



# 1 SUMMARY DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT/NKATSAKANYO YA PHUROJEKE

Save the Sand is a transformative carbon removal and community development project implementing agroforestry across the Sabie and Sand River catchments in Mpumalanga, South Africa. Located within the globally significant Maputoland-Pondoland-Albany Biodiversity Hotspot and the UNESCO-designated Kruger to Canyons Biosphere Reserve, the project zone encompasses approximately 630,000 hectares of diverse ecosystems spanning savanna, grassland, and forest biomes.

*Hlayiso wa Sava i phurojeke yo cinca swilo leyi kongomaka eka ku susa k'haboni emoyeni ni ku hlulukisa vaaki hi ku tirhisa kurima niku byala mirhi eka tindzhawu ta ku khoma mati ta Nambu wa Sabie Sand eMpumalanga, wa Afrika Dzonga. Phurojeke leyi yi kumeka eka ndzhawu ya nkoka swinene leyi tivekaka tani hi Maputoland-Pondoland-Albany, ndzhawu yo hlayisa swihari ni swihlala, ni le ka Ntanga wa Kruger to Canyons lowu amukeriweke hi UNESCO. Ndzhawu ya phurojeke yi angarhela kwalomu ka 630,000 wa tihekithara ya swiyimo swa ntumbuluko leswi hambaneke, ku katsa savanna, grassland ni forest biomes.*

Through strategic planting of native and non-native fruit and nut-bearing trees on residential land, croplands, and restoration areas, the project will sequester ~7.5 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent over 40 years while delivering substantial climate adaptation, community empowerment, and biodiversity conservation co-benefits. The project targets approximately 40,000 hectares in its first phase, engaging an estimated 240,000 community members who currently depend on agriculture, tourism, and natural resources for their livelihoods.

*Hi ku byala swihlala swa mihandzu ni timbewu ta le ndzhawini ni leti nga riki ta lendzhawini eka ndzhawu ya vaaki, masimu ni tindzhawu to hlayisela, phurojeke yi ta khoma kwalomu ka 7.5 wa mabilyoni wati tonnes ta CO<sub>2</sub> kuringana malembe ya 40, hindlela yaleyo yita tlhela yi humesa mimpfuno yo tala yo katsa ku cinca ka maxelo, ku hlulukisa vaaki, ni ku hlayisa swilo leswi hanyaka. Eka xiyenge xo sungula, phurojeke yi kongomisa 40,000 wa tihekithara, ku tirha na vaaki va kwalomu ka 240,000 lava hanyisaka hi vurimi, vuendzi ni switirhisiwa swa ntumbuluko.*

The initiative addresses critical environmental and social challenges, including unsustainable agricultural practices, vegetation loss, soil erosion, declining water quality, and limited livelihood diversification options for local communities. By combining carbon sequestration with tangible community benefits, Save the Sand creates a pathway toward climate-resilient development while supporting the region's 2.3 million inhabitants.

*Phurojeke yi lulamisa swiphiqo leswi nga kona swa ntumbuluko ni swa vaaki, ku katsa matirhelo ya vurimi leyi nga tiyangiki, ku nyamalala ka swihlahla, ku hlantsweka ka misava, ku hunguteka ka ku tenga ka mati, ni ku pfumaleka ka tindlela to hambana ta ku ti hanyisa. Hi ku hlanganisa ka k'haboni ni mimpfuno leyi vonakaka eka vaaki, hlayiso wa sava wo tumbuluxa ndlela eka nhluvukiso lowu tiyeke eka ku cinca ka maxelo, ku ri karhi ku seketeriwa vaaki va ndzhawu lava fika eka 2.3 wa mamiliyoni.*

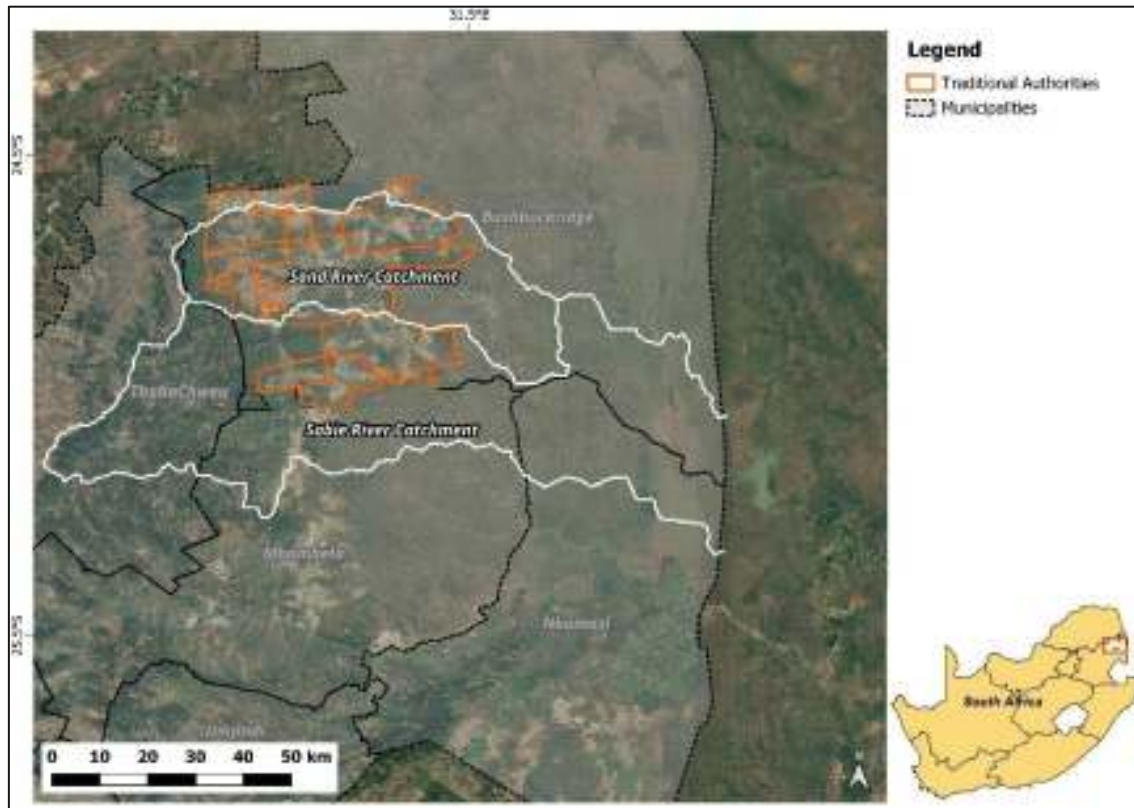
## 1.1 Project location/Ndzhawu ya Phurojeke

The project is located within the Ehlanzeni District Municipality, Mpumalanga, covering the communal lands of ten traditional authorities including Mnisi, Amashangana, and Moletete. The first phase focuses on ~40,000 ha of customary land governed by these authorities.

*Phurojeke yi kumeka eka masipala wa Ehlanzeni eMpumalanga, yi katsa misava ya vaaki leyi lawuriwaka hi vuhosi bya ndhavuko lebyi fi kaka eka khume, ku katsa Mnisi, Amashangana, Moletete ni van'wana. Xiyenge xo sungula xi kongomisa eka kwalomu ka 40,000 wati tihekithara ta misava ya ndhavuko leyi lawuriwaka hi tihosi teto.*

Customary land tenure systems govern most project areas, with traditional authorities playing central roles in land allocation and management decisions. This governance structure is recognized in project design, with engagement protocols respecting traditional decision-making processes while ensuring transparency and FPIC compliance.

*Milawu ya ndhavuko yo lawula misava yi tirhisiwa ngopfu eka tindzhawu ta phurojeke, laha tihosi ti tlangaka xiave xa nkoka eka ku averiwa ni ku lawuriwa ka misava. Leswi swi tekiriwa enhlokweni eka ku hleriwa ka phurojeke, ku landza milawu ya ndhavuko ya ku teka swiboho, ku ri karhi ku tiyisiwa ku va ni ku pfumelelana loku kongomisaka (FPIC) ni ku va ni ku vonakala.*



## 1.2 Project context and baseline scenario/Xiyimo na masungulo ya Phurojeke

The Sabie and Sand River catchments face mounting environmental pressures from unsustainable land management practices, climate change impacts, and population growth. Historical vegetation loss has resulted in significant soil degradation, reduced water retention capacity, and declining ecosystem services. These environmental challenges directly threaten the livelihoods of local communities who depend on agriculture and natural resources.

*Tindzhawu ta ku khoma mati na nambu wa Sabie Sand ti langutana ni ku tika lokukulu loku vangiwaka hi matirhelo ya misava lama nga tiyangiki, ku cinca ka maxelo ni ku kula ka nhlayo ya vanhu. Ku lahleka ka swihlahla hi nkarhi lowu hundzeke ku vange Ku onhaka ka misava, ku hunguteka ka ku khoma mati, ni ku hunguteka ka mimpfuno leyi humaka eka ntumbuluko. Swiphiso leswi swi khumba ngopfu vutomi bya vaaki lava ti seketeleke hi vurimi ni switirhisiwa swa ntumbuluko.*

The project zone overlaps with recognized Key Biodiversity Areas and borders several protected areas, making conservation efforts particularly critical. Despite the region's ecological significance, many areas have experienced habitat fragmentation and degradation, threatening numerous plant and animal species. The project specifically targets restoration of degraded forests, riparian zones, and agricultural lands to rebuild ecosystem connectivity and function.

*Ndzhawu ya phurojeke yi hlangua ni tindhawu leti tivekaka ta nkoka to hlayisa swihari ni swihlahla naswona yi le kusuhi ni tindzhawu leti sirhelelekeke. Hambileswi ndzhawu leyi yi nga ya nkoka swinene,*

tindzhawu to tala leti onhakeke hi ku avanyisiwa ka tindzhawu to tshama ni ku hunguteka ka swihlahla, leswi khomaka swihlahla ni swiharhi swo tala. Phurojeke yi kongomisa ngopfu eka ku vuyesela mafurha ya swihlahla lama onhakeke, tindzhawu ta le matlhelo ya milambu, ni masimu, ku tlhela ku hlanganisiwa ntirho wa ntumbuluko.

Communities within the catchments face limited economic opportunities, with particular challenges for women, youth, and marginalized groups. Food security remains a concern, with many households vulnerable to climate shocks and seasonal variations in agricultural productivity. The project directly addresses these challenges by creating employment, enhancing food security through year-round tree product availability, and building local capacity for climate-smart agricultural practices.

*Vaaki va ndzhawu va langutana ni ku pfumaleka ka mintirho, ngopfu-ngopfu vavasati, vantsywa ni vanhu lava nga tshikileriwa kumbe ku tekeriwa ehansi. Ku sirheleleka ka swakudya ka ha ri xiphiso, hikuva mindyangu yo tala ya vaviseka hi ku cinca ka maxelo ni ku hambana ka mihandzu hi tin'hweti. Phurojeke yi hlamula swiphiso leswi hi ku tumbuluxa mintirho, ku ndlandlamuxa swakudya hi ku kumeka ka mihandzu lembe hinkwaro, ni ku aka vuswikoti bya vurimi lebyi tiyeke eka maxelo.*

In the absence of the project, the region faces intensified land degradation driven by urban expansion and over-reliance on natural resources. Historical deforestation and agricultural expansion have fragmented habitats, leading to high soil erosion and reduced climate adaptive capacity for local households.

*Loko phurojeke yi nga ri kona, ndzhawu yi ta ya emahlweni yi onhaka hikwalaho ka ku tala ka mimovha ni ku ntumbuluxiwa ka switirhisiwa. Ku tsemiwa ka swihlahla ni ku andza ka vurimi swi avanyisa tindzhawu, swi vanga ku hlantswa lokukulu ka misava ni ku hunguteka ka vuswikoti bya vaaki byo tiyisana ni ku cinca ka maxelo.*

### 1.3 Project approach and methodology/Maendlelo ya Phurojeke

The project employs a phased VCS-grouped approach, beginning with small-scale initial Project Activity Instances (PAIs) that are representative of planned activities. This allows for design refinement, community engagement, and capacity building before scaling up. The methodology combines census-based approaches for residential and cropland areas with area-based approaches for reforestation sites.

Phurojeke yi tirhisa ndlela ya hlangano wa VCS kuya hi swiyenge, ku sungula hi mintirho leyintsongo, leyi yimelaka leswi kunguhatiweke. Leswi swi pfuna ku antswisa hlanganiso wa phurojeke, ku ngenisa vaaki, ni ku aka vuswikoti, ku nga si endliwa hi mpimo lowukulu. Tindlela to hlayisa ta tirhisiwa, ku katsa ndlela ya ku hlaya mindyangu ni masimu, ni ndlela ya ku hlaya tindzhawu ta ku vurimi.

#### Mihlangano ya Mintirho ya Nkoka

- Ndzhawu yo hlayisa swihlahla emasimini: Ku byala ku fika eka 100 wa mihandzu ni timbewu, ku hlanganisiwa ni vurimi lebyi nga kona.
- Ku byala eka Tindzhawu ta Vutshamo: Ku byala ku fika eka 50 wa swihlahla etindlwini, eswikolweni, etindhawini ta vaaki ni lema sinweni ya vaaki.

- Mintirho ya ku tlhela u byala mirhi: Ku byala swihlahla eka ndzhawu leyi onhakeke, etindhawini ta milambu nile tlhelo ka tindlela, ku tiyisa misava, ku sirhelela mati ni ku hlanganisa tindzhawu ta swilo leswi hanyaka

## 1.4 Tripple bottom line benefits/Mimpfuno ya Triple Bottom Line

The project delivers transformative climate, community, and biodiversity benefits. Climate benefits include 7.5 million tonnes \$CO\_{2}\$ removal over 40 years with 100-year monitoring, enhanced microclimate regulation, improved water management, and soil stabilization. Community benefits encompass 200-460 direct jobs (50% women), training for 120,000 households in climate-smart agriculture, income diversification through fruit and nut production, year-round food security, and improved education access. Biodiversity benefits include enhanced management of 40,000 hectares, restored habitat connectivity across fragmented landscapes, support for endangered species including Pepperbark tree, and riparian buffer restoration protecting aquatic ecosystems while building long-term ecosystem resilience.

### *Mimpfuno ya Triple Bottom Line*

*Phurojeke yi humesa mimpfuno ya nkoka eka maxelo, vaaki nile ka swilo leswi hanyaka. Mipfuno ya maxelo ku susa 7.5 wa timiliyoni ta tithini ta CO<sub>2</sub> eka malembe ya 40, ku antswisa maxelo ya laha kaya, ku lawula mati ni ku tiyisa misava. Mipfuno ya vaaki yi katsa mintirho yo kongoma ya 200-460 (50% i vamanana), ndzetelo eka mindyangu ya 120,000 eka vurimi lebyi tiyeke eka maxelo, ku hambanisa miholo hi mihandzu ni timbewu, swakudya lembe hinkwaro ni ku antswisa dyondzo. Mipfuno yo hlayisa swihari ni swihlala yi katsa ku antswisa vulawuri bya 40,000 wa tihektara, ku vuyetela vuhlanganisi bya vutshamo, ku seketela tinxaka leti nga ekhombyeni ku fana na Pepperbark tree, na ku vuyetela tindhawu ta milambu.”*

## 1.5 Standardized benefit metrics/Mimpfuno leyi endliweke hi Ndlela leyi Tiyeke

Tafula leyi landzelaka yi kombisa nkucetelo lowu ehleketiwaka wa phurojeke eka nkarhi hinkwawo wa vutomi bya yona.

Category/Xiyenge	Metric / Xipimelo	Achievement (Lifetime) / Ku humelela (Vutomi hinkwabyo)
<b>GHG</b>	<i>Net Emission Removals / Ku susiwa loku heleleke ka tigasi</i>	<b>~7.5 Million tCO<sub>2</sub>e</b>
<b>Land Management</b>	<i>Hectares of Non-Forest land improved / Tihektara leti antswisiweke</i>	<b>~40,000 ha</b>
<b>Livelihoods</b>	<i>Total beneficiaries / Nhlayo ya vapfuniwa</i>	<b>~240,000 Individuals</b>
<b>Gender Equity</b>	<i>Total female beneficiaries / Nhlayo ya vamanana lava vuyeriwaka</i>	<b>~132,000 women</b>

<b>Education</b>	<i>Students/Learners impacted / Nhlayo ya vadyondzi lava vuyeriwaka</i>	<b>~264,000 learners</b>
<b>Biodiversity</b>	<i>Globally Endangered species protected / Tinxaka leti sirheleliweke</i>	<b>111 species</b>

## 1.6 Safeguards & Community Engagement / Nhlayiso ni Ku Hlanganyela ka Vaaki

The project employs robust safeguards to protect community rights and environmental integrity. Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) principles guide all engagement, ensuring communities have the authority to make informed decisions about participation. Land tenure security is addressed through transparent agreements respecting customary and formal property rights.

*Phurojeke yi tirhisa milawu yo tiya yo sirhelela timfanelo ta vaaki ni ntumbuluko. Milawu ya Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) yi landzeriwa eka ku hlanganyela hinkwako, ku tiyisisa leswaku vaaki va teka swiboho leswi twisisekaka. Ku hlayisiwa ka mfanelo ya misava ku endliwa hi ku pfumelana ka leswi vonakaka na leswi hloniphaka ndhavuko ni milawu ya mfumo.*

Participatory approaches ensure community ownership and sustainable long-term management. Regular stakeholder consultations, grievance mechanisms, and benefit-sharing arrangements promote equitable outcomes. The project particularly emphasizes inclusion of women, youth, and marginalized groups in decision-making processes and benefit distribution.

*Tindlela ta ku hlanganyela ti tiyisa ku va vaaki va vani vulawuri bya phurojeke nkarhi wo leha. Ku burisana nkarhi hinkwawo, tindlela to faka swivilelo, ni ku averiwa ka mimpfuno swi tiyisa ku ringana. Phurojeke yi kongomisa ngopfu eka ku hlulukisa vavasati, vantsywa ni vanhu lava nga etlhelo eka ku teka swiboho ni ku kuma mimpfuno.*

Stakeholders include Traditional Authorities, landholders, local & national government, conservation agencies, and community-based organizations. Each group plays distinct roles in project governance and implementation. Regular stakeholder meetings provide platforms for information sharing, collaborative decision-making, and conflict resolution. Grievance mechanisms offer accessible channels for addressing concerns and ensuring accountability.

*Vahlayi va nkoka va katsa tihosi ta ndhavuko, vaaki va misava, mfumo wa le ndzhawini ni wa tiko, tinhlango to hlayisa ntumbuluko ni tinhlango ta vaaki. Ku va ni minhlango ya nkarhi hinkwawo swi pfuna ku avelana vuxokoxoko, ku teka swiboho swin'we ni ku lulamisa ku kanetana. Tindlela to hlamula swivilelo ti pfuna ku tiyisa vutihlamuleri.*

Special measures ensure meaningful participation by women, youth, and marginalized groups. Gender-disaggregated targets guide employment and training activities. Youth engagement programs build next-generation leadership for sustainable land management. Attention to marginalized groups addresses historical barriers to participation and ensures equitable benefit distribution across all community segments.

*Milawu yo hlawuleka yi tiyisa ku hlanganyela ka vavasati, vantshwa ni vanhu lava vekike etlhello. Ku hambanisa hi rimbewu ku landzeriwa eka mintirho ni ndzetelo. Mintirho ya vantshwa yi aka vuhosi bya nkarhi lowu taka eka ku lawula misava hi ndlela leyi tiyeke. Ku yingisa vanhu lava nga vekeliwa etlhello ku pfuna ku lulamisa swiphiso swa khale ni ku tiyisa ku averiwa ka mimpfuno hi ku ringana eka vaaki hinkwavo.*

## 1.7 Project Proponent and Partner

### **Project Proponent:**

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### **Technical Support:**

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This summary provides an overview of the Save the Sand project. For complete technical details, methodology, and supporting documentation, refer to the full CCB/VCS Project Description Document (Version 1, January 2026).