

MEETING NOTES – 2 DECEMBER 2014  
PLETTENBERG BAY COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT FORUM MEETING  
HELD AT THE ANGLICAN CHURCH FROM 09h30 – 11h30

1. Welcome

Dr. Gwen Penry was welcomed to the meeting. She is a Marine Mammal researcher (her PhD research was done on the Bryde's Whale) and hosts pelagic birding trips launching from main beach. She is also interested in the EIA process and has done a course to become an EIA practitioner.

2. Apologies

Maretha Alant, Chris Behrens, Mark Brown, Annabelle Connyngham, Jenny Gardy, Di Grant, Erwin Leibnitz, Kerry Schurmann, Anton Wolfaardt.

3. Present

An attendance register was circulated.

4. Acceptance of previous meeting notes

Paul Falla accepted the previous minutes and Angus Greig seconded it.

5. Additions to the agenda

5.1 Anath complaint (refer to section 8.3)

5.2 Republic of Extra Cold event (refer to section 8.4)

6. Member updates

**Redford Conservancy:** Anton sent an update via email to say that he has been in contact with the engineer with regards to pollutants going down the furrow at the truck stop construction in the Craggs and he was assured that they are under the strictest regulations to look after the environment. He is still awaiting feedback on the specific measures being put in place to prevent pollutants from the truck stop from washing down the furrow.

**Southern Craggs Conservancy:** Progress is being made with their alien clearing project.

**Ratepayers Association:** The proposed bylaw with regards to the Keurbooms Estuary has been submitted and approved by council. The next step before the bylaw can be passed is that it needs to be published.

**ORCA:** A clean-up operation was held, along with the Nature's Valley Trust and grade 7 learners from Kurland Primary School, in Kurland Village and the Craggs

area. Some sections could not be cleaned by the group as there was hazardous waste and disposable nappies. They also discovered illegal dump sites in the Craggs.

**Eden to Addo:** The previous Eastern Cape Coordinator (Rob Malcolm) has resigned and the Western Cape Coordinator (Pam Booth) is coordinating Eden to Addo's Alien Clearing project. As such, Dick Carr has been appointed (from January 2015) to work as a project coordinator for the whole region. The alien clearing project is progressing well. Due to the isolated location of the alien clearing work a satellite phone was acquired to improve safety of the team. All the paper work for the establishment of the Robberg Coastal Corridor has been submitted to the MEC so it will hopefully soon be formalised.

**Bitou Valley Foundation:** Guide training is planned for January. A selection process will be followed to identify the potential trainees. A co-operative work space is also being established next to the food garden in Green Valley.

## 7. Matters arising

### 7.1. Proposed Rezoning: Portion 80 of Farm 293, Knysna Division

The Forum submitted comments and objected to the rezoning application from "Agriculture Zone 1" to "Special Zone: Rural Conservation" as it will set a negative precedent for the area. Rezoning is not required for the proposed permaculture farming activities planned and additional units can still be applied for but the number of units/density will be determined by the "Agriculture Zone 1" specifications. The forest is already protected by law so there is not a specific need to designate it under a special Conservation Area for protection. In addition to the rezoning objection, the Forum made comments and suggestions on specific issues as presented in the motivation report for the application e.g. additional information required on the water and sewerage solutions proposed.

### 7.2. Residential dwelling: Portion 3 of 447 Ganse Valle

The Forum did not object to the application but did request that effort is made to ensure that any *Brunsvigia* plants on the construction site are rescued.

### 7.3. Estuary embankment activity: Portion 136 of 304 Matjes Fontein and Erf 775, Keurbooms River

The Forum has not received any further feedback or information from the property owner or the environmental practitioners but on query to the S24G sub-directorate (DEA&DP) it was indicated that a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) will be made available in due course (no specific date was given). The Forum will send a letter to the Western Cape Minister of Environmental Affairs to appeal the Directive issued to stabilise the bank, to complain about the process being followed and to highlight current and possible legal infringements that is not covered by the Directive and will possibly not be covered by the S24G EIR e.g. draining of the wetland.

7.4. Car park: Portion 91 of 304 Matjes Fontein, Keurboomstrand (opposite Milkwood Glen)

The KPOA held extensive meetings with various role players and agreed to the way forward (primarily affected bodies within the village and the municipalities' relevant persons). They insist that the issue is a village problem and as the municipality is the responsible body for these planning type issues that affect the village, for various reasons, the focus should be contained to that area. The relevant home owners have been contacted by the municipality and agreements will be sorted out between them. Working together seems to be the way forward. The municipality has been charged with due care over season especially with traffic control and calming measures. There is currently no formal application for Portion 91.

7.5. Section 24G application: Farms 491 and portion 10 of Doukama 221, Wittedrift (Bitou River Pipeline installation)

Both the Forum and the Bitou Valley Foundation appealed the decision that approved the installation of a pipeline to extract water. The appeal is on the grounds that the Forum believes that the department has condoned the illegal installation of the pipeline prior to considering the impacts that will result from the abstraction of water from the system on the Bitou River, the Bitou Wetland and the Keurbooms Estuary. The Forum holds that no decision regarding abstraction from the Bitou system should be made before appropriate studies have been done; the amount of water allocated for extraction needs to be verified and validated and a reserve determination for the Bitou Wetland and Keurbooms Estuary should be undertaken.

7.6. Whale watching operators and Jet Ski's

An article for the CXpress was drafted.

7.7 Swop-Shop

R100 000 (from the Bitou LED) for the Swop-Shops in the Bitou region has been paid into the Forum's account. The Kurland Swop-Shop is being launched. A container has been hired and a scale has been purchased for this shop.

7.8 Small Boat Harbour

It has been agreed by the committee that any additional funds paid into the Small Boat Harbour account, following the appeal for funding to cover the last legal costs, will be split between the Environmental Forum and the Ratepayers Association.

7.9 Wadrift Dam

The Ratepayers Association had a meeting with Pikkie Lombard and the public works department and went with them to the proposed site to discuss the plans

for the storage dam. It appears that the proposed pipeline between Plett and Sedgfield will not be built as it is not deemed to be viable. One member feels that a study needs to be done to determine the permeability of the possible fault lines in the proposed dam area. At this stage it appears that the storage dam will probably have to be built in 5 to 10 years' time as the Keurbooms River will not be able to directly supply the rising demand. It was discussed during the Forum meeting that there are many other alternatives to first consider to alleviate water issues, before having to resort to building a dam. The importance of a reserve determination was emphasised, before the construction of the dam.

## 8. New applications and issues

### 8.1 Proposed rezoning, subdivision & consent use: Portions 12 of Farm Matjesfontein No. 304, district of Knysna, in Bitou Municipality

A large part of the property is either coastal dune or wetland. There is a concern with regards to the density of units being planned when taking into consideration the sensitivity of the site. The Forum will consider the feedback from DEA&DP, SANParks and CapeNature on other proposals along the Dune corridor when formulating their comments. At this stage it also appears that no EIA is being planned so this will be queried with DEA&DP due to the sensitivity of the site.

### 8.2 Proposed rezoning, departure and amendment of subdivision layout: Erf 151 and 155, Keurboomstrand

The proposal will be considered to determine what is being planned before the Forum will decide if they need to comment or not. An area of concern with this site is to ensure that no further development take place into the forest surrounding the property.

### 8.3 Anath Complaint

A letter addressed to the Forum was read at the meeting as was requested in the letter. The letter indicates that the Forum is in support of the current tenant living on the property and that CapeNature will not be able to take over the management of the property until the tenant vacates the property. It was clarified during the meeting that this is not true. The Forum will follow up with CapeNature with regards to what the intention is for the property and what the next steps will be e.g. ensure that the property stays accessible to the public.

### 8.4 Republic of Extra Cold Event

There was a concern that the Keurbooms Estuary Management Forum was not consulted during the planning of the event (planned for 29 December 2014) on Stanley Island. Julie Carlisle was involved with the planning and developed an environmental management plan for the event. This management plan was stipulated by the municipality as a condition of approval. CapeNature was also

consulted and they will monitor the event. Letters of support for the event were also provided by neighbouring landowners. It was agreed that a meeting would be arranged with the event organisers (Nature Sport) to discuss potential issues e.g. fake snow, sewerage solution, waste management, trampling and breeding birds.

## 9. General

### 9.1 Meeting with the Municipality

During the meeting it was discussed that a meeting should be arranged with the municipality to discuss certain matters of concern including the following:

- The way forward with regards to the upgrading of Central beach.
- Municipal representation at Forum meetings.
- Consultation of relevant organisations when environmental decisions are taken e.g. the Keurbooms Estuary Forum for the Republic of Extra Cold event.
- The appointment of an Environmental Officer for Bitou Municipality.

## 10. Announcements

10.1 Plett Hope Spot Launch – The Lookout Deck on 8 December 2014

10.2 Boere-Brocante Fundraiser – Ouland Royale on 16 December 2014

## 11. Date of next meeting

3 February 2015