

PRESS RELEASE

Knysna Municipality
Immediate Release

30 November 2012

LAGOON PLAN APPROVED

The Knysna Municipal Council approved the R68-million plan towards the permanent reduction of pollution into the Knysna lagoon on 29 November 2012.

The detailed report was commissioned by Knysna Estuary Pollution Control Task Committee, chaired by Municipal Manager Lauren Waring, which was established in August 2011 to investigate ongoing pollution into the estuary.

Prepared by the municipal departments Planning and Development and Technical Services following a report by consultants Royale Haskoning DHV (formerly Stuart Scott International), the report identified the major contributors of pollution and linked them with several specific projects that would address the short and long term causes.

Projects worth R29,6 million have already started or are to be implemented shortly, while Council committed in principle to allocate at least another R38,3-million over the next five years towards the plan. The report also expressed confidence that funding for many of these projects could be obtained from various sources, not just Knysna Council. Applications have been or will be made to the Departments of Human Settlements, Water Affairs and Environmental Affairs as well as the Danish International Development Agency and any other available sources of funding.

When the major projects in the current and five-year projects have been implemented, the Knysna Municipality is confident that pollution levels throughout the lagoon will return to within acceptable levels set out by the Department of Water Affairs.

While unacceptable and by no means considered to make the situation less serious, it should be noted that the high volumes of salt water that flows in and out of the lagoon flushes pollution out twice a day. **Mid-stream samples**, taken from 11 points across the lagoon by SANParks in mid-November 2012, tested well within recreational limits. Four out of 13 points, taken by Eden District Municipality at **inflows into the lagoon**, exceed acceptable recreational levels. Nine points, mainly in the vicinity of The Heads, Leisure Island and the White Bridge, tested under the limit and is therefore safe for public use.

Details of the Lagoon Plan, the presentation made to the relevant committee, and the monthly Estuary Water Quality Report are available on the Knysna Municipal website at www.knysna.gov.za

ENDS

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