

# Minutes of the quarterly eThekweni Biodiversity Forum meeting

## November 2010

**DATE:** 04 November 2010

**TIME:** 09h00 – 12h00

**VENUE:** Paradise Valley, Durban

### PRESENT:

Aarnia van Vuuren	AV	Greg Mullins	GM	Nicolette Forbes	NF
Barry Lang	BL	Jabu Sithole	JST	Nomafu Dlamini	NDL
Bheki Mdletshe	BM	Jean Lindsay	JL	Paulos Gwala	PG
Bianca McKelvey	BMK	Jean Senogles	JS	R. Lundie	RLU
Bryan Ashe	BAS	Jessica Brislin	JB	Reshnee Lalla	RL
Cassandra Abboy	CAB	Johan Vermeulen	JV	Rodney	
Chantal Motilall	CMO	Kate Richardson	KR	Bartholomew	RBA
Crystal Naidoo	CN	Kirstin Williams	KWM	Roger Uys	RU
Darren Green	DG	Lesley Frescura	LF	Rosemary Harrison	RH
Debra Roberts	DR	Lynne Thompson	LT	Ryan Bowman	RBN
Deren Coetzer	DC	Martin Clement	MC	Sibusiso Mkhwanazi	SMZ
Derrek Ruiters	DRU	Meggan Lewis	ML	Sue George	SG
Di Dold	DD	Mpumelelo Sithebe	MSI	T. Govender	TG
Di Higginson Keith	DHK	Natasha Gangadin	NGA	V.J. Khoza	VJK
Duane Constance	DCO	Natasha Govender	NG		
		Ndabezinhle			
Errol Douwes	ED	Mbambo	NMB		

### APOLOGIES:

Richard Boon, Jo Boule, Alistair McInnes, Cameron McLean, Geoff Pullan, Gillian Noyce, J.E. Granger, Ahmed Thandar, Adrian Armstrong.

### 1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

NG welcomed all and facilitated introductions.

### 2. PRESENTATION: Dr. Debra Roberts talking on, "Climate change and Durban: so what's new locally and what was rotten in the state of Denmark in 2009?"

DR gave a brief background on climate change and theories around climate predictions for the future. DR also spoke about the climate negotiations at the COP15 in Copenhagen and why the negotiations were unsuccessful. DR ended with discussing the Municipal Climate Protection Programme which EPCPD is responsible for developing and implementing.

BAS asked why Andrew Mather's sea-level rise study was not taken seriously with regard to the new beachfront developments. He also queried why the study was not made more freely available and why it is not taken into account by the City's strategic planning unit. DR noted that this research is

still very new and because of its nature, it is very difficult to mainstream but progress is being made. RBA asked about the potential for achieving something substantial re: climate change during the COP negotiations in South Africa in 2011. DR said that it is remote that anything will come out of the conference in SA.

#### **4. EMD REPORT BACKS**

##### **a) Town Planning Matters**

No new updates were available on this matter. Below is the report back from the previous meeting: RB reported on the various Town Planning Matters that the EPCPD are undertaking. He noted that the public processes have finally come to an end. The objections from the public would now be collated and taken to committee. Roosfontein Nature Reserve is to be proclaimed and the timeframe for this to be finalised is likely the end of August. The rezoning of the 200 ha Fosaville property (170 ha for conservation) is to be taken to committee. With respect to the rezoning of properties in the Outer West, all plans are to be taken to committee within the next three months.

##### **b) Mayoral Biodiversity Award**

No updates available.

##### **c) Invasive Alien Species Strategy**

No new updates were available on this matter. Below is the report back from the previous meeting: ED informed the forum that the invasive alien plants control strategy has been finalised and was sent to council early in 2010. He noted that this is an evolving document and he would like to draw knowledge from other departments and organisations who are also involved with invasive alien species control to improve the strategy. ED has since circulated the strategy to the members of the forum.

##### **d) KZN Biodiversity Stewardship Programme**

DR is continuing to work on proclamation of selected reserves as part of the KZN Biodiversity Stewardship Programme, Roosfontein being the reserve that is currently being taken through this process.

##### **e) Giba Gorge Special Rating Area**

No new updates available on this matter. Below is the report back from the previous meeting:

NG reported on behalf of AM as follows:

The Giba Gorge Environmental Precinct has now got a permanent Conservation Management staff compliment (since Feb), headed up by Tuthuka Majola (manager) reporting directly to AM and conservation committee. Implementation Programmes highlighting all work planned for on a monthly basis, including deliverables and performance indicators, have been distributed to all landowners since February. All of these will be available on the new Giba Gorge website which is due to go live by the end of May.

Some of the work done to date includes:

- 1.) Development and updates of Conservation Management Plan (available on website to come: [www.ggep.org](http://www.ggep.org))
- 2.) Alien plant clearing (bulk of work) in grasslands between M13 and Eagle Rock and in the forest around McIntosh Falls.
- 3.) Construction of two new trails (ongoing) in the main gorge forest and McIntosh and Kirkman falls - details of which will be on website.
- 4.) Soil erosion control on various cutlines and roads.

- 5.) Involvement of schools in River Health Monitoring.
- 6.) Construction of parking area off Longforger Avenue.
- 7.) Plans to construct staff facilities and visitor ablutions - to allow for school buses.
- 8.) Landowner newsletters distributed and new website content handed over to designer.

## 5. GENERAL

BAS spoke briefly on the Mvula Trust. The Trust trains community members about environmental issues. Paulos Gwala, one of the community members involved with the trust, spoke about the work being done on alien invasive species and litter. The Trust also has a partnership with local schools. LT spoke about being approach by someone regarding eradicating rock doves (domestic pigeon). Many forum attendees expressed concern over using certain drugs to kill pigeon. LF said that these birds are an important link in the food chain and many predatory birds feed on them. Eradicating the pigeons may thus impact other species of fauna. BMK asked about the usefulness of biological control on these birds and DG raised the issue of prisms that are used as a deterrent to birds on farms. ED noted that if one wants to use any sort of poison or drug to eradicate fauna or flora, they are legally obliged to get a permit from the Health Department. The individual must also be a registered pest controller. NG raised the issue of the tree planting policy as this has been a recurring issue at the meetings. It was suggested that a separate meeting has to be convened outside the forum. NG has spoken to RB about this meeting, who agreed that it is important to get all the interested parties involved.

LF reminded people of the return of the Barn Swallows and Mt Moreland (7 November 2010). All were asked to bring their sundowners and enjoy the swallows returning to their roost. NB: This is a particularly auspicious occasion as this is the first return of the swallows since the KSIA opened. For details please see our new website [www.barnswallow.co.za](http://www.barnswallow.co.za)

### Closing and date of next meetings:

NG closed the meeting at 12h00 and thanked everyone for attending.

### Meeting dates for 2011 are as follows:

**24 February 2011**

**19 May 2011**

**25 August 2011**

**17 November 2011**

### Acronyms used in these (and previous) minutes:

AIO	Alien Invasive Organism
BSAP	Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
BSSA	Biodiversity Stewardship – South Africa
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity (Global)
COP 9	Ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (a CBD initiative)
CARA	Conservation of Agricultural Resources Act (Act 43 of 1983)
DAEA	Department of Agriculture and Environmental Affairs (Provincial)
DEAT	Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (National)
DME	Department of Minerals and Energy
D'MOSS	Durban Metropolitan Open Space System
DUCT	Duzi Umgeni Conservation Trust
DWAF	Department of Water Affairs and Forestry (National)
ECO	Environmental Consultant
EESMP	EThekweni Environmental Services Management Plan
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EKZNW	Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife
EM	EThekweni Municipality
EMD	(eThekweni Municipality) Environmental Management Department
EMP	Environmental Management Plan

EPCPD	Environmental Planning and Climate Protection Department
GGEP	Giba Gorge Environmental Precinct
GHG	Green House Gases
IAP	Invasive Alien Plant
IAS	Invasive Alien Species
ICLEI	International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives
KZN	KwaZulu Natal
LAB	Local Action for Biodiversity
MOSS	Metropolitan Open Space System
NEMA	National Environmental Management Act (1998)
NEMBA	National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act (Act 10 of 2004)
NGO	Non Government Organisation
NRB	eThekweni Municipality's Natural Resource Branch
SANBI	South African National Biodiversity Institute (National)
SAPTA	South African Pet Traders Association
SCP	Systematic Conservation Planning
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SOER	State of the Environment Report
UKZN	University of KwaZulu-Natal