



## agriculture, forestry & fisheries

Department:  
Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

### The sustainable use of Monkey rope (*Secamone gerradii*) by local subsistence farmers

*Secamone gerradii* (Monkey rope) is a climber and is mostly utilised in the area surrounding Xhama forest in Mouth Ayliff area and surroundings in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa. These plants are generally utilised by subsistence farmers in the construction of sledges that are used during the harvesting of maize. Monkey rope is the only plant utilised for this purpose and has therefore threatened its survival. Due to this continues threat of extinction of monkey rope, a study was initiated by the Department which will assist in understanding what is the causes of threat in line with the method of utilisation by the local subsistence farming community. This study also investigates the role of the community's traditional beliefs and their perspective of the forests and their right within the forests. The long term goal of the study is to develop sustainable harvesting levels and techniques and if possible identify alternative methods.



Sled constructed by local farmers during the maize harvesting season.

A pre-feasibility study was conducted in 2004 where after three research plots of 2m x 2m in size were established in 2006. These diameter growth is measured twice a year (February and August) representing the wet and dry seasons of the year. To date, a baseline inventory was conducted and completed. Currently the data is being analysed and a preliminary report will be produced in the near future. The ecological study will be completed in February 2010. Future work planned includes the performance of social surveys.

***For more information please contact:***

*Mr. Sonwabile Menyelwa*

*Senior Scientist: Forestry Technical Information Services*

*E-mail: menyelwas@dwaf.gov.za*

*Tel: (043) 604 5439*

*Fax: 0866130280*

*Mobile: 0795136620*