

The Cost and Benefit Analysis of Dwesa-Cwebe Marine Protected Area on the Wild Coast, South Africa: What Role for the State?

The Conservation Symposium

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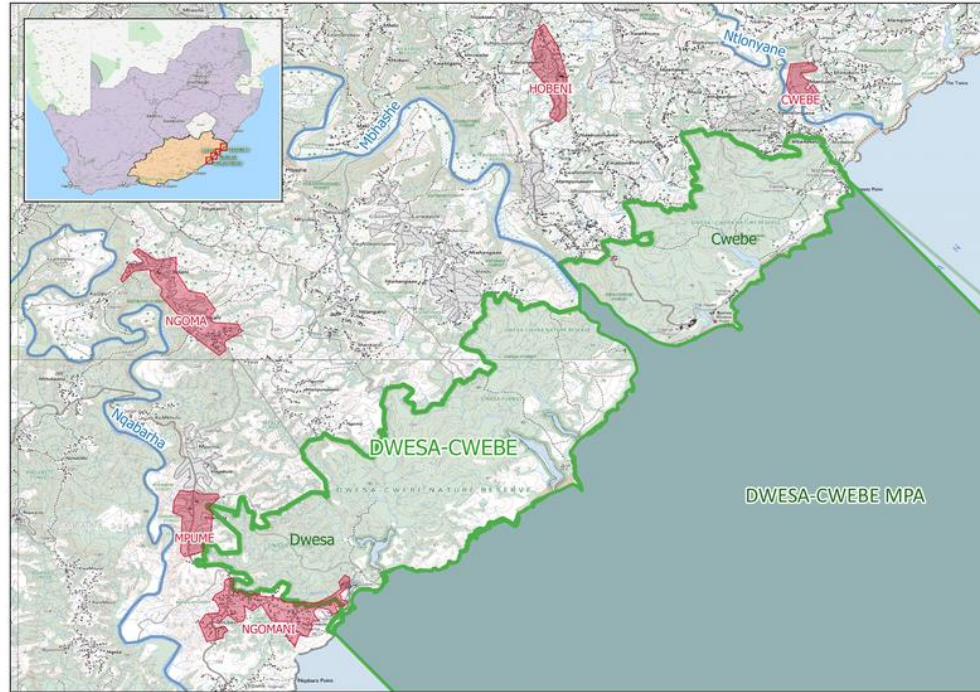
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INTRODUCTION

- Dwesa and Cwebe nature reserves on the Eastern Cape Wild Coast have had some form of MPA since 1991
- This has been a constant source of conflict between communities and conservation managers
- Community unhappiness with the MPA was a key reason for the 1996 land claim
- Despite winning the land claim, local people are still denied uncontrolled use of the MPA
- People have lost lives accessing marine resources and protecting the same resources.
- What then are the benefits, if any, of continuing with managing the MPA and is it worth the costs?

DWESA-CWEBE STUDY AREA



DWESA AND CWEBE STATE FORESTS/ NATURE RESERVES

- Dwesa and Cwebe: Proclaimed State Forests 1891 (Henkel), Sarhili before this.
- No restrictions or controls over utilisation of marine resources.
- Forests, grasslands and marine resources important (Moll, 1974).
- Transkei Bantustan declare Nature Reserves 1975 – proposed sustainable use model (Tinley).
- Transkei government decide on fences and fines. Tourism and strict protection.
- Consulted Chief but not communities.
- Restrict access to local people.
- Still allow use of marine resources (mussels) and sale to The Haven Hotel (Cwebe)

DWESA FORESTS



DWESA RHINO – THE VISION FOR A WORLD-RENOWNED AFRICAN WILDLIFE RESERVE



MARINE PROTECTED AREA

- 1991 Transkei government unilaterally declares a marine reserve. Transkei Military Decree 1992 names Dwesa and Cwebe National Wildlife Reserves.
- Entire shore and six nautical miles seawards – 18000 ha MPA.
- Intention to protect linefish resources, estuaries and intertidal zone.
- In 1994, MPA reverts to SA and retains status under Sea Fisheries Act of 1973.
- Designated open shore angling zones cater for nature reserve guests only.
- Restricted access to marine resources for locals - key to the land claim

LAND CLAIM AND MPA

- 1994 mass invasions of Dwesa and Cwebe. Uncontrolled mussel harvesting.
- 1995 Dwesa-Cwebe communities join forces, 1996 institute land claim.
- 2001 agreed settlement – co-management (but excludes management of marine resources).
- Just prior to settlement, Dec 2000, MCM proclaim new MPA under MLRA 1998 - prohibits all fishing and shellfish collection. Little/No consultation.
- Initially no scientific basis for MPA. Later focus was only on science.
- Marine scientists concerned about Pignose grunter *Lithognathus lithognathus* recreational angling pressure. Decide it is cleaner to prohibit fishing for all.
- Bad timing and worse deal than pre land claim for local people.

CONFLICTS

- Surveys show support for marine laws along the Wild Coast, but not for MPA at Dwesa-Cwebe.
- Fisheries laws never well enforced along Wild Coast due to resources and accessibility
- Historically field rangers were poorly trained. Allegations of ‘kangaroo court’ punishment.
- 2004 ECPTA manage the MPA with trained rangers.
- 2010 David Gongqose case – local fishermen ignoring the law.
- No disputing shellfish use by amaXhosa. Fishing taboos well documented and argued.
- Guilty in High Court but SCA ruled customary rights.
- 2011 abalone poacher shot dead in Dwesa by rangers.
- 2011 poacher shot dead in Cwebe by rangers.
- Unrest and conflict result.
- 2013 field ranger shot dead by marine poachers.
- Different community attitude to subsistence ‘poaching’ *ukujola* and commercial poaching but need for MPA questioned.

FISHING IN THE MPA – MBHASHE RIVER



LATEST MPA

- 2015 - MPA under MLRA withdrawn and reproclaimed under NEMPAA.
- Ntlonyana River to Nqabara Point and 14.8 km to sea 265 km²
- Allowance for controlled fishing zones – 64% of MPA is open.
- Traditional leaders and local people want further access. Still resist the MPA. Fishing in restricted zones.
- But there is an anomaly with resistance to Shell's 2021 intention to explore offshore along the Wild Coast for oil and gas.
- Benefits of a well managed marine area to local amaXhosa were argued by a coalition of concerned parties, including the Dwesa-Cwebe Communal Property Association.
- Shell exploration and seismic blasting is rejected. Celebrated victory by community.

BENEFITS OF DWESA-CWEBE MPA

- Transition between KZN subtropical and Agulhas warm-temperate biogeographical zones. Includes important estuaries like the Mbhashe (nursery areas for linefish).
- Supports distinct plant and animal communities.
- Conserves key surf-zone and estuary dependant linefish species.
- Incorporates subtidal rocky reefs and sandy benthos.
- Inshore and offshore reef habitat for survival of many collapsed fish stocks – mainly sparids and dusky kob. Contains one of two spawning areas for white steenbras.
- Healthy abalone population.
- Socio-economic importance – source of shellfish protein for 1000s of years (shell midden at Dwesa carbon dated to 5000BP).
- Jobs for guides and gillies.
- Tourism attraction and associated benefits.
- Cultural and spiritual importance to amaXhosa.

COSTS OF THE DWESA-CWEBE MPA

- Since the inception of the first MPA in 1991 there has been conflict between communities and conservation managers.
- Loss of access to some resources.
- Impacts on culture and way of life.
- Ineffective mechanisms for local community participation in decision-making.
- Requires sufficient resources from the state to manage it.

FUTURE FOR THE DWESA-CWEBE MPA

- Status quo – same conflicts, continued unlawful utilisation in restricted zones. MPA is a paper park with limited benefits.
- Alternative 1: co-management: Improved regular traditional leader and community engagements
- Implementation of the land claim settlement agreement
- Implementation of an MPA management plan
- Joint monitoring of compliance
- Environmental awareness programmes with local people
- Alternative 2: strict enforcement by ECPTA and the state alone. Requires increased budgets, personnel, political support.
- Note: Alternative 1 also requires increased budgets and staff to be effective.
- Preferred option by traditional leaders and interviewed managers: alternative 1.