

ANNIVERSARY OF 2017 FIRES ARE WE BETTER PREPARED?



As 7 June commemorates the anniversary of the 2017 Knysna wildfires, the Garden Route Environmental Forum asks if we are now better equipped to face such a disaster.

YES! SAYS GARDEN ROUTE DISASTER MANAGEMENT CENTRE

The 2017 Knysna and Bitou wildfire disaster was without a doubt the most devastating of its kind in the history of Southern Africa," says Cobus Steyn, Chairperson of the Garden Route Environmental Forum (GEF).

With loss of life and a badly-affected local economy, comparable damage done to infrastructure, businesses, culture, forestry and property running into trillions of Rands, the Knysna and Bitou fire disaster caused unparalleled ecological havoc in an area of 20 000 hectares.

As part of an ongoing debate on the correlation between the consequences of COVID-19 and that of climate change, GEF asked Gerhard Otto, Head of the Garden Route District Municipality's Disaster Management Centre, if the Southern Cape is today better prepared in the event of a repeat of the 2017 wildfire disaster.

"From a preparedness level the Garden Route District Disaster Management Centre, Local Municipalities, nature conservation entities, forestry as well as regional fire protection

associations have, as a collective, ramped up capacity to fight wildfire disaster way beyond what was in place in 2017. Aerial firefighting capacity, clearing of fire breaks and upgraded firefighting equipment, all makes for a better-prepared region dealing with regular and intense wildfire scenarios," says Otto.

Continues Otto, "The 2017 Knysna and Bitou wildfire disaster was caused by a perfect storm of climate change, super strong winds, possible human error and the prevalence of large-

scale invasive alien plants in the landscape, all of which contributed to the scale and ferocity of the disaster."

"For instance, in as much as disaster management and firefighting services are better resourced than three years ago, invasive alien plants still dominate the landscape. The wide-spread prevalence of invasive alien plant stands has the potential to provide the biofuel necessary for a repeat of the 2017 wildfire disaster."

"Landowners, in general, do their best, within their means, to eradicate and control invasive alien plant growth on their land, but the task at hand is a mammoth one, and much more needs to be done in order to achieve a fire-safe environment in the Southern Cape," says Otto.

COVID-19 and climate change will affect the future of the present-day Southern Cape dramatically

"COVID-19 has had a severe and tangible effect on the socio-economic fabric of the Southern Cape and we know that the real challenge the advent of the pandemic is posing, is still nowhere near its true impact. Both COVID-19 and climate change will affect the future of the present-day Southern Cape dramatically. The new normal

Knysna Municipality strives to maintain its position as a premier tourist destination in South Africa – a place where peace, prosperity and harmony prevail, ensuring an exceptional lifestyle for residents and visitors alike.



TENDER NO: T 59 of 2019/20

SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF A NEW FIRE FIGHTING SINGLE CAB VEHICLE WITH SKID UNIT

Knysna Municipality hereby invites tenders for the supply and delivery of a new fire fighting single cab vehicle with skid unit.

Tender documents will be available from the Knysna Municipality website: www.knysna.gov.za at no cost. Website registration is as follows: Information centre – Supply Chain Management – Tenders.

Enquiries regarding technical information may be directed in writing only to the Electro-Technical Department, at the attention of L Williams at email: lwilliams@knysna.gov.za

Enquiries regarding the bidding procedure may be directed in writing only to Supply Chain Management, for the attention of C Bezuidenhout at email: cybezuidenhout@knysna.gov.za

Bids are subject to local production and content. Minimum Stipulated Local Content Designation for Fire Fighting vehicles is 30%.

Closing time for submission of bids is 12:00 on Wednesday, 10 June 2020.

Bids will be opened immediately thereafter, in public at the Knysna Municipality, Supply Chain Management Unit, City Office Building, Queen Street, Knysna.

Bids are to be completed in accordance with the conditions and bid rules contained in the bid document and tendering documents must be placed in a sealed envelope and externally endorsed with the bid number, description of the goods, closing date of the bid, and be deposited in the bid box, at the office of the Knysna Municipality, Supply Chain Management Unit, Finance Building, Queen Street, Knysna. Notwithstanding the 90-day period for validity of bids as set out in the bid documents, bids shall be deemed to remain valid until formal acceptance by the Knysna Municipality of an offer.

Happy
Special
Birthday