

# Doug Banks Renewable Energy Vision



a proposal

September 2008.

*"Others have spoken of his inspiring work in this vital field {Renewable Energy} in more detail, suffice it for me to say that his single-minded dedication to this cause and his practical, hands-on contributions from a very young age right up to his death will have a lasting impact. It seems the planet is crying today for a true son of the soil."*

(From the eulogy delivered by Chip Snaddon, political cartoonist and long standing friend)

The untimely death of Dr Douglas Ian Banks of Restio Energy on 4<sup>th</sup> July 2008 has been a significant loss to the development of Renewable Energy not only in South Africa, but across the African continent. Doug was an inspiration to many in the industry and responsible for the implementation of one of South Africa's only self-sustaining off-grid electrification projects NuRa (<http://www.nura.co.za/>) in KwaZulu-Natal. He engaged with national governments, non-governmental bodies, multi-national corporates and individuals from all walks of life in his passion to address the growing energy needs of the world in a responsible and sustainable manner.

His work for REEEP ([www.reeep.org](http://www.reeep.org)) inspired the following obituary:  
<http://www.reeep.org/57.10314/obituary-dr-douglas-banks.htm>

His mentorship and professional guidance prompted Dr Grant Ballard-Tremeer, Director Eco Ltd, to pen the following:  
<http://www.hedon.info/1201/news.htm>

Doug's passion touched the lives of many, across the world. It is a measure of the inspiration that he was that his passing has evoked heartfelt sorrow from people he had only known and worked with for brief periods. The gap he has left is tangible and significant.

A group of professionals working in the field of Renewable Energy (RE) have set out to create an initiative that will not only be a legacy in Doug's memory, but will continue some of the work he so passionately drove.

In the light of the fact that Doug was an inspiration to many young postgraduates whom he mentored; that he was particularly concerned about the dearth of young engineers entering the RE field; and that he was passionate about improving people's access to energy generated in a sustainable, responsible and renewable manner; it is proposed that :

- A memorial fund to be set up and possibly managed by University of Cape Town's Post Graduate Funding Office;
- Corporates and individuals to be approached to contribute to building this fund to an amount of at least 1,000,000.00 ZAR;
- Trustees of the fund to allocate funds on an annual basis to individuals or projects that fulfill the aims of the fund; which are:
  - Enabling African postgraduate students to further their studies in the field of RE, with a view to nurturing the intellectual capital needed to grow and mature the use of RE in Africa. There will be an initial preference for engineering students, however the selection panel will have the discretion to focus on any scarce RE skills;
  - Stimulating the growth of the base of knowledge and expertise in RE through sponsorship of lectures, conferences, and studies.
  - Encouragement of mentoring of young minds and hearts by professional people in, and associated with, the RE sector.
- With this in mind, we would like to see that typically, a young African graduate engineer considering his or her future, might be persuaded to further their studies with a Masters or Doctoral degree at a recognised institution. This individual would have access to a group of professionals (largely, but not exclusively made up of people who knew Doug and would like to contribute in kind to the kind of mentoring he excelled at) in the RE sector as mentors and tutors. This individual would also be expected to present the results of their work at an annual lecture, to be hosted at one of South Africa's tertiary institutions.

- The funds would need to cover or partially cover academic fees and living expenses, as well as travel required to fulfill the obligations of the fund.
- It would be expected that the individual spend at least 6 months of their studies in practical work, preferably in internships at one or many of the institutions in which the mentors work.

So far, the following has been done:

- Restio Energy have made a temporary bank account available for the collection of funds. To date (2008/09/06) over R35,000.00 has been donated by private individuals who knew Doug and wish to see his legacy continued. (banking details below)
- A group of Doug's friends and associates have made themselves available to initiate and steer the initiative, and mentor the beneficiaries of the fund. A growing list is appended below. Anyone wishing to add their name should contact Dave Gale.
- The fund will be launched at an inaugural Doug Banks Renewable Energy Vision lecture on 10<sup>th</sup> September 2008 at the UCT Sports Club in Cape Town, where it is intended that the following people will deliver presentations:
  - Katherine Steel (World Bank), Jit Bhattacharya (Haas School of Business) and Robbie Cahill (McKinsey).
  - Tasneem Essop (former Minister of Environment, Planning and Economic Development in the Western Cape).
  - Johan Buys (Thin Film Solar Technologies).
  - Sifiso Dlamini (NuRa).

This continent of ours, Africa, and indeed the planet, is in dire need of bright, energetic young minds to build on the legacy of people like Dr Doug Banks, in shaping the future of our energy usage. The Doug Banks Renewable Energy Vision fund seeks to nurture and empower just such people.

We who have committed ourselves to this initiative would like to call on individuals and corporates across the globe to commit to contributing to the fund and thus ensuring that the passion and drive which Doug was known for is taken forward. If you are interested in doing so, please contact Dave Gale at +27 82 467 2400 or dave@gale.za.net.

A copy of the legal framework for the fund is available on request.

**“All that is valuable in human society depends upon the opportunity for development accorded the individual.”**

- **Albert Einstein**

The Fund's current banking details.

Acc Name:	Restio Energy
Bank:	Standard Bank of South Africa
Branch:	Mowbray
Branch Code:	024 909
Account Number:	01 424 888 3

Friends and associates who have made themselves available to initiate and steer the initiative, and where appropriate, mentor the beneficiaries of the fund:

- Helene van der Merwe, Restio Architects
- Jane & Ian Banks
- Dr Wendy Annecke, GVEP International
- Robert Aitken, Restio Energy
- Nthabiseng Mohlakoana, HSRC
- Glynn Morris, AGAMA Energy
- Andrew Janisch, Sustainable Energy Africa
- Dave Gale, Restio Energy
- Professor Jan Glazewski, UCT Law faculty
- Professor Michael Banks, Director, Cooperative Institute for Marine Resources Studies, Oregon State University
- Axel Scholle, EmCon
- Chris Purcell, Energy & Development Group
- Alix Clark
- Wikus Kruger, Restio Energy
- Jason Schäffler, Nano Energy
- Dr Grant Ballard-Tremeer, Director Eco Ltd, UK.
- Davin Chown, Genesis Eco-Energy (Pty) Ltd

if you would like your name added to this list please contact Dave Gale at [dave@gale.za.net](mailto:dave@gale.za.net).