

Making Sustainable Development A Reality
www.thegreenconnection.org.za



Annual Report 2011-2012

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080-620-NPO

PBO no: 930036889

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRPERSON

Every year The Green Connection (GC) makes positive strides in applying their mission of empowering people to participate in making their environment sustainable. I am proud to say that as one of the smaller non-profit environmental organisations the Green Connection has been actively involved in numerous projects, which has benefited communities either directly and indirectly. The institution has on many occasions and without hesitation offered their expertise on a pro-bono basis to various community based and non-profit organisations.

The Green Connection has produced excellent reports and presentations during the course of the year. These reports and presentations give testimony to the professionalism that GC demonstrates and is available on our website, www.thegreenconnection.org.za



The past year has seen more non-profit organisation working together and networking to achieve sustainable development.

As a Public Benefit Organisation, we ask ourselves how we represent the public. This institute has always believed in putting communities first. Without communities that live sustainably, we are in danger of an irreversibly degraded and uninhabitable environment. And only through people will we be able to preserve the wellbeing of our environment and the essential resources it provides upon which our human survival depends. We have to continue to secure and protect the future of the environment for the next generation.

Let us all make ***Sustainable Development a Reality!***

OUR MISSION

We believe that empowering people to participate in their environment is the only way that truly sustainable development can take place. Our environmental resources are limited and not ours to squander but to protect for future generations.

We believe that economic growth and development, improvement of socio-economic status and conservation of natural resources can only take place within a commonly understood framework of sustainable development. Our organisation aims to provide practical support to both the government and non-government sector as an integral part of sustainable development.

PROFILE

The Green Connection was established in 2000 and registered as a Non-profit organisation in 2010. The organisation comprises of 66.67% women and 83.3% PDI and prides itself on its relevance to the new South Africa. The organisation's Public Benefit Organisation (PBO) status was approved in 2011.

BOARD MEMBERS

Yachika Reddy has worked across a spectrum of projects focused on rooting sustainable energy approaches and practices in urban development planning and management processes across South Africa, during her 6 years of employment at SEA (Sustainable Energy Africa).



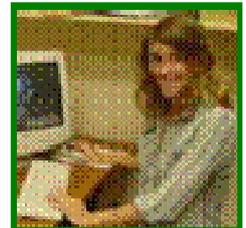
Liz McDaid is an environmentalist whose research and development work has mostly focused on environmental programmes aimed at building the capacity of civil society and government, including; co-ordination of field workers, design and facilitation of workshops, material development, and the establishment of working partnerships amongst different NGO's, as well as between civil society and government. Liz's core interest is public participation in environmental decision-making.



Basier Dramat is responsible for the financial management and provides the business expertise for the Green Connection. Specialising in accounting, taxation, environmental accounting, economic development and community based projects.



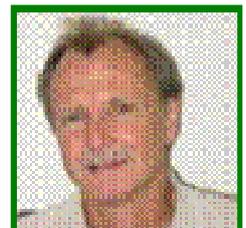
Christy Bragg expertise lies in conservation and biodiversity, community use of resources and awareness raising. Conservation issues, including environmental policy, community involvement in natural resource protection and sustainable use, in-depth knowledge of freshwater resources, terrestrial ecology, and concepts and issues in biodiversity conservation. She is adept at giving presentations to all sectors of society, and strongly believes in the value of raising awareness.



Penny Hlakula has a strong background and years of experience working with NGOs. An interesting part of her work history includes working with youth as a community organiser for environmental awareness, HIV/AIDS and socio-economic issues, as well as hosting a youth radio show.



Glyn Williams is a commercial and litigation attorney and specialises in *inter alia* environmental law. A number of environmental action groups and NGO's have been his clients over the years.



PROJECTS:

The Green Connection received funding from various projects, funds mostly raised in partnership with other non-governmental organisations.

EIAMS (Environmental Impact Assessment and Management Project) - Specialist Studies

The Green Connection completed 3 Specialist Reports for the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) from February to August 2011. The Specialists Reports for the Environmental Impact Assessment and Management Strategy (EIAMS) was based on three subthemes; Representative Demographics within service providers and civil society, Empowerment of marginalized communities and Cooperative Governance: EIM tools.

These reports were part of the larger governmental review of the Environmental Impact Assessment and Management review and the final results of the review will be presented to the public at a later date.

The Green Economy:

Liz McDaid was invited to attend a civil society gathering hosted by AIDC and presented a critique of the role of energy in the green economy, and reflected on how civil society might strengthen its participation in this arena. The report is available on our website, www.thegreenconnection.org.za

Liz McDaid worked with Sustainable Energy Africa to analyse some of the developmental impacts of key renewable energy and energy efficiency interventions within the City of Cape Town. This report provides some reflections on how to ensure that renewable energy will be implemented in a way that addressed the challenges of broad based black empowerment, gender inequities, poverty and small business development, all of which should be key to the green economy.

Sustainable Fisheries Project:

The Green Connection in partnership with WWF-SA designed and implemented a responsible fisheries training programme for commercial fisheries. These courses were designed and presented by Green Connection's Liz McDaid and WWF colleagues, to the crew and skippers of deep sea fishing operators. It is a land based course, and informal evaluation of the course has shown its effectiveness. A similar course is now in the design phase for coastal fishing communities.



Role playing a fisheries vessel inspection
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Responsible fisheries training workshop
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Succulent Karoo Climate Change Communication Project, funded by CEPF:

With support from Conservation International, in 2007, the Green Connection ran a series of climate change awareness workshops for local communities in the Succulent Karoo who have had little or no access to information about climate change in the past.

During subsequent years, we worked with two pilot communities, Wupperthal and Sutherland, to assist them to build resilience to adapt to climate change. At these workshops one participant from each area received a fuel efficient stove. We are hoping to obtain additional funding to provide more families with these stoves, which will reduce their environmental footprint and increase their energy security, health and well being.

The Green Connection has subsequently facilitated the use of the climate change communication model and tools that were developed for the SKEP project, and have run workshops in Gauteng, and Kwazulu-Natal.



Four of the Wupperthal participants were invited by the Worldwide Fund for nature South Africa (WWF-SA) to a workshop in August 2010. WWF-SA hosted a series of Roundtable workshops on a low-carbon economy theme. Mary-Anne Zimri, Magrieta Oktober, Rachel Ludick and Katrina Scheepers attended the 'You have struck a rock' Women and climate change adaptation: a focus on food security workshop.

The Electricity Governance Initiative:

The Electricity Governance Initiative (EGI) is a unique network of civil society organisations dedicated to promoting transparent, inclusive and accountable decision making in the electricity sector. We facilitate collaboration of civil society, policymakers, regulators, and other electricity sector actors using a common framework to define “good governance”. More than 30 organizations around the world are now partners in the Initiative.

The Green Connection is part of EGI- South Africa. For 2011, we participated in two EGI-SA projects, one was to use an analytical tool to analyse the renewable energy policy that government had embarked on. This work has been expanded into 2012 as the government renewable energy implementation has been amended. Partners included OCN, Project 90x2030, Idasa, and SAFCEI.

In 2011, our organisation was also part of a project to host the Energy Caucus in South Africa, to facilitate sharing of perspectives on energy governance between civil society and parliament. Partners included Project 90x2030, Idasa and 350.org.

The caucus meeting covered a number of topical energy topics, including nuclear energy, the progress of renewable energy and also enabled activists to network and discuss joint actions going forward. Members of parliament were invited to a workshop to share perspectives on key issues related to renewable energy implementation. We facilitated the energy caucus meeting, held capacity building workshops for community activists on current energy issues and facilitated community activists’ engagement with Members of Parliament.

The Green Connection together with other EGI-SA partners undertook a systematic assessment of decision-making processes in the electricity sector in South Africa. The report “**The Governance of Power – Shedding light on the electricity sector in South Africa**” (ISBN: 978-1-920409-16-6) was published in 2010.



Electricity Governance Initiative workshop



Facilitating empowerment workshops

For 2012, we are now piloting the framework on the revision of the IRP and the IEP, as well as working on a capacity building tool which we can use to empower civil society. We will be analysing the case study, engaging with stakeholders, build capacity and understanding of energy governance and make input into Governmental energy planning processes.

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IES Abroad:

IES Abroad (Institute for the International Education of Students) provides courses for international students visiting South Africa. Liz McDaid and Lynette Munro from the Green Connection are faculty members at IES, offering an environmental management course focusing on environmental justice issues within the sustainable development sector.

In January 2012, Liz presented a short talk on Going Green to this year's IES students. The talk covered some of the environmental challenges facing South Africa and how students might play their part in turning problems into solutions.



American students attending the Sustainable Development Course



Imizamo Yethu township in Hout Bay

What are the implications of the South African Industrial Biofuel Strategy for land, women and the poor in South African rural communities?

Green Connection was contracted by SPP and Oxfam to investigate and produce a report on the potential impacts of biofuels on the poor rural communities in the Eastern Cape.

According to the Biofuel Feasibility Report (2006), due to South Africa's relatively high liquid fuels consumption and relatively low agricultural capability (as regards arable land and water), biofuels can only make a small impact on supply security, and replacing the traditional community practice of low input- low risk farming with high input- high risk agricultural systems is often unaffordable and unsustainable. Ultimately biofuels per se is not the global solution to the oil crisis and using annual commercial food crops to replace fossil fuels can only be a short-term, limited solution, given the high fuel demand growth of the world.

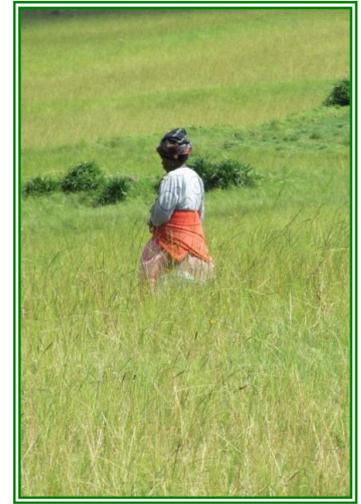


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As it stands, the South African Biofuel Strategy will have mostly negative impacts for rural communities and women in particular. As the Biofuel Strategy is based on an industrial scale and targets rural communities in the homelands to produce feedstock in order to facilitate both rural development and biofuel development, it is founded on an unsustainable agricultural model in a context of poor tenure security, limited capacity, inadequate markets and infrastructure, and ineffective governance. The interplay of these factors leads to negative repercussions for communities.



Raising awareness of civil society of the IRP and energy policies of SA:

As part of the Electricity Governance Initiative (EGI), Green Connection held a workshop in 2010 in Nieuwoudtville to educate and empower rural communities to engage with energy policy in South Africa. The workshop's aims were threefold: to provide the community with information on South Africa's current energy policy and plans; to build on the current knowledge of the community about issues around energy and climate change and ecologically appropriate solutions; and to disseminate the sustainable energy model developed with Bank Information Centre-funding by Green Connection for South Africa. Thus the workshop was both an information session, as well as an awareness raising medium, and a model was developed and tested for future energy workshops. The workshop was rated as highly informative by the participants.



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Workshops and conferences:

A range of workshops and conferences was attended by The Green Connection team and various presentations arranged. Presentations have been made to the Women Caucus in Parliament, Portfolio Committee on Energy and various civil society platforms. The Green Connection works collaboratively with many non-governmental organisations, for example, the Green Connection endorsed the SAFCEI submissions into the Climate Change Policy, the IRP, the National Planning Commission and other energy policy and legislative processes. Liz McDaid attended COP17 in Durban in 2011, in her capacity as the SAFCEI climate change and energy programme coordinator.

Our organisation has attended a number of renewable energy forums and conferences either as a participant or as a speaker. These include the 2nd Annual Solar Conference 2012, the Windaba 2011 conference, SASEC, etc.

The Green Connection is also represented on the Advisory Committee that advises the province on the green economy.

We have also provided capacity building workshops to participants in the Diakonia council of churches sustainable development course, and have provided advice to the Diakonia council on the green economy.

The Green Connection also works with Earthlife Africa in Johannesburg, working the organization to build the capacity of communities on issues of energy governance that affect them.

Resources:

A Green Connection poster and DVD (short video clips on worm farming and the use of the energy efficient fuel stove) were exhibited at a conference in London, England.

A new booklet, 'Redrawing the Grid - a case for sustainable, decentralised electricity for Southern Africa' was designed in late 2010. The booklet is one of a series that looks at different aspects of an alternative energy vision for South Africa. This brochure summarise the findings of an in-depth report that examined how decentralised electricity system that was based on renewable energy might be beneficial, particularly to those millions of South Africans who are beyond the reach of the national electricity grid.

Visit www.thegreenconnection.co.za for more information on these resources.

Annual Financial Statements

The Green Connection Board meeting is held annually and took place on 23 April 2012 in Rondebosch. Annual Financial Statements were prepared by external accounting officers, Stokell and Associates.

Income

Consulting fees	191,983.00
Retention fees	12,545.00
	204,528.00

Expenditure

