

Honour the earth during Earth Hour

When celebrating Earth Hour this year, WWF-South Africa is asking individuals and organisations to make a public promise to the earth by thinking about their choices around food, water and energy use, and understanding how these impact on the environment.



L to R: Dr Morné du Plessis (WWF-SA CEO) and Braam Malherbe (extreme conservationist)

Hundreds of 'How do you honour the Earth?' pledges have already been posted on www.wwf.org.za. The public can view the promises of other people on the website and share them on social media, with the intention of creating a crowd-sourced conversation about saving the environment.

"It is essential to remember that through our everyday consumer choices, and how we spend our money, we are actually voting for the products, services and organisations that strive to live up to an environmental mandate; Let's make choices that support our planet," says CEO of WWF South Africa, Dr Morné du Plessis. "Since I estimate that I face more than 50 decisions daily that relate to food, water and energy options, I have pledged to honour the earth by thinking twice before choosing."

Leave a legacy

This year's Earth Hour campaign culminates on Saturday, 29 March 2014 at 8:30pm, when South Africans join others around the world in turning off their lights for an hour as an act of symbolic unity. "Beyond switching off your lights, WWF SA urges you to make a promise to the earth and take action for the environment this year. The time is now. Together we can leave a legacy of flourishing ecosystems, healthy rivers, and abundant flora and wildlife," concludes Du Plessis.

"I believe if we each as individuals Do One Thing (#DOT) for the environment, we can collectively save our planet for future generations to enjoy," says extreme adventurer and conservationist, Braam Malherbe, who is personally helping to drive the campaign as an Earth Hour supporter.

"It is doing the small things like saving water, using alternative energy, recycling your waste, and making sustainable, ethical product choices, that will help the earth survive the devastating impact of man. To honour the earth I have pledged to reduce re-use and recycle waste and to educate others to do the same," Malherbe says.

City challenge

In addition to the Honour the Earth campaign, six South African municipalities have competed in the international Earth Hour City Challenge for sustainable city management. Cape Town and Durban were named finalists and Cape Town was selected as South Africa's Earth Hour Capital, competing against 32 other finalists from around the world. The winner will be announced in Vancouver prior to Earth Hour.

Both Cape Town and Durban are also still in the running for the international social media We Love Cities campaign which asks citizens to vote for their favourite sustainable city.

Also, the local Restore the Roodeberg campaign, which aims to buy a crucial piece of land for incorporation into the Table

Mountain National Park, has been selected as one of ten global projects as part of Earth Hour Blue using crowd-sourcing to raise funds for a worthwhile environmental cause. The campaign needs to raise R7,2m to buy this land which is currently in private hands.

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