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Seasonal

Supplement

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Spot the differences?

Reintroducing, not reinventing, who we are...

People still often ask us: "So what's the difference actually between EarthCollective, Living Lands, PRESENCE...?" Whilst we're well used to answering this question we thought it about time to revisit the question for those of you who may still be wondering. This is for a number of reasons but naturally it's important that our partners, members students have a clear idea with whom they are engaging & with what identity. The next few paragraphs will provide some more clarity and background.

EarthCollective is a professional peer-to-peer network which was set up in 2006 by Wageningen University graduates. As a group we felt we had plenty of ideas and contacts after our studies and were keen to put them into action. So that's how it started... After a few months of brainstorming and meetings we found three main opportunities which we wanted to pursue— these subsequently evolved into: PRESENCE; eyes4earth & CVNI (see page 6 for info)

EarthCollective members therefore worked hard at catalysing these various initiatives through close collaboration with relevant partners. The network has taken an enabling and facilitating role with the background vision of revitalising links between nature and human well-being. The PRESENCE initiative has evolved quickest to date.

PRESENCE was set-up as a collaborative South-North platform to support and guide research-implementation for 'mainstreaming' the restoration of 'living landscapes': natural areas which display a healthy mix of ecosystems, wildlife diversity and human land-uses.

From the outset, PRESENCE involved numerous local/international partners to support this shared vision. In that sense, it has also taken the shape of a learning network for restoration. The initial focus for trialing the PRESENCE approach on-ground has been in the Baviaanskloof Mega-Reserve and PRESENCE partners have made invaluable contributions to keep momentum.

EarthCollective members based in South Africa knew that in order for their catalytic work to be fully realized, PRESENCE needed an institutional home to ensure continued growth. So EarthCollective members formed Living Lands in late 2008 to act as the secretariat and coordinating body for the PRESENCE platform/network.

Living Lands is now a registered and growing South Africa Section 21 NPO guiding the restoration and conservation of natural 'living landscapes' in and around the Baviaanskloof Mega-Reserve. Embodying much of the EarthCollective approach and philosophy, Living Lands' current roles are to:

1. Coordinate the PRESENCE learning network and related initiatives;
2. Coordinate the growth of the PRESENCE Learning Village (Kouga Dam);
3. Manage the Elemental Equity natural capital fund and related investments in landscape restoration (e.g. spekboom reforestation for carbon/CO₂ capture);
4. Facilitate training, education and stewardship related to capacity building for community-based conservation and natural resource management.

The vision of Living Lands is to tap into North-South collaboration, partnerships and cultural exchange to build long-term local and regional capacity.

Some of the original EarthCollective team now work for Living Lands. And this naturally causes some confusion. But while Living Lands grows and finds its own legs these members will maintain involvement to ensure its South African future. EarthCollective's role now is to provide continued support where necessary (e.g. with news & communication, media, email support) and network members - even those not based in SA - continue to 'chip in' with info, knowledge and assistance.

So that's the rundown. We trust this paints a clearer picture for all involved. After taking a break last quarter the [Seasonal Supplement](#) is now back with an expanded 6-page issue. Enjoy! ~ MZ



In late 2009, PRESENCE in the Baviaanskloof received extensive coverage in the Dutch and Belgian media (primetime TV, press, radio). [Click here to check out links to various items](#)



A few images of the interaction from the 2009 PRESENCE Workshop held at the World Heritage Interpretive Centre at Cambria, Baviaanskloof MR.



PRESENCE Workshop '09: Questions to keep us busy

Cambria (SA): In November 2009, the PRESENCE network successfully held its third annual workshop. The purpose of the workshop was to facilitate dialogue around proposed measures & incentives for landscape/catchment restoration (e.g. Payments/Rewards for Ecosystem Services (PES) in and around the Baviaanskloof Mega-Reserve. Special emphasis was put on current status of research and implementation, future strategy and coordination; and future needs, roles and responsibilities (various stakeholders, institutions etc.). Outcomes of the workshop included the following agreed question areas:

Farmscale Restriction Model: Develop a detailed integrated restoration model for one specific farm;

Institutional framework: Distilling & testing experiences from around the

world to develop a PES institutional framework for the Baviaanskloof. How do we develop an institutional structure to facilitate dialogue for a sustainable shared direction amongst landowners researchers, EC Parks, government, implementing agents in the region?

Stewardship: How do we promote stewardship values and behaviours amongst all stakeholders? Development methodology for biodiversity management planning with a view to implement stewardship arrangements.

Behaviour Change: Understand likely behavioral changes amongst all stakeholders as a consequence of PES; what will the implications of these changes be for the environment and community in the Baviaanskloof? Can we study this only after launch or also during the process (with interventions)?

Vegetation & Flows: What is the influence of vegetation on base flows, flood flows and sediment flows?

Resource Economics: What are the key design components of PES: it's not working if we only let landowners pay for water; what is the package for PES? Integral for economic valuation studies.

Hydrology: What will we learn from the quantification of hydrological effects of restoration at the catchment level? We need to identify priority areas (including on-ground monitoring/ data collation)

Agriculture: How do we ensure sustainable livestock management in degraded and semi-degraded areas in relation to carbon sequestration?

[Click for PRESENCE Workshop '09 News email:](#) odi@earthcollective.net



Above: Images which tourists felt added to their Baviaanskloof experience; and a framework for most important themes which make up this natural experience. Source Wietske Fousert, WUR MSc 2010

* PRESENCE: Participatory Restoration of Ecosystem Services & Natural Capital, Eastern Cape (SA). PRESENCE is a collaborative & multi-stakeholder network aimed at guiding the restoration of 'living landscapes' in South Africa. PRESENCE is an initiative of EarthCollective; the SA Living Lands foundation acts as secretariat.

Research for PRESENCE in the Baviaanskloof is supported by Wageningen University's Ecosystem & Landscape Services Programme (SELS)



Humera Iqbal (Dutch): Involved with marketing and communication related to PRESENCE, Living Lands...& enjoying learning a lot of new things about nature.



Marjan Sommeijer (Dutch): Modelling the water balance of the western Baviaanskloof to determine rainfall infiltration & run-off across restored & degraded areas (thesis)



Dirk-Jan Heil (Dutch): Implementing the plan for the PRESENCE Learning Village (Kouga Dam) with a focus on the proposed cultural botanical gardens.

The PRESENCE Network Page

Reviews & updates from recent research in the Baviaanskloof Mega-Reserve...

ATTITUDES TOWARD RESTORATION

Annie Montpetit recently completed her MSc thesis aimed at assessing tourism operators' attitudes toward nature and landscape restoration in the Gamtoos Valley. Her research involved 20 stakeholders in the Gamtoos Valley. Annie gained insight into perceptions, beliefs and knowledge of local tourism operators regarding solutions for sustainable natural resource management. The study evaluated whether views of operators in the Gamtoos Valley were aligned with the goals and objectives of ongoing nature restoration initiatives.

Annie's overall results underlined the importance of nature for tourism in the region & highlighted the need to provide more solution-oriented information about conservation/restoration. Specifically, findings from the interviews highlighted the idea that tourism operators evaluated nature for the benefits they obtain from it. Operators perceived nature as the most important asset for tourism. They acknowledged that the outstanding beauty of the area is the main tourism attraction in the Gamtoos Valley and they all agreed that tourism in the region is an industry benefiting from the natural environment. Furthermore, tourism operators expressed serious concerns regarding how negative impacts of environmental problems issues such as water scarcity, landscape degradation and invasive alien species may affect tourism, agriculture and employment in the region.

Operators agreed that tourism development should be planned according to nature's needs. All agreed that more should be done to protect nature in the Gamtoos Valley. Some interviewees argued that tourism operators would be willing to invest money in restoration of the natural environment if they clearly understood the benefits of it. Furthermore, all tourism operators would like to receive more information about landscape restoration as they consider restoration important for the success of tourism development.

Annie's recommendations include: greater targeted education and awareness; positive incentives; developing attractions which showcase natural assets; greater local community involvement and that restoration should not be seen as the only solution to reverse biodiversity loss: sustainable strategies regarding resource consumption and land management are essential.

Annie sincerely thanks the willing & friendly contributions from participants

Text: Annie Montpetit & Matthew Zylstra [mail to: matthew@earthcollective.net]

EXPERIENCING THE BAVIAANSKLOOF

Wietske Fousert recently completed her MSc thesis and sought to unpack what exactly it is that makes up the tourism experience in the Baviaanskloof. Her work explored how tourists respond to various landscapes, scenery, wildlife and activities. This study was done in order to better define public restoration preferences as well as for identifying responsible tourism markets. Wietske interviewed over 30 respondents and presented photos of various landscapes, wildlife, activities in order to trigger tourists responses to that particular experience.

Wietske identified which landscapes both enhanced and minimised the tourist experience. Some 'wild' landscapes invoked positive feelings of quietness, peace and tranquillity. She found that certain aspects of natural environment (e.g. running wildlife, spectacular geology and wildflowers) and activities such as hiking, 4x4 driving and swimming were associated with feelings of isolation, adventure and naturalness (non-commercialization). Landscape degradation, when identified as such, was negatively perceived. Interaction with locals (hospitality), interesting information and conservation projects, e.g. leopard-friendly initiative, scored the highest positive meanings for the tourists interviewed.

The most important meanings derived from these experiences related to: Stimulation (an interest to learn); Novelty (an escape from everyday life, feeling the special atmosphere); Interactive (getting involved with, interacting with locals); Hedonic (adventure, excitement); Isolation (peace, quietness, being in nature); Nostalgia (good memories, thinking about the past). Tourists interviewed valued conservation & restoration; ecologically healthy landscapes; 'pristineness' and the conservation-minded farmer image.

Recommendations include enhancing social-cultural features; providing more local information & education and preserving the current 'naturalness' (ecological and social-cultural), developing sustainable tourism infrastructure to further attract nature lovers to the wild Baviaanskloof.

Text: Wietske Fousert & Matthew Zylstra [mail to: matthew@earthcollective.net]

CRACKING THE CODE: WETLAND LOSS

Western Baviaanskloof (SA): In what is now becoming a tradition, another group of Rhodes University Honors students visited the Baviaanskloof during late January. The purpose of their trip was to carry out further assessment of the geo/hydro/biophysical characteristics of the area. These students were from the Geography and Environmental Sciences Department and were guided by Professors Kate Rowntree and Fred Ellery. New insights emerged. [Click here for full story...](#)

A TIME TO P(R)AY FOR ECOSERVICES?

In recent weeks and months, heavy rain has fallen in many parts of South Africa but still not in the Baviaanskloof, Kouga and Gamtoos catchments. Dams supplying Port Elizabeth are below 20% and Kouga Dam is now at 35%. Is enough being done or is a disaster looming? [Click here for the full story...](#)

9 Questions in 99 seconds with: Humera, Marjan & DJ

Family? HI: "Love, support, fun, life!"

MS: "A brother, sister, parents. Now I live somewhere else but visit them often."

DJ: "Mum, Dad, my brother. I miss them"

Food? HI: "Good! Enjoyment. I like Dutch 'drop' [salty lollies], curry, pancakes..."

MS: "Like cooking with other students here & sharing with everyone."

DJ: "Typical Dutch food like potatoes, meat and vegetables."

Fears? HI: "I don't really have fears except for missing family...fearless [laughs]"

MS: "Snakes! [laughs] I just hope I won't get into trouble with them while here."

DJ: "Cape Cobra! [laughs]. For the rest, I don't think I have any fears at all...I think"

Free-time? HI: "Family & friends—No. 1. Everything with them—doesn't matter what"

MS: "Meeting with friends, relax a little. Love to go camping and hiking on holidays"

DJ: "Hanging out with friends, drink beer [laughs], playing football, driving own car."

Fitness? HI: "Swimming or exercise to use all my muscles...sometimes push-ups."

MS: "I like the soccer at the Learning Village! [laughs] At home I used to run and do rock climbing—as long as it is outside."

DJ: "I play football...not really doing fitness"

Favourites? HI: "Family, friends, soccer, Inter Milan!...and shopping [laughs]"

MS: "Being outside (like here), looking at the scenery, listening to music, relaxing..."

DJ: "Football, music, cars & working a bar"

Facebook? HI: "Ooh. Lots of messages. Can be annoying! But fun to keep track of friends and stay in contact."

MS: "Ah, I don't have Facebook actually. I use the [similar] Dutch one—Hyves."

DJ: "You want my address? [smiles] I have it but I don't use it much. Maybe in future..."

Future? HI: "I used to have other plans but now it is sticking with family & close friends...and then have a family empire!"

MS: "I want to have a great time here, finish studies & after that travel a lot then settle, get a real nice job, live together with people I like and maybe even get married & things like that—but that's still far away!"

DJ: "See more of the world & have a wife, children & good job. And be happy."

Fieldwork? See profiles to left-side of page.

What'll the Wattle's say & Will the Willow's weep? Nature experience and invasive species education

Kouga Valley (SA): EarthCollective's [eyes4earth](#) initiative recently teamed up with [TerraPi Charity](#) to offer an Environmental Education weekend for 25 children from Maranatha and Protea shelters for street youth/orphans from the nearest large city of Port Elizabeth.

TerraPi has run a number of these courses already during the past year or so and facilitator's Rob and Yvette's shared enthusiasm and passion for educating about nature and environmental issues such as alien invasive species (e.g. black wattle) is impressive.

The youth engaged in a range of activities which included guided nature walks (sometimes in silence), wildlife spotting, removal of black wattle seedlings, storytelling, drumming and free-time.

Part of eyes4earth involvement was to gain insight into how youth perceive alien invasive species, if the presence of these trees enhances or diminishes their nature experience and if/how education about such issues can be improved for the future.

During the weekend, as well at the conclusion, a number of youth were asked to reflect on what they learnt, and to share their views on invasive species such as Black Wattle. Some of the responses were very humbling.

Many of the youth recalled that the black wattle trees are responsible for taking up a lot of water and choking waterways. And that in a water scarce country like South Africa this isn't good.

But upon speaking to the children a little longer it became clear - and quite understandably - that for youth who are generally nature deprived, the idea that a nice shade-giving tree could be seen as 'bad' was a bit difficult to grasp.

The children were asked that if a black wattle could talk what they would think it was saying to them. A few responses were naturally "Don't pull me out" and "I haven't done anything wrong". There were more insightful reflections to the whole black wattle dilemma but none topped the gentle protest by one boy that: "God doesn't make mistakes"...

In other eyes4earth news, Matt and colleague Noël Isaacs attended four days of the [Spirit of the Wild \(SOTW\) Course at Bergplaas Nature Reserve](#). It was a thoroughly enriching experience and both were left with the feeling that they had a much more complete toolbox for fulfilling their roles as budding environmental educators. The SOTW course focuses heavily on the experiential reconnection with nature and aids participants in identifying activities help facilitate this process. Matthew also took the opportunity to speak to participants in-depth about their meaningful nature experiences, the way in which this shaped their perceptions and, finally, if the presence of invasive species (e.g. willow) enhanced their experience. The results are intriguing and will be shared in a future issue...

eyes4earth is an education outreach initiative for ongoing PhD research currently being carried out by Matthew Zylstra at Stellenbosch University and funded by the Centre of Invasion Biology. The TerraPi environment education event was co-funded through Matt's research budget.



All photos from the 3-day course can be found on the [TerraPi Facebook Page](#)

Naturalist Education: Shaping scientists for the future

United States (US): The well-regarded scientific journal *Conservation Biology* published an interesting article in 2009 by Mark Hayes titled "Into the Field: Naturalistic Education and the Future of Conservation". Hayes basically argues that there are multiple ways of being intelligent and, as argued by Howard Garden in the 1980s, for far too long we have tended to view intelligence through a very narrow and unidimensional lens. (Conservation) Educators must therefore view intelligence from a much broader perspective.

Hayes discusses the relatively 'new' (at least in scientific circles) concept of 'naturalist intelligence' - which is the "cognitive potential to process information that is exhibited by expert naturalists". Hayes argues that an appreciation for this kind of intelligence might influence the design of university curricula in emphasising the need for well-rounded scientific naturalists. Such education would involve, for example, students in outdoor inquiry-based projects and assisting students' learning to both sharpen observation skills in

the natural world as well as reflecting on their own learning skills and strengths. Hayes concludes that time spent outdoors alone and among people with expertise in natural history, ecology, and conservation will significantly influence the knowledge and skills that undergraduates learn, the careers they pursue, the ethics and values they uphold and, critically, the real contributions they make to conserving earth's biodiversity.

Text: matthew@earthcollective.net

Source: Hayes, M (2009) *Conservation Biology*, Volume 23, No. 5, 1075-1079.



An example of outdoor inquiry-based projects from EarthCollective's members facilitation of *Wildlands Studies* 2009. This activity was introduced an expert South African naturalist.

Hishuk-Ish Tsawalk: indigenous views on show in Canada

Tofino (CA): EarthCollective's CVNI initiative will be participating in several workshops, presentations and sessions prior and during the 12th conference for Ethno-Biologists, May 9-14, 2010. Recognition of the central role of Indigenous peoples in all global, regional, and local processes is a founding element of the International Society of Ethnobiology (ISE). During the pre-conference Community Conservation Workshop, CVNI and Pronatura will be participating and bringing Mexican experiences into the mix. Sponsored by the Global Diversity Fund this workshop will explore inter-

national and national policies, contemporary concepts and exemplary case studies of community conservation. The work on sacred natural sites in Mexico's North West states of Sinaloa, Sonora and Chihuahua as well as in South Western Oaxaca (see page 5) will be reflected upon by a broad range of participants from diverse cultures to guarantee a rich learning experience. At the conference, CVNI will be presenting "Indigenous Perceptions of Environmental Change in Coastal Zone Management in Northeast Arnhem Land". CVNI will share some lessons learned from

experiences in developing guidance for Dhimurru Aboriginal Corporation's Fisheries Guidance & Sacred Sites Management. Dhimurru recently began implementing cross-cultural guidelines for recreational fishers which were first started in 2007 by EarthCollective/CVNI.

Another session organised by the IUCN-CSVPA and the Sacred Land Film Project will facilitate cross cultural learning for recognition, rights, protection and conservation of sacred natural sites.

Text/Contact: bas@earthcollective.net

[Click here for more information](#)

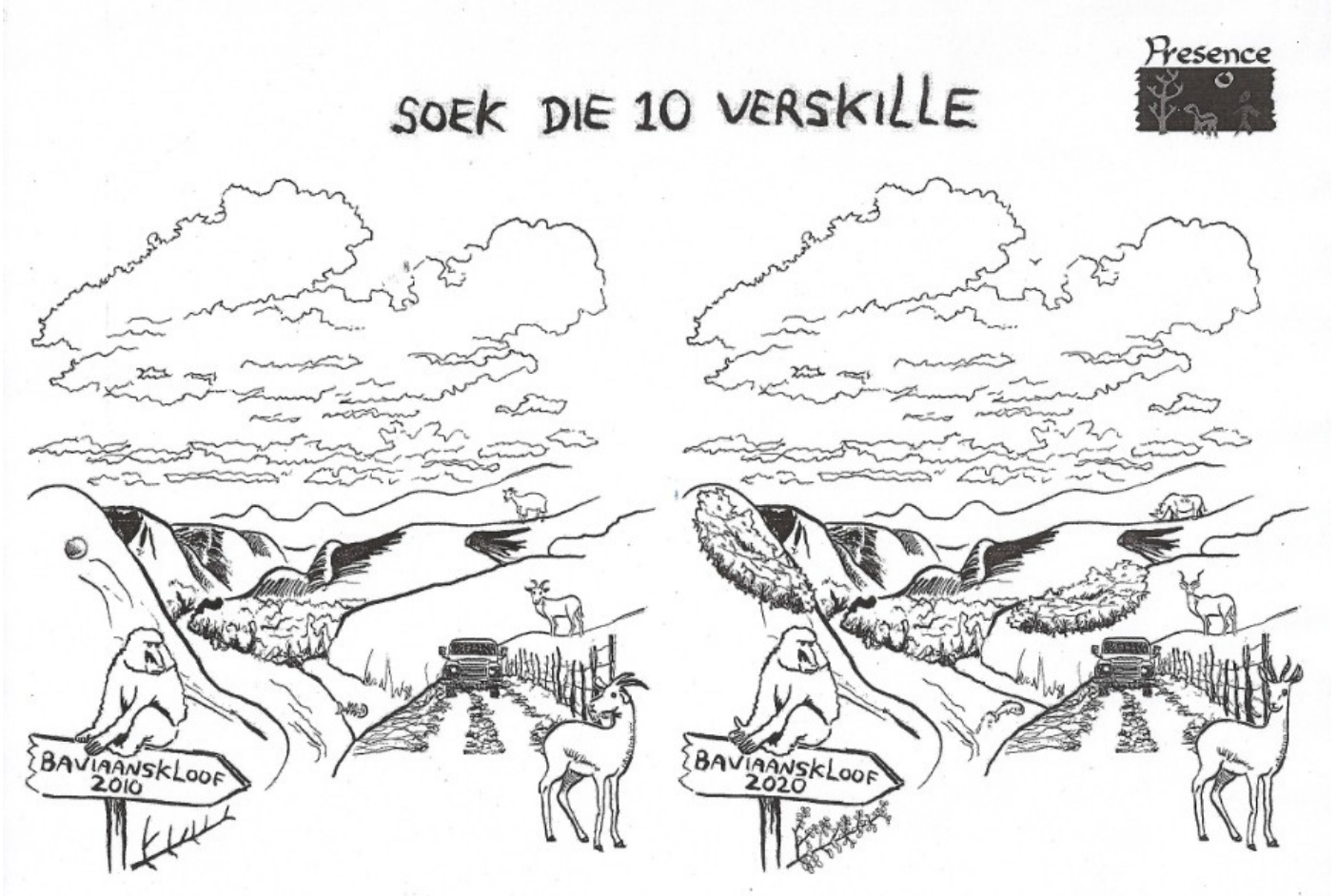
Image & logo from [ICE 2010 website](#) **May 9-14, 2010**
Tofino BC, Canada



Hishuk-Ish Tsawalk... **Everything is one, everything is connected.** The theme of the 12 International Conference for Ethnobiologists reflects the philosophy of the local Nuu-chah-nulth First Nations at Tofino, Vancouver Island in Canada. It also resonates with the need for integrating different worldviews, values and perceptions which is one of CVNI's main aims.

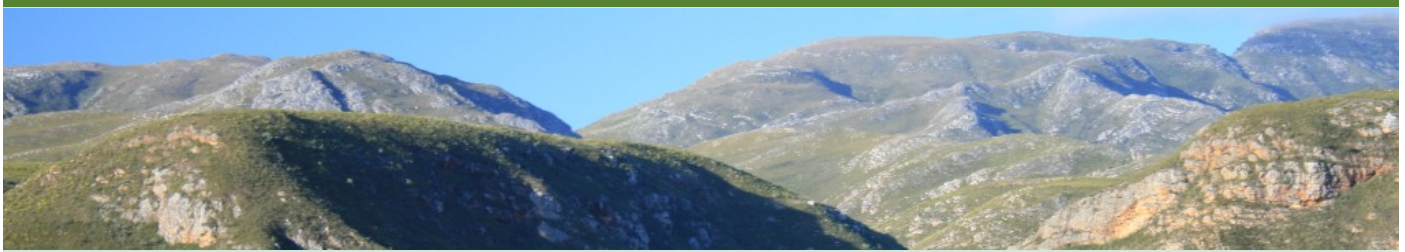
Spot the differences :

Part 2



Above: Test your observation skills and see if you can spot the 10 differences between the two images above!

Thanks go to Marcel van der Drift for this creative and talented piece of work.



Odirilwe Selomane
(from the Limpopo Province, South Africa)



Noël Isaacs
(from Baviaanskloof, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa)



Bart van Eck
(from Netherlands)

Silvia Weel
(from Brazil)

New faces @ Living Lands: Odi, Noel, Bart & Silvia

PRESENCE Learning Village (Kouga Dam):

Living Lands is delighted to be able to welcome a wealth of new and diverse experience to the growing team.

Odirilwe is no stranger to the Baviaanskloof area. Last year, he joined the Living Lands team for eight spent weeks during his student MSc internship with the Dutch Agricultural Economics Institute. Odi's new role will focus on coordinating PRESENCE research trajectories as well as developing his own PhD around economic and policy research strategies for the future implementation of regional landscape conservation and restoration incentive schemes.

Noël is already well-known to his Living Lands colleagues. During the past two years, Noël has assisted numerous PRESENCE students in the Baviaanskloof in providing local knowledge as well as helping with Afrikaans translation when students engaged with community. Alongside his previous job, Noël invested much time and energy in establishing the tourist hiking trail at Sewefontein with fellow community members. His drive and passion for nature and local knowledge will bring much value. Noël's initial role will be as manager of the PRESENCE Learning Village with complementary activities in Baviaanskloof restoration and eyes4earth youth education.

Like most of his Living Lands colleagues, **Bart** has his educational roots in Wageningen University where he studied aquatic ecology and water quality management. Bart brings a wealth of new experience to the team with a strong background in water sanitation, environmental technology and sustainability innovation. Bart's primary role is to act as research coordinator for the PRESENCE Learning Network.

Silvia – a Living Lands' & EarthCollective founding member – has returned after taking six months out to pursue a job opportunity in Brazil. Silvia's focus will now be oriented more toward wildlife management and conservation with local partners.

A road trip with reverence

Conserving Nature & Culture at Sacred Sites in Mexico

Mexico: EarthCollective's Cultural Values and Nature Initiative (CVNI) collaborates with Pronatura Mexico and the IUCN Specialist Group on Cultural and Spiritual Values of Protected Areas. The collaboration is aimed at strengthening the work of Pronatura's Biocultural Unit with a special focus on the conservation of sacred natural sites. Pronatura has developed a national strategy for the conservation of biodiversity rich sacred natural sites which is currently being tested in the field.

Objectives of the collaboration include:

- Enhancement of the methodology for the conservation of biodiversity rich sacred natural sites
- Identification of conservation opportunities for sacred natural sites in the field in North West Mexico
- Advising and enabling partnerships and institutional linkages for the conservation of sacred natural sites
- Dissemination of results at conferences, websites, as book chapters, scientific articles and Newsweek Latin America.
- In collaboration with IUCN CSVPA; Building a coalition or peer-to-peer community of Meso American organisations working on biocultural conservation approaches and the conservation of sacred natural site



Sacred natural sites are the world's oldest protected areas, places where cultural and biodiversity are inextricably linked. Mexico's many cultures still protect large numbers of biodiversity rich sacred sites today. EarthCollective's CVNI and Pronatura Mexico's Biocultural Diversity Unit in collaboration with the IUCN's Specialist Cultural and Spiritual Values (CSVPA) report on their advances with a national conservation effort to protect these sacred places and the nature they contain.

Nearing 2012 we are becoming more and more familiar with the sacred time and places of the ancient Maya civilization.

sacred natural sites and to learn about their situation first hand, they visited the territories of the Mayos and the Seris in the coastal desert as well as snow-covered mountains of the Tarahumara.

Huatabambo is a dusty town of 7000 and as the capital of the Mayo territory it connects to many smaller communities set in a landscape dominated by large scale agriculture. The Rio Mayo flows from the mountains in Chihuahua to the coastal floodplains of Sonora but after having been dammed for irrigation water in the late sixties not a lot of water reaches the sea today. Despite this the region features many coastal wetlands of international importance such as "Mononcarit" which provide invaluable services and natural beauty to the area. Don Erasmo Leyva is quick to tell us that their mangrove systems support a multi-million dollar shrimp and fishing industry in the gulf of California as well as eco-tourism options.

Don Erasmo takes us to a sacred mountain that was once used by sorcerers to perform rituals and collect medicinal and magic plants. The mountain overlooks the coastal floodplains whilst land inward it overlooks brackish bird speckled wetlands which saline soils have saved the area agricultural expansion. The Mayo still depend on these places for the many medicinal plants they use today.

Even more so, they collect "Tanabari", the cocoons of four butterfly species which are made in to bracelets that are used by the "Pasquales" to perform traditional dances. These butterflies are now endangered because most of its habitat has been replaced by large scale monocultures that demand chemical fertilizer and pesticides. In order to save the culturally significant species the government promotes sustainable harvest and recuperation in greenhouses but according to Don Erasmo, restoration of the sacred natural sites should also be part of the plan.

In the government supported greenhouse "Tanabari" are being harvested without damaging the animal inside the cocoon. At the sacred "MMMM" Mountain the team is recording its natural habitat along with the cultural use and significance.

Text and Photos by Bas Verschuuren

See: <http://culturalvalues.org> for more information about the CVNI activities.

What many people do not know is that the Maya, like most other traditional cultures on the American continent, still revere countless sacred natural sites; caves, springs, mountains, rivers, forests, trees, rocks and caves that are all part of a sacred landscape. These sacred natural sites are central to a rich body of cultural knowledge and practices that help maintain ecosystems as well as many wild plant and animal species. Because little is known about the numbers and distribution of these sacred natural sites Pronatura, CVSPA and CVNI in collaboration with custodian communities, set out learn about these places and to collect this information on their management and values throughout Mexico.

Jaime Santiago Mariscal (Pronatura) and Bas Verschuuren (CVNI & IUCN CSVPA) embarked on a 7000km journey through the states of Sinaloa, Sonora and Chihuahua in north-western Mexico. In search of



ABOVE: Every year, thousands of pilgrims come to the sacred natural site of Santa Cruz set in the state's largest intact coastal dune system. Access remains to be negotiated with private land owners that are rapidly converting parts of this natural ecosystem into shrimp farms.

TOP RIGHT: In the government supported greenhouse "Tanabari" are being harvested without damaging the animal inside the cocoon. At the sacred "MMMM" Mountain the team is recording its natural habitat along with the cultural use and significance.

RIGHT: The sacred site of San Antonio for example consists of a cross and a single tree known to mark the vast agricultural expanse for miles around.

BELOW: Bayagory Mountain with its sacred caves is set in a vast agricultural expanse, some fields still to wet to be farmed after previously having been wetlands. The cactus fruits are being harvested annually and are of economic importance to the local people.



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EarthCollective's Seasonal Supplement Newsletter is published four times per year on a seasonal basis. Your inclusion on this mailing list is either because you are associated with EarthCollective activities, have previously expressed interest in our work, or you know someone in the EarthCollective network. However, should you no longer wish to receive this newsletter or related updates, email: 'unsubscribe newsletter' to info@earthcollective.net. Any other feedback, comments, ideas for future news stories or newsletter subscriptions can also be mailed to: info@earthcollective.net (Seasonal Supplement Editor: Matthew Zylstra)

AN ENCOUNTER WITH WILLOW

Silent whispers of presence
I ask to be filled with this essence
"Join me" resounds the tree
And, "O Man, Remember:
This warm touch of your family member"
...
Doubts that remain and the questioning why
Are dispelled with the touch of a butterfly
~ m@

Poetry

Piece

From the Collective Field:

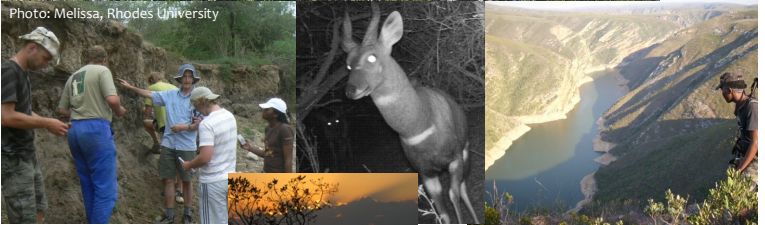
A selection of photos from recent happenings



Photo: Susan Kram, Wildlands Studies 2009



Photo: Melissa, Rhodes University



All photos in the Seasonal Supplement are supplied by EarthCollective members unless otherwise stated.

Quotes of the Quarter

*Don't ask yourself what the world needs;
ask yourself what makes you come alive.
And then go and do that. Because what the world
needs is people who have come alive.*
- Howard Thurman

*Education is the ability to perceive the hidden
connections between phenomenon*
- Vaclav Havel

*Prophets do not come from the cities, talking of
store clothes and riches. No. They come from the
wild places, speaking of goats running with life and
talking of a different kind of treasure.*
- Ian Player quoting Andrew Little

About EarthCollective

EarthCollective's vision statement is: *to act as a catalyst for creating, enabling and facilitating initiatives that restore links between nature and human wellbeing. And simply to get positive ideas happening.*

EarthCollective has formalised three inter-linking programmes: eye4earth, PRESENCE and the Cultural Values & Nature Initiative.

Cultural Values & Nature Initiative (CVNI):

CVNI is an action research project which aims to elicit cultural and spiritual perceptions of nature and the environment and integrate them into ecosystem management, nature conservation and policy.

eyes4earth:

eyes4earth.org is an education initiative aimed at creating awareness of the links between nature and our well-being. eyes4earth combines visuals and public participation to stimulate awareness and lasting pro-environmental behaviour.

PRESENCE (Living Lands - secretariat):

Participatory Restoration of Ecosystem Services & Natural Capital, Eastern Cape. PRESENCE functions as a collaborative South-North platform to support and catalyse new and existing programs for 'mainstreaming' the restoration of living landscapes to support rural livelihoods.

News in a Nutshell

South Africa:

Living Lands has engaged with [Rhodes & Stellenbosch Universities](#) in providing two PhD positions as part of the ongoing PRESENCE in the Baviaanskloof / Water for Food & Ecosystems programme. The PhD candidates will commence work mid-2010. Living Lands is also providing funding to support an MSc student with [EC Parks](#).

Living Lands has contracted Gamtoos Irrigation Board to do implementation and monitoring of tributary stream (alluvial fan) restoration in the Baviaanskloof.

Living Lands has contracted Johan Kruger and his team to set up a monitoring system for slope and wetlands restoration in selected areas of western Baviaanskloof.

Living Lands with co-operation from local land-owners has planted [28 hectares of spekboom](#) in the western Baviaanskloof.

The PRESENCE Learning Village is building a "Learning Lapa". This small thatch-roof building will serve as a gathering point for workshops, meetings, training, education purposes to support community growth.

Dieter Van den Broeck, Matthew Zylstra & Alejandra Vargas successfully co-instructed (with Dr. Peter Lent) the 6-week Wildlands Studies Course. [Click here for full story.](#)

Mexico:

Bas Verschuuren attended a conference in Merida on Protected Areas and arranged a successful session on Sacred Natural Sites.

Events & Agenda

South Africa:

The [International Year of Biodiversity](#) will be celebrated in the Baviaanskloof Mega-Reserve on 22nd May 2010. Organized by [EC Parks](#) and hosted at [TerraPi](#), the event will feature stalls, activities, workshops and presentations around themes of what is actually being done to conserve and restore biodiversity in the BMR region. Living Lands team will assist & present. The goal is to help people understand how important biodiversity is for healthy and sustainable development on earth.

New students from both Europe & South Africa continue to roll into the PRESENCE Learning Village. Between 8-12 students/interns are expected by mid-2010.

Australia:

Matthew Zylstra will attend and present at the [Healthy Parks, Healthy People Conference](#) in Melbourne 11-16 April. His topic will address the role of meaningful nature experience in planning for Parks.

Germany:

Dieter Van den Broeck will attend and present at a workshop in Salza (Germany) on [Solutions for Sustaining Natural Capital and Ecosystem Services Designing Socio-Ecological Institutions](#). Dieter, along with FSD colleague Rudolf de Groot, will present some of the lessons learned from the past two years of PRESENCE and its ambitions toward a learning network for restoring ecosystem services.

