



## LAUNCH OF NGO PARTNERSHIP TO IMPLEMENT HIGH-IMPACT CONSERVATION ACTION IN FRESHWATER AND POVERTY PRIORITY AREAS

20<sup>th</sup> March 2013

**Start**

This 2014 National Water Week the Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT), Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa (WESSA), and Conservation South Africa (CSA) are proud to announce the launch of a European Union (EU) funded project that will focus on natural resource conservation and management for the generation of a water-linked green-economy in the Eastern Cape and southern KwaZulu-Natal.

“The project will address challenges around water security, poverty alleviation and the value of freshwater investment scenarios in three priority sites: the Amathole, uMzimvubu and uMzimkulu catchments in South Africa. Our key objectives are to improve natural resource protection and management; to empower communities to value the natural resources under their custodianship; and to empower communities to enter the green economy through the development of sustainable alternative livelihoods. We are certain that this alliance of three local NGOs with such in-depth knowledge and understanding of the issues within the region will ensure the success of the project,” said Bridget Corrigan, Manager of the EWT’s Source to Sea Programme.

The project will build on on-going work in the catchments and will upscale conservation efforts already underway in these sites. Specific outcomes for the next 4 years include:

- At least 6 000 ha of critical wetlands and riparian zones in selected priority sites secured under formal stewardship status for key biodiversity and water service functions
- At least 20,000 ha of degraded rangeland and riparian zones in the selected priority sites placed under improved natural resource management
- Two thousand four hundred hectares of land already cleared of Invasive Alien Plants maintained through follow-up treatment within community stewardship agreements
- At least eight households receiving regular income through bee-keeping initiatives
- Four households receiving annual income through employment of community-driven Eco-Rangers
- At least 80 households benefiting from Invasive Alien Plant clearing and rehabilitation employment
- Sixteen schools participating in the Eco-Schools programme and undertaking environmental learning and contextual action projects

The project will be working closely with schools, school-leavers, municipalities, communities, industry and various tiers of government to educate the youth in environmental issues, provide skills development for adult-learners, capacitate local municipalities and develop sustainable micro-enterprises to enable communities to join the Green Economy.

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The Endangered Wildlife Trust is a non-profit, public benefit organisation dedicated to conserving species and ecosystems in southern Africa to the benefit of all people.

**NPO Number:** 015-502, **PBO number:** 930 001 777, **Member of IUCN** - The International Union for Conservation of Nature  
The Endangered Wildlife Trust is US 501(c)(3) compliant under **US IRS Registration number:** EMP98-0586801.



On the African continent there are approximately 345 million people without access to clean, usable water. Surveys from 45 developing countries show that women and children bear the primary responsibility for water collection in the majority of households. This is time not spent working at an income-generating job, caring for family members, or attending school. Globally, women spend 200 million hours a day collecting water. Every 21 seconds, a child dies from a water-related illness. There is therefore no denying the importance of having access to potable water and how crucial it is for our survival, our health and our progress.

“Within the uMzimvubu catchment, CSA is working with Traditional Authorities and Municipalities to enable local communities to realize the protection of thousands of hectares of National Freshwater Ecosystem Priority Area (NFEPA) wetlands that are a source of water for two million people downstream. Communities are showing huge interest in becoming custodians of wetlands while clear benefits such as job creation through clearing of invasive vegetation are tied to these agreements,” said Sinegugu Zukulu, Manager of CSA’s uMzimvubu Green Economy Demonstration site.

“WESSA’s focus in this partnership is to enhance human capacity or capability for improved catchment management and stewardship through various education processes and interventions such as the Eco-Schools programme, accredited courses and awareness-raising. These initiatives will engage local youth, communities and local authorities with situated learning opportunities and projects that address some of the environmental challenges facing the three different catchments,” said Laura Conde-Aller, WESSA’s programme manager.

“We are extremely excited about this partnership and this project because it is a concerted, large scale and focused response to the increasingly alarming water situation in the Amathole, uMzimvubu and uMzimkulu catchments. We are approaching the project holistically and we are confident that real changes will be made in terms of habitat rehabilitation, species preservation and community development,” concluded Corrigan.

For further information about the project please contact Bridget Corrigan on [bridgetc@ewt.org.za](mailto:bridgetc@ewt.org.za)

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### **About the Endangered Wildlife Trust**

The Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT) is dedicated to conserving threatened species and ecosystems in southern Africa to the benefit of all people. Our Vision is a healthy planet and an equitable world that values and sustains diversity of all life. The EWT was established in 1973 and is registered as a Non-Profit Organisation. The EWT fills the key niche of on the ground conservation action. We identify the key factors threatening biodiversity and develop innovative methodologies and best practice guidelines to reduce these and promote harmonious co-existence and sustainable living for both people and wildlife. We achieve our goals through specialist programmes, and our skilled field staff are deployed regionally and throughout southern Africa. The EWT is a proud member of the International Union for Conservation of Nature and the United Nations Global Compact. Visit [www.ewt.org.za](http://www.ewt.org.za) for further information.

### **About Conservation South Africa (CSA)**

CSA is a South African, Conservation, Public Benefit Organisation and an affiliate of Conservation International (CI). CSA is committed to helping societies adopt a more sustainable approach to development—one that considers and values nature at every turn. For more information, visit [www.conservation.org/southafrica](http://www.conservation.org/southafrica), and follow us on Twitter: @ConservationOrg or Facebook: [www.facebook.com/conservation.intl](http://www.facebook.com/conservation.intl)

### **About the Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa (WESSA)**

WESSA is a South African environmental organisation with a mission to implement high impact environmental and conservation projects which promote public participation in caring for the Earth. With 87 year history, WESSA has a strong track record of delivering human capacity development projects by working in strategic partnerships, thus enabling people to make more sustainable lifestyle and environmental management choices. Critical focus areas include life-supporting ecosystems such as water, energy and biodiversity. For more information, visit [wessa.org.za](http://wessa.org.za).

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