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UNESCO EDNA SAMPLING CAMPAIGN

iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority as a renowned diverse natural site and South Africa's first World heritage site is an integral participant of UNESCO eDNA (Environmental DNA) sampling campaign. The Environmental DNA expedition is a global, citizen science initiative that will help to measure marine biodiversity and the impact climate change might have on the distribution pattern of marine life across World heritage sites. iSimangaliso Environmental Education and Awareness Program together with selected high schools neighbouring the Park partake in this initiative to take samples in Lake St. Lucia, Ingwe beach, Mission rock beach, Sodwana Bay and Kosi Bay.



Five learners were selected from each school to be part of the UNESCO eDNA sampling campaign. Silethukhanya High School from Mtubatuba, Inkosi Moses Zikhali High School from Mbazwana and Star of the Sea High School from Manguzi were in partnership with iSimangaliso Wetland Park in this scientific initiative.



The cost effective, ethical nature of eDNA sampling has the potential to revolutionize knowledge about ecosystems and species diversity and to inspire the next generation of ocean researchers. Learners also had an exposure to participate in scientific activities of which can also help to develop young marine scientists in future.

eDNA sampling campaigns will be organized across 25 UNESCO World Heritage marine sites. The results are expected to provide a once-off biodiversity snapshot, with focus on fish and mega vertebrates of which several are on the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) Red List vulnerable and endangered species. iSimangaliso Wetland Park is amongst the UNESCO World Heritage marine site.



Learners were fully participating and delighted throughout the sampling campaign, iSimangaliso Wetland Park as a renowned diverse natural site that was proclaimed by UNESCO continues to fly the flag high.

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Statement issued by iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority

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