



Working for Water

E-News

Welcome to the *Working for Water* electronic newsletter. This publication is aimed at keeping staff and stakeholders informed on the progress made towards controlling invasive alien plants (IAPs), the challenges encountered during implementation and the achievements of *Working for Water* nationally.

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WeedBuster Week: *Plant Me Instead*

By: Leon Jamarie

From 6 to 12 October 2008, thousands of people from a broad spectrum will be adhering to *Working for Water's* call of highlighting the importance around the planting of indigenous plants by following the call of *Plant Me Instead*.

The National WeedBuster Week is an annual culmination of the ongoing campaign aimed at the management and containment of invasive alien plants (IAPs). The campaign is a multi-departmental initiative led by the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry through the *Working for Water (WfW)* programme, and supported by various partners

and stakeholders. The aim of the WeedBuster campaign is to consolidate awareness, support and ownership of the ongoing effort in order to ensure that IAP control initiatives in South Africa are effective and sustainable.

A number of events will be taking place during the week with the Minister of Water Affairs and Forestry, Mrs. Lindiwe Hendricks, attending an event in four regions to draw awareness to the events. The launch of WeedBuster Week will take place on the 6th of October 2008 in Jacobsdal, in the Free State. This event will also be a follow-up on the initiative started by the launch of the War on Poverty in August by the Deputy President and the establishment of the poverty alleviation forum for implementation of the Free State Poverty Alleviation Strategy.

Other events on the calendar include Ministerial Events at the Witfontein Nature Reserve near George on the 7th, at the Roodeplaat Dam in the North West Province on the 8th and at the Sebokeng Township in Vereeniging on the 10 October 2008.

The core message to be communicated during WeedBuster 2008 is *Plant me instead*, which aims to encourage communities to consult their local nurseries when selecting plant species.

This year's campaign will highlight the impact on our natural resources which included water resources, productive land, the impact of fire on the environment etc. The campaign will again target private landowners to ensure a sustained effort to plant or replace invasive with indigenous species. The 2008 theme is built on the public awareness and support already generated by the campaign in 2006 and 2007.

For more information concerning events and program please visit the WeedBuster site at www.dwaf.gov.za/wfw or call our Toll Free Hotline on 0800 005 376.

National WeedBuster Week Calendar of Events

Eastern Cape			For	Contact
Alfred Nzo DM	7 October 2008	Ongeluksnek	Broader community, learners	(041) 586 4884
Amathole DM	10 October 2008	Keiskammahoek, Hogsback	Learner, Educators	
Ukhahlamba DM	7-12 October 2008	Ugie, Barkley East	Learners, educators	
OR Tambo DM	9-12 October 2008	Port St Johns, Mthatha, Lusikisiki	Learners, Educators, community	
Cacadu DM	6-7 October 2008	Kareedouw	Learners & Educators	
Cacadu DM	7-8 October 2008	Rocklands	Learners & educators	
Cacadu	8-9 October 2008	Grahamstown	Learners & educators	
KZN				
Msunduzi	8 October 2008	Royal show ground pmb	Broader community, learners	
Mandeni municipality	8 October 2008	Sundumbili primary mandeni	Clearing of Invasive Alien Plants with learners	
Vryheid municipality Zulu land District	6 October 2008	Ntaba primary school	Raising Awareness amongst learners	
Vryheid	8 October 2008	Kwagobeni pschool	Raising Awareness amongst learners	
Umkhanyakude	7 October 2008	Malusi primary school	Raising Awareness amongst learners	
Umkhanyakude	6 October 2008	Gwegwede primary school	Raising Awareness amongst learners	
Uthukela	6 October 2008	Ntubane school	Raising Awareness amongst learners	
Grey town	6 October 2008	Khanyisani cp school	Raising Awareness amongst learners	
Bergville	6 October 2008	Medosweat c.p school	Raising Awareness amongst learners	
ETHEKWINI	6-12 October 2008	Durban Airport	Broader community, learners	
Mandeni	6 October 2008	Mathonsi School	Raising Awareness amongst learners	
Mandeni	7 October 2008	Mgandeni high school	Raising Awareness amongst learners	
Ilembe district	6 October 2008	Tongaat, umvoti, dokodweni, and mandini toll plaza	Broader community, learners	
Mandeni	7 October 2008	Hlanganani Pschool	Raising Awareness amongst learners	
Stanger	9 October 2008	Imushane primary	Raising Awareness amongst learners	
Kwadukuza	6 October 2008	Kwadukuza	Assembly presentations at 5 schools	
Stanger	6-7 October 2008	Stanger manor library	Broader community, learners	
Stanger	13 October 2008	Dunga Psc and Itwane Pscl	Raising Awareness amongst learners	
	14 October 2008	Mandini pschool	Planting of indigenous trees	

National WeedBuster Week Calendar of Events

Northern Cape			For	Contact
Lejweleputswa	6th October 2008 - 10:00am	Verkeerdevlei plaza/ toll gate	Raising awareness about Invasive Alien Plants	(053) 802 0500
Xhariep municipality	6th October 2008 - 7:30am	Inoseng primary school	Raising awareness about Invasive Alien Plants	
Thabo Mofutsanyana	7th October 2008 - 7:30am	Ipolokeng primary school	Raising awareness about Invasive Alien Plants	
Thabo Mofutsanyana	7th October 2008 - 10:00am	Tshepano III public school	Raising awareness about Invasive Alien Plants	
Thabo Mofutsanyana	7th October 2008 - 12:00pm	Phaphamang Public school	Raising awareness about Invasive Alien Plants	
Xhariep municipality	7th October 2008 - 10:00am	Luckhoff combined school	Raising awareness about Invasive Alien Plants	
Lejweleputswa	7th October 2008 - 11:15am	Aramelo combined school	Raising awareness about Invasive Alien Plants	
Lejweleputswa	7th October 2008 - 13:30pm	Kegomoditswe primary school	Raising awareness about Invasive Alien Plants	
Lejweleputswa	7th October 2008 - 10:00am	Lekgaleng primary farm	Raising awareness about Invasive Alien Plants	
Fezile Dabi	15th October 2008 - 7:30am	Selogilwe intermediate school	Raising awareness about Invasive Alien Plants	
Fezile Dabi	15th October 2008 - 10:00am	Botjchabatsatsi intermediate school	Raising awareness about Invasive Alien Plants	
North West				
Dr. Ruth Mompoti District Municipality Ganyesa	6th October 2008	Bore Intermediate School	Raising awareness about Invasive Alien Plants	
Roodeplaat Dam	8th October 2008	Roodeplaat Dam	Raising awareness about Water Hyacinth	
Dr. Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality Mmabatho	9th October 2008	Ipeleng Primary School	Raising awareness about Invasive Alien Plants	
Dr. Kenneth Kaunda District Municipality Wolmaranstad	10th October 2008	Gontse Primary School	Raising awareness about Invasive Alien Plants	
Bojanala Platinum District Municipality Klipgat	14th October 2008	Klipgat Community Hall	Raising awareness about Invasive Alien Plants	



WWF Water Neutral Scheme

The WWF Water Neutral Scheme, a partnership between WWF South Africa and *Working for Water* programme that allows water users to quantitatively balance their water use account, is to launch what is believed to be the world's first fully quantitative water neutral scheme. The launch will take place on 8 October 2008 at the SAB Newlands Brewery.

Water Neutrality is an innovative scheme that allows participants to quantitatively balance their water-usage accounts through a three-step process of reviewing, reducing and replenishing water supplies.

Dr Deon Nel, Head of the WWF Sanlam Living Waters Partnership said: "The concept of water neutrality, based on its carbon equivalent, has been used loosely over the past years; however until, now no-one has been able to quantitatively justify these claims. We believe that our scheme is the first in the world that allows participants to truly claim to be water neutral."

He explained that participants will replenish water supplies by investing in projects that quantitatively supplement water supplies equal to their water usage. The *Working for Water* programme, which creates more than 30 000 much-needed employment opportunities in rural areas each year, is such a project. In partnership with *WfW* participants will invest in the clearing and rehabilitation of areas infested with water-intensive invasive alien trees.

"The impact of these invasive trees on our water resources cannot be overstated. South Africa loses more than 3,300 million kilolitres of water, the equivalent of 26 large dams, annually to these infestations. The fact that the project makes a significant contribution to job-creation and poverty alleviation makes it even more significant in the South African socio-economic context," Dr Nel added.

WWF is urging widespread investment in the scheme and believes that water should be top of mind for any major corporation that is planning a medium to long term future in this country. "If we wish to avert a 'water-shedding' scenario, the equivalent of 'load-shedding', we need to invest in water security now. Currently more than 98% of South Africa's available water supplies are allocated. With limited options left for new dams, ever-increasing demand due to economic growth and unfavourable climate change predictions, we need to think inno-

vatively about how we manage our water supplies."

Professor Kader Asmal, former Minister of Water Affairs and Forestry and now patron of the WWF Water Neutral Scheme, said "Water availability is one of the most decisive factors that will affect the economic development of this country. Water runs through every layer of our aspirations as a nation. By investing in the WWF Water Neutral Scheme, participants are investing in the future of our country, the well-being of our societies and the human rights and dignity of the most vulnerable."

A Water Neutral Calculator has been developed which determines the investment a company needs to make to become water neutral through the removal of invasive alien plants. The calculator is based on two principal input values:

1. The average amount of water 'replenished' through the clearing of a hectare of invasive alien plants and maintaining it in a rehabilitated state; and
2. The average cost of clearing a hectare of invasive alien plants and maintaining it in a rehabilitated state.

The amount of hectares of invasive alien trees that a water user would need to finance to be cleared to become water neutral, is therefore calculated by dividing the water user's 'water deficit' by the average amount of water replenished through the clearing of a hectare of invasive alien trees (2540m³/year).

Water users may choose how they wish to structure their water offsets over the first 10 years of the minimum 20 year investment period. Annual payments are then calculated using a matrix model constructed in Microsoft Excel.

For more information please contact Sarah-Leigh Paul of the WWF Sanlam Living Water Programme on 021 888 2820 or visit www.wwf.org.za.

Working for Water Empowers Communities

By Anelisa Zwelendaba

Working for Water delivered on its goal of providing socio-economic upliftment when it donated computer equipment to two needy communities.

Working for Water (WfW) recently handed over computer equipment to the Sir Lowry's Pass soup kitchen and Bright Lights non-profit organizations which depend on programmes such as *Working for Water* to make a better living for the poor. Social responsibility plays a huge role in *WfW* and shows that not only does it care for its natural resources but also for the people that live in this environment. Donations like these could create future employment for people who previously had no hope.

The Sir Lowry's Pass centre runs a soup kitchen from the railway station and feeds more than 200 people daily and Bright Lights is a centre which supplies a safe environment for children. Aside from their duties of feeding the poor, these centres still take the responsibility of creating an educational environment for the deprived.

The Sir Lowry's soup kitchen also runs an AIDS support group and support classes for children while Bright Lights supports children that are under poverty, street children that have nobody to guide them, child labour issues and dealing with orphans who got there because of HIV and AIDS. These are some of the main reasons *Working for Water* decided to donate 33 hard drives, 47 monitors and 16 printers to the centres and with the help of Execu Move Company who had the equipment delivered to the centre for free.

Social development is an integral part of *Working for Water*, which aims to alleviate poverty and dealing with HIV and AIDS issues. By donating the computer equipment to these centres, *Working for Water* means to support one of its initiatives.

"These computers will change the lives of these people for the better and its all thanks to the *Working for Water* programme", said Cecile Langenegger, Committee member of Sir Lowry's Soup Kitchen.

A clear message of long time sustainability was evident throughout the proceedings. It was evident that the computer equipment will help these children to develop themselves by creating a place where they can en-

WfW Takes A Walk On The Wildside

By Anelisa Zwelendaba

Working for Water exhibited at the Absa Kirkwood Wildsfees festival in the Eastern Cape recently.

The Absa Kirkwood Festival is an annual festival that aims to combine all aspects of wildlife to showcase various organizations. The festival was held in Sundaysriver Valley which is close to Addo Elephant Park an area in which the plantation of Spekboom (*Portucularia afra*) is growing intensively.

Working for Water (WfW) was situated in the "Take a Walk on the Wildside" exhibition whereby the target goal was to get landowners to participate in educating themselves about invasive alien plants (IAPs). Landowners were given the opportunity to learn to manage, control as well as identify IAPs on their land and to gain knowledge concerning what responsibilities they need to adhere to as farmers by introducing the CARA legislation to them at the exhibition.

The Kirkwood area is populated with farmers who struggle with controlling one of the most dominant IAPs in their land, the prickly pear (*Opuntia ficus-indica*). Recent studies have shown that over 1 million hectares of the Karoo and Eastern Cape were densely infested with Prickly Pear before *WfW* introduced the biological control method which managed to control the problem to an extent.

With annual events like these, *Working for Water* is now able to reach land owners and make them more aware of invasive alien plants on their land.

WfW continues to Inform, Educate and Entertain

By Anelisa Zwelendaba

Working for Water also exhibited at the XXIII International Congress of Entomology, one of the biggest science festivals in the world. This was the first time that the event was held in Africa and was hosted at the Durban International Convention Centre (ICC) in July 2008.

The event offered *Working for Water* programme the opportunity to showcase its scientific research internationally. The main purpose of the exhibition was to make people more aware of what the *Working for Water* programme does when using its clearing methods by introducing the different bio-control elements when clearing invasive alien plants.

During the week long exhibition the *WfW* programme partook in discussions held by various scientists and scholars. This provided the opportunity for *WfW* to observe what other countries are doing and also for the programme to provide awareness of the biological methods used on invasive alien plants, the focus of the exhibition.

Minister of Science and Technology, Dr Mosibudi Mangena made mention of *WfW* in his address and applauded the programme for its methods used in combating IAP species. "Managing the invasion is

being tackled through the programme called "*Working for Water*" which follows a dual approach of the physical removal of the plants by workers employed for this purpose, and the use of insects and pathogens as bio-control agents", Minister Mangena said.

By focusing on scientific research, the *WfW* was able to give detailed explanations as to how the clearing methods work especially the biological control which is the use of natural enemies, usually herbivorous insects to control invasive plants like the prickly pear (*Opuntia ficus-inica*) by using its host the cochineal insects.

"These control methods are effective, they reduce the cost of managing invasive plants substantially, we are encouraged that none of the agents introduced into South Africa have resulted in substantial damage to indigenous plants", said the Minister.

Through such conferences *WfW* continues to strive in meeting its mission and performing its duty of keeping up with latest trends and informing the public of effective yet safe ways in combating IAPs.

Please forward contributions to

FaredT@dwaf.gov.za or ZwellendabaA@dwaf.gov.za

For more information contact the *Working for Water* toll free information line on 0800-005-376

or visit our website www.dwaf.gov.za/wfw/ or send your queries to: wfw@dwaf.gov.za

To see pictures of invasive alien plants go to <http://www.agis.agric.za/wip/>