

Climate Change

The informed would argue that in terms of world issues there is nothing as important as the issue of 'Global Warming'.

We live on a planet that is being systematically stripped of all its resources with a recklessness that borders on the insane. It would appear that there is little care or consideration given to Mother Earth when it comes to an issue like energy. Everyone knows that fossil fuels are harmful we also know that there are alternative sources of energy namely renewable energy which are much less harmful but many of us don't seem to care and continue to burn fossil fuel with no thought to the damage that it does.

Do we look after the fertility of our soils - the source of all of our foods? Once again there is significant evidence that we are losing monumental amounts of soil every year.

What has all this got to do with Goedgedacht?

Well we are worried and wish to make our contribution to the various debates on climate change and global warming.

With this in mind we have eleven climate related projects. We would be the first to admit that they are very small and in their infancy but it's a start and we hope to build on this in the years ahead.

Fog harvesting

This is an experiment aimed at catching the fog and mist of the West Coast and turning it into water that can be stored in tanks for the long dry summers. The method of collecting water is done in the deserts of Chile, South America and in the high mountains of Nepal.

Earth bricks

Compressed earth can make a very useful and 'Agreement' certified brick if done carefully. This method uses a fraction of the energy of a cement or clay brick. Let's hope it catches on and becomes the brick of the future. We will be making and using these bricks at Goedgedacht farm.

Community Cycles

Goedgedacht in partnership with BEN (Bicycle Empowerment Network) has started an outlet for repairing and selling second hand bicycles at the township of Esterhof in Riebeeek Kasteel. In this way we will be making it easier for unemployed people to find work as well as getting poor people out of taxis and onto bicycles. Both healthier for the individual and healthier for Mother Nature!

Esterhof Flower Project

This project involves community members in income-generation by encouraging them to use their small garden plots to produce flowers for the hotel industry in Cape Town, using an innovative system that processes sewage into a very valuable, natural fertiliser. 90% by 2030 program

The project's main purpose is to challenge South Africans to change - the way they live, the way they relate to the environment.

Activities:

Mitigation: Encouraging all South Africans to become more planet conscious and 'do their bit' by voluntarily reducing their carbon emissions.

Adaptation: Working with small-scale farmers to monitor weather changes, cultivate suitable crops and to improve water management (pilot project).

Awareness-raising and advocacy:

Providing easily-assimilated information to ordinary South Africans so that they can lobby for change to existing laws and policies governing the use of natural resources, with a strong focus on energy efficiency, renewable energy development, transport emissions reduction, sustainable waste management, and water conservation.

A 'Carbon neutral' Goedgedacht by December 2009 Let's make Goedgedacht 'carbon neutral'!. We have already built a bio-digester to make methane gas for cooking purposes. All our hot water is now solar-powered, and the next big jump will be solar panels for all our electrical needs. We hope to get there by December 2009.

Bio-Diversity program.

We live in the Cape Floral Kingdom, globally recognised as one of the richest, rarest and smallest of such kingdoms in the world. We need to treasure and protect it. Right now, 1400 of 8600 plant species are listed as critically rare, endangered or vulnerable. Goedgedacht farm on the Kasteelberg (a registered conservancy) is in the Renosterveld part of this plant kingdom and we will make every effort to protect and guard the plant species on the farm. This project is still at the planning stage.

Goedgedacht Olive Farmers Association.

All research points to our area becoming hotter and drier as global warming intensifies. We need to prepare for the days

ahead when water becomes more scarce. Farmers need to be introduced to crops that can survive in hot dry conditions. Olives are one of these crops and we promote olive farming among the emerging black farmers in the region. We already have 120 farmers participating in this project.

The Olive Peace Grove.

This is Goedgedacht's biggest, oldest and most ambitious climate-change project. It has been run for the past 15 years. At present our olives groves cover 27 hectares with 9000 trees. The profit from the olive oil we produce is used to support our community projects.

Climate Change Crops (C3) project.

We're looking into alternative crops which local farmers, including poor black farmers, can grow that are hardy enough to handle a dry hot climate while giving them a quicker return on their time and energy than olives? This project hopes to do just that...

Esterhof CDM i.e Clean Development Mechanism.

This is a technical term which brings together communities that want to reduce their carbon emissions and other groups which need to pay in some way for the carbon that they create. The small village of Esterhof/Riebeek-Kasteel would make a wonderful CDM project.. We intend to build partnerships between high carbon producers – and poor communities – to see how parties can become winners – with Mother Earth the ultimate winner.

These are our climate-change projects. We are keen to do as much as we can to contribute to the debate on climate and hope to do more in the future.