

WWF-SA, Sanlam launch Journey of Water campaign

WWF-South Africa, through a partnership with Sanlam, launched its Journey of Water campaign this week. The campaign aims to connect urban water users to their water sources, which are often remote.



Research by WWF-SA, together with the Council For Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), recently mapped out South Africa's water source areas - the "crown jewels" of the country's water resources. This study revealed that only 8% of SA's landscape delivers more than half of its surface water. These water production areas are high-rainfall environments that are essentially "water factories" which supply water to the majority of the country, including its major economic hubs.

These areas not only supply the catchments and dams downstream, but also provide water to communities in and around towns and cities, the farming sector and industries that help drive the economy.

Journey of Water walk

A highlight of the campaign is the Journey of Water walk, starting on 4 November 2013. WWF and Sanlam will take a group of celebrities and the media on an actual journey of water from one of the strategic water source areas, the Boland Mountains (the headwaters of the Berg, Breede and Eerste rivers) - into Cape Town. This is an 85km, four-day journey. The campaign will also include in-store activations (in more than 50 restaurants), a water installation at the Kirstenbosch National Botanical Garden, as well as the launch of an easy-to-use interactive electronic tool which enables consumers to locate the source of their water directly. So whether you are in Soweto, Springbok or Sasolburg this tool will show you, at a touch of a button, which mountains and rivers provide the water that comes out of your tap. The mobi site (www.journeyofwater.co.za) will also look at the threats facing your water source as well as what you can do at home to reduce your water footprint.

Christine Colvin, senior manager of the WWF Freshwater Programme says: "We want to empower South Africans with information about their water sources so that they can contribute towards securing this critical part of our natural heritage. Many South Africans, especially those living in urban areas, do not understand or appreciate where the water that flows from their taps really comes from and the key role healthy natural catchments play in providing it."

With water demand destined to rise and water supplies becoming less predictable due to climate change, invasive alien vegetation and human activities such as mining, these fragile ecosystems are bound to be under even more pressure in future.

Water, the lifeblood of every economy

Commenting on the Journey of Water campaign and Sanlam's involvement, Francois Adriaan, head of Sanlam Group Corporate Affairs, said Sanlam believed the campaign would go a long way to raising much needed awareness about the importance of water conservation: "At Sanlam we realise that water is the lifeblood of every economy and that we need to partner with and support the WWF in our efforts to conserve water and rally fellow corporates and the rest of the nation to do the same. For us, this is an imperative which we believe will contribute to the sustainability of our business and the development of the communities in which we do business and the country as a whole. We are excited to be part of the Journey of Water campaign and look forward to the activities ahead and well beyond this campaign. We might not change everyone's behaviour straight away, but might just have a significant enough impact to make more people think before they make use of this precious resource. Ghandi's words resonate: 'Be the change that you wish to see in the world'".

Everyone can do something, adds Colvin, "Reduce your direct and indirect consumption of water and protect your water source areas. Ensure that a water secure South Africa is part of this generation's legacy."

For more information on the walk, the mobi-site, instore-activities and the installation, go to www.journeyofwater.co.za and www.wwf.org.za.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>