

Boers trek on

South African white farmers are seeking land in Mozambique and Zambia as the moment of majority rule nears in their own country. Some right-wingers have been seeking funds to take over control of a swathe of Mozambique's Gaza province. The project would cost \$491 million, its organiser estimate. Already many South African farmers have secured occupancy of land in Mozambique, while there is a well-founded plan for extending the Kruger National Park into Mozambique.

Meanwhile, according to Zambia's National Farmers' Union, more than 250 foreign farmers, mostly South African, have moved to Zambia, where only 6% of the arable land is under cultivation. They say they should invest a minimum of R500,000.

In Mozambique, Gaza has long been seen by South Africa as a natural extension of the Kruger Park and as grazing territory for the cattle breeders and farmers of the Lowveld. But it has also for generations been the preserve of Shangaan cattle-raisers.

Afrikaner farmers have since privatisation was introduced in Mozambique been buying up the equivalent of 50-year freeholds on farms over the border. Land tenure may be changed with full privatisation, though this would need a constitutional revision.

Towards the end of last year 18,000 ha of land was made available to South Africans in the south of the country around Moamba, with another 5,000 ha around Sabie.

Over 2,500 applications for land have been made to the Mozambican agriculture ministry by SA farmers or their associations in the Lowveld for land south of the Limpopo and along the Ressano Garcia-Moamba road.

The drive to trek further if deep in Afrikaner tradition - after the Boer war some ended up as far as Eldoret in Kenya.

But their move will mean a loss of much needed technological expertise and skill to an important economic sector in a democratic South Africa.