

PUBLIC HEARING ON THE NATIONAL VELD AND FOREST FIRE BILL



I Adrian D A Simmers is the chair person of the Jonkershoek Forestry Community Forum (JFCF), and we are also members of:

1. Forestry Communities Forum (FCF), which consist of 13 different Forest Communities over the Western Cape.
2. Western Cape Forest Sector Forum (WCFSF), which also include some of the Forest Communities in the Southern Cape.

Submission and Comments

The JFCF did not see the NATIONAL VELD AND FORESTS ACT OF 1998, but what we have seen to be Amended is fine, as long as it not going to have a negative influence on our community .

Herewith we would like to spel out our needs and short comings to prevent spreading, and to containing of wild veld and forest fires near our Community Sattlements.

We would like to see the laws to be enforced, if it was any transgress.

Prevention to be made, to protect our houses, infrastucture, livelihoods and other assets by making:

- Fire brakes \pm 20 meter wide from the houses and buildigs
- Fire brakes at our water intake point, around our reservoirs, where the main pipes to the houses are running.
- Fire brakes underneath all ESCOM & TELKOM lines.
- Community members should be trained how to use fire fighting equipment.
- With the help of the local Emergency, Fire & Rescue Agencies, the community should work out safe and easy accesible assembling points, from where people can be safely evacuated.
- Training should also be given to youth and others how to assist the sick and elderly in such a time.
- A safety commitee should appointed to manage the crisis till help from dedicated help arrive.

Protection of our Natural Indigenous Forest against Wild Fires

Note:

- *Most Protia species (and other fynbos species) need a fire every 16-24 years not to extinc.*
- *But fires to frequently can also lead to extinction.*

Prevention to be made where there is Pine Plantation Forest

- There have to be 20 meter fire brake between Forest and Plantation
- The Fire brakes should be divided in two, and each half should be burned in 10 to 12 year cycles.
- No Pines should be planted closer than 30 meters from a stream, depending on the slope.
- No Pines should be planted above the 240 contour line, and if so, there should also be a fire brake above it.
- Companies should pay a fine and rehabilitate if they were the cause of damage in a natural forest by fire.
- DAFF should not issue any permit, if areas where companies have harvested is not clean from all timber waste and logs, which can cause a fire danger hazard.
- A 12 meter fire brake should be on both sides of farm boundaries to prevent fire to jump from one side to the other.
- Pre-cribed burning should be introduced where needed.
- Plant species surveys should be done, before and 1 year plus after pre-cribed burning.