

WITZANDS AQUIFER NATURE RESERVE

LANDSCAPE

The Witzands Aquifer Nature Reserve is situated in the Western Cape, 45 km from Cape Town's Central Business District. The nature reserve covering over 3000 hectares consists of two vegetation types being Cape Flats Dune Strandveld (endangered) and Atlantis Sand Fynbos (critically endangered). Generally, both these vegetation types are poorly conserved. The nature reserve is largely dominated by smaller mammals, many of which are nocturnal and inconspicuous.

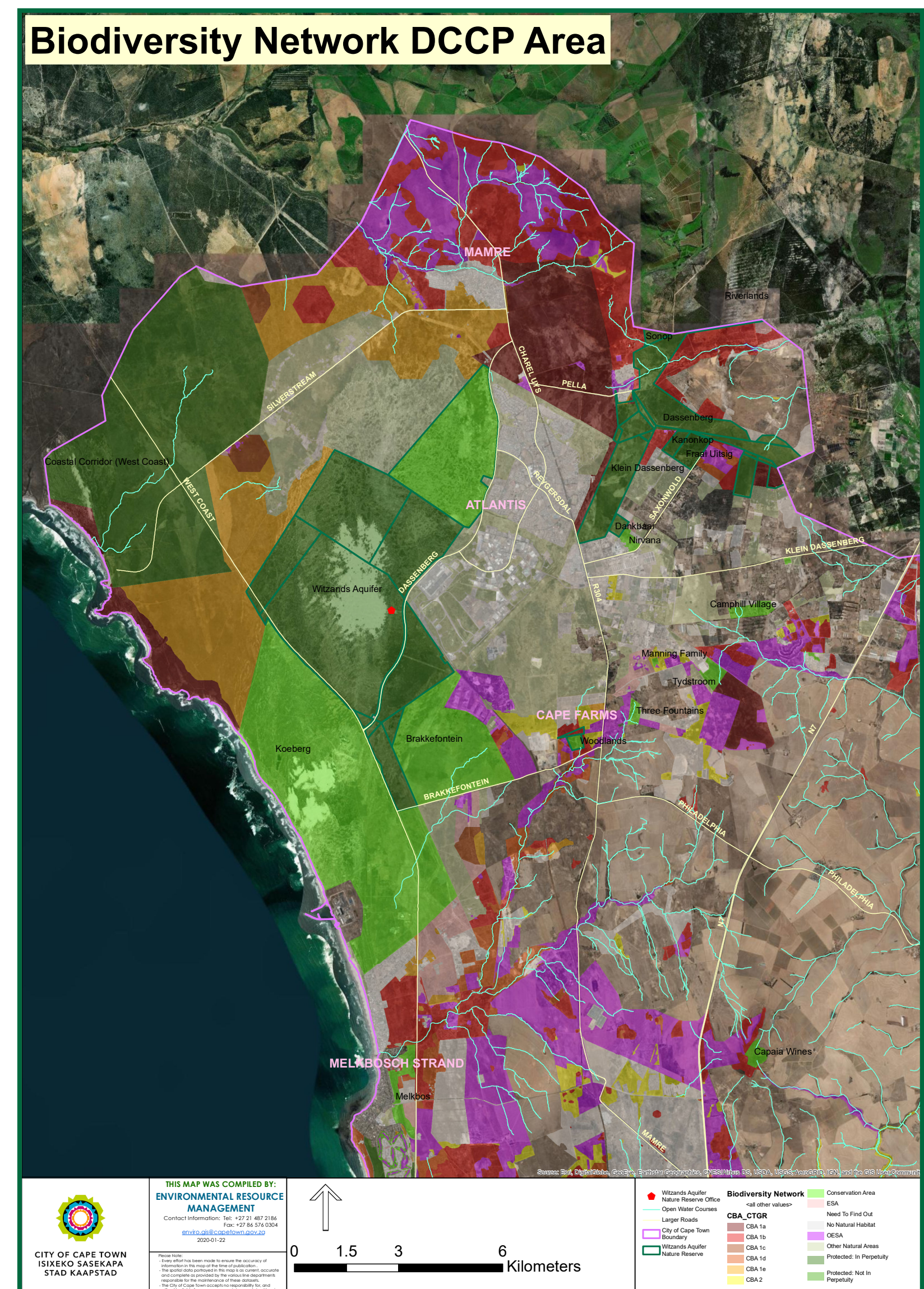
Underground is a natural aquifer, from which water is extracted and converted into drinkable water for the surrounding communities of Atlantis, Mamre and Pella. Atlantis, with a significant residential population and many industries, requires a steady freshwater supply. This is met by the area's natural coastal aquifer, recharged urban storm water runoff and treated wastewater. Pond 7, Witzands Aquifer Nature Reserve's largest man-made water body, is a recharge pond managed by the City of Cape Town Atlantis Water Scheme. The scheme works closely with Biodiversity Management staff in the area to protect and enhance the unique biodiversity found here.

The non-vegetated mobile dunes and rocky outcrops are two outstanding features of the nature reserve. The mobile dunes cover an area of approximately 440 hectares. Witzands Aquifer Nature Reserve is part of the southern core of the Cape West Coast Biosphere Reserve which is unique in terms of its diverse landscape, fauna and flora.

The Dassenberg Coastal Catchment Partnership

An important part of the Biodiversity Network (BioNet) is to create a viable ecological link between the Dassenberg Hills and the coast. The Dassenberg Coastal Catchment Partnership (DCCP) spans approximately 34 500 ha as a landscape-scale conservation initiative and multiple stakeholder partnership. The area is unique for its unmatched levels of threatened biodiversity, water security, climate change adaptation corridors, natural and cultural heritage, and associated socio-economic opportunities. Landownership within this area is a melting pot of State (national, provincial and local authority), private and communal.

Mechanisms to protect and manage the land includes a range of different Biodiversity Stewardship Agreements with the private and communal landowners, the conservation of State-owned land, land acquisition and development offsets as part of the Environmental Authorisation process.



Acknowledgements:
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