



**Western Cape
Government**

Department of Environmental Affairs
and Development Planning



DRAFT PROVINCIAL BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN 2020 - 2030

September 2023



Foreword

To be added

Draft for Public Comment

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Acronyms

BioFIN	The Biodiversity Finance Initiative
BSP	Biodiversity Spatial Plan
CAPE	Cape Action for People and the Environment
CBA	Critical Biodiversity Area
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CFR	Cape Floristic Region
CoP	Conference of the Parties
DEA&DP	Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning
DEDAT	Department of Economic Development and Tourism
DFFE	Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment
EIIF	Ecological Infrastructure Investment Framework
EPWP	Expanded Public Works Programme
ESA	Ecological Support Area
GBF	Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
LGBTQI+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Intersex and many other terms
MAB	Man and Biosphere Programme
METT	Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MoA	Memorandum of Agreement
MPA	Marine Protected Area
MTSF	Medium-Term Strategic Framework
NBA	National Biodiversity Assessment
NBES	National Biodiversity Economy Strategy
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
NDP	National Development Plan
NEMA	National Environmental Management Act (Act 107 of 1998)
NEM:BA	National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act (Act 10 of 2004)
NEM:PAA	National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act (Act 57 of 2003)
NGO	Non-governmental Organisations
OECM	Other Effective area-based Conservation Measure
PBSAP	Provincial Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
PBES	Provincial Biodiversity Economy Strategy

PSDF	Provincial Spatial Development Framework
SANBI	South African National Biodiversity Institute
SANParks	South African National Parks
SDF	Spatial Development Framework
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SMME	Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises
SO	Strategic Objective
SWSA	Strategic Water Source Areas
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
VIP	Vision-Inspired Priorities
WCBA	Western Cape Biodiversity Act (Act no 6 of 2021)
WCCCRS	Western Cape Climate Change Response Strategy
WCG	Western Cape Government
WCIDRP	Western Cape Integrated Drought Response Plan
WCPAES	Western Cape Protected Areas Expansion Strategy

Definitions

Biodiversity means the variability among living organisms from all sources, including terrestrial, marine, and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are part, and includes diversity within and between species, within and between populations, and of ecosystems.

Biodiversity economy means the businesses and economic activities that either directly depend on biodiversity for their business or that contribute to conservation of biodiversity through their activities. Included in this concept are also products derived from the by-products or waste streams from biodiversity management activities such as from alien clearing. Examples of the biodiversity economy include ecotourism, flower industry, fishing industry, various rooibos or honey-bush products, and any biotechnology products based on genetic resources.

Biome is defined in terms of climate and dominant growth forms in the vegetation.

Bioprospecting means the search for plant and animal species from which commercially valuable compounds can be obtained.

Capability means the ability or qualities necessary to do something.

Capacity Building means improving skills and/or knowledge required for professional use (compare with the definitions for environmental awareness and mainstreaming biodiversity).

Conservation Areas means an area of land or sea that is not formally protected in terms of the Protected Areas Act (NEMPAA) but is nevertheless managed as least partly for biodiversity conservation. Because there is no long-term security associated with conservation areas, they are not considered a strong form of protection. Conservation areas contribute towards the conservation estate but not the protected area estate, and include National Parks, World Heritage Sites, Wilderness Areas, Provincial Nature Reserves, State Forest Nature Reserves, Marine Protected Areas, Island Nature Reserves, Contract Nature Reserves, Protected Environments, Local Authority Nature Reserves¹, Mountain Catchment Areas and Private Nature Reserves, Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs) such as Biodiversity Agreements and Conservation Servitudes, Voluntary Conservation Areas, Conservancies and the Buffer- and Transition Zones of Biosphere Reserves.

Conservation Estate includes protected areas declared under the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act (Act 57 of 2003) and Other Effective Conservation Measures.

Critical Biodiversity Areas (CBAs) means terrestrial (e.g., threatened vegetation type remnants) and/or aquatic features (e.g., vleis, rivers and estuaries), and the buffer areas along aquatic CBA features, whose safeguarding is critically required in order to meet biodiversity pattern and process thresholds. CBAs are identified through a systematic biodiversity planning approach and represent the most land-efficient option to meeting all thresholds.

¹ Local Authority Nature Reserve and Private Nature Reserves were declared in terms of the Nature Conservation Ordinance and are deemed to be Nature Reserves in terms of Section 12 of NEM:PAA. Mountain Catchment Areas were declared in terms of the Mountain Catchment Areas Act (Act 63 of 1970). Nature reserves and MCAs that were declared in terms of the Ordinance are in the process of being regularized in terms of NEM:PAA requirements.

Ecological Infrastructure means the naturally functioning ecosystems, including mountain catchments, water resources, coastal dunes, wetlands and nodes and corridors of natural habitat that together form networks of interconnected structural elements in the landscape that generate or deliver valuable ecosystem services to people. It is the nature-based equivalent of built or hard infrastructure and can be just as important for providing services and underpinning socio-economic development. Ecological infrastructure does this by providing cost effective, long-term solutions to service delivery that can supplement, and sometimes even substitute, built infrastructure solutions. Ecological infrastructure includes healthy mountain catchments, rivers, wetlands, coastal dunes, and nodes and corridors of natural habitat, which together form a network of interconnected structural elements in the landscape.

Ecological Support Area (ESA) means a supporting zone or area required to prevent the degradation of Critical Biodiversity Areas and protected areas. They can be aquatic features, e.g., specific river reaches which feed into aquatic Critical Biodiversity Areas; or terrestrial features, e.g., the riparian habitat surrounding and supporting aquatic Critical Biodiversity Areas, and are often vital for delivering ecosystem services.

Ecological resilience means the capacity of ecosystems to adapt to changes and disturbances yet retain their basic functions and structures. A resilient ecosystem can adapt to shocks and rebuilds itself when damaged.

Ecosystem approach means a strategy for the integrated management of land, water and living resources that promotes conservation and sustainable use in an equitable way. It is based on the application of appropriate scientific methodologies focused on levels of biological organisation which encompass the essential processes, functions and interactions among organisms and their environment. It recognises that humans, with their cultural diversity, are an integral component of ecosystems.

Ecosystem services means the benefits humans derive from ecosystems, which benefits include:

- (a) provisioning services, such as the production of food and provisioning of water;
- (b) regulating services, such as the control of climate, air quality or disease and disaster risk reduction;
- (c) supporting services, such as nutrient cycling, soil formation and crop pollination; and
- (d) cultural services, such as spiritual and recreational benefits.

Environmental awareness means having an understanding of the environment, the impacts of human behaviours on it, and the importance of its protection (compare with the definitions for capacity building and mainstreaming biodiversity).

Estuary means a body of surface, that is permanently or periodically open to the sea; in which a rise and fall of water level as a result of tides is measurable at spring tides when body of surface water is open to the sea; or in respect of which the salinity is higher than fresh water as a result of the influence of the sea, and where there is a salinity gradient between the tidal reach and the mouth of the body of surface water, and "estuarine" has a corresponding meaning.

Gender means a social and cultural construct, which distinguishes differences in the attributes of men and women, girls and boys, and accordingly refers to the roles and responsibilities of

men and women. Gender-based roles and other attributes, therefore, change over time and vary with different cultural contexts. The concept of gender includes the expectations held about the characteristics, aptitudes and likely behaviours of both women and men (femininity and masculinity).

Mainstreaming biodiversity means ensuring that biodiversity, and the services it provides, are appropriately and adequately factored into policies and practices that rely and have an impact on biodiversity (compare with the definitions for capacity building and environmental awareness).

Mainstreaming gender and human rights is a process of identifying gaps and making the concerns and experiences of Priority Groups² integral to the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all sectors of life to ensure that they benefit equally³.

Other Effective area-based Conservation Measure means a geographically defined area other than a Protected Area, which is governed and managed in ways that achieve positive and sustained long-term outcomes for the in-situ conservation of biodiversity, with associated ecosystem functions and services and, where applicable, cultural, spiritual, socioeconomic, and other locally relevant values.

Partnership means an agreement between two or more parties/organisations to work together towards a common goal or for a particular aim, characterised by a formal agreement (e.g., MoU/MoA/contract), in contrast to an informal collaboration where no formal agreement is in place.

Priority group means a social group that has been identified by the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa or by court judgments to face particular social, physical, or economic barriers in society and has been targeted in this PBSAP. These groups include women, children, people with disabilities, foreign nationals, older persons and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Intersex, and many other terms (LGBTQI+) community.

Rehabilitation means returning a disturbed, degraded or destroyed ecosystem to sustainable, productive use, with the emphasis on repairing ecological processes and ecosystem services (as per draft National Biodiversity Offset Guideline 2022).

Restoration means returning a disturbed, degraded or destroyed ecosystem to its natural condition, with the species present being representative of the ecosystem that occurred on the site prior to disturbance, and ecological processes supporting the long-term persistence of the ecosystem and species, and the associated ecosystem services, through active (with interventions) or passive (without interventions) means (as per draft National Biodiversity Offset Guideline 2022).

Securing Strategic Water Source Areas (SWSAs) means the implementation of a range of mechanisms that aim to enhance the ability of SWSAs to deliver the maximum quantity of

² Priority groups are woman, children, people with disabilities, foreign nationals, older persons and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Intersex and many other terms (LGBTQI+) community.

³ Adapted from the definition of gender mainstreaming used in the White Paper on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2016).

good quality freshwater for people and economic activity both within and downstream in a way that helps assure efficient, equitable and sustainable water supply and access for all.

Species endemism means species that are found only in one area and nowhere else in the world.

Sustainable use - the use of any component of biodiversity in a manner that:

- (a) is ecologically, economically, and socially sustainable.
- (b) does not contribute to its long-term decline in the wild; or disrupt the genetic integrity of the population;
- (c) does not disrupt the ecological integrity of the ecosystem in which it occurs;
- (d) ensures continued benefits to people that are fair, equitable and meet the needs and aspirations of present and future generations; and
- (e) ensures duty of care towards all components of biodiversity, for thriving of people and nature.

Terrestrial Ecosystem means an ecosystem unit that has been identified and delineated as part of a hierarchical classification system, based on biotic and /or abiotic factors. Terrestrial ecosystems can also be defined as vegetation types (CapeNature 2022).

Wetland means land which is transitional between terrestrial and aquatic systems where the water table is usually at or near the surface, or the land is periodically covered with shallow water, and which land in normal circumstances supports or would support vegetation typically adapted to life in saturated soil.

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Stakeholder discussion sessions were held with Western Cape Government Departments, Local and District Municipalities, Biosphere Reserves, CapeNature, selected national government departments and entities, as well as private sector stakeholders including Non-Government Organisations and academia. The inputs received were incorporated into the revision process and contributed to shaping the strategy choices made in the revised PBSAP. The authors gratefully acknowledge the valuable input received during these discussion sessions and thank all participants.

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The PBSAP at a glance

PBSAP VISION

By 2040, biodiversity, the natural heritage and Ecological Infrastructure is valued, wisely and equitably used, conserved, and restored, and delivers the ecosystem services that improve the quality of life of the people of the Western Cape.

OVERARCHING TEN-YEAR GOAL

By 2030, the management, consolidation, and expansion of all the categories of the Western Cape's network of conservation areas, promotion of existing and new biodiversity mainstreaming and conservation initiatives, enabling of an inclusive and sustainable biodiversity economy and active participation of stakeholders, progressively contribute to the attainment of biodiversity conservation as well as the economic and development vision of the Western Cape.

PBSAP STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

SO1: Enhanced biodiversity conservation and ecosystem integrity contributes to a resilient Western Cape society

SO2: All sectors mainstream, manage and support the conservation of, and equitable access to, biodiversity through their policies and practices

SO3: The biodiversity economy is strengthened and increasingly contributes to equitable and sustainable development and livelihoods

SO4: Improved knowledge management and capability supports effective planning, decision-making, monitoring, and reporting towards achieving biodiversity management objectives

SO5: Stakeholders and financial resources are mobilised to achieve sustainable long-term benefits for biodiversity

Summary of Strategic Objectives and Outcomes

Strategic Objectives				
<p>SO1: Enhanced biodiversity conservation and ecosystem integrity contributes to a resilient Western Cape society</p>	<p>SO2: All sectors mainstream, manage and support the conservation of, and equitable access to, biodiversity through their policies and practices</p>	<p>SO3: The biodiversity economy is strengthened and increasingly contributes to equitable and sustainable development and livelihoods</p>	<p>SO4: Improved knowledge management and capability supports effective planning, decision-making, monitoring, and reporting towards achieving biodiversity management objectives</p>	<p>SO5: Stakeholders and financial resources are mobilised to achieve sustainable long-term benefits for biodiversity</p>
Outcomes				
<p>1A: Representative biodiversity is secured and conserved through a network of conservation areas and existing and new conservation initiatives in the province <i>[including biodiversity found in terrestrial, freshwater (incl. wetlands), coastal, estuarine and the marine environments, at all levels including ecosystems, habitats, species, genes, and Ecological Infrastructure]</i></p> <p>1B: Protection and restoration of biodiversity and its associated Ecological Infrastructure in all environments and at all levels, provides resilience against negative effects of climate change and variability-related events</p>	<p>2A: Economic and development sectors that have historically adversely impacted on biodiversity adapt their practices to actively contribute to conservation and restoration of biodiversity and Ecological Infrastructure</p> <p>2B: Compliance with authorisations and permits is monitored and enforced</p> <p>2C: Biodiversity impacts are reduced by integrating biodiversity considerations into relevant legislation, policies and practices</p> <p>2D: The functional and economic value of biodiversity and Ecological Infrastructure is positively recognised by authorities and stakeholders</p>	<p>3A: Opportunities from the biodiversity economy are expanded and strengthened by developing the economic potential inclusive of all sections of society, conscious of priority groups</p> <p>3B: The business case for conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and its contribution to the economy is recognised and valued by decision makers and stakeholders</p>	<p>4A: Relevant biodiversity and conservation data and knowledge is accessible to users, and supports decision making</p> <p>4B: The status of species and ecosystems is regularly monitored and assessed</p> <p>4C: Spatial priorities for the management of biodiversity and Ecological Infrastructure are identified</p> <p>4D: DEA&DP and CapeNature have the required capability to implement their environmental mandate</p> <p>4E: DEA&DP and CapeNature support sector partners and municipalities to implement their environmental responsibility</p>	<p>5A: Collaborative programmes in the province contribute substantially to the implementation of the PBSAP</p> <p>5B: Effective involvement by the public and civil society in the implementation of the PBSAP and related environmental planning and decision-making processes</p> <p>5C: Increased financial resources to achieve environmental objectives</p>

1. Introduction and strategic context

The Provincial Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (PBSAP) is a strategic mechanism of the Western Cape Government (WCG) that guides all stakeholders active in the province, including the national and provincial government entities, local and district authorities, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), business and society as a whole, to act in a coordinated and collaborative manner with regard to biodiversity conservation, its sustainable use, and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use and value of ecosystems goods and services.

This is the first revision of the 2015-2025 PBSAP, which was based on the 2011-2020 Convention on Biological Diversity's (CBD) Strategic Plan for Biodiversity and Aichi targets, the 2014 Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing, as well as the 2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). Some of the strategic informants for the review included the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, the White Paper on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of South Africa's Biodiversity⁴, and updated information on the state of biodiversity globally as well as in South Africa and the Western Cape.

Biodiversity forms the foundation for all ecosystem goods and services, which in turn provides the base upon which the economy and all of society functions. The fact that healthy ecosystems are a critical foundation to human health is explicitly acknowledged in the One Health Theory of Change and Joint Plan of Action⁵. Reduced ecosystem services impact human health and food production, which is why one of the action tracks in the Joint Plan of Action is to “*protect, restore and prevent ecosystem and environmental degradation*”. Likewise, healthy ecosystems are pivotal to several of the priority focus areas identified in the Western Cape Grown for Jobs Strategy 2035 (see section 1.4.3).

Despite global efforts, neither the CBD Strategic Plan for Biodiversity (2010) nor its Aichi targets were fully met by the due date of 2020, indicating that an alternative approach to halt the deterioration of biodiversity is required. The reality is that focusing solely on traditional conservation is not enough to achieve maximum benefits for people and nature alike, and that people's needs as well as mixed-use- and landscape-level approaches need to be considered.

The 2030 PBSAP is informed by the findings of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services' Global Assessment Report (2019), Living Planet Report (2020) and the 5th Global Biodiversity Outlook (2020). International strategic frameworks taking their lead from these reports are the United Nations (UN) Decade on Ecosystem restoration (2021-2030) and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF).

1.1. The scope of the PBSAP

The purview of the PBSAP is explained below in relation to biodiversity, the spatial extent, applicable timeframe, and the landscape context to which it applies.

⁴ Government gazette no 48785, 14 June 2023.

⁵ Developed by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (UN), the UN Environment Programme, the World Health Organisation and World Organisation for Animal Health (FAO *et al.*, 2022).

1.1.1. Defining biodiversity

The PBSAP aligns with the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act (Act 10 of 2004; NEM:BA) and the Western Cape Biodiversity Act (Act 6 of 2021; WCBA), which themselves are aligned with the text of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD, 1992), and defines biodiversity as follows:

“Biological diversity or ‘biodiversity’ is the variability among living organisms from all sources including, inter alia, terrestrial, marine, and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are part; this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems.”

The key attributes associated with biodiversity as indicated in Figure 1 below are encompassed in defining the scope of biodiversity.

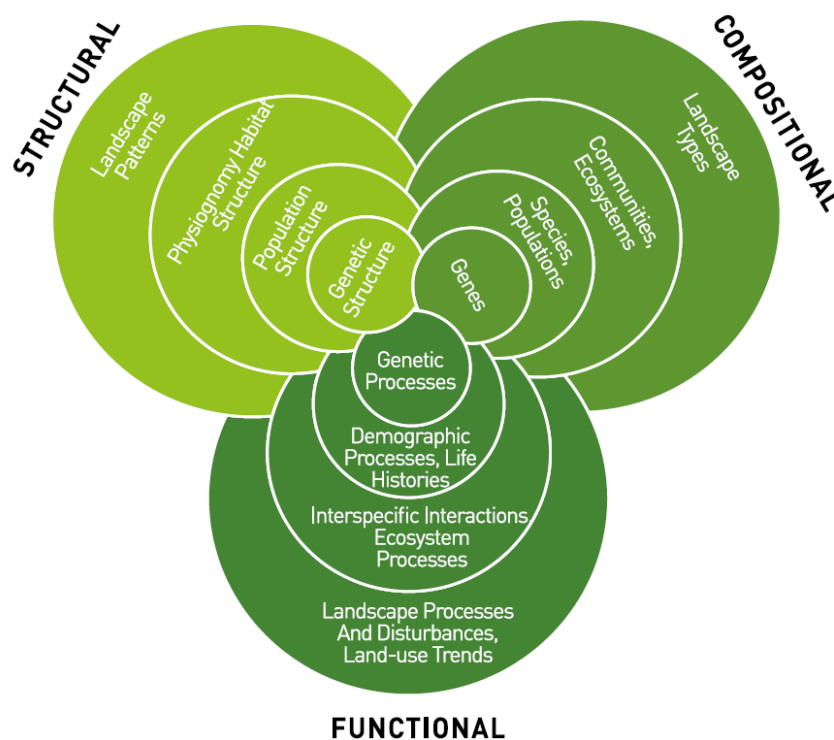


Figure 1: Attributes of biodiversity when viewed as compositional, structural, and functional components, each of which encompasses multiple levels of organisation (Noss, 1990).

1.1.2. Spatial extent and timeframe of the PBSAP

The PBSAP and all its strategic elements are limited to the administrative boundary of the Western Cape province of South Africa and includes management actions that applies to both the urban and rural environments. The lead actors implementing the PBSAP are the Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning (DEA&DP) and CapeNature. CapeNature is the provincial authority responsible for nature conservation in the Western Cape. CapeNature manages World Heritage Sites, provincial nature reserves and selected marine protected areas, estuaries associated with protected areas, and islands. These areas provide ecosystem services to residents, climate change resilience and access for ecotourism as well as research and environmental education. To facilitate working across the province CapeNature adopted a landscape conservation paradigm to depart from protected area-centric conservation management, as illustrated in figure 1 above. The resulting delineated

landscapes are aligned to incorporate a catchment to coast management continuum - Figure 2.

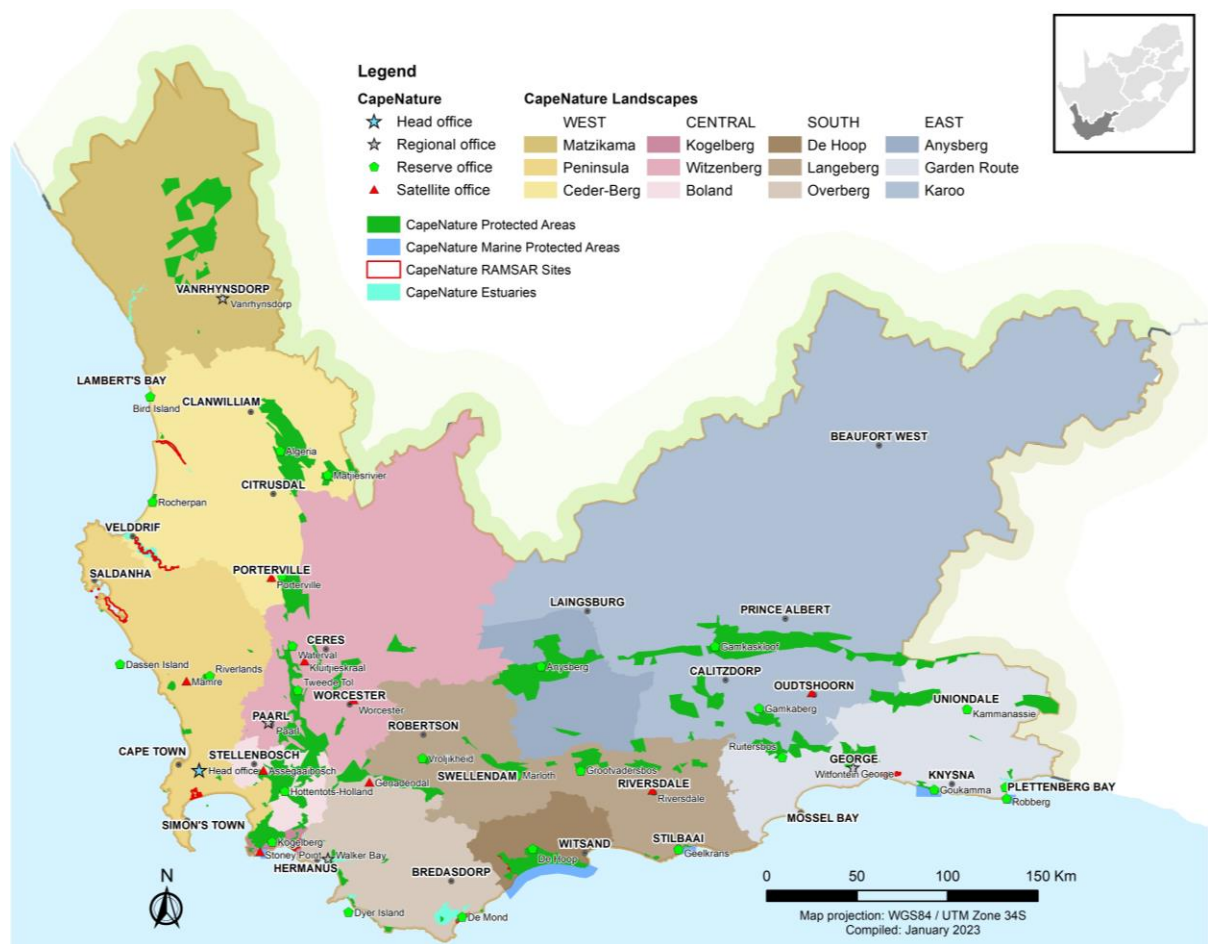


Figure 2: Map of the Western Cape depicting CapeNature Landscapes, Provincial Nature Reserves and Marine Protected Areas (CapeNature, 2022).

The 2030 PBSAP is aligned to the Medium-Term Strategic Framework 2019-2024 (MTSF), the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) 2015 to 2025, the White Paper on Conservation and Sustainable Use of South Africa's Biodiversity (2022), the United Nations Decade of Ecosystem Restoration 2021-2030, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework adopted at the 15th Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in 2022, as well as the One Health Approach. It responds to the National and Provincial economic growth and development strategies (such as the Western Cape Growth for Jobs Strategy 2035) as well as other biodiversity-related policies and laws internationally, nationally and provincially.

1.1.3. The PBSAP and the Western Cape Biodiversity Economy Strategy

The Provincial Biodiversity Economy Strategy (PBES) for the Western Cape was published in 2016, following the publishing of a separate National Biodiversity Economy Strategy in addition to the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan. The implementation of the PBSAP and the PBES demonstrated the co-dependence and integrated coordination at the provincial level, resulting in the incorporation of the PBES into this reviewed PBSAP as Strategic Objective 3 (SO3, "The biodiversity economy is strengthened and increasingly contributes to equitable

and sustainable development and livelihoods"). The implementation of the PBES will be monitored against SO3 and reported separately as the PBES.

1.2. Process to develop and revise the PBSAP

The process followed to develop the 2015-2025 PBSAP and the revision to yield the 2030 PBSAP is summarised below:



Figure 3: Process followed to develop the PBSAP.

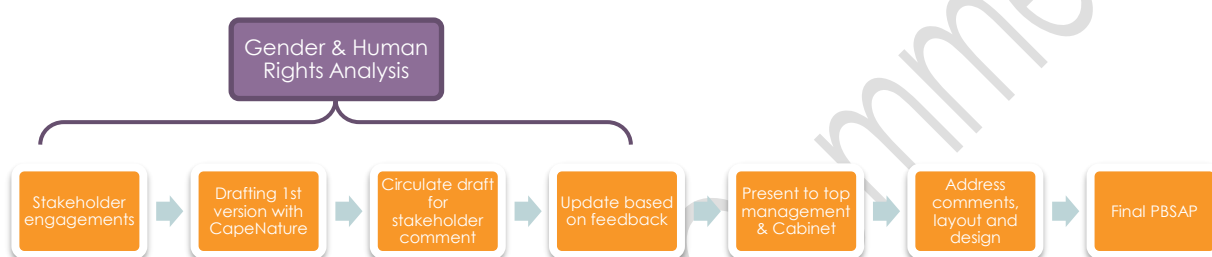


Figure 4: Process followed to revise the PBSAP.

While a similar process was followed to revise the PBSAP as compared to its initial development, additional steps include incorporating a Gender and Human Rights Gap Analysis [undertaken in terms of the DEA&DP Gender Equity Strategic Framework 2020-2025 (see section 1.4.3) and elaborated on in section 1.2.1 below] as well as the internal process that will be followed in presenting the final revised draft to top management and provincial Cabinet.

The revision was initiated in 2021 with an extensive period of stakeholder engagement to discuss the PBSAP 2015-2025, which lasted for 8 months and included 10 meetings across Western Cape Government Departments, Local and District Municipalities, Biosphere Reserves, CapeNature, selected national government departments and entities, as well as private sector stakeholders including NGOs and academia. Based on the feedback received and combined with the lessons learned in the six years of implementation of the PBSAP 2015-2025, the 2030 PBSAP was iteratively revised by the DEA&DP and CapeNature with several rounds of internal informal comment. This also resulted in the condensing of four enabling SOs in the original PBSAP (SO 4-7) into two SOs in this revised PBSAP (SO 4 and 5).

Key internal reviewers provided feedback on a pre-public comment version of the revised PBSAP, followed by an internal commenting period for DEA&DP and CapeNature.

The revised PBSAP responds to international and national changes in biodiversity policy and strategy as well as updated biodiversity data and information such as the Western Cape State of Conservation (2020 and 2021) and State of Biodiversity (2017) Reports. In addition to including extensive engagement with stakeholders, the PBSAP revision process was also guided by the National Medium Term Strategic Framework (2019-2024); the Vision Inspired Priorities of the WCG Provincial Strategic Plan 2019-2024 and the Western Cape Growth for

Jobs Strategy 2035, specifically Ecological Infrastructure measures focussing on water security, flooding, fire risk and job creation.

1.2.1. Gender and human rights gap analysis and mainstreaming

The Gender and Human Rights Gap Analysis set out to identify whether the 2015-2025 PBSAP adequately catered for the social-cultural sensitivities and dimensions surrounding priority groups within the Western Cape. It was found that, while the PBSAP 2015-2025 would benefit priority groups most through its efforts to safeguard the ecosystems upon which many vulnerable individuals depend, the PBSAP itself was largely blind to the social-cultural dimensions that shape how benefits and burdens associated with biodiversity management are distributed within the Western Cape. As a result, high likelihood existed that the implementation of the 2015-2025 PBSAP could unintentionally exacerbate existing inequalities in certain instances. The findings and recommendations of the Gap Analysis have been incorporated into this revision of the PBSAP to avoid approaches that might drive inequality in the biodiversity management space and to actively enable a human rights-based approach to the strategies.

A summary of the general themes related to the findings and recommendations of the gap analysis that guided the revision of the PBSAP and its implementation plan are mentioned below. Please see the full Gender and Human Rights Gap Analysis Report (DEA&DP 2022) for a comprehensive overview of these recommendations. It should also be noted that for some of these recommendations the level at which they are applied may only be visible at the more detailed short-term operational planning scale of the PBSAP Implementation Plan and may therefore not be explicit in the main revised PBSAP.

Engaging with priority groups to understand their priorities and perspectives

For many reasons outlined in the Gap Analysis Report, the voices of the most marginalised members of society are often not heard in the processes designed to encourage participation. Meaningful participation is vital in gathering a variety of perspectives on an issue or topic so that discussions and decisions are formulated around an "as-accurate-as-possible" representation of reality. Additionally, meaningful participation requires incremental adjustments in the perspectives of those participating in these discussions and decisions, which ultimately results in outcomes that are considered legitimate (even if these outcomes might not be the desired outcome of certain groups). Although measures designed to address these issues might be time consuming and costly, having priority individuals as co-owners of interventions or strategies will considerably strengthen their likelihood of success. Some of the common social elements that hinder effective engagement with priority groups include reduced literacy, livelihood strategies that inhibit engagement, gender roles that make engagement difficult, and lack of agency to participate.

The implementation of the 2030 PBSAP (outlined in the PBSAP Implementation Plan) will prioritise mechanisms that maximise the participation of members of vulnerable groups, specifically for the gains mentioned above.

Representivity within decision-taking processes and institutions

The importance of context and lived experiences is vital, and therefore, wherever possible, priorities and perspectives of the individuals who form part of the priority groups should be incorporated. This revised PBSAP acknowledges the importance of context in its adoption of

the principle of subsidiarity⁶. Actions where this is particularly important have incorporated mechanisms to engage with the individuals impacted by decisions or actions to evaluate whether decisions reflect the needs and perspectives of vulnerable groups or not.

1.3. The Western Cape, home to globally important biodiversity

The Western Cape is known for its rich biodiversity and unique natural landscapes. It is characterised by a wide range of habitats, ranging from cool moist coastal areas, fynbos shrublands and forests to hot and dry semi-arid regions. In total, the province contains five of South Africa's nine biomes, namely the Forest, Fynbos, Nama Karoo, Succulent Karoo, and Albany thicket, and displays several vegetation types from the less defined Azonal group of habitats typically associated with aquatic features. It is this diversity of habitats which contributes to the region's high levels of biodiversity with numerous plant and animal species found nowhere else on Earth.

The Succulent Karoo biome is an internationally recognized biodiversity hotspot, and is the world's only arid hotspot. This biome occurs along the western and north-western parts of the Western Cape extending up into southern Namibia and east into the Little Karoo. It experiences low and erratic rainfall, with most precipitation occurring in the winter months. The summers are hot and dry, and the region is prone to droughts. The dominant feature of the Succulent Karoo is its rich assemblage of succulent plants (with an estimated 6,000 plant species occurring within its boundaries) which have adapted to store water in their leaves, stems, or roots to survive in the arid conditions. These succulent species include a variety of *Mesembryanthemaceae*, or 'Vygies' (such as the iconic and diverse family of stone plants), aloes, and other unique plant forms (Low & Rebelo, 1996). The region's plant diversity also provides a visually stunning display of colourful flowers during the spring bloom, known as the "Namaqualand daisies."

South and south-east of the Succulent Karoo is one of the most prominent biomes in the Western Cape, the Fynbos Biome. This endemic biome is renowned for its incredible plant diversity, with over 9 000 species recorded, many of which are endemic. The Fynbos biome is characterised by a Mediterranean climate, with cool, wet winters and warm, dry summers. The region experiences regular fires, which play a crucial role in maintaining the ecological balance and promoting the growth of certain plant species. These plants have adapted to the fire-prone environment and display various strategies for regenerating after fires, such as resprouting from underground bulbs or seeds. Due to its ecological significance and unique biodiversity, the Fynbos biome has been recognised as one of the world's six floral kingdoms (Cape Floral Region) and is designated as a global biodiversity hotspot, the only one located entirely within a single country (SANBI, 2019a). The Fynbos biome has the highest number of threatened ecosystem types (59 of 122) of all South Africa's ecosystems (SANBI, 2021).

To the north and east of the Fynbos and Succulent Karoo biomes, the Nama Karoo biome is an arid ecosystem that covers vast areas in South Africa, primarily in the central and western parts of the country. It is named after the Nama people, who are indigenous to the region. The Nama Karoo biome is known for its unique vegetation and challenging environmental conditions. The vegetation of the Nama Karoo is well-adapted to the arid climate, characterised by low rainfall and high temperatures. With over 2 000 species recorded, the

⁶ See the guiding principles of this PBSAP in section 3.3.

dominant plant forms in this biome are shrubs, dwarf shrubs, and succulents (Palmer and Hofman, 1997).

The Albany thicket biome is another endemic biome found predominantly in the Eastern Cape but extending into the eastern portion of the Western Cape. It is characterised by dense, thorny shrubs and small trees that form a thick understory, creating a tangled and impenetrable landscape. This biome is named after the Albany region, which encompasses areas around the city of Grahamstown. The Albany thicket biome is typically found in a transitional zone between the fynbos biome to the west and the savanna biome to the north and east and is well-adapted to periods of drought and occasional fires.

The Afrotropical forest is a unique biome found in several mountainous regions of southern Africa including the Western Cape. It is characterised by its cool, misty climate and dense vegetation, which consists of a variety of tall trees, shrubs, and understory plants. This biome experiences a mild climate with regular rainfall throughout the year, although it is often shrouded in mist and fog. This moisture-rich environment creates ideal conditions for the growth of a diverse array of plant species. The dominant tree species in these forests include yellowwoods, stinkwoods, Cape beeches, and various species of alder. The forest floor is often covered in lush ferns, mosses, and other understory plants (Mucina & Rutherford, 2006).

The Western Cape is also home to diverse animal life. The terrestrial biomes support a range of mammal species, including the Cape mountain zebra and bontebok. It is also inhabited by small mammals such as rodents and insectivores; several are locally endemic. Avian diversity is high, with numerous bird species found in the region, including endemic species like the Cape Sugarbird and Protea Seedeater (Hockey *et al.*, 2005).

Coastal areas of the Western Cape provide important habitats for marine and estuarine species. The Benguela Current, which influences the coastal waters, supports diverse marine ecosystems and a rich variety of fish, seabirds, and marine mammals. Wetland areas in the Western Cape, such as estuaries and freshwater marshes, are critical for waterbird species, as well as for numerous plant and invertebrate species (Branch *et al.*, 2007).

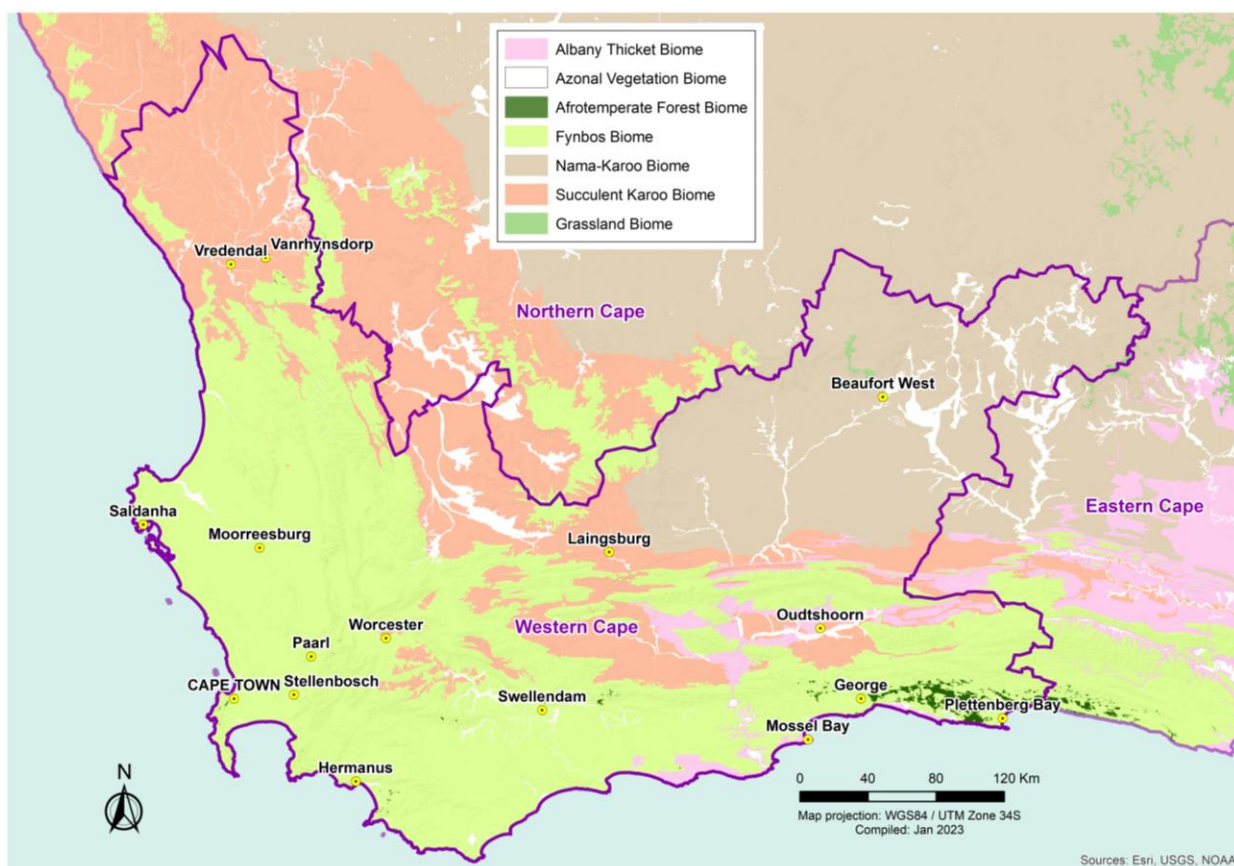


Figure 5: Map indicating the extent of Biomes in the Western Cape.

1.3.1. The landscape of the province

The Western Cape is situated in the most south-western part of South Africa, flanked by the Indian Ocean to the south and the Atlantic Ocean to the west and southwest, the two oceans meeting at Cape Agulhas, the southernmost point of Africa. The Western Cape has the longest coastline of the four South African coastal provinces and is bordered by the Northern Cape to the north and the Eastern Cape to the east. It occupies an area of 129 462 km². Cape Town, the only major city in the province, is in the south-westernmost corner and is the capital of the province as well as the legislative capital of South Africa.

The Western Cape is predominantly a winter rainfall area, with warm to hot dry summers and cool rainy winters, with a similar climate to other Mediterranean-type ecosystems located in the Mediterranean Basin, parts of Chile, California, and parts of South-Western and South-Eastern Australia. The source of rainfall mostly originates from mid-latitude cyclones driven from the South Atlantic by westerly winds. In summer, the climatic belts move southwards to be replaced by dry south-easterlies which can often reach gale-force and result in high fire risk. Further eastward the rainfall is more evenly distributed throughout the year, with non-seasonal rainfall in the Southern Cape. Rainfall decreases further inland as the Cape Fold Mountains blocks the inland movement of moisture, creating a rain shadow effect. The Nama Karoo region in the north-eastern parts of the province has predominantly late summer rainfall which falls in erratic thunderstorms.

The Cape Fold Mountains are the most prominent topographic feature of the Western Cape, which form a north-south axis (including the Cederberg, Groot Winterhoek, and Witzenberg mountain ranges) and an east-west axis (including the Langeberg, Riviersonderend,

Outeniqua and Swartberg mountain ranges) which converge in the south-west (Boland Mountains).

The primary rivers of the Western Cape include the Berg, Breede, Olifants and Gouritz Rivers, and each provide a vital function in terms of the water needs for the various economic sectors in a predominantly arid province. The mountains mentioned above form vital catchments for the rivers, as these regions experience elevated rainfall.

The combination of the high variability of topography, which in turn results in high levels of climatic variation over short distances, variation in altitude/geology/soils, and a long history of geological stability and few mass extinction events (e.g., ice ages) has resulted in high levels of speciation and endemism within the Western Cape.

1.3.2. Freshwater environment and wetlands

The Breede-Olifants is the main Water Management Area in the Western Cape. The 2018 National Biodiversity Assessment Report (NBA, 2018) indicates that 19.3% of river types and 67.1% of wetland types in the Western Cape are listed as Critically Endangered. Threats to rivers and wetlands include alien invasive vegetation, alien invasive fish and poor water quality. Degraded freshwater environments are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, such as increasing temperatures and drought.

Surface water Strategic Water Source Areas (SWSA) are areas that contribute significant surface water run-off in relation to their size. The total area of surface water SWSAs in South Africa, Lesotho and Swaziland represent approximately 8% of South Africa's surface area yet they produce a mean annual runoff representing approximately 50% of the region's total mean annual runoff (Nel *et al.*, 2013). Likewise, groundwater SWSAs provide strategic groundwater resources, many of which are also associated with the surface water SWSAs. Following a national prioritisation process, 22 surface water and 37 groundwater SWSAs were identified as the most important for both people and the environment. This included the establishment of 8 focal surface water⁷ and 8 focal groundwater⁸ SWSAs in the Western Cape (Le Maitre *et al.*, 2018). Locally important groundwater SWSAs include those in arid areas which rely heavily on groundwater, such as the Kammanassie in the Karoo and the Vanrhynsdorp sub-national groundwater SWSA near the Knersvlakte.

1.3.3. The marine, coastal and estuarine environments

The coast is a dynamic environment that is influenced by both the terrestrial and the marine environments. The Western Cape's coastline stretches more than a 1 000 km; this is the longest coastline of all the four coastal provinces of the country and includes both the Indian and Atlantic Oceans.

The confluence of the warmer Agulhas and the colder Benguela Ocean currents along the Western Cape coastline results in the abundant and rich marine biodiversity of the province. Approximately 33% of the world's marine fauna occur in South African oceans and are represented by high levels of marine endemism in the Warm Temperate Agulhas ecoregion on the south coast of the Western Cape. The most recent National Biodiversity Assessment

⁷ Table Mountain; Boland; Groot Winterhoek; Langeberg Mountains; Swartberg; Outeniqua; Kougaberg and Tsitsikamma (the latter extends into the Eastern Cape)

⁸ George and Outeniqua; Overberg Region; South Western Cape Ranges; Cape Peninsula and Cape Flats; Tulbagh-Aston Valley; North-western Cape Ranges; West Coast Aquifer ; Sandveld

(NBA, 2018) reports that approximately half of marine ecosystem types are threatened, with the cold temperate Southern Benguela ecoregion containing more threatened ecosystems than the Warm Temperate Agulhas ecoregion. Marine ecosystem pressures include fishing, mining, coastal development, harbours, mariculture, freshwater flow reduction, pollution, climate change and illegal harvesting and trade.

Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) are established to help conserve marine life and foster the conservation and management of biodiverse marine habitats. There are ten MPAs in the Western Cape, namely Stillbaai, Goukamma, Robberg, De Hoop, Bettys Bay, Walker Bay Whale Sanctuary and Rocherpan managed by CapeNature, Helderberg managed by the City of Cape Town, and Table Mountain National Park, Tsitsikamma and West Coast National Park managed by SANParks.

There are 54 estuaries and 38 micro estuaries along the Western Cape coastline, including the second and third largest estuaries in the country (Groot Berg and Knysna estuaries, respectively; Van Niekerk *et al.*, 2019). In addition, the Langebaan system is the only estuarine lagoon in the country.

Beaches allows for a variety of activities such as swimming, fishing, spiritual ceremonies and harvesting of marine flora and fauna for food, medicine and bait. In addition, beaches and dunes protect settlements from storm surges, wave damage, flooding and wind stress.

1.3.4. Genetic diversity

Genetic diversity provides the foundation for biodiversity and is necessary for long-term survival, adaptation, and resilience not only for individuals, but also for populations, species, and ecosystems. The maintenance of this diversity allows species or populations to adapt to an ever-changing environment and facilitate resilience against climate change and the impacts of threats to biodiversity. The maintenance of genetic diversity can support further development of climate resilient crops, boost ecosystem resilience to the impacts of climate change such as droughts and increased fire frequency, maintain pollination services, and negate the impacts of alien invasive species on ecosystem integrity. The One Health Theory of Change establishes a link between loss of genetic diversity in biodiversity and reduced health in humans and animals (One Health High-Level Expert Panel, 2022). Threats to genetic diversity include:

- habitat fragmentation leading to geographical isolation of subpopulations,
- impacts that decrease populations below an effective population size,
- accidental or ill-advised species / subspecies introductions outside their natural range resulting in hybridization with native species,
- accidental or ill-advised movements of ecotypical species resulting in loss of local adaptations, and
- artificial selection for specific physical characteristics, e.g., game colour morphs.

The Western Cape represents high levels of species endemism and genetic variation within species, which is attributed to the high variation in habitats and ecological niches. This results in high functional, structural, and compositional variation. Redfins, of which all freshwater fish species except one are endemic to the Cape Fold Ecoregion in the Western Cape, are an example of species with high genetic variability, as research findings support high levels of genetic and morphological variability between redfin populations. In Cape mountain zebra, three distinct genetic lineages are identified: Kammanassie, Gamkaberg and Cradock. All

three lineages exhibit poor genetic diversity within populations with significant genetic variability between populations, representing significant loss of genetic variation through fragmentation of populations over time.

1.3.5. Ecological Infrastructure and Ecosystem Goods and Services

Ecological Infrastructure refers to features in the environment such as healthy mountain catchments, rivers, wetlands, estuaries, coastal dunes, and corridors of natural habitat, which together form a network of interconnected features in the landscape that give rise to ecosystem goods and services. Examples of these ecosystem services include a stable and sustained supply of clean, potable water; providing pollination services; nutrient cycling; climate regulation; and reducing the risk of disasters like floods, droughts, and irregular fires. These ecosystem services directly and indirectly support the health of humans and animals (FAO *et al.*, 2022), and investing in Ecological Infrastructure in order for these ecosystem goods and services to continue supporting economic development and job creation is one of the focus areas of the Western Cape Growth for Jobs Strategy 2035 (WCG, 2023; also see section 1.4.3). Ecological Infrastructure often provides services at higher quality and at no or lower cost than engineered or built infrastructure alternatives, and investing in Ecological Infrastructure can therefore often result in greater returns for a desired good or service than built infrastructure. It should also be noted that the ecosystem goods and services provided by ecosystems outside of urban areas do not just support people living in rural areas but are critical for the health and economic prosperity of urban populations as well, in addition to the direct benefits that urban biodiversity offers urban dwellers, such as cleaner air and breakdown of pollutants, a reduced heat island effect, and improved mental and physical well-being.

Investigations into the value provided by Ecological Infrastructure indicated that the loss of ecosystem services in the province was equivalent to a direct cost to society of at least R4.5 billion per annum (DEA&DP, 2014), making it clear that there needs to be investment in the restoration and maintenance of natural capital to secure the provision of ecosystem services. The Ecological Infrastructure Investment Framework (EIIF) was developed to provide a guide to decision-makers from both the private and public sector in making choices around where – and how – to invest to promote the resilience of the Western Cape's Ecological Infrastructure. It highlighted risks to water security (primarily due to alien plant invasions and rangeland degradation), the risks to human life, property and livelihoods posed by uncontrolled fires and by floods (coastal and inland), and the risks to food supply and livelihoods due to rangeland degradation, particularly from over-grazing.

DEA&DP and CapeNature work to manage the impact on Ecological Infrastructure and ecosystem services to improve the resilience of communities to climate change. This work also further enables the Strategic Framework and Overarching Implementation Plan for Ecosystem-Based Adaptation in South Africa (2016-2021), the EIIF, the Western Cape Biodiversity Spatial Plan as well as the Western Cape Growth for Jobs Strategy 2035.

1.4. The policy context

The PBSAP has been revised to align and respond to the updated requirements of international, national and provincial policy and legal frameworks governing biodiversity.

1.4.1. International policy context

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) is the international treaty for "the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources". This treaty was adopted at the end of the 1992 Rio Earth Summit, signed by 150 government leaders. The Convention entered into force on 29 December 1993 with 168 signatures, including South Africa.

The United Nations General Assembly adopted the Millennium Declaration in 2000 which included the Millennium Development Goals that sought to address issues of poverty eradication and sustainable development. In 2015, the United Nations adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which saw a progression of the Millennium Development Goals being absorbed into 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Of relevance to biodiversity management, and to this PBSAP, is SDG 15 "Life on land", which includes halting biodiversity loss. The PBSAP 2015-2025 was aligned with the targets set out under SDG 15 and the CBD's *Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020*, the latter containing 20 biodiversity-related Aichi Targets, which were due in 2020. However, most of the Aichi Targets have not been achieved (Secretariat of the CBD, 2020).

The decade of 2020-2030 has been declared the UN Decade for Ecosystem Restoration, and to replace the Aichi Targets an updated global biodiversity strategy and targets were developed at the 15th CBD Conference of the Parties (CoP) in the form of the Kunming-Montreal GBF. Since the development of the PBSAP 2015-2025 there have therefore been significant shifts in global and national biodiversity related thinking, necessitating the revision of the PBSAP to ensure continued alignment to international strategies and agreements such as the Kunming-Montreal GBF.



Figure 6: High level overview of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

Box 1. Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework Goals

Goal A

- The integrity, connectivity and resilience of all ecosystems are maintained, enhanced, or restored, substantially increasing the area of natural ecosystems by 2050;
- Human induced extinction of known threatened species is halted, and, by 2050, the extinction rate and risk of all species are reduced tenfold and the abundance of native wild species is increased to healthy and resilient levels;
- The genetic diversity within populations of wild and domesticated species, is maintained, safeguarding their adaptive potential.

Goal B

Biodiversity is sustainably used and managed and nature's contributions to people, including ecosystem functions and services, are valued, maintained and enhanced, with those currently in decline being restored, supporting the achievement of sustainable development for the benefit of present and future generations by 2050.

Goal C

The monetary and non-monetary benefits from the utilization of genetic resources and digital sequence information on genetic resources, and of traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources, as applicable, are shared fairly and equitably, including, as appropriate with indigenous peoples and local communities, and substantially increased by 2050, while ensuring traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources is appropriately protected, thereby contributing to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, in accordance with internationally agreed access and benefit-sharing instruments.

Goal D

Adequate means of implementation, including financial resources, capacity-building, technical and scientific cooperation, and access to and transfer of technology to fully implement the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework are secured and equitably accessible to all Parties, especially developing country Parties, in particular the least developed countries and small island developing States, as well as countries with economies in transition, progressively closing the biodiversity finance gap of \$700 billion per year, and aligning financial flows with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the 2050 Vision for biodiversity.

It is a requirement for states party to the CBD to develop national Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans, and Provincial Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans are provided for as per Decision 22 of the 10th CBD CoP, which endorsed the *Plan of Action on Subnational Governments, Cities and other Local Authorities for Biodiversity (2011-2020)* by encouraging “...subnational and local biodiversity strategies and actions plans in support of national biodiversity strategies and action plans”.

Although the CBD and its Kunming-Montreal GBF, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development are arguably the most

important multilateral international environmental agreements for Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans, several complementary agreements exist, outlined in Box 2 below.

Box 2. Examples of multilateral international environmental agreements that are relevant to the PBSAP

- The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2015)
- UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB, 1971)
- Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, esp. as a waterfowl habitat (Ramsar, 1971)
- Convention Concerning the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1975)
- International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling (1948)
- Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (1979)
- Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (1996)
- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Fauna and Flora (1975)
- Convention of Prevention of Marine Pollution (1975)
- Benguela Current Convention (2013)
- Convention for Cooperation in the Protection, Management and Development of Marine and Coastal Environment of the Atlantic Coast of the West, Central and Southern African Region (Abidjan Convention, 1981)
- Convention and the implementation of the Strategic Action Programme for the protection of the Western Indian Ocean from land-based sources and activities (WIO-SAP or The Nairobi Convention of 1985)
- The Paris Agreement on Climate Change (Paris Agreement, 2015)

1.4.2. National policy context

The national context for the PBSAP first emanates from the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa ("the Constitution"), which stipulates the mandates of the three tiers of government – national, provincial and local government. In relation to functions pertaining to biodiversity management, Schedule 4 ascribes "...*nature conservation, excluding national parks, national botanical gardens and marine resources*" as functional areas of legislative competence⁹ concurrent to national and provincial governments.

The Constitution under the Bill of Rights also includes an environmental right under section 24:

"24. *Environment.*—Everyone has the right—

(a) *to an environment that is not harmful to their health or well-being; and*

(b) *to have the environment protected, for the benefit of present and future generations, through reasonable legislative and other measures that—*

- prevent pollution and ecological degradation;*
- promote conservation; and*

⁹ It should be noted that "legislative competence" refers to the ability to make laws relating to the functional areas mentioned, not the mandate to manage or provide services relating to these areas.

- iii. *secure ecologically sustainable development and use of natural resources while promoting justifiable economic and social development."*

To realise this right all three tiers of government – national, provincial and local – and other organs of state are required to take legislative and other measures to give effect to the environmental right.

Based on the above, and in accordance with the CBD requirement for member states to develop National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (NBSAPs), the then national Department of Environmental Affairs published the 2015 NBSAP which takes a comprehensive long-term view with strategic objectives and long-range targets. It is anticipated that the NBSAP 2015-2025 as well as the Strategic Framework and Overarching Implementation Plan for Ecosystem-based Adaptation in South Africa 2016-2021 will also be updated to respond to the Kunming-Montreal GBF in the near future.

Table 1: Alignment between the 2015 NBSAP and the PBSAP strategic objectives.

		PBSAP Strategic Objectives				
		SO1	SO2	SO3	SO4	SO5
NBSAP Strategic Objectives	SO1: Management of biodiversity assets and their contribution to the economy, rural development, job creation and social wellbeing is enhanced	✓		✓		
	SO2: Investments in ecological infrastructure enhance resilience and ensure benefits to society	✓				
	SO3: Biodiversity considerations are mainstreamed into policies, strategies and practices of a range of sectors		✓		✓	✓
	SO4: People are mobilised to adopt practices that sustain the long-term benefits of biodiversity		✓	✓		✓
	SO5: Conservation and management of biodiversity is improved through the development of an equitable and suitably skilled workforce		✓		✓	✓
	SO6: Effective knowledge foundations, including indigenous knowledge and citizen science, support management, conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity		✓		✓	

The NBSAP is informed by the NBA which is the primary tool for monitoring and reporting on the state of biodiversity in South Africa. The NBA is an invaluable informant of biodiversity related policies, strategies and actions in various sectors towards improved biodiversity management. The NBA also serves to distil the implications of commitments made by South Africa under the CBD, and to track South Africa's performance against these commitments. Together the NBSAP and the NBA inform the National Biodiversity Framework. The latter is a requirement in terms of the NEM:BA and frames the country's top priority actions, strategic objectives and mid-range targets. All of these strategic informants are incorporated into the PBSAP and its integrated PBES, and the relationship between these policies and additional informants to the PBSAP is shown in Figure 7.

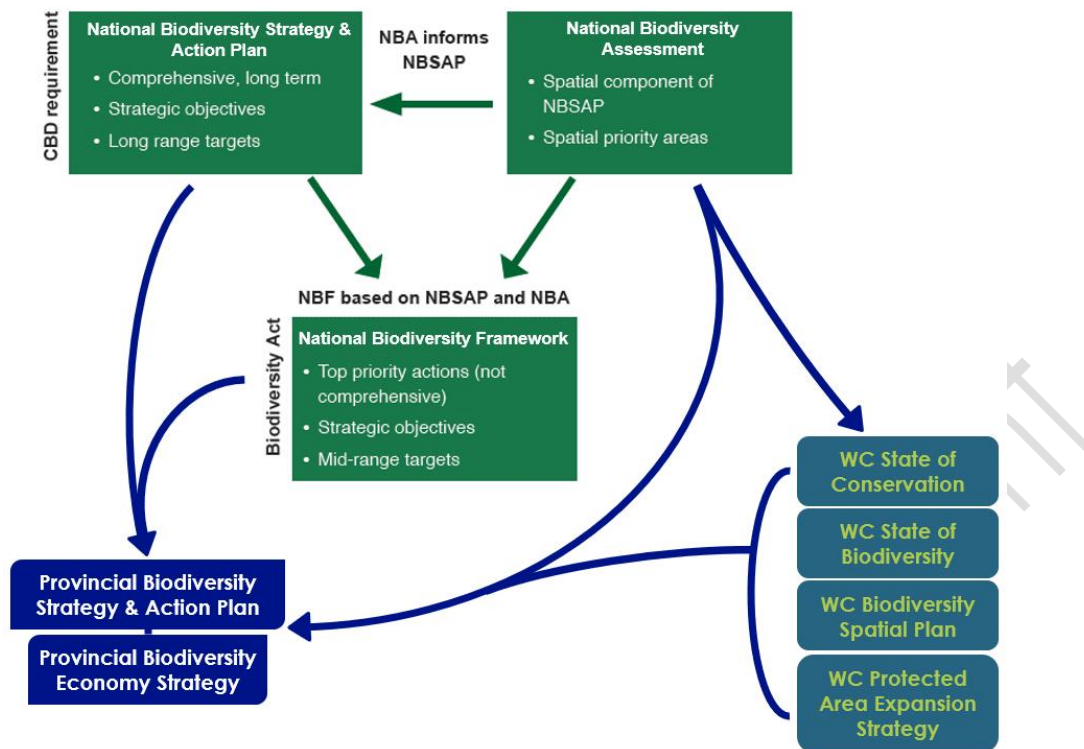


Figure 7: The relationships between key driving strategies and informants for the PBSAP.

The National Biodiversity Economy Strategy (NBES) supports the commercialisation and trade of biodiversity by creating an enabling environment for communities and entrepreneurs to participate in the biodiversity economy, while contributing to poverty alleviation, sustainable development and conservation of the country's rich biodiversity and ecosystem services. The three main sector focus areas of the NBES include the wildlife, bioprospecting/biotrade and ecotourism industries. The principles of the NBES are listed below.

- Conservation of biodiversity and Ecological Infrastructure
- Sustainable use of indigenous resources
- Fair and equitable beneficiation
- Socio-economic sustainability
- Incentive driven compliance to regulation
- Ethical and humane practices
- Improving quality and standards of products

Economic and development policy context of South Africa

In addition to the country's Constitution, the PBSAP is couched within the economic and development context of South Africa. Key economic and development national and provincial policies include:

The **National Development Plan 2030** (NDP) sets out the priorities and aspirations of the Republic of South Africa until 2030 towards a prosperous and inclusive future in South Africa. Importantly, the NDP outlines that South Africa is a developmental state, and that sustainable development that improves the quality of life for South Africans must be prioritised. It is in this context it should be understood that the PBSAP is anthropocentric when considering biodiversity value.

The **Medium Term Strategic Framework 2019 – 2024** identifies outcomes, indicators, baselines and targets in terms of the implementation of the NDP for the 2019 to 2024 period for all spheres of government.

The **National Spatial Development Framework 2022** provides a spatial context to the NDP and sets out how the priorities and aspirations of the NDP translate spatially at a national level.

The overarching national environmental policy and legal framework

South Africa has extensive policies and legislation pertaining to sustainable development and environmental management. The PBSAP is informed significantly by these policies, highlighted below:

- National Framework for Sustainable Development (2008)
- National Strategy on Sustainable Development and Action Plan 2011-2014 (NSSD 1, 2011)
- Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act (Act 16 of 2013)
- White Paper on Environmental Management (1997)
- National Environmental Management Act (Act 107 of 1998) and the associated Specific Environmental Management Acts:
 - The Environmental Conservation Act (Act 36 of 1998)
 - The National Water Act (Act 36 of 1998)
 - The National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act (Act 57 of 2003)
 - The National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act (Act 10 of 2004)
 - The National Environmental Management: Air Quality Act (Act 39 of 2004)
 - The National Environmental Management: Integrated Coastal Management Act (Act 24 of 2008)
 - The National Environmental Management: Waste Act (Act 59 of 2008)
- World Heritage Convention Act (Act 49 of 1999)
- Marine Living Resources Act (Act 18 of 1998)
- White Paper on National Climate Change Response (2011)
- White Paper on Conservation and Sustainable Use of South Africa's Biodiversity (2022)
- National Climate Change Bill

Other national legislation relevant to the implementation of the mandate of biodiversity and nature conservation

The following are the key national laws relevant to the implementation of the mandate of biodiversity and nature conservation and include all amendments to these acts and any regulations promulgated thereunder.

- Carbon Tax Act (Act 15 of 2019)
- Civil Aviation Act (Act 13 of 2009)
- Conservation of Agricultural Resources Act (Act 43 of 1983)
- Construction Industry Development Board Act (Act 38 of 2000)
- Criminal Procedure Act (Act 51 of 1977)
- Disaster Management Act (Act 57 of 2002)
- National Forest Act (Act 84 of 1998)
- Minerals and Petroleum Resources Development Act (Act 28 of 2002)
- Mountain Catchment Areas Act (Act 63 of 1970)
- National Heritage Resources Act (Act 25 of 1999)
- National Prosecuting Authority Act (Act 32 of 1999)
- National Veld and Forest Fire Act (Act 101 of 1998)

- Occupational Health and Safety Act (Act 85 of 1993)
- Promotion of Access to Information Act (Act 2 of 2000)
- Promotion of Administrative Justice Act (Act 3 of 2000)
- Sea Birds and Seals Protection Act (Act 46 of 1973)
- Seashore Act (Act 21 of 1935)

It is important to note that many of the legislative instruments outlined above and the previous page include enabling provisions for the development of subordinate policy and legislative tools such as guidelines, management plans, and regulations.

The policy development and law reform in respect of biodiversity management has ensured alignment with the Constitution, sustainable development, and environmental management policies and laws. Biodiversity policies and laws are also a mechanism to implement the relevant national and provincial obligations under the Constitution as well as the sustainable development and the national environmental management principles.

As a result of the recommendations of a High-Level Panel the National Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE) in 2021 embarked on the development of a Policy Position on the conservation and ecologically sustainable use of Elephant, Lion, Leopard and Rhinoceros as well as a White Paper on Conservation and Sustainable Use of South Africa's Biodiversity. CapeNature and the DEA&DP have been actively involved in the working sessions and commenting processes related to these key policies. The White Paper was approved for implementation in June 2023 and the DFFE and various partners are in the process of developing an implementation plan. These frameworks heralds in a sea-change in the management of indigenous faunal resources and the associated legal framework. In parallel with this process a DFFE-led Biodiversity Alignment Committee has been established under MINTECH Working Group 4 (Compliance and Enforcement) and Working Group 10 (Advisory Committee on Environmental Policy & Law Reform) to ensure that future frameworks are aligned to avoid conflicts.

1.4.3. Provincial policy context

The Constitution of the Western Cape (1998) is enabled in terms of the national Constitution. In terms of Chapter 10 of the Provincial Constitution, there are provincial policy directive principles aimed at achieving:

- the protection of the environment in the Western Cape, including its unique fauna and flora, for the benefit of present and future generations; and
- the protection and conservation of the natural historical, cultural historical, archaeological and architectural heritage of the Western Cape for the benefit of the present and future generations.

The WCG has several overarching strategies and policies in place that guide implementation of its mandate and pursuance of its economic and social development goals. Additionally, the province has put in place strategies and legislative mechanisms to give effect to its obligations in respect to environmental and biodiversity functions. There are also initiatives aimed at strengthening the biodiversity policy and legal framework within the province, including this PBSAP as well as the development of the WCBA.

Western Cape Biodiversity Act, Act 6 of 2021

In December of 2021, the Western Cape Premier assented to the WCBA, which will come into effect in a phased manner. Once this Act is fully in force the legislative context within the Western Cape specific to biodiversity management will be harmonised through the repeal of the Sea Shore Act (Act 21 of 1935), the Mountain Catchment Areas Act (Act 63 of 1970), the Nature Conservation Ordinance (1974), and the Western Cape Biosphere Reserves Act (Act 6 of 2011), as well as the Western Cape Nature Conservation Laws Amendment Act (Act 3 of 2000) excluding section 2 and schedule 2.

The WCBA will significantly improve the WCG's ability to give effect to the PBSAP, along with the commitments made under the CBD that are applicable to the WCG.

The Western Cape Biodiversity Spatial Plan (BSP)

The 2017 BSP comprises a map of biodiversity priority areas accompanied by a handbook providing contextual information and land use guidelines. It identifies priority areas for biodiversity conservation and ecosystem delivery via the delineation of spatial categories of biodiversity priority areas such as Critical Biodiversity Areas (CBAs) and Ecological Support Areas (ESAs). The BSP Handbook provides guidelines for land use planning and decision-making, and for land and resource management using the BSP Map¹⁰. All the guidelines are informed by the 'Desired Management Objective' for the different categories included in the BSP Map, as well as the relative impact of a land use activity on biodiversity. The BSP is in the process of being updated, and the draft 2023 BSP identifies 24% of the province as CBAs, 13% as ESAs, 16% as Protected Areas, 18% as no natural habitat left remaining and 29% as other natural areas.

The Western Cape Protected Area Expansion Strategy (WCPAES)

The WCPAES guides the strategic expansion of protected areas. It aligns with the National Protected Areas Expansion Strategy, CapeNature's Strategic Plan (2021-2025) and the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act (Act 57 of 2003; NEM:PAA). It provides guidance for the strategic increase in the protected area network and is updated every five years. The concept of strategic increase is crucial and a key aim of the WCPAES is to increase representation of threatened ecosystem types into the conservation estate. These priority areas are identified in the Conservation Action Priorities Map.

OneCape 2040

OneCape 2040 complements the NDP and was designed to build on the then Provincial Strategic Objectives. OneCape 2040 sets the goal of:

"...creating a resilient, inclusive and competitive Western Cape with higher rates of employment producing growing incomes, greater equality and an improved quality of life".

The vision as stated in OneCape 2040 is that of:

"...a highly-skilled, innovation driven, resource efficient, connected, high opportunity and collaborative society".






¹⁰ The 2017 version is accessible at: [CapeFarmMapper](#); [SANBI BGIS](#); or [WCG Environmental and Development Planning Atlas](#).

OneCape 2040 identifies six changes or transitions that are required to achieve its vision; directly relevant to biodiversity is the Ecological Transition (Green Cape) – aiming for sustainable low carbon resource use. The ecological transition's goals are for all people to have access to water-, energy- and waste services that are delivered on a sustainable resource-efficient manner; and for the Western Cape to be a recognised leader and innovator in the Green Economy. The primary levers identified to achieve these goals are energy- and water infrastructure, regulation geared to sustainable resource use and innovation and the fast tracking of the green agenda incentivised.

The Western Cape Provincial Strategic Plan 2019 - 2024

The Provincial Strategic Plan sets out the WCG's vision and strategic priorities for the 2019 to 2024 period. A central aspect of the PSP is the sustainable utilisation of resources towards the realisation of five Vision Inspired Priorities (VIPs). The synergies between this strategy and action plan and the PSP are identified in Table 2 below.

Table 2: PBSAP contributions to Vision Inspired Priorities of the PSP

VISION INSPIRED PRIORITIES	PBSAP STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES
 <p>VIP 1: Safe and Cohesive Communities</p>	<p>Strategic Objectives 1, 2 and 4</p> <p>These priority areas promote resilient communities through response to impacts of climate change as well as safe, equitable and sustainable public access to the benefits from biodiversity management and natural resources use.</p>
 <p>VIP 2: Growth and Jobs</p>	<p>Strategic Objective 1, 3 and 5</p> <p>Enabling a sustainable Biodiversity Economy is prioritised to support inclusive and equitable growth, jobs and recovery. The various capacity building initiatives that the DEA&DP facilitates and supports as well as the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) and 'Working for' Programmes in key catchments and on the conservation real-estate contribute to both employment in marginalised communities as well as growth through education initiatives.</p>
 <p>VIP 3: Empowering People</p>	<p>Strategic Objective 2 and 4</p> <p>The municipal support programme and the various capacity building, advocacy and education initiatives empowers the youth, communities as well as officials from various organs of state.</p>
 <p>VIP 4: Mobility and Spatial Transformation</p>	<p>Strategic Objective 4</p> <p>Spatial transformation is engaged through Strategic Objective 4 which includes the Western Cape Biodiversity Spatial Plan, and invaluable spatial informant to a resilient sustainable future Western Cape. At the time of drafting, 20 of the 30 municipalities in the Western Cape had either partially or fully aligned with the Biodiversity Spatial Plan.</p>
 <p>VIP 5: Innovation and Culture</p>	<p>Strategic Objective 1,2,3,4 and 5</p> <p>Innovation is a central theme throughout the PBSAP, with each Strategic Objective incorporating an element of novel approaches to age-old issues. From innovative policy instruments for the expansion of the conservation estate, to exploring novel funding mechanisms to resource the PBSAP, innovation and culture is central to this document.</p>

Western Cape Provincial Spatial Development Framework 2014

The Western Cape Provincial Spatial Development Framework (PSDF) provides a good opportunity for biodiversity considerations to be integrated in development activities. It deals with four interrelated themes: introducing a transversal system of spatial governance; sustainable use of the Western Cape's spatial assets and resources; opening-up opportunities in the provincial space-economy; and developing integrated and sustainable human

settlements. As elements of the spatial assets and resources the PSDF includes biodiversity and ecosystems; water; soil and mineral resources; resource consumption and disposal; and landscape and scenic assets.

In addition to the PSDF the Western Cape Land Use Planning Act (Act no. 3 of 2014) and the Western Cape Infrastructure Framework (2013; however, this is currently being reviewed) are some of the relevant provincial-level overarching policies relating to spatial planning and land use.

Ecological Infrastructure Investment Framework 2021

Through a process of co-creation, working with multiple sector partners and the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, the DEA&DP facilitated the development of the EIF, including a series of tools that:

- clearly outline key risks posed to the Western Cape's most important Ecological Infrastructure via a catchment prioritisation report;
- identify where intervention should be prioritised for greatest return/gains;
- quantify the investment needed for anticipated returns/gains, providing investor confidence; and
- an Implementation and Monitoring Plan for setting baselines and tracking progress towards the vision of the EIF and its investment objectives.

The EIF will drive investment in Ecological Infrastructure to achieve the following objectives:

1. to improve water quality and quantity in support of people's health and livelihoods in the province, by controlling the threat of alien invasive plants specifically and improving the ecological status of rivers, wetlands and estuaries more generally;
2. reduce the vulnerability of people, property and the environment to the threat of uncontrolled wildfires;
3. to sustainably support local livelihoods and food supply provided by the province's rangelands through improved land management practices, particularly relating to grazing;
4. to reduce the exposure of communities, the environment, infrastructure and economic activities to the impacts of increased flooding within the catchment and along the coast.

Western Cape Climate Change Response Strategy: Vision 2050¹¹

As a result of the anticipated impacts of climate change, the WCG is currently implementing the Western Cape Climate Change Response Strategy: Vision 2050 (WCCCRS 2022). This transversal strategy provides policy direction in response to climate-related risks and potential opportunities, through either creating or leveraging systemic innovative response programmes that tackle the region's vulnerability to droughts, heat and floods and take advantage of opportunities that will enable climate resilient development which fosters economic growth that is low-carbon and further creates an advanced Green Economy. Even though the Strategy is drafted by the Western Cape Government, it is a guiding document for all sector

¹¹ Available at <https://www.westerncape.gov.za/eadp/sites/eadp.westerncape.gov.za/files/atoms/files/WCCCRS%20Vision%202050%20March%202022.pdf>

stakeholders in the province (both public and private sector) who can play a role in responding to climate change. The strategy includes four guiding objectives:

- responding to the climate emergency;
- transitioning in an equitable and inclusive manner to net zero emissions by 2050;
- reducing climate risks and increasing resilience; and
- enabling a Just Transition through public sector, private sector and civil society collaboration.

Each of the four guiding objectives have dedicated climate action pathways describing the actions necessary to respond to climate change, which are further elaborated on in the WCCCRS Implementation Plan.

The WCCCRS recognises that well-managed natural systems that can cope with the increasing climate impacts are pivotal to adapting to climate change, and the PBSAP, EIF, BSP and WCPAES are recognised as existing programmes that contribute significantly to the WCG’s climate change response in this regard. A Western Cape Climate Change Adaptation Pathway is also being developed.

Western Cape Growth for Jobs Strategy 2035

In response to the many socio-economic challenges facing the Western Cape, including low economic growth and high levels of unemployment, the Growth for Jobs Strategy sets out a goal that by 2035, the Western Cape will be a R1-trillion inclusive economy in real terms and growing at between 4 and 6% per annum, increasing employment levels and improved well-being. The Strategy’s Priority Focus Areas are reflected in Figure 8, which all impact on biodiversity to varying extents; however biodiversity and the ecosystem goods and services these provide are critical for particularly priority focus area *Water security and resilience*. The Priority Focus Areas for Horizon 1 (up to 2026) with greatest opportunity for biodiversity gains are *Driving growth opportunities through investment* priority focus area, which includes investment in indigenous products, and *Water security and resilience*, where investment in Ecological Infrastructure for water security is a central theme.



Figure 8: The Growth for Jobs Strategy Horizon 1 - Priority Focus Areas (WCG 2023)

Western Cape Integrated Drought and Water Response Plan

As a response to the 2015-2019 drought in the Western Cape, the WCG developed the Western Cape Integrated Drought and Water Response Plan (WCIDWRP). The aim of the WCIDWRP is to plan for interventions towards long-term water security and resilience for the province and support integrated and coordinated provincial drought response and planning. Focus areas of the WCIDWRP include investment into Ecological Infrastructure such as protection of wetlands and ecosystems, and alien clearing in catchments to reduce the amount of water lost to these invasives.

Western Cape Infrastructure Framework

The draft 2050 Western Cape Infrastructure Framework (WCIF) acknowledges Ecological Infrastructure as part of the infrastructure portfolio that requires active management and investment. Ecological Infrastructure Guidelines will be developed along with an updated project pipeline.

DEA&DP Gender Equity Strategic Framework 2020-2025

The DEA&DP Gender Equity Strategic Framework 2020-2025 was developed in response to the national 2018 Framework on Gender Responsive Planning, Budgeting, Monitoring, Evaluation and Auditing, and requires the inclusion of gender equity considerations in all new or revised DEA&DP policy and strategy. As such, the PBSAP revision process also included a detailed gender gap analysis, which was widened to look at human rights more broadly. The results of this analysis and how these were incorporated into the PBSAP revision is discussed in section 1.2.1.

1.4.4. Local government and biodiversity

The Municipal Systems Act (Act no. 32 of 2000) requires that municipalities provide services and implement development in an environmentally sustainable manner. As sites of biodiversity importance invariably fall within the administrative boundaries of one or more local authorities, this means that these sites either need to be managed sustainably by the municipality, or that any impact on these sites as a result of municipal service provision and development should not compromise sustainability. Municipalities are also directly responsible for managing local authority nature reserves. Sites of biodiversity importance have ecological, economic and social relevance and provide ecosystem goods and services to all residents. Through the principle of spatial resilience, it is imperative that these ecologically important areas are incorporated into the spatial plans, policies and land use management systems of local authorities¹². Important spatial plans and policies specific to land use management include:

- Biodiversity Spatial Plans (BSPs);
- Integrated Development Plans (IDPs);
- Spatial Development Framework (SDFs); and
- Environmental Management Frameworks.

Adequately representing ecologically important areas and the landscape needed to safeguard their continued existence is a significant step towards achieving many of the biodiversity management objectives of the PBSAP. However, local authorities are often under-capacitated to incorporate biodiversity management into their work. Consequently, provincial support is offered to local government to respond to environmental and biodiversity

¹² Section 7(d) of the Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act (Act 16 of 2013)

legislation, including through the review of IDPs and SDFs, the provision of high-level biodiversity plans such as the Western Cape BSP, WCPAES and EIF, coastal development management, and the provision of implementation support.

Draft for Public Comment

2. Situation analysis

Key issues, institutional challenges as well as pressures on and threats to the biophysical environment of the province that were identified as part of the strategy development and revision process are summarised below. As these are highlighted, the implications with regard to the focus of the PBSAP are also indicated.

2.1. The economy and the development context

The COVID-19 pandemic and associated lockdown measures disrupted economic activity and deepened existing socioeconomic challenges in the Western Cape, which has had a knock-on effect on budgets available for environmental management. As of mid-2023, risks remain exacerbated by ongoing power shortages and climate change.

The Western Cape continues to face difficult challenges that include poverty, unemployment, inequality, and inadequate access to some of the basic services, in particular housing. As an example, according to Statistics South Africa the unemployment rates were estimated at 22.5% and 26.8% in the Western Cape in the 4th quarter of 2022 (using the narrow and expanded definitions, respectively). However, unemployment is more prevalent among the youth, with the unemployment rate of young people aged 15 to 24 in the Western Cape standing at 34.5% in the third quarter of 2022. Additionally, between 2016 and 2021 the Western Cape received in-migration of 292 325 people, accounting for 46.8% of total population growth over this period (WCG, 2022). The continuation of in-migration to the Western Cape will place increased pressure on its health, education, and public infrastructure. An associated driver of this trend is migration of population from rural areas to urban areas, thus leading to urban sprawl that significantly increases the demand for formal housing, as well as unlawful occupation of land in natural areas which are also often prone to natural disasters.

Over the period 2011 to 2020 annual economic growth in the Western Cape had declined steadily from 3.8% to -6.9%. This has resulted in an average of 1% growth over the period, mirroring the economic decline in the rest of South Africa.

The NDP 2030, OneCape 2040, Provincial Strategic Plan (2019-2024), Growth for Jobs Strategy 2035, infrastructure development plans at national and provincial levels, and industrial development plans, to name a few macro interventions, are aimed at addressing the challenges mentioned. Operation Phakisa – the strategy on the ocean economy – have identified oil and gas, marine transport and manufacturing and aquaculture as some of the key sectors that will be developed in the Western Cape. The WCG's Green Economy Strategy Framework promotion activities are spearheaded by the DEA&DP, the Department of Economic Development and Tourism (DEDAT), Department of Agriculture and GreenCape. The primary areas of focus are on resource efficiency including energy, water, and waste, but also include other elements such as sustainable public procurement, land-use management, biodiversity, and communications. The implementation of the Green Economy Strategy Framework is the responsibility of multiple WCG departments, with overall coordination and oversight by DEDAT. The Green Economy Chief Directorate within DEDAT has a mandate to stimulate the development of green economy and associated industries (i.e., those businesses that provide green technologies, products, and services) towards enabling local manufacturing and job creation opportunities and to facilitate improved resource resilience to enhance the competitiveness and resilience of the Western Cape economy. The PBES portion of the PBSAP ties in with these initiatives.

What does this mean for biodiversity conservation?

In terms of country-level exposure to biodiversity and ecosystem services decline based on the economic sectors most reliant on nature, South Africa is ranked as one of the most vulnerable countries dependent on biodiversity and ecosystem services (Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Index analysis, Swiss Re 2020). This means that the South African economy, including that of the Western Cape, is highly vulnerable to the consequences of ecosystem degradation. Managing biodiversity and ecosystem restoration programmes are therefore a key contributor to job creation and a healthy economy, and conserving biodiversity contributes to the achievement of social and economic objectives of the province. At the same time, the implementation of the economic and infrastructure projects listed above has the potential to cause loss of ecosystems, habitats, populations, species and genes. It is important that development should avoid any such loss; where necessary, effective mitigation strategies for conservation should be implemented. Ideally, strategic environmental assessments of these key economic activities and the development planned should be undertaken with the aim to secure beneficial outcomes for biodiversity conservation.

2.2. The status of Western Cape ecosystems

The Western Cape State of Conservation Report is produced on an annual basis and provides a snapshot of the status of conservation in the Western Cape highlighting achievements, challenges, and impacts. The more detailed Western Cape State of Biodiversity Report is produced every five years as is mandated by the WCBA.

The 2022 State of Conservation Report highlights the status of Western Cape Ecosystems as per the summary provided in Figure 9.

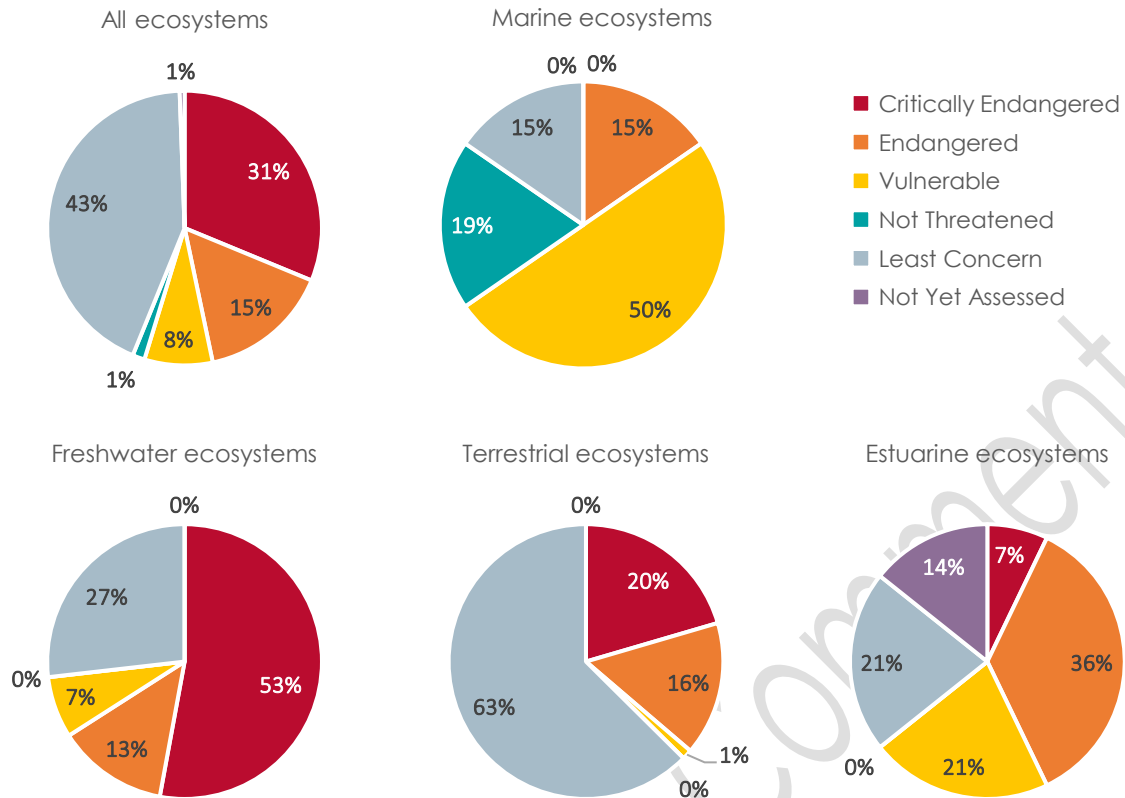


Figure 9: The status of ecosystems in the Western Cape as derived from the Western Cape State of Conservation Report 2022 (CapeNature, 2023), with the percentages based on number of ecosystems.

Terrestrial ecosystems, freshwater ecosystems, wetlands, estuarine, coastal and marine environments all deliver ecosystem services that underpin and support the economic, social (including health) and spiritual requirements of society in both the rural and urban environments. Much has been undertaken to protect representative biodiversity through a variety of conservation tools and strategic mechanisms, including through formal protected areas and off-reserve conservation initiatives. However, these tools and strategic mechanisms require effective mainstreaming and multi-sector adoption to enable the Western Cape to deliver on the CBD targets.

What needs to be done? The diversity of ecosystems, habitats, populations, species and genetic diversity must be protected. Areas that are protected should be representative of all these levels of biodiversity and should encompass all environments as well as ensure ecosystem processes are maintained and are resilient in the face of climate change and variability.

The protection of the unique biodiversity of the Western Cape increasingly relies on partnerships between the communities, private sector and government for its conservation. NGOs play an important role in this regard, and partnerships to conserve biodiversity in ways that do not fall within the traditional formally protected area approach have received recognition by the CBD since 2018 as Other Effective area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs).

2.3. Pressures and threats on the biophysical environment of the province

The provincial extract from the NBA 2018 (SANBI, 2019b) highlights pressures on and threats to the ecosystems, habitats and species that constitute the biodiversity of the Western Cape. These include economic and development activities such as unsustainable agriculture, illegal land transformation, mining, inappropriate urbanisation and related demand for human settlement expansion; alien invasive species of fauna and flora found in terrestrial and aquatic environments; over-harvesting and illegal harvesting of species such as wildflowers, succulents, geophytes, reptiles and fish; over-abstraction and pollution of water; and climate change. There is also increased pressure on natural areas due to unauthorised settlement. These pressures and threats result in:

- the transformation and degradation of ecosystems and habitats, which results in habitat loss;
- increased negative impacts on fauna and flora species of conservation concern, many of which are not found anywhere else in the world;
- the loss or reduction in the quality of ecosystem services that support the economy and society, including negative impacts to quality and quantity of freshwater;
- increased vulnerability to natural disasters such as fires, droughts and floods; and
- alteration of natural fire regimes and increase in frequency and intensity of fires, thus threatening and destroying property, landscapes and life.

The most significant pressures and threats in recent years are expanded on further below.

2.3.1. Alien Invasive Species

The Western Cape has a long history of introduction and establishment of invasive alien species of both plants and animals. These species are present throughout the province and also occur in Protected Areas, although the more arid interior of the province appear to be less impacted. Invasive alien species are a threat due to the negative impacts on both biodiversity and on the ability of ecosystems to supply the ecosystem services on which all society depends. Different invasive alien species have different extents and severities of impact, and it has been cogently argued to prioritise management on those species with the greatest negative effects (e.g., pines, polyphagous shot-hole borer and Australian Acacias) and in priority areas, notably Protected Areas (van Wilgen *et al.*, 2020) and catchments. Managing invasive alien species is one of the primary interventions used to effect ecosystem restoration and address the imperatives of the Decade on Ecosystem Restoration and the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal GBF.

The effects of the many invasive alien species and the management responses are well summarised in the recent comprehensive book "Biological Invasions in South Africa" (van Wilgen *et al.*, 2020). Of primary concern to the Western Cape is the direct impact of invasive alien trees on reducing water delivery from catchments. If invasive alien trees are not removed from the catchments supplying the interconnected Western Cape Water Supply System (which supplies the City of Cape Town and several Boland regions), in 45 years' time the equivalent of an entire Berg River Dam's worth of water will be lost every year (Le Maitre *et al.*, 2019). In an already water-scarce province and in the face of predicted climate change with increasing temperatures and likelihood of droughts (Naik & Abiodun, 2019) this is a serious concern and needs active management to achieve sustainability over the long term.

2.3.2. Fire

Although fire is a natural phenomenon in the fynbos biome which covers much of the province, it can be problematic even in natural areas if fires occur too frequently in succession or do not occur frequently enough to stimulate germination of fire-dependent species (of which there are many in the Western Cape). In both cases the richness of biodiversity can be negatively affected. Where the natural areas adjoin agricultural or urban areas the spread of fires can have serious economic and life-threatening effects. Fire and invasive alien plants are inextricably linked as invasive alien species increase fuel loads significantly in the fynbos, and the combination of elevated fuel loads and higher temperatures due to climate change creates a more conducive environment for fire ignition and spread. While fynbos is a fire-driven biome this has direct implications for management and risk to the environment (loss of biodiversity and erosion) and society (loss of life and infrastructure). The increasing wildland-urban interface heighten the risk of these effects and requires more active fire management both to enable natural processes to continue and to minimise negative effects on the economy, livelihoods, and lives.

2.3.3. Unlawful occupation of natural areas

Unlawful occupation of land, including protected areas and lands that are earmarked for protected area expansion, significantly impacts biodiversity and constrains financial and human resources. Unlawful occupation of land takes place due to various reasons, which have all been exacerbated during the COVID-19 associated lockdown.

Unlawful occupation severely impacts the effectiveness of protected area management, potentially leading to the abolishment and de-proclamation of protected areas. This has been evident in the case of the Driftsands Nature Reserve, which was abolished and deproclaimed in 2022 due to the extensive unlawful occupation during the COVID-19 lockdown. In the Kogelberg Biosphere Reserve footprint, Knoflokskraal has also been aggressively settled through unlawful occupation during the lockdown and restrictions. The Lourens River Protected Natural Environment and the Papegaaienberg Nature Reserve suffered similar fates in recent years. Especially in urban areas unlawful occupation of Nature Reserves and other open green spaces can pose potentially catastrophic risks to health and safety due to the sudden disruption to critical ecosystem services that these areas offer to surrounding communities.

2.3.4. Climate change

Climate change is an overarching threat to biodiversity, the economy, health and societal activities in general, and the NBA 2018 shows that South Africa's biomes are expected to be negatively impacted by climate change. In response to current and future predicted impacts of climate change, the WCG and CapeNature are implementing local-level mitigation and strategic adaptation measures through the WCCCRS 2022 and the Western Cape BSP (see section 1.4.3), with a Western Cape Climate Change Adaptation Pathway also in development. These include disaster risk reduction and response plans, and protecting and restoring Ecological Infrastructure such as wetlands, riparian zones and coastal corridors. The BSP also identifies and incorporates climate change mitigation corridors to inform land use planning and facilitate climate change conscious decision making in this regard. This, together with integrated catchment management, is aimed at achieving climate change resilience in the natural landscape. CapeNature's integrated approach to catchment management includes biodiversity, freshwater, ecological, fire and invasive alien management through a "catchment-to-coast" approach. Many of these interventions (e.g., ecotourism, invasive alien

clearing, and promotion of biodiversity and climate change awareness) are aimed at advancing a biodiversity economy that contributes to inclusive and sustainable livelihoods and development opportunities.

What should change? There is a need to focus on educating, raising awareness and involving residents to play their part in preventing harmful actions and to take local conservation action. Business and the private sector should also take precaution and avoid or seek to minimize the impacts of their development and operational activities on the environment. Where opportunities exist, business should offset their impacts by setting aside land for conservation. The pressures and threats and their underlying drivers should be addressed at multiple-linked scales. Law enforcement should promote compliance by clear communication and sharing information with landholders and the private sector.

2.4. Capacity to implement

South Africa's legal and policy framework is fully supportive of our international environmental policy obligations. The focus now is on implementation of these national policies and laws. Institutions and their capacity are key during this implementation phase. While the Western Cape is not short of institutions, the following challenges constrain the ability for efficient and effective implementation:

- limited number and loss of skilled people, especially people with well-established work experience;
- rapid turnover of key skills, especially in municipalities, leading to loss of institutional memory; and
- additional requirements emanating from new policies and laws while no additional funds to implement are provided.

Previous experience in terms of the implementation of the PBSAP shows that, in general, there is uneven focus and capacity to deal with environmental issues and in particular biodiversity management responsibilities. What is encouraging is that, at least at the level of setting objectives for biodiversity as part of the IDPs, all the municipalities reviewed during the 2021/22 financial year have addressed biodiversity to varying degrees, with approximately 76% of municipalities either partially or entirely aligning with the biodiversity spatial priorities set out through the PBSAP (and therefore the BSP 2017, to which the PBSAP is fully aligned). Institutional and human capacity building initiatives should include a focus on local government, as key decisions made at this level impact on achievement of biodiversity objectives.

Feedback from consultation indicates that almost all levels of government have inadequate financial resources to fulfil all their biodiversity mandates, functions and responsibilities.

What needs to change? A systematic and focused approach should be taken with respect to institution-building, development of the required human resources and on mobilising of additional financial resources. Partnerships involving all sectors of society are going to be key.

3. The Vision, the Overarching Goal and the Guiding Principles

The PBSAP's Vision is a far-reaching aspirational statement that indicates a desired future state, and in this context it is aligned with OneCape 2040, the development plan of the province. In turn, OneCape 2040 is aligned with the NDP, Vision 2030.

The Overarching Goal represents a 10-year milestone en route to achieving the vision. The strategic objectives, outcomes, targets and actions in the PBSAP are anchored on the Overarching Goal.

The Guiding Principles reflect the values that serve as the foundation for the PBSAP and cut across all elements of this strategy.

3.1. The vision

By 2040, biodiversity, the natural heritage and Ecological Infrastructure is valued, wisely and equitably used, conserved, and restored, and delivers the ecosystem services that improve the quality of life of the people of the Western Cape.

3.2. The Overarching Goal

By 2030, the management, consolidation, and expansion of all the categories of the Western Cape's network of conservation areas, promotion of existing and new biodiversity mainstreaming and conservation initiatives, enabling of an inclusive and sustainable biodiversity economy and active participation of stakeholders, progressively contribute to the attainment of biodiversity conservation as well as the economic and development vision of the Western Cape.

3.3. The Guiding Principles

In addition to the National Environmental Management Principles (Section 2 of NEMA), these Guiding Principles complement the values adopted by the WCG and should be pivotal in planning and decision-making by all sectors in government and general stakeholders.

INTRINSIC VALUE: Biodiversity is conserved for its intrinsic value in addition to its contribution to the economy and society.

PEOPLE VALUE AND TAKE COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY FOR BIODIVERSITY: All of the people of the Western Cape, including the general public, civil society and the private sector recognise the value of biodiversity. Through cooperation and effective coordination they take collective responsibility for the conservation and management as well as the wise and sustainable use of the biodiversity and ecological services of the globally important biodiversity found in the province.

FAIR AND EQUITABLE BENEFITS FROM BIODIVERSITY: The benefits that arise from the biodiversity and biological resources found in the Western Cape must be fairly and equitably distributed, with particular regard to rectifying historical inequalities and acknowledging existing user rights.

ECOSYSTEMS HAVE A FINITE CAPACITY: Ecosystems have a finite capacity to recover from threats, impacts and pressures, and the need for systemic change to reduce threats, impacts and pressures should be recognised by all stakeholders.

HOLISTIC AND MULTIDISCIPLINARY APPROACHES: Biodiversity management should account for social and economic development imperatives and consider the links between ecological and social systems.

ECOSYSTEM APPROACH: The ecosystem approach to the conservation of biodiversity must guide planning and management authorities as well as private landowners in their biodiversity management activities.

PARTICIPATORY AND CO-GOVERNANCE PROCESSES: Planning, decision-making and management of biodiversity should be underpinned by participatory and co-governance processes that are inclusive and cognisant of barriers to participation, especially among priority groups. Wherever appropriate, initiatives and actions should be contextualised based on their scope and sphere of influence.

SOUND KNOWLEDGE: Planning and decision-making of biodiversity management must be based on sound knowledge that is periodically reviewed. The Precautionary Principle applies when knowledge is limited or does not exist. The diverse base of knowledge holders in the Western Cape must be acknowledged, and priority setting must be inclusive and equitable.

THE PRINCIPLE OF SUBSIDIARITY: where appropriate, governance structures should be established as close as possible to the level of the impact on people and landscapes.

Draft for Publication

4. The Strategic Objectives, Outcomes, Targets and Actions

4.1. Strategic Objective 1 (SO1): Enhanced biodiversity conservation and ecosystem integrity contributes to a resilient Western Cape society.

Scope: This objective focusses on protecting and conserving nature in nature reserves as well as natural places outside nature reserves. These natural areas will be connected through a network and corridors of protection to secure fresh water in catchments and rivers as well as ensure pollination services, healthy soils, grazing and other natural goods that we need to maintain our wellbeing and grow our economy.

The main vehicles through which this SO is implemented in the Western Cape is the Western Cape BSP and WCPAES (see section 1.4.3 for more detail on these strategies).

When considering Protected Area expansion, it is important to look at the international context which in turn determines the need for a national and a provincial policy framework for Protected Area expansion. The CoP15 in Kunming and Montreal concluded negotiations for the Kunming-Montreal GBF. This framework will guide conservation efforts for the next 10 years toward delivering on the shared 2050 vision of living in harmony with nature. The Aichi Biodiversity Targets were replaced by the GBF monitoring framework and includes the conservation of at least 30% of land and sea by 2030 (the 30x30 target), as well as effective restoration of 30% of areas of degraded land and sea. Achieving a 30x30 conservation target for the Western Cape would require an increased rate of conservation estate expansion than that which is currently achievable based on existing resource allocations. At the time of review there are discussions taking place at all levels on how to enable the necessary increase in resources that would allow South Africa to achieve this target. Conservation and restoration of ecosystems directly supports the One Health Joint Plan of Action (2022-2026) to improve human and animal health through improving ecosystem health¹³, as well as actions identified in the Western Cape Growth for Jobs 2035 to augment ecosystem water provision for productive use via investment into Ecological Infrastructure¹⁴.

At a provincial level, the emphasis of mainstreaming the WCPAES among partner organisations is on enabling a common understanding of the principles of targeted expansion, which are:

- **Protected area expansion must occur within priority biodiversity areas:** Within the Western Cape, the spatial depiction of priority biodiversity areas is the CBA Map. All organisations engaged with natural resource management or protection within the province should align their operations accordingly. The declaration of protected areas in terms of NEM:PAA, on land which is not a biodiversity priority or specifically required to meet ecological targets, will be discouraged. It should be noted that the CBA Map covers the whole of the Western Cape, including both rural and urban areas.
- **Not all hectares are equal:** Not all protected area hectares are equal in importance. Certain ecosystem types have been protected over and above that which is required for the ecosystem to persist. Actively pursuing further protection of already well

¹³ Specifically, Action Track 6.1: *Protect, restore and prevent ecosystem and environmental degradation.*

¹⁴ Specifically, under Priority Focus Area 4: *Water security and resilience.*

protected ecosystems, especially at the expense of under protected ecosystems, must not result in the disproportionate representation of ecosystems on protected land in the province. The protection of a hectare of an under-protected ecosystem is far more important than the protection of a hectare in an over-protected ecosystem.

- **Plan for what is needed and align operations accordingly, not vice versa:** The targets which have been set in the 2021-2025 WCPAES are based on: a) ecological requirements depicted by the biodiversity thresholds, and b) political commitments. These are ambitious targets and require partner support for delivery. Operational support through financial resources needs to be secured to align multi-partner organisational actions with this strategy. The inverse, i.e., setting targets against a confirmed budget, should be applied in individual organisational Annual Operational Plans.
- **Partner up:** Successful delivery relies on collaborative partnerships. All partners involved in natural resource protection and management within the Western Cape should work together to deliver upon these targets. Partners should complement each other to ensure maximum achievements. The Western Cape Biodiversity Stewardship Reference Group is the appropriate and agreed forum established for the sharing of knowledge, alignment of goals, coordination, and collaboration within the community of practice in the Western Cape.

In addition to the work of government and government entities in conserving biodiversity found in the Western Cape, the region has seen several ground-breaking stakeholder collaborative ecosystem-based conservation initiatives that include the Cape Action for People and the Environment, Restore Eden Programme, Greater Cape Town Water Fund, and the Garden Route Environmental Forum. International conservation mechanisms are also being utilised in the province and include the World Heritage Convention, the Convention on Wetlands of Importance (the Ramsar Convention) and the Man and the Biosphere Programme.

The private sector is also a critical player in securing important and critical biodiversity and the Biodiversity Stewardship Programme and other programmes involving private landowners need to be enhanced and expanded.

In addition to formally protected areas there is an increasing focus on Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs). These are defined by the CBD as: "*a geographically defined area other than a protected area, which is governed and managed in ways that achieve positive and sustained long-term outcomes for the in-situ conservation of biodiversity, with associated ecosystem functions and services and where applicable, cultural, spiritual, socio-economic, and other locally relevant values*". Sites that are not formally conserved but which do meet the criteria for OECMs are important conservation areas to engage in further investment of necessary resources. A candidate OECM site could therefore potentially become formally declared as a protected area.

4.1.1. SO1 Outcomes, Indicators and Targets

SO1: Enhanced biodiversity conservation and ecosystem integrity contributes to a resilient Western Cape society			
SO1 – Outcome 1A: Representative biodiversity is secured and conserved through a network of conservation areas and existing and new conservation initiatives in the province [including biodiversity found in terrestrial, freshwater (incl. wetlands), coastal, estuarine and the marine environments, at all levels including ecosystems, habitats, species, genes, and Ecological Infrastructure]			
ACTION PLAN			
Implementation actions	Lead Responsibility	Indicator	Target output
1.1) Identify and promote effective conservation in priority ecosystems, as per the WCPAES 2021-2025 and the MTSF 2019-2024.	CapeNature, supported by DEA&DP	1.1) Implement WCPAES 2021 to 2025	1.1) Review implementation and revise WCPAES by 2024 and every five years thereafter as per the WCBA
1.2) Expand the Western Cape Conservation Estate		1.2) Areas protected in accordance with the Protected Areas Act (ha, km, km ²) or conserved by other measures (inclusive of Stewardship) ¹⁵	1.2) Between 2020 and 2025, the conservation estate is expanded by an additional 5 000 ha per annum (the next CapeNature 2025-2030 Strategic Plan will determine the target thereafter).
1.3) Ensure protected areas in the Western Cape are NEM:PAA compliant.	CapeNature	1.3) Number of nature reserves within the Protected Area Network that are NEM:PAA complaint	1.3) By 2030, 50% of the Protected Area Network is fully NEM:PAA compliant
1.4) Effectively manage protected areas to enhance biodiversity conservation and landscape resilience, as per Protected Area Management Plans and Biodiversity Management Plans and the MTSF 2019-2024		1.4) Percentage area of state managed Protected Areas assessed with a Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT) score above 67%	1.4) By 2030, at least 80% of the area (in hectares) managed by CapeNature assessed with METT score above 67%

¹⁵ As per the WCPAES 2021-2025

SO1: Enhanced biodiversity conservation and ecosystem integrity contributes to a resilient Western Cape society			
SO1 – Outcome 1B: Protection and restoration of biodiversity and its associated Ecological Infrastructure in all environments and at all levels, provides resilience against negative effects of climate change and variability-related events			
ACTION PLAN			
Implementation actions	Lead Responsibility	Indicator	Target output
1.5) Improve water security via ecosystem rehabilitation, as per the CapeNature Catchment to Coast Strategy, the Provincial Coastal Management Programme 2022 - 2027 and the MTSF 2019-2024	CapeNature and DEA&DP	1.5.1) Number and total size (ha) of watercourses rehabilitated	1.5.1) By 2030, 12 watercourses are initiated for rehabilitation annually
		1.5.2) Number and areas (ha) of water-related Ecological Infrastructure maintenance or improvement interventions	1.5.2) By 2030, at least six interventions in multiple priority catchments and strategic water source areas are undertaken; number of hectares reported
		1.5.3) Strategic Water Source Areas secured through water source partnerships (incl. ha)	1.5.3) Groot Winterhoek-Boland and Outeniqua-Tsitsikamma SWSA (Western Cape portion) secured by 2030; number of hectares reported
1.6) Implement the EIIIF	DEA&DP, supported by CapeNature	1.6) Implementation and Monitoring Plan for the EIIIF is implemented	1.6) By 2030, three strategic actions from the Implementation and Monitoring Plan have been implemented
1.7) Prevent habitat loss of priority biodiversity, as per Protected Area Management Plans, Biodiversity Management Plans, and Biodiversity Spatial Plan and Handbook, the WCBA and the NEM:BA	DEA&DP, CapeNature and municipalities	1.7) Trend in habitat loss over time as reflected by changes in land cover.	1.7) Status of Habitat Loss reported on annually in State of Conservation Report and five-yearly in State of Biodiversity Report
			Please also see target outputs 1.1-1.7; 2.1, 2.2, 2.4.2, 2.7-2.10.2, 2.15, 4.3, 4.6.5, 4.11, 4.12, 5.2.2, 5.4 and 5.10.1.

4.2. Strategic Objective 2 (SO2): All sectors mainstream, manage and support the conservation of, and equitable access to, biodiversity through their policies and practices.

Scope: This objective focusses on ensuring that all sectors (not just those traditionally focussed on conservation) include biodiversity considerations in such a way that they support biodiversity being safeguarded, reduce their own impact on biodiversity and Ecological Infrastructure, as well as improving equitable access to biodiversity.

While some gains have been made in biodiversity conservation due to exceptional work done in the environmental sector, biodiversity continues to decline worldwide, as evidenced by the fact that none of the Aichi Targets were met by the due date of 2020. There is also a clear connection emerging between the impacts of climate change and biodiversity loss, with each of these crises compounding and exacerbating the other. This has shown that the environmental sector cannot address declining biodiversity and conservation on its own, and that all sectors, especially those that impact on biodiversity, need to incorporate biodiversity concerns – a “whole of society” approach is needed for success. Especially in a developing economy like South Africa there is a risk of focussing on economic and social development to the detriment of the environment that provides the very foundation for that growth and improved well-being, a link that has been emphasised in the One Health Joint Plan of Action. Therefore, it is critical that all sectors adopt strategies that focus on sustainable development, i.e., balancing environmental, social and economic goals, which includes investing in ecosystems and Ecological Infrastructure to support the achievement of economic growth.

In the PBSAP, and considering the province’s economic and development trajectory, it is therefore sensible to advance the strategy of mainstreaming biodiversity considerations and priorities in non-biodiversity-focussed policies, strategies, plans, practices, projects and priority economic and development sectors of the Western Cape. In addition to being a potentially effective mitigation strategy against biodiversity loss, when strategically employed this is an opportunity to involve industry and business in achieving biodiversity conservation goals and to enhance participation of broader group of stakeholders in biodiversity conservation.

All sectors (including business and the private sector) should be encouraged to improve the sustainability of their practices by, among others, adopting organisational policies and industry standards that foster responsibility toward the environment. Measures that indicate to companies that their actions are likely to impact the environment adversely need to be developed by industry bodies. Incentives, certification, and other recognition programmes that encourage best practice in sustainability should be reinforced and supported. The role of Ecological Infrastructure in delivering services and ensuring human and animal health should be acknowledged and included in investment strategies. Moreover, traditional agricultural practices need to adopt a more sustainable biodiversity economy driven approach as promoted by the WC Department of Agriculture in their SmartAgri plan. There are already biodiversity and business initiatives that lead the way in this regard, including the Biodiversity and Wine Initiative, Badger Friendly Honey Initiative, Sandveld Biodiversity Best Practice Potato Project, Integrated Biodiversity and Ostrich Industry project and Farming for the Future, to name a few. The Honeybush industry has benefited from the Honeybush Community of Practice, which is led by the Sub-directorate: Biodiversity Management and saw the publication of guidelines for the sustainable harvesting of Honeybush and associated field

guide for wild Honeybush harvesters. Similarly, the wildflower picking industry together with CapeNature have developed a Sustainable Harvesting programme. Investing in Ecological Infrastructure is included in the Western Cape Growth for Jobs Strategy 2035 to help ensure adequate water provisioning for accelerated economic growth.

In mainstreaming biodiversity, it is sensible to engage with development processes early on at the strategy development and planning stages. Interface and engagement by biodiversity policy makers and managers with macro development planning processes (e.g., National Development Plans or OneCape 2040) and local level planning (e.g., Integrated Development Plans and Spatial Development Frameworks) to secure beneficial outcomes for biodiversity goals and objectives is essential. It is also efficient to influence the economic and other development plans through strategic environment assessment processes rather than engaging only when project level Environmental Impact Assessments take place, by which time stakeholders are already invested in their positions.

Draft for Public Comment

4.2.1. SO2 Outcomes, Indicators and Targets

SO2: All sectors mainstream, manage and support the conservation of, and equitable access to, biodiversity through their policies and practices.			
SO2 – Outcome 2A: Economic and development sectors that have historically adversely impacted on biodiversity adapt their practices to actively contribute to conservation and restoration of biodiversity and Ecological Infrastructure			
ACTION PLAN			
Implementation Actions	Lead Responsibility	Indicator	Target output
2.1) Identify biodiversity-related planning needs and develop appropriate planning tools to address these needs	DEA&DP and CapeNature	2.1) Increased number of environmental planning tools relative to the 2020 baseline that strategically integrate priority biodiversity considerations	2.1) By 2030, two additional environmental planning tools have been developed/ revised ¹⁶
2.2) Provide improved guidance and policy / regulatory clarification on biodiversity offsetting in the Western Cape	DEA&DP, with support from CapeNature	2.2) Number of updated/new guidelines and policy documents on biodiversity offsets	2.2) By 2025, an updated provincial guideline and policy document on biodiversity offsets is adopted
2.3) Develop at least one strategic offset initiative	DEA&DP, with support from CapeNature	2.3) Number of strategic offset initiatives	2.3) By 2030, one strategic offset initiative developed

SO2: All sectors mainstream, manage and support the conservation of, and equitable access to, biodiversity through their policies and practices.			
SO2 – Outcome 2B: Compliance with authorisations and permits is monitored and enforced			
ACTION PLAN			
Implementation Actions	Lead Responsibility	Indicator	Target output
2.4) Ensure an efficient environmental permitting system by finalising applications for biodiversity permits and authorisations within legislated timeframes, as per NEM:BA and WCBA	CapeNature	2.4) Percentage of complete applications for biodiversity permits and authorisations finalised within legislated timeframes	2.4) 80% of complete applications for biodiversity permits and authorisations are finalised within legislated timeframes per annum

¹⁶ E.g., Biodiversity Spatial Plans; Environmental Management Frameworks; Biodiversity Management Plans – species; River Maintenance Management Plans; Strategic Environmental Assessments; Guidelines; Spatial Development Frameworks; agricultural and/or mining strategic approaches.

SO2: All sectors mainstream, manage and support the conservation of, and equitable access to, biodiversity through their policies and practices.

SO2 – Outcome 2B: Compliance with authorisations and permits is monitored and enforced

ACTION PLAN

Implementation Actions	Lead Responsibility	Indicator	Target output
2.5) Ensure monitoring, evaluation, and enforcement of compliance with issued permits, authorisations or other legislative obligations required by environmental legislation, as per the NEMA and NEM:BA	CapeNature, supported by DEA&DP	2.5.1) Number of compliance inspections ¹⁷ conducted by CapeNature	2.5.1) An annual accounting of the number of compliance inspections conducted by CapeNature
		2.5.2) Number of CapeNature administrative enforcement notices ¹⁸ issued for non-compliance with environmental management legislation	2.5.2) An annual accounting of the number of administrative enforcement notices issued for non-compliance with environmental management legislation by CapeNature
2.6) Implement a provincial database which tracks Environmental Authorisations (EAs) containing biodiversity offset conditions to better enable compliance monitoring and ensure protection in perpetuity	DEA&DP, supported by CapeNature	2.6) A record of biodiversity offsets that have been established as conditions of EAs	2.6) Within one year of a national database tracking biodiversity offsets in EA conditions being implemented, a WCG database is established to track EAs containing biodiversity offset conditions, and compliance with EA conditions is being monitored

SO2: All sectors mainstream, manage and support the conservation of, and equitable access to, biodiversity through their policies and practices.

SO2 - Outcome 2C: Biodiversity impacts are reduced by integrating biodiversity considerations into relevant legislation, policies and practices

ACTION PLAN

Implementation Actions	Lead Responsibility	Indicator	Target output
2.7) Mainstream biodiversity considerations into relevant provincial	DEA&DP and CapeNature	2.7) Number of relevant new or reviewed provincial policies which include biodiversity considerations.	2.7) Relevant provincial policies being developed or reviewed consider biodiversity.

¹⁷ To assess the extent to which the regulated community is complying with the conditions of their permits, authorisations or other legislative obligations as required by environmental legislation

¹⁸ To assess the level of compliance by the regulated community with administrative enforcement notices issued by environmental authorities.

SO2: All sectors mainstream, manage and support the conservation of, and equitable access to, biodiversity through their policies and practices.

SO2 - Outcome 2C: Biodiversity impacts are reduced by integrating biodiversity considerations into relevant legislation, policies and practices

ACTION PLAN

Implementation Actions	Lead Responsibility	Indicator	Target output
policies under development or review			
2.8) Update municipal planning tools to reflect and align with the BSP, as per the Western Cape Biodiversity Act (Act no. 6 of 2021)	Municipalities, with support from DEA&DP and CapeNature	2.8) Number/percentage of Municipalities incorporating the latest available Western Cape Biodiversity Spatial Plan and associated Handbook in Spatial Development Frameworks and Integrated Development Plans	2.8.1) By 2030, all local municipalities include an overview of the BSP in their IDPs 2.8.2) By 2030, all local municipalities correctly assign spatial planning categories (e.g., Core 1 and/or the highest conservation priority) to Protected Areas, CBAs and ESA 1 in their SDFs as per the BSP and associated Handbook
2.9) Support municipalities to improve environmental management through active restoration of degraded ecosystems, as per the NEMA	Municipalities, with support from DEA&DP and CapeNature	2.9) Number of municipalities implementing ecosystem restoration programmes; ha of area covered	2.9) By 2030, all municipalities report on and implement ecosystem restoration programmes; number of hectares reported.
2.10) All municipalities and provincial organs of state actively manage alien invasive species, as per the NEM:BA and EIIF	Municipalities and provincial organs of state, with support from DEA&DP, CapeNature and DFFE	2.10) Municipalities and other organs of state that control land have an invasive species monitoring, control, and eradication plan in line with the NEM:BA	2.10.1) By 2030 all municipalities have and implement invasive species monitoring, control, and eradication plans and reference the plan in their IDP. 2.10.2) By 2030, all provincial organs of state that control land have and implement invasive species monitoring, control, and eradication plans.
2.11) Integrate biodiversity priorities into relevant legislation, policies and practices as per the NBSAP	DEA&DP and CapeNature	2.11) Provide comments and inputs to the development of biodiversity-related legislation, policies and practices	2.11) Provide comment on at least 40 biodiversity-related legislation, policies and practices annually

SO2: All sectors mainstream, manage and support the conservation of, and equitable access to, biodiversity through their policies and practices.

SO2 - Outcome 2C: Biodiversity impacts are reduced by integrating biodiversity considerations into relevant legislation, policies and practices

ACTION PLAN			
Implementation Actions	Lead Responsibility	Indicator	Target output
2.12) Report on the indicators and targets established in the PBSAP as per the DEA&DP Annual Performance Plan	DEA&DP, supported by CapeNature	2.12) Annual PBSAP implementation reports	2.12) Report annually on the implementation of the PBSAP
2.13) Implement and further develop biodiversity legislation for the Western Cape.	DEA&DP, supported by CapeNature	2.13) The WCBA is implemented	2.13) By 2030, regulations for the WCBA are developed and implemented

SO2: All sectors mainstream, manage and support the conservation of, and equitable access to, biodiversity through their policies and practices.

SO2 - Outcome 2D: The functional and economic value of biodiversity and Ecological Infrastructure is positively recognised by authorities and stakeholders

ACTION PLAN			
Implementation Actions	Lead Responsibility	Indicator	Target Output
2.14) Pursue partnerships / collaborations focussed on biodiversity and Ecological Infrastructure restoration programmes	DEA&DP and CapeNature	2.14) Number of partnerships / collaborations ¹⁹ maintained / developed with active collaboration on biodiversity and Ecological Infrastructure restoration programmes	2.14) By 2030, 10 partnerships / collaborations maintained / developed at a landscape scale (e.g., Restore Eden Programme, Biosphere Reserves, etc.)
2.15) Identify and develop biodiversity- and Ecological Infrastructure-related policy mechanisms to support conservation	DEA&DP and CapeNature	2.15) Number of policy mechanisms to conserve biodiversity and Ecological Infrastructure developed and implemented	2.15) By 2030, at least one policy mechanism (e.g., OECMs) developed and implemented to conserve biodiversity and Ecological Infrastructure

¹⁹ An association/partnership that includes e.g., an MoA or ToR that is recognised by any or more government departments, academic and research institutes and official industry bodies.

4.3. Strategic Objective 3 (SO3): The biodiversity economy is strengthened and increasingly contributes to equitable and sustainable development and livelihoods.

Scope: This objective focusses on both expanding the biodiversity economy as well as increasing awareness of its contribution to people's access to resources for livelihoods and sustainable development.

This Strategic Objective represents the Provincial Biodiversity Economy Strategy.

Biodiversity and its related Ecological Infrastructure underpin and support economic and development activities through the ecosystem goods and services they provide. Almost all sectors of the economy rely directly or indirectly on healthy ecosystems, habitats, species and genetic resources. In addition, ecosystem goods and services are critical for industries such as agriculture and ensure that the basic requirements of human beings are met. In addition to agriculture and the agro-processing sector, economic sectors that rely directly on ecosystems services include ecotourism, fishing, horticulture and natural products industries, pharmaceuticals, traditional medicines, cosmetics, and other biotechnology-enabled products and processes.

Given not only the existing contribution but also the potential contribution of biodiversity to the economy the WCG developed the PBES (2016) in alignment with the National Biodiversity Economy Strategy, which has subsequently been revised and encapsulated within this SO3. The 2016 PBES culminated through a phased approach, starting as an Eco-Invest Programme (Phases I, II and III) from 2014 with a portfolio of recognised investable projects over several years, as well as unpacking the value and opportunities within the biodiversity economy sector and the cost of not investing in healthy biodiversity and Ecological Infrastructure. The Eco-Invest Programme was followed by the development of the EIIIF (see section 1.4.3). The key drivers of investing in Ecological Infrastructure are realised through augmenting the benefits or reducing of risks linked to the ecosystem goods and services that people get from nature [e.g., potable water as specifically included in the Western Cape Growth for Jobs Strategy 2035, which highlights the role of Ecological Infrastructure (incl. catchments, coast and estuaries, biodiversity, land and landscapes, rivers and wetlands) in the provision of water to all sectors of the economy]. The EIIIF aims to mobilise partner sectors to effectively coordinate investment in Ecological Infrastructure, boosting the return from such investments.

In terms of coordinating the clearing of alien invasive plants via the EIIIF and the contribution of this to the biodiversity economy, various biomass beneficiation programmes of the PBES aim to derive co-benefits from the clearing of invasive plants, such as employment creation, improved water security, improved natural risk buffers and improved sequestration of carbon in above-ground biomass and within soils. However, the success of these programmes and the PBES as a whole relies on sustained funding streams. The PBES scale and implementation is largely limited by the budget allocations and staffing structure and capacity within the Biodiversity Management Sub-Directorate, necessitating an outward looking approach to work collaboratively with other components within DEA&DP, CapeNature, Biosphere Reserves, other spheres and sectors of government, as well as the private sector and non-profit partners. There is thus a need to mobilise investment by public and private sectors towards unlocking the biodiversity economy of the province and restoration of ecological services.

South Africa has one of the highest rates of unemployment in the world, underscoring the importance of job creation in the South African and Western Cape context. In addition to contributing to the economy, biodiversity-based industries and services are also responsible for the creation of employment. The manual clearing of alien invasive plants is recognised to be a labour-intensive operation that can take place in rural settings, and create jobs where they are needed, for ecological gains that will improve the resilience of downstream sectors heavily reliant on water, such as tourism and agriculture. The DEA&DP has also made significant strides in the processes of developing Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMME) and agripreneurs through partnerships with local champions and mentors. These partnerships enabled external funding and support from other government departments including DFFE, the South African National Biodiversity Institute's (SANBI) Global Environment Facility 6, as well as civil society, for example the Table Mountain Fund and the GIZ - ABIOSA.

The DEA&DP with its partners will continue to be the driving force in the province behind the sustainability, protection and equitable sharing of benefits in the natural products sector. The DEA&DP has been a founding member together with DEDAT, CapeNature and the Department of Agriculture to establish and formalise a Natural Products Hub in the province. This hub collective will drive aspects of market access, community development, product development and sustainable use of natural indigenous genetic resources.

Many people in poor communities depend on nature as the buffer against poverty and derive cultural and spiritual benefits from nature. Therefore, it is important that there is active promotion of transformation, access to biodiversity and ecological resources to all communities. Work is also ongoing to mainstream awareness and sensitivity of priority groups and gender equity into biodiversity economy projects, which is tracked using indicators that disaggregate by indicating beneficiaries' gender, age group and disabilities.

4.3.1. SO3 Outcomes, Indicators and Targets

SO3: The biodiversity economy is strengthened and increasingly contributes to equitable and sustainable development and livelihoods			
SO3 – Outcome 3A: Opportunities from the biodiversity economy are expanded and strengthened by developing the economic potential inclusive of all sections of society, conscious of priority groups.			
ACTION PLAN			
Implementation actions	Lead Responsibility	Indicator	Target output
3.1) Facilitate the provision of work opportunities in the biodiversity economy with a focus on women, youth and people with disabilities through environmental public employment programmes	CapeNature	3.1.1) Number of employment opportunities provided through EPWP	3.1.1) By 2030, at least 450 employment opportunities are provided through EPWP annually
		3.1.2) Number of work opportunities created through environmental programmes	3.1.2) By 2030, at least 700 work opportunities created through environmental programmes ²⁰ annually
3.2) Support the establishment and growth of SMMEs in the biodiversity economy sector (as per the National Biodiversity Economy Strategy - NBES)	CapeNature and DEA&DP	3.2) Number of SMMEs supported	3.2) By 2030, at least 10 SMMEs are supported annually
3.3) Facilitate the development of new business opportunities in the biodiversity economy (e.g., plant products, biomass, ecotourism, etc.), with a focus on priority groups	CapeNature and DEA&DP	3.3.1) New business opportunities ²¹ identified, developed and facilitated	3.3.1) By 2030, five new business opportunities are identified, developed and facilitated (from a 2020 baseline)
		3.3.2) Communities supported to access biodiversity economy initiatives (Transformation and Gender equity)	3.3.2) By 2030, five communities supported to access biodiversity economy initiatives (from a 2020 baseline)
3.4) Identify Ecological Infrastructure value chain and functional landscape initiatives and implement as per the EIF Implementation and Monitoring Plan	DEA&DP supported by CapeNature	3.4) Ecological Infrastructure value chain and functional landscape initiatives initiated	3.4) By 2030, five Ecological Infrastructure value chain and

²⁰ Work opportunities in terms of contractors and other SMMEs, and not in terms of EPWP. Indicators are tracked in terms of proportion of women, youth and people with disabilities.

²¹ This indicator is intended to have a wide scope; a new business opportunity could be a new company, new source material, new product developed, alternative uses developed for existing species, etc.

SO3: The biodiversity economy is strengthened and increasingly contributes to equitable and sustainable development and livelihoods			
SO3 – Outcome 3A: Opportunities from the biodiversity economy are expanded and strengthened by developing the economic potential inclusive of all sections of society, conscious of priority groups.			
ACTION PLAN			
Implementation actions	Lead Responsibility	Indicator	Target output
			functional landscape initiatives ²² initiated (from a 2020 baseline)
3.5) Ongoing implementation and regular revision of the CapeNature resource mobilisation / investment strategy	CapeNature	3.5) CapeNature resource mobilisation projects launched	3.5) By 2030, five CapeNature resource mobilisation / investment opportunities ²³ launched (from a 2020 baseline)

SO3: The biodiversity economy is strengthened and increasingly contributes to equitable and sustainable development and livelihoods			
SO3 – Outcome 3B: The business case for conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and its contribution to the economy is recognised and valued by decision makers and stakeholders			
ACTION PLAN			
Implementation actions	Lead Responsibility	Indicator	Target output
3.6) Report on the implementation the PBES (SO3 in this PBSAP)	DEA&DP supported by CapeNature	3.6) The Provincial Biodiversity Economy Strategy (PBES, SO3 in this PBSAP) is effectively implemented	3.6) The PBES (SO3 in this PBSAP) is reported on annually
3.7) Increase investment in priority ecosystem services	DEA&DP and CapeNature	3.7) Increased facilitation of investment in priority ecosystem services	3.7) By 2030, investment ²⁴ in at least six key ecosystem services ²⁵ is maintained and facilitated (from a 2020 baseline)

²² E.g., Payments for Ecosystem Services project in Keurbooms Catchment, the Keurbooms Ecological Infrastructure Investment Work Group, EIFF incorporation into landscape initiatives and Biosphere Reserves, Water Fund projects, etc.

²³ E.g., De Hoop Nature Reserve - Whale Trail 2, development of nature based activities and ecotourism infrastructure (lodges, nature-based activities, etc.).

²⁴ E.g., restoration in terms of alien clearing projects, ecosystem rehabilitation, etc.

²⁵ E.g., water provision/quality; reducing disaster risk (such as fires and floods); rangelands; , coastal protection, healthy estuaries, soil health, pollination services, etc.

SO3: The biodiversity economy is strengthened and increasingly contributes to equitable and sustainable development and livelihoods

SO3 – Outcome 3B: The business case for conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and its contribution to the economy is recognised and valued by decision makers and stakeholders

ACTION PLAN

Implementation actions	Lead Responsibility	Indicator	Target output
3.8) Develop formalised mechanisms which incorporate the value of ecosystem goods and services into biodiversity planning	DEA&DP and CapeNature	3.8) Number of formalised mechanisms ²⁶ which incorporate the value of ecosystem goods and services which has been developed or integrated into biodiversity planning	3.8) By 2030, at least two formalised mechanisms ²⁶ are developed or integrated into biodiversity planning which incorporates the value of ecosystem goods and services
3.9) Develop business cases that highlight the value of ecosystem goods and services and their potential return on investment	DEA&DP supported by CapeNature	3.9) Business models made for priority ecosystem goods and services	3.9) By 2030, produce at least three business cases that highlight the value of ecosystems goods and services, including if appropriate the avoided cost of not conserving biodiversity (from a 2020 baseline)

²⁶ E.g., green bonds, economic policy instruments, the Biodiversity Finance Initiative (BioFIN), GCTWF, People and Parks, securing of SWSAs, etc.

4.4. Strategic Objective 4 (SO4): Improved knowledge management and capability supports effective planning, decision-making, monitoring, and reporting towards achieving biodiversity management objectives.

Scope: This objective focusses on generating accurate and useful information needed for effective governance of biodiversity and Ecological Infrastructure and making it accessible to decision-makers in an easy-to-use format, as well as increasing both government and the private sector's capacity to manage biodiversity.

Planning, decision-making, monitoring, reporting and management of biodiversity are effective when sound data, information, and knowledge are available. Despite many years of research on the biodiversity of the Western Cape, gaps still remain. For example, more information and knowledge are required on biodiversity processes, invertebrates and micro-organisms, as well as of the aquatic environment, estuaries and wetlands. Additionally, the PBSAP acknowledges the value and importance of traditional ecological and indigenous knowledge especially in light of the looming threat of much of this knowledge being lost forever, due in part to the loss of a generation of knowledge holders and users and compounded by the increasing rural-urban migration, resulting in fewer knowledge holders and users in subsequent generations.

Biodiversity Spatial Planning is now a widely adopted practice at provincial and local levels and is legally required for the Western Cape as per the WCBA. Spatial prioritisation for biodiversity management also takes long-term impacts and conditions into account, such as those caused by climate change and population growth. Adequately catering for areas of ecological importance in the development trajectory of a municipality or province makes considerable progress towards achieving many of the outcomes of the PBSAP. One of the challenges that arise in implementation is around ensuring that data remains current and meaningful. One such example of the delay between the generation of information and the "operationalisation" of that information in decision-making is the delay experienced in updates to the national list of ecosystems that are threatened and in need of protection (originally gazetted in 2011), which afford ecosystems with endangered or critically endangered status additional protection through the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations. While this list reflects a five-year review cycle, the list was only updated in November of 2022, with widespread concern that changes in ecosystem threat status were not being reflected accurately.

It is also important that accurate data and correct knowledge are available to planners, managers, policy makers and other decision makers as the first step in ensuring that there is conscious understanding of the potential impacts of, for example, development decisions. Disaggregating such data on gender, age and disability allows for additional insights that can assist in decision-making and policy or initiative development processes that are more responsive to the needs of priority groupings. It also ensures that biodiversity policy implementation shows measurable results. The private sector and society at large also require information and knowledge that will enhance their understanding of the actions they undertake, and of the state of the environment in the sites they operate or implement projects in. Therefore, gathering, analysing and packaging data and information in useful formats for a wide range of users is vital, especially with the needs and abilities of priority groupings in the Western Cape in mind.

In addition to government, researchers, biodiversity managers, user groups and local communities should all collaborate to ensure that the knowledge they gather and hold – including indigenous knowledge – is available to achieve the strategic objectives of the PBSAP in a responsible manner that respects the rights of knowledge holders. Priority setting around gathering information or generating new knowledge should be inclusive, seek to redress inequalities, and should take measures to understand the needs of members of society who are unrepresented or under-represented in these discussions (e.g., women, children, the elderly and disabled).

The power of technology, and in particular, information and communication technologies such as remote sensing, can enhance and fast track the process of gathering data and information on biodiversity. In a resource constrained and rapidly changing world, the need for near-real-time monitoring, assessment, reporting, and sharing of data, information and knowledge on the status of biodiversity at all levels is critical for improving the management of natural resources.

Capable institutions, such as DEA&DP and CapeNature, that are adequately resourced are paramount to the correct interpretation of information and the subsequent effective implementation of interventions to ensure that resource management and conservation is evidence-based and robust. Ensuring that officials within these institutions are exposed to emerging paradigms and catalytic concepts ensures that they remain current and adept in performing their duties. Continual professional development through annual training interventions should be encouraged, as well as building the next generation of environmental professionals in these organisations through new learner opportunities such as internships and mentoring programmes.

4.4.1. SO4 Outcomes, Indicators and Targets

SO4: Improved knowledge management and capability supports effective planning, decision-making, monitoring, and reporting towards achieving biodiversity management objectives			
SO4 – Outcome 4A: Relevant biodiversity and conservation data and knowledge is accessible to users, and supports decision making			
ACTION PLAN			
Implementation actions	Lead Responsibility	Indicator	Target output
4.1) Drive strategic biodiversity monitoring and research priorities	CapeNature, supported by DEA&DP	4.1) A CapeNature Ecological Surveillance Monitoring Research Framework with priorities is implemented	4.1) By 2030, strategic monitoring and research priorities are determined as part of the CapeNature Ecological Surveillance Monitoring Research Framework
4.2) Establish mechanisms for sharing information and knowledge on biodiversity	CapeNature	4.2) Existing mechanisms for sharing information and knowledge on biodiversity amongst relevant stakeholders are utilised, and new mechanisms are established	4.2.1) By 2030, the Conservation Management System is updated and accessible to relevant users
4.3) Conduct mainstreaming engagements to support municipalities in incorporating the BSP and other relevant biodiversity strategies into their IDPs and SDFs	DEA&DP and CapeNature	4.3) Strategies, conservation tools and reports are mainstreamed ²⁷	4.3) At least 8 mainstreaming engagements conducted annually (4 by DEA&DP and 4 by CapeNature; note the latter forms a subset that also contributes towards target output 4.11)
4.4) Provide tools, resources and opportunities to priority groupings to participate in biodiversity conservation as per the DEA&DP Gender Equity Strategic Framework 2020-2025	DEA&DP, supported by CapeNature	4.4) Gender and priority grouping disparities and biases are addressed in biodiversity strategies, conservation tools and reports	4.4) By 2030, an analysis of biodiversity strategies, conservation tools and reports shows they are increasingly cognisant of biases and addresses gender and priority grouping disparities

²⁷ Also see target 2.8.2.

SO4: Improved knowledge management and capability supports effective planning, decision-making, monitoring, and reporting towards achieving biodiversity management objectives			
SO4 – Outcome 4B: The status of species and ecosystems is regularly monitored and assessed			
ACTION PLAN			
Implementation actions	Lead Responsibility	Indicator	Target output
4.5) Track and report on the status of threatened and priority ecosystems as per the NBSAP 2015-2025	CapeNature, supported by DEA&DP	4.5) Threatened and priority ecosystems and species status are tracked	4.5.1) The State of Biodiversity Report is updated on a five-year cycle
			4.5.2) The State of Conservation Report is updated on an annual basis, feeding into the State of Biodiversity Report

SO4: Improved knowledge management and capability supports effective planning, decision-making, monitoring, and reporting towards achieving biodiversity management objectives			
SO4 – Outcome 4C: Spatial priorities for the management of biodiversity and Ecological Infrastructure are identified			
ACTION PLAN			
Implementation actions	Lead Responsibility	Indicator	Target output
4.6) Adopt and regularly update biodiversity spatial planning tools and promote their utilisation in decision making as per the NBSAP 2015-2025	CapeNature and DEA&DP	4.6) Biodiversity spatial planning tools are in place, current and actively utilised in decision making	4.6.1) The Western Cape Biodiversity Spatial Plan is updated every five years
			4.6.2) The Catchment to Coast Strategy is revised every five years
			4.6.3) The CapeNature Conservation Action Priority Map is updated every five years
			4.6.4) Updates to the BSP informs the national screening tool and CapeFarmMapper
			4.6.5) The EIIIF Catchment Prioritisation Report is updated by 2030

SO4: Improved knowledge management and capability supports effective planning, decision-making, monitoring, and reporting towards achieving biodiversity management objectives			
SO4 – Outcome 4D: DEA&DP and CapeNature have the required capability to implement their environmental mandate			
ACTION PLAN			
Implementation actions	Lead Responsibility	Indicator	Target output
4.7) Ensure the resourcing of the PBSAP to ensure implementation	DEA&DP, supported by CapeNature	4.7) Resources (expertise and finance) for the implementation of the PBSAP have been leveraged	4.7.1) By 2025, resources for the implementation of the PBSAP have been quantified 4.7.2) By 2030, a strategy is in place to meet the resource requirements identified in 4.7.1, and is inclusive of priority groupings
4.8) Ensure DEA&DP and CapeNature staff receive the necessary training for ongoing skills improvement	DEA&DP and CapeNature	4.8) Ongoing professional training for staff is implemented	4.8.1) In response to the national process to determine scientific capacity, an assessment of provincial scientific capacity is conducted every five years, starting in 2023/24. 4.8.2) Relevant training interventions are included in the Performance Agreements of CapeNature and DEA&DP staff
4.9) Provide internship opportunities in the biodiversity sector	CapeNature, supported by DEA&DP	4.9) Number of internships provided through various initiatives in the sector	4.9) By 2030, at least 10 internship opportunities are provided annually through various initiatives in the sector, including learnerships
4.10) Apply the recommendations coming out of the Organisational Design process ²⁸	DEA&DP	4.10) Organisational Design process and service delivery model implemented	4.10) By 2030, the recommendations of the Organisational Design process are internalised and implemented

²⁸ The OD process was implemented for CapeNature and the DEA&DP's Directorate: Biodiversity and Coastal Management to determine the fit for purpose capacities required to ensure service delivery in terms of biodiversity and coastal management for the province.

SO4: Improved knowledge management and capability supports effective planning, decision-making, monitoring, and reporting towards achieving biodiversity management objectives

SO4 – Outcome 4E: DEA&DP and CapeNature support sector partners and municipalities to implement their environmental responsibility

ACTION PLAN

Implementation actions	Lead Responsibility	Indicator	Target output
4.11) Implement environmental capacity building initiatives as per the DEA&DP and CapeNature Annual Performance Plans	DEA&DP and CapeNature	4.11) Number of environmental stakeholder capacity building initiatives	4.11) At least 80 environmental stakeholder capacity building initiatives are implemented per annum
4.12) Develop and implement a biodiversity-related capacity building programme for local government councillors	DEA&DP	4.12.1) A capacity building programme for councillors in place	4.12.1) By 2030, a capacity building programme for local government councillors on biodiversity strategies, policy and legislation has been implemented
		4.12.2) Number of capacity building interventions that include councillors	4.12.2) At least one capacity building intervention aimed at councillors is held annually

4.5. Strategic Objective 5 (SO5): Stakeholders and financial resources are mobilised to achieve sustainable long-term benefits for biodiversity

Scope: This objective focusses on increasing the available resources to protect and restore biodiversity, in terms of people's knowledge and capability on how to do so, improving collaboration between all sectors, as well as increasing the available funding.

South Africa and the Western Cape are well-endowed with a vibrant civil society in the environmental sector, and over the years civil society has been at the forefront of environmental advocacy and stewardship. Civil society leads and champions initiatives on biodiversity – many of which contribute enormously to shaping policy and the conservation of biodiversity. NGOs often also have well-established expertise and relationships with donors including international donors and the private sector. Key initiatives in the province have been funded from financial resources mobilised by or in partnership with civil society. Engagement with civil society is thus important to overcome the enormous challenge of protecting and securing biodiversity of the province.

Examples of ground-breaking initiatives where civil society plays a leading role include Cape Action for People and the Environment (CAPE), the Succulent Karoo Ecosystem Programme, the Biodiversity and Wine Initiative and the Greater Cape Town Water Fund. Although the CAPE Strategy has reached its term (2020), a summative and formative evaluation of its impact and future was undertaken with SANBI and partners as an ongoing CAPE Legacy Project. The outcome of this process as well as this revised PBSAP will determine the way forward for partnership structure(s) for biodiversity in the Western Cape. CAPE is in the process of transitioning to a future partnership vehicle, focusing on transformation under a new Memorandum of Understanding. This partnership platform is pivotal to the implementation of this Strategic Objective. Key examples of the types of stakeholder partnerships and relationships important for implementing the PBSAP include:

- Co-governance, joint responsibility and risk-sharing
- Collaboration and co-investment
- Participatory planning, policy, and decision-making processes
- Awareness and outreach
- Data, information, and knowledge sharing

The biodiversity and conservation sector represents less than 1% of the total WCG expenditure and is therefore chronically underfunded, and consequently resource deficient to undertake required core scientific services. Considering declining public expenditure allocations, the inability to raise revenue, a reduced availability of technical and human capacity to manage protected areas, and the need to respond to emerging disasters like pandemics, there is a need to fundamentally shift the manner in which the sector is viewed from a public finance management point of view. Considerable focus in recent years has been to raise awareness outside the conservation sector on the critical importance of Ecological Infrastructure in supporting and providing public services as well as human and animal health and wellbeing, and the need for non-environmental sectors to also invest in Ecological Infrastructure to support their own continued growth and improvement. This has resulted in Ecological Infrastructure being acknowledged in the Western Cape Growth for Jobs Strategy 2035 as an important investment area, particularly for water security. Further to this, there is a need to improve the overall governance of the sector from a structural and financial perspective to

realise the economies of scale in relation to socio-economic and scientific value of protected areas.

In terms of provincial resources for biodiversity management, approximately 50% of the DEA&DP's Vote 9 allocation (estimated to be R566 million for 2022/23) is allocated to CapeNature as the province's main scientific authority and conservation implementer. CapeNature manages 16 Nature Reserve complexes, comprising a total of 828 970 ha. Furthermore, the CapeNature protected area estate totals 1 030 429 ha which includes CapeNature managed Protected Areas and Formal Stewardship sites supported by CapeNature (SoCR, 2022).

CapeNature is driving ecotourism and access as a strategic focus to ensure:

- expansion of the ecotourism development footprint;
- growth and diversification of own revenue streams;
- repositioning of existing infrastructure to cater for a broader spectrum of society, thus promoting greater access opportunities and interaction between communities and protected areas;
- driving advocacy projects and programmes amongst all stakeholders with specific focus on youth, learners and communities at large;
- strengthening the corporate brand and positioning; and
- quality visitor facilities and experiences that promotes service excellence.

CapeNature's approach looks towards strategic partnerships to leverage capability and investment with relevant entities, civil society, research and academic institutions, industry as well as landscape initiatives and biosphere reserves.

4.5.1. SO5 Outcomes, Indicators and Targets

SO5: Stakeholders and financial resources are mobilised to achieve sustainable long-term benefits for biodiversity			
SO5 – Outcome 5A: Collaborative programmes in the province contribute substantially to the implementation of the PBSAP			
ACTION PLAN			
Implementation Actions	Lead Responsibility	Indicator	Target Output
5.1) Communicate biodiversity-focussed content	CapeNature supported by DEA&DP	5.1) Biodiversity-focussed content is communicated	5.1) Annually communicate biodiversity-focussed content via a minimum of six bimonthly newsletters, six website blog posts, 12 social media posts and R500 000 worth of media Advertising Value Equivalent
5.2) Implement a stakeholder engagement programme	CapeNature supported by DEA&DP	5.2) Stakeholder engagement programme is implemented and platforms for engagement and dialogue are created	5.2.1) Annual review of the Stakeholder Engagement and Access Strategic Plan
			5.2.2) Protected Area Advisory Committees are established, maintained and functioning for all CapeNature managed Protected Areas by 2026
			5.2.3) The People and Parks structure is capacitated, functional and actively participating in Protected Area Advisory Committees
			5.2.4) Support and participate in relevant Forums and other liaison platforms
5.3) Supplement the environmental curriculum in schools in the Western Cape	CapeNature and DEA&DP	5.3) Collaborate with the Provincial Department of Education to supplement the Environmental Education programme in schools	5.3.1) At least 50 schools are engaged annually by CapeNature to implement a supplemented environmental curriculum
			5.3.2) Four interventions conducted annually by DEA&DP with teachers to supplement the environmental curriculum, via the e-learning programme
5.4) Conduct environmental awareness campaigns focused on environmental calendar days	CapeNature supported by DEA&DP	5.4) Number of environmental awareness activities conducted	5.4) By 2030, 300 environmental awareness activities that are focussed on environmental calendar days are conducted per annum

SO5: Stakeholders and financial resources are mobilised to achieve sustainable long-term benefits for biodiversity			
SO5 – Outcome 5B: Effective involvement by the public and civil society in the implementation of the PBSAP and related environmental planning and decision-making processes			
ACTION PLAN			
Implementation actions	Lead Responsibility	Indicator	Target Outputs
5.5) Improve awareness and attendance amongst members of the public and civil society of environmental committees and fora	DEA&DP supported by CapeNature	5.5) Number of members of the public and civil society attendees at environmental committees and fora	5.5.1) By 2023/24, set a baseline for participation by individuals and civil society at environmental committees and fora including disaggregated information on priority groups 5.5.2) By 2030, there is increased participation by individuals and civil society at environmental committees and fora including increased participation by priority groups.
5.6) Adopt public participation processes that are sensitive and reflect gender roles and needs of priority groups	DEA&DP supported by CapeNature	5.6) Public participation processes reflect improved involvement by and consideration of priority groups	5.6) By 2030, public participation processes are sensitive to and cognisant of gender roles and the needs of other priority groups

SO5: Stakeholders and financial resources are mobilised to achieve sustainable long-term benefits for biodiversity			
SO5 – Outcome 5C: Increased financial resources to achieve environmental objectives			
ACTION PLAN			
Implementation actions	Lead Responsibility	Indicator	Target Output
5.7) Engage with biodiversity-related resourcing mechanisms to support the implementation of the PBSAP	DEA&DP	5.7) The Western Cape participates in biodiversity-related resourcing mechanisms, e.g., BioFIN	5.7) Annual reporting via the PBSAP Implementation Report on the Western Cape's participation in biodiversity-related resourcing mechanisms
5.8) Pursue co-funding and co-beneficial partnership	DEA&DP	5.8.1) Number of opportunities for co-funding leveraged through external funding sources	5.8.1) By 2030, at least five externally funded projects or co-funding opportunities leveraged

SO5: Stakeholders and financial resources are mobilised to achieve sustainable long-term benefits for biodiversity

SO5 – Outcome 5C: Increased financial resources to achieve environmental objectives

ACTION PLAN

Implementation actions	Lead Responsibility	Indicator	Target Output
opportunities ²⁹ for implementing the PBSAP		5.8.2) Quantum of co-funding ³⁰ leveraged via formal partnerships (e.g., MoU/MoA)	5.8.2) From 2025, the quantum of co-funding from formal partnerships is reported annually via the PBSAP Implementation Report
		5.8.3) Number of co-beneficial partnership opportunities leveraged	5.8.3) From 2025, the number of co-beneficial partnership opportunities leveraged is reported annually via the PBSAP Implementation Report
5.9) Review and Implement the CapeNature Tourism Investment Plan	CapeNature supported by DEADP	5.9) Quantum of finances leveraged through the CapeNature Tourism Investment Plan	5.9.1) Five yearly review of Tourism Investment Plan
			5.9.2) Increase in Tourism generated revenue year on year equal to or more than the Consumer Price Index
			5.9.3) Completion of infrastructure upgrade and maintenance projects on an annual basis, as per the CapeNature Tourism Investment Plan
5.10) Provide financial support to Biosphere Reserves as part of the MAB Programme ³¹	DEA&DP	5.10) Funded MAB biosphere reserves	5.10.1) By 2030, at least five MAB Biosphere Reserves receive funding towards operational costs
			5.10.2) The conservation value leveraged by Biosphere Reserves as a result of DEA&DP's financial support is reported on annually as part of the PBSAP Implementation Report.

²⁹ E.g., projects addressing water and food security have strong levers to biodiversity conservation efforts that could be 'folded' into co-funding.

³⁰ Includes sweat equity and other in-kind support.

³¹ This action also supports Outcome 1A: *Representative biodiversity is secured and conserved through a network of conservation areas and existing and new conservation initiatives in the province* [including biodiversity found in terrestrial, freshwater (incl. wetlands), coastal, wetlands, estuarine and the marine environments, at all levels including ecosystems, habitats, species, genes, and Ecological Infrastructure].

5. Conclusion

The WCG through this revised PBSAP is consolidating and creating further momentum for government and its partners to continue to expand on the commendable initiatives underway to conserve the globally important biodiversity of the Western Cape. The WCG has both a global and a Constitutional responsibility to safeguard, limit the loss of and restore the biodiversity and ecological services within its boundaries. In keeping with the commitment in signing the Edinburgh Declaration, the WCG will play a critical role in meeting national and global targets.

The WCG's own imperatives such as the Provincial Strategic Plan and Western Cape Growth for Jobs Strategy 2035 to grow the economy, to create jobs and to reduce inequality underscore the need to pursue these initiatives in a manner that ensures that vulnerable groups receive priority in the consideration of implementation, specifically in how benefits and opportunities are accessed and distributed. At the same time, the PBSAP continues to support unlocking and developing the economic value of the rich biodiversity found in the province.

The actions proposed herein, including the existing initiatives – which the WCG reinforces – are to be implemented within the 10-year period. The target date of the year 2030 aligns to the OneCape 2030 and the Kunming-Montreal GBF.

The PBSAP was developed and reviewed with the view that the DEA&DP will take the lead and will coordinate actions. However, national, provincial, local governments and entities operating in the province should also align their actions to this revised PBSAP. Civil society, including private sector and NGOs, should similarly do the same. Partnering and collaborating has been the basis for achieving many ground-breaking initiatives in the province and this revised PBSAP reinforces this manner of working.

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Draft for Public Comment

7. Annexures

Annexure A: Programmes, strategies and frameworks that support the PBSAP or to which it aligns

The PBSAP is a coordinating structure for the biodiversity work of the WCG. As such, some of the implementation actions are drawn from other specialist plans (e.g., the WCPEAS) or are specifically designed to support and align with national strategies and programmes. This annexure contains a list of these programmes, strategies, frameworks and other tools that either house the implementation actions of this PBSAP, or to which those implementation actions are aligned, as well as to which SO they relate.

Impl. Prog./strategy/framework	SO1	SO2	SO3	SO4	SO5
CapeNature Catchment to Coast Strategy The strategy aims to mitigate impacts on the freshwater ecosystems in the province. Measures include alien invasive plant control and rehabilitation of freshwater ecosystems.	x				
CapeNature Tourism Investment Plan (TIP) The TIP provides guidance for increased tourism investment.					x
DEA&DP Gender Equity Strategic Framework (GESF) The GESF aims to catalyse a paradigm shift towards gender mainstreaming, empower women, ensure gender equality and contribute to inclusive growth and economic transformation.	x		x	x	x
National Biodiversity Economy Strategy The National Biodiversity Economy Strategy provides guidance for the development and growth of the biodiversity economy.			x		
National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) The NBSAP provides a framework for the integration of biodiversity considerations into plans and strategies.	x	x	x	x	x
National Government Medium Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) The MTSF is a five-year implementation plan and monitoring framework for achieving the National Development Plan 2030 priorities for the sixth administration of Government.	x		x		
UNESCO Man and Biosphere Programme (MAB Programme) The MAB Programme is an intergovernmental scientific programme that aims to establish a scientific basis for enhancing the relationship between people and their environments.	x	x	x		x

Impl. Prog./strategy/framework	SO1	SO2	SO3	SO4	SO5
<p>Western Cape Biodiversity Spatial Plan (BSP)</p> <p>The BSP is a biodiversity planning product which represents the priority biodiversity areas and Ecological Infrastructure that need to be secured in the long term.</p>	x	x		x	
<p>Western Cape Climate Change Response Strategy: Vision 2050 and its Implementation Plan</p> <p>A transversal provincial strategy in response to climate-related risks and potential opportunities, through either creating or leveraging systemic innovative response programmes that tackle the region's vulnerability to droughts, heat and floods and take advantage of opportunities that will enable climate resilient development which fosters economic growth that is low-carbon and further creates an advanced Green Economy</p>	x	x	x	x	x
<p>Western Cape Government Ecological Infrastructure Investment Framework (EIF)</p> <p>The EIF is a collaboration project between WCG and other entities, which sets out investment objectives as it relates to the EIF, as well as reactive and proactive approaches to eradicating poverty and effectively managing invasive alien species in the province.</p>	x	x	x	x	x
<p>Western Cape Growth for Jobs Strategy 2035</p> <p>This strategy aims to achieve a provincial economy that achieves break-out economic growth, resulting in sufficient employment and opportunity and an economy that is sustainable, resilient, diverse and thriving – generating confidence, hope and prosperity for all.</p>	x		x	x	x
<p>Western Cape Integrated Drought and Water Response Plan (WCIDWRP)</p> <p>The aim of the WCIDWRP is to plan for interventions towards long-term water security and resilience for the province and support integrated and coordinated provincial drought response and planning.</p>	x	x		x	x
<p>Western Cape Protected Area Expansion Strategy (WCPAES)</p> <p>The WCPAES has adopted a target to formally protect 60% of the biodiversity thresholds for all terrestrial ecosystems by 2030.</p>	x				
<p>Western Cape Provincial Coastal Management Programme (WC: PCMP)</p> <p>The WC CMP is a five-year programme which details how the Western Cape Government together with its partners intends to manage the coast within the constraints of currently available resources.</p>	x		x		

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