



CITY OF CAPE TOWN
ISIXEKO SASEKAPA
STAD KAAPSTAD



Biodiversity Management Progress Report

July 2023 – June 2024



From left to right: Steenbras Nature Reserve, Malachite Kingfisher (*Corythornis cristatus*), BMB staff member birding

SPATIAL PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT
ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT
BIODIVERSITY MANAGEMENT BRANCH

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1. Abbreviations and Acronyms

1.1 Acronyms used throughout this report

BioNet	Biodiversity Network, the systematic biodiversity plan for Cape Town
BMB	Biodiversity Management Branch
CAPE	Cape Action for People and the Environment
CapeNature	Western Cape provincial conservation authority
CPBMJTT	Cape Peninsula Baboon Management Joint Task Team
CBA	Critical Biodiversity Area
CCT	City of Cape Town, also referred to as City
CDF	Conservation Development Framework
CFU	Colony Forming Units
CIP	Metro Southeast (SE) Strandveld Conservation Implementation Plan
CPUT	Cape Peninsula University of Technology
CR	Critically Endangered
CSU	Conservation Services Unit, Biodiversity Management Branch
DCCCP	Dassenberg Coastal Catchment Partnership
DEA&DP	Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning (Western Cape)
DFFE	Department of Forestry, Fisheries and Environment (national)
DSDF	District Spatial Development Framework
EDRR	Early Detection and Rapid Response
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EMD	Environmental Management Department
EN	Endangered
EPWP	Expanded Public Works Programme
FTE	Full Time Equivalents (jobs)
GIS	Geographic Information System
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
ISU	Invasive Species Unit, Biodiversity Management Branch
LBSAP	Local Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
LC	Least Concern
METT	Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool, METT-SA03 used in this report
MoA	Memorandum of Agreement
MPP	Mayoral Priority Programme
MSDF	Municipal Spatial Development Framework
NCC	NCC Environmental Services
NEMA	National Environmental Management Act, Act No. 107 of 1998
NEMBA	National Environmental Management Biodiversity Act, Act No. 10 of 2004
NEMPAA	National Environmental Management Protected Areas Act, Act No. 57 of 2003
P&C	People and Conservation
PAAC	Protected Area Advisory Committee
PAMA	Protected Area Management Agreement
PAMP	Protected Area Management Plan
PPM	Project Portfolio Management
PSHB	Polyphagous Shot Hole Borer
SANBI	South African National Biodiversity Institute
SANParks	South African National Parks, the national protected area authority
SCM	Supply Chain Management
SMF	Strategic Management Framework
SLA	Service Level Agreement
S&P	Systems and Procedure
SPCA	Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals; both National (NSPCA) and local Cape of Good Hope (CGHSPCA)
SSB	Water & Sanitation: Scientific Services Branch
TCP	Tenders, Contracts and Projects Unit, Biodiversity Management Branch
TMF	Table Mountain Fund
TMNP	Table Mountain National Park, managed by SANParks
UBP	Urban Baboon Programme
USIP	Urban Sustainability Internship Programme
WULA	Water Use Licence Application
WWF-SA	World Wide Fund for Nature, South Africa

1.2 Acronyms of the CCT Nature Reserves

ACA	Ariesfontein Conservation Area
BBNR	Blaauwberg Nature Reserve
BFNR	Bothasig Fynbos Nature Reserve
BB	DNR: Botterblom section
BNR	Bracken Nature Reserve
DNR	Durbanville Nature Reserve
ESNR	Edith Stephens Nature Reserve
FBNR	False Bay Nature Reserve
HCA	Haasendal Conservation Area
HFNR	Harmony Flats Nature Reserve
HNR	Helderberg Nature Reserve
JCA	Joostenbergskloof Conservation Area
MCCA	Morkel's Cottage Conservation Area
MDS	WNR: Macassar Dunes section
MES	WNR: Macassar East section
SAS	WNR: Strandfontein Aquifer Section
SNR	Steenbras Nature Reserve
SWCA	Symphony Way Conservation Area
TBNR	Table Bay Nature Reserve
TNR	Tygerberg Nature Reserve
UWNR	Uitkamp Wetland Nature Reserve
VSCA	Van Schoorsdrift Conservation Area
WANR	Witzands Aquifer Nature Reserve
WCC	Westlake Conservation Centre
WNR	Wolfgat Nature Reserve
ZNR	Zandvlei Nature Reserve

2. Executive Summary

2.1 Conserving biodiversity: our natural capital

The key legislation that guides the management and protection of biodiversity in Cape Town is the National Environmental Management Act 107 of 1998 (NEMA) and its subsidiaries the Biodiversity Act 10 of 2004 (NEMBA) and the Protected Areas Act 57 of 2003 (NEMPAA). The management of wetlands is chiefly administered through the National Water Act 36 of 1998. This legislation provides the City of Cape Town (CCT or City) with its mandate both in terms of being a landowner and more generally in terms of biodiversity protection and invasive species control. Therefore, the City abides by this legislative framework and has developed strategies, policies, and plans to ensure the protection, conservation, and wise use of priority terrestrial biodiversity, rivers, estuaries and wetlands.



Figure 1: Specialist pollinator-plant mutualisms occur in fynbos

The **Integrated Development Plan (IDP)** and **Municipal Spatial Development Framework (MSDF)** recognise Cape Town's critical environmental assets, its globally important biodiversity, and the significance of its 307 km coastline. The City is indeed exceptionally rich in species and is recognised as the most biodiverse city in the world (Figure 1). The City's **Local Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (LBSAP)** and the **Environmental Strategy** recognise the significance of, and commit the City to conserving, Cape Town's unique biodiversity for both present and future generations (Figure 1).

The Environmental Management Department's (EMD's) Biodiversity Management Branch (BMB) is responsible for the planning and implementation of the LBSAP. This incorporates conservation planning, protected area expansion, conservation services, flora and fauna species identification and protection, urban wildlife conflict, people and conservation (nature conservation tourism, recreation, community involvement and education), nature reserve management, job creation, skills development, invasive species control, and restoration.

The Biodiversity Network (BioNet) includes all priority natural and semi-natural terrestrial sites, wetlands and rivers, and indicates which parcels of land are classified as Critical Biodiversity Areas (CBAs) and need to be conserved to meet National Conservation Targets. The BioNet and Management Guidelines were consolidated into the **Bioregional Plan**, which was approved as policy by the City Council in July 2015. The Biodiversity targets are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Biodiversity reporting targets as per the IDP.

INDICATOR	BASELINE TARGET 2020/21*	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
9.A Proportion of biodiversity priority areas protected (%)	65%	65,25%	65,40%	65,50%	65,80%
9.B Biodiversity priority areas remaining (hectares)	85 000 ha	81 000 ha	81 000 ha	81 000 ha	81 000 ha

*Percentage of the 2009 Biodiversity Network.

2.2 Notable Highlights¹

- 1) Cape Town was selected by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) as a **Generation Restoration Role Model City**. Only 10 Role Model Cities were selected in 2023, and only one in Africa.
- 2) BMB is currently reorganising the Integrated Reserve Management Plans (IRMPs) into **Protected Area Management Plans** (PAMPs) – progress 50%.
- 3) The delivery of two new custom built **weed harvesting machines**: one at Zandvlei Nature Reserve (Cape Shoveler) and one at Table Bay Nature Reserve (Otter) as part of the Mayoral Priority Programme (MPP) (Figure 2).



Figure 2: The new weed harvester, the Otter, in Table Bay Nature Reserve.

- 4) Work began in January 2024 on the **construction** of the upgraded education centre, offices and accommodation at **Bracken Nature Reserve**. The buildings themselves have already received a Five Star Green Award from the Building Council of South Africa for being the first net-zero carbon certified building in Cape Town. Its design means that it will generate more energy than it consumes and will set a new standard for eco-friendly construction in the City of Cape Town (Figure 3).

¹ See Annexure A for additional highlights per reserve



Figure 3: BMB staff member, Thobela Eric Bunu, with the Bracken Nature Reserve construction in the back ground.

- 5) A total of 3 642 Green Job Opportunities (target 3 000), 678,67 Full Time Equivalents (FTEs) (target 500) and 156 096 person days of temporary employment were created. All together **BMB facilitated over 4 008 green job opportunities (166 447,50 person days and 723,68 FTEs)** and spent a budget of over R49 M for EMD and R25 M for other line functions including ward and Subcouncil allocations.
- 6) **Kader Asmal EPWP programme Skills Development Programme** has been ongoing for six years, with Phase 1 implemented between 1 July 2018 and 30 June 2021, and Phase 2 implemented from 1 July 2021 and ending on 30 June 2024. Since its inception, 233 participants have benefited from this programme with 136 participants exiting the programme into mainstream/long-term employment opportunities or to further their studies and/or venturing into entrepreneurship (Figure 4).



Figure 4: Kader Asmal Skills Development Programme close out awards.

- 7) Of the 15 **vacancies** in the BMB, three were filled by EPWP/skills development candidates and six promotions who were previous EPWP/ skills development programmes.
- 8) Awards and Recognition:
 - SPE Awards 2023:**
 - 2nd Runner-up: Transversal Project Team of the Year (Invasive Species Unit)
 - Winner: Transversal Project Team of the Year (Land Acquisition Team)
 - Runner-up: Leadership (Lewine Walters)
 - Executive Director's Award: Erika Foot

EPWP Awards 2024:

Winner: Best EPWP Environmental & Cultural Sector Project

2nd Runner up: Best EPWP Project Implementation Team

2nd Runner up: Most Innovative Project (Kader Asmal Skills Development Programme)

Benchmark project of the Year: Kader Asmal Skills Development Programme

Certificate of Compliance: Carbon Smart Programme

- 9) The nature reserve manned gates, events and access points recorded **598 315 visitors**. Over **35 624 individuals** attended education programmes, events, exhibitions, formal or awareness activities on and off the reserves, equalling **35 906 person days of education**. In total, **440 volunteers (1 341 person days; approximate value = R1 M)** and **83 sponsored individuals (3 741 person days; approximate value = R6 M)** were recorded.
- 10) In the last financial year, new populations of species of special concern were discovered: **12 flora species** and **2 fauna species** (Knysna Warbler (*Bradypterus sylvaticus*) and Paddle-winged Lacewing (*Halterona pulchella*)) (Figure 5).



Figure 5 (from left to right): Knysna Warbler (*Bradypterus sylvaticus*); Paddle-winged Lacewing (*Halterona pulchella*); *Geissorhiza radians* found at Rivergate 2 in Parklands.

2.3 Notable Innovations

Use of drone technology

The use of drone thermal imagery during routine conservation operations has proven very successful. Drone footage was used to locate hippos and also used during fire management operations at the Tygerberg wildfire in January 2024 resulting in the successful deployment of resources to prevent damage to neighbouring properties (Figure 6).



Figure 6: Hippo at Rondevlei.

2.4 Notable Challenges

- 1) **EPWP funds:** Major concern as to the long term sustainability - R45 M in 2023 financial year to a possible R0 M in financial year 2026 - most legally required work (fire breaks, invasive species control) on reserves undertaken via EPWP.
- 2) **Intense rainfall events:** Significant erosion occurred in the Helderberg and Steenbras Nature Reserves. This also resulted in the closure of the Koeel Baai campsite.
- 3) **Safety and security, and protected area integrity:** Remains a major concern and is the largest expenditure item on Reserve Budgets. Damage to infrastructure was sustained at Witzands Aquifer Nature Reserve (Klinker Street house) and Morkel's Cottage Conservation Area (theft of and damage to fencing).
- 4) **Land invasions:** Rivergate (Table Bay Nature Reserve); Slangetjebos (False Bay Nature Reserve); and Wolfgat Nature Reserve. During the past year there was also an attempted invasion of the Macassar Dunes. There are an illegal occupation of structures in Blaauwberg Nature Reserve (Figure 7).
- 5) **Public Works land:** Lack of progress in resolving the state land challenges.



Figure 7: Illegal land occupation in Blaauwberg Nature Reserve

3. Strategy, Policy, Legislation and Plans

3.1 Biodiversity Network (BioNet)

The fine-scale systematic spatial biodiversity plan for Cape Town, known as the BioNet, was updated by the Conservation Services Unit (CSU) to align to the national Technical Guidelines for CBA Maps and to the Western Cape Biodiversity Spatial Plan. The biodiversity priority areas required to meet national biodiversity targets (i.e. Protected Areas + Conservation Areas + Critical Biodiversity Areas) now total 81 742,65 ha, compared to c. 85 000 ha in 2009 (Figure 8). On 3 October 2023, BMB Head: Conservation Services, Cliff Dorse, presented a webinar on Biodiversity Planning and Implementation in the City of Cape Town for the BirdLife Conservation Conversations series. Over 270 people joined this webinar.

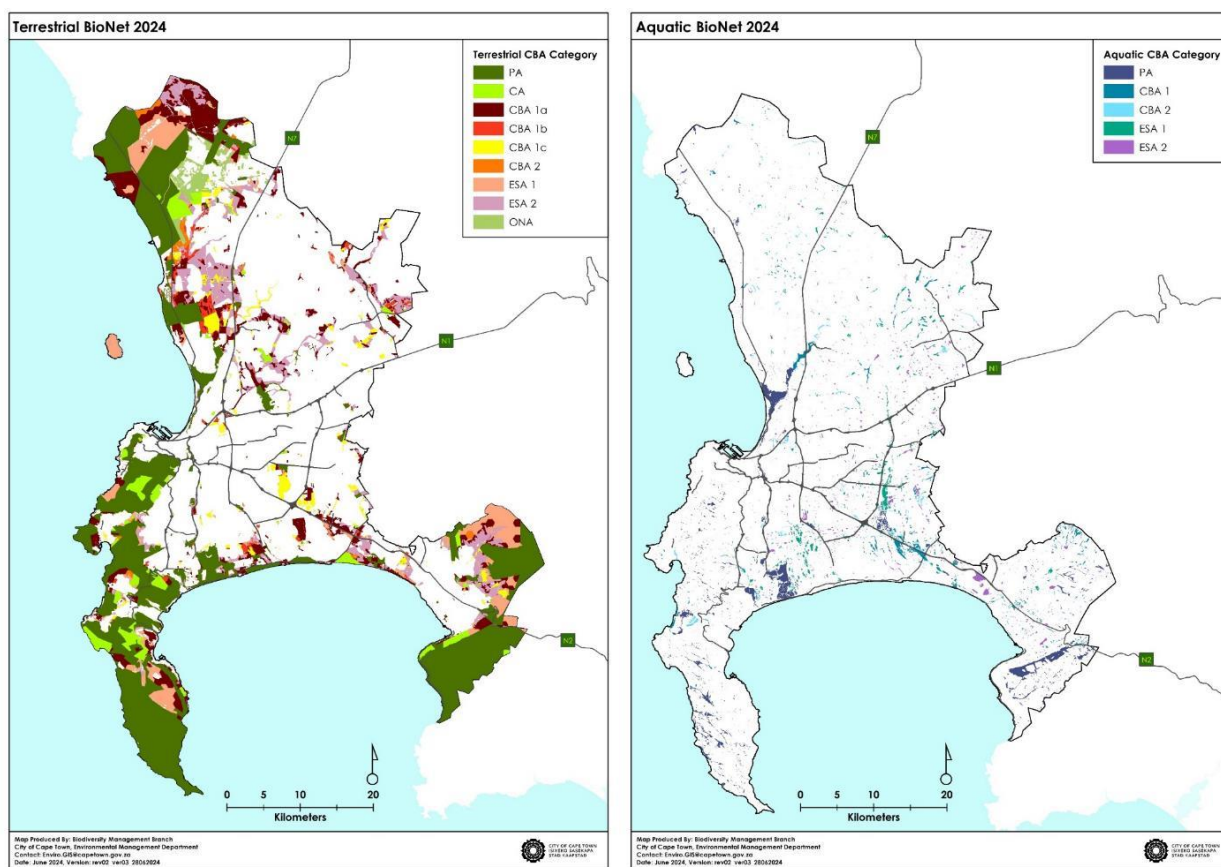


Figure 8: BioNet 2024 - terrestrial (left), freshwater (right).

3.2 Bioregional Plan

The Cape Town Bioregional Plan was adopted as Council Policy in August 2015 (Policy Number 44854). It comprises a biodiversity profile for the bioregion, the Cape Town BioNet and management guidelines. The purpose of the Bioregional Plan is to inform and guide spatial planning, environmental assessment and natural resource management by a wide range of sectors whose policies and decisions impact on biodiversity. The Bioregional Plan is undergoing the Council process to be updated. The Concept Note for the update was presented to the Policy Coordinating Committee in March 2024. Internal consultation with other City line functions, and external consultation with other government stakeholders, was conducted in May 2024. In order to align to the Western Cape Biodiversity Act, 2021, the updated policy will be called the “Cape Town

Biodiversity Spatial Plan 2024". The Concept Note (as of 30 June 2024) is with the Mayor's Office awaiting signature of approval. The draft plan is with the Policy Analyst for review.

3.3 Local Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan

The Local Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (LBSAP 2019) action plan component was aligned to the IDP (SDBIP), Circular 88, PBSAP, NBSAP and Global Biodiversity Framework; and approved in November 2023. The LBSAP Strategy component and updated objectives will form part of the revised Environmental Strategy:

OBJ 1: Develop and maintain relevant policies and strategies to ensure alignment with relevant International, National, Provincial and City of Cape Town legislation, policies and strategies.

OBJ 2: Secure formal conservation status, manage and maintain terrestrial and wetland priority sites and species.

OBJ 3: Identify, enhance and optimise socio-economic benefits and opportunities that are ecologically sustainable.

OBJ 4: Increase communication efforts to enrich knowledge and awareness about, and support for, Cape Town's biodiversity.

OBJ 5: Ensure effective and efficient management of the Biodiversity Management Branch.

3.4 Protected Area Management Plans; Estuary Management Plans and the Invasive Species Control Plans

BMB is currently reorganising the Integrated Reserve Management Plans (IRMPs) into Protected Area Management Plans (PAMPs). Although the process is at 50% and delayed due to staff capacity and resources, during the past year significant progress was made. The revised PAMPs for the proclaimed City Nature Reserves and all draft plans will be complete by the end of June 2025 before the public engagement process.

The Zandvlei Estuary Management Plan (EMP) is slightly behind schedule due to a request for an extended public participation process by the SPE: PC. The EMP was updated as required based on the comments received. The report was then submitted on the e-Agenda for council approval; however, a legal query was received, leading to further delays.

Six Invasive Species Control Plans were updated and submitted for review while 10 are being finalized before they can be reviewed.

3.5 Ramsar Wetland City

The City of Cape Town is one of 43 cities globally accredited as a Ramsar Wetland City (only four cities in Africa). The inaugural meeting of the CCT Ramsar Wetland City Steering Committee took place on 22 May 2024. The meeting was attended by representatives of 13 organisations and eight different line functions within the CCT municipality (Figure 9). The discussion centred on a focus for the committee on seasonal wetland systems, with a formal Terms of Reference to be adopted.

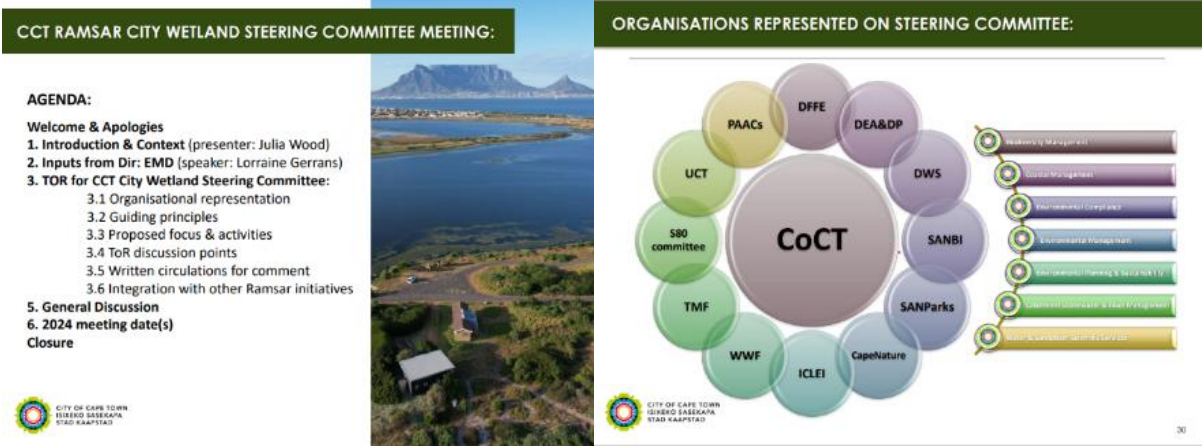


Figure 9: The inaugural CCT Wetland City Steering Committee meeting took place on 22 May 2024 with representatives from 13 different organisations.

3.5 IUCN Membership

Council approved the City joining the IUCN as a subnational and the formal application was submitted in June 2024. The IUCN, with its more than 1 400 members, can assist the City to protect its world-renowned biodiversity, co-create urban environmental solutions to address complex yet interrelated urban nature conservation and become one of the leading environmentally friendly cities.

4. Green Jobs

4.1 Job Creation

Green jobs are jobs that focus on enhanced environmental quality, improved living environment and the



restoration and/or protection of municipal green infrastructure and ecosystem services; with a specific focus on skills development and social upliftment. In this financial year, 3 643 temporary employment opportunities (target 3 000) and 156 096 person days (678,67 full-time job equivalents – target 500) were created through implementation of invasive species control, green jobs and skills development projects across the BioNet (Figure 10, Table 2). A number of invasive species control and green jobs projects were also facilitated for various line departments. Through these projects an additional 365 EPWP job opportunities, 10 351,50 person days and 45,01 FTEs were achieved (Table 3).

Figure 10: River Wardens working at Zandvlei Nature Reserve.

Table 2: Job Opportunities created. Although some were for other line departments, all job opportunities were recorded for EMD.

Project	Budget (excl. VAT)	Expenditure (excl. VAT)	Person Days	Job Opportunities	FTE
Kader Asmal Skills Development Programme (GPX.0000984-F1)	R10 427 817,12	R10 427 817,12	14 995	99	65,2
Kader Asmal Integrated Grant Project (GPX.0000987-F1)	R20 036 008,99	R20 036 008,99	75 541	1 696	328,44
Kader Asmal Integrated Project: MJCP (S20.00104)	R1 126 136,16	R1 125 853,56	5 708	56	24,82
Kader Asmal Integrated Project: Treasury PEP Funding (GPX.0001995-F1)	R14 055 200,00	R14 055 200,00	11 836,5	537	51,46
Other line functions incl. Wards & Subcouncils (reported against EMD EPWP Projects)	R20 172 083,63	R20 134 174,06	48 015,5	1 255	208,75
TOTAL	R65 817 245,90	R65 779 053,73	156 096	3 643	678,67

Table 3: Job Opportunities created on behalf of other line departments.

Line Departments	Planned Budget	Actual Expenditure	Person Days	Job Opportunities	FTE	Comments
Enterprise and Investment	R1 900 000,00	R 1 893 522,48	4 284,5	150	18,63	Job opportunities created on behalf of Enterprise & Investment Department
Housing Development	R3 642 951,81	R 3 396 096,23	6 067	215	26,38	Job opportunities created on behalf of Human Settlements Directorate
TOTAL	R5 542 951,81	R5 289 618,71	10 352	365	45,01	

5. Conservation Services

5.1 Conserved land in Cape Town

Protected and conserved land in Cape Town is now **55 477 ha**, which is **65,27%** of the baseline 2009 BioNet and equates to 22,63% of the municipal area (245 189 ha, Table 4). The Corporate Scorecard Target of 65,25% of the BioNet conserved was achieved.

Table 4 outlines conserved land according to management authority. City managed Nature Reserves expanded by 2 237,92 ha over the past year. Table Mountain National Park (TMNP) was previously reported as an estimated 25 000 ha. TMNP was re-mapped to cadastral boundary and only secure erven are now reported on for Cape Town's conservation estate. A substantial area of land on the Cape Peninsula remains unresolved, without long-term status under the Protected Areas Act or perpetuity Biodiversity Stewardship (contractual law). CapeNature has not yet finalised the offset for the loss (deproclamation) of Driftsands Nature Reserve. Eskom reduced their conservation area to accommodate expansion of the nuclear facility.

Table 4: Conserved land in Cape Town as of 30 June 2024

Management Authority	Area	BioNet*
City of Cape Town	19 928,42 ha	23,45%
SANParks (TMNP)	24 561,39 ha	28,90%
CapeNature	5 926,45 ha	6,97%
Eskom	2 722,14 ha	3,20%
Stewardship (CapeNature & CCT sites)	2 338,61 ha	2,75%
TOTAL	55 477,00 ha	65,27%

5.2 Protected Area Expansion

1) Reserve Proclamation

- Proclamation of Table Bay Nature Reserve concluded.
- MAYCO approval received to proceed with the second round of proclamation of City Reserves.
- MoU with CapeNature for the expansion of existing reserves and MoU for the proclamation of six new reserves drafted, vetted and signed by the City, currently with CapeNature for signature.
- Protected Area Management Agreements (PAMAs) with CapeNature for the six new reserves drafted, vetted and signed by the City. Currently with CapeNature for signature.
- Continued exploring various avenues to resolve the state land challenges.
- Sales Agreement signed for a 9 ha portion of Somerset West Erf 7133 (Schaapenberg Estate) – transfer in process.
- Sales Agreement signed for Macassar Erf 1188 – transfer in process.
- Sales Agreement signed for a 167 ha portion of MA 708 (Cloof Wine Estate) – transfer in process.
- Sales Agreement signed for a 656 ha portion of MA 707, 713 & 754 (Burgherspost Wine Estate) – transfer in process.
- Transfer of Melkboschstrand Erf 633/RE to City's title in December 2023.
- Funding secured for support of public conservation in the form of the Nature Connect: Bluedowns Biodiversity Offset Fund. The funding, administered by Nature Connect, was made available to install

new fencing along the southern boundaries of the Woodlands Conservation Area. The previously dilapidated fence was allowing domestic animals from the neighbours into the Conservation Area, but has now been upgraded to a 1.8 m game fence spanning three of the property boundaries.

2) Reservation of City Land (conserving City-owned land).

Six reservations were submitted and four were approved during the reporting period.

- Reservation *Benefit Transfer* of 125 ha across Atlantis Erf 2756 approved during July creating a buffer between Atlantis residential area and the Klein Dassenberg NR, Papekuil Outspan linking the Klein Dassenberg and Atlantis Dunes section of the Witzands Aquifer Nature Reserve.
- Reservation approved of City land for the expansion of the Uitkamp Wetlands NR spanning 3.97 ha across Durbanville Erven 20194, 4140, 3949, 4151, 10849 & 90/RE.
- Reservation application for Cape Farms 977 and 978 (Soetwater) submitted and approved.
- Reservation application for Erf 3351 Gordons Bay (Steenbras office) submitted and approved.
- Reservation application of City land for the expansion of Steenbras NR spanning 3.5 ha across Gordon's Bay Erven 1686 (2.5 ha) & 3351 (1 ha) submitted.
- Reservation application of City land for the expansion of Wolfgat NR spanning 18 ha across 28079, 1212 and 1215 submitted.

3) Stewardship

- New Smits Valley Nature Reserve MoU and PAMA signed.
- Biodiversity Agreement with Klipheuwel Dairy Farm for the remnants across the Klipheuwel Quarry Site agreed to and in process.
- Funding secured for private conservation support in the form of the Dept. Agriculture: LandCare programme and TMF: Fynbos Forever Programme.
- Ongoing servicing of ---stewardship sites, including:
 - continued with the active restoration programme at **Three Fountains Nature Reserve** by planting out an additional 2 000 *Elegia tectorum* within the wetlands area on the reserve;
 - organising opportunities to work on their own farm as well as the surrounding Stewardship sites within the Schoongezicht cluster for the residents of **Camphill Village Private Nature Reserve**, established in the early 1990s (Figure 11);
 - planting out another 700 *Elegia tectorum* seedlings within the Kleine Stinke River section of the **Atlantic Hills Welbeloond Conservation Area**; and
 - by working with the West Coast District Municipality, LandCare and Conservation Outcomes, an opportunity was created to start alien clearing on the Kalbaskraal Nature Reserve right on the boundary with the City. Conservation Outcomes would support the Verification of the Private Nature Reserve owned by Mr Charles Hamman and the LandCare project would help with critical management interventions such as alien clearing and fencing. This also supports the conservation work of the adjacent Local Authority Nature Reserve still managed by West Coast District Municipality, who is also benefitting from the alien clearing.



Figure 11: New alien clearing team created for Camphill Village

- **Development facilitation**

- ***Metro Southeast Strandveld Conservation Implementation Plan***

The Macassar East Conservation Land Bank has facilitated or is in process of facilitating six City housing developments; resulting in 108,22 ha of the conservation land bank used for biodiversity offsets; and facilitating 7 879 residential opportunities in Khayelitsha and Mfuleni.

Last year the following was achieved:

- Sales agreement for Erf 1188 Macassar reached and transfer in process.
- Reservation of City land in Macassar for conservation purposes in process.
- Assisted Bulk Water with the possible acquisition of Erf 1129 Philippi as part of an offset.

- ***Atlantis Land Bank (Dassenberg Coastal Catchment Partnership, DCCP)***

The proactively secured conservation land bank was fundamental in motivating for the Atlantis Generic EMPr (Environmental Management Programme) which was gazetted on 7 April 2022. This programme has now excluded the “removal of indigenous vegetation” trigger from the listed activities that require Environmental Authorisation within the Atlantis Urban Edge.

In the last year:

BMB continued to proactively undertake valuations to increase the land bank.

- The Search and Rescue team assisted the City’s Bulk Water Department to obtain site clearance for a new Waste-water Retention Pond south of Witzands.
- Assisted Human Settlements Department in ground-truthing wetland patches within the Atlantis Residential Urban Edge that could potentially pose significant constraints to their proposed social housing projects; and submitted a report with our findings for their consideration.

5.2 Flora

Floral finds of the year

Notable species were found at the following new locations:

- Joostenbergskloof Conservation Area: A spring visit in September recorded new populations of *Geissorhiza radians* (Endangered (EN)), *Geissorhiza lewiseae* (Vulnerable (VU)), and *Restio duthiae* (VU).
- Penhill Conservation Area: New population of *Oxalis argyrophylla* was discovered which is a large range-extension for the species. Samples are required to confirm the identification.
- Blaauwberg Nature Reserve: A population of *Steirodiscus speciosus* (Critically Endangered (CR)) was discovered on the Melkbos Corridor. This species is highly threatened and this new location is of conservation significance.
- Rivergate 2 (future part of the Table Bay Nature Reserve Fynbos Corridor): A population of *Geissorhiza radians* (EN) was found in very important Renosterveld habitat.
- Nieuwepost: *Lampranthus coccineus* (CR) was a new addition to the site list.
- Schoogezicht: *Pelargonium chelidonium* (EN) was a new addition to the site list.
- Damarakloof: *Aristea lugens* (EN) was a new addition to the site list.
- Mamre: *Stoebe gomphrenoides* (EN) was a new addition to the site list.
- Schoongezicht: A population of *Stoebe leucocephala* (Least Concern (LC)) was discovered which constitutes the first record for the City of Cape Town. A widespread but seldom recorded species.
- Groot Olifantskop: A population of the poorly known *Ruschia klipbergensis* (Data Deficient (DDT)) was discovered on a rocky outcrop on this private farm.

5.3 Fauna

1) Fauna finds/observations of the year

- The Chairman of the Cape Bird Club, Mr Mike Buckham, discovered a breeding pair of Knysna Warblers (*Bradypterus sylvaticus*) in Newlands Forest in the Table Mountain National Park (Figure 5). This is an incredible discovery as this species was considered to be locally extinct in Cape Town.
- Paddle-winged Lacewing (*Halterona pulchella*) was found on City owned land at Papekuil Outspan (Figure 5). This species has not been seen for several years and it is the first confirmed record of them on City owned land.
- Revisited the only known population of the CR Swartland Silver-spotted Copper (*Trimenia wallengrenii wallengrenii*) population on Burgherspost that was still doing really well with around 50 butterflies in flight during the visit.

2) Fauna management

Table 5: Game register for July 2023 – June 2024

Species	Translocations	Births	Deaths	Total in CCT	Animals on Loan	Animals on CCT Reserves
Hippopotamus (<i>Hippopotamus amphibious</i>)	0	0	0	7	0	7
Bontebok (<i>Damaliscus pygargus pygargus</i>)	0	3	2	0	*13	0
Eland (<i>Taurotragus oryx</i>)	0	2	0	13	0	13
Red Hartebeest (<i>Alcelaphus buselaphus</i>)	0	2	0	**13	0	13
Grey Rhebok (<i>Pelea capreolus</i>)	0	0	0	***3	0	0

* The City Bontebok herd are kept on Kinko Conservation Area near Swellendam that is within the historic range of Bontebok.

** Red Hartebeest are very shy, and difficult to count. Two juveniles were caught on camera traps in this financial year.

***No records since 2018 so this is a rough estimate

- Three hippo have dispersed from the False Bay Nature Reserve Rondevlei Section hippo pod and will have to be translocated to new conservation sites.
- The population numbers of eland and hartebeest are steadily growing at Blaauwberg Nature Reserve. When it is economically viable, a mass capture event will be scheduled to remove the excess stock.
- Milnerton Racecourse Section of Table Bay Nature Reserve is an isolated site that requires continual monitoring and removal of excess animals. BMB successfully removed two grysbok through a drive net capture and translocated the animals to other CapeNature approved conservation sites (Figure 12).
- To address the issues of rapid urbanisation and increased conflict with wildlife, the BMB is developing a new program called 'Living Alongside Wildlife' or WildCT.



Figure 12: City staff assisting with the capture and transport of grysbok at Milnerton Racecourse to other sites.

5.4 Mayoral Priority Programme: Recreational Vleis

1) Water Quality related closures of recreational waterbodies and other reserve waterbodies

The implementation of the Vlei System and Procedure (S&P, Decision making to partially close, close or reopen each of the City's recreational vlei's located within the Protected Areas: Zeekoevlei, Zandvlei and Rietvlei S&P) (approved by the City Manager on 27 March 2023) was not possible due to delays in receiving *E. coli* results from Water & Sanitation: Scientific Services Branch (SSB). The receipt of results up to a month after sampling prevented a meaningful management response. This issue was raised multiple times and a meeting held on 25 June 2024 resulted in more efficient communication around the recreational waterbodies. The only system subject to partial closure during this year has been Zeekoevlei, where the north-western end of the system has been subject to continual poor sampling results exceeding *E. coli* thresholds for intermediate contact recreation (Table 6). Highly polluted flow from the Big Lotus River continues and affects sampling point ZEV2 significantly as per quarterly confirmation to Catchment Stormwater and River Management Branch for corporate scorecard reporting. This situation will likely only resolve once catchment level pollution abatement actions are identified and implemented. This however has the potential to severely impact on the efficiency of the dredging exercise planned.

Table 6: Recreational Restriction imposed during the financial year.

Waterbody	Reason	Date of Closure	Date of Reopening
Zeekoevlei	High <i>E. coli</i> readings exceeding thresholds	21 October 2022 to end of reporting period (30 June 2024) (partial closure around ZEV2)	Undetermined

As a result of various incidences (Table 7), a strategic partnership was established between Department of Fisheries, Forestry and Environment (DFFE), BMB, EMD: Coastal Management Branch (CMB) and SSB to focus on fish die-off causal factor investigations. A WhatsApp group was established for efficient communication and a workshop to train staff in the CCT protocol and what investigations entail took place on 8 May 2024. Various represented organisations and specialists presented and the workshop was extremely well attended (71 attendees) by SANParks, CapeNature, DFFE, BMB, SSB and CMB. We look forward to future collaborations after overwhelming positive responses to the workshop. The Fish Die-off protocol was circulated to BMB for immediate implementation and compliments the Fish Die-off observation sheet. The information contained within this would assist the new investigation task team to mobilize for sampling and analysis.

Table 7: Fish Die-off events noted during year.

Site	Species	Date	Duration	Sampling	Causal Factor
TBNR: Milnerton Lagoon	South African Mullet (<i>Chelon richardsonii</i>)	1/1/24	1 day	Yes -WPC	Ammonia toxicity – various contributing conditions and sewage spill
FBNR: Rondevlei section	Carp / Karp (<i>Cyprinus carpio</i>)	18/1/24	1 day	Yes	Oxygen depletion – low water level and associated algal blooms from eutrophicated condition
FBNR: Zeekoevlei canal mouth	Carp / Karp (<i>Cyprinus carpio</i>)	27/1/24	1 day	No	Oxygen depletion – highly polluted discharge from WWTW

2) Milnerton Lagoon Dredging Project

The Milnerton Lagoon dredging project has progressed into the detailed design phase. Four options for implementing the dredging of Milnerton Lagoon were submitted to the Mayoral Office. Among these, the option to dredge the channel and remove sand with a cyclone was supported. This method allows for 30 000 m³ to be dredged, with the cyclone separating sediment particles based on their size, shape, and density. Water is separated from solids using a siphon that draws water up through the vortex finder at the top. Semi-dry underflow material (sand) is discharged at the bottom of the cyclone and placed back into the lagoon. This method reduces the volumes of material to be dewatered and disposed of offsite to 6 000 m³ (see Figure 13).

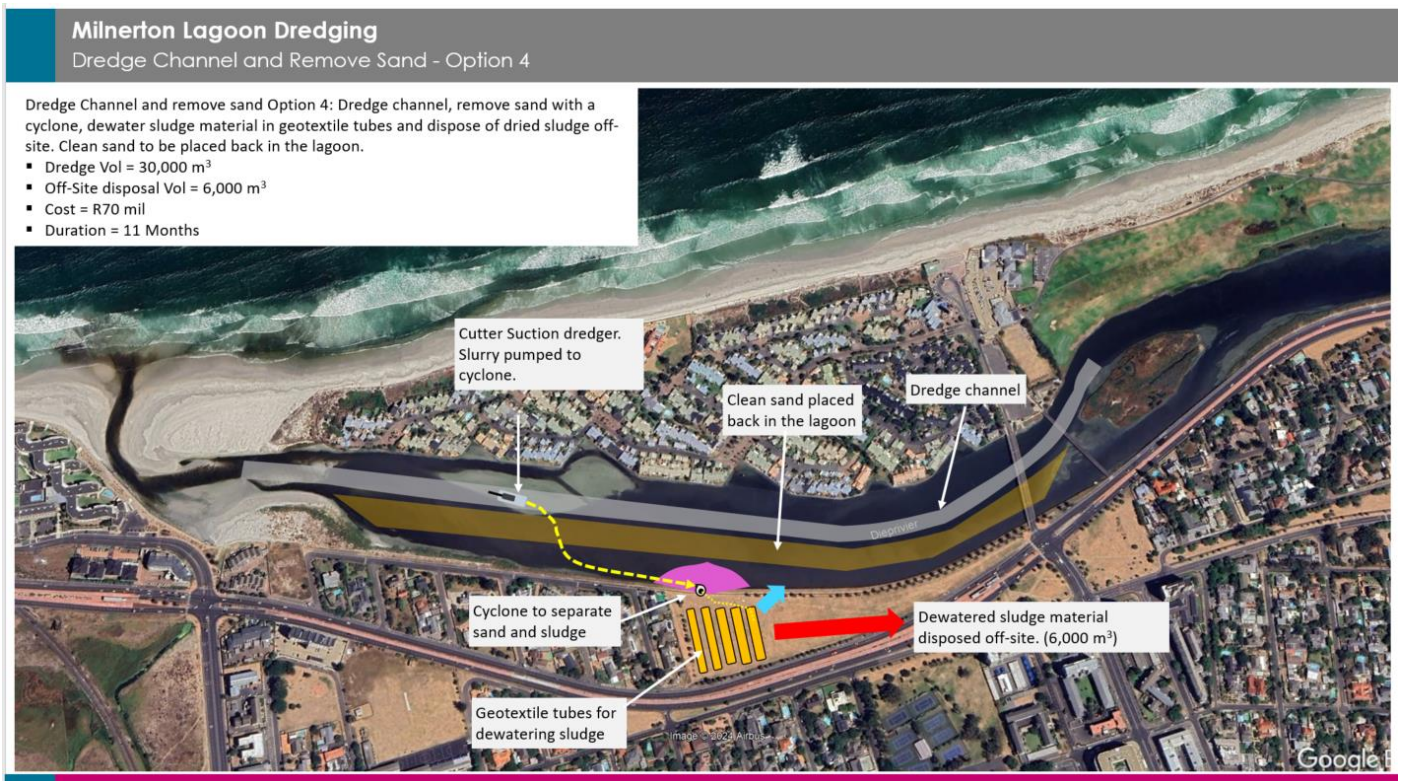


Figure 13: Milnerton Lagoon dredge channel and remove sand option

3) Milnerton Lagoon Aeration Project

The aeration trial at Milnerton Lagoon was initiated in November 2023 to address the persistent sulphur smell caused by low oxygen levels in the water. Aerators were installed to continuously infuse oxygen into the lagoon, running 24 hours a day, seven days a week. To mitigate the impact of load-shedding, a

generator was installed, ensuring a consistent power supply for uninterrupted operation. External independent consultants were appointed to assess the efficacy of the aerators. Their report has been compiled and is currently under review. Based on their findings, a recommendation regarding the continuation of this project will be made.

4) Zeekoevlei Dredging Project

The Zeekoevlei dredging project is currently in the procurement phase, with the detailed design phase now completed (Figure 14). During the 2023/24 financial year, we successfully obtained the Environmental Authorisation and Water Use Licence necessary for the project. The dredging tender was advertised and awarded. It is currently in the appeal period, which will end on 24 July 2024. This phase includes addressing any appeals and finalising the contract to ensure that the project can proceed without legal or procedural obstacles.

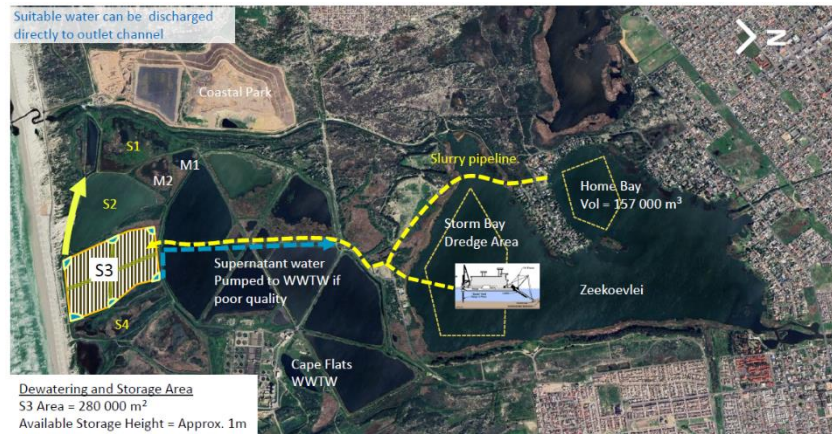


Figure 14: Detailed design of the Zeekoevlei dredging project.

5) Lowering of Zeekoevlei Weir and Fish Ladder Project

The concept designs, concept report, and construction estimates have been successfully completed. This project reached the detailed design phase during the 2023/24 financial year. Additionally, the public participation process for the Environmental Authorisation has commenced, with the closing date for comments set for 26 July 2024.

5.4 Wetlands

1) CCT Wetland Report

As a deliverable for the Ramsar Wetland City status the CCT has commissioned a wetland focused report. This report aims to provide a wealth of information on the wetland systems contained within the City of Cape Town, with a specific focus on seasonal wetlands (Figure 15). It will complement the existing Inland Water Quality reports, as well as the Know Your Coast reports. The Wetland Report aims to create awareness and provide material that will be publicly digestible and accessible. The categorisation and clarification of the significance of our wetland systems is essential to further and ensure the more effective protection of these systems. The appointment of a specialist consultant team has taken place in May 2024, after lengthy discussions around the most appropriate scope of works. The report will be completed by the end of August 2024 and will be presented to a number of forums and stakeholders. A brief information booklet will be circulated publicly and information

contained within this report will form the basis of future projects and focus areas, such as discussions around wetland offset potentials.



Figure 15: Seasonal wetland systems within the CCT that merit additional focus for enhanced protection.

2) Wetland Mapping and Offsets

Updating of the BioNet wetland layer has been the subject of numerous discussions with SANBI and SSB. The adoption of the same terminology used in the National Wetland Map 6 initiative is essential and the discussions are centred around shared information on groundtruthing and existing resources. Further discussions with the Department of Water and Sanitation also touched on wetland offsetting and the potential of wetland land banking. There is a lot of work that still needs to be done on both these initiatives, but the partnerships are established to continue this work collaboratively.

5.5 Restoration

1) Ecological Restoration Planning in City protected areas

In the last financial year, baseline Habitat Condition Assessments were completed for new sections of nine nature reserves. Thirteen days were spent in-field from September to November 2023, and 33 BMB staff were trained or retrained in habitat condition assessments (Figure 16).



Figure 16: Habitat condition assessment at Table Bay Nature Reserve (left) and Ariesfontein Conservation Area (right) in October 2023.

2) Zeekoevlei Eastern Shore rehabilitation project

A total of 530 plants were planted within the rehabilitation footprint to increase species diversity (500 *Haemanthus coccineus* and 30 *Kedrostis nana*). A review of species diversity was undertaken in December 2023 to identify new species for propagation and seeding on site.

3) Zandvlei Promenade Road rehabilitation project

A large-scale planting day was organised and attended by numerous staff members on 13 July 2023. A total of 832 plants were planted (88 *Cyperus textilis*, 712 *Elegia tectorum* and 32 *Aponogeton distachyos*)

and a substantial amount of alien and invasive plant species were removed from the site (Figure 17 and 18). A significant amount of litter was removed from the portion subject to vagrancy and the area subject to windblown litter from the adjacent braai sites. Water quality measurements were taken and species such as Malachite Kingfisher and Clicking Stream Frog were noted on site.



Figure 17: Planting, litter clean-up and alien clearing at Zandvlei Promenade Road wetland, 13 July 2023



Figure 18: Re-introduction of Waterblommetjies (*Aponogeton distachyos*) through mature plants and seed stock.

4) Restoration facility activities summary

- Plant material (cuttings and seeds) collected: **2 020 cuttings** and seeds of more than 50 different species were collected for various restoration projects
- Plants bagged-up: **10 450**
- Seedling trays sown: **85**
- Re-introduced plants and bulbs for various restoration projects: **7 698**
- Plants donated to stewardship and public sites: **1 859**
- Searched and rescued plants mostly from developments sites: **10 705**
- Re-introduced seeds (broadcasting) of 55 different species.

5.6 Ecological Research

1) Blaauwberg Sand Fynbos Restoration Project

The current phase of this large-scale ecological restoration project continues the City and Stellenbosch University collaboration, funded by the Anglo American Nature Positive Grant (2022-2025). This collaboration includes investigations that have the potential to cost-effectively improve ecological restoration outcomes at vegetation community and landscape scales, and to improve the conservation

status of threatened plant species by optimising propagation techniques for species that do not perform well from direct sowing.

2) Research and Project applications

At the end of June 2024, 20 research projects are in progress on City Nature Reserves. An additional 16 research applications are being processed. Over this past financial year, five projects were completed and reports received. However 23 research theses or reports are still outstanding, and thus findings are not yet available to City managers. Some of these are more than two years after the project completion. This issue will need to be taken up with the institutions involved.

6. Invasive Species

6.1 Terrestrial Invasive Plant Management

Approximately 11 649,29 ha (initial = 1 080,46 ha, follow-up = 4 772,92 ha and maintenance = 5 795,91 ha) of invasive plants were cleared in protected and conservation areas.

In addition, 5 292,19 ha (initial = 908,37 ha, follow-up = 2 709,06 ha and maintenance = 1 674,76 ha) of invasive plant species were cleared in public open spaces, road verges, and greenbelts in collaboration with various City line departments (Figure 19, Table 8).

Table 8: Additional hectares (ha) cleared per Line Department in 2023/2024.

Department	Initial (ha)	Follow up (ha)	Maintenance (ha)
Environmental Management (greenbelts & road verges)			165,69
Bulk Services: Bulk Water (Wemmershoek Catchment)	162,16	1 963,02	601,79
Bulk Services: Bulk Water (Other Areas)	9,26	33,73	1,38
Recreation & Parks	437,41	303,98	273,20
Distribution Services: Pump stations	0,13		83,05
Bulk Services: CSRM	33,46		
Housing Development	149,87	395,89	214,19
Enterprise & Investment: Atlantis Special Economic Zone	86,13	12,44	40,00
Facilities Management	20,60	0	88,56
Roads Infrastructure Management	9,35	0	206,90
TOTAL	908,37	2 709,06	1 674,76



Figure 19: Invasive alien plant control in Wemmershoek (before on left and after on right).

6.2 Aquatic Invasive Plant Management

A total of 15 catchment systems (rivers, wetlands, etc.) were cleared of invasive aquatic plant species during the financial year. Initial hectares of 59,30 ha, and 398,04 ha of follow-up, were cleared (Figure 20, Table 9).

Table 9: Hectares (ha) cleared per aquatic catchment in 2023/2024.

Rivers Cleared	Initial ha	Multiple follow-up ha
Big Lotus River	3.50	8.97
Black River	20.58	56.36
Bokmakierie River	1.50	
Bokramspruit River	4.48	123.54
Helderberg Nature Reserve (Pond)	0.20	
Kuils River		21.58
Liesbeek River	5.30	33.80
Mosselbank River	1.10	3.80
Princessvlei		95.28
Salt River	10.98	10.98
Silverstream Canal		3.17
Soet River		24.90
Vygekraal River	5.95	15.66
Westlake River	4.83	
Zeekoevlei	0.90	
TOTAL	59.30	398.04



Figure 20: Invasive control in the Black River (before on left and after on right).

6.3 Biocontrol

A total of 10 218 biological control agents and 57 cladodes (plant material) containing fungi (*Dactylopius ceylonicus* or cochineal) were released during this financial year (Table 10).

Table 10: The biological control agents released during this reporting period for control of invasive plants.

Biocontrol Release Sites	Target Species	Agent	Number released
Grassy Park - CCT Open space	<i>Opuntia monochantha</i>	<i>Dactylopius ceylonicus</i>	12 cladodes
Fisherman's Walk, Grassy Park - Road verge	<i>Opuntia monochantha</i>	<i>Dactylopius ceylonicus</i>	3 cladodes
Baviaanskloof Road, Hout Bay - Road verge	<i>Opuntia monochantha</i>	<i>Dactylopius ceylonicus</i>	3 cladodes
Ave Cordelia, Hout Bay - Road verge	<i>Opuntia monochantha</i>	<i>Dactylopius ceylonicus</i>	9 cladodes
FBNR - Rondevlei island	Water Hyacinth	<i>Megamelus scutellaris</i>	3464
Westlake River	Water Lettuce	<i>Neohydronomus affinis</i>	455
Wilde Voel Vlei Estate - river	Water Lettuce	<i>Neohydronomus affinis</i>	964
Welbeloond Road	Parrot's Feather	<i>Lysathia sp.</i>	205
Wilde Voel Vlei Estate	Water Lettuce	<i>Neohydronomus affinis</i>	580
Chamberlain Street, Glen Lily	<i>Opuntia monochantha</i>	<i>Dactylopius ceylonicus</i>	15 cladodes
Black River	Water Hyacinth	<i>Megamelus scutellaris</i>	1700
Silver Hurst, Constantia	Parrot's Feather	<i>Lysathia sp.</i>	200
Alphen Drive, Constantia	<i>Opuntia monochantha</i>	<i>Dactylopius ceylonicus</i>	10 cladodes
Glencairn	<i>Opuntia monochantha</i>	<i>Dactylopius Ceylonicus</i>	5 cladodes
Macassar	Parrot's Feather	<i>Lysathia sp.</i>	150
Black River	Water Hyacinth	<i>Megamelus scutellaris</i>	1500
Black River	Water Hyacinth	<i>Megamelus scutellaris</i>	1000

6.4 Invasive Animal Management

1) House Crows

During spot operations, a total of 7 621 crows were observed. These numbers could both include multiple sightings of the same bird. The trapping method continued to be unsuccessful this year with no crows trapped. A total of 81 House Crow carcasses were collected for the year. Increase in number of carcasses collected can be attributed to the use of laced bait which commenced again during the last quarter of the reporting financial year after approval of a Corvicide permit. Table 11 provides a breakdown of House Crow surveys across the City.

NB: Estimated population size is based on the average roost counts.

Table 11: Invasive House Crow census and count of individuals captured in 2023/2024

Reporting Period	Number Spotted (during baiting)	Roost count	Number Baited	Number Collected	Number Removed
				(carcasses)	(Trapped)
July 2023 – September 2023	710	829	129	0	
October 2023 – December 2023	1 322	137	161	0	
January 2024 – March 2024	1 699	895	238		
April 2024 – June 2024	869	632		81	
Total for 2023/24	4 600	2 493	528	81	

2) Mallard Ducks

The Mallard Duck project's priority for this financial year was to focus on monitoring the population of this species across the City. Control operations were to be done only if these ducks were found inside the protected areas. During the Mallard Duck counts, a total of 44 mallards were counted from public open spaces (Table 12).

Table 12: Waterbodies surveyed for invasive Mallard Ducks.

Location	Numbers Counted
Sunrise Villas, Muizenberg, Vygeboom dam & Coastal Park Landfill Site	39
Strandfontein Birding Area & Silverhurst Constantia	5
Total Number Counted	44

3) Guttural Toads

The project was conducted in 225 properties in the Constantia area during the year. A total of 1 380 toads were removed (Table 13).

Table 13: Number of Guttural Toads captured per sex versus number of properties visited in 2023/2024.

Reporting Period	Numbers Captured			# Properties visited
	Male	Female	Juvenile	
July 2023 – September 2023	24	5	6	6
October 2023 – December 2023	195	332	88	111
January 2024 – March 2024	114	398	216	108
April 2024 – June 2024	0	0	0	0
Total	333	735	310	225

4) Polyphagous Shot Hole Borer (PSHB)

The PSHB continued to spread in the City of Cape Town. PSHB has been confirmed in Somerset West Region, Penhill (confirmed in February 2024) and a number of Southern Suburbs (Newlands, Rondebosch, Kenilworth, Mowbray, Rosebank, Wynberg, Observatory and Alphen in Constantia (confirmed in April 2024)). At this point, there is still no effective means to control or treat beetle infestations within a tree. Chemical control is also not legal at this stage as no insecticides or fungicides have been registered for urban trees. However, several scientific research projects/programmes are being conducted globally to find effective ways to control the beetle and the fungi it carries. The current best practice strategy is to reduce beetle numbers by physically removing infested highly susceptible reproductive host and highly infested reproductive host trees (van Rooyen et al., 2021, de Wit et al., 2022). Approximately 217 PSHB reports were received and 194 surveys were conducted. A total of 963 infected trees were detected and 938 of those trees were successfully removed.

In addition, several PSHB training workshops were conducted as part of PSHB management strategy. These workshops were aimed at providing training to small businesses, landowners and our conservation partners on how to identify PSHB infected trees and provided protocols on how to safely manage PSHB infected biomass. By the end of the financial year 649 people were trained. These included general members of the public, contractors and business owners, staff from other conservation agencies, and City officials.

6.5 Early Detection and Rapid Response

The Early Detection and Rapid Response Programme (EDRR) targets 16 [listed invader species](#) for control across the City. The priority for this project is to detect, identify and control these target species in order to prevent them from expanding and invading large areas (Table 14).

Table 14: Number of verified sightings of EDRR removed during 2023/2024

Reporting Period	# of sightings controlled
July 2023 – September 2023	
October 2023 – December 2023	23
January 2024 – March 2024	29
April 2024 – June 2024	63
Total for 2023/24	115

7. Fire

7.1 Wildfire



Figure 21: Staff at wildfire in Slangetjebos, False Bay Nature Reserve

In the past year 47 wildfires burnt approximately 227 ha on nature reserves in the City. The most significant wildfires took place at WANR: Dassenberg Section, Tygerberg Nature Reserve, Table Bay Nature Reserve, Haasendal Conservation Area and Steenbras Nature Reserve (Figure 21 and 22).



Figure 22: Wildfire at Steenbras Nature Reserve

7.2 Ecological Burns

Eight successful ecological burns were conducted during the past year (76,78 ha), at Witzands Aquifer Nature Reserve, Blaauwberg Nature Reserve, Bothasig Fynbos Nature Reserve, Milnerton Racecourse Section of Table Bay Nature Reserve, and False Bay Nature Reserve (Table 15). A planned fuel reduction burn was successfully conducted at the Strandfontein Sewage Works in preparation for receiving sludge from the dredging of Zeekoevlei.

Table 15: Dates of ecological burns and area burnt

	Reserve	Date	Ha burnt
1	Blaauwberg NR	14/02/2024	12,00
2	Blaauwberg NR	19/02/2024	11,00
3.	Witzands Aquifer NR: Prashanti Hill, Klein Dassenberg sections	27/02/2024	3,17
4.	Witzands Aquifer NR: Prashanti Hill, Klein Dassenberg sections	06/03/2024	9,60
5.	Bothasig Fynbos NR	26/03/2024	4,61
6.	Table Bay NR: Milnerton Racecourse	03/04/2024	3,10
7.	False Bay NR: Van Blommestein Park	04/04/2024	1,70
8.	False Bay NR: Strandfontein birding areas S3	17/04/2024	31,60
	Total		76,68

Strategic coordination of the Fauna Observations Team at ecological control burns involved six burns this financial year. Data captured are being digitized and used to interpret these events from a faunal survival and survival strategy perspective. The focus is on vertebrate fauna (excluding highly mobile bird species that were merely noted as additional) (Figure 23 and 24).

Species diversity of observed vertebrate fauna (excl. birds):

Sites:	Year	Species tally:
Helderberg NR	2022	15
Ariesfontein NR	2022	11
FBNR: Van Blommestein Park	2024	11
Botterblom NR	2022	8
Haasendal NR	2022	8
TBNR: Parklands Fynbos Corridor	2022	7
FBNR: Strandfontein S3	2024	7
Bothasig NR	2024	6
TBNR: Milnerton Racecourse	2024	6
Steenbras NR	2022	5
Blaauwberg NR	2023	5
Klein Dassenberg: Prishantj Hill	2024	5



Figure 23: Species diversity observed at all fires since fauna observations commenced.



Figure 24: Bothasig Fynbos NR ecological control burn showing fauna observation team member in action.

7.3 Brush Pile Burning

No brush pile burning was conducted during the past year.

8. Nature Reserves

8.1 Business Framework for the Nature Reserves

The Danish University of Technology assigned a team of Executive Masters of Business Administration candidates to undertake a consultancy project to develop a business planning framework for the Branch using Tygerberg Nature Reserve as a case.

8.2 Monitoring Framework and Plans

A "straw dog" monitoring plan was compiled for each of the Protected Areas as part of the PAMP planning process. Work to develop subject-specific monitoring plans and related standard methods continues, the capacity to conduct this monitoring is a key constraint guiding methodologies.

8.3 METT Assessments

All the proclaimed nature reserves and three new sites (Haasendal Conservation Area, Symphony Way Conservation Area, and Westlake Conservation Area) were evaluated using the South African Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT-SAv3). All score data and intervention reports were uploaded onto the DFFE METTs Webtool by the end of February 2024. The data presented in Table 16 below shows the current scores for 2023/2024 compared to scores from the METT-SAv3 assessment in the previous assessments periods. Vesuvius Way Conservation Area (VWCA) was assessed as part of Wolfgat Nature Reserve as this site will be proclaimed as a section of this protected area, and called the Strandfontein Aquifer Section of Wolfgat Nature Reserve.

All the nature reserves evaluated fall within the score range of 'Sound' management (scores between 33 to 66%), and scores indicate a general trend of improvement towards Best Practice (>66%). Correct reporting and documentation of management activities remain an area of improvement required as scoring relies on adequate portfolios of evidence, and in general was the reason for the drop in scores for some nature reserves. The three most improved nature reserves were Westlake Conservation Area that improved by 8% since last assessed in 2018; Wolfgat Nature Reserve improved by 4%; and Uitkamp Wetlands Nature Reserve by 4%. The next assessment process is due in 2025/2026. Six of the 19 nature reserves assessed were 55% and over, and Steenbras Nature Reserve scored 59%, resulting in falling short of the LBSAP target for 2024 of "at least one reserve scores above 60%".

Table 16: METT-SAv3 evaluation scores for the CCT Nature Reserves for the period 2023/2024 assessment compared to the previous assessment scores from 2018/2019, 2019/2020, and 2021/2022.

Nature Reserve	2018/2019 scores	2019/2020 scores	2021/2022 scores	2023/2024 scores
Blaauwberg NR	54%	55%	59%	56%
Bothasig Fynbos NR	51%	49%	54%	52%
Botterblom NR	42%	44%	50%	52%
Bracken NR	44%	48%	48%	51%
Durbanville NR	49%	49%	52%	53%
Edith Stephens NR	42%	47%	48%	45%
False Bay NR and Ramsar site	45%	49%	54%	51%
Harmony Flats NR	42%	44%	45%	46%
Helderberg NR	55%	58%	57%	56%
Steenbras NR	47%	48%	58%	59%
Table Bay NR	46%	49%	51%	46%
Tygerberg NR	59%	54%	58%	57%
Uitkamp Wetlands NR	40%	43%	45%	49%
Witzands Aquifer NR	49%	49%	57%	55%
Wolfgat NR incl. VWCA	53%	52%	54%	58%
Zandvlei NR	41%	45%	52%	51%
Haasendal CA	<i>Not assessed</i>	<i>Not assessed</i>	<i>Not assessed</i>	39%
Symphony Way CA	<i>Not assessed</i>	<i>Not assessed</i>	<i>Not assessed</i>	33%
Westlake CA	39%	<i>Not assessed</i>	<i>Not assessed</i>	47%
AVERAGE	45%	48%	53%	50%

8.4 Reserve Awards (November 2025)

The reserve, which over the last year, has excelled in:

- Conservation, restoration and veld management
- Invasive species and fire management
- Infrastructure management
- Staff – working as a team, health and safety aspects, following Council policies
- People and Conservation aspects
- Achieved despite external threats and pressures
- Showcases the City and supports the objectives of the City

Reserve of the Year

Runner up: Harmony Flats Nature Reserve

Winner: Symphony Way Nature Reserve

9. Urban Baboon Programme

9.1 Cape Peninsula Troops covered by the Urban Baboon Programme

The Urban Baboon Programme (UBP) is run by the City's service provider, NCC Environmental Services. The troops overall spent an average of 93,2% of time out of the urban area this year. The Slangkop, Waterfall and Constantia Troop 1 troops did not average 90% of time out of town this year (Figure 25).

Preliminary data show that the Peninsula population has increased from last year in the both the north (23) and the south (6). This is more than double the number of baboons in 2006 (245). The 2023/2024 annual count can be found [here](#).

The Cape Peninsula Baboon Management Joint Task Team (CPBMJTT) signed the Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) in July 2023 and approved the Cape Peninsula Baboon Strategic Management Plan (CPBSMP) in September 2023. A series of seven community meetings were held in June 2024. City staff are involved in the CPBMJTT, a partnership that, although slow to act, is working. Time at present is being spent on the various legal challenges and looking for arrangements towards January 2025, when the current Urban Baboon programmes tender expires.

For more information regarding the Urban Baboon Programme including reports from the City's service provider (NCC), please visit the [City's website](#).



Figure 25: Baboon on a sign - Cape Point Photo: Cliff and Suretha Dorse

9.2 Gordon's Bay Baboons

The management of baboons in the Steenbras Nature Reserve and surrounding area is ongoing. The monitoring of the three troops, as well as the two splinter troops will continue. There have been problems with one of the splinter troops spending a large amount of time in Gordon's Bay.

10. People and Conservation

10.1 Environmental Education, Awareness and Events

This year environmental education activities in the BMB reached 22 986 learners from 155 schools (and an additional 1 342 teachers and 11 296 adults) resulting in 35 906 person days of education (Figure 26). This means that 35 624 individuals were involved in formal education events, exhibitions, informal or awareness activities on and off reserve by BMB staff. This included the work undertaken on the reserves by partners with the City. The number of person days of education, learners, teachers, and total people, all increased from last year, including an increase in the number of schools.



Figure 26: Environmental Education programme at Wolfgat Nature Reserve: Strandfontein Aquifer section

10.2 Media

In the past financial year, there were 47 media releases from the City of Cape Town focusing on Biodiversity Management Branch matters; in the same period there were more than 12 media articles, radio interviews, and media queries. This is certainly an underestimate due to the difficulty in tracking all media mentions and articles, including social media. Please see Annexure B for details. All media releases can be seen on the City of Cape Town [website](#).

10.3 Protected Area Advisory Committees

The establishment of Protected Area Advisory Committees is provided for in the Protected Areas Act, and the role of these PAACs is primarily intended to give advice, and to facilitate interaction, communication,

engagement and the development of partnerships with stakeholders, surrounding communities and organizations with a real interest in nature reserves, to promote the set management plan objectives of the nature reserves. PAACs serve a three year term, and this term came to an end at the end of June 2024. From April to June 2024 the City and BMB undertook the process of revising and renewing Advisory Committee memberships for the following nature reserves:

- Blaauwberg
- Bracken (including Perdekop and Haasendal)
- Durbanville (including Uitkamp Wetland, Botterblom and Joostenbergskloof)
- Edith Stephens
- False Bay (including Rondevlei, Zeekoevlei, Pelican Park, Slangetjebos, Zandwolf and Strandfontein Birding Area)
- Helderberg (including Silverboomkloof, Harmony Flats and Morkel's Cottage)
- Steenbras
- Table Bay (including Rietvlei, Diep River, Milnerton Racecourse and Zoarvlei)
- Tygerberg (including Bothasig Fynbos and Ariesfontein)
- Witzands Aquifer (including Klein Dassenberg Hills)
- Wolfgat (including Strandfontein Aquifer and Macassar Dunes)
- Zandvlei (including Muizenberg East)

10.4 Visitors and revenue

The City's nature reserves received 598 315 visitors recorded mostly through its manned access points and events (the majority of reserves are open access so this figure is an under estimate). Through paid gates and events an income of R13,8 M was received (over collected on revenue by 204% of planned) (Figure 27, Table 17 and 18).

Table 17: Visitor numbers and revenue from 2017 to 2024

Entry gate	2018/19	2019/20
2017	343 490	R1 900 000
2018	410 000	R1 910 000
2019	378 193	R3 500 000
2020	319 519	R3 500 000
2021	340 265	R5 867 000
2022	394 062	R7 772 000
2023	631 432	R9 578 592
2024	598 315	R13 767 118

Table 18: Visitor numbers for individual reserves

Entry gate	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/2024
Helderberg	57 603	44 367	186 248	85 199	62 862	174 752
Tygerberg	31 791	17 094	34 195	41 762	43 847	29 450
Zeekoevlei	103 192	108 526	59 440	40 482	219 991	167 821
Witzands Aquifer	7 138	25 159	42 029	94 162	137 344	121 086



Figure 27: Commercial filming at the dunes, Witzands Aquifer Nature Reserve

10.5 Volunteers and Sponsored Programmes

1) Sponsored Programmes

Sponsored² programmes resulted in 83 individuals (made up of external sponsored staff members, learnerships and interns) and 3 741 person days of work in the BMB (approximate value is R6 M).

2) Volunteer programmes

Nature Connect is assisting with the administration, by drawing up volunteer contracts and assisting with placements. The volunteers resulted in 440 individuals and 1 341 person days on the reserves (valuing approximately R1 M).

A community volunteer project was successfully initiated at Helderberg Nature Reserve to address the ongoing trail maintenance of the network of trails within the reserve. Community volunteers were trained in trail maintenance techniques and in collaboration with the Friends of Helderberg, equipment was purchased to support the project. The trail maintenance team are extremely enthusiastic and effective, and have also started to assist at Steenbras Nature Reserve and the neighbouring Hottentots Holland Nature Reserve.

10.6 Skills Development

The training of EPWP, interns, learnerships, and formal skills development programmes is critically important. Of the 15 vacancies in the BMB, three were filled by EPWP/skills development candidates and six career advancements were from those who were previously EPWP/ skills development.

1) Kader Asmal

This programme has been ongoing for six years, with Phase 1 implemented between 1 July 2018 and 30 June 2021, and Phase 2 implemented from 1 July 2021 and ending on 30 June 2024. Since its inception, a total 233 participants have benefited from this programme with a total of 136 exiting the programme into mainstream/long-term employment opportunities or to further their studies and/or venturing into

² Sponsored programmes include individuals that undertake work for BMB and their salaries/stipends are paid for by external partner organisations.

entrepreneurship. During the last year, 49 training interventions (out-sourced and in-house) were successfully implemented.

The skills development programme focuses on developing candidates in the middle management (auxiliary conservation officer), technical (auxiliary quality controller), administrative and clerk support, and awareness and communication (people and conservation officers) fields of the environmental sector.

In particular, the Kader Asmal EPWP Work Integrated Learning (WIL) programme in the City for 2023/24 was a success, with BMB facilitating the placement of 15 students. The 2023 cohort included seven students from Centurion Academy and eight students from the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT). The performance of the students was exemplary, with a 100% pass rate achieved. The lowest average mark for the five subjects combined was 57% for the CCT students. Notably, CCT produced two of the top three students, highlighting the effectiveness of the programme and the dedication of the mentors and staff. The new students started in January 2024.

2) Carbon Smart Skills Development Programme

In the last financial year, the Carbon Smart Skills Development Programme was initiated and aims to employ 30 women between 18-55 years old at the Carbon-Smart Training Academy in Maitland. This programme is fully supported and funded through the City's EPWP department, and designed to upskill individuals across four different positions over three years, thereby ensuring a systematic approach to development and growth.

3) Other skills/internship programmes

Those shown in Table 19 are run by partner organisations.

Table 19: Breakdown of skills development programmes.

Programme	Number of participants	Host Site
Nature Conservation Learnership 2023-24	9	3 – Wolfgat NR, 2 – Blaauwberg NR, 1 – Zoarvlei: Table Bay NR, 1 – False Bay NR, 1 – Steenbras NR, and 1 – Witzands Aquifer NR
Nature Conservation Learnership (only started 28 June 2024)	4	3 – Steenbras NR, 1 – Helderberg NR
Groen Sebenza Internship	3	2 - Table Bay NR (1 - Zoarvlei, 1 – Milnerton Racecourse), 1 – Zandvlei NR (Muizenberg East Cluster)
River Wardens (7 May 2024 – 30 June 2024)	27	4 - Table Bay NR, 15 - False Bay NR, 8 - Zandvlei NR
Totals	43	

11. Staff and Visitor Safety, and Security

11.1 General Security

Visitor and staff safety, combined with protected area integrity, is the biggest financial cost for the BMB, and was over R40 M for the 2023/24 financial year.

The security budget is spent on:

- 1) **Regular security/static guards** – Safety and Security, Facilities Management tender is transversally used for the deployment of static guards at a number of nature reserves for access control.
- 2) **Integrity “rangers”** – as per BMB’s Visitor and Staff Safety Tender, undertake patrols along fences; assist with environmental crime and visitor safety; and provide first response to emergencies including all types of crime, fire, and pollution events.
- 3) **Cash collection services** – reserves with paying entrances use cash collection services.

There is a close collaboration between the Marine and Environmental Law Enforcement Unit and BMB staff.

The following were proactive measures were undertaken in 2025:

- Process underway to train reserve staff as Peace Officers to share the compliance and enforcement function.
- Regular Environmental Law Enforcement operations, joint operations and inspections at nature reserves.
- The EMD’s tender/contract makes provision for surveillance to be conducted via drones. This has been of great help in areas where unlawful land occupation occurs. Statistics and drone images provided shows the extent of unlawful land occupation, which includes not only the extent in terms of area invaded but also a count of structures on sites. This information is critical for planning purposes and used in legal proceedings as evidence. The City’s Safety and Security Directorate is also making sue of drones for a number of their operations.
- Regular Environmental Law Enforcement task team meetings to integrate and guide environmental law enforcement:
 - Include area law enforcement
 - Introduction to the nature reserves
 - Introduction to the by-laws
 - Identify priorities for action.

11.2 Illegal land invasion

The City’s nature reserves have not been exempted from the unlawful land occupation and this remains one of the biggest challenges (Table 2). BMB has established excellent working relationships with anti-land invasion, law enforcement and other City departments working with the land invasion issues. BMB secures protected areas by means of contracted security in addition to permanent staff. Participation in briefings hosted by Safety and Security ensures BMB is recognised and protected areas are prioritised by the Anti Land Invasion Unit and Metro Police.

Monitoring and surveillance of Unlawful Land Occupation sites continued (Table 20):

1) Rivergate:

Various City departments are involved in this matter, each with their own items to action. This includes Environmental Management, Informal Settlements, Legal Services, Safety and Security as well as Social Development. The City is also in the process of appointing a new senior advocate in this matter.

2) Slangetjebos:

The City consulted their external legal team on developments in Slangetjebos ULO and received advice on the launching of the eviction application. This advice is currently being considered and will be discussed with senior management in order to agree on a way forward.

3) Wolfgat:

Urgent interdict obtained to prevent unlawful occupation and expansion within Wolfgat Nature Reserve during the previous report period. The matter was opposed by the respondents and hearing was set for 4 June 2024 and interdict was granted.

4) Macassar:

An attempted land grab took place on 19 April 2024 at approximately 19:00. All relevant services were activated, and responded. An emergency interdict issued on the 20th April 2024 and no structures were erected.

5) Other:

Legal request form to be submitted for a temporary settlement / vagrant issue at Zandvlei Nature Reserve which occurred during COVID. With inspection it was noted that the number of vagrants have increased. The Displaced People's Unit need to assess and determine whether this is a vagrancy issue and if they can attend to this matter or whether the unlawful land occupation route is to be followed in terms of eviction.

The illegal occupants of structures at Blaauwberg Nature Reserve is part of a protracted court proceedings.

Table 20: Unlawful land occupation on City Nature Reserves or land reserved for BMB

	Site	Number of Structures	Date of invasion	Where process is
Adjacent to Table Bay Nature Reserve	Rivergate Erf 79 and Erf 38295	Erf 79 Rivergate: Total 310 as at 13 June 2024 Erf: 38295 Rivergate: Total 147 as at 13 June 2024	July 2020	Court proceedings ongoing
False Bay Nature Reserve	Slangetjebos	Erf 1 Slangetjebos: Total 1263 as at 7 June 2024 Erf 93284 Slangetjebos: Total 248 as at 7 June 2024	2018	
Wolfgat Nature Reserve	Wolfgat	1	August 2022	Emergency interdict in place Court proceedings ongoing

12. Administration

12.1 Budget

- 85% (R63 970 212) of the Capex budget (R75 583 471) was spent, with further commitments of R1 076 000 rolled over.
- 93% spend on the Controllable Operational Budget.
- 96% spend on Repairs & Maintenance controllable expenditure.
- 94% spend on the MPP Operational budget.
- 100% spend on Kader Asmal grant funding.
- 100% spend on all ward allocation budgets.
- Received additional operational budget via adjustment budget for 2023/2024. SMF budget requests approved for offsets, MPP, and Living Alongside Wildlife Programme.
- Revenue 204% of planned amount even with SAMRAS (point of sale) being closed on and off during the period (Total revenue raised is R13 767 118).
- PPM reporting 100% each month.
- Total budget for EMD EPWP was R49 M sourced mainly as a grant from the City's EPWP office; additional funds from other line functions, subcouncils and wards for invasive species clearing was R19.5 M, of which R10 M was spent on EMD priorities.
- Allocated and spent just over R3 M from LandCare for last financial year and continued with R475 000 for three-year TMF programme (small incentive projects for landowners ending in September 2025).

12.2 Key Capital Investment Projects

The nature reserves have a capital investment programme to upgrade and develop the visitor facilities and offices. The projects in planning phase during the financial year include:

- Harmony Flats Nature Reserve complex
- Zandvlei Nature Reserve multipurpose centre
- Edith Stephens Nature Reserve office complex and education centre
- Westlake Conservation Centre office complex

Ongoing fencing of the Nature Reserves and the delivery of two weed harvesters were critical capital projects. The tender for redevelopment of a Visitor Centre and Administrative complex at Bracken Nature Reserve was awarded and the site was handed over at the end of October 2023. The project is scheduled to be completed in 20 months' time. The design of the facility has been awarded a 5 star green award from the Building Council of South Africa and is the first certified net zero building within the organisation (Figure 28).

The City's contracts were the subject of various extortion processes and some of BMB's contracts (such as various fencing projects) were severely affected with a result of underspending and delay in service delivery.



Figure 28: The upgrading of office / education centre at Bracken Nature Reserve

12.1 Staff

Staff Recognition Awards (November 2023)

Biodiversity Find of the year

Flora find of the year:

Jacques van der Merwe

Wine Cups (*Geissorhiza radians*): This is one of the most classic of the Cape bulb flora. They are Endangered and there are very few colonies in the City of Cape Town. The discovery of a healthy population of these at the only Swartland Shale Renosterveld in the Parklands Fynbos Corridor was extremely surprising and a great find. Jacques van der Merwe found the population but I would also like to recognise Christopher Singo for this find.

Fauna finds of the year:

1) Akho-Amava Myataza

Spesbona - aka Ceres Streamjack (*Spesbona angusta*) Helderberg NR – the Odonata world was shocked to discover the diminutive Spesbona at and near the Duck Pond at the HNR. It is a highly enigmatic damselfly that is confined to a small area around Ceres and is classified as Endangered. This is the first record for the CCT and this population constitutes a significant range extension for “one of South Africa's rarest Damselflies” (Dragonfly Biotic Index – Samways and Simaika 2016) Akho-Amava Myataza & Hayley Wittridge – for great habitat management (the Spesbona needs very high water quality).

2) Lewine Walters

West Coast Flightless Dung Beetle (*Pachysoma aesculapius*) Zandwolf Wolfgat NR. Globally vulnerable species, last seen in the area 140 years ago according to iNaturalist beetle experts! It is also the only iNaturalist record for the CCT. Lewine Walters – for spotting the critter.

3) Cliff Dorse

Swartland Silver-spotted Copper (*Trimenia wallengrenii wallengrenii*) discovered on the Dassenberg hills above Mamre. This species was endemic to the hills between Darling and Mamre and was last observed during the late 1990s and subsequently presumed to have gone extinct. Several surveys had failed to locate the species until City staff discovered a population in late November 2022.

Special Award

This year this award focused on vegetation restoration

Joint Runner ups

Tshepo Mamabolo

Christopher Singo

Winner

Abraham Saaiman

Best Teams

Joint Runner ups

Helderberg Nature Reserve Staff (Figure 29)

Skills Development Programme Team (Mashudu Phalanndwa, Mfundo Tafeni, Eleanor Hutchings, Sandiso Kraai)

Winner

Work Capacity Test team

The following staff are the “core” team that are most often involved in the WCT process:-

Owen Wittridge – Administrator of all the WCT's

Celeste Bergman – Admin support, liaison between staff of all the WCT's

Penny Glanville, Lewine Walters, Elana Kellerman, Simonne Sables – Timekeepers – dependent on availability

Hayley Wittridge – Pacesetter

Dylan Mentor – Sweep vehicle

Outstanding Staff Member

Runner-up

Andrew Arries

Winner

Sakhile Luhani



Figure 29: Staff at Helderberg Nature Reserve

13. Annexures

Annexure A: Nature reserves each illustrating at least one major highlight and one major challenge from 2023/2024

Name of nature reserve	Highlight(s)	Challenge(s)	Management response to challenge
Nature Conservation Unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appointment of both Regional Heads completes the realignment of the operational leadership team within the Nature Conservation Unit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The threats and ongoing illegal land invasion of protected areas are negatively impacting the City's Nature Reserves. Security of staff and infrastructure is negatively impacting morale and financial resourcing within the Unit Navigating and understanding the bureaucracy of the organisation which hampers the effective delivery of services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing legal processes and watchfulness to prevent additional invasions. Motivation for additional People and Conservation officers
NORTH REGION			
Blaauwberg Nature Reserve (BBNR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two planned ecological burns for the reserve achieved an 86% burn rate of the planned areas. The Anglo-American funded research into Cape Flats Sand Fynbos restoration continued. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The lack of access to alternative accommodation for the relocation of illegal occupants from the condemned structures at the Blaauwberg's Valley Farm homestead is holding up the launch of the Court application for an eviction order. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing legal process
Table Bay Nature Reserve (TBNR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The arrival of the new weed harvester machine, Otter, occurred in May 2024. This was the culmination of several years of planning and will greatly assist in efforts to control pondweed which affects recreational use of the Rietvlei water body. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The catchment area of the greater Table Bay Nature Reserve remained a receptor of extensive polluted water from various sources including: huge volumes of sub-standard treated effluent discharged from Potsdam Wastewater Treatment Works, untreated sewerage from failing sewer conveyance infrastructure, wastewater/solid waste from informal settlements; unauthorised industrial discharges, fuel spills and run-off and silt from agricultural/mining areas, etc. The result of all these inputs are especially evident at the Milnerton Lagoon where a lot of these waste elements settle. Any form of life and biodiversity, in the lagoon, has disappeared due to the inability for aquatic life to tolerate these toxic waters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with Water and Sanitation to address pollution issues Continue to engage in the MPP programme for Inland Water and Sanitation as well as mitigation measures such as the dredging of the Milnerton Lagoon mouth.
Witzands Aquifer Nature Reserve (WANR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revenue and visitor numbers have increased exponentially, proving both the popularity of the nature reserve and the recreational opportunities it offers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The rapid and ongoing growth of commercial activities (including sandboarding, off-roading and quad biking) necessitated the Witzands Aquifer Nature Reserve to initiate a process to determine the number of commercial activities that can be 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Process to manage and support use of the reserve underway through the establishment of a code of conduct and limiting visitor numbers. Commercial tender might need to be initiated

		sustainably accommodated in the nature reserve. Associated with this investigation is the identification of the procedures needed to formalise and manage commercial access to the nature reserve as well as how to accommodate requests received from interested parties for start-up companies.	
Bracken Nature Reserve (BNR), Haasendal Conservation Area (HCA) and Joostenbergskloof Conservation Area (JKCA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work began on the construction of the new Bracken environmental education and visitor centre. The older heritage buildings at the site were protected as work began on this project. • A new fence was erected at the Perdekop Section, which has helped to alleviate some of the security concerns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No secure fencing at Haasendal to protect the reserve from poaching, dumping and fire. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fencing and security to be investigated
Durbanville Nature Reserve (DNR), Uitkamp Wetland Nature Reserve (UWNR) and Botterblom Nature Reserve (BSNR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plant cuttings and seeds had been collected before the wildfire which swept through Uitkamp; allowing this material to be used in restoration after the fire. • A visit and clean up by neighbouring residents of Uitkamp Wetland Nature Reserve provided a good opportunity to build relations with neighbouring residents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ecological burn permit for Durbanville was issued on 18 April; too late to implement the burn due to the onset of early rain. • The malfunction of the Durbanville NR intercom resulted in a reduction in recorded visitor numbers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with air pollution to resolve – meeting set up in July 2024. • Repair of the intercom system.
Tygerberg Nature Reserve (TNR), Bothasig Fynbos Nature Reserve (BFNR) and Van Schoorsdrift Conservation Area (VSCA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new giant "Photo Frame" was erected on top of Tygerberg Hill. • The presence of qualified Peace Officer staff at Tygerberg Nature Reserve has helped to address some of the compliance issues which have plagued the reserve in the past. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The lack of a full staff at the Van Schoorsdrift and Ariesfontein Nature Reserves has limited management effectiveness. • Load shedding has resulted in no water being available which has led to the closure of the Tygerberg Nature Reserve on several occasions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Posts to be put on the staffing strategy
South REGION			
Helderberg Nature Reserve (HNR) and Silberboomkloof	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helderberg Nature Reserve received a replacement bakkie after a long two year wait. The 4X4 double cab is a far more capable vehicle for the reserve's requirements. • A fencing upgrade has begun at Helderberg Nature Reserve. Sections of internal fencing as well as a section on Hillcrest Road are in the process of being replaced. This forms part of a Capital project allocation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Polyphagous Shothole Borer Infestation has crept into the indigenous forest sections of the Helderberg Nature Reserve. This presents new challenges to the management of this infestation. The loss of so many trees in the lower section of the reserve has already had a number of impacts. • The lack of sufficient full time People and Conservation staff at Helderberg Nature Reserve remains a concern. The gap is currently being filled by intern positions which is not sustainable as the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The reserve and Invasive Species Unit continue to work on the circumstances presented.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The conversion of the old environmental centre into a fully functioning administration office for BMB staff has begun. The removal of the asbestos roof and replacement of new roofing, was the largest of the tasks to be completed. Other improvements included addressing the network requirements for the building and the installation of a kitchen facility. Repairs on the upper sections of the management track to Leopards Loop were achieved through the Green Jobs programme. Restoration of the artificial ponds which facilitate water flow through the lower sections of the reserve has also begun. The siltation of these ponds after the 2022 fire has affected winter water flow and flooding of the lower parts of the reserve is presenting challenges and placing infrastructure at risk. 	<p>contract positions are not long term. This along with the infrastructure repairs pending at the HEC, is making service delivery in the Environmental Awareness and Social Development front difficult to achieve.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SMF application for P&C post. Major repairs on the management tracks and trails due to severe weather conditions and major erosion. Continue with restoration of artificial ponds to facilitate water flow through the reserve.
Harmony Flats Nature Reserve (HFNR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 22 EPWP staff have been gainfully employed on the various reserves in the area. The expansion of the <i>Protea scolymocephala</i> population on both Harmony Flats Nature Reserve and Morkel's Cottage Conservation Area is an indicator that there is an overall improvement of the habitat condition on these protected areas. The expansion of the population has been facilitated by BMB staff who ensure that when seed becomes naturally available it is not lost to site by the wind but rather collected and scattered up wind of already existing plants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The lack of sufficient full time People and Conservation Officers for the Helderberg Area Nature Reserve remains a concern to assist with the needs at Harmony Flats Nature Reserve and MCCA. The removal of Security Services from Morkel's Cottage Conservation Area since August 2023 has resulted in considerable impacts and setbacks. The inability to access tenders and the navigation of tedious procurement processes is impacting the ability to get priority projects complete. Urgent repairs and maintenance to the building is impacting service delivery and present public liability risks are not being addressed timeously. A number of Capital projects assigned to the reserves are also at risk. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SMF budget application for Helderberg NR. Decision by Senior Managers to be made regarding site integrity and needs TCP unit assist on Supply Chain Management and Tender access.
Steenbras Nature Reserve (SNR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A team of EPWP staff has been appointed which consists of 1 Clerk, 1 Team Leader and 7 Workers. Nature Connect Learners completed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Several landslides occurred during a storm event on 24 September 2023 along the R44 Clarence Drive coastal section of the reserve, causing large sections to be inaccessible by vehicle. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding for additional Quemic IT team required. Management of Baboon – collars and virtual fence.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The contractor appointed through the Green Jobs Unit to undertake repairs and maintenance along the Steenbras River Gorge completed the work during the reporting period. The School Street office first phase of its maintenance is nearing completion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Although beneficial, one Quemic Integrity Team is not able to effectively serve the entire nature reserve. Ideally a second/third team needs to be appointed. There are many incidents which are missed, and evidence of these is only found after the fact. There have been several break-ins at the Kogel Bay Depot, all of the valuable items from the BMB buildings have been removed, however, the perpetrators are still gaining access into the Recreation and Parks Storeroom and have stolen gas bottles, copper wire and any items of metal they can find. A splinter baboon troop is visiting the Gordon's Bay residential area almost daily. A plan of action is being implemented to remove this troop. Large scale plant poaching, especially <i>Berzelia</i> species and Buchu, is on the increase in the Basin/Kogel Bay area. This is for the export (overseas) market. An operational plan will be developed to prevent further incidents. 	
Wolfgat Nature Reserve (WNR), Macassar Dunes Section (MDS), Macassar East Section (MES) and Strandfontien Aquifer Section (SAS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Filling of posts for Macassar East Fencing completed along Swartklip Road, Baden Powell Drive, Eastern Fence line (near Hugenhout Primary School) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Illegal structure's occupants (Khoisan Grouping) make it difficult for projects to proceed e.g. (fencing/firebreak maintenance). Poachers using dogs, illegal harvesting of flora afterhours. Dumping and fencing theft Need additional funds to complete Eastern Fence line. Current allocation is only for a portion of the fence line. Funds needed for Vesuvius Way and Macassar Dunes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Court interdict granted, and the next step is the eviction application. Additional funds to complete funds
Edith Stephens Nature Reserve (ESNR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design diagrams for new buildings completed public participation during December 2023. Klaas's Cuckoos were recorded at ESNR for the first time, very successful amphibian counts with many Western Leopard Toad recorded. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Area manager resigned 	<p>Asieff Khan appointed as Biodiversity Area Coordinator for Edith Stephens and Symphony Way.</p>

False Bay Nature Reserve (FBNR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pelican Park 2 Biodiversity Offset was approved and will be managed by False Bay Nature Reserve. • Improving water quality at Zeekoevlei. • Increasing visitors, especially birders, to the Reserve. • Hippos at Rondevlei has drawn many visitors to the Reserve. • Unveiling of the expanded picnic area. • Strandfontein S3 fuel reduction burn and planned ecological burn at Van Blommestein Park. • Construction of the electric fence at Rondevlei 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heavy rains and inundation of certain sections of the Reserve hampered progress with field operations • Uncontrolled wildfires and land invasion at Slangetjebos Section. • Inadequate fencing to secure hippos in Strandfontein Section. • Frequent hippo activity making it difficult to control water hyacinth and litter at the Italian Road Canal. • Not having a permanent mechanical plant operator. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slangetjebos Eviction application. • Hippo management.
Westlake Conservation Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New biocrete gatehouse structure delivered. • Fence line replacement (Clearview) along Steenberg Road and bottom of Ou Kaapse Weg boundaries by contractor. • New bird species record for site: Sombre Greenbul. • Gate repairs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several incidences of minor theft on site. • New gatehouse experiencing several structural issues e.g. peeling paint, wall and floor cracks. • Water supply issues - top borehole pump stopped functioning (May 2024) and several municipal water supply outages affected operations. • Capex funds needed for UPSs for gate motor and network box. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain funds for UPSs
Zandvlei Nature Reserve (ZNR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A school holiday EE programme was run in collaboration with the Zandvlei Trust. • R1,5 M fencing project under way. • Weedharvester - Cape Shoveler was delivered and launched at ZNR. • Small Plant/ Vehicle replacements of motorbike and quad bike 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four grysbok mortalities (three caused by trains). • Gabion project hardened certain banks in the lower section of the narrows. • Sewage spills were disruptive. Major spill at Zandvlei mouth led to deaths of 40 Giant snake eel juveniles. • Subsistence poaching reports increased. • Cape Shoveler weedharvester had teething problems and was not actively clearing over the summer season as modifications led to downtime. Vessel is difficult to operate in the wind. 	Repairs and Maintenance funding for Weedharvester required.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wildfire in Westlake Wetlands.• Cases of arson in Westlake Wetlands, a few small fires were extinguished.	
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Annexure B: Media releases, articles and queries

MEDIA RELEASES	DATE	ARTICLES/RADIO/MEDIA QUERIES	DATE
Capetonians, help us name the weed harvesters for Zandvlei and Rietvlei	03 July 2023	Radio Interview Capetalk - Hippos (Cllr Lansdowne)	03 October 2023
Signing of agreement sets foundation for more sustainable baboon programme on the Cape Peninsula	07 July 2023	CONTACT article: "Five 'green' stars for Bracken reserve redesign"	October/November issue
For the love of fynbos on Mandela Day	11 July 2023	CONTACT article: "Giving our fynbos a helping hand"	Oct/Nov issue
For the love of fynbos on Mandela Day	18 July 2023	CONTACT article: "Toads now safe and sound underground"	October/November issue
Bracken Nature Reserve Visitor Education Centre design gets a 5-star Green Star rating	21 July 2023	Radio Interview 788 - Nature Reserves in CT (Julia Wood)	31 October 2023
Travel tunnels for the toads at City's Zeekoevlei Nature Reserve	02 August 2023	Rapport article: "Blou baaie van Blouberg tot Melkbos"	04 February 2024
The Cape Shoveler and Otter are coming for the wetland weeds	10 August 2023	Netwerk 24 media query - Snare Awareness	14 February 2024
Update on sustainable baboon programme for the Cape Peninsula	04 September 2023	District Mail media query - World Environment Day City celebrates 56 Kader Asmal graduates	05 June 2024
Free entry to City's nature reserves this Heritage Weekend	21 September 2023	Northern News media query - Bracken Nature Reserve multipurpose centre	11 June 2024
Task-team releases proposals for baboon-proof fencing on Cape Peninsula	26 September 2023	False Bay Echo media query - Animal By-law	28 May 2024
Steenbras Nature Reserve, Gorge hike closed until further notice	27 September 2023	Radio Interview Helderberg FM - City Nature Challenge	26 April 2024
Zandvlei estuarine management plan available for public comment	01 October 2023	Radio interview Radio Cape Pulpit - hippos at Rondevlei (Julia Wood)	01 May 2024
Steenbras River Gorge, Crystal Pools hiking trail, closed for this hiking season	06 October 2023		
Table Bay Nature Reserve Rietvlei section bird hide temporarily closed	06 October 2023		
City Nature Reserves growing	29 October 2023		
Blaauwberg Nature Reserve's coastline flies Green Coast flag again	01 November 2023		
River Wardens ushering a brighter, greener and safer future for the City	03 November 2023		
Residents reminded to comment on Zandvlei estuarine management plan	12 November 2023		
Residents invited to City's nature reserves next weekend to participate in Bioblitz	19 November 2023		
Beetle pest training for businesses handling trees and plant material, and residents	21 November 2023		
Visitors encouraged to come enjoy expanded picnic area at Rondevlei	04 December 2023		
Cape Shoveler now patrolling Zandvlei	05 December 2023		
City celebrates passionate environmental volunteers	11 December 2023		
Knysna Warbler, known for its beautiful call, rediscovered on the Cape Peninsula	20 December 2023		
Tygerberg Nature Reserve temporarily closed	29 January 2024		
The City's Tygerberg Nature Reserve is open to visitors	02 February 2024		
City shines light on Rondevlei this World Wetlands Day	02 February 2024		
City of Cape Town and Cape Leopard Trust aim to curb snares	11 February 2024		
Clearing alien invasive plants saves up to 16,1 billion litres of water each year	12 February 2024		

City offers free Polyphagous Shot Hole Borer beetle (PSHB) pest training in Parow, Strand, Masiphumelele	15 February 2024		
Borer beetle pest sighted in Penhill, Eerste River	26 March 2024		
Comment on environmental impact of proposed Strandfontein coastal node development	09 April 2024		
Budget prioritises cleaner vleis, improved beach facilities, resilient coastline and reserves	10 April 2024		
City's Carbon Smart Skills Development programme empowers women	17 April 2024		
An opportunity to contribute as a citizen scientist in the City Nature Challenge	18 April 2024		
Borer beetle pest sighted in Alphen, Constantia	19 April 2024		
False Bay Nature Reserve boasts a legendary hippo population, one of which is to be relocated	24 April 2024		
Participate in the City Nature Challenge and get your photos seen worldwide	25 April 2024		
Joint Task Team (CPBMJTT) to engage baboon-affected communities about transitioning period, sustainable solutions	26 April 2024		
Specialised weed harvester, the Otter, now patrolling Rietvlei	10 May 2024		
Reminder to apply for membership of City nature reserve advisory committees	12 May 2024		
City offers free Polyphagous Shot Hole Borer beetle (PSHB) pest training in Durbanville area	14 May 2024		
City offers free Polyphagous Shot Hole Borer beetle (PSHB) pest training in Constantia	30 May 2024		
World Environment Day: City celebrates 56 Kader Asmal graduates	05 June 2024		
Joint Task Team to meet with baboon-affected communities as from next week	06 June 2024		
Residents can look forward to a beautiful multi-purpose centre at Bracken Nature Reserve	10 June 2024		
City proposes modification of weirs at Zeekoevlei and Rondevlei to improve water quality	26 June 2024		