economic significance (Mander & le Breton, 2006). Again it is difficult to single out the woodland contribution among these figures, although it presents an obvious area for industrial development. Another commodity that is approaching significant importance is the formal sale of firewood derived from the woodlands (Anderson & Anderson, 2001; Milton *et al.*, 2002; Raliselo, 2002).

The White Paper recognised the role of woodlands in terms of energy supply and therefore advocates for sustainable management and regulation.

“Sustainable wood supplies need to be part of integrated energy programmes to address the historic shortfall in energy supplies to rural households. This can be done through community forestry programmes, the redistribution of surplus wood from industrial forests, the management of harvesting from natural woodlands, and improved efficiency in wood use.”

(DWAF, 1996, par 1.2)

The conservation objectives of the forestry policy are translated into legislation in the form of various provisions for protection in the National Forests Act (NFA), notably a principle requirement for minimum areas of protected woodlands and an entire piece of legislation dedicated to fire regulation (DWAF, 1998b). The economic objectives find expression in the NFA's provision for community forestry.

It is clear that the policy objectives as contained in the White Paper are echoed in the forestry legislation of 1998. This provides the mandate and legislative instruments that would enable DWAF to undertake programmes and initiatives towards achievement of the policy objectives.

4. Implementation of the Policy

4.1 Overview of a decade since the publication of the White Paper

The NFAP was published a year after the White Paper and provided the first overarching strategy towards implementation of the Policy (Van der Zel, 2000). The NFAP dealt with woodlands and indigenous forests combined, although there are some significant differences between these resources that would affect implementation and progress. New forestry legislation was approved in 1998, which made explicit and adequate provision for woodlands, providing a range of legal instruments for among other protection, research, monitoring and promotion of community forestry (DWAF, 1998). DWAF also presented the first Natural Forests and Savannah Woodlands Symposium in 1998, specifically focussing on Woodlands. Thus, up until 1998 there had been a consistent strand of initiative towards implementation.

In contrast there seems to have been less structured and consistent progress for several years since then (DWAF, 2004). The lack of a concentrated effort to address community based woodland management was identified by Shackleton and Willis (2000). Although a national workshop during 1999 resulted in a proposed strategy for “community woodland management” (Shackleton *et al.*, 1999a), DWAF did not implement this strategy, except for continuing with two donor funded programmes in the Limpopo and Mpumalanga provinces that were already underway at the time. During 2001-2002 a baseline study was commissioned by the Department with the aim to consolidate and verify the existing literature about the definition and extent of the woodlands, a subject about which much had already been written by then (e.g. Shackleton *et al.*, 1999a; Shackleton *et al.*, 1999b; Fairbanks, 2000). A pilot study was undertaken through DfID support in 2001, aimed at mapping the woodlands from satellite images in conjunction with

the National Forest Inventory (NFI) of natural forests. The pilot study indicated difficulties in distinguishing between some of the woodland vegetation types with the available images, however, it could be possible to map woodlands on a national scale without differentiation of woodland types. It was recommended that mapping from these images obtained for the NFI would have little advantage over existing National Land Cover Data (HTS, 2001). Subsequently the CSIR was commissioned to develop a classification system for woodlands and to develop a national woodland map based on the classification. The process involved a range of stakeholders through two consultative workshops, of which one was aimed at resolving issues of co-operative governance (Willis, 2002; Fleming *et al.*, 2002).

The other significant development during this period was the development of a national list of protected tree species that included woodland species, (DWAF, 2002) and comprehensive guidelines for licensing its use, for which supporting studies were undertaken (e.g. Alias *et al.*, 2003; Hermann *et al.*, 2003; Seymour *et al.*, 2003). At the same time there was a strong parallel initiative within DWAF to develop capacity through training in law enforcement (Kühn *et al.*, 2002). However, much of the emphasis still fell on enforcement within the context of State forests. During these first years the woodlands policy probably had little effect within the broader sector, except that much research was done, of which some on the initiative of research institutions (e.g. Everard, 1998). Evidence of this research can be found in many scientific papers published in various journals, the proceedings of the Natural Forests and Woodlands Symposia, which were presented by DWAF, other similar events, e.g. of the Arid Zone Ecology Forum, congresses of the Grassland Society of Southern Africa, etc., and unpublished reports of the CSIR.

The question then arises; why was there an apparent lack of implementation of the woodlands policy? To answer this, one can recognise actual lack of implementation and examine its possible causes, and one can show that lack of implementation was also a matter of perception, because some of the work that was done went unrecognised as relevant in terms of woodlands.

The slow progress in actual policy implementation for woodlands may be ascribed to a combination of factors. External factors, with reference to DWAF, include the complexities of ownership and natural variation within the woodlands (e.g. discussed in Shackleton *et al.*, 1999a), as well as the diversity of mandates of different organs of State (Shackleton *et al.*, 1999a, Willis & Evans, 2000). Complex social dynamics within communities and the associated risk of conflict may have been a deterrent to engage in community based woodlands management (Shackleton & Willis, 2000). Experience proved that these social dynamics had a definite impact on progress and outcomes, for example in some of the pilot projects undertaken as part of the Danish and Finnish funded programmes in Bushbuckridge and elsewhere in Limpopo (Yeatman *et al.*, 2001; DWAF, 2002). Internal factors that hampered policy implementation included capacity constraints, alluded to by Shackleton & Willis (2000) and Willis & Evans (2000), as well as organisational reforms within DWAF's Forestry components (also discussed in Kühn *et al.*, 2002), staff turnover and the resulting disruption of processes that were already initiated. Stronger emphasis on implementation of other policy matters such as restructuring of commercial forestry may have competed for limited capacity within the organisation. The effect of these factors may have been compounded by some disagreement or lack of understanding about DWAF's mandate for woodlands, and the perception that this is something new and different from DWAF's established functions. Expressions of opinion among DWAF staff that "*there is no policy on woodlands*", as well as reference to "*Woodland Management*" as a singular function served as evidence for such a lack of understanding. The notion that DWAF was responsible for 'management' of the extensive woodlands was problematic, since DWAF was in the process of devolving wherever possible its established management responsibilities (plantations, indigenous forests, etc.). In terms of the policy, DWAF actually had very limited management responsibility for woodlands, while it had various other roles of which most were perfectly synergic to the 'new' role of Government.

Willis and Evans (2000) observed that organisational structures are slow to respond to policy developments, thus impacting on their capacity and performance. It can be argued that the over all structure of Forestry in the initial years of the policy was not conducive to implementation of the woodlands policy. Lead responsibility for woodlands was sub-optimally located within DWAF. The Directorate of Community Forestry that was responsible for "*Woodland Management*" had a specific purpose, which could only reasonably give effect to part of the overall mandate in terms of woodlands. The relevance of other functions within the organisation was apparently overlooked. Therefore achievements in these areas went unrecognised in terms of progress regarding woodlands and the focus on woodlands may not have been sufficiently strong in the development of these functions, resulting in missed opportunities.

Although the NFAP provided a fairly detailed breakdown of tasks, a clear need existed for policy interpretation and for the development of a more comprehensive and explicit strategy and guidelines about the role and function of the Department. New initiative towards implementation seems to have

emerged since 2003. In the development of a new Forestry vision for DWAF during October 2003, it was explicitly stated that DWAF's role in terms of Woodlands needed to be clarified (DWAF, 2003).

A detailed analysis of the policy and legislation, as explained in the methodology, suggested a fairly clear set of roles or functions (Table 3). Some roles overlap with other organs of state that would require co-operation and possibly clarification. One clear observation from the analysis was that DWAF's mandate did not translate into a singular woodlands role or function. The different roles and functions also differed in emphasis or priority. Further it was necessary to define more exactly within the framework of the policy where attention should be focused and how implementation should be approached. Thus a need existed for strategy and in some functions for operational guidelines.

4.2 Development of a strategy framework and implementation plan

The development of a strategy for woodlands was taken forward through the Directorates of Forestry Support and Forestry Policy and Strategy since 2004. This came at a time when a better defined business process and structures (e.g. the Forestry Functional Management Committee) existed to support the process. It built on the earlier policy analysis and focussed more strongly on broad internal consultation, for example through a workshop convened at Blydepoort in February 2005 (DWAF, 2005a) and internal follow-up meetings. The outcomes of previous stakeholder workshops were considered as supplementary input together with other literature, thus incorporating the views and concerns of external stakeholders. Some of the priority concerns expressed during the February 2005 workshop are shown in Table 2. A key concern of the highest priority was that of Co-operative Governance. DWAF staff recognised the need for community forestry support services in conjunction with law enforcement and that there needs to be a balance between these. This could for example address issues raised by Twine and Siphugu (2002) and reflect the earlier emphasis on "Community Woodland Management" for which Shackleton *et al.* (1999) proposed a strategy. The important contribution that Traditional Authorities have played in the past, and potentially still can play was also recognised, acknowledging the fact that there is much confusion prevailing throughout most communal areas about the present role of Traditional Authorities *vis-à-vis* the elected Municipal Authorities.

Table 2. Priority Issues to be addressed in a woodlands strategy (DWAF, 2005a)

Main Issue / Problem	Level of Priority ²
Co-Operative Governance and Concurrent Competence	1
Education and Awareness	1
Promotion of sustainable management of natural woodland resources	2
Provision of support services for rural livelihoods (Extension)	3
Promotion of alternative energy and Biomass Resources	3
Effective enforcement of legislation	3
Lack of accurate information on Biodiversity	4
Improvement of legislation	5
International Participation	6

For the purpose of coherence the processes of development of a Woodlands Strategy and development of a National Forestry Plan (NFP) had to be harmonised. In this case the NFP takes precedence because it is higher level and overarching. Examination of the key strategies proposed for the NFP at the time of writing the Woodland Strategy Framework again emphasised that the woodlands theme does not stand on its own. Various linkages existed with virtually all other themes, thus underscoring the fact that woodlands should be treated as a forest resource rather than a function or an issue in its own right. The Woodlands Strategy Framework echoes the roles and functions derived from the policy analysis (roles and functions are listed in Table 3) and points out that most of these functions were now existing and reflected within the new organisational delineations as they were described in the organisational reform process during 2003 – 2005. (DWAF, 2005b).

An important step towards the internalisation of the strategy framework was the drafting of an implementation plan that translates the strategy into the format of the official strategic plan of the Department in terms of its Key Focus Areas (KFA), strategic objectives, outputs and time frames (DWAF, 2006). The imperative remained that the implementation plan should be captured in future versions of the DWAF Strategic Plan, otherwise there remains the risk that it may be overlooked in the processes of normal work planning and performance evaluation, and thus that implementation may fail. The approval of the Woodlands Framework Strategy and Implementation Plan and the broad participation of DWAF staff in

² Six levels of priority emerged from the Blydepoort workshop discussions. Level 1 was most important and 6 was least important.

the development thereof should however address some of the previous obstacles, such the perception that woodlands related work is out of bounds and uncertainty about responsibility within DWAF. It is believed therefore that a better chance exists that motivated individuals within the organisation will proceed with implementation. There may be lack of understanding of some very subject specific technical matters of how certain woodland issues should be dealt with. Thus it was identified in the implementation plan that more detail needs to be developed around specific issues and functions, such as protected areas planning, monitoring, research, information management, awareness programmes, a fuel wood strategy and woodland rehabilitation. The need for training and additional staff in certain key posts was also identified, e.g. more technical and scientific staff in all DWAF regions and specialist ecologists in the National Office (DWAF, 2006).

Table 3. Analysis of the correspondence of woodland functions with the DWAF organisation structure and roles of external agencies (from DWAF, 2005c and Willis, 2002)

Functions / Roles	Corresponding component within DWAF	External role players
Policy	DWAF-Forestry: Senior Management Directorate: Forestry Policy & Strategy (Directorate Forestry Technical & Information Services)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International policy forums • Various national & provincial Government departments
International co-operation	DWAF-Forestry: Senior Management Directorate: Forestry Policy & Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DEAT
Protection	Directorate: Forestry Regulations Directorate: Forestry Technical & Information Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DEAT / SANPARKS • Provincial Conservation Authorities
Law Enforcement	DWAF Regions Directorate: Forestry Regulations Directorate: Forestry Support (Directorate: Forestry Technical & Information Services)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dept of Justice / SAPS • DEAT / SANPARKS / (SANBI) • Provincial Conservation Authorities • Municipalities
Monitoring	DWAF Regions Directorate Forestry Technical & Information Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various national & provincial Government departments
Research	Directorate: Forestry Policy & Strategy Directorate: Forestry Technical & Information Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universities • Research institutions • Various national & provincial Government departments
Information Management	Directorate: Forestry Technical & Information Services DWAF Regions	
Reporting	Directorate: Forestry Technical & Information Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DEAT
Provincial & Local Planning	Directorate: Forestry Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DPLG • Provincial departments for local Government. • District / Local Municipalities
Awareness	DWAF Regions Directorate: Forestry Policy & Strategy Directorate: Forestry Technical & Information Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ (Various national and provincial government departments)
Advisory Services	DWAF Regions Directorate: Forestry Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provincial departments of Agriculture and Environment • NGOs
Sustainable use systems	DWAF Regions Directorate: Forestry Development Directorate: Forestry Technical & Information Services	
Facilitation of Funding	(Directorate: Forestry Development)	
Fire Regulation	Directorate: Forestry Regulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire Protection Associations
State forest (Woodland) management	DWAF Regions with Directorate: Forestry Support Directorate: Forestry Regulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SANPARKS • Recipient agencies in the devolution process

4.3 Implementation challenges

The approval of the strategy framework and implementation plan as described above accomplished the necessary recognition of woodlands as a functional responsibility for DWAF. It also indicated the synergy with existing and future functions. The Department still faces constraints and challenges in terms of organisation and human resources, both numbers and appropriate skills, to enable implementation of the policy. The importance of appropriate organisation as an instrument of policy implementation is brought sharply into focus by lack of progress with the implementation of the woodlands policy during previous years. Although it may seem that there now exists an overall fit between all the functions and the structure of DWAF (Table 3), it remains a prerequisite that the organisation should actually function effectively.

Part of the solution to the problem of staff shortages, and a challenge in its own right, is the need for co-operation with other service providers, particularly other organs of State. It can be anticipated that the dynamics of co-operation will be influenced among other by the extent of overlap in responsibilities and the degree of clarity of mandates. It is thus hypothesised that the performance of functions in the implementation of the policy may develop as depicted by the two-dimensional model in Figure. 2: Where the mandate for a function is not clear, an institution may dispute its role. Some measure of contesting may manifest where the stakes are high, where roles of more agencies overlap and where there is lack of clarity regarding the specific mandates of different role players. On the other hand implementation may be differentiated through clarification of mandates and by reducing the degree of overlap, otherwise co-ordination has to be achieved where mandates are clear and where there remains much functional overlap among multiple role players.

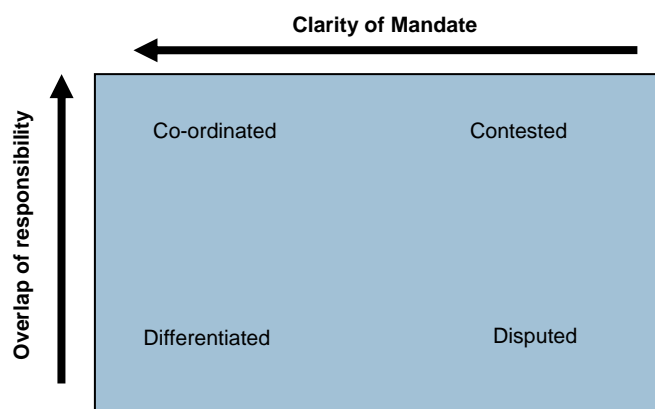


Figure 2. Performance of functions and modes of interaction among service agencies (institutional behaviour) based on the clarity of mandates for specific functions and the measure of overlap in responsibility – a hypothesis.

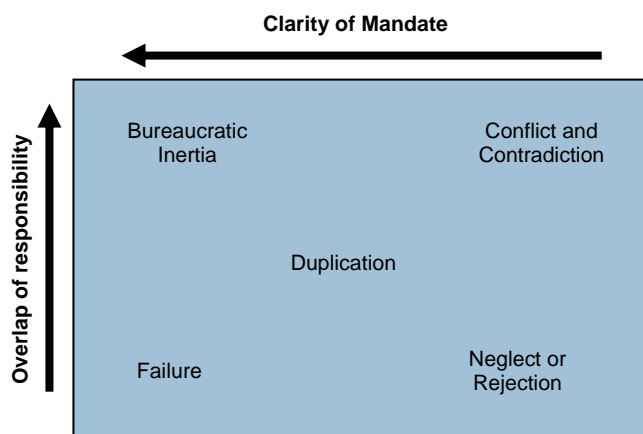


Figure 3. Risks associated with multiple agency responsibility for functions and co-operative governance – a further hypothesis.

This model suggests predictable risks for policy implementation as shown in Figure 3: Neglect or rejection of responsibility is a risk where there is little functional overlap and where the mandate is not clear (i.e. disputed functions). Contesting on the other hand may result in conflict and contradiction. Where functions are highly differentiated so that there is little functional overlap, there is risk in failure (inadequate performance). Duplication is inevitable along the continuum between contesting and differentiation, resulting in waste of resources. In some cases duplication can however be an advantage, rather than a risk. Co-ordination of functions, if taken to the extreme, poses the risk of bureaucratic inertia through elaborate protocols and procedures.

The challenge for DWAF and other concerned agencies will be in finding the correct approach that optimises results and minimises the risks. A model proposed by Perry *et al.* (2002) suggested that institutional objectives and the means of achieving them can be either conflicting or mutually reinforcing between agencies. The product is: break down of government where both goals and means of different agencies are conflicting, "Fragmented Government" (turf wars) where objectives are mutually reinforcing but the means are conflicting, "Incremental Government" is achieved where objectives are conflicting while means are mutually reinforcing. Where both the objectives and the means are mutually reinforcing, "Holistic Government" is achieved. It is the latter that needs to be pursued for woodlands.

Some possible approaches for achieving harmony and co-operation in the implementation of the woodland policy include clarification of mandates, e.g. through amendments of legislation, assignment and delegation of functions through provisions in the National Forests Act, roles clarified and agreed in Government strategies or through memoranda of agreement. Spatial Development Frameworks and Integrated Development Plans also provide possible mechanisms. The new Intergovernmental Relations Framework Act provides mechanisms specifically for the purpose of promoting co-operative government.

5. Conclusion

Although the forestry policy of 1996 included woodlands with a number of specific provisions for its implementation contained in the National Forest Act of 1998, it was perceived that DWAF had not succeeded convincingly in implementing the policy over the first five to seven years after the release of the policy. Part of the reason for this is perceptual, i.e. the progress that was made was not recognised. Real failures in policy implementation did however occur as well. These can be attributed to various internal and external factors such as:

- uncertainty about the policy and the implications thereof in practical terms,
- the perception of woodlands as a singular function that is the responsibility of one component in the DWAF(Forestry) structure, rather than recognition of the multiplicity of functions and shared responsibility,
- the complexities associated with woodlands from an institutional, land tenure, ecological and social point of view,
- capacity constraints within DWAF, in terms of both skills and numbers of staff, to attend to woodland issues as well as other responsibilities, and
- institutional weaknesses and continuous organisational reform in DWAF that did not in all cases fit the requirements for policy implementation.

With the approval of a comprehensive woodlands framework strategy in 2005 that recognises a wide range of functional responsibilities for the implementation of the policy, the DWAF has entered a new chapter in its still fairly new woodlands book. Although this comes at a time of policy review, there is ample evidence that suggests that the basic tenets of the 1996 policy still apply. DWAF faces challenges in the implementation of the new strategy, which include overcoming all of the internal weaknesses that plagued the implementation of the policy since its inception, notably those that relate to internal capacity and organisational structure and functioning. Recognising these weaknesses is an essential prerequisite for overcoming them and moving forward. A major external challenge relates to co-operation with other role players. There are various models and approaches that can be adopted for co-operative governance. The possibility exists that the outcome for different functions and in different parts of the country may be different. Given the general commitment among staff and the broad realisation within DWAF of the importance of woodlands, it is anticipated that sufficient willpower currently exist within the organisation to overcome some of the challenges and make progress on various aspects of implementation of the policy.

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