

# Gondwana honoured at GIFTTS awards ceremony

Gondwana was recently selected among hundreds of applicants in the Preferred Hotel Group to be the honouree in the category of Conservation Well Being in the hotel group's Great Initiatives for Today's/Tomorrow's Society (GIFTTS) awards held in Delhi, India.



GIFTTS is one of Preferred Hotel Group's most important programmes, serving as a global platform to celebrate the great works of its member hotels in community service, philanthropy, and environmental well-being which entails green, sustainability-focused and/or energy-usage initiatives.

Gondwana was acknowledged for its 'Gondwana Goes Greener' programme, which includes the implementation of solar power, new communal staff transport, an enhanced recycling programme, establishment of a wormery for compost and organic gardens, as well as the reserve's ongoing conservation efforts for endangered flora and fauna species.

## Electric geysers replaced

Gondwana has replaced all of its electric geysers with solar assisted geysers in their staff village which houses 75 people. This has had a significant impact on the reserve's electricity consumption and the team is busy investigating how to roll it out across the lodge and the private residences. To lessen our carbon footprint, Gondwana has acquired a fuel efficient mini-bus that picks up all the staff and transports them throughout the reserve throughout the day and night. This has reduced CO2 emissions and decreased the amount of traffic on the reserve.

The reserve has implemented a recycling programme where organic and inorganic materials are separated. Inorganic materials are recycled and organic materials are used in the vermiculture project. All organic waste is given to the red wiggler worms that assist in the decomposition of the materials into nutrient rich compost. The compost is then diluted and used in the lodge and staff organic vegetable gardens as well as a newly developing plant nursery.

## Indigenous tree nursery

Gondwana's indigenous tree nursery is under way where all plants that are propagated are indigenous to the region. Staff are sourced from the surrounding communities to run the project. Once the trees are large enough, they will be transplanted to areas on the reserve where previous land use has altered the landscape. This project in return promotes habitat improvement for fauna, recovery of the veld, job creation, and wise waste management.

Gondwana supports some of the most critically endangered vegetation types in the world. These areas would have been under intensive threat if under an alternative land use. The reserve bi-annually monitors veld condition to determine the state of the fynbos. Much of the transformed areas have started to recover by wise veld management which includes the ongoing eradication of alien Wattle trees which helps to re-establish wetlands and natural vegetation.

## Honey production

Bees pollinate flowers and thus play a vital role in the persistence of fynbos. Gondwana has recognised this and has

invested in a sustainable honey production programme. This project ensures the availability of quality natural raw honey without compromising bee populations.

The reserve has invested in the reintroduction of species that have been on the verge of extinction including the endangered desert black rhinoceros, bontebok, cheetah and Cape Mountain Zebra. Gondwana has committed to and engaged with interested parties to contribute to these species' conservation and provide a meaningful population within South Africa's meta-population.

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