



## Trip Report: SOUTHERN AFRICA

---

**South Africa: July 18-25, 2001**

**By Marsha Cannon**

**July 18-20, University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg, SA**

**July 22-25, BASIS Southern Africa Synthesis Meeting, Magaliesburg, SA**

Traveler: Marsha Cannon, BASIS CRSP Outreach and Communications Specialist  
University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1357 University Avenue,  
Madison, WI 53715; tel (608) 262-3658; fax (608) 262-2141;  
email: mcannon@facstaff.wisc.edu

Dates: July 18-25, 2001

Itinerary:

10 July	Depart Madison
12 July	Arrive Durban
13-17 July	Personal leave, South Africa
18 July	Arrive University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg
19 July	Field visit, Bekhazulu Community, KwaZulu-Natal
20 July	Field visit, Glenesk, Natal Trust Farms, KwaZulu-Natal
21 July	Day of rest
22 July	Travel to Johannesburg/Magaliesburg, Gauteng
23 July	Synthesis Meeting, Magaliesburg
24 July	Synthesis Meeting
25 July	Synthesis Meeting and return to Johannesburg
26-29 July	Personal leave, Johannesburg and Cairo
30 July	Travel from Africa to Madison

Objectives: The trip had two purposes:

(1) Visit BASIS research sites in rural KwaZulu-Natal to take photographs for use in BASIS annual report. The sites are located near Estcourt (northwest of Pietermaritzburg) and Ixopo (southwest of Pietermaritzburg);

(2) Represent the BASIS Management Entity and document the July 22-25, 2001 Southern Africa Synthesis Meeting held in Magaliesburg, near Johannesburg.

Summary: Visiting rural research sites provided an opportunity to gain first-hand knowledge of the many challenges facing decision-makers in South Africa. Attending the Synthesis Meeting helped me gain better understanding of BASIS CRSP research, and will facilitate my work on the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Report. Meeting host country researchers in person was an added bonus.

Activities:



During our visit, we drove up a steep hillside to view Bekhazulu community. The area has been settled since the early 1900s. The population level has increased dramatically in the past few years as labor tenants moved off neighboring commercial farms.



*Overgrazing has resulted in severe soil erosion near Bekhazulu, KwaZulu-Natal. Roads show as smooth, light-colored lines while erosion appears as dark, jagged lines. It is winter, and small fires have been set along roadsides to clear away dry weeds.*

Much of the available land remains unoccupied. Although there is pressure to move in, and a few plots have been opened up to “homesteaders,” lack of jobs and infrastructure (e.g. sanitation) has so far prevented extensive settlement. Some land is farmed collectively by groups of tenants.

An 11-member Board of Trustees oversees the land. Members worry about how to keep trespassers from vandalizing forested areas, and unauthorized cattle from grazing the wetlands and cropland. The threat is turning the land into an open-access resource. Another threat arises through the principle of “tacit consent” whereby someone who lives on land for 12-24 months accrues land rights.

Three members of the Bekhazulu Trust’s Subcommittee for the Environment met with BASIS researchers to talk about land management options such as renting arable land to commercial farmers and establishing an ecotourism venture. BASIS researchers and Lima experts plan to work with the Bekhazulu community to identify sustainable opportunities for the future.



*BASIS researchers and Bekhazulu Trust members met to discuss options for managing environmentally valuable Trust land. Shown above left are (l. to r.): Amon Phewa, Chairman, Bekhazulu Trust; Mike Roth, BASIS CRSP; Albert Kheswa, member, Trust Subcommittee for the Environment; Mike Lyne, University of Natal; Marble Mabele, the Trust's Subcoordinator for the Environment; and Peter Greene, Lima. On the right, above, Trust members view a wetland on their property where blue and wattled cranes have been observed. The blue crane is South Africa's national bird and perhaps the most endangered of all cranes. Wattled cranes are the rarest African crane and the most dependent on wetlands. Rare birds could form the foundation for an ecotourism project.*

#### Friday, July 20

Visited Glenesk Farm, a prospective research site located south of Pietermaritzburg, between Ixopo (pronounced *CO-po*) and Bulwer with Lyne, Roth, and Greene.

Natal Trust Farms (NTF) manage Glenesk and nearby Texas Valley Farm. Both farms were at one time privately held but were purchased by government to be incorporated into the KwaZulu homeland. NTF was set up as a parastatal organization to consolidate and manage state-owned farms.

Together the two farms contain approximately 850 hectares of sugar cane under cultivation (700 hectares at Glenesk, 150 at Texas Valley). Total 2001 cane production is expected to be 37,000 tons.

It takes 24 months to bring a new sugar cane field to production. Once established, a cane field can be harvested up to 7 times, every 18 months. Harvest is spread over 9 months of the year, April through December.

Sugar cane is planted and harvested by hand. At Glenesk there are 41 permanent workers. Seasonal workers employed by both farms number in the thousands. Tractors are essential for hauling the harvested cane and for soil preparation. Altogether there are 12 tractors, 7 at Glenesk and 5 at Texas Valley.

Under pressure to redistribute land, the Provincial Department of Agriculture intends to dissolve NTF in 2003 and partition Glenesk into five parcels. Advertisements are set to be published in September 2001 for proposals to rent and operate the parcels. According to Lyne, this strategy presents a number of problems, for example:

1. Up to 5,000 seasonal workers from nearby communities expect that one day they will have rights to the land. Giving just five people land rights would dash hopes for the future.
2. Currently Glenesk generates at least R20,000 monthly income for the nearby community in wages. Changing the ownership structure could diminish that amount.
3. Economies of scale achieved by operating the large farm as a single unit could be lost if it is divided into five parcels.
4. Small growers could possibly negotiate contracts with and receive technical assistance from the large sugar companies. However, there is uncertainty regarding cash flow that depends largely upon which fields (old fields? new fields?) are allocated and how access to equipment such as tractors will be managed.

Lima plans to submit a bid for part of Glenesk. If successful, Lima hopes to pursue an "equity share" scheme. Existing farm workers and managers would become equity shareholders in a new company formed to rent and operate the farm. These individuals would use their R20,000 government grants to invest in the company. Eventually the shareholders might be able to convert their equity into land ownership.

BASIS research seeks to identify institutional innovations required to improve the viability of equity sharing under privatization and farm restructuring.

Land redistribution is very complex and generates strong emotions from everyone involved. However, when asked the question "What do people really want . . . land or money?" the Glenesk assistant farm manager replied, "money." Obviously, land is viewed as a source of wealth, but which land is transferred, and how the land is transferred and managed will determine how such wealth is generated and who receives the benefits.

Saturday, July 21

Day of rest

### SYNTHESIS MEETING

July 22-25

**SUMMARY:** A total of 33 individuals attended, 10 women and 23 men.

Notable attendees:

- \* Amon Chirwa, Ministry of Water Development - Malawi
- \* Ms. Vuyiswa Nxasana, Chief Director for Land Reform, South Africa Department of Land Affairs
- \* Renson Gasela, MP - Zimbabwe
- \* Daniel McKenzie Ncube, MP - Zimbabwe
- \* Mr. Neal Cohen, USAID/South Africa
- \* Mr. Dorvin Stockdale, USAID/ South Africa, Agriculture Officer

By category, the 33 attendees represented:

- 3 USAID representatives, including Lena Heron
- 6 US PIs/researchers
- 4 host country/regional government representatives
- 2 host country/regional NGOs
- 13 host country/regional PIs/researchers
- 5 other - Alvaro Trigueros, University of Central America; Alta Dreyer, University of Natal Institute of Natural Resources; Anne Helling, University of Oslo; Jeanne Koopman, Boston University; and Marsha Cannon.

### Sunday, July 22

10:15 am - Departed to Pietermaritzburg to Johannesburg

2:30 pm - Arrived Valley Lodge, Magaliesburg

After dinner, Pauline Peters led a brief group discussion about the purpose for the meeting. Mike Roth reviewed the 1997 meeting held at this same site, to plan BASIS policy research on land, water, finance and labor. He went over the purpose of the current workshop (to review research findings over the past four years) and the definition of synthesis (summarize key results from two or more research projects to forge one coherent, policy-relevant statement).

Roth commented that synthesis is essential for policymakers as well as donors. "This is the first meeting of land and water research groups," he said. "We are here to search for common findings, common problems, in hope that it will lead to synergy, within the region and globally."

Researchers made presentations, followed by small group discussions. They covered key findings, why the findings are important for researchers, and any limitations of the research. Flip chart notes and discussions were transcribed and will be used to prepare a summary report of the meeting. Pauline Peters is collecting final papers so that a workshop proceedings can be produced.

### Monday, July 23

Magaliesburg

LAND - Papers were presented, with group discussion following.

1. SOUTH AFRICA: Lyne, Michael and Mark Darroch. University of Natal-Pietermaritzburg, South Africa. *Land Redistribution in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa: Four Census Surveys of Farmland Transactions, 1997-2000*. This study of all modes of land transfer in one province indicates that private purchases have redistributed more land and much more land wealth than government-assisted programs.
2. NAMIBIA: Fuller, Ben and George Eiseb. University of Namibia. *Same Ingredients, Same Recipe: Will There Be Enough Land to Reform?* Limited amounts

of land are being freed up for redistribution to formerly disadvantaged people, in part because land is being transferred to corporate holdings.

3. ZIMBABWE: Rugube, Lovemore, Walter Chambati, and Melody Musodza. University of Zimbabwe. *Land Redistribution in Zimbabwe: Five Census Surveys of Farmland Transactions, 1996-2000*. Describes the government's land redistribution program and compares effectiveness with private land transfers between whites and disadvantaged in Zimbabwe.
4. ZIMBABWE: Petrie, Ragan, Kizito Mazvimavi, and Michael Roth. University of Wisconsin-Madison. *Seeking Women Land Owners and Ownership in Zimbabwe: Case Studies of Deeds Registration Haves and Have Nots*. Case studies investigate land acquisition through the private market by women.

To conclude the day, Mike Roth led a session for decision-makers present to discuss what they had learned so far.

COMMENTS: It is difficult to summarize so many diverse comments made over the course of a day. The problem of access to land in Southern Africa is simultaneously complex and urgent. Research takes time, yet decision makers want quick results that they can use. Government is under pressure to redistribute land, yet the private sector sometimes does the job more effectively. The private sector thrives on short-term returns, yet political/economic instability threatens the prospect of any returns at all. Clearly, it will take time and cooperation to solve a problem that is centuries old. Sharing information through workshops such as this is a positive step toward building the channels of communication and trust that can lead to positive change.

Tuesday, July 24  
Magaliesburg

WATER - Papers were presented, with small group discussion following.

5. MOZAMBIQUE: Das Neves Tembe, Joel and Aristides Baloi. Universidade Eduardo Mondlane, Mozambique. *Improving Access to Water Resources in Mozambique: Research Findings and Policy Implications*. Researchers outlined various policy approaches, such as pricing to enable cost recovery; defining roles of government, corporations, and other water agencies to stimulate stakeholder participation in planning and development; and an integrated approach to planning and managing water resources based on the principles of sustainable development.
6. ZIMBABWE: The topic of *Improving Access to Water Resources in Zimbabwe* was addressed by researchers Bill Derman (Michigan State University); Claudios Chikozho, Everisto Mapedza, Jim Latham, and Francis T. Gonese (Centre for Applied Social Sciences-CASS, University of Zimbabwe); and Zebediah Murungweni of GTZ-Reform of the Water Sector. Gonese presented a paper, and

Mapedza made a PowerPoint presentation. A comprehensive paper is being prepared.

Since 1998, CASS has been carrying out research on water sector reform in Zimbabwe, focused on three catchment Council sites: Mazowe, Sanyati, Manyame. Researchers have identified critical areas where policy action is needed.

7. MALAWI: Ferguson, Anne E., Michigan State University and W. O. Mulwafu, University of Malawi. *Decentralization and Access to Water Resources in Malawi*. A report on the current state of local empowerment in water management institutions.

Chilima, Grace and B. Nkhoma, University of Malawi. *Community Based Management [CBM] Approach in the Management of Water Resources by Different Organisations in the Lake Chilwa Basin*. While CBM has had some positive contributions in providing water to communities, challenges and problems remain in coordination and monitoring of projects.

An additional paper was distributed by Jeanne Koopman, African Studies Center, Boston University. *Community Participation in Traditional Irrigation Scheme Rehabilitation Projects in Tanzania: Overview of Findings and Policy Implications from a Collaborative Research Project*. Findings of research sponsored by USAID/BASIS CRSP from January 2000 to March 2001.

COMMENTS: A “lessons learned” discussion was held after the day’s presentations. Comments revealed a need for commitment and capacity—on the parts of both government and the private sector in Southern Africa—to make water reforms work. Ample research opportunities exist in areas such as water pricing policy, project coordination, and local empowerment. Some view water as separate from land, but both are natural resources and must be managed together.

Wednesday, July 25  
Magaliesburg

Everyone was asked to consider what they had heard and learned over the past two days, then write three policy statements to share with the group. Pauline Peters and Ben Fuller categorized the statements and Pauline has had them transcribed to become part of the Proceedings.

Roth thanked workshop organizers, participants, and our hosts at the University of Natal. He also announced that in 6 weeks he will be stepping down as BASIS CRSP director, and Pauline Peters will be stepping down as Technical Committee chair.

Lena Heron, BASIS CRSP Cognizant Technical Officer at USAID, commented that she was “impressed with the quality of research and level of discussion.”

There was discussion about a new mentor program between BASIS researchers and young researchers in Zimbabwe (and possibly Malawi).

Researchers were asked to send their final papers to Pauline Peters by August 31, 2001, for the workshop proceedings, which will be posted on the BASIS web site. In addition, and depending upon the quality of the papers, there was discussion about a possible special issue of the *Journal of South African Studies*.

Special notes for BASIS ME regarding communications and publications:

1. Workshop participants are very interested to know immediately when publications become available. The suggestion was that an e-mail announcement go to everyone on the BASIS e-mail list. Some folks have difficulty downloading/printing off the Internet, so there would need to be an option for requesting a paper copy.
2. Researchers would appreciate having multiple copies (Mike Lyne's exact words were "a big pile") of Briefs to distribute to interested colleagues and decision makers. Perhaps a publication notice could include the opportunity to request multiple copies.

Marsha Cannon  
August 27, 2001  
Madison, Wisconsin

---

---

[Return to Southern Africa Program Page](#)

---

---

*Posted 26 October 2001*

This file: <http://www.wisc.edu/live/bassaftripmc0107.pdf>