

EDEN SUPPORTS COASTAL MANAGEMENT

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“There has been a process in place over the last two years funded under the WWF CAPE Marine Programme which has looked at developing a suite of marine related products for the Garden Route. These included a Spatial Biodiversity Plan, Socio-Economic Study and Integrated Marine Management Plan for the area between the eastern boundary of Tsitsikamma National Park and the Kaaimans Estuary. With the enactment of the Integrated Coastal Management Act it is now necessary for coastal municipalities to fulfil certain functions in accordance to the Act. Eden Municipality through Vernon Gibbs-Halls and Henry Hill have been at the forefront of ensuring that these requirements are achieved within their municipal jurisdiction. A coastal management toolkit will be compiled for all the coastal municipalities and thoroughly workshopped through a stakeholder engagement process.

As a result of the previous work that has been completed and the need to ensure implementation of the ICM Act, funding has been sourced through the Eden Municipality to undertake a gap analysis of planning and management plan work that has been undertaken within the Garden Route from a marine, estuary and coastal perspective over the last few years. This information will then be used to identify what is needed to expand this information to cover the rest of the Eden Municipal Boundary through to the Gouritz River. This study will be used as a case study for other municipalities to follow.

Important stakeholders met at the Eden District Municipal Council Chambers to conduct an initial scoping and planning session to identify exactly what work has already been completed and what work still needs to be carried out and also to develop a plan for roll out into the near future. It was imperative that this small working group be formed to guide and assist with, where necessary, in the gathering of necessary information. It is envisaged that over the next two years, socio-economic, biodiversity spatial assessments and the development of an Integrated Coastal Management Plan for the entire Eden Municipal Boundary will be developed in conjunction with all the local coastal municipalities in the district, namely George, Knysna, Bitou, Mossel Bay and Hessequa. The management plan will identify illegal structures for removal like unapproved. In addition this will lead in the formation of a fully representative coastal forum. What is really exciting is that this will be the first opportunity to ensure integrated management between the near-shore marine environments, together with estuary and coastal strip management. The Eden District Municipality has taken a strong lead in this process and will drive the establishment of the first Coastal Forum in South Africa.”

MAYORAL HANDING OVER CHEQUE FOR PHASE OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN PHOTO ATTACHED NAMES
— From row from left: Jonathan Kingwill (Blue Pebble), Tim Andrew (Enviro-Fish), Maretha Alant (SanParks), Rhett Hiseman (CapeNature), Councillor Leon Dorfling(Executive Mayor Eden District Municipality), Peter Chadwick (WWF), Len du Plessis (San Parks), Henry Hill (Eden District Municipality), Vernon Gibbs-Halls (Eden District Municipality) Back Row from left: Robbie Robinson (Blue Pebble), Dr Alan Boyd (DEAT Marine and Coastal Management), Aidan Wood (Enviro-Fish), Pierre de Villiers (CAPE Estuaries), Andrew Brown (San Parks), and Dr Steve du Toit (WESSA)