

MEDIA RELEASE - April 21, 2004

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KNP GIVES 40 TREES TO MATIKWANA HOSPITAL

The director of the Kruger National Park, Dr Bandile Mkhize formally handed over 40 indigenous trees to Matikwana Hospital in Mkhuhlu on April 21, 2004.

Dr Mkhize said during the presentation that conservation was everybody's responsibility and that the philosophy behind the presentation was to involve everyone in conservation as "SANParks is the custodian of conservation but the people of South Africa are the owners of it."

"As we plant these trees here today, homes for animals are created. Birds will come and build their nests and breed, insects like butterflies and bees and many other species will also find refuge in these trees. The soil will get more organic material from the leaves, erosion will be minimized and water retention improved.

"This is how the ecological circle goes," he explained.

People living and working within the boundaries of the Kruger National Park share a lot of things with the community of Mkhuhlu, most noteworthy being the Sabie River, which flows passed this town before it flows through the Park via Skukuza and Lower Sabie.

"If people in this area are not aware of conservation, they may pollute the river and this pollution will then be transported to the KNP. I thus call upon all of us to take conservation very seriously and to play an active role in the conservation efforts of our environment," Dr Mkhize said.

He concluded with a plea to regard the tree donation as a first step towards a meaningful joint conservation effort between the park and its neighbours.

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Matikwana Hospital manager Mr Richard Ubisi and KNP director Dr Bandile Mkhize plant a tree together after the KNP donated 40 indigenous trees to this hospital.

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