THE ROOTS OF CONTEMPORARY GOVERNMENTAL AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVITIES IN SOUTH AFRICA, 1654-1972

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Opsomming

Die grondslae van eietydse regerings- en nieregerings-omgewingsaktiwiteite in Suid-Afrika, 1654-1972

Ten einde die eietydse regerings- en nieregerings-omgewingsaktiwiteite in Suid-Afrika na behore te kan begryp en te kan beoordeel, word in hierdie artikel 'n evaluerende oorsig gegee van die ontstaan en ontwikkeling van "environmentalism" in Suid-Afrika vanaf 1654 (toe die eerste maatreëls ingestel is om die omgewing vanaf staatsweë te bewaar) tot en met 1972 (toe die United Nations Conference on the Human Environment te Stockholm wêreldwyd 'n nuwe era in die geskiedenis van "environmentalism" ingelui het). Vier fases in hierdie ontwikkelingsgeskiedenis is geïdentifiseer, naamlik 'n lang periode van wetlike beskerming (1654-1883), 'n periode toe naas privaatbelange daar talle wildreservate en nasionale parke geproklameer is (1883-1937), die era toe daar van proteksionisme na die bewaring van natuurlike hulpbronne beweeg is (1937-1965), en ten slotte 'n kort periode wat as 'n omgewingsrevolusie tipeer kan word (1965-1972).

1. Introduction

Present-day environment-orientated activities are characterised by high-level political attention being paid to policies, legislation and co-operation aimed at improving the state of the natural environment. The high priority afforded to the environment by politicians worldwide is a relatively recent phenomenon and only came to the fore in 1972 when the United Nations convened the historic United Nations Conference on the Human Environment (UNCHE, Stockholm, June 1972). This conference succeeded in placing the environment on national and international political agendas and directly led to far-reaching changes within the official administration of the environment by the South African government (for example the creation of the Department of Planning and the Environment in 1973). It further redefined the role played by the environmental non-governmental organisations (ENGOs) within the South African environmental movement.

Crosby writes that "the new environmentalism did not detonate but grew and therefore has no precise birthday."[1] He was referring to environmentalism (i.e. the environmental movement) in the United States of America (USA), but the same argument is valid within the South African context. The environmentalism that came to the fore in the 1970s in South Africa has roots that go back many years. The purpose of this article is to focus on the development of the South African environmental movement between 1654 and 1972.

While acknowledging that the pre-colonial societies in South Africa contributed tremendously to the conservation of the South African environment prior to the permanent settlement of white people in the Cape in 1652, this article will restrict its focus to two main aspects of the South African environmental movement: firstly, to the development of official government environmental activities, with particular emphasis placed on the development of environmental legislation, in which the present-day activities of the South African government and the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism are rooted, and secondly, attention will be directed at the emergence of non-governmental environmental concerns and activities in which the emphasis will fall on the ENGOs, the academic community and *The Star*'s CARE campaign. Light will also be shed throughout on the state of the South African environment in the various phases of South African environmentalism between 1654 and 1972.

Acknowledging the need to order the historical past through periodisation, this article will divide the years 1654 to 1972 into four phases: legislative protection, 1654-1883;[2] private interest groups, game reserves and national parks, 1883-1937;[3] from protectionism to the

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[1] A.W. Crosby, "The past and present of environmental history", *The American Historical Review*, 100, 4 (October 1995), p. 1186.

[2] This phase was identified by J.A. Pringle, *The conservationists and the killers: The story of game protection and the Wildlife Society of Southern Africa* (Cape Town, 1982), p. 7.

[3] Pringle identified the cut-off point for the second phase as 1926 - the year in which the Wildlife Society was founded and the National Parks Act was passed by the Union parliament. This act paved the way for the creation of the Kruger National Park and other national parks. It seems as though the momentum generated by the National Parks Act carried on into the 1930s with the creation of four additional national parks in 1931 and 1937. Pringle, *Conservationists*, p. 7; Department of Planning and the Environment, *Environmental conservation* (Pretoria, 1973), p. 12.

conservation of natural resources, 1937-1965,[4] and the environmental revolution, 1965-1972.[5]

2. Legislative protection, 1654-1883

The origin of government environmental protection in South Africa dates back to the first permanent white settlement in the Cape of Good Hope in 1652. In that year the Dutch East India Company established a refreshment post at the Cape with Jan van Riebeeck as Governor. he main purpose of the refreshment post was to supply passing ships *en route* to India or Europe with fresh produce and water. Unfortunately the first attempts at intensive agriculture failed which created some difficulties for Van Riebeeck, for he not only had to provide passing ships with produce, but he also had to feed the people in the settlement. He could also not rely on hunters for they seemed more prone to injure themselves in the hunting process, rather than the game they were hunting. Van Riebeeck thus had to look towards Robben Island and Dassen Island, inhabited by penguins, to satisfy the daily needs of the white settlement. It was the overexploitation of these penguins that led to the first wildlife conservation measure in South Africa.[6]

On 14 April 1654 Van Riebeeck issued a *placcaat* (i.e. legislation) informing the white settlers that they would henceforth be allowed only two meals daily instead of three and that each person was entitled to only half a penguin per day. Due to the heavy daily consumption of penguins (the standard portion being one penguin per person), Van Riebeeck noted that within two or three days there would be no penguins left on the islands if exploitation continued with the same intensity.[7]

The first anti-pollution measure followed less than a year later when the *placcaat* of 10/12 April 1655 prohibited the polluting of drinking water supplied to passing ships.[8] Numerous

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[4] According to Farieda Khan, the shift away from protectionism to the conservation of natural resources started in the 1940s. However, government attention started to focus on soil conservation in the 1930s and therefore 1937 is preferred in this study. F. Khan, "Soil wars: The role of the African National Soil Conservation Association in South Africa, 1953-1959", *Environmental History,* 2, 4 (1997), p. 441.

[5] C.D. Schweizer identified 1965 as the start of the environmental revolution in South Africa. C.D. Schweizer, "Environmental and related interest groups in South Africa", 1 (M.Sc. dissertation, University of Cape Town, 1983), p. 75.

[6] R. Elphick and H. Giliomee (eds), *The shaping of the South African society, 1652-1820* (Cape Town, 1979), pp. 44-45; Pringle, *Conservationists*, pp. 18, 20.

[7] Pringle, *Conservationists*, p. 18.

[8] M.K. Jeffreys (ed.), *Kaapse plakkaatboek* 1: *1652-1707* (Cape Town, 1944), *Placcaat* of 10/12 April 1655.

anti-pollution *placcaten* followed,[9] while restrictions were also placed on the burning of grass, hunting, the overexploitation and sale of wood and the sale of venison to passing ships.[10] Under Governor Jacob Borghorst the first hunting licences were introduced in 1669, and Governor Simon van der Stel imposed the first comprehensive prohibition on illegal hunting, making it a criminal offence in 1680. The overexploitation of wildlife by the white settlers made it necessary for Governors Tulbagh, Van Plettenberg and Rhenius to start protecting certain species, notably the hippopotamus, rhinoceros, buffalo and eland, that were becoming rare.[11]

The Cape authorities were concerned mainly with those elements in nature needed for the white settlers to survive in the Cape of Good Hope. This resulted in restrictions placed on the exploitation of wildlife and forests and an attempt to control the quality of drinking water. After Britain permanently took over the control of the Cape Colony in 1806, wildlife legislation was brought in line with that in Britain itself. However, the stricter legislation was difficult to enforce because of the size of the colony and the fact that hunters tended to venture beyond colonial borders in their search for game.[12]

The white people in the Cape were also involved in a struggle over land and natural resources with indigenous groups, notably the San, Khoikoi and Xhosa. In this conquest the white people more often than not ended up victorious - and this process, completed only in the twentieth century, had a disastrous effect on the traditional political, economic and cultural systems of the indigenous groups. In this process indigenous groups not only lost their political freedom as the whites extended their authority over them, but also their economic means of survival through restrictions placed on hunting.[13]

The Great Trek of the 1830s and the settlement of the white people in the interior had far-reaching environmental consequences.[14] The environmental impact of the white

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[9] See Jeffreys, *Kaapse plakkaatboek,* 1, *Placcaten* of 26 August 1656, 6 February 1661, 22 December 1676, 5 January 1677 and 10/11 February 1687.

[10] G.F. Barkhuizen, "Die administrasie van omgewingsbewaring in die Republiek van Suid-Afrika" (D.Admin. thesis, University of the Orange Free State, 1980), pp. 7-8.

[11] D. Hey, "The history and status of nature conservation in South Africa", in A.C. Brown (ed.), *A history of scientific endeavour in South Africa* (Cape Town, 1977), p. 135.

[12] E.J. Carruthers, *The Kruger National Park: A social and political history* (Pietermaritzburg, 1995), p. 8.

[13] H.J. van Aswegen, *History of South Africa to 1854* (Pretoria, 1990), pp. 108-114, 116-118, 139-148.

[14] See F.J. Potgieter, "Die vestiging van die blanke in Transvaal (1837-1886) met spesiale verwysing na die verhouding tussen die mens en die omgewing", in *Archives Year Book for South African*

expansion into the interior differed from that of the initial settlement in the Cape in that it took the Natal Colony and the two Boer republics a much shorter time to reach a crisis situation.[15] This was mainly due to the improvement in arms (which made the century of the big hunt possible) and to the fact that white people in general had become more adapted to the South African environment. They were in a much better position to harness nature than their predecessors at the Cape were.[16]

The destruction of wildlife continued with hunting and the profits thereof being the economic foundation of the white political entities in the interior. By 1858 ivory was Natal's main export commodity and it produced £31 754 in revenue. The ivory exports peaked in 1877 when 19 350 kg left the colony. By 1895 annual exports had fallen to 30 kg. In 1855 the Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek (ZAR) exported an estimated 90 000 kg of ivory, while in 1866 one company alone in the Orange Free State (OFS) exported 152 000 blesbok and wildebeest hides.[17] The villains in the ivory trade were not only the white settlers as black tribes actively participated and competed with one another to gain control.[18]

The nineteenth century is known as the era of the great hunt in which "sportsmen" attempted to kill nearly all game they laid their eyes on. An open season on wildlife, that was to last for nearly a century, started in 1800 when the British Governor in the Cape, Sir George Yonge, granted all persons the right to kill wildlife, without a licence or prohibition, beyond a 48 km radius from Cape Town.[19] The biggest hunt in South African history took place on 24 August 1860 when Prince Alfred, Queen Victoria's sixteen year old son, together with Sir George Grey and a royal party, went hunting on the farm Bainsvlei (outside Bloemfontein) on the invitation of the owner, Andrew Hudson Bain. The hunt, that lasted less than an hour, left an estimated 1 000 game dead.[20] The establishment of hunting as a sport affected the economic livelihood of black tribes in the interior, mainly

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History, 28, 2 (Pretoria, 1959), for the environmental impact of white settlement in the Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek.

[15] It took Natal for example only 60 years from the arrival of the first white settler in 1824, to reach a state of environmental crisis in 1884. Pringle, *Conservationists*, pp. 10-13.

[16] See W. Beinart and P. Coates, *Environment and history: The taming of nature in the USA and South Africa* (London, 1995), pp. 25-27.

[17] Beinart and Coates, *Environment and history*, pp. 10-11; Carruthers, *Kruger National Park*, p. 12; J. McCormick, *The global environmental movement: Reclaiming paradise* (London, 1989), p. 9.

[18] Carruthers, *Kruger National Park*, pp. 11-12.

[19] Pringle, *Conservationists*, p. 34.

[20] "The greatest hunt in history", *African Wildlife*, 26, 1 (1972), pp. 24-25.

because it created the assumption that hunting as a sport was noble, whereas subsistence hunting, especially with snares, was seen as "less civilised."[21]

This excessive hunting took place despite legislation introduced by the *Volksrade* (i.e. parliaments) of the OFS and the ZAR in 1858 and the Natal Colony in 1866.[22] The latter also experienced problems with forest destruction (the first commission to inquire into this affair was set up in 1878), declining fish resources, a noxious weed (*Xanthium spinosum*) and water pollution caused by effluents from the first sugar mills.[23] The overexploitation of wildlife led to the drastic decline in their numbers and blame for this situation in many cases was laid on the black tribes. The whites reacted by restricting the access of black people to wildlife, denying them legal access to weapons, making them non-eligible for hunting licences and prohibiting their ownership of hunting dogs.[24]

In the Cape Colony, the authorities continued to pay attention to diminishing forests, and forest conservancies were proclaimed in the Knysna and Tsitsikama forests. The most important piece of conservation legislation passed in the Cape legislature in the nineteenth century was the Forest and Herbage Preservation Act (no. 18 of 1856). This act survived in a slightly modified form as the Forestry Act (no. 22 of 1888) until 1910, and was, according to Richard Grove, the most comprehensive form of conservation legislation passed in the British colonies in the nineteenth century.[25] Enforcing this piece of legislation became the responsibility of the Forest Department that was established in 1875 in the Cape Colony.[26]

By the end of the first phase of legislative conservation, important developments were taking place in the South African economy. In 1867 diamonds were discovered on the Vaal-Hartz River confluence and soon after in Kimberley. The advent of the diamond industry led to the economic transformation of South Africa from a predominantly

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[21] E.J. Carruthers, "'Police boys' and poachers: Africans, wildlife protection and national parks, the Transvaal 1902 to 1950", *Koedoe*, 36, 2 (1993), p. 13.

[22] Hey, "Nature conservation", p. 135; M.A. Rabie, "Wildlife conservation and the law", *The Comparative and International Law Journal of Southern Africa*, 6, 2 (July 1973), p. 148.

[23] Pringle, *Conservationists*, pp. 11, 13.

[24] Carruthers, "'Police boys'", pp. 12-13

[25] R. Grove, "Early themes in African conservation: The Cape in the nineteenth century", in D. Anderson and R. Grove (eds), *Conservation in Africa: People, policies and practice* (Cambridge, 1989), pp. 25-31.

[26] E. Schwella and J.J. Muller, "Environmental administration", in R.F. Fuggle and M.A. Rabie (eds) *Environmental management in South Africa* (Cape Town, 1992), p. 72.

agricultural economy to a modern capitalist economy.[27] The driving force behind these economic changes were immigrants, which led to the unusual situation in South Africa in which immigrants built up the economic structures required for industrialisation. Unlike other parts of the world where immigrants were absorbed into existing economic structures, it was the population of the four political entities in South Africa that was absorbed into an economic structure completely organised by immigrants.[28]

3. Private interests, game reserves and national parks, 1883-1937

On 21 August 1883 the first known non-governmental organisation (NGO) concerned with some sort of environmental conservation was founded in South Africa. The Natal Game Protection Association (NGPA), formed by a group of sportsmen, was a single-issue group and concerned itself only with wildlife conservation. Its stated objectives included the prosecution of all individuals breaking game laws, and negotiation with the Natal authorities, when necessary, to amend or extend game laws.[29] Pringle sees the founding of the NGPA as an extraordinary event for it marked the beginning of public participation in conservation measures in South Africa. For 231 years since white settlement started in South Africa, wildlife conservation was primarily seen as the duty of the governments; now, for the first time, individuals organised themselves into an interest group with the aim of tightening wildlife conservation measures.[30]

The NGPA was founded nine days after the last quagga (*Equus quagga*), a mare, died in captivity at the Amsterdam Zoo on 12 August 1883. Nobody realised at the time that a specie had just become extinct - only after the zoo authorities started looking for a replacement quagga did they realise that there was none left in the veld to replace it with. It took some years before the message reached South Africa because the authorities in the Cape Colony, unaware that the quagga had become extinct, gave legal protection to

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[27] T.R.H. Davenport, *South Africa: A modern history* (London, 1991), pp. 494-495; N. Worden, *The making of modern South Africa: Conquest, segregation and apartheid* (Oxford, 1995), p. 19; R. Turrel, "Kimberley: Labour and compounds, 1871-1888", in S. Marks and R. Rathbone (eds), *Industrialisation and social change in South Africa: African class formation, culture and consciousness* (New York, 1982), p. 46.

[28] L. Solomon, "Socio-economic aspects of South African history, 1870-1962" (Ph.D. thesis, Boston University Graduate School, 1962), pp. 9-10.

[29] "The history of the Wildlife Society", *African Wildlife*, 30, 5 (1976), p. 19.

[30] Pringle, *Conservationists*, p. 10.

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[29] "The history of the Wildlife Society", *African Wildlife*, 30, 5 (1976), p. 19.

[30] Pringle, *Conservationists*, p. 10.

the quagga for the first time on 6 July 1886 (act no 36 of 1886). This act prohibited the killing of quaggas without special permission from the Cape Governor.[31]

Economic changes brought about by the diamond industry in the Northern Cape, were further accelerated by the discovery of the main gold reef on the farm Langlaagte (present-day Johannesburg) in 1886. The gold industry developed faster and better than the diamond industry and led to the gold rush in which thousands of people flocked to Johannesburg in search of wealth. Increasing urbanisation led to a greater demand for meat products to sustain the non-farming urban population. This in turn placed greater pressure on the dwindling wildlife resources in the ZAR.[32]

The first initiative to formally protect wildlife by establishing game reserves was taken by the ZAR government.[33] In August 1889 seven government owned farms, situated in the south-eastern corner of the ZAR along the Pongola River (bordering both Swaziland and Zululand), were set aside for conservation purposes. It took about five years before the ZAR government officially proclaimed the Pongola Game Reserve on 13 June 1894 with H.F. van Oordt as its first game warden. The Pongola Game Reserve was short-lived and the Union government de-proclaimed it in 1921.[34]

The Natal Colony followed the ZAR's initiative and in April 1897 proclaimed four game reserves at Umfolozi, Hluhluwe, St Lucia and Umdhletse. Like the Pongola Game Reserve, these newly proclaimed reserves were all situated on agriculturally poor land, though the game within their borders formed an integral part of the economic livelihood of the Zulus in the area. The Zulus were prohibited from hunting within the borders of the game reserves and showed resistance to these conservation measures by illegally poaching within the reserves.[35] Shortly after, on 26 March 1898, the ZAR proclaimed its

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[31] Pringle, *Conservationists.*, pp. 10, 14-16; "1883-1983: Centennial of the extinction of the quagga", *African Wildlife*, 37, 4 (1983), pp. 146-148; J.C. Greig, "Editorial: The lesson of the quagga", *African Wildlife*, 37, 4 (1983), pp. 134-135.

[32] N.C. Pollock and S. Agnew, *An historical geography of South Africa* (London, 1963), pp. 177-180.

[33] It is important not to confuse game reserves with national parks. Game reserves provide sanctuaries for wildlife with no or little human interference. A national park is created by an act of parliament (it thus has greater legal protection than game reserves), and entails interaction between the protected ecosystem and humans (mainly tourists). Carruthers, "'Police boys'", p. 13.

[34] See E.J. Carruthers, "Game protection in the Transvaal 1846 to 1926", *Archives Year Book for South African History*, 58 (Pretoria, 1995), pp. 45-67; and E.J. Carruthers, "The Pongola Game Reserve: An eco-political study", *Koedoe*, 28 (1985), pp. 1-15 for a detailed discussion.

[35] E.J. Carruthers, "National parks and game reserves, the Transvaal and Natal: Protected for the people or against the people?" Paper presented at the sixteenth biennial conference of the South African Historical Society, Pretoria (6-9 July 1997), pp. 3, 10-11.

second game reserve, the Sabi Game Reserve. In 1926 this reserve became the nucleus of the renowned Kruger National Park.[36]

In the meantime game protection associations, like the NGPA, were formed all over South Africa. The best known of these associations were the Western Districts Game Protection Association (1886) and the South African Republic Game Protection Association (1892).[37] The oldest surviving environmental interest group in South Africa, the Mountain Club of South Africa (MCSA), was established in October 1891 in Cape Town. Though primarily concerned with the exploration of South Africa's mountains, the MCSA also actively participated in the conservation of mountain flora, ranging from combating alien vegetation to proposing legislation and legislative changes.[38]

The momentum created by the conservation measures in the last decades of the nineteenth century was briefly put on hold by the outbreak of the Anglo-Boer War between Britain and the two Boer republics on 11 October 1899. The environmental toll of this war still needs to be properly investigated, but one can assume that its impact on the environment was far-reaching. The Anglo-Boer War came to an end on 31 May 1902, with both the ZAR and the OFS losing their independence to Britain. They respectively became the Transvaal Colony and the Orange River Colony.[39]

Wildlife conservation measures continued after the war, with the re-proclamation of the two existing game reserves in the Transvaal. Other game reserves proclaimed after the war included the Singwitsi Game Reserve (1903) and the Rustenburg Game Reserve (1909) in the Transvaal; the Namaqualand Game Reserve (1903, de-proclaimed in 1919) and the Gordonia Game Reserve (1908, de-proclaimed in 1930) in the Cape; the Hlabisa Game Reserve (1905) and the Mkhuze Game Reserve (1912) in Natal, and the Sommerville Game Reserve (1925) in the OFS.[40] A number of private organisations re-emerged, most notably the Transvaal Game Protection Association (TGPA, 1902 - formerly known as the South African Republic Game Protection Association) and the Western Districts Game and Trout Protection Association (1902).[41] Scientific associations were also formed, like the

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[36] See Carruthers, *Kruger National Park*, pp. 23-28 for more details.

[37] Pringle, *Conservationists*, p. 63; Carruthers, "Game protection in Transvaal", p. 69.

[38] *The Mountain Club of South Africa* (pamphlet, Cape Town, 1991), pp. 1-4.

[39] Thomas Pakenham, *The Boer War* (London, 1992), pp. xv, p. 569.

[40] Carruthers, "Game protection in Transvaal", p. 147; Carruthers, "National parks", pp. 3, 11; Pringle, *Conservationists*, pp. 70, 74; Hey, "History and status", p. 139.

[41] See Pringle, *Conservationists*, pp. 60-161 for more details.

Botanical Society in 1913 and the South African Ornithological Union (1904 - renamed the Southern African Ornithological Society in 1930).[42]

On an administrative level, the South Africa Act of 1909 gave the provinces the responsibility for the protection of fauna and flora. Hey notes that this responsibility was interpreted as the promulgation of conservation and protectionist legislation, the regulating of hunting and fishing, and the implementing of the bounty system of predator control.[43] More importantly, the South Africa Act of 1909 led to the creation of the Union of South Africa that came into existence on 31 May 1910 with Gen. Louis Botha as Prime Minister.

The alienation of black people from land followed shortly after with the promulgation of the Natives Land Act in 1913. This act regulated the purchase, ownership and occupation of land by black and white people. Scheduled areas were set aside for black people which amounted to less than 8% of the total land area of the Union. Black land ownership was confined to the scheduled areas,[44] though exceptions did occur.[45] According to Khan, in a study on black environmental perceptions, the 1913 Land Act was the most important influence that shaped black views on the environment. It transformed the positive view of the natural environment among black people, into a generally negative attitude.[46] The 1913 Land Act was followed in 1936 by the Native Trust and Land Act which made a further six million hectares of land available to black people. Restrictions were placed on the purchase of land in these areas and only tribal councils and black syndicates were allowed to buy in the "native reserves."[47]

Important developments in flora conservation also took place in 1913. In that year South Africa's first National Botanical Garden was established on the Kirstenbosch estate in Cape Town. Because not all South African plant species could be grown at Kirstenbosch, the decision was taken to develop regional gardens that represented the ecological areas

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[42] C.D. Schweizer and K.H. Cooper, "Voluntary organisations and the environment", in R.F. Fuggle and M.A. Rabie (eds), *Environmental concerns in South Africa: Technical and legal perspectives* (Johannesburg, 1983), pp. 134-135.

[43] Hey, "Nature conservation", p. 137.

[44] B.J. Liebenberg and S.B. Spies (eds), *South Africa in the 20th century* (Pretoria, 1993), pp. 58-59.

[45] See H. Feinberg, "Challenging the Natives Land Act: African land acquisitions between 1913 and 1936." Paper presented at the sixteenth biennial conference of the South African Historical Society, Pretoria (6-9 July 1997).

[46] F. Khan, "Contemporary South African environmental response: An historical and socio-political evaluation with particular reference to Blacks" (M.A. dissertation, University of Cape Town, 1990), pp. 18-19.

[47] Liebenberg and Spies, *South Africa*, p. 298.

in South Africa. Eight regional gardens totalling 1 352 ha were established between 1913 and 1982 to conserve indigenous flora in South Africa.[48]

For most of its history the mainstream environmental movement in South Africa remained a predominantly white middle class movement in which black people were stereotyped as being the ravagers of the natural environment. This view was challenged with the establishment of the first black environmental organisation, the Native Farmers Association (NFA), in 1918. The NFA was founded by Davidson Don Tengo Jabavu and a black American missionary, Rev. J.E. East, to address the widespread environmental deterioration and poverty among rural communities in the Eastern Cape. It focussed on agricultural, socio-economic and political issues, and attempted, *inter alia*, to end the discriminatory practices towards black farmers and to establish their equality with their white counterparts. Lack of land and poverty were identified by the NFA as the main causes of environmental degradation among black communities.[49]

The South African economy experienced its first phase of industrial development in the 1910s. Between 1865 and 1915, the economy was transformed from one with an agricultural base into a modern capitalistic economy based on the mining industry. From 1915 onwards developments in the manufacturing, commercial and service sectors sparked off industrialisation in South Africa. The state played an important role in this development, at first promoting economic liberalism, but after the electoral success of the Pact government (a coalition between the Labour and the National Parties) in 1924, South Africa entered a new phase of economic nationalism. This entailed greater state intervention in agriculture and industries, given the fact that the Pact-government brought about a political alliance between white labour interests and white rural capital. Important landmarks in the industrial development were the creation of the Electricity Supply Commission (Escom) in 1923 and the South African Iron and Steel Industry Corporation (Iscor) in 1928.[50]

A breakthrough in the long struggle to convince the South African government to establish a national park came in 1926 with the passing of the National Parks Act (no 56 of 1926). This act provided for the creation of the National Parks Board to manage governmental conservation interests and the establishment of the Kruger National Park (KNP). The latter

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[48] J.N. Eloff, "Botanic gardens and education in South Africa", in D. Bramwell *et al* (eds), *Botanic gardens and the World Conservation strategy* (London, 1987), pp. 88-89.

[49] Khan, "Contemporary South African", pp. 28-32; F. Khan, "Davidson Don Tengo Jabavu: Pioneer South African environmental activist", *African Wildlife*, 46, 6 (1992), p. 275; Khan, "Soil wars", pp. 439, 441; F. Khan, *Environmentalism in a changing South Africa* (s.l., s.a.), pp. 4-5.

[50] Liebenberg and Spies, *South Africa*, p. 178; D.G. Franzsen and H.J.J. Reynders (eds), *Die ekonomiese lewe van Suid-Afrika* (Pretoria, 1966), pp. 158-159; J. Nattrass, *The South African economy: Its growth and change* (Cape Town, 1982), pp. 24-28.

came into being by the consolidation of the Sabi and Singwitsi Game Reserves into one national park. A wedge occupied by the Makulele community, separated these two areas. Plans to evict the Makulele made very early in the KNP's existence, failed until 1969, when the Makulele were evicted and their land incorporated into the KNP. The first warden of the KNP was Col James Stevenson-Hamilton who had been the warden of the Sabi Game Reserve since 1902. Stevenson-Hamilton, together with other interested parties, notably the TGPA, had been key figures in the struggle for a national park.[51]

One of South Africa's most influential ENGOs, the Wildlife Protection Society of South Africa, was also founded in 1926. In December 1925 the TGPA disbanded, and the same people formed the Wildlife Society on 11 March 1926 with the specific aim of protecting wildlife. The name was later changed to the Wildlife Society of Southern Africa and again in 1996 to the Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa.[52]

The momentum and energy created by the establishment of the KNP in 1926 carried on till the 1930s when four additional national parks were established. The Addo Elephant National Park (1931), the Bontebok National Park (1931) and the Mountain Zebra Park (1937) were created in a desperate attempt to save the Addo elephant, the bontebok and the mountain zebra of which there were left, by the 1930s, only eleven, twenty and seventeen respectively. The fourth park, the Kalahari Gemsbok National Park (1931), was not born out of desperation, but to provide a home for migrating game.[53]

5. From protectionism to the conservation of natural resources, 1937-1965

In 1937 G.V. Jacks and R.O. Whyte published their highly influential book, *The rape of the earth: a world survey of soil erosion*. Their chapter on soil erosion in South Africa starts off with an alarming observation: "A national catastrophe, due to soil erosion, is perhaps more imminent in the Union of South Africa than in any other country."[54] In their view the race against soil erosion in South Africa had become a race against time, and they warned that

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[51] See Carruthers, *Kruger National Park*, pp. 47-66; Carruthers, "Game protection in Transvaal", pp. 150-177; Carruthers, "National parks", pp. 3-6; Pringle, *Conservationists*, pp. 85-108; M. Nel, "Kruger land claim", *African Wildlife*, 50, 6 (1996), pp. 6-9.

[52] Pringle, *Conservationists*, p. 107; J. Taylor, *Share-Net: A case study of environmental education resource material development in a risk society* (Howick, 1997), pp. 12-13. See also O. Martiny, "The Wildlife Society of Southern Africa", in Council for the Habitat, *Conference proceedings* 4: *Activities in retrospect, Johannesburg, 9.5.1978* (s.l., s.a.), pp. 57-64.

[53] *South Africa 1989-90: Official yearbook of the Republic of South Africa* (Pretoria, 1989), p. 705 ; "The crisis parks", *African Wildlife*, 34, 2 (1980), pp. 14-17; A.P.J. van Rensburg, "Die geskiedenis van die Nasionale Bontebokpark, Swellendam", *Koedoe*, 18 (1975), pp. 165-190.

[54] G.V. Jacks and R.O. Whyte, *The rape of the earth: A world survey of soil erosion* (London, 1937), p. 264.

by the time the mines were exhausted, South Africa's soil would no longer be able to feed the white population in the country.[55]

This was not the first time that bad soil conservation practices in South Africa were highlighted. Two government investigations, in 1914 and 1919, launched after severe droughts, had placed emphasis on the urgent need for soil conservation. In its report the Drought Investigation Commission (1919) even warned of the danger of South Africa becoming a great uninhabitable desert.[56] However, the need for soil conservation in South Africa was not considered urgent after the rains came again. Several attempts were made between 1925 and 1939 to address the need for soil conservation, notably by the Soil Erosion Advisory Council (1929-1933), the launching of the Soil Schemes in 1933 and the proclaiming of the Drakensberg Conservation Area for intensive water and soil conservation studies in 1934. The first move towards establishing an effective soil conservation service within governmental structures came only in 1939 with the creation of the Division of Soil and Veld Conservation within the Department of Agriculture.[57]

However, the outbreak of the Second World War in the same year meant that soil conservation had to be pushed aside while the government attended to other matters. Nonetheless, important events did occur during the war period, including the passing of the Forest and Veld Conservation Act (no 13 of 1941) which was the first legislative attempt to address soil erosion and related problems. It was followed in 1946 by the promulgation of the Soil Conservation Act (no 45 of 1946) which allowed for the creation of a new Division of Soil Conservation and Extension to administer the act.[58]

Public concern for soil degradation also led to the founding of the National Veld Trust (NVT) on 18 March 1943 in Cape Town. The aim of the NVT was to promote soil and water conservation, and to educate the general public on the need of the state to act in this regard. Partly funded by the government, the NVT played a key educational role and remained the most influential ENGO in soil conservation for decades.[59]

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[55] Jacks and Whyte, *Rape of the earth*, pp. 266-268. Jacks and Whyte were mainly concerned with the white people in South Africa, hence the reference that the soil would not be able to feed the white population group in the country.

[56] M.A. Rabie, "South African soil conservation legislation", *The Comparative and International Law Journal of Southern Africa*, 7, 3 (November 1974), pp. 259-261; T.C. Robertson, "Ecology and political ideals", *Veldtrust* (December 1972), p. 9.

[57] J.C. Ross, *Soil conservation in South Africa: A review of the problem and developments to date* (Pretoria, 1963), pp. 15-17.

[58] Ross, *Soil conservation*, p. 18.

[59] Robertson, "Ecology and political ideals", pp. 9-10; R.J. van Niekerk, "Bewaring as sedelike prinsipe in die Suid-Afrikaanse bodembenuttingsituasie: 'n Kultuur-filosofiese studie" (D.Phil thesis,

Soil conservation was also addressed within the Southern Africa region in 1948 with the convening of an Inter-African Conference in Goma, in the Belgian Congo (today the Democratic Republic of Congo), to discuss soil conservation and land utilisation. This conference led to the establishment of the Southern African Regional Commission for the Conservation and Utilisation of the Soil (SARCCUS). SARCCUS's main functions were to focus attention on the problems involved in the conservation and utilisation of natural resources, and to provide mechanisms for the exchange of information to successfully address these problems. Member states of SARCCUS included Angola, Basutoland (Lesotho), Bechuanaland (Botswana), Nyasaland (Malawi), Mozambique, Northern Rhodesia (Zambia), Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), South Africa and South West Africa (Namibia), and Swaziland.[60]

Between 1940 and 1948 important environmental legislation was passed including the Sea Fisheries Act (no 10 of 1940), the Advertising on Roads and Ribbon Development Act (no. 21 of 1940), the Forest Act (no 13 of 1941), the Natural Resources Development Act (no. 51 of 1947), the Fertilisers, Farm Feeds, Agricultural Remedies and Stock Remedies Act (no. 36 of 1947) and the Atomic Energy Act (no. 35 of 1948). All these acts provided for greater government control over the conservation of natural resources and the combatting of pollution.[61]

In the meantime the ruling United Party (UP), under the leadership of Gen. J.C. Smuts, and the opposition National Party (NP), under Dr D.F. Malan, were fighting a highly politicised battle over the proposed Dongola Wild Life Sanctuary. The proposal, first tabled in 1944, met serious resistance from the NP, mainly because it threatened white land-owning interests in the area. Despite this resistance, the Smuts government went ahead and proclaimed the Dongola Wild Life Sanctuary on 28 March 1947 (Act no. 6 of 1947). After the NP came to power in 1948, immediate steps were taken to abolish this national park. The Dongola Wild Life Sanctuary Repeal Act (no 29 of 1949) was passed in 1949 and the land on which it was situated was either given back to its original owners or allocated for settlement.[62]

University of Pretoria, 1981), p. 55.

[60] Rabie, "Soil conservation legislation", p. 290

[61] R.F. Fuggle, "An overview of lessons that can be learned from efforts to protect the South African environment", *National Veld Trust jubilee conference proceedings, Pretoria, 2 to 4 November 1993* (s.l., 1994), pp. 48-49.

[62] See E.J. Carruthers, "The Dongola Wild Life Sanctuary: 'Psychological blunder, economic folly and political monstrosity' or 'more valuable than rubies and gold'?", *Kleio*, 24 (1992), pp. 82-100; and Carruthers, "National parks", pp. 6-8 for more details.

After the NP came to power in 1948, government attention was mainly focussed on implementing the proposed domestic policy of apartheid which helped the NP to power. Acts to legally enforce racial segregation followed shortly after while the process of political exclusion of black, Indian and coloured South Africans that started in 1910 culminated in 1956 in the removal of coloured voters from the common voters' roll. These groups reacted to this and other racist policies by launching a passive resistance campaign in the 1950s aimed at demonstrating to the South African government that the new direction they had taken was not acceptable to the majority of the population.[63]

During this period of political uncertainty for black people, the second black ENGO, the African National Soil Conservation Association (ANSCA) was founded. The first suggestion to launch ANSCA came from the NVT which felt that, since membership to the NVT was limited to whites only, a separate organisation should be started for black people. ANSCA was launched on 26 September 1953 with Sam Motsuenyane as organising secretary and W.B. Ngakane as president. According to Khan, ANSCA's main aim was to convince black farmers to combat soil erosion through the adoption of sound agricultural methods. In 1957 the Department of Bantu Administration and Development instructed ANSCA to disband and to re-organise along ethnic lines in order to fit in with governmental racial policies. Rather than comply with this request, ANSCA disbanded, and despite efforts to continue with its work, by 1960 it had completely collapsed.[64]

Regional and city planning also began to receive proper attention in the 1940s and 1950s. Prior to that, determining which land should be used for mining, farming, manufacturing, residential areas, etc., depended on which sector would be the most profitable. After 1942 the South African government opted to implement regulations in order to decentralise the industrial concentration in only four big centres, to the rural areas and especially to those areas close to the black reserves (called border industries).[65] The most important regional planning commission was the Commission for the Socio-economic Development of the Bantu Areas within the Union of South Africa, appointed in 1949 and headed by Prof. F.R. Tomlinson. The report of the Tomlinson Commission emphasised the need for economic development in the black reserves if the NP's goal of separate development were to be realised. It stressed the fact that only when black people had work opportunities in or

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[63] T. Karis and G.M. Carter, *From protest to challenge. A documentary history of African politics in South Africa, 1882-1964* 2: *Hope and challenge, 1935-1952* (Stanford, 1973), pp. 403-428; Liebenberg and Spies, *South Africa*, pp. 321-345, 376-378.

[64] Khan, "Soil wars", pp. 439-459; Khan, "Contemporary South African", pp. 33-39; Khan, *Environmentalism*, pp. 5-6; "It was a tragedy this black movement died", *African Wildlife*, 29, 3 (1975), p. 20; "ANSCA's ambition", *Veldtrust* (November 1954), pp. 12-13; "First ANSCA congress", *Veldtrust* (November 1953), pp. 27-29.

[65] I. Botha, "'n Teoretiese en historiese oorsig van streekbeplanning in Suid-Afrika, met riglyne vir 'n toekomstige beleid" (M.Sc. dissertation, University of the Orange Free State, 1990), pp. 40-45.

close to the reserves would the flow of black people to the industrial areas be curbed. The Commission concluded that South Africa had to choose between racial integration and racial segregation; if racial segregation was opted for, the reserves needed to be developed.[66]

The government opted for racial segregation, especially after Dr H.F. Verwoerd became Prime Minister in 1958. Often labelled the "architect of apartheid", Verwoerd introduced a master plan for the division of South Africa into white and black areas in 1959. The Bantustan policy led to the creation of ethnic Bantustans (later called homelands) scattered throughout South Africa.[67] Regional and city planning in South Africa was thus not driven by the need to take the environmental impact of human activities into account; rather, it was the product of political policies aimed at carving South Africa up along ethnic lines with little consideration of the environment and the majority of the population in the country.

In the same year that Verwoerd tabled his grand plan for apartheid, the first environmental co-operative body, the South African Nature Union (SANU) was established. The aim of SANU was to consolidate resources and to provide a unified forum of all environmentally orientated groups in South Africa. Established in 1959, SANU continued to exist till 1974 when the Habitat Council replaced it.[68] In 1963 two important ENGOs were created, namely the Wilderness Leadership School and the African Wildlife Society (AWS). The former concentrated on environmental education, pioneering the wilderness experience in the country. The AWS, on the other hand, was an attempt to involve black people in conservation. Established by the Natal chapter of the Wildlife Society for black people in Natal, it collapsed after only two years without really stimulating black participation in environmental issues.[69]

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[66] Botha, "Streekbeplanning", pp. 45-46; A. Wessels and M.E. Wentzel, *Die invloed van relevante kommissieverslae sedert Uniewording op regeringsbeleid ten opsigte van swart verstedeliking en streekontwikkeling* (Institute for Historical Research report IGN-T1, Pretoria, 1989), pp. 134-153.

[67] T. Lodge, *Black politics in South Africa since 1945* (Johannesburg, 1983), pp. 201-226; Liebenberg and Spies, *South Africa*, pp. 355-398.

[68] Schweizer and Cooper, "Voluntary organisations", p. 136.

[69] Khan, "Contemporary South African", pp. 40-41; Schweizer, "Environmental and related", 2, p 54.

6. The environmental revolution, 1965-1972

In a study on environmental and related interest groups in South Africa, Schweizer marks 1965 as the year in which the environmental revolution "arrived" in the country.[70] This conclusion is based on the fact that between 1965 and 1970 fifteen ENGOs were established in South Africa.[71] In Part 2 of her study she lists eighteen ENGOs established between 1965 and 1972, as opposed to the three between 1961 and 1965, nine between 1951 and 1960, seven between 1946 and 1950, and twenty-five between 1901 and 1945.[72]

Though her list is incomplete at times, fact remains that by 1965 the general public in South Africa was increasingly becoming more active in environmental matters. However, in no way did it generate the same amount of interest as in the USA and Western Europe, where the environmental revolution led directly to the creation of ENGOs with political agendas that addressed a wider range of issues than their conservation predecessors. In South Africa there is no group, founded between 1965 and 1972, that can claim to be of the same sort as Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth.[73]

The environment had not yet become a political issue in South Africa, and the overwhelming majority of new ENGOs had some sort of conservation agenda. This ranged from co-ordination (for example the Co-ordinating Council for Nature Protection in the Cape, 1970), environmental management (for example the South African Wildlife Management Association, 1970), or good old-fashioned nature conservation (for example the Southern African Nature Foundation, 1968). Important newcomers to the environmental scene were the anti-pollution groups like the Clean Cape Association (1966), the National Association for Clean Air (1969) and Keep South Africa Tidy (1971).[74] Of particular importance to the environmental movement was the establishment of the Southern African Nature Foundation (SANF) by Dr Anton Rupert in 1968. As the branch of the World Wildlife Fund in Southern Africa, the SANF set out to assist in nature conservation, environmental education and fundraising to finance urgent projects.[75] Most of the ENGOs were established to address a single issue, like litter, air pollution and

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[70] The environmental revolution was sparked off in 1962 by the publication of Rachel Carson's *Silent spring* in the USA. It led directly to a global re-evaluation of the impact of human activities on the natural environment and to the formulation of new environmental legislation and policies by governments. It further established the environment globally as a political issue. See McCormick, *The global environmental movement*, pp. 47-68 for more details.

[71] Schweizer, "Environmental and related", 1, pp. 62-63, 75.

[72] Schweizer, "Environmental and related", 2, pp. 3-59.

[73] See also Schweizer, "Environmental and related", p. 81.

[74] Schweizer, "Environmental and related", 1, pp. 72-82.

[75] Interview with I. McDonald, 1 April 1998, Stellenbosch.

nature conservation. An holistic approach to the environment within a single ENGO, which characterised the environmental revolution elsewhere, was initially limited to the Society for the Protection of the Environment (SPE). Established in 1971, the SPE addressed a variety of issues ranging from environmental marring to proposed developments and unchecked population growth.[76]

The environment also received renewed attention from the South African academic community from 1968 onwards. In 1968, the Faculty of Forestry at the University of Stellenbosch introduced a course in nature conservation for the first time, which was followed by the establishment of chairs in nature conservation at the same institution and at the University of Pretoria (the Eugene Marais Chair) in 1970. In 1972, the University of Cape Town (UCT) established the School of Environmental Studies and, with the financial assistance of the multi-national Shell oil company, the Shell Chair of Environmental Studies was instituted. These initiatives were followed in 1973 by the establishment of an Institute of Fresh Water Studies at Rhodes University, an Ecological Institute at the University of the Orange Free State, and the Percy Fitzpatrick Institute for African Ornithology at UCT.[77]

Despite political distractions in the Southern Africa region and in the international political arena, the government also started to display greater sensitivity towards the environment. Important anti water pollution legislation (the Water Act no 54 of 1956) was followed by the Atmospheric Pollution Prevention Act (no 45 of 1965). An important provision of the latter was that air polluters had to prove that they had adopted the best practical means to control their pollution. In terms of the act, the "best practical means" were seen as measures that were technically feasible and economically viable. The government retained the "best practical means" criterion into the 1990s, ignoring the shift towards the "polluter pays" concept that had been in force in most industrialised countries since the 1970s.[78] Other important environmental legislation adopted included the Physical Planning and Utilisation of Resources Act (no. 88 of 1967), the Forest Act (no. 72 of 1968), the Soil Conservation Act (no. 76 of 1969), the Mountain Catchment Areas Act (no. 63 of

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[76] *Society for the Protection of the Environment Newsletter* 1, 1 - 1, 4 (1971).

[77] M.A. Rabie and R.F. Fuggle, "The rise of environmental concern", in Fuggle and Rabie, *Environmental management*, pp. 18-19; Schweizer and Cooper, "Voluntary organisations", p. 139; "Richard Fuggle is doing something quite new...", *African Wildlife*, 28, 3 (1974), pp. 26-27; R. Bigalke, "Nature conservation education at the University of Stellenbosch", in *African Wildlife*, 26, 1 (1972), p. 36.

[78] See M.A. Rabie, *South African environmental legislation* (Pretoria, 1976), pp. 93-108 for air pollution control in South Africa prior to 1976.

1970) and the Prevention and Combatting of Pollution of the Sea by Oil Act (no 67 of 1971).[79]

In the absence of television to bring the environmental crisis into people's homes, the environmental revolution passed by largely unnoticed by the general public. The Cleaner Air, Rivers and Environment (CARE) campaign launched by *The Star* on 10 March 1971 changed environmental reporting in South Africa and played an important role in educating the general public in South Africa on environmental problems. Headed by James Clarke, CARE set out to expose pollution, indifference towards the country's conservation needs, poor town planning and all abuses of the South African environment.[80] Articles were published on pollution, soil erosion, diminishing wildlife, the population explosion, the misuse of land, the lack of country and town planning, and the overexploitation of natural resources. *The Star*'s readers were also informed on how to run green households, while numerous initiatives were taken to directly involve the public in environmental actions.[81]

CARE was instrumental in exposing the real state of the South African environment. Of particular concern to the campaign was the high pollution levels in the country, and they informed their readers that the air in Johannesburg and Pretoria in 1971 was so polluted that to inhale it was the equivalent of smoking fifteen cigarettes a day. Many state and parastatal industries such as Iscor and Escom were identified as major air polluters in the country, while particular attention was paid to the South African Railways (SAR) whose 2473 steam locomotives caused serious air pollution throughout the country. With the SAR being the only organisation allowed to cause smoke in smokeless zones, no pollution expert or state department was willing to speak out against the railways industry.[82]

South Africa also had problems with water pollution with, for example, the Vaal River being so polluted by industrial effluent that the water below the Vaal Triangle was not fit even for industrial use.[83] In 1970 and 1971 water at the Vereeniging purification and pumping station of the Rand Water Board, was unsuitable for purification treatment on 151 and 102 days of the year respectively. Industrial effluent also polluted water resources in Natal,

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[79] *South Africa 1978: Official yearbook of the Republic of South Africa* (Pretoria, 1978), pp. 339-352.

[80] *The Star*, 10 March 1971; James Clarke, *Our fragile land: South Africa's environmental crisis* (Johannesburg, 1974), pp. 11-16; Interview with James Clarke, 5 March 1998, Johannesburg.

[81] M. Cottee, "CARE: one of the most successful newspaper campaigns conducted in South Africa", in *African Wildlife*, 26, 2 (1972), pp. 62-63.

[82] *The Star*, 10-31 March 1971.

[83] *The Star*, 10-31 March 1971.

the Eastern and Western Cape, while poor farming methods resulted in topsoil loss which in turn silted up the river networks of the country.[84]

South Africa's environmental problems were not confined to pollution only. The over-exploitation of fish resources in the country's territorial waters had become a problem by 1971. The pilchard resources, for example, had declined to such an extent that only 300000 tons were caught in 1971. This was down from 1 500 000 tons caught in 1968. Improved fishing techniques, larger fishing fleets, lack of government control and pollution at sea were identified as the main problems.[85] But the country needed more fish and more food to feed the fast growing population. With an average annual growth rate of 3,09%, by 1970 South Africa had a population of 21,8 million, 7 873 000 of whom lived in the four metropolitan areas[86] in the country.[87]

The state of the environment did not go by unnoticed by the ENGOs in the country. In 1971 the first national environmental conference, "Man and his environment", was hosted by the NVT, the SPE and SANU to address environmental degradation in South Africa. At the conference, held on 21 and 22 October 1971 at Stellenbosch, the 350 delegates dealt mainly with pollution, focussing on all the various types that posed environmental problems for South Africa. "Man and his environment" was, like the founding of the first ENGO in 1883, a historic event, for it was the first time that government departments, local authorities, universities, conservation bodies, ENGOs, agricultural unions and industries got together to discuss the environmental crisis in South Africa.[88]

7. Conclusion

Conservation through legislation dominated the first phase of the environmental movement in South Africa which lasted from 1654 to 1883. Conservation was seen primarily as the duty of the authorities and despite a long record of conservation legislation, forest and game resources had seriously diminished by 1883. The most important reasons for this situation were the wasteful nature of many white people in South Africa and the fact that the authorities were unable to successfully enforce their legislative restrictions. By 1883

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[84] R.J. Laburn, "Pollution of water", *Habitat RSA* (Johannesburg, 1974), pp. 39-43.

[85] J.P.A. Lochner, "The exploitation of marine resources", *Habitat RSA*, pp. 64-65

[86] The Cape Peninsula, Port Elizabeth/Uitenhage, Durban/Pinetown and Pretoria/Witwatersrand/ Vereeninging areas.

[87] J.M. Calitz, *Southern African population: A regional profile, 1970-1990* (Johannesburg, 1990), pp. 2, 6, 8-9.

[88] *Habitat RSA*, pp. 3, 140.

the stage was set for both public involvement in conservation and for tighter conservation measures, in the form of game reserves, by the authorities.

An important aspect in the second phase (1883-1937) of the South African environmental movement was the emergence of private, non-governmental organisations concerned with the conservation of the natural environment, like the Mountain Club of South Africa and the Wildlife Protection Society of South Africa. During this phase, the movement mainly centred on the conservation of wildlife and was, with the exception of the NFA, confined to the white middle-class. By 1926 previous divisions along class and language lines with regard to conservation within the white community were being bridged and wildlife began to be of cultural and sentimental importance to all whites.[89] The black communities did not share this view. For them wildlife conservation meant being alienated from both their land and their economic means of survival.

Between 1937 and 1965 the conservation of natural resources dominated the environmental scene in South Africa. Newly introduced conservation measures by the government were not aimed at protecting the environment, but rather focussed on protecting the economic interests of the industries and the state. ENGO activity revolved mainly around the conservation of fauna and flora with notable exceptions being the NVT which actively promoted soil conservation practices among the farming community in the country.

In the last phase (1965-1972) of the South African environmental movement between 1654 and 1972, the movement gradually started to move away from the conservation of natural resources, fauna and flora, to address some of the problems of an industrial society. That the country had environmental problems was widely acknowledged; however, the extent of these problems was open to much dispute. The government was not willing to admit to a crisis situation while ENGOs such as the SPE and *The Star*'s CARE campaign were widely propagating the existence of an environmental crisis in the country.

Despite increasing attention being paid to pollution between 1965 and 1972, the South African environmental movement still remained focussed predominantly on the conservation of fauna and flora. However, by 1972, as a direct result of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, a new dimension was added to the focus areas of South African environmentalism, which redirected the movement towards a re-evaluation of the type of protection the government afforded the natural environment and the role ENGOs had to play in order to bring about the much needed changes to improve the South African environment.

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[89] Carruthers, *Kruger National Park*, p. 65.