



**SKEP COORDINATION UNIT
MEDIA RELEASE
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**CELEBRATION OF WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY ON 5 JUNE 2012 IN SPRINGBOK,
NAMAKWA DISTRICT, NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCE**

World Environment Day is an annual event, celebrated on the 5th of June, aimed at being the biggest and most widely celebrated global day for positive environmental action. The 2012 theme for World Environment Day is Green Economy. World Environment Day celebrations started in 1972 and have grown to become the one of the main vehicles through which the United Nations (UN) stimulates worldwide awareness of the environment and encourages political attention and action.

This year the Northern Cape Provincial Department of Environment and Nature Conservation (DENC), in partnership with the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI), Conservation South Africa (CSA), and the Namakwa District Municipality (NDM) will celebrate World Environment Day in Springbok with a full day programme and a Gala Evening, to celebrate the signing of the Namakwa Biodiversity Advisory Forum (NAMBAF) Statement of Intent; the Launch of the Provincial Coastal Committee; the Launch of the Three Peaks Conservancy Signing Ceremony, and the Signing of Intent to Declare the Orange River Mouth as a Nature Reserve.

Starting at 09h00 in the main road of Springbok, activities of the day will be kick started with an organised march to the Show Hall, facilitated by the various eco-schools and community members. From 10h00 till noon at the Show Hall, the MEC of DENC, Me. Sylvia Lucas will deliver a Keynote Address. Exhibitions by various state departments, state institutions, local municipalities, and environmental civil society organizations will be on display. This will be followed by a meeting of the quarterly Namakwa Biodiversity Advisory Forum (NAMBAF) from 14h00 till 16h00.

The Gala Evening programme will be hosted by MEC Me. Sylvia Lucas from 18h00 until 20h00 at the Police Clubhouse, and is set to include the Inauguration of the Northern Cape Provincial Coastal Committee Members, the Signing of the NAMBAF Statement of Intent, the Signing of Three Peaks Agreement, and the Signing of Intent to Declare the Orange River Mouth a Nature Reserve, in terms of the national Environmental Management: Protected areas Act, 2003 (NEMPA).

The Northern Cape Provincial Coastal Committee facilitates a coordinated, inclusive and integrated approach to coastal and marine resources management by providing a platform for dialogue, co-operation and co-ordinated action between the key organs of state and other structures involved in coastal and marine management in the Province of the Northern Cape.

The Northern Cape Provincial Coastal Committee advises the MEC and the Provincial lead agency on matters related to coastal and marine resource policy and management; and co-ordinates effective implementation of the Integrated Coastal Management Act as well as the application of other legislation relevant to the NC coastal, marine and estuarine environments.

NAMBAF was been established on the 10th of July 2009, to promote better coordination between stakeholders, as well as to improve communication between civil society, national, provincial and local spheres of government. This arrangement proactively ensures proper planning, management, co-operation, integration and efficient decision making in issues of biodiversity conservation. Effective biodiversity conservation and environmental management will be achieved through knowledge sharing and well informed intervention strategies on biodiversity conservation and environmental management.





CSA, through a process of consultation with key partners such as the Kamiesberg Municipality, DENC and South African National Parks (SANParks), identified Biodiversity Stewardship as the most appropriate and most likely to succeed model for conserving the Kamiesberg Uplands.

The location of the Three Peaks Voluntary Conservation Area falls within the Kamiesberg Mountains Uplands. This includes commonage and private land within the Kamiesberg Municipality boundaries and the Namakwa District Municipality.

The Namakwa District's Bioregional Plan indicates the Kamiesberg Uplands as a Critical Biodiversity Area I (CBA I). This means that is a priority area, and is irreplaceable in terms of meeting biodiversity pattern targets. The core biodiversity areas are either with the highest biodiversity value, or areas that have been transformed to other land-uses (mining and croplands). All of what remains is required to meet conservation targets.

The Three Peaks Voluntary Conservation Area will be registered on the data base of Conservation sites of DENC, and will be managed by the landowners and users with the support from the Kamiesberg Municipality, CSA and DENC.

The Orange River Mouth (ORM) forms a transboundary site between South Africa and Namibia. The ORM was designated a Ramsar site in South Africa on the 28th of June 1991, and esignated a Ramsar site on the 23rd of August 1995 in Namibia. The ORM covers an area of approximately 500 hectares and is fed by the only perennial river (Orange / Gariep) in the region forming a linear oasis through an arid area.

This is a critical factor for supporting the rich biodiversity found at the mouth and in the surrounding landscape. It falls under the jurisdiction of the Department of Environment and Nature Conservation (DENC) in the Northern Cape Province, South Africa and the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) in Namibia.

The Orange River estuary has been identified as a biodiversity priority area by the Ramsar Convention; the National Spatial Biodiversity Assessment; the National Protected Area Expansion Strategy; the Succulent Karoo Ecosystem Programme; the Namakwa Biodiversity Sector Plan; the Richtersveld Municipality Biodiversity Assessment, and the Lower Orange River Transfrontier Conservation Area.

Biodiversity is the foundation on which the wealth of South Africans is built. Through World Environment Day, the UN Environment Programme is able to personalize environmental issues and enable everyone to realize not only their responsibility, but also their power to become agents for change in support of sustainable and equitable development. World Environment Day is also a day for people from all walks of life to come together to ensure a cleaner, greener and brighter outlook for themselves and future generations.

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