

<b>Better Management Practice</b>	<p><b>Better management practices have been implemented in all natural areas and heritage resources are protected</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Natural areas should be identified and mapped</li> <li>• Natural areas should be managed with fire</li> <li>• Natural vegetation should be classified</li> <li>• Natural vegetation on the farm, or adjoining farms/neighbours should be connected in the form of corridors</li> </ul>	<p><b>Identification and management of natural and cultural resources</b></p> <p>All natural areas, cultural resources and planted areas of the farm form part of a natural and agricultural resource. Planning must cover the entire farm area including the natural areas. These areas should be identified and mapped to a recognisable level such as grassland, natural forests, wetlands and riverine areas. To ensure consistency as to what constitutes a riverine area, the length of a river can be used as a unit of measurement, rather than area of land. A register should also be compiled to supplement information represented on maps.</p> <p>A register of any existing cultural resources should be identified and mapped. They include resources such as archaeological remains (material remains resulting from human activity and which are older than 100 years such as artefacts and human remains), structures such as rock art, artefacts and features associated with military history older than 75 years of age. The owner of land on which a heritage resource exists may request the assistance of the South African Heritage Resources Agency for the protection of that resource.</p> <p><b>Veld burning</b></p> <p>Grassland should be burnt on a rotational plan, at intervals of between two and four years, to maintain the vigour and health of the grassland, reduce the hazard of combustible fuel build-up and prevent the succession of woody vegetation. Wetlands may require special attention regarding burning. For example, any nests of wetland birds should be noted and efforts made to protect the sites from controlled burns. However, it is important that wetlands are burnt on a regular basis, but care must be taken to avoid any resulting peat burns which have a lasting impact on the soil and can burn for months at a time. Reference should be made to the series of information booklets entitled, 'Wetland Fix' and the National Veld and Forest Fire Act 101 of 1998.</p> <p><b>Management of natural areas</b></p> <p>As a minimum, all natural/unplanted areas should be classified using a simple approach such as natural forest, grassland, watercourses (wetlands and riparian habitat) and woodland.</p> <p>Ideally natural vegetation on the farm, or adjoining farms/neighbours, should be connected in the form of corridors to encourage movement of animals, and provide a habitat for predators of sugarcane pests.</p>
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<b>Better Management Practice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Farmers have considered the costs and benefit of removing sugarcane from wetlands and areas adjacent to watercourses</li> <li>• Nesting sites of protected bird species should be identified</li> <li>• Snares should be removed and destroyed</li> <li>• Farmers should become members of a Conservancy Association</li> </ul>	<p>Formal management planning should include the entire land area and provide for operations such as alien and invasive plant control, weed and invader plant control, veld burning and smoke management. Farmers should, from both a cost and environmental perspective, avoid marginal lands for sugarcane.</p> <p>Appropriate to the concept of scale, intensity and risk, farmers should consider the removal of historically planted sugarcane from watercourses, and areas adjacent to watercourses that, while lawfully established at the time and indeed remain a lawful activity, are now considered a poor management practice. Therefore removal of sugarcane from wetlands should be subjected to a cost benefit analysis and be implemented over a period of time.</p> <p><b>Nesting sites</b> Nesting sites of threatened and protected bird species should be identified and recorded on a map.</p> <p><b>Poaching</b> The elimination of all forms of poaching on farms is to be encouraged. The areas where snares are found should be identified and the dates and numbers of snares found should be recorded and then destroyed. The theft of plants such as tree ferns, cycads and Clivia lilies is also regarded as poaching.</p> <p><b>Conservancy Associations</b> A conservancy is a voluntary association of environmentally conscious land-owners and land-users who choose to co-operatively manage their natural resources in an environmentally sustainable manner without necessarily changing the land use of their properties.</p> <p>Any farmer or group of farmers wishing to use the term “conservancy” will need to register and have a bone fide conservancy. Conservancies are co-ordinated through the National Association of Conservancies and Stewardship of South Africa (NACSSA) The vision is to promote stewardship of natural resources at a community level (see <a href="http://www.nacsa.org.za">www.nacsa.org.za</a>)</p>
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<b>Better Management Practice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indigenous plant seeds (excluding protected species) should be collected and potted as part of a plant rescue programme or for the purpose of re-establishment elsewhere</li> </ul>	<p>Forest and bush restoration is not difficult, and often requires only that the area to be restored be kept free of invaders to allow the re-growth of indigenous plants. These areas do not have to be large and can be small isolated 'islands' which will act as 'stepping stones' for the movement of wildlife. Consideration should be given to watercourses as the first areas to rehabilitate. The watercourses will act as corridors protruding into the cultivated land areas.</p> <p>To re-establish natural forest or woodland, farmers are encouraged to use local species of the plant community that would have occurred naturally in the area. Seedlings should be collected and potted until they are large enough to plant out. (Refer to SASRI Information Sheet 1.1 – Establishing vegetation in degraded wetlands).</p>
<b>Legal requirement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where hunting takes place, this should be done in accordance with the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act, 10 of 2004 and provincial conservation legislation</li> </ul>	<p>Hunting is regulated at both a national and provincial level. At a national level, a permit is required to hunt any listed threatened or protected species. Norms and standards have been promulgated for hunting, applicable either generally or in respect of a specific species. Where hunting takes place, this must also be in accordance with both the national and provincial legislation.</p>