

RECRUITMENT INFORMATION – THE GOURITZ CLUSTER BIOSPHERE RESERVE

Together with what is already available on the GCBR web site, this document brings together information that will help in drafting an application for the positions being recruited, where detailed Job Descriptions can be found at <http://gouritz.com/recruit/>

GCBR Identity and History

Registered as a non-profit company in 2011, the Gouritz Cluster Biosphere Reserve organisation is a voluntary-driven citizens' initiative dedicated to the conservation of the region's biodiversity, tied to socioeconomic development for the wellbeing of its peoples. UNESCO has designated the region as a place of major biodiversity significance for the planet.

The GCBR's origins lie in a collaboration called the Gouritz Initiative, which ran from 2003-2009. This project brought together a range of people and organisations that were concerned to do something to counter deterioration of the unique ecology and ecosystems that make up the bioregions of the Little Karoo and coastal area. UNESCO recognition that this area contains 3 global biodiversity hot spots meriting international recognition gave an added spur to the GCBR's thinking and work. From 2018, in partnership with a Dutch foundation, the GCBR's scope of work will expand based on six major projects as well as many smaller initiatives that respond to local opportunities. The summary below, gives an idea of the range of GCBR activity and the professional demands they will make.

The GCBR Programme and Activities

The GCBR's work in 2018 and beyond will take forward a lot of the ongoing projects, both big and small. To understand what the GCBR has done and is doing in terms of variety and impact please look at the [GCBR web site](#). What will change is using new finance for innovative initiatives giving an increase in scale of outreach and wider contributions to ecological and socio-economic well being. These can be summarized in seven projects, three of which continue what is already being implemented.

Goukou Resilient River to Coast

This project focuses on the Goukou Catchment System. It involves an entire river system from catchment to coast which is largely located on private land, with limited to no systematic alien eradication programme being implemented. Alien infestations are increasing rapidly and have severe impact on water supply to downstream communities and on biodiversity.

It represents a first phase of what is expected to grow into a flagship Resilient Rivers programme. The probability of the project to extend beyond its initial 3-year timeframe is high, both in terms of further work within the Goukou catchment as well as expansion to other river systems in the GCBR.

Jobs 4 Carbon

This project draws on the lessons learnt from over a decade of practice in thicket restoration. It builds on the GCBR's highly successful flagship project which has been running in Vanwyksdorp since 2014. Through this initiative many job opportunities have been created, with positive impact on local households. In addition, the local environment becomes aesthetically more pleasing over time, adding to the landscape's natural beauty, which is an important attraction for visitors to the region.

In the next three years, Jobs for Carbon will continue to work in the Vanwyksdorp area by planting additional degraded sites, while expanding its reach to the adjacent Calitzdorp-Oudtshoorn area. It is estimated that more than 10,000 ha of spekboom thicket in this area has been severely degraded.

Water Wise Ways

Every Drop counts. This project follows our successful “War on Leaks” campaign. The initiative will reduce water stress and the high costs of water leaking out of distribution systems that are currently met by local residents and municipalities as suppliers. Fixing leaks using local enterprises could save municipal expenditure, create employment when local communities take charge of repairs themselves and place less demand on natural water sources.

Waste Water-The untapped resource. Water quality in Karoo rivers is poor as there is less available to dilute and assimilate waste discharge. Worldwide, wastewater is gaining momentum as a reliable alternative source of water, shifting from ‘treatment and disposal’ to ‘reuse, recycle and resource recovery’. A current sewage water purification project in De Rust, using an artificial wetland, is proving effective and less expensive than more sophisticated, engineered approaches. The methodology will be replicated at the sewage pond at Klaarstroom, a small rural town.

Witteberg-Langeberg Ecological Corridor

The intention is to re-establish an ecological corridor linking the Witteberg Mountains to the Langeberg Mountains, through several private game reserves. The current system of farming in this area, including game fences, unsustainable grazing, habitat fragmentation and marginal returns to farms, limits wildlife movement and inhibits regeneration. A large-scale ecological corridor will reduce fragmentation of the biodiversity contained in several existing protected areas and World Heritage Sites to create an unfragmented protected area. The corridor will also promote large scale rehabilitation of the Klein Karoo vegetation, establish incentives towards the adoption of a wildlife and tourism economy on farms, increasing economic opportunities for poor communities.

Vanwyksdorp Development Institute: Developing a Strategic Knowledge Partnership

The GCBR’s programme is based on iterative management with a practice-driven learning approach. Projects within the programme have documentation, learning and communication budgets to generate knowledge products for dissemination. This resource also calls for using knowledge – both new and existing – to increase human capital that can repair and rebuild damaged ecosystems, improve livelihood opportunities and propagate sustainable land use practices. Partnership with the Vanwyksdorp Development Institute (VDI) will create a node and strategic institutional home for developing the new skills, new attitudes, new social and human capital that are so badly needed.

GCBR and Local Authorities

From a deeply divided economic structure, policymakers face a continuous challenge of reconciling complex and often conflicting relationships between poverty, inequitable access to resources, economic growth and protection of environmental assets. The GCBR is in a position to influence government, especially Local Government, to share the organisation’s vision of increasing socio-ecological resilience and sustainability. Developing relationships of mutual trust and support between the GCBR and the eight municipalities within the biosphere reserve domain is therefore a critical component of the overall programme.

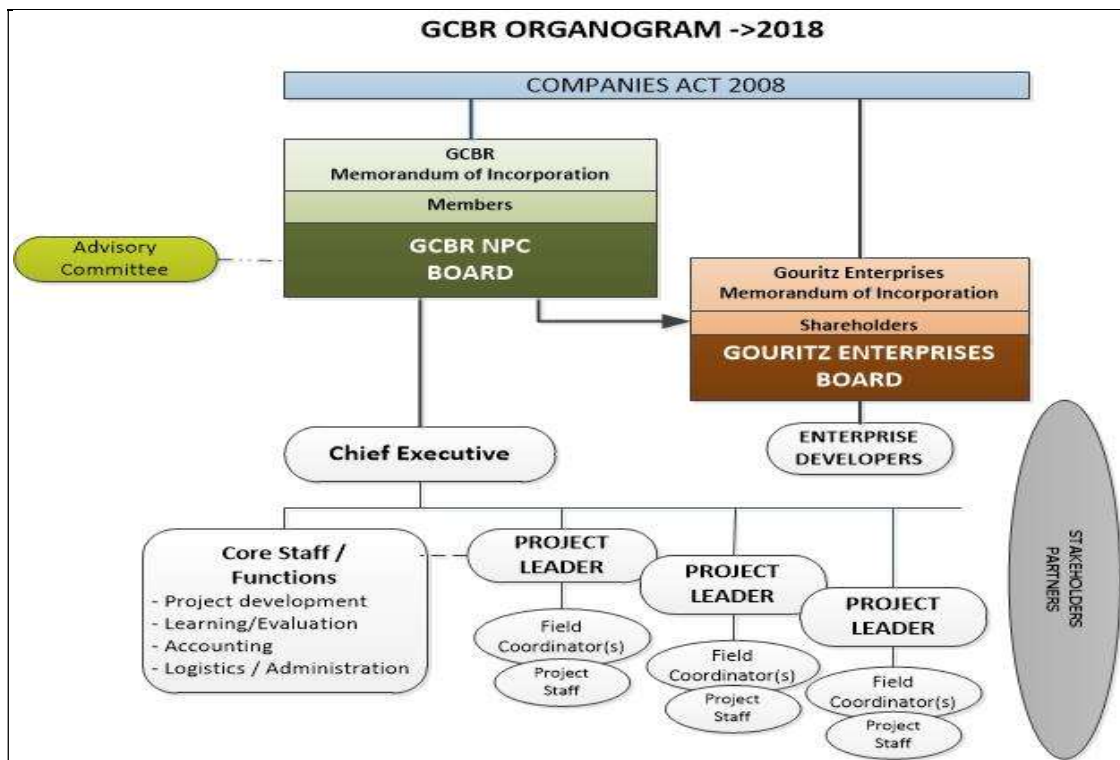
Green Clubs

In recent years, together with the Landmark Foundation (LMF), the GCBR has adopted a process-sensitive way of engaging with schools and learners. This relationally intensive and necessarily slow approach draws on lessons from other, more technology-centred, methods which mostly fail to generate real ownership by school principals and staff. Enquiries suggest that an approach to bring environmental education into the formal curriculum is not practically viable. This project will therefore gradually expand the number of schools involved in GCBR/LMF’s unique, demonstrated approach to bringing environmental awareness – transferring SKILLS, imparting KNOWLEDGE, changing ATTITUDES and instilling VALUES – into the domain’s primary and secondary school system.

The GCBR Organisation: The Set up Starting in 2018

The GCBR's current organisational design is a product of its distinct history. An awareness-raising quarterly meeting of members at the Gouritz Forum gave and sustained the GCBR's voluntary momentum with an active, hands-on, board of directors. This combination of governance and operations was modelled on other biosphere reserves and informed by provincial legislation. Since GCBR's registration as a non-profit company, a dynamic volunteer board has been the inspiration for and life blood of a remarkable amount of on-the-ground activity and innovation. But there is an obvious limit to what people can do in their spare time, which became more and more of an obstacle to fully capitalizing on what has been achieved so far.

In 2015, the GCBR made contact with a newly established family foundation in the Netherlands – [DOB Ecology](#). A visit by the DOB Chief Executive of and an adviser showed a remarkable affinity between the two organisation's goals and approach to partnership. As a consequence, in addition to the six projects described above there is dedicated support for the development of the GCBR as an organisation to a 'next level'. This means that the weight of operational responsibility and practical work will move from the board to professional staff. Recruitment of core staff is a concrete step in this transition. What the new organisational design looks like is below.



The diagram shows the organisational set up starting in 2018. The longer-term intention is for the GCBR to function as a social enterprise by evolving and combining two organisations as 'hubs', one dedicated to delivery and learning, the other to resourcing the organisation's core costs from profit-making enterprises. Staff recruitment is therefore in a forward-looking framework of reducing dependency of core financing on grants.

In recruitment, it is important to bear in mind that practical experience built up by the GCBR over the past five years paints a pretty clear picture of what each core function will entail. The detailed job descriptions are grounded in ongoing practices with anticipated tasks and responsibilities, bringing together mission, context, strategy and lessons learned so far.

What will remain the same in the old and new set up is the GCBR's culture, ethics and approach to work. As much as its own delivery of benefits to the region's ecology and population is important, the GCBR will continue to focus on informing, enabling and facilitating others, be they volunteers, local organisations, networks and public bodies which share the same commitment and ideals. Building mutually respectful relationships with diverse stakeholders is a key GCBR value and competency, vital for collective success.

The professional invitation

The range of initiatives and organisational development intentions show the extent to which a lean core team needs to be familiar with this comprehensive, integrated field of work – ecological gains allied to socio-economic improvement. There are many related initiatives and organisations that can provide the professional exposures and experience required. The GCBR offers an opportunity to experienced professionals who are passionate about this field to co-create a new stage in the organisation's contribution to a unique ecosystem and its people.