

# WITZANDS AQUIFER NATURE RESERVE

## VEGETATION

### Fynbos

Fynbos is the main indigenous (local) vegetation type found in our city and the Cape region. The word fynbos is Dutch for 'fine-leaved plant'.

Fynbos is a unique kind of vegetation that makes up 80% of the UNESCO-honoured Cape Floristic Region, two-thirds of which are found only in the Cape. With more than 7 000 plant species, it is also the richest ecosystem in the Cape Floristic Region. The other relatively extensive vegetation types are renosterveld and strandveld, contributing over 2 000 plant species. Among its 19 vegetation types, Cape Town has six that are endemic. These are confined to the city and only possible to conserve within City boundaries.

### Cape Flats Dune Strandveld

This vegetation type is confined to Cape Town, but shares affinities with coastal thicket vegetation to the east and succulent karoo to the north. Cape Flats Dune Strandveld occurs on flat to slightly undulating dune field landscapes. The soils are alkaline sands derived from Tertiary to recent calcareous sand of marine origin. Outcrops of limestone occur, particularly along the False Bay coastline. Strandveld has few endemic species compared to Fynbos.

### Sand Fynbos

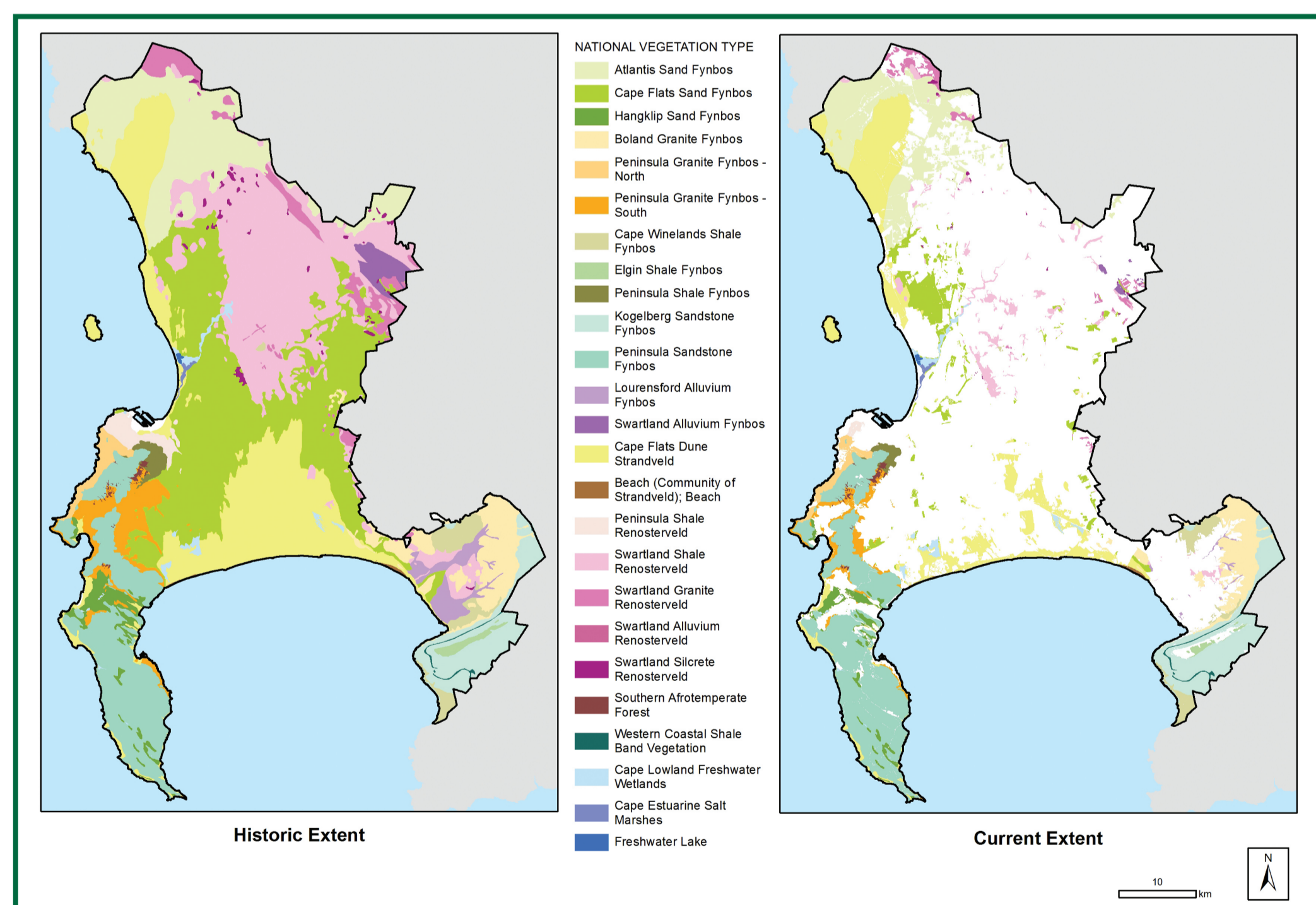
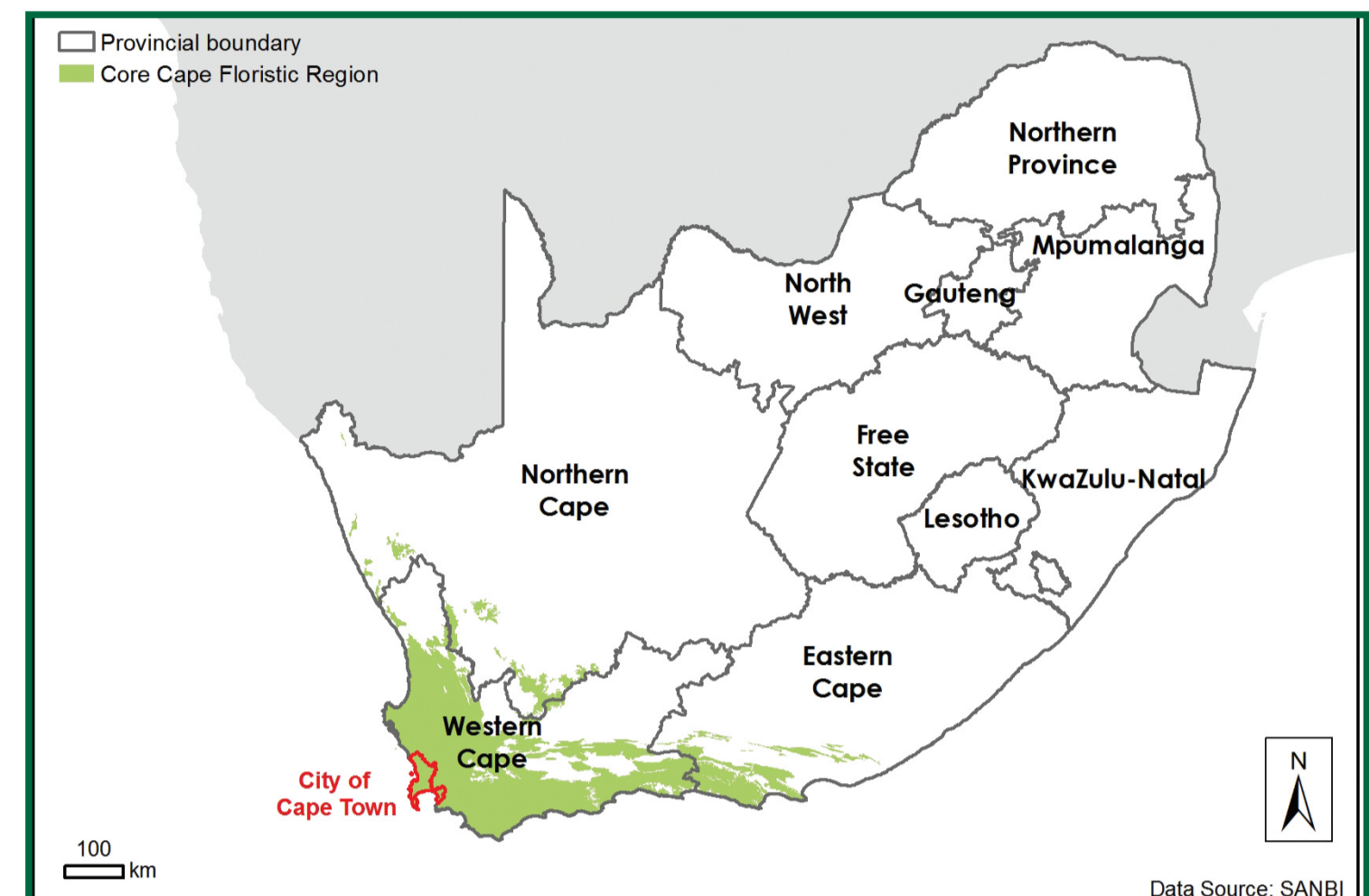
Cape Town has three types: Cape Flats Sand Fynbos, which is endemic to Cape Town; Hangklip Sand Fynbos, which occurs on the Peninsula as well as east of False Bay; and Atlantis Sand Fynbos, which extends north of Cape Town. Sand Fynbos occurs on moderately undulating and flat plains on leached, acidic to neutral Tertiary sand. All three Sand Fynbos types are species-rich and harbour a number of endemic plant species: for example *Erica margaritacea* in Cape Flats Sand Fynbos and *Leucospermum parile* in Atlantis Sand Fynbos.

### Conserving our fynbos

The loss of natural areas as well as invasion by alien plants are the main threats to our fynbos. There are many ways for you to help protect our natural environment and its ecosystems.

### Here are some suggestions:

- Volunteer at one of our nature reserves to assist with controlling invasive species and restoring the veld.
- Maintain biodiversity in your garden by composting, avoiding pesticides, planting indigenous plants, and using fencing that lets small animals move between gardens.
- Engage with local government to support proper planning of urban areas to prevent urban sprawl.
- Reduce, reuse and recycle your waste so we can have cleaner and greener natural areas.
- Reduce your carbon footprint and use less of the earth's resources by driving less and conserving water, electricity and fossil fuels.
- If you know your birds or plants, record and monitor threatened and rare species and help groups like Custodians of Rare and Endangered Wildflowers (CREW) map areas that need conservation.



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