



OVERSTRAND CONSERVATION FOUNDATION

TRADING AS WHALE COAST CONSERVATION

ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE PERIOD APRIL 2015-MARCH 2016

Note that the period covered in this report ends on March 2016. Detailed reports on all the activities can be found on the WCC website.

OVERVIEW BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

At the outset I would like to pay tribute to the sterling work of the organisation despite a context of extreme pressure on resources. It really is a case of fewer bodies achieving an awful lot more and we are very grateful for the way everyone has responded to the challenges of the last year.

Our project to promote sustainable lifestyles in the Overberg was funded over three years by a grant from the National Lotteries Commission and was completed in November 2015. Since then we were able to secure a number of smaller grants for specific projects.

We are trying to become more self-funding through initiatives such as the sale of alternative energy equipment, participation in the MyPlanet initiative and making and selling cigarette butt bins. We are also doing environmental consultancy work that brings in a small but steady income.

In addition we have recently launched a series of eco-experiences that bring in valuable income although they also mean long hours for staff. These experiences and the evening talks at the Greenhouse have made us much more visible to the public, which is very positive. However there remains much work to be done, particularly in education of all ages, to ensure that we can continue to live in one of the jewels of the country and, more particularly, be able to hand this heritage on to our children and grandchildren.

Jamie Hart

THE ORGANISATION

See Annexure A on p.9 for Patron Members, Board Members and Staff

Vision

The unique biodiversity of the Cape Whale Coast environment is valued and protected to ensure its wonders never cease.

Mission

To raise awareness of the unique and biodiverse natural resources of the Cape Whale Coast region and to promote sustainable communities.

HOW DO WE FULFIL OUR MISSION?

To fulfil our mission, Whale Coast Conservation focuses on five areas of operation, viz. Eco-Management, Eco-Learning, Eco-Living, Eco-Community and Environmental Projects. Our aim is to inspire a culture of respecting and protecting the unique biodiversity of the Cape Whale Coast and thus caring for our environment.

1. ECO MANAGEMENT:

Eco-Management has two components: **Eco-Advocacy** is proactive and **Eco-Watch** is reactive.

Through our **Eco-Advocacy** work we engage with all stakeholders to promote the inclusion of the fundamental principle of sustainability into policy, law, development planning, management thinking and action.

- Participation in Estuary Management Forums: The Whale Coast is home to several estuaries that are vital fish breeding nurseries. Human impact on the estuaries is severe and thus their management is critical. WCC chaired the Klein River Estuary Forum for 2 years and has ongoing input in the management of the estuaries on the Klein River, Bot River, Kleinmond and Onrus River.
- Input into Integrated Development Plans of both District and Local Municipalities.

Through our **Eco-Watch** programme, Whale Coast Conservation registers as an interested and affected party (I&AP) in all advertised public participation processes related to environmental impact assessments, change of land use

applications outside of the urban edge and other processes. We have, inter alia, given comprehensive comments on

- Hermanus Bypass Road Scoping Report
- Application to build an Astronomy Centre in Fernkloof
- Application to expand a quarry in Stanford

2. ECO LEARNING

Through our Eco-Learning activities we inspire understanding of and commitment to sustainable lifestyles. Our environmental education and awareness programmes target both children and adults. Whale Coast Conservation has developed a Youth Environment Programme (YEP) that supports schools in the Overstrand to provide quality and inspirational environmental education. The Green House is the hub of the learning programme. We provide themed exhibits and learning resources, youth holiday eco-programmes, adult eco-education and research work. Regular eco-adventures for families, curriculum-related adventure lessons for schools and citizen-science projects encourage a love and understanding of nature.

Note: Illustrated Reports on all our programmes and activities are available on our website <http://whalecoastconservation.org.za/publications/activity-reports/>

Youth Environment Programme (YEP)

The WCC Youth Environment Programme was a major focus area of the past year. It was designed and launched in response to schools looking for new challenges beyond the WESSA Eco-Schools. The YEP includes various components:

1. Schools Expos: We visited 13 schools with three different Expos on Water (Term 1), Energy (Term 2) and Fynbos (Term 3). Each Expo consisted of 5 interactive exhibits, each with an educator to lead exploration of the theme. The children spent 10 minutes at each exhibit in groups of 12. We interacted with an average of 200 learners at each Expo, enabling us to reach a total of about 2,000 learners over the year. All the Expos in the three Gansbaai schools are sponsored by AVI. The Expos on Fynbos were sponsored by Hermanus Botanical Society (Stanford and Hermanus) and Kogelberg Branch of the Botanical Society (Kleinmond).
2. Calendar Events: We celebrated special calendar days with activities at selected schools and the public. We celebrated Arbor Day, Marine Week,

participated in the International Coastal Clean-ups; and we Walked for Water.

3. Holiday programmes: Funding from the municipality has given us the opportunity to involve the youth in their environment through edu-taining holiday programmes. We have run holiday programmes on Grotto Beach, in Piet se Bos and on Kleinmond Beach.
4. Stripes the Eco-Cat: Stripes wrote stories for children on how to go 'green'. These stories were read to learners, made available on-line and also appear regularly in Whale Talk magazine.

The YEP was enthusiastically endorsed by both educators and learners.

Environmental awareness

1. Talks:

We held 7 well-received talks and 2 film evenings over the year:

- Tuesday 19 May: Economic And Social Consequences Of Abalone Poaching by Dr Serge Raemaekers
- Tuesday 7 July: SA's Small Scale Fishing Communities – An Uncertain Future by Mkhululi Silandela
- Tuesday 11 August: Chelsea And Other Floral Adventures 2015 By David Davidson
- Wed 26 August: Sea Turtle Conservation b Dr George Hughes
- Tuesday 15 September: Critical Factors For Successful Environmental Campaigns by Hayley Mclennan
- Tuesday 20 October: Water And Our Love-Hate Relationship With Micro-Organisms by Prof Gideon Wolfaardt
- Tuesday 17 November: The Role Of Citizen Science In Conservation by Sheraine Van Wyk

2. Eco-Experiences:

We took participants on eight different adventures; most were repeated several times due to popular demand.

- Frogging
Participants learned how to identify the local frogs by their calls and then went in search of them by torchlight.
 - Fireflies and Frogs in Fernkloof
A window of opportunity in October enabled us to take several groups of enthusiasts to see the magical mating display of fireflies in Fernkloof. Some exciting frogs were also identified.
-

- Fairy Forest and milkwood ecology
This adventure was repeated 5 times due to popular demand. A walk through the milkwood forest by torchlight allowed us to discuss milkwood forest facts and ecology. At the end of the walk a magical display of fairy lights in the ancient trees and fairies made of recycled materials delighted the participants.
- Moonlight Meander on Hoy's Koppie
The experience started with a short history of Hoy's Koppie, followed by a meander around the hill, and ended with a sing-along of popular songs.
- Fynbos and Fire in Fernkloof
The fire in parts of Fernkloof provided the opportunity for Dr Pat Miller to conduct participants through burnt and unburnt areas of the fynbos and to discuss adaptations to and need for fire.
- Moonlight and Mussels on Grotto Beach
The full moon and low tide provided two evenings of learning and fun on the beach. Dr Pierre Hugo explained how the moon influences tides and Sheraine van Wyk introduced the creatures of the inter-tidal zone and how they adapt to the shifting tides.

3. Anti-litter campaigns

Coastal and Urban Clean-ups involved extensive litter collection with the participation of school children, communities and Working for Coasts. In line with International Coastal Cleanup protocols, the types of litter items were analysed and quantified. It was found that cigarette butts were the main litter item by far. In response, WCC launched a campaign to make smokers aware that cigarette butts are a serious environmental pollutant. WCC tested various designs of cigarette butt bins to meet the need for responsible disposal of butts. This led to the manufacture of a unique butt bin that could be put up where smokers tend to gather.

The idea was then born to also manufacture a Doggy Doo Bag Dispenser Bin to be erected in public places where people enjoy walking their dogs in order to encourage dog owners to pick up after their best friends.

4. Citizen science

Involving adults and children in their environment motivates caring for that environment. Citizen science not only exposes participants to nature, but they are given skills and exposure to the scientific method.

Shark Egg Cases:

The different egg cases washing out on Overstrand beaches give a good indication of the types and numbers of oviparous sharks in Walker Bay. School groups and 'Working for Coasts' workers were trained to collect, identify and quantify the different species of shark eggs on Overstrand beaches. In the process they became experienced citizen scientists. Informational flyers help people to learn about these sharks.

Frog monitoring:

The presence (or absence) of frogs is a good bio-indicator of the health of water bodies. Frogging was used as a tool in several projects, e.g.

- Mill Stream Project in Stanford (funded by the TMF and OSM), which is formulating a management plan for the Mill Stream and Willem Appel Dam.
- Endangered Western Leopard Toads breed in the dam in Stanford. When the tiny toadlets leave the dam to go and forage, they are trapped on roads by high verges. Enthusiastic school and community groups participated in their rescue.

5. Public Expos

These exhibits provide an opportunity to interact with people outside our regular membership and are thus important opportunities to raise awareness of our natural environment.

- Hermanus Flower Festival: WCC had a separate tent with exhibits and demonstrators explaining the concept of the Cape Whale Coast Hope Spot. We also organised 'amazing nature races' for children.
- Whale Festival: WCC promoted citizen science and the newly-designed cigarette butt bin.

3. ECO LIVING

Whale Coast Conservation's work in this field aims to help people to 'go green' as a sustainable lifestyle choice. We facilitate public access to reputable technology suppliers and service providers. We also offer advice and 'green' technology at affordable prices.

4. ECO COMMUNITY

Whale Coast Conservation gives advice and helps communities to improve their quality of life through better management of scarce resources and a greener environment. Project examples include:

- Greening Zwelihle
-

- Arbor Week at Schools
- Gardening Competition in Zwelihle, Mt Pleasant and Hawston

BRIEF SUMMARY OF AUDITED FINANCIAL REPORT

Revenue: R2.24m

Expenses: R1.54m

Accumulated surplus: R951.3K

Treasurer Roy Moulton summarised the year as follows, with a cautionary note:

A successful year overall, with an improved surplus as a result of the Lotto grant. Looking ahead, there is a need to become self-sustaining is a priority as it is unlikely that we will be successful in our application for further grants from Lotto.

OUR FUNDERS

We have been actively pursuing funding opportunities and submitting relevant proposals. In an economic climate where money is tight and an increasing number of charities and non-profits competing for funds, we have been fairly successful – perhaps a tribute to the quality and value of the services we perform.

We extend our thanks to those who have provided funding for specific projects:

- The National Lotteries Commission that funded a three-year project raising awareness of sustainable living and sustainable development in the Overberg
 - Anglo Vaal Industries funded the Youth Environment Programme in 3 Gansbaai schools
 - The Overstrand Municipality awarded us a Grant-In-Aid to run youth holiday camps
 - Funding for the Mill Stream Improvement Project in Stanford has been obtained from the Municipality and the Table Mountain Fund
 - The Kogelberg Branch of the Botanical Society of SA sponsored a holiday camp in Kleinmond
 - The G&R Raimondo Charitable Trust supported environmental education
 - The Agulhas Biodiversity Initiative funded the dissemination of on-line educational material on water in schools.
 - Rotary club of Newlands assisted with the purchase of a shipping container that serves as a workshop for producing butt bins
 - And we gratefully acknowledge contributions from some private individuals, in particular Johan and Catherine Conradie.
-

Annexure A

Patron Members

Dr Frank Raimondo: Retired company director; Trustee of the Wilderness Leadership School and of World Wildlife Fund (SA), a Founding Director of the Wilderness Action Group and Director of the Peace Parks Foundation.

Judge Mark Kumleben: Retired Judge of the Supreme Court

Prof George Branch: Emeritus Professor, UCT, Marine Biologist

Mr Louis De Waal: Retired company director

Mr Paul Du Toit: Owner Wine Village

Management Board

Mr James Hart: Chairperson, Retired owner of International Engineering Company

Prof John Verster, Vice Chairperson, Emeritus Professor of Business Science, Chairman of a Public Benefit Organisation, former company director and retired senior executive of the Standard Bank Group.

Mr Roy Moulton: Treasurer, Financial Director of La Vierge Wine Estate; Former Financial Manager for Consol Glass (Pty) Ltd Bellville

Dr Pat Miller: Member, Retired transportation consultant; Former Chairperson of Hermanus Botanical Society

Mr John Cowan: Member, Retired Science Educator

Mr Rodney Anderson: Member, Property Developer; Owner Hermanus Gateway Shopping Centre

Mr Richard Tate: Member, Retired Farmer and former President: International Tobacco Growers Assoc.

Mr Julius Swart: Member, Headmaster, Hawston Primary School

Ms Mary Faure, Member, Retired US lecturer, Chairperson of Hermanus FynArts Festival; former Chairperson of Hermanus Tourism Bureau

Ms Fiona Matthes: Member, Retired owner of a Western Cape health food company

Staff

Mr Robert Fryer: General Manager

BSc (Electrical Engineering); Honours BCom (Business Econ); Formerly AECl business unit manager; broad knowledge and expertise in environmental management policies and legislation and best practices pertaining thereto

Mrs Sheraine Van Wyk: Manager: Environmental Awareness and Education

BSc (Hon)(Botany); Masters degree in environmental education; Formerly high school maths and natural science educator; specialist in citizen science and community involvement processes.

Dr Anina Lee: Manager: Communications

PhD and former lecturer in Biochemistry

Ms Ingrid Du Plessis: Manager: Facilities and Administration

Honours Geography (Environmental Management); financial management and Pastel accounting certification.

Ms Shirley Mgoboza: Youth Environment Programme coordinator

Diploma Environmental Management, Diploma IT

Mr Dante Campbell: IT Technician

Mr Denfred Bruintjies: Field Assistant

GOVERNANCE

The WCC governance structure is a 10-member Management Board that meets six times a year; a Chairman's Committee of four members that meets monthly and reports to the Management Board; and a Remuneration Committee that meets as required and reports to the Management Board.

Staff meetings are held weekly or as required.