

**Draft Programme ‘Turning the illiberal into the convivial? Debating the future of  
wildlife conservation in Africa’**

*Workshop @ Chartfield, Cape Town, 7-10 June 2026*

Dear all,

Below you can find a first draft of the programme for our Cape Town workshop. As per the concept note, the workshop has three central objectives:

1. To collectively reflect on the histories of African conservation in contemporary turbulent times and discuss how illiberal trajectories can be changed towards more holistic and just ways of wildlife conservation in the future;
2. To actively reconnect the past, present and future of this rethinking of African conservation;
3. To lay ground for a joint statement article, a potential special issue and ideas for possible a cooperative transdisciplinary third party funded project to engage with past, present and future conservation imaginaries, knowledges and practices in Africa.

Practically, the idea of the programme is to combine presentations with broader debate sessions. The broader debate sessions are meant to reflect on the presentations and to discuss broader themes identified as important for the workshop, namely:

1. Conservation brutalism: militarization, extraction, resistance (Matose & Marijnen)
2. Histories and genealogies of illiberal conservation (Thakoli, Lenggenhager & Pesa)
3. Conservation futures: Conviviality, African environmentalisms, Visions (Bollig & Büscher)

We kindly ask the theme leads to prepare some brief notes on the importance of each theme to open the discussion and help structure and lead the sessions.

Thanks so much and see you all soon!

Michael, Luregn and Bram

**Sunday 7 June 2026**

9:00-10:30	<b>Welcome, round of introductions, setting the scene, Aims &amp; Programme</b>	Bram, Michael, Luregn
10:30-11:00	<b>Coffee</b>	
11:00-12:30	<b>Capitalism and Tourism</b>	
	The wilderness fetish: The mystification of nature conservation in the age of capital	Clemens Greiner (Cologne)
	Paths Not Taken: Reimagining Tourism and Conservation Beyond Colonialism	Mfundo Mlilo (Cologne) & Javier Revilla Diez (Cologne)
12:30-14:00	<b>Lunch</b>	
14:00-15:30	<b>Violence and Conflict</b>	
	Green Pacification: Conservation and security operations at the imperial frontier	Esther Marijnen (Wageningen)

	Defending and promoting wildlife economy through conservation violence in the Okavango Delta, Botswana	Emmanuel Mogende (Botswana)
	A Political Forest: Conservation and Conflict in Liberia's Sapo National Park	Shadrach Kerwillain (Munich)
15:30-16:00	<b>Coffee</b>	
16:00-17:30	<b>Broader debate 1</b> Conservation brutality: militarization, extraction, resistance	Frank Matose (Cape Town) & Esther Marijnen (Wageningen)
19:00	<b>Dinner</b>	

### Monday 8 June 2026

9:00-10:30	<b>Broader Debate 2</b> Histories and genealogies of illiberal conservation	Luregn Lenggenhager (Basel) & Lerato Thakoli (Wageningen) & Iva Peša (Groningen)
10:30-11:00	<b>Coffee</b>	
11:00-12:30	<b>History and Indigeneity</b>	
	"International Conservation NGOs and the Quest to Control the African Countryside, 1960–present".	Jan-Niklas Kniewel (Bern)
	Maasai indigeneity and land rights.	Saitoti Parmelo (Tanzania) & Jim Igoe (Virginia)
12:30-14:00	<b>Lunch</b>	
14:00-15:30	<b>Elites and Accumulation</b>	
	On the intersection between housing, biodiversity conservation and transnational flows of capital in the age of brutality.	Lerato Thakoli (Wageningen)
	Elite Private Nature Conservation – between dereliction and curation	Luregn Lenggenhager (Basel)
	Democratization or Elite Consolidation? Community-based Conservation and New Alliances in southwestern Zambia	Léa Lacan (Cologne)
15:30-16:00	<b>Coffee</b>	
16:00-17:30	<b>Broader Debate 3a</b> Conservation futures: Conviviality, African environmentalisms, Visions	Bollig & Büscher
19:00	<b>Dinner</b>	

### Tuesday 9 June 2026

9:00-10:30	<b>Future and Transformation</b>	
	Carbon trading in wildlife landscapes: what does it imply for critical environmental justice?	Mathew Bukhi Mabele (Dodoma) & Wilhelm Kiwango (Dodoma)
	Community-based conservation in Southern and Eastern Africa (Namibia/Kenya): Land-	Michael Bollig (Cologne)

	Based Economies, Governance, and Politics in Rapidly Changing Rural Communities	
	How effective are Payments to Encourage Coexistence (PEC) in mitigating Human Carnivore Conflict (HCC)? The case of the Rungwa-Ruaha Landscape in Tanzania.	Wilhelm Andrew Kiwango & Mathew Bukhi Mabele (Dodoma)
10:30-11:00	<b>Coffee</b>	
11:00-12:30	<b>Future and Transformation</b>	
	Thoughts on relationship between conservation and extraction	Tafadzwa Mushonga
	Tiptoeing Transformation? The need for structural change and the realities of power in South Africa	Bram Büscher, Gijsbert Hoogendoorn, Innocent Sinthumule
12:30-14:00	<b>Lunch</b>	
14:00-15:30	<b>Broader Debate 3b</b> Conservation futures: Conviviality, African environmentalisms, Visions	Bollig & Büscher
15:30-16:00	<b>Coffee</b>	
16:00-17:30	<b>Concluding session: publications and possible grant ideas going forward</b> Major overview publication / special issue	Luregn, Michael, Bram
19:00	<b>Dinner</b>	

*Workshop is made possible through the support of:*



**Future Rural Africa**