

Bergrivier Municipality

and



PRESS RELEASE

Background and information:

Local Action for Biodiversity (LAB) is a global urban biodiversity initiative launched by ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability in partnership with IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) in 2006. ICLEI Africa with its LAB Programme Team is formally mandated by ICLEI to manage LAB globally. LAB is supported by the “Global Partnership for Cities and Biodiversity” which is coordinated by the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

The overarching aim of LAB is to improve biodiversity management at the level of local government, in recognition of their enormous potential for contributing locally to conserving the global common good of ecosystems and biodiversity, towards sustainable development.

LAB's vision includes the strengthening of existing partnerships and developing new partnerships between local governments and relevant biodiversity organisations, United Nations programmes, NGOs, academic institutions, donors etc.

Bergrivier Biodiversity Report 2010

During June 2009 Bergrivier Municipality became the first B-municipality in South Africa to become a member of the LAB programme. With the assistance of this programme, the municipality developed a Bergrivier Biodiversity Report 2010. The report which will be made public in libraries in the Bergrivier municipal area and on the website, give an assessment of work done on biodiversity in the area as well as areas that need attention.

LAB International Workshop 1-4 February 2010 brings Mayors and technical experts from around the world to Bergrivier

The Bergrivier Mayoral Committee has approved the hosting of the LAB International workshop during February 2010 by the Municipality. The workshop has since the inception of the programme annually proved to be an invaluable opportunity for sharing and networking amongst the approximately 80 Local Action for Biodiversity

(LAB) participants from around the world. These local governments are brought face-to-face for several days to discuss everyday experiences, challenges, successes and ideas. Besides the technical and practical value of this event, relationships are also forged across the globe, not only between local governments, but with the experts and LAB team too. One of the greatest values of the workshop is the bringing together of the technical biodiversity staff with the Mayors and political leaders. This allows for both to understand the issues from each other's point of view, and also provides the time for the Mayors and political leaders to interact with their peers, while the technical staff delve into technical details. Experts from around the world will be present at the workshop to provide guidance and advice, and this is an unprecedented opportunity to ask questions and refine plans and approaches.

Climate change and the protection of our resources for future generations:

The workshop will consist of 3 full days, including a site visit which will take half a day.

The program will consist of expert speakers, and will include the LAB team and experts in the fields of climate change, communication, education and public awareness (CEPA), as well as biodiversity planning, etc. Each local government will also get the chance to present on their work. Besides the presentations, there will be a strong focus on interactive discussions surrounding the LAB deliverables, as well as other pertinent biodiversity and related topics. There will also be a half day site visit to showcase one of the Bergrivier areas and will provide an opportunity for politicians and experts to discuss ideas and challenges around the site. The Mayors and political leaders will spend a lot of time with the rest of the delegates, but the group will split to allow Mayors to participate in their own sessions, and for the technical staff to interact around technical details.

Enquiries:

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