

**STATE OF CONSERVATION REPORT FOR THE CAPE FLORAL REGION**  
**PROTECTED AREA WORLD HERITAGE SITE**

**(N 1007bis)**



**BY THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**  
**DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT**

**SOUTH AFRICA**

**DECEMBER 2022**

## **IDENTIFICATION OF THE PROPERTY**

**Identification No:** N 1007bis

**Name of property:** Cape Floral Region Protected Areas World Heritage Site

**State Party:** South Africa

**Province(s):** Western Cape and Eastern Cape

**Criteria:** (ix) and (x)

## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

The Cape Floral Region Protected Areas World Heritage Site (CFRPA WHS) is a serial property that comprises 1 094 742 ha and include 13 different protected area clusters and their individual components. Most of the clusters are within the Western Cape Province, with some sections in the western sections of the Eastern Cape Province. Included are National Parks, Nature Reserves, and Wilderness Areas.

Decision 44 COM 7B.84 requested the State Party to address several issues related to the state of conservation of the property. The issues raised in the decision are addressed in detail in this report.

The CFRPA WHS is managed by three (3) management authorities: the Western Cape Nature Conservation Board (CapeNature), Eastern Cape Parks and Tourism Agency (ECPTA) and South African National Parks (SANParks). These authorities have standing budget allocations which enable them to meet their conservation and management responsibilities.

A Joint Management Committee (JMC) for the serial site was established in 2010. It involves the Chief Executive Officers of the three management authorities along with the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment which also chairs the Committee. The JMC continues to meet annually whilst its technical committee meets at least twice a year.

THE CFRPA WHS is not planning any major constructions that can potentially negatively impact the property's Outstanding Universal Value.

**2. RESPONSE TO THE DECISION OF THE WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE, PARAGRAPH BY PARAGRAPH**

The paragraphs under this section provide detailed responses to the issues raised through Decision 44 COM 7B.84.

**2.1. RECALLING DECISION 42 COM 7B.94, ADOPTED AT ITS 42ND SESSION (MANAMA, 2018)**

The recall of decision 42 COM 7B.94 is noted and an update on any outstanding issues from that decision is provided in the paragraphs below.

**2.2. WELCOMES THE CONFIRMATION THAT A SUSTAINABLE FINANCING MECHANISM IS NOW IN PLACE FOR ALL THREE MANAGEMENT AUTHORITIES OF THE PROPERTY TO ENSURE ITS EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT.**

Noted.

**2.3. NOTES WITH CONCERN THE DELAY IN FINALIZING THE MANAGEMENT PLANS FOR ALL 13 CLUSTERS OF THE PROPERTY, WHICH FURTHER DELAYS THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE REQUESTED INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT PLAN (IMP), THAT SHOULD ENSURE A COMMON MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK AND OBJECTIVES FOR THE ENTIRE PROPERTY IN LINE WITH THE DEFINED OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE (OUV), AND URGES AGAIN THE STATE PARTY TO ACCELERATE THE PROCESS**

The State Party is pleased to report that all management plans for the protected areas that form the core of all 13 clusters of the property are now in place. The Integrated Management Plan that will ensure a common management framework is being finalised.

**2.4. APPRECIATES THAT THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK HAS NOW BEGUN, WHICH WILL PROPOSE ADDITIONAL BUFFER ZONES AROUND EACH CLUSTER AND WILL GUIDE THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF A SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK WHICH**

## **WILL COVER STRATEGIC SPATIAL PLANNING AND GUIDE LAND USE IN THE AREA**

The State Party wishes to bring to the attention of the Committee that the development of a separate Environmental Management Framework (EMF) which was going to propose additional buffer zones around each cluster, has been revisited and discontinued. This is in light of a national strategy currently being developed that will serve as a national buffering mechanism policy for all World Heritage Sites in South Africa. The Policy will recognise existing buffering mechanism policies including buffer zones as tools enhancing Spatial Development Frameworks already in place across the CFRPA WHS buffer areas, whilst providing guidance on possible further enhancement of these where applicable.

It is furthermore recognised that existing national and provincial-based buffering tools are in place and implemented by respective management authorities alongside mandated provincial and local governments policies and frameworks, including but not limited to the Protected Area Expansion Strategy, inclusive of a formal biodiversity stewardship programme involving private landowners and community land. Spatial planning products are included, with reference to the Western Cape Biodiversity Spatial Plan (BSP) and the Eastern Cape Biodiversity Conservation Plan (BCP), a result of systematic biodiversity planning processes that delineates Critical Biodiversity Areas and Ecological Support Areas which need to be safeguarded. The BSP and BCP is designed to provide spatial information and assist decision making with regards to land use and environmental management (core and buffer areas included).

In addition, a property-wide management framework, that will include objectives for management of the entire property, in line with the defined Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) is being finalised.

### **2.5. NOTES WITH CONCERN THE FIRES WHICH AFFECTED THE TABLE MOUNTAIN COMPONENT OF THE PROPERTY AND REQUESTS THE STATE PARTY TO REPORT ON THE IMPACTS OF THE FIRE ON THE STATE OF CONSERVATION OF THE PROPERTY**

The State Party wishes to inform the Committee that the fire of 18 April 2021 was of no extreme consequence to the natural environment or the OUV of the Cape Floral Region

Protected Areas World Heritage Site (CFRPA WHS) in its entirety. An area of about 600 hectares of land, which includes various built areas, were burned.

This amounts to less than 2% of Table Mountain National Park and less than 0.04% of fynbos vegetation of the core of entire CFRPA WHS. Note that non-fynbos and built areas, which are not part of the OUV, are included in this calculation. In context, only a small portion of actual fynbos vegetation was burnt and the area where the fire occurred on the slopes of Devil's Peak was already due for prescribed burning as part of the management actions for Table Mountain National Park (TMNP).

Therefore, there were no impacts on the OUV of the CFRPA WHS and the integrity of the OUV of the serial site has not been compromised. The recent fire grabbed media attention due to buildings that burnt on the neighbouring campus of the University of Cape Town and in adjacent urban areas further afield, outside of the CFRPA WHS core. Buildings and urban infrastructure are not part of the OUV criteria of the CFRPA WHS.

It should be borne in mind that the natural vegetation (fynbos) of the Cape Floral Region, as noted in both the original and extension inscription processes and associated documents, is in fact recognised as a (naturally) fire-driven and fire-adapted ecosystem. Therefore, there are no grounds for 'concern' to be raised when fires occur in the CFRPA WHS.

The management obligations associated with wildfires are well articulated in the respective Management Plans of the three Management Authorities of the CFRPA WHS.

- The fire investigation summary report, compiled with the intention of providing interested parties and members of public with information pertaining to the events and matters relating to the 18 April 2021 fires can be downloaded at:

[https://www.sanparks.org/assets/docs/parks\\_table\\_mountain/tmnp-fire-investigation-report.pdf](https://www.sanparks.org/assets/docs/parks_table_mountain/tmnp-fire-investigation-report.pdf)

- A TMNP Fact Sheet, issued as additional information can be found at:

[https://www.sanparks.org/assets/docs/parks\\_table\\_mountain/tmnp-fact-sheet.pdf](https://www.sanparks.org/assets/docs/parks_table_mountain/tmnp-fact-sheet.pdf)

- The approved TMNP Park Management Plan, which addresses fire management and biodiversity management, etc., can be downloaded at:

[www.sanparks.org/conservation/park\\_man/approved\\_plans.php](http://www.sanparks.org/conservation/park_man/approved_plans.php)

**2.6. REQUESTS THE STATE PARTY TO CLARIFY THE LOCATION OF THE PERMANENT HOUSING IDENTIFIED FOR THE RESETTLEMENT OF THE COMMUNITIES AFFECTED BY FIRE AND FLOODING, AND DEMONSTRATE THAT THERE WILL BE NO IMPACT ON THE OUV OF THE PROPERTY**

As reported during the 44<sup>th</sup> Session, the State Party undertook a series of stakeholder engagements with the City of Cape Town Metropolitan Municipality, the Western Cape Provincial Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning, National Department of Human Settlements, Housing Development Agency, SANParks and all the relevant stakeholders including community representatives in order to find ways and options to be explored in which alternative land can be identified and utilized to accommodate the housing needs of the members of the Imizamo Yethu communities who were temporarily relocated after fires in the area.

Through these initiatives, the state Party can report that four properties in close proximity to Imizamo Yethu, in Hout Bay were identified for the resettlement of the communities that were affected by the fire. The total land area is 7,955 ha, has been identified and the Imizamo Yethu Integrated Residential Development will commence the planning phase once the supply chain processes are finalised.

**2.7. ALSO REQUESTS THE STATE PARTY TO ENSURE THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) FOR THE PROPOSED INTERPRETATIVE CENTRE AT BAVIAANSKLOOF NATURE RESERVE COMPONENT OF THE PROPERTY, WHICH WAS MENTIONED IN THE STATE PARTY REPORT, TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE WORLD HERITAGE CENTRE FOR REVIEW BY IUCN BEFORE ANY DECISION IS TAKEN THAT MAY BE DIFFICULT TO REVERSE IN ACCORDANCE WITH PARAGRAPH 172 OF THE OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES**

The State Party wishes to confirm that the EIA of the development of the Interpretative Centre at Baviaanskloof, the project was authorized to proceed because there were no identified negative impacts on the OUV of the site. The State Party followed all due processes in terms of the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA), that the

process was concluded and that the project has been finalised. The Environmental Authorisation issued in terms of NEMA is attached hereto as **Annexure A**.

**3. OTHER CURRENT CONSERVATION ISSUES IDENTIFIED BY THE STATE(S) PARTY(IES) WHICH MAY HAVE AN IMPACT ON THE PROPERTY'S OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE**

There are no conservation issues identified by the State Party which may have an impact on the property's Outstanding Universal Value.

**4. IN CONFORMITY WITH PARAGRAPH 172 OF THE OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES, DESCRIBE ANY POTENTIAL MAJOR RESTORATIONS, ALTERATIONS AND/OR NEW CONSTRUCTION(S) INTENDED WITHIN THE PROPERTY, THE BUFFER ZONE(S) AND/OR CORRIDORS OR OTHER AREAS, WHERE SUCH DEVELOPMENTS MAY AFFECT THE OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUE OF THE PROPERTY, INCLUDING AUTHENTICITY AND INTEGRITY**

THE CFRPA WHS is not planning any major constructions that can potentially negatively impact the property's Outstanding Universal Value.

There are no major restorations, alterations and/or new construction(s) identified by the State Party that may affect the Outstanding Universal Value of the property.

**5. PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE STATE OF CONSERVATION REPORT**

The State Party has no objection against the uploading of the State of Conservation report on the World Heritage Centre's State of Conservation Information System, thereby providing public access to the report.



**6. SIGNATURE OF THE AUTHORITY**



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Mr Khorommbi Matibe

Acting Deputy Director-General- Biodiversity and Conservation: Department of  
Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment

Date: 01/12/2022