

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS ALONG THE WESTERN CAPE COAST

The Western Cape Coastal Zone is an area where dense human settlements are concentrated due to the abundance of natural resources, livelihood and recreational opportunities found along the coast.

Both economic and social conditions can impact on the state and quality of coastal environments. Recent data shows that growth in the Western Cape has largely been boosted by three sectors:

- Construction (average growth of 5.5% between 2006 and 2015)
- Finance, insurance, real estate and business services (average growth of 4.1%)
- General government (average growth of 3.7%)

Climate change will reconfigure economic competitiveness regionally and globally, but can also provide the catalyst for investment into climate adaptation that may increase economic competitiveness of the Western Cape.

Common economic activities include: fishing, aquaculture, agriculture, tourism, forestry, housing, and various infrastructure. Important industries that contribute to the Western Cape economy with high growth potential are; Oil and gas, Tourism and Agric-processing. Other coastal related activities that contribute to the economy include: Port and shipping, marine vessel building, repairs and servicing, commercial fishing, SA Navy and Koeberg power station.

Drivers

Economic and social drivers can be directly linked to the Provincial Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The total GDP for the Western Cape in 2016 was about R600 billion (or R426 billion at 2010 prices) (StatsSA 2016). It was found that GDP growth is relatively consistent in coastal municipalities compared with the Province as a whole.

Ports are a coastal dependent activity and are a critical gateway to the global economy for South Africa. Currently the total contribution of ports to the GDP of the province was 0.62% in 2016/17. Although the contribution of Ports to GDP is small, a measure of port activity and product throughput does nevertheless provide an indication of import/export economic activity.

Pressures

A number of indicators were selected to assess the pressures that socio-economic activities have on the Western Cape coast. The most significant economic activities in the Western Cape include the following:

- Coastal population densities (64% of the Province's population within City of Cape Town in 2016).
- Coastal mining activities (1796 hectares in 2014).
- Agricultural activities (contributes 3.9% to the Provincial economy for 2017/2018 financial year).
- Aquaculture activities (67% of marine aquaculture produces situated in the Western Cape (Figure 1), contributing R600 million to the Provincial economy in the 2016/2017 financial year).
- Tourism (57% of all tourist arrivals in South Africa come through the Western Cape in the 206/2017 financial year).

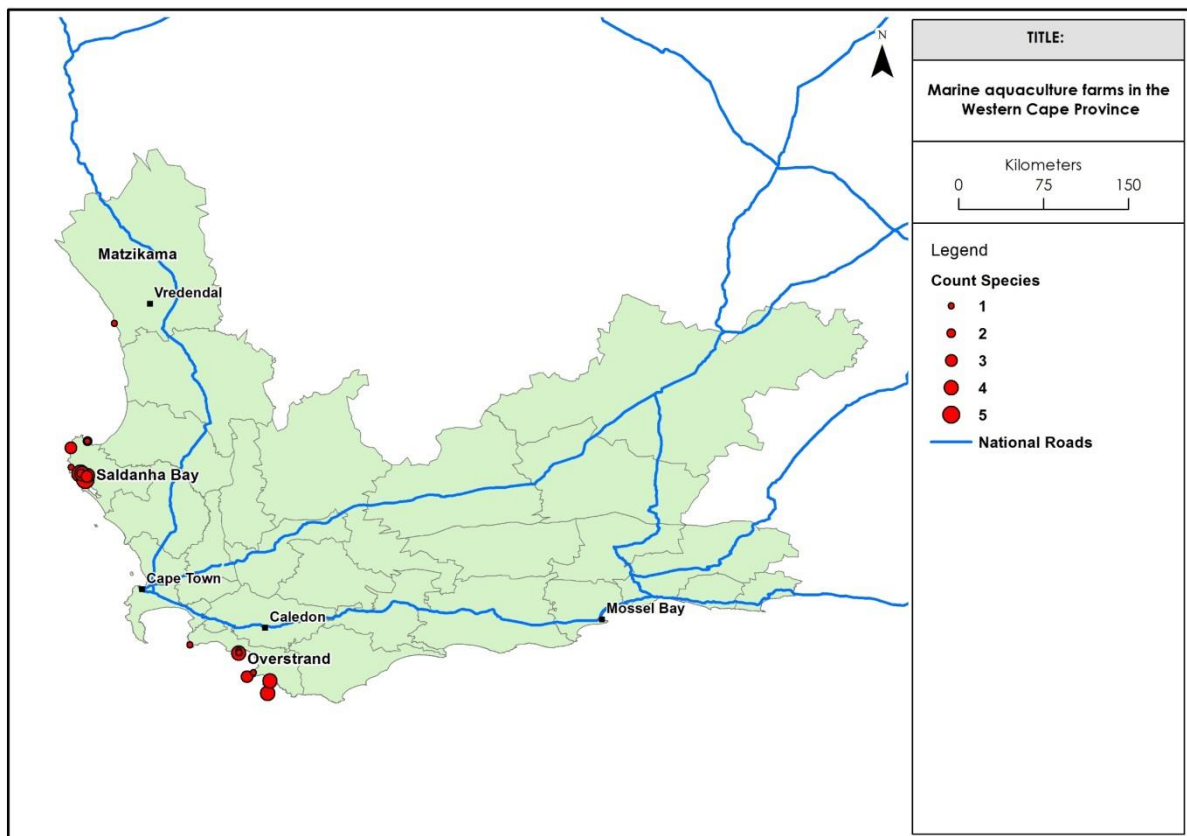
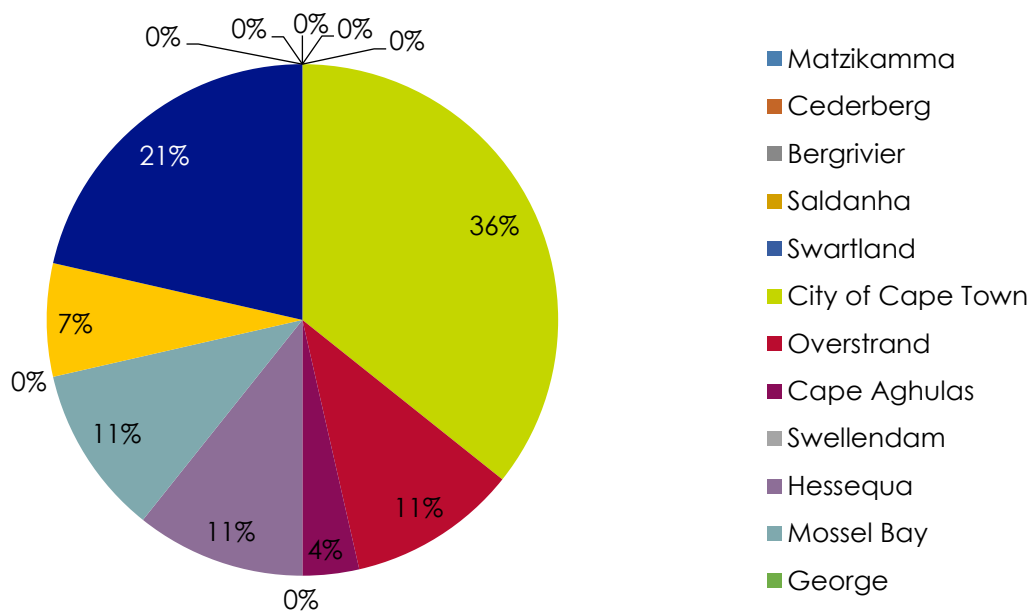


Figure 1: Marine aquaculture farms in the Western Cape

State

The total number of Blue Flag beaches per year, as a percentage of the number of major beaches in the province was used as an indicator to report on the state of coastal assets that influence the socio-economic environment. Currently (2017/18) 5% of the Western Cape beaches are Blue Flag beaches, with the majority of the beaches occurring within the City of Cape Town (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Percentage of Blue Flag beaches per municipality for the 2017/2018 financial year



Impacts

The impacts of economic activities and social conditions on the Western Cape coastline will vary according to the nature of the associated pressure. Some of the impacts that may be linked to economic activities and social conditions include:

- Pollution of coastal land and water from land based activities.
- Alteration of physical features of estuaries, beaches and dune systems
- Transformation and loss of aquatic and terrestrial biological resources.
- Changes in distribution patterns and population densities of communities living within coastal areas.

Table 1: Working for the Coast projects in the Western Cape (2015-2018)

Year	Project Name	No of employees	Budget (ZAR millions)
2015-18 Cycle	Olifants River to Berg River Mouth	89	13
2015-18 Cycle	West Coast National Park	56	7
2015-18 Cycle	Berg River Mouth to Silwerstroom River	88	13
2015-18 Cycle	Silwerstroom to Hout Bay	72	10
2015-18 Cycle	Table Mountain National Park	68	8
2015-18 Cycle	Simons Town to Rooiels	85	11
2015-18 Cycle	Rooiels to Quoin Point	98	14

2015-18 Cycle	Cape Agulhas National Park	58	6
2015-18 Cycle	Agulhas Lighthouse to Witsand	75	10
2015-18 Cycle	Witsand to Gouritsmond	94	12
2015-18 Cycle	Gouritsmond to Nature's Nalley	100	12
2015-18 Cycle	Garden Route National Park - Knysna Section	81	11
2015-18 Cycle	Garden Route National Park - Wilderness Section	92	11
	Total	1056	138

Responses

The response to the impacts of economic activities and social conditions in coastal environments in the Western Cape mostly involves managing human activities in a manner that avoids, limits or mitigates against the impacts and include:

- Protection of heritage resources (72 heritage assets currently have formal protection, 2017).
- Establishment of recognised stakeholder communication platforms (e.g. Provincial Coastal Committee, Municipal Coastal Committee, Estuary Advisory Forums and Protected Area Advisory Committees).
- Working for the Coast (R138 million has been spent on the Western Cape coastline 2015-2018 budget cycle, and 1 056 employment opportunities were created, Table 1).

OUTLOOK: IMPROVING

The socio-economic outlook is good, with improved GGP and GDP in line with Provincial growth rates. Future economic activities and social conditions are likely to continue to exert significant pressure on the coast due to the many economic and social benefits that can be derived from the coastal location. Thus future development and investment must be planned and directed in such a way that the existing economic and social value of the coastline is not compromised, but is further enhanced by retaining the natural and cultural capital, and integrating a natural systems approach for development and infrastructure.