

## GOURITZ E-NEWS

2017/1

It is almost impossible to convey in the short space of a newsletter what has been going on in the GCBR since the previous newsletter as things are moving really fast.

In this issue you will find more about the excellent results compiled in the report by Myles Mander when he did the final audit of the first Jobs 4 Carbon project which came to an end in October 2016. Congratulations to all the team members who worked so hard to produce the fine results. We shall soon be reporting on phase 2 of Jobs 4 Carbon which is already underway.

Environmental education is so important when one wants to influence the actions of future generations and what better way to do that than starting with kids. Read the articles on education to see what is being done in schools and with school children. And there are lots more to come.

It is a feather in our cap to have so many scientists in our midst who do a variety of research work and Dr Daan F Toerien is one of them. Read his interesting paper: 'The enduring and spatial nature of the enterprise richness of South African towns' published recently in the South African Science Journal.

Humans are so good at developing new innovative things to make our lives easier but often without knowing what the impact on other living organisms will be over a period of time. Plastic is such an invention. We are now at a point where we know that on average plastic takes up to 500 years to break down. What is even worse is that it is filling up our oceans to such extent that plastic islands are forming and the latest research shows that sea salt contains plastic particles.

Read more in this newsletter and please send us your feedback on all the articles.

Happy reading!

WF Botha

Chairman

## GCBR FORUM & ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING IN OUDTSHOORN A HUGE SUCCESS

The recent GCBR Forum and Annual General Meeting which took place on the 16th May 2017 at the Proefplaas near Oudtshoorn was a memorable event. No less than 75 people attended the get-together. Willem Botha (GCBR Chairman) presented the Chairman's report on what has been achieved, largely by a group of volunteers, during the past year.

We welcome the following newly elected directors to the GCBR Board: Ms Najma Adams - Director Agriculture & Mining; Mr Rhett Hiseman - Chairperson of Langeberg Sector; and Mr Jan Vlok - Chairperson of Towerkop Sector.

Four fascinating talks were presented after the formal proceedings of the AGM:

- ***Flood and Fire in the Holocene – a Sedimentary Record of climate cycles*** - Chris Lee (Blue Hill Nature Reserve)
- ***The Karoo Predator Project - understanding socio-ecological mechanisms behind farmer-predator conflict in the Karoo*** – Marine Drouilly (University of Cape Town)
- ***Ecology of baboons in conflict with sheep farmers in the Karoo*** - Marion Tafani (University of Cape Town)
- ***GCBR 2017-2018 : The road ahead*** - Steve du Toit (DOB Project Manager).

## Jobs for Carbon



### Thumbs-up for Jobs for Carbon!

1/23/17

An independent evaluation of the Jobs for Carbon project has been completed. The report hails the project and provides good advice on the way forward. According to the reviewers, the project objectives were broadly achieved, and certain targets were substantially exceeded. "The project target of restoring 300ha of spekboomveld was exceeded. Some 812ha was initiated into a process of restoration through the project, either through replanting with spekboom or through the exclusion of grazing animals (or both). The plantings show above average survival in comparison to other localities." "The impact of this project on human capital were outstanding. There were 60 success stories – i.e. 60 people changing from what many critics called 'unemployable' to becoming motivated capable labourers skilled in veld restoration and good work practice, and who put food on the table and who paid for schooling." Download the full report below.

[Read more](#)

## Environmental Education

### Badges for Butterflies



5/30/17

It is a great honor to wear a badge on a uniform. The grade 6's and 7's of Vanwyksdorp's Green Butterflies received badges in recognition of their positions within the Green Clubs. This was done with the aim of instilling a sense of pride, achievement, camaraderie and to promote recognized leadership within the school structure. It will also allow the juniors to look up to their leaders and be inspired by them and aspire to become a leader too. Some learners had two as they form part of two working teams. There was enormous pride as they were being called up to receive their badges. This is the first time for these learners - in fact it will be the first time the school has such an award. We also handed out their Green Butterflies t-shirts. These t's and badges were kindly sponsored by LANDCARE OUDTSHOORN. On Saturday, 20TH May 2017 the Green Butterflies visited Gamkaberg World Heritage Site. This trip was done in conjunction with Cape Nature. The main aim for this outing was to expose learners to a Nature Reserve, which is rich in biodiversity and wildlife.

The Green Butterflies are keen on starting a Botanical Garden at their school and it was important to see the botanical side of a nature reserve. Two third year interns Natasha and Annelize took the learners on a short hike to learn about karoo plant diversity and medicinal properties. They also did a short presentation on plant types, how to identify plants, their classification and adaptations. Nombu did a presentation on fire and fynbos. The information centre was a highlight.

[Read more](#)

### Vanwyksdorp Butterflies propagating spekboom



5/30/17

Recently the Green Butterflies together with their teacher Mr. Philander spent the afternoon at the Spekboom nursery in Vanwyksdorp. The aim was to learn about the Spekboom and its role in the environment regarding carbon sequestration and how it is used to restore land. It is a very relevant topic as Vanwyksdorp is the home town of the Jobs 4 Carbon (J4C) project. Many of the parents are engaged in the project. The workshop was presented and prepared by Evelyn Pretorius, who is presently involved with J4C. They planted over 200 off cuts from cuttings used by the J4C team; these were planted into tins which they had collected. They prepared the soil, tins, and cuttings. There is much learning opportunity that can and may develop from this event. There are two new green clubs being established in the area and it would be a noble gesture to gift these "up and coming" green schools with Spekboom.

[Read more](#)

### Herbertsdale Primary planning for a Green Club



5/29/17

Green Clubs is a project where environmental clubs are initiated and supported at primary and secondary schools. The aim is to encourage environmental leaders, promote sustainable living, and highlight local and global environmental issues through awareness campaigns. The Green Club will initiate local projects that will serve the school and community. These projects have socio-economic effects on the community and tourism is one of the focus points. On Thursday 5th of May we introduced the concept of an environmental club and instigated the need for leadership in our community. The aim was to constitute a club with an elected committee and various teams to run the portfolios needed. The main objective of the program is to allow full

learning process; this enables responsible and accountable actions and consequences by the learners. Read more about this initiative in the report below.

[Read more](#)

## Entrepreneurship & Economic Development

### GCBR features in study on enterprise richness of South African towns



5/14/17

A study on the number of enterprise types shows a significant relationship with the total number of enterprises in (1) towns in different regions of SA and (2) towns in the same region, but seven decades apart.

Entrepreneurial space in towns develops or disappears in a regular way as towns grow or regress, which is further proof of orderliness in the enterprise dynamics of SA towns. In considering the lack of employment and poverty in South Africa, the National Development Plan suggests that town and rural areas are important cogs in efforts to overcome these problems. Development plans that are out of sync with the observed regularities are perhaps bound to fail.

[Read more](#)



### The PALAEOLANDSCAPE near Mossel Bay some 60 000 years ago

A visualization of the Palaeo-Agulhas Plain off Mossel Bay some 60 000 years ago during a moderate cold phase (glacial). In the distant background is the ridgeline of the current coastline some 30 km away, and the snow-capped Outeniqua Mountains. The vast and monotonous plain is drained by a languid, meandering Gouritz River which has formed extensive wetlands behind the barrier of coastal dunes. The plain is underlain by fertile soils which support a dense and productive grassland which is home to large herds of grazing mammals. These include several extinct forms such as longhorn buffalo, eland, giant Cape zebra, giant hartebeest and bluebuck, as well as the springbok, waterbuck, zebra and other plains game still found roaming the African tropical grasslands today.

[Read more](#)

## Marine Conservation



### How our clothes are poisoning our oceans and food supply

5/14/17

Micro-plastic pollution is devastating our oceans. In an article published in The Guardian Newspaper on the 20th June 2016 it is reported that new studies indicate that the fibres in our clothes could be poisoning our waterways and food chain on a massive scale. Microfibres – tiny threads shed from fabric – have been found in abundance on shorelines where waste water is released. Recent research indicates that the biggest culprit may be the shirt off your back. In an alarming study, researchers at the University of California at Santa

Barbara found that, on average, synthetic fleece jackets release 1.7 grams of microfibres each wash. It also found that older jackets shed almost twice as many fibres as new jackets. Download full article below.

[Read more](#)

## Upcoming Events



### Vetplantfees 2017

*A festival celebrating the Succulent Plants that grow in the Klein Karoo.*

23-25 September 2017

09:00-17:00

Calitzdorp Railway Station

Admission: Free

For more information please contact: Buck Hemenway ([buckhem41@gmail.com](mailto:buckhem41@gmail.com); 076 298 7337)



### Tour De Gouritz Biosphere MTB

TOUR DE GOURITZ BIOSPHERE MTB

3 Day Tour from 10-12 November 2017

From Great Brak River, Vanwyksdorp, Oudtshoorn to Herold.

Entries: [www.trisport.co.za](http://www.trisport.co.za)

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