



RHODES UNIVERSITY
Where leaders learn

The **Department of Environmental Science, Rhodes University** in partnership with the **Centre for International Forestry Research, South African-Netherlands Programme for Alternatives in Development**; and the **Programme for Land and Agrarian Studies, University of the Western Cape** are pleased to invite you to a policy briefing session and workshop on:

Making the Invisible Visible: Ameliorating Poverty through Natural Resource Commercialisation

Friday 10 February 2006

9:30 - 15:00

**Botanical Gardens Conference Centre
Botanical Gardens, Tshwane (Pretoria)**

Who should attend?

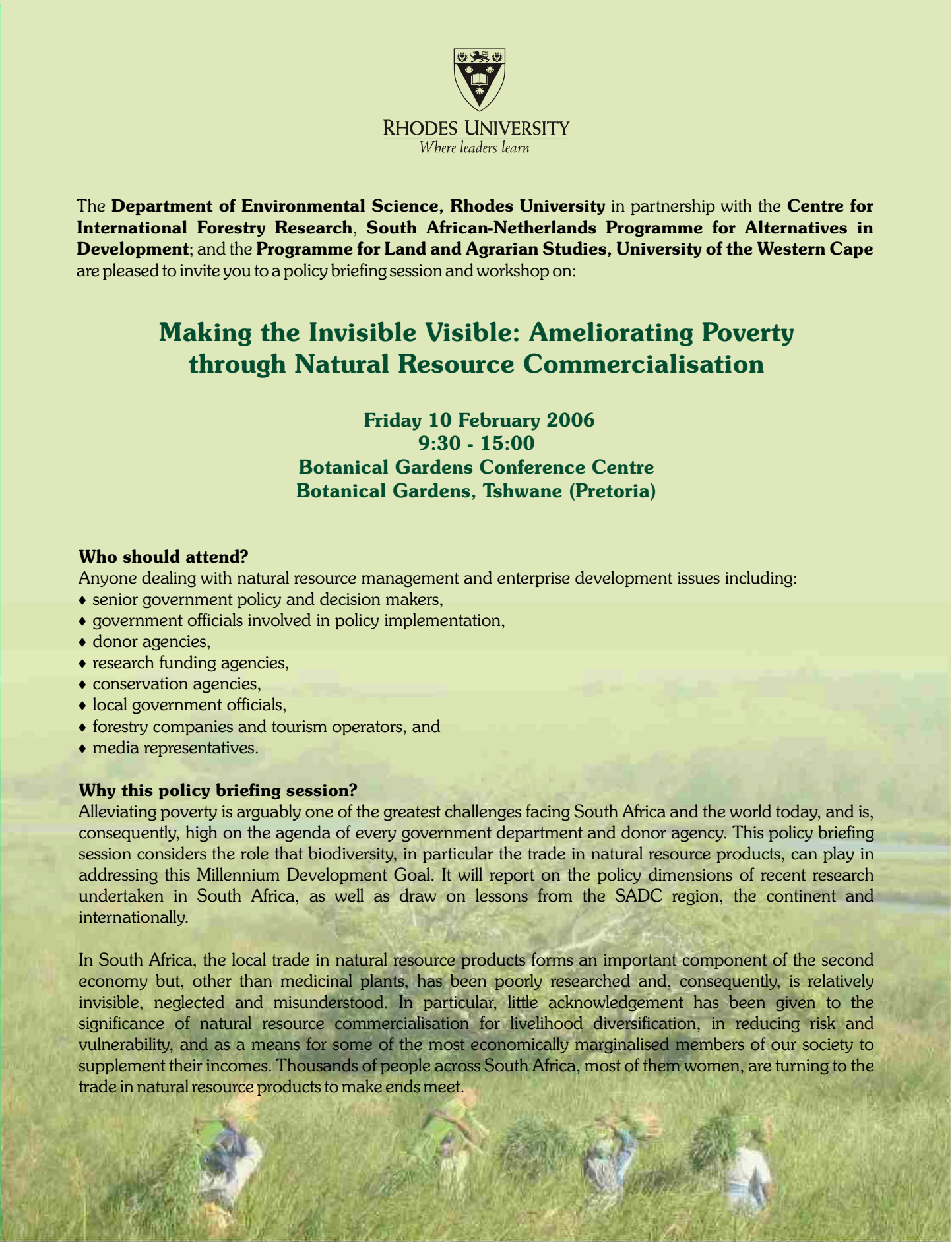
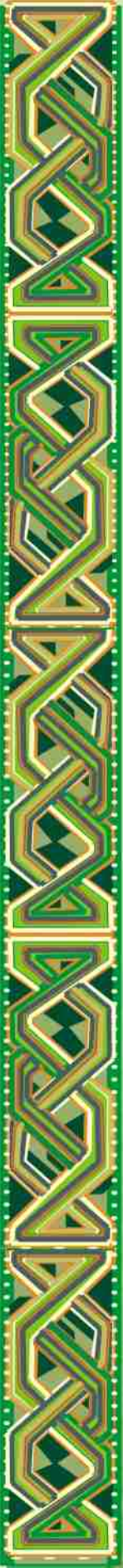
Anyone dealing with natural resource management and enterprise development issues including:

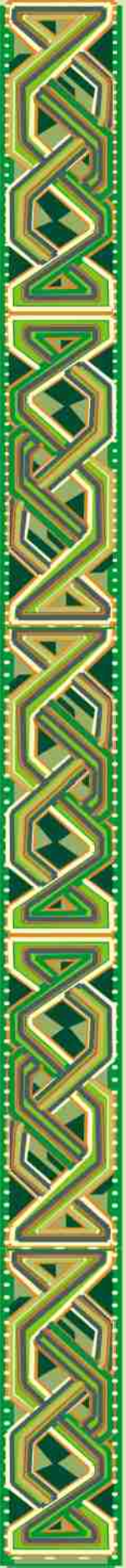
- ◆ senior government policy and decision makers,
- ◆ government officials involved in policy implementation,
- ◆ donor agencies,
- ◆ research funding agencies,
- ◆ conservation agencies,
- ◆ local government officials,
- ◆ forestry companies and tourism operators, and
- ◆ media representatives.

Why this policy briefing session?

Alleviating poverty is arguably one of the greatest challenges facing South Africa and the world today, and is, consequently, high on the agenda of every government department and donor agency. This policy briefing session considers the role that biodiversity, in particular the trade in natural resource products, can play in addressing this Millennium Development Goal. It will report on the policy dimensions of recent research undertaken in South Africa, as well as draw on lessons from the SADC region, the continent and internationally.

In South Africa, the local trade in natural resource products forms an important component of the second economy but, other than medicinal plants, has been poorly researched and, consequently, is relatively invisible, neglected and misunderstood. In particular, little acknowledgement has been given to the significance of natural resource commercialisation for livelihood diversification, in reducing risk and vulnerability, and as a means for some of the most economically marginalised members of our society to supplement their incomes. Thousands of people across South Africa, most of them women, are turning to the trade in natural resource products to make ends meet.





This policy briefing session draws attention to and advocates for this poorly recognised and frequently dismissed sector. It has been organised in response to a lament frequently expressed by producers “*the government does not see us and yet we are helping ourselves*”. We will highlight the critical role that the trade in biodiversity plays in rural welfare and household livelihood security, as well as draw attention to the major problems and constraints producers confront. We will propose ways forward for assisting local producers and traders to overcome the obstacles they face and to enhance their incomes reflecting on experiences from around the world. We will consider aspects of environmental regulation, resource access, gender, training, market development, local economic development and capacity building. We will also discuss innovative ways in which to grow and expand existing markets, while ensuring sustainability of both the trade and the resource base upon which it relies.

What to expect - a taste of the programme

There will be a number of *short* presentations covering the following:

- ◆ Key findings and policy implications from eight case studies of local trading in natural resource products in South Africa (Dr Sheona Shackleton, Rhodes University)
- ◆ Lessons from the trade in natural resource-based craft in Botswana and Namibia (Dr Beth Terry, Design and Development Services, Namibia)
- ◆ Building capacity and providing support for women trading in forest products in West and Central Africa (Dr Ouseynou Ndoye, Centre for International Forestry Research, Cameroon)
- ◆ India's support for the trade in natural resource and craft products (Dr Rehka Singhal, Indian Institute of Forest Management, India)
- ◆ International perspectives and lessons drawing on case studies from across the globe (Dr Brian Belcher, Centre for International Forestry Research, Indonesia)
- ◆ Building the local trade through the development of new, sophisticated export markets: Initiatives at Phytotrade (Gus le Breton, Phytotrade Africa, Zimbabwe)
- ◆ Making a living from selling natural resources: A local perspective of the challenges producers face (local producers from Bushbuckridge will be invited to tell their own stories)
- ◆ A panel composed of a number of national, regional and international experts will provide the opportunity for discussion and for participants to pursue any of the issues raised in the presentations.

What will you get out of it?

As well as providing insights into the significance of the natural resource product trade for livelihoods and poverty alleviation and ways to enhance this, all participants will receive a 'resource pack' to take away. This will include a number of practical South African orientated policy briefs, summaries of case studies, international policy briefs, information brochures and a few surprises.

RSVP

Please RSVP to Julie Burton-Heitz at j.burton-heitz@ru.ac.za before 30 November 2005 indicating your intention to attend or not.

If you are unable to attend please nominate someone in your place, as we believe it is important that your department, directorate or organisation is represented.

By attending this meeting you will be showing willingness to listen to the voices of those poor rural producers who seldom have an opportunity to speak out.

