**FISH RIVER CANYON CLEAN-UP CAMPAIGN 2015 REPORT**

**AI/AIS RICHTERVELD TRANSFRONTIER PARK**

On 01 August 2001 former President Sam Nujoma of Namibia and former President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa signed international Treaty establishing the/Ai-/Ais-Richtersveld Transfrontier Park (ARTP) in Windhoek, Namibia. The two parks are separated by the Orange River which is the international boundary between the two countries and it spans over some 73 km. The signing of the Treaty gave rise to a Joint Management Board and various working groups whose responsibility is to advise on technical issues about projects within ARTP.

The ARTP spans some of the most spectacular arid and desert mountain scenery in southern Africa and features the world’s second largest canyon namely Fish River Canyon.

The fish River Canyon hiking season starts annually on the 1st day of May and stops on the 15th of September each and every year. This is a popular activity attract many people from different parts of the globe. They leave quite a lot of trash at the end of the season. It was for this reason that stakeholders in /ai/ais Richtersveld Transfrontier Park (ARTP) i.e. Ministry of Environment and Tourism (Namibia), Directorate of Transfrontier Conservation area (Department of Environmental Affairs in South Africa), Gondwana Nature Reserve, and Namibian Wildlife Resorts undertook a 6 day activity of cleaning up the Fish River Canyon. Additionally staff members from Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare as well as Ministry of Youth and Sports joined the operation.

A clean up took place from 14 to 19 September 2015, with a total number of 45 volunteers from the above mentioned agencies and Stakeholders. Namibia Breweries was the main event sponsorer, who sponsored T-shirts, assorted drinks, water purification tablets, meat and boerwors. Furthermore, we had additional sponsorships from Namdeb Diamond Corporation, who sponsored caps; Namplace who sponsored hats and Namibia Wildlife Resorts who sponsored accommodation and salads, in conclusion Godwana nature Reserve sponsored heavy duty recycling bags and spray paint for road marking inside the canyon.The year there three different groups because groups where divided into 10km, 20km and 60km categories, who entered the Canyon at different days and all groups came out on the same day. The volunteers carried all the items with them and were only relieved of their loads at exit points. This allowed us to have more time to clean thoroughly; covering inaccessible areas in the Canyon and at the same time enjoy the hike and scenery of the canyon. The total amount of waste collected was 100kg; the load of waste was carried by hands for 90km until the exit point at Ai/Ais Resort.

A local SME company was used for the design and printing of the T-shirts, to promote more job creation and poverty aliviation amongst the previously disadvantaged groups. There were no recordings of incidents, injuries or fatalities during the 2015 Fish River Canyon clean-up Campaign, which made the event a huge success. Organized

Collection of photos of the day.







