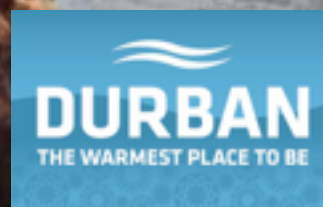


AUGUST 2018

# DURBAN GREEN CORRIDOR INTEGRATING OPEN SPACE MANAGEMENT, YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AND ECOTOURISM

Nompilo Buthelezi & Duncan Pritchard



# BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

This paper discusses the Durban Green Corridor initiatives to add value to and encourage the positive utilization of Durban's open space system. Open spaces play an integral part in maintaining the environmental integrity in most settlements (Costanza, Norton & Haskell, 1992). Durban has a range of open space that falls within catchments some of these open spaces are managed by eThekweni Municipality under the Biodiversity Planning Branch. The municipality uses D'MOSS to manage and maintain these space DMOSS is a system of open spaces, comprising 74671ha of land and water that incorporates areas of high biodiversity value linked together in a viable network of open spaces.

The open spaces within the uMngeni valley amongst others are characterized by invasive alien plants, illegal dumping, crime hot spots, high levels of unemployment in communities surrounding these open spaces and little recreational use of these spaces. Within the areas that fall under DMOSS only 10% of these areas are actively managed. This called for civil society and NGO partnerships to increase the percent of managed and maintained open spaces

## ABOUT DURBAN GREEN CORRIDOR

Durban Green Corridor (Green Corridors NPC) Is a Non-Profit organization initially established by eThekweni Municipality (The city of Durban) in 2010 and seeks to add value to open spaces along our river catchments.

Durban Green Corridor operates at 4 strategic levels:

- Institutional Development: Public, private, civil society partnership. Social enterprise business model
- Leisure & Tourism Economic Development: Economic infrastructure, product development and activation, sector value chain and enterprise development

- Community & Youth Development: Youth involvement (sports, recreation and arts linked to tourism), job creation, skills & organisational development, neighbourhood development through improved open spaces.
- Environmental Stewardship: Alien plant and pollution control, open space rehabilitation & improvement, environmental education, activating open spaces and creating value and awareness, area management partnership.



# Durban Green Corridors Project Footprint



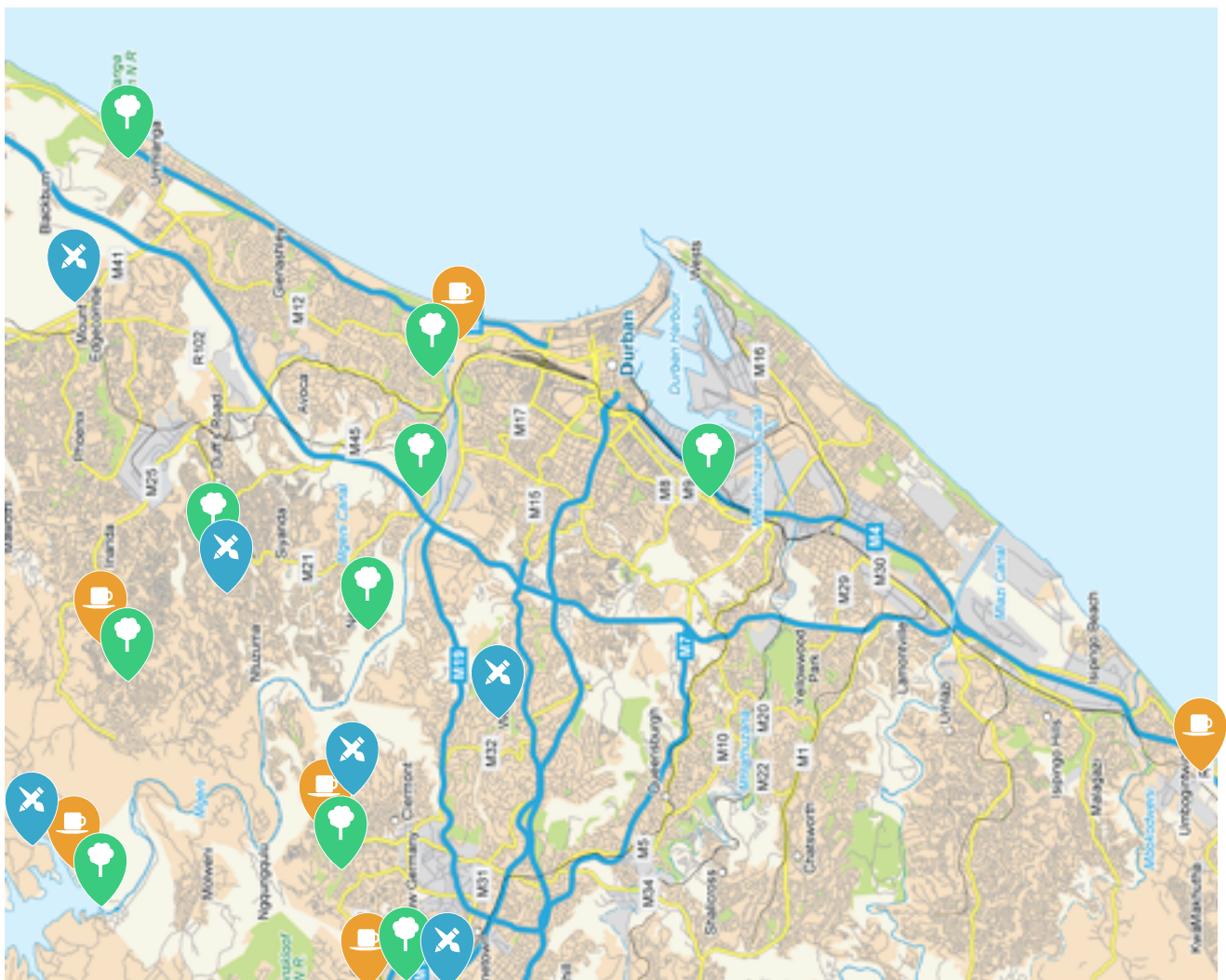
Green Spaces  
Program focuses on  
healthy  
environments and  
leveraging social  
benefits from open  
spaces



Ecotourism program  
focused on tourism  
product  
development,  
packaging,  
marketing and and  
business support



The GO!Durban  
Cycle Academy and  
active mobility  
programme is  
focused on youth  
development, sports  
development and  
active mobility using  
open spaces



# Durban Green Corridors Example Initiatives

## **Turning illegal dumping site into maintained pocket of parks.**

A pocket park (also known as a parkette, mini-park, vest-pocket park or vesty park) is a small park accessible to the general public. Pocket parks are frequently created on a single vacant building lot or on small, irregular pieces of land. They also may be created as a component of the public space requirement of large building projects.

Through interdepartmental partnership the driving force being the Sukuma Sakhe Forum. Durban Green Corridor is maintaining a series of five pocket parks around the metropolitan area.

## **Creating opportunities for community recreational space**

Beyond the pocket parks, other spaces cleared of invasive alien plants have been used by community member for agriculture and recreational park areas. These recreational parks are managed and maintained by the community members. Alien vegetation management also creates valuable income generating opportunities for community members and space for ecotourism activity. In addition to managing alien weeds in these spaces, DGC undertakes an active program of revegetating these parks with indigenous trees sourced from the local community.

## **Development of Go Durban Cycle Academy & Mobility Programme**

Participation in organised sport is widely recognised as a vehicle for positive youth development in preparation for adult life. In partnership with Go!Durban three Cycle Academies have been established with professional mountain bike coaching facilities. During the week, these facilities service local school children and service tourists over weekends

sites, all in areas where poverty is rife, This project constitutes a significant part of DGC's youth development mission. The most talented of the cyclists are nurtured and entered into mountain biking competitive events. The youth who enter the Bike Academy programme also benefit from academic support and nutrition programs

At the sites of the Cycle Academies, other sporting activities are also offered in organised fashion and these include canoeing, running, soccer and netball. The introduction of competitive participation has occurred recently and there has been investment in equipment which will allow for the introduction of other sporting codes in the future.

# Durban Green Corridors Example Initiatives

## **Litter Booms and Cleaning Initiatives**

Through a partnership with Durbanites Against Plastic Pollution Durban Green Corridor has engaged in a range of programs to address plastic pollution in river catchments. The project aims to empower more people and organizations to take action to stop plastic pollution and to showcase effective prevention and pollution control measures at individual, community and city-wide levels. Various initiatives including a series of trash booms have proven highly effective.

## **Development of Inanda Children's Wilderness Park**

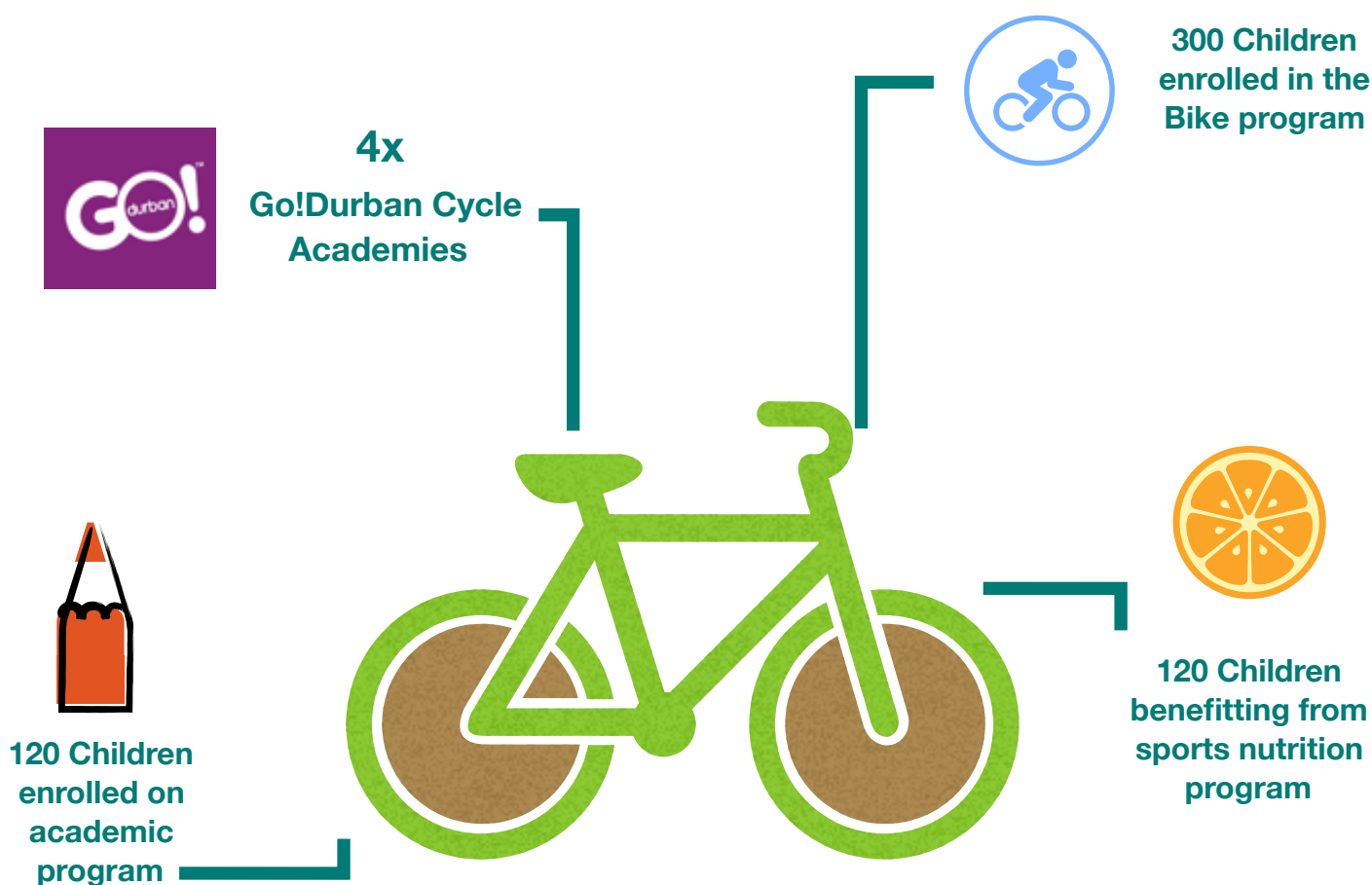
Children's Wilderness Areas are open spaces where "free play" is encouraged. The focus of DGC's pilot Children's Wilderness is around youth development through interaction with nature under a well-defined occupational therapy programs. The heart of the Inanda Children's Wilderness Park is to encourage youth development, community wellness and facilitate eco-tourism within the Inanda community. Based on the KinderWilnis concept in Bremen Germany, the Inanda Children's Wilderness Park is adapted to a South African context and designed to meet the developmental needs across the lifespan of communities.

## **Ecotourism Development Initiatives**

Creating economic incentives for protecting open spaces and indigenous fauna and flora is underpinned by DGC's ecotourism programme. The tourism programme creates a range of tourism routes and offerings including activities such as canoeing, mountain biking, hiking, bird watching, traditional Zulu cultural experiences as well as picnic and camping areas/facilities.

These tourism activities are led by local community guides which receive training and mentorship from Durban Green Corridor and support a wide network of tourism service providers. DGC has established a travel desk and strong marketing arm which links these rural tourism enterprises directly with the market and established mainstream operators.

# The Go!Durban Cycle Academy And Active Mobility Programme Impacts



Go!Durban cycle academy riders have been performing incredibly well on the racing circuit with regular podium finishes across all age groups against stiff competition!



# Ecotourism Development, Responsible Tourism and Marketing Programme Impacts



Serviced over 8000 tourists during the reporting period.  
Forecast 10 000 by end June 2018



Supporting 50+ SMME's and community based businesses

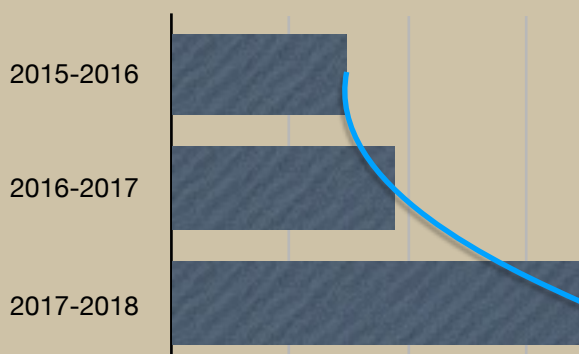


Our Responsible Tourism Network has grown to over 15 members, committed to responsible tourism and connecting formal & informal sectors



Over 50 000 website visits, a social media following of over 6000 people

DGC Tourism Revenue 2015-2018

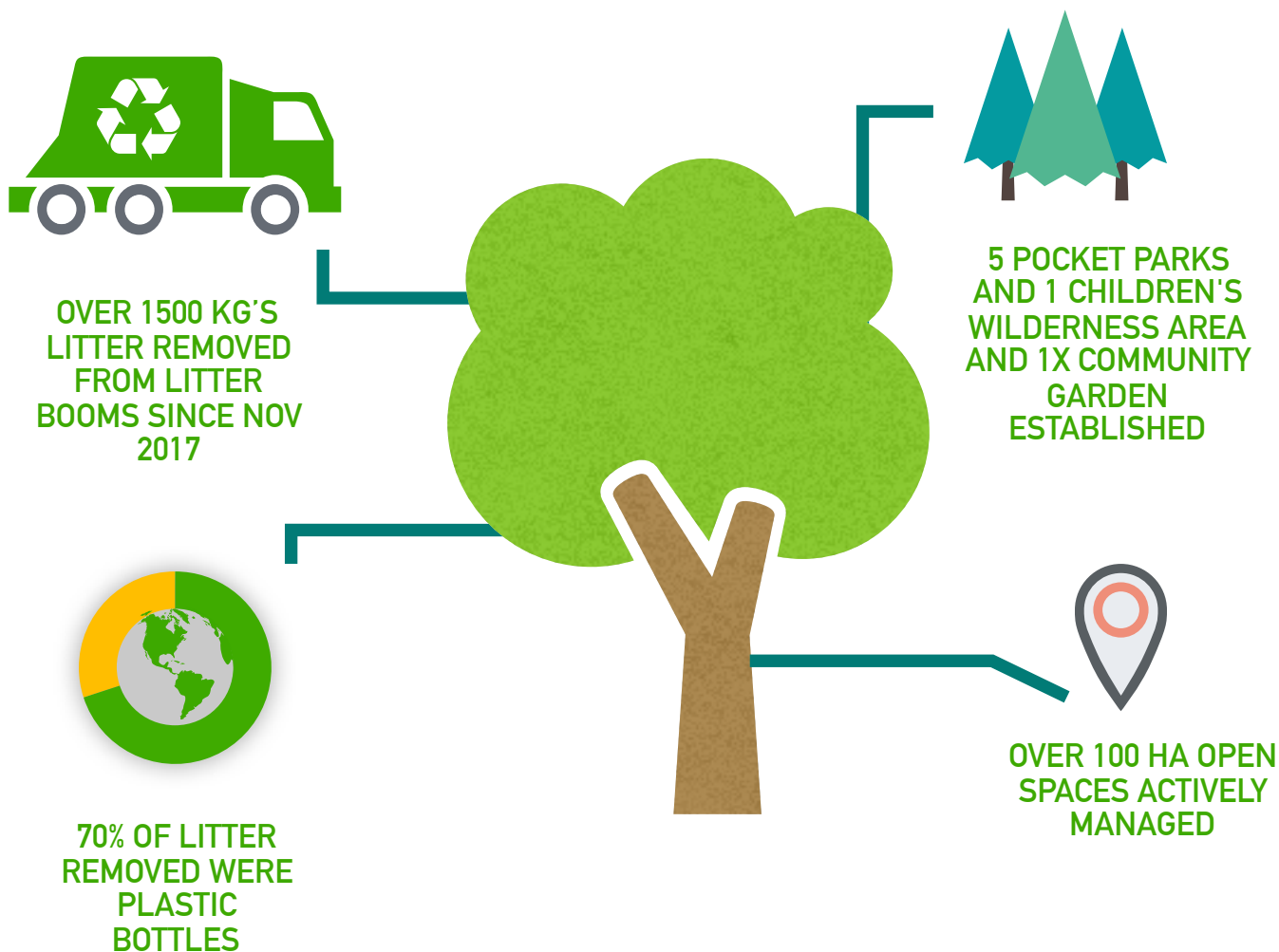


## Tourism Grow

They say it takes four years for a business to get off the ground and DGC's tourism operations is starting to see this effect. **Year on year growth since 2015 has exceeded 25%**



# Environmental Program Impacts



## Turning Weeds Into Cash

The Plant Based Raw Materials Value Chain project is a partnership with Dutch consortium to create industrial raw materials from alien plants

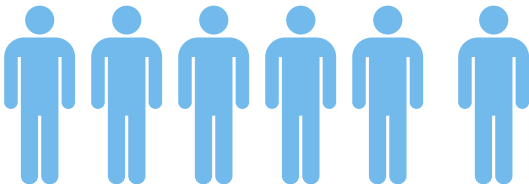
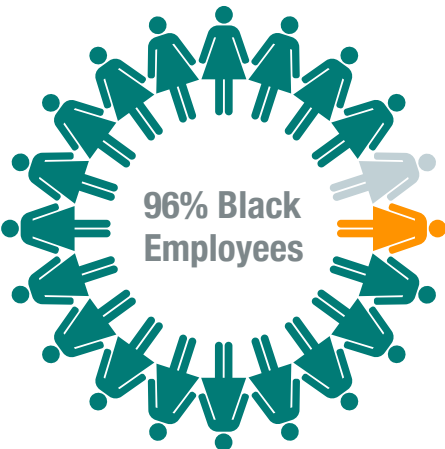




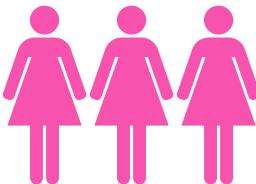


# EMPLOYMENT & JOB CREATION IMPACTS

175 people employed by Durban  
Green Corridors



Male  
65%



Female  
35%

75%

Unskilled or received on the job  
training