

ORHA Quarterly Progress Report to BGCMA – July 2022



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Management and Maintenance of the Reeds in Onrus River Estuary

INTRODUCTION:

After the successful application for funding from BGCMA, ORHA received the full amount of R200,000 in its account on 29th April 2022

ORHA was immediately faced with its first major challenge. This amounted to overcoming one of the conditions of the grant that stated we were not allowed to utilise any funds for labour costs.

Fortunately, we had already amassed some R48,000 in donations from various donations received from our generous Riparian owners, with which the project could start.

It was clear from the beginning, much more would be needed to clear the more than the estimated 60,000 square meters of reeds, and we subsequently managed to obtain further assistance from the LPT (Lagoon Preservation Fund) to the tune of R250,000 through OREF (Onrus River Estuary Forum) to pay for labour.

1. Financial oversight

The ORHA committee, in conjunction with OREF decided to create and manage separate accounts, within both organisation's accounting structures and bank accounts. Unfortunately, to create such separation within our own bank account turned out to be our next obstacle. To date we are still waiting for finalization of this facility and as we are all volunteers, ORHA decided to appoint a temporary Personal Assistant as well as Bookkeeping person to help the members of the EXCO with the

administration of the project. The funding of these people is via the RIPARIAN fund. See later section on expenditure.

2. Purchasing of equipment and tools

Four Stihl brush cutters form the bulk of the equipment obtained to date. We soon found out that the size of chipper needed to productively process the cut reeds, was beyond our budget and we had to think outside the box. After we also realized through practical experience that cutting reeds in a rising and falling water level scenario was very difficult and slow, it was decided to forfeit the purchase of a chipping machine and construct two rafts (see photos) with which to access the reeds from the water. The larger craft dubbed Grote Griet, is the transport barge servicing the smaller Reedling from which the crews access and cut the reeds.



ORHA also struck a deal with HABONIM, the adjacent Jewish youth camp to do the chipping in exchange for them keeping the processed reed chips for their own use.

The equipment and tools also need to be stored in a secure place and to date we have been able to find a temporary solution and we will have to look at obtaining a shipping container and find a place to put it. This could deplete our current fund.

3. Progress to date.

Not all is gloom and doom as we can happily report that we have cut almost all of the intended areas and anticipate (weather permitting) to complete the first cut stage within the allotted and permitted time frame which ends at the end of July.

To achieve this, we have engaged two outside contractors with the instruction to cut whenever there was no rain.

In order to comply with other conditions stipulated in the BGCMA fund, we also employed local labour, who was trained from scratch by one of our Exco members Nicholas Rabie, who is a retired farmer, as well as paying an expert trainer in Stihl equipment to do training on the brush cutters.

After trying to pay them for area completed had failed, we switched to paying them per day worked under supervision. This was not very productive.

Furthermore, there was some unpleasant and abusive interaction with a local riverside resident who is dead set against the cutting of the reeds. The crew then decided to discontinue their work with ORHA.

We have also appointed a local drone pilot to supply us with regular progress photos. As is evident from the below pictures, the first stage of the project has substantially and successfully been achieved.

The total estimated area that has been cut to date is approximately 50,000 square meters.





2022:07:08 16:20:23
100m



2022:07:08 16:28:21
Duikklip



2022:06:25 17:33:33
100m



2022:07:08 15:47:03
100m

4. Expenditure Summary

As at 30 June the following amounts have been spent:

Labour	:	R129,510.00	(LPT Fund)
Training:	:	R2,450.00	(BGCMA)
Tools, Fuel & Equipment:	:	R85,500.00	(BGCMA)
Drone Footage	:	R1,750.00	(RIPARIAN FUND)
Personal Assistant	:	R2,500.00	(RIPARIAN FUND)

5. Remaining Work





End of Report.