

ROTARY LAUNCHES 7th AREA OF FOCUS

The Rotary Foundation Trustees and Rotary International Board of Directors have both unanimously approved adding a new area of focus: supporting the environment.

More than \$18 million in Foundation global grant funding has been allocated to environment-related projects over the past five years. Creating a distinct area of focus to support the environment will give Rotary members even more ways to bring about positive change in the world and increase our impact.

RI President Mark Maloney said that during his travels around the world as a Rotary senior leader he encountered many Rotary members and Rotoractors who advocated for the environment to be an area of focus.

"I believe strongly that our Rotary Foundation programs now have a valuable added dimension to our efforts," says, Maloney.

Foundation Trustee Chair Gary C.K. Huang said that with the global population reaching near eight billion, protecting the environment is increasingly important.

"It is time for us to use our collective resources to invest in a smart and efficient way to protecting our environment," says Huang. "We are qualified to take this initiative because we are a global group of problem solvers with diversified talents."

In 1990-91, RI President Paulo V.C. Costa made the environment one of his primary causes, creating the **Preserve Planet Earth** subcommittee, which looked at ways clubs and members could conduct environmental initiatives.

"We have finally caught up to Costa [his vision]," said Past RI President Ian H.S. Riseley, chair of the Environmental Issues task force, which championed the new area of focus.

"As a lifelong environmentalist, I'm delighted that our great organization has recognized that the environment is a worthy and appropriate destination for our project activity," says Riseley. "This is an exciting moment in Rotary history."

Supporting the environment becomes Rotary's seventh area of focus, which are categories of service activities supported by global grants. It joins peacebuilding and conflict prevention; disease prevention and treatment; water, sanitation, and hygiene; maternal and child health; basic education and literacy; and community economic development.

Grant applications for projects will be accepted beginning on 1 July 2021. Gifts and commitments from Rotarians and others will be sought to provide global grant support for the new area of focus

The goals of the Rotary PPE program are just as applicable today as then and we need to keep it simple

- Focus attention of all Rotarians on taking action to protect and preserve the planet;

- Increase the number of environmental service projects undertaken by Rotary clubs;
- Promote awareness among Rotarians and Rotary clubs of environmental issues; and
- Foster the image of Rotary clubs as dedicated to Preserving Planet Earth.

With the above in mind its time that clubs in our District 9400 start

Firstly do a status quo check of their town or city area regarding the environment which in turn dictate the way forward re project ideas

- Are there reserves, parks, green belts in trouble ie infrastructure collapse, no maintenance, too few green spaces etc
- Do you have endangered vegetation types\wildlife and their conservation status eg Magaliesberg Moot Valley Bushveld, Cape Vulture, Black Stork , Haenertsburg grasslands, Raffia palms Mtunzini
- What is the status of littering and rubbish dumping
- If you have a river, dam or beaches what is the level of water pollution and the source thereof eg non-functional sewage works
- Whats the status of alien invasive plant (AIP) in your area
- Air pollution – sources ie coal mines etc
- Is there poaching -snares, dogs and to what scale
- Are there groups cutting down trees for firewood in many cases syndicates involved and in protected areas

Now that we have the “**WHAT’S**” the issue, let’s look at **WHO** is involved in our town or part of the city

- Environmental organizations: Wildlife & environment Society of SA(WESSA) friends groups in areas like Pretoria, Polokwane, Dullstroom and Witbank
- WESSA branches: West Rand branch (Krugersdorp through to Roodepoort) Tshwane, Springs Nigel and Boksburg
- WESSA zones in Kempton park and Paul Roux
- Conservancies on outside of towns especially Gauteng, Magaliesberg and the Waterberg
- Is your club in or close to a UNESCO Biosphere reserve. 4 in our region
- Do we have Rotarians who are members of WESSA, Birdlife SA, Bot Soc, GRAA, Hon Rangers
- Also possible source of new members for Rotary
- Does your club have members belonging to Rotary enviro related action groups eg Rotary ESRAG or RAGES

For queries please contact:

John Wesson (Committee Chair) jwesson@wessanorth.co.za
 or Committee Members PDG Jankees Sligcher js77@mweb.co.za and
 IPDG Maurice Stander maurice@mcbrokers.co.za

In a follow up article we will highlight the types of projects that have been and are currently been run in our and other districts