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### **Data & Information:**

- CapeNature Field Rangers
- Conservation Managers & Officers
- Landscape Conservation Intelligence Teams
- Biodiversity Capabilities

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### Online WC SoCR 2024 Report

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This is the fourth State of Conservation Report to inform the periodic Western Cape State of Biodiversity Report, as required Western Cape Biodiversity Act. These reports provide annual updates to the conservation status of species and ecosystems, highlighting outcomes in various aspects of the conservation work undertaken by CapeNature.

Our commitment to safeguarding biodiversity aims firstly to respond to provincial conservation imperatives. These in large measure mirror that of the global community, as underscored by the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF). This framework, agreed upon during the 15th Conference of Parties to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity 2022, outlines a way toward a more resilient and sustainable planet.

CapeNature, contributes to providing immediate and local conservation outcomes as well as the realization of key Global Biodiversity Framework targets.

The Western Cape Biodiversity Spatial Plan integrates the changes in the status of ecosystems and species with changes in land use and informs land use, development planning, environmental assessments, protected area expansion and mitigation of the impact of climate change on biodiversity through the integration of biodiversity corridors.

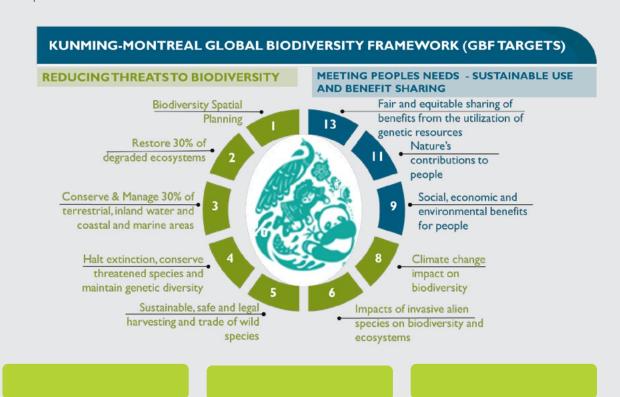
The development and implementation of a Western Cape Protected Areas Expansion Strategy and Protected Area and Estuarine Management Plans, enable progress towards effective representative protection of terrestrial, inland water and coastal and marine areas. Clearing of invasive alien plants on CapeNature protected areas is prioritized for ensuring ecological services and conservation of strategic water source areas.

CapeNature pursues the conservation of threatened species and maintenance of genetic diversity through the implementation of Biodiversity Management Plans, regulated through permits and authorizations, and supported by compliance and enforcement.

CapeNature implements regulatory compliance and enforcement, publishes hunting notices, and issues permits and licenses to ensure the sustainable use of wild species.

CapeNature is proud to contribute to the South African perspective where the status of biodiversity in the Western Cape impacts the outcomes of the national indicator framework.

Dr Ashley Naidoo CEO





## **CAPENATURE** LANDSCAPES & LANDSCAPE UNITS



### Legend

### CapeNature

- Head office
- Regional office
- Reserve office
- Satellite office
- CapeNature Protected Areas
- CapeNature Marine Protected Areas
- CapeNature RAMSAR Sites
- CapeNature Estuaries

### **CapeNature Landscapes**

WEST

Matzikama

Peninsula

Ceder-Berg

CENTRAL

Kogelberg

Witzenberg

Boland

SOUTH

De Hoop

Langeberg

Overberg

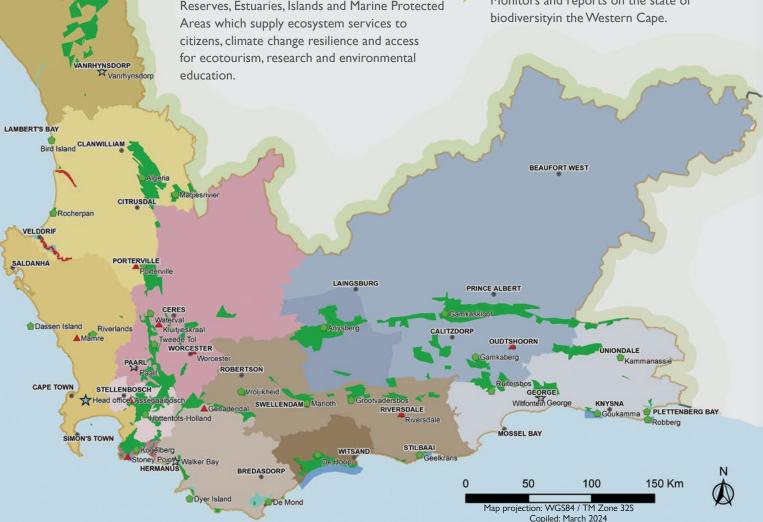
EAST

Anysberg

Garden Route

Karoo

- CapeNature, executive arm of the Western Cape Nature Conservation Board, is the provincial authority responsible for nature conservation in the Western Cape. CapeNature:
  - Manages World Heritage Sites, Provincial Nature Reserves, Estuaries, Islands and Marine Protected Areas which supply ecosystem services to citizens, climate change resilience and access for ecotourism, research and environmental
- Implements biodiversity and environmental management legislation, policies, procedures and guidelines in the Western Cape.
- Contributes to the development of biodiversity legislation and policies, provincially and nationally
- Monitors and reports on the state of biodiversityin the Western Cape.

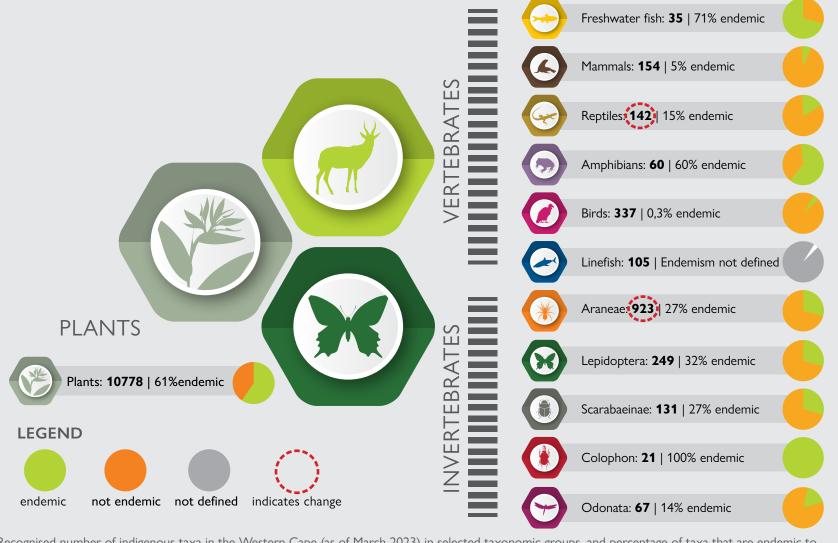






## THE BIODIVERSITY OF THE WESTERN CAPE





Recognised number of indigenous taxa in the Western Cape (as of March 2023) in selected taxonomic groups, and percentage of taxa that are endemic to the province. The Araneae total reflects the latest assessment (Dippenaar-Schoeman et al 2024).



Cape Lion (Felis leo capensis), illustration from Meyers Konversations-Lexikon encyclopedia, 1897

The number of extinct mammals in the Western Cape has decreased from 6 to 5 - not through gene editing technology, being explored to resurrect lost species like woolly mammoth, but through an analysis of museum specimens. The results show that lions which used to roam the grasslands of the Cape Flatswere only isolated from their counterparts for a short time before eradicated by European colonizers. And were not genetically distinct as originally understood (de Flamingh et al. 2024). In the Western Cape, free-roaming lions can be found on Karoo National Park and private properties.

Note: This biodiversity inventory is not exhaustive \* Taxa: Includes species, subspecies and varieties.



## THE STATUS OF WESTERN CAPE

## **ECOSYSTEMS**



### **IUCN RED LIST** CRITERIA FOR ECOSYSTEMS

Assess risk of collapse of ecosystem

Α	DISTRIBUTION REDUCTION
В	RESTRICTED DISTRIBUTION & DECLINE
С	DEGRADATION OF ABIOTIC ENVIRONMENT
D	DISRUPTION TO BIOTIC PROCESSES

E QUANTITAVE ESTIMATE OF RISK OF COLLAPSE

QUANTITATIVE THRESHOLDS

COLLAPSED **CRITICALLY ENDANGERED VULNERABLE** LEAST CONCERN

### **WESTERN CAPE ECOSYSTEMS:**

- ▶ **348** different ecosystem types (Coastal Marine, Freshwater, Terrestrial and Estuarine)
- ▶ 191 of 348 ecosystems in the Western Cape are threatened

**ENDANGERED** 

**ENDANGERED** 

CONCERN

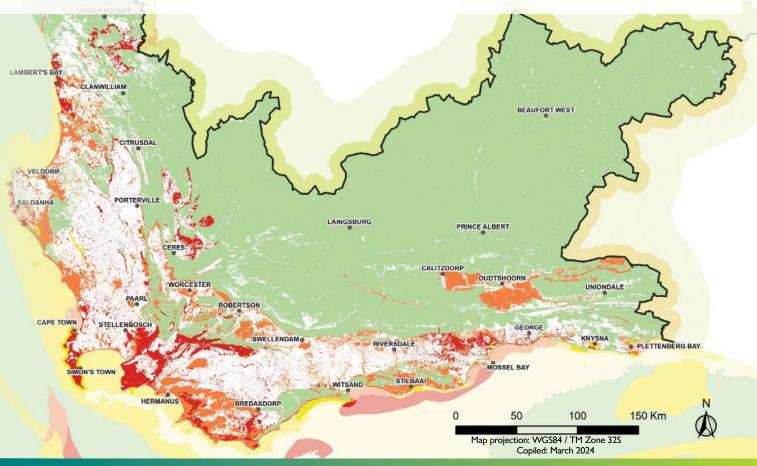
**NOT YET ASSESSED** 

Ecosystem are classified according to threat status as reported in the 2018 National Biodiversity Assessment except for terrestrial ecosystems which are updated to reflect the 2022 Red List of Terrestrial Ecosystems.

### Legend

Critically Endangered Endangered Vulnerable

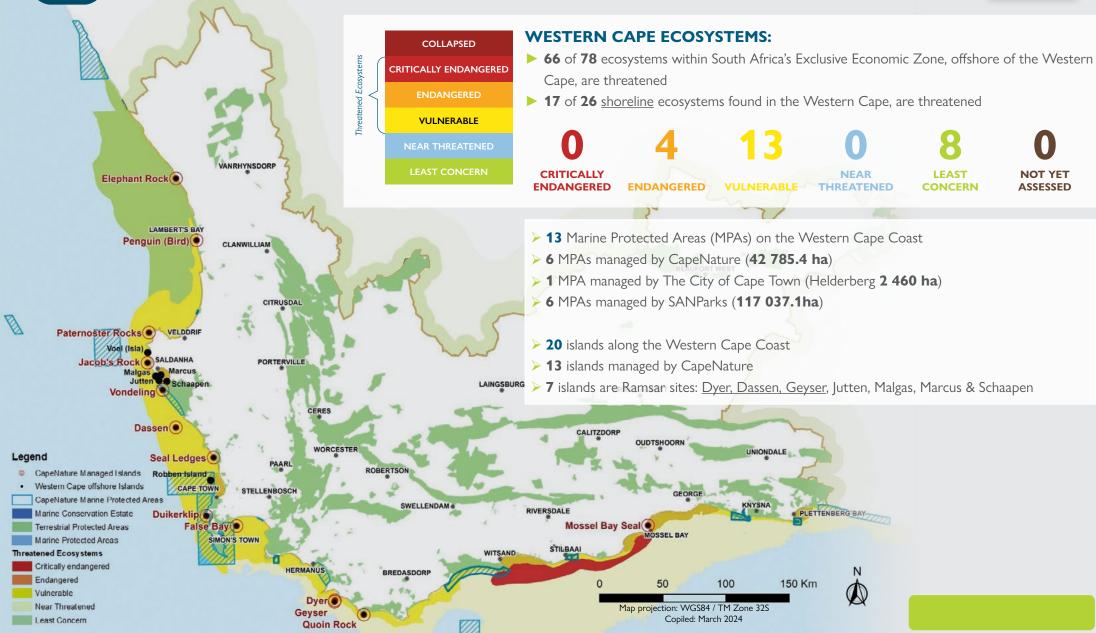




## THE STATUS OF WESTERN CAPE

## **MARINE ECOSYSTEMS**







## STATUS OF WESTERN CAPE **ESTUARINE ECOSYSTEMS**





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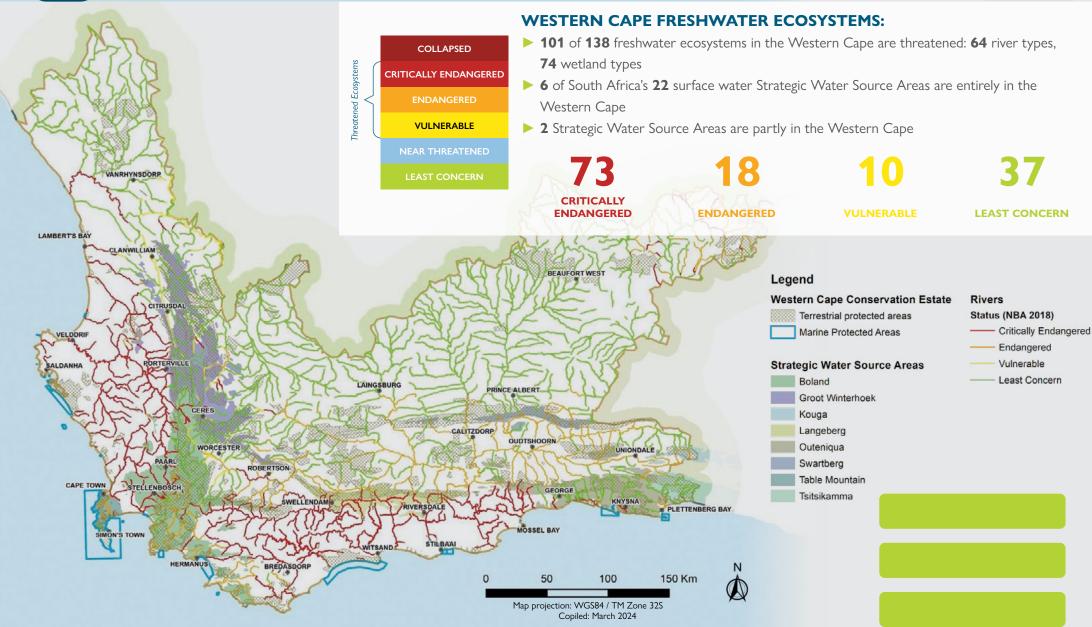
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## STATUS OF WESTERN CAPE

## **FRESHWATER ECOSYSTEMS**

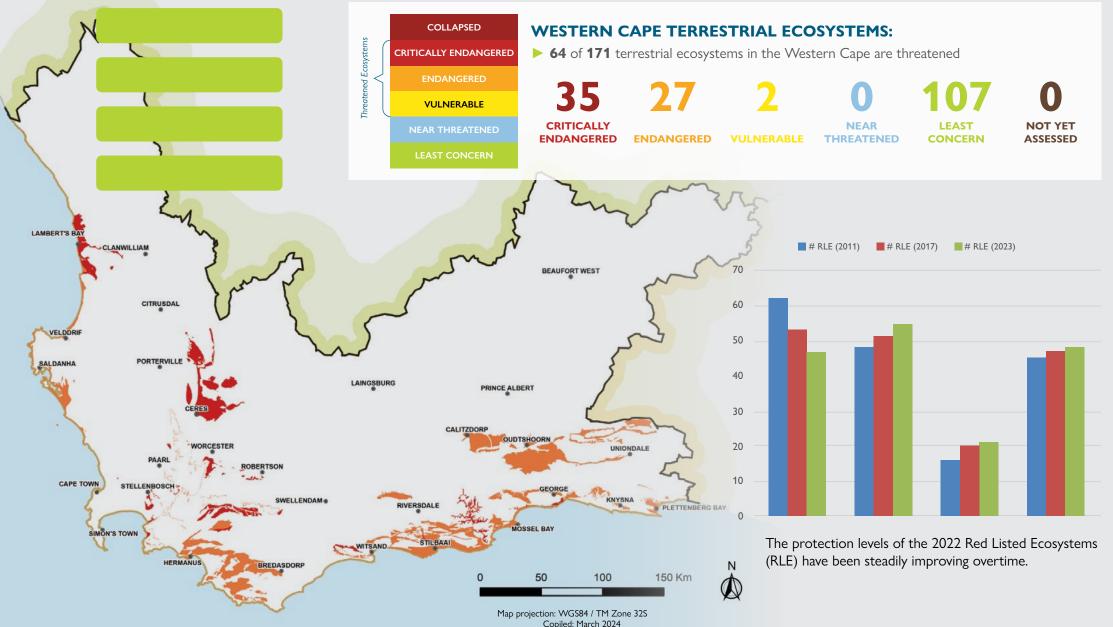






# STATUS OF WESTERN CAPE TERRESTRIAL ECOSYSTEMS







16% of extant taxa in the Western Cape are threatened

IUCN Red List Assessment

**EXTINCT IN THE WILD (EW)** 

**VULNERABLE (VU)** 

DATA DEFICIENT (DD)

NOT EVALUATED

24 of 44 Freshwater fish species are threatened

South Africa
Author of that
of the order order order order order order order order order or

Concentration of plant taxa of conservation concern in South Africa. Map

In South Africa, the highest concentration of plant taxa of

conservation concern is in the Western Cape.

**8** of 60 Amphibian species are threatened

7 of 27 Marine mammal species are threatened

1 939 of 10 778 Plants species are threatened

**16** of 126 Terrestrial mammal species are threatened

**32** of 300 Butterfly species are threatened

73 of 758 Marine fish species are threatened

7 of 78 Dragonfly & Damselfly species are threatened

indicates change

28 Terrestrial bird species are threatened

10 of 142 Reptile species are threatened

28 of 923 Spider species are threatened

5% Endangered

8% Vulnerable

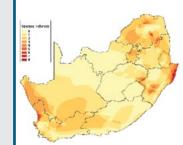
3% Near Threatened

72% Least Concern

3% Critically Endangered

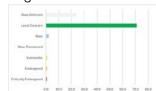
In South Africa, Eswatini and Lesotho, most reptiles of conservation concern are found in the southwest and northeast.

data supplied by SANBI, 2024.



Species richness, reptiles of conservation concern. Figure from Tolley et al. 2024

From 1997-2022, spider surveys were conducted at sites in the Cape Floristic Kingdom.



Percentage of CFK spider species in different conservation status categories. Data from Dippenaar-Schoeman et al. 2024

The CFK supports 42% of South Africa's spiders. Most are widespread and not threatened but seven (five in the Western Cape) are Critically Endangered.

Adequate data

9% Data Deficient



# STATUS OF WESTERN CAPE CONSERVATION ESTATE



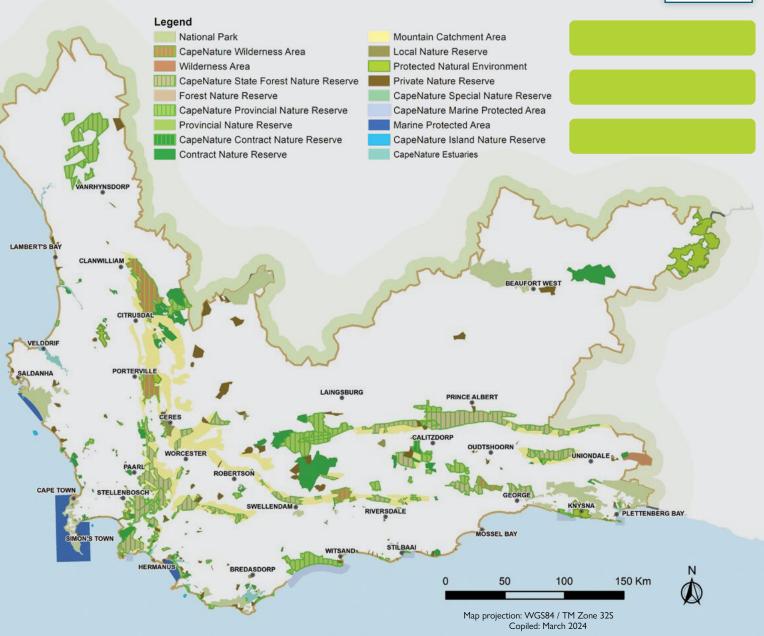
CapeNature manages 16 Nature Reserve complexes, comprising a total of **828 441 ha** 

The CapeNature protected area estate totals **1 082 118 ha** which includes CapeNature managed Protected Areas and formal Stewardship sites supported by CapeNature.

Western Cape Conservation Estate	Area (hectares)
CapeNature State Vested Protected Areas	659 233
CapeNature Managed Protected Area Estate	828 441
CapeNature Protected Areas Estate	1 082 118
Western Cape Protected Areas Estate	2 328 477

NATURE RESERVES DECLARED IN	
2023-2024	hectares
Table Bay Nature Reserve	800.56
Total hectares declared:	800.56

STEWARDSHIP NATURE RESERVE	
AGREEMENTS SIGNED (2023-2024	hectares
Doringkloof Karoo Plaas Nature Reserve	209.20
Kruisrivier Nature Reserve	1 997.09
Machaseh Nature Reserve	844.84
Manna Karoo Nature Reserve	42 388.84
Wilde Honde Ness Nature Reserve	273.58
Smits Valley Nature Reserve	38.00
Blombos Private Nature Reserve	64.22
Sugarbird Private Nature Reserve	510.28
Otter's Creek Private Nature Reserve	4.30
Lower Potteberg agreement withdrawn	-1 314.40
Total hectares signed:	45 015.95





## STATUS OF CAPE NATURE

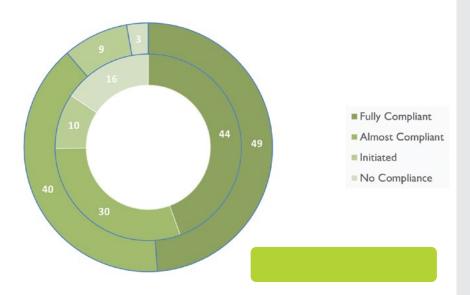
## PROTECTED AREA MANAGEMENT EFFECTIVENESS 2022-2024



	All	Terrestrial	MPA
Number of CapeNature Protected Area Complexes assessed (METT-SA assessments submitted)	37*	31	6
Number of CapeNature protected areas included in METT-SA assessments	111	105	6
Average CapeNature Protected Area Complex Management Effectiveness (METT-SA score) (%)	73	73	73
Percentage (%) CapeNature protected areas in the Sound Management Category	93	92	100

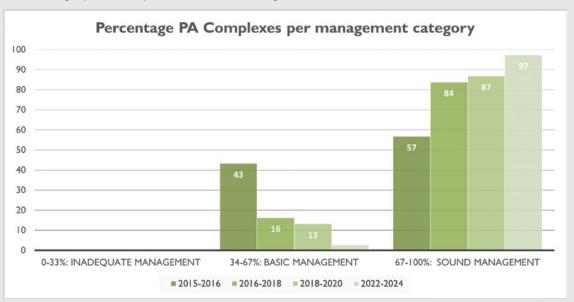
<sup>\*2022-2024</sup> METT-SA Assessment excludes Driftsands Nature Reserve.

## Changes in METT-SA indictor compliance (Inner ring: 2020-2022; Outer ring 2022-2024)



### **Factors That Influence Management Effectiveness**

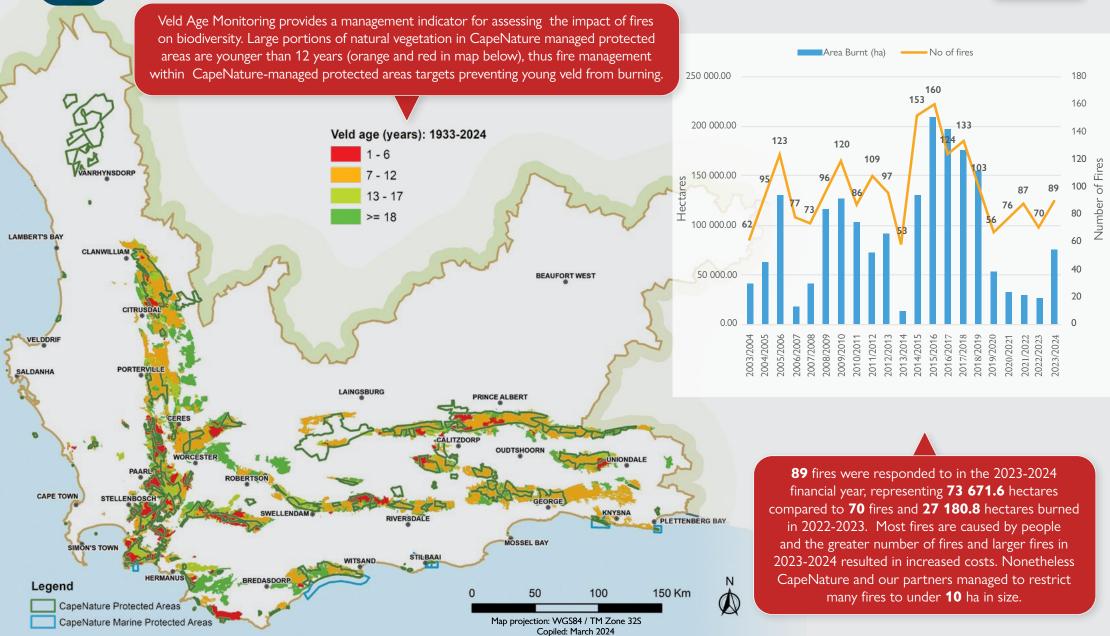
- Ongoing drafting of integrated Protected Area Management Plans and associated decision support tools improved management effectiveness.
- The implementation of education, awareness and interpretation programmes, compliance training and the resurrection of Protected Area Advisory Committees improved management effectiveness.
- The implementation of targeted CapeNature METT-SA action plans improved management effectiveness.
- Budget reductions and associated limitations on human resources constrain compliance monitoring and law enforcement and infrastructure maintenance.
- Invasive species management and restoration across protected areas continue to rely on strategic partnerships and external funding.



At protected area level, 93% of protected areas (97% of Protected Area Complexes), lie within the 'Sound Management' category and 7% of protected areas (3% of Protected Area Complexes), lie within the 'Basic Management' category. There are no protected areas in the 'Inadequate Management' category. The average METT-SA score is 73%.

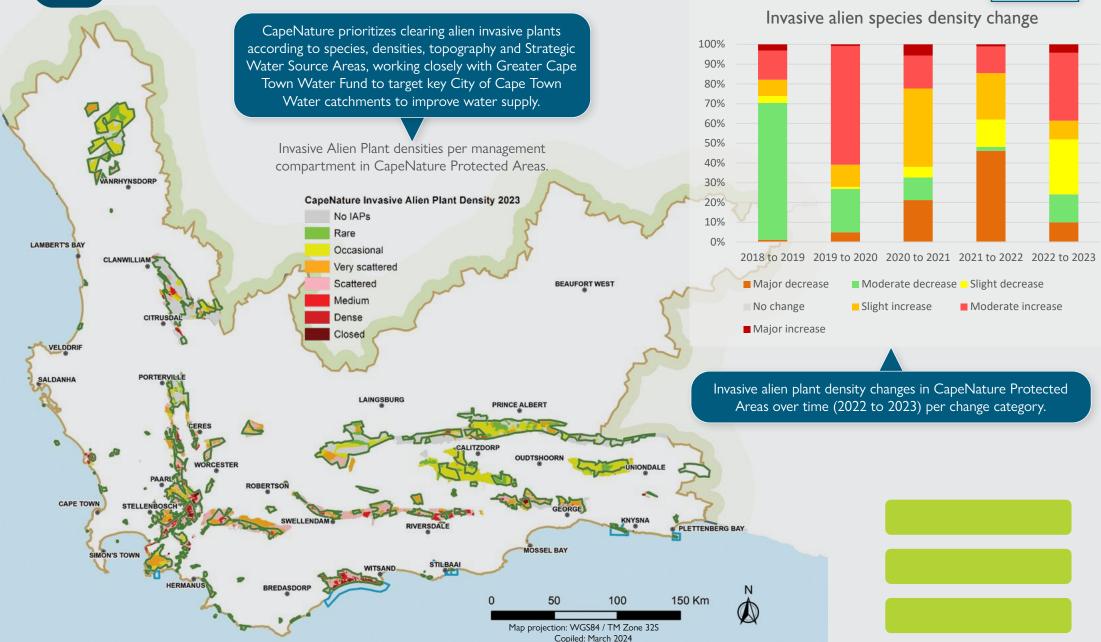
# THE STATUS OF FIRE





# THE STATUS OF BIOLOGICAL INVASIONS: PLANTS







## **BIODIVERSITY CRIME**

## **RESPONSE**

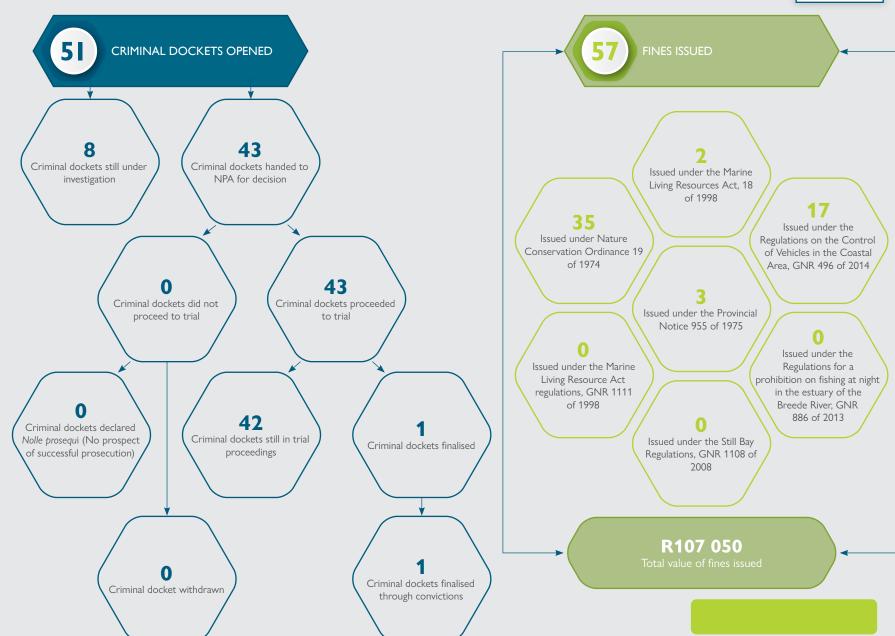














## SURVEILLANCE AND MONITORING **PRIORITY SPECIES**

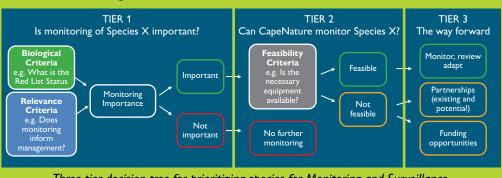




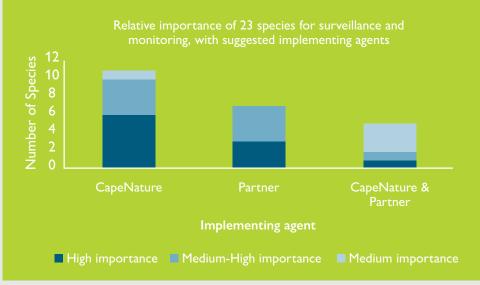
### **Prioritization Tool for Species Surveillance & Monitoring**

Purpose: To optimize CapeNature's surveillance and monitoring activities and highlight opportunities for partnerships.

Approach: A 3-tier decision-tree using biological, relevance and feasibility criteria to determine monitoring needs and actions



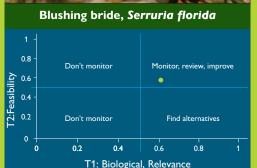
Three-tier decision-tree for prioritizing species for Monitoring and Surveillance



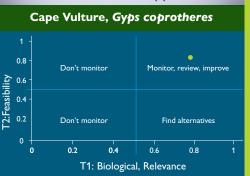


### **Prioritization Tool for Species Surveillance & Monitoring: Examples**



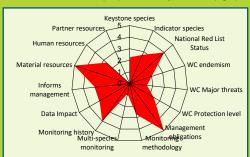






Combined scores for Biological, Feasibility and Relevance criteria for S. florida (left) and G. coprotheres (right).





Radar charts showing all criterion scores for S. florida (left) and G. coprotheres (right).

Prioritized species are derived from Protected Area Management Plans, the Western Cape Biodiversity Spatial Plan and the Protected Area Expansion Strategy and described in the State of Biodiversity Report.





### SURVEILLANCE AND MONITORING

## **PRIORITY SPECIES: FAUNA**





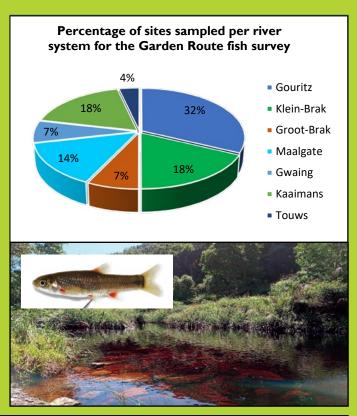
### Surveillance

Data collected through either ad hoc observations or focal biodiversity surveys providing occurrence information which is useful for determining species persistence or changes in species distribution. An example on one surveillance project is the Garden Route Fish Survey.

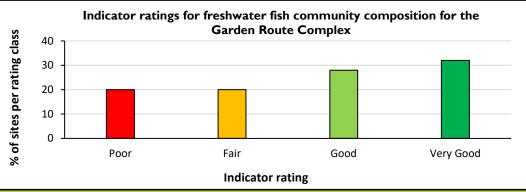
### **Garden Route fish survey**

- 28 sites sampled in 7 catchments.
- Late rainfall and high river flows affected catch data.
- Fish detected at 20 sites.
- Data analysed in terms of indicator ratings defined in management plan.
- Baseline survey will inform future surveillance and monitoring requirements.





INDICATOR RATINGS TO DEFINE THE CONDITION OF THE FRESHWATER FISH COMMUNITY					
Key attribute	Indigenous freshwater fish species composition				
Indicator	% Indigenous fish species composition and age class				
Indicator Ratings					
Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good		
Indigenous fish species absent	50% or less of expected indigenous fish species present, only 1 age class present. Some invasive alien fish species present	>50% of expected indigenous fish species present, 1-2 age classes present. Some invasive alien fish species present	100% of expected indigenous fish species present and all 3 age classes present. No invasive alien fish species present		







## SURVEILLANCE AND MONITORING

## **PRIORITY SPECIES: FAUNA**



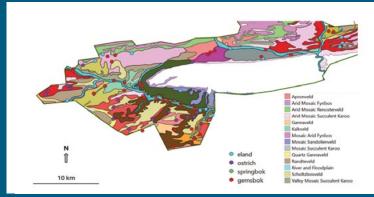
### Little Karoo aerial game surveys, 2023-2024



**Monitoring:** Fixed methods used to obtain data to detect changes over time.

In the reporting period, there were 169 dedicated faunal monitoring and surveillance projects, several of which are multi-species projects. Examples from two Protected Areas have been provided as examples to illustrate the nature and diversity of the monitoring conducted.





Distribution of herd-forming game species, including ostrich, relative to habitat type in the survey area on Anysberg Nature Reserve.

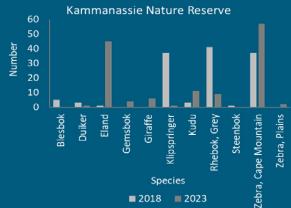


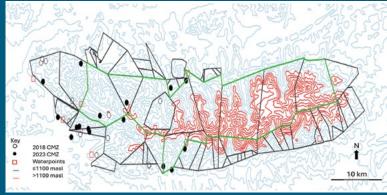












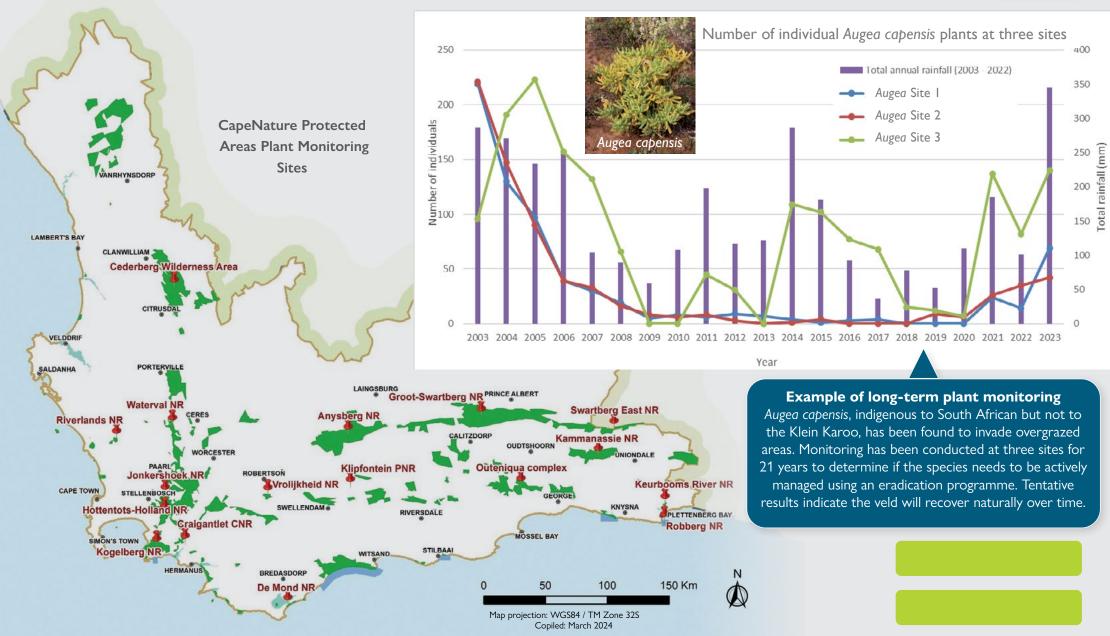
Kammanassie Cape mountain zebra distribution (2018: white circles, 2019: black circles) relative to waterpoints (red squares) and altitude (blue lines) ≤1100masl, red lines >1100 masl.



## SURVEILLANCE AND MONITORING

## **PRIORITY SPECIES: FLORA**







CapeNature acknowledges the of collaboration in sustaining biodiversity conservation and the Biodiversity Economy. CapeNature values and pursues working with communities, private landowners, civil society, conservation organisations, researchers, tertiary institutions and other spheres of government to deliver on conservation targets.

CapeNature engages in numerous, valued, formal and informal working collaborations.

### The partners with whom the entity has formal agreements for biodiversity conservation, are listed below.

I Afritrails 27 G	Garden Route District Municipality	53	On The Ball College (OTBC)
2 Agulhas Biodiversity Initiative 28 G	Gift of the Givers	54	Overberg District Municipality (ODM)
3 Berg River Municipality 29 G	Gouritz Cluster Biosphere Reserve (GCBR)	55	Overberg Renosterveld Conservation Trust
4 BirdLife South Africa 30 G	Greater Cederberg Fire Protection Association (GCFPA)	56	Overstrand Municipality
5 Buffalo Valley Trust 31 G	Greater Overberg Fire Protection Association (GOFPA)	57	Rocklands Landowners Agreement
Cape Agency for Sustainable Integrated Development in Rural Areas (CASIDRA)	Grootbos	58	Sanbona Wildlife Reserve
7 Cape Leopard Trust 33 H	Heuningvlei Community	59	South African Environmental Observation Network (SAEON)
8 Cape Peninsula Fire Protection Association (CPFPA) 34 H	Hospitality Property Fund	60	South African Hikers Network
9 Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) 35 In	nvasive Fish Species Management (IFSM)	61	South African Institute for Aquatic Biodiversity (SAIAB)
10 Cape Winelands District Municipality 36 K	Kishugu Training	62	South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI)
11 Centre for Estuarine Research and Conservation (CERC) 37 K	Knysna Municipality	63	South African National Parks (SANParks)
12 Centre for Invasion Biology (CIB) 38 La	andmark Foundation	64	South African Shark Conservancy (SASC)
13 City of Cape Town 39 Le	eisure Charitable Trust: Berg Estuary	65	Southern African Foundation for the Conservation of Coastal Birds (SANCCOB)
14 Conservation at Work 40 Le	eisure Charitable Trust: Walker Bay	66	Southern African Tortoise Conservation Fund/Trust (SATCT)
15 Conservation Outcomes 41 Le	eisure Conservation Trust	67	Southern Cape Fire Protection Association (SCFPA)
16 Denel 42 Lo	Logos, Ethos &Pathos Consulting (Pty) Ltd t/a Nightsbridge	68	Swartland Municipality
17 Department of Agriculture 43 M	Mapula Trust	69	Table Mountain Fund (TMF)
18 Department of Forestry Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE) 44 M	Matzikama Municipality	70	The Nature Conservancy (TNC)
19 Dyer Island Conservation Trust (DICT) 45 M	McGregor Tourism	71	University of the Free State (UFS)
20 Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT) 46 M	Mountain Runner Events (Pty) Ltd	72	University of the Western Cape (UWC)
21 False Bay TVET College (FBC) 47 M	Mountains to Oceans (MTO) Forestry	73	Volunteer Wildfire Services (VWS
22 Flower Valley Conservation Trust 48 N	National Research Foundation (NRF)	74	Warrior on Wheels
23 Forge 49 N	Nature Connect: Sustainable Schools	75	West Coast District Municipality (WCDM)
24 Friends of the Tollhouse 50 N	Nelson Mandela University (NMU)	76	Western Cape Government (PDMC
	Northern Cape Department of Agriculture, Environmental Affairs, Rural Development & Land Reform	77	Winelands Fire Protection Association (WFPA)
26 Garden Route Biosphere Reserve 52 C	Ocean Finance Company	78	Working on Fire (WoF)
		79	World Wildlife Fund (WWF)





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### Online WC SoCR 2024 Report

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