

## **Michael Sears**

I was born in Johannesburg, South Africa, and grew up in Cape Town and Nairobi, Kenya. In the worst of the apartheid era, my family emigrated to Australia, where I studied mathematics. But Africa drew me back and I accepted a position at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg where I specialized in applications of mathematics in a variety of areas including image analysis and ecological modelling. One of the more adventurous projects involved radio-tracking hunting lions through the Botswana night. Another was a system model for the Kalahari Gemsbok National Park.

I have traveled widely in Southern and Central Africa. Botswana has always been a special favorite with its magnificent conservation areas, dramatic scenery, and varied peoples. A long-held ambition was to capture the flavor of the country as the canvass of a novel.

From 1997 until my retirement at the end of 2007, I managed remote sensing at Anglo American, a major international mining house. Its associate – the diamond giant De Beers – has extensive interests in Botswana through the Debswana joint venture with the government. The mining and exploration threads in the books draw on experiences in this context.

I enjoy research, project work, and writing most when I'm working with other people. I've worked with researchers in several countries on varied projects, managed teams in the academic and business arenas, and co-authored eight novels.

I now live in Knysna on the south coast, but my mind is often in the African bush, and the rest of me follows as often as possible.