

# BIOGRAPHY

## Captain Edmund Wayne Stuurman

*Senior Khoi Leader | Cultural Activist | Community Strategist*

Captain Edmund Wayne Stuurman is a distinguished Indigenous leader and cultural advocate, currently serving as the Senior Khoi Leader of the House of Klaas and Dawid Stuurman and the representative of the Gamtouer Ethnic Community in South Africa. Born in 1971 in Bethelsdorp, Port Elizabeth—a region steeped in indigenous heritage—Captain Stuurman is the eldest of four children born to Gert and Eva Stuurman.

He began his academic journey at Van der Kemp Primary School and completed his secondary education at Bethelsdorp Senior Secondary School in 1989. In 1990, he enrolled at the University of the Western Cape (UWC) to pursue a Bachelor of Commerce degree, but his studies were interrupted in 1992 due to financial hardship.

Between 1992 and 1998, Captain Stuurman worked in the entertainment industry before joining Volkswagen South Africa (VWSA) in 1998. He married in 2000 and became a father to twin sons, Jerome and Jeremy, and later a daughter, Eryn. Following a divorce in 2007, he remarried in 2013 to Vernorene, and the couple has a daughter, Eliana.

In 2009, he transitioned from corporate employment to entrepreneurship, establishing a successful transport business that continues to operate to this day. However, it was in 2010, following a profound spiritual experience, that his path as a traditional leader and cultural custodian fully emerged. Recognising the need to reclaim and uphold the legacy of his forebears, Captain Stuurman began actively engaging in restorative heritage work.

In 2018, he was formally appointed by the Stuurman elders to revive and advance the legacy of Klaas and Dawid Stuurman—revolutionary figures in South Africa's anti-colonial resistance—and to lead advocacy efforts for the cultural, spiritual, and territorial recognition of the Khoi and the Gamtouer Ethnic Community.

Captain Stuurman's leadership is characterised by a deep commitment to intergenerational knowledge systems, indigenous environmental stewardship, and the assertion of biocultural rights. Under his stewardship, the House of Klaas and Dawid Stuurman has entered into landmark collaborations with Nelson Mandela University (NMU) and North-West University (NWU), focusing on the development of a Biocultural Community Protocol and the rollout of eco-education programs targeting youth across historically marginalised communities.

He is a valued contributor to national and international discourses on indigenous rights, ecological justice, and decolonial heritage frameworks. Captain Stuurman is affiliated with Nelson Mandela University's Department of Humanities and actively participates in global policy dialogues as a member of the World Council of Churches (WCC) through two of its strategic working groups:

- The **Biodiversity and Climate Justice Commission (BCJ CCJSD)** – focused on ecological justice, climate resilience, and sustainable development.
- The **Ecumenical Indigenous Peoples Network Reference Group (EIPNRG)** – a forum that amplifies indigenous voices within the global ecumenical movement.

Through these platforms, he continues to elevate the spiritual, cultural, and environmental rights of Indigenous Peoples, championing a decolonial vision rooted in justice, dignity, and interdependence.





