

## SIGNING OF THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN BOTSOC AND SANBI



SANBI's Tanya Abrahase and BotSoc's Zaitoon Rabaney exchanging copies of the agreement (Photo: Sanbi)

Two IUCN members have recently signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to collaborate on various aspects of conservation. The South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI) and the Botanical Society of South Africa (BotSoc) have agreed to strengthen their historical link and demonstrate a true model for effective cooperation and a mutually beneficial relationship between a public entity and civil society.

The struggle to preserve our rich diversity of plant life can only be won when conservation organizations work together in finding common solutions to common problems

**(Adapted from IUCN Newsletter – prepared by Hastings Chicoko, Secretariat Head IUCN)**

The history of the partnership between the two organizations dates back to the establishment of Kirstenbosch garden in 1913.

"This partnership is based on the recognition that the struggle to preserve our rich diversity of plant life can only be won when conservation organizations work together in finding common solutions to common problems," said Zaitoon Rabaney, BotSoc Director of Operations.

"Through the MoU, the two organizations will mobilize financial resources for small infrastructure and a variety of projects in the national botanical gardens in South Africa," disclosed Rabaney.

SANBI's work in botanical gardens will benefit from the support of BotSoc members and volunteers. For example, SANBI's programme on Custodians of Rare and Endangered Wildflowers (CREW) will see continued and increased involvement of BotSoc members especially in the area of biodiversity research. The teacher development resources and action programme of learners in communities will be strengthened to articulate such areas such as climate change, biodiversity conservation and sustainable development. All these are subject to the provisions of the agreement between the two organizations.

SANBI is a respected authority in research into indigenous, naturalized and alien flora of southern Africa it is an institute under the Department of Environmental Affairs (an IUCN state member since 1993) responsible for ensuring that biodiversity knowledge influences policy, management and decision making.

BotSoc joined IUCN in 1984 and was established June 1913 to win the hearts, minds and material support of individuals and organizations for the conservation, cultivation, study and wise use of the indigenous flora and vegetation of southern Africa.