



CITY OF CAPE TOWN
ISIXEKO SASEKAPA
STAD KAAPSTAD



**THE CAPE PENINSULA
BABOON MANAGEMENT
JOINT TASK TEAM
AND
BABOON STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT PLAN**

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

March 2024

1. Who is the CPBMJTT?

The Cape Peninsula Baboon Management Joint Task Team (CPBMJTT) comprises representatives from the three spheres of government, namely SANParks (National Government), CapeNature (Western Cape Provincial Government), and the City of Cape Town (local government).

2. Who chairs the CPBMJTT?

The chair rotates annually; currently SANParks chairs the task team.

3. What does the CPBMJTT do?

The CPBMJTT has been tasked by Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, Barbara Creecy, to develop and implement a Baboon Strategic Management Plan for the sustainable management of the Chacma Baboon population in the Cape Peninsula.

4. Who serves on the CPBMJTT?

The CPBMJTT members have been nominated by their respective authorities to serve on the CPBMJTT. These are officials delegated by their authorities to oversee the implementation of the transitioning period and effective implementation of the Baboon Strategic Management Plan in cooperation with communities and stakeholders.

The CPBMJTT members do not act as individuals. These officials represent the authorities, and are collectively responsible for the implementation of the BSMP in accordance with the respective mandates, roles and responsibilities of the represented authorities.

5. What is the Cape Peninsula Baboon Strategic Management Plan (CPBSMP)?

A strategy introducing a new and refreshed sustainable approach to baboon management based on adaptive management principles.

The three authorities are tasked with leading and supporting the implementation of the plan in accordance with their respective mandates and responsibilities, and in collaboration with communities and businesses located near baboons' natural habitat and with the support from various stakeholders.

6. Did affected communities and interested and affected parties have the opportunity to contribute to the drafting of this plan?

Yes. The plan is the result of the collective effort of the CPBMJTT and is informed by, amongst others, research, international best practice, operational experience and expertise, including input from stakeholders at Minister Barbara Creecy's roundtable event at Kirstenbosch on 7 June 2022 and community engagements undertaken by the City of Cape Town in August and September 2022.

The draft Baboon Strategic Management Plan was presented to the public for comment in January 2023; a stakeholder engagement meeting was hosted in Tokai in March 2023; and the CPBMJTT received and considered 800 individual comments emanating from the public participation process. All these contributions informed the approved Cape Peninsula Baboon Strategic Management Plan that was made public on 21 December 2023. Public comments are available as an annexure to the BSMP published on the websites of all three authorities.

7. When was the Cape Peninsula Baboon Strategic Management Plan adopted and publicly released?

On 21 December 2023.

8. Where can I get this plan?

The Cape Peninsula Baboon Strategic Management Plan and the comments from the public participation process are available here:

- SANParks – <https://bit.ly/3sb9mQJ>
- CapeNature – <https://bit.ly/47c1mOd>
- City of Cape Town – <https://bit.ly/3Qj2j1L> and <https://bit.ly/3tw3j9l>

9. What is going to happen next, now that the plan is adopted and public?

The Cape Peninsula Baboon Strategic Management Plan must now be operationalised with specific local interventions to address the unique and potentially varying needs and circumstances and geographic contexts of baboon affected communities to ensure that implementation actions are suited and appropriate to these respective areas, and solutions are owned by residents.

The CPBMJTT is finalising the programme for engagements with baboon-affected communities to identify and collaborate on area-specific interventions suited to that community.

Affected communities are encouraged to read the Cape Peninsula Baboon Strategic Management Plan, as well as the baboon-proof fencing summary report that was published on 26 September 2023; and to also propose strategies, actions and interventions from their perspectives for further discussion.

10. When will the CPBMJTT meet with communities in baboon-affected areas?

The CPBMJTT intends to meet with communities in baboon-affected areas by mid-2024 if all goes as planned.

11. What is the Baboon Advisory Group (BAG)?

The BAG will advise the CPBMJTT on achieving the outcomes of the CPBSMP and support its implementation, while ensuring feedback between constituencies and the CPBMJTT. The BAG will consist of representatives from baboon-affected communities, experts, scientists and researchers in the field of primatology, representatives from relevant non-government organisations and advocacy groups, representatives from business impacted by and adjacent to baboons' natural habitat, and animal welfare organisations such as the National and/or Cape of Good Hope SPCA.

The BAG is not a decision making body.

12. When will the BAG be constituted?

The call for nominations for the BAG will be made at upcoming community meetings and engagements with other stakeholders such as the National and Cape of Good Hope SPCA, the SA Navy, and others, with the aim of constituting the BAG by mid-2024.

13. What is expected from communities and other stakeholders at the upcoming meetings?

The CPBMJTT encourages communities in areas adjacent to baboons' natural habitat to peruse the Cape Peninsula Baboon Strategic Management Plan that was made public on 21 December 2023, as well as the draft Fencing Report that was published in September 2023.

We have also made available the presentation that was discussed at the online public briefing on Monday, 18 March 2024, as well as the recording of the meeting to assist and guide communities.

The intention is to collaborate with residents about area-specific solutions suitable to each community's unique circumstances. Communities are encouraged to also propose strategies, actions and interventions for discussion. We are looking forward to these engagements that will take place soon.

14. What will happen with the NCC baboon rangers after 31 December 2024?

The contract with NCC Environmental Services who manage the Urban Baboon Programme will not be funded by the City after 31 December 2024.

The intention of the BSMP is that a range of solutions are implemented by all the stakeholders involved, according to their mandates and available resources, to ensure a sustainable and wild baboon population live in natural landscapes on the Cape Peninsula.

15. Will there be baboon monitors as from 1 January 2025?

The State will not fund baboon monitors as from 1 January 2025.

Communities living close to baboons' natural habitat and/or affected by baboons may fund and appoint an authorised service provider to monitor baboons and respond to incidents.

The CPBJTT will not prescribe to communities, but will collaborate with communities on finding solutions best suitable to their unique circumstances and available resources.

16. Who will fund baboon monitors as from 1 January 2025?

The funding model for baboon monitors still needs to be determined.

The State will not fund monitors after 31 December 2024. The identification of and collaboration on funding models and mechanisms will take place during community engagements intended to identify community-based solutions. Communities are encouraged to initiate discussions about funding solutions for baboon monitors before the engagements with the CPBMJTT.

17. How will communities fund solutions?

This still needs to be determined in consultation with communities.

We advise residents to prepare for the upcoming meetings, and to also propose solutions.

The CPBMJTT will advise communities as far as possible, but in the end it is up to communities to decide which solutions are needed in their areas, and how these could/should be funded in addition to those solutions that will be funded by the three authorities, amongst which fences and animal-proof bins.

18. Why can the State not fund solutions, seeing that there are now three authorities who can contribute?

The three authorities are funding solutions in terms of their respective mandates, roles and responsibilities.

It is also important to understand that although there are now three authorities involved, it does not mean there is more budget available. The intention is to transition to a sustainable model with the best return on investment.

All three authorities allocate their budgets according to priorities; there are competing demands; budget constraints; and supply chain management processes. State spending is governed in terms of the Public Finance Management Act and Municipal Finance Management Act and requires from the State to spend money prudently and wisely.

19. What is the plan, come 1 January 2025?

The way forward will be determined in collaboration with affected communities, stakeholders, and interested and affected parties in coming months.

The sustainable management of the Chacma baboon population is a shared responsibility between the three authorities – SANParks, CapeNature, City of Cape Town, as well as the affected communities.

No single one solution is the answer, be it baboon monitors or fences, but a combination of all possible tools including waste management and resident education, must be implemented/used as needed, and where appropriate, to ensure sustainable management and to keep baboons out of the urban areas and in the natural environment.

Efforts to ensure a sustainable baboon population be it through contraception, translocations, and other scientific wildlife tools, must be implemented as well.

20. Who and what constitutes a community? Who should get involved? And why?

All residents who are residing within areas that are frequented and impacted by baboons are encouraged to get involved in the conversation.

The CPBMJTT cannot force residents to get involved, however, it would be in the affected community's best interest to organise themselves and to discuss possible solutions and funding mechanisms in preparing for the upcoming meetings with the CPBMJTT as the solutions will have an impact on all residing in these communities.

The more organised a community, and the more united residents are in supporting proposed solutions, the sooner these can be tried, tested, and implemented.

21. What is the current baboon population of the Cape Peninsula?

The baboon population north of Plateau Road has increased by 88% from 245 individuals in 2006 to 461 in 2024.

Thus, the population of all troops on the Cape Peninsula (including Plateau Road and Cape Point troops) currently consists of nearly 600 (about 590) individuals.

Excluding CT2 (20 baboons) which are north of Constantia Nek; there are about 570 baboons south of Constantia Nek.

A previous estimate of ecological and management capacity of the baboons South of Constantia Nek was between 450 to 566 (Gaynor 2000, Hoffman & O'Riain 2012).

22. Why has the baboon population grown on the Cape Peninsula?

The natural habitat of the baboons on the Cape Peninsula has historically been low-lying fynbos areas. The fynbos ecosystem is a nutrient-poor system and provides a limited amount of food sources for larger mammals such as baboons.

With urban and residential development, baboons' natural areas became limited to the upper areas of the mountainous Cape Peninsula, effectively reducing their natural habitat but also providing them with access to human food sources such as vegetable gardens, fruit trees, food in residential areas and waste food.

These relatively energy-rich food sources in urban areas allowed baboons to survive and reproduce at a greater rate than if they only had access to natural food sources. Thus, the baboon population has increased beyond what can be sustained by natural areas on the Cape Peninsula.

Furthermore, baboons have no natural enemies within the Cape Peninsula.

23. What is a 'natural landscape' referenced in the CPBSMP?

Natural landscape refers to the natural habitat on the Cape Peninsula, not limited to Table Mountain National Park, where various land tenures may apply and ownership may vary between private, community and State-owned land.

24. Can baboon proof fences work?

There is evidence to suggest that fences are effective when integrated with the presence of baboon monitors at or near the entrances/openings in fences.

The CPBMJTT published a baboon-proof fencing summary report in September 2023 for affected communities' consideration. The report proposes locations on the Cape Peninsula where baboon-proof fencing could be considered to keep baboons in their natural habitat and out of the urban environment, as far as possible.

25. How many monitors are needed to monitor a fence?

This will depend on the location of the fence, its design, and the local circumstances.

26. Where can I get the fencing report?

The JTT encourages communities from areas in close proximity to baboons' natural habitat to download and read the document.

The report is available here:

- SANParks website: <https://bit.ly/3rsUrks>
- CapeNature website: <https://bit.ly/3PVn7fy>
- City of Cape Town website: <https://bit.ly/48r4kQm>

27. What is in the fencing report?

- Fencing as an intervention to keep baboons in natural areas and outside the urban edge as a sustainable approach to baboon management was investigated and a report of the findings prepared. The report provides:
- recommendations for proposed placement of baboon-proof fencing throughout the Cape Peninsula and background information on examples of the successful implementation of baboon-proof fencing on the Cape Peninsula
- what the fencing could look like in terms of height and design to ensure the free movement of small animals
- key issues to be considered in deciding whether a location is suitable for baboon-proof fencing
- maps indicating locations that may be considered for baboon-proof fencing on the Cape Peninsula

28. Are you going to install fences all over the place?

No. The report provides recommendations for proposed placement of baboon-proof fencing throughout the Cape Peninsula. Fencing is one of the options that could be included in a sustainable approach to baboon management. Options will be discussed at the planned community engagements.

Depending on the location and land ownership, Environmental Authorisation in terms of the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA) may be required and public participation will form part of this statutory process.

29. Is there enough space for all the baboons in the natural landscape of the Cape Peninsula?

The natural landscape is finite and ecological and carrying capacity is limited. Adaptive management interventions in the interest of the wellbeing of the greater Cape Peninsula Chacma baboon population must be implemented to maintain the baboon population numbers in line with the carrying capacity.

Some of these interventions may not be popular with or supported by all residents and interest groups, but will have to be discussed at the meetings with affected communities, stakeholders, interested and affected parties.

It is important to add that there is no one single solution, be it monitors or fences, but a combination of all possible tools including waste management and resident education, must be implemented/used as needed, and where appropriate, to ensure sustainable management and to keep baboons out of the urban areas and in the natural environment.

30. Who is the Cape Peninsula Joint Baboon Operational Team (CPJBOT)?

The CPBMJTT established the Cape Peninsula Joint Baboon Operational Team. The (CPJBOT) comprises members of all three parties to the Memorandum of Agreement – SANParks, CapeNature and The City of Cape Town.

31. What does the CPJBOT do?

The CPJBOT is responsible for operational matters and makes recommendations about baboon management issues and interventions to the CPBMJTT for consideration and support. Once a recommendation has been supported by the CPBMJTT, the CPJBOT implements the decision.

32. Who chairs the CPJBOT?

The chairpersonship and secretariat of the CPJBOT rotates annually. Currently, CapeNature chairs the CPJBOT.

33. Who funds the Cape Peninsula Baboon Strategic Management Plan?

All three authorities – SANParks, CapeNature, and the City of Cape Town – contribute resources in accordance with their respective roles, mandates and responsibilities as stipulated in the Memorandum of Agreement that was signed by all three parties in July 2023. The MoA sets the foundation for the cooperation between the three parties for a more sustainable management plan for the Cape Peninsula's Chacma baboon population.

34. What does NCC Environmental Services do?

NCC Environmental Services is contracted to manage the City's Urban Baboon Programme until 31 December 2024. NCC provides baboon rangers as part of this contract to keep baboons out of the urban areas and in their natural habitat as far as possible.

NCC also informs and educates residents and businesses about responsible waste management, and how to baboon-proof properties.

NCC also provides case histories on raiding and dispersing males to the CPJBOT for consideration.

35. Who will take over NCC's roles and responsibilities as from 1 January 2025?

Communities who live close to baboons' natural habitat and/or affected by baboons may fund and appoint an authorised service provider to monitor baboons and respond to incidents.

36. When can I contact NCC Environmental Services?

NCC Environmental Services can assist with baboon related incidents on public property until 31 December 2024. They are not allowed to assist on or enter private properties. NCC can advise residents how to baboon-proof their properties. This service is free of charge.

37. How can I contact NCC Environmental Services?

Phone NCC's 24-hour line: 071 588 6540.

38. Are there currently rangers for every troop?

No. Given the fixed funding and resources allocated in the existing contract with NCC, the rangers do not monitor splinter troops such as CT2 and Seaforth.

NCC has a direct line to the Cape Peninsula Baboon Management Joint Task Team, consisting of representatives from SANParks, CapeNature and the City of Cape Town, who will discuss/decide on urgent interventions as and when needed.

Any injuries to baboons should be reported to the Cape of Good Hope SPCA.

39. Can NCC assist on private properties?

No. Residents are encouraged to report incursions or incidents on **public property** to NCC on the 24-hour hotline number: 071 588 6540.

40. Can the community appoint their own baboon monitors?

Yes. Those wanting to provide a monitoring service are advised to do fund raising, or fund these by requesting the local residents to contribute to such an initiative.

41. Does NCC Environmental Services have contact with the CPBMJTT?

Yes. NCC has a direct line to the Cape Peninsula Baboon Management Joint Task Team, consisting of representatives from SANParks, CapeNature and the City of Cape Town, who will discuss/decide on urgent interventions as and when needed, for example, when a male baboon has dispersed

In addition, NCC has access to CapeNature officials who are available to offer advice regarding measures that can be taken by private landowners to baboon proof their property. In the event a permit is requested for the use of lethal/non-lethal methods to control/remove baboons on private property, upon receipt of a complete application CapeNature endeavours to expedite the permit application process. In the event of a potential contravention of the Nature Conservation Ordinance, CapeNature undertakes to investigate upon the receipt of a sworn statement.

42. What happens to injured baboons?

The public can report injuries to baboons to the Cape of Good Hope SPCA.

43. What can I do to baboon-proof my property?

The most important measure is to prevent access to food attractants on your property.

- Feed your pets inside only and put away pet food when they are not eating.
- Do not leave seeds outside, or fruit, for birds
- Fruit trees attract baboons. Best is not to have these on your property.
- Enclose vegetable gardens.
- Keep all food waste – be it in a wheelie bin or something else, locked away where baboons cannot get to it.
- On collection day, try take out your bin at the last minute, if possible.
- Another option is to secure the bin off the ground to a wall or pole as baboons have difficulty opening upright bins.
- Compost should be contained in locked composting bins.

44. What else can I do to secure my property?

Make your premises unappealing to baboons. Install burglar bars and security gates with bars less than 8 centimetres apart, the same applies to cat flaps.

Lock all doors and windows when baboons are in the area.

Landowners can consider the option of electric fences on the edges of their properties to keep the baboons out of their properties.

45. Who can advise me on how to baboon-proof my property?

- Contact Kim from NCC, the City of Cape Town's Urban Baboon Programme service provider, on kiml@ncc-group.co.za or 071 588 6540 to arrange a visit to provide advice in this regard.

46. When will the City provide animal-proof bins to communities?

The City has finalised an order for 2 000 double locks to be fitted to refuse bins as from 30 April 2024.

The double lock works better than the gravity lock, and has been tested.

The locks will be fitted to existing wheelie bins, and the first roll-out will be in Simon's Town, once locks are fitted. It will take a number of years to complete the roll-out, but the priority areas are Kommetjie, Scarborough, Glencairn, DaGama Park, Capri, and Sunnydale which are to follow after Simon's Town.

More information about the delivery times, and distribution programme will be made available as soon as the bins are available.

47. What are the responsibilities of businesses and restaurants in baboon-affected areas?

Restaurants and businesses dealing with food must practice responsible waste management, same as residents. This means baboons must not have any access to food waste or refuse bins. The same applies to the SA Navy in Simon's Town.

48. Why are you not monitoring CT2?

There are no additional resources available in the existing contract for CT2.

The range of the CT2 troop was originally within the Tokai area, however, in around 2021 the troop moved over Constantia Nek, north of Constantia Main Road.

Contingency funding was used for a while; however, the rangers were mostly ineffective in keeping the troop out of the urban area due to the nature of the terrain. This include mature trees which the baboons use to cross fences and the size of the private properties and the close proximity to natural areas. The lack of a buffer zone between natural areas and residential areas in this region increased the difficulty of deterring baboons substantially.

49. What is the CPBMJTT doing about CT2?

The CPBJTT is investigating possible strategies for this troop and will communicate with the affected community once these have been finalised. One possibility is to relocate the entire troop to an area outside of the Cape Peninsula. Investigations into the feasibility of this approach are underway.

50. What is happening with the Seaforth troop?

The Cape Peninsula Baboon Management Joint Task Team attempted the capture and relocation of the Seaforth troop to a natural area on the Cape Peninsula late in 2023 in the interest of the safety of people, the endangered African Penguin colony, and baboon welfare. Unfortunately, the attempt did not succeed.

Following the fires in December 2023 the troop roosted in the natural area, but has recently returned to the urban area. The intention is still to relocate the troop to a natural area on the Cape Peninsula.

It is impossible to give an exact date or timeframe. Baboons are unpredictable and wild animals. Also, these operations are logistically complicated, as such, there is no date envisaged for the capture and relocation effort.

The support and cooperation of the local community is vital to ensure the successful capture and relocation of the troop.

The CPBMJTT will liaise with the Cape of Good Hope SPCA, and keep the Simon's Town community informed.

51. Can I feed baboons, or give them water?

No. It is illegal to feed any wild animal, including baboons.

52. Is it legal to help baboons cross a road?

Baboons are clever animals and generally cross roads when it is safe to do so. Helping baboons cross roads, or following them, contributes to habituating the animals. There are wildlife warning signage along roads in areas frequented by baboons, informing motorists to reduce speed.

More signage will be installed in the new financial year, starting 1 July 2024, as more funding becomes available. The best option is to minimise any interaction with any wildlife as far as possible, this is in the interest of both the animal and the community. It is also important for road users to change their behaviour and to adhere to the signage.

53. Can I follow the NNC rangers to film or take photos of the baboons in hot spot areas?

No. The Cape Peninsula Baboon Management Joint Task Team does not consider requests for the filming of baboons and rangers on the Cape Peninsula, neither do we support requests for photographing the baboons. This is in the interest of the safety and security and wellbeing of residents, the rangers, and baboons alike.

The principal focus is to avoid the habituation of baboons by minimising contact between humans and baboons as far as possible, and to keep baboons out of the urban areas and in their natural environment. The filming and photographing of baboons contradict these principles.

54. How do you warn motorists of baboons crossing?

Wildlife warning signage boards have been installed along roads in Constantia and surrounds to inform residents to slow down as wildlife – including baboons – may cross these roads at night, or day.

Signs are up along Rhodes Drive, approximately 130m from Klaasens Road; and when travelling south of the Southern Cross Drive intersection; another one approximately 770m from the Constantia Nek roundabout, and along Constantia Road, at the intersection with Belair Drive; at the Spaanschemat River Road opposite Uitsig Estate; along Orpen Road in Tokai, just before the forest area. Please see the attachment for the exact locations.

More signage will be installed in the current financial year where appropriate, and in accordance with the National Road Traffic Management Act. That said, the signage will have limited impact when drivers do not comply with the warning to reduce speed. This is even more reason why residents living adjacent to natural areas are encouraged to change their behaviour and practices to protect and respect wildlife.

55. How and where can I keep informed of meetings, and other important decisions?

We are continuously updating our contact list of interested and affected parties. Please send an email to cpbmjtt@sanparks.org. Include your name, and your residing address, and designation if you are representing an NGO, or stakeholder.

That aside, the CPBMJTT intends to have a dedicated website or central point for information operational before 1 January 2025 to make it easier for all to stay informed about issues related to the Cape Peninsula Chacma baboon population.

Disclaimer

This document was prepared and published in the first week of April 2024.

Kindly note that the content will be revised and updated on a regular basis to reflect the most recent available information. We advise all to always download the latest FAQ document.