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White Shark Projects, winner of the 2008 Imvelo Responsible Tourism Award in the Waste Management category, is owned and managed by three South African women. Based in Kleinbaai in the Western Cape, this world-leading tourism product focuses on the conservation of Great White Sharks through responsible tourism and research.

White Shark Projects is strongly committed to community development and upliftment. Staff members are all recruited from the local area, while local scholars benefit from ongoing tourism and environmental awareness programmes that promote a culture of responsibility for marine biodiversity and the environment.

The White Shark Recycle Swop-Shop is an initiative by White Shark Projects in Maskehane, Gansbaai. The Swop-Shop is a recycling project encouraging local children to collect recyclable waste such as bottles, tins and plastics in the community, at school or in their homes. They swop bags of waste at the Swop Shop in return for points that can be "spent" on much needed items like school stationery or clothes.

In addition, White Shark Projects works closely with the South Africa Shark Conservancy, financing various out-reaches as well as providing funds for the day to day running of the conservancy. White Shark Projects has implemented a dorsal fin tracking programme whereby individual pictures of the dorsal fins of Great Whites are taken and fed into a database. By 2011 they will have significant data on this species, which will aid in identifying and conserving Great White Sharks in the Gansbaai area.

"Because Fair & Responsible practises are what we build our business on, we wanted our commitment to be underwritten by a credible third party. We have learned a tremendous amount out of the FTSA assessment process, and now that we are certified we will be better able to maintain the standards we've set."

-- Charmaine Beukes, Sales and Marketing Manager, White Shark Projects



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