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One planet

South Africa

ANNUAL REPORT 2023



NATURE CONNECT
Changing lives through nature



HEI foundation

OVERVIEW 2023

“THE RESOURCES, INTERACTIVE GAMES AND DEMONSTRATIONS INSPIRE ME AS A TEACHER. THERE IS A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING BASED ON RESPECT AND MUTUAL EXPECTATIONS BETWEEN ONE PLANET SA AND OUR SCHOOL. THEY NEVER FAIL TO DELIVER ON THEIR PROMISES AND WILL ALWAYS GO THE EXTRA MILE IF WE SHOW ENTHUSIASM”.
MR KHUMALO, CORRIE LYNN PRIMARY SCHOOL.

While we are a tiny team working with a very modest budget, I am impressed to see the impact we have made this year with more than 12 000 environmental interactions with learners lasting between 2- 5 hrs. We pride ourselves on the quality of our in-school teaching support. We come prepared with resources for hands-on active curriculum aligned lessons. We are helping teachers and learners to make the connections between complex environmental issues and relate these to their own contexts while taking action to address them.

Now into our second year with the Sustainable Schools Programme in KZN, the programme’s success is evident in the high level of teacher and learner engagement, with our in-school lesson support providing invaluable guidance enhancing the understanding of sustainability as well as the ability to take action. Teachers have shown dedication and passion, investing their time and effort to implement impactful action projects that promote sustainability within their school communities. Apart from our school support, we have conducted numerous, impactful education activities in the form of in-nature excursions, day programmes for adults and learners as well as training for other NPOs and have extended our reach in ways we weren’t expecting.

While we are also constantly on the lookout for new funding partners, the economic climate is likewise not very promising, we remain deeply grateful for the loyalty shown by the Solon Foundation, the HCI Foundation and Nature Connect SA over these past few years.

Bridget Ringdahl, CEO/ Programme Manager One Planet SA



WHAT IS THE SUSTAINABLE SCHOOLS PROGRAMME?



“WE ARE VERY GRATEFUL AND APPRECIATE THE RELATIONSHIP THAT WE HAVE WITH ONE PLANET. OUR PARTNERSHIP HAS GROOMED US, THE TEACHERS AND LEARNERS, AND HAS TAUGHT US HOW TO TAKE CARE OF OUR EARTH, PLANTS, WATER AND ANIMALS.”
NOBANDA PRIMARY SCHOOL.

The Sustainable Schools programme, is helping to fill an urgent gap in engaging children in sustainability action projects and curriculum, in a fun and meaningful manner that in turn influence their families and wider communities to take sustainability issues seriously.

We aim to cultivate Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) practices in a way that is locally relevant in South African schools. Developed and supported by Nature Connect, and a network of like-minded partners such as One Planet SA, the Programme is a holistic approach to ESD supporting whole school participation in a continuous learning, action, reflection and adaptation process.

MORE THAN 155 SCHOOLS IN 5 PROVINCES ARE CURRENTLY INVOLVED. WITH OVER 322 ACTION PROJECTS INVOLVING 300 TEACHERS AND MORE THAN 1,8MILLION EDUCATIONAL HOURS.



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FROM THE TEAM

“LEARNERS HAVE DEVELOPED PASSION FOR ENVIRONMENT AND CRITICAL THINKING. THEY ARE FREE TO EXPRESS THEIR VIEWS ON ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES AND GAINED CONFIDENCE TO DO PRESENTATIONS IN LARGE GROUPS.” ANTONIA MKHABELA, SHEA O’CONNOR COMBINED

MDU MCHUNU, SCHOOL FACILITATOR

My highlight has been at one of our new schools where pupils there were shy and always a shadow of themselves. Over my visits I have seen an enormous attitude shift and eagerness to participate in every environmental activity that I bring, they are always looking forward to my visits every 2 weeks. I have been called “Mr Honeybee” ever since I facilitated on “Bees & Biodiversity” lesson. One pupil from the school had a chat with her sister, who is one of the teachers from one school I visit (Shea O’Connor) about the lovely session I usually have with them, this was a heartwarming experience for me, which implies the little change one can make. Their Natural Science teachers told me that my lesson made teaching and learning easy for them, *“MiniSASS touches on diversity of animals which was covered in class and is curriculum aligned, and you bringing the practical part of the lesson made learners more aware of their surrounding environment, and they were happy to identify those macroinvertebrates for themselves,”* said Mrs Gininda



JULIA INVERNIZZI, FACILITATOR & RESOURCE MANAGER

My highlight of the year is the Karkloof Conservancy Birding Outing. Partnering with Birdlife KZN, the Karkloof Conservancy and SAPPI was a wonderful opportunity to work together sharing resources, expertise and time. It gave us the opportunity better get to know our community, share common interests, and most importantly get learners in nature to foster a real passion and love for birds. I was able to witness first hand how lesson and content learned in the classroom adds meaning and context to the ‘lived’ experience. Not only did this outing provide that vital connection to nature but also provided the space for a more intimate connection with our learners. I believe cultivating meaningful relationships through a shared moment (watching the Pied Kingfisher we learned about in class, catching a fish) can have long-lasting resolve for positive change.

HIGHLIGHTS 2023

FOR 2023 WE HAVE SUPPORTED
26 SCHOOLS IN KZN TO BECOME MORE SUSTAINABLE



12 378 LEARNER INTERACTIONS

from 26 schools received practical
in classroom, environmental
lessons



Over 174 school support visits
between 2 -5 hrs each, were
conducted



174



17

CLIMATE CRISIS LESSONS

24

BIODIVERSITY LESSONS



20

WASTE & RECYCLING LESSONS

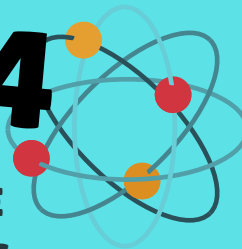


18

WATER & WETLAND LESSONS

24

SCIENCE LESSONS



15

INDIGENOUS GARDEN LESSONS



9



ANIMAL COMPASSION AND SNAKE INTERACTION EXPERIENCES

MINI-SASS CITIZEN WATER QUALITY OUTINGS

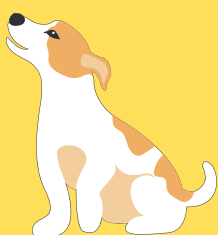


12

96



96 HRS OF ALIEN INVASIVE SPECIES CLEARING



14

TIPPY TAPS WERE INSTALLED/MAINTAINED

HOW WE SUPPORT SCHOOLS IN CLASSROOM SUPPORT



Support visits involve co-teaching an environmental lesson (topic) in the classroom with the teacher and assisting the class to start a relevant mini-action project, to sustain it and plan for the next activity. We usually work with Grd 4 -7s and try to support the same group of learners for an entire year. We work with schools on a ‘Work together /Work away” approach so that we aren’t doing the work for the school, but rather, supporting them to implement the projects themselves. On average schools were visited between up to 9 times/ year depending on the time they had available, and our project budget. Some examples follow:

LESSON: HERITAGE FOODS AND THE UN INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF MILLETS

Did you know that millets are ancient grains and were the first cultivated crops 5000 years ago (sorghum, teff, various millets). They are nutrient dense, hardy, adaptable and affordable – so why do we no longer find them on our tables?

Learners were well aware of how diets have changed from healthy plant-based to fast food, high sugar and too many animal products. They were fascinated to be taken into a journey of their food heritage. After a hands-on experimental lesson on heritage foods focusing on Imifinos, learners were amazed to learn how nutritious they are and that there is definitely great wisdom sitting with our elders that we need to tap into. We explored, tasted and learned about 10 so-called weeds, that most of us have forgotten about or never heard of – Msobo (solanum), Uqdolo (blackjacks), Ushukuyana (gallant soldier), Imbati (nettles), Ihlaba (dandelions). Free food literally on our doorstep.

They learned about all the amazing nutrients that can be found in plants and celebrated these special days by eating a more adventurous coleslaw salad, called GBOMS (G= Greens, B = Beans, O= Onions, M=Mushrooms, S=Seeds) with some pearl millet, that included no less than 14 easily available vegetables and a host of imifinos.



IN CLASSROOM SUPPORT

LESSON: BIODIVERSITY AND SCIENTIFIC METHODS

While February was International Wetlands month (and of course there is Valentines Day). We focused our efforts on loving nature, our planet and wetlands more, by supporting outdoor activities that develop scientific skills, as well as a deep appreciation for nature (and our wetlands). One of the activities, although so simple, has been a 'first' for all learners- Conducting a Biodiversity survey using the quadrat method of 2 grasslands. The comparative study took a number of different sites: inside the schools and outside. What was most striking for the learners was the how diversity was SO much higher outside, even if it wasn't a pristine grassland. Learners graphed their findings and reflected on the results and came to the conclusion that we should all look after nature better, after all, it looks after us.

We also encouraged all schools to wear GREEN for Valentines day in solidarity of our wetlands and LOVE for our planet and send us a heart-shaped photo of learners recognising this. The response was overwhelming with 18 schools rising to the fun challenge!



“SUSTAINABLE SCHOOLS INSTILLS THE PASSION FOR TAKING CARE OF THE ENVIRONMENT, WHILE THE ACTIVITIES DONE, DEVELOP VALUES SUCH AS RESPONSIBILITY, INTEGRITY, SERVICE, CREATIVITY, AND AWARENESS OF ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES LOCALLY, NATIONALLY, AND INTERNATIONAL WITH HANDS-ON ACTIVITIES” ANTONIA MKHABELA AND SIMANG DLAMINI

LESSON: WATER SCARCITY AND CONSERVATION

Nobody is too posh for tippy taps – have you set up yours yet?

SA is forecast to be using more freshwater than we have available by 2030. That’s just around the corner. Saving water should become a top priority for all. Over 18 tippy tap stands have been set up or maintained in our schools with the potential to save hundreds of thousands of litres of water. Most significantly learners were involved in a hands-on lesson covering many CAPS outcomes. Importantly they learned about water auditing and calculated the amount of water that could be saved from washing hands under a running taps vs a tippy tap. The results are STAGGERING. In some cases up to 20x more water is used under a tap, the average was around 10 times more. On average most schools measured 1litre/handwash with tap while only 0,1litres is used with a tippy. The maths was easy and in the case of Bambanani a school of 450 learners.

They worked out for 1 day using taps they would need 450 litres but for one 10mth school year 90 000litres that’s equivalent to 18, 5000litre Jojos!

While using tippy taps would only require 2, 5000litre jojos of water for the year Meanwhile Phumelalani Primary that has 1400 learners would need 56, 5000litres Jojos to wash hands under taps for the year versus only 5 jojos of water with Tippy taps! These savings are significant and small, inexpensive and easy interventions like these are extremely worthwhile for so many reasons.



OTHER SUPPORT

“THE AWARDS AND CELEBRATION CEREMONY WAS A WONDERFUL EXPERIENCE FOR BOTH TEACHERS AND LEARNERS. THE PRESENTATIONS WERE INFORMATIVE, INSPIRING, AND BEAUTIFULLY PRESENTED. THE INTERACTIVE WORKSHOP PROVIDED US WITH THE OPPORTUNITY TO ACTIVELY ENGAGE WITH THE MATERIALS, ASK QUESTIONS AND MAKE CONTACT WITH LIKE-MINDED PEOPLE. WHAT A WONDERFUL LEARNING EXPERIENCE, WE LOOK FORWARD TO THE NEXT”
STEPH SUMMERS, HOWICK HIGH

CELEBRATION AND AWARDS DAY 2022

We celebrated with 117 teachers, learners and supporters of the Sustainable Schools Programme in KZN. The day was interactive as possible with an array of stimulating and fun interactive stands that engaged everyone in the amazing world of catchments where participants modelled a catchment and then tested how water flowed and how things like climate change cause flooding and landslides. They engaged in a fabulous frogs with EWT. As 2023 is the UN International Year of Millets, this was the perfect chance to learn about something that was completely new for most. Tasting Sorghum was interesting and delicious to some and it was fascinating to learn about the climate adaptive properties of these Ancient Grains. Expert SS School The Birches Pre-primary captured everyone with their clever Trash to cash recycled products while others got to learn and identify some of our most prolific alien invasive plants species and what to do about them. Soil solutions was time to get hands muddy and realise the value and importance of top soil.

All the schools efforts were recognised with various awards while 6 exceptional schools were rewarded with R6000 each to go toward their environmental project of choice. These included Howick Prep, who were awarded the prizes for “Best new school to the Programme” and Hawkstone Primary for their excellent efforts in “Consumption and Waste” being the first school albeit only having 60 learners to collect 450 eco-bricks for their eco-bench project. Other winners included Nhlonhweni, Kwangubeni , Nobanda and Amanzimtoti Primary Schools.



MIDLANDS TRASHION SHOW JUNE 2023

"ONE OF THE BUILDING BLOCKS TO HAPPINESS IS REAL HUMAN ENGAGEMENT. TODAY'S TRASHION SHOW WAS 100% THAT, WITH EVERY PARTICIPANT WHETHER JUDGE, TEACHER OR LEARNER ENGAGED TO THE MAX." PHILLIPA GORDON, TRASHION JUDGE

Did you have any idea that globally about 100 million tonnes of textile waste is generated each year? Or that by 2050 scientists predict there will be more plastic than fish in the ocean? There is one ton of plastic for every person on Earth – much of it packaging materials that have been used just once, but will last forever.

These horrifying statistics underpin the exuberant, colour filled, inspiring and dazzlingly spectacular Trashion Show held in Howick each June – almost 200 learners from across KZN participated this time, showing off their design talent and green credentials. It has been 3 years since this artistic spectacle has been possible and schools were highly enthusiastic to strut their stuff!

Amahle Ngobse (Shea O'Connor Combined School) used wonderful combinations of materials and colours, while home schooler Brea Venter's dress was judged to be perfect to attend a Royal Wedding. Vibrant plastic pom poms earned Snothando Khanyeza (Phumelelani Primary) the nickname Colour Pop, and Nomveliso Mchunu's (Muntuza Primary) caused a stir in her ensemble made of discarded plastic spoons. In the boy's category, Superhero space junkie Joshua Ganachaud (Amanzimtoti) was the best fantasy costume.

Favourite in the Wire Cars category was Akhona Mabizela's brilliantly engineered truck. Judge Barry Downard commented "Over the years, it has never ceased to amaze me the careful observation, level of detail, and spirit of invention on display. These are kids who, for the most part, are not technically 'educated', and who have very little in the way of raw materials and tools with which to make their cars."

Shea O'Connor Combined School learners won many of the top spots. Educator Smanga Dlamini enthused, "The creativity was beyond amazing. This is real learning. Across all grades, the Trashion Show teaches life skills and environmental care. Exactly the sort of learners we aim to produce."





KARKLOOF BIG DAY OUT-19 MAY 2023

One Planet SA assisted the Karkloof Conservation centre with a series of environmental activities at the “Big Day Out”. Despite the foul weather conditions, 55 learners had a wonderful time indoors learning about the importance of trees and preserving the health of our soils which was led by Mdu Mchunu. In an action-orientated activity learners acquired the skills of navigation using a compass. With the exorbitant costs of transport, there are rare opportunities for these schools leave the confines of the classroom. Outdoor excursions are thus essential to nurture relationships and foster a better understanding of this area’s incredible biodiversity.

HAPPY EARTH FESTIVAL 2023 17-18 AUG

The Happy Earth Festival is an opportunity for children to learn and have fun in nature. We were thrilled to be one of more than 16 other Environmental NPOs and institutions that supported fun-filled educational activities over the 2 days with more than 1400 learners and teachers representing around 30 schools in the Pietermaritzburg/greater midlands.

We supported a tour of a virtual river, exploring all the macroinvertebrates that indicate the quality of the stream and tell the story of its health using the miniSASS tool. We also did a scavenger hunt tuning learners into their senses - listening, feeling and smelling their way into nature.

KARKLOOF BIG BIRDING DAY OUT 24 OCTOBER

Reaching out to 149 primary school children from three schools in the Karkloof; One Planet, the Karkloof Conservancy and Birdlife volunteers partnered together to give the learners a unique hands-on encounter to the birding hides at their local Karkloof conservancy. The Karkloof is a mecca for Avian fauna with over 280 bird species and all of South Africa’s crane species, there were many discoveries to be made. After learning the basics of birding in one of our in-school lessons prior to the outing, their retention for detail and the excitement of watching, for the first time, a Pied kingfisher snatch a fish was priceless.



TRAINING OTHER NGOS

Over and above school related support we have worked with The Duzi Conservation Trust and Love Howick Eco-champ to support insights and knowledge for the important roles they play in our communities. We shared lessons and activities on a range of environmental topics including water, climate crisis, biodiversity, taxonomy, water auditing, water footprints, waste and soils. This hands-on workshop equipped the Eco-Champs with hands-on interactive ways to work with children and adults alike in the communities they support.

Asked whether they found the experience valuable, we were humbled to receive these comments :

“We have learned so much , I wish we could do more practical workshops like this”

“We have gained more knowledge and learned great activities we can repeat easily as we have experienced this hands-on”, “This has been so enlightening”

OCEANS 8 CHARITY SWIM

A fantastic 2 days of Ocean swimming that raised an impressive R889,612.25 for the 14 charities. Thanks to the Oceans 8 Charity team for including One Planet SA in this incredible opportunity and enabling us to be a beneficiary of the funds raised. This event is definitely to be repeated and can only grow from the enthusiasm that was so evident by swimmers, supporters and sponsors alike. Even Bridget from One Planet took the plunge and entered the 1 Mile, with no swimming training, at last minute and much to her surprise enjoyed every stroke, so much so, that she swam another mile. One Planet benefitted with receiving a very generous R10k with very little involvement.



SNAPSHOT OF SCHOOLS

16 Yrs of Green Excellence! Nhlonhlweni Primary School, Ladysmith



“It is dedication of environmentally minded Nhlonhlweni Primary that has put Ladysmith on the map. The level of excellence and innovation is on another level. When others see difficult conditions, garbage, limited resources, poverty, Nhlonhlweni sees opportunities.” Dr Thuli Tabur



This year Nhlonhlweni launched their Water Explorer/Sustainable Schools status highlighting more than 16 years of commitment to the environmental agenda. This is the result of the incredible commitment and dedication from their formidable headmistress Nomvula Hadebe. They invited neighbouring SS schools and all partners to celebrate with them in an interactive morning of environmental learning facilitated by the learners. This year they have set up 2 tippy tap stands, celebrated the wetlands and frogs, kept over 300 bags of plastic out of the environment by building fantastic eco-brick bench, learned about animal compassion and raised money for Free Me KZN and conducted a biodiversity survey, while being awarded one of the Special seed fund monetary prizes at the SS awards day.

New school on the block! Riverdale Primary School, Estcourt

New comer, Riverdale Primary joined late in the year but have started with a bang. Their incredible coordinator Deborah Gamade has been an example of getting things done and a champion with all follow-on activities.

The excelled in their Climate change lesson and built no less than 8 functional solar ovens. For their waste lesson they have started a fantastic eco-brick collection and one of the Special seed fund monetary prizes at the SS awards day. They have repeated SS lessons with other classes like the Heritage food lesson. Great things are coming for this school!



SNAPSHOT OF SCHOOLS



Consistent and committed! Hawkstone Primary School, Karkloof



“With a tight school schedule, visits from One Planet SA have been the highlight. We deeply appreciate all the planning and resources that turn ordinary lessons into fun, hands-on and memorable. Learners are inspired to work better, be better and do better not just for our own growth but for the protection of our mother earth”
Teacher Asanda Ncgobo

It has been encouraging to see Hawkstone meet all their goals this year. In addition to expanding and labeling their beautiful indigenous garden, they have built an eco-brick bench and saved another 200 black bags of ground litters by collecting over 200 eco-bricks.



They continued to conserve water at the school through the active use of tippy taps. They have conducted scientific experiments looking at the effects of CO2 on heat retention and taken action to reduce their cooking emissions by building a solar cooker. The learners had plentiful opportunities to explore their natural environment with a birding outing to Karkloof Conservancy, a hike up Nhlosane Mountain and a trip to Umngeni Valley.



Saving more than just a few drops! Thembelihle Primary, Howick

Our most impressive achievement is the reduction in our monthly water consumption. With the installation of modified tippy taps. This has not only saved water but money too. Furthermore, the tippy-tap system has resulted in the permanent shut down of older grades wash area taps. We have also taken care of our school's vegetable garden. We have been able to provide fresh produce for our school's feeding scheme.

Learners have developed a powerful sense of ownership and responsibility towards caring for and protecting their immediate environments. They have shown a genuine interest in eradicating alien plants and nurturing indigenous trees and herbs. In fact, many of them have even taken the initiative to create vegetable and herb gardens at their homes.



SNAPSHOT OF SCHOOLS



Taking action always! Amanzimtoti Primary School



“Continuous engagement and support from One Planet has helped us to achieve success. Engaging with enquiring young minds keeps one focused on the important task of developing strategies that will ensure a better world for all” Eco-coordinator, Alice Surmon

Top of the priority list, has been the change to solar panel and solar cookers reducing their electricity consumption by 25%. They have undertaken many inspiring projects like the recycled bottle top wall murals, they had participated in a trashion show and beach clean up, and collected eco-bricks.



With the contribution of SS awards monies, they had hard earned they started a food forest and comprehensive garden recycling program in addition to an already flourishing school vege garden. They have built an indigenous muthi plant garden, learned about the importance of wetlands and developed the skills to key out indigenous plant in their garden. They continue to promote a robust glass and paper re-use and recycle program.



Next year they plan to build a pond to promote biodiversity at the school.

Still an Shining example! Shea O'Connor Combined School, Nottingham Rd

“SS has instilled the passion for taking care of the environment, while the activities, developed values like responsibility, integrity, service, creativity, and awareness of environmental issues locally and globally with hands-on activities” Antonia Mkhabela and Simang Dlamini

Learners have participated in hands-on lessons around the Climate Crisis and the school has taken a leap forward going off grid and installing solar panels now saving a whopping R7000 mthly apart from Carbon. The learners now see and learn about it with their own eyes and experiences. They still regularly maintain and learn in their in-school wetland conducting miniSASS.

“The hands-on lessons make learning of scientific concepts and processes more meaningful. Learners are eager to participate because of this”





FINANCIALS

COMPILED BY FRAMEWORK CONSULTANTS

This summary accounts for funding from March 2022 to Feb 2023 and has been verified by Framework Consultants. We have completed all our other requirements by SARS, CPIC and the Dept of Social Development as per NPO regulations in South Africa

(Registration Number 2021/821289/08) Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 28 February 2023		
Detailed Income Statement Figures in R	2023	2022
Revenue Grants received	717 844	200 460
Other income Donations received	1 503	
Administrative expenses Bank charges		(220)
Other expenses GSSS Administrator expenses	(27 965)	(80 000)
HCI Administrator expenses	(213 716)	
Nature Connect Administrator expenses	(236 356)	
SOLON rent		(6 080)
SOLON SA Administrator expenses	(119 361)	(33 000)
Sundry Projects	(5 310)	
	(602 708)	(119 080)
Surplus from operating activities	116 639	81 160
Finance income		
Interest received	5 190	232
Surplus for the year	121 829	81 392

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are extremely grateful to our funders: The HCI Foundation, The Solon Foundation and Nature Connect (Allan Gray). Without their support and belief in our efforts none of this would be possible.

We would also like to thank all the wonderful schools we work with. You are rare and special and examples to all of South Africa about how important including our environment into the daily actions and teaching is vital to our long-term sustainability.



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