



# SST

IN REVIEW  
2019 – 2023

**Working towards a  
future where the people  
of Africa and her seas  
flourish together**





About Sustainable Seas Trust

Sustainable Seas Trust (SST) is a science-based organisation working to protect Africa’s seas for the benefit of all those who live on the continent through research, education, economic upliftment and collaboration.

Main Funding Partner:  
The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs



Norwegian Embassy  
Pretoria

The Norwegian government has committed to taking the lead in driving ocean sustainability, investing billions in the blue economy around the world. Norway has been an invaluable support to SST, enabling us to achieve many of our goals and continue our mission. Without their generous funding, the ‘Towards Zero Plastics to the Seas of Africa’ project would not be a reality.

About This Review

Welcome to the SST In Review document. This review covers the period of funding generously granted by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs towards the flagship ‘Towards Zero Plastics to the Seas of Africa’ project, from 1 April 2019 to 30 September 2023. More than an annual report, this document serves to capture the work of the organisation during the tenure of this flagship project, as well as the milestones and major achievements over the last four and a half years.

The content of this review was approved by SST’s Board of Trustees on 30 November 2023.

Cover image Woman from a coastal community in Zanzibar collects water.

Production team

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# CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE



Mike Rodel

The reporting period under review played out against the backdrop of some of the most disruptive and difficult circumstances our planet has experienced in living memory. The COVID-19 pandemic brought the world to a standstill, with ensuing disruptions to the global supply chain, the war in Ukraine, an energy crisis and rising inflation compounding people's distress.

Many countries also experienced the reality of climate change in the form of higher-than-average temperatures, prolonged droughts, flooding, and runaway bush fires, making the pressing need to address this global threat clearer than ever.

Yet, even under these circumstances, I am pleased to write that Sustainable Seas Trust (SST) showed flexibility and responsiveness as an organisation and was able to realise its set objectives for the 'Towards Zero Plastics to the Seas of Africa' project. During the pandemic, SST demonstrated that it could pivot its strategy when required and change tactics accordingly in pursuit of these objectives.

Of course, none of the project outputs or resulting success stories would have been possible without the generous funding from our major donors, especially the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

We are also grateful for other project-specific funding from the likes of Petco, the Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Organisation (WIOMSA), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Abidjan Convention, Commonwealth Litter Programme (CLiP)/Cefas, Pick n Pay, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa (Wessa), GRID-Arendal, British High Commission, Eastern Cape Parks and Tourism Agency, and South African Tourism. Every contribution of support enabled the overall realisation of SST's strategy.

## Building a Sustainable Future for Africa

One of the report findings from an independent review of the 'Towards Zero Plastics to the Seas of Africa' project notes that:

*"There are indications that the project has been well received across the continent and that the work it focused on is important and considered to be contributing to lasting benefits. Its outputs are being utilised widely, both on the continent and beyond. The project has managed to replicate its methodologies and marine litter monitoring activities based on these methodologies. These monitoring activities are likely to continue on the continent with or without the direct involvement of the project, which speaks to the sustainability of the project approach."*

**The scaling up of SST's operations – from a small, locally focused South African charitable trust to one with continental impact and high-level international funding – intensified the critical importance of accountability and good governance, and it is something that is taken very seriously by the executive team.**

Every aspect of SST has been critically re-evaluated with fresh eyes and we have committed to finding the best, most efficient and sustainable ways of doing things. To this end, the executive team is in the process of reviewing the human resources and remuneration policies, formulating changes to communications strategies, and investigating new fundraising models.

The executive team has put a lot of effort into ensuring that there is compliance with all the levels of detail required by our major funders with regard to reporting, while the trustees' oversight of the underpinning policies and procedures has guided that compliance.

## Tribute to our Trustees

Charitable trusts, such as SST, have a special place in our society because they are committed to helping others. This creates a level of trust from the public, funders and beneficiaries that we must protect. Trustees help run an effective trust that is able to credibly demonstrate how it operates for the good of others.

We are grateful to all our trustees, past and present, for bringing their skills and energy to this hard but rewarding work. I would specifically like to acknowledge the long-standing support of the late Ms Mandlakazi Skefile, who passed away from cancer on 14 April 2022. We valued her contribution and her courage – our condolences to her family. We also said goodbye to Ms Kavitha Moodley (the corporate trustee) and Mr Richard Laing, who resigned in December 2022. Thank you both for your dedicated service. Mr Richard Laing has been the longest serving independent trustee, and has provided constant support, trusted advice and a steady hand to both the trustee grouping and myself in particular.

A warm welcome to our new trustees – Mr Gordon Turner, Dr Henry J. Roman and Ms Telly Chauke – who joined me and the other trustees, Mr Nceba Mfini, Mr Ntsako Baloyi and Ms Janine Osborne, in 2023. They bring with them a wealth and depth of knowledge that will benefit SST in the long run and ensure continuity of the role of the trustees in ensuring that the organisation has a sound strategy and implementation plan, and that the necessary governance structures are in place.



Matej Kastelic | Shutterstock



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## Farewell to the Founder

Of course, it would be entirely remiss of me if I failed to shine the spotlight on our founding trustee and first Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Dr Tony Ribbink, who retired at the end of 2022.

Our deepest appreciation goes to Dr Ribbink, a globally recognised scientist in his own right, deeply respected visionary and personal friend. If it wasn't for Tony's unwavering ambition and belief, SST would not be what it is today. If not for his far-sightedness, the 'Towards Zero Plastics to the Seas of Africa' project – which has fundamentally shifted the trajectory of the organisation forever – would not be a reality or, indeed, a success.

Tony, I thank you for your guidance, hard work, and friendship. It has been a true privilege working with you, learning from you, and following your vision as you shaped and grew SST into the organisation that it is today, with a footprint extending along the coastline of the entire African continent and the West Indian Ocean Islands.

## A New Beginning

I would also like to compliment the whole SST team, past and present staff members, who have all given of themselves so passionately to achieve the goals of the organisation and have continued reporting exceptional progress even in an extremely challenging environment.

As a board, we are excited about the new energy and long-term strategy brought to the organisation by the new CEO, Ms Janine Osborne. We have the utmost faith in her ability to take SST into the future – and have already seen evidence of this through the newly developed theory of change, a strengthened communications strategy and a much more robust financial management structure, ensuring that the organisation is well positioned to deliver on the second phase of the 'Towards Zero Plastics to the Seas of Africa' project (now entitled 'Zero Waste to the Seas of Africa') and to maintain the continued faith of the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in our ability to deliver on the ambitious and expanded key goals that have been defined for the project.

As we begin a new chapter for SST, we are proud of the solid foundation that has been built and looking forward to seeing the continued impact along a much larger continental journey. ■



# CEO'S LETTER



Janine Osborne

The world, and our home continent of Africa in particular, is reaching several tipping points where urgent intervention is required. The rapid rate of change, escalating populations and unsustainable consumption and disposal of resources mean we can no longer afford to think and act small.

By now you will have realised that this review is unusual in that it spans the life of a pivotal project that has shifted the trajectory of SST's mandate and strategy forever. This has demanded that we re-evaluate the way we do things in order to stay on target and have a real, meaningful impact.

As I write this letter, SST stands on the cusp of a new era.

**We have an urgent and enormous task ahead of us, as Africa is the second most polluted continent in the world.**

Costs of marine waste to Africa are estimated in the millions of dollars every year. The exact amount of waste entering the sea from the African continent remains unknown, but it is clear the rapid development of Africa has seen waste accumulation outpace management capacity.

Added to this, Africa is set to undergo a major transformation over the next century as its population surges and cities urbanise along with an increased demand for adequate housing, shelter, food and energy. Research shows that the average waste collection rate in most African countries isn't enough to meet increased consumerism and changing consumption patterns.

As the global conversation about plastic pollution and the calls for urgent, collaborative action are escalating, clear action plans, unambiguous

messaging and practical guidance, resources and toolkits to address waste and support responsible waste management are crucial to reduce waste, achieve sustainable development goals and enable countries to meet their commitments to the emerging global plastics treaty.

This is the impetus behind SST's newly articulated strategy.

## Season of Change

In going over the content of this review, the phrase 'sea change' occurred to me. It refers to a profound transformation and, looking back over the last four years, couldn't be more apt.

The past year in particular has been a significant one, characterised by fundamental change – from a change in leadership to a new strategic direction for the organisation (more on our Theory of Change below).

In this spirit of innovation, this review deviates from the standard 'annual report' format for one very particular purpose. That is to align with our renewed and strengthened intention of being transparent – in funding sources, in clear reporting, in project design, and in the responsible execution of operations – because we believe this is critical to the success of our organisation.

We are a network of passionate individuals, stakeholders, and communities, who are collective custodians of Africa's coastal resources. Accountability is a critical aspect of SST's operations to ensure we maintain the trust of our network and execute in a responsible and ethical manner, whilst providing full transparency to partners and funders going forward.

## Our Rebrand

Over the last 18 months, SST has also undergone an intensive organisational repositioning exercise to better reflect our strategic objectives as a growing African organisation that is serious about tackling big-picture issues, such as climate change, as well as plastic and other forms of waste. Our vision is to see Africa's seas and her coastal communities flourishing together.

For us, this is more than an aesthetic rebrand. It has involved months of re-evaluating what we do and how we do it, from the inside out. We started by implementing a thorough Theory of Change within our organisation. Driven by research and compelling evidence, we looked at how we could achieve our long-term goals by better supporting the communities and organisations we work with, connecting all stakeholders, and creating a stronger and more relevant brand presence within the field.

As our mandate has grown, there has been a need to appeal to and seek to work with a growing and diversified target audience. This means that we need to communicate on a broader scale while still being sensitive to the way our audiences respond to our messaging.

The blue future of our seas will benefit generations to come and it's important that we speak to our youth and draw fresh interest and involvement in sustaining our seas. This translates directly to a change in the way brands are communicated and consumed, with digital being at the forefront. Our logo needs to be able to translate well on small screens and across all media, so that we remain relevant and effective in reaching all our audiences.

With people at the centre of everything we do, our goal is to create an even stronger network across Africa, inspire more people to become collective custodians of Africa's seas, extend our presence, and make an even greater impact in all our work.

## Next Chapter

As we look forward to the future, it's equally important to take a moment to acknowledge how far we've come and what has been achieved to date. In the following sections, we look back at SST's history and highlights, and how, with the aid of the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, we have moved a significant step closer 'Towards Zero Plastics to the Seas of Africa'.

We also unpack our new strategic direction in detail, including the expected impact and clearly defined measures of success, as well as what sets SST apart from other organisations operating in this space.

**We may have a new look, but our ultimate purpose remains the same: to protect Africa's seas for the benefit of her people and enable the blue economy.**

We are so excited to embark on the next chapter of our journey together with our partners and stakeholders to sustain Africa's seas! ■





## 02 | About SST

**S**ustainable Seas Trust (SST) is a science-based organisation working to protect Africa's seas and communities for the benefit of all who live on the continent.

We empower individuals, organisations, and communities to become passionate, involved and committed custodians of Africa's seas through an Africa-wide network bolstered by research, education, economic upliftment, and collaboration.

Through our projects, we aim to achieve six UN Sustainable Development Goals:

-  **Goal 4:** Ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all.
-  **Goal 8:** Promoting sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.
-  **Goal 11:** Working towards sustainable cities and communities.
-  **Goal 12:** Ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns.
-  **Goal 14:** Working to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development.
-  **Goal 17:** Partnering for the sustainable development of these goals.

Internally, we further work towards **Goal 16**, improving governance.

By sharing knowledge, resources and expertise and inspiring co-operation and collaboration, SST enables people across Africa to work towards and drive the blue economy for the long-term wellbeing of all who live on the continent.

By empowering people across Africa to come together to value and care for her seas, SST works to ensure a thriving sustainable future for all its people. ■

### WHAT OUR PARTNERS SAY

**"Plastics|SA have found the SST team professional, dedicated, and passionate about their work. The establishment of the African Marine Network has given Plastics|SA a valuable platform to collaborate with other stakeholders that work in the space of addressing plastics marine pollution, advocacy, education and awareness projects."**

– Mr Douw Steyn, Director Sustainability, *Plastics|SA* (South Africa)



Dr Tony Ribbink  
(Founder and First CEO)

# OUR HISTORY

The focus given to SST, when it was first formed by the regional management committee of the African Coelacanth Ecosystem Project, was on helping coastal communities sustain the natural resources upon which they depended. As this committee was drawn from Comoros, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, South Africa and Tanzania, SST began its work in the Western Indian Ocean region but, from the outset, its trust deed enabled it to run projects in any African country.

## Start-Up Funding

SST was originally intended to be launched with start-up funding from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to build the initial capital of the trust fund from which the annual yield would be used to run projects. However, the economic crisis of 2008 meant that UNDP was forced to meet its existing contractual obligations rather than invest in new projects. Accordingly, SST started with inadequate funding, with much of its initial financial support coming from me and my wife, Anthea. Fundraising for this new, unknown organisation required that SST be properly marketed and develop a track record of success.

## Early Years

SST's initial projects provided scientific, educational, and economic guidance to coastal communities who depended on marine resources for their livelihoods, helping them to practise animal husbandry and sustainable harvesting, and break the shackles of poverty that tied them to a diminishing resource base.

The organisation's first major roadshow was the Sea Pledge tour around South Africa, rallying community support and giving public lectures on threats to marine biodiversity in coastal towns, from Saldanha Bay in the west to Sodwana Bay in the east.

In 2009, SST made the significant international shift to addressing broader climate change issues with the launch of the South East African Climate Consortium (SEACC), which drew together academics and NGOs to develop well-rounded climate courses across tertiary institutions.

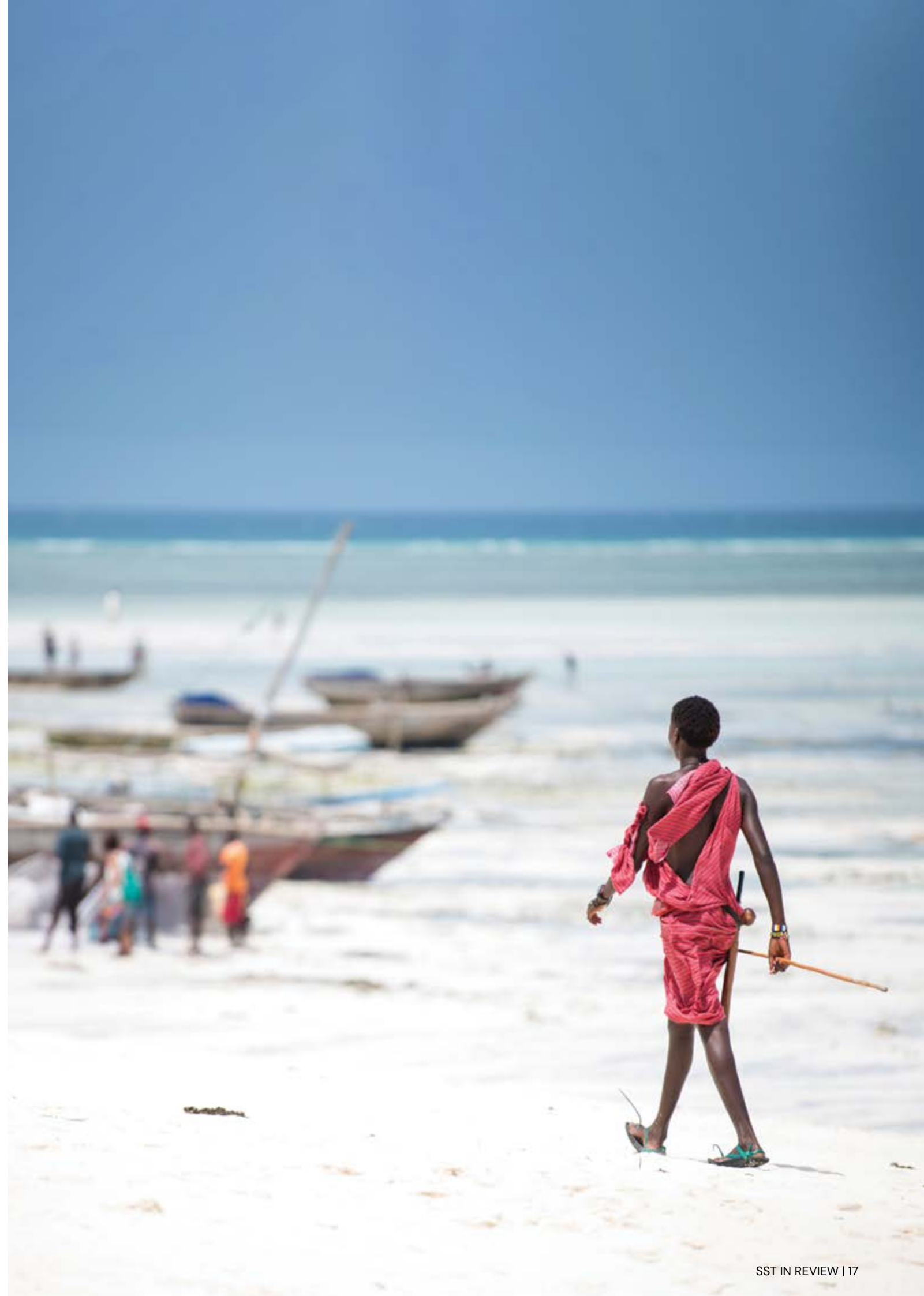
Two years later, SST presented its climate resolution at the United Nations Climate Change Conference, COP 17, in Durban, where it was unanimously adopted.

In December 2014, SST collaborated with Mission Blue, run by one of our patrons, Dr Sylvia Earle, to identify and launch the South African sites in the global Hope Spots campaign. SST specified the formal criteria for Hope Spots, which are ecologically unique marine areas designated for protection and conservation.

## African Marine Waste Network<sup>1</sup>

From the outset, SST laid heavy emphasis on education as the key to success in achieving the goals of sustainability, poverty alleviation, and conservation. Education was found to be particularly impactful when it was based on evidence gleaned from research that was pertinent to the situation, such as the resources and economies of a coastal village. Accordingly, education and research were woven into every SST project as key components. Importantly, the use of video content aided communication and led to better understanding.

<sup>1</sup> Now called the African Marine Network in the updated Theory of Change and strategy.





It was at the Second African Marine Debris Conference, hosted by PlasticsSA in 2015, that SST was invited to develop and run the African Marine Waste Network (AMWN), not because of SST's expertise in plastics, but because of its well-established network in Africa. SST soon discovered that the plastics issues, which superficially appear relatively simple, are indeed exceedingly complex and multifaceted. SST publicly stated that solving the plastics issues is more complex than rocket science. Rocket science is guided by the firm laws of physics, but plastics issues deal with every facet of human endeavours and behaviour.

The AMWN rapidly grew to become SST's largest and most dominant project, placing the sustainability, marine education, and research projects of marine biodiversity and ecological processes on the backburner. Given that SST had little experience in the management of plastic waste, the launch of the AMWN in July 2016 was arranged over three days so that workshops, calling upon experts, helped formulate the initial way forward for SST.

This was followed a year later by the first international conference of SST, which was attended by experts from Africa and elsewhere in the world to help define where Africa is now, where it needs to be in the future, and what needs to be done to achieve the goals of the network.

The conference guided SST to adopt the following four-pronged approach:

-  Embark upon research to better cope with the data-poor situation in Africa and produce evidence-based recommendations.
-  Promote education and capacity at every level.
-  Grow the networking across Africa to promote communication, sharing of knowledge and techniques.
-  Explore the economics of plastics, including the application of the principles of the circular economy to the African context.

In addition to the conference giving direction to the AMWN activities, many new partnerships were formed, and previous partnerships were renewed, such as those with the Nairobi Convention, Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association (WIOMSA), and the Abidjan Convention, all giving the networking components of the AMWN a massive boost.

A key partnership with Dr Karl Klingsheim of the Norwegian University of Science and Technology produced the significant proposal that led to several years of generous, gratefully received Norwegian funding to SST for its 'Towards Zero Plastics to the Seas of Africa' project. ■

## WHAT OUR PARTNERS SAY

**"Sustainable Seas Trust has been a valued partner for NTNU over many years. We will continue our fight against marine plastic pollution, and our preferred partner in Africa will always be SST."**

– Professor Karl Klingsheim, *Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU; Norway)*



Performance Review:

# TOWARDS ZERO PLASTICS TO THE SEAS OF AFRICA

Background and Context

In 2018, the Norwegian government launched a new development programme to combat marine litter and microplastics. The programme is intended to contribute to the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14.1 which states that, by 2025, the world should prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds.

In 2019, the Norwegian Embassy in Pretoria, South Africa, signed a four-year agreement with SST in support of a programme titled RAF-18/OO36 ‘Towards Zero Plastics to the Seas of Africa’. The grant amount was thirty-nine million and seven hundred thousand Norwegian Kroner (NOK). The four-year project came to an end in March

2023 and was given a no-cost extension until September 2023.

The ‘Towards Zero Plastics to the Seas of Africa’ project’s main goal was to help the 54 African continental and island states stop plastics from flowing into the environment and entering the seas, and had the following impact statement:

Protect and conserve ocean resources by reducing the flow of plastic pollution to the oceans off the coast of Africa.

It had three outcomes:

|           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Outcome 1 | Flow of plastic pollution to Nelson Mandela Bay, South Africa, will be reduced by 90% compared to 2019 baseline.                                                                                                   |
| Outcome 2 | Methodology used in Nelson Mandela Bay as a proof of concept will be shared and replicated in one catchment in each of the following countries: Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles and Tanzania. |
| Outcome 3 | Information on this methodology and lessons learned will be disseminated broadly throughout Africa.                                                                                                                |

The project contained four outputs, relevant for all three outcomes.

|          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Output 1 | Research regarding plastic waste (amount of waste, sources, transport and flow, toxicity, strategies for reducing waste) is generated for the scientific community, government, civil society and the private sector. |
| Output 2 | Education about plastic waste and its flow to the sea is carried out in schools, among adults, municipalities, civil society and business in the private sector.                                                      |
| Output 3 | Economic incentives and enterprises will be promoted for people in low-income areas to increase employment by using waste, thereby removing it from the environment.                                                  |
| Output 4 | Communications and networking will be used to increase understanding among the public, governments, civil society, academia and schools to encourage commitments to a clean environment.                              |

WHAT OUR PARTNERS SAY

“It is the scale and multi-dimensional focus of the ‘Towards Zero Plastics to the Seas of Africa’ project that makes it unique amongst projects that do similar work on the continent. It is impressive that SST holds strong working relationships with both the Abidjan and Nairobi Conventions. Few other organisations in Africa, if any, can boast the same.”

– Mr Chandru Wadhwani, Joint Managing Director, Extrupet (South Africa)





### Performance Review

Over the implementation period, the project achieved 66% of its targets, exceeding 55% of the targets it achieved. The remainder of targets that were missed occurred largely during years 1 and 2 and this is largely attributed to the impact of COVID-19. However, during year 3, the project managed to recover lost ground.

To date, the techniques for developing baselines, stopping waste flow, and monitoring progress ‘Towards Zero Plastics to the Seas of Africa’ have been established in Nelson Mandela Bay and the Western Indian Ocean countries. Instruction manuals and guidebooks to guide teams in South Africa and other countries have been developed for the management of macro- and microplastics. Education, capacity building and skills transfer methods and resources have been created

and are being rolled out into Africa. Economic enterprises and income development opportunities in impoverished areas have been identified and are ready to be multiplied. Comprehensive communications have been designed to meet the specific challenge of engaging diverse stakeholder groups, growing supportive networks and, ultimately, shifting behaviour towards anti-littering and waste-free living.

In an independent review of the project, key SST stakeholders indicated that the project has resulted in increased policy awareness of marine issues by regulators and National Government authorities. Furthermore, stakeholders indicated that they would continue using the knowledge products, such as guidelines and methodologies, developed. This means that the benefits will continue to be enjoyed by the respective countries and bodes well for the sustainability of the project interventions. ■

### WHAT OUR PARTNERS SAY

**“SST is one of WIOMSA’s key partners in delivery of our mission. SST staff delivered high-quality products, such as tools to aid in the management of marine litter and knowledge products with high reliability. Many of the materials created in collaboration with SST have been shared with our members, benefitting the wider WIO region community.”**

– Dr Arthur Tuda, Executive Secretary, *The Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association* (WIOMSA; Tanzania)



# TOP HIGHLIGHTS

Here are some of the major achievements from the last four years:

## Scientific Research and Monitoring

- **SST coordinated and developed the first regional litter monitoring programme for marine plastics.**
  - This programme has yielded new insights into the amount, type and sources of waste in Africa. Prior to this, most data were inferred.
  - However, despite the progress, Africa remains data poor. This work will therefore continue.
- **SST developed and published the first African Marine Litter Monitoring Manual (second edition published in October 2023).**
  - This manual describes the techniques and adjustments to techniques that have been used in the regional litter monitoring programme.
  - This manual has additionally been converted into a free online course, available on the *African Waste Academy*.
- **SST developed and published the first Sample Preparation Manual for the analysis of plastic-related pollutants.**
  - Macro- and microplastic-related pollutants are understudied in Africa. The development of this manual and the associated training course will work to build capacity within Africa, for Africans, to start developing data sets for these pollutants.
- **SST developed a citizen science training programme for the collection of macrolitter data on beaches.**
  - This course empowers citizens to know what type of data to take note of when picking up beach litter. This adds to the growing database of this type of waste and expands current understanding of litter and waste.

## Research Publications

### Peer-reviewed journal publications

Marlin D & Ribbink AJ. 2020. The African Marine Waste Network and its aim to achieve 'Zero Plastics to the Seas of Africa'. *South African Journal of Science*. 116(5/6), Art. #8104.

Barnardo T, van Niekerk TM, Pichegru L, & Marlin D. 2021. The first baseline estimation of marine litter in Port Elizabeth, South Africa. *Marine Pollution Bulletin* 172: 112903. ISSN 0025-326X.

Fourie AJ, Uren RC, Marlin D & Bouwman H. 2022. Metals and co-presence of other pollutants in mussels (*Perna perna*) around Algoa Bay: Human consumption safety concerns. *Marine Pollution Bulletin* 185: 114345.

Castro G, Fourie AJ, Marlin D, Venkatraman V, González SV & Asimakopoulos AG. 2022. Occurrence of bisphenols and benzophenone UV filters in wild brown mussels (*Perna perna*) from Algoa Bay in South Africa. *Science of the Total Environment* 813: 152571.

Swanepoel, S., Scheckle, T. J., & Marlin, D. (2023). Implementing Land-Based Litter Surveys Through Visual Inspection of Imagery Using Unmanned Aerial Vehicles. *Environmental Challenges*, 100753.

All research publications and resources are available on the [SST website](#).

## Education and Capacity Building

- SST developed the online *African Waste Academy* to provide online training courses and supplementary resources to people throughout Africa in support of sustainable waste management and anti-littering behaviour.
- SST developed and tested curriculum-aligned resources and school programmes to address plastic waste in schools and communities.
- This has led to the development of a comprehensive school programme that results in an income-generating collection and recycling initiative and an eco-club for the school.
- SST coordinated and published curriculum-aligned resources for educators.
- Due to the lack of plastic education in schools, these resources were developed and aligned to the curricula in seven Western Indian Ocean countries to provide teachers with an easy way to include this type of educational content in their classrooms.
- This has further been developed into an online course for educators, available on the *African Waste Academy*, to give them the necessary training to implement these resources within their schools.

## WHAT OUR PARTNERS SAY

**"The people [at SST] and the organisation are doing great work. They execute their tasks with enthusiasm and passion [and] work both with communities and policy makers, thereby maximising their impact. They are doing very relevant work for both our country and the African continent."**

– Professor Reza Daniels, Director: School of Economics, *University of Cape Town* (South Africa)



# CASE STUDY

## Munch-on-the-Move Educational Programme

Poor learner achievements in international assessment programmes demonstrate Africa's need to further develop capacity and support teachers to provide meaningful teaching and learning experiences that align with national curriculums.

The UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) – and particularly SDG goal 4.1 – highlight the need for inclusive, equitable, quality primary and secondary education, leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes for all learners by 2030.

Yet – and according to an education survey SST conducted – African educators find it increasingly challenging to create curriculum-linked learning opportunities that assist learners to identify sources and impacts of plastic pollution, as well as potential solutions to plastic pollution. Exacerbating this reality is the current, limited curriculum content focusing on the circular economy, waste, littering, pollution (and solutions).

Qualitative research further indicates that educators feel they are not equipped to meaningfully address behaviour change or the long-term impact of driving sustainable waste management and the blue economy within their classrooms.

Against this background, SST has taken the initiative and developed an innovative educational support programme called "Munch". This programme provides inclusive quality learning experiences which directly address the high-inequality index within schools. The programme also provides relevant, accurate knowledge, training and resources, and assists schools in establishing a funding stream that will help drive continued upliftment opportunities.

In essence, Munch is a large, transportable wire recycling deposit, shaped to resemble a fish, and divided into different compartments, each intended to collect a different recyclable material. It is specifically designed to collect PET and HDPE plastic bottles and lids and aluminium cans (amongst the most widely littered packaging items).

It also has small access gates for easy removal of the recyclable waste (which can then be stored in recycling bags or bins until a local buy-back centre or individual waste reclaimer comes to collect it).

The Munch Education Programme supports SST's vision of emboldening educators with an accurate and reliable resource that will help them prepare and present relevant teaching opportunities that are fun for learners, as well as develop sustained behaviour changes with respect to recycling.

In South Africa, the international transport company Pickfords Removals has generously assisted SST by sponsoring the transport of the Munch recycling deposit between schools. The strategy is to have Munch stay with one partner school for a short period before moving on to support another school. Referred to as "Munch-on-the-Move", this represents the next iteration of the broader Munch educational programme and enables SST to support more educators and learners.

Taking things a step further, Munch also aims to address environmental pollution within communities that do not have access to municipal services. It further provides communities with access to certain socio-economic benefits, such as the ability to unlock income-generating opportunities for themselves. Funds generated from selling recyclables on to local, informal buy-back centres or informal waste reclaimers can be channelled back into the schools. The model is also transferable across different contexts in Africa. The educational support material has thus far been aligned to several African curricula but can be adapted to any country quite easily once the context is understood.

So far, approximately 1 800 kilograms of plastic waste have been collected from schools through the Munch-on-the-Move education programme. SST believes this programme has the potential to make big waves in providing meaningful learning experiences en route to achieving zero waste to the seas of Africa.



Scan this QR code to watch the video

## Economic Enterprises and Incentives

- SST supported the growth and expansion of the Motherwell Community and Enviro Hub in one of Nelson Mandela Bay's poorest and largest townships. It is now a thriving buy-back centre making a difference in a community once suffocated by plastic waste.
- SST's involvement in the project has informed the organisation's understanding of the economics of recycling, and the economic and social impacts innate to recycling interventions in informal communities. This knowledge will prove critical when working in other informal communities with similar stakeholders.
- SST undertook an Economic Impact Assessment (EIA) for the Call-2-Action Programme and Packa-Ching model in Buffalo City Municipality, unpacking two operational models used in the recovery of recyclable materials. These models were assessed for their social and economic impact, and the efficacy in the collection of materials. This information will be integral to the successful roll-out of mandatory Extended Producer Responsibility in South Africa and elsewhere.



# CASE STUDY

## Motherwell Community and Enviro Hub

To achieve our overarching goal of zero plastics to the seas of Africa, SST worked with like-minded people, businesses and organisations who are passionate about improving the lives of their communities and the health of the environments in which they exist.

The Motherwell Community and Enviro Hub is one example where successful partnerships and dedication to a common cause have brought about big change.

The high-density settlement of Motherwell in Gqeberha, Eastern Cape, has for many years been a biodiversity priority area under critical threat from pollution. Lacking proper waste management, disposal and storage systems, it was not uncommon to see children playing amongst piles of illegally dumped, unhealthy and unsafe waste. Due to the close proximity to the Zwartkops estuary, much of this waste also ended up in the ocean.

With the area battling severe poverty, SST knew from the start that any attempt to tackle Motherwell's waste crisis would need to go hand-in-hand with partnering with and supporting the local community.

SST therefore decided, instead of starting from scratch, to rather support the good work already being done by various organisations working in Motherwell to address the socio-economic and environmental challenges and help to develop Motherwell's existing, community-run waste

initiative into an integrated and comprehensive waste sustainability hub – known today as the Motherwell Community and Enviro Hub.

The Motherwell Community and Enviro Hub, with its new, fully operational, solar-powered and rainwater-fed building, is indeed a wonderful example of community engagement and upliftment for the greater good of the environment.

Besides creating awareness around Motherwell's waste crisis, another big driver for SST was skills development within this community, particularly the empowerment of women and children to become proactive in tackling the township's waste crisis.

SST's support to the Motherwell Community and Enviro Hub extended to conducting over 20 training workshops for all 18 staff members. Additionally, SST successfully imparted knowledge to 100 children and organised five training events focused on arts and crafts.

SST's involvement in the project has informed the organisation's understanding of the economics of recycling, and the economic and social impacts innate to recycling interventions in informal communities. This knowledge will prove critical when working in other informal communities with similar stakeholders. SST subsequently created a visual showpiece of this case study – a now-thriving buy-back centre in a Gqeberha community once suffocated by plastic waste.



Scan this QR code to watch the video



## Strategic Stakeholder Engagement and Communications

- **Maps:** SST developed the *African Marine Network maps*, which consist of the Waste Organisations and Projects map and the Recycling and Waste Locations map.
- These maps currently function as a membership portal for the African Marine Network.
- These maps provide a valuable information service and have become a source of accurate, reliable information with regards to businesses involved in the recycling and repurposing of waste.
- **Guidebook:** SST is developing a detailed *Guidebook for the Development of National and Regional Action Plans to Address Plastic Waste*, to be widely published in early 2024. The Guidebook is aligned with the discussions

currently taking place within the context of the Global Plastics Treaty and gives clear guidelines to address plastic waste at every point in the value chain. It will be an invaluable resource to African partners in meeting their obligations to the treaty, as well as their Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

- **Action Plans:** Working with the Abidjan Convention, SST developed practical national and regional action plans for selected member states, linked to specific actions for specified stakeholder groups (see 'Case Study: Action Plans to Combat Plastic Waste for the Abidjan Convention' for more).
- **Operation Clean Spot:** SST trialled and tested the innovative Operation Clean Spot (OCS) campaign in Nelson Mandela Bay. Included in this is the successful development of the OCS mapping platform and a specialised integrated model for sustainable waste management across the packaging value chain.

## WHAT OUR PARTNERS SAY

"SST helped three Abidjan Convention country members (Côte d'Ivoire, DRC and Mauritania) draft their national action plan to address plastic pollution across the value chain. Thanks to this partnership, the Abidjan Convention secretariat can assist its contracting parties in drawing up their national policies. The collaboration with SST is profitable for both the Abidjan Convention Secretariat and its countries. The Abidjan Convention sees SST as an invaluable resource in terms of technical expertise."

– Dr Abdoulaye Diagana, Programme Coordinator, *Abidjan Convention* (Abidjan)



## CASE STUDY

### Action Plans to Combat Plastic Waste for the Abidjan Convention

Through our ongoing partnerships with multilateral organisations, SST is supporting various African countries to draft comprehensive regional and national action plans to address plastic pollution.

Under the project titled *Assisting the Abidjan Convention to Develop a Strategy for National and Regional Action Plans to Better Manage Plastics*, SST compiled a National Action Plan for **Côte d'Ivoire**, which was presented to stakeholders at an international World Environment Day event focused on solutions to plastic pollution and hosted by UNEP in Abidjan in mid-2023.

This was the first of three action plans to be developed for the Abidjan Convention area. The second and third, an action plan for **Mauritania** and one for the **Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)**, have also been completed.

SST has also developed a **regional action plan** covering the whole Abidjan Convention area, along with a **draft protocol on plastic pollution**, and **best practice guidelines for the development of national action plans** for other member countries of the Abidjan Convention. Besides Côte d'Ivoire, Mauritania and the Democratic Republic of Congo, other countries that have been profiled are Angola, Benin, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, the Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Nigeria, São Tomé e Príncipe, South Africa and the Republic of The Gambia.

These country profiles, together with the assessment of waste management systems, the collation of information on 1500 key stakeholders, and a thorough review of pertinent policies and legislation, represent the core around which national and regional action plans can be developed to assist other African countries better manage their waste – and particularly plastic waste, which is a major contributor to marine pollution and risk to the blue economy. Further sustaining the project is its close alignment with the UN's intergovernmental negotiations which are aimed at developing an internationally legally binding treaty to combat plastic pollution.

# CASE STUDY

## Operation Clean Spot

Since its launch in 2021, SST's Operation Clean Spot (OCS) has quickly become a litter minimisation high-achiever and an African environmental success story.

As SST's flagship citizen science project, OCS is an innovative and ingeniously practical ongoing project with far-reaching potential to help mitigate South Africa and Africa's waste crises.

With the help of many organisations and individuals, this initiative is also bringing SST significantly closer to achieving its ultimate goal of zero waste to the seas of Africa.

Founded on the principle that clean and healthy communities lead to a clean and healthy ocean, OCS partners with businesses, schools, and concerned citizens wanting to make a difference in the most immediate and simple of ways in their local communities by adopting a spot of their choice and keeping it clean of plastic and other forms of waste.

In 2022 alone, and thanks to the combined efforts between public clean-up events and citizens becoming stewards of spots by keeping them litter free, OCS facilitated more than 200 clean-ups and removed 13 622 kilograms of waste from the environment.

What is even more encouraging is the groundswell of support OCS is receiving in taking care of SA's

coastal environments in particular. While much of OCS's focus has been on cleaning up the Nelson Mandela Bay area, things are quickly extending both inland and to other coastal areas.

OCS is unique in that it can be implemented by ordinary people – school children, families, company employees, sports clubs, interest groups, online influencers – whose participation draws attention to the bigger picture of pollution and the plastic waste crisis.

Waste is a challenge that reaches across the value chain and each stakeholder must understand and embrace their specific role if African communities are to be cleaned up. SST believes this is what is missing from many other, similar projects attempting to address the issue of plastic and other waste in the environment. The work is not conducted across the entire value chain but tends to be siloed into one part thereof.

This type of approach means interventions are often not as successful as they could be. The OCS model therefore introduces a holistic intervention that includes and empowers the full value chain to address waste.

It is, therefore, this scale and multi-dimensional focus of the OCS project which makes it unique amongst projects that do similar work on the African continent.



# IMPACT DASHBOARD

Over the review period, SST achieved the following outputs in support of targeted UN Sustainable Development Goals:



## SHAPING SOCIETAL TRANSFORMATION THROUGH EDUCATION (Goal 4)

- 27 170 learners reached through school visits and events
- 1 050 teachers trained
- 141 educational resources developed
- 129 online courses and webinars provided
- 40 schools reached
- 29 recycling programmes launched
- 10 training workshops: research
- 3 training workshops: waste reclaimers
- 2 training workshops: waste management and recycling
- 1 training workshop: business
- 51 000 unique visitors to website
- 72 000 website sessions
- New SST website launched



## STRENGTHENING THE ECONOMY (Goals 8, 11 and 12)

- Developed the unique online *African Waste Academy* to provide online training courses throughout Africa in support of sustainable waste management and anti-littering behaviour.
- Developed the *African Marine Network maps*.
- Developed a *citizen science training programme*, available on the African Waste Academy, for the collection of macrolitter data on beaches.
- Developed *Litterlogga*, a mobile app designed to support citizen scientists and researchers to collect comparable information about litter in the environment.
- Completed Economic Impact Assessment for the Call-2-Action Programme and Packa-Ching model in Buffalo City Municipality, assessing two operational models used in the recovery of recyclable materials for social and economic impact, and efficacy in the collection of materials.
- Supported the growth and expansion of the Motherwell Community and Enviro Hub, a buy-back centre in one of Nelson Mandela Bay's poorest and largest townships.



## SUSTAINING THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT (Goal 14)

- Produced five peer-reviewed research articles towards understanding the impact of and potential solutions to marine litter in the environment.
- Developed and published the first *African Marine Litter Monitoring Manual*.
- Developed and published the first *Sample Preparation Manual* for the analysis of plastic-related pollutants.
- Developed the first regional litter monitoring programme for marine plastics in Africa.



## IMPROVING GOVERNANCE (Goal 16)

- Achieved clean annual financial audits over the reporting period.
- >80% attendance by trustees at Board meetings (16 meetings over the reporting period).
- Progress with diversity and inclusion at Board level (29% females, 43% black and 29% coloured trustees).
- Finalised internal policies and procedural documents for human resources and financial management.
- Adherence to internally developed operational management and governance processes.



## SEEKING PARTNERSHIP (Goal 17)

### International Partnerships and Affiliations

- Abidjan Convention
- CEFAS (Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science)
- Mission Blue
- Nairobi Convention
- Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU)
- Our Blue Future
- United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP)
- Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association (WIOMSA)

### National and Local Project Partnerships

- African Marine Solutions (AMSOL)
- Border-Kei Chamber of Business
- Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)
- Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE)
- Department of Science and Innovation (DSI)
- Durban Partnership Against Plastic Pollution
- Eastern Cape Parks and Tourism Agency (ECPTA)
- Alliance to End Plastic Waste
- GreenCape
- I Am Water Ocean Conservation
- MyWaste
- National Marine Sanctuary Foundation
- Nelson Mandela Bay Tourism (NMBT)
- Nelson Mandela University (NMU)
- Plastics|SA
- Petco
- Pick n Pay
- Raggy Charters
- South African Environmental Observation Network (SAEON)
- South African Local Government Association (SALGA)
- South African Initiative to End Plastic Waste in the Environment
- South African Maritime Safety Authority (SAMSA)
- South African Plastics Pact
- The Beach Cooperative
- WWF South Africa



Anca Milushev | Shutterstock

## WHAT OUR PARTNERS SAY

**“SST’s impact on marine conservation is substantial. The SST team displays a wealth of knowledge and passion when it comes to protecting Africa’s seas and communities and marine conservation.”**

– Ms Cheri Scholtz, CEO, *Petco Producer Responsibility Organisation* (South Africa)

Over the last 18 months, SST has undergone an intensive brand repositioning exercise to better reflect our strategic objectives as a growing African organisation that is serious about tackling big-picture issues, such as climate change, as well as plastic and other forms of waste.

We started by implementing a thorough Theory of Change within our organisation. Driven by research and compelling evidence, we looked at how we could achieve our long-term goals by better supporting communities and the organisations we work with, connecting all stakeholders and creating a stronger and more relevant brand presence within the field.

### A Unique Value Proposition

The foundation for our organisational Theory of Change is a unique value proposition guided by the following three overarching questions:

#### What Is the Biggest Challenge Our Stakeholders Have?

The impacts of plastic debris on marine ecosystems are many and varied, but the most visible impacts include the ingestion, suffocation and entanglement of hundreds of marine species, many of which have commercial value. Marine debris can additionally damage and degrade habitats; interfere with navigational safety; degrade the quality of life in coastal communities; and threaten human health and safety. This profound ripple effect means decisive and clear action must be taken to mitigate the risk of marine pollution to the seas of Africa through enabling the blue economy.

#### How Does SST Solve This Challenge?

To realise the goal of a sustainable blue economy for Africa, SST recognises that work must start on land. The data paucity in Africa, related to litter, waste and plastics in the environment, has been addressed to some extent, but significant work is still needed in this regard.

SST has developed and consolidated models of operation, design principles, and appropriate resources to inform comprehensive plans of action, on various scales of impact and across the plastic

value chain, for the sustainable management of plastic waste. The organisation now seeks to take the knowledge, and resources and design principles learned over the last four years and scale up its programmes of impact to meaningfully address waste in the environment, beyond plastic, and support sustainable waste management practices in Africa towards the prevention of marine pollution, a key risk to the blue economy.

This is about more than simply preventing plastic waste. It is about ensuring that sustainable waste management practices encompass all relevant waste-related risks to the ocean – be that industrial, agricultural or household waste – and that behaviour across the value chain is ultimately transformed.

#### What Can SST Offer That No Other African Organisation Can?

SST provides a trusted and credible foundation of scientific knowledge, experience, credibility and trust upon which environmental and economic marine health, wealth and wellbeing in Africa can be built, while the African Marine Network delivers the means to do so through a collective community of collaboration and cooperation.

We in SST have the following strengths:

- We are focused on Africa's seas and Africa's communities.
- We have an African footprint: Our network of current work extends to 32 of the 54 continental and island states of Africa, with communications into all.
- We are science-based: independent, researched, proven and impartial.
- We are inclusive: a marine impact organisation, available and open to all.
- We are credible and respected in Africa as the go-to brand for matters of marine impact.
- We have a strong, extensive and inclusive partner network.
- We have a large library of resources, data, information, content and knowledge.
- We are established and have decades of experience and expertise in marine sustainability, training, transfer of knowledge and capacitation, and research.

### WHAT OUR PARTNERS SAY

**“[SST's] collaborative approach and ability to reach throughout Africa is remarkable. 'Towards Zero Plastics to the Seas of Africa' is an innovative and necessary initiative that has been well executed. They are playing a vital role in Africa in the marine waste field.”**

– Dr Judy Mann-Lang, Executive: Strategic Projects, *Two Oceans Foundation* (South Africa)



# ■ OUR VISION AND MISSION

## Our Vision

A future where the people of Africa and her seas flourish together.

## Our Mission

We inspire and empower all those who live in Africa to value and care for her seas for both the long-term benefits and the people's continuous wellbeing.

We are working towards uplifting and sustaining our fellow African communities by fostering and providing solutions that will enable the blue economy.

Through education, research and targeted action, as well as partnerships, let us curb the risk of marine pollution through integrating waste management principles into value chains. To realise the goal of a sustainable blue economy for Africa, we first need to start on land.



## ■ OUR THEORY OF CHANGE

Sustainable Seas Trust has an ambitious vision of success of realising a future where the people of Africa and her seas flourish together. To realise this impact, the organisation has defined the following **positioning statement**.

Using waste as the lens, *marine pollution* as the impact being mitigated against, and coastal communities (meaning cities, towns and villages located on the African coastline) as the focal point of interactions between land and ocean, SST works towards the following overarching impact:

# A future where the people of Africa and her seas flourish together.

## Our Strategies to Realise our Intended Impact:

- 01** Support governments at all levels to champion sustainable waste management principles.
- 02** Partner with multilateral and regional bodies to support improved good governance and advocate for sustainable waste management approaches.
- 03** Collaborate with businesses to transform their waste generation practices and support local recycling initiatives.
- 04** Engage with coastal communities to improve their quality of life through identifying opportunities for income generation through recycling.
- 05** Foster change in attitude and behaviour of all people for responsible consumption and a sustainable waste economy.

## Amplified by our Interventions to:



Build strategic partnerships and help influence public opinion.



Share best practice.



Design and implement innovative research programmes and appropriate support resources.



Secure financing and manage risk.

## We aim to achieve the following long-term outcomes within the next 5 years:

- Policies, legislation, institutions and behaviours are aligned with sustainable waste management principles resulting in decreased pollution, litter and littering behaviour in African coastal communities.
- Local authorities support sustainable waste management behaviour in their communities.
- Local businesses in the packaging value chains reduce waste generation.
- African countries support education for sustainable development and sustainable waste management across the packaging value chain.
- Local communities value and care for the ocean through the development of a deep love, connection and appreciation for it.
- SST is a leader in the international marine conservation sector.

# A FUTURE WHERE THE PEOPLE OF AFRICA AND HER SEAS FLOURISH TOGETHER.

LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

Policies, legislation, institutions and behaviours are aligned with sustainable waste management principles resulting in decreased pollution, litter and littering behaviour in African coastal communities.

Local authorities are equipped to support sustainable waste management behaviour in their communities.

Local businesses in the packaging value chain supported and empowered to reduce waste generation.

Appropriate and relevant high-quality resources developed and implemented, at scale, across Africa to support education for sustainable development and sustainable waste management across the packaging value chain.

Local communities capacitated to value and care for the ocean through the development of a deep love, connection and appreciation for it.

IMMEDIATE AND INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES

Governments at all levels, and multi-lateral and regional organisations consider research outcomes when writing waste management policies and are therefore empowered to champion sustainable waste management practice.

SST has relationships with governments at all levels with staff understanding the roles and responsibilities of different spheres of government

Governments at all levels, and multilateral / regional organisations are aware of key SST research outputs, partnering with SST for increased impact.

National governments prioritise education for sustainability and understand sustainable waste management needs.

Increased recognition of the value of waste across the value chain.

Increased knowledge of waste & sustainable waste management in Africa across the simplified value chain.

Increased appreciation of the contributions that SST research programmes make to the sustainable management of waste on the continent.

Local authorities support sustainable waste management behaviour in their communities by working collaboratively with the private sector and communities.

Increased appreciation for nature and waste management amongst key stakeholders across Africa.

SST holds functional partnerships with like minded organisations across Africa.

Local businesses in the packaging value chain reduce their overall waste generation and support anti-littering activities in their neighborhood.

Local businesses align their waste management practices with sustainable waste management.

Local businesses engage with SST to understand their waste generation practices and to train their staff on sustainable waste management.

Educators implement curriculum aligned resources for sustainable development within their classrooms.

Curriculum developers and educators (formal and informal) recognise the value of education for sustainability.

The African Marine Network provides an enriching membership experience with SST that facilitates the collation and exchange of marine conservation knowledge, expertise and skills to relevant African communities with the aim of developing strong commitment and measurable action towards sustainable waste management principles.

The African Youth Network stimulates youth towards collective action and help amplify their voices, to become actively involved in the solving Africa's waste challenges through sustainable.

SST's members contribute financially through a well-managed membership programme which fosters commitment to sustainable waste management practices.

An African Youth Network is functional and vibrant.

Consumers do not litter because of the deep connection and appreciation they have developed for the ocean.

Coastal communities assist their small businesses and entrepreneurs operating within the recycling and waste sector to grow sustainably through collaboratively identifying opportunities for economic and enterprise development

The challenges impeding sustainable waste management in identified coastal communities are researched and understood.

PROGRAMMES OF IMPACT

Business Development and Strategy

Legal and Risk Management

Research, Development and Monitoring

Community Upliftment and Enterprise Development

Education and Capacity Development

Strategic Stakeholder Engagement

## OUR CORE VALUES



**Rigour:** Credible, observant, and analytical. We pay close attention to the world and are a peer-reviewed, science-based organisation. Deeply researched and well documented knowledge is the foundation of moving towards a sustainable future.



**Enabling:** Working together through collaboration, co-operation and a sense of community creates lasting impact. We are committed to enabling and uplifting individuals along their journey.



**Impact-Driven:** Excellence in everything we do. We take action, and hold ourselves accountable to ensure we make a meaningful and positive impact through passion and high-functioning properties.

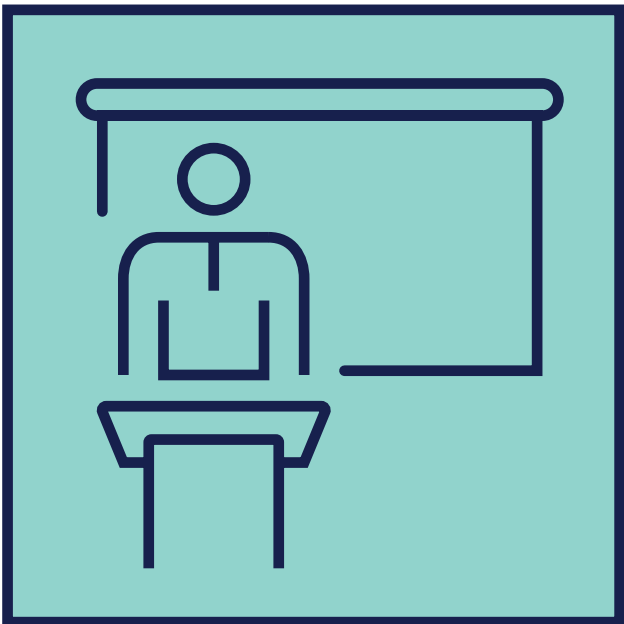
# We have developed a powerful 4-pillar approach to realise these outcomes:



## PILLAR 1: What We Are Learning Research, Development and Monitoring

Research, development and monitoring is our first pillar. We design well-structured, high-quality research programmes to generate comprehensive understanding of the challenges impacting sustainable waste management in identified coastal communities. Our stakeholders are key, and, through our African Network Maps, we are able to map stakeholders to identify potential partnership opportunities for collaborative development towards sustainable waste management.

We also design all our interventions when it comes to training, skills transfer, capacity building, community upliftment and enterprise development based on our stakeholder engagement strategy. This includes direct strategic guidance and advice across the packaging value chain, on a national and regional level, to mitigate and eliminate waste in the environment and support sustainable waste management. Informed impact reporting through robust organisational monitoring and evaluation gives us the tools we need to understand whether our interventions are effective and have had the desired impact.



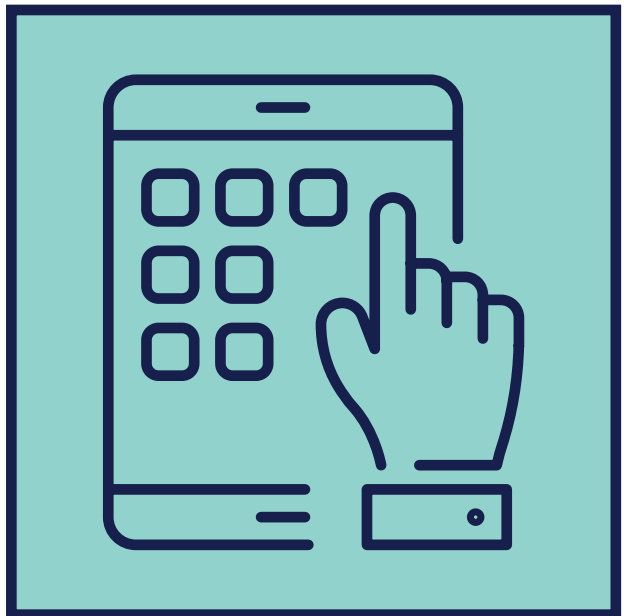
## PILLAR 3: What We Are Teaching Education and Capacity Building

To facilitate meaningful change, we need to start from the ground up. We believe education can change behaviour. We therefore design and develop appropriate and relevant high-quality resources for implementation, at scale, across Africa to support education for sustainable development and waste management across the packaging value chain. Our unique e-learning platform, the African Waste Academy, is the first of its kind on the continent. It's an active platform for collaboration, resource- and knowledge-sharing, capacity building and support for mitigating marine pollution challenges across Africa.



## PILLAR 2: Where We Are Helping Community Upliftment and Enterprise Development

We work collaboratively with communities to upskill and empower identified SMMEs and informal collectors operating in the recycling and waste sector, equipping local authorities to support sustainable waste management behaviour in their communities, and supporting local businesses in the packaging value chain to reduce waste generation. In addition, we capacitate local communities to value and care for the ocean through the development of a deep love and appreciation for the ocean. In this way, we work to support coastal communities to mitigate the impact of marine pollution while working with them to create sustainable income-generating opportunities for themselves.



## PILLAR 4: How We Are Working Strategic Stakeholder Engagement

We provide an enriching and collaborative membership experience. One of the tools we provide to assist stakeholders is The African Marine Network Maps, an interactive mapping platform that spatially connects waste research and management role-players across the different sectors of the packaging value chain. Our integrated community clean-up campaign, Operation Clean Spot, further allows us to gather measurable results and design principles for a cohesive approach towards waste management across different stakeholder groups.

The 'Towards Zero Plastics to the Seas of Africa' project fundamentally shifted the trajectory of SST forever. Now, the organisation is well-placed to take the knowledge, resources and design principles gleaned from this project, and scale up its programmes of impact to meaningfully address waste in the environment, beyond plastic, and support sustainable waste management practices in Africa towards the prevention of marine pollution, a key risk to the blue economy.

SST's mandate has now been broadened to include all waste, broader than simply plastics, as an ambitious vision that can resonate with people and in which they can be included to help stop waste at source, wherever they live, work or play. Thus, SST's laser focus is on supporting Africa towards achieving zero waste to its seas.

SST has strong relationships with several multilateral organisations in Africa. Strengthening these partnerships to support a just transition for Africa to a circular and blue economy will be the priority of the organisation's national and international operational activities moving forward.

### Focus areas will include:

#### 1. Operation Clean Spot:

- SST's programme in support of sustainable waste management across the packaging value chain, Operation Clean Spot, will be scaled into other selected densely populated coastal cities in Africa through the African Marine Network and in partnership with new and existing stakeholders.

#### 2. Enterprise Development:

- SST will support and enable previously marginalised individuals in the recycling sector to move themselves up the value chain.

#### 3. Extended Producer Responsibility:

- In partnership with key stakeholders and partners across Africa, and within the context of the incipient Global Plastics Treaty, SST will support the roll-out of mandatory Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) policies and voluntary EPR activities within an African context.

#### 4. Youth Engagement and Adult Capacity Building:

- SST will support teachers to provide meaningful teaching and learning experiences in support of sustainable waste management interventions.
- SST will create, in partnership with others, an accountable and representative network platform to facilitate meaningful collaboration, resource- and knowledge-sharing for the youth of Africa.

#### 5. Abandoned, Lost and Otherwise Discarded Fishing Gear (Ghost Gear):

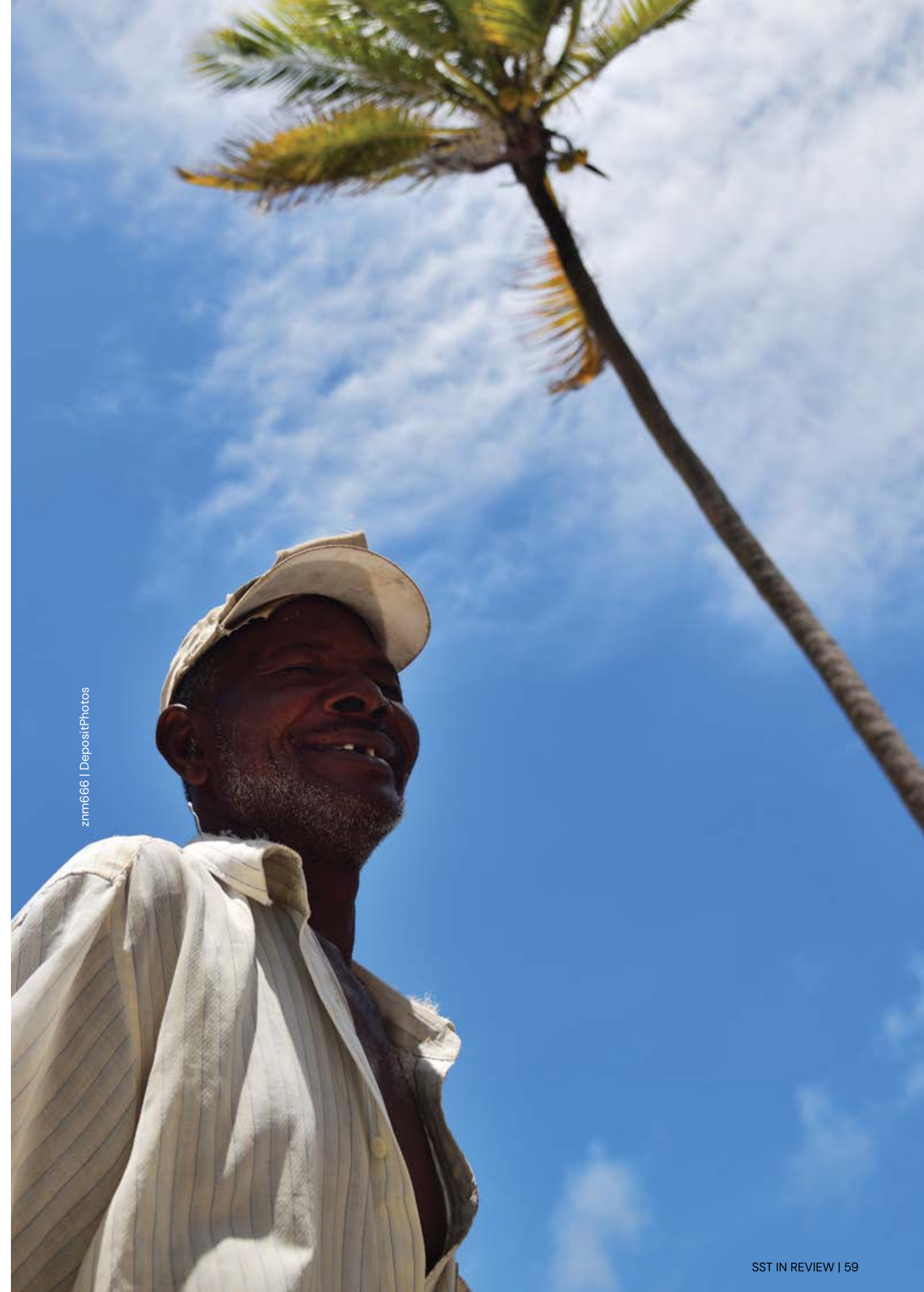
- SST will work with partners to mitigate waste from fishing and other vessels through reviews of waste collection activities, sorting, and disposal methods and appropriate training programmes.

Furthermore, SST will continue to mobilise academia, business, government and civil society within coastal African countries and across borders to stop waste at source and clean up pollution on land to systematically and measurably stop the flow of waste to the sea. These actions will contribute not only towards the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals for each country in which the work is undertaken, but also towards the commitments made to the developing global plastics treaty.

### WHAT OUR PARTNERS SAY

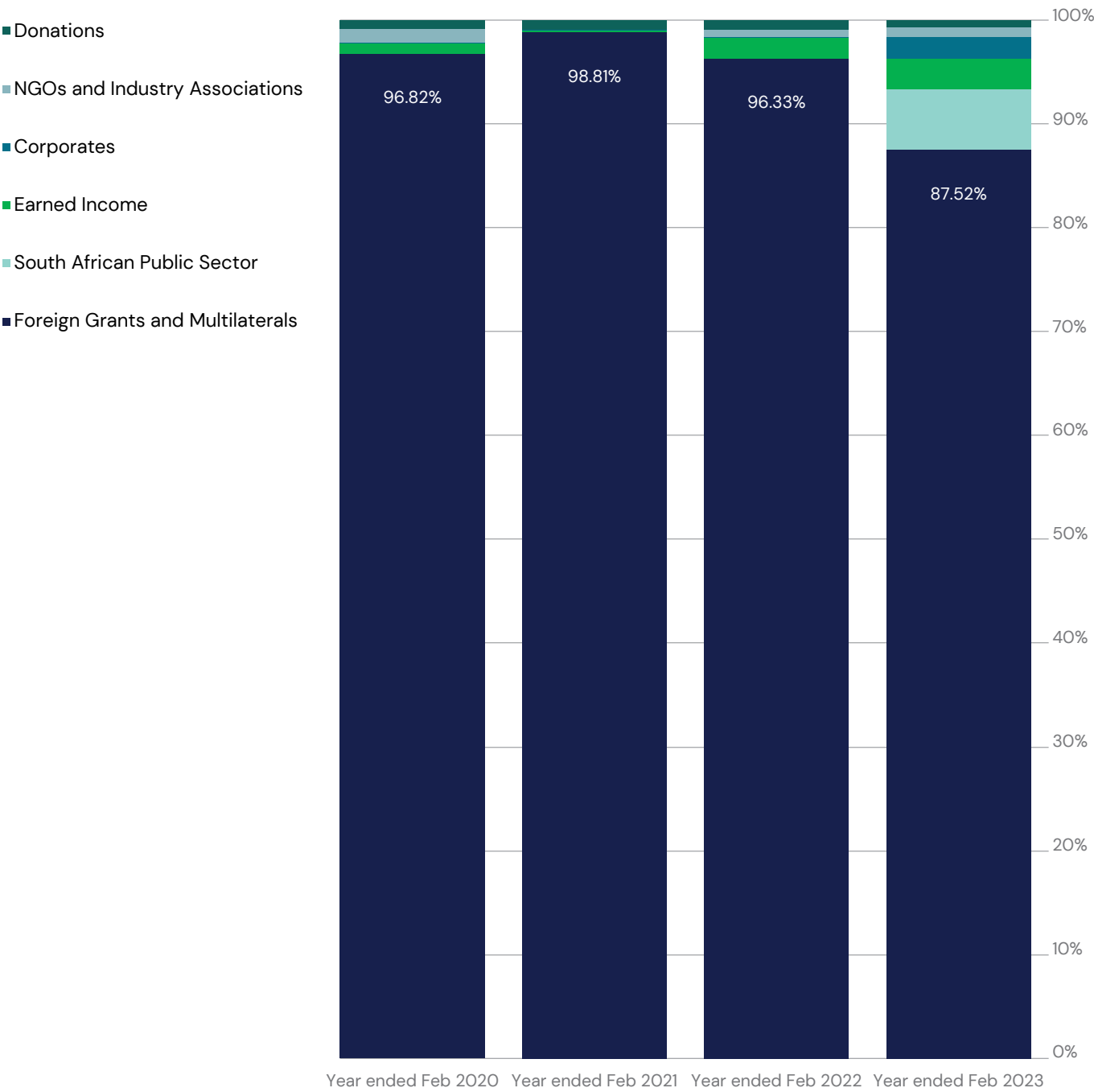
**"Our collaboration with SST in the clean ocean space has helped us to maximise the impact of collective efforts and has contributed to the overall health and sustainability of our oceans, most especially our advocacy work in Ghana and West Africa."**

– Mr Daniel Yaw Mensah Tornyigah, Executive Director  
Federation Of Plastic Manufacturers Recyclers and Users (Ghana)



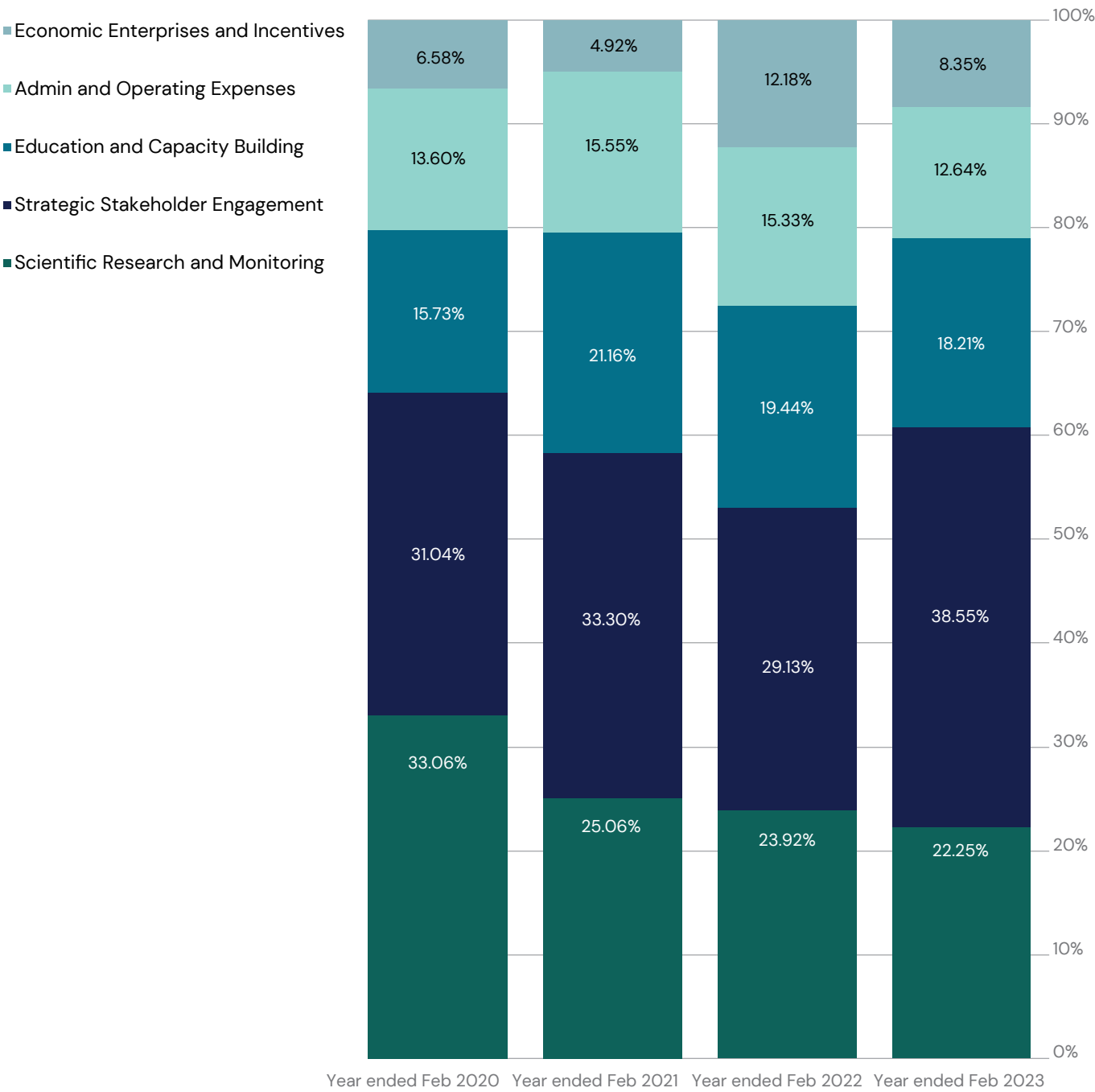
A significant proportion of SST’s funding over the last four years has come from foreign grants and multilateral organisations. During this time, SST has managed to increase its earned income through consultancy work. In 2023, SST received funding from the South African public sector towards events hosted in Nelson Mandela Bay, which is why the proportion of funding from that sector increased during this period. It will be a priority in the coming years to diversify SST’s funding sources and improve the sustainability of such funding.

Income by source



A higher proportion of funds was utilised for research in the first year, while in the last year a higher proportion of funding was reserved for strategic stakeholder engagement, compared to previous years. This utilisation of funds reflects SST’s strategic approach to projects, which involves investing in sound research at the outset in order to design and implement appropriate interventions, and then ensuring effective communication of the interventions and sharing of resources through strategic stakeholder engagement. SST is always looking at ways to streamline operating and administration expenses in order to focus funds on the impactful projects happening on the ground.

Utilisation of funds



# BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Trustees are appointed to manage and govern the assets of SST. Thus, they have a fiduciary responsibility to protect the organisation's best interests in decisions made on its behalf. While not involved in operational activities, trustees oversee the health and all aspects of SST's strategic direction. Their primary role is to provide the non-executive leadership in the management of the fiduciary, legal and ethical aspects of the trust and to provide strategic guidance. The board of trustees does not necessarily require technical expertise as technical input may be provided by the advisory panel as needed. The trustees are not remunerated and pay their own expenses to attend all meetings.

DonyaNedomam | DepositPhotos



**Mr Mike Rodel**  
CEO of *EMRE* Retail Developers & Co-Founder of RE-TEC  
Appointed as a trustee in 2013. Chair since 2016.



**Mr Nceba Mfini**  
Human Resources Executive, *African Marine Solutions*  
Appointed as a trustee in 2018.



**Mr Ntsako Baloyi**  
Head of Sustainability for *Coca-Cola Beverages South Africa*  
Appointed as a trustee in 2021.



**Ms Janine Osborne**  
CEO of *Sustainable Seas Trust*  
Appointed as a trustee in 2022.



**Mr Gordon Turner**  
Director of *CA Trust Company*  
Appointed as the corporate trustee in 2023.



**Dr Henry J. Roman**  
Director of Environmental Services and Technologies, *Department of Science and Innovation* (2011 – Oct 2023); Regional Representative for Southern Africa, *International Water Management Institute* (Nov 2023 – present)  
Appointed as a trustee in 2023.



**Ms Telly Chauke**  
Chief Sustainability Officer and Executive Manager, Sustainability Business Unit, *Coega Development Corporation*  
Appointed as a trustee in 2023.

# ADVISORY PANEL

SST's advisory panel does not make strategic decisions. Instead, the members provide current knowledge, critical thinking and analysis to assist SST's executive leadership to make better decisions, set more aspirational goals and get things done better and more efficiently. SST has a healthy spread of panellists, drawn from

organisations representing the western and eastern sides of Africa (including the Abidjan and Nairobi Conventions, UNEP, WIOMSA). In South Africa, expertise is sourced from government, academia, business, and NGOs. All advisory panel members are highly esteemed, mostly in leadership positions, and are well recognised locally and abroad.

**Prof Linda Godfrey**

Principal Researcher, *Council for Scientific and Industrial Research*  
Chair

**Dr Julius Francis**

Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association (*WIOMSA*)  
Vice-chair

**Dr Tony Ribbink**

Founder and first CEO, SST

**Ms Cheri Scholtz**

CEO, *Petco*

**Mr Douw Steyn**

Sustainability Director, *Plastics/SA*

**Dr Henry J. Roman**

Regional Representative for Southern Africa, *International Water Management Institute*

**Dr Jared Bosire**

Programme Officer, UNEP Nairobi Convention

**Dr Judy Mann-Lang**

Executive for Strategic Projects, *Two Oceans Aquarium Education Foundation*

**Ms Nitasha Baijnath-Pillay**

Specialist Advisor for Aquatic Science and Coastal Infrastructure Development, *National Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries*

**Prof Peter Ryan**

Director of the *FitzPatrick Institute of African Ornithology*, University of Cape Town

**Dr Reza Che Daniels**

Associate Professor, *School of Economics*, University of Cape Town

**Mr Wilfred Chivell**

Founder, *Dyer Island Conservation Trust*

**Dr Chris Wilcox**

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Director, *Sustainable Ocean Initiative*

**Mr Chris Whyte**

Circular Economy Specialist





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**Dr Sylvia Earle**, founder of *Mission Blue*, which aims to establish marine protected areas – called Hope Spots – globally.

**Prof Derrick Swartz**, who was instrumental in developing Nelson Mandela University’s leadership role in marine sciences, education and conservation.

**Mr Craig Foster**, one of South Africa’s top documentary filmmakers.

**Mr Masaki Miyaji**, the Mayor of Tobetsu-cho and a Senior Corporate Advisor for *Mitsubishi* and the *Japan International Cooperation Agency* (JICA).

**Mr Peter van Kets**, an extreme adventurer, motivational speaker and a passionate conservationist.

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