



For Immediate Release

To: All Media

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PRESERVING SOUTH AFRICA'S PRECIOUS PEATLANDS: A CALL TO ACTION ON WORLD WETLANDS DAY 2024

Pretoria, - As the world commemorates World Wetlands Day on Friday 2 February 2024, we turn our focus to the invaluable peatlands of South Africa, highlighting their crucial role in climate regulation, water purification, habitat for biodiversity and the overall well-being of our planet. Aligned with the RAMSAR 2024 World Wetlands Day theme, "*Wetlands and human wellbeing*", this year's celebration underscores the urgency to address the threats facing South African peatlands.

To raise awareness about the significance and challenges faced by South African peatlands, we are pleased to announce the premiere of our short film, "*The Plight of South Africa's Peculiar Peatlands*", online on YouTube on 2 February 2024, at 10am. This cinematic journey sheds light on the delicate balance these ecosystems maintain and the imminent threats they face, serving as a poignant call to action for rehabilitation and conservation efforts.

South African peatlands, vital repositories of biodiversity, carbon, and water, are under increasing threat from habitat degradation, climate change, and human activities. The film explores these challenges, emphasizing the need for collaborative initiatives to protect and restore these critical ecosystems.

Beyond their local ecological significance and global climate significance, South African peatlands play a pivotal role in supporting local communities by providing water resources, supporting agriculture, and contributing to the cultural and recreational fabric of the region. Recognizing and preserving this symbiotic relationship between people and peatlands is essential for a sustainable future. Furthermore, many of South Africa's most vulnerable communities are dependent on these peatland systems for their livelihoods.

World Wetlands Day is an opportunity to acknowledge the interconnectedness of wetlands with our daily lives. The RAMSAR 2024 theme emphasizes the pivotal role wetlands play in supporting both people and nature. Join us in this global initiative to advocate for the protection and sustainable use of wetlands, ensuring their resilience in the face of mounting challenges.

DETAILS OF THE PREMIERE AND NETWORKING EVENT:

Date: 1st February 2024

Time: 16h00

Venue: ARC-CO, Hatfield, Pretoria

Journalists and media are also invited to be part of this significant moment by attending the launch of "*The Plight of South Africa's Peculiar Peatlands*". Please register by 29 January 2024, using the provided [registration link](#)

For more information about the project "Biodiversity-Climate Nexus for Wetland Management," visit the project website: <https://www.arc.agric.za/arc-iscw/Biodiversity/Pages/default.aspx> or contact the researchers listed below.

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Notes to the Editors

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