

**PHASE 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPACT
ASSESSMENT & MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES
FOR TWO ROCK ART SITES:
ROBURNIA PLANTATION, BLAIRMORE
MPUMALANGA PROVINCE**

**PREPARED FOR
KOMATILAND FORESTS**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This study was done in the area known as Roburnia plantation, situated near the Blairmore office, Amsterdam, Mpumalanga, on *portion 4 of the farm SYDE 258 IT*. Komatiland Forests requested that the two rock art sites (*SYDE 1 & SYDE 1*) be assessed and management guidelines drawn up. The sites are included in Komatiland Forests inventory of *Areas of Special Interest (ASI)* on Roburnia plantation. Both sites are grouped under the code, *737-B40*.

A phase 1 Heritage Impact Assessment was conducted and surveyed for archaeological and historical cultural remains on the entire farm. Visibility of the area was excellent. The two sites are vulnerable and threatened by uncontrolled visitation. Extensive digging has taken place in search of treasure, resulting in the loss of the archaeological deposit in which the context of the rock art and San (Bushmen) history was to be found. Chipping marks at the images are also clearly visible at both sites. A snare was also removed directly under the painted surface at *SYDE 1*.

The National Heritage Resources Act, no 25 (1999)(NHRA), protects all heritage resources, which are classified as national estate, and it is stated in section 27(18) that “no person may destroy, damage, deface, excavate, alter, remove from its original position, subdivide or change the planning status of any heritage site without a permit issued by the heritage resources authority responsible for the protection of such site,” and in section 35(4) “No person may without a permit issued by the responsible heritage resources authority – (a) destroy, damage, excavate, alter, deface or otherwise disturb any archaeological site.

It is recommended that Management Guidelines, as set out in Part II, be implemented by the Komatiland Forests Plantation Manager for the Roburnia section, and that quarterly and annual monitoring takes place (see PART II for Management Guidelines), to ensure the effective management and conservation of the two rock art sites.

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PHASE 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES FOR TWO ROCK ART SITES: ROBURNIA PLANTATION, BLAIRMORE

A. INTRODUCTION

Adansonia Heritage Consultants were appointed by Komatiland Forests, to conduct a phase 1 archaeological impact assessment, as well as to recommend management guidelines for the conservation of the two rock art sites on Blairmore, Roburnia Plantation, *SYDE 1 & 2*, north east of Amsterdam and close to the Swaziland border.

B. AIMS OF REPORT

The aims of this report are to source all relevant information, archaeological resources, background information and origins of the rock art on the sites near the Blairmore offices, on *portion 4 of the farm SYDE 258 IT*. Komatiland Forests will be advised as to the current status of the rock art sites, and management guidelines will be proposed to ensure the future protection of both the sites. Specifications as set out in the National Heritage Resources Act no., 25 of 1999 (NHRA) were consulted, although each site is unique with specialized requirements. The study area is indicated in *Appendix 1* (Location of Rock art sites on topographical map).

C. METHODOLOGY

The two rock art sites on *portion 4 of the farm SYDE 258 IT*, near the Blairmore office, were visited and a full investigation was conducted on the current status of the sites.

• Fieldwork & Survey:

The research was conducted by means of:

- Fieldwork and survey was conducted on foot of the study area as indicated by GPS coordinates;
- The two sites were photographed and site information was recorded on forms (see Appendix 2: First Visit & Rock Art site records of *SYDE 1 & SYDE 2*) . Digital photographs were used and the images were color enhanced with a specialized computer programme in order to get a complete record of the site (see Appendix 4: Photographic documentation). The standard "*First Visit*" *Site Information* form, as well as *Rock Art Site Record* forms, as currently used by the Rock Art Research Institute at Wits University, was used.
- Research was conducted by means of collecting primary or secondary literary sources

with relevant information on the prehistory and history of the area;

- Evaluation of the status of both sites was done within the framework provided by the National Heritage Resources Act, no. 25 (1999) and South African Heritage Resources Authority's (SAHRA) guidelines;
- Personal (oral) and written information were acquired from employees of Komatiland Forests.

- **Survey of the study area:**

The surface of the study area is mainly huge granite outcrops or boulders, with natural vegetation and drainage lines in the immediate area. The area surrounding the two sites are still pristine, bordered by Pine forest plantations under the jurisdiction of Komatiland Forests. Visibility was excellent, the area had been burnt some time ago and is currently covered with new growth. The survey took place during October 2008. GPS co-ordinates were used to locate the rock art sites on the property.

- **National Heritage Resources Act**

All archaeological and other cultural heritage resources are evaluated according to the National Heritage Resources Act, no., 25, 1999 (NHRA), section 3(3). A place or object is considered to be part of the national estate if it has cultural significance or other special value in terms of:

- (a) its importance in the community, or pattern of South Africa's history;
- (b) its possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of South Africa's natural or cultural heritage;
- (c) its potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of South Africa's natural or cultural heritage;
- (d) its importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class of South Africa's natural or cultural places or objects;
- (e) its importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics valued by a community or cultural group;
- (f) its importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period;
- (g) its strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.

D. LOCALITY

The study area includes the two rock art sites at Blairmore, Roburnia Plantation on *portion*

4 of the farm SYDE 258 IT, topographical map 1:50 000, 2630 BD (see *Appendix 1*). The farm is situated approximately 20 kilometers north of Amsterdam on the R33 road to Warburton, 10 km on the Maryvale road and right on the Diepdal road. After approximately 3 km, the road splits and the right turn-off should be followed for another 3 kilometres. The Blairmore office is situated towards the left. SYDE 1 site is approximately 150m, and SYDE 2, approximately 300m, from the dirt road close to the entrance of the Blairmore office, in a southerly direction.

E. CURRENT STATUS: FABRIC, ASSOCIATIONS & SETTING

The rock art site names are standardised to conform to the national sites names, which are also specified by the Rock Art Research Institute at Wits. The sites are officially allocated the names of the farm on which it is situated, SYDE 1 and SYDE 2. All other names that generally refer to the sites will also be recorded.

• Background

Komatiland Forests has identified 72 *Areas of Special Interest* (ASI) on Roburnia plantation. Most of these sites are cultural heritage features related to black (Late Iron Age & recent), or white (recent) history, with only one site identified as a rock art or Stone Age site. In the summary of *Areas of Special Interest* on Roburnia, both sites are grouped under one code as 737-B40.¹

Cultural resources are those natural and modified features of the landscape associated with human activity, both past and present which includes *inter alia*, rock art. All these resources are critical to the understanding and interpreting of southern African colonial and pre-colonial history. They are fragile and may be destroyed unless proper management principles are implemented. These finite and non-renewable resources cannot be recovered, once they are lost.²

Rock art is a legacy left by the Bushman (San people) who lived in the area. The art was created primarily for religious and ritual purposes, and every rock art site is therefore regarded as a sacred site.

Rock art forms part of South Africa's rich history with a combination of unique features:

¹C. Foster, e-mail correspondence 2008-10-25.

²E.J. Wahl, A.D. Mazel & S.E. Roberts, *Cultural Resource Management Plan for the Natal Drakensberg Park*, p. 2.

- Rock art occurs in all sections of the Mpumalanga Province, but has not been extensively researched;
- A wide range of images are depicted in the art;
- the paintings are preserved not only in their natural setting, but also in their cultural context. The floors of painted shelters are often strewn with artefacts which were made and used by the San hunter-gatherers;
- the rock art of the region uniquely represents a coherent artistic tradition and embodies the beliefs and cosmology of the San of this area, their contacts with other people and their changed circumstances through time.³

- **Legislative context**

The management of cultural resources in the Mpumalanga Province is mandated by the National Heritage Resources Act no. 25, 1999 (NHRA), which aims to promote good management of the national estate, and to enable and encourage communities to conserve their legacy so that it may be bequeathed to future generations. Heritage is unique and it cannot be renewed, and contributes to redressing past inequities.⁴ It promotes previously neglected research areas of which the study area is in crucial need of.

The NHRA protects all ancient sites and states in Section 27(18) that “no person may destroy, damage, deface, excavate, alter, remove from its original position, subdivide or change the planning status of any heritage site without a permit issued by the heritage resources authority responsible for the protection of such site;”⁵

Rock art is a priority for all custodians (such as Komatiland Forests), in terms of cultural resources management. Rock art sites can play a major role in understanding the history of San people who once lived in this area. It is stated under the general principles for heritage resources management specified in the NHRA, section (5) that “all authorities performing functions and exercising powers in terms of this Act for the management of heritage resources must recognise certain principles” such as:

“the lasting value of heritage resources and the valuable, finite, non-renewable and irreplaceable aspects thereof; the moral responsibility; to ensure that heritage resources are effectively managed; laws and procedures should be clear and available; heritage

³E.J. Wahl, A.D. Mazel & S.E. Roberts, *Cultural Resource Management Plan for the Natal Drakensberg Park*, p. 2.

⁴National Heritage Resources Act, no. 25 of 1999. p. 2.

⁵*Ibid.*, p. 42.

resources form an important part of the history and beliefs of communities; heritage resources contribute to research and education and should be developed in a respectful way”.⁶

The general protection of the NHRA, states in section 5(7) that “the identification, assessment and management of the heritage resources of South Africa must - (a) take account of all relevant cultural values...” and forms part of the national estate.⁷

“alter” means - any action affecting the appearance or physical properties of a place or object, whether by way of structural or other works, by painting, plastering or other decoration or any other means;

“archaeological” means:

(a) **material remains** resulting from human activity which is in a state of disuse and are in or on land and which are older than 100 years, including artefacts, human remains and artificial features and structures; and

(b) **rock art**, being any form of painting, engraving or other graphic representation on a fixed rock surface or loose rock or stone, which was executed by human agency and which is older than 100 years, including any area within 10m of such representation.

“conservation” in relation to heritage resources, includes protection, maintenance preservation and sustainable use of places or objects so as to safeguard their cultural significance;⁸

- **SYDE 1** (See Appendix 2: First Visit & Rock Art Site Record & **Appendix 4: Photo documentation**)

<i>SITE NAME</i>	<i>GENERAL NAME</i>	<i>ORIGINS / TRADITION</i>	<i>GPS CO-ORDINATES</i>	<i>ASSOCIATED ARCHAEOLOGICAL MATERIAL</i>
SYDE 1	Blairmore / Roburnia paintings	SAN / BUSHMAN	S 26°28'02.7" E 30°45'27.0"	DEPOSIT: NONE - the deposit has extensively been disturbed (see explanation in report) CLOSE BY: Historic stone walls (see report)

PHOTOGRAPHS:

General picture

⁶National Heritage Resources Act, no. 25 of 1999. p.16.

⁷*Ibid.*, p. 16.

⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 6-8.

Panel

Disturbed excavated area

Stone Walls

- **SYDE 2** (See Appendix 2: First Visit & Rock Art Site Record & [Appendix 4: Photo documentation](#))

<i>SITE NAME</i>	<i>GENERAL NAME</i>	<i>ORIGINS / TRADITION</i>	<i>GPS CO-ORDINATES</i>	<i>ASSOCIATED ARCHAEOLOGICAL MATERIAL</i>
SYDE 2	Blairmore / Roburnia paintings	SAN / BUSHMAN	S 26°28'07.9" S 30°45'26.9"	DEPOSIT: NONE – the deposit has extensively been disturbed (see explanation in report)

PHOTOGRAPHS:

General picture

Panel

Disturbed excavated area

F. PREHISTORY AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF THE SAN (BUSHMAN) IN THE HIGHVELD AREA OF MPUMALANGA

In academic terms, the word “Bushmen” was replaced with “San”, although both terms are now currently accepted. The San people or “Bathwa” as the black people also refer to them, inhabited the Mpumalanga Escarpment long before black societies began to enter the region.⁹ Remains of stone tools and rock art sites have been found throughout the Mpumalanga Province.¹⁰

Rock art of southern Africa was part of a remarkable religious tradition. The art was not simply decorative or a record of daily life. Its purpose was deeper, and the trance dance was the central religious ritual of the San. Shamans, or medicine people used supernatural power obtained during trance states to make rain, heal the sick and maintain social harmony. Many rock paintings are depictions of visions experienced while in a trance. Others depict ritual occasions or the animals whose power the shamans hoped to use. The art is also a monument to the San who struggled to retain their rights and their land.¹¹

The disappearance of the San people in this region may be attributed to the greatly increased and rapidly expanding population of black settlers who immigrated to this area, especially since the 17th century, and the arrival of Europeans during the 19th century. Rock paintings and stone artifacts are the main records that remain of the San people's presence.

Some interesting information was obtained from the National Archives of South Africa, about the fascination with indigenous groups, at the beginning of the 20th century, as the following section shows. Please note that terms are kept in the original context of when it was first written during this time in history:

The British Association was to visit South Africa (Johannesburg) at the end of August 1905 and for this gathering a selection of the various native tribes, and papers on subjects regarding initiation ceremonies and diseases amongst natives,¹² were prepared as part of

⁹Tlou Makhura, Early Inhabitants, in P. Delius (ed.), *Mpumalanga, History and heritage*, p. 91.

¹⁰PRMA: Information file 9/2.

¹¹SAHRA, Rock Art, <http://www.sahra.org.za/rockart.htm> Access 2008-10-16.

¹²SNA: 260 Letter from Central Division Native Commissioner, NCP 264/1905, 19 July 1905.

the program of events.

In early 1905, the Department of Native Affairs were enquiring at all their regional offices as well as District Magistrates offices, about the possible existence of “thoroughbred bushmen in the old Transvaal area”¹³ (currently North-West, Gauteng, Limpopo, Mpumalanga provinces). This information was needed for the planned visit of the Anthropological section of the British Association, in August 1905.

The Resident Magistrate in Ermelo reported that “there are several Bushmen who appear to be thoroughbred” on the farm Bothwell 140, **Chrissiesmeer area**. He also reported that “a small tribe of wild Bushmen were discovered in the krantzes along the” Ingwempizi river, bordering Swaziland (**Amsterdam area**).¹⁴ Most of them were already intermarried with Swazis but mention was also made of “Bushmen families which are as near as possible thorough-bred” on the farm Florence of Mr. JW Grimes.¹⁵ The Native Commission communicated to the resident magistrate to get some of these “Bushmen” for the British Association’s visit, railway fares and subsistence allowance was to be paid by the Native Commission. The resident magistrate of Ermelo sent a telegram on 24 August 1905, to the Native Commission that Mr. Grimes stated the “bushmen absolutely refused to go to Johannesburg” as “they have superstitions if they leave [the] farm their children will die...”

There is very little known on the history of the San people in the Chrissiesmeer area but pioneer work has been done by anthropologist Frans Prins, of the Natal Museum who did some research on the current population of about 50 San individuals still living in the area. Information was discovered in the memoirs of a German, Jacob Filter who described that some “Bushmen left the foothills of the Central KwaZulu-Natal Drakensberg in 1879.” Jacob Filter was a transport rider between Natal and the then Eastern Transvaal. He described two groups of Bushmen – the ‘black’ Bushmen of Natal and the ‘yellow’ Bushmen of Lesotho. Both groups travelled together, and after four years, reached the Lake Chrissie area in Mpumalanga. Jacob Filter became well-known to these Bushmen groups and he also transported them on his ox-wagon.¹⁶

It is thought that their choice of destination was based on long-standing trade relations with

¹³SNA: 260 Letter from Resident Magistrate Ermelo to Secretary for Native Affairs, 13/494, 21 July 1905.

¹⁴SNA: 260 Letter from Resident Magistrate Ermelo to Secretary for Native Affairs, 13/494, 21 July 1905.

¹⁵SNA: 260 Letter from Von Dessauer to Marwick, Undated.

¹⁶E. von Fintel (Red.), *Die Nachkommen van Johann Heinrich Jakob Filter 1858-2008: Die Geschiede einer Pionierfamilie in Nordnataal*, p. 405.

Bushmen already resident in the area. The many overhanging shelters overlooking the famous pans found in the Lake Chrissie area, provided natural habitations and safe havens for the San. The pans themselves were used by the San to conceal themselves from the Swazi impis and Boer commandos. Tradition has it that they could remain submerged for hours at a time breathing through reed pipes.

The current small Bushman community at Lake Chrissie was known to few ethnologists, but it is clear that they were the last remnants of the great painters of the Drakensberg. They have lived in this area for almost five generations and worked as farm labourers on sheep farms and have almost completely lost any link with their rich cultural heritage.

According to Prins, their original Xegwi language has been completely forgotten except for two very old men who could still remember fragments of this speech. They remember stories about their forefathers painting on the rocks and hunting with bows and arrows but had no idea of how to do this themselves. But, in spite of this, they regard themselves as Bushmen, “amaBushmana”. They still have the generic traits typical of the San, short body stature and a slant to the eyes, but there is an acute sense of loss of their original cultural identity and way of life.¹⁷

Specific information on the *SYDE 1 & 2* sites are not obtainable. According to Roché Olivier, Roburnia Plantation Manager, the sites were only pointed out to them in 2006. An old farmer visited the area to show his sons where they had brought their sheep to graze. They camped at the *SYDE 1* rock art site as it provided natural protection with the large boulders. It might have been this individual who built the stone walls which are still visible, in order to make the area more secure for them and their animals. While staying there at the time, they discovered the two rock art sites. During their visit, they pointed the two rock art sites out to the Komatiland Forests officials.¹⁸

G. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The two painted sites at the Blairmore office, on *portion 4 of the farm SYDE 258 IT*, is in need of particularly urgent management requirements due to extensive disturbance at both the sites by treasure hunters and traditional medicine people. Signs of uncontrolled visitation at both these sites are visible and the sites have deliberately been dug up in search of treasure, resulting in the loss of the deposit in which the context of the rock art

¹⁷Personal information: F. Prins, Anthropologist, Natal Museum. Interview by Sian Hall, Sept 1999.

¹⁸Personal information: R. Olivier, Komatiland Forests, P.O. Box 145, Amsterdam, 2008-10-29.

and San history was to be found. Chipping marks on the art, are also clearly visible at both sites, and poaching also takes place. The only feature now left, is the non-renewable art itself, which should be carefully managed and preserved.

These two rock art sites, *SYDE 1* & *SYDE 2* on Roburnia plantation, as in the case of all rock art sites, are extremely important in terms of its pre-historic connection with a heritage that is no longer with us. What makes it more valuable is the fact that descendants of the painters, are still living in the vicinity, although they have lost much of their heritage by intermarrying other groups.

H. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

All heritage features identified in the area as a whole, are protected under the National Heritage Resources Act no. 25 of 1999, and changes are subject to professional research and impact assessment.

In the light of the above information as well as the specifications as stipulated in the NHRA, it is recommended that Management Guidelines, as set out in Part II, be implemented by the Komatiland Forests Plantation Manager for the Roburnia section, and that quarterly and annual monitoring takes place (see PART II for Management Guidelines).

PART II

MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

Objective: To implement, monitor and maintain conservation measures in order to prevent natural and unnatural deterioration of *SYDE 1* & *SYDE 2* rock art sites at the Roburnia plantation, Blairmore section.

- **Current Status:**

SYDE 1 & *2* are both painted on loose standing granite boulders. The panels are relatively small and close to ground / surface level. Both are extensively faded as a result of natural exposure as well as unnatural (human) elements.

The panel at *SYDE 1* is done entirely in red ochre, although white may have been used on the heads and necks of the two large antelopes, which has already faded away. *SYDE 2* has both yellow as well as red or orange ochre colors.

The art of both sites are currently vulnerable and threatened by vegetation growing against the rock surface and which brushes against the paintings. Uncontrolled visits to these sites are obvious and the following actions are proof thereof. Extensive digging for probably treasure (as is a custom by some black people in Mpumalanga at various rock art sites) has also taken place at both the sites. As a result, the archaeological deposit, which is crucial for understanding the context of the paintings and their inhabitants, has already been destroyed. Chipping of the paint itself is another great threat to the paintings. In some cultures it is believed that the paint contains supernatural powers which is used in traditional medicines. Poaching also takes place in the area, and on the first visit to *SYDE 1*, a snare was removed underneath the painted panel.

- **Current Management Actions:**

Brief management prescriptions are recorded in Komatiland Forests' *Areas of Special Interest* register, stating that:

- A buffer zone of 5 metres be maintained around the site;
- The area be kept free of weeds;
- The paintings should be checked by an expert;

- Protection from intense fires;
- Additional information to be captured.¹⁹

Future Priorities

The responsibility by Komatiland Forests' officials and the plantation manager of the specific section, is crucial to implementing the recommendations in the management guidelines. It is recommended that a yearly audit by a heritage specialist be done to prevent further deterioration of the site and to recommend immediate action and remedial measures, if necessary.

• Inventory

The frequent updating of the rock art inventory, their content and significance will contribute to the cultural heritage responsibility of all institutions (Komatiland Forests) as specified by the NHRA (section 5), and will also contribute to crucial research and general knowledge of the rock art in the area.

- Hard copies of the information contained in the survey should be made available to each plantation manager for implementation.
- The rock art sites within its control should be recorded on 1:50 000 maps which are kept at each station.
- Each station is required to send details of all new sites discovered to a heritage specialist which will notify SAHRA for inclusion in the provincial and national databases.

• Site Monitoring

Sites within Komatiland Forests' jurisdiction should be monitored at least quarterly by the plantation manager and annually by a heritage specialist to determine whether impacts (if any) are having an unacceptable effect upon the rock art sites and to take appropriate action thereafter. These measures are crucial as uncontrolled visits to the sites already take place.

The plantation manager and heritage specialist should have a set of the site record forms (see Appendix 2), photographs and a copy of the tracing, pertaining to the known sites under its administration as well as a map with the exact locations. It is recommended that the management status for monitoring *SYDE 1 & 2*, be assessed by a heritage specialist before each winter season, in order to guide the fire management control.

¹⁹C. Foster, e-mail correspondence 2008-10-25.

- An annual plan should be developed to ensure the quarterly and annual visits as required. This should be tasked to the responsible official who will also arrange with a heritage specialist.
- Site monitors should be aware that they are not allowed to interfere with cultural resources in any way at the sites.
- Photographs of the sites should be taken during each visit.
- Non-contact tracings of the art, indicating damage and seep lines should be done by a specialist.
- An evaluation report should be sent to the responsible official in charge.
- A buffer zone of at least 10 metres (as specified in the NHRA, section 2) be maintained around the site.

- **Site Vegetation**

Vegetation surrounding sites should be retained unless it poses a direct threat to the rock art. Natural vegetation has value as a shield to reduce the impact of direct sunlight, for site microclimate control, to buffer daily extremes in temperature and humidity and for the consolidation of shelter deposits and soils for assistance in the suppression of airborne dusts.

In the case of *SYDE 1* shrubs such as Sagewood (*Buddleja salviifolia*)²⁰ is currently brushing on the paintings which will destroy them in due course, and may damage the paintings from direct and indirect heat from fire and carbon over the paintings.

- The vegetation which is directly damaging the painted surfaces by rubbing contact, must be removed at the *SYDE 1* site; and the small vegetation which will grow to cover the paintings at *SYDE 2*, must also be removed;
- All other natural vegetation should be retained to shield the paintings against extremes in temperature and humidity.
- The impact of vegetation should be monitored by a heritage specialist on an annual basis to prevent out of control growth of vegetation;

- **Fire Management**

Vegetation surrounding rock art sites should always be protected from both scheduled and unscheduled burns, to prevent fire damage to the sites.

²⁰B. Van Wyk & P. Van Wyk, Field Guide to Trees of Southern Africa, pp. 258-259.

- When doing a pre-burn assessment of the rock art sites, the responsible officer should take steps to eliminate fire damage by burning a firebreak around the site;
- Immediate steps should be taken by the responsible official to avoid potential damage by unscheduled burns;
- Vegetation (for example grass) should be cut with slashers to keep it short. No brushcutter equipment should be used, as stones may damage the painted surfaces and dust will be deposited on the art;
- Long term strategies for the protection of the rock art sites from fire damage should be developed due to the frequency of uncontrolled fires;
- Rock art sites must be placed on the list of vulnerable features for all management sections.

- **Site Interventions**

Various forms of intervention are appropriate for rock art sites which include removal of bird and insect nests or vegetation to reduce risk of fire damage. The removal of graffiti should only be executed by a rock art specialist. All interventions should be done in consultation with a cultural heritage resources specialist.

- **Animals in shelters**

Rock art sites, paintings and archaeological deposits are easily damaged by animals rubbing against the rock and trampling shelter floors. This is especially problematic where domestic animals graze close to the sites, or where the site provides an overhang which may be used for protection against the elements. As far as could be established, *SYDE 1* & 2 are not currently affected by such actions.

- **General Visitor Management**

Uncontrolled use of rock art sites is undesirable as it may result in unnecessary and often irreversible deterioration of such sites.

- Visitors to the sites should be managed, monitored and regulated;
- Visible paths to the sites should be allowed to overgrow and be closed;
- Directions to the sites should not be made public;
- Site information is kept confidential and is not made available to the public.

- **Staff Education & Site Visits**

Public visitation should not be allowed at the rock art sites without the company of the responsible official for the plantation / environmental officer. Field staff should not be allowed to direct people to the sites. Both SYDE 1 & 2 are situated ideally on the Roburnia plantation area of Komatiland Forests. This in itself is to the benefit of the rock art sites as it is not well known in general.

- Staff working in the area should be made aware of the sensitivity of rock art sites;
 - Staff should be made aware of the SAHRA's principles of what is, and is not allowed at rock art sites (see Appendix 3: SAHRA's principles for rock art conservation);
 - A copy of SAHRA's principles should be visible at each office;
 - Site visits should take place by prior arrangement;
 - Field staff should not supply directions to specific sites;
 - Visitors should be accompanied by a responsible official of Komatiland Forests;
 - Researchers should provide details of their institutional affiliation and a motivation for the visit;
 - Researchers may be allowed to visit a site unaccompanied.
-
- **SAHRA's principles for rock art conservation includes:**
 - The National Heritage Resources Act, 25 of 1999 protects all rock art sites. Anyone found guilty of removing or damaging rock paintings can be fined or imprisoned or both;
 - Water and any other substance will destroy the paintings. Salts are drawn to the rock surface by water. The salts then expand and weathering is accelerated;
 - Touching the painted surfaces, rubbing or chipping at paintings will destroy them;
 - Do not put your name or any other writing on or near the rock art;
 - Rock art must not be removed from its original setting as this destroys its meaning;
 - Dust and soot from fires obscure rock paintings, so avoid using rock art sites as camping places;
 - Rock shelters with paintings should not be used as kraals since animals rub against the painted surfaces.²¹

These management guidelines were compiled with the assistance of the *Cultural Resource Management Plan for the Natal Drakensberg Park*,²² although most of it is specific for the SYDE 1 & 2 rock art sites at Roburnia / Blairmore plantation.

²¹SAHRA, Rock Art, <http://www.sahra.org.za/rockart.htm> Access: 2008-10-16.

²²E.J. Wahl, A.D. Mazel & S.E. Roberts, *Cultural Resource Management Plan for the Natal Drakensberg Park*, pp. 6-23.

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- SNA: 260 Letter from Von Dessauer to Marwick, Undated.
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