



WESTERN CAPE
ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
PARTNERSHIP

Celebrating Ten Years of Partnering and Collaboration in Action

Remarks by Andrew Boraine, CEO EDP

10th Anniversary event, Moyo, Kirstenbosch, 26 April 2022

I'd like to start with a story, about the significance and relevance of the place we are in tonight. Just 10 metres away, you can hear a small stream. This is the source of the Liesbeek River. For nearly 2000 years, the Liesbeek river system was the driver of the Cape herder economy. This economy was based on the practice of moving livestock from one grazing ground to another in a seasonal cycle.

The thick forests in the upper Liesbeek valley also contained many trees and plants that were harvested for veldkos, livestock feed and medicine. For example, the valuable but deadly poisonous fruits of the 'ghoeboontjie' or bitteramandel plant were rendered edible by a technique of soaking, boiling, roasting and grinding. Two ancient cattle tracks could be found, one fording the Black River and the Liesbeek in Maitland on the way to Salt River and the City Bowl, and one stretching from the old mouth of the Salt River south of Paarden Eiland to Rondebosch. These are known today as Voortrekker Road and Main Road respectively.

About 370 years ago, a new economy emerged with settler farmers being granted land along both sides of the Liesbeek River to grow vegetables, fruit and grain, and to graze livestock. This economy was powered by slaves brought from Batavia and Madagascar. Down the road from us, the CEO of the settler economy, Jan van Riebeeck, established his own farm, Bosheuwel, which stretched from the banks of the upper Liesbeek to the top of Wynberg Hill, the area known today as Bishopscourt. Here the first vines were planted and the first grapes pressed, the start of the Cape wine industry.

The inevitable clash between the original herder economy and the new settler economy took place over access to water, grazing lands and forests in the Liesbeek valley. A full-scale

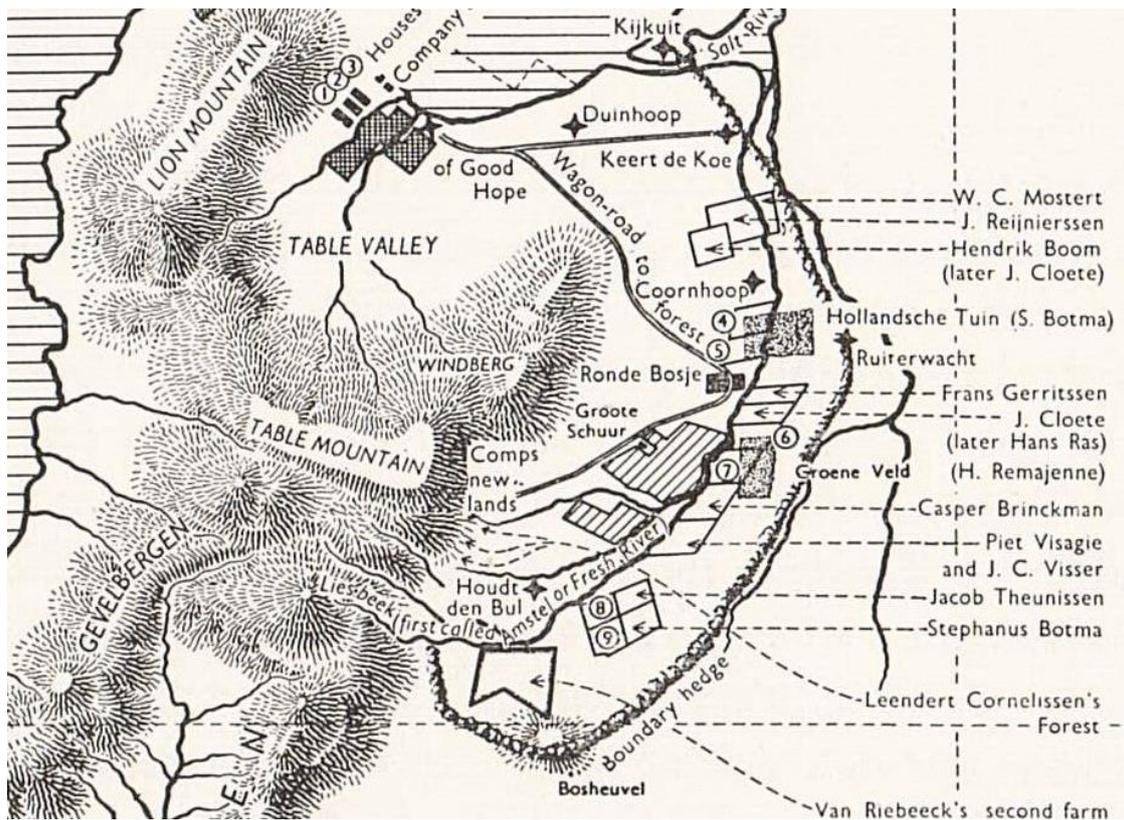
war broke out in 1659, which ended in a stalemate. This brings us to the second part of our story.



Some of you may have wondered about the symbolism of the entangled trees in the invitation you received for tonight's event. It could perhaps be taken to refer to a complex systems approach, with many moving parts, but the reference is more literal.

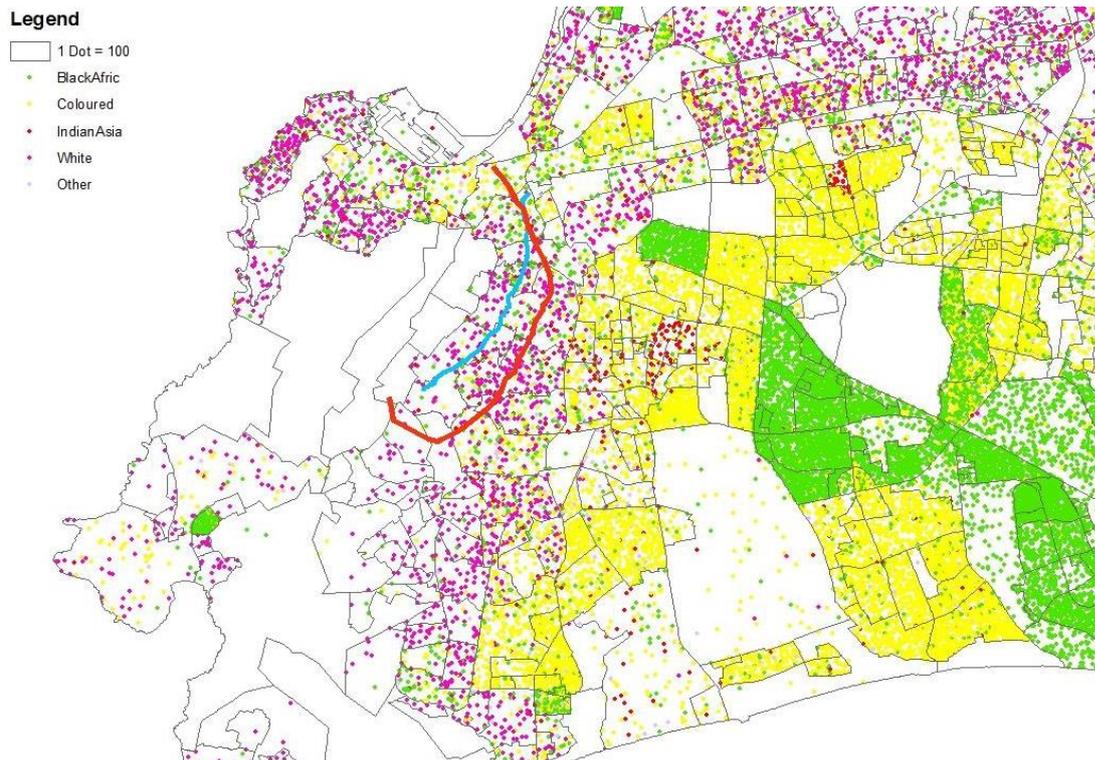
About 300 metres from where we are this evening, in 1660, Van Riebeeck starting planting his so-called 'wild almond' hedge as a barrier. The indigenous tree is actually a member of the protea family, but not directly related to the African protea family. Its closest relative is the Macadamia in Australia, which points to the time when South America, Africa, India, Antarctica and Australia were all one continent, Gondwanaland, which split up some 130 million years ago. But that is another story.

The hedge was part of a 13-km bow shaped barrier including wooden palisades, forts, natural water barriers, and mounted response units that stretched from here to Fort Kijkuit at the mouth of the Salt River. Parts of the hedge still exist today. It is South Africa's oldest National Monument, predating the Castle of Good Hope by 6 years.



This barrier was South Africa's first frontier. It most probably followed a route from Kirstenbosch to the top of Wynberg Hill, along Primrose Avenue in Trovato Estate, Herschel Walk, Palmyra Road, Campground Road/ Rondebosch Common, Sawkins Road to Lower Mowbray, Rhodes High School, Protea Hotel/ Wild Fig restaurant, Valkenburg Hospital, River Club, corner Perth and Cannon Road in Maitland (possible location of the Keert de Koe Fort), to Marine Drive and Table Bay.

In the early 1950s, this same boundary was used more or less by apartheid planners to draw up the first proposals for segregated Group Areas in Cape Town. Its social and economic impact can be felt to this day, as seen in the map below.



Location of Van Riebeeck's boundary overlaid on dot density map¹

So, what's the point? One of the lessons that we have learned over the past decade is that as human beings, *we feel before we think*. It's the way our brains work. We don't always start with the logical facts and 'hard' data. We have discovered that in any partnering process, the so-called 'soft' issues of history, memory, identity, belonging, meaning and culture, and especially the notion of fairness, are as important as data and evidence-based planning, and we need new tools and capabilities to work with these issues.

The story of the Liesbeek River Valley, and so many similar stories in our history, presents us with three challenges today:

- How do we grow the Cape Town and Western Cape economy in a way that restores wealth and prosperity to all?
- How do we consciously build social cohesion and a common identity through a more inclusive storytelling, as part of all our development programmes?

¹ This is a dot density map, showing the population by race groups. One purple dot = 100 White people, one yellow dot = 100 Coloured people, one green dot = 100 Black people and one red dot = 100 Indian people. The Liesbeek River is shown as a light blue line, and the boundary hedge is shown as a red line. One can see that the location of the original hedge is close to the apartheid boundary between White and Coloured areas, which is largely still in place in post-apartheid Cape Town. From *Critical posthumanism in geomatics education: A storytelling intervention*, Siddique Motala, A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The Institute of Post-School Studies, Faculty of Education, University of the Western Cape, May 2018

- How do we restore the natural ecosystems and ecological infrastructure of our waterways and wetlands in Cape Town and the Western Cape, and regain access to the natural environment?

We don't have the time this evening to reflect on all the highs and lows, and all the lessons, in the life of a collaborative intermediary organisation over the past ten years. There are many lessons we could discuss, for example, 'listen twice, talk once', 'partnering is a verb, partnership a noun', 'start with the system, not the mandate', etc. The lessons are covered in more detail in our [commemorative publication](#).

I will mention just three things which stand out for me:

1. **Building resilience.** The immense value of organising whole of society responses to shocks and stresses, for example, during the conflict in the agricultural sector in 2014, the Cape Town drought in 2017, and the food crisis at the beginning of Covid in 2020, under the simple but effective banner of 'connect, communicate, collaborate'. I also think that the four 'whole of society approach' (WOSA) pilot projects in Saldanha, Drakenstein, Khayelitsha and Manenberg helped the Western Cape Government and municipalities respond rapidly to the COVID pandemic through highly effective area-based multi-disciplinary teams. Our work on responding to shocks and stresses has evolved into the Futurecasting Sessions hosted jointly with the CoCT, which focus on building city and citizen resilience.
2. **Shifting organisational culture.** The evolution of an 'EDP Way' of deliberately doing things differently to challenge and shift stuck organisational culture and enable rather than force or command human behaviour change. Although I do remember clearly the shock on the faces of certain WCG HoDs when we agreed that everyone in the room, including the Premier and Ministers, would be referred to by first names during a recent Cabinet workshop, to make the point about breaking down unnecessary hierarchies and protocols that often stand in the way of genuine communication.
3. **Moving from planning to implementation.** Too often, public, private and voluntary resources are invested into parallel, misaligned and even competing projects. The EDP has supported our partners to turn plans into action, by helping identify who needs to work together, and how to work together in practice, to achieve tangible results through action. This has meant addressing culture change in the public sector authorising environment which is often experienced as 'disabling' for those outside the state wanting to contribute to their own development.

The need to overcome the boundaries and barriers in our society (locally and globally, between communities, and between people and planet) seems more urgent today than it was when we launched the EDP ten years ago. The need for trusted and independent intermediaries, to help 'bridge the divides' and 'mind the gaps' is immense. Many of you that do this important work are in this room. We hope that the EDP, through our partnering and adaptive practices, can continue to support our partners to work together through the deliberate juxtaposition of differences to drive new ideas.

In thanking all of you for the incredible work you do, and for supporting our efforts, I'd like to conclude with a special vote of thanks. In October 2010, Alan Winde and I had a cup of coffee in Doppio Zero in St George's Mall. At the time, I was CEO of the Cape Town Partnership (CTP), a cross-sector urban regeneration partnership operating in Cape Town Central City since 1999. Alan Winde, then Western Cape Minister for Finance and Economic Development, was curious to see if the CTP approach could be applied more broadly to mobilising and organising stakeholders in the Western Cape economy. We agreed to give it a try. Alan then told us we had a year to get things up and running.

After twelve frantic months of activity, with advice from international experts like Prof. Greg Clark, and funding support from National Treasury's then Technical Advisory Unit, we launched with 130 diverse partners in the provincial economic ecosystem on 26 April 2012, with the City of Cape Town and the WC Government as our core funding partners, and former Cabinet Minister Barbara Hogan our first Board chairperson. The rest is history, as they say.

What we started then, and what we are today, is in many ways quite different. And that is also the point. Alan Winde, thank you for trusting the process, for creating space and investing public resources in an experiment, for encouraging innovation and change, and learning by doing, and for relating to the EDP as a partner with government, not a service provider to government.

We look forward to continuing our collaborative intermediary work with you and all our partners, in communities, civil society, business, knowledge and research institutions, and the three spheres of government.

Thank you.

Andrew Borraine, CEO EDP.