

## Editors Column

We are pleased to bring you the latest edition of our newsletter. In this edition we feature issues on climate change in Zimbabwe, Black Crystal Commemorations on Tree Planting Day and World wetlands day and as usual we bring you up to date with the Environmental Legislation corner.

We welcome your comments and environmental contributions which you may kindly send to The Editors on:

infor@blackcrystal.co.zw

Thank you and happy reading!  
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Environmental Consultants  
Caring for the environment beyond today

Black Crystal Consulting is one of Zimbabwe's leading reputable companies offering a quality service in environmental and socioeconomic consultancy services. Black Crystal Consulting believes in ***caring for the environment beyond today*** to ensure that biodiversity is maintained and that natural resources are not depleted for the next generation.

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## Did you know?

Trees have been used to make airplanes. The famous Spruce Goose that is on display at Evergreen Aviation and Space museum in Oregon is made almost entirely of wood.

## Environment Legislation corner

Section 70 of the Environmental Management Act prohibits against waste disposal as follows:

1. No person shall dispose or discharge waste in a manner that causes environmental pollution or ill health to any person.
2. Any person who transport or operates a waste disposal site must obtain a licence from the Environmental Management Board for him to transport waste or operate the disposal site.
3. Any person whose activities generate waste shall employ measures essential to minimize the waste through treatment, reclamation and recycling.
4. Any person who contravenes any part of section 70 shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable to imprisonment for a period of not more than 5 years, or a fine or both imprisonment and the fine

## Commemorating the Tree Planting at Chikurubi prison primary school

Black Crystal is very aware of its corporate responsibilities and as such partnered with Unilever in the undertaking of a social and environment project to commemorate National Tree Planting Day at Chikurubi primary school on 29 November 2011, which also happened to be the school's speech and prize giving day.

The first Saturday of every December has been set aside as the National Tree Planting Day. Last year's commemorations were held under the theme "*Forests for people*" with the sausage tree/umuvee/mumve being the tree of the year. The tree is botanically known as *Kigelia Africana*.

The event was graced by the Deputy Commissioner of Prison services Mrs F Mupure, Officer Commanding of the Mashonaland region Mr Chisora, Officer in

Charge Chikurubi Farm Prison Mr V Machona and their accompanying Officers. The tree of the year was planted by the Deputy Commissioner of Prison services Mrs F Mupure

Unilever set up a Life Buoy information booth with nurses that were educating the children on cleanliness in light of the typhoid breakout. The nurses also gave out life buoy soap tablets, towels and satchels, donated by Unilever, to the prize winners and performers Black Crystal donated 20 trees 12; of these trees were fruit trees for the establishment of this school's orchard and 8 were indigenous trees including the tree of the year.

Overall, the tree planting event was very successful as many of the children are now aware of the National Tree Planting Day and they are looking forward to caring and learning about their new saplings.



*Mrs Mupure watering the Kigelia Africana*

### Did You Know?

Wetlands can also act as a buffer against cold temperatures.

**Africa Environment Day is on the 3<sup>rd</sup> March - so you can start planning your involvement in the celebrations!**

## World Wetlands Day 2<sup>nd</sup> February

A wetland is characterised as an area of ground that is saturated with water either permanently or periodically. Wetlands are an important feature of the landscape as they provide many benefits for people and animals. February 2 marks the date assigned to Wetlands and is known as World Wetlands Day (WWD). It commemorates the Convention of Wetlands that was signed on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of February 1971, in Ramsar, Iran. WWD was first celebrated in 1997 and now each year government agencies, non-governmental organizations, conservation organizations, and groups of citizens can help raise public awareness about the importance and value of wetlands. The theme for WWD day this year is 'WETLANDS AND TOURISM.' Wetlands are very fragile ecosystems that are protected from activities such as cultivation as they affect their delicate hydrology making them vulnerable to soil erosion and gully formation. Zimbabwe has its own legislation for the conservation and protection of wetlands from human mismanagement. The Environmental Management Act (CAP 20:27) and Statutory Instrument 7 of 2007 bans people from cultivating on wetlands.

### Benefits of Functioning Wetland System

Wetlands perform many important biological services such as:

Wetlands slow down water's momentum as it travels to the ocean or the river, and less momentum means less soil erosion.

Wetlands act as natural water purification systems.

Wetlands act as a natural barrier against floods.

Wetlands retain water underground during dry periods.

Wetlands offer a home to many organisms and they are sometimes referred to as nature's 'biological supermarkets' due to the high number of species that they support.

## Climate Change in Zimbabwe

Climate change is a significant and lasting change in the statistical distribution of [weather](#) patterns over [periods](#) ranging from decades to millions of years. In Zimbabwe climate change is already happening and this being shown through shifting rainfall patterns and increase in extreme events such as droughts, localised floods and higher temperatures.

### Possible effects of Climate Change in Zimbabwe

At an economic scale climate change is posing challenges for various sectors such as the agricultural one where increasing droughts may result in a decline in food production leading to food shortages

A reduction in rainfall and runoff, in some areas, is expected to affect the quality and quantity of water available for both domestic and industrial use.

The drop in annual rainfall will limit hydropower production significantly leading to the use of alternatives like coal which produce more pollution than hydropower.

With an increase in extreme temperatures disturbances in ecological systems are occurring, such as changes in the range of infective parasites can impact the occurrence of serious infectious disease, particularly those diseases that occur in warm areas and are spread by mosquitoes and other insects. These vector-borne diseases include malaria, dengue fever, yellow fever and encephalitis. Warm temperatures can increase air and water pollution which in turn harms human health.

### Climate Change Challenge Coming to Africa

In response to global Climate change the U.S. is sponsoring **Apps4Africa**: Climate Challenge (a series of three regional competitions to develop innovative, web-based and mobile technology solutions to

local climate change. **Apps for Africa** is allowing African countries including Zimbabwe to come together to solve the issue of global climate change challenges. The competition will be calling on Civil society groups, citizen, young innovators and entrepreneurs to find innovative technological solutions to everyday problems on issues ranging from transparency and governance to health and education For further information please visit [www.apps4africa.org](http://www.apps4africa.org),

## Calling for International Action to Save the Migratory Birds

Migratory birds are reportedly declining in numbers by the day. Many species like the Whinchat are in steep decline so much so that conservationists believe that the only way to save the birds is to call for international action. Tropical African countries including Ghana are taking the lead for this call. The Birdlife International Partnership hopes this plea will be heeded by all countries sharing these birds, and especially those that attended the tenth Conference of Parties of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals held from 20-25 November 2011 in Bergen, Norway. A resolution tabled at the meeting calls for broad-scale action to improve the conservation status of African-Eurasian migratory land birds which, if adopted, could help reduce the catastrophic decline in numbers of many species of birds which migrate long-distance between Europe and Africa. Dramatic land use changes in both continents (Africa and Europe) and illegal killing of the birds along the Mediterranean have been cited as the major dangers that will cause the extinction of the birds.