

# Unitrans champions International Water Week with collaborative clean-up day

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Committed to environmental rejuvenation and sustainability, logistics services provider Unitrans has partnered with Adopt-a-River, uniting their efforts in a river clean-up initiative as part of International Water Week.



The event, held at the Unitrans depot in Clairwood, KwaZulu-Natal, on 23 August 2023, showcased a robust collaboration among critical stakeholders, including neighbouring companies, the community and the government.

"We have prioritised several sustainability goals and have made a firm commitment to making a positive impact and being responsible in our consumption and everything we do," explained Unitrans CEO Terry Bantock. "The clean-up day is a reflection of this. Unitrans believes in the power of partnership and proactive engagement to drive positive change. Through initiatives like this, we aim to inspire and encourage a broader movement towards safeguarding our planet for future generations."

Unitrans actively supports Adopt-a-River, a non-profit organisation dedicated to making a difference in our waterways. The project involves waste collection from the Umhlatuzane River adjacent to the company's Clairwood depot, tackling illegally dumped waste and controlling the alien invasive species along the riverbank. The clean-up day highlighted the ongoing efforts to restore the Umhlatuzane river, by clearing some significant sand deposits and blocking off slip road access, which was illegally used for washing vehicles and dumping waste and chemicals into the river.

## **Collaboration for sustainability**

By Unitrans' unwavering dedication to adopting a portion of the river and fostering sustainable practices, the event echoed a resounding call for collective action in safeguarding natural resources.

The dedicated group of environmental enthusiasts comprising Unitrans and Adopt-a-River staff, representatives from the community, Ethekewini Municipality, the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, neighbouring companies, as well as members of the media, dedicated their time and effort to address some of the challenges faced on the Umhlatuzane river.



Recognising the critical importance of water resources and the need to address environmental challenges, Unitrans and Adopt-a-River embarked on this journey in November 2022, marking the beginning of a relentless effort to combat daily issues affecting the Umhlatuzane canal and its banks. The project's inception highlighted the problems plaguing the Umhlatuzane river and its surroundings.

Founder and director of Adopt-a-River, Janet Simpkins, stressed the importance of collaboration: "By embracing the concept of adopting and maintaining a space along a river, ordinary individuals can become water warriors. The need for water security, particularly in the face of global climate change, cannot be overemphasised. Protecting our precious water resources and keeping them pollution free is vital. We are grateful to all the stakeholders for joining hands with us to support this important initiative."

Commenting on the excellent turnout of various stakeholders, head of accelerated organisational sustainability, Liesl de Wet, added: "Considering the multiple stressors impacting our rivers, now more than ever, a unified approach is required to protect our rivers, wetlands, and broader catchments. We are delighted that our neighbours, community members and government stakeholders joined us on this important initiative."

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