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South Africa Wins Gold at Chelsea Flower Show

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by LizeRoodt_EventsNOW!

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It was a golden day for South Africa as the South African National Biodiversity Institute's (SANBI's) 2011 Kirstenbosch – SA Chelsea entry "Botanical Landscapes" scooped its 31st gold medal at the prestigious RHS Chelsea Flower Show (CFS) in London.

Featuring two World Heritage sites, the Cape Floral Kingdom and the Richtersveld which are also biodiversity hotspots – of which there are only 25 worldwide- the design captured the judges' imagination to scoop a coveted gold once more. With the backdrop of the majestic Table Mountain our ever popular proteas and fynbos picked according to the Sustainable Harvesting Code of Best Practice makes up a portion of the fynbos display at the show and showed the diversity of our Cape endemic plants. In contrast, the dry desert of the Richtersveld sector showed some rare, and hitherto unseen at Chelsea, species as part of the Succulent Karoo biome which is the only arid biodiversity hotspot on Earth.

Exhibiting for the 36th year the hardworking team raced to put the finishing touches and add the unusual specimens to this year's exhibit in time for the judging. The long hours of preparation with the team of designers, SANBI members and volunteers were worth it!

A joyful team celebrated at the show joined by jubilant sponsors, Gerrit van Rensburg, MEC for Agriculture and Rural Development, Provincial Government of the Western Cape (PGWC) and Alan Demby Chairman of the SA Gold Coin Exchange and Scoin shops.

Thanks to these generous sponsors the Kirstenbosch-SA exhibit was able to exhibit once more at the Chelsea Flower Show. Empowerment projects sourced through the PGWC have also been key suppliers to this display and Edwin Gouws of Mountain Dew and Dorah Siduka of Fynsa, representatives from two of these farms, were also able to enjoy firsthand, the fruits of their labours.

Visitors to the stand will also receive an eco-friendly bag sourced from women's cooperatives in Khayelitsha through a project called "Township". These are just some of the ways that the global community is experiencing some of the extraordinary job-creating projects that are thriving in our country.

"Our exhibit is always popular but this year exceeded expectations as there was a fascination for the unusual specimens we were able to show" said designers David Davidson and Ray Hudson. "The display offers visitors many reasons to visit South Africa, but mostly because of the diversity of our plant life."

As a desirable tourist destination South Africa thrives on presenting exhibits such as these. With the hope that Table Mountain will become one of the New 7 Wonders of Nature and that Cape Town will win the bid for World Design Capital 2014 potential visitors have a taste of what they can experience through the global excellence of this exhibit.

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