



KRUGER2CANYON

NEWS

April 2025

The Farm House, R527, Zandspruit, Hoedspruit, Limpopo email: editor@kruger2canyon.co.za

‘Belligerent’ Magistrate Again Ordered to Back Off on Kruger Park Wildlife Crimes Court Shutdown



Illustrative image | Dutch students process a fake crime scene of a poached rhino during their training at the Wildlife Forensics Academy in Yzerfontein (Photo: Kim Ludbrook / EPA-EFE). From left tp right: Naomi Engelbrecht (Photo: judiciary.org.za), Dunstan Mlambo (Photo: Felix Dlangamandla / Gallo Images / Daily Maverick), Judge President Segopotje Sheila Mphahlele (Photo: judiciary.org.za), Judge Frans Legodi (Photo: Judges Matter).

Tony Carnie

What lies behind the persistent attempts to shut down or curtail the operations of the Skukuza Regional Court, which has achieved remarkable success in bringing rhino poachers to justice?

The Battle of Skukuza began as a simple legal disagreement about which court buildings can be used to try rhino killers in South Africa. It soon degenerated into a battle royale between two judicial “elephants”; the younger one characterised as belligerent and disrespectful, the elder as pleading, humble and patient.

The result was that the two elephants locked tusks and the judicial grass around Mpumalanga was trampled and potentially “poisoned”, leading to a situation in which senior magistrates were uncertain about which elephant to listen to - and who was in charge of the administration of justice in Mpumalanga province.

The more vexing question, lurking in the background, is what lies behind the persistent attempts to shut down or curtail the operations of the Skukuza Regional Court, a dedicated wildlife crimes court that has achieved remarkable success in bringing rhino poachers to justice over the past eight years.

It was originally established as a periodical court in 1963, close to the main camp in Kruger National Park. In March 2017, it was upgraded to a periodical regional court, at a time when South Africa’s rhinos were being slaughtered by poachers at a rate of more than 1,000 every year - mainly in the country’s flagship wildlife park.

At the time, the then environmental affairs minister, Edna Molewa, welcomed the establishment of the dedicated rhino court inside the park, noting that it would help to ensure faster turnaround times for horn poaching cases. According to a South African National Parks (SANParks)

annual report, the Skukuza Regional Court had achieved a 97% conviction rate by 2021 and handed out stiff jail terms to convicted horn poachers.

More recently, in November 2024, Skukuza’s dedicated regional court prosecutor, advocate Abednigo Lott Mgiba, was honoured with the “best environmental crimes prosecutor” award by the national Department of Environmental Affairs after finalising more than 70 recent cases in the court and achieving a 100% conviction rate - mainly for rhino poaching crimes.

Cont. on page 6...

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From the Editors desk

Well, well, didn't that go past like a flash. One more month and we will be halfway through 2025!

To keep it flowing, it seems that the sustained pressure on the Mopani District Municipality over the last 18 months has borne some fruit. There has now been extensive rehabilitation work done which has resulted in three new pumps installed and the immediate environ around the Leguaan Street pump station has been cleaned up. The sewer transfer pump station seems to be working efficiently for now. there are still issues that need to be resolved – emergency sewage storage dam capacity, currently limited to 24 hours inflow if there is an outage, the standby generator has not been connected since March 2024 (what are they municipality doing and how difficult can that be? It desperately requires the will to do it which again seems to be lacking – or maybe they are waiting once again for private enterprise to get involved? Wow, this is frustrating!), there is no automation, and the threat of contamination of drainage lines still exists. We live in hope.

The Mopani District Municipality's long-term plan was rejected by the Department of Water Affairs and Sanitation at the end of February – let's hope the revised plan (if submitted) will be revised to relocate the facility to a more appropriate site.

Here are some days to keep in mind as the month progresses: 2nd May is World Tuna Day, 3rd May is World Press Freedom Day, 10th May is the World Migratory Bird Day, 12th May is the International Day of Plant Health, 20th May is the fantastic World Bee Day, the 22nd May is the International Day for Biological Diversity and the 25th May is World Football Day.

Love The Hoed® Titbits

Thanks to all the sponsors, the fundraising ball held at the Radisson Hotel went off with a bang. The dancers that came and did a short show were 'off the charts' and I can confidently say that everyone had an amazing time, with some stragglers bringing up the rear! Total raised was around R 157 000 and this will go some way to help with the good work done by Farmwatch, day-in-and-day-out, to ensure the safety of us all. Thank you to all the sponsors and donors, and of course to Farmwatch – you people are amazing!

Please keep the donations rolling in as this allows the organisation to be sustainable and let's not forget – it's for us and used for us! Better than taxes for sure!

To donate to Farmwatch contact Jane @ 072 310 0032 or scan the QR code below.

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Graaff-Reinet Fossil Centre Opens, Housing World's Biggest Collection of Unique Species



An exhibit reconstructed from fossils at the Karoo Fossil Centre
Image supplied

Estelle Ellis

The Karoo Origins fossil centre, housing the Rubidge family's unique collection of fossils from the area, including what globally respected palaeontologist Professor Bruce Rubidge described as the biggest collection of unique species in the world.

Professor Bruce Rubidge, who inherited his grandfather's impressive fossil collection housed for 91 years on the farm Wellwood near Nieu Bethesda, said the facility housed the biggest display of holotypes (unique species) in the world and is also an educational and research centre.

The centre, in Graaff-Reinet, is a dream held for decades by the family that has now come true.

Rubidge headed the Evolutionary Studies Institute at the University of the Witwatersrand for more than three decades.

"Karoo Origins already serves as a field base for local and international scientists actively involved in research on the rocks and fossils of the Karoo," he said.

All of the fossils in Rubidge's collection are displayed, but it is also a live collection – they will add and research new fossils found.

At the centre, visitors can learn about the geological history of the Karoo and why it is considered a remarkable area for fossils, which include dinosaurs, tortoises, crocodiles and especially mammals.

The fascinating history of how Rubidge's grandfather, Sidney, became interested in fossils is also told at the centre.

In 1934, Rubidge's daughter Peggy (10 at the time), came to him and asked: Daddy, what are fossils? In response, Sidney took his family on a picnic to a rocky outcrop on his farm. This outing resulted in the discovery of the remarkably complete skull of a large flesh-eating therapsid, a mammal-like

reptile, which was described as a new species, *Dinogorgon rubidgei*, by the internationally acclaimed palaeontologist Dr Robert Broom.

Some of the quirky letters exchanged between Broom and Sidney Rubidge are also on display. The exhibitions in the centre are designed by Colin Payne and Diane Makings from the design studio Fancy Horse. Payne said he was delighted to find some of the letters exchanged between Rubidge and Broom, including one where, in the middle of a scientific discussion, Broom asked about a ram that Rubidge was having trouble with on the farm.

Professor Rubidge, who is passionate about keeping the collection in the Karoo, said one day Broom asked his grandfather if they could move this specific skull, also on display, to the fossil centre at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg.

"Grandfather answered that the skull had been in the Karoo for millions of years and most certainly did not want to travel to Johannesburg," Rubidge said.

After the first skull, Sidney Rubidge began collecting fossils on and around his farm. His collection, Rubidge said, provided much information about the Permian and Triassic animals of southern Africa. The centre also tells the story of the remarkable fossil hunter James Kitching, who, as a child, was paid to find fossils by Sidney Rubidge.

"An important feature of the Rubidge Collection is the very large number of holotype specimens. A holotype is the reference specimen of a newly described species. As all 107 of these holotype specimens are on display, Karoo Origins has the distinction of displaying the greatest number of fossil holotype specimens in any exhibit.

"The Rubidge Fossil Collection contains a wide diversity of fossil 'reptile' species that lived between 260-250 million years ago, and at that time, the most abundant land-



The display cases where fossils from Sidney Rubidge's collection may be viewed.
Photo: Supplied

living vertebrates were therapsid mammal-like reptiles, the most distant ancestors of mammals," Rubidge said

He said the rocks of what is known as the Karoo Supergroup were deposited between 300 million and 180 million years ago.

"These rocks are internationally renowned for their wealth of ancient fossil reptiles that lived during the existence of the supercontinent of Gondwana. This giant continent included the present-day Africa, South America, Madagascar, India, Antarctica and Australia."

He said this made the collection internationally important.

"The rock outcrops north of Graaff-Reinet hold the best record on land of the greatest global mass extinction event of all times. This occurred 252 million years ago, at the end of the Permian Period, and obliterated 90% of species," he said. This, Rubidge pointed out, made Karoo Origins a unique centre where the public could learn about past extinction events and also about the current sixth extinction.

"What is being created here is an exciting experience and journey into the distant past. We are looking forward to welcoming anyone with an interest in palaeontology, whether it be amateurs with a general interest in the geological history and fossils of the Karoo to local and international scientists, as well as undergraduate and postgraduate students," Rubidge said. The development in technology had opened the frontiers for new knowledge about fossils. He said that through CAT scans of the fossils, new research was being conducted on the metabolism of extinct animals, and how biodiversity had changed over time.

"The more specialised a creature is, the more vulnerable to extinction," he said. He said they were investigating which animals survived extinction events.

He said preserving a sense of place for the fossils was very important to him. "Museums don't usually display holotypes. This is the biggest collection of holotypes in the world."

In the 1940s, the former Monuments Council wanted to move the fossils, but Rubidge's grandfather persuaded the council to allow him to keep them in the Karoo.



Justin Arnols at work in his laboratory at the Karoo Origins Fossil Centre (above)
Photo: Estelle Ellis

An exhibit from a reconstructed fossil (below) Image supplied



"He realised that it would be difficult to keep them on the farm. He said the family, however, had serious concerns about the collections in South African museums becoming neglected – even 25 years ago, South Africa's biodiversity collections were under threat.

After Rubidge intervened, steps were taken to correct the situation, but there are still concerns that more and more scientists are retiring and that collections will again be threatened.

"I think this collection has great potential for tourism," Rubidge said.

The centre is open from 8.30am to 4.45pm in Parsonage Street, Graaff-Reinet. If you want to find out more about the centre, please check out their website at <https://fossilcentre.co.za>

This article was previously published by Daily Maverick – Karoo Origins



Artists from design company Fancy Horse made a prehistoric scene come to life at the Karoo Fossil Centre in Graaff-Reinet.
Photo: Supplied

Hopping Around the Globe: How Easter was Probably Celebrated Worldwide

Local correspondent

Easter may have its roots firmly planted in Christian tradition, but around the world, this spring/autumn holiday (depending on which hemisphere you are in) has taken on a vibrant life of its own - complete with chocolate eggs, exploding carts, water fights, and even a few puzzled bunnies in unlikely places.

Whether commemorating the resurrection of Christ or simply celebrating new beginnings, Easter has become a global patchwork of customs, both sacred and delightfully strange.

Italy's fiery spectacle

In Italy, Easter is celebrated with full theatrical flair. In Florence, locals gather for the Scoppio del Carro — or “Explosion of the Cart.” This tradition, rooted in the 11th century, involves a beautifully decorated cart being ignited by the Archbishop of Venice, by a mechanical dove-shaped rocket, ignited at the altar and ‘fired’ at the end of Easter Mass on Easter Sunday, to ignite the cart. If all goes well (and the cart explodes properly in a spectacular fireworks display), it’s believed to promise a good harvest and year ahead.

Italians also do Easter food justice with Colomba di Pasqua, a traditional dove-shaped bread studded with almonds and pearl sugar, which rivals the more famous Christmas panettone.

Poland - wet and wild

Head to Poland the day after Easter Sunday, and you might get caught in a very soggy showdown. Śmigus-Dyngus (or ‘wet Monday’) a Polish Easter Monday tradition - originally a pagan celebration - sees boys trying to catch girls by surprise by splashing them with water, from buckets, squirt guns, water balloons, and anything else that can hold liquid - even fire trucks!

According to tradition the girls who end up the wettest are supposedly the ones that will get married first. It supposedly originated from the baptism of Prince Mieszko I on Easter Monday in 966 AD. The water symbolizes cleansing and renewal, and the celebration has now become a national water fight where no one is safe - not even the elderly.

Greece - midnight fireworks and red eggs

In Greece, Easter (known as Pascha) is the most important Greek religious holiday of the year. The celebrations are steeped in Orthodox tradition and culminate with a midnight church service on



Holy Saturday. As the clock strikes twelve, all lights are turned off, and candles are lit in the church, the glow spreads through the darkened church like wildfire - literally - and a communal cry of “Christos Anesti!” (Christ is risen!).

This is then followed by quickly trying to walk home or to the tavern/restaurant without the candles going out, not dripping wax on their clothes or anyone else’s clothes, and not setting anyone on fire! All this while cheers, fireworks, gunshots, and dynamite are set off for the next 3 hours or more.

One Easter Sunday, everyone in Greece celebrates with a lunch of Greek lamb, goat, kokoretsi, wine, tsoureki bread and cracking red eggs.

And the red eggs? Greeks dye eggs a

deep red to represent the tomb in which Jesus was buried, while the red dye his blood shed for his follower’s salvation. They then engage in a game of egg-tapping, which is both a test of strategy and strength.

Australia has bilbies - not bunnies

Hop on over to Australia, and you’ll notice something missing - the Easter Bunny. Instead, the Aussie Easter mascot is the bilby - an endangered marsupial with rabbit-like ears. This is partly due to Australia’s prickly relationship with invasive rabbits, which have wreaked havoc on native ecosystems.

Chocolate bilbies now take pride of place on shelves, raising awareness (and funds) for conservation. Leave it to the Austra-

lians to give Easter a meaningful, eco-conscious twist.

France - giant omelettes and church bells

In the southwestern town of Bessières, Easter Monday involves cooking a giant omelette by the Brotherhood of the Giant Omelette, made with over 15,000 eggs - prepared in a giant pan over an open fire, often in the town square. It serves as a symbol of the Brotherhood’s commitment to sharing a meal with the community.

Legend has it that when Napoleon Bonaparte visited the area, he had an omelette which was so good he ordered a giant one be cooked for his troops. The event is a celebration with dancing, music, parades, and of course, the giant omelette itself.

In another unique twist, French churches go mysteriously quiet from Good Friday until Easter Sunday. The reason? The bells have “flown to Rome” to be blessed by the Pope - or so the story goes. They return on Easter morning, ringing joyously to announce the resurrection.

Japan and beyond- Easter without the religion

In countries where Christianity is not widespread, Easter is often observed as a cultural event rather than a religious one. In Japan, for instance, it’s mostly celebrated at theme parks like Tokyo Disneyland, which puts on pastel-coloured parades and egg hunts. It’s more about kawaii (cute) aesthetics than crucifixion and resurrection - but no less joyful.

In China, Thailand, and even parts of India, Easter is marked modestly by Christian minorities, often with church services and community feasts.

Meanwhile, global retailers have helped spread the pastel fever, turning Easter into a candy-coated holiday even in places where its deeper meaning isn’t widely known.

A celebration of renewal

Whether you’re lighting fireworks in Athens, dodging water balloons in Warsaw, or biting the ears off a chocolate bilby in Perth, Easter seems to strike a universal chord - the celebration of renewal, hope, and community.

In a world that could always use a little more joy, Easter continues to prove that it’s more than just a religious observance. It’s a global excuse to come together, get creative, and maybe, just maybe, believe in magic for a moment. Even if that magic comes in the form of a six-foot rabbit hiding jellybeans behind the couch.

We hope you all had a Happy Easter!

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E-Mail : hoedspruit@century21.co.za
Website : www.century21wildlife.co.za



WILD FIG APARTMENTS, HOEDSPRUIT R 950 000
Beds 2 | Baths 1 | Floor: 84 m²

Ground-floor apartment offering open-plan living, a private garden area, ceiling fans, ample cupboards, and a full bathroom. The complex has a communal pool, prepaid electricity, municipal water with backup, and is centrally located. Permission may be applied for to keep a small pet.
Michelle Herb - 071 652 9140 Ref: 2370410



THE VILLAGE, HOEDSPRUIT WILDLIFE ESTATE R 2 400 000
Bedrooms 3 | Bathrooms 2

This lovely 255m² townhouse is set amongst beautiful trees and has a lovely fenced garden area. The home features kitchen, courtyard and lounge with aircon that leads to the covered patio and garden. Great investment option or an opportunity for first-time home buyers.
Michelle Severin - 083 469 3821 Ref: 2370806



CANYON GAME RESERVE R 2 800 000
Bedrooms 3 | Bathrooms 2.5 | Floor size: 275 m²

This comfortable home has a lounge, open plan kitchen, upstairs library and large patio. The house has a new thatch roof and there are solar panels, 5kVa inverter and 5kVa batteries. The views from the spacious patio are towards the Drakensberg mountains, and a large Tamboti tree.
Rob Severin - 083 469 3820 Ref: 2344618



BLYDE WILDLIFE ESTATE R 5 500 000
Bedrooms 5 | Bathrooms 4 | Floor size: 450 m²

Well-maintained property with panoramic mountain views from patio, pool and boma area. Main house with 3 bedrooms and a guest unit with 2 bedrooms. Paved driveway and entrance, double garrage, double carport, storage facility, laundry room, staff room and enclosed courtyard.
Jason Jones - 083 267 4794 Ref: 2343311



CANYON GAME RESERVE R 2 800 000
Bedrooms 4 | Bathrooms 4 | Floor size: 290 m²

The main house comprises 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, open plan lounge, dining area and kitchen. A covered patio and decked area is found off the living area with a pizza oven and pool. The self-contained cottage comprises lounge, dining area, kitchenette and two en-suite bedrooms.
Michelle Severin - 083 469 3821 Ref: 2345896



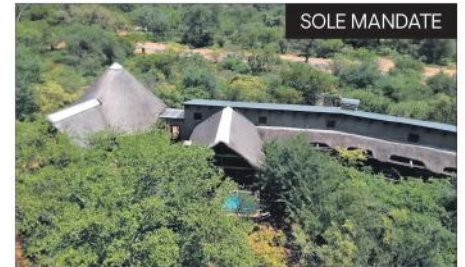
LISSATABA NATURE RESERVE R 2 800 000
Beds 2 | Baths 2 | Floor: 140 m²

Lock-up-and-go home with great views! Overlooking the Olifants River this property features a main unit with bedroom, open plan kitchen, living and dining area, leading to a covered patio. A spacious stand-alone chalet with en-suite bathroom and a storage area overlooks a waterhole.
Rob Severin - 083 469 3820 Ref: 2355906



NDLOVUMZI NATURE RESERVE R 4 000 000
Beds 4 | Baths 3 | Floor: 125 m²

This 21 hectare Olifants river property offers stunning views, a beautiful garden, and riverine tree surroundings. The property includes a 2-bedroom main house and a separate 2-bedroom cottage, as well as an expansive entertainment area with braai, pizza oven, dining area and pool.
Jason Jones - 083 267 4794 Ref: 2330912



HOEDSPRUIT WILDLIFE ESTATE R 4 400 000
Beds 5 | Baths 4 | Floor: 276 m²

This well-located, charming property comprises 3-bedroom house with a rondavel which could be rented out, as well as a flat that is currently rented out. Sliding doors from the main home's living area lead to the covered patio with splash pool. The patio area also features a pizza oven.
Michelle Severin - 083 469 3821 Ref: 2360126



ORCHARD HILLS from R 2 500 000 excl
New Development Beds 2 | Baths 2

These off-plan, full-title luxury farmhouse-style homes feature an open-plan lounge, dining area, and kitchen with a separate scullery/laundry. The lounge extends onto a spacious covered terrace with a built-in braai, perfect for outdoor living
Calin Leppan - 082 824 9482 Ref: 2269562



HOEDSPRUIT WILDLIFE ESTATE R 5 700 000
Beds 5 | Baths 5 | Stand size: 4,900 m²

Two thatched homes on a single stand, zoned for commercial use. Ideal for business or rental income, with potential for long- or short-term leasing. Each home features a swimming pool and private pet-friendly garden. A rare investment opportunity with flexible usage options.
Cherilynn J v Rensburg - 079 894 3974 Ref: 2379783



NDLOVUMZI NATURE RESERVE R 4 458 000
Beds 4 | Baths 4 | Floor: 176 m²

This tranquil home on a 21 hectare property overlooks the Olifants river and is surrounded by large riverine trees and rocky outcrops. The open plan living, dining area and newly fitted kitchen are all under high vaulted ceilings that make this home light and bright, adding to the appeal.
Jason Jones - 083 267 4794 Ref: 2152063



COMMERCIAL: Hoedspruit Wildlife Estate R 8 470 000
Beds 6 | Baths 6 | Floor: 780 m²

Guest house with 6 spacious en-suite guest rooms and owner's quarters. Colonial-style home with wraparound patio, pool, bar, central lounge, and dining area. Rooms include bath, shower, aircon, minibar, and DSTV. Sold fully furnished as a going concern, without liabilities. Backup power & water.
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RAPTORS VIEW WILDLIFE ESTATE R 23 000 pm
Beds 3 | Baths 2 | Furnished

Available immediately until 31 March 2026, not pet friendly - Escape to the bush and enjoy a cozy open plan lounge/dining room area leads into the spacious kitchen and scullery. Outside is a lovely entertainment area with covered seating area, decking and pool. Furnished, but excluding linen.
Michelle Herb - 071 652 9140 Ref: 2359009



HOEDSPRUIT CENTRAL R 8 000 pm
Commercial/Office space | Floor size: 40 m²

Available immediately - Sought-after shop/office space available with access from the main road in Hoedspruit. The office space has its own electricity meter. Electricity is for the tenant's cost. Kitchen and bathroom facilities are shared.
Michelle Herb - 071 652 9140 Ref: 2379575



'Belligerent' Magistrate Again Ordered to Back Off



Section Ranger Neels Van Wyk inspects a three-day-old carcass of a poached rhino on 8 November 2014 at the Kruger National Park. Photo: Gallo Images/Sunday Times/ ames Oatway

Cont. from page 1...

Given this enviable track record, why have there been repeated, recent attempts to close the court down or reduce the number of cases heard in Skukuza, when the legitimacy of the court was established emphatically by three high court judges in April 2020?

'Junior elephant'

Enter the "junior elephant", Naomi Annette Engelbrecht, the regional court president (RCP) of Mpumalanga, who has repeatedly defied directives from two Judge Presidents to ensure that the court be kept open. As the senior official in charge of regional court magistrates in that province, Engelbrecht has attempted several times to shut down the court entirely or reduce its regional court status to channelling cases to courts outside park.

In doing so, she defied several written directives from two former Mpumalanga Judge Presidents, Dunstan Mlambo and Frans Legodi, by arguing that Skukuza had not been legally proclaimed as "a place for the holding of a court".

In subsequent verbal and written exchanges with Judge President Legodi, Engelbrecht pretty much told him to take a hike. She was in charge of magistrates in the province, she said, and would not adhere to Legodi's directives or those of his predecessor on the question of Skukuza. She also instructed at least two senior magistrates to disregard Legodi's directives on Skukuza.

In an email exchange at the end of November 2019, Legodi informed Engelbrecht that he had instructed regional magistrates Theron and Lesufi not to remove any matters from the Skukuza court roll.

Victimisation

To emphasise his point, Legodi stated: "You are therefore requested not to give them contrary instructions or threaten them with victimisation", as any instruction to the contrary would be added to the complaints sent to the Magistrates Commission, the state body tasked with suspending or removing magistrates from office (among other responsibilities).

Commission to serve at the courts, including the Skukuza court. Apparently, both the RCP and the Chief magistrate view serving at that court as an inconvenience. It might be so; but let us remind ourselves if a reminder is needed, that periodical courts are not necessarily there to suite the convenience of judicial officers or practitioners, but to reach people out there. There is a disturbing statement in Ms Venter's affidavit that the RCP stopped the regional court from sitting at Skukuza as a result of request by the attorneys. We also hope that, unlike the RCP, the Chief Magistrate has not made good her threat. The Minister has, as we have seen, duly appointed the court building at Skukuza as a place for the holding of a court; it is not the business of the two judicial officers to go about shutting down courts; doing so could amount to obstructing the course or administration of justice.

Extract from Legodi's letter (above)

Eventually, Legodi (as the most senior judicial official in Mpumalanga) requested that a Full Bench of the province's high court conduct a special review after Engelbrecht had refused an application by State prosecutors to transfer several poaching cases back to the Skukuza court.

In their special review judgment, the three justices (Bernard Ngoepe, Cynthia Pretorius and Thando Mankge) castigated Engelbrecht, describing her conduct as unbecoming for such a senior justice official, who had been openly defiant of Judge President Legodi. In rejecting Legodi's requests and instructions, she had used language that was "inappropriate, disrespectful and unnecessarily belligerent".

23.3 One is entitled to disagree with one's seniors; but this should be done professionally and with appropriate respect for one's seniors. Seniors are respected not so much for their own sake as it is in the interests of an institution and the cause it serves. Secondly, it is one thing not to hold respect but quite another to actually show the disrespect openly and publicly as the RCP did. Her conduct showed disrespect for the Judge President in his capacity as the head of the Judiciary of the Province. She persisted in defying the JP despite his numerous pleas and humble requests. She also persisted in defying the JP despite an email from the JP informing her that the Director of Public Publications also disagreed with her. We have set out above numerous emails, some pleading and others instructing, all of which were in vain. She dismissed the JP, and told him that he would hear from her. Numerous meetings at the instance of the JP, including the one held on the very day on which she brushed aside the Directives with her judgment, failed to move her, not even to temporarily oblige pending the resolution of the matter. It is indeed hard to see any good faith on her part. This was unbecoming of her as Regional Court President.

Extracts from the special review judgment (above)

That was not all.

The three judges found that Engelbrecht's conduct had the potential to "poison" relations between two of the most senior justice officials in the province and had resulted in "actual and potential harm" to the administration of justice in Mpumalanga.

Refer to Extract from the special review judgment (centre left below)

As a further mark of their displeasure, the three judges ordered that a copy of their judgment be forwarded to the Magistrates Commission, noting that it should not be the business of judicial officers to go around shutting courts, as this could amount to obstructing justice.

Unsuccessful appeals

Engelbrecht appealed against this judgment (unsuccessfully) all the way to the Constitutional Court, which in February 2021 dismissed her appeal as lacking any reasonable prospect of success.

That, most observers might think, settled the matter.

Yet, as reported by veteran Lowvelder journalist Buks Viljoen, the continued operation of the Skukuza court was cast into doubt once more last month, with renewed attempts to transfer cases or reduce the frequency of court hearings at Skukuza.

Responding to queries from the Daily Maverick, Kruger National Park spokesperson Ike Phaahla said it recently came to the attention of SANParks that court hearings at Skukuza would be reduced to just one day a week from 6 March and that this was a result of "an instruction from the RCP" (Engelbrecht).

Phaahla said he had "no idea" why these instructions had been given, further noting that SANParks had not been consulted about the instruction.

In an attempt to clarify this and several other issues concerning the Skukuza court, Daily Maverick has made repeated efforts since 28 March to contact Engelbrecht for comment via her email address, landline numbers and cellphone, but she has not responded. *Cont. on next page...*

on Kruger Park Wildlife Crimes Court Shutdown

RHINO POACHING IN SOUTH AFRICA - 2024



420

rhino poached
in South Africa



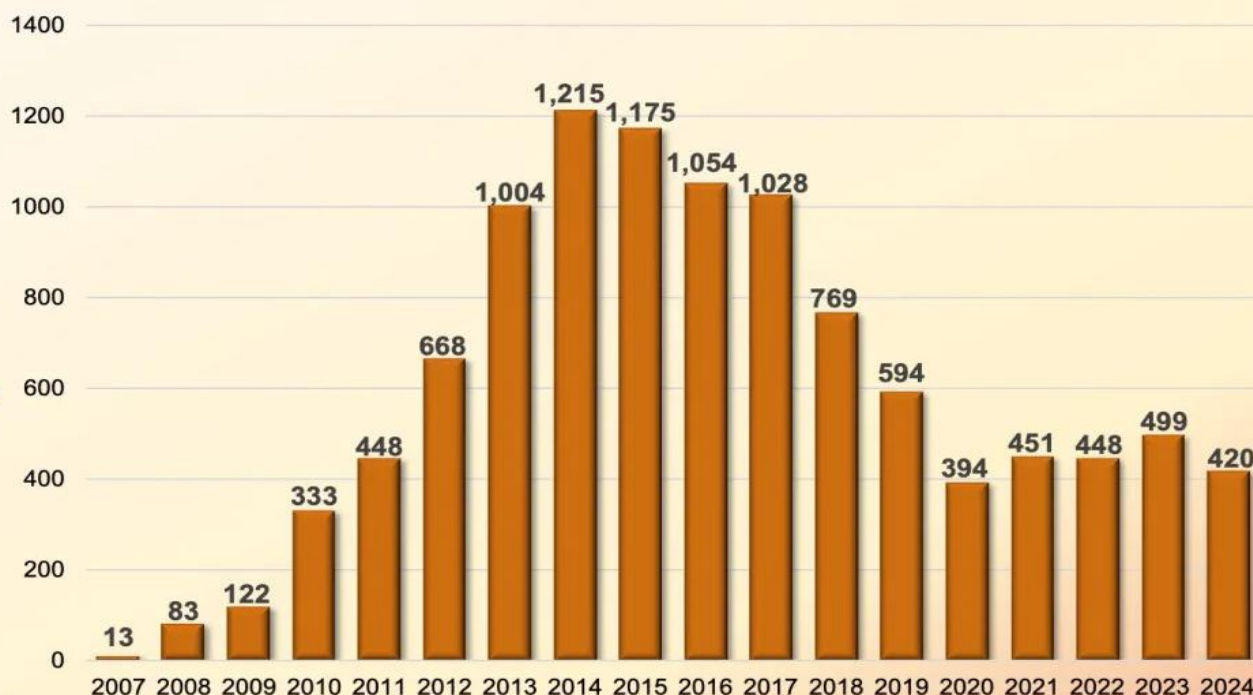
76%

of all poaching on
state / national parks



55%

of poaching was
in KwaZulu-Natal



Source: South Africa Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment



Cont. from previous page...

New directive

Now, it has emerged that the current Mpumalanga Judge President, Segopotje Sheila Mphahlele, found it necessary to issue a new directive instructing Engelbrecht that any cases that had been transferred from Skukuza to the Hazyview court should be transferred back to Skukuza. This court should also continue to hear cases twice a week.

In the latest directive of 8 March, addressed to Engelbrecht, the chief magistrate and the director of public prosecutions for Mpumalanga, the Judge President further emphasised, "No matters shall be transferred from Skukuza to Hazyview or any other court seat without authorisation of this office" and that her directive would remain in force unless revoked or amended in writing.

So, for now at least, it seems to be back to business at the Skukuza court.

Yet, given the protracted history of this affair, the latest attempt to shut down or downgrade this court has raised several questions about Engelbrecht's motives and behaviour, the answers to which are likely to remain a matter of speculation unless Engelbrecht elects to clarify them publicly.

'Not a good venue'

Interestingly, just hours after Daily Maverick sent questions to the Magistrates Commission on 24 March (and copied to the Magistrates Matter contact site), we received an email message from Vanja Karth, the head of the University of Cape Town's Democratic Governance & Rights Unit, indicating that she believed that, for practical reasons, Skukuza was "not a good venue for trials".

In the email thread of her message, she had indicated to four legal sector colleagues that she had "just had a 30 min chat to Naomi" and was happy to discuss the Skukuza issue with Daily Maverick.

When we contacted her soon afterwards to elaborate, Karth said the Skukuza court was a "tiny building" located on the same property as the local police station.

"You have to pay park fees and hire transport from the gate," as it was not possible to walk to the court because of the risk of being attacked by lions and other dangerous wildlife, she said.

There were, therefore, access-to-justice issues, she stated, further noting that as Skukuza was not a permanent court, it was necessary to transport court staff such as clerks, interpreters and stenographers from other courts, which could entail additional petrol/transport costs.

There was only one "box" (dock) for accused

suspects, so if there were six or eight accused in court, there was no space for the public to be seated.

Karth said there were also concerns about the security of magistrates, as they had to share toilets with the public.

"The only people who benefit [from the location of Skukuza court] are SANParks," said Karth, adding that it was not a "neutral or unbiased space" for accused persons.

Karth said another issue was that Skukuza was not a full-service court with bail payment facilities, so suspects or their representatives would have to drive to Mbombela if they were granted bail.

In a subsequent email message to Daily Maverick, Karth provided photographs of the interior of the court while clarifying a previous statement to indicate that suspects did not have to pay park entrance fees if they showed bail receipts and also stating that there was no internet connection at Skukuza.

"So I think the real question is: why is there such an urgent push to keep using a court that is clearly inadequate when there are full-service courts in close proximity? What is the value, and to whom, to insist on the continued use of Skukuza?"

(Several legal officials have said privately that rangers often face intimidation when giving evidence in courts outside the park and have to travel through areas where rhino poaching syndicates operate. Senior Hawks investigator Lieutenant Colonel Leroy Bruwer, who was investigating several high-profile rhino poaching cases, was murdered by gunmen in March 2020 while travelling to work in Mbombela.)

However, as we pointed out in our subsequent request for comment to Engelbrecht, it was not clear whether the criticisms above reflected Karth's or Engelbrecht's views.

Legal arguments

Nor do some of the criticisms entirely chime with arguments previously raised on Engelbrecht's behalf during the special review hearing in 2020.

The three justices emphasised that arguments in the review case were almost entirely confined to points of law about the gazetting and proclamation of Skukuza by the minister of justice, although Engelbrecht or her legal representatives did provide insights into some of the reasons for her opposition to the Skukuza court location and logistical concerns.

For example, Engelbrecht is quoted in the review judgment stating that some of her magistrates were "scared to go to court" at Skukuza.

Commenting on alleged logistical and other challenges at Skukuza, the three judges remarked, "In passing, we mention that some complaints were raised by the attorneys who opposed the State's application for the transfer of the matters to the Skukuza court for trial, such as the small size of the court, inconvenience to the public and the lack of effective air-conditioning system."

"Apparently, both the RCP and the Chief Magistrate view serving at that court as an inconvenience. It might be so; but let us remind ourselves, if a reminder is needed, that periodical courts are not necessarily there to suite [sic] the convenience of judicial officers or practitioners, but to reach people out there. There is a disturbing statement in [regional court prosecutor Ansie Venter's] affidavit that the RCP stopped the regional court from sitting at Skukuza as a result of request(s) by the attorneys."

Significantly, the judges also recorded that it was the legal counsel for several wildlife crime suspects who argued the review case on behalf of Engelbrecht — and that the minister of justice and correctional services, the minister of the environment, forestry and fisheries, SAN-

Parks and the office of the director of public prosecutions all argued against Engelbrecht's views, which she had set out in a 167-page affidavit.

Daily Maverick was not able to establish the exact nature of the crimes allegedly committed by these suspects, but did confirm that at least one of them (former SANParks employee Blues Excellent Shabangu) was arrested in April 2014 for allegedly hunting and killing a white rhino in Kruger National Park.

Later, when Engelbrecht and legal representatives for the alleged wildlife offenders applied for leave to appeal, the three high court judges commented, "In any event, an accused person does not have the luxury to choose at which court building they should be tried. As long as the crime was committed within the relevant magisterial district of the court, it remains the prerogative of the State to choose which court building; whether or not the court building has an effective air conditioning system, or whether the road to that court is dirt or bumpy in relation to the court building they prefer."

Legodi's complaint

Finally, there is the question of what happened to Judge President Legodi's complaint to the Magistrates Commission and the stinging judgment by the three judges who heard the special review case five years ago.

The short answer is: Nothing.

In response to our queries, the Magistrates Commission confirmed that it received a copy of the judgment soon after delivery, but it deferred any action until Engelbrecht's appeals to other judicial bodies were concluded.

"Thereafter, at its meeting held in October 2022, the Ethics Committee [of the commission] considered the matter and closed the file after Judge President Legodi indicated that he has no intentions to pursue the matter," the commission said in a statement to Daily Maverick on 4 April.

The commission also provided a copy of a formal letter sent by the commission head, Judge President Aubrey Ledwaba, to Legodi in November 2022, shortly before Ledwaba retired as Judge President of Mpumalanga. In the letter, Ledwaba referred to a telephone call he had with Legodi the previous month, "during which you indicated to me that you do not wish to pursue the matter".

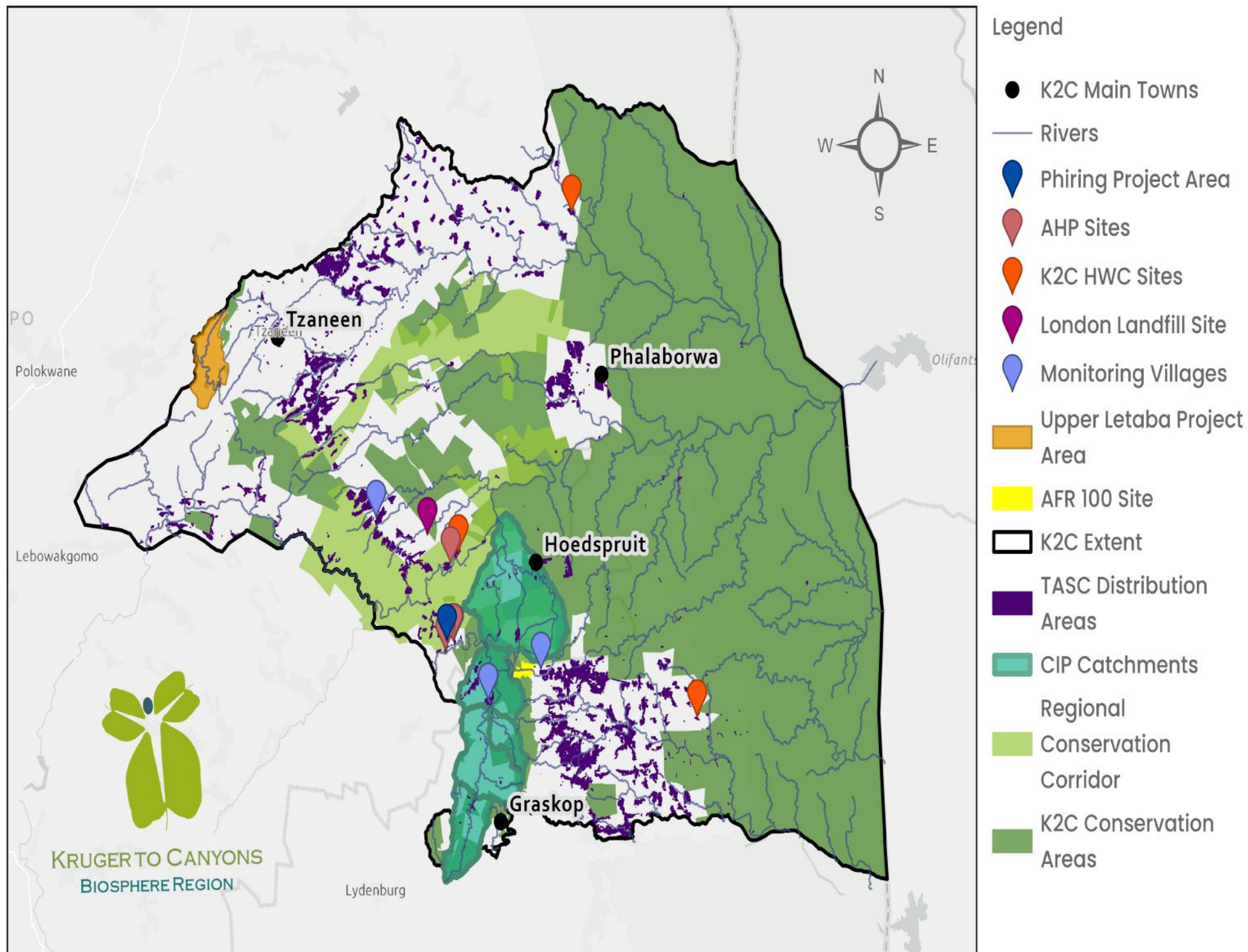
Shortly afterwards, the commission's Ethics Committee resolved to "close the file" on Engelbrecht.

This article was previously published by the Daily Maverick/Our Burning Planet/Analysis: Battle of Skukuza



The Skukuza Regional Court
Photo: Supplied

A Year of Impact: How the K2C Biosphere is Building a Resilient Future



Lauren Booth, K2C Communications Officer

The Kruger to Canyons Biosphere Region NPC (K2C) has released its 2024-2025 Impact Report, and the message is clear: through strategic partnerships, innovative projects, and strong community collaboration, real change is taking root across the landscape. From land restoration and job creation, to data-driven conservation and circular economies, K2C is a leading force in building a sustainable future for both people and nature.

At the heart of the K2C's work is a mission to balance sustainable development and natural resource use with biodiversity conservation. This is done through implementing projects with strategic partners. This year's report offers inspiring evidence of that mission and collective action.

A landscape of change: Measurable impacts cross the region

Amongst a host of positive outcomes, some of the most impressive from the past year include:

- 1,544 hectares of land restored, securing vital ecosystems.
- 15,025 hectares brought under conservation agreements.
- 838,426 tonnes of carbon emissions avoided.
- Over 300 million litres of water

released through alien plant removal.

- 673 sustainable jobs and 525 livelihood opportunities created.
- 315,000 households with improved fuel usage through clean cookstoves.
- 106 SMMEs supported, including 11 mentored intensively.
- 45,446 new iNaturalist observations feeding into 13 different conservation datasets.

"We are dedicated to creating a region where people have a sense of pride and belonging, feel empowered to take action and are inspired by the natural world around them every day," says Romy Antrobus-Wuth, K2C's Conservation Science and Data Manager. "Producing the Impact Report each year is an important tool for us to share the results of collective action on the ground."

Mapping the Movement: Where the Work is Happening

The K2C Biosphere extends from the Letaba River to the Sabie River, and between the Blyde Escarpment and the Mozambique border. With a huge landscape to work in, K2C's specific project nodes focus on water and catchment investment, declaring new protected areas to secure conservation corridors, waste management, climate resilience and human wild-

life conflict.

Key projects being undertaken

K2C is involved in the financing and implementation of a **Catchment Investment Programme** to protect the state of the Blyde and other key river catchments through invasive plant clearing, sustainable rangeland management and protected area expansion. Strategic partners involved are Conservation South Africa and The Nature Conservancy.

Securing and improving the **management of key biodiversity and water corridors** linking the Greater Kruger to the escarpment and Blyde River Canyon Nature Reserve, to secure habitats that provide breeding grounds and migratory routes for threatened species.

The **African Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative** involves clearing invasive species to restore degraded land and promote indigenous vegetation establishment, as well as investigating the use of off-cuts (e.g.: biochar) to support local SMMEs in the areas adjacent to protected areas. This partners with Conservation South Africa and the Sabi Sand Pfunanani Trust.

BeResilient is a citizen science project for freshwater health and Indigenous knowledge systems for climate risk adaptation. Here the K2C together with UNESCO, has established a citizen science freshwater health monitoring programme in the biosphere landscape, documenting

Indigenous knowledge systems aimed at building climate resilience and feeding into early warning systems.

Another project showcases sustainable land-use practices (climate-smart farming, tourism, eco-savings) that improve ecosystem services and build community resilience. This is part of the **Phiring Demonstration Site**, in partnership with Conservation South Africa and the Hoedspruit Hub.

The **Upper Letaba Vegetation Clearing project** focuses on removing alien invasive trees around the town of Haenertsburg in the upper Letaba catchment, to offset water used in the catchment by Coca-Cola. This has been made possible through the partnership with The Nature Conservancy and Coca-Cola.

The **London Landfill Community Recycling project** is a waste management beneficiation centre at the London landfill site. It stimulates a waste circular economy for waste reclaimers and entrepreneurs within the K2C landscape, made possible by the partnering with TASC and the Maruleng Municipality.

With the **Human-Wildlife Conflict in the Greater Kruger Landscape project**, K2C is looking to develop mitigation strategies to reduce conflict and support coexistence between communities and wildlife near adjacent to protected areas. This project is in partnership with WWF-Khetha.

Cont. on page 10...

Cosmic Easter Eggs



Cosmic Egg (above), image- Adobe Stock, Lepus the hare (below) and Hare on the moon (above right)

Images supplied



Ben Coley

Easter has been and gone, but I thought it might be nice to explore some (admittedly tenuous) links to Easter in the night sky for May.

But before we start, did you know that the date of Easter, like all major holidays, is dictated by celestial movements? Easter Sunday is celebrated on the first Sunday after the first full moon, after the northern hemisphere's vernal equinox. Its phases have been watched for millennia as a means of ancient time keeping, and its relentless path from new, to full, back to new, has long been associated with new life. This has been recorded as far back as the early Bushmen, who considered it bad fortune to look at a full moon after piercing an animal with a poisoned arrow, for fear that the regenerative properties might be passed on to their prey.

Related objects

Here are five Easter-related objects and

astronomical myths to consider during the month of May:

The Cosmic Egg

Many ancient cultures believe that the Universe, and everything within it was hatched from some sort of divine embryo. Various mythologies refer to the Universe itself emerging from a cosmic embryo, while in others, it hatched a great creator, who then manifested the Universe. In more recent times, the phrase was given traction by George Lemaitre in the 1930's, a pioneer of the Big Bang Theory. By backtracking the expansion of the Universe, Lemaitre proposed an initial state of a *primeval atom* from which everything originated: the original Cosmic Egg.

The Egg Nebula

Continuing the Easter Egg trend, the Egg Nebula is found within the constellation of Cygnus, the Swan. Considered a *protoplanetary nebula*, its kaleidoscopic appearance is caused by an old star that is in the process of shedding its atmosphere



into space. These gaseous layers form a glowing cloud around the dying object. The *protoplanetary nebula* is a short-lived period, lasting only a few thousand years (a blink of an eye to a star), before the star finally expires, releasing its entire contents back into the cosmos in a beautiful phenomenon known as a *planetary nebula*.

The Milky Way

No Easter is complete without a copious amount of chocolate! Cosmic confectionary references abound, with products such as Mars bars, Astros and of course, the light and fluffy Milky Way! Named after the spiralling hazy arms of our galaxy that arc high across the night sky during southern hemisphere winter, our galaxy has been known as the Milky Way since the time of the ancient Greeks. Zeus attempted to get his illegitimate son, Hercules, to suckle from the breast of his wife, Hera, while she slept on Mount Olympus. Unsurprisingly, Hera awoke and was none too pleased, wrenching Hercules away, spilling the milk across the sky. The Greeks called it *kyklos galaxias* (milky circle), the Romans evolved this to *via lactea* (milky road), and we now refer to it as the *Milky Way*.

Lepus, the Hare

But what about the lovable, chocolate-toting Easter Bunny? Many constellations in the night sky are named after animals, and nestled beneath the feet of Orion,

the Hunter, lies Lepus (the Hare). One of the original forty eight constellations recorded by Ptolemy around 150AD, the hare is depicted hiding from Orion's hunting dogs, Canis Major and Canis Minor.

The Hare on the Moon

Our final offering also refers to a hare, this time on the face of the Moon. The dark *mare*, or *seas*, on the lunar surface were seen as a hare by Bushmen tribes. One day, the Moon came across a hare that was very upset on account of losing a family member. The Moon consoled the hare, telling it not to fear death as it would see its loved ones again, just as the Moon disappeared and reappeared each month. The hare was tasked with sharing this information with the humans but failed to do so, angering the Moon. The two had an altercation, with the Moon splitting the hare's top lip with a blow, before placing it on the Moon's face, so that it would fade and return each month, for eternity.

The timeless expanse of stars above our heads has long-since been the medium upon which cultures have etched their thoughts, memories, and imagination. Regrettably, this is not something that we do much these days, but regardless of what you may, or may not see, in today's stellar tapestry, I hope you had a very happy Easter!

See Celestial Events SA advert for contact details

First Fossil Hyena Tracks Found in South Africa – How Expert Animal Trackers Helped

Charles Helm

Research Associate, African Centre for Coastal Palaeoscience, Nelson Mandela University

Clive Thompson Clive Thompson

Research Associate, African Centre for Coastal Palaeoscience, Nelson Mandela University

“The art of tracking may well be the origin of science.” This is the departure point for a 2013 book by Louis Liebenberg, co-founder of an organisation devoted to environmental monitoring.

The connection between tracking in nature, as people have done since prehistory, and “western” science is of special interest to us as ichnologists. (Ichnology is the study of tracks and traces.) We learned our skills relatively late in life. But imagine if we had learned as children and if, as adults, we tracked as if our lives depended on it? What additional visual and cognitive talents would we bring to our field work as scientists?

Our mission is to find and document the fossilised tracks and traces of creatures that existed during part of the Pleistocene Epoch, between 35,000 and 400,000 years ago, on the Cape coast of South Africa. Since 2008, through the Cape South Coast Ichnology project, based in the African Centre for Coastal Palaeoscience at Nelson Mandela University, more than 370 vertebrate track sites have been identified. They have substantially complemented the traditional record of body fossils. Examples include trackways of giant tortoises and giraffe.

Given the challenges inherent in identifying such tracks, we wondered how hunters who’ve been tracking all their lives would view our work, and how age-old indigenous expertise might align with our approach.

Fortunately, we could call on experts with these skills in southern Africa. The Ju/’hoansi (pronounced “Juun-kwasi”) San people of north-eastern Namibia are perhaps the last of southern Africa’s indigenous inhabitants who retain the full suite of

their ancient environmental skills. The Nyae Nyae conservancy in which they live gives them access to at least some of their historical land with its remaining wildlife. They still engage in subsistence hunting with bow and poisoned arrow and gather food that’s growing wild.

A handful among them have been recognised as Indigenous Master Tracker, a title created by Liebenberg’s CyberTracker initiative in recognition of their top-flight hunter-gatherer status. And so, late in 2023, the Master Trackers #oma (“Komma”) Daqm and /uce (“Tchu-shey”) N#amce arrived in Cape Town.

We were not the first to think along these lines. Ju/’hoansi Master Trackers have assisted scientists in the interpretation of hominin tracksites in French caves, and prehistoric tracks in the rock art record in Namibia. However, we knew that our often poorly preserved tracksites in aeolianites (cemented dunes) might present a stiffer challenge.

Our purpose was to compare our own interpretations of fossil trackways with those of the Master Trackers and possibly find some we had overlooked. As we’ve set out in a recently published paper with the Ju/’hoansi trackers and our colleague Jan De Vynck as co-authors, they did exactly this, confirming the first fossil hyena trackway ever to be found.

Swapping techniques

The Late Pleistocene is not that far distant from the present (a mere 125,000 years), and many of the species that made tracks on the Cape south coast then are still with us. Some are extinct but have recognisable tracks, like the giant long-horned buffalo and giant Cape zebra.

We knew, though, that tracking in Kalahari sand, like the Ju/’hoansi do, is not the same as tracking on Pleistocene rock surfaces. Many of our tracks are preserved on the undersides of ceilings and overhangs or are evident in profile in cliff exposures. Our track-bearing surfaces are usually small, and present no associated signs. We can’t

follow the spoor for any distance. We don’t know at what time of day the tracks were made or the role of dew, and we have never succeeded in actually tracking down our quarry. Coprolites – fossilised droppings – are seldom found conveniently beside the tracks of the depositor.

We showed our new colleagues known fossil track sites, without providing our own interpretations. #oma and /uce discussed these between themselves and presented their conclusions about what had made the tracks and how the animal had been behaving. We then shared our insights and our 3D photogrammetry data where applicable, and reached joint conclusions.

Soon they were identifying freshly exposed track sites without our input, and were providing fascinating, new interpretations for sites which had puzzled us. For example, they saw ostrich tracks which we had missed, beside ostrich egg remnants, and concluded that we were probably looking at a fossilised ostrich nest. On another occasion they pointed out the distinctive track pattern of a scrub hare on the hanging wall of an eroded piece of cliff.

First fossilised hyena trackway

One of the most memorable experiences involved a 400,000-year-old trackway on a rock surface at Dana Bay, identified a few years earlier by local geologists Aleck and Ilona Birch. This rock had only been transiently exposed for a few days in the past decade, usually being covered by beach sand.

Our earlier interpretation had been that the trackmaker might have been a hyena, probably the brown hyena.

We were vindicated when our master tracker colleagues independently reached the identical conclusion. Examining our digital 3D images together fortified our collective judgement.

This was a big deal: it was the first fossil hyena trackway to be confidently identified, as previous examples had involved only individual tracks or poorly preserved possible trackway segments. Hyena trackways are

distinctive: the forefoot tracks are substantially larger than those of the hindfoot.

Different ways of seeing

Both of us are privileged to have university degrees and institutional affiliations. But there is another way in which acumen can be measured: the ability to use the ancient methods of discernment and pattern recognition to support and feed one’s family and community through tracking, hunting and gathering.

What we have demonstrated, we believe, is a novel confluence of old and new ways to reveal fascinating features of the past. We use geological understanding, satellite technology, paleontological databases, tracking manuals and sophisticated dating methods. But hunter-gatherers see what escapes us and our drones: obscure strokes and enigmatic configurations on time-beaten surfaces. They tap an alternative knowledge base, both culturally received and cultivated from childhood.

The follow-through challenge must be to develop this partnership for mutual discovery and reward, understanding the past to better equip us for our uncertain future.

Clive Thompson is a trustee of the Discovery Wilderness Trust, a non-profit organization that supports environmental conservation and the fostering of tracking skills.

Charles Helm does not work for, consult, own shares in or receive funding from any company or organisation that would benefit from this article, and has disclosed no relevant affiliations beyond their academic appointment.

Partners

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This article was previously published in The Conversation.

A Year of Impact: How the K2C Biosphere is Building a Resilient Future

Cont. from page 8...

Then there is **The Absorbent Hygiene Products project** where K2C is piloting a co-governance model for responsible diaper waste management through multi-stakeholder collaboration in two communities. The University of the Western Cape is the partner in this project.

The Cookstove Project is a carbon project distributing more than 450 000 improved cookstoves across the K2C region to help reduce fuel loads and as a result carbon emissions across the landscape. This is in partnership with TASC.

People power: building skills, knowledge and networks

Beyond the environmental outcomes, K2C continues to invest in people and sustainable livelihoods in the region. Over 276 individuals were trained in various technical and community skills, four interns were supported, and thirty-five training sessions were held. These activities ensure that the region and its custodians survive environmental pressures, but are also positioned to thrive in the face of them.

Looking ahead: A long-term vision

True impact is a long-term, iterative process and the K2C team welcomes feedback, engagement and questions from stakeholders across all sectors.

“Meaningful change requires long-term positive transformations, with the goal of making a lasting difference to the lives of people and the species that occur in the region, as well as to address systemic issues. Thus our impact reporting is not the end of the story - it’s a measure of where we are in achieving long-term goals, as well as an invitation to collaborate,” says Marie Tinka Uys, K2C COO.

If something in the report inspires you, get in touch with the K2C Biosphere team or share it with someone who has an interest in the future of this region. The full Impact Report is available for download via the Resources section of the K2C website at www.kruger2canyons.org.

Our combined projects resulted in the following impacts:



BUSINESS DIRECTORY

BUSINESS / SHOPS / SERVICES

| | |
|--------------------------------|--------------|
| Celestial Events | 079 575 0900 |
| Chic Shack | 084 381 7071 |
| FGASA | 011 886 8245 |
| Fruitful Living | 015 793 3703 |
| Kruger2Canyon News | 082 330 6060 |
| Love the Hoed | 082 330 6060 |
| Macadamia South Africa (SAMAC) | 012 001 4107 |
| SPAR Hoedspruit | 015 793 2305 |
| Tops @ SPAR | 015 793 2069 |
| Ruggedwear | 087 149 3893 |
| Vehicle License Department | 015 793 0838 |

CONSTRUCTION & INDUSTRIAL

| | |
|--------------|--------------|
| BUCO | 015 793 0560 |
| Coastal Hire | 015 793 0971 |
| Mopane Group | 015 781 1571 |

SCHOOLS & EDUCATION

| | |
|------------------------------|--------------|
| Drakensig Laerskool | 015 793 3756 |
| Drakensig Pre-primer | 015 793 2401 |
| Hoedspruit Christian School | 015 793 2067 |
| Lowveld Academy | 015 793 3750 |
| Mariepskop Laerskool | 079 529 6071 |
| Mariepskop Pre-primer | 082 880 7069 |
| Perspective Training College | 082 787 4471 |
| Southern Cross Schools | 015 793 0590 |

EMERGENCY – HELP LINES

| | |
|---|------------------|
| After Hours Emergency Doctors | 084 770 1741 |
| Air Force Base Hoedspruit | 015 799 2911 |
| Africa Safe -T | 087 095 8911 |
| HSP Ambulance | 015 383 0650/ |
| Med OSH Consulting | 078 672 0215 |
| Alcoholics Narcotics Anonymous | 082 258 4602 |
| Ambulance Airforce Base | 015 799 2065 |
| Ambulance Services Limpopo | 015 793 1581 |
| Ambulance Tintswaloo Hospital | 101 77 |
| Ambulance Services Swift | 060 528 2784 |
| Farm watch/ Plaaswag | 072 310 0032 |
| Fire Brigade AFB | 015 799 2172 |
| Fire Brigade Maruleng | 015 793 0536 |
| Fire Dpt Hoedspruit | 015 793 0728 |
| GKEPF Greater Kruger Enviro Protection Foundation | 065 743 2224 |
| Hoedspruit Clinic | 015 793 2342 |
| Hoedspruit Medical Rescue | 072 170 0864 |
| Hoedspruit Paws | 078 431 3161 |
| Hoedspruit Town Watc | 072 812 2172 |
| | 082 683 2835 |
| Hoedspruit Farm Watch | 072 310 0032 |
| Hospital Hoedspruit Pvt Hospital | 012 000 1111/2/3 |
| Hospital Emergency | 012 000 1254 |
| Hospital Nelspruit Mediclinic | 013 759 0645 |
| Hospital Tintswalo | 013 795 5000 |
| Hospital Sekororo Gvt-The Oaks | 015 383 9400 |
| Hospital Tzaneen Mediclinic | 015 305 8536 |
| Maruleng Municipality | 015 793 2409 |
| Medical Rescue | 072 170 0864 |
| Med Centre Emergency No | 084 770 1743 |
| Protrack | 015 793 2585 |
| SAPS Station Commander | 082 565 8253 |
| SAPS General | 101 111 |
| SAPS | 015 799 4000 |
| SPCA Phalaborwa | 071 519 7044 |
| Victim Support Unit | 082 940 0651 |

MEDICAL & VETERINARY SERVICES

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|
| Counselling Ronelle Joubert | 082 787 4471 |
| Dr J Blignaut | 083 410 0190 |
| Dr Ndlovo | 015 793 1257 |
| Dr A Polley | 015 793 0606 |
| Dr Shivambu | 082 465 8114 |
| Dr van Berge | 079 531 6582 |
| Dr Dubrowski | 081 061 0313 |
| Dr Kirstein | 071 746 1059 |
| Dr du Toit (Pediatrician) | 082 655 4738 |
| Lowveld Dental (Dentist) | 073 597 5174 |
| Dr L van Vuren (Dentist) | 015 793 0845 |
| Hlokomela | 087 550 0387 |
| Hoedspruit Clinic | 015 793 9000 |
| Hoeds Wildlife Est Pharmacy | 015 793 1427 |
| Lowveld Pharmacy | 072 404 6142 |
| HSP Pharmacy | 015 793 2318 |
| J Coetzee (Clinical Psychologist) | 015 781 0012 |
| Kyk Oogkundiges (Optometrist) | 060 548 5387 |
| ProVet Veterinary Hospital | 015 793 0797 |
| Wildlife Safety Solutions | 073 934 6156 |

REAL ESTATE & PROPERTY

| | |
|------------|--------------|
| Century 21 | 015 793 1534 |
|------------|--------------|

TOURISM & THINGS TO DO

| | |
|--------------------------|--------------|
| Eastgate Airport | 015 793 3681 |
| Harvest House Restaurant | 065 574 8374 |
| K2C Biosphere Region | 015 817 1838 |
| Skyway Trails | 013 737 8374 |

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A co-ed Pre-school, Preparatory School and College nestled in Hoedspruit, South Africa

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Overview

May 2025 brings a shift in energy as stability and growth take centre stage. With Taurus season grounding us in practical matters and Gemini season sparking curiosity and movement, this is a month for building foundations and embracing new ideas. The Full Moon in Scorpio on May 12 intensifies emotions, encouraging deep transformation, while the New Moon in Gemini on May 27 inspires fresh connections and intellectual pursuits. Relationships, finances, and career paths may see significant shifts - stay adaptable and embrace change with a steady heart. May 2025 is a time for balance - between stability and change, grounding and movement. Stay adaptable and embrace the opportunities ahead!

Pisces (February 19 - March 20)

May encourages deep communication and learning. Whether through travel or new studies, you're expanding horizons. The New Moon inspires fresh creative projects and exciting new connections.

Aries (March 21 - April 19)

May pushes you to slow down and focus on stability. Financial planning and career growth take priority. Mid-month, emotional depth in relationships may require you to open up more.

Taurus (April 20 - May 20)

It's your season, Taurus! Step into the spotlight and take charge of personal and professional goals. The Full Moon in Scorpio brings revelations—embrace the changes ahead.

Gemini (May 21 - June 20)

A month of introspection followed by a surge of energy as Gemini season begins. You're feeling more social and inspired—perfect for launching new ideas or making bold connections.

Cancer (June 21 - July 22)

May is all about strengthening friendships and community ties. The Full Moon highlights your deeper emotions—trust your intuition when making important decisions.

Leo (July 23 - August 22)

Career matters come into focus, with new opportunities knocking at your door. The New Moon brings fresh networking possibilities—don't shy away from stepping up.

Lady Godiva and your May 2025 horoscopes



Virgo (August 23 - September 22)

Adventure and expansion call your name this month. Whether through travel or learning, embrace new experiences. The Full Moon pushes you to let go of past doubts and trust in transformation.

Libra (September 23 - October 22)

Emotional depth is your theme for May. Relationships take a serious turn, and financial matters require attention. Mid-month clarity helps you make crucial long-term choices.

Scorpio (October 23 - November 21)

The Full Moon in your sign intensifies everything—expect revelations in love, career, or personal growth. Let go of what no longer serves you and embrace a fresh perspective.

Sagittarius (November 22 - December 21)

Work-life balance is key this month. Health and wellness take priority, so be mindful of stress levels. The New Moon in Gemini sparks excitement in partnerships and collaborations.

Capricorn (December 22 - January 19)

Creativity and passion take centre stage—lean into hobbies or projects that inspire you. Romance could bring surprises, so keep an open heart and mind.

Aquarius (January 20 - February 18)

Home and family matters need your attention. The Full Moon may bring emotional revelations, while the latter half of the month offers fresh social and networking opportunities.

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The Age of Entitlement: Why Today's Generation Struggles with Independence

AI perspective 'correspondent'

In the ever-evolving landscape of human history, each generation finds itself under scrutiny. The so-called "Greatest Generation" faced the trials of war and economic depression with grit and resilience. Baby Boomers grew up in an era of industrial and technological expansion. Generation X navigated a world of shifting cultural norms and the rise of digitalization. And then we arrive at today's younger generations – the Millennials and Generation Z - who are often criticized as lazy, entitled, and incapable of self-sufficiency. But is this judgment fair, or are we simply seeing the natural evolution of society through a different lens?

The Rise of Comfort and Convenience

One undeniable shift in modern society is the level of comfort and convenience that technological advancements have provided. Unlike past generations who had to physically work hard for information, solutions, or even their daily meals, today's youth have the world at their fingertips. With a tap on a screen, food arrives at the doorstep, answers appear in milliseconds, and services are outsourced effortlessly. While efficiency has improved, it has also fostered a culture where patience, perseverance, and problem-solving are undervalued.

Instant gratification has become the norm. If something is difficult or takes too long, frustration sets in quickly. This ease of access has undoubtedly led to a decrease in certain practical skills. Many young adults struggle with basic home maintenance, cooking, or even face-to-face conflict resolution - all

skills that were once essential for daily survival. But can we truly blame them for adapting to a world that no longer demands these abilities?

Parenting and Overprotection

Another key factor in the perceived entitlement of younger generations lies in parenting styles. Gone are the days when children were left to fend for themselves outdoors, experiencing trial and error as they navigated life. The modern approach to parenting often involves shielding children from hardships, ensuring their happiness at all costs, and advocating for their every need. While this comes from a place of love, it has inadvertently created young adults who struggle with resilience.

Many parents today micromanage their children's lives, stepping in at the first sign of struggle - whether it be in academics, sports, or social situations. As a result, when these individuals reach adulthood, they often lack the ability to problem-solve on their own. They expect handholding in the workplace, struggle with constructive criticism, and are quick to label challenges as unfair rather than opportunities for growth.

The Social Media Effect

Social media has revolutionized communication, but it has also significantly influenced the mindset of younger generations. Constant exposure to curated lives on platforms like Instagram and TikTok fosters unrealistic expectations. Many young people see influencers living lavish lifestyles and assume success should come easily, without witnessing the hard work behind the scenes.

Furthermore, social media has created an echo chamber of validation. When people receive instant praise for minimal effort, it reinforces the idea that they are exceptional without necessarily having earned it. The desire for immediate recognition over long-term perseverance leads to a workforce that craves quick promotions, avoids criticism, and expects rewards simply for participation.

A Shift in Work Ethic

Past generations often took pride in their work, regardless of the job at hand. Hard work was synonymous with dignity and self-respect. Today, however, many younger individuals seek fulfilment and passion in their careers from the start, rather than viewing entry-level positions as stepping stones.

While seeking meaningful work is not inherently negative, it has led to an aversion to traditional forms of labour. There is a noticeable decline in young people pursuing trades, manual labour, and hands-on careers - fields that were once the backbone of economies. The perception that certain jobs are beneath them has fuelled the stereotype of laziness.

Additionally, the "quiet quitting" phenomenon - where employees do only the bare minimum required - reflects a shift in mindset. While older generations often accepted long hours and unquestioning loyalty to their employers, younger generations prioritize work-life balance, sometimes at the cost of work ethic.

Is the Criticism Entirely Justified?

Despite these criticisms, it is important to consider the unique challenges that Millennials and Generation Z face. Economic instability, student debt, and skyrocketing housing prices have made it increasingly difficult for young people to achieve the same milestones their parents did. In previous generations, hard work often resulted in financial stability, home ownership, and a clear career trajectory. Today, many young adults work just as hard - if not harder - yet struggle to see the same rewards.

Moreover, younger generations have developed strengths that their predecessors lacked. They are more socially aware, prioritizing inclusivity, mental health, and environmental responsibility. They embrace technological advancements, navigate global issues with a broader perspective, and challenge outdated societal norms.

Conclusion: A Generation in Transition

Rather than labelling Millennials and Generation Z as lazy and entitled, perhaps we should recognize that they are products of a rapidly changing world. Yes, some aspects of independence and work ethic may seem to have diminished, but at the same time, new values have emerged. They are not necessarily worse off—just different.

Ultimately, every generation has its strengths and weaknesses. Instead of lamenting the perceived decline of independence, society should focus on bridging the gap, fostering resilience, and encouraging a balance between modern convenience and traditional values. After all, history shows us that each generation is simply a reflection of the world in which it was raised.

Credit: ChatGPT 4o mini - chatgpt.com

My 5 Sent

Upa Bobbili

Die som van die mens, was 'n gevolgtrekking na 'n gesprek tussen 'n paar van ons manne na ons pas 'n groot projek klaar gemaak het. Van die eerste fondasie wat gegrou was tot die laaste plantjie wat geplant was, het alles bymekaar gekom vir 'n pragtige eindprodukt. Hartseer gedeelte is die manne wat fondasies gegrou het, geen eer kry vir hulle harde werk nie. Daai manne wat op en af gehardloop het met kruivaens vol sement vir die fondasies, kry geen eer nie. Die een met die glimlag by ontvangs hoor die komplimente, wat dan antwoord "ONS het hard gewerk om alles so te kry." Ons mis die som van die mens, want die eer gaan na die glimlag, en nie die eelte op die hande nie.

Niemand is 'n eiland nie. Ons is almal afhanklik van mekaar. Niemand kan leef sonder infrastruktuur van die mens nie. Ons

het die kruiva manne nodig, ons het boer nodig, ons het die rak pakker nodig, ons het die argitek nodig, ons het beslis die leraar nodig, en so kan ek aan gaan tot in diep in die toekoms in. Ons het beslis nie gierigheid nodig nie, dit los 'n skeiding tussen mense Ryk en Arm en die middelklas moet almal dra. Ons het nie die eie ek nodig nie, dit los ons met boelies en luigatte wat eintlik niks doen nie. Lee blikke maak die meeste geras.

Enige iets wat negatief is bring verdeeldheid. En dit is satan se speelplek. Nou of jy glo of nie, satan is almal se vyand. Ons Skepper se doel is dat elke mens die ander een sal raaksien, sonder jaloesie, sonder haat, sonder afguns, maar eerder met liefde, verdraagsaamheid en met geduld. Niemand is die selfde nie, dit is hoekom ons vinger afdrukke verskil. Maar almal se bloed is dieselfde kleur. Die een groot ding wat satan ingestel het is mense regte.

Ons moet onthou die fondasie gooier van jou bou projek sien nooit of selde die einde produk. Of kry die geleentheid om daar te kom kuier. So wees verdraagsaam met hom,

want die standvastigheid van jou gebou lê in sy hande.


Die som van die mens is om almal dieselfde te sien. Wees ryk, dit is ok, wees arm, dit is ok, wees die middelklas dit is ok. Maar weet en verstaan, ons kan nie sonder mekaar nie. Elke persoon speel 'n rol in jou lewe. Die rak pakker pak die rakke presies dieselfde of jy ryk of arm is. Glo dit of nie, die prys is ook dieselfde. Nog 'n stukkie inligting wat almal vergeet, jy word gebore en jy gaan dood, punt. Hoe jy lewe is wat saak maak, en bepaal die mens wat jy is, en hoe jy gaan onthou word.

Dit is nie lank nie dan is dit Moedersdag, eer jou moeder. Dra haar op die hande en bederf haar. Klop jou pa op die skouer en sê knap gedaan ou grote. Want dit het twee van hulle gevat om jou in die lewe te bring. Al wat uit die hemel uit val, is seëninge, reën en die lieflike sonstrale. Die res is samewerking tussen mense, geslagte, rasse en kulture. Niks en niemand is van selfspokend nie.

Vrede in die wêreld is die waarde van die som van die mens. Groete.

SUDOKU ANSWERS









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