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Cover image

What can be more demonstrative of the incredible power locked inside nature, than brilliant bolts of lightning illuminating the savanna during a thunderstorm.

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Power and nature

Power and nature are on everybody's lips these days.

With Eskom's loadshedding, power – or rather the lack of power – is a constant topic of conversation for South Africans. And for many, it is also a daily struggle. Similarly, due to Climate Change, there is an increasing awareness of the need to live sustainably in order to conserve our planet's nature and its resources. But so often, we think of power and nature as separate. Power is the current in the wiring of our homes that powers our wifi, our lights and our appliances. And nature is "out there" in the bush, where the animals live. But of course, all power comes from nature. And nature isn't just "out there". Everything we build, where we live, the food we eat, the air we breathe, everything around us and we ourselves, are part of nature. Power and nature are inextricably linked. Part of the reason we are in this mess of Climate Change, is because we forgot this fact. We thought we were separate from nature, even above it. But all the energy we have is simply borrowed from nature, and to continue living on this planet, we must find ways of living in harmony with nature, and to use its power responsibly.

That is what this issue is about: the relationship between power and nature. We look at what is needed for our species to be successful in managing the energy transition from depletable, polluting and globe-warming fossil fuels to renewable energy sources. We look at "green" hydrogen, and why it might not be as practical as we would have hoped, at biogas, agrowaste-energy,

at solar, and at how South Africans have adapted their lifestyles to cope with loadshedding, and to live more sustainably through renewable energy sources. We examine the Water-Energy-Food (WEF) Nexus in a South African context and at the global and local energy crises.

Then, we also have features that celebrate the never-ending wonders of nature: A new species of dinosaur discovered in Utah, how nanobiophotonics are being utilised to prevent the next pandemic, at young scientists from Limpopo who wrote passionate essays about our relationship with the ocean, as well as yellow jacket wasps, medicinal mushrooms in Knysna and a very deceptive, but cunning daisy flower. And a whole lot more.

We hope you enjoy the edition, that you will have power and warmth this winter, and that you will continue to marvel with us about the power of nature – so we may learn how to use it, conserve it and nurture it for generations to come.

With regards,



Fanie (RS) van Rooyen (Editor)

Tshifhinga tshinzi, ri hambula uri mannda na mupo zwofhambana. Mannda ndi mulilo une ra u shumisa dzinduni mahayani ashu, mulilo wonoyo ufha maanda dzi Wifi, mavhone na zwinwe zwishumiswa zwa mudagasi. Mannda othe ane ravha nao abva kha mupo, futhi uri ri ise phanda na u tshila kha vhuno vhupo ri khou tea u wana ndila dza u tshila nga mulalo nawo, na u shumisa mannda awo nga vhudifhinduleli.

Translated into Venda by Zwanda Charles Ramukumba.

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