PRISTINE
VICTORIA FALLS SOCIETY
~ established - 2021 ~

PRISTINE VICTORIA FALLS SOCIETY

2023 HIGHLIGHTS

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Pristine Victoria Falls Society Newsletter for 2023!
We are delighted to share with you the latest updates and achievements in our ongoing efforts to promote sustainable waste management practices in our beautiful region.

Executive Summary

Welcome to the Pristine Victoria Falls Society newsletter! In this edition, we bring you the latest updates on our ongoing efforts to preserve and protect the majestic Victoria Falls, a UNESCO World Heritage site. We celebrate the successful completion of our community outreach programs, highlighting the positive impact they have had on the local population and environment. Additionally, we discuss upcoming environmental and waste management projects and partnerships, emphasizing our commitment to sustainable tourism and responsible development. With our dedication to preserve the natural beauty and cultural significance of Victoria Falls, the Pristine Victoria Falls Society invites you to join us in our mission to ensure the long-term conservation of this breathtaking natural wonder.

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Douglas Musiringofa
(Program Manager)

A MESSAGE FROM THE PROGRAM MANAGER

Dear Esteemed Stakeholders and Respected Community Members,
As the year draws to a close, I find myself reflecting on the incredible journey we have embarked upon together in preserving and protecting the natural beauty of Victoria Falls. It has been an honor and a privilege to serve in the environmental and waste management fraternity for this remarkable community. It is almost unbelievable that it has been one year since l joined Pristine Victoria Falls Society and yet we have together achieved so much. Certainly, the journey did present us with its fair share of challenges and setbacks. However, we embraced these obstacles as valuable opportunities for growth and learning.

I want to take this opportunity to express my deepest gratitude to each and every one of you who has played a part in our collective efforts to safeguard the environment and promote sustainable waste management practices. Whether you are a government representative, business owner, conservationist, or dedicated community member, your contributions have been invaluable in shaping the positive changes we have witnessed in our beloved city.

Throughout the year, we have achieved significant milestones in our commitment to environmental preservation and waste management. The collaborative initiatives and proactive measures taken by all stakeholders have made a meaningful impact on reducing pollution, preserving our natural heritage, and enhancing the overall well-being of Victoria Falls. In 2023, we had the opportunity to witness an impressive number of 833 targeted clean-up activities. These activities resulted in the collection of 33,371 bags of waste amounting to over 60 tonnes of litter cleared off our streets and filling up a total of 203 waste pits. However, we also encountered a challenge during the months of August to November, as household waste burning became quite prevalent, resulting in a significant number of 176 fires throughout the year.

To combat these issues and ensure better environmental management, we implemented stronger enforcement strategies through the Victoria Falls Waste Management Taskforce. This proactive taskforce played a crucial role in issuing 303 tickets for various violations, including waste dumping, non-compliance, and littering. Our greatest achievement, however, was the remarkable growth of our organization. We were successful in enrolling 124 new members, which boosted our total membership base to over 350 members. This increase in membership is a clear indication of the growing support for our cause and the recognition of the importance of environmental conservation and waste management.

As we look ahead to the coming year, I am filled with hope and optimism for the continued progress and evolution of our environmental endeavors. Together, we can build upon our successes and strive for even greater sustainability, resilience, and harmony with nature.

In closing, I extend my heartfelt thanks to everyone who has been a part of this important work. Your dedication, passion, and unwavering support have been instrumental in our achievements, and I am deeply appreciative of the collaborative spirit that defines our community of Victoria Falls. We were honored to receive two awards as the Environmental Champions of the year in 2023. This is a wonderful recognition of the remarkable strength and spirit within our community. As the Pristine Victoria Falls Society celebrates its 2nd anniversary this year, these accolades stand as a testament to our continuous ability to achieve significant accomplishments. They also serve as a powerful reminder of our city's immense potential.

May the spirit of unity and shared responsibility continue to guide us as we endeavor to preserve the splendor of Victoria Falls for generations to come. I trust that the joy and warmth of the holiday season will be with you all, and may the coming year be filled with happiness and prosperity.

Until its over,

Program Manager

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Mike Paul Davis
(PVFS Chairperson)

A WORD FROM PRISTINE VICTORIA FALLS SOCIETY CHAIRPERSON

As we close out 2023 let us doff our collective caps to Douglas and his team, who in a short space of a single year, have transformed the PVFS into an award-winning environmental entity.

The roots of the Society are invested in the collective community responsibility to preserve our marvellous natural wonder and wildlife environment.

The diverse membership of schools, private and public sector, sports and civil societies and a band on committed individuals give the Society its backbone fuelled by the generous support of a handful of dedicated donors.

The societies "call to arms" to literally wage war on litter and the invidious enemy no.1 "Single use plastic" that chokes our drainage systems, kills our wildlife and blights our communities is no better illustrated than through the terminology that has crept into our vocabulary.

Terms such as "Eco-Warriors" (Junior members), "Crime Scene" (a particularly bad area of litter), "Hit Squad" (the dedicated team tasked with tackling crime scenes) have become common language.

Victoria Falls is growing at an unprecedented rate and the challenges of simply keeping our environment vaguely clean, let alone our lofty goal to become the cleanest city in Africa, are great, but not insurmountable. It needs more members, more resources, more selfless passion as displayed by Douglas and his team. Whilst 2023 was very much focused on the symptoms – characterised by the collection of 60 tons of litter plucked off our streets, 2024 will see some of the focus shift onto the causes. We will kick off a campaign to persuade government to make Victoria Falls a plastic free zone. with a complete ban on single use plastics within the Victoria Falls community. If Vic Falls can serve as the pilot scheme, and has some success, then perhaps it can be rolled out in other communities.

We will continue to strengthen and embolden environmental law enforcement.
We will work with a strategic partners "Eco-drop" to bring tourism organisations on board to discourage use of single use plastic drinking bottles and with "Ele-Collection" to bring a state-of-the-art recycling plant to Victoria Falls. Their success is our success!ing

But most of all we will focus on ensuring our +/-5000 ha slice of heaven is kept clean and preserved for future generations.

Best Regards,

Michael Davis

PVFS Chairperson

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Waste Reduction and Recycling Initiatives

In 2023, we continued our focus on waste reduction and recycling initiatives. With the support of local businesses, residents, and community organizations, we have made significant strides in promoting recycling and reducing the amount of waste ending up at our dumpsite. We have initiated activities focused on waste separation starting in select hotels and lodges. Twenty local volunteers who have been engaged in our various clean up initiatives have commenced waste separation at the dumpsite targeting High and Low Density plastic as well as PET. PVFS has worked diligently to establish partnerships with various recycling companies. For more information on one of these partnerships, you can view a video at this link: https://youtu.be/p-XzIL1SsOE?si=ZlDCVpXkr3gI2CQx

Public Awareness and Education

At the heart of our efforts in 2023, we have focused on empowering individuals with the knowledge they need to make informed decisions about waste management. We are thrilled to share that our educational workshops, awareness campaigns, and community events have seen a significant increase in participation and a growing enthusiasm for sustainable waste management practices.

One of our key priorities this year has been environmental education in schools. We have taken proactive steps by establishing environmental clubs in schools, where students can come together to learn, discuss, and take action on important environmental issues. Through these clubs, we aim to foster a sense of responsibility and inspire the next generation of eco-conscious leaders.

In addition to school initiatives, we have reached out to the wider community through door-to-door educational campaigns and engaging road shows. By bringing our message directly to people's doorsteps and organizing exciting road shows, we have been able to connect with individuals from all walks of life and instil a sense of environmental stewardship.

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We are immensely proud of the progress we have made so far in 2023, and we are grateful for the support and enthusiasm we have received from our community. Together, we are creating a brighter future for waste management by equipping individuals with the knowledge and tools to make sustainable choices.

Partnerships and Collaborations

Our partnerships and collaborations with government agencies, waste management entities, and local schools have been instrumental in driving positive change. Together, we have worked towards enhancing waste collection infrastructure, implementing innovative waste segregation programs, and fostering a culture of environmental stewardship within our community. Throughout the year, we relied on the commitment and support of local stakeholders to execute our waste management activities in the city of Victoria Falls. This included partners carrying out clean up activities and 16 partners committing financial resources to the organization. One of our greatest achievements in partnerships in the year 2023 was through our collaboration with Ele-Crew and Conservation Connect in which we revamped the fence at the Victoria Falls dumpsite in an effort to prevent wild animals from accessing it and ingesting plastic.

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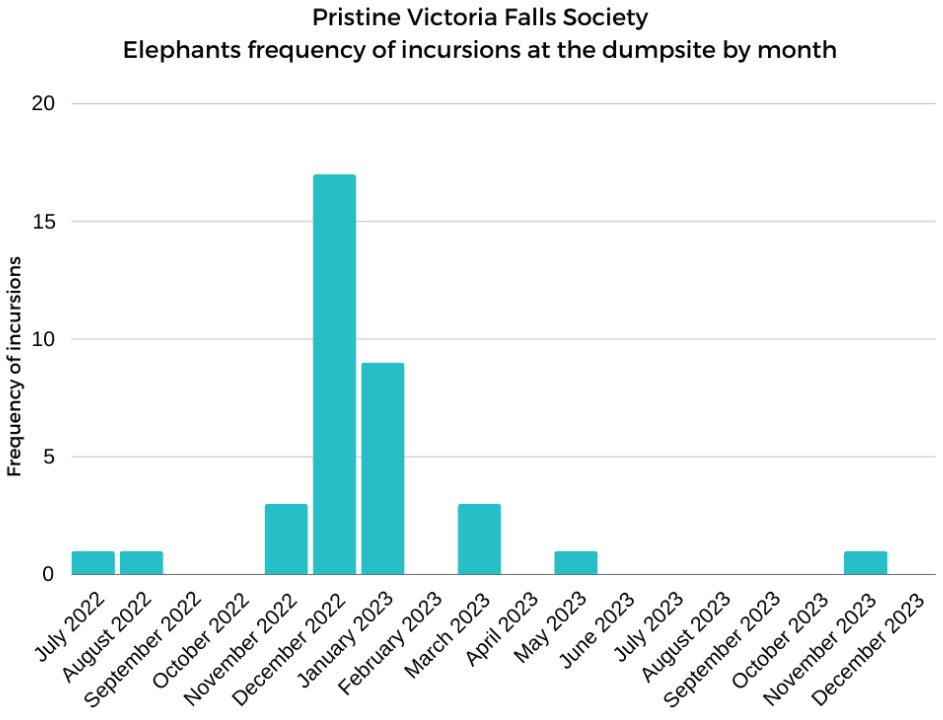

The rubbish dump provides a favourable habitat for elephants and other wild animals due to the availability of easily accessible food and water, which is preferred over foraging in the national park. However, this poses a serious threat to the elephant population and ultimately impacts tourism due to the ingestion of plastic. The installation of a fence has proven to be effective in preventing wild animals from entering the rubbish dump, as depicted in the graph comparing the period from April to December 2023 with the same period in the previous year. During this timeframe, only two instances of animals breaching the fence were recorded, compared to 22 incidents in the previous year.

In 2023, we were thrilled to announce an incredible donation towards our environmental efforts by Pioneers Lodge, one of our valued supporters. Pioneers Lodge generously contributed an Isuzu KB300 D-Max to our organization, allowing us to expand our reach and make an even greater impact on the environment. This donation enabled us to increase our capacity for transporting and distributing essential supplies, organizing educational events, coordinating clean-up activities and conducting research in the field. We are immensely grateful to Pioneers Lodge for their kind contribution and continuous dedication towards preserving our planet for future generations.

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INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE AND TRADITIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL PRACTICES

Ten year old Anesu Ashley Musiringofa speaks to us about her "Dream City"

I dream of a clean, green and environmentally friendly city. One which promotes and consider my future, a child friendly and a safe space. I am privileged to have been born in the home of one of the 7 natural wonders of the world and I am thus obliged to maintain this beautiful wonder - wonderful...

I am MaNcube, Sokos, Shoko, Cheta-Mudimba the pompous one, the bearer of children, the tree-climber and one-who-always-barks! We eat centipedes, we throw ants into our mouths but not "PLASTIC"... I dream of a city that does not poison us with plastic!

A city flourishing with numerous indigenous forest fruits and fresh water. I do not eat plastic!

Anesu Ashley Musiringofa

I am Sokos, those on the steep rocks and cliffs, one-who-rests-only-when-he-is-full. I am hungry and thirsty for a city with environmentally cautious people who care for my future. Why do we live our lives on this planet as if we had another one to go to? I dream of a city in which adults understand that they borrowed the earth from us - the children...

Photo credit: Suzanne Elliot Smith – Victoria Falls.

Where is our pride? Where is the love?
A clean city, green city is my dream city!

#BeatPlasticPollution

Tourism and the environment

Victoria Falls is not just a breathtaking natural wonder; it is also a testament to the intricate link between tourism and the environment. As visitors flock to this awe-inspiring destination, they are not only immersed in its beauty but also become advocates for its preservation. The economic benefits of tourism in Victoria Falls have paved the way for sustainable initiatives, our planet's most precious treasures, creating a harmonious relationship between the local community and the environment.

WORLD TOURISM DAY 2023

TOURISM & GREEN INVESTMENTS

From eco-friendly accommodations to responsible tourism practices, Victoria Falls has become a shining example of how tourism can be a catalyst for environmental conservation. By showcasing the delicate balance between tourism and the environment, Victoria Falls serves as a reminder that every visitor holds the power to protect and preserve our natural wonder.

Waste collection and efficiency

Looking ahead, our focus remains on enhancing waste collection efficiency, expanding recycling initiatives, and striving for a greater reduction in waste generation. We are committed to exploring new technologies and sustainable solutions to address waste management challenges while maintaining the pristine beauty of Victoria Falls. To this end, 2023 saw innovative ideas and projects being piloted in which PVFS is partnering various hotels and non-profit organizations to make use of all food waste from hotels and local restaurants to produce stock feed and organic manure through the black soldier fly larvae concept.

The black soldier fly larvae project is an innovative initiative that harnesses the power of nature to tackle food waste from tourism in Victoria Falls. By utilizing black soldier fly larvae, which have a voracious appetite for organic waste, this project efficiently converts food waste into nutrient-rich insect protein. This sustainable solution not only reduces the environmental impact of food waste but also provides a valuable protein source for livestock feed, contributing to a circular economy.

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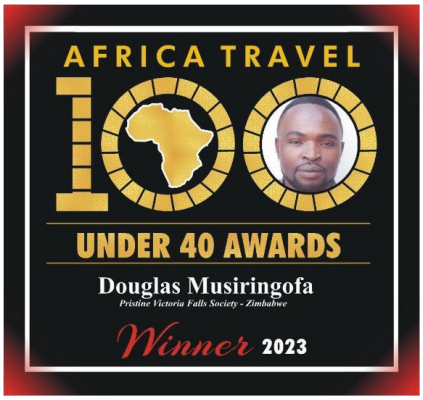
OUR ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2023 IN NUMBERS

- 833 targeted clean-up activities.
- 33,371 bags of waste amounting to over 60 tonnes of litter cleared off our streets and
- 203 waste pits spotted and filled.
- 176 waste burning fires reported and attended to.
- 303 tickets for various violations, including waste dumping, non-compliance, and littering were issued.
- 124 new members joined the movement boosting our membership to over 350 members.
- Two awards received for being your environmental champions of the year 2023.



Community Engagement and Feedback

We value the input and feedback from our community members. Your active participation in waste management activities and your commitment to environmental responsibility are essential in shaping our future strategies. We encourage you to continue supporting our efforts and sharing your ideas for a cleaner and healthier Victoria Falls.

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Innovative environmental initiatives in Victoria Falls

Ecodrop is a local company in Victoria Falls that is dedicated to promoting sustainability in the tourism industry. They recognize the growing concern surrounding single-use plastic and have developed a unique and cost-effective solution to combat this problem

To address the issue of plastic waste, Ecodrop has introduced water refill stations at strategic locations in Victoria Falls, including the airport. These stations offer a convenient and eco-friendly alternative to single-use plastic bottles. By encouraging both locals and tourists to refill their bottles, Ecodrop significantly reduces the amount of plastic waste generated in the area.

By being a part of Ecodrop, not only are you helping the environment, but you are also contributing to the overall conservation efforts in Victoria Falls. Together, we can preserve this beautiful destination for future generations.

The concept behind Ecodrop is simple: visitors and locals can purchase a durable and reusable bottle that comes with a special code. This code can be scanned at any of the conveniently located refill stations, where visitors can easily fill their bottles with refreshing cold water that has been purified using reverse osmosis technology. Not only does this system eliminate the need for single-use plastic bottles, but the Ecodrop bottle itself also serves as a memorable souvenir, reminding visitors of their wonderful time in Victoria Falls.

By choosing Ecodrop's refill system, visitors can fully enjoy the natural beauty of Victoria Falls without worrying about the negative impact on the environment. Make your stay in Victoria Falls meaningful and sustainable by joining Ecodrop's movement towards a greener future.

Conclusion

As we reflect on the progress made in 2023, we extend our gratitude to everyone who has contributed to the success of our waste management initiatives. Together, we have made a positive impact on the sustainability of Victoria Falls, and we are excited to continue this journey towards a more environmentally conscious community.

We invite you to join us in our mission to create a cleaner and more sustainable Victoria Falls for generations to come. Together, we can make a difference! Thank you for your ongoing support and commitment to responsible waste management.

Our sponsors:

Key partners:

Ministry of Environment, Climate, Tourism & Hospitality Industry

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