

4. BIOREGIONAL PLANNING MODEL: APPLYING SPATIAL PLANNING CATEGORIES (SPCS) (REFER *PLAN 3*)

4.1 BACKGROUND

Bioregional planning is an internationally recognised planning concept aimed at achieving sustainable development. Bioregional planning refers to land use planning and management that promotes sustainable development by recognising the relationship between, and giving practical effect to, environmental integrity, human well-being and economic efficiency within a defined geographic space. In practical terms, bioregional planning refers to the matching of human settlement and land use pattern with the parameters of ecological systems, and the planning design and development of the human made environment within these parameters in a manner that ensures environmental sustainability (Dennis Moss Partnership Inc 2003:47).

4.2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The inputs to this section of the report by the Conservation Unit of the Botanical Society of South Africa, together with inputs drawn from various specialist engaged by the Conservation Unit, are gratefully acknowledged. The inputs of CapeNature are also gratefully acknowledged.

4.3 OVERARCHING POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

No	Policy Statement (P) or Strategy (S)
P1.1	Apply the policies and strategies formulated for each SPC to land use applications and for decision making purposes.
P1.2	For the purposes of any development within an area indicated as Untransformed or Waterways according to <i>Plan 3</i> , the applicant / owner should be required to provide adequate proof to the satisfaction of the Municipality and responsible government department (ie Department of Agriculture, CapeNature) that the area is not regarded as Critically Endangered, Endangered, important for key ecological processes, special habitat, or of ecological significance.
P1.3	For all land use applications on land zoned as Agriculture and applications in terms of the Land Use Planning Ordinance 15 of 1985, the Subdivision of Agricultural Land Act 70 of 1970, the Conservation of Agricultural Resources Act 43 of 1983 or any other application as determined by the relevant Department of Agriculture, the Municipality should determine whether applicants will be required to submit simultaneously a land use plan indicating the application of the bioregional SPC's for the farming unit. Such a requirement should be determined on the basis of the sensitivity and vulnerability of the area concerned.
S1.1	Establish an Environmental Management Committee (EMC) to advise the Municipality on change in land use issues and sound environmental management. This EMC should consist of representatives from: CapeNature (Land Use Advisory Unit representative and the regional ecologist), the Department of Agriculture (Western Cape), Overstrand Municipality (environmental officer and planner), and local environmental groups.
S1.2	The EMC should monitor compliance with the policies and strategies of this SDF on a regular basis, to ensure sound implementation.

It should be noted that the area is divided into a number of SPCs which form the basis for planning, land use and management. In addition, there is a map layer showing areas which are important in terms of key ecological and/or evolutionary processes (refer *Plan 4*). These processes cross SPCs and municipal boundaries. That is, areas affected by these processes should be given specific and careful attention in planning, land use and management, to safeguard their continued function; it is important that all remaining natural habitat in these areas is retained and, wherever practicable, that degraded land is restored. Section 4.10 of this report describes these important process areas.

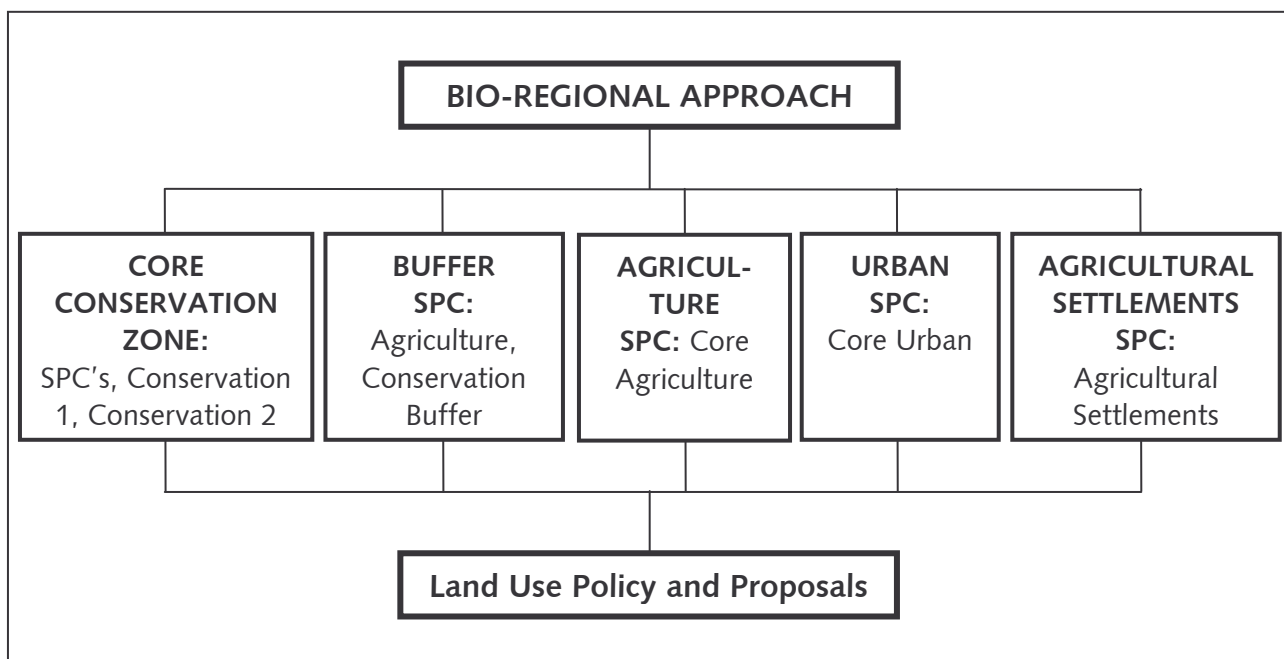


FIGURE 9: BIO-REGIONAL APPROACH

4.4 CONSERVATION I

Represents areas of the highest conservation status. This SPC includes unique areas, areas which are irreplaceable in terms of achieving national biodiversity conservation objectives, and/or areas which provide valuable ecosystem services in terms of, particularly, maintaining water production and/or quality, protecting soils, regulating floods, buffering coastal areas, etc. Land is in Public ownership.

Would include:

- Statutory conservation areas.
- State-owned parts of Mountain Catchment Areas, which provide valuable ecosystem services.

Could allow:

- Low intensity, non-consumptive, nature-based recreation.
- Harvest of natural resources on a sustainable basis, provided that such use is compatible with this area.
- Education.
- Research.

Policies:

- Prohibit transformation of areas of Critically Endangered or Endangered natural vegetation¹.
- Protect the biodiversity and ecosystem functioning of the Conservation Area.
- Protect the distinctive landscape character of the area.
- Promote sound management of natural resources.
- Permit use of natural resources if and only if such use would be sustainable and would not jeopardise biodiversity conservation.
- Safeguard areas identified as important for key ecological and evolutionary processes².
- Eradicate alien invasive species.
- Promote the restoration of degraded or disturbed areas.
- Promote awareness of the significance and uniqueness of natural vegetation and ecosystems of the area amongst local landowners and communities, visitors and tourists.

Strategies:

SPC 2.1:	No transformation of existing areas of Critically Endangered or Endangered natural vegetation.
SPC 2.2:	Natural resources should be soundly managed to ensure biodiversity conservation and the maintenance of ecological corridors.
SPC 2.3:	Encourage the transfer of national state land to local or provincial conservation departments to enable effective management.
SPC 2.4:	Land reform processes should not undermine or be inconsistent with the policies or strategies of this spatial planning category.
SPC 2.5:	Natural resources could be used, harvested or extracted, if and only if such use/harvest or extraction is compatible with the area and would be sustainable.
SPC 2.6:	Degraded or disturbed areas should be cleared of invasive alien plants and restored.
SPC 2.7:	Where development in this SPC is being considered, a full botanical assessment should be carried out by a specialist botanist approved by the Land Use Advisory Unit of CapeNature. This assessment should focus on determining the significance of the site (presence of Critically Endangered or Endangered vegetation) and its broader context with regard to key ecological and evolutionary processes. Specific attention should be paid to the connectivity of the site with other sites of similar natural vegetation in relatively close proximity. It is central to the conservation of Critically Endangered or Endangered vegetation or ecosystems that clusters of remnant sites, or a series of remnants within close proximity, are conserved to enable their persistence and protect genetic variability. The findings of the assessment should inform (ie establish opportunities for or constraints to) further planning.
SPC 2.8:	Development should not take place in ecologically sensitive areas, eg floodplains, steep slopes, wetland or drainage areas, or mobile dunes or driftsands.
SPC 2.9:	All applications for changes in land use should be referred to the Environmental Management Committee for evaluation in terms of the policies contained in this SDF.
SPC 2.10:	CapeNature and the Municipality should disseminate information on the uniqueness and significance of the indigenous vegetation and ecosystems in the Sub-region to local landowners and communities, visitors and tourists.

¹. South Africa is currently preparing a National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, part of which comprises a National Spatial Biodiversity Assessment which evaluates the conservation status of ecosystems and classifies them as being either 'critically endangered', 'endangered', 'vulnerable' or 'least threatened'. This Assessment will form the basis for a national biodiversity framework and for the protection of threatened ecosystems in terms of the Biodiversity Act 10 of 2004.

². These key ecological processes have been identified as part of the Cape Lowlands (Renosterveld) Project.

4.5 CONSERVATION II

Represents areas of the highest conservation status. Includes unique areas, relatively large areas, clustered and/or discrete areas which are irreplaceable in terms of achieving national biodiversity conservation objectives, and/or areas which provide valuable ecosystem services in terms of, particularly, maintaining water production and/or quality, protecting soils, regulating floods, buffering coastal areas. Land is in private ownership.

Would include:

- Areas having a Critically Endangered or Endangered ecosystem status.
- Land within Mountain Catchment Areas in private ownership which provides important ecosystem services.
- Mountainous areas or areas on steep slopes unsuitable for development, and having high landscape, visual and / or heritage value, and / or providing an important ecosystem service (eg coastal protection or buffer, etc).
- Natural areas of high connectivity value with protected, Critically Endangered or Endangered areas outside the municipal area.
- Floodplains, wetlands, river corridors and riparian areas within these categories.

Could allow:

- Low intensity, non-consumptive nature-based recreation.
- Harvest of natural resources on a sustainable basis, provided that such use is compatible with this area.
- Extensive grazing at an appropriate stocking rate.
- Education.
- Research.

Policies:

- Prohibit transformation of Critically Endangered or Endangered natural vegetation.
- Protect biodiversity and ecosystem functioning through sound management and eradication of alien invasive plants.
- Protect the distinctive landscape character of the area.
- Promote sound management of natural resources.
- Permit use of natural resources if and only if such use would be sustainable and would not jeopardise biodiversity conservation.
- Safeguard areas identified as important for key ecological and evolutionary processes.
- Eradicate alien invasive species.
- Prohibit subdivision of agricultural land.
- Promote rehabilitation of degraded or disturbed areas.
- Promote awareness of the significance and uniqueness of natural vegetation and ecosystems of the area amongst local landowners and communities, visitors and tourists.

Strategies:

SPC 3.1:	No transformation of Critically Endangered or Endangered natural areas by, amongst others, cutting, clearing or ploughing of indigenous veld for cultivation, planting of exotic trees, mining, quarrying or waste disposal, erection of infrastructure, or other development, to be permitted.
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SPC 3.2:	<p>Where cultivation of virgin land, or other development which affects natural vegetation in this SPC is being considered, a full botanical assessment should be carried out by a specialist botanist approved by the Land Use Advisory Unit of CapeNature. This assessment should focus on determining the significance of the site (presence of Critically Endangered or Endangered vegetation) and its broader context with regard to key ecological and evolutionary processes. Specific attention should be paid to the connectivity of the site with other sites of similar natural vegetation in relatively close proximity. It is central to the conservation of Critically Endangered or Endangered vegetation or ecosystems that clusters of remnant sites, or a series of remnants within close proximity, linked by natural vegetation corridors, are conserved to enable their persistence and protect genetic variability.</p> <p>The findings of the botanical assessment should inform (ie establish opportunities or constraints to) further planning and environmental assessment, through due consideration of alternatives, specifically with regard to avoiding irreversible or significant impacts, through the location, siting, scale, design, management and/or other appropriate means.</p> <p>Where impacts on a threatened ecosystem would be unavoidable, in-kind offsets for residual impacts should be required in compensation. That is, land areas containing the same quality of habitat and composition of species, of an appropriate size determined by CapeNature, should be set aside for conservation in perpetuity.</p>
SPC 3.3:	Any application for the cultivation of natural veld, development on or subdivision of privately owned land within this area, involving more than a primary dwelling, should be subject to the Integrated Environmental Management procedure, and environmental assessment (including the consideration of alternatives and public participation) at an appropriate level of detail.
SPC 3.4:	All applications for changes in land use should be referred to the Environmental Management Committee for evaluation in terms of the policies contained in this SDF.
SPC 3.5:	No introduction of plants for commercial use should be permitted.
SPC 3.6:	<p>Land in this SPC should be managed in such a way as to ensure that remaining areas of natural veld, and areas which support key ecological and evolutionary processes (refer <i>Plan 4</i>) are conserved for future generations. Specifically, such aspects as the fire regime, eradication of invasive alien plants, rehabilitation of disturbed or degraded areas, and use of biocides and fertilizers, should be managed strictly in accordance with advice from CapeNature and/or other competent bodies and/or persons.</p> <p>Degraded areas should be restored.</p>
SPC 3.7:	Applications for subdivision of agricultural land should be rejected.
SPC 3.8:	Natural resources could be used, harvested or extracted [only where such use/harvest or extraction is compatible with the area] on a sustainable basis, drawing on reliable research, advice from CapeNature and other competent bodies and/or persons, and should incorporate sound management and appropriate monitoring. Such uses could include sustainable harvest of wildflowers or indigenous plant material, as well as extensive game farming.
SPC 3.9:	Any introduction of game animals or fish to the area, or harvest or extraction of indigenous plants or animals, should be subject to consent and management conditions from CapeNature.
SPC 3.10:	Development should not take place in ecologically sensitive areas, eg floodplains, steep slopes, wetland or drainage areas, or mobile dunes or driftsands.
SPC 3.11:	Establish a fund to assist private landowners in eradicating invasive alien vegetation, and/or promote eradication of invasive alien vegetation through municipal valuation or rate retrieval mechanisms.
SPC 3.12:	Promote the incorporation of portions of land containing Critically Endangered or Endangered natural vegetation preferably into areas managed under Co-operation or other Stewardship Agreements with CapeNature (eg Contract Nature Reserve, Co-operation Agreement, Conservation Area).
SPC 3.13:	Where rights to cultivate virgin land exist on remaining areas of Critically Endangered or Endangered natural vegetation, due consideration should be given to the possibility of land swaps with other fallow agricultural land, or leasing arrangements, to enable conservation of these significant remnants.

SPC 3.14:	Where mining rights exist and mining would result in transformation of remnant Critically Endangered or Endangered natural vegetation, every effort should be made to consider compensation or land swaps to avoid transforming this vegetation. Where such transformation cannot be prevented, stringent rehabilitation measures, monitoring and auditing should be essential, and the objective of rehabilitation should be to restore natural veld of the affected area. The professional input of a specialist ecologist or botanist with local knowledge and experience should be required in this regard.
SPC 3.15:	Input by the Municipality to the preparation of an EMPR is considered essential, to ensure that such EMPR would be adequate in terms of the policies and strategies within this spatial planning category, and would be implemented.
SPC 3.16:	The Municipality should establish mechanisms or a fund to assist in securing land swaps to prevent further transformation of natural areas. (eg transferable development rights).
SPC 3.17:	CapeNature and the Municipality should disseminate information on the uniqueness and significance of the indigenous plants and ecosystems in the Sub-region to municipal officials, local landowners and communities, visitors and tourists.
SPC 3.18:	Promote the establishment of Fire Protection Associations, and mechanisms to reinforce investment in sound fire management.
SPC 3.19:	Grazing of livestock to be limited to the minimum specified carrying capacity (to be determined for each area by Department of Agriculture and CapeNature). For renosterveld areas, the suggested ratio is 1 (one) large stock unit/20 ha. Grazing management practices should be guided by the Environmental Management Committee.
SPC 3.20:	Potentially viable and sustainable alternative uses of land for, amongst others, agricultural production, harvest and use of indigenous plants, agri-tourism and ecotourism, should be investigated in partnership with relevant agriculture and conservation agencies.

4.6 CONSERVATION-AGRICULTURE BUFFER

Rural, modified landscapes of relatively high value in terms of achieving national objectives for biodiversity conservation, particularly in terms of maintaining ecological and evolutionary processes outside of the Conservation SPCs, and safeguarding valuable ecosystem services such as production of harvestable goods, water production and/or protection of water quality, protecting soils, regulating floods, buffering coastal areas (etc). In addition, this SPC contributes to the protection of cultural assets (specifically landscapes of visual or heritage value).

These areas provide a buffer between the conservation and agriculture “core” areas, and represent ecological corridors, vegetation transition areas and/or important areas for delivery of ecosystem goods or services.

Would include:

- Areas having a Vulnerable or Least Threatened ecosystem status.
- Natural areas within the municipal boundary in close proximity to Conservation I or Conservation II SPCs, which provide a buffering role to those SPCs.
- Tracts of habitat within the municipal boundary which play a critical role in maintaining connectivity between fragments of threatened habitat.
- Natural areas or partly transformed areas outside of core agriculture, urban or conservation SPCs, which link up with natural areas beyond the municipal boundary.
- Formally demarcated ‘buffer’ areas of Biosphere Reserves.
- Floodplains, wetlands, river corridors and riparian areas within this SPC.

Could allow:

- Limited cropping, orchards and other forms of farming, provided that such activities do not have a detrimental impact on key areas for ecological or evolutionary processes, or other dynamic or sensitive environments (eg mobile sands, wetlands, dunefields, floodplains, etc).
- Game-farming, extensive grazing.
- Sustainable harvest of natural resources.
- Education, research.
- Small-scale ecotourism, nature-based recreation, farm-based tourism.

Policies:

- Prohibit transformation of those areas of buffer which are situated in key ecological/evolutionary process areas, in sensitive and/or dynamic environments, and/or which provide connectivity between protected or threatened ecosystems within the municipal boundary to similar systems beyond the municipal boundary.
- Allow only limited transformation of the Conservation-Agriculture Buffer area for agricultural or other development purposes, ensuring that such transformation would not jeopardise either the ecosystem status of habitat in this area or important ecological process areas.
- Allow low impact activities only.
- Protect the biodiversity, connectivity and ecosystem functioning in the Conservation areas through sound and supportive management practices in the Conservation-Agriculture Buffer area, as prescribed by CapeNature.
- Protect the distinctive landscape character of the area.
- Promote sustainable use and sound management of natural resources.
- Promote sustainable use of agricultural land in the Conservation-Agriculture Buffer area.
- Prospecting or mining to be granted in certain conditions.
- Promote efficient use of water resources and safeguard those ecosystems which regulate water yield and quality (wetlands, riparian systems, floodplains).
- Support the diversification of the agricultural sector in terms of agri-tourism and value adding in the Sub-region. Promote research into sustainable use and harvest of indigenous natural resources.
- Prohibit the subdivision of land currently used for agriculture, unless such subdivision is for the purposes of incorporating additional land into Conservation SPCs.
- Promote restoration (preferably), or rehabilitation, of degraded or disturbed areas.
- Promote eradication of alien invasive species.
- Promote awareness of the significance and uniqueness of natural vegetation and ecosystems of the area amongst local landowners and communities, visitors and tourists.

Strategies:

SPC 4.1:	<p>No transformation³ or cultivation of existing natural areas which contain Critically Endangered remnants should be permitted.</p> <p>No transformation of natural areas which provide connectivity between protected or threatened ecosystems within and beyond the municipal boundary, which are key ecological process areas and/or lie in sensitive and/or dynamic environments, should be permitted.</p> <p>Only minimal impacts on natural areas containing Endangered ecosystems should be allowed, provided that in-kind offsets for residual impacts would be secured in compensation. That is, where a threatened ecosystem would be affected, land areas containing the same quality of habitat and composition of species, of an appropriate size determined by CapeNature, should be set aside for conservation in perpetuity.</p> <p>Transformation of Vulnerable ecosystems should be permitted on a limited scale only, taking into account the cumulative effects on ecosystem status of allowing repeated transformation of areas within this ecosystem category.</p>
SPC 4.2:	Employ the principles of 'land care' and 'area-wide planning' as endorsed by the Department of Agriculture. Local planning processes used by this Department should help to identify focal areas for resource conservation efforts.
SPC 4.3:	<p>Applications to cultivate virgin land, or for other development which affects natural vegetation, should be rigorously evaluated to ensure that such land does not contain threatened (ie Critically Endangered, Endangered or Vulnerable) vegetation, does not lie within an important ecological or evolutionary process area, in an area that provides valuable ecosystem services (in terms of, particularly, maintaining water production and/or quality, protecting soils, regulating floods, buffering coastal areas), or which is dynamic or sensitive (wetland, floodplain, riparian area, dune or driftsands area, etc).</p> <p>Where the proposed development of virgin land would affect one or more of the above, it is essential that an appropriate specialist/s approved by the Land Use Advisory Unit of CapeNature be involved. The specialist/s' findings should inform further planning and environmental assessment, through due consideration of alternatives, specifically with regard to avoiding irreversible or significant impacts, through the location, siting, scale, design, management and/or other appropriate means.</p>
SPC 4.4:	Development should not take place in ecologically sensitive areas, eg floodplains, steep slopes, wetland or drainage areas, or mobile dunes or driftsands.
SPC 4.5:	Development applications should be subject to the Integrated Environmental Management procedure and environmental assessment (including the consideration of alternatives and public participation) at an appropriate level of detail.
SPC 4.6:	All applications for changes in land use should be referred to the Environmental Management Committee for evaluation in terms of the policies contained in this SDF.

³. By, amongst others, cutting, clearing or ploughing of indigenous veld for cultivation, planting of exotic trees, mining, quarrying or waste disposal, erection of infrastructure or other development.

SPC 4.7:	<p>Where mining rights exist and mining would result in transformation of threatened ecosystems, offsets should be required. With regard to the transformed areas, stringent rehabilitation measures, monitoring and auditing should be essential, and the objective of rehabilitation should be to restore natural veld of the affected area. The professional input of a specialist botanist with local knowledge and experience, as well as from CapeNature, should be required in this regard.</p> <p>Input by the Municipality to the preparation of an EMPR is considered essential, to ensure that such EMPR would be adequate in terms of the policies and strategies within this spatial planning category, and would be implemented.</p> <p>Proposed new mining activities, which would not involve transformation of any natural vegetation, should be subject to environmental assessment, giving due consideration to the potential significance of associated impacts on biodiversity, ecological processes, ecosystem services, heritage and landscape character, and on the social and economic fabric of local communities. Provided that negative impacts could be managed and mitigated (including offsets) to make them acceptable, that there would be net benefits, and there is assurance of sound management and rehabilitation, mining should be allowed. Input by the Municipality to the environmental assessment conducted as part of the mining application, and to the preparation of an EMPR, is considered essential. Such input would help ensure that decision-making on mining is sound, and that the associated EMPR is adequate in terms of the policies and strategies within this spatial planning category, and would be implemented.</p>
SPC 4.8:	<p>Marginal land with low productivity and viability should be rehabilitated to natural veld. The advice of CapeNature, the Department of Agriculture and other competent bodies should be sought in this regard.</p>
SPC 4.9:	<p>Any development for which an Environmental Impact Assessment is required in terms of environmental legislation should include a baseline or sensitivity study of the affected area, and an assessment and evaluation of potentially significant impacts associated with the proposal and reasonable alternatives. At minimum, formal comment from CapeNature should be obtained, and a specialist botanist with local knowledge and experience in the area should be involved in the EIA. Ways to avoid impacts on threatened ecosystems, or on important ecosystem services or ecological processes by changing the location, siting, scale, design, management and/or other appropriate means, should be clearly stated. Cumulative effects of the proposed development on ecosystem status should be taken into account within the municipal boundary.</p>
SPC 4.10:	<p>Any development should be planned and implemented to have minimal negative impact on biodiversity, aesthetic, heritage or sense of place characteristics. Use of energy and water-efficient technologies should be promoted, as well as sound management and disposal of solid waste and sewage.</p>
SPC 4.11:	<p>Natural resources should be soundly managed to ensure biodiversity conservation and the maintenance of ecological corridors. Specifically, such aspects as the fire regime, eradication of invasive alien plants, rehabilitation of disturbed or degraded areas, and use of biocides and fertilizers, should be managed strictly in accordance with advice from CapeNature and/or other competent bodies and/or persons.</p>
SPC 4.12:	<p>Natural resources could be used, harvested or extracted [only where such use/harvest or extraction is compatible with the area] on a sustainable basis, drawing on reliable research, advice from CapeNature and other competent bodies and/or persons, and should incorporate sound management and appropriate monitoring. Such uses could include sustainable harvest of wildflowers or indigenous plant material, as well as extensive game farming.</p>
SPC 4.13:	<p>Restore, or rehabilitate degraded areas and areas invaded by alien plants, to restore their biodiversity and ecosystem function, and maintain effective ecological corridors. Advice on appropriate rehabilitation methods should be obtained from CapeNature, provincial nature reserve staff, and other competent bodies and/or person/s.</p>

SPC 4.14:	Establish a trust fund to assist private landowners in eradicating invasive alien vegetation, and/or promote eradication of invasive alien vegetation through municipal valuation or rate retrieval mechanisms.
SPC 4.15:	Any introduction of plants for commercial use, introduction of game animals or fish to the area, or harvest or extraction of indigenous plants or animals, should be subject to consent and management conditions from CapeNature.
SPC 4.16:	Promote the incorporation of portions of land containing natural vegetation into Contract Nature Reserves, or areas managed under Stewardship or Co-operation Agreements with CapeNature.
SPC 4.17:	CapeNature and the Municipality should disseminate information on the uniqueness and significance of the indigenous vegetation and ecosystems in the Sub-region to local landowners and communities, visitors and tourists.
SPC 4.18:	Compliance with the policies of this SDF should be monitored by Department of Agriculture, CapeNature and the Municipality on a regular basis, encouraged and enforced.
SPC 4.19:	Potentially viable and sustainable alternative uses of land for, amongst others, agricultural production, harvest and use of indigenous plants, agri-tourism and ecotourism, should be investigated in partnership with relevant agriculture and conservation agencies.

4.7 CORE AGRICULTURE

Rural landscapes of largely transformed areas which may contain remnants of Critically Endangered or Endangered natural vegetation, which have value in terms of food production, maintaining ecosystem services, and protecting heritage assets. Land is in private ownership.

Would include:

- Largely transformed areas.
- Un-transformed areas categorised either as Critically Endangered or Endangered ecosystems, or ecosystems which are not currently under threat.
- Floodplains, wetlands and riparian areas within this SPC.

Could allow:

- Limited expansion of existing cropping, commercial forestry, orchards and other forms of farming, subject to environmental and specialist botanical assessment.
- Game-farming, extensive grazing.
- Sustainable harvest of natural resources, subject to DWAF/CMA authorisation.
- Ecotourism, farm-based tourism.
- Mining and mineral extraction, subject to environmental and specialist botanical assessment.

Policies:

- Prohibit transformation of Critically Endangered or Endangered natural vegetation.
- Safeguard areas identified as important for key ecological and evolutionary processes.
- Protect the distinctive landscape character of the area.
- Promote sustainable use and sound management of agricultural land and natural resources, employing the principles of "LandCare" as endorsed by the Department of Agriculture.
- Promote eradication of invasive alien vegetation.
- Protect sensitive areas such as wetlands, drainage lines and riparian areas.
- Promote efficient use of water resources.
- Promote rehabilitation or restoration of degraded or disturbed areas.
- Support the diversification of the agricultural sector in terms of tourism and value adding in the Sub-region.

- Retain areas of high primary production potential for agricultural use.
- Discourage the subdivision of land currently used for agriculture, except where it is consistent with the requirements as stipulated by Act 70 of 1970, and the guidelines for the sustainable sizes of farms required for the various types of agricultural produce, as determined by the Department of Agriculture.
- Permit mining and mineral extraction where it would not result in unacceptable negative impacts on local ecosystems or ecosystem services, and/or local communities.
- Promote awareness of the significance and uniqueness of natural vegetation and ecosystems of the area amongst local landowners and communities, visitors and tourists.

Strategies:

SPC 5.1:	No transformation of Critically Endangered or Endangered natural areas to be permitted.
SPC 5.2:	Where the cultivation of virgin land, and/or other development which would affect natural vegetation, is being considered, a full botanical assessment should be carried out by a specialist botanist with local knowledge and experience approved by the Land Use Advisory Unit of CapeNature. This assessment should focus on determining the significance of the site (presence of Critically Endangered or Endangered vegetation) and its broader context with regard to key ecological and evolutionary processes. Specific attention should be paid to the connectivity of the site with other sites of similar natural vegetation in relatively close proximity. It is central to the conservation of Critically Endangered or Endangered vegetation or ecosystems that clusters of remnant sites, or a series of remnants within close proximity, are conserved to enable their persistence and protect genetic variability. The findings of the botanical assessment should inform (ie establish opportunities or constraints to) further planning and environmental assessment, through due consideration of alternatives, specifically with regard to avoiding irreversible or significant impacts through the location, siting, scale, design, management and/or other appropriate means.
SPC 5.3:	Any application for the cultivation of natural veld, development on or subdivision of privately owned land within this area, involving more than a primary dwelling, should be subject to the Integrated Environmental Management procedure, and environmental assessment (including the consideration of alternatives and public participation) at an appropriate level of detail.
SPC 5.4:	Applications to prospect or mine should be considered in the light of the findings of an environmental impact assessment, giving due consideration to the potential significance of associated impacts on biodiversity, ecosystem services, heritage and landscape character, and on the social and economic fabric of local communities. Provided that negative impacts could be managed and mitigated to make them insignificant, that there would be net benefits, and there is assurance of sound management and rehabilitation, mining should be allowed. Input by the Municipality to the environmental assessment conducted as part of the mining application, and to the preparation of an EMPR, is considered essential. Such input would help ensure that decision-making on mining is sound, and that the associated EMPR is adequate in terms of the policies and strategies within this spatial planning category, and would be implemented.
SPC 5.5:	Development should not take place in ecologically sensitive areas, eg floodplains, steep slopes, wetland or drainage areas, or mobile dunes or driftsands.
SPC 5.6:	Any development should be planned and implemented to have negligible negative impact on biodiversity, aesthetic, heritage or sense of place characteristics. Use of energy and water-efficient technologies should be promoted, as well as sound management and disposal of solid waste and sewage.
SPC 5.7:	All applications for changes in land use should be referred to the Environmental Management Committee for evaluation in terms of the policies contained in this SDF.

SPC 5.8:	Applications for subdivision of agricultural land should be adjudicated by the Department of Agriculture in terms of the benefits that would accrue from such subdivision, ie conservation, enhanced agricultural development or the social-economic upliftment of communities. Subdivision should be consistent with the requirements as stipulated by Act 70 of 1970, and the guidelines for the sustainable sizes of farms required for the various types of agricultural produce, as determined by the Department of Agriculture.
SPC 5.9:	Promote the incorporation of portions of land containing Critically Endangered or Endangered natural vegetation into areas managed under Co-operation or other Stewardship Agreements with CapeNature (eg Contract Nature Reserve, Co-operation Agreement, Conservation Area).
SPC 5.10:	Employ the principles of "Land Care" and "Area-Wide Planning", as endorsed by the Department of Agriculture. Local planning processes used by this Department should help to identify focal areas for resource conservation efforts.
SPC 5.11:	Land in this SPC should be managed in such a way as to ensure that remaining areas of natural veld, and areas which support key ecological and evolutionary processes (refer <i>Plan 4</i>) are conserved for future generations. Specifically, such aspects as the fire regime, eradication of invasive alien plants, rehabilitation of disturbed or degraded areas, and use of biocides and fertilizers, should be managed strictly in accordance with advice from CapeNature and/or other competent bodies and/or persons.
SPC 5.12:	Grazing of livestock to be limited to the minimum specified carrying capacity (to be determined for each area by Department of Agriculture and CapeNature). For renosterveld areas, the suggested ratio is 1 (one) large stock unit/20 ha. Grazing management practices should be guided by the Environmental Management Committee.
SPC 5.13:	Land having high primary production potential should be retained for agricultural use and not sterilised by alternative forms of development.
SPC 5.14:	Where rights to cultivate virgin land exist on remaining areas of Critically Endangered or Endangered natural vegetation, land swaps or leasing arrangements with owners of other fallow agricultural land should be thoroughly investigated to avoid such cultivation.
SPC 5.15:	Where mining rights exist and mining would result in transformation of Critically Endangered or Endangered natural vegetation, every effort should be made to consider compensation or land swaps to avoid transforming natural vegetation. Where such transformation cannot be prevented, stringent rehabilitation measures, monitoring and auditing should be essential, and the objective of rehabilitation should be to restore natural veld of the affected area. The professional input of a specialist botanist with local knowledge and experience, as well as from CapeNature, should be required in this regard.
SPC 5.16:	On marginal land with low productivity and viability, every effort should be made to rehabilitate such land to natural veld. The advice of CapeNature, the Department of Agriculture and other competent bodies should be sought in this regard.
SPC 5.17:	Natural resources could be used, harvested or extracted [only where such use/harvest or extraction is compatible with the area] on a sustainable basis, drawing on reliable research, best practice, and advice from CapeNature and other competent bodies and/or persons, and should incorporate sound management and appropriate monitoring. Such uses could include sustainable harvest of wildflowers or indigenous plant material, as well as extensive game farming.
SPC 5.18:	Rehabilitate or restore degraded areas and areas invaded by alien plants where such areas provide habitat for Critically Endangered or Endangered vegetation, link natural areas of conservation value, represent areas supporting key ecological and evolutionary processes, and/or where desirable in terms of broader aesthetic, landscape character, heritage or other management objectives. Advice on appropriate rehabilitation methods should be obtained from CapeNature, provincial nature reserve staff, and other competent bodies and/or person/s.
SPC 5.19:	Establish a fund to assist private landowners in eradicating invasive alien vegetation, and/or promote eradication of invasive alien vegetation through municipal valuation or rate retrieval mechanisms.

SPC 5.20:	Any introduction of plants for commercial use, introduction of game animals to the area, or harvest or extraction of indigenous plants or animals, should be subject to consent and management conditions from CapeNature.
SPC 5.21:	Potentially viable and sustainable alternative uses of land for, amongst others, agricultural production, harvest and use of indigenous plants, agri-tourism and ecotourism, should be investigated in partnership with relevant agriculture and conservation agencies.

4.8 AGRICULTURAL SETTLEMENTS

Modified rural landscapes which contain small, low-density, nodal settlements. Intensive small-scale agriculture dominates the land use. These areas are transitional between urban and partly transformed natural landscapes.

Would include:

- Agricultural settlements or “agri-villages”.

Could allow:

- Subdivision of land or evaluation of land tenure to allow for community-based agriculture.
- Small-scale, intensive farming, community agriculture, or production of livestock (eg piggeries, chickens).
- Small-scale agri-industry.
- Smallholdings.
- Resorts, guest farms, farmstalls.

Policies:

- Promote sustainable use and sound management of agricultural land.
- Safeguard areas identified as important for key ecological and evolutionary processes.
- Zoning permission for commercial uses outside the designated Agricultural Settlements should not be granted.
- Applications for future development should comply with the restrictions on development below the 1:100 year flood line.
- Development within the Agricultural Settlements should avoid or minimise negative impacts on ecosystems and should promote efficient use of resources.
- Adverse impacts of the Agricultural Settlements on adjacent areas should be minimised.

Strategies:

SPC 6.1:	Development should not take place in ecologically sensitive areas, eg floodplains, steep slopes, wetland or drainage areas, or mobile dunes or driftsands.
SPC 6.2:	Natural areas within in this SPC which support key ecological and evolutionary processes (refer <i>Plan 4</i>), and/or are valued open spaces for recreation, and/or incorporate structures or places of cultural/heritage value, should be protected and soundly managed for current and future generations.
SPC 6.3:	Determine and implement optimum, sustainable ways of disposing of sewage and solid waste, and ways to optimise the efficient use of freshwater and ground water resources, in consultation with DWAF/CMA/DEAT.
SPC 6.4:	Employ the principles of “Land Care” and “Area-Wide Planning” as endorsed by the Department of Agriculture. Local planning processes used by this Department should help to identify focal areas for resource conservation efforts.

SPC 6.5:	Special attention should be given to promote the sound management of available water resources, with emphasis on efficient and appropriate use of available water, avoiding wastage or leakage, and avoiding pollution of these resources.
SPC 6.6:	Monitor and evaluate sewage and solid waste disposal, as well as use of freshwater and ground water resources, and amend practices where appropriate to ensure their sustainability, in consultation with the CMA/DWAF.
SPC 6.7:	The planting of invasive exotic plant species in gardens should be strictly prohibited. Planting of locally occurring indigenous (water-wise) plants should be encouraged.
SPC 6.8:	The scale and form of any tourism facilities provided within the Agricultural Settlements should complement and respect the modest character of the settlements, and should be consistent with an overall Tourism Development Strategy to be prepared for the Sub-region.
SPC 6.9:	Any development in this area should be subject to environmental assessment (including the consideration of alternatives and public participation) at an appropriate level of detail.

4.9 CORE URBAN

Intensive settlement areas of relatively high density within the study area, able to obtain and support a range of services and opportunities. These areas have a defined edge and contain a range of land use activities.

Would include:

- Urban Areas, main towns.

Could allow:

- Commercial activities.
- Infrastructure and services.
- Social facilities.
- Housing.
- Industry.

Policies:

- Zoning permission for commercial uses outside the designated commercial areas should not be granted.
- Safeguard areas identified as important for key ecological and evolutionary processes.
- Applications for future development should comply with the restrictions on development below the 1:100 year flood line.
- Development within the Core Urban Area should avoid or minimise negative impacts on ecosystems and should promote efficient use of resources.
- Adverse impacts of the Core Urban Area on adjacent areas should be minimised.

Strategies:

SPC 7.1:	Compile area specific, detailed Local Spatial Development Frameworks for each Core Urban Area. These framework plans should give site specific guidelines to the provision of facilities and amenities in terms of their scale and location relative to the strategic need to capitalise on the specific comparative advantages of a particular area relative to the sub-region and the experience it offers permanent residents, seasonal residents and tourists.
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SPC 7.2:	Opportunities and constraints of the natural and cultural environment, as well as potential impacts on valued or sensitive environmental components, should be considered when planning development within these areas: Important place making and cultural elements, eg visitor facilities, trails, historical buildings, tree lines, and other heritage resources should be identified and protected. Furthermore, these elements should be promoted and incorporated as the basis for the site evaluation and planning of all future development.
SPC 7.3:	Development should not take place in ecologically sensitive areas, eg floodplains, steep slopes, wetland or drainage areas, or mobile dunes or driftsands.
SPC 7.4:	Plans for managing water resources, ground water resources, sewage effluent, solid waste and alien vegetation eradication should be prepared and implemented.
SPC 7.5:	The use of water- and energy-efficient sustainable technology in development should be promoted.
SPC 7.6:	The planting of invasive exotic plant species in gardens should be strictly prohibited. Planting of locally occurring indigenous (water-wise) plants should be encouraged.
SPC 7.7:	Special attention should be given to promote the management of available freshwater resources, with emphasis on efficient and appropriate use of available water, avoiding wastage or leakage, and avoiding pollution of these resources.
SPC 7.8:	Any development in this area should be subject to the Integrated Environmental Management procedure and environmental assessment at an appropriate level of detail.

4.10 IMPORTANT ECOLOGICAL AND EVOLUTIONARY PROCESS AREAS (REFER *PLAN 4*)

4.10.1 Introduction

The maintenance of ecological and evolutionary processes is critical both to conserving the exceptional level of species diversity found in this area and to maintaining ecosystem services such as reliable water yield, water quality, flood regulation, and coastal buffering and protection. The area contains representative examples of a wide range of lowland fynbos communities that have been extensively transformed by agriculture or alien plant invasions elsewhere in the globally unique Cape Floristic Region. It is thus of great conservation importance. The area supports a wide variety of birds and other animals that are directly related to the wide diversity of habitats in the area. It also contains a number of important catchment areas, river systems, estuaries and special habitats such as wetlands and vleis, and forest patches.

Ten important Process Areas have been identified, as shown on *Plan 4*. These Process Areas support connections between Critically Endangered or Endangered habitats for biodiversity, and link areas of natural vegetation, wetlands and watercourses (streams and rivers). They also support connections between the mountains, lowlands and the coast, and along mountain ranges and the coast. The Process Areas support not only current ecological processes, but also make provision for evolutionary processes to continue. It is anticipated that adequate spatial provision for such processes could help local biodiversity adapt to climate change.

The sound planning and management of these areas would enable ecological and evolutionary processes and ecosystem services to persist. Of the utmost importance is to prevent or avoid further fragmentation of natural habitat, to maintain links or corridors of natural habitat, to manage freshwater and associated wetland systems soundly, and to replicate the key management 'drivers' that determine the species composition and structure (eg fire in fynbos).

The Process Areas are broadly defined only. That is, there may be some spatial flexibility within these areas in terms of safeguarding processes (eg providing an upland-lowland corridor or coast-inland corridor), or there may be no flexibility (eg corridors between spatially fixed, threatened remnants). They cross SPCs, and may accommodate a range of different established land uses. For this reason, they are not defined in terms of an SPC, but rather as an overlay to the SPCs.

Would include:

- Natural and semi-natural areas, wetlands and river/stream corridors within urban areas, agricultural settlements and areas, conservation-agriculture buffer areas, and formal conservation areas in private or public ownership.

Could allow:

- A range of land uses which would not compromise the integrity of these key process areas by reducing the integrity of remaining natural areas and/or connections between remaining natural areas, wetlands and drainage lines, and between the mountains, the lowlands and the coast.

Policies:

- Safeguard areas identified as important for key ecological and evolutionary processes.

Strategies:

SPC 8.1:	Where development is being considered and would affect remaining areas of natural vegetation or habitat in areas identified as being important for ecological and evolutionary processes, an ecological assessment should be carried out by an appropriate plant, terrestrial or freshwater ecologist approved by the Land Use Advisory Unit of CapeNature. This assessment should focus on (1) determining the significance of the site in its broader context with regard to, and (2) the implications of the proposed development for, maintaining connections between other sites of natural vegetation in relatively close proximity, protecting links with drainage lines, watercourses, wetlands, and/or maintaining connections between and/or along mountains, lowlands and coast. The findings of the assessment should inform (ie establish opportunities or constraints to) further planning and decision-making on the proposed development.
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4.10.2 The Process Areas

The Process Areas were derived, iteratively, through a synthesis of available existing information and through workshops, meetings, discussions etc with key roleplayers, principally staff of the Conservation Unit of the Botanical Society of South Africa and CapeNature.

Sources of information included:

- Vegetation and Conservation Report for the Southern Overberg Structure Plan (1994).
- Cape Action Plan for the Environment (CAPE) Project (2000).
- Agulhas Biodiversity Initiative (ABI) Project Document (2003).
- Cape Lowlands Renosterveld Project (2003).
- The Overberg Spatial Development Framework (2004).
- National Spatial Biodiversity Assessment (2004).
- Provincial Spatial Development Framework (Draft March 2005).

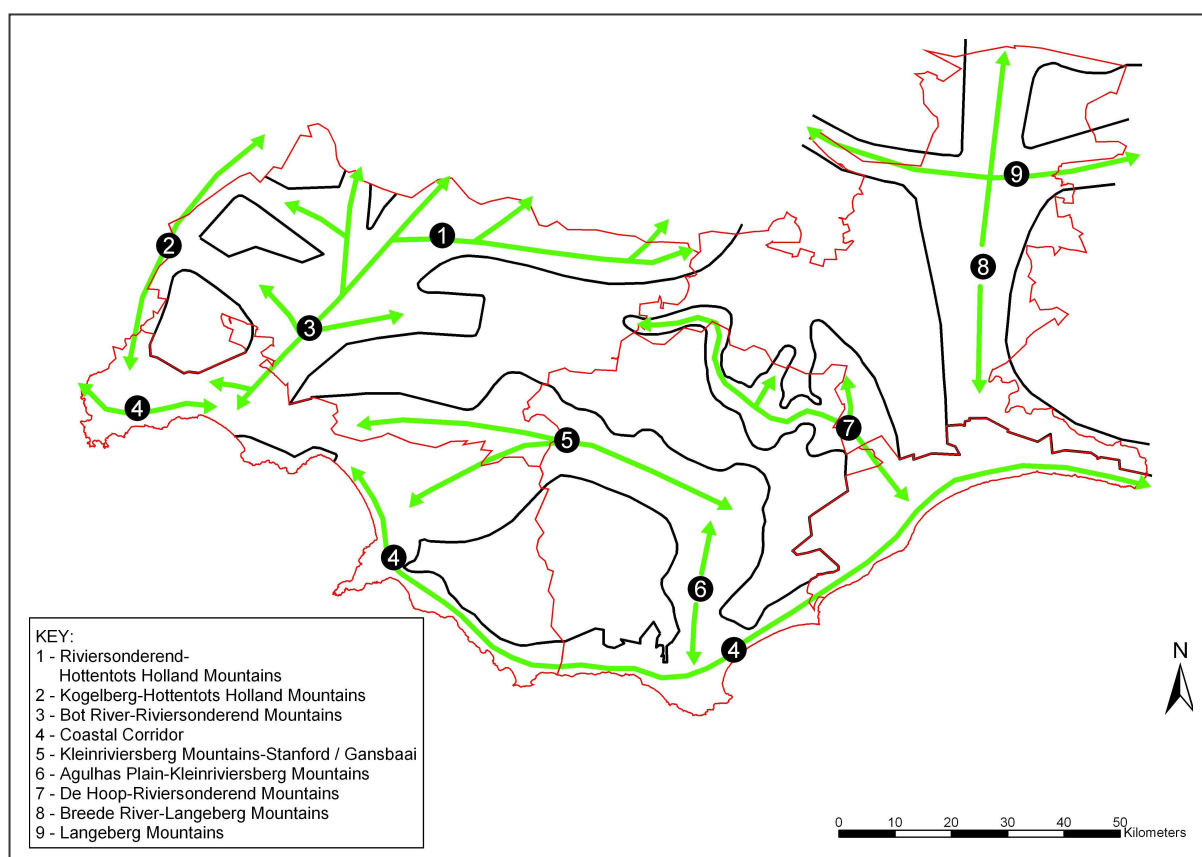


FIGURE 10: THE ECOLOGICAL PROCESS AREAS

Each of the ten Process Areas is numbered, as shown on *Plan 4*; the text hereunder describes why each Process Area is important. It should be noted that Process Areas 4, 5, 6 and 10 together effectively cover the area from the coast to the Kleinriviersberg Mountains, incorporating the Agulhas Plain.

The various layers of information underlying and collectively informing the demarcation of Process Areas is depicted in *Plan 5*.

Plan 6 reflects those Process Areas relevant to the study area only.

Process Area 1: Riviersonderend Mountains – Hottentots Holland Mountains

- This ecological corridor is identified in the Provincial Spatial Development Framework (PSDF). The area is important in that it spans the biogeographic gradients of the Cape Floristic Region and the Succulent Karoo, and it makes allowance for long term evolution and migration across the landscape.
- This area incorporates soil-type transitions mapped in the Cape Lowlands Renosterveld Project (2003), that are important for ecological and/or evolutionary processes.
- It incorporates priority clusters identified in the Cape Lowlands Renosterveld Project (2003) where they occur on ecological gradients and have relatively high connectivity (fragments of Critically Endangered renosterveld within 500m of one another).
- The mountains function as an important catchment area, performing a valuable ecosystem service.

- It accommodates a number of tracts of Endangered ecosystem as identified in the National Spatial Biodiversity Assessment (2004).
- It accommodates a number of river corridors that provide important linkages between ecosystems.
- The area provides tracts of natural habitat linking Protected Areas, namely: the Theewaterskloof Nature Reserve; the Riviersonderend Nature Reserve; the Hottentots-Holland Nature Reserve; the Villiersdorp Nature Reserve, the Greyton Nature Reserve; the Riviersonderend and Hottentots-Holland Mountain Catchment Areas.

Process Area 2: Kogelberg - Hottentots Holland Mountains

The Kogelberg Biosphere Reserve is of exceptional conservation significance. It may be regarded as the 'floristic heart' of the Cape Floristic Region as it appears to have the highest plant species richness and endemism. An exceptional diversity of natural environments characterises the area, including marine and coastal environments, rare blackwater lakes, marshes, estuaries, rivers, and mountains bordering on a narrow coastal plain.

- This ecological corridor is identified in the PSDF, as it provides for long term evolution and migration across the landscape. It is also identified as an important upland-lowland gradient in the Cape Lowlands Renosterveld Plan.
- It incorporates priority clusters identified in the Cape Lowlands Renosterveld Project (2003) where they occur on ecological gradients and have relatively high connectivity (fragments of Critically Endangered renosterveld within 500m of one another), allowing interaction.
- The mountains function as an important catchment area, performing a valuable ecosystem service.
- The area provides tracts of natural habitat linking Protected Areas, namely: the Hottentots-Holland Nature Reserve; the Theewaterskloof Nature Reserve; the Groenlandberg Nature Reserve; the Kogelberg Nature Reserve, and the Hottentots-Holland Mountain Catchment Area.

Process Area 3: Bot River Estuary - Riviersonderend Mountains

This ecological corridor links the Bot River estuary on the coast to the Riviersonderend Mountains inland.

- It is identified in both the PSDF and the Cape Lowlands Renosterveld Project (2003) as an important coast to interior corridor for ecological and evolutionary processes, that would support the migration and exchange of inland and coastal biota.
- The area accommodates a number of upland-lowland gradients identified in the Cape Lowlands Renosterveld Project (2003), that are important for ecological and evolutionary processes. It also accommodates soil gradients.
- The area incorporates Cape Lowlands Renosterveld Project (2003) priority clusters where they coincide with ecological gradients and have relatively high connectivity, allowing interaction.
- It accommodates a number of tracts of Endangered ecosystem as identified in the National Spatial Biodiversity Assessment (2004).
- It accommodates a number of river corridors that provide important linkages between ecosystems, and provides links to the Klein Swartberg Mountain.

- The area links tracts of intact vegetation preserved in Protected Areas, namely: the Theewaterskloof Nature Reserve; Groenlandberg Nature Reserve; Caledon Nature Reserve; Houwhoek Nature Reserve; Mt Hebron and Bot River Nature Reserves; Kogelberg Nature Reserve; Villiersdorp Nature Reserve; Riviersonderend Mountain Catchment Area.

Process Area 4: Coastal Corridor

The coastal corridor broadly accommodates the coastal zone and dynamic or mobile ecosystems found in that zone. It is important for animal and plant dispersal, providing linkages along climate gradients.

- The coastal corridor is identified in both the PSDF and the Cape Lowlands Renosterveld Project (2003) as being important for enabling the persistence of ecological and evolutionary processes.
- It links a number of protected areas, namely: Kogelberg Nature Reserve; Bot River Nature Reserve; Walker Bay Nature Reserve; Uilkraalsmond Nature Reserve; Pearly Beach and Groot Hagelkraal Nature Reserves; Quoin Point Nature Reserve; De Mond Nature Reserve; and De Hoop Nature Reserve. De Mond is an internationally recognized Ramsar site for its wetlands.
- It incorporates the shifting sand dunes along the coast (west of Cape Agulhas, at Quoin Point, and between Struisbaai and De Hoop).
- The area includes high endemism limestone habitats which are important from an evolutionary process perspective.
- It incorporates a number of estuaries and floodplains associated with the many rivers that empty into the sea along this coast (including the Palmiet, Bot, Klein, Uilkraals, Nuwejaars, Kars, Heuningnes, Sout and Breede), as well as numerous coastal wetlands.
- It provides a corridor for movement of threatened animal populations between coastal protected areas (eg for endemic and threatened mammals such as the bontebok and Cape mountain zebra between De Hoop and De Mond).

Process Area 5: Bredasdorp Mountains – Stanford/Gansbaai

This mountainous area forms an east-west corridor; tracts of natural habitat between the coast and the mountains provide a 'crest to coast' link.

- The lowlands – to – mountain area is identified in the Cape Lowlands Renosterveld Project (2003) as being an important coast to interior gradient for enabling the persistence of ecological and evolutionary processes.
- The area incorporates priority clusters identified in the Cape Lowlands Renosterveld Project (2003) where they occur on ecological gradients and have relatively high connectivity (fragments of Critically Endangered renosterveld within 500m of one another), allowing interaction.
- It accommodates a number of tracts of Endangered ecosystem as identified in the National Spatial Biodiversity Assessment (2004).
- It incorporates a number of forest patches that are recognized as 'special habitat'.
- It accommodates a number of river corridors that provide important linkages between ecosystems.

- The area accommodates a number of upland-lowland gradients identified in the Cape Lowlands Renosterveld Project (2003), that are important for ecological and evolutionary processes. It also accommodates soil gradients.
- The area provides tracts of natural habitat linking Protected Areas, namely: the Babilonstoring Nature Reserve, the Maanskynkop Nature Reserve; the Fernkloof Nature Reserve, Walker Bay and Salmonsdam Nature Reserves.

Process Area 6: Agulhas – Bredasdorp Mountains

This ecological corridor provides a link between the Agulhas area and the Bredasdorp Mountains, incorporating a diversity of habitats and threatened ecosystems.

- It is identified in the PSDF as an important coast to interior corridor for ecological and evolutionary processes, that would support the migration and exchange of inland and coastal biota.
- The area accommodates a number of upland-lowland gradients identified in the Cape Lowlands Renosterveld Project (2003), that are important for ecological and evolutionary processes.
- It incorporates a substantial area of Critically Endangered ecosystem in terms of the National Spatial Biodiversity Assessment (2004).
- It accommodates a number of 'special habitat' wetlands and enables ecological processes between these and adjacent terrestrial systems.
- The area incorporates some priority clusters identified in the Cape Lowlands Renosterveld Project (2003) that have relatively high connectivity (fragments of Critically Endangered renosterveld within 500m of one another), allowing interaction.
- It also accommodates upland-lowland and soil gradients.
- The area provides tracts of natural habitat linking Protected Areas, namely: Heuningnes and De Mond Nature Reserves.

Process Area 7: De Hoop – Riviersonderend Mountains

This ecological corridor provides a link from the coast to the interior close to the Riviersonderend Mountains.

- The area is identified in the Cape Lowlands Renosterveld Project (2003) as being an important coast to interior gradient for enabling the persistence of ecological and evolutionary processes.
- It accommodates a number of upland-lowland gradients identified in the Cape Lowlands Renosterveld Project (2003). It also accommodates soil gradients.
- It incorporates priority clusters identified in the Cape Lowlands Renosterveld Project (2003) that have relatively high connectivity (fragments of Critically Endangered renosterveld within 500m of one another), allowing interaction.
- It accommodates a number of river corridors that provide important linkages between ecosystems.
- The area links tracts of natural habitat protected in the De Hoop Nature Reserve with inland corridors of natural habitat.

Process Area 8: Breede River Estuary – Langeberg Mountains

This ecological corridor links the Breede River estuary on the coast to the Langeberg Mountains inland.

- It is identified in both the PSDF and the Cape Lowlands Renosterveld Project (2003) as an important coast to interior corridor for ecological and evolutionary processes, that would support the migration and exchange of inland and coastal biota.
- It incorporates priority clusters identified in the Cape Lowlands Renosterveld Project (2003) that have relatively high connectivity (fragments of Critically Endangered renosterveld within 500m of one another), allowing interaction.
- The area incorporates tracts of Endangered ecosystems identified in the National Spatial Biodiversity Assessment (2004).
- It accommodates a number of river corridors that provide important linkages between ecosystems.
- The mountains function as an important catchment area, performing a valuable ecosystem service.
- It also accommodates upland-lowland and soil gradients.
- The area provides tracts of natural habitat linking Protected Areas, namely: the Warmwaterberg Nature Reserve; the Marloth Nature Reserve; the Zuurberg Nature Reserve; the Boosmansbos Nature Reserve; the Langeberg Mountain Catchment Area; the Bontebok National Park; and the De Hoop Nature Reserve.

Process Area 9: Langeberg Mountains

This ecological corridor follows the Langeberg Mountains in an east-west direction, following climatic gradients.

- It is identified in the PSDF as an important inland corridor for ecological and evolutionary processes.
- The mountains function as an important catchment area, performing a valuable ecosystem service.
- The area provides tracts of natural habitat linking Protected Areas, namely: the Marloth Nature Reserve; the Zuurberg Nature Reserve; the Boosmansbos Nature Reserve; and the Langeberg Mountain Catchment Area.

Process Area 10: Agulhas Plain

The Agulhas Plain is recognized as being the last relatively intact complex of highly diverse vegetation, wetlands and coastal ecosystems in the Cape Lowlands. Because of its complexity, there are numerous ecological processes active in this area; within and between the freshwater (including vleis and wetlands) systems, the coastal corridor, the inland Kleinriviersberg Mountains and areas to the west and east of the Agulhas Plain.

- The PSDF identifies a coastal - inland – coastal corridor as being important for ecological and evolutionary processes. This corridor spans the Agulhas Plain from the vicinity of Pearly Beach inland to the Kleinriviersberg Mountains and back to the coast near the mouth of the Heuningnes River.

- The Agulhas Plain – mountain area is identified in the Cape Lowlands Renosterveld Project (2003) as being an important coast to interior gradient for enabling the persistence of ecological and evolutionary processes.
- It accommodates a number of special habitats such as drainage systems and wetlands that provide important linkages between ecosystems (including Soetendalsvlei, the Ratel River and Nuwejaars River wetland systems), as well as important ecological features such as Geelkop and Heuningrug.
- The area incorporates small remnants of Critically Endangered ecosystems, and relatively larger areas of Endangered ecosystems identified in the National Spatial Biodiversity Assessment (2004).