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HOEDSPRUIT COMMUNITY CONSERVATION NEWS & ADVERTISER

STAND UP, MARULENG

One voice. One community. A future we build together

MASCC
MARULENG AFFECTED STAKEHOLDERS & COMMUNITY CONSORTIUM
IN UNITY WE GROW TOGETHER

Mark Bishop

Somewhere above Pilgrim's Rest, men funded by this community are working through the night to stop poison flowing into the river that runs past your door. Most of us don't know they exist. That is about to change.

By the time you read this, the Maruleng Affected Stakeholders and Community Consortium (MASCC) will have held its inaugural AGM. Its first elected board will be published on mascc.org.za. Mark the moment.

Because This Place is Worth It

We chose to live here. Some of us were born here, some came for the bush, the rivers, the space and the people. Some came to build a business or raise a family. All of us stay because this corner of the Lowveld is unlike anywhere else.

We believe a community that wants something better should not sit and wait for it. It should organise, stand up and build it.

Because be honest about where we are. Too many of the things that keep a community working have been left to slide: roads, water, services, and the land and rivers around us. Most of us have phoned, emailed, logged the complaint, and waited. Then waited again.

Nobody is coming to fix it for us. So, we fix it ourselves, together.

One Voice, Backed by Knowledge and Numbers

Individual complaints get lost. A united, organised community does not. One resident is a reference number. A thousand residents, farmers and businesses, speaking with one voice, are a constituency that cannot be ignored.

That is how MASCC works. It is not a protest group, and it is not a political party; it is apolitical by design. It deals with Maruleng Local Municipality constructively, with facts, persistence and numbers behind it.

Behind those numbers sits real knowledge: people versed in the law, who understand how municipal systems work and where they fail. Every complaint is documented. Every dispute is tracked. Recorded complaints become evidence, and evidence gathered across a whole district becomes leverage.

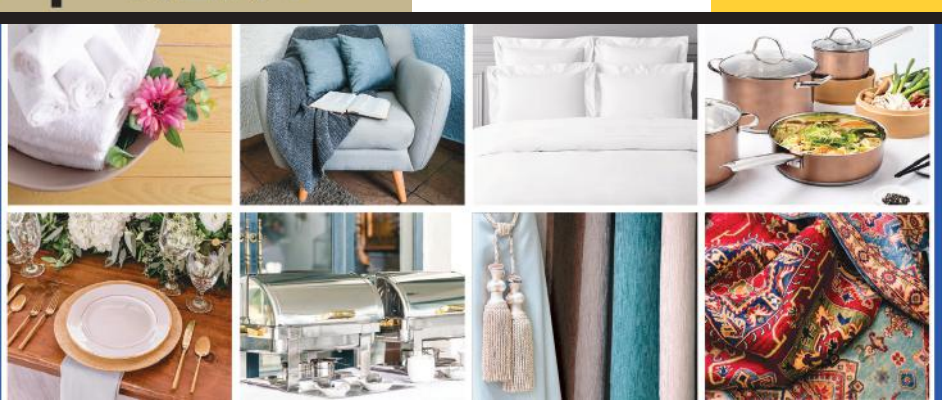
MASCC works with others, not against them: with the municipality, with councillors and traditional leaders, and with Farmwatch. It is funded by its members, which means it answers to its members.

Cont. on page 4

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From the Editor

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One Day, Any Life: Lowveld Academy Leads

Here's the story telling competition update.

Every story starts with a blank page and one question: what happens next? Our *A Day in the Life of…* competition hands young writers that page and asks them to fill it. Any character. Any world. One day.

So far, Lowveld Academy has set the pace. Its learners have sent in more entries than any other school, and their commitment shows, in the number of stories and in the effort behind them. Well done to the pupils, and to the teachers who encouraged them to try.

The field is still wide open, and we'd love to see more schools take part this month. A story doesn't need to be long or perfect. It needs a character worth following and a day worth telling. A honey badger plotting a raid on a camp kitchen. A girl who wakes up able to understand the birds outside her window. A grandfather's last day before he retires. The idea is yours.

Writing a story costs nothing and gives back plenty: the fun of inventing, the surprise of where a character takes you, and the pride of finishing something entirely your own.

To everyone who has entered so far: congratulations. You've done the hard part. Now, who will take home the R1,000 book voucher?

How to enter?
Check out the advert below!

There will only be **one winner**, selected overall from the entries. The Editor's decision is final. The prize is non-transferable and cannot be redeemed for cash. Winners will be announced in the December 2026 edition of Kruger2Canyon News.

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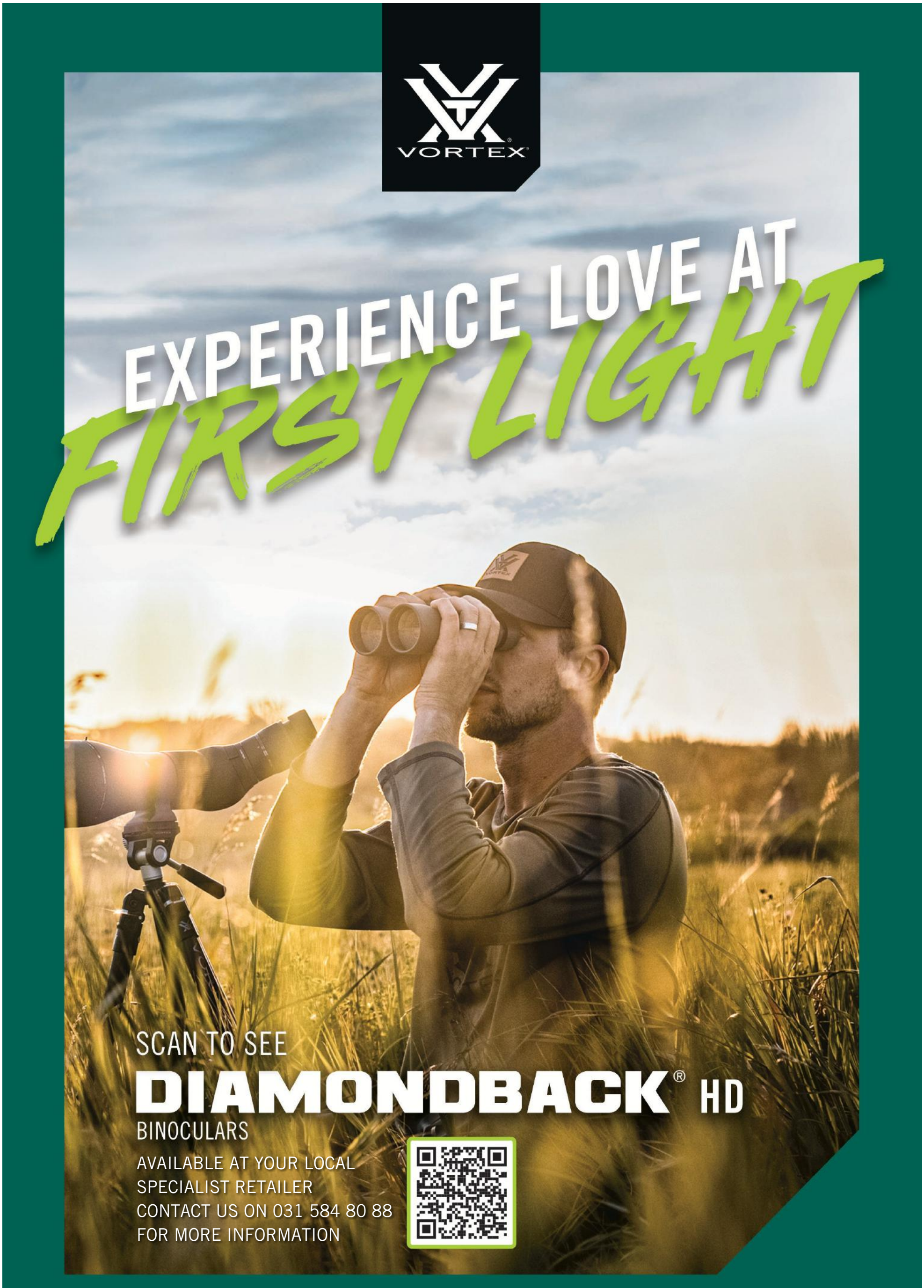
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STAND UP, MARULENG

One voice. One community. A future we build together

Cont. from page 1

Its stated aims: strengthen communities, protect the environment, improve service delivery, encourage participation, build partnerships and find lasting solutions.

Work Already Under Way

Around the table. Earlier this month MASCC met the municipality, councillors and traditional leaders. It followed that with a very well attended public participation meeting in Hoedspruit.

Disputes and billing

Homeowners and businesses with service-delivery disputes can now download a standard form from MASCC's website. Complaints are documented properly, carry weight and are tracked until resolved.

Clearance figures

No property here can be transferred without a rates clearance figure from the municipality. Property owners and sellers across the area report that these figures have been calculated incorrectly for years, and that those who overpaid have not been refunded. Alone, a seller pays and moves on. Together, with legal knowledge behind them, owners can challenge the calculations, demand corrections and pursue what is owed.

Roads, water and sanitation

Potholes damage vehicles, slow deliveries, frighten off tourists and put lives at risk after dark. Outages and failing sewage systems are health risks that cost businesses money every day. A body representing hundreds of ratepayers can map the problems, report them collectively and keep them on the agenda until they are fixed.

Safety

Hoedspruit has earned a reputation as one of the safest towns in the country. That did not happen by accident. It is the work of Farmwatch and the residents, farmers and security partners behind it. MASCC will work alongside Farmwatch to protect that record and build on it. Dark streets, broken infrastructure and neglected land are where crime finds its opening.

The local economy

Tourism, agriculture and small business carry this region. When services fail, they pay first. MASCC protects the conditions every employer and every job depends on.

The Blyde

This is MASCC's most striking work so far.

The Blyde River rises on the escarpment near Pilgrim's Rest and flows down to the Blydepoort Dam, past Hoedspruit and on into the Olifants River and the Kruger National Park. It waters farms, feeds tourism and sustains wildlife all the way down. What happens up there does not stay up there.

For several years, illegal gold miners have worked its banks and the surrounding hills, processing their ore with mercury and cyanide. Government has acknowledged it on record. The Department of Mineral and Petroleum Resources has named the catchment around Pilgrim's Rest an illegal mining hotspot. The Department of Water and Sanitation has told Parliament that dirty processing water flows straight back into the river. Arrests have come and gone. The mining has carried on.

So MASCC acted. It funds a dedicated anti-mining task force: an experienced team that has spent recent months working the river by day and night, in hard country, against people prepared to defend their trade with weapons.

The results are real. The team has cleared a long stretch of river between Bourke's Luck and Pilgrim's Rest. It has shut down mining sites that operated openly for years and pushed the miners off the river. It reports the water is already running clearer, with formal sample results to follow. Along the way, it has helped local farmers deal with stock theft and poisoning. All of this with very little.

But clearing a river is one thing. Keeping it clear is another. Without sustained pressure, the miners will wait, learn and return. The task force needs more people and better transport for the years ahead.

Your Part

MASCC's strength is its membership, and nothing else.

Individuals pay R100 a month, less than a tank of fuel lost to a pothole. Business and organisation categories are available, and supporter membership is free. Application forms are online in English and Afrikaans.

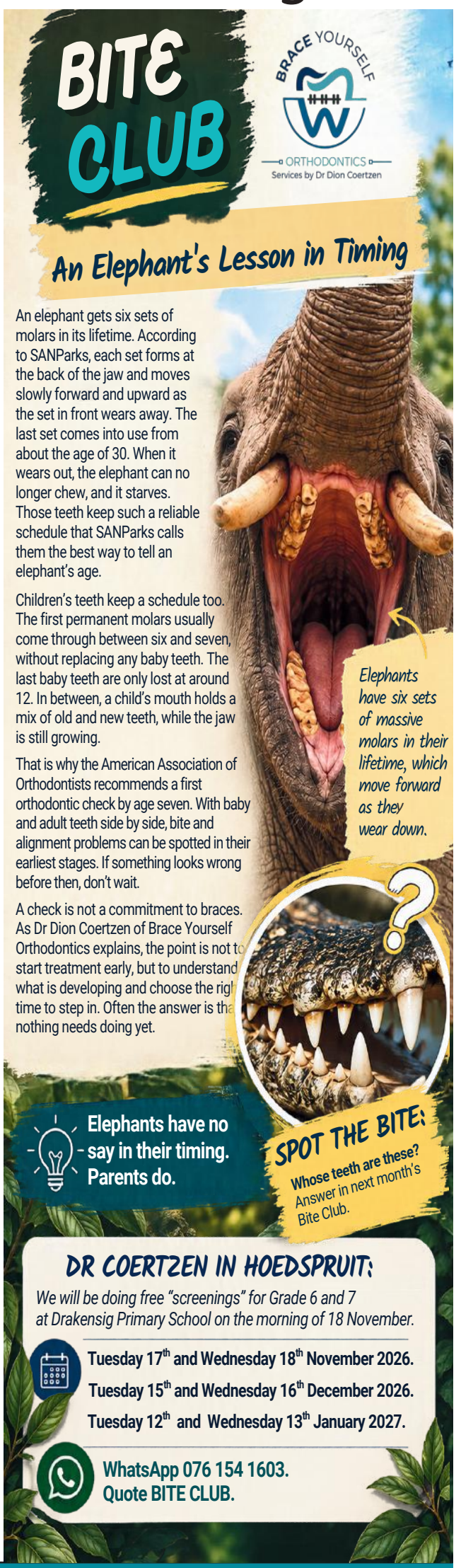
Let's be blunt. Every pothole fixed, every account corrected and every kilometre of river cleared benefits every one of us, members or not. Don't be the one who rides on everyone else's effort. Don't be a hanger-on. Don't sponge off the people giving their time, their money and, on the river, their safety. If you live here, farm here or do business here, you have a stake. Pay your share.

We are known as one of the safest towns in the country. Now let's become the greatest.

The Blyde, the roads, the water in our taps: they belong to all of us, and so does the job of looking after them.

In unity we are strong. In unity we are a voice. In unity we move forward. In unity we become great.

Join at mascc.org.za, email: info@mascc.org.za or admin@mascc.org.za, or call 060 696 5242. It's time to get involved.



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Physical Address:
Khayagelo Business Suites
Main Road (R527)
Hoedspruit

Contact Information:
Phone :015 793 1534
E-Mail :hoedspruit@century21.co.za
Website :www.century21wildlife.co.za

CENTURY 21® Wildlife



HOEDSPRUIT WILDLIFE ESTATE — R 4 500 000
Beds 2 | Baths 2 | Floor size: 110 m²

Furnished home with open-plan living flowing onto the pool, boma and braai area. Features upstairs patio, study nook, sundowner deck, storeroom and single carport. The bedrooms have air-conditioning and ceiling fans throughout. Recently re-thatched with mesh protection and freshly repainted.

Jason Jones - 083 267 4794 Ref: 2563728



HOEDSPRUIT WILDLIFE ESTATE - COMMERCIAL — R 26 000 000
Beds 9 | Baths 10

Outstanding lodge opportunity across two greenbelt stands can accommodate 22 guests. Includes owner's residence, multiple luxury self-catering cottages, two pools, and bomas. Fully furnished, solar-powered, and income generating. Exceptional turnkey business.

Carika Fox - 071 911 9940 Ref: 2473536



MODITLO WILDLIFE ESTATE — R 8 700 000
Beds 3 | Baths 3 | Floor size: 318 m²

Furnished bushveld home with exceptional mountain views, high ceilings and modern finishes. Open-plan living flows onto a covered patio with built-in braai, pool and timber decking. Features a separate scullery and pantry, private bedroom decks, and baboon-proof mesh screens.

Michelle Severin - 083 469 3821 Ref: 2565759



LISSATABA NATURE RESERVE — R 4 750 000
Beds 3 | Baths 3 | Floor: 260 m²

Renovated home features four separate thatch buildings and a carport. Main living space boasts double-volume glass windows, flowing to a patio with a rock plunge pool and sweeping views. Three en-suite bedrooms with private decks, and outdoor showers. Include an 8kVa inverter system.

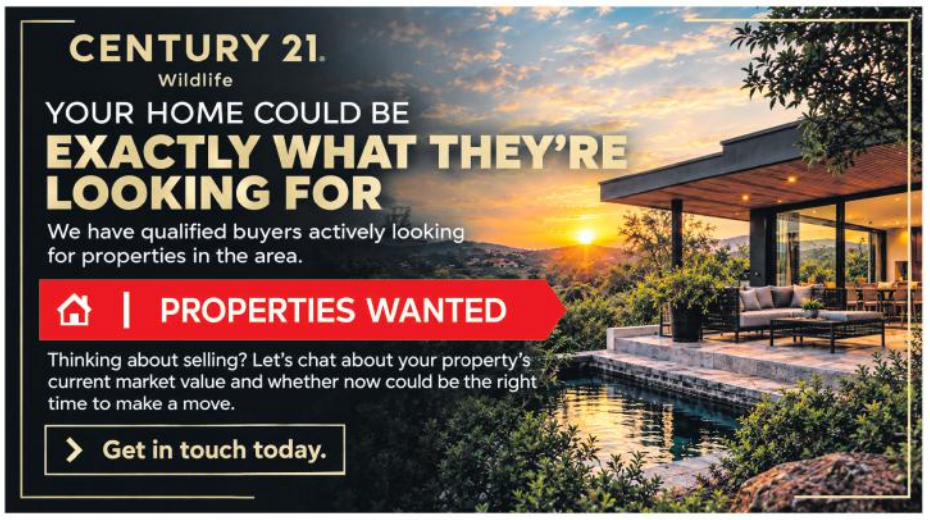
Rob Severin - 083 469 3820 Ref: 2484473



COMMERCIAL LODGE: KAMPERSRUS — R 12 500 000
Beds 14 | Baths 14 | Floor: 1484m²

This popular lodge can sleep 28 guests. Main area has a bar, pool, and dining area. Multiple self-catering units (cabins, tents, chalets). Includes staff quarters and storage. Approved plans and COC's done. Sold furnished as going concern via share transfer. Financials available on request, with NDA.

Michelle Severin - 083 469 3821 Ref: 2486485

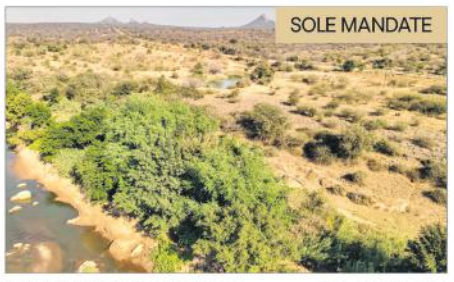




NDLOVUMZI NATURE RESERVE — R 3 550 000
Beds 3 | Baths 5 | Floor: 240 m²

Established bush camp with three thatch and rock chalets, communal bush kitchen and dining area, storerooms, pool and lapa. Features a private waterhole, electrified fencing, employee accommodation, covered carport and two boreholes with JoJo tank and pressure pump.

Jason Jones - 083 267 4794 Ref: 2566855



ELEPHANT ROCK ECO ESTATE — R 1 250 000
Stand size: 2,400 m²

Exceptional stand with indigenous vegetation, escarpment views and close proximity to a well-stocked bass fishing dam. Enjoy access to Olifants river frontage with scenic picnic spots and viewpoints. Flexible building guidelines, security and gravel roads. Pet-friendly estate.

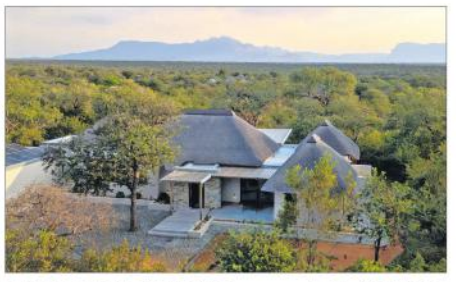
Calin Leppan - 082 824 9482 Ref: 2521127



EKUTHULENI, near HOEDSPRUIT — R 3 800 000
Beds 3 | Baths 2 | Floor: 104 m²

Furnished riverside chalet with beautiful Olifants River views. Features open-plan living, kitchen, sleeping loft and private swimming pool, braai and boma area. Ideal as a weekend getaway or holiday accommodation investment. Share block ownership; cash buyers only.

Carika Fox - 071 911 9940 Ref: 2566898



ZANDSPRUIT BUSH & AERO ESTATE — R 14 450 000
Beds 3 | Baths 2 | Floor: 422 m²

Stylish home in a secure estate with open-plan living, high-end finishes and mountain views. Living area flows to a covered patio, pool, braai and boma. Modern kitchen with separate scullery and double garage (2.6m clearance). Features include solar system, security cameras & fibre connectivity.

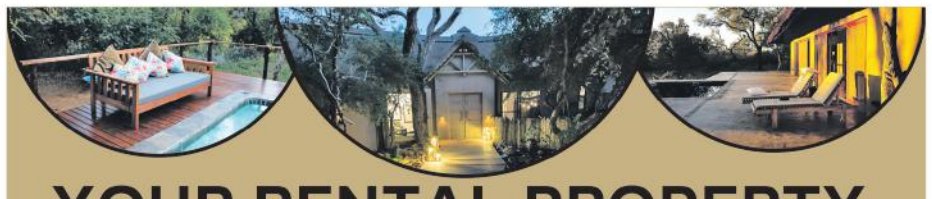
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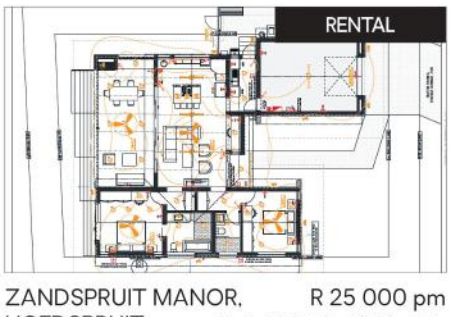


EKUTHULENI, near HOEDSPRUIT - COMMERCIAL — R 21 800 000

Six fully furnished holiday chalets sleeping up to 36 guests. Four offer direct Olifants River views, while two are privately set among natural rock formations and indigenous trees. Each has a private pool, patio, braai and boma. Share block ownership; conventional mortgage financing unavailable.

Carika Fox - 071 911 9940 Ref: 2567439





ZANDSPRUIT MANOR, HOEDSPRUIT — R 25 000 pm
Beds 2 | Baths 2 | No Pets

Brand-new home **available soon**, subject to completion of the build. Features open-plan living, study nook, modern scullery, gas hob, electric oven and covered patio with built-in braai. Includes single garage and contemporary finishes. Completion and occupation dates may vary.

Natasha van Nelson - 071 652 9140 Ref: 2560825



MAIN ROAD, HOEDSPRUIT COMMERCIAL OFFICE SPACE — R 11 500 pm
70 m²

Available immediately - Ideal for office-based professionals, this first floor office space has excellent visibility from the R527. Separate secure entrance with intercom, shared kitchen and bathroom facilities, water included, pre-paid electricity. Fibre connectivity is available.

Natasha van Nelson - 071 652 9140 Ref: 2499518

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Conservation Delivers Billions for Economy and Communities in Greater Kruger

LOCALS ONLY

As Kruger National Park prepares to celebrate its centenary in 2026, a new socio-economic impact report has revealed the substantial contribution that conservation is making to jobs, tourism, local economies and community development across the Greater Kruger landscape.

The Greater Kruger Socio-Economic Impact 2024/25 Report, covering 16 protected areas linked to the Kruger National Park through the Greater Limpopo Transfrontier Conservation Area (GLTFCA) Cooperative Agreement, shows that conservation is generating significant economic and social returns while protecting one of Africa's most important wildlife landscapes.

Spanning more than 2.3 million hectares, the Greater Kruger network comprises over 550 landowners and 170 commercial enterprises.

According to the report, protected area management expenditure totalled R1.82 billion during the reporting period, with 85% spent within the local province, supporting businesses and livelihoods. Security and anti-poaching operations accounted for approximately one-third of conservation management budgets.

Tourism remained a major economic driver, generating R5.26 billion in visitor spending and recording 1.93 million bed nights. International visitors accounted for 76% of all bed nights, while average occupancy reached 55%, well above the national accommodation sector average of 40.7%.

The report found that conservation and tourism directly support 8,341 jobs, of which 92% are permanent. Tourism alone supports an estimated 14,299 full-time equivalent jobs nationally, contributing R2.5 billion to the country's economy. Protected area management supports a further 11,384 jobs and contributes R1.5 billion in gross value added. Combined activities generate an estimated R641 million in tax revenue.

Commenting on the findings, Mr Oscar Mthimkhulu, Chairperson of the Joint Management Committee (JMC) and Managing Executive of Kruger National Park, said the report highlights the growing importance of conservation as a driver of socio-economic development.

"This report shows that conservation in the Greater Kruger landscape contributes significantly to jobs and the local economy. We must build on this evidence to strengthen collaboration and ensure neighbouring communities share in these benefits."

Beyond economic contributions, the report highlights at least R44.83 million in social investment, supporting education, skills development and community upliftment initiatives.

Among the success stories featured are the Klaserie Private Nature Reserve's Eco Children Programme, which has established eight school libraries, the Timbavati Foundation's Careers in Conservation Expo, which introduced more than 400 learners to career opportunities in the wildlife economy, and Ukuthunga Handmade, a non-profit that supports more than 60 women from rural communities bordering the park.

Community surveys conducted among the 2.9 million people living around the Greater Kruger revealed strong support for conservation, with between 80% and 97% of respondents valuing wildlife protection. However, many residents also expressed concerns about unemployment, with 74% to 89% identifying a lack of jobs as the primary driver of poverty, while many respondents called for greater socio-economic investment alongside conservation efforts.

The report concludes that conservation in the Greater Kruger is increasingly embracing a community-centred approach that balances wildlife protection with socio-economic development. It also notes that the findings likely underestimate the sector's true impact, as many tourism businesses operating beyond the open system were not included in the study.

As Kruger National Park approaches its 100th anniversary, the report underscores a growing reality: conservation is not only safeguarding biodiversity but also creating jobs, stimulating economic growth and improving lives across the Greater Kruger landscape. Through stronger partnerships between protected areas, government, the private sector and communities, the benefits of conservation can continue to expand for both people and nature.

Power of Attorney: It's Not What You Think

Marteen Michau

When a family member becomes either physically or mentally unable to deal with their own financial affairs, those closest to them are often faced with a difficult legal situation. South African law doesn't provide for an enduring power of attorney – if the person who granted it can no longer act legally, it will lapse, presenting problems for those responsible for their loved one's welfare.

The time might come when – due to old age, an illness, stroke or dementia – your loved ones are no longer able to manage their own finances and estate. Many people believe that either a general or special power of attorney will entitle an agent, such as a close family member, to act on an incapacitated individual's behalf. What they don't realise, however, is that under South African law, if your loved one is no longer able to make his or her own decisions, the power of attorney will fall away.

Unlike in some other countries, South African law doesn't provide for what's known as an 'enduring power of attorney' which continues after the individual who granted it (the principal) has become incapable of acting legally. Under our law, the agent can never have more powers than the principal, so if the latter is no longer of sound mind, the agent's power of attorney will become void.

This clearly leaves those looking after a loved one who has lost mental capacity in a predicament, for example, if funds needs to be accessed to provide for the individual's personal care.

What alternatives are there to an enduring power of attorney under South African law?

Curatorship or Administration

One potential solution is to apply for the incapacitated individual to be placed under curatorship or administration.

The process of applying for curatorship in terms of the High Court Rules is usually cumbersome, and it can be costly. Applying to the Master of the High Court to appoint an administrator in terms of the Mental Health Care Act may be a quicker, simpler and cheaper option.

The differences between the two options are:

Administrator (Mental Health Care Act):
Appointed by the Master for individuals with a diagnosed mental illness or severe intellectual disability, making it suitable for smaller estates. The requirements for an Administrator application are:

1. Medical Proof: Two independent medical certificates confirming the diagnosis and inability to manage affairs.
2. Documentation & Notice: A sworn application detailing assets, income, and relationship to the patient, alongside proof of notification to next-of-kin.
3. Investigation: The Master may appoint an investigator for larger estates before confirmation.

Curator Bonis (High Court - Common Law)
Necessary for incapacity from physical decline or for large, complex estates, requiring a formal High Court application.

Is a Special Trust a Solution?

A perhaps more appropriate solution is to set up a special trust. The trustees can then provide for the general maintenance and welfare of the incapacitated individual out of the trust fund – including medical costs.

A special trust will enjoy individual tax rates, not necessarily the high 45% tax rates which may be applicable to other trusts.

The incapacitated person must be the sole beneficiary while alive.

Bequests can be made in the wills of family members or the parents of the incapacitated person to the special trust.

A special trust can also be set up in the will of a person on their death to receive benefits from their deceased estate as funding for the maintenance and general needs of another individual family member unable to act on their own.

Updating your will and trust deed

Everyone should keep their wills updated, especially when circumstances change. Individuals who become compromised in terms of handling their own affairs, may thereafter be unable to sign a new, valid will. Spouses can balance their estates from time to time, or set up an independent, separate fund or bank account for the other spouse – ensuring that one spouse will have access to funds if the other becomes mentally incapacitated and a power of attorney lapses.

Trust deeds should be updated to make provision for succeeding trustees should an existing trustee no longer be able to act on his or her own. Provision should also be made in the trust deed that the number of trustees won't fall below the minimum requirement should one trustee have to vacate his or position because of incapacity to act as trustee. The trust deed should in addition stipulate that the founder won't have to agree to amendments should he or she become unable to act legally.

If you would like to discuss or implement any of these proposed solutions, or if you need a trust deed or your will to be reviewed, please don't hesitate to contact Marteen Michau at marteen@fidelisvox.co.za.

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Paul Michau Cell number:082 554 8530 | Email: paul@fidelisvox.co.za
Jean Michau Cell number: 072 686 1140 | Email: jean@fidelisvox.co.za

Amplify, Good Work Foundation Help to Create Skills and Jobs in Rural South Africa



K9 Unit (above) Image supplied

THIS IS SA

A partnership between Amplify Investment Partners and the Good Work Foundation (GWF) is creating demonstrable impact in South Africa's rural areas.

Through its system, GWF provides rural communities with access to digital education, modern skills development, and pathways into meaningful work. This model brings opportunity closer to young people who are often geographically and socially excluded from it, functioning as a virtuous cycle where education leads to opportunity, and opportunity drives community growth.

GWF now has 40 schools in its network (up from 31 in 2024), and operates six world-class Digital Learning Campuses in Hazyview, Huntington, Justicia, Lillydale and Dumphries in Mpumalanga, as well as Philippolis in the Free State.

"In rural contexts, trust is built over time," says GWF CEO Kate Groch. "GWF's long-standing presence across its campuses allows the organisation to work not only with individual learners, but also with the broader community systems around them. This is what makes the ecosystem durable. It is not only a set of programmes. It is a network of relationships built over years."

In 2025, the GWF supported 13 000 learners at its Open Learning Academy, up from 9 600 in 2024, according to its latest Impact Report. More than 320 students graduated from its Bridging Year Academy (182 with distinction). Of its 125 Career Academy graduates, 82% were absorbed into work or further study in areas such as hospitality, conservation, and IT, reflecting the high proportion of its graduates moving on to further training and employment opportunities.

The Facilitator Academy, which is wholly sponsored by Amplify, provides training and skills development for GWF graduates who have shown interest and aptitude in training and education. In 2025, its 12 students achieved a 100% pass rate, and all have found placements. Currently, 65% of GWF's 151 staff are alumni of the academy.

"We are thrilled to see the effect that our partnership is having in areas that need these interventions most – particularly in driving youth employment," says Wade Witbooi, Amplify's Managing Director. "For Amplify, the realisation of financial objectives and creating sustainable impact for future generations are at the core of our ethos. This extends to our sustainability and impact partners in line with our focus on creating impact through the SDGs aligned with our values.

"Our goals are exemplified in Amplify's partnership with GWF with initiatives that create access, opportunity and employability for rural and marginalised communities," Witbooi adds. "GWF's performance illustrates how effective these partnerships can be."

Groch says that the foundation's 2025 achievements truly demonstrate its Ecosystem of Learning and Working in action. Through this model, GWF partners with young people on a journey toward becoming confident, employable, and active participants in their communities and the wider economy. It is driven by education (digital-based curricula that equip learners with 21st-century skills), access (breaking down barriers to the economy through learning that leads directly to dignified, locally rooted employment) and upliftment (delivering tangible social and economic mobility for individuals, families, and communities).

"GWF's mission is to connect young South Africans with the skills they need to access opportunities for careers within their own rural spaces," says Groch.

GWF's ecosystem begins in Grade 3 at the Open Learning Academy and continues through the Bridging Year Academy and Career Academies, and beyond graduation through mentorship, alumni support, work exposure, and employment pathways.

Impact

GWF is a major pillar of Amplify Investment Partners' impact projects. Amplify supports GWF in line with its focus on creating impact through United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that align to its values.

These include ending poverty (SDG1), by providing access to education and job opportunities; quality education (SDG4), by providing grants for people to be educated to work in and set up businesses that serve the tourism economy; decent work and economic growth (SDG8), with its education and employment partners helping to create purposeful job creation resulting in economic growth and opportunities; and gender equality (SDG5), by supporting initiatives and businesses that employ from local communities, that have a majority female workforce and who are focused on up-skilling young female adults.

SDG15 is life on land, where Amplify supports SANParks' Environmental Crime Investigation unit, a specialist unit focused on rhino-related safety in the greater Kruger National Park and on abalone- and tourism-related safety in the Cape region.

Additionally, Amplify supports SANParks' K9 Unit, a critical part of the anti-poaching team in the Kruger National Park, where a team of over 50 dogs track poachers and search for illegal firearms and rhino horn.

Its support of Contemplate Wild enables real-time data tracking to detect behavioural events and threats to endangered species and habitats. Rangers, as well as K9 handlers, pilots, scientific services staff and field guides in poaching hotspots carry GPS-linked devices that act as data feeds and panic buttons.

"Amplify believes life is about more than returns," Witbooi concludes. "It's about achieving a balance between realising financial hopes and dreams and creating sustainable impact for future generations."

Rwanda Secures 10-year Formula 1 Deal to Bring Grand Prix Back to Africa

THIS IS AFRICA

Bonface Orucho
bird story agency

The agreement ends a 33-year absence from the continent and puts a purpose-built circuit in Bugesera at the centre of Rwanda's plans to expand tourism, investment and international sports business. The next test is whether the country can turn the global championship into lasting economic opportunities for local businesses and communities.



Graphic image depicting Rwanda flag **Image: Canva Pro**

Formula 1 will return to Africa under a 10-year agreement with Rwanda, ending a 33-year absence from the continent and moving the long-running campaign for an African Grand Prix from competing bids to a confirmed host.

The Formula 1 African Grand Prix, presented by Visit Rwanda, is expected to join the championship calendar in the early 2030s, once a purpose-built circuit in Bugesera, south of Kigali, has been completed.

In its announcement on 13 October, Formula 1 said the agreement followed years of collaboration to establish the foundations for a "successful, sustainable and world-class Grand Prix".

The event will form part of a wider sports, tourism, infrastructure and commercial development project led by the Rwanda Development Board.

"This is not simply about hosting a Grand Prix. This is about creating legacy and inspiration, a legacy of tourism and investment, a legacy of skills, education, and opportunity," said Stefano Domenicali, president and chief executive of Formula 1, at the launch in Kigali, earlier today.

Domenicali said the partnership with Rwanda and the FIA would extend beyond the race weekend, creating opportunities for local businesses and communities while connecting African fans more closely with the championship.

Formula 1 estimates that more than 100 million fans across Africa follow the sport, with almost 60% of fans in key African markets under the age of 35. Domenicali also cited a global audience of more than 800 million fans, positioning the agreement as part of the championship's wider expansion into new markets.

Rwandan President Paul Kagame described the development as an opportunity for the continent as well as his country, saying the ambition extended beyond securing one race on the calendar.

"Ultimately, what we want is for the African Grand Prix to pave the way for other races to be hosted on the continent," Kagame said. "This is not impossible to achieve, and what we are doing now proves this."

FIA President Mohammed Ben Sulayem made a similar point about the event's identity. "It's not called Rwandan F1. It's called Africa," he said, describing the announcement as the start of a new chapter for the championship on the continent.

The agreement follows almost two years of public campaigning by Rwanda to secure a place on the Formula 1 calendar. Kagame formally announced the country's bid in December 2024 during the FIA General Assembly and Awards ceremony in Kigali, building on Rwanda's efforts to attract international sporting events.

The championship has been absent from Africa since the 1993 South African Grand Prix at Kyalami. South Africa has pursued upgrades to the historic circuit, while Morocco has proposed a major motorsport complex near Tangier. Nigeria and Zanzibar have also advanced proposals to host a Grand Prix.

Rwanda's agreement gives it the first confirmed hosting arrangement among these recent African bids. South Africa remains interested in bringing Formula 1 back, meaning the agreement could become a starting point for renewed efforts to establish a broader African presence on the calendar.

For Rwanda, the immediate task is infrastructure delivery. The planned circuit will be located about 40 kilometres south of Kigali, next to the new Kigali International Airport, and developed to the FIA Grade 1 standard required to host Formula 1.

A circuit concept presented at the launch showed a track stretching approximately six kilometres, with 17 corners, an anticlockwise layout and an elevation gain of 197 metres per lap. The design is intended to use the area's natural contours to create a demanding circuit for drivers and varied viewing opportunities for spectators.

Formula 1 and the Rwanda Development Board also intend to develop the venue into a year-round destination for international motorsport, conferences, entertainment and other major events. The wider development is designed to generate demand for hospitality, transport, catering, event services and other businesses beyond the annual race weekend.

Kagame said the project would involve substantial private-sector participation, with investors among those attending the announcement. He also argued that the Grand Prix formed part of a wider economic strategy rather than being an objective in itself.

"We are not looking at just Rwanda alone. We are looking at Rwanda in the context of a continent," he said, adding that the country wanted other African markets to participate in the opportunities created by the project.

The scale of those opportunities will depend on the investment required and how much economic activity can be retained locally. Formula 1 and the Rwandan government have not yet disclosed the circuit's construction budget, the detailed financing structure or a projected economic impact. The inaugural race date and development milestones will be announced later.

Rwanda enters the project with an established tourism and international events sector. According to the Rwanda Development Board, tourism revenue reached US$685 million in 2025, up from US$647 million in 2024, while visitor arrivals rose to 1.49 million.

The country's meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions sector generated US$94.7 million in 2025 from 165 international and regional events. Formula 1 could build on this existing market by bringing additional international visitors, extending hotel stays and increasing demand for local services.

Recent Grand Prix assessments show the potential scale of the business, but also the importance of costs. In Australia, the 2025 Melbourne Grand Prix increased Victoria's gross state product by an estimated A$323.9 million, equivalent to about US$225 million, and supported 1,631 full-time-equivalent jobs. The Victorian government estimated that the event generated A$3.08 in economic impact for every dollar invested by the state.

Singapore offers a longer-term comparison. According to the country's Ministry of Trade and Industry, the Singapore Grand Prix generated more than S$2.2 billion in incremental tourism receipts between its launch in 2008 and 2024, equivalent to about US$1.72 billion at October 2026 exchange rates. However, the estimated annual cost of organising the event averaged S$140 million, or about US$109 million, between 2022 and 2025.

South Africa's earlier experience provides a historical reminder of the financial demands involved. Kyalami hosted championship races in 1992 and 1993, but financial difficulties and the cost of staging an international event amid currency pressures contributed to the race's departure. Comparable economic-impact assessments from that period are not readily available, making modern host-city data a more useful benchmark for Rwanda.

According to Mohammed Ben Sulayem, the FIA would continue working with Rwanda to develop the circuit to international safety and sporting standards, while supporting grassroots initiatives such as karting to widen access to motorsport.

The objective, he said, was "to create opportunities for young people across Africa, not simply to bring an international event to the continent."

"For many years, we have spoken about our desire to return but always said we would return in the right way, with the right vision and the right partner. That partner is Rwanda," Domenicali stated at the launch.

This article was previously published by the bird story agency

Learning Together on the Blyde's Steep Slopes





Women from the K2C general clearing teams learning about rope work (above left). Removing alien vegetation growing on cliff edges is vital to prevent reseeding, but requires highly skilled teams to do the work (above right)
Images supplied

Lauren Booth
K2C Biosphere Communications Manager

On the Blyde catchment's steep slopes, a pine tree left beyond the reach of a clearing team can continue spreading seeds into the surrounding landscape. Restoring this important water source means reaching those trees too, and investing in the people who can do so safely.

The catchment covers approximately 200,000 hectares. Its history of forestry has left a legacy of invasive alien plants, predominantly pines, which have spread into surrounding grasslands and mountain slopes. These invasions threaten biodiversity and are estimated to reduce streamflow by 13.7 million cubic metres of water a year.

Reaching trees on cliffs and in remote valleys requires specialist rope access skills, careful preparation and teams who can rely on one another. This work forms part of the Catchment Investment Programme (CIP) being implemented by Kruger to Canyons Biosphere (K2C) in partnership with Nature for Water through its GO Fund programme, and The Nature Conservancy South Africa. It aims to improve water availability and long-term security for downstream users while creating local jobs and livelihood opportunities and protecting biodiversity.

Over the past two years, an estimated 22,000 hectares have been cleared of invasive alien plants through the programme, which has employed up to 100 people at a time, including a core of 31 people with specialised skills.

The same principle - investing in catchment restoration to protect water supplies - underpins the Greater Cape Town Water Fund (GCTWF). The recently launched Cape Water Performance-based Bond is helping to finance the expansion of that work, and the K2C team is collaborating with the GCTWF role-players to learn from their model.

Building Confidence Together

The Cape Town connection also offers K2C an opportunity to learn from people with years of experience in the field, restoring difficult mountain terrain. Following high altitude technical training in 2025, K2C team members were joined in August 2026 by experienced rope technicians from Likhona Lethu Services, a contractor working with the GCTWF, for a ten-day learning exchange in the Upper Blyde, combining workshops, site planning and practical fieldwork.

For the K2C team, this meant time alongside experienced colleagues: watching how they approached a task, asking questions and receiving guidance while putting their own training into practice. It created space to revisit techniques and work through uncertainties with someone who understood the demands of the job from years of practice.

The learning went beyond handling ropes. Together, the teams checked equipment, assessed hazards and discussed emergency plans. These preparations also meant learning how to work together: understanding each person's responsibilities, communicating clearly and looking after one another.

Participants' reflections highlighted growing confidence, better equipment handling and stronger teamwork. They also recognised the need for continued practice. The value of the exchange lay in having time and support to develop these skills together.

"Working as a team is the most important thing to ensure safety. We appreciated the respect that the K2C and Likhona Lethu teams had for each other and we also loved the biodiversity of the landscape in the nature reserve," said Likhona Lethu team lead Ayabonga Velem.

Mentoring others was a new experience for Likhona Lethu Services, while working in the Blyde introduced them to different conditions and approaches. The teams also compared the tools they use. Likhona Lethu recommended herbicide applicators designed to reduce blockages and spills, while K2C shared its use of tree poppers - hand tools that grip small invasive trees and pull them out with their roots.

Seeing a path into specialist work

For K2C, identifying barriers to women's progression and supporting equal access to learning and development are part of its commitment to gender mainstreaming. K2C's Lower Blyde Restoration Project Manager, Dimakatso Nonyane, arranged for women from the general clearing teams to meet the two women in the visiting Likhona Lethu Services team. Most participants had previously regarded high altitude work as a role only for men. Meeting women already performing these roles gave them an opportunity to ask questions and imagine a different path for themselves.

For Angel Mapheule, seeing women with specialist skills was a source of encouragement. "Some ladies know how to use a chainsaw and that encourages me!" she said. The opportunity to learn directly from the visiting team was also impactful.

Lesedi Malope expressed an interest in learning more about rope technician work and appreciated the time taken to explain it. "The Cape Town teams are very good at teaching and explaining to us, they made sure we understood," she said.

Several women expressed interest in further training. Turning that interest into a career opportunity will require training, practical experience and continued support, but the encounter helped to lay a foundation by challenging assumptions about who could pursue the work and encouraging women to consider developing these skills themselves.

Preparing for the difficult terrain ahead

As K2C works to scale up the CIP, its investment in people and developing skills will remain closely tied to its restoration ambitions. "Ensuring that the teams operate safely is crucial and this learning exchange provided an opportunity for our teams to gain confidence and clearly understand safety requirements," said Nicholas Theron, K2C's Senior Programme Manager. "This training will enable our teams to tackle some of the most challenging terrain safely into the future, with planned operations focussed on the Three Rondawels, an iconic landmark currently being overrun by alien plants."

Reaching such a remote site will require helicopter drop-offs and extended stays camping on the mountain. In those conditions, the exchange's lessons in planning, equipment checks, communication and looking after one another will be particularly important.

As the CIP looks to upscale, continued mentorship and learning will help the teams to prepare to take on more challenging terrain, while opening opportunities for individuals to develop their skills and careers.

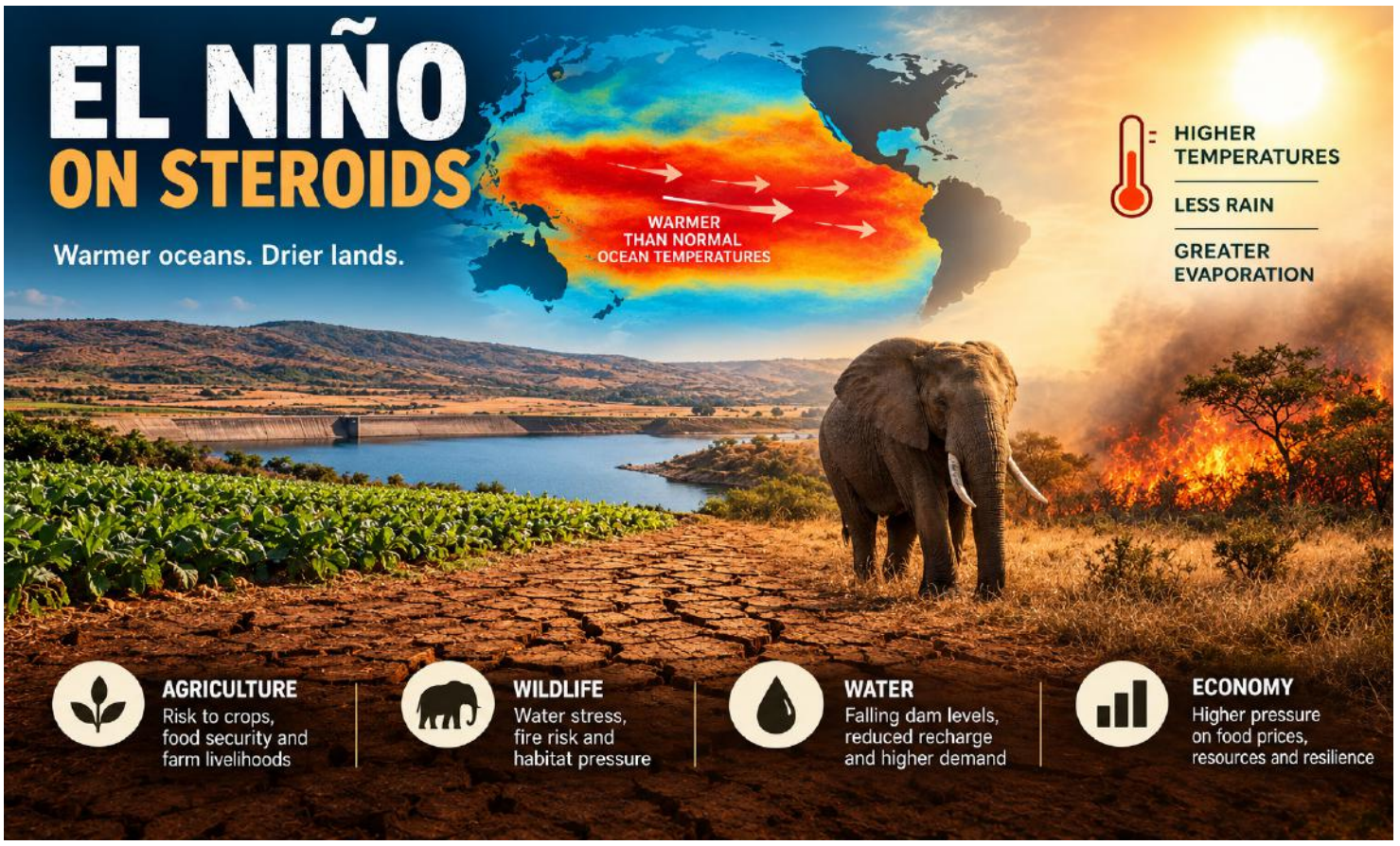




Weather service sounds El Niño alarm for North-East, including Kruger Park

Ed Stoddard

While still a subject of intense debate among scientists, the strength of El Niño phases has been intensifying alarmingly in recent decades, pointing to the unnatural role of human-stoked climate change from the burning of fossil fuels – and this one is off the charts.



South Africa's northeast, including the Kruger National Park and key farming areas, is bracing for an exceptionally dry, hot summer.

South Africa's northeast, which includes key farming lands and the flagship Kruger National Park, is forecast to be bear the brunt of the unfolding El Niño on steroids, a flashing red light for the agricultural sector and wildlife.

"The seasonal forecast for November-December-January (NDJ), December-January-February (DJF), and January-February-March (JFM) indicates an increased likelihood of below-normal rainfall across large parts of the summer rainfall region," the South African Weather Service said in its monthly Seasonal Climate Watch.

"The dry signal is particularly widespread across the interior and the northeastern half of the country, where substantial rainfall is normally received during summer. This outlook is broadly consistent with the typical influence of El Niño over southern Africa."

This is an ominous forecast for farmers in a region that produces mostly fruit and vegetables, though it's not all doom and gloom as such crops are grown under irrigation and dam levels are currently brimming.

But temperatures are also expected to be blazing, and evaporation rates and increased water demand could quickly reduce dam levels.

The weather service warned that this was "likely to exacerbate water loss, adding pressure on water-scarce regions over most of the northeastern half of South Africa".

"Such conditions may also lead to increased dry soils including drought, significantly disrupting water resources by reducing water infiltration, accelerating runoff, as well as obstructing groundwater recharge."

Nature on the Brink

It's also bad news for the Kruger, with a marked increase in the potential for wildfires and withering drought. El Niño is a natural weather pattern, and wildlife worldwide has for time immemorial been subjected to cycles of drought, with populations rebounding after the rains return.

But while still a subject of intense debate among scientists, the strength of El Niño phases has been intensifying alarmingly in recent decades, pointing to the unnatural role of human-stoked climate change from the burning of fossil fuels – and this one is off the charts.

"This year's El Niño event is likely to be the strongest in 1,000 years if the latest models of its peak prove accurate," climate scientist Zeke Hausfather said recently in his influential newsletter The Climate Brink.

The scientific spoor for this assertion is based on tree rings going back to 1100 and the chemical signature of coral fossils detected from the annual bands they produce.

A once-in-a-millennial climate event may be looming, and there may be nothing *natural* about it.

The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) this week released a new seasonal climate outlook warning that the current El Niño event could reach unprecedented levels of intensity.

"The Global Seasonal Climate Update forecasts that sea surface temperatures in the tropical Pacific – the epicentre of El Niño – may rise to 3.8°C above average during November 2026 to January 2027. WMO declares an El Niño when the sea surface temperature anomaly in this region is 0.5°C," it said.

Contribution to Inflation

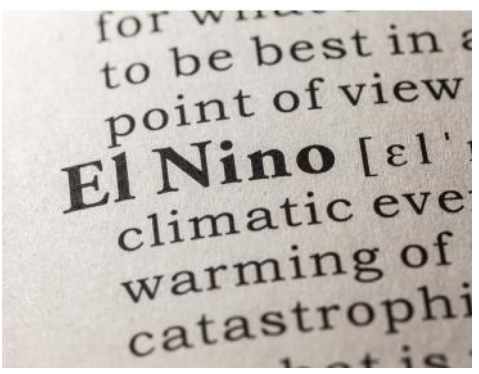
South Africa at least has low food inflation currently, ample stocks of the staple maize, and decent dam and soil levels, which should take some of the sting out of a scorching summer.

Responsible fiscal policy and a tax revenue boost from the mining industry have also enabled the Treasury to set aside a R10-billion contingency reserve for drought and El Niño response, which was announced in Wednesday's Medium-Term Budget Policy Statement.

This underscores how seriously the government is taking this El Niño. And this month's Seasonal Climate Watch was pointedly issued almost a fortnight earlier than usual, which also speaks to the mounting concerns about its impact.

Preparation is vital. A possible summer of discontent looms as we are in uncharted waters.

This article was previously published in the Daily Maverick/Business Maverick/Summer Scorcher





Overlap in Governance
No Single Point of Failure

Andrew Paterson
Philosafaris.com

Our wilderness trail group sat in the shade of a Tamboti glade on the Shingwedzi River watching the den of a pack of wild dogs on the opposite bank, when they began voting among themselves.

It sounds fanciful, but it isn't. The pack - eleven adults and seven pups - had been resting through the midday heat in the shade of a large Jackalberry growing out of the disused termite mound housing the pups. As the afternoon temperature began to drop, individuals started to stir. One adult stood, stretched, and sneezed. Then another. Then three more in quick succession. The sneeze, in African wild dog society, is a rallying call - an individual's expression of readiness to move. The pack doesn't act until enough individuals have sneezed. Research has confirmed what people have observed for generations: the dogs appear to operate a quorum system. When the ratio of sneezes crosses a threshold relative to pack size and the varying seniority of the individuals signalling the group moves. No single animal commands the decision. The authority is distributed, redundant, and often surprisingly democratic.

What happened next was equally instructive. Two of the senior adults moved in slightly different directions - a split of opinion, visible in posture and orientation, about which way to hunt. For a moment the pack's attention divided. Then a third adult moved to join one of the two, a fourth followed, and the question resolved without conflict or hierarchy. The group had processed competing proposals and arrived at a collective decision through a mechanism that had no single point of failure. Had the dominant male been absent, injured, or wrong, the pack would still have hunted. The governance was overlapping, redundant, and robust.

This is Brian Walker's eighth attribute of Social-Ecological Resilience - Overlap in Governance - and it is, in many ways, the institutional dimension of everything the preceding attributes have described. Diversity, modularity, tight feedbacks, social capital: all of these generate value only insofar as the systems of governance that manage them are structured to survive the failure of any single component.

What Overlap in Governance Actually Means

Walker frames this attribute in terms of institutional redundancy: resilient systems have governance structures that include multiple overlapping layers of authority, a mix of common and private property with overlapping access rights, and decision-making distributed across scales rather than concentrated in a single node.

The word redundancy tends to trigger a managerial reflex - redundancy is inefficiency, duplication of cost, something to be rationalised away. Walker's point is precisely the opposite. In complex adaptive systems facing unpredictable disturbances, what looks like redundancy is often the structural insurance that allows the system to absorb the failure of any single governance mechanism without collapsing entirely.

The classic demonstration in African conservation is the landscape mosaic of protected areas, communal lands, private game reserves, and contractual parks that characterises functional transfrontier ecosystems. No single tenure type would sustain the full complexity of the ecological and social system. State protected areas provide legal permanence and enforcement capacity; communal lands carry traditional knowledge, flexible access rights, and local legitimacy; private reserves bring management investment and economic incentive; contractual parks bridge the gaps. When one layer comes under political or financial pressure - as all do, in rotation - the others continue to function. The governance architecture has no single point of failure precisely because it was never designed around a single point of control.

The danger, as Walker notes, runs in both directions. A system with too little overlap - where a single institution, tenure type, or governance layer carries all the load - is vulnerable to the failure of that layer. But a system with no coherent structure at all - where multiple governance actors operate at cross-purposes without any shared framework - generates its own fragility through conflict, duplication, and the inability to coordinate response when coordinated response is urgently needed. Resilience lies in the middle: enough overlap for redundancy, enough coherence for collective action.

The Mapungubwe Confluence and Layered Authority

At the point where the Limpopo and Shashe Rivers meet, the borders of South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Botswana converge in a landscape of baobab-studded sandstone ridges and dense riverine thicket. The Mapungubwe transfrontier conservation area - managed across three sovereign jurisdictions, multiple community trusts, private reserves, and state parks - is one of the most complex governance mosaics in southern Africa.

What makes it instructive for resilience is not its complexity but its performance under stress. When poaching pressure intensifies in one jurisdiction, anti-poaching operations can be coordinated across borders in ways that no single national park system could manage. When drought concentrates wildlife around permanent water, animal movement across the international borders - facilitated by the removal of fences between compatible land-use zones - redistributes pressure across the system rather than concentrating it vulnerably in one place. When one partner government's conservation budget is cut, the others continue to hold the ecological infrastructure together.

None of this works frictionlessly. Transfrontier governance generates its own complications: jurisdictional disputes, misaligned management philosophies, the ponderous machinery of intergovernmental agreement. Walker is not suggesting that overlap in governance is comfortable. He is suggesting that these frictions are the price of a system that does not catastrophically fail when one of its components is compromised. The alternative - a single, seamless, optimally efficient governance authority - would be more elegant, but far more brittle.

The Stoic Concept of Distributed Duty

The Roman Stoic philosopher Musonius Rufus (30–100 AD/CE), teacher of Epictetus and one of the most practically minded thinkers in the tradition, approached the question of governance through the Greek concept of *kathêkon* - commonly translated as appropriate action or duty, but carrying a richer sense of the obligations that naturally fall to different roles in a functioning community.

Musonius argued that the health of any community - family, city, empire - depended not on the pre-eminence of any single role or authority, but on the proper functioning of multiple overlapping obligations. The parent, the teacher, the magistrate, the philosopher, the soldier: each carried duties that the others could not fully substitute for. Remove any one layer, and the community's capacity to respond to disturbance was degraded. The system's resilience was a function of its distributed architecture of obligation.

This maps directly onto Walker's institutional redundancy. What Musonius described as a web of *kathêkon* is, in systems terms, overlapping governance - multiple actors, each carrying a portion of the load, each capable of absorbing more if a neighbour fails, none carrying so much that their failure would bring down the whole. The community that concentrates all its governance functions in a single authority - however capable - has, in Stoic terms, concentrated its duties in ways that are structurally unwise. Virtue – the primary "good" of Stoic philosophy – that is distributed is virtue protected.

Musonius applied this at the individual level too. The person who has cultivated only one identity, one role, one domain of competence - who is entirely the soldier, or entirely the parent, or entirely the professional - has no redundancy in their own governance architecture. When that single role is disrupted, the whole self is destabilised. The Stoic prescription was the cultivation of multiple, overlapping capacities for appropriate action: the philosopher who can also farm, the soldier who can also teach, the governor who can also empathise.

Overlap in Governance in Special Forces

The wild dog pack's quorum system is not so distant from the informal governance that characterises the most resilient special forces teams. Walker's attribute addresses both the structural and the psychological dimension of redundancy.

Structurally, the small team that functions as a genuine governance overlap - where every member is trained to lead, to navigate, to treat casualties, to make the mission-critical decision, to call for an abort & extraction if the team member nominally responsible for that decision is unable to - has built institutional redundancy into its human architecture. The team leader goes down: the second-in-command steps up without a beat lost, because the authority was never solely located in the leader. The communications specialist is out of action: another team member has sufficient capability to hold that function at reduced but still-functional capacity. The governance architecture has no single point of failure.

This is not merely operational pragmatism. It has a psychological dimension that Walker's broader framework illuminates. Teams structured around single points of authority - where the leader's competence, judgement, and psychological state determine the team's entire functional capacity - create a fragility that extends beyond the tactical. Every team member's sense of safety, agency, and efficacy becomes contingent on one person's continuity. When that person is absent, compromised, or simply wrong, the team does not merely lose a function. It loses its governing coherence.

Conversely, the team that has distributed its governance - that has genuine, shared leadership, authentic overlap in capability and authority, and a culture in which any member can raise a concern, flag a decision, or assume a function without that being read as insubordination - has built something closer to the wild dog's quorum: a system in which collective intelligence, not individual authority, is the primary governance mechanism. Such a team is, in Walker's terms, a genuinely resilient system. It does not have a single point of failure because it was never built around one.

Walk-On

The wild dogs moved off into the late afternoon mopane, their painted flanks flickering between the trunks. The decision had been made - not by any one of them, but by all of them together, in a process older than any institution we have built.

No single point of failure. No single point of control. Just the accumulated, distributed wisdom of a group that has learned to share the load.

If you want to get hold of Andrew email: ecostoic@philosafaris.com - Safaris to the Wisdom of Nature - Philosophy means "love of wisdom" in ancient Greek, Safari means "journey" in Swahili.

Africa on the Rise as Birders' Paradise

Bonface Orucho
bird story agency

As international demand for bird-watching grows, Africa's protected areas are gaining greater visibility among specialist travellers. A new global ranking highlights four parks whose rich birdlife is helping re-shape the continent's wildlife tourism market.



Four African protected areas have been ranked among the world's top 20 birdwatching destinations, highlighting the continent's growing position in the global birdwatching tourism market.

Kenya accounts for two of Africa's four parks in the rankings.

The new study by UK travel insurance company AllClear ranked 115 internationally recognized birdwatching destinations across six continents using eight indicators, including bird species diversity, notable species, climate, accessibility, distance from airports, and daily travel costs.

"Birdwatching is rapidly growing in popularity, and it is easy to understand why. There are few experiences quite like spotting a rare or iconic species in its natural habitat," according to Letitia Smith, travel insurance expert at AllClear.

"For those looking for a rewarding but calming way to experience the natural world, birdwatching offers an immersive outdoor adventure that can be enjoyed at a gentle pace without the physical demands of more strenuous activities."

Peru's Manú National Park topped the global rankings with a score of 83.1 out of 100, followed by Tambopata National Reserve.

In Africa, Kenya's Tsavo East National Park ranked third globally with 59.8 points, making it Africa's highest-ranked destination. South Africa's Kruger National Park placed 10th, Kenya's Amboseli National Park ranked 14th, and Botswana's Chobe National Park placed 17th.

Together, the four African parks are home to more than 1,700 recorded bird species, including raptors, waterbirds, savannah species, and migratory birds that move between Africa, Europe, and Asia.

Tsavo East National Park, which covers nearly 13,750 square kilometres in southeastern Kenya, is one of Africa's largest protected areas. The park is known for its red-soil landscapes, the Galana River, and large elephant populations.

About 470 bird species have been recorded in the park, including the Somali ostrich, secretary bird, martial eagle, African fish eagle, lilac-breasted roller, and Von der Decken's hornbill, as well as numerous kingfishers, bee-eaters, and weavers. Seasonal rains create wetlands that attract migratory birds alongside resident species.

Tsavo East lies approximately 330km south-east of Nairobi. Its open landscapes and range of habitats support birdwatching alongside sightings of elephants, lions, cheetahs, giraffes, and buffalo.

Amboseli National Park offers a different habitat. Permanent swamps fed by underground water from Mount Kilimanjaro support wetlands within the surrounding savannah. More than 500 bird species have been recorded, including African jacanas, pelicans, crowned cranes, hamerkops, pygmy falcons, flamingos during wetter seasons, and a range of migratory waterbirds, according to the World Bird Database. The park is also known for its elephant population and views of Mount Kilimanjaro.

Kruger National Park in South Africa covers almost 20,000 square kilometres and supports roughly one-third of southern Africa's recorded bird species. Birdwatchers visit the park to see the region's "Big Six" birds: Pel's fishing owl, southern ground hornbill, kori bustard, lappet-faced vulture, martial eagle, and saddle-billed stork. Rivers, grasslands, woodlands, and mopane forests provide habitat for more than 500 bird species alongside the park's well-known mammal populations.

Botswana's Chobe National Park completes Africa's representation in the rankings. The park supports more than 500 bird species across its floodplains, marshes, and the Chobe River. African skimmers, carmine bee-eaters, fish eagles, kingfishers, storks, herons, and other waterbirds are regularly recorded, particularly during seasonal floods, according to the park's website. Boat safaris are a popular way to observe many of these species.

According to AllClear, the rankings go beyond species numbers. Researchers also assessed notable species, the likelihood of sightings, average temperatures, rainfall, wind conditions, airport access, and estimated daily travel costs to produce an overall birdwatching score.

According to Smith, factors such as climate, accessibility, and daily travel costs are important considerations for travellers, particularly those with medical conditions or planning trips to remote destinations.

The findings come as birdwatching continues to attract more participants globally. The study cites research by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), which found birdwatching participation in the United Kingdom has increased by 47%, with more than four million people now taking part. Similar growth has been recorded in North America and parts of Europe.

For African tourism, the trend broadens the market beyond traditional game-viewing safaris. Birdwatchers often travel outside peak seasons, stay longer, hire specialist guides, and visit multiple protected areas, generating additional revenue for local tourism businesses.

Wildlife agencies and conservation organizations are also investing in wetland restoration, habitat protection, and community conservancies that support bird populations. In Kenya, the Tsavo and Amboseli landscapes form part of larger conservation corridors. Botswana continues to protect the Chobe River ecosystem, while South Africa promotes birding routes linking national parks with community conservancies and Important Bird Areas.

Notably, South America secured six places in the global top 20.

This article was previously published by the bird story agency



Kori Bustard Image: Bldr Janet Canva Pro

Life on Mars

Ben Coley
Celestial Events SA

Your oxygen supply has failed. The temperature outside is −60°C. The nearest doctor is millions of kilometres away, and even a radio message asking for help could take 22 minutes to reach Earth. Welcome to life on Mars!

Fortunately, you're not actually on the Red Planet - but NASA wants to find out how humans might survive there. Its CHAPEA mission (*Crew Health and Performance Exploration Analog)* has placed four volunteers in a simulated Martian habitat for more than a year, testing not only the technology needed for survival, but also the limits of human endurance.

The 3D-printed habitat called Mars Dune Alpha at its Johnson Space Centre in Houston, Texas Covers approximately 158 square metres, and contains sleeping quarters, a kitchen, workspaces, exercise equipment and facilities for growing crops. This is the second such experiment and the crew are scheduled to emerge from the habitat on the 31st October, after 378 days of isolation.

Commander Ross Elder and crew members Ellen Ellis, Matthew Montgomery and James Spicer have been conducting experiments, maintaining equipment, growing food and undertaking simulated spacewalks, managing limited supplies and simulating equipment failures. Mars is millions of kms away, so messages between Earth and Mars can take up to 22 minutes each way, meaning that a reply to a question could take 44 minutes… Real Martian explorers will need to solve many problems themselves rather than wait for instructions or assistance from Earth.

But the greatest challenge may not be technological. Imagine spending over a year with the same three people, with little privacy, no change of scenery and nowhere to escape an argument! Boredom, homesickness and tension can undermine concentration levels and have a drastic effect on teamwork. CHAPEA hopes to help NASA investigate how crews can remain psychologically resilient when isolated from family and familiar surroundings.

Mars may look familiar, with its mountains, valleys and rusty-red deserts, but its environment is profoundly hostile to human life. Earth's average temperature is about 15°C, while Mars averages approximately −63°C.

The atmosphere is even less welcoming. Earth's air supplies the oxygen we need to breathe, whereas Mars's atmosphere is about 95% carbon dioxide, with surface pressure typically less than 1% of Earth's. This causes liquid water to instantly sublimate away into vapour. Unprotected, humans simply could not survive there. Astronauts would depend on pressurised habitats and oxygen-supplying spacesuits - systems that must work reliably every moment of every day.

Whilst NASA's MOXIE experiment aboard the Perseverance rover has demonstrated that breathable oxygen and potable water production from Martian carbon dioxide is possible on a small scale, scaling this up to support a crew reliably over an extended time period remains a major challenge.

Mars is about half the size of Earth, with just 38% of its gravity. A person weighing 75 kg on Earth would feel as though they weighed only 28.5 kg on Mars, although their actual body mass would remain unchanged. The long-term effects of living in such low gravity on bones, muscles and the circulatory system remain uncertain.

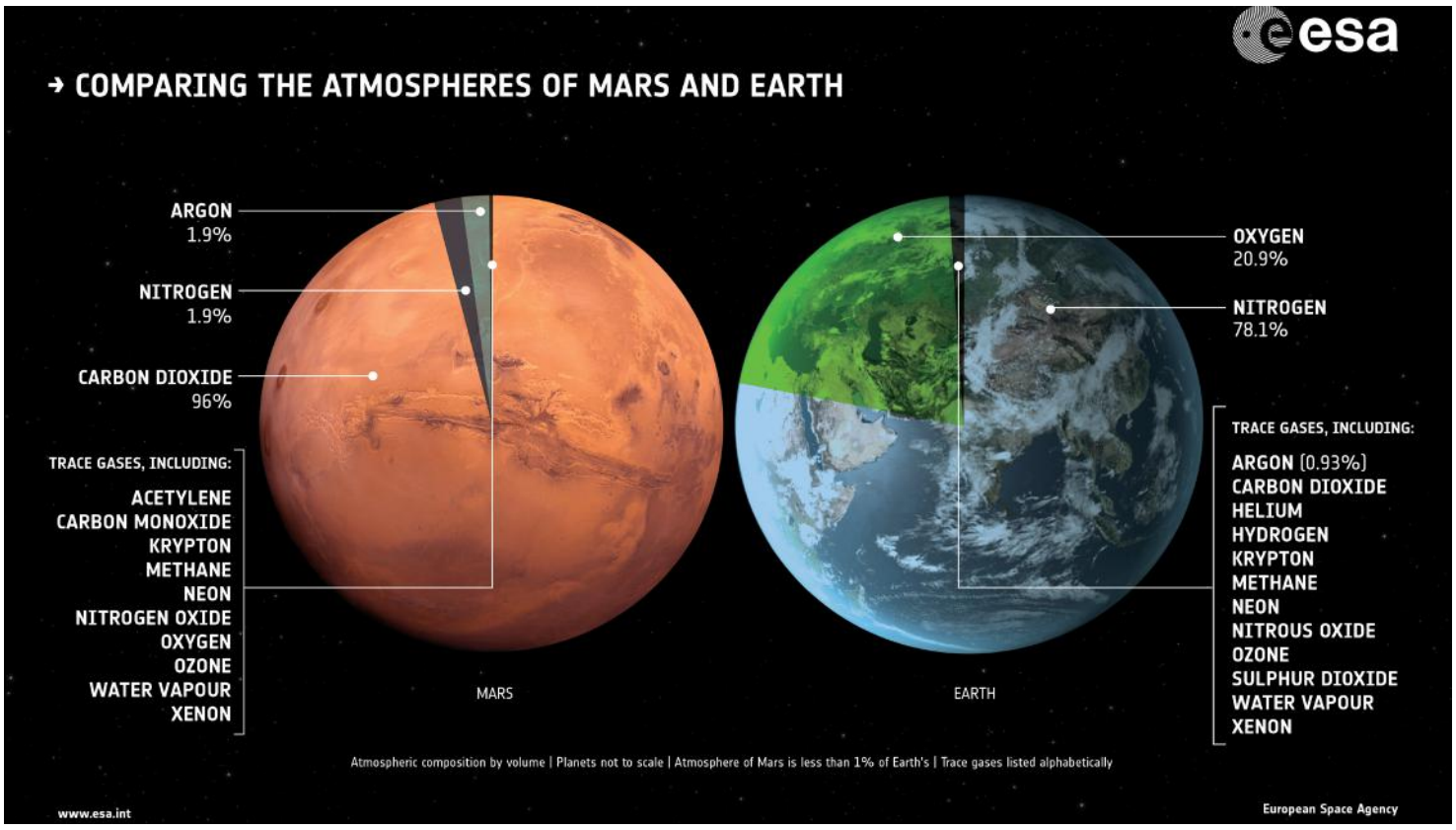
Then there is radiation. Earth's atmosphere and magnetic field protect us from much harmful space radiation, but Mars lacks a global magnetic field like ours. Settlers would need heavily shielded shelters, potentially buried deep beneath Martian soil. Dust storms can blanket vast regions for weeks on end, reducing sunlight and coating equipment. Accessible water is scarce, food must be grown or transported, and Martian soil contains perchlorates, chemicals that can be harmful to humans and complicate agriculture. Almost every necessity, from oxygen and drinking water, to warmth and electricity, will depend *entirely* on technology.

Reaching Mars typically takes six to nine months each way. After a long journey, astronauts would face an extended stay in an environment where a minor malfunction could become life-threatening. A failed oxygen generator, damaged spacesuit, serious injury or illness, could put the entire crew at risk. Doctors on Earth might know how to help, but communication delays prevent real-time advice, and a rescue mission would be extraordinarily difficult, expensive and potentially take at least a year to arrive.

This is why CHAPEA matters. On Mars, a broken machine cannot be fixed by calling a technician, a medical emergency cannot be solved with a quick trip to hospital, and a difficult day cannot end with a walk in the fresh air.

Humans have demonstrated that we have the technology to explore the solar system, but surviving on the Red Planet will require more than courage and a good spacesuit. It will demand reliable technology, careful planning and people capable of keeping their bodies and minds working together in one of the most unforgiving environments imaginable.

Ben Coley / Celestial Events SA can be contacted on 079 575 0900.





Mars vs Earth atmosphere (top). Travel time to Mars (above) and CHAPEA experiments (below) **Images supplied**



Antivenom “Shortage”

Jonathan Leeming

A recent advisory published on the 11th September 2026, by the South African Vaccine Producers (SAVP) regarding the unavailability of stock and production dates for future batches of antivenom to be released, caused some commotion. Too many people, this advisory indicated that antivenom is unavailable for the treatment of envenomation in Southern Africa and patients are going to die. However, this could not be further from reality.



SAVP Polyvalent Snake antivenom is the most used antivenom in southern Africa. It is vital for treating bites of 10 species of snake including the Puff Adder. As the supply of the antivenom became erratic, Panaf stepped in to fill the gap. Image supplied

The development of snake antivenom in South Africa began in 1901 by Dr Watkins-Pitchfont at the South African Institute for Medical Research (SAIMR) in Pietermaritzburg. After development and production, the commercialisation of antivenom was handed over to the SAVP at the National Health Laboratories in Johannesburg, South Africa. At the time, the SAVP were world leaders in antivenom production and additional types of antivenom were developed, saving hundreds of lives every year.

Today, the SAVP produce 4 different antivenoms for use in Southern Africa:

1. **Polyvalent snake antivenom** - effective in the treatment of 10 species of snakes including the Mambas, Adders, Cobras and Rhinkals.
2. **Monovalent Boomslang antivenom** - effective in the treatment of Boomslang bites.
3. **Scorpion antivenom** - effective in the treatment of stings of scorpion belonging to the genus *Parabuthus*, notably the Granulated Thick-Tail Scorpion, Transvaal Thick-Tail Scorpion and the Hairy Thick-Tail Scorpion.
4. **Latrodectus antivenom** - effective in the treatment of spider bites from both the Black (4 species) and Brown (3 species) Button Spider.

Antivenom is vital for any envenomation that risks loss of life or loss of limb. Each antivenom is supplied in liquid form, is required to be stored between 2 - 8°C and has an expiry date of 3 years from date of manufacture. Treatment involves an initial dose and a follow up dose until symptoms improve.

The use of antivenom is the best course of action to treat an envenomation from medically significant animals. Without it, the patient may lose their life, their limb, become permanently disabled or suffer a long and extended recovery period. It is a miraculous drug that when required it is absolutely necessary. SAVP polyvalent snake antivenom is the most widely used antivenom in Southern Africa, without it, the effective treatment of snakebite would not be possible. However, when needed, monovalent Boomslang, scorpion and Latrodectus antivenom are equally vital in preventing death, loss of limb and ensuring a favourable outcome for the patient.

During and after Covid, the SAVP went through a tough time. Supply chain difficulties and internal challenges affected production to such an extent that some SAVP antivenoms were unavailable. The SAVP has moved on since then, and with new management and resources are getting back on track. Antivenom is not quick nor easy to produce. It is a costly production process that takes months to manufacture the final product from raw venom.

When the SAVP release an advisory indicating stock unavailability, it does not mean there is no antivenom to treat patients. Just like the panic buying of toilet paper during Covid created empty shelves in supermarkets, the sporadic availability of antivenom has resulted in medical organisations stockpiling large quantities of antivenom for their own use. Limited stocks and stockpiling exasperate antivenom availability for everyone else. Although the SAVP may have no stock of certain antivenom, it is available throughout southern Africa. The important question is where is this antivenom?

For many years, the SAVP were the only supplier of effective antivenom in Southern Africa. However, with the variable availability of their antivenom (importantly polyvalent snake), alternative suppliers were sought. The Eswatini Antivenom Foundation in partnership with the Instituto Clodomiro Picado, University of Costa Rica, developed a new lyophilised (powdered) polyvalent snake antivenom called Echitab-ICP or use in Eswatini. Premium Serums in India manufacture a polyvalent antivenom (Panaf) which is widely used throughout Africa. Panaf has been registered for use in South Africa and has proven to be a highly effective equivalent to SAVP polyvalent snake antivenom. Both Panaf and Echitab are supplied in powdered form that does not require refrigeration and has an expiry date of 5 years from date of manufacture. There are the possibilities of SAVP equivalent antivenoms (Boomslang, Scorpion and Latrodectus) being developed by alternative manufactures.

In 2008 the World Health Organisation published guidelines for the production, control and regulation of snake antivenom immunoglobulins. One of those standards was that to ensure an uninterrupted supply of antivenom in a region, there should be 2 or 3 different manufacturers supplying antivenom.

As availability of antivenom from the SAVP begin to stabilise, and alternative and new antivenom become registered for use in Southern Africa, the availability of antivenom to the patient, and challenge of a single supplier of this life saving drug will be a thing of the past.

Jonathan Leeming is Southern Africa’s leading authority on spider bites and scorpion stings. He consults for poison information helplines, medical organisations and academic institutions, and speaks and is a panel member at medical conferences. He is a member of the National Snakebite Advisory Group. Email info@JonathanLeeming.com or go to www.scorpions.co.za

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Fight Smart: Breast Cancer Can be Cured!

Dr Q Sibiya
Radiologist

Breast cancer remains one of the most devastating cancers affecting women worldwide, claiming around 670,000 lives every year. In South Africa, about 1 in 28 women will be diagnosed with breast cancer in her lifetime.



Late diagnosis is one of the biggest reasons so many women die of this disease. The fight against breast cancer begins long before the diagnosis. It is our responsibility to start that fight earlier.

Being a woman and getting older are risk factors in themselves. Roughly half of all breast cancers occur in women with no other risk factor. Non-modifiable risk factors also include inherited genetic mutations (BRCA1 and BRCA2), a family history of breast, ovarian, prostate or pancreatic cancer, and a personal history of breast cancer or of radiation therapy to the chest before the age of 30.

Modifiable risk factors, which we hardly ever speak about, include smoking, excessive alcohol intake, obesity, lack of regular physical exercise and hormone replacement therapy.

This is where the fight against breast cancer (and many other diseases) begins: honest conversations with ourselves, and changing what we need to change. No effort is too small.

It is also very important for women to have a thorough conversation with their healthcare provider before deciding to start hormone replacement therapy.

Breast cancer can be detected early, often before a lump can be felt, through screening mammography, with breast ultrasound added where needed. The role of a screening mammogram is to find breast cancer before it becomes palpable or advanced.

Women should have a mammogram every year from the age of 40. Women at high risk, usually because a close relative had breast cancer, may need to start earlier.

Regular screening mammography reduces deaths from breast cancer and allows earlier diagnosis with less aggressive treatment. Self-examination does not replace screening, but any change a woman notices in her breasts should be reported promptly.

Breast cancer is far less common in men, but it does occur. Men should also have any breast lump, swelling or change assessed promptly by a healthcare professional.

Finding a change in the breast understandably causes anxiety, but most breast lumps are not cancer. A newly felt lump should not be a cause for panic. It should be a prompt to seek medical attention early, when treatment (if needed) is most effective.

Early detection saves lives. Let us fight smart.

Hoedspruit PRIVATE HOSPITAL

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Address: Huilboerboon Street, Hoedspruit | **Email Support:** info.hph@hphospital.co.za

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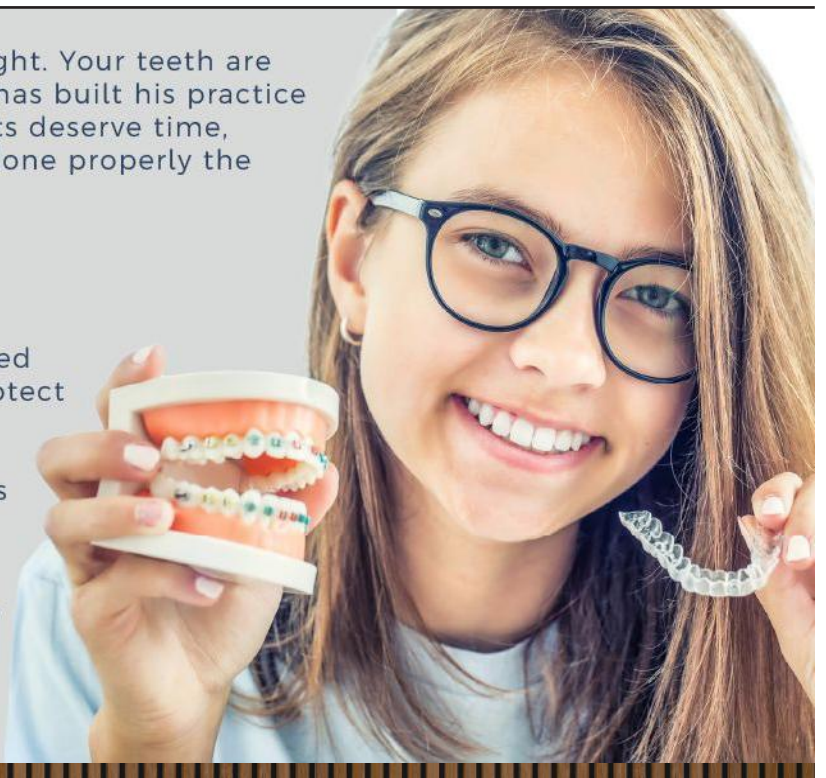
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MARILE LANDMAN
B.Optom (RAU) 2006
060 548 5387
admin@hdlandman.co.za
Hoedspruit Private Hospital, Medical Centre North

JEANETTE MAREE
AUDIOLOGY / OUDIOLOGIE

AUDIOLOGY / OUDIOLOGIE
Hoedspruit Private Hospital, Medical Center North

Cell: 077 280 6533
Email: info@jmaudiology.co.za

Lady Godiva's November Forecast: The Stars Set the Mood, You Do the Work

Lady Godiva

November is when the sky and the to-do list finally agree. The heat builds, the first storms gather over the Lowveld, and the year starts winding down whether you're ready or not. The stars can point the way, but they won't pay your bills. December is closer than it looks. Anything you want settled before the holidays gets harder once everyone downs tools and goes quiet. Each sign below gets a little sky and a plain job. The sky is for atmosphere. The job is for Monday.

Scorpio (23 October – 21 November)
Pluto, your ruler, deals in what's buried, and your season turns the volume up on everything you feel. Someone owes you money, an answer or an apology. Ask for it this month, in writing if it's money. They won't raise it themselves.

Sagittarius (22 November – 21 December)

Jupiter's Archer takes aim on the 22nd, and your restless streak wakes with it. The diary is about to fill with year-end functions and "quick catch-ups". Pick the three that matter and decline the rest this week, not on the day.

Capricorn (22 December – 19 January)
Saturn, your ruler, has one lesson and repeats it until you pass: finish what you start. Clear the one task you keep moving to "tomorrow". December you will be grateful, and slightly less annoying.

Aquarius (20 January – 18 February)
Uranus lends you bright ideas, but this month someone near you is thirsty for something small and practical. Skip "let me know if you need anything". Offer a lift, a phone call or two hours of your time.

Pisces (19 February – 20 March)
Neptune, your ruler, loves a tide, and the festive tide pulls straight at your wallet. Check your debit orders, subscriptions and insurance renewals now. Cancel one thing you don't use.

Aries (21 March – 19 April)
Mars runs hot in you, and the Lowveld heat isn't helping. If an angry message needs sending, write it and leave it until tomorrow morning. If it's still true then, send it.

Taurus (20 April – 20 May)
Venus rules your love of comfort, and the comfort has a leak, literally or otherwise. A gate, a tap, a tyre, the thing you've stepped around since winter. Get the quote this week, because storm season finds every weak spot.

Gemini (21 May – 20 June)
Mercury keeps you talking, and you've left too many conversations half-finished. Pick the three people you owe a reply and answer them today. Short replies count.

Cancer (21 June – 22 July)
The Moon pulls your moods like a tide, and this month it pulls you toward family. December plans go to whoever speaks first, so speak first. Settle who hosts, who travels and who brings what.

Leo (23 July – 22 August)
The Sun rules you, and you've been giving off warmth for months. Someone is working hard and getting no thanks, and it may be you. Thank one person out loud this month, or ask for the thanks you're owed.

Virgo (23 August – 22 September)
Mercury has you fixing everyone else's machinery while yours runs on fumes. Book the appointment you've been putting off, whether dentist, eye test or check-up. It's a ten-minute phone call.

Libra (23 September – 22 October)
Venus favours honest hearts, and someone close needs a straight conversation, not a hint. Find the one clear sentence and say it. Nobody can read your mind, and they've stopped trying.

Hot Tips for November
Pay, reply, book, fix. In that order, and before the 1st of December. Summer storms and power cuts go together in the Lowveld. Charge the power banks and find the torch while there's still light. Drink more water than you think you need. Half this month's arguments are heat and tiredness in disguise. The stars may be watching, but they're not doing the washing up, so do one avoided job a day.



SUDOKU

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		9		7				3
			6		5			2
				2	3	1		

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Notices

SANRAL
BUILDING SOUTH AFRICA THROUGH BETTER ROADS

VEA ROAD MAINTENANCE & CIVILS

NOTICE TO INTERESTED STAKEHOLDERS

CONTRACT SANRAL X.007-005-2026/1 EMERGENCY REPAIR OF FLOOD DAMAGE STRUCTURES ON NATIONAL ROADS R578, R524, R40 AND R36 IN LIMPOPO PROVINCE

MARULENG LM - EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Applicants to request for the Expression of Interest Application Form via:

- Email: vealimpopo@gmail.com
- Subject: Expression of Interest – Maruleng LM
- or Collect at our office. (Address below)

The completed Application to be re-submitted to the above email. Alternatively, drop documentation in an allocated box at:
VEA Phalaborwa office
18 Potgieter street, Phalaborwa.

For enquiries contact: VEA Limpopo Site office Tel: 060 144 4328
Email: vealimpopo@gmail.com

Closing date and time of submission:
Monday, 16th November 2026 at 12pm(Midday)
No submission received after the closing date and time will be accepted or considered.

Market Analysis: SUB-CONTRACTOR & SUPPLIER REGISTRATION APPLICATION FORM

Documents to be emailed or hand-delivered as indicated above. Submissions must be submitted as indicated no later than the date and time indicated above. SANRAL does not take any responsibility for any submissions made to the wrong physical address.

VACANCIES AVAILABLE Hoedspruit Ambrosia Citrus Estate

ambrosia

Job Title: Harvester
Hours: Monday - Friday 07:30-16:00 **Terms:** Seasonal
Salary: R30.23 per Hour

Job description:
Ambrosia will be looking to appoint 200 harvesters of the season to pick lemons, grapefruits and oranges on 9 November 2026

Requirements:
1. The candidate must be able to work on a Saturday and overtime during the week when required
2. The candidate must have a good work ethic and must be energetic and a quick learner.
3. The candidate must be able to work long hard hours.
4. This work consists of hard and physical work.
5. The candidate should provide a clear RSA identity document (copy), Tax document (copy) and Bank confirmation letter.

Contact Details:
(HR Manager) 082 522 4579**Office:** 087 806 2086
Closing date: 11 December 2026

SANRAL
BUILDING SOUTH AFRICA THROUGH BETTER ROADS

VEA ROAD MAINTENANCE & CIVILS

APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION ON THE LABOUR DATABASE CONTRACT SANRAL

FOR THE EMERGENCY REPAIR OF FLOOD DAMAGE STRUCTURES ON NATIONAL ROADS R578, R524, R40 AND R36 IN LIMPOPO PROVINCE

Maruleng Local Municipality

PURPOSE OF THIS FORM
This Form is to obtain and create database for people who would like to be labourers for this project, for the purpose of assisting the main contractor VEA Road Maintenance and Civils, and subcontractors in conducting routine maintenance in above mentioned Projects. The main Contractor or Subcontractors should use this form to ascertain which employees (labourers) are from designated groups in terms of the Employment Equity Act, 55 of 1998, as amended.

WHO SHOULD COMPLETE THIS FORM?
Community members who would like to be part of the labourers for this project.

WHERE TO GET THE FORM
Request the application form by emailing vealabour@gmail.com OR from project PLC members OR Whatsapp: 060 144 4328

Please Note:
'Designated Groups' means black people who are youth (under 35); women and people with disabilities who are citizens of the Republic of South Africa by birth or descent; or became citizens of the Republic of South Africa by naturalization: (i) before 27 April 1994; or (ii) after 26 April 1994 and would have been entitled to acquire citizenship by naturalisation prior to that date but who were precluded by Apartheid policies.

The completed form can be emailed to vealabour@gmail.com or hand deliver at our Phalaborwa office :
18A Potgieter Street, Phalaborwa, 1390 by the 16 November 2026.

Supporting documents such as Qualification certificates, ID copy and proof of residence (Municipal rates and taxes, Letter from Traditional Council, Letter from Municipal office) Proof of Disability if applicable must be attached to this form.

Closing date: 16 November 2026
Email: vealabour@gmail.com
Subject: Labour Maruleng LM Application





Kruger2Canyon News *Community Directory*

BUSINESS/EATING/SERVICES

Bushveld Keys Locksmiths
082 869 0890
Celestial Events
079 575 0900
Codfather Seafood & Sushi
021 438 0782/3
FGASA
011 886 8245
Fidelis Vox
082 375 9507
082 554 8530
Fruitful Living (WhatsApp)
079 842 1903
Industrial Liquors
083 463 2253
Koti Services
064 078 8408
Kruger2Canyon News
082 330 6060
Mamore African Cuisine
083 463 2253
Oasis (WhatsApp)
068 912 7816
SPAR Hoedspruit
015 793 2305
Suzuki Hoedspruit
015 0011 359
The Brewery
060 970 7771
Tops @ SPAR
015 793 2069
Valencia
013 752 7005
Wild in Africa (Beading)
079 225 4988

TOURISM AND THINGS TO DO

Eastgate Airport
015 793 3681
First Car Rentals
010 001 8048
GolfSim
060 970 7771
Graskop Gorge
066 305 1572/3
Hertz Car Rental
086 160 0136
Kruger to Canyons Biosphere
015 817 1838
My Africa
063 381 7738
Skyway Trails
013 737 6747

CONSTRUCTION/TRADE

Coastal Hire
015 793 0971
Discon
083 415 3186
Mopane Group
015 781 1571
Paintsmiths
078 304 2034
079 894 4144

SCHOOLS/EDUCATION

Drakensig Laerskool
015 793 3756
Drakensig Pre-Primary
015 793 2401
Hoedspruit Christian School
015 793 2067
Lowveld Academy
015 793 3750
Mariepskop Laerskool
079 529 6071
Mariepskop Pre- Primary
082 880 7069
Perspective Training College
082 787 4471
Southern Cross Schools
015 793 0590

REAL ESTATE

C21 Wildlife Properties
015 793 1534

PHARMACIES

HPH Pharmacy
012 379 0698
HSP Pharmacy
015 793 2318
HWE Pharmacy
015 793 1427
Lowveld Pharmacy
072 404 6142

CLINICS

Government Clinic
015 793 9000
Hlokomela Clinic
087 550 0387

MEDICAL SERVICES

Afrirad (X-Rays)
015 880 1722
Brace Yourself Orthodontics
072 490 7869
Dialysis Clinic
072 321 4131
Dr Blignaut
083 410 0190
Dr Coertzen (Orthodontist)
072 490 7869
Dr Dabrowski
081 061 0313
Dr du Toit (Pediatrician)
082 644 5000
Dr Kirstein
071 746 1059
Dr Ndlovu
015 793 1257
Dr Polley
015 793 0606
Dr Shivambu
082 465 8114
Dr van Berge
079 531 6582
Dr van Vuuren (Dentist)
015 793 0845
HPH Radiology
011 075 8980/8
Jeanette Maree Audiology
077 280 6533
KYK Oogkundiges/Optometrist
060 548 5387
Lowveld Dental
073 597 5174
R den Dunnen (Nurse)
083 236 0159
S Vet (Speech Therapy)
079 528 3023

ANIMAL SERVICES

Hoedspruit Animal Hospital
071 326 8716
015 793 0797
Hoedspruit Reptile Centre
015 795 5203
Mohololoholo Rehab
064 705 3180
State Vet
060 543 0203

EMERGENCY - HELP LINES

Africa Safe-T
087 095 8911
Alcoholics Narcotics Anonymous
082 258 4602
Ambulance Services Limpopo
015 793 1581
Ambulance Services Swift
060 528 2784
ER 24
079 306 0666
FARMWATCH
072 310 0032
Fire Brigade Airforce
015 799 2172
Fire Brigade Maruleng
015 793 0536
Fire Department Hoedspruit
015 793 0728
Hoedspruit Private Hospital (HPH)
012 000 1111/2
HPH Casualty
012 000 1113
HPH Emergency
012 000 1254
HPH ER Direct
010 300 0280
HSP Ambulance
015 383 0650
HSP Med Rescue
072 170 0864
Med OSH Consulting
078 672 0215
Poison Centre
0861 555 777
SAPS
015 799 4000
079 889 4407
SAPS General
101 111
Sekororo Hospital
015 383 9400
Snake Removal
073 934 6156
Tintswalo Hospital
013 795 5000
Victim Support Unit
082 940 0651





My 5 Sent

Oupa Bobbili

Vriendelikheid – weer verkiesings tyd, en al wat nou glimlag is die wat kruisies soek. Gee my sommer 'n naar kol op die maag. Ek ry deur die dorp en bekyk hoe die pale weer gehang word met die borde. Die een party hang sy borde oor die ander partye se borde sodat net hulle advertensies gesien kan word. Dit is hoe ons lewe, gun niemand niks nie. Alles gaan oor om beheer te hê, maar diens lewering is glad nie op die agenda nie. Ons burgemeester was net grootmond aan die begin, en dit het daar geëindig.

Nou wat het vriendelikheid met die geite uit te waai. Vriendelikheid is nie net 'n vals glimlag nie. Dit gaan oor om nederig en opreg te wees. En mense wat so is, dien gewoonlik ander. Nors mense doen nie. 'n Nors Kelner in die restaurant bedien jou nie, hy doen net sy of haar werk, en irriteer net die gaste. 'n Vriendelike Kelner bedien jou met alles wat jou kos smaaklik maak. Inteendeel jy wil langer kuier en definitief weer terug kom in die toekoms. Nors mense blok jou om iewers heen te gaan. Dit gee die plek 'n slegte naam.

Dit is die selfde as jy by die staats departemente instap, as hulle jou vriendelik behandel dan gee jy nie om, om 'n bietjie te wag nie. En glo my ons ou mense het nie geduld nie. Daar is min goed wat my so omkrap as iemand wat jou bedien asof jy sy of haar skoonma is nie. Dit kos absoluut niks om vriendelik te wees nie.

Vriendelikheid ken nie, kleur, ras, kultuur of taal nie. Vriendelikheid ken nie status, geld of titels nie. Vriendelikheid ken, goeie maniere, verdraagsaamheid, hulpvaardigheid, lag, en liefde. Vriendelikheid oordeel glad nie, en veroordeel ook nie, daar is meer haat as liefde tans in die lewe. Dis net as ons vir dieselfde rede kan lief hê as wat ons haat, hoe wonderlik sou die lewe wees.

Iemand vra my vir wie gaan ek stem. Weet jy as ek rêrig kon kies sal dit daai drie manne wat voor PME die ketties en sjambokke verkoop. Hulle is altyd vriendelik en op hulle pos. Ek sal vir daai een stem wat jou altyd laat tuis voel as jy by 'n plek kom. Ek stem vir die een wat dit nie as 'n werk sien nie, maar as 'n roeping. Ek sal vir die een stem, wat altyd antwoorde op probleme gee wat nie een hulle werk is nie. Die een wat verantwoordelikheid vat as dinge skeef gaan en uit hulle pad gaan om dit te herstel.

Beheer vrate, wat lui en gierig is sal nooit my stem kry nie. Hulle is nooit vriendelik nie, maar eerder altyd besig om meer selfsugtig te wees nie.

Wees nederig en vriendelik, dit kos waaragtig niks nie.

Groete.

The Birds That Beat The Army

Claude, Anthropic Ai

In November 1932, the Australian army went to war against a bird. It sent one officer, two gunners, two machine guns and 10,000 rounds of ammunition. The bird won.



The story starts with a government that had run out of ideas. After the First World War, Australia settled returned soldiers on farmland in Western Australia's Wheatbelt, much of it marginal. Then the Great Depression collapsed wheat prices. Then drought in the interior pushed an estimated 20,000 emus toward the wheat districts around Campion and Walgoolan, where they trampled crops and damaged fences. By then roughly a quarter of the soldier-settlers had already abandoned their land. The rest were desperate. Many were veterans, and they knew exactly what a machine gun could do. They asked for some.

The Defence Minister, Sir George Pearce, agreed. He described the job as "emu control using machine guns." Major G.P.W. Meredith of the Royal Australian Artillery's Seventh Heavy Battery arrived at Campion on 2 November 1932.

The plan was simple. Settlers would circle the birds and herd them toward the guns. The emus declined to cooperate. They split into small groups and scattered in every direction. On 4 November, an ambush of around a thousand emus went wrong when a gun jammed after about a dozen kills. By 8 November, reports said 2,500 rounds, a quarter of the supply, had brought down roughly 200 birds.

The news reached Parliament. One member asked, half in jest, whether medals would be struck for those taking part. A colleague replied that any medals belonged to the emus, who had won every round so far.

Meredith withdrew, but the farmers demanded his return, and he went back on 13 November. The military tried mounting a gun on a truck. The emus outpaced it. Meredith later paid the birds a grudging compliment, comparing their ability to absorb gunfire to the toughness of tanks.

On 10 December 1932, the soldiers were withdrawn. The official tally was 986 emus for 9,860 rounds, exactly ten bullets per bird. Meredith argued that many more had wandered off to die unseen, and nobody could prove otherwise. The incursions had faded by then, but according to one account, the harvest did more to end them than the guns did.

The government's next move was quieter. Farmers asked for the army again in 1934, 1943 and 1948, and each time were refused. Instead, authorities leaned on a bounty system that had existed since 1923 and supplied farmers with ammunition. It worked in the crudest sense. In a single six-month stretch in 1934, farmers lodged 57,034 bounty claims, vastly more birds than the soldiers had reported killing. Between 1945 and 1960, around 284,700 emus were killed in Western Australia.

And still the emus survived. Their population remains stable today, and wild emus have been protected under Australian federal law since 1999.

Nobody should read this only as comedy. The crop losses were real. The farmers were real, and so was their distress. It would be just as wrong to cast the farmers as fools or the emus as heroes. They were animals following water and food in a drought, and the people in their path had been handed marginal land and a collapsing economy.

What the episode shows is narrower and more useful. Force that arrives with spectacle and little understanding of the animal's behaviour tends to fail. The machine guns were built for armies that stand still and shoot back. Emus do neither. What eventually changed the numbers was dull: bounties, ammunition in the hands of people who knew the ground, and fencing. Those methods killed far more birds than the army did. Whether that was the right answer remains an argument worth having, and it is one that never fully goes away wherever wildlife and livelihoods collide.

Anyone who lives in the Lowveld knows the instinct. When animals and people clash, there inevitably are difficult situations. In 1932, that response arrived on a truck with two machine guns and left with nothing to show for it but a joke. The birds are still there.

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