

OBSERVATIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF STAKEHOLDER RELATIONS AT SOUTH AFRICA'S FIRST WORLD HERITAGE SITE – THE ISIMANGALISO WETLAND PARK AUTHORITY – SOME HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES IN RELATIONSHIP TO DEVELOPMENT AND THE AGRARIAN CRISIS IN NORTHERN KWA ZULU NATAL

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PART THREE - CONTINUED

ABSTRACT

Part three of this research paper is the final part of the narrative that completes the discussion undertaken in this comprehensive research effort. This part of the paper will encapsulate the discussion in outlining two important stakeholders in respect of stakeholder relations, in the form of Ezemvelo and the Ingonyama Trust Board (ITB). Other stakeholders will not be discussed. Having discussed the land question throughout the discussion, the researcher will posit that the land debate is about dignity and will outline some pertinent issues in respect to agrarian reform, important to stakeholder relations in the context of iSimangaliso. Synthesis of culture and the importance of appropriate technology will be nuanced. The researcher will provide some thoughts as a gestalt to this narrative. Some conclusions, recommendations and a few salient recommendations will be provided and made by the researcher. The narrative concludes the discussion that growth must take place now in South Africa or it will never happen. Finally, a broad conclusion will be undertaken to bring the narrative to an orderly conclusion.

KEYWORDS: Stakeholders; Stakeholder relations; Land Debate; Dignity; Agrarian Reform; Synthesis of Culture; Appropriate Technology; Ezemvelo; Ingonyama Trust Board

1. TWO IMPORTANT STAKEHOLDERS: INTRODUCTION

These two important stakeholders will be discussed as separate entities and the discussion will not embrace or discuss both these entities within the ambit of this introduction but, will allude to them separately as autonomous institutions. Ezemvelo is a provincial entity in charge of Parks in the Province of KZN and, falls under the jurisdiction of the Provincial Department of Economic Development whilst, the Ingonyama Trust Board (ITB) is an entity that falls directly under the Zulu Monarch (King) of the Zulu Nation. The Zulu King is the sole trustee of the ITB. The seriousness of the situation unfolding within Ezemvelo and the ITB has not been addressed by the iSimangaliso Board at any of its Boards meetings to any great depth or at all, for purposes of understanding or intellectually nuancing or teasing out the issues, in an attempt to address and intervene meaningfully, for purposes of arresting the situation in a meaningful manner, in the interests of the World Heritage Site, and its very survival. This is a clear indication that the iSimangaliso Board does not give the organization the required support and leadership on important and vexing issues that affect the organization. The Wetland Park will eventually be placed into a quagmire if the situation is not addressed. On the other hand the Board together with the National Department of Environmental Affairs have not discussed the seriousness of the situation and, all of this points

to a lack of strategic intervention by the iSimangaliso Board. It underscores the point made by the researcher in many parts of this narrative that, there seems to be a lack of and absolute paucity of the finite understandings of the broader conservation, development, tourism, and staff issues coupled with a host of other important variables that require urgent attention and intervention. In reality the observation of the ICEO reveals that the Board is involved in rudimentary and mundane issues that add no leverage to the institution as a whole. There is no doubt that these unfolding situations and dire scenarios, could and can cause great harm to the Wetland Park Authority in the long run. In other words, there is a total lack of understanding by the Board in respect of its mandates and its strategic focus. It has failed to provide the necessary direction and leadership to the ICEO, the Executives and, above all has failed miserably to provide the necessary guidance to the Department of Environmental Affairs.

1.1 Ezemvelo

The researcher had alluded fleetingly in parts of the paper to the dire straits that Ezemvelo was and is in. In reality or in actual fact, it is under siege. This could affect the conservation function that it carries out for the iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority, as a World Heritage Site. Mngoma and Mbanjwa (2018: 1) have reported on Ezemvelo's finances that are in a state of morass and in dire straits. They report as follows (2018):

- “Poor leadership and a lack of commercial knowledge by the Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife Board has been blamed for the entities ailing finances.
- The opposition Democratic Alliance has called upon the MEC of Economic Development in KZN to immediately remove the entire Board, following evidence of poor leadership and a dearth of knowledge when it came to the commercialization of the entity.
- It has emerged after the budget hearing on the 13th of April 2018 that a R500 million revenue enhancing strategy that was proposed two years ago, in a bid to turn around the entity's ailing assets is yet to get off the ground. The Portfolio Committee instructed that the strategy be implemented immediately.
- The opposition parties in KZN said that they were deeply disappointed by the financial status of what was once, one of the jewels of KZN.
- With these events and criticisms, the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of Ezemvelo admitted to the seriousness of the situation.
- The current Board is little more than a bunch of entrepreneurs __ all focused – on – self – enrichment rather than an effective commercialization strategy” (Rodgers, In Mngoma and Mbanjwa (2018).
- The Finance Portfolio Committee found that the figures presented by Ezemvelo did not tally with those of the Treasury.
- It risks, its budget not being approved.
- It was also said by the opposition that, the revenue turn – around strategy had cost R500 million.
- In the 2018 / 2019 budget year, Ezemvelo is expected to spend 83 percent (R814 million) of its total R980 million income on salaries and that, the entity is only panning on injecting one percent of the budget into infrastructure. The bulk of its finances is provided by government. It is not self – sustaining and does not have the ability to harness funding from the private sector or from entities from outside. Only a miniscule amount of money is raised from gate fees and other small tourist attractions under its control.
- Transfers to Ezemvelo were R728 million in 2016 / 2017, declining to a projected R697 million in 2018 / 2019” (Mngoma and Mbanjwa (2018: 1).
- Services provided by Ezemvelo is on the wane and it could collapse, if the provincial government does not intervene decisively in the short and medium terms. If this is to happen, it will spell disaster for iSimangaliso, in respect to its legal mandate to undertake conservation.

There is no doubt that, in spite of the spin by the Ezemvelo Board, its senior staff and the Provincial Department of Economic Development, to paint a rosy picture of Ezemvelo and, attempting to cover – up the circumstances that they are in; the financial situation and the top heavy structure of the organization is a recipe for collapse irrespective that, it will be kept afloat by government. This is a usual scenario on the part of government because, it cannot bite the bullet or take the necessary hard decisions on behalf of taxpayers and the nation to streamline, downsize or shut down non – performing government organizations or privatize them. Government, will continue pouring in millions into loss – making organizations and, is apt to secure the jobs of inefficient bureaucracies and non – functioning and performing state owned entities.

The Board of iSimangaliso and its Executives, including the National Department of Environmental Affairs should take these scenarios into consideration and, project upon the seriousness of the Ezemvelo situation because, it holds and carries out the important conservation function on behalf of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority. In the long run, it could and will compromise iSimangaliso. Many of the services it undertakes for iSimangaliso are deteriorating and in some cases, has collapsed. Ezemvelo is a threat to the advancement of iSimangaliso's tourism, conservation and development initiatives as a World Heritage Site, and to the preservation and enhancement of the mandates of the World Heritage Council and the promotion of its values.

The National Department of Environment, the Provincial Government, the Provinces Department of Economic Development, the iSimangaliso Board and Executives should now find it expedient and necessary to begin a series of cogent discussions to address the dire circumstances and situation that both Ezemvelo and iSimangaliso find themselves in. This becomes necessary to avoid bickering when the eventual crunch comes and therefore, early discussions and possible intervention strategies over time become essential to save the situation and address the manifest and real problems that do exist. It seems that all role – players are in a state of denial and appear to be masking the real and dire scenarios that are unfolding. Workable intervention strategies are possible, to allow for mechanisms to be put into place, in order to avoid either these organizations folding in the long run and deteriorating to a point of no return or being completely downsized, given the current poor economic situation that has gripped South Africa for a protracted period of time and, will be to the determinant of both organizations and to South Africa.

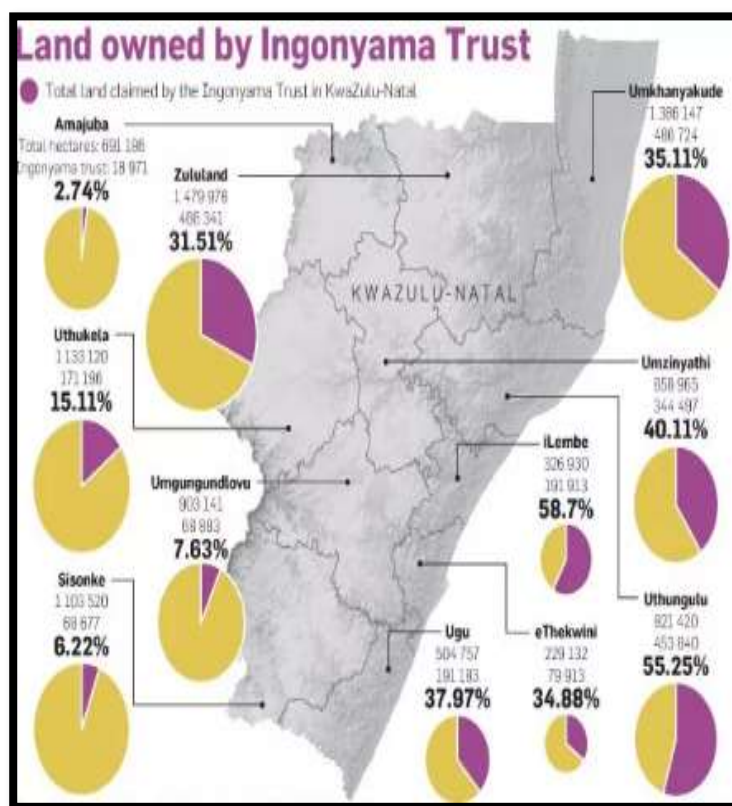
1.2 Ingonyama Trust Board (ITB)

Having delineated the issues somewhat elaborately in terms of stakeholder relations in the context of land distribution, the Amakhosi, the different communities, concessionaires, the World Heritage Council, municipalities and other relevant stakeholders including the National Department of Environmental Affairs and the National Department of Land Affairs, it becomes necessary and cardinal for iSimangaliso to understand the importance of these stakeholder entities. There has been much criticism of the Ingonyama Trust Board in recent debates in South Africa.

iSimangaliso, in the last year, and during the tenure of the ICEO has engaged with the CEO and Chairperson of the ITB on four occasions and not much has been achieved with the ITB, except that they wanted iSimangaliso to draw – up terms of reference in respect to the engagement between the two entities and, to sign a memorandum of understanding indicating that iSimangaliso will and must pay 50 percent of all legal costs incurred with regards land disputes and conflicts and, the restitution of land in and around the Park. Isimangaliso was unable to enter into an agreement of this nature until the iSimangaliso Board agreed to this proposal and, ratified the proposal. The iSimangaliso Board at its meeting declined the proposal made by the ITB. It has now been observed that the ITB's back is against the wall because, the government of South Africa has now called the ITB to order and, Parliament has told the ITB that there is nothing special about Kwa Zulu Natal land, and, further indicated that it does not have its own currency, its own police, Cabinet and in actual fact, it is part of a united and unitary South African state.

It must be appreciated and understood from the graphic presented below that the ITB controls nearly 3 million hectares of land on behalf of King Goodwill Zwelitheni, who is battling for his survival" (Harper, 2018: 9). It is obvious from the graphic presented below that the ITB owns and has accrued and acquired vast amounts of land in the Province of KZN, and is holding the rural people of the province to ransom by not allocating land to them by means of title deeds. The ITB therefore, requires to imbibe transition and political change which it is resisting and, has maintained the unnecessary historic status quo, similar to the former apartheid state. This has contributed significantly to the processes of uneven development and, the manifest problems that confronts this area of Northern Kwa Zulu Natal. If this status quo is maintained by the ITB and other agencies, not much will be achieved to redress the imbalances of land distribution and restitution and therefore, nothing will be achieved to redress the imbalances of uneven development and underdevelopment in this area. The Kwa Zulu Natal Provincial Government and the National Department of Land Affairs is the only hope of addressing the land and agrarian crisis in this area, for purposes of obtaining empowerment of the people, after nearly twenty – five years of democracy and, for purposes of peace and security in this region. All of this does not "Lie in greater oppression of the masses that, have challenged the power structures of government, but in the pursuance of human rights and of promoting social justice and progress, but better standards of life for all amidst greater freedom. Development must never ever be crippled and held to ransom in the South African context, as it is an era that is now confronting the Republic, in all facets of life and poor development initiatives "(Karodia, 2007: 139).

The Graphic Below Shows the Land Owned by the Ingonyama Trust Board in KZN Province. Total Land Claimed by the ITB in KZN is Depicted Hereunder as Follows:



SOURCE: KWA ZULU NATAL DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT 2018

In a letter to the Mail and Guardian newspaper on the 23rd of March (2018: 26) on the ITB, Prince Mangosuthu Buthelezi, MP and President of the Inkatha Freedom Party attempted to correct the history of the ITB. “That the Act was the last piece of legislation passed by the Kwa Zulu Legislative Assembly and published in the Government Gazette. There was nothing secretive about it. The Act according to the Prince had nothing to do with the negotiation process at CODESA, prior to South African democracy. It was signed by solemn agreement by President Nelson Mandela of the ANC, F. W. de Klerk of the ruling Nationalist Party of South Africa, which was the government of the day and himself, as representative of the Zulu Monarch and the IFP.” This he says was the basis of which and by which the IFP re – entered the 1994 negotiations and subsequent elections to create a democratic South Africa. Prince Buthelezi (2018) further adds that “The intention of this Act, was to preserve the land left to the Zulu nation after colonial conquests and racial dispossession so that, it could continue to be administered in the best interests of traditional communities.” A purposeful and meaningful analysis of Prince Buthelezi’s interpretation requires a, cogent and intellectual understanding and is articulated hereunder as follows:

- This deal was rushed through based on political expediency and for purposes of so – called peace and, in order to avoid confrontation in KZN that was developing and undergoing a low intensity “war” at that time. More importantly, it allowed for the IFP to re – enter the negotiation process before the birth of a democratic South Africa in April of 1994.
- It smacks of the IFP having held the country to ransom on its own terms, in the form of a “sweetheart” deal with the apartheid Nationalist Party and Mandela being the peace – maker was forced to sign, in order that the negotiation process continued unhindered, in order to create and usher in a democratic South Africa and therefore, interpreting this as legitimate action, by any individual or organization is misguided; rather than acknowledging that this was a wrong move for an emerging democratic South Africa and, particularly in the context of a unitary South African state.
- It must be clearly understood that racial dispossession of land was a universal phenomenon engineered throughout South Africa and the continent of Africa. It is not specific to the province of Kwa Zulu Natal.

- The land issue has been administered poorly by the ITB and, the lot of the people remains the same since the colonial and apartheid onslaught of dispossession of land because, the people have no title deeds, are not bankable and have been placed into greater poverty, with their dignity being eroded even further.
- It suits the Prince, the Zulu monarch, the Amakhosi and other role – players to maintain the status quo and, thus engineer a process of fostering the rise of a dangerous type of Zulu nationalism in KZN, based on their narrow understanding of the tenets of democracy and thus stoking – up emotion amongst their followers and the Zulu nation of people.
- Zulu leaders of stature must now come to the fore to challenge the misguided notions and the interpretation of the land issue in the country and particularly in Kwa Zulu Natal. It cannot be treated differently and with kid gloves.
- This dangerous precedent that has been created in many ways side – lines and disempowers the people in respect of the land issue in this province and, assists overtly, to maintain the status quo, which compromises the unitary democratic state of the Republic of South Africa.
- SABC prime time news on the 8th of October 2018 reported that the King of the Zulus now wants the government to put in writing its views about the ITB and the land question.” This is a dangerous game that the King is playing and this request has to be turned down by the democratic government because, it has nothing to negotiate with the Zulu Monarch. This exemplifies the fact that the Kings back is against the wall and the King now wants some guarantees about the land owned by the Zulu Kingdom. The government should not play into the hands of the King and negotiate a settlement that all land owned by the ITB be surrendered to the democratic government.

The King wants President Cyril Ramaphosa to sign an agreement promising to exclude territories that the monarch controlled from the government land – reform drive according to Stoddard (2018:3). Reports suggest that the ANC is targeting white owned land for expropriation, while seeking to provide security of tenure to the seventeen million people, a third of South Africa’s population, who reside on tribal lands controlled by traditional leaders. President Ramaphosa has previously said that, he and the ANC would not touch the land controlled by the King. As things stand the situation is becoming dire and dangerous and the ANC finds itself in a quagmire to deal with this volatile issue, in an unfolding volatile province and, could cause serious problems for the ruling government as it tries to find a solution, appeasing the King and, at the same time not creating a precedent, by pandering to the whims and fancies, the veiled threats and the like from the Zulu Monarch.

Paddy Harper (2018: 17) reports that “There is a move by the ITB to purge staff members, who are sitting at home on full pay since the middle of 2016, after being suspended by the Board management in what is claimed to be a purge of “uncooperative” staff. It is alleged that the delay in charging them was to “facilitate” many “unscrupulous tenders for friends.” These included the “removal” of Mnini businessman Ron Wilson from his fishing camp in January 2017 (The ITB is facing many allegations of this nature).

It has been reported by Paddy Harper (2018: 9) that “The ITB is facing closure in terms of the recommendations by Parliament’s high – level panel report, and this has been further rocked by the resignation of its CEO Dr. Fikisiwe Madlopha, who quit her nearly R2 million a year job last month. The CEO has jumped ship as the ITB board sinks deeper into trouble.”

Paddy Harper (2018: 4) reports that: “Judge Jerome Harper Ngwenya (Retired), the Chairperson of ITB bent the lease rules to accommodate his own business interests and since 2016, failed to pay rent for a service station on trust land, but got a long – term lease. Ngwenya has extensive business interests and is in partnership with the King through a holding company in Bayede Marketing, which markets wine and craftwork. He is a director of 11 active companies, as well as several that have been deregistered. He has been involved in many shady deals.” It is obvious that the ITB is in disarray and the situation does not augur well in respect of its survival. There is no doubt that as an important stakeholder, this dynamic will change drastically and fundamentally in terms of land issues that affect the people and, will affect the Wetland Authority either negatively or positively in the years that lie ahead. This fundamental issue, in respect of land and the crisis that affects the nation and, the Zulu monarch and his people must be resolved sooner or later, to bring about the much – needed redress and, above all to address the issue of uneven development in this area of Northern Kwa Zulu Natal. The nation waits with bated breath for the outcomes because, it could and may cause resistance and foment violence throughout the province.

Andiswe Makinana (2018: 14) states that parliament is pushing back and stamping the state’s authority over the ITB amid legal threats and war talk by the Zulu King, who also wants of government to stop talking about land expropriation. The National Assembly’s Portfolio Committee on Rural Development and Land Reform instructed the Board to stop its conversion of permission to occupy agreements into long – term leases. He further reports that in a tense meeting the

government accused the trust of reducing people's rights and questioned its interests." The chairperson of the ITB. Judge Jerome Ngwenya indicated that "A lease could be the highest form of land ownership. His statement reduces rights that people have on the land, reducing them to be tenants" (Ngwenya, 2018. In Makinana). "A landowner with permission to occupy land can use it, or has to pay rent on that land as a tenant. This sounds like the ITB is deepening the theatre of land dispossession and even watering down rights that people have on the land. There are doubts whether the Board has the interests of rural people at heart. What's so different about Kwa Zulu Natal" (Nchabeleng, 2018, In Makinana).

It must be placed on record that many in the country believe that there is nothing special about KZN because, it must obey the laws of the Republic. On the other hand, many people in the country state that the land was given to them by the KZN government and is therefore, South African land. If it continues to resist the democratic government, its behavioural patterns is nothing but, akin to colonialism and apartheid ideology of maintaining the historic status quo and, goes against the edicts and proclamations made in the Freedom Charter of the African National Congress, as was outlined by the founding fathers of the historic South African freedom struggle against apartheid and their resistance to British colonialism.

In the recent past, tension has been building since a report by former President Kgalema Mphahlele, led a panel, which spent two years investigating the effect of laws passed by parliament. The panel recommended and called for the repeal of the ITB Act, to bring the Province of Kwa Zulu Natal in line with the national land policy. In this regard Andiswe Makinana (2018: 14) states that King Zwelithini "Threw down the gauntlet saying the government must refrain from speaking about expropriation of land that falls under the ITB and, added that the Zulu nation will stop at nothing to protect the land given to them by their forefathers. Without rentals, the ITB would not be able to implement its programmes. The current budget was more than R50 million, with R19 million from the state." The governments, contribution to the ITB makes up nearly 40 percent of its budget. Adding to the woes of the ITB Paddy Harper (2018: 8) reports in the Guardian Mail that "Ingonyama has been ordered by the Auditor General of South Africa to pay Treasury, millions of Rands in mining royalties, it has been collecting since 1994." It appears that the end is nigh for the ITB because it cannot:

- Survive without adequate funding.
- It is fueling a dangerous Zulu nationalism with racial undertones.
- It is challenging the democratic government in respect of the land issue.
- That, it has not distributed land to the people and communities and, refuses to give them title deeds but, they have only tenant status and pay for the land,
- The land issue has raised much emotions among the people. The ITB is steadfastly hanging upon the large tracts of land and therefore, not contributing to the upliftment of the people, maintains the status quo and, is one of the conduits that is keeping the people and communities in bondage, in "slavery" and within the realms of poverty, contributing to massive inequality and, thus adding to the grave unemployment that confronts the rural Zulu people.
- It is not allowing for development of the people and, contributes significantly to the processes of uneven development, in this area of the country.
- It is holding up the distribution of land and, is not involved in the restitution process.
- This is a clear indication that the distribution of land to the people, is not only a white problem but equally, affects the black Kings in many parts of the country and, the Amakhosi that fall under them. This is a travesty of justice, an indictment to South African democracy, within the confines of a unitary state. It is further exacerbated by large parcels and tracks of land owned by the state and the municipalities.
- This situation overtly compromises stakeholder relations, stymies development, hampers the emergence of development, black commercial farming in this area and does not allow for the emergence of much needed subsistence farming and other employment opportunities. All of this should and must be resolved amicably with the Zulu Monarch and his subjects, as soon as possible and, in the interests of South African democracy.

The Parliamentary Committee rejected Ngwenya's presentation and instructed the trust to put on hold the conversion of permission to occupy, saying that, it must thoroughly consult the Land Reform Department and the communities living on the land and, present whatever decisions they take to Parliament" (Andiswe Makinana, 2018: 14). In other words, the call by the nation and the Parliamentary Committee was unanimous that there must be a conversion of the informal ownership to a title deed, to give back to the people, their dignity, such that they own the land they are living on. It must be understood by the ITB that the people cannot any longer be tenants but must be land owners. The land question in many ways around the iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority revolves around the resolution of this troublesome and vexing issue and, to this end the ITB together with the Zulu Monarch are holding – up land transformation and restitution and equitable distribution of

land to the indigenous people. Observation and experience indicates that the Amakhosi in this region of Northern Kwa Zulu Natal are subservient to the King of the Zulu nation and, their power and, their recognition as the Amakhosi rests in the hands of the King. If the land is taken away from the ITB and the control of the Zulu Monarch, the power and sway of the Amakhosi in this area will be reduced and, gradually they will lose power and be relegated to ceremonial duties in the cultural milieu only and, will lose control over their communities. This issue therefore, must be resolved in the interests of the people, in the interests of sustained development of the area and region but, above all in the interests of the Republic of South Africa and the entire nation.

1.3 Ingonyama trust did not declare land worth R1. 08 billion

The Ingonyama Trust is in very serious problems and the decision of the iSimangaliso Board and its Executives not to engage with them in respect of land issues was a correct decision. This is brought to the fore, in that mining money was wrongly claimed as revenue by the trust. “The Auditor General of South Africa has made a damning finding against the ITB, saying it failed to provide supporting documents to account for land to the value of R1. 08 billion. This emerged in the annual report tabled in Parliament on Friday the 12th of October 2018, which also stated that royalties from a mining operator was incorrectly recognized as the trust’s revenue. The ITB obtained an adverse opinion for 2017 / 2018 (Maqhina, 2018: 1). The Rural Development and Land Affairs Minister said that the performance of the trust was unsatisfactory. She took issue with the Boards leadership for not establishing effective oversight and monitoring over financial and performance reporting processes and compliance with legislation. “It did not comply with accounting for property, plant and equipment and therefore could not really account for R28. 21 billion. It plainly boiled down to possible misappropriation of the assets. Six officials have been charged for financial misconduct according to Maqhina” (2018: 1). According to the Auditor General (In Maqhina, 2018: 1) “The trust incorrectly recognized royalties from a mining operator as its revenue and this was not paid to the National Revenue Fund as required by law.”

In a comprehensive response according to Maqhina (2018: 1) “The Board said that in the past they had not determined and disclosed land value in the financial statements but the R28 billion that was reflected in the 2017 / 2018 report was based on municipal valuations.” The Auditor General (2018) further added that “A 100 percent audit of land values reflected in the land valuations register at least, one would have expected a sample to be selected for audit purposes.”

All of this points to a total lack of proper accountability and underscores the point that the ITB has become a burden to the rural people of the KZN province and, an extreme embarrassment to both the national and provincial governments of South Africa. There is therefore, no doubt that it is an indictment to the workings of the trust and, to this end government must intervene decisively and that, the trust must cede all the land under its control to government, in order that the land be redistributed to the rightful owners with title deeds, in order to level the playing fields and thus redress past anomalies once and for all. The ITB is not a viable option as it stands and is playing a dangerous political game that is not in the interests of democracy and certainly not in the interests of the Republic of South Africa. It was important for the researcher and, in the context of this narrative that the issues of the ITB be squarely put on the table, in order to understand these anomalies that stymie development and the empowerment of the rural masses of KZN. It is therefore posited by the researcher that the ITB is a burden to the land issue and contributes significantly to the processes of uneven development in this region to a large measure and, exacerbates more than significantly and contributes to the worsening agrarian crisis in the province and, is holding a large sector of the rural population to ransom and thus keeping the rural masses in bondage, very similar to apartheid policies. This issue must be evaluated by government soon and to this end must be decisive in its actions, avoid delaying tactics and resolve positively this problematic issue, once and for all.

2. LAND DEBATE IS ABOUT DIGNITY

If there must be economic change in South Africa, create a crisis, then as drama ensues, stand by to negotiate a way out of it through finding a compromise wrote Steven Friedman (2018: 9). The country’s current debate over land expropriation without compensation, which has been endorsed by Parliament under the new President of South Africa Cyril Ramaphosa, is now a fait accompli. In other words, the time has come some twenty five years after democracy was attained to deal with its minority – ruled past. This will be a clear and tacit indication by the democratic government that, it is now prepared to deal with many inequalities of the past apartheid regime. According to Friedman (2018: 9), “The negotiations which produced the 1994 Constitution, was because of black anger at apartheid. Moves to change the constitution are dramatic because, they threaten the property rights on which the market economy rests. The debate is polarized and heated, but among middle – class black people, support for the change seems overwhelming.”

Outsiders might be surprised that tensions caused by economic inequalities focus on land, but farming has not been South Africa's key industry for decades. For most people, it might not be about agriculture but, because of the destruction caused by apartheid and arrogant colonial imperatives and, compounded by the lack of farming opportunities, side by side with poverty, massive unemployment and gross inequalities. In other words, they want the land to be restored to the indigenous people, to restore their pride and dignity. All else will follow and, when they engage with farming activity, historically denied to them, it will provide the impetus and momentum to build the collapsed South African economy and in some way, reduce poverty and inequality and, create the much needed, employment opportunities. The argument therefore, hinges on a historical understanding that, the demand by black freedom and revolutionary movements for the return of the land meant, the return of the country to its people. It is directed not only to ownership of the farms but, at white minority control of the economy and society. In discussions with iSimangaliso staff and the people within civil society, there is a lack or rather, a paucity of placing the land and agrarian questions into a cogent perspective based on human values and, many argue the irrelevancies and, thus maintain the status quo and, are therefore unable to consolidate the issue of the importance of stakeholder relations, in the context of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority. These fundamental tenets have not been understood by the iSimangaliso Board over time and the Board therefore does not provide the necessary focus to the organization in terms of its strategy for decisive intervention.

Strategy of the organization was developed in November of 2017 and has not been evaluated by the Board within a twelve month period to determine the outcomes of the strategy. Strategy of the organization must be allowed to run for a minimum of two years, in order to determine whether the strategies are working or not, to determine the positive and negative outcomes of the agreed to strategy. Strategy must therefore be allowed to be implemented by the Executives and the CEO of the organization over a minimum of two years with the Board playing an oversight and monitoring role which is its mandate for purposes of affording the necessary direction and tweaking the strategies to incorporate new variables in respect of intervention. There has to be in depth consultation with all stakeholders prior to tweaking or developing the organizational strategy, every two years, in order to factor in to the strategic plan and its focus, the views and requirements of all stakeholders and, to consolidate and refine the imperatives of stakeholder relations and other important strategic imperatives and variables that must be obtained from learned experiences. Strategic planning must be undertaken every two years and the strategy of the organization should not be allowed to run for a longer period of two years before changes are made. A long term strategy will be unacceptable because it will not allow for holding the CEO and the executives accountable in terms of the desired outcomes and generally will make intervention all the more difficult. It therefore stands to reason that there should be two strategic sessions over the period of the Boards tenure because the Boards term runs for four years. This will also allow for an incoming Board to run with the strategy without delay or attempting to immediately change the strategic focus before it settles down and takes office. Observations by the ICEO reveals that the Board does not have a plan to evaluate the agreed to strategic plan and therefore cannot give the necessary direction to the CEO and the Executives of the organization. This has to be relooked at by all concerned in order to develop a strategic plan that will give the necessary implementation direction to iSimangaliso.

All of this symbolizes, a much broader demand for change in the context of post democratic South Africa and to this end, the Board, and the Executives need to seriously factor the issues of stakeholder relations and, engineer a new trajectory for such engagement with all stakeholders. "It is also why no one has paid much attention to arguments about the technical merits of land expropriation and, as to why there is such support for a constitutional change despite the fact there is no need for it because; expropriation without compensation is possible now. Property rights are protected by Section 25 of the constitution which stipulates that compensation must be paid. But it also states that this may not be used to impede the state taking legislative and other measures to achieve land, water and related reform, to redress the results of past racial discrimination" (Friedman, 2018: 9). It must be appreciated by all South Africans that the dispute is about dignity and equality, not constitutional clauses. It must be registered that land owners who hold the state to ransom will risk losing compensation; property rights will be protected, making investment safe. The pattern described in this discussion, in which the country's elites are very good at compromising in the face of crisis, but just as good at creating the crisis which force them to compromise, is hardly the ideal way to build a fairer economy, a fairer society and in enhancing stakeholder relations in all sectors.

Crisis drives change as was seen over the last twelve months at the iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority in respect to stakeholder relations and the restructuring of the organization to deal with its past "sordid" history and compromised management echelons. In this regard, the elites, some Executives within the organization past and present, the different or successive Boards of state – owned enterprises have avoided economic change and reforms, which can and will redress past

wrongs, while protecting the assets of investors who play by the rules. It is therefore, apt to tread cautiously and to this end the different Boards must take into consideration these real intricacies' and adapt incrementally to the rapid changing political landscape and stakeholder demands that South Africa is confronted with after nearly twenty five years of democracy. In other words, the disputes importance depends not on whether it produces a compromise on land but, on whether "It begins with negotiating on opening the economy to the excluded" (Friedman. 2018). It must be remembered by the iSimangaliso Board and the Executives of the organization including all government departments and, particularly the Departments of Land and of Environmental Affairs that South African rural anger in Kwa Zulu Natal and, other regions of the country in terms of redress in general, is encompassed and premised by the land and agrarian crisis and, the facets of underdevelopment and characterized by the processes of uneven development. These issues require urgent intervention, if the situation is to be saved and resolved amicably.

3. SOME ISSUES IN AGRARIAN REFORM

Agrarian reform and coupled with stakeholder relations is a controversial issue. Some professionals and politicians believe that reform is a critical component of any overall policy to increase food production and improved rural welfare. Critics challenge this position. Some express philosophical opposition to state intervention against private property; others question the efficiency and cost effectiveness of reforms; others maintain that the basic problem lies not in tenure relations but, in cheap food policies and, of course, the lack of political will. Those who support agrarian reform and development have two basic sets of arguments. One set derives from neo – classical economies. Peasant producers make better use of land, labour and capital than landlords; productive resources should, therefore, be redistributed to peasants. The other set of arguments derives from a pre – occupation with the feudal or anachronistic organization of estates.

Estate land must be redistributed to eliminate "extra economic coercion" to increase productivity and to improve the standard of living of workers. These two positions are critically reviewed in Lehman" (1978: 339 – 345). "The second position, usually labelled "structuralist," has been dominant since World War II. Structuralists argue that, governments must initiate land reform to increase food production, improve the productivity of labour and decrease rural poverty." Major proponents of this school include Barraclough (1973) for Latin America, Warriner (1962) for the Middle East, and Jacobs (1961) for Southeast Asia. Their influence has been felt in national and international programmes supportive of agrarian and development reform (Parsons, 1973: 106). Structuralists defend agrarian reform as a critical component in an overall programme to change the organization of agricultural production and development in general, so that, both productivity and welfare are enhanced. They emphasize the redistribution of land, the designation of land beneficiaries, the establishment of group farms and an infrastructure to assist the reform sector. Future attempts at agrarian reform and the accompanying, much needed development, must give more thought than has been the case in the past to the production of basic food, the possibilities of complimentary production in the reformed and private sectors, and the development of welfare and employment generating programmes benefitting those sectors of the rural population that will not benefit directly from agrarian reform. During the last decade, it has become clear that merely to increase food production is an insufficient goal for agriculture and rural development policy in less developed countries. In order that the majority of rural – people – small and marginal cultivators, tenants and landless workers, can also participate in the benefits of rural development; policies and programmes, must focus directly on increasing their productivity, incomes and employment opportunities. "For any approach to development that incorporates most of the rural people, not merely the minority comprising large scale commercial farmers, one must identify four necessary components, Esman and Uphoff (1982: 46) identify these as follows:

- "A set of government policies that stimulate higher productivity and greater income – earning opportunities. In addition to fair prices for agricultural commodities, they include tariff and credit measures to discourage premature mechanization, which displace agricultural labourers for whom there are no alternative job opportunities.
- Government investments and expenditure on physical and social infrastructure that enhance productivity and rural welfare. These infrastructural facilities include roads, irrigation and drainage works, research and training centres, schools and sanitary water supplies.
- Technologies, such as higher yielding varieties and improved cropping and husbandry practices, that are suitable to the specific needs of small farmers in their distinctive micro – environments and that they can afford to adopt.
- Organizations to guide action in the pursuit of common goals."

There is compelling evidence that agricultural development strategies designed to increase the productivity, welfare and employment opportunities of small farmers, tenants and landless workers, require far more attention to stakeholder relationships also, than the subject has received to date by those involved in development discourse and, its implementation

in the rural periphery of Kwa Zulu Natal. Institutions need to be built and strengthened at the local level to develop more effective local action capacities, aggressive educational and training programmes instituted for local people and citizens at large. Without such institutional mechanisms at the grassroots level, no policies, technologies or infrastructure can be effectively implemented. Institutional development at the local level must, therefore, involve both government and local membership associations, communities and the Amakhosi, in respect of emphasizing the links between them. This is and will be the vital organizational dimension of agricultural and rural development, which automatically will enhance and consolidate the much – needed stakeholder relationships in the region.

4. SYNTHESIS OF CULTURE AND APPROPRIATE TECHNOLOGY

In harnessing this narrative, the discussion will not be complete without projecting on this issue which bears relevance to the imperatives of the Park and to stakeholder relationships. Every culture, if it is to continue, must form patterns for the education and training of oncoming generations. It must be able to emphasize, synthesize culture, indigenous and traditional knowledge with appropriate technology to suit its conditions and frames of reference. Fasheh (1982: 6) states that “The world is heading to a peak of cultural changes and cultural awareness. Training can be used to stress one’s own culture, with its special and beautiful characteristics. At the same time, it can be used to make one aware of the drawbacks in one’s own culture and try to overcome them.” In other words, training should be used to point out the strengths and weaknesses of one’s own culture. Teaching which is detached from cultural aspects and conducted in a purely abstract, symbolic and meaningless way, is not only useless, but also very harmful to society, to farmer training itself and to future generations.

Colonialism has implied the underdevelopment of most so – called “developing” countries. Underdevelopment is just not an economic process. Foreign domination also caused agricultural underdevelopment. African agriculture was ignored or despised; the farming capacities of certain peoples were negated and destroyed; agriculture was presented as the white man’s creation and ability (To get a better understanding of the Rise and Fall of the Africa Peasantry – Read Colin Bundy’s book titled – The Rise and Fall of the African Peasantry (1988). (See the Bibliography for publisher details). Cultural affirmation should have formed part of the struggle against agricultural underdevelopment of South Africa and, the combat against racial and colonial, prejudice. In all underdeveloped regions, it is necessary to encourage an understanding that the people have been, and will be, capable of developing agriculture by themselves, and thus participate in meaningful development initiatives.

Culture could thus be redefined in terms of its relationship to the dominant social formations and power relations in society. This ‘politicized’ concept of culture would include the relationship between ideology and the socio – economic system. In a country like South Africa, where the political and economic dominance of one group over all others had been entrenched for so long, the concepts of power and conflict are central to a discussion on culture. Giroux (1981: 26) describes a ‘politicized’ notion of culture more fully thus: “Culture, in this sense would be defined not simply as life’s experiences functioning within the context of historically located structures and social formations but, as “lived antagonistic relations” situated within a complex of socio – political institutions and social forms that limit, as enable human actions.” Therefore, culture is more than simply the expression of what grows out of the experiences of people in their daily social and economic roles. The culture of people encompasses their experiences in the struggle for political power and, their opposition to economic constraints that prevail. This is precisely the situation in this area of Kwa Zulu Natal and, to this end all role players including iSimangaliso, its management, the Board, the Department of Environmental Affairs and all other departments must take into consideration, when dealing with communities and the Amakhosi. This was not the forte of the former iSimangaliso management and Executives in the past dispensation.

It follows therefore, that totality involves the understanding of any fact or situation in its historical, socio – economic, political and cultural context. Knowledge does not exist apart from human consciousness’ it is produced by us collectively searching and trying to make sense of the world. Frankenstein (1983: 185) states that “The rationality basic of science and technology disappears under the extraordinary effects of technology itself, and its place is taken by myth – making irrationalism.” People begin thinking and according to the prescriptions they receive daily from the communications media rather, than in response to their dialectical relationships with the world. Technology becomes a species of new divinity to which people create a cult of worship.” The awe created by both the apparent complexities of technology and the superficially wonderful concrete changes it has made in daily life, must be countered by showing people that they can understand how technology works and in whose interest, it is applied. Critical education must challenge and expose the contradictions in society’s definition of ‘progress’ and the good life.’ Technology which Southern Africa as a region cannot disengage from in the agricultural sector, for purposes of agricultural development, must be incorporated selectively and appropriately with

the indigenous culture, knowledge and traditions to create meaningful progress and the good life. A problematizing reality approach as a starting point is in – itself already a confidence – creating activity. Problematizing reality, reinforced by cultural, social and individual – collective confidence – stimulating activities, will contribute substantially to emancipatory agricultural education and training, to enable all people in the region to understand, develop and use agriculture as a tool, in the process of grasping agricultural reality, the reality of its nature and of society. It stands to reason, therefore, that farmers' wants, needs and positions must be very highly regarded in any programme that is attempting to modify their behaviour. Isimangaliso and other government formations must factor this into the development equation, with a view of strengthening stakeholder relationships. In this way meaningful training programmes can be designed and implemented.

One of the essential functions of theory is to help the mind transcend human limitation. One of the most obvious achievements of modern scientific theory is its revelation of a whole array of causal connections which are quiet staggering to the eye of common sense. Amuah (1989: 2) noted that "Theory serves to place events in a wider causal context than that provided by common sense. But once a theoretical idiom has been developed, it tends to direct people's attention towards certain kinds of causal linkage and away from others," as has occurred in this region of Kwa Zulu Natal. Most African traditional cultures have adopted a personal idiom as the basis of their attempt to understand the world, which has not been allowed to surface and contribute to development, its emergence was thwarted by Eurocentric policy – makers.

Are the traditional notions of cause merely artefacts of the prevailing theoretical idiom, fantasies with no basis of reality? Or are they responses to features of people's experiences which, in some sense are there? Although these notions are ones to which people are not predisposed by the prevailing theoretical idiom, they also register certain notable features of the objective simulation. Over much of Africa, one is dealing with small – scale, relatively self – contained communities – these are the rank of social units that have helped Africans achieve equilibrium with agriculture, disease and a host of other retarding and hazardous factors. Amuah (1989: 3) further states "That scientific method is undoubtedly the surest and most efficient tool for arriving at such beliefs. Given the basic process of theory – making and environmental stability of time to adjust to experiences. A people's belief system may come to grasp (even in the absence of scientific method) a significant range of common sense which Eurocentric agricultural policy thinking and the importance to enhancing stakeholder relationships, has blatantly undermined, buried and degraded. It is because traditional agriculture beliefs demonstrated the truth of this, in that, it seems apt to extend to them the label 'empirical' and not grounded in theory."

The relation between common sense and theory are essentially the same as they are in Western society. That is, common sense is the handiest and most economical tool for coping with a wide range of circumstances in everyday life and, to this end the culture of communities in relationship to stakeholder relationships, it is important to unpack this important variable more fully. Nevertheless, there are certain circumstances that can only be coped with in terms of a wider causal vision than common sense provides. Thus, in these circumstances there is a jump to theoretical thinking. In this regard Amuah (1989: 4) emphasizes that "It has cast doubt on most of the well – known rural dichotomies used to conceptualize the difference between scientific and traditional agricultural thought and, as to how individuals interpret culture within an organization and, its subsequent implementation at the levels of communities; intellectual versus emotional; rational versus mystical; reality orientated versus fantasy - oriented ; casually – oriented versus prematurely – oriented; empirical versus non – empirical; abstract versus concrete, analytical versus non – analytical. These are shown to be inappropriate." Amuah (1989: 4) adds that "If one is disturbed by the casting away of established distinctions, it's hoped that it will be accepted when it is realized how far it can pave the way towards making sense of so much that previously appeared senseless.."

The aim of this exposition has been to reopen the bridge between traditional African thinking and modern western science. The point is that, the difference between non – personal and personalized theories is more than anything else a difference in idiom of the explanatory quest. Grasping the point is an essential preliminary to realizing how far the variable dichotomies used in this field are simply obstacles to understanding. Once grasped, areas of seemingly bizarre and senseless features of traditional African thinking become immediately comprehensible. Until it is grasped, they remain essentially mysterious. Making the business of personal versus impersonal entities, the crux of the difference between African agricultural and development theory together with understanding African culture from the perspectives of culture and science, not only blocks the understanding of tradition, it also draws a red herring across the path to an understanding of science.

There is no doubt that observations and experiences within the iSimangaliso communities may shed some light on the reality as to why development programmes and rural development initiatives have not been peasant – oriented in this region of Northern Kwa Zulu Natal, and may provide by means of more coordinated and intellectual research in respect to

stakeholder relations and, also provide some useful directions and intervention strategies, for the improvement of peasant participation in development programmes to the benefit of this region and its people. This knowledge base will be useful to policy makers and development theorists in their endeavours to solicit peasant participation that, is currently at a low ebb at iSimangaliso and, other important government agencies. This participation of peasants will enhance by means of consensus with communities in planning, execution and evaluation of future development programmes in this region.

5. SOME THOUGHTS AS A GESTALT TO THIS NARRATIVE

The researcher finds it necessary to harness the discussion undertaken in this narrative and research effort, and to summarize and extrapolate upon the arguments advanced in this comprehensive analysis of stakeholder relations as it affected iSimangaliso as a Wetland Park Authority and, to project upon the issues discussed in this research paper, in the form of a gestalt, in an attempt to bring the arguments advanced to a quick and orderly closure by projecting upon the issues that were advanced throughout this long narrative. This was undertaken to capture the historical context in which the Wetland Park operated and therefore, the research paper was assembled in terms of observations and experiences gleaned over a twelve month period of the researchers, tenure as Interim Chief Executive Officer of the World Heritage Site. It was an honest attempt at addressing the issues that permeated stakeholder relations and, the facets of underdevelopment and uneven development in this troublesome area and region of Kwa Zulu Natal, and to have projected upon the vexing and challenging issues that encompass the agrarian crisis. This is advanced hereunder as follows:

- The new democratic South Africa has moved on to explore the socio – economic dynamics of post - apartheid transformation. In this regard, the government has a policy of a mixed economy. (One can criticize this policy 25 years down the road to democracy on various counts – social distribution, the markets, capitalist forces and so on, unemployment, poverty, inequality and other salient variables). The ANC is also committed to the Freedom Charter, which states that “Our people have been robbed of their birthright to Land”, that “Our people shall share in the country’s wealth’ and that ‘land shall be shared by those who work it” (ANC, Freedom Charter, 1955 – Nothing tangible in this regard has been achieved). A purposeful analysis since freedom and democracy in 1994, clearly shows and reveals that the ANC has reneged from the fundamentals of the Freedom Charter, by accommodating the Kings and Amakhosi in respect of land issues. They have held back development and in the Kwa Zulu Natal Province, this was consolidated and strengthened under the Zuma Presidency. It was and is a dangerous component of South African democracy because, it can ferment violence when dealing with the land issue and, can in the case of KZN, give rise to massive resistance on the part of the King, the ITB and the Amakhosi and the different communities.
- The government post 1994 has considered and implemented a variety of possibilities in respect of engineering new policies of how production might be reorganized in the interest of the people, and to deal with the past inequities created by apartheid and the horrid colonial legacy.
- The paper has alluded to a transitional approach to change, to ensure that production is maintained and that, people are advanced within the realms and ambit of sustained production, in order to deal with the persistent inequities by means of, and full participation within development and, thus to deal with the agrarian crisis. In other words, the general good and welfare of the people must be advanced and food supplies and food security must be secured.
- In respect of farming options, the state should engage all stakeholders and revisit the concept of state farms, production cooperatives, family farms, the support and enhancement of commercial farms with improved wages and living conditions of workers.
- Whilst investments made in large – scale, high productivity farming should not be lost, but a massive investment will be required to enhance women in agriculture and more than the efforts in securing small – holder farmers with the imperatives directed to subsistence farming.
- Helena Dolny (2001: 50 – 51) points out that “Rural finance is a powerful resource that can change the economic basis of their lives. Easy access to credit to black farmers is still denied today and government must intervene decisively to solve the issues that permeate the crisis within development, agriculture and the issue of access to land in many parts of South Africa and, in the region of KZN.
- Helena Dolny (2001: 51 – 52) further points out that the Strauss Commission (1996: 108) were given twelve areas to solicit research, analyze the information and draw – up recommendations.
- Some of these were as follows:
 - “The needs and aspirations of rural people and the demand for rural financial services.

- Broadening the participation of rural people in rural financial markets and, to promote mechanisms across the three spheres of government in respect to savings and mobilization.
- Financial mechanisms to facilitate the acquisition and development of land within the framework of a land reform programme.
- Women as priority beneficiaries of public sector activities.
- Capital retention in rural areas.
- Methods of expanding the backward and forward linkages in the rural and broader economy.
- The issue is what constitutes development? According to Seers (1977: 3) “the question to ask about a country’s development are three: What has been happening about poverty? What has been happening about unemployment? What has been happening about inequality? If all three of these have declined from high – levels, then beyond doubt this has been a period of development in the country concerned.” South Africa has performed dismally on all three counts since democracy and the situation is worsening under the democratic government. This is a matter of serious concern.
- What best constitutes rural development strategy for the early 21st century and a little beyond in South Africa is influenced by history and, is perhaps less simple to define than in other post – colonial situations. The legacy of social engineering undertaken by the apartheid state led to a reluctance towards supply – driven, top – down land redistribution wherein, the state would require massive areas of land and distribute it either to the landless unemployed or entrepreneurs with a land shortage (The South African state has the land but does not have the political will to redistribute including ITB land and other massive tracts of land in its possession). The democratic government has failed to achieve this cardinal and fundamental facet and requirement for development post 1994 and, this situation is up to today maintained, giving impetus of the retention of the historic status quo, which in itself is destructive to the polity of the country and to the emancipation of the people.
- Transformation is needed to provide a more appropriate customer service and to tailor product design to the needs of the new stakeholders’ as clients. It requires a self – sustaining strategy. Institutional transformation requires implementation of these mandates.
- It is therefore suggested that a sense of urgency must be developed; creating a guiding coalition; developing a vision and strategy; communicating the change vision. This has not really occurred in South Africa and historically within and at iSimangaliso.
- Dolny (2001: 97) in respect of transformation says that “The word transformation is misused, abused, and over – used but, significantly it seemed, to be a word which in its true essence embodied the idea of metamorphosis. When we speak of someone ‘transformed,’ we acknowledge the essence of the person that remains, but that something fundamental has happened to him or her that has provoked a deep change. The everlasting flower that had been chosen as the symbol of the occasion of this transformation attempted at a holistic metamorphosis, as well as acknowledging the associated trauma.” Unfortunately, South Africa over the last decade has seen a retrogression of this desired metamorphosis and has dampened the spirit of so – called democracy and has negated the aspirations of the masses of its people (By the same token this change and metamorphosis has not taken place among many Board members but, more importantly has not been imbibed by a number of white and some black staff at iSimangaliso. This has impeded the desired and necessary metamorphosis of the organization to deal with the transformation agenda with a view of creating an all – embracing new organization and, the required cohesion outside the parameters of narrow racial interpretations by many within iSimangaliso.
- It must be recognized by all entities including the Board of iSimangaliso and governments that they must realize and recognize that while good leadership from and by management makes a decisive difference, long – term fundamental change would, and could only be secured, if people’s daily work environment offered them satisfaction in the tasks that they undertake, their working relationships and the reward for their effort. In the iSimangaliso dynamic, a set of desirables need to be formulated by the Board in conjunction with the Executives and general staff. Some of these are identified as follows:
 - “ Effective two way communication;
 - Understanding and empathy for cultural diversity;
 - Multi – skilling through training, knowledge and empowerment;
 - A team – based approach to focus and motivate staff and maximize potential; and
 - Professionalism based on pride and integrity” (Dolny, 2001: 167).

The researcher also offers some solutions out of his observations and experiences at iSimangaliso over a twelve month period as Interim CEO and lists and discusses these as follows hereunder:

- A revamp of the status quo now becomes essential and in this regard the Board, the CEO, Executives and the Department of Environmental Affairs must play a cardinal, fundamental and pivotal role, in order to usher in a completely new era on the basis that, the transformation agenda would have been completed and, thus provides an opportunity to break the status quo and direct the organization afresh.
- It would be simple to dismiss the problems experienced at the iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority as the result of political intrigue and interference, particularly by some white staff that emanate from the old management within the organization. This has been expressed tacitly and with vindictiveness by some of these white staff. This will be a situation of analytical abdication on the part of the organization, the Board and the Department of Environmental Affairs. It therefore begs the question of what iSimangaliso should expect from corporate governance. Effective governance heightens staff morale, assists in positioning the organization among all its stakeholders, positions the institution locally and internationally and above all else produces better business results.
- The problems vary between different public entities, but in their totality it calls for greater respect between the parties involved as to their distinct roles, as well as adherence to the fundamental principles of good and acceptable governance coupled with extreme accountability.
- The conflation of the roles of the ICEO, the incoming CEO and, the Chairperson of the Board must be seriously addressed within corporate governance by the entire Board, in order to reach an acceptable and defined consensus, in this regard (This aspect was postulated by the researcher as truisms against the Chairperson of the Board within the narrative by providing empirical evidence and therefore, underscores the point that requires urgent attention by the full Board and the Department of Environmental Affairs to address and rectify without any deviation and without unnecessary and toxic emotion but, in the interests of the organization).
- The confusion over roles and functions must be addressed across the spectrum at iSimangaliso. (This was brought to the attention of the incoming CEO and the Chairperson of the Board in the ICEO'S exit report and at the Board meeting where the incoming CEO was present).
- The Chairperson's communication role to Board members, Executives, staff and the Department of Environmental Affairs must be tacitly delineated and therefore, the leadership and communication roles of the Chairperson cannot be overstated and, must be clearly defined, in order to hold the Chairperson responsible and accountable for any interference and, for purposes of proper governance, which needs to be instituted with the necessary accountability, at all times, irrespective.
- Emphasis on continuity is essential at iSimangaliso.
- A host of other issues that the Board and the Executives will have to address with the necessary urgency and within the framework of intellectual discussion. If this is done in an orderly fashion iSimangaliso could then become a winning organization which, will be in a position to hold its own against any other state – owned enterprise.
- In respect to stakeholder relations for iSimangaliso, it is essential that the Board must agree on positioning the organization, realign it, create partnerships and independence and, pursue an integrated approach to stakeholder relations management. An approach that should underpin a more coordinated and sustainable approach to collaboration and fund raising that is sorely lacking. This must be done by marketing the Park nationally, domestically, regionally as well as internationally. It must be recognized by the Board that, it must always subscribe to the principles of good corporate governance and, must appreciate that stakeholders' perceptions affect the reputation and image of iSimangaliso. The Board must therefore, reinvent itself, given the reality that it is now officially and effectively a management authority with statutory status, in order to make a sizeable contribution to the organization and the country.

6. SOME CONCLUSIONS

In spite that the narrative is not all inclusive and comprehensive in nature, as concerns the issues raised in this paper and that not all stakeholders were discussed, it is necessary to posit some conclusions as follows:

- The discussion highlighted the reality that the democratic government of South Africa as in this part of Kwa Zulu Natal Province, has not intervened decisively and, would have reached the limits of reformism with regards land issues and, the implication will result in greater strife on parts of the communities and, all of this will lead to greater poverty, unemployment and increasing inequality.

- That the promulgation of the Wetland Park Authority was in the opinion of the researcher undertaken more out of vanity, was not a clearly thought out strategy to deal with the question of land distribution to communities and has caused the massive erosion of human rights.
- Further that the idea of a spin off from tourism has not resulted in the creation of employment opportunities for the locals and, this is underscored by there not being a single black entrepreneur that, has emerged within the tourist industry of iSimangaliso, which is in the hands of whites. This status quo must be changed and both the government and the Park Authorities require to reengineer a strategy for black empowerment into the tourist industry.
- That conservation which is supposedly the main brief of the Park is an outsourced function. This can be dangerous in the long run and conservation could collapse. It is essential that the Park with the Department of Environmental Affairs gear themselves to fully take over this cardinal function.
- That the reengineered structure of the organization be implemented in the shortest period and irrespective of the financial problems that confront the country, money has to be found to intervene decisively.
- That the corporate headquarters be built over a two year period which has been approved by the Board.
- Land reform and rural development programmes that formant collective action and a consciousness can be effective mechanisms in the creation of social articulation and mass based democratic regimes. The discussion clearly shows that currently this is not achievable in Northern Kwa Zulu Natal because, both the Provincial and National governments have not developed a meaningful intervention strategy. This must become a priority.
- The contradictions of the agrarian question and unequal development within this area of KZN, against the equation of food and massive poverty can only be expected to deepen in this region. There is a clear indication in terms of the discussion in this narrative that, its solution lies in social and structural changes at the level of the total social transformation, as it pertains to this depraved and poverty stricken region.
- That consolidated stakeholder relations could usher in an era of development, possible business opportunities, infrastructure building, possible discourse on mining in selected areas, enhancement of much needed tourism initiatives and a host of other real possibilities. All of this has to be engaged thoroughly with the idea of development and addressing the agrarian reform processes.
- The study confirmed that extension and training within agricultural development can play a pivotal role in accommodating change through the effective development of a vast, and hitherto untapped reservoir of human capital / resources in this region.
- Black upliftment and advancement in the large rural periphery must continue and, confirms the view that non – formal education, extension, training and agricultural development must be relentlessly pursued and coordinated, in the interests of a more acceptable society.
- Another contributory factor is the relative infancy of organizations post democracy in addressing the manifest problems and challenges of this region.
- The findings confirm that, the principal difficulty encountered was and is one which arose from the paucity of material dealing with stakeholder relationships and with development.
- Overall, in this region, all sectors including both government and the private sector, there is a lack of understanding development and that, there has been very little investment by the three tiers of government, towards human capital development.
- Naturally, given the length of the narrative many conclusions are dispersed throughout the paper and bears relevance to the issues raised in the paper. A host of other conclusions can be made and, it is hoped that the reader will synthesize some of these from the narrative as a whole.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

Having outlined some conclusions, it is now necessary to highlight some recommendations. These are as follows and are enunciated hereunder:

- Land reform and rural development programmes that foment collective action and a consciousness can be effective mechanisms in the creation of social articulation and mass based democratic regimes which was postulated in the conclusions to this narrative.
- The contradictions of the agrarian question, the haphazard implementation of stakeholder relations, unequal development, against the equation of food ad massive poverty in this region of Kwa Zulu Natal, can only be expected to worsen and deepen. The solution lies in social and structural changes at the level of the total formation, as it pertains to this region and has been articulated throughout the research paper.

- That the coordination and implementation of extension and training within the Jurisdiction of the Park, within and outside can play a pivotal role in accommodating change through reasoned and sustained implementation of stakeholder relations, by means of effective development of a vast hitherto untapped reservoir of human capital.
- Black upliftment and advancement in the large rural periphery in terms of the observations and experiences of the researcher, must continue and confirms the view that non – formal education, extension, training and, agricultural development must be relentlessly pursued and coordinated, in the interests of a more acceptable society.
- It is obvious from the discussion undertaken in this paper in respect of stakeholder relations and agricultural and rural development discourse must be further enhanced in this area.
- It has been determined explicitly that, the dynamic nature of non – formal extension education and training is an area of development theory and practice which is heavily influenced by time and, the historical and political context within which it exists and operates. For this reason, it is not possible to make finite judgments about trends in extension education, trends within the actual delivery systems of extension or for that matter, in respect of training, either about its content or its methodology, and as was and as to how it must be applied in Northern Kwa Zulu Natal.
- The narrative confirms that the discussion must be seen in the context of its orientation towards positive and much needed stakeholder relations change, in the historical and social fabric of the present South African society that, has suffered from the constraints of apartheid policy and ideology, coupled with the slow change by the democratic government.
- It also confirms that the principal difficulty encountered arises from the paucity of material and research dealing with development and stakeholder relations within iSimangaliso. This was and is a historic problem.
- Any model chosen for enhancing stakeholder relations, and development must encompass structural reform and this must be formulated by consensus by all role – players. The model chosen must be critically appraised and modified to suit local conditions, before any implementation is considered by the iSimangaliso authorities. In a regional context, as a component to improve the income position of the poor, thus allowing the rural periphery to re – emphasize economic growth.
- African states in general but more importantly South Africa must be engaged in more interesting and applicable experimentation, in the hope of finding new models that will and can be better adapted to contemporary reality.
- The amelioration of poverty in the rural areas of this region must be addressed in a composite manner by provincial departments, municipalities, iSimangaliso and other formations with explicit support from the National Department of Environmental Affairs.
- There is a dearth in understanding indigenous culture in the context of the iSimangaliso dynamic, in respect to the subtle nuances of stakeholder relations and, towards the development of agricultural systems and, the general improvement and delivery of services, extension and the modalities of training. More attention must be paid to these issues to avoid collapse of stakeholder relationships. If this happens, the authority of the Park will be eroded and iSimangaliso can easily be reduced to a passive development player that communities will pay scant reference to.
- Research on the characteristics of farmers and the physical characteristics of extension areas, gender and material status together, with the educational levels of the training of farmers, employment and sources of income of households and of farmers are vital. Also the possession of capital goods by farmers / recipients must be established.
- It is also recommended the role of the different institutions within the same government, which carry out development initiatives, extension activities, be established, determined and researched, in order that a unified and cohesive and acceptable strategy is developed. This cannot be left to iSimangaliso alone, which is currently the order of the day. This comprehensive effort must be coordinated by the Department of Environmental Affairs.
- Intensive research on the types of infrastructural development, the land tenure system, human potential in conjunction with the socio – economic factors that affect stakeholder relations, extension, agriculture and development must be pursued.
- Research recommendations need to be tailored for different target groups. Institutional support to stakeholders must become a policy imperative.
- Pilot Projects must be put into place before launching regional programmes. To achieve all of this there must be strong provincial and national government support, political commitment, the political willingness to intervene, cooperative tribal authorities, sound planning and provision for institutional support and inputs together, with application of sound management principles, adequate supervision, monitoring and evaluation by the Department of Environmental Affairs and so on. The iSimangaliso Board must play a leadership role in this regard and must be supported by the Executives of the institution, in terms of their daily operational duties.

- It is also recommended that adequate funding over and above the current budget must be provided by the national government to deal with the agricultural and development programmes that will be identified.
- The researcher posits salient and important recommendations by virtue of observations as ICEO of iSimangaliso, in terms of the all - embracing reality and fact that, as the situation stands at present, the structure is not tailored to meet the intervention strategy that can be acceptable by all stakeholders. Some improvements have been noted, in this regard and the new approved structure must now be implemented together with the filling of critical posts that were identified and approved by the Board.
- The fact that communities and stakeholders see iSimangaliso as a “mega municipality,” it is obvious that the budget of iSimangaliso cannot absorb the all - encompassing issues of development. However, the researcher as ICEO boldly posits that, if government injects a half a billion Rands extra per year for the next five years (Additional to its yearly budgetary allocation per year over this five year period, two and a half billion over the next 5 years). The ICEO is confident that the area can be turned around within and outside the Park and within certain areas of the buffer zone in respect of development. This will serve the communities, create jobs, reduce poverty, win the confidence of the stakeholders, raise the stakes for iSimangaliso and will allow for growing goodwill and enhance stakeholder relations. This will lead to a massive modernization of the area and also deal with the agrarian crisis provided parcels of land is made available for all of this to take place in a coordinated manner by virtue of sound planning and intervention strategies. This will be a win – win situation for all. The Board, the Department of Environmental Affairs and the Treasury must look into this proposal in a positive manner (The private sector must be brought in to inject more money and to oversee development and control these development funds).
- One of the major drawbacks to stakeholder relations and engagement has been the non – recognition by the past management to communicate with the Amakhosi and their communities, in the local isiZulu language. In other words, there was historically, no sustained and coordinated effort by the previous management, in terms of a language indigenization policy and stakeholders were paid scant reference to. Recently and during the tenure of the ICEO efforts in this regard were made. This aspect must be pursued relentlessly and requires the support of all the staff of iSimangaliso. It must be implemented urgently. It will pay handsome dividends for the organization and will improve stakeholder relations to the massive advantage of the Park and, will improve the poor image of the organization. Efforts of this nature are vital and will secure the support of stakeholders, and will allow for an era of the ushering in of much needed goodwill of the Amakhosi and their communities and for much needed general empowerment and general development. The question is therefore where shall and when shall we begin?

In summary, it can be said that this research paper, discussion and narrative, identified some of the patterns and problems related to stakeholder relations within the iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority over a one year period through, the process of observations and experiences. This discussion could not encompass comprehensively all the issues that relate to encompassing stakeholder relations in its entirety. The organization therefore, requires to commission in – depth research on this most important variable and, a host of other variables, through structured studies by engaging all stakeholders, identified in this paper, including those stakeholders that were not identified. However, what emerged clearly is that stakeholder relations, must be considered by all Executives as a principal duty and task and within the routine of their daily tasks and this must be given the highest priority by the Board and the Department of Environmental Affairs. Within this context, it is hoped that stakeholder relations coupled with agricultural intervention and extension, once the land issues have been resolved in the interests of stakeholder communities by the government, must also become a development strategy of the provincial government. To this end iSimangaliso could in some small measure play a significant role but, more importantly, this must become the combined strategy of all role – players in this region of Kwa Zulu Natal.

8. GROWTH IS NOW OR NEVER FOR SOUTH AFRICA

According to Fuad Cassim (2018: 1- 3, City Press) “In South Africa today, the basic cost of living is rising, while living standards are falling.” This is a clear indication, in terms of the thrust of this paper that improved stakeholder relations will serve the interests of iSimangaliso, in respect of getting involved in development issues apart from its tourism and conservation mandates that, it has hitherto not concentrated upon fully. This is the imperative that must be identified by government, the Department of Environmental Affairs, amidst other role – players. Unless this is done, the deterioration, which is the result of sharply uneven development and, slow and sluggish economic growth and, declining per capita income, is arrested, no advantage can be accrued in terms of the current political changes to restore sustainable progress in the country. Fuad Cassim (2018) further states that “South Africa must decisively break from the vicious cycle of the past decade, which was characterized by state capture, grand endemic corruption and steeped in political patronage, policy inconsistency and

incoherence, political instability and social mistrust.” This is exemplified to a considerable extent in the region of Northern Kwa Zulu Natal and, the communities that engage with iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority with their Amakhosi.

Systems of governance rarely change overnight, but a new leadership is emerging that might offer the necessary pragmatism, reform and hope. To this extent, iSimangaliso must move into a new trajectory of engagement and go beyond its brief of conservation and tourism imperatives and, now turn its strategic focus to increased and sustained stakeholder interaction, coupled with the necessary development initiatives, to turn the tide of poverty, inequality and unemployment in Northern Kwa Zulu Natal, and, particularly in areas under its jurisdiction. It is an opportunity to break out of the low – growth trap and move back into line with the global business cycle. Isimangaliso must appreciate that business and private investment are essential for its very salience and survival, as an organization for purposes of its sustained growth and development. Investment was put on hold because of political uncertainty, poor governance, weak growth and low returns among many other reasons in South Africa. It is therefore obvious that investment is a key determinant of productivity growth in the economy.

Economic reform and good governance which has not been a feature of South Africa and its State Owned Enterprises, over the last two decades are critically important to starting a virtuous cycle of investment, growth, employment and economic inclusion. Economic reform and good governance, coupled with astute leadership by the iSimangaliso Board and the Executives of the organization, must be infused consistently and without delay because, they are not short – term events, but processes are already beginning to unfold and, to this end iSimangaliso should ensure that, it is not held back or found wanting, in making a sizeable contribution to conservation, tourism, development, agrarian reform, enhancing stakeholder relationships, and economic growth in this region. This can be achieved by means of sustained interaction, respect and engagement with all stakeholders. The signals encourage cautious optimism.

9. CONCLUSION

Alleviating hunger is not a simple matter. Colonial legacies, unwise authoritarian policies, the lack of appropriate technology, unequal or dualistic agricultural and development structures, population growth, weak and irregular consultation with stakeholders and, many other factors render solutions to the problems that confront iSimangaliso and, thus render solutions of the region difficult. “Nonetheless, there are only a few countries that have the labour absorption capacity to employ rural people historically uprooted through technological and political change” (Karodia, 2007), as was seen during the declaration of iSimangaliso as a World Heritage Site.

Integrity and boldness must now be accepted as a given strategy within the context of government. What is required is leadership and courage which was non – existent at iSimangaliso over a protracted period of time by the former management, the former Executives, the successive Boards and the Department of Environmental Affairs. Peter Bruce (2018: 16) underscores the point that “Inequality is caused by the presence of wealth. Poverty is caused by its complete absence and therefore, it is our collective responsibility to fix poverty first.” Poor people can only be helped by governments, Boards, Executives that are focused and disciplined in the extreme. It is very hard work but, it must be undertaken and done. You end poverty in South Africa and you fix everything. This will not mean the end of inequality but, it will mean the end of our greatest curse – indignity. South Africa must avoid anarchy and to this end Barney Mthombathi (2018:17) says, “Anarchy is the result of government __ the absence of any guiding or uniting principal; disorder, chaos. This is the current state of play in South Africa. To most freedom remains a mirage. This is exemplified by disillusionment and not only because of a lack of service delivery occasioned by incompetence and corruption; is it a feeling of exclusion.”

The lack of appreciation by the apartheid government, our British colonial “masters” and, to a considerable extent by the democratic government of South Africa, including the iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority, in respect to the relative autonomy of the African peasantry created, a situation where both state power and state institutions, are beginning to crumble in Northern Kwa Zulu Natal and, in and around the Wetland Park Authority and, in many parts of the Republic of South Africa. What is being experienced is both fundamental and significant. It has not marked the end of the road that had been travelled by its colonial “masters” and, its former apartheid policy – makers.

Only capitalism within a coordinated and implementable mixed economy and not pandering with socialist ideals, and the distribution of wealth, by means of certain forms of state intervention, considering that the markets rule the outcomes economically, given the current recession and poor economic climate that South Africa finds itself in has, to nurture good governance and accountability, coupled with the rule of law and, the marginalization of the landed elite and the abandonment

of political patronage by the democratic government, can assist the country out of this quagmire. The reality that confronts us all, is that development must become a matter of changing the material and social realities from outside and from without.

The caveat of entrenching the neo – capitalist agenda of the west and, its acceptance by the democratic ANC government is dangerous for the purposes of social distribution of wealth. Wealth must first be created before it can be distributed. The neo – liberal capitalist agenda is led by the ruling African National Congress, and has become a dangerous phenomenon, over the last decade and, has the potential of scuppering the development agenda of the South African state (Is there a development agenda?). This must be resisted by the sum total of the South African nation. The government must be held accountable for development.

In bringing this discussion to an end, stakeholder liaison activities and stakeholder relations within the iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority must be driven by the Board, the CEO and the Executives and the various units responsible for stakeholder relations. The communication unit of Isimangaliso will and must be responsible for the success of the implementation of the strategy. In summary, it must be envisaged through nurturing relationships with iSimangaliso stakeholders and, responding to stakeholder needs that are consistent with iSimangaliso's mandated objectives and to account to its stakeholders.

The iSimangaliso Board is ultimately responsible for stakeholder relationships without usurping the authority and operational jurisdiction of the organizations Executives, and it will be the CEO'S responsibility to unpack strategy and, delegate responsibility to the various Executives and be responsible for marketing the strategy by showcasing it as a premier World Heritage Site and a Wetland Park Authority, without compromising the consolidation and implementation of stakeholder relations, in a quest of achieving acceptable development and dealing decisively with the processes of uneven development. This must be undertaken in partnership with communities. This can be achieved if the Board and the iSimangaliso Executives work in tandem and, with each other.

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