



Address: P O Box 3542, Knysna, 6570

1 June 2009

Re: EXPRESSION OF INTEREST TO ATTEND THE CLIMATE CHANGE WINTER SCHOOL:

Maretha Alant (previously Shroyer) is currently employed by SANParks as the Environmental Planner for the Garden Route National Park (GRNP). The GRNP was declared on 6 March 2009. The GRNP stretches from Wilderness in the Southern Cape to Tsitsikamma in the Eastern Cape. Unique features of the GRNP include the largest continuous complex of indigenous forest in Southern Africa, the Knysna and Swartvlei estuaries, ranked number 1 and 6 respectively for conservation importance in the country and the oldest marine protected area in Africa.

Ms Alant's key responsibilities are mainstreaming biodiversity and commenting on EIAs and land use change applications. She represents SANParks on various Environmental Liaison Committees and Environmental Forums.

The key short term threats to biodiversity conservation in the Garden Route are development pressure and invader plants. Possible climate change related events that are on the increase include:

- ❖ Tsitsikamma experienced severe storms in August 2008.
- ❖ Knysna and Sedgefield are currently experiencing a drought.
- ❖ An increase in forest fires.
- ❖ Beach erosion resulting from storms and high tides threatening infrastructure.
- ❖ Flooding of homes in Wilderness and Sedgefield that are constructed in floodplains.
- ❖ Water pollution as a result of failure of municipal infrastructure (wastewater treatment works falling in rivers as a result of storms)

Increased knowledge in climate change effects could have the following benefits:

- ❖ Implementation of "best practice guidelines" (based on scientific models) for determining setback lines for new developments close to rivers, estuaries and the sea.
- ❖ Implementation of "best practice guidelines" (based on scientific models) for repairing and expanding barriers / sea walls to secure infrastructure on the coastline.
- ❖ Publishing of materials to increase awareness regarding the possible effects of climate change in the Garden Route.
- ❖ Prevent or delay extinction of endangered plant species via the establishment of conservation corridors from mountain catchment to sea.
- ❖ Effective participation in disaster management strategies related to climate change impacts.
- ❖ Information sharing with four Local and 2 District Municipalities regarding the GRNP position in terms of climate change.
- ❖ Increased understanding of climate change adaptation programmes and related benefits.
- ❖ Inclusion of climate change mitigation in EIA and land use change application comments in the critical biodiversity and ecological support areas in the Garden Route.

Degrees completed

Bachelor of Science: University of Orange Free State, 1985.

Higher Diploma in Education: University of Orange Free State, 1985.

Bachelor of Science (Honours): University of South Africa, 1994.

Master of Philosophy (Environmental Science): University of Cape Town, 1996.

Professional membership

Member of Interim Certification Board for Environmental Assessment Practitioners of South Africa.

Member of South African Institute of Ecologists and Environmental Scientists.

Member of South African Chapter of the International Association for Impact Assessment.

Climate change workshops attended

1. Landscape Initiative Knowledge Exchange (LINK) workshop on Climate Change and Corridors / Landscapes, from 13 to 17 October 2008 at 'Die Hel' in Gamkaskloof Nature Reserve, organised by the C.A.P.E. Co-ordination Unit. Speakers included Dr Grace Wong of Conservation International, Dr Guy Midgley of SANBI, Dr Emma Archer of the University of the Witwatersrand and Sarshen Marais of the Climate Action Partnership.
2. Eden Climate Change Summit, 2 to 4 February 2009, sponsored by Eden District Municipality and PetroSA.
3. Carbon Trading Opportunities in South Africa: Opportunities and Technologies¹⁰, July 2008 organised by PriceWaterhouseCoopers and the University of the Witwatersrand.

Climate change scenarios and related adaptation and possible mitigation measures form an important part of my work in the Garden Route land- and seascape. Linking climate change scenarios with resource economics and ecological accounting is my current research interest. Your due consideration of the above motivation will be appreciated and I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Maretha Alant
Environmental Planner: Garden Route National Park