

**ANOTHER TRANSFRONTIER SUCCESS: “Donation of two
Motorola two way SSB Radios from uKhahlamba Drakensberg World
Heritage Site to Sehlabathebe National Park.”**

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The conservation initiatives of governments, NGOs, and concerned individuals are desperate, fragmented, and often too limited to bring about the basic changes required to reverse natural and cultural heritage loss and degradation. Initiating change to promote and support conservation as well as sustainable use of natural and cultural capital requires a diverse and yet co-ordinated, fully participatory programme that attacks the problem at its roots. Support must be built among a wide range of institutions and individuals, making use of the best modern science and indigenous knowledge, and establishing the conservation of natural and cultural heritage in their rightful place as a major development objective. Such a change needs legislative backing, a need recognized by governments when over 150 of them signed the convention on Biological Diversity in Rio de Janeiro on 5 June 1992. The Convention has become a challenge to individual states to develop and implement environmental and biodiversity conservation measures.

As the rate of destruction of our natural and cultural heritage has increased, so there has been a growing recognition that the world community should be making a concerted effort to ensure their conservation and sustainable use. The Maloti Drakensberg Transfrontier Conservation and Development Project (MDTP) is such a joint action. The project is supported by the governments of Lesotho and South Africa and during its first phase (2003 to 2008) was funded by the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) and supervised by the World Bank. While focusing on conservation of natural and cultural heritage, the project has also contributed to sustainable livelihoods of local communities through amongst others the promotion of nature-based tourism. The MDTP is now moving into its second five-year phase which forms part of a 20-year strategy that will be funded by the governments of Lesotho and South Africa.

One of the means to secure critical natural and cultural heritage followed by the MDTP is through the establishment of Transfrontier Parks. Amongst important deliverables for MDTP phase I, was the declaration of a Transfrontier Park between uKhahlamba Drakensberg Park World Heritage Site in the KwaZulu-Natal Province of South Africa and Sehlabathebe National Park in The Kingdom of Lesotho. The declaration process has required the establishment of a Joint Management Committee (JMC) consisting of role-players from the Lesotho Ministry of Tourism, Environment and Culture and Ezemvelo KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife., South Africa.

The JMC was formed on 8 April 2005, at Qachas Nek to ensure co-operative management through a Joint Management Plan between the Sehlabathebe

National Park and uKhahlamba Drakensberg Park World Heritage Site before and after the declaration of the two Parks as a Transfrontier Park (TFP). The JMC meets quarterly.

At its last meeting on 30th April 2008 held at Mohale Lodge at Mohale Dam in the Kingdom of Lesotho, two long distance, two-way radios were handed over from Ezemvelo KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife to the Parks section of the Lesotho Ministry of Tourism Environment and Culture. The radios will help to establish two-way communication between the remote Sehlabathebe National Park and its Head Office in Maseru. This will assist in improving the Park's management effectiveness including the relaying of reservation information from Maseru to the Park's tourist lodge. The photograph below shows the handover of the radios.



Left: Mr. Maponesa Mosenye (Director Lesotho National Parks), Right: Mr. John Crowson (uKhahlamba Drakensberg Park World Heritage Site).