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14 December 2023 – The Western Cape Government in partnership with CapeNature has reviewed the Provincial Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2015-2025 (PBSAP) to align with the latest international and national biodiversity strategies and to respond to the worsening biodiversity and climate change crises, Anton Bredell, Western Cape Minister of Local Government, Environmental Affairs and Development Planning said today.

South Africa is a signatory to the Convention on Biological Diversity which, in addition to requiring a National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, also encourages subnational governments such as provinces to develop Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans. International, national, and provincial information indicates that biodiversity is increasingly being degraded and lost, which has a concomitant negative impact on the economy and human health and well-being.

The link between biodiversity and climate is highlighted by Gerhard Gerber, Head of the Western Cape Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning: “The loss of biodiversity leads to increased emissions and reduced carbon capture by the environment, which contributes to climate change. As climate change worsens impact on biodiversity, leading to more biodiversity loss, causing further climate change, and reducing our capacity to adapt to the changing climate. Together, this negative feedback loop leads to a

continued spiral of impacts on people, the economy, and the environment.”

The PBSAP is intended to combat biodiversity degradation and improve the status of biodiversity by guiding all stakeholders active in the province, including the national and provincial government entities, local and district authorities, non-governmental organisations, business and society as a whole, to act in a coordinated and collaborative manner with regard to biodiversity conservation, its sustainable use, and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use and value of biodiversity and resulting ecosystems goods and services.

The PBSAP’s strategic objectives include enhancing conservation efforts, mainstreaming biodiversity considerations into all sectors, updating policies and practices to support biodiversity conservation, strengthening and expanding the biodiversity economy, improving equitable access to biodiversity’s benefits and opportunities, improving biodiversity knowledge management, and mobilising capacity and financial resources for implementation.

Minister Bredell said: “Intact and functional ecosystems are a critical foundation to human health and provides irreplaceable ecosystem services that are essential to the province’s economic development. As such, the PBSAP not only aims to improve biodiversity management, but also supports the implementation of related strategies such as the One Health Approach and Growth for Jobs 2035.”

According to Dr Razeena Omar, CEO of CapeNature, the protection of the unique biodiversity of the Western Cape is dependent on partnerships between communities, the private sector, civil society, and government for its conservation. “Public sector efforts to

conserve biodiversity can only be successful if coordinated with and supported by action from other sectors. This is not limited to actions to conserve biodiversity, but also requires changing approaches in all sectors to reduce unnecessary impacts on biodiversity. Partnerships are crucial for the implementation of strategies such as the PBSAP”.

All partners are invited to comment on the draft reviewed PBSAP to ensure relevant alignment and feasibility.

The contact persons for information related to the Draft PBSAP are:

CONTACT PERSONS EMAIL ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Ms Frances Balayer Frances.Balayer@westerncape.gov.za

021 483 3697

Source: www.westerncape.gov.za

The contact persons for information related to the Draft PBSAP are:

CONTACT PERSONS EMAIL ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Ms Frances Balayer Frances.Balayer@westerncape.gov.za

021 483 3697

Source: www.westerncape.gov.za

Written comment on the Draft PBSAP must be submitted before or on 16 February 2024:

(a) emailing the comment to:

Frances.Balayer@westerncape.gov.za; or

(b) posting the comment to:

Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning

Attention: Ms Frances Balayer

Directorate: Biodiversity and Coastal Management

Private Bag X9086

Cape Town 8000.

(c) delivering the comment to:

Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning

Attention: Ms Frances Balayer

4th Floor, Leeusig Building

1 Dorp Street

Cape Town 8001.

ENDS

Contact:

Wouter Kriel

Spokesperson for Minister Anton Bredell

Western Cape Minister of Local Government, Environmental Affairs
and Development Planning

079 694 3085

Wouter.kriel@westerncape.gov.za

Click here to download the [Draft Provincial Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2020 – 2023](#)