

THE HUMAN SPIRIT NEEDS PLACES WHERE
NATURE HAS NOT BEEN REARRANGED BY
THE HAND OF MANKIND"



TO APPLY TO BECOME AN AFFILIATED FRIENDS GROUP OR MEMBER OF WESSA CONTACT:
Tel: 031 201 3126 Email: wessamembers@wessa.co.za Website: www.wessa.org.za

BENEFITS & BASIC PRINCIPLES OF WESSA AFFILIATED FRIENDS GROUPS AND ORGANISATIONS

1. DEFINITION OF A WESSA AFFILIATED GROUP OR ORGANISATION

Friends Groups affiliated to WESSA encourage public participation in caring for the Earth. They are volunteers who band together to conserve, rehabilitate or prevent inappropriate developments in a natural or semi-natural area/environment or place of special interest. These areas need not be large formalised nature areas, but can be small non-formalised pockets of the terrestrial and/or aquatic (freshwater and marine) environment in various states of conservation worthiness. Friends Groups encourage local communities to become more involved with their local environment and take responsibility for its continued well-being. Friends Groups are guided by the Mission Statement, Policies and Position Statements of WESSA.

Independent, environment-based organisations with the same or similar aims as Friends Groups may become affiliate members of WESSA, thus strengthening the conservation movement. Groups caring for monuments, sites of historical, archaeological or cultural importance, and other similar, community-based initiatives may also apply to become affiliate members.

2. BENEFITS

History: Established in 1926, WESSA is one of South Africa's oldest membership-based environmental Non-Government Organisations (NGO) with years of experience and action behind it.

Marketing Materials: Friends Groups may use WESSA's name and logo on signboards and other materials such as letterheads and brochures.

Publicity: Friends Groups benefit from exposure through channels such as: newsletters; national publications; the WESSA website and various social media channels.

Fundraising: Affiliation with WESSA enhances the credentials of a Friends Group. By association, this increases the credibility of fundraising efforts.

Newsletters and Magazines: Friends Groups receive a copy of both '*Environment: People & Conservation in Africa*' magazine and *EnviroKids* magazine each quarter as well regular e-communications, newsletters and activity newsflashes.

WESSA Membership: Individual Friends Group members are automatically considered to be WESSA supporters and can register with WESSA to receive free newsflashes about events and activities. They also qualify for a special reduced rate if they wish to become full WESSA Members.

Events and Activities: Friends Groups receive e-mail newsflashes providing environmental updates and notification of events and activities in their area. Representatives of Friends Groups may attend WESSA regional functions at a reduced fee.

Handbook: A comprehensive Friends Groups Handbook is available to help in the setting up of new groups and provide guidance for existing ones

Volunteers: WESSA will encourage WESSA volunteers to assist with Friends Group projects.

Educational Resources: WESSA can provide access to a range of resources and support materials such as those published by Share-Net; Various books, magazines and newsletters; Environmental courses.

Networking & Capacity Building: Where possible, WESSA will provide capacity building and networking opportunities for Friends Groups.

Preferential Distribution of Funds: Under certain circumstances and for appropriate projects, opportunities may arise to work directly with a Friends Group, in which case funding would be preferentially sub-contracted to that Friends Group.

Advice and Support: WESSA has experience in contributing to environmental policies and legislation and, where possible, will assist with interpreting environmental legislation and offering legal advice via the Centre for Environmental Rights and other organisations within our network.

3. BASIC PRINCIPLES

- a. Friends Groups understand and are guided by the Mission Statement, Policies and Position Statements of WESSA.
- b. Friends Groups are encouraged to affiliate to WESSA and to use the WESSA logo alongside their own.
- c. Friends Groups shall have a constitution, approved by WESSA, giving the Friends Group a legal identity.
- d. Friends Groups may raise funds from the public in their own name if they comply with the Non-profit Organisations (NPO) Act. They may only raise funds in WESSA's name with prior permission from the WESSA. (Affiliation to WESSA and use of the WESSA logo does, by association, increase credibility of the Friends' fundraising efforts.)
- e. Friends Groups are involved in their chosen natural environment (or component parts, such as rare species) voluntarily and at their own risk.
- f. Friends Groups work with the agreement and under the guidance of the landowners / managing authorities of the particular area.
- g. Friends Groups should work towards the conservation of their natural environment and actively encourage the involvement of local communities in their work.
- h. Friends Groups welcome membership from any concerned member of the public.
- i. Friends Groups function using *Robert's Rules of Order* (See: <http://www.robertsrules.org/>)
- j. Friends Groups are financially independent. They must keep proper financial records. These records must be available for public scrutiny.
- k. Friends Groups may not institute or defend legal action in the name of WESSA, without prior sanction.
- l. WESSA supports Friends Groups as far as is reasonably possible.
- m. Friends Groups should stay in contact with their WESSA Region.
- n. Friends Groups should have a representative on the regional WESSA committee
- o. In order to report back to each other, share ideas and successes, as well as learn new skills, Friends Groups undertake to attend WESSA Regional Friends Groups events whenever possible.
- p. Friends Groups are encouraged to keep a log book of events and happenings.
- q. Friends Groups are encouraged to contribute to WESSA's monthly e-newsletters or any other news dissemination structure as requested by WESSA.
- r. Friends Groups registered in terms of the Non Profit Organisation Act (NPO) (No. 71 of 1997) shall abide by the conditions of the Act.

4. RELATIONSHIP WITH WESSA

Where possible, WESSA will help facilitate the relationship with the landowners and provide environmental expertise and other help/guidance.

WESSA shall keep a watching brief on Friends Groups activities and, if necessary, intervene tactfully where WESSA policies are not being adhered to.

WESSA shall also encourage and recognise successful or innovative Friends Groups projects, facilitate in making corporate funding links and will look to established Friends Groups as valuable sources of information and expertise on environmental matters.

WESSA shall also encourage and recognise successful or innovative Friends Groups projects, make corporate funding links and look to established Friends Groups as valuable sources of information and expertise on environmental matters.