



WESSA's Centenary

Celebrate a Legacy of Impact, and Create a Future of Sustainability

Date

4 October 2025



The start of a Legacy



WESSA's 100-year journey starts before 1926 – with citizens actively and voluntarily taking small actions for their local and national environment.

WESSA's relevance and necessity over 100 years is underpinned by our ability to be present in South African communities, to understand contextual threats and challenges to our biodiversity, and to adapt our strategies to respond to these challenges while staying true to our founding principle: enabling *People to Care for the Earth*.

WESSA's history dates back to 1883 and was only formalised as an association in 1926. This formalisation was necessary for WESSA members to change the future of conservation in South Africa through the proclamation of the Kruger National Park.

WESSA's resilience is rooted in our ability to connect people to their local natural heritage and enabling them to become stewards of their environment.



A journey through WESSA's Legacy



1926

Successful campaign for KNP proclamation

1931

Establishment of Addo Elephant Park

1948

Founder member of IUCN

1952

Twinstreams initiated – one of the first Environmental Education centres in Africa

1972

Lead campaign to incorporate Eastern Shores into GSLWP

1976

uMngeni Valley Education project initiated

1985

Pioneered the Friends Group community conservation concept

2006

National survey of the municipal protected area estate

2003

Initiated FEE Eco-Schools Programme

2001

Implementor of international Blue Flag Programme in South Africa

1980

First environmental strategy for SA developed – first NGO in the world to do so

1996

Custodian of the Twinstreams environmental education Centre

1989

Bushpigs Education Centre is established

2010

Founder member of the Centre for Environmental Rights

2013

Major partner in the SANBI Groen Sebenza programme

2013

Partnered with DFFE Youth Environmental Services Programme

2014

Implementor of UNESCO's Regional Environmental Education Programme over SADC

2016

Partnered with NDT for sustainable coastal tourism

2018

WESSA partners with Anglo American to open Sishen Education Centre

2017

Initiated youth environmental advocacy and ecosystems restoration through FEE's YRE and LEAF programmes

2017

Launch of Green Coast Programme

2016

Implementor of international Green Key Programme in South Africa

2016

Expansion of youth sustainability training across Africa

2019

uMngeni Valley proclaimed as Nature Reserve

2019

EnviroKids turns 40

2022

Reimagination of WESSA's Mission focus to Educate, Advocate,

2023

Eco-Schools Programme 20th anniversary & expansion into SADC region

2023

Hosted the international EEASA Conference

2023

Cofounder of the Environmental NGO Alliance

2025

Developed the Green Jobs for Youth Programme to invest in the future of the next generation of environmentally conscious leaders in all fields.

Impact Initiatives



1

Launch the WESSA Centenary Journey (October 2025)

- Launch at 2025 Blue Flag/ Green Coast Awards
- In partnership with Ford Wildlife Foundation



2

WESSA Life in Action

WESSA and partners nationwide drive impactful environment and conservation projects including skills volunteering, collaborative action, and initiatives from Green Key hotels to Green Rising land rehabilitation. 100 trees planted across the country.



3

100km FNB-WESSA Ultra for the Environment

A nature-based triathlon where individuals and relays swim, cycle, and run from Midmar Dam to uMngeni Valley Nature Reserve, raising funds for conservation with participation from professional athletes and personalities.



Impact Initiatives...continued

100 Futures for climate action, renewable energy and youth employment

Building on its legacy of environmental capacity building, WESSA and partners will invest in the Green Jobs for Youth programme, securing 100 futures in climate, renewable energy and conservation- announced at the 100-year celebration in 2026 and launched in 2027.

4



5

Annual WESSA Awards

At WESSA's 100th AGM, we will honour the people and partners who have shaped our journey—staff and members past and present, as well as stakeholders, businesses and individuals whose milestones have advanced sustainability in South Africa. A total of 100 awards will be presented to recognise contributions from 1926 to 2026, and a commemorative coffee table book will showcase WESSA's conservation milestones and past awardees, celebrating a century of impact.



6

"100 reasons why People should Care for the Earth" Campaign

A year-long social media campaign sharing weekly stories, photos and videos of people celebrating nature and local initiatives, amplified through monthly wrap-ups and dedicated hashtags.



Impact Initiatives...continued



7

Regional WESSA 100 Events

100th year celebration national “roadshow”. WESSA Member-led events and actions celebrated across the country.



8

The promise of another 100 year of People Caring for Our Earth: WESSA Legacy Fund

At WESSA’s 100th celebration in 2026, the Impact Endowment Fund and Club 100 will be launched as a long-term financing mechanism, inviting donors and patrons to invest in a sustainable future for South Africa.



9



WESSA’s 100th Year Culmination Event

A two-day centenary event at uMngeni Valley Nature Reserve will feature a public ‘Music in the Valley’ festival, WESSA’s 100th AGM with invited partners and awardees, and an immersive journey through the past, present and future of WESSA. A WESSA time capsule to be buried at uMngeni Valley.





WESSA

PEOPLE CARING FOR THE EARTH

WESSA logos

White



Black



Copper



Charcoal



Blue



Green



White on opaque background



Black on opaque background





**Educate.
Advocate.
Act.**



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**Join us in shaping the next 100 years
of People Caring for the Earth**

Contact Adrienne West to find out more and
get involved.



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