

Earth Hour 2012

Dear colleagues,

A wave of darkness will sweep across Planet Earth as millions of people turn off their lights in solidarity for Earth Hour – this Saturday 31 March 2012. Hundreds of millions of people, businesses and governments around the world unite each year to support the largest environmental event in history. More than 5,200 cities and towns in 135 countries worldwide switched off their lights for Earth Hour 2011 alone, sending a powerful message for action on climate change.

The celebration of Earth hour is very important, as everyone needs to be constantly reminded about the consumption of energy and its devastating impact on the planet.

World Heritage Sites

UNESCO is showing its support for this endeavor by inviting all World Heritage sites to **switch off the lights** for one hour. In doing that, these iconic sites would once again show their leadership in protecting our environment for a sustainable planet. All World Heritage sites participating this year are encouraged to send a photo or video clip to the World Heritage Centre for inclusion on the World Heritage website. Please send all submissions to Ms Gina Doubleday at g.doubleday@unesco.org or via the filedepot tool, for heavy files:

<http://www.unesco.org/tools/filedepot>.

CapeNature reserves and offices

What are we doing at reserves doing earth hour? As the conservation authority for the province, CapeNature should lead by example. There are several basic things we can introduce during this hour ... and continue to use.

These are a number of ways your reserve/office can start to reduce its impact on the planet as well as reduce costs:

- Provide and encourage staff to use recycling facilities
- Turn off non-essential lights after hours in offices or installing motion-sensors
- Installing energy saving light bulbs and devices (e.g. timers on lighting)
- Turning off printers, computers, monitors, microwaves etc. and power points at the end of the day when unused for long periods.
- Elect *Earth Hour Monitors* for your reserve whose job it is to ensure lights are out and appliances are off standby at the end of each working day.

Guests at reserves

- Encourage and remind guest by posting notices and leave notes in their accommodation units
- Invite guest to join any activities you plan on the reserves

At home

Invite Your Friends Over and Turn Off the Lights

Last but not least, turn down all of the lights in your home. It's a little strange sitting around in the dark, but it's only for one hour. You can help spread Earth Hour awareness by inviting your friends, family or neighbors to join you for Earth Hour activities. A few friendly faces can help make the time go faster, too!

Beyond Earth hour

Remember that saving energy is about more than just turning down the lights. Challenge yourself to do some or all of these energy saving things for Earth Hour - and every day - to save energy and help the planet. These are some of the ways your reserve can start to reduce its impact on the planet today as well as reduce costs:

Unplug Appliances, Chargers, Computer

Turn off and unplug your television and other devices like DVD players and video game consoles. If you have all of your electronics plugged into a power bar or surge bar, you can switch them all off at the end of the day. Even an idle computer uses energy.

Online Resources

- whc.unesco.org
- www.earthhour.org
- www.panda.org/earthhour

Share your stories

Send us your activities, photos and stories for the next edition of the This & That.

