

Welcome, highlighting the importance of the MSP process and South Africa's international commitment to increasing MPA estate

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Why is biodiversity important to us?

- Humans depend on the services ecosystems provide. Biodiversity loss weakens ecosystems, which are then less capable of providing those services.
- Biodiversity is good for the economy - At least 40 percent of the world's economy and 80 percent of the needs of the poor are derived from biological resources.
- Biodiversity is an essential part of the solution for climate change, e.g. by absorbing and storing large amounts of carbon, or buffering us from the elements, such as impacts of storm surges and sea level rise.
- There is a close link between degradation of nature and disease outbreaks. Protecting nature saves lives and money...

“What we do over the next 10 years will determine the future of humanity for the next 10,000 years” (David King)

Implementing “interventions to ensure environmental sustainability and resilience to future shocks.” is a critical action identified in South Africa’s NDP 2030

CBD commitments: act as custodians of our national environmental heritage and of our shared global heritage, as a megadiverse country

Operation Phakisa - ocean economy. South Africa is expanding economic growth and food and energy security through the growth of several marine sectors.

Such growth will often be concentrated in coastal and shallow shelf regions, therefore considerable potential for inter-sectoral and / or sectoral-environmental conflict in these areas

Hence the need for Marine Spatial Planning to ensure sustainable resource use, considering the impacts and requirements of multiple sectors/users

South Africa needs to ensure that the current growth strategy enables future growth by preserving our ecological resilience to the imminent threats of climate change.

Progress already made in securing some marine ecological infrastructure with declaration of 20 new MPAs through Operation Phakisa

The **biodiversity sector** is a key sector in providing an enabling environment for economic growth and expansion that is environmentally sustainable.

Role: identify areas of particular importance for biodiversity; provide strategic advice for enhanced management to secure the biodiversity in these areas

Transparency and a participatory approach are essential to these processes

We would like to take this opportunity to share with you the progress that we have made up to now, the science underlying it, and our proposals for engagement and iterative progress going forward, especially in terms of using the work done as an input into the coming planning process within the MSP framework.