

## *The Zandvlei Catchment Forum (ZCF)*

### **A City of Cape Town and a civil society initiative**

An estuary, Zandvlei has a delicate, cyclic and seasonal balance of sea to fresh water mix which determines its life supporting capabilities. The source of all the rivers of Zandvlei rise in the Table Mountain range. These are the Diep, Sand, Langevlei, Keyser, Westlake, Grootboschkloof, Prinkasteel and Spaanschemat Rivers.

The Diep River has the longest course, approximately 15 kilometers from source to Zandvlei. These rivers are the life blood of Zandvlei and have to be carefully monitored to make sure of the sustainability of Zandvlei.

Developments along water courses impact negatively as excessive nutrients (fertilizers) and sediments (top soil erosion) are deposited in Zandvlei in the high run off periods. Also affecting the rivers is the lack of road gutter and storm water drain sump cleaning. The silt ends up in the storm water drains which feeds into the rivers and then into Zandvlei. If damming and water extraction of these rivers is not carefully controlled, the inflow to Zandvlei can be seriously affected.

Initially called the Sand River Catchment Forum, an initiative of the Catchment, Stormwater and River Management Branch of the *Transport Roads and Stormwater department* of the City, started in 1998 to create an opportunity for civil society, local and provincial government to discuss and formulate management options for the Zandvlei catchment : -

- so as to enhance water quality,
- minimize flood risks and
- increase general amenity value of the drainage system and its immediate environs

In 2005 the activities of the Forum ceased because of changes in the City. As a result of a small group of Zandvlei Trust and Marina da Gama residents lobbying then Mayor Zille to emphasize the importance of communication between council and civil society to manage the catchment in a holistic way to enhance this precious natural resource and to hopefully avert an environmental disaster, it reconvened in 2007 with Martin Thompson of the City's Transport Roads & Stormwater Department as the Chair.

At a meeting in **2015**, those it was decided to rename the Sand River Catchment Forum to the **Zandvlei Catchment Forum** as it was felt this name would better describe the catchment area of concern. The Sand River is only one of the feeding rivers of the catchment flowing into Zandvlei.

Meetings of the Forum are convened through the offices of the City and are held quarterly. A variety of topics are discussed, presented, and reported on – all issues

affecting the flow of wwater in the catchment from their source to Zandvlei estuary – e.g. solid waste problems; dumping problems, run off from farms; businesses along the rivers etc.

Minutes can be accessed from the link to the archived ZVT website – [click here?](#)

Over the years the following organisations and businesses attend these meetings :

- City of Cape Town - Transport for Cape Town,
- City of Cape Town - Environmental Resource Management,
- City of Cape Town - Planning,
- City of Cape Town - Health,
- City of Cape Town - Parks,
- City of Cape Town - Utility Services,
- Table Mountain National Park,
- Friends of Constantia Valley Greenbelts,
- Friends of Tokai Plantations,
- Friends of Die Oog,
- Friends of the Kistenhof Wetlands,
- Friends of Park Island,
- Friends of the Keysers River,
- WESSA,
- Working for Wetlands, Western Cape,
- SANBI – Urban Conservation,
- Constantia Property Owners Asssocation,
- Constantia Hills Residents Association,
- Zandvlei Trust,
- Wetland Solutions,
- Constantia Wine Route - Buitenwerwaching Wine Estate.

*For any comment, suggestion or enquiry on ZCF contact [Gavin Lawson](#).*