

SOUTHERN CAPE INVASIVE SPECIES FORUM -24 June 2015 – Town Hall, George

Caution: These are not minutes!

A Dropbox link with presentations will be made available to attendees and circulated, once available!

It was a well-attended multi-stakeholder affair. Not all are acknowledged here.

DEA's Alien Invasive Species (AIS) Roadshow in George – Interesting bits and bobs

The NEMBA's (National Environmental Management Biodiversity Act, Act no. 10 of 2004) kicked in last year, 1 October 2014. The DEA is hosting workshops across the country to inform re the rollout; establish AIS forums within regions; and structures in order to implement the new law.

SCARY OR SALIENT FACTS

- 28 000 current jobs related to AIS eradication
- 55 000 job target for the above
- 20 million ha extent of AIS invasion in SA
- Projected cost/time frames for eradication of AIS in Western Cape: R3,9 billion – 18 years
- Projected cost/time frames for eradication of AIS in Eastern Cape: R8 billion – 72 years
- Stream flow reduction due to AIS in Western Cape: 529m³/annum
- Stream flow reduction due to AIS in Eastern Cape: 244m³ /annum
- “Jumped-over-the-garden-fence” was the euphemistic term used by officials for the “odd escapee” of pines etc. ‘Just report it, and it will be sorted out quick sticks!’ came the DEA official’s glib response. This led to first bemused, then indignant, then vociferous assurances from the floor by various attendees (and very much rightfully so!!!!) – ‘That those ‘plantations’, of whatever, you saw on the way here madam, are in fact dense stands of happy escapees!!!’ We’ll have to drag some officials off to fieldtrips, for sure.
- National List of Invasive species (Total of 559): It includes plants (383), mammals, reptiles, amphibians, fresh-water fish, terrestrial invertebrates, fresh-water invertebrates, marine invertebrates and microbial species.
- A Booklet, “South Africa’s National Listed Invasive Species” with the full list in a 34-page A5 format, but not fully illustrated, is available from DEA.
- **Aliens-a-comin...** The Garden Route has been identified as suitable habitat for two approaching invasives: *Campanoclinium macrocephalum* (Pompom weed, Gauteng baddie) and *Parthenium hysterophorus* (Famine weed, KZN and eastern parts of SA). Both create a sterile monoculture habitat and the latter, especially common on disturbed areas such as around homesteads, causes severe irritation, blisters etc. on contact to both humans and livestock.
- A list of AIS on a property has to be compiled and provided for all properties sold henceforth. The estate agents have to ensure that this documentation is in place.
- Government realises that invasive alien eradication creates jobs. There is a R3 billion budget (? Western Cape/National). R5million to Southern Cape.
- DEA has developed and appears willing to develop a variety of targeted information and awareness material depending on the needs of areas and the problem species present. Booklets,

brochures, posters etc. It appears that it might be worthwhile to approach them with constructive proposals to develop and market such items.

- One pampas grass plant produces 2 million seeds per season. Cut and burn plumes if it is not possible to eradicate plant immediately.
- Local resident Pam Booth (& Eden to Addo) arrived at the workshop armed with bio-control 'Wattle bugs' (a midge, *Dasineura rubiformis*) to distribute. For now the critters are within the galls (lumpy growths on the branches of the wattle), the galls are harvested, distributed to mature wattles and as spring arrives the critters will crawl up into mature flowering wattles and do their damage to inhibit seed formation. Success in this at Keurbooms and Karatara. Now is the time to harvest and distribute!
- Categories of AIS = 4

Category 1a: Invasive species which must be combatted and eradicated. Any form of trade and planting is prohibited.

Category 1b: Invasive species which must be controlled and wherever possible, removed and destroyed. Any form of trade or planting is strictly prohibited.

Category 2: Invasive species or species deemed to be potentially invasive, in that a permit is required to carry out a restricted activity. Category 2 species include commercially important species such as pine, wattle and gum trees. Plants in riparian areas are Cat 1b.

Category 3: Invasive species which may remain in prescribed areas or provinces. Further planting, propagation or trade is however prohibited. Plants in riparian areas are Cat 1b."

Wording from the DEA booklet, reference given earlier.

GARDEN ROUTE SUCCESSES

Southern Cape Landowners Initiative (SCLI) - They are Working for Water's implementing agency in the Southern Cape. SCLI has regular workshops and seminars, an annual conference during December and a mailing list for those interested. Kobus Meiring heads this incredibly successful programme. We've encountered him and his labour force in the field before. Local landowners sing SCLI's praises.

Links to their fb-page and website did not open at the time I tried.

Samantha McCullagh, NMMU informed re the Kaaimans to Touw Eco- Restoration Project. Not quite sure what this is about... yet. Follow the blog at: www.kaaimans2touwktt.wordpress.com.

Looks like a lovely site, useful information .

Contact: kaaimans2touw@gmail.com

Louise Stafford (ex-Garden Route!) of the City of Cape Town, Invasive Species Unit heads up a programme in Cape Town for Green Jobs. Her skills, experience, approach and ability to 'get-things-done' impressed. Looks like there might be worthwhile blueprints to adapt and duplicate here.

NB!! TRAINING NB!!

SAGIC (South African Green Industries Council) has scheduled training across the country aimed to transfer knowledge about the AIS. A formal request was put forward for a course to be held in George. Kay Montgomery, dynamic mover and shaker (Biosecurity Advocacy, DEA), indicated October as a possibility for this.

<http://www.invasives.org.za/press/item/936-sagic-invasive-species-training.html>

www.sagic.co.za

VERY USEFUL NUMBERS AND LINKS

www.invasives.org.za is the national website, with provincial sites to follow soon.

The site functions..... if you can figure out legalese...

And the fb-page link: <https://www.facebook.com/invasivespeciessouthafrica>. It works too!

National Environmental Crimes and Incident Hotline: **0800 205 005**

This is the broad environmental hotline (e.g. spillages etc.). It can be used to report alien infestation and emerging problems. Report content will be reviewed prioritised, a reference no. provided and feedback promised within 8 weeks of an acknowledged report.

Stiaan Kotze heads up the compliance section (Biosecurity Compliance, DEA. Known as superman, he is a hottie, willing to assist, encourages all to contact him, but no to moms who enquires re his availability as matric farewell partner.

021 441 2816

082 447 4077

skotze@environment.gov.za

AIScompliance@environment.gov.za

Warren Schmidt deals with the Invasive Animals (Biosecurity Advocacy, DEA)

Yolanda Nodendwa gave an overview of the protocol required Category 2 permit applications (Biosecurity Permits, DEA)

At the end of the meeting a Southern Cape Invasive Species Forum was officially established by Kay Montgomery of DEA, following a full show of hands of course.

'Greentings'

Sandra Falanga

Outramps CREW and GCBR (Mossel Bay)