

South Africa: Soutpansberg Protected Area Water Conservation Project



Global Environment & Technology Foundation (GETF)

📍 Soutpansberg Mountains, Limpopo Province - South Africa

Program: Replenish Africa Initiative (RAIN)



Project Quick Facts

Project Name:	Soutpansberg Protected Area Water Conservation Project	
Location:	Soutpansberg Mountains, Limpopo Province - South Africa	
Funding:	RAIN Investment: \$276,500 Rainforest Trust: \$12,500	
Project Duration:	March 2019 - August 2020	
Benefits:	Number of beneficiaries: 3 women and youth will be economically empowered 320 girls and boys to benefit from training in water, sanitation and hygiene conducted at a series of school-based workshops 3,200 hectares under improved management	Expected Replenish Amounts: TBD
Key Partners:	Primary Implementer: Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT)	Other Stakeholders: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• SanParks EcoFurniture Program• Conservation Outcomes• Limpopo Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism (LEDET)• Vhembe Biosphere Reserve• L Wright Game Farm
Activities Summary:	The project focuses on the removal of woody invasive alien plant species from the upper catchment areas of the Soutpansberg Mountains. The project is also working to protect catchments through formal proclamation under the national Biodiversity Stewardship Program, as well as educating local communities on water related issues.	

Project Description

The Western Soutpansberg Mountain is a key groundwater source area containing an upper catchment with wetlands and streams that feed into the regionally significant Sand River. The mountains fall within the Vhembe Biosphere Reserve (Limpopo Province). Soutpansberg is recognised as an area of high biodiversity and concentration of species unique to this geographic location.

The area is under threat from invasive alien plants such as *Eucalyptus* spp. and *Acacia mearnsii*, known to have a detrimental impact on water resources and biodiversity. RAIN implementing partner, Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT) identified a high prevalence of invasive alien trees in the focal properties of the Western Soutpansberg. There is a further threat from development and land-use change, with less than 2% of this important and pristine mountain being formally protected.

The Coca-Cola Foundation, through its flagship, Replenish Africa Initiative (RAIN) program is partnering with EWT to address source water protection through the removal of invasive alien plant species from upper catchment areas of the Soutpansberg Mountains. The Soutpansberg RAIN initiative will also work towards protecting these catchments through formal proclamation under the national Biodiversity Stewardship Program, as well as educating the local communities on water-related issues.

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RAIN Program Overview

Launched by TCCF (in 2010) in response to the severe health challenges faced by millions of Africans living without access to safe drinking water, RAIN aims to improve access to safe water for 6 million people in Africa by the end of 2020. In addition, RAIN aims to create employment opportunities for women, youth and families through water project activities as well as improve children's learning environment through WASH in schools. RAIN is backed by an 11-year, \$65 million commitment by TCCF and made possible through the support of more than 140 partners.

Grant period: 2010-2020 (11 years)

Program Description: RAIN supports a wide range of water-related projects in response to Africa's significant challenges in meeting the SDGs on water. Projects are designed to meet specific community needs including water supply, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH); productive use of water; and watershed protection.

