



Knysna

Municipality || Munisipaliteit || uMasipala

inclusive || innovative || inspired

MEDIA RELEASE

Embargo: Immediate

DATE: Wednesday 12 November 2025

Swartvlei Beach nets second Green Coast Award

Swartvlei Beach is making waves in eco-tourism, earning the prestigious Green Coast Award from the Wildlife & Environment Society of South Africa (WESSA) for the second year running.

According to Knysna Executive Deputy Mayor and Chairperson for the Planning, Economic Development and Tourism Portfolio, Morton Gericke, this well-deserved recognition highlights the municipality's strong partnership with the Strandloper Project.

"WESSA's Green Coast Award celebrates high-biodiversity coastal spots that draw adventure seekers and nature lovers," he said. "It spotlights areas where local councils and communities champion biodiversity protection, eco-friendly tourism, environmental education and research. Winning this award puts lesser-known coastal gems – like Swartvlei – firmly on South Africa's international and domestic tourism map.

To win this honour, applicants must meet and sustain strict standards across key areas, including universal access for all visitors, clear signage, effective control of domestic animals, solid waste management, clean ablution facilities and thriving eco-tourism initiatives. At least one of three aspects – sensitive habitats, species or cultural heritage – must also be protected. Knysna's dedicated in-house municipal programme has risen to the challenge, ensuring Swartvlei Beach not only qualifies but excels.

"We invite local residents to rediscover Swartvlei Beach this festive season," Gericke continued. "Stroll along the pristine sands, breathe in the fresh sea air and take pride in a community treasure that belongs to us all. Visitors planning a Garden Route getaway are encouraged to include this hidden gem in their itinerary and experience nature at its most welcoming and well-protected.

"Thank you to the WESSA team, the Strandloper Project, Sedgefield residents and the Environmental Management team, led by the Director of Planning and Development Andiswa Dunywa, for their tireless efforts in safeguarding our coastline for generations to come," Gericke concluded. "The Green Coast status opens doors to better tourism amenities, smarter coastal ecosystem care, skill-building for local teams and greater public awareness of our natural treasures. It's a win for everyone who appreciates South Africa's beautiful shores."

The awards ceremony took place on Friday 31 October 2025 at the Royal St Andrews Hotel in Port Alfred.

ENDS

Knysna Municipality Communications Department

P O Box 21, Knysna. 6570. Western Cape. South Africa

Tel +27 (0)44 302 6300 (switchboard) or 302 6430 (direct)

E-mail communications@knysna.gov.za