

View over the Mondeor valley towards the Kliprivier Nature Reserve

# KUPRIVIERSBERG SUSTAINABILITY ASSOCIATION



**The Klipriviersberg Sustainability Association (KlipSA) is a community based organisation promoting a new approach to development in the southern areas of Johannesburg. Its aim is to protect, promote and enhance the value of the natural assets in Joburg south, particularly the Klipriviersberg Nature Reserve and surrounding hills, grasslands and wetlands.**

This general overview is the first in a series of articles on the vision and plans for Joburg South, and future ones will discuss specific projects to be undertaken by KlipSA.

Andrew Barker is the chairman of KlipSA, and his vision and philosophy for the association embraces a new approach, whereby investment and development are guided by biodiversity value. The fundamental premise of this approach is to use the area's natural resources as the basis for sustainable social and economic development.

The primary aim of the project is to address food security, job creation and economic growth to the south of the CBD, bringing employment opportunities to areas where it is most needed. Barker has mooted the idea of an "agri-tropolis", the creation of an urban agricultural hub over an extended area where organic and productive agricultural practices will stimulate a primary economy. Tourism, agri-tourism and eco-tourism, along with their associated economic value chains, are integral parts of the "agri-tropolis".

## Proposed projects

Below are a few of the projects which KlipSA wishes to implement, once funding becomes available (mainly from the private sector). Barker stresses

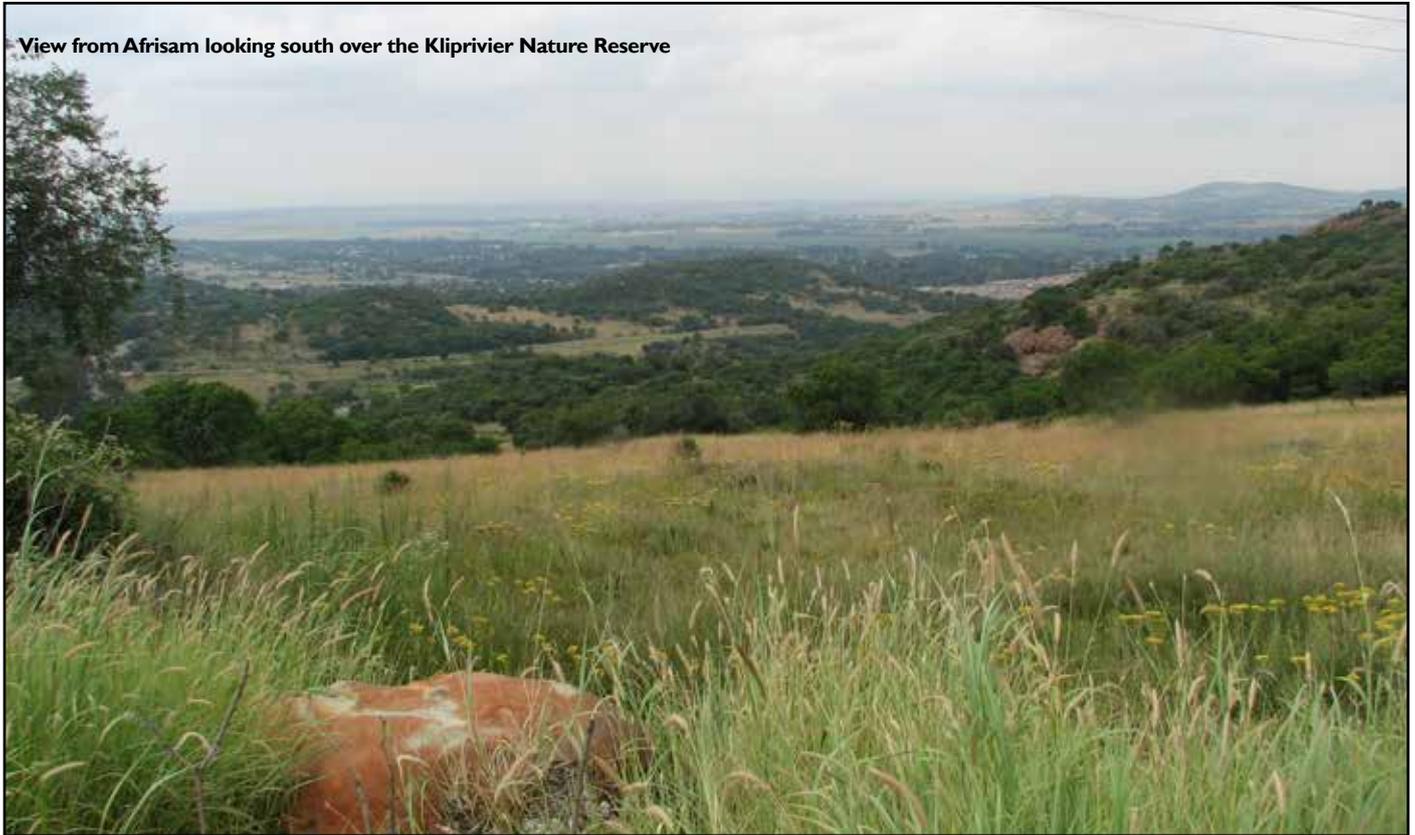
however that the work underway by KlipSA is a community, government and private sector venture. The idea is that all projects will eventually become self-funding, with KlipSA managing and co-ordinating them.

- promote investment in industries, services and infrastructure to attract labour for agricultural and tourism activities;
- prepare a management plan for the Kliprivier wetlands to improve the water quality and quantity in order to stimulate related economic development;
- develop an environmental education centre to provide educational resources and facilities for local communities and students. Discussions have been held with the University of Johannesburg (UJ) regarding the establishment of a "living laboratory" where research will be conducted by students;
- provide presentations and workshops to introduce sustainable business practices to local business communities and sustainable living styles to residential communities;
- guide investors and developers in the implementation of sustainable design, construction and management techniques ("green" building principles);
- development of a biodiversity corridor along Kliprivier Drive by planting and maintaining appropriate vegetation species;
- provide land and infrastructure to improve the efficiency of the City Deep freight logistics hub;
- reclamation of mine-impacted areas to provide economic and social opportunities and address environmental issues.

## KEEDZ

KEEDZ is the Klipriviersberg Economic and Ecosystem Development Zone. It is a development model for the southern areas of Johannesburg, focusing on the following:

View from Afrisam looking south over the Kliprivier Nature Reserve



- investment in sustainable economic and social development driven by environmental values and opportunities. This encompasses, amongst other things, protecting the value of biodiversity and urban land development through rehabilitation, re-use and recycling;
- the KEEDZ model is driven by biodiversity as the primary aim and focus, community needs such as food security, unemployment and poverty, and the application of biomimicry principles;
- involvement of local authorities to implement the plans; and
- a focus on upgrading, rehabilitating and re-using mine-impacted areas;

### KUBiC

One of the projects envisaged under the KEEDZ model is the Kliprivier Urban Biodiversity Corridor (KUBiC), which was launched a year ago. It is a development vision for the southern areas of Joburg, founded in protecting, promoting and adding value to natural assets through sustainable economic and social development. The project supports the “Corridors of Freedom” recently announced by the Executive Mayor of Johannesburg, Councilor Parks Tau, where the corridors are designed to change the urban settlement pattern of the city. The intention is to create a unique experience when entering and leaving Joburg by the creation of a major green corridor with added public and non-motorised transport facilities for pedestrians and cyclists.

There are three essential elements to KUBiC: environmental, economic and social. The environmental element is to:

- establish self-sustaining, attractive habitats adding to biodiversity;
- improve the linkages between fragmented formal, informal and natural open spaces;
- promote biodiversity in mixed use, developed urban areas;
- improve aesthetics along the corridor and into surrounding urban areas; and
- mitigate carbon emissions and air pollution.

The economic element is to:

- promote tourism and investment;
- improve the visual experience and impression of the south and along Kliprivier Drive;
- improve property value and increase investment opportunities;
- reduce costs of maintenance and urban management along the road side; and

- improve the business environment.

The social element is to:

- improve the living conditions of people residing next to Kliprivier Drive;
- improve the working conditions of people working along Kliprivier Drive;
- provide job creation and employment opportunities;
- improve accessibility and movement of people;
- reduce social problems and costs;
- improve open space areas for active and passive recreation; and
- strengthen the civic identity and pride of communities.

Current partners and sponsors of KUBiC include the City of Joburg, Joburg City Parks, Thaba Ya Batswana Eco Hotel & Spa, SOJO Business and Tourism, KlipSA, Water Wise, Kironia Environmental, Green Earth Landscaping and Howden Africa. The intention is to encourage companies, organisations, communities, schools and individuals to become involved.

### Biodiversity stewardship

A sustainability team has been established within KlipSA to work with developers and encourage them to take environmental aspects into account when planning projects. Says Barker: “We want them to build environmentally sound developments which will protect, promote and enhance the environment; we want them to design with care and look at the natural aspects of an area so that the buildings blend with the surrounds instead of ruining them. The use of biomimicry principles in design is an opportunity”.

### Profile

Andrew Barker is a registered Town and Regional Planner and has participated in many aspects of national, provincial and local urban planning processes. He has a thorough understanding of all spheres of government, private sector companies and communities in developing urban areas. He is also a Certified Value Engineer and has been involved in business management and organisational development since 1985. [isa](#)

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