

# ECO AWARE



**ADVENTURE  
INCLUDED**

## Eco Aware

Owning a 4x4 gives one the freedom to explore remote, rugged terrain. With this freedom comes responsibility. All 4x4 owners have a duty to be eco aware and to care for the environment they travel through.

In order to protect the coastal environment, 4x4s have been totally restricted from beaches, including:

- Dunes
- Estuarine salt marshes adjacent to estuaries
- Estuarine intertidal sand and mud flats
- Bird and turtle nesting areas
- Beaches with steep gradients

4x4s have also been restricted from protected areas specifically established to conserve the coastal environment

- National parks
- Nature reserves
- Wilderness areas
- Historical sites
- Palaeontological sites

There are exemptions for research, security personnel, disabled people, emergency services and local parks authorities. Designated boat launch sites are also exempt.

Currently 4x4s can only drive on beaches beyond our borders.

Follow these guidelines for responsible driving:

- Ensure your vehicle does not have a fuel or oil leak as it will pollute the beach.
- Drive only on beaches where vehicle access is permitted and ensure that you obtain the necessary permits (if a permit system is in place).
- Gain access to the beach via an authorised entry point.
- Reduce tyre pressure before driving on a beach or soft sand. You will



benefit from the traction gained and minimise damage caused by wheel-spin.

- Drive on the 'wet sand' between the high- and low-tide marks.
- Be aware of tidal patterns, your exit route may not be accessible at high tide.
- Consider local wildlife (turtle populations on the East Coast of South Africa breed above the high-tide mark. On the West Coast crustaceans breed below the high-tide mark. If you're in doubt, consult the local nature conservation authorities).

Avoid these areas:

- Bathing beaches
- Pioneer plants on the back-shore
- Bird and turtle nesting sites

### **It is our responsibility as 4x4 owners to be 'Eco Aware'.**

- Act and drive responsibly and be courteous.
- Respect the rights of fellow off-roaders, local populace, and fauna and flora.
- Practise safe fire techniques.
- Remove your litter.
- Use cat latrines.
- Use biodegradable cleaners, shampoos and soaps.
- Don't enter private land without permission.
- Close gates behind you as you pass through property.
- Avoid wheel-spin and repair any damage caused, repack ruts, etc.
- Educate yourself by attending our ongoing 4x4 courses.

## **Eco Aware Dictionary**

**Anthropogenic** Changes brought about by humans to the environment.

**Aquatic** Organisms that grow, exist and are evident in water.

**Aquifer** Permeable rock able to store quantities of water.



**Back-shore** This area is between the dunes and the high tide mark, it is here that turtles lay eggs and plants grow and regenerate, plants, animals and birds are vulnerable in this area.

**Biodiversity** Diversity that may exist among living organisms from whatever source (land, sea, air and rivers) and the ecological areas where they exist. The term also includes diversity within species, between species and ecosystems.

**Biodiversity Hotspot** An area identified as a conservation priority because it contains a high number of endemic species and faces threat.

**Biomes** These are regions that display similar climate and geographic characteristics, climate is determined by precipitation (rainfall) and average temperature. Geography consists of the terrain, the location and any barriers such as mountains, rivers etc. Specific conditions determine the flora and fauna within the biome, the fauna, flora and soil organisms within a biome make up an ecosystem.

**Carbon Dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>)** A naturally occurring gas within the earth's atmosphere. Produced when animals exhale, vegetation rots, and when material containing carbon is burnt or broken down e.g. fossil fuels such as petrol and diesel.

**Carbon Tax** A tax on emissions implemented on new motor vehicles. Applied at the time of sale for every gram of CO<sub>2</sub> per kilometre the vehicle emits over 120g/km.

**Catchment** The area of land drained by a particular stream or river.

**Coastal Zone** The area of land and sea along a coast. It includes estuaries, onshore areas, and offshore areas, wherever they form an integral part of the coastal system.

**Concessions** Areas of land owned and managed communally, mainly by traditional peoples or landowners.

**Conservation** The maintenance of environmental quality and function.

**Degradation** The reduction or loss of the biological or ecological function within an area.



**Dunes** Situated adjacent to beaches these are the vegetated sand ridges where plants and small animals live. The dunes are sensitive ecosystems and can be irreparably damaged by irresponsible driving.

**Ecosystem** The combination of animal, plant, and micro-organisms with their environment (soil, water, climate, and atmosphere) interacting as a unit.

**Eco-Tourism** Where the natural environment is the main tourist attraction. The resulting tourism benefits the environment.

**Effluent** Generally wastewater that flows out of a human generated system into a river or the sea.

**Emissions** Pollution discharged into the environment.

**Endangered Species** Species facing a high risk of extinction in the near future.

**Endemic** A species occurring in and restricted to a geographical region.

**Environmental Degradation** When the environment is no longer able to sustain its ecological system.

**Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)** A process undertaken to assess the impact of a planned activity on the environment.

**Environmental Implementation Plan (EIP)** A statutory instrument promoting co-operative governance for environmental management.

**Environmental Management** A multi-disciplinary process of managing environmental resources.



**Environmental Management System (EMS)** Procedures drawn up in terms of a South African Bureau of Standards (SABS) code of practice.

**Fauna** All the animal life within a region.

**Flora** All the plant species within a region.

**Floodplain** The area adjacent to a river that is seasonally flooded when water levels rise.

**Fynbos (Afrikaans)** A fine-leaved bush, mainly found in the southern Cape.

**Grass Strips** Grasses planted in a strip to prevent soil erosion and intercept surface water run-off.

**Heritage Sites** Sites of artistic, cultural, geological, zoological, botanical, archaeological, scientific or historic importance.

**Indigenous Species** Plants, animals, or microbes native to a particular area.

**Invasive Alien Species** Species intentionally or unintentionally introduced to an area where they would not naturally occur.

**Inter-cropping** Growing flora among others of a different type.

**Intertidal Zones** This is the area between the high- and low-tide marks. Sloped zones suffer from erosion caused by 4x4 driving.

**Marine Protected Area (MPA)** A marine or estuarine habitat where types of fish or plants are protected or where an entire ecosystem is set aside as a park or conservation area.

**National Park** Land set aside for the protection of plants, animals, marine life and scenery.



**Red Data List** A list of species in danger of extinction or already extinct, published by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

**Red Data Species** Species appearing on the Red Data list.

**Salt Marshes** Low lying areas situated at estuaries and alongside lagoons. They are the breeding place for crabs, shrimp, fish and birds as well as certain vegetation types.

**Sand And Mud Flats** Areas adjacent to the shores of estuaries and lagoons, regularly flooded by salt water they are home to crustaceans.

**Shell Middens** Prehistoric shell deposits found in dune areas along coastal areas that are of valuable archaeological importance. They contain a combination of: bones and bone fragments, stone artefacts, ostrich shell fragments, beads, seashells, rounded burnt stones, charcoal and ash.

**Soil Conservation** An intervention to stop soil degradation or reverse it, through physical structures (contours and terraces), or through biological means (inter-cropping, grass strips).



**Soil Erosion** The loss and movement of soil generally caused by running water, wind, wheel-spin and gravity.

**Stakeholders** People and organisations involved or that have vested interests in an area or an activity.

**Sustainability** Responsible management of an activity to enable it to meet the needs of present and future generations.

**Trans-Frontier Conservation Area (TFCA)** Conservation areas overlapping international boundaries.

**Triple Bottom Line** A plan for sustainable development that enables a positive social, environmental and economic outcome.

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