



Khomas Environmental Education Programme (KEEP)

QUARTERLY UPDATE
January – March 2018



With a focus on school groups, the GCF Khomas Environmental Education Programme (KEEP) is most busy during term time. From previous experience, the year often starts off rather slow while everyone is getting back into a routine of school/work-life-balance. 2018 started off well with our first group joining us in the field just two weeks after we all returned to the office from a well-deserved break over the festive season. However, some changes to this year's school calendar in Namibia have resulted in a fewer bookings as compared to last year. Despite this challenge, we still managed to host a total of 568 students from five schools between mid-January and mid-March.



While our calendar is filling up now, we still have a few open spots left in the second term and we are also taking bookings for groups during the upcoming holidays. If you know of any group that might be interested in joining us, please get in touch.

Early in the new year we expected to find the dam in Daan Viljoen Game Reserve, the KEEP field site, full of water and to see all the creatures that come with the rain. Unfortunately, we found the dam drying up and for a while, we worried what might happen to the local animals and plant life. However, we noticed the wildebeest started having offspring and that one of the giraffe is heavily pregnant. These are both considered signs for good rains, as animals know so much more about nature and their environment than we do. While we will keep a look-out for a gangly baby giraffe on our upcoming field days, we might need to think about a name for the baby. Any ideas?

As always, no two field days are the same. We have experienced many amazing sights this year already including cobras, a grass snake, tortoises, stick insects, leopard tracks and poop, and even a buzzing bee hive.

In January, we also hosted a group of delegates on a field day who attended the international Pathways Conference in Windhoek. Walking through the bush with a group of representatives from different conservation organisations was daunting at first, but it was a great opportunity for our KEEP team to share ideas and experiences as well as brainstorm ways to tackle challenges we face while implementing all different aspects of the programme. One thing that stuck out particularly during discussions was that our challenges are not unique – we all face similar challenges when working with young students and their teachers. So good to know and we had some very encouraging and useful discussions exchanging experiences.





Another highlight for us was a GCF planning day that was organised early in the new year. This gave all of us at GCF an opportunity to catch up, learn about everything that is going on in the organisation and ensure we are all working for a common goal – to save giraffe in the wild.

Collaborating with partners is at the core of GCF's values. While our colleagues at the Namib Desert Environmental Education Trust (NaDEET) helped us develop KEEP initially, we could now repay the favour. GCF supported and funded the latest issues of NaDEET's Newsletter, the 'Bush Telegraph', which is dedicated to giraffe and their conservation. We did not only provide content and cover printing and postage costs, we also physically assisted with packing and distributing 15,000 copies of the 'Bush Telegraph' to different schools and organisations throughout Namibia. We will continue to hand out copies together with our own workbook to schools this year.



KEEP also went international at the beginning of 2018 – well sort of ... The workbook was specifically developed to be used during our field days at Daan Viljoen Game Reserve in Namibia, however, we have received a lot of positive feedback and interest from other organisations throughout Africa. Due to popular demand we have now 'Kenyanised' our KEEP workbook and the result is just amazing. Check out our brand-new Nature Workbook for Kenya on the GCF website. It is designed for primary school students all over Kenya, who are sure to have a lot of fun with it. Get in touch to get your high res PDF for printing.

The new year also brought some staff changes. While we bid farewell to GCF's Environmental Education Coordinator Rachel du Raan, who was instrumental in developing KEEP and the Namibian workbook, we are confident that our remaining KEEP team consisting of Naemi Antonius and our former intern Martha Haufiku will continue to implement an excellent environmental education programme for primary school students.



In addition to our staff, our donors are important to allow us to run KEEP successfully. From the educational resources to transport and food that we provide to



students in the field as well as our staff salaries, all this requires financial support. While we continue to work hard on the fundraising front, we are still looking for a dedicated donor to support the meals we provide for all our students. Many students depend on the Government's school feeding scheme, and without providing food, we could not take some of the students into the field with us. If you would like to help us provide healthy snacks, such as apples, crackers and a sandwich, please get in touch. Your support would make a big difference and please remember that your contribution does not necessarily have to be financial.



As always, would also like to thank the Ministry of Environment and Tourism for their continuous support in allowing us to use such an amazing resource as Daan Viljoen Game Reserve, as well as the Ministry of Education for allowing the teachers and students to join us for a day in the bush.

Keen to find out more?

You can keep up to date with GCF's activities on the GCF website

giraffeconservation.org

Thanks again for your support.

