

The St Francis Conservancy Project



NEWSLETTER

January 2004

1ST STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP

A landowner and stakeholder workshop was held in December 2003 in St Francis Bay. The purpose of this workshop was to develop, in a participatory manner, a mission and vision for the St Francis Conservancy, and in doing so also generate additional buy-in for the Project.

The workshop was skillfully facilitated by Ms Kirsten Freckleton, of the Succulent Karoo Ecosystem Planning (SKEP) Project.

The mission statement that was developed at the workshop communicates the essence of the Conservancy and summarises the "what", "how", "why" and "for whom" questions.

Mission

"The St Francis Conservancy exists to preserve and restore the patterns and processes of this unique environment and inheritance to be shared for the benefit of current and future generations, through a collaborative self-sustaining venture involving all interested role players, managed primarily by landowners, with the help of specialists, according to conservation best practice principles and ethics."

The vision is more encompassing than the mission, and answers the question, "What will success look like?"

Vision

"St Francis Conservancy, a unique natural and cultural heritage, is preserved and restored by its custodians as a place of enrichment and inspiration for all."

In addition to developing a mission and vision, landowners and stakeholders were asked to identify key issues that require special attention. The most important of these were: alien vegetation eradication; conservation of natural vegetation; co-operation between landowners and local government; and co-operative management.



Working together - the workshop provided an opportunity for landowners and other stakeholders to develop a vision and mission for the St Francis Conservancy

A report on the workshop is available on request.

CONSERVANCY MANAGEMENT

The management structures of the St Francis Conservancy are now beginning to take shape. A Steering Committee has been formed. This committee consists of representatives from each of the major landowner groups, government officials and other stakeholders. The first meeting of this committee was held in November 2003.

The Steering Committee currently consists of:

Mrs Sandra Hardy / Mr Wrex Tarr
(Kromme Trust & Goed Geloof)

Adv. Rene van Rooyen / Dr Anton Bok / Dr Warwick Sauer

(Rebelsrus Private Nature Reserve)
Mrs Elizabeth Rautenbach
(Mostertshoek)

Mr Jan Rigaard / Mr Cas Terblanche
(Rocky Coast Farms)

Mr Jimmy Haupt
(Sand River Sanctuary)

Mr Derek Cook / Mr Brent Cook
(Thula-moya Coastal Reserve & The Dunes)

Mr Gert Greeff / Dr Francois Maritz / Mr Herman Stofberg

(Thyspunt & Oyster Bay)

Mrs Bronwyn Egan
(Kouga Municipality)

Mr Gerrie Ferreira / Mr Hennie de Beer / Mr Hennie
Swaenevelder
(Prov. Dept. Economic Affairs, Environment & Tourism)
Mr Des Green
(St Francis Coastal Open Space System)

The Steering Committee will be the highest management authority of the new conservancy and will be responsible for policy-level decisions. An Implementation Committee will be formed under the Steering Committee to deal with day-to-day management issues.

Minutes of the Steering Committee meetings are available on request.

FOURCADE BOTANICAL GROUP

Excellent progress has been made in the collection of data on rare and endemic plant species within the Conservancy planning domain. This is being undertaken in partnership with the Fourcade Botanical Group, under the Custodians of Rare and Endangered Wildlife (CREW) project of the National Botanical Institute.

Thus far, seventeen sites have been visited within the planning domain. The data captured during these visits will feed directly into the management plan for the area. In this way, management actions can be designed to account for important species with special management requirements.

The areas visited thus far include: Rebelsrus Private Nature Reserve, Thyspunt, the Sand River Sanctuary, Thula-moya Coastal Reserve and Rocky Coast Farms.

The Biodiversity Conservation Unit would like to thank Caryl Logie, Godfried Potgieter and the Fourcade Botanical Group for their amazing enthusiasm and commitment to this project.

MANAGEMENT PLAN

A second draft of the Interim Environmental Management Plan for the St Francis Conservancy has been released for stakeholder review.

Once comments have been received and incorporated, the plan will be finalized. Thereafter implementation projects – based on the recommendations of the plan – will be developed.

The plan is currently too large to send via e-mail, but efforts are being made to compress the file size. A record has been kept of individuals that have requested copies of the plan. These individuals will receive copies of the plan as soon as it can be e-mailed.



Globally significant conservation - The exquisite orchid *Satyrium hallackii* is found in the Conservancy planning domain. This species is listed as endangered, and may become extinct without conservation intervention.

UPCOMING PROJECT ACTIONS

- 1) Interested landowners will be requested by their Steering Committee representatives to sign a membership form for the Conservancy. Included with this membership form will be an information pack that contains background on the proposal, a copy the draft constitution for the Conservancy and relevant legislation.
- 2) A proposal will be made to the Provincial Department of Economic Affairs, Environment & Tourism to formally declare the Conservancy.
- 3) A website for the Conservancy will be launched. This website will be updated regularly and will inform landowners and other stakeholder of progress in the Project.
- 4) Approval is being sought for official conservancy signage (i.e. the guineafowl conservancy logo) to be erected. Once this is obtained, the official signage will be erected at key points around the Conservancy.



LOMAS WILDLIFE
PROTECTION TRUST



BIODIVERSITY
CONSERVATION UNIT

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