

Minutes of the quarterly eThekwini Biodiversity Forum meeting August 2009

Date: 06 August 2009

Time: 09h00 – 12h00

Venue: Paradise Valley, Durban

Attendance: Errol Douwes (ED), Jean Senogles (JS), Wiseman Nhlangulelo (WN), Sue Shafto (SS), Natasha Govender (NG), Christine Bubb (CB), Di Higginson Keith (DHK), Di Dold (DD), Desiree Marimuthoo (DM), Barry Lang (BL), Jessica Rich (JR), Margaret Appleton (MA), Kate Richardson (KR), Lesley Frescura (LF), John Forbes (JF), Gary Edwards (GE), Sandile Mkhize (SM), Rachel Ndlovu (RN), Asanda Xozwa (AX), Trafford Peterson (TP), Rodney Bartholomew (RBA), Jessica Brislin (JB), Mpumelelo Sithebe (SMT), Thami Kunene (TK), Nomafo Dlamini (ND), Jabulani Khoza (JK), Preston Chetty (PC), G. Mngema (GM), Martin Clement (MC), Craig Mulqueeny (CMQ), Roger Uys (RU), Jean Lindsay (JL), Johann Vermeulen (JV), Jo Boule (JBO), Kirstin Williams (KW), Nikhat Hoosen (NH), Steve Butler (SB), Jabu Sithole (JST), Sane Miya (SMY), Reshnee Lalla (RL), Michael Cheek (MCH), Derrek Ruiters (DR), Rory Lynoly (RLN), Lynne Thompson (LT), Adrian Armstrong (AA), Margaret Burger (MBU), Jeanne Tarrant (JT), Richard Boon (RB), Meggan Lewis (ML), Graham Cairns (GC), Heather Cairns (HC), Alistair McInnes (AM), Bheki Mdletshe (BM), Rael Hughes (RH), Wayne Stead (WS), Hilary Vickers (HV), Peron Amein (PA) Chumisa Thengwa (CT)

Apologies: Debra Roberts, Penny Croucamp, , Malcolm Stainbank, Santosh Bachoo, Terry Stewart, Ross Crouch, Chris Dalzell, L.R. Gravelet-Brondin, Mark Graham, Pravin Pillay, Gill Noyce, Keith Peel, Karl Westphal, Rebecca Joubert, Rob Crankshaw, Mbali Goge, Sibusiso Mkhwanazi, Cameron McLean

1. Welcome and Introductions

NG welcomed all and facilitated introductions.

2. Confirmation of previous minutes

NG handed over to ED to facilitate the presentations. ED stated that he circulated the agenda and the presentations will focus on the interventions of eThekwini Municipality especially in the Outer West areas. ED further gave some background info on the Outer West areas and noted that much of the area is under traditional leadership and as such is owned by the Ingonyama Trust. These areas had previously seen less environmental management. ED stressed the importance of these areas due to the varied forest and grassland ecosystems present therein and the ecosystems services these habitats provide.

3. Presentation: Giba Gorge Special Rating Area: Alistair McInnes from Environmental Management Department

AM gave a short background and history of the Giba Gorge Environmental Precinct's (GGEP) importance to the City. AM stated the GGEP contains red data species and sites of historic importance. He further stated that the GGEP has scarp forest, sandstone sourveld and grasslands. AM noted that the GGEP is threatened by issues such as muthi harvesting, soil erosion, fire management, alien plants, water pollution and lack of awareness. AM further stated that Giba Gorge and surrounds needed environmental protection and management and that co-management funds were secured from the Council for three years in 2007.

AM explained the Special Rating Area concept used for the GGEP. AM stated that the process is facilitated by eThekwini Municipality and it's a landowner cooperative. The benefits of this initiative are biodiversity conservation, fire management and recreational facilities, potential for increased

property value and historical site protection and potential tourism opportunities.

AM presented the proposed budget and the way forward. He informed the forum that applications for additional funding will be made.

4. Presentation: Working for Ecosystems: Sustainable Development and Poverty Alleviation by Wayne Stead from WESSA

ED gave a brief background on Working for Ecosystems. WS stated that Working for Ecosystem focuses on environmental management especially in the invasive alien plants control. Community upliftment was also a priority and is being achieved through awareness and training, job creation, and small business development and support. He informed the forum that employees undergo various courses and workshops, e.g. HIV Aids awareness, Life Skills (Basic Banking skills and bank account management, bush fire awareness and basic fire fighting, First Aid Course and I.A.P Control and herbicide applicators course.

WS also informed the forum that WESSA assist communities to establish and register their cooperatives in the eThekweni Municipality's procurement database. He further stated that as part of Working for Ecosystems, they hire those cooperatives. WS stated that they are currently working in areas like Ntshongweni and that most of the work they are doing is removing invasive alien plants.

5. Presentation: Working on Fire: Setting the bar for best practice management on recent acquired: Rael Hughes

RH gave a brief background of the engagement of Working on Fire and further informed the forum that they are contracted to eThekweni Municipality to remove invasive alien plants and also engage in activities that restore the ecosystem.

He further informed the forum that Working on Fire has been tasked by the eThekweni Municipality to focus IAP control primarily on land recently acquired for environmental purposes. He stated that the staff recruit for Working on Fire are sent for training at the Nelspruit academy. He further gave the outline of their operational activities and how they ensure safety of the workers and the quality of their work.

He informed the forum that 5 team members will be HIRATA trained to control IAPs on steep areas.

6. Presentation: Conservation Zones and Environmental Conservation Zones: John Forbes Environmental Management Department, eThekweni Municipality

JF gave a brief background on the existing and new zones and reservations and informed the forum that eThekweni Municipality had previously had some 40 town planning schemes. He further gave distinction and comparisons between Environmental Conservation Zones and Conservation Zones.

JF presented a list of all properties that Council has acquired as follows:

- Clanstal - on the beach front off Greenpoint Drive
- Crestholme - flanking and above Inanda Road
- Drummond - off Old Main Road
- Forest Hills - flanking and in the vicinity of the Krantzklouf Nature Reserve between Kloofview Road and Margaret Crescent
- Isipingo Beach - along the ocean front off Refinery Drive.
- New Germany - off Goshawk Road
- Paradise Valley, Pinetown - flanking and in the vicinity of the Paradise Valley Nature Reserve

off various roads in Paradise Valley, Cowies Hill, QUEENSBURGH and Westville.

- Treasure Beach - overlooking the ocean off St Geran Grove, off Marine Drive.
- St Hillier, Gillitts - near the Giba Gorge.
- Kloof Escarpment - the southern portion to the west of the M13.
- Chatsworth - flanking the Silverglen Nature Reserve off Lakeview Drive,
- Cliffdale Hill - portion of the prominent hill visible from, and to south, of the N3 and just inland of Key Ridge and Assagay - between Alverstone Road and Kangelani Way

JF further stated that some sites rezonings have been appealed against to the KZN Planning and Development Commission. These would still have to be resolved, but either way it should not affect the bulk of the rezoning and he further added that should the rezoning application be made in the future with respect to rezoning a conservation zone to another zone, the Bodies' approval will be required as a prerequisite prior to the rezoning.

JF encouraged the forum to view and if necessary comment in due course on the city's four draft Spatial Development Plans that cover the entire municipal area and that are now available on the City's website AT <http://www.durban.gov.za/durban/government/planning/planning-news/sdp/view>. A public participation process is scheduled to commence in September 2009 and details should appear in the press.

7. EMD report backs

a) Green Bylaws

RB reported that the process is still ongoing. A draft is being edited by lawyers at Shepstone & Wylie.

b) Mayoral Biodiversity Award

ED informed the forum that the nomination forms have been circulated if people wanted to nominate anyone.

c) Invasive Alien Species Strategy

ED informed the forum that the invasive alien plants control strategy which was completed earlier in the year would now be sent to Council for approval. Part of the strategy is prioritization of natural areas currently managed by Parks Department with a specific focus on alien plants control and biodiversity management and also to ensure that Natural Resources staff receive necessary training such as capturing info on GIS.

DD commented about invasive snails in Lower Illovo. ED indicated that all invasive species were part of the strategy, but that plants were currently the main focus.

d) KZN Biodiversity Stewardship Programme

ED apologized on behalf of Derrek Ruiters who was ill, and informed the forum that Derrek was continuing to work on proclamation of selected reserves as part of the KZN Biodiversity Stewardship Programme.

8. General

Introduction of DMOSS into Town Planning Scheme

JF informed the forum that the introduction of DMOSS to the Town Planning Scheme has been approved by Council and that consultation will soon take place.

Closing and Date of the next meeting:

NG closed the meeting at 11h45 and thanked everyone for coming.

Next meetings: 5 November.

Times: 9:00am – 12:00pm

Venue: Paradise Valley

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
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

Invited members of the eThekweni Biodiversity Forum

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