



THE ROAD TO
ZERO WASTE

EASTERN CAPE
CONFERENCE 2015

The Future of Scholars' involvement in an Environmental career

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An Environmental Career for Scholars

- A scholar who wishes to further a career in environmental studies currently faces a huge problem of lack of assistance and/or guidance at school level.
- With the already existing pressure of subject choice in Grade 9, we have no clue as to which subjects should be taken in order to become an environmentalist.
- Universities/Colleges visit a few schools advertising their career path studies they offer, yet environmental is always excluded.
- How do scholars prepare from Grade 8, being educated towards this career?
- This conference is a great platform to bring forth our concerns. We would like environmental careers to be more common.

Why is this a problem?

- Further study institutions visit schools. The main careers advertised are doctors, psychologists, accountants, business managers. Nothing on environmental.
- There is no guidance in choosing subjects for Environmental careers in Grade 9. It is poorly advertised. We need to be exposed at a deeper/earlier level, not only after matric.
- Scholars would have to do their own research which not all are exposed to, especially the poorer schools.
- There are many environmental bursaries for matriculants, but they may not have the correct subjects. Hence the problem of correct subject choice.
- Why is an environmental career not seen as an important career like the doctors?

We posed a question to scholars:

Why did you not consider a career in Environmental?

- 2010 Matriculant: “I considered it at some stage but it was not spoken of, so I went with my second choice”.
- 2011 Matriculant: “It didn’t seem like a job that pays much in salary. I don’t know”.
- 2012 Matriculant: Nobody spoke about that career when the universities came to our school. Is it not the department of Education’s duty to advise scholars?”.
- 2013 Matriculant: “I had to do my own research and had to pay for it myself. Environmental did not have much information so I never bothered with it”.
- Current Grade 11 Scholar: “For any career path they left us to choose our subjects, with the knowledge to choose our careers from there”.

What is currently being done?

- There are a few companies who are making an effort, such as Eco Schools, MBSA, The Waste Trade Company, to name a few.
- For example, Mercedes Benz hosts an annual Schools Expo only being able to invite a certain amount of scholars to attend.
- Seemingly, the main aim of these caring companies is to educate the scholars on good waste management practices. This is a great effort.
- We take part in our beach clean-ups in the Eastern Cape area, which is advertised by these companies.
- Unfortunately, this helps very little with guiding scholars in their career investment.

What can you do to help?

- Job-Shadowing at your company.
- Practical exposure to equip us.
- This can form can form part of could form part of your company's social responsibility.
- Can the Department of Education work in conjunction with willing companies to prepare us from scholar stage to post-matric?
- We would like to see environmental companies visiting our schools on a more regular basis.
- Spend time with us at schools for example, plant a tree, help us plant an organic garden. Come back and see our progress.

What can you do to help?

- Come and show us what we can do to promote recycling at our schools.
- We feel the duty for guiding us at school level lies more with the Department of Education and Department of Environmental Affairs with the assistance of environmental companies.
- The Institute of Waste Management of Southern Africa (IWMSA) can assist by possibly allowing us to attend free training course they offer.
- Training at school level, will lay the groundwork for scholars.

Our future

- Any Waste Management crisis we face today can already be a problem that we could be faced with.
- Even the poorest schools in the Eastern Cape have energetic, committed scholars who can make a difference in the future.
- If we can make this change it will pave the way for future young environmentalists.
- The Eastern Cape province is the most rural. We want to contribute to its green footprint.
- We are the youth – the future.
- We need your help to be the best we can be!



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Thank you

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