

The National Coastal Management Programme of South Africa: 2026 – 2031

Ensuring a Sustainable Coastal Future



forestry, fisheries
& the environment

Department:
Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



THE NATIONAL COASTAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME OF SOUTH AFRICA: 2026-2031

Published by the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment



Minister's Foreword

DISCLAIMER

This document represents an update to the original National Coastal Management Programme, and as such, still upholds the vision, principles and core objectives of the original Programme. This document does not in any way have legal authority or take precedence over the National Environmental Management: Integrated Coastal Management Act, 2008 (Act No. 24 of 2008) (ICM Act) nor does it purport to stand in the place of or substitute any of the wording and provisions of the ICM Act. The ICM Act remains the final and legal authority on Integrated Coastal Management in South Africa. However, please note that Acts of Parliament are occasionally amended, and the reader is advised to consider the latest version of any Act referred to in this document.

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South Africa's democratic journey has been mirrored in our evolving approach to coastal management. Over the three decades since our transition to democracy, we have witnessed a profound improvement in how we view, value, and protect our coastal heritage. This evolution has culminated in sophisticated legal frameworks that acknowledge the intricate relationships between ecological sustainability, social justice, and economic development along our coastline.

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Our oceans and coasts represent more than just geographic boundaries – they are vital economic corridors, cultural treasures, and ecological lifelines. Globally, these zones face unprecedented pressures, with half the world's population now concentrated in coastal areas and migration trends suggesting further densification. South Africa's response to these complexities must be both visionary and pragmatic.

The 2000 White Paper for Sustainable Coastal Development marked a watershed moment in our young democracy's environmental governance.

It laid the foundation for a unified approach to coastal management, directly confronting the fragmentary and inequitable practices of our past. This vision materialised in the groundbreaking ICM Act, later strengthened by its 2014 amendment. This legislation stands as a testament to South Africa's commitment to environmental leadership, pioneering integrated coastal management not just for our nation, but for the African continent.

The ICM Act's power lies in its rejection of siloed management approaches in favour of holistic, integrated solutions. Among its many innovative mechanisms, coastal management programmes (CMPs) emerge as the cornerstone of implementation. These programmes transcend traditional bureaucratic boundaries, embedding coastal considerations into the fabric of governmental planning and decision-making at all levels.

At the apex of this system, stands the National Coastal Management Programme (NCMP), which serves as both compass and catalyst for coastal governance in South Africa. As the principal implementation tool of the ICM Act, it provides the essential framework for cooperative governance and coordinated action across all spheres of government. The NCMP's authority guides and shapes provincial and municipal coastal management programmes, ensuring coherence in our national coastal management effort.

Our vision for South Africa's coast is ambitious yet achievable – a coast that works for all, sustains our communities, and preserves our natural heritage for future generations. The NCMP translates this vision into concrete action through carefully identified priority areas: enhancing coastal access, protecting our estuaries, addressing coastal vulnerability, managing pollution, strengthening enforcement, advancing research, fostering education, and building partnerships.

The Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment remains steadfast in its commitment to this vision. Through the NCMP, we set forth practical, measurable objectives that acknowledge both immediate needs and long-term aspirations. Our approach recognises that



effective coastal management requires not just government action, but the active participation of all South Africans in safeguarding our coastal resources.

As we face climate change, increasing urbanisation, and economic development, the NCMP stands as our roadmap to a sustainable coastal future. It embodies our dedication to protecting and enhancing South Africa's coastal zone – not just as an environmental imperative, but as a vital component of our national heritage and future prosperity.



Willie Aucamp

**Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the
Environment**





South Africa's Coastal Vision: Our Shared Heritage, Our Shared Responsibility

We, the people of South Africa, celebrate the diversity, beauty and richness of our coast and seek an equitable balance of opportunities and benefits throughout it.

We strive for sustainable coastal development – involving a balance between material prosperity, social development, cultural values, spiritual fulfilment and ecological integrity, in the interests of all South Africans.

We strive for a time when all South Africans recognise that the coast is ours to enjoy in a spirit of community. We recognize that access to our coastal public property is a fundamental right of all South African citizens, and we commit to removing historical barriers and facilitating equitable coastal access for all communities.

We embrace the principles of a sustainable Blue Economy, seeking to unlock the economic potential of our coast in a way that regenerates, rather than degrades, our natural capital.

We look forward to a time when all South Africans assume shared responsibility for maintaining the health, diversity and productivity of coastal ecosystems in a spirit of stewardship and caring.

We seek to guide the management of our coast in a way that benefits current and future generations and honours our obligations and undertakings from local to global levels.

Celebrating Our Coastal Heritage

South Africa's 3,000km coastline is a national treasure of immeasurable value, stretching from the Atlantic Ocean in the west to the Indian Ocean in the east. This diverse coastal environment is not merely a geographical feature—it represents our shared heritage, a living testament to our identity as South Africans.

Our coast embodies our country's remarkable biodiversity, cultural significance, and economic potential. From the cold, nutrient-rich waters of the West Coast to the warm subtropical environments of KwaZulu-Natal, our coastal regions host some of the most diverse marine ecosystems in the world. These shores have shaped our history—serving as points of cultural exchange, sustaining communities through traditional fishing practices, and connecting us to global maritime networks. Today, they continue to play a vital role in our national identity, offering spaces for recreation, spiritual connection, economic activity, and scientific discovery.



Ecological Richness

Home to over 10,000 marine species, including 147 that are found nowhere else on Earth, making our waters among the most biodiverse globally.



Cultural Significance

Centuries of coastal traditions, from indigenous Khoisan practices to contemporary fishing communities, creating a rich tapestry of cultural heritage.



Economic Value

Contributes approximately R177 billion annually to our economy through tourism, fishing, shipping, and other blue economy sectors.

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

CARP	Climate Change Adaptation Response Plan
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CML	Coastal Management Line
CMP	Coastal Management Programme
CPP	Coastal Public Property
CPZ	Coastal Protection Zone
CVI	Coastal Vulnerability Index
CWDP	Coastal Waters Discharge Permit
DDM	District Development Model
DFFE	Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment
DLRRD/DARLRD	Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development
DoT	Department of Transport
DPW/DPWI	Department of Public Works and Infrastructure
DsT	Decision Support Tool
DWS	Department of Water and Sanitation
EbA	Ecosystem-based Adaptation
EBSA	Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Area
eCAS	EMI Case Administration System
EFZ	Estuarine Functional Zone
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EMI	Environmental Management Inspector
EMP	Estuarine Management Plan
EPWP	Expanded Public Works Programme
GBF	Global Biodiversity Framework
GEF	Global Environment Facility
HWM	High-Water Mark
ICM	Integrated Coastal Management
ICMOrg	Incident Management Organisation
ICZM	Integrated Coastal Zone Management
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
IMOrg	Incident Management Organisation
LN3	Listing Notice 3

MINTECH	Ministerial Technical Committee
MLRA	Marine Living Resources Act
MPA	Marine Protected Area
MSP	Marine Spatial Planning
MTDP	Medium-Term Development Plan
NATJOINTS	National Joint Operational and Intelligence Structure
NCC	National Coastal Committee
NCCAS	National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy
NCCRP	National Climate Change Response Policy
NCMP	National Coastal Management Programme
NDP	National Development Plan
NECEIS	National Environmental Compliance and Enforcement Information System
NEMA	National Environmental Management Act
NEM:PAA	National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NOSCP	National Oil Spill Contingency Plan
NPA	National Prosecuting Authority
OCIMS	Ocean and Coastal Information Management System
OECM	Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measure
ORV	Off-Road Vehicle
PCC	Provincial Coastal Committee
SAEON	South African Environmental Observation Network
SALGA	South African Local Government Association
SAMSA	South African Maritime Safety Authority
SANSA	South African National Space Agency
SDF	Spatial Development Framework
SOC	State of Coast
SPLUMA	Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act
WfC	Working for the Coast
WG7	Working Group 7
WIOSAP	Western Indian Ocean Strategic Action Programme
WWTW	Waste Water Treatment Works

Executive Summary

The National Coastal Management Programme (NCMP) 2026-2031 represents a landmark evolution in South Africa's environmental governance. As the nation's principal policy directive mandated by the Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) Act, this programme provides a robust and actionable framework for the sustainable and equitable management of our 3,592-kilometer coastline. Building on the lessons from the first NCMP, this updated version is a strategic recalibration—more integrated, practical, accountable, and responsive to the pressing challenges of our time.

Our National Vision:

We, the people of South Africa, celebrate the diversity, beauty and richness of our coast and seek an equitable balance of opportunities and benefits throughout it. We strive for sustainable coastal development – involving a balance between material prosperity, social development, cultural values, spiritual fulfilment and ecological integrity, in the interests of all South Africans. We strive for a time when all South Africans recognise that the coast is ours to enjoy in a spirit of community. We recognise that access to our coastal public property is a fundamental right of all South African citizens, and we commit to removing historical barriers and facilitating equitable coastal access for all communities. We embrace the principles of a sustainable Blue Economy, seeking to unlock the economic potential of our coast in a way that regenerates, rather than degrades, our natural capital. We look forward to a time when all South Africans assume shared responsibility for maintaining the health, diversity and productivity of coastal ecosystems in a spirit of stewardship and caring. We seek to guide the management of our coast in a way that benefits current and future generations and honours our obligations and undertakings from local to global levels.

A Programme Anchored in Global and National Priorities:

This NCMP is explicitly aligned with global best practices and key international commitments, including the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. It strategically integrates globally recognised concepts such as the Sustainable Blue Economy, Source-to-Sea Management, and Marine Spatial Planning (MSP), ensuring our national actions are both



locally relevant and globally aligned. Nationally, it serves as a key implementation tool for the National Development Plan (NDP) 2030 and is designed to be operationalised through the District Development Model (DDM).



Strategic Priorities for 2026-2031:

Based on a comprehensive analysis and stakeholder consultation, this NCMP focuses national efforts on eight interconnected strategic priorities:

1. **Equitable Public Access and Livelihoods:** Securing the coast for all people and their prosperity.
2. **Estuary Management and Restoration:** Revitalising the vital arteries of our coastline.
3. **Climate Resilience and Spatial Planning:** Proactively planning for a resilient tomorrow.
4. **Coastal Pollution Management:** Turning the tide on pollution for a healthier coast.
5. **Effective Governance:** Strengthening the rule of law along our shores.
6. **Coastal Research and Innovation:** Harnessing knowledge for better decision-making.
7. **Awareness, Education, and Partnerships:** Fostering a national culture of coastal stewardship through collective action.
8. **Mechanisms for Effective Compliance and Enforcement:** Implementing measures to facilitate effective compliance and enforcement.

A Framework for Action and Accountability:

The core of this NCMP is a dedicated and detailed **National Implementation Plan**. For each of the eight priorities, it sets out clear, time-bound actions, measurable Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), and designates lead and support agencies, ensuring a clear line of sight from strategic intent to on-the-ground delivery.

Key Structural Enhancements:

To ensure its effectiveness and practicality, this NCMP introduces several critical new components:

- **A Dedicated Regulatory Framework Chapter:** A practical guide that collates existing **norms and standards** applicable to the coastal zone and commits to developing new ones where gaps exist, providing much-needed clarity for managers and developers.

- **Comprehensive Guidance for Municipalities:** A dedicated chapter acknowledging the resource and capacity constraints at the local level, offering a **phased approach** to developing Municipal CMPs and leveraging partnerships for support.
- **A National Coastal Investment Framework:** A new chapter that reframes the NCMP as an investment prospectus, articulating the economic case for coastal management and outlining a **blended finance strategy** to secure the necessary resources for implementation.
- **Robust Governance Mechanisms:** The NCMP formalises **National Capacity Building** to empower officials and a clear **Conflict Resolution Mechanism** to address the inevitable disputes in a multi-user environment.

Monitoring for Adaptive Management:

The programme establishes a rigorous monitoring and evaluation framework, centered on a comprehensive **State of the Coast (SOC) Report** to be published every five years, with the first annual report due in 2027. This report, built on a detailed set of core national indicators, will provide the evidence-base to track progress, ensure accountability, and guide the adaptive management of our coastal resources. The entire programme endeavors to be supported by a **Digital NCMP Portal** to ensure transparency and public access to information.

This NCMP is a commitment to all South Africans. It is a comprehensive framework for collaboration, a detailed guide for action, and a promise to protect and enhance our invaluable coastal heritage for all generations.



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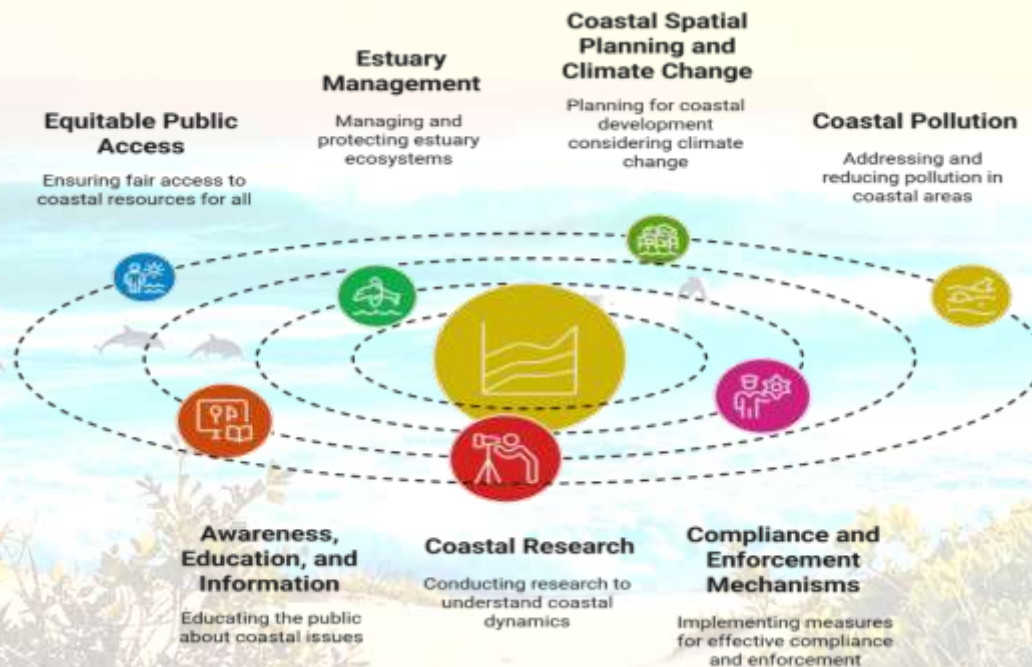
Quick Reference Guide for Decision-Makers

What is the NCMP?

The NCMP is South Africa's legally mandated, five-year national strategy for the coast. It is the primary policy directive that coordinates the actions of national, provincial, and local authorities to ensure our 3,592km coastline is managed sustainably, equitably, and resiliently, in line with the Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) Act.

The 8 National Priorities: Focusing Our Efforts:

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Key Mandates for Your Sphere of Government

Sphere	Your Core Responsibilities under the ICM Act & this NCMP	Key Chapter Reference
NATIONAL (Ministers, DGs, National Entities)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set national policy and develop legally binding norms and standards. • Oversee national implementation and ensure cross-sectoral alignment (e.g., MSP, Water). • Fulfill international reporting obligations and lead national research. 	Chapters 4, 5, 8
PROVINCIAL (MECs, Heads of Department)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement a Provincial Coastal Management Programme (PCMP) that is aligned with this NCMP. • Establish and manage the Provincial Coastal Committee (PCC). • Delineate Coastal Management Lines (CMLs) and provide technical support to municipalities. 	Chapters 5, 7, 9
MUNICIPAL (Mayors, Municipal Managers, Councils)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and adopt a Municipal Coastal Management Programme (MCMP). • Integrate the MCMP into your Integrated Development Plan (IDP) and Spatial Development Framework (SDF). • Designate and manage coastal access land and enforce local by-laws. 	Chapter 9,7

How This Plan Helps You and Your Mandate

- **For Municipalities:** This NCMP provides a clear, legally-defensible framework for making land-use decisions. It strengthens your case for accessing national and international funding for coastal projects and provides a direct line to the DFFE Municipal Support Unit for technical assistance.
- **For Provinces:** This NCMP provides the strategic direction needed for effective provincial planning. It establishes a formal platform (the PCC) for coordinating with municipalities and national departments, streamlining reporting, and addressing cross-cutting provincial challenges

CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

1.1 The South African Coast: Our National Treasure

Throughout history, humans have sought out the coast as a desirable place for settlement, livelihoods, recreation, and cultural heritage. Forming a highly dynamic zone of convergence between land and sea, the coastal regions of our planet serve as unique geological, ecological, and biological domains of vital importance to a vast array of terrestrial and aquatic life. These areas represent some of the most productive and diverse ecosystems on Earth, supporting critical ecological processes and essential ecosystem services.

South Africa's approximately 3,592 kilometers of coastline, spanning three ocean systems, represents one of our nation's most precious assets. This dynamic interface between land and sea encompasses diverse ecosystems including estuaries, dunes, rocky shores, sandy beaches, and coastal wetlands, each playing a vital role in maintaining ecological balance and supporting human well-being. These coastal systems are indispensable to life itself and contribute significantly to our national prosperity and quality of life.

The coast affects people in multiple and profound ways. Beyond providing spaces for human settlement, recreation, and cultural practices, it serves as:

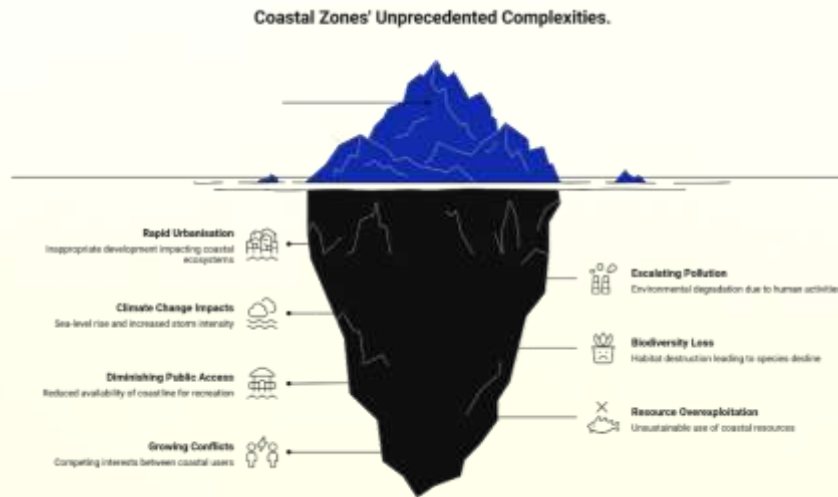
- A critical source of food security through fisheries and aquaculture
- An economic powerhouse hosting major ports, industries, and tourism infrastructure
- A repository of cultural heritage and traditional knowledge



- A source of scientific discovery and educational opportunities
- A provider of essential ecosystem services including coastal protection, carbon sequestration, and water filtration

With South Africa's unemployment rate at 30.9% and youth unemployment at a staggering 58%, the coastal zone represents one of the few growth sectors with potential to create jobs at scale while simultaneously addressing environmental sustainability objectives. The Blue Economy is therefore not merely an environmental concern but an economic imperative—the ocean represents untapped potential for employment in fishing, aquaculture, tourism, maritime transport, and coastal restoration. This Programme recognises that coastal management must deliver tangible socio-economic benefits to communities if it is to secure the social licence necessary for long-term environmental protection.

Furthermore, the coast holds deep spiritual and cultural significance for many South African communities, playing a central role in traditional practices, religious ceremonies, and cultural identity. The restoration and sustainable maintenance of these coastal areas directly affects both the personal and economic well-being of current and future generations of South Africans.



The Multifaceted Importance of South Africa's Coast



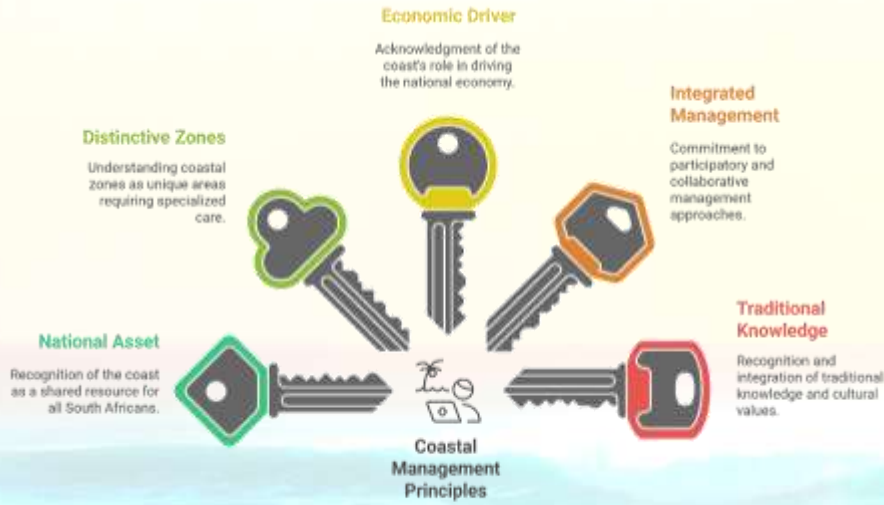
However, our coastal zones face unprecedented complexities in the 21st century:

- Rapid urbanisation and inappropriate coastal development
- Escalating pollution and environmental degradation
- Climate change impacts including sea-level rise and increased storm intensity
- Loss of biodiversity and habitat destruction
- Diminishing public access to the coastline
- Resource overexploitation
- Growing conflicts between competing coastal uses

The advent of democracy in South Africa marked a fundamental shift in coastal management philosophy and practice. This was anchored in several key principles:

- Recognition of the coast as a national asset belonging to all South Africans
- Understanding of coastal zones as distinctive places requiring specialised management
- Acknowledgment of the coast's role as a driver of the national economy
- Commitment to integrated, participatory management approaches

- Recognition of traditional knowledge and cultural values



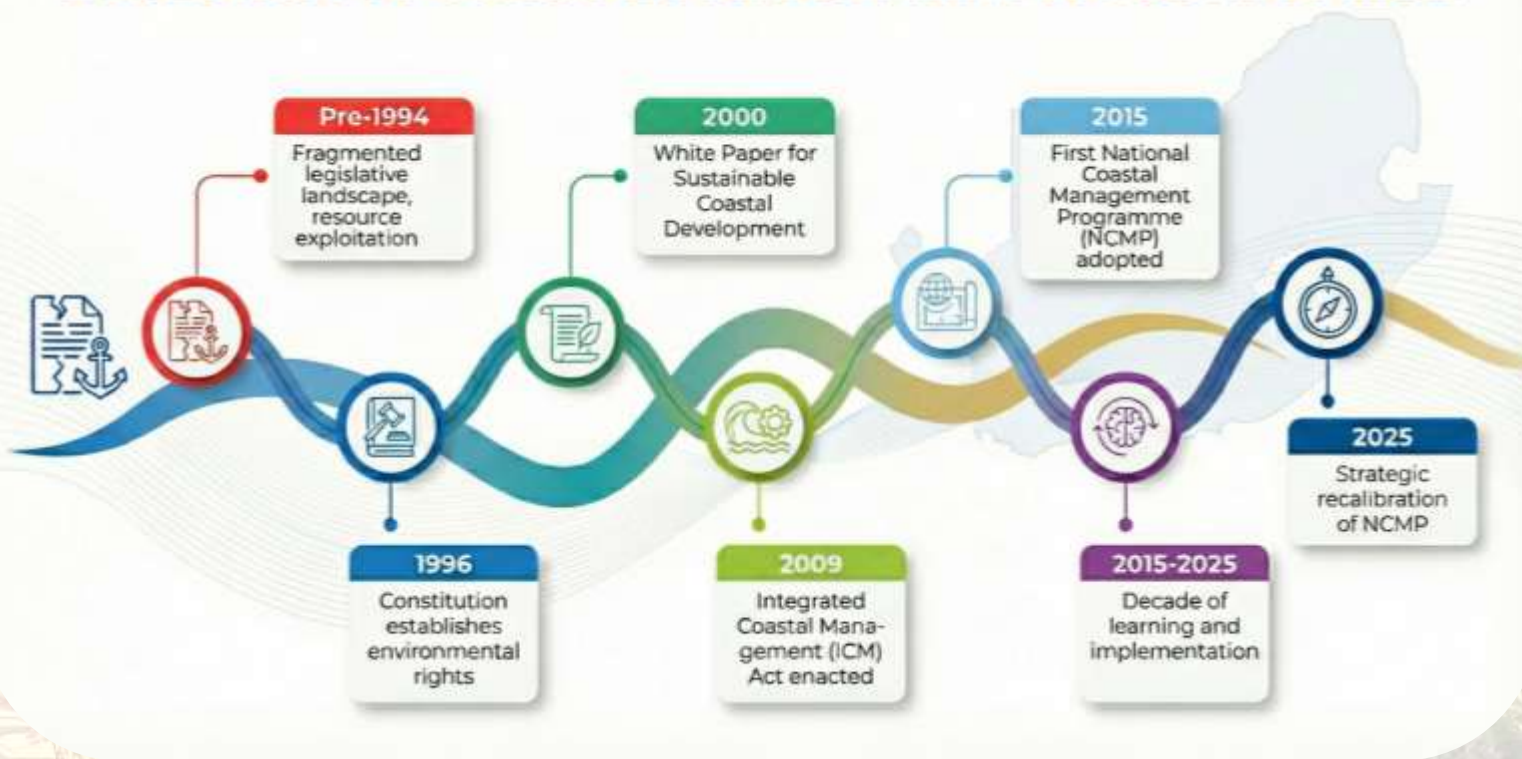
Coastal Economic Drivers



1.2 The Journey of Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) in South Africa

South Africa's approach to coastal management has undergone a profound transformation, moving from the fragmented, often inequitable practices of the past towards a holistic, integrated, and constitutionally-grounded framework. This evolution reflects our nation's broader journey towards a more just and sustainable democracy.

EVOLUTION OF COASTAL MANAGEMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA



The White Paper for Sustainable Coastal Development (2000) signalled this paradigm shift, laying the groundwork for a more integrated and equitable approach to coastal management. This was further strengthened by the ICM Act which provided the legislative framework for coordinated coastal governance.

The NCMP represents the operational manifestation of this evolved approach to coastal management. As South Africa's principal policy directive for coastal governance, it serves multiple critical functions:

- Providing strategic direction for integrated coastal management
- Coordinating actions across all spheres of government
- Facilitating engagement with non-governmental organisations, the private sector, and local communities
- Establishing implementation frameworks for priority coastal management initiatives
- Monitoring and evaluating coastal management effectiveness.

Through stakeholder consultation and scientific analysis, the NCMP identifies and addresses key priorities for coastal management, translating policy objectives into actionable plans. It represents a living document that evolves with our understanding of coastal systems while maintaining steadfast commitment to sustainable and equitable coastal development.



1.3 Purpose and Mandate of the NCMP

This National Coastal Management Programme is the primary instrument for fulfilling the mandate of the Integrated Coastal Management Act (ICM Act). As per sections 44 and 45 of the Act, its purpose is to:

1. **Serve as a National Policy Directive:** It establishes the official national policy for integrated coastal management, providing a binding framework for across government levels and organs of state whose activities may impact the coastal zone.
2. **Ensure an Integrated, Coordinated, and Uniform Approach:** It is designed to overcome the siloed, sector-based management of the past. It provides the strategic "glue" that connects the actions of various departments—from environment to transport, minerals to water—and aligns national, provincial, and municipal efforts.
3. **Operationalize the ICM Act:** It translates the legal requirements and principles of the ICM Act into an actionable strategic framework, detailing:
 - o **A National Vision** for the coast.
 - o **Specific Objectives** for coastal management.
 - o **Strategic Priorities** that focus national effort.
 - o **A Framework for Co-operative Governance.**
 - o A commitment to developing **Norms and Standards.**
 - o **Performance Indicators** to measure progress.
4. **Provide a Framework for Alignment:** It serves as the parent document for all Provincial Coastal Management Programmes (PCMPs) and Municipal Coastal Management Programmes (MCMs), ensuring a "golden thread" of policy consistency from the national to the local level.

This NCMP is therefore the South African government's primary commitment to the sustainable and equitable management of our coast. It is the yardstick against which our collective performance as custodians of this national treasure will be measured.

1.4 Core Principles of Integrated Coastal Management in South Africa

The implementation of this NCMP is guided by a set of foundational principles that reflect our constitutional mandates and align with global best practice. These principles inform every priority, objective, and action within this programme:



1. **Ecological Integrity:** The health, biodiversity, and productivity of coastal ecosystems are the foundation for all social and economic benefits. Their protection and restoration are paramount.
2. **Social Equity:** All South Africans, particularly historically disadvantaged and marginalised communities, have a right to equitably access, use, and benefit from coastal resources.
3. **Sustainable Development:** Development must meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
4. **A Sustainable Blue Economy:** We embrace the principles of a sustainable Blue Economy, seeking to unlock the economic potential of our coast in a way that regenerates, rather than degrades, our natural capital and promotes inclusive growth.
5. **A Source-to-Sea Approach:** We recognise that our coast is inextricably linked to the health of our river catchments and that sustainable coastal management requires integrated action from the mountains to the sea.
6. **The Precautionary Principle:** In the face of uncertainty, a risk-averse and precautionary approach will be adopted to prevent environmental harm.
7. **Co-operative Governance:** Coastal management is a shared responsibility that requires active collaboration between all spheres of government, the private sector, and civil society.
8. **Adaptive Management:** Coastal management is a learning process. Our strategies will be continuously monitored, evaluated, and adapted based on the best available scientific evidence and local knowledge.



CHAPTER 2: INTEGRATED COASTAL MANAGEMENT IN CONTEXT

2.1 Integrated Coastal Management in South Africa: A Policy Framework

South Africa's approach to integrated coastal management exists within a sophisticated matrix of international commitments, regional partnerships, and national imperatives. This comprehensive framework recognises the intrinsic connection between sustainable development, environmental protection, and the wellbeing of coastal communities across the Western Indian Ocean region.

2.2 The International Context: Global Frameworks for Sustainable Development

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by United Nations Member States in 2015, provides the overarching international framework for coastal management. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals recognise the intrinsic connection between poverty alleviation, economic growth, and environmental protection, particularly concerning oceans and coasts.

South Africa's coastal policy evolution traces back to the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, which produced Agenda 21a comprehensive blueprint for sustainable development. This foundation was strengthened by the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development, hosted in South Africa itself, which reinforced global commitments to environmental protection and poverty eradication. These international agreements have shaped the nation's coastal



governance structures and established a framework for integrated management that balances conservation with development needs.

2.3 Key International Treaties and Conventions

South Africa's coastal management framework is underpinned by adherence to several critical international environmental agreements that establish standards for conservation, sustainable use, and marine protection.



The Ramsar Convention

Conservation and sustainable use of wetlands through designated Ramsar Sites, wise use principles, international cooperation frameworks, and regular reporting requirements that ensure accountability and progress monitoring.



Convention on Biological Diversity

Core objectives include biodiversity conservation, sustainable resource use, and equitable benefit-sharing, implemented through national strategies, integration with sectoral policies, and international cooperation mechanisms.



Nice Ocean Declaration (2025)

South Africa is a signatory to the Nice Ocean Declaration, adopted at the Third United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC3) in June 2025 by over 170 countries. The Declaration commits signatories to expanding marine protected areas, decarbonising maritime transport, tackling ocean pollution, and mobilising climate finance for ocean action.



London Convention and Protocol

Focuses on prevention of marine pollution through regulation of dumping waste, protection of marine environments, and international monitoring frameworks that ensure compliance and environmental safety.



Global Biodiversity Framework

The Kunming-Montreal Framework targets 30% ocean protection by 2030, driving Western Indian Ocean initiatives, establishment of new MPAs, and regional cooperation mechanisms despite funding and enforcement complexities.



Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Treaty

The BBNJ Treaty, which South Africa has signed, entered into force in January 2026. This binding international legal framework addresses conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction—approximately two-thirds of the ocean that was historically unmanaged.

2.4 The Regional Context: Collaborative Frameworks

South Africa actively participates in three key regional conventions that facilitate coordinated management of shared marine and coastal resources across the African continent and Western Indian Ocean region.

The Nairobi Convention

Scope: Western Indian Ocean Region

Focus: Marine and coastal environment protection

The Nairobi Convention brings together member states to address shared environmental challenges, promote sustainable development, and protect the rich biodiversity of the Western Indian Ocean through coordinated policies and implementation mechanisms.

The Abidjan Convention

Coverage: Atlantic Coast of West, Central, and Southern Africa

Purpose: Marine and coastal environment management

This convention establishes frameworks for protecting marine ecosystems along Africa's Atlantic coastline, facilitating cooperation amongst member states and promoting integrated coastal zone management approaches.

The Benguela Current Convention

Focus: Benguela Current Large Marine Ecosystem

Objective: Sustainable use and conservation

Addressing the unique ecological characteristics of the Benguela Current system, this convention coordinates management of one of the world's most productive marine ecosystems, balancing conservation with sustainable utilisation of marine resources.

Each convention has developed Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) Protocols, with South Africa playing a leadership role as the first African nation to enact dedicated coastal management legislation. This pioneering position enables South Africa to share experiences, provide technical assistance, and facilitate capacity building across the region.

2.5 Constitutional and National Framework

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 provides the foundational principles for environmental management through section 24, which establishes environmental rights as fundamental human rights. This constitutional provision emphasises the right to an

environment not harmful to health and wellbeing, protection of the environment for future generations, prevention of pollution and ecological degradation, promotion of conservation, and sustainable development as core principles.

"Everyone has the right to an environment that is not harmful to their health or wellbeing, and to have the environment protected for the benefit of present and future generations."

The National Environmental Management: Integrated Coastal Management Act builds upon these constitutional principles by establishing a comprehensive vision for coastal management, specific coastal management objectives, strategies for achieving these goals, and performance indicators to measure progress. This legislation provides the statutory framework for implementing South Africa's coastal management policies, ensuring alignment with constitutional values whilst addressing practical management challenges across diverse coastal environments.

2.6 Strategic Alignment: National Development Priorities

South Africa's coastal management objectives are integrated within broader national development frameworks that address economic transformation, social equity, and environmental sustainability.



These strategic frameworks ensure that coastal management contributes directly to national development objectives, addressing the triple challenges of poverty, inequality, and unemployment whilst promoting sustainable use of marine and coastal resources.

2.7 Medium-Term Development Plan Priorities

The Medium-Term Development Plan (MTDP) 2024-2029 articulates specific priorities that directly influence coastal management implementation and outcomes.



2.8 The District Development Model: Breaking Down Silos

The President, in the 2019 Presidential Budget Speech, identified the "pattern of operating in silos" as a challenge that led to a "lack of coherence in planning and implementation and has made monitoring and oversight of government's programme difficult". The consequence has been non-optimal delivery of services and diminished impact on the triple challenges of poverty, inequality, and employment.

The District Development Model builds on the White Paper on Local Government (1998), which seeks to ensure that "local government is capacitated and transformed to play a developmental role". The White Paper defines developmental local government as "local government committed to working with citizens and groups within the community to find sustainable ways to meet their social, economic and material needs and improve the quality of their lives".



The model is a practical Intergovernmental Relations mechanism to enable all three spheres of government to work together, with communities and stakeholders, to plan, budget, and implement in unison. Service delivery can thus be turned into local level development opportunities through localised procurement and job creation which promotes and supports local businesses and involves communities directly in coastal management implementation.



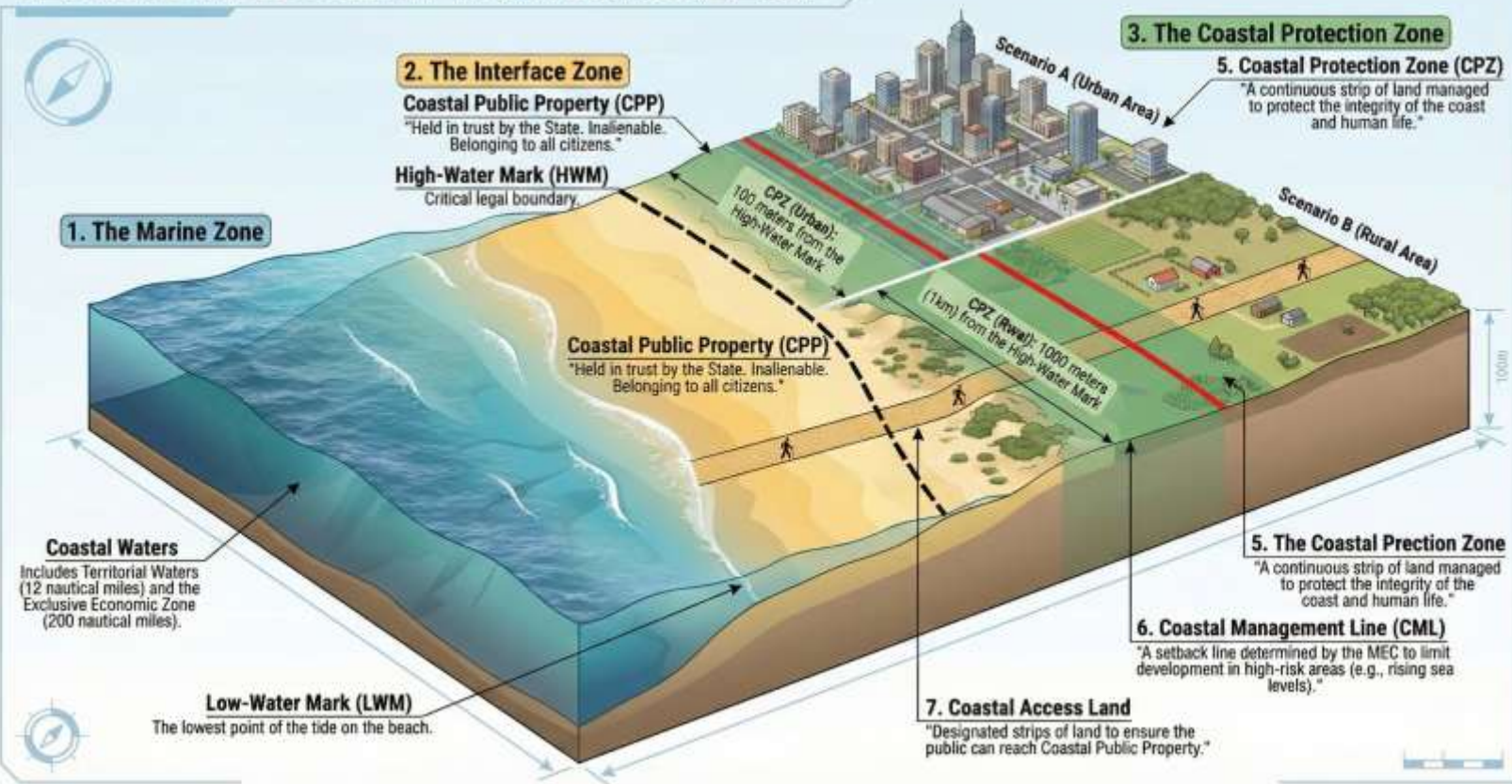
CHAPTER 3: THE COASTAL ZONE OF SOUTH AFRICA

Integrated coastal management is an enlightened approach to the stewardship of the resources and activities that shape the destiny of our shores. It is not a programme that seeks to block progress or stifle innovation, but rather to ensure that these vital forces operate in harmony with the natural world and the communities that rely upon it. At its core, integrated coastal management strives to strike a balance between the demands of development and the needs of the environment, economy, and society. It brings together a diverse array of stakeholders – government agencies, local groups, businesses, and non-governmental organizations – in a collaborative process of decision-making that seeks to chart a course for the coastal zone that is sustainable, responsible, and equitable.

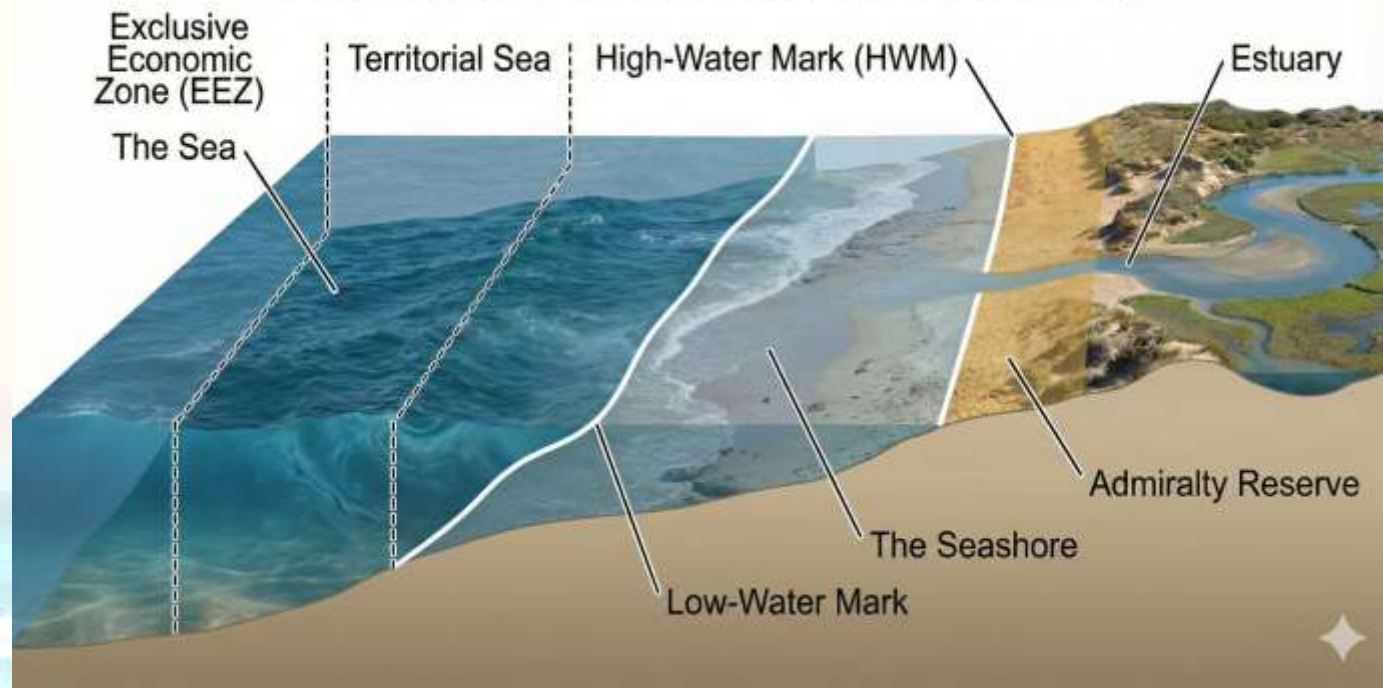
South Africa's coastal zone is a tapestry of life and industry that stretches along its entire shoreline, a ribbon of land and sea that stretches for almost 3592 kilometers. It is a place of extraordinary diversity, home to a staggering array of habitats and species, some of which are found nowhere else on earth. From the sandy beaches to the rocky cliffs, the tidal flats to the dune forests, this is a land of extraordinary natural beauty. But it is also a place of human activity, where the rhythms of commerce and culture have shaped the lives of generations. The coastal zone is a place of economic importance, with tourism, fishing, and shipping all playing a vital role in the region's prosperity. It is also a place of great human population density, with cities and towns that hum with the energy of the people who call them home. The coastal zone of South Africa is a vital part of the country's identity, a place of wonder and opportunity that is both deeply rooted in the past and poised for the future. In essence, the coastal zone of South Africa is comprised of 2 major components, those being **Coastal Public Property** and the **Coastal Protection Zone**.



DEFINING THE SOUTH AFRICAN COASTAL ZONE



Components of Coastal Public Property



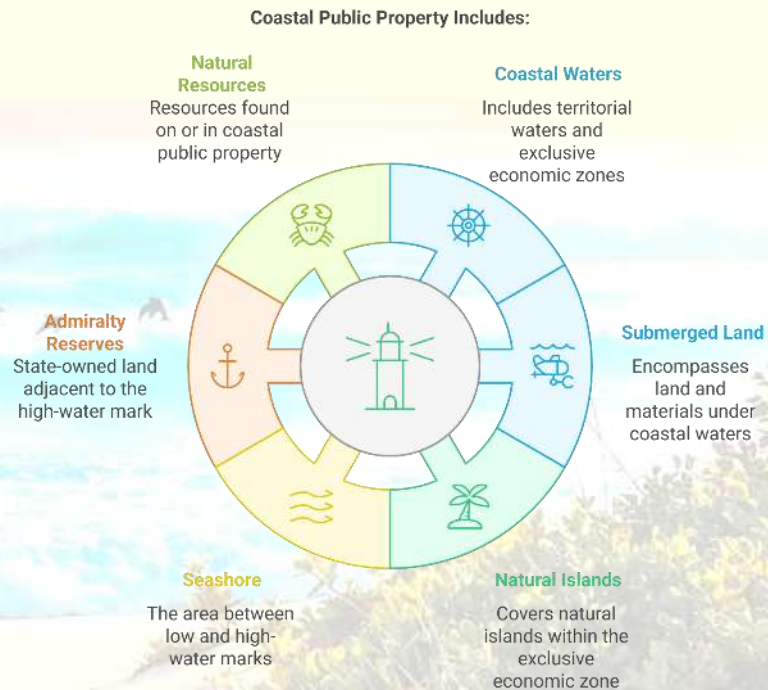
3.1 COASTAL PUBLIC PROPERTY

In terms of section 7 read with section 11 of the ICM Act, CPP refers to land and water areas that are the property of the public, held in trust to the state and are open to the public for use and enjoyment. Coastal public property is inalienable and cannot be sold, attached or acquired by prescription and rights over it cannot be acquired by prescription. Coastal public property can include a variety of different types of areas, such as beaches, parks, trails, marinas, and wildlife refuges. While not all coastal state lands qualify as CPP, the Minister

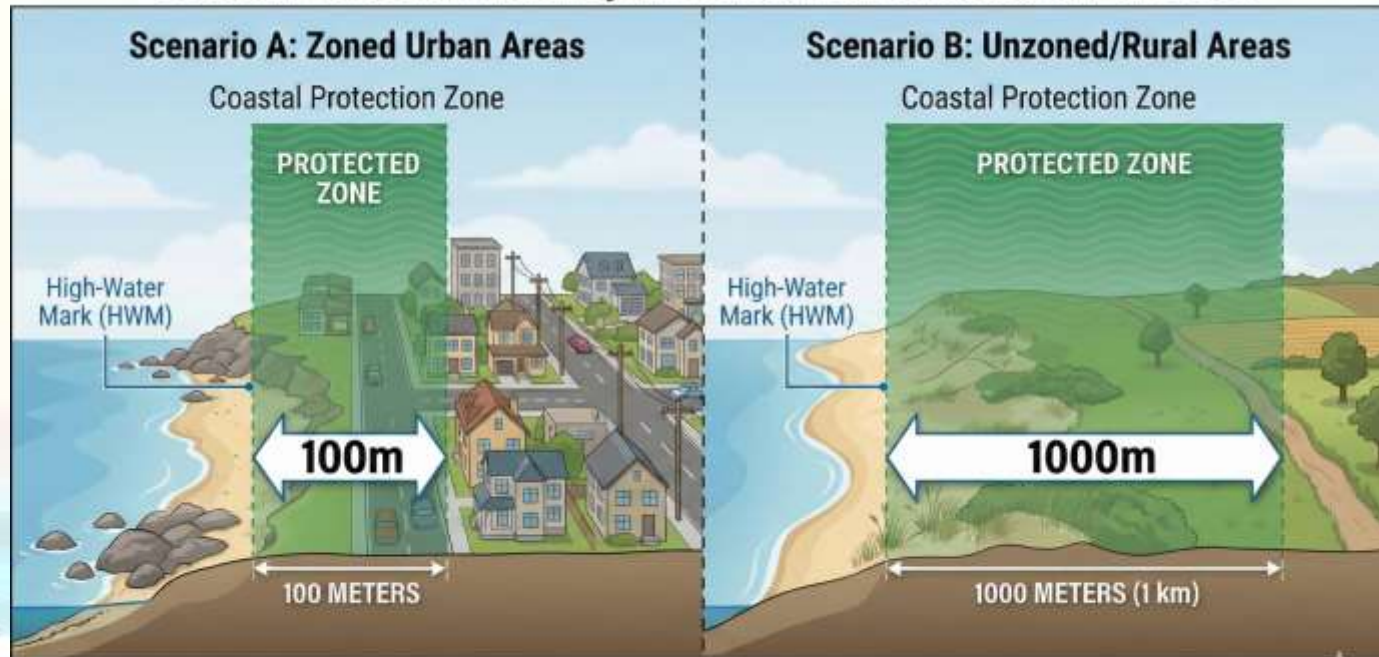
has the authority to extend the boundaries of CPP further inland if necessary. Some common components of coastal public property may include:

- **Natural features:** Coastal public property often includes natural features such as beaches, dunes, cliffs, and wetlands, which may be protected and managed for their environmental or recreational value.
- **Recreational facilities:** Coastal public property may include facilities for recreational activities such as swimming, fishing, boating, or hiking. These may include lifeguard stations, boat ramps, fishing piers, and picnic areas.
- **Cultural and historical resources:** Coastal public property may include sites of cultural or historical significance, such as historic lighthouses, shipwrecks, or indigenous cultural sites.
- **Educational facilities:** Coastal public property may include facilities such as visitor centers or nature centers, which provide educational opportunities for the public to learn about the coast and its resources.
- **Infrastructure:** Coastal public property may include infrastructure such as roads, parking areas, restrooms, and other amenities that are needed to support public access and use of the area.

In terms of the ICM Act, the CPP has the following components:



Coastal Protection Zone: Dynamic Boundaries based on Land Use



Note: The Coastal Protection Zone acts as a regulatory buffer, its width determined by the existing land-use zoning relative to the High-Water Mark, ensuring appropriate protection based on the level of development or natural state.

3.2 THE COASTAL PROTECTION ZONE

(sections 16 and 17 of the ICM Act)

The concept of a CPZ is based on the idea that the coast is vulnerable to a range of hazards and impacts, and that it is important to take proactive measures to protect it. Coastal protection zones are often established in response to specific threats or vulnerabilities, such as the risk of erosion, flooding, or other types of coastal damage.

The need for coastal protection has likely been recognised for as long as humans have lived near the coast. Throughout history, people have taken various measures to protect their communities and resources from the forces of the sea, including building physical structures such as seawalls and building communities farther inland. With the growth of coastal populations and the increasing value of coastal resources, the concept of coastal protection has become more formalised and systematic, with governments and other organizations establishing policies and programmes to protect the coast.

The components of the coastal protection zone can vary depending on the specific needs and conditions of the area, but some common elements may include:

- **Natural features:** The coastal protection zone may include natural features such as sand dunes, cliffs, and vegetation, which can help to protect the coast from erosion and storm surge.
- **Structural measures:** The coastal protection zone may include man-made structures such as seawalls, revetments, and breakwaters, which can provide physical protection against coastal hazards.
- **Land-use and other regulations:** The coastal protection zone may include regulations on land use and development in order to minimise the risk of damage to the coast from human activities.

Components of the Coastal Protection Zone



- **Monitoring and management:** The coastal protection zone may include a program of monitoring and management to ensure that the protective measures are effective and to identify any potential problems or issues.

Overall, the components of the coastal protection zone are designed to work together to protect the coast and the communities and resources that depend on it.



3.3 THE HIGH-WATER MARK

Section 1 of the ICM Act defines the **High-Water Mark (HWM)** as the highest line reached by coastal waters but excluding any line reached, (a) as a result of exceptional or abnormal weather or sea conditions; or (b) an estuary being closed to the sea.

The HWM is an important reference point in environmental management because it represents the boundary between the land and coastal waters, and it is used to determine the extent of the jurisdiction of various regulatory agencies.

Since the HWM is determined by natural factors, it is considered to be an ambulatory and fluid boundary that can change over time. Despite this, it remains a useful and necessary boundary line for coastal management because it allows for the responsible and sustainable use of coastal resources by clearly defining the limits of public and private ownership.

In the South African context, the HWM is used to delineate the legal boundary between the CPP and the CPZ and can be used to identify areas of the coast that are subject to certain restrictions or protection measures. For example, certain activities or developments may be restricted in areas below the high-water mark in order to protect the coast from environmental damage. In areas



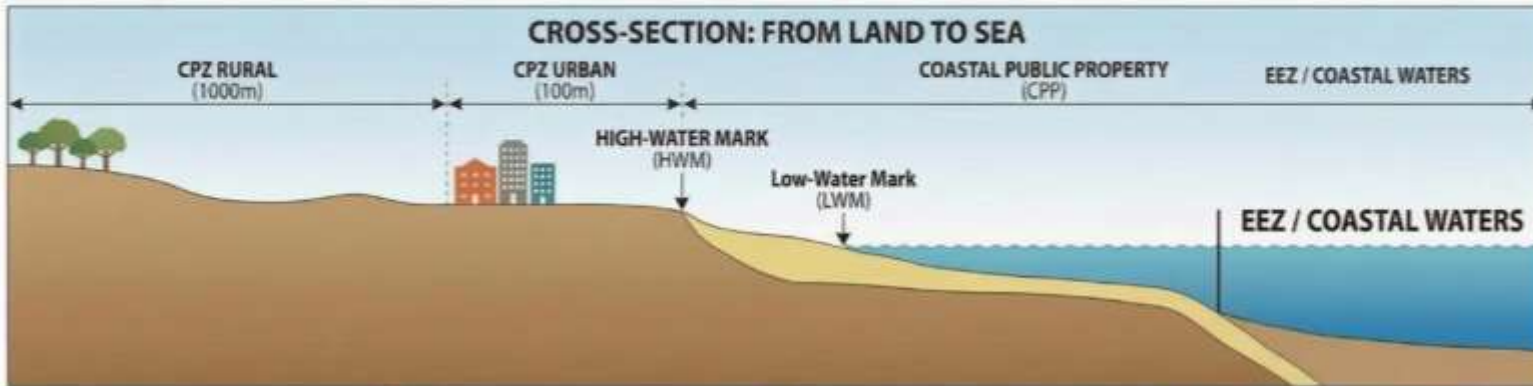
without admiralty reserve, high-water mark is also the boundary between the CPP and the CPZ, and it can be used to determine the ownership and management of coastal resources, making it an important tool for managing and protecting the coast, used by a number of countries to ensure the sustainable use and conservation of the coastal environment.

Through effective cooperative governance and collaboration via the dedicated Coastal Spatial Planning Working Group, the DFFE and the DLRRD (formerly known as DALRRD) have been working consistently to provide further clarity over the details relating to HWM determination. As the custodian of all cadastral property and land-rights boundaries, the Chief Surveyor General has developed an advisory note that responds to issues around the practical position of the HWM – please download a copy [HERE](#).



DEFINING THE COASTAL ZONE

ICM Act 24 of 2008 • Understanding South Africa's Coastal Boundaries



COASTAL PROTECTION ZONE

The Coastal Protection Zone consists of land generally 100m inland from the High-Water Mark in urban areas and 1000m inland in rural areas. It is designed to protect the integrity of the coastal environment and protect people and property from coastal risks.



HIGH-WATER MARK

The High-Water Mark is the highest line reached by coastal waters, excluding any line reached as a result of exceptional or abnormal weather or sea conditions. It determines the boundary between the Coastal Protection Zone land and Coastal Public Property.



COASTAL PUBLIC PROPERTY

Coastal Public Property consists of coastal waters, the seashore, submerged land, and natural resources. It is owned by the citizens of South Africa and held in trust by the State, ensuring public access and protection.



COASTAL WATERS

Coastal waters include marine waters that form part of the territorial waters of the Republic (12 nautical miles), estuaries, harbors, and any other body of water declared to be coastal waters.



COMPONENTS OF COASTAL PUBLIC PROPERTY

Coastal Waters

Marine waters forming the territorial waters of South Africa and specific enclosed water bodies.

Littoral Active Zone

The dynamic area of the coast, including beaches, dunes, and estuaries, where natural processes (wind, waves) occur.

Reclaimed Land

Land that has been reclaimed from the sea or coastal waters, which remains part of CPP unless formally alienated.

Natural Resources

- Any biological or non-biological resource (sand, minerals, marine life) found within the Coastal Public Property.

Estuaries

- A body of surface water that is permanently or periodically open to the sea and varies in salinity.

Admiralty Reserve

- Narrow strips of state-owned land running parallel to the coast, originally reserved for maritime purposes.

EXCLUSIONS FROM CPP

- Any portion of the seashore below the HWM that was lawfully alienated before the Act.
- Portions of a harbor or port declared as such under relevant legislation.

COMPONENTS OF COASTAL PROTECTION ZONE

Protected Areas

- Any area declared a protected area under the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act that abuts the coast.

Coastal Water Bodies

- Any body of water on land (like a coastal lagoon) that is not an estuary but is influenced by the coast.

Land Units

- Any land unit that is situated wholly or partially within the 100m (urban) or 1000m (rural) zone.

DEVELOPMENT IN THE CPZ

- Development in the CPZ is restricted to prevent urban sprawl and protect the 'sense of place.'
- Activities usually require Environmental Authorisation (EA) to ensure they do not harm coastal integrity.



CHAPTER 4: GOVERNMENT ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ICM

4.1 National Government: Strategic Leadership and Policy Development

National government shoulders the primary responsibility for establishing the overarching framework for coastal management in South Africa. As the custodian of coastal public property, the national sphere ensures that the state fulfils its role as public trustee, protecting and managing these areas for current and future generations. This responsibility encompasses developing regulations to control usage, determining boundaries, and designating state-owned land as coastal public property where appropriate to achieve the ICM Act's objectives.

National Coastal Management Programme

Develop and implement the NCMP aligned with ICM Act requirements, setting standards and principles for all coastal management activities

National Estuarine Management Protocol

Ensure implementation of the protocol and that each estuary has an Estuarine Management Plan meeting prescribed minimum requirements

National Coastal Committee (NCC)

Establish and maintain the NCC, determining its powers and appointing representatives

Beyond policy development, national government monitors the establishment and functioning of provincial lead agencies, ensuring consistency across jurisdictions. The national sphere also maintains critical oversight of environmental authorisations for coastal activities, considering relevant coastal factors when listed activities require assessment. This strategic positioning enables national government to maintain coherent coastal management standards whilst allowing for regional adaptation and implementation.

4.2 Roles in accordance with the ICM Act

The ICM Act regulates issues which fall within the legislative competency of both national and provincial government in terms of the Constitution. The ICM Act therefore assigns roles and responsibilities to all three spheres of government, with mandatory functions assigned to national, provincial, and local governments that are specifically defined in the Act.

The ICM Act has specific mandatory functions designated to the Minister, MEC and municipalities. In essence, the designations should be interpreted as follows:

Minister	MEC	Municipality
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• National Department responsible for Environmental Affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The provincial lead agency designated by the Premier	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The district municipality; or• The local municipality, by agreement with the district municipality for assignment of implementation of a provision

ASPECT		RESPONSIBILITIES
NATIONAL GOVERNMENT ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES		
1	The management of coastal public property	Ensuring the state as a public trustee, provides for the protection, management and enhancement of coastal public property as an inalienable area within the coastal zone that belongs to the citizens of South Africa. This is achieved by the Act and then supported by regulations to control the use of coastal public property, determine and adjust the boundaries of coastal public property as deemed appropriate, as well as designation and inclusion of certain portions of state-owned land as coastal public property, to achieve the objectives of the ICM Act.
2	The National Estuarine Management Protocol	Ensure that the National Estuarine Management Protocol is implemented and that each estuary along the SA coast has an Estuarine Management Plan, which meets the minimum requirements as prescribed, in place in collaboration with responsible authorities appointed for Estuary Management Plan (EMP) development and implementation.
3	The National Coastal Committee	Establishment of the National Coastal Committee (NCC) (currently operating as Working Group 7 (WG7)), determination of its powers, and appointing representatives for the Committee.
4	Monitor the appointment of provincial lead agencies	Ensure that provincial lead agencies for ICM are established and functioning on a continual basis.
5	Development and Implementation of the National Coastal Management Programme	Develop an NCMP aligned with the contents of the ICM Act

6	Consistency and alignment between the NCMP and other statutory plans	Ensure that any plan, policy or programme adopted by an organ of state that may affect coastal management is consistent and aligned with the NCMP.
7	Consultation and public participation	Ensure meaningful consultation with government and other coastal stakeholders.
8	Environmental authorisations for coastal activities	Provide inputs where an Environmental Authorisation is required for listed activities in the coastal zone taking into account relevant coastal factors and considerations.
9	Discharge of effluent into coastal waters	Ensure that point source discharges of polluted effluent are effectively assessed, controlled and monitored. To consider applications for coastal waters discharge permits.
10	Dumping of waste into coastal waters	Prohibit incineration at sea, regulate dumping at sea and ensure that the overall intent of sections 70 and 71 of the ICM Act is understood by stakeholders.
11	Emergency dumping at sea	Ensure that consideration is given to emergency situations relating to the dumping of waste at sea and to consider permit applications in this regard.
12	The National Action List	Develop a national action list to provide a mechanism for screening waste and other material based on their potential effect on human health and the marine environment.
13	Determination of national appeals	Establish procedures to be followed in determining appeals.
14	Prescribing regulations and fees	Develop regulations for the management of activities within the coastal zone, and consult the Minister of Finance before making any regulations that will entail expenditure of funds in future years, application fees, or regulations imposing fees, costs, or any other charges.

15	General provisions applicable to regulations	Specify general procedures relating to regulations, including penalties for contraventions.
16	Marine protected areas	NEMPAA read with the specific MPA regulations, sets out rules, prohibitions and limitations for MPAs.

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1	Management of the coastal protection zone	Ensuring the protection, management and enhancement of the coastal protection zone. This is achieved by developing regulations to control the use, determine and adjust the boundaries of the coastal protection zone as deemed appropriate, as well as designation and inclusion of certain portions of provincially controlled state-owned land as coastal public property to achieve the objectives of the ICM Act. This may also include the appointment of voluntary coastal officers.
3	Establishment of coastal management lines	Establish coastal management lines by notice in the Gazette to restrict or prohibit certain activities that may have an adverse effect on the coastal zone.
4	Marking coastal boundaries	The MEC may determine or adjust any coastal boundary related to CPZ, CML and coastal access land. Any boundaries determined or adjusted in terms of section 26 of the ICM Act by the MEC must be communicated to municipalities so that they must include these in zoning maps and / or land use schemes.
5	Designation of provincial lead agencies	In collaboration with the Premier, ensure that provincial lead agencies for coastal management are designated and function effectively to promote and coordinate coastal management within a coastal province.
6	Establishment and functioning of Provincial Coastal Committees	Establishment of the Provincial Coastal Committee (PCC), determination of its powers and appointing representatives for the Committee.

7	Development and Implementation of PCMPs	Develop PCMPs aligned with the contents of requirements of the ICM Act and the standards and principles of the NCMP.
8	Consistency and alignment between PCMPs and other statutory plans	Ensure that any plan, policy or programme adopted by an organ of state that may affect coastal management is consistent and aligned with PCMPs, which in turn is aligned with the NCMP.
9	Consultation and public participation	Adequate consultation and public participation precede the exercising of a power by the MEC, which the ICM Act requires to be exercised in accordance with section 53 of the ICM Act.
10	Environmental authorisations for coastal activities	Where the province is the competent authority the province must ensure that the factors contained in section 63 of the ICM Act and considered, and that the requirements of this section complied with before an environmental authorisation is issued in terms of Chapter 5 of the NEMA.
11	Implementation of national regulations	Implement national regulations, for example, list public boat launch sites that may be used by the public to access the coastal zone.
12	Regulations by MECs	Develop regulations for the management of activities within the coastal protection zone and specify general procedures relating to regulations, including penalties for contraventions.
13	Information and Reporting on Coastal Matters	Prepare a report on the state of the coastal environment in the province which must contain any information prescribed by the Minister.
14	Co-ordination of actions between provinces and municipalities	Liaise with coastal municipalities in the province to co-ordinate actions taken in terms of this Act by provincial organs of state in the province with actions taken by municipalities.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT / MUNICIPAL ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1	Access to coastal public property	Ensuring that the public has equitable access to coastal public property by designating coastal access land to promote access to CPP along the coast, withdrawing inappropriate coastal access land and following an environmentally sensitive and socially responsible process in designating coastal access land.
2	Coastal management line demarcation on zoning maps	Delineate coastal management lines in Spatial Development Frameworks and municipal zoning / land use scheme maps (should participate in any provincial coastal management line determinations, but this is discretionary; work with relevant provincial department to determine municipal coastal management lines which the province must Gazette). Contribute to the implementation of legal framework associated with coastal management lines.
3	Determining and adjusting coastal boundaries of coastal access land	Ensure specified considerations are taken into account when determining or adjusting a coastal boundary of coastal access land.
4	Marking coastal boundaries on zoning maps	Delineate coastal boundaries determined or adjusted in terms of section 26 of the ICM Act on zoning scheme maps and in Spatial Development Frameworks, where applicable and appropriate.
5	Municipal CMPs	Prepare and adopt a municipal CMP for managing the coastal zone or specific parts of the coastal zone in the municipality.
6	Consistency and alignment between Municipal CMPs and other statutory plans	Ensure that any plan, policy or programme adopted by an organ of state that may affect coastal management is consistent and aligned with municipal coastal management programmes, which in turn is aligned with provincial coastal management programmes and the national coastal management programme and ensure that IDPs (including its spatial development framework) is consistent with other statutory plans (See section 52(1)(a) to (f) of the ICM Act) adopted by either a national or a provincial organ of state.
7	Consultation and public participation	Adequate consultation and public participation precede the exercising of a power by a municipality, which the ICM Act requires to be exercised in accordance with section 53 of the Act.

8	Implementation of land use legislation in coastal protection zone	Section 62 of the ICM Act obliges any organ of state that is implementing any legislation that regulates the planning or development of land, in a manner that conforms to the principles of cooperative governance contained in Chapter 3 of the Constitution, apply that legislation in relation to land in the coastal protection zone in a way that gives effect to the purposes for which the protection zone is established as set out in section 17 of the ICM Act. Furthermore, SPLUMA requires that a land use scheme must comply with environmental legislation.
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4.3 National Environmental Authorisations and Marine Protection

Environmental Authorisations

National government provides essential inputs where Environmental Authorisations in terms of NEMA are required for listed activities within the coastal zone. This process ensures that relevant coastal factors and considerations are thoroughly evaluated before development proceeds. The authorisation framework balances economic development with environmental protection, requiring comprehensive assessment of potential impacts on coastal ecosystems, public access, and long-term sustainability.

Consultation with stakeholders forms a cornerstone of this process, ensuring that decisions reflect diverse interests whilst maintaining ecological integrity. The national sphere's role in authorisations creates consistency in how coastal development is assessed across provinces and municipalities.

Marine Protected Areas

The National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act (NEMPAA), read together with specific MPA regulations, establishes comprehensive rules, prohibitions, and limitations for Marine Protected Areas. These designated zones serve as critical refuges for marine biodiversity, supporting ecosystem resilience and providing baseline areas for scientific research.

National government's stewardship of MPAs ensures that South Africa meets its international obligations for marine conservation whilst supporting sustainable use of marine resources. The MPA network represents a key tool in maintaining healthy ocean ecosystems for future generations.

4.4 Pollution Control and Waste Management at Sea

National government exercises critical control over marine pollution through comprehensive regulation of effluent discharge and waste dumping in coastal waters. This responsibility reflects the understanding that coastal waters are shared resources requiring stringent protection from contamination. The regulatory framework addresses both routine discharges and emergency situations, ensuring that the marine environment remains healthy and productive.

The National Action List serves as a crucial tool, providing a mechanism for screening waste and other materials based on their potential effects on human health and the marine environment. This proactive approach prevents harmful substances from entering coastal waters, protecting both ecological systems and the communities that depend upon them. Emergency dumping provisions recognise that unforeseen circumstances may arise, but maintain rigorous assessment standards even in urgent situations.



4.5 Regulatory Powers and Appeals Framework

National government possesses extensive regulatory powers essential for comprehensive coastal management. These powers enable the development of regulations governing activities within the coastal zone, establishing clear rules and standards that guide behaviour and development. The regulatory process requires consultation with the Minister of Finance before making regulations that entail future expenditure or impose fees, ensuring fiscal responsibility and transparency.



The appeals framework provides essential checks and balances, establishing procedures for determining appeals and ensuring that affected parties have recourse when disagreeing with administrative decisions. General provisions applicable to regulations specify procedures including penalties for contraventions, creating a deterrent effect whilst providing clear consequences for non-compliance.

4.6 Provincial Government: Regional Implementation and Coordination

Provincial government occupies a pivotal position in South Africa's coastal governance framework, translating national policy into regional action whilst accommodating local conditions and priorities. The Member of the Executive Council (MEC) responsible for coastal matters carries substantial responsibilities for managing the coastal protection zone, establishing coastal management lines, and coordinating activities across multiple municipalities within the province.

The coastal protection zone represents a critical buffer area requiring active management to prevent inappropriate development and protect coastal processes. Provincial government develops regulations controlling use within this zone, determines and adjusts boundaries as circumstances require, and may designate provincially controlled state-owned land as coastal public property. This flexibility enables provinces to respond to emerging threats, accommodate legitimate development, and ensure that the coastal protection zone fulfils its intended purpose.



Coastal Management Lines: Establish management lines by Gazette notice to restrict or prohibit activities that may adversely affect the coastal zone

Boundary Determination: Determine and adjust coastal boundaries for CPZ, CML, and coastal access land, communicating changes to municipalities

Lead Agency Designation: Collaborate with the Premier to designate provincial lead agencies promoting coordinated coastal management

4.7 Provincial Coastal Management Programmes and Coordination

Programme Development and Alignment

Provincial Coastal Management Programmes (PCMPs) serve as the primary mechanism for coordinating coastal activities within a province. These programmes must align with the ICM Act's requirements and the standards established in the National Coastal Management Programme, creating a nested hierarchy of planning instruments that ensure consistency whilst allowing regional variation. PCMPs address specific coastal challenges within the province, identify priority areas for intervention, and establish mechanisms for inter-municipal cooperation.

The Provincial Coastal Committee (PCC) provides essential governance structure, bringing together representatives from various sectors and levels of government. The MEC establishes the PCC, determines its powers, and appoints members who collectively provide strategic guidance and oversight. This committee structure facilitates information sharing, identifies cross-cutting issues, and helps resolve conflicts amongst competing coastal uses.

Key Coordination Functions

- Establish and maintain Provincial Coastal Committees
- Develop PCMPs meeting ICM Act requirements
- Ensure alignment with NCMP standards
- Coordinate with coastal municipalities
- Facilitate inter-municipal cooperation
- Resolve conflicts amongst coastal users
- Monitor implementation
- effectiveness

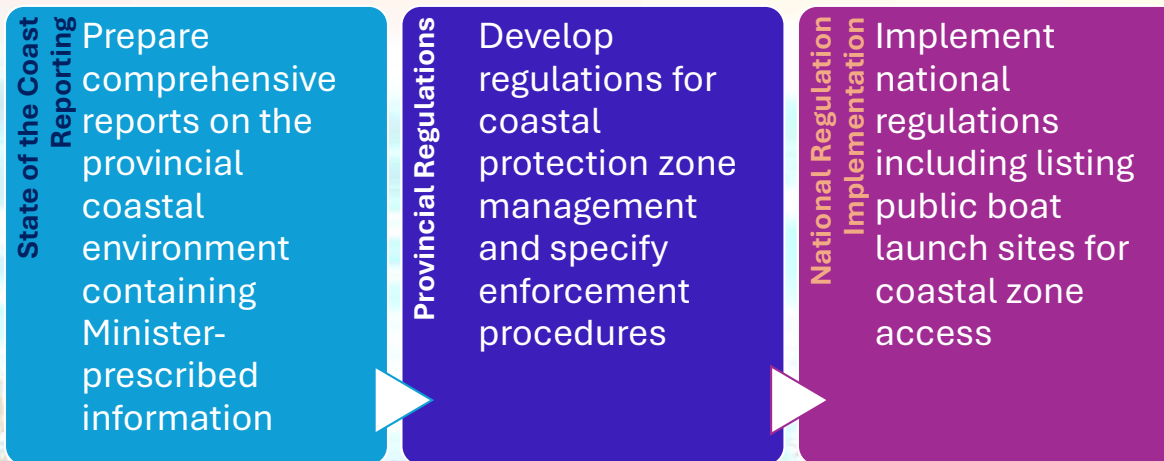
Key Provincial Coordination Functions



Consistency and alignment between PCMPs and other statutory plans represents a critical responsibility. Provincial government must ensure that any plan, policy, or programme adopted by an organ of state affecting coastal management aligns with the PCMP, which in turn must align with the NCMP. This cascading alignment prevents contradictory policies and ensures that all governmental actions support common coastal management objectives.

4.8 Provincial Consultation, Reporting, and Regulatory Powers

Meaningful consultation and public participation form foundational requirements for provincial coastal management. Before exercising powers requiring consultation under section 53 of the ICM Act, the MEC must ensure adequate engagement with affected parties and stakeholders. This participatory approach enhances decision quality, builds public support, and ensures that diverse perspectives inform coastal management actions.

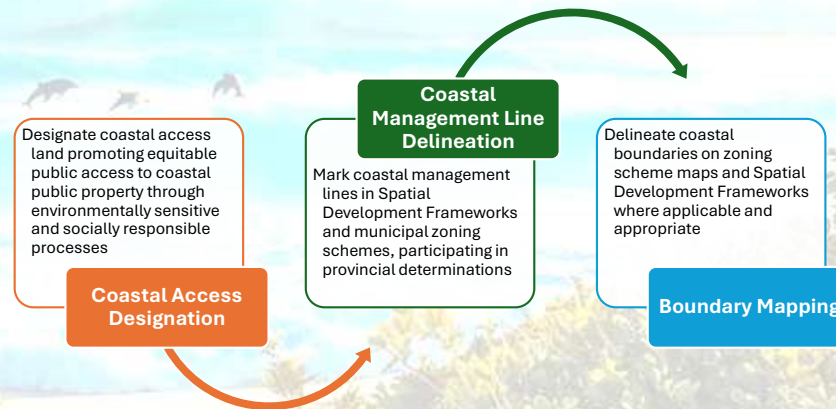


Provincial government bears responsibility for preparing reports on the state of the coastal environment within the province. These reports must contain information prescribed by the Minister and serve multiple purposes: documenting coastal conditions, tracking trends over time, identifying emerging issues, and providing evidence for adaptive management decisions. Regular reporting creates accountability and enables evidence-based policy adjustments.

When the province serves as the competent authority for environmental authorisations, it must ensure that factors contained in section 63 of the ICM Act receive consideration and that requirements are met before issuing authorisations under Chapter 5 of NEMA. This responsibility requires technical capacity and institutional coordination to properly assess applications and impose appropriate conditions. Provincial government also develops regulations for managing activities within the coastal protection zone, specifying general procedures and penalties for contraventions, thereby creating a locally adapted regulatory framework operating within national standards.

4.9 Local Government: Direct Coastal Access and Land Use Management

Municipalities serve as the frontline implementers of coastal management, directly managing public access, applying land use controls, and engaging with coastal communities daily. Local government's proximity to coastal resources and populations positions it uniquely to respond to localised issues, facilitate public access, and integrate coastal considerations into broader municipal planning and development frameworks. The municipal mandate encompasses both enabling appropriate coastal use and preventing harmful activities.



Ensuring equitable public access to coastal public property represents a fundamental municipal responsibility. Municipalities designate coastal access land, creating pathways and entry points that enable communities to reach and enjoy coastal areas. This designation process must be environmentally sensitive, avoiding damage to fragile ecosystems, and socially responsible, ensuring that access benefits all community members including those historically excluded from coastal amenities. Municipalities may also withdraw inappropriate coastal access land where environmental, or safety concerns warrant such action.

4.10 Municipal Coastal Management Programmes and Integration

Municipal Coastal Management Programmes (CMPs) serve as the most localised planning instruments in the coastal governance hierarchy. Municipalities prepare and adopt CMPs for managing the coastal zone or specific coastal portions within their jurisdiction. These programmes must align with provincial coastal management programmes and the national programme, creating a coherent planning framework extending from national strategy to on-the-ground implementation. Municipal CMPs address site-specific coastal challenges, identify local priorities, and establish implementation mechanisms suited to municipal capacities and resources.

Integration with Municipal Planning

Municipalities must ensure that Integrated Development Plans (IDPs), including Spatial Development Frameworks, remain consistent with municipal CMPs, provincial coastal management programmes, and the national coastal management programme. This multi-level alignment prevents contradictory objectives and ensures that coastal considerations inform all municipal planning and development decisions.

The Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act (SPLUMA) requires that land use schemes comply with environmental legislation, including the ICM Act. When implementing land use legislation in the coastal protection zone, municipalities must apply that legislation in a manner giving effect to the protection zone's purposes as set out in section 17 of the ICM Act, conforming to cooperative governance principles contained in Chapter 3 of the Constitution.



Adequate consultation and public participation must precede municipal exercise of powers requiring such engagement under section 53 of the ICM Act. This participatory requirement ensures that municipal coastal management decisions reflect community needs and values whilst maintaining transparency and accountability. Through these integrated responsibilities, municipalities translate national policy and provincial coordination into tangible coastal management outcomes, protecting coastal resources whilst enabling appropriate use and development that serves community interests and supports sustainable coastal economies.





CHAPTER 5: ALIGNMENT, GOVERNANCE, AND PARTNERSHIPS

The success of the National Coastal Management Programme (NCMP) is fundamentally dependent on a robust framework for co-operative governance and active partnerships. The Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) Act provides the legislative foundation for this framework, but its effective implementation requires clear mandates, functional institutions, and a shared commitment from all stakeholders. This chapter outlines the governance ecosystem designed to drive the implementation of this NCMP, ensuring alignment from the national to the local level and fostering a "whole-of-society" approach to coastal stewardship.

5.1 A Framework for Co-operative Governance

The ICM Act establishes a clear hierarchy of coordinating bodies designed to ensure seamless integration and communication across all spheres of government. This structure is not merely a reporting line but an active network for collaborative planning, problem-solving, and joint action. **Crucially, this network must extend beyond the high-water mark to integrate with both catchment and marine governance structures.**



THE ICM GOVERNANCE ECOSYSTEM



Note: The City of Cape Town, Nelson Mandela Bay Metropolitan Municipality, and Umkhanyakude District Municipality do not have formally constituted Municipal Coastal Committees (MCCs) in terms of the ICM Act. These municipalities utilise alternative local government committee structures to facilitate coastal programme implementation.

National Level: The National Coastal Committee (NCC)

- **Mandate:** The NCC is the apex body for co-operative coastal governance in South Africa. Its primary mandate is to promote integrated coastal management in the Republic and to coordinate the effective implementation of the ICM Act and this NCMP.
- **Key Functions:**
 1. Oversee and monitor the implementation of the National Implementation Plan (Chapter 4).
 2. Review and facilitate the alignment of Provincial Coastal Management Programmes (PCMPs).
 3. Provide a high-level forum for resolving cross-sectoral and inter-governmental conflicts.
 4. Advise the Minister on the development of national norms and standards.
 5. Commission the five-yearly State of the Coast Report.
 6. Ensure seamless integration and alignment with the Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) National Working Group to coordinate planning across the land-sea interface.
 7. Engage with the national structures of the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) to promote a Source-to-Sea perspective in national water resource management.
- **Composition:** As mandated by the ICM Act, the NCC will comprise representatives from relevant national departments, each provincial lead agency, SALGA, coastal metropolises, key public entities (e.g., SANParks, SANBI), and representatives from civil society and traditional leadership.

Provincial Level: Provincial Coastal Committees (PCCs)

- **Mandate:** The PCCs are the engines of provincial coordination and implementation. They are responsible for driving the development and execution of the PCMPs and ensuring they are aligned with this NCMP.
- **Key Functions:**
 1. Develop, implement, and review the Provincial Coastal Management Programme.

2. Facilitate alignment between Municipal CMPs within the province.
3. Provide technical and strategic support to municipalities.
4. Act as the primary provincial forum for stakeholder engagement, including traditional authorities, industry, and NGOs.
5. Compile and submit provincial State of the Coast reports to the NCC.
6. Formally include representatives from the relevant Catchment Management Agencies (CMAs) to facilitate a Source-to-Sea approach in provincial planning.

Municipal Level: Municipal Coastal Committees (MCCs)

- **Mandate:** MCCs are essential for grounding coastal management in local realities. While their establishment is discretionary under the ICM Act, this NCMP strongly advocates for their formation in all coastal municipalities as a best practice for effective governance.
- **Key Functions:**
 1. Develop and guide the implementation of the Municipal Coastal Management Programme.
 2. Provide a formal platform for local stakeholder engagement, ensuring that community voices, including those of small-scale fishers, marginalised groups, and local businesses, are integrated into planning processes.
 3. Advise the Municipal Council on coastal development applications, by-law enforcement, and local access issues.

5.2 Alignment Framework for Provincial and Municipal CMPs

To ensure a unified national effort and prevent fragmented, contradictory actions, all Provincial and Municipal Coastal Management Programmes (PCMPs and MCMPs) must be formally aligned with this NCMP.

1. **Vertical Alignment:** There must be a clear "golden thread" of policy consistency.

- **PCMPs:** Must adopt the National Vision and align their strategic priorities and objectives with the seven priorities of this NCMP, while adapting specific actions to the provincial context as identified in their own State of the Coast analysis.
 - **MCMPs:** Must be consistent with both this NCMP and their respective PCMP. They are responsible for translating provincial and national strategies into tangible, on-the-ground management actions.
2. **Horizontal Alignment:** Coastal management must be integrated into all relevant planning frameworks.
- **Provincial Level:** The PCMP must be integrated into the Provincial Spatial Development Framework (PSDF) and other key provincial growth and development strategies.
 - **Municipal Level:** The MCMP must be formally integrated into the municipality's Integrated Development Plan (IDP) and its Spatial Development Framework (SDF). This is a critical step to ensure that coastal management is not treated as a peripheral "environmental" issue but is central to all municipal planning and budgeting.
3. **Process and Timeline:**
- The DFFE, in partnership with Provincial Lead Agencies and SALGA, will develop a **National Guideline for CMP Alignment** by **Q4 2026**.
 - All coastal provinces are required to review and submit their aligned PCMPs to the Minister for approval by **Q4 2026**.
 - All coastal municipalities are required to develop and adopt their aligned MCMPs by **Q4 2027**.

5.3 Marine Spatial Planning National Working Group

Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) can be defined as a public process of analysing and allocating the spatial and temporal distribution of human activities in marine areas to achieve ecological, economic, and social objectives that have been specified through a political process. In South Africa, MSP is governed by the Marine Spatial Planning Act, 2018 (Act No. 16 of 2018). In terms of section 8 of that Act, the MSP National Working Group is tasked with coordinating MSP efforts across various sectors and stakeholders. It plays a critical role in advancing integrated marine management, ensuring sustainable use of marine resources, and protecting marine biodiversity. This includes government departments, industry representatives, environmental organisations, academia, and local communities. The functions of the MSP National Working Group are as follows:

- Developing national policies and guidelines for MSP which are aligned with South Africa's environmental legislation and international commitments.
- Facilitating inclusive stakeholder engagement processes: Gather input and ensure transparency in MSP decision-making.
- Coordinating efforts to gather and manage spatial data: Collect essential data and information for MSP planning and implementation.
- Overseeing the MSP planning process: Involves mapping marine areas, assessing uses and activities, and developing spatial plans that integrate conservation and development objectives.
- Monitoring the implementation of MSP plans: Evaluate their effectiveness and adapt plans as necessary based on new information or changing circumstances (Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries, 2022).

MSP in South Africa is also guided by various legislation, including the Marine Living Resources Act, the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (NEMA) and the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act, 2003 (NEM:PAA) which provide some of the primary legal bases for marine resource management and conservation.

5.4 National Estuary and MPA Task Group

To date, South Africa has a total of 42 Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), 62% of which are coastal and the remainder of the MPAs are offshore. South Africa's +/- 3,592km coastline boasts 290 estuaries, which are recognised by NEMA as sensitive, vulnerable, highly dynamic or stressed ecosystems that require specific attention in management and planning procedures, especially whereby they are subjected to significant human resource usage.

Estuaries and Marine Protected Areas Task Team was established to support and advise the MINTECH Working Group 7 for Oceans and Coasts, on estuarine ecosystems, habitats (including blue carbon ecosystems), Marine Protected Areas and conservation management. The functions of the task team are as follows:

- Deliberating on joint planning issues: Address and discuss effective management and conservation measures of marine ecosystems, including estuaries.
- Sharing information: Facilitate the exchange of information related to marine ecosystem management and conservation.

- Coordinating development and implementation of management plans: Ensure alignment with NEM:PAA, the ICM Act, National Estuarine Management Protocol, World Heritage Convention Act (Act No. 49 of 1999), and the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act. (Act No. 10 of 2004) (NEMBA)
- Facilitating implementation of multilateral agreements: Coordinate actions and targets relevant to the Oceans and Coasts mandate.
- Contributing to the expansion of MPAs.
- Support the effective management of estuarine ecosystems and habitats based on scientific evidence.
- Capacity building in marine science and planning: Promote capacity-building programs and provide platforms for young scientists and managers to engage in discussions on marine biodiversity issues.

5.5 Regional Task Force for Water Quality

The Contracting Parties to the Nairobi Convention with support from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) implemented a Project entitled 'Implementation of the Strategic Action Programme for the Protection of the Western Indian Ocean from land-based sources and Activities' (WIOSAP). The Programme has supported various interventions across the region 'to reduce impacts from land-based sources and activities and sustainably manage critical coastal and marine ecosystems through the implementation of the agreed WIO-SAP priorities with the support of partnerships at national and regional levels.

Regional Task Forces for the respective components were established to facilitate the achievement of the programme goals and objectives.

The overall responsibility of the Regional Task Force on Water Quality (RTF-WQ) is to support the effective implementation of activities defined in "Component B - Improved water quality focuses on the need for the WIO Region's water quality to attain international standards by the year 2035" of the Programme.

5.6 Incident Management Organisation

The South African Interim Incident Management Organisation (IMOrg), under the Department of Transport, plays a crucial role in co-ordinating preparedness and response to all hazards in the marine environment, particularly oil spills, using the internationally recognised Incident Management System (IMS) which was introduced in 2015. By implementing international best practice in incident management, South Africa is proactively preparing to manage marine pollution incidents effectively, by ensuring that the appropriate resources and stakeholders are activated quickly and that the decision-making process is done timeously. The IMOrg comprises experts and professionals from the South African Maritime Safety Authority (SAMSA), National Disaster Management Centre, Petroleum Agency South Africa, Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, Department of Mineral Resource, and industry role players.

5.7 Strengthening Partnerships

Beyond the formal government structures, achieving the ambitious goals of this NCMP requires a "whole-of-society" approach. The DFFE is committed to moving beyond simple consultation to building genuine, lasting partnerships.

- **Civil Society and NGOs:** Recognised as vital partners in implementation, monitoring, and community mobilisation. The NCMP will establish formal channels for engagement through the NCC and PCCs and will seek to co-develop and co-fund projects where objectives align.
- **The Private Sector:** Engaged as a key driver of the coastal economy. This NCMP will establish a "National Coastal Stewardship Forum" (as per Action 7.3.1) to create a platform for public-private partnerships focused on sustainable development, innovative financing for conservation, and corporate social responsibility.
- **Research and Academia:** Formalised as the backbone of our evidence-based approach. MoUs will be strengthened with key institutions (e.g., NRF, SAEON, CSIR, coastal universities) to align research with the priorities outlined in the National Coastal Research Agenda.
- **Traditional Authorities:** Recognised as essential partners and custodians of invaluable traditional ecological knowledge. This NCMP commits to formalising the role of traditional leaders in coastal governance structures and ensuring that customary rights and knowledge are respected and integrated into management plans and decision-making processes.

5.8 Provincial Alignment Requirements

Provincial Coastal Management Programmes (PCMPs) are the critical link between national strategy and local implementation. They must translate the national priorities into a provincial context.

Strategic Framework Alignment

Provincial Coastal Management Programmes must demonstrate clear alignment with:

1. National Priority Areas: The PCMP must be structured to address the seven national priorities outlined in this NCMP. While the specific actions may differ based on provincial realities, the strategic focus must be consistent:

- * Equitable Public Access and Livelihoods
- * Estuary Management and Restoration
- * Climate Resilience and Spatial Planning
- * Coastal Pollution Management
- * Effective Governance and Enforcement
- * Coastal Research and Innovation
- * Awareness, Education, and Partnerships

2. Implementation Mechanisms: The PCMP must establish clear mechanisms for its implementation, including:

- * Clear designation of institutional responsibilities.
- * Resource allocation frameworks and financial plans.
- * Monitoring and evaluation systems aligned with national SOC indicators.
- * Formal reporting structures.

Provincial Responsibilities

To achieve this alignment, Provincial Lead Agencies must ensure the following:

- **Policy Integration:**
 - Incorporate NCMP objectives into the Provincial Spatial Development Framework (PSDF) and Provincial Growth and Development Strategy.

- Review and align sectoral policies (e.g., tourism, agriculture, transport) with coastal management priorities.
- Ensure vertical integration by actively guiding and supporting municipalities in the development of their CMPs.
- **Institutional Arrangements:**
 - Establish and maintain a fully functional **Provincial Coastal Committee (PCC)** as the primary coordinating body.
 - Formally designate the provincial **lead agency** for coastal management.
 - Create and sustain **inter-departmental coordination mechanisms** to break down silos.
- **Resource Management:**
 - Develop and implement specific provincial strategies for priority areas like estuary management and coastal access.
 - Coordinate the management of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) within provincial jurisdiction in alignment with national objectives.
- **Monitoring and Reporting:**
 - Establish and manage provincial monitoring systems that feed into the national State of the Coast reporting framework.
 - Conduct regular reporting on the implementation progress of the PCMP to the NCC.
 - Maintain a provincial coastal information system that is accessible and aligned with the national OCIMS platform.

5.9 Municipal Alignment Requirements

Municipalities are the frontline of coastal management implementation. Their plans and actions have the most direct impact on coastal ecosystems and communities.

Integration with Municipal Planning

For an MCMP to be effective, it cannot be a standalone environmental document. It must be deeply embedded within the core planning and budgeting processes of the municipality.

- **Spatial Planning Integration:**

- Incorporate coastal management zones (e.g., Coastal Protection Zone, Coastal Management Lines) as official, legally recognised overlays in the municipal SDF and zoning schemes.
- Ensure that all land-use decisions within the coastal zone are explicitly assessed against the objectives of the MCMP.

- **Development Planning Integration:**

- Include coastal management priorities, objectives, and specific projects as a dedicated chapter or key performance area within the municipal IDP.
- Align the municipal budget and resource allocation with the priorities identified in the MCMP to ensure it is a funded mandate.



Municipal Implementation Requirements

- **Institutional Framework:**

- Establish a **Municipal Coastal Committee (MCC)** to ensure stakeholder participation and guide implementation.

- Formally designate one or more **Coastal Management Officials** responsible for day-to-day management and coordination.
- **Operational Alignment:**
 - Develop and enforce municipal **by-laws** that are aligned with the NCMP and PCMP, particularly concerning coastal access, land use in the CPZ, and local pollution control.
 - Implement a local coastal access management plan, including the maintenance of infrastructure and public servitudes.
- **Community Engagement:**
 - Establish and maintain stakeholder engagement mechanisms, such as local coastal forums, to ensure community participation in decision-making.
 - Promote public awareness and education on local coastal issues.

5.10 A Step-by-Step Guide to Alignment

This section provides a practical, step-by-step process for provinces and municipalities to develop or revise their CMPs to ensure alignment with the NCMP.

Phase 1: Assessment (First 6 months)

1. **Review Existing Plans:** Conduct a thorough review of the current PCMP/MCMP, IDP, SDF, and other relevant sectoral plans.
2. **Identify Gaps and Misalignments:** Compare existing plans against the seven strategic priorities and specific objectives of this NCMP.
3. **Assess Resources:** Evaluate the current financial, technical, and human resource capacity for coastal management and identify key needs.

Phase 2: Planning (Next 12 months)

1. **Develop Alignment Strategy:** Draft a clear strategy detailing how the new/revised CMP will address the identified gaps and align with the NCMP.
2. **Set Priorities and Timeframes:** Prioritise local actions that correspond to the national priorities and establish realistic implementation timelines.
3. **Stakeholder Consultation:** Conduct extensive and meaningful consultations with all relevant stakeholders (other departments, traditional authorities, civil society, industry) on the draft CMP.

Phase 3: Implementation (Ongoing)

1. **Formal Adoption:** Formally adopt the aligned CMP through the relevant council resolutions.
2. **Integrate into IDP/SDF:** Begin the statutory process of integrating the MCMP into the next review cycle of the municipal IDP and SDF.
3. **Execute Actions:** Begin implementation of the actions outlined in the CMP, focusing on early-win projects to build momentum.

Phase 4: Review (Annual)

1. **Monitor Progress:** Use the indicators defined in the CMP to track implementation progress.
2. **Report:** Submit annual progress reports to the next sphere of government (municipality to province, province to national).
3. **Adapt:** Use the findings from monitoring to adapt and refine the implementation approach as needed.

5.11 National Capacity Building Strategy for Integrated Coastal Management

Rationale: The most significant impediment to the successful implementation of the previous NCMP was the acknowledged lack of financial, technical, and human resource capacity, particularly at the municipal level. A strategy without a plan to capacitate its implementers is destined to fail. This NCMP therefore includes a dedicated strategy to address these capacity constraints head-on.



Strategic Goal: To ensure that all institutions with a coastal management mandate, especially provincial and municipal authorities, have the necessary skills, resources, and support to effectively fulfill their responsibilities under the ICM Act and this NCMP.

Key Initiatives:

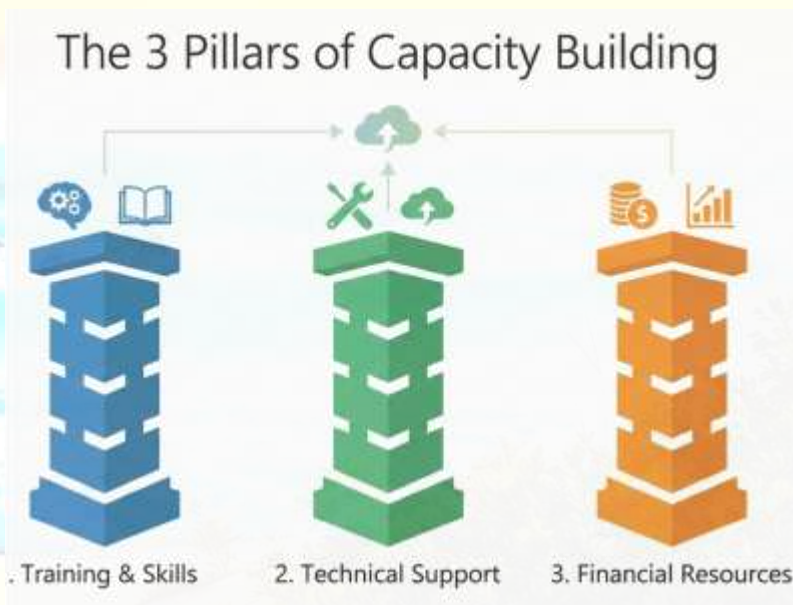
1. National ICM Training Programme:

- **Action:** DFFE, in partnership with SALGA and academic institutions, will develop and roll out a standardised, accredited national training curriculum for coastal managers and compliance officers (as per Action 5.2.1).
- **Content:** The curriculum will cover the ICM Act and its regulations, principles of climate change adaptation, spatial planning tools, estuary management, and stakeholder engagement techniques.
- **Target:** To train at least 200 officials at the provincial and municipal level by 2028.

2. Municipal Support Unit:

- **Action: Municipal Coastal Management Support** will be established within the DFFE's Oceans and Coasts Branch.
- **Function:** This unit will not be an enforcement body, but a support hub providing direct technical assistance to municipalities. This includes help with drafting MCMPs, reviewing EIAs, developing by-laws, and accessing funding.
- **KPI:** The unit will be operational by Q2 2026 and will provide direct support to at least 10 coastal municipalities per year.

3. Financial Support and Resourcing:



- **Action:** The DFFE will actively work with National Treasury, COGTA, and international partners (e.g., GCF, GEF) to develop blended finance models and ring-fenced grants to support under-resourced municipalities in implementing their mandated coastal management functions.
- **KPI:** At least one new financial support mechanism for municipal coastal management is established by 2027.

5.12 Conflict Resolution Mechanism

Rationale: Integrated coastal management involves a wide array of stakeholders with often competing interests (e.g., conservation vs development, subsistence vs commercial use). While the co-operative governance structures (NCC, PCCs) are the first port of call for resolving disputes, a formal, transparent, and fair process is needed for when consensus cannot be reached.

The Principle of Escalation: This NCMP establishes a clear, tiered approach to dispute resolution.

1. Level 1: Local and Provincial Forums (MCCs and PCCs):

- All conflicts should first be addressed at the lowest possible level. The MCCs and PCCs are the primary forums for dialogue, negotiation, and finding consensus-based solutions between stakeholders.

2. Level 2: National Coastal Committee (NCC) Mediation:

- Where a dispute cannot be resolved at the provincial level, or if it involves a conflict between two national departments, the matter may be formally tabled at the NCC.
- The NCC will act as a high-level mediator, seeking to find a solution that aligns with the principles and objectives of this NCMP and the ICM Act.

3. Level 3: Ministerial Determination:

- In cases where the NCC cannot reach a consensus, or where the dispute involves a fundamental point of national policy, the Chairperson of the NCC will refer the matter to the Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment.

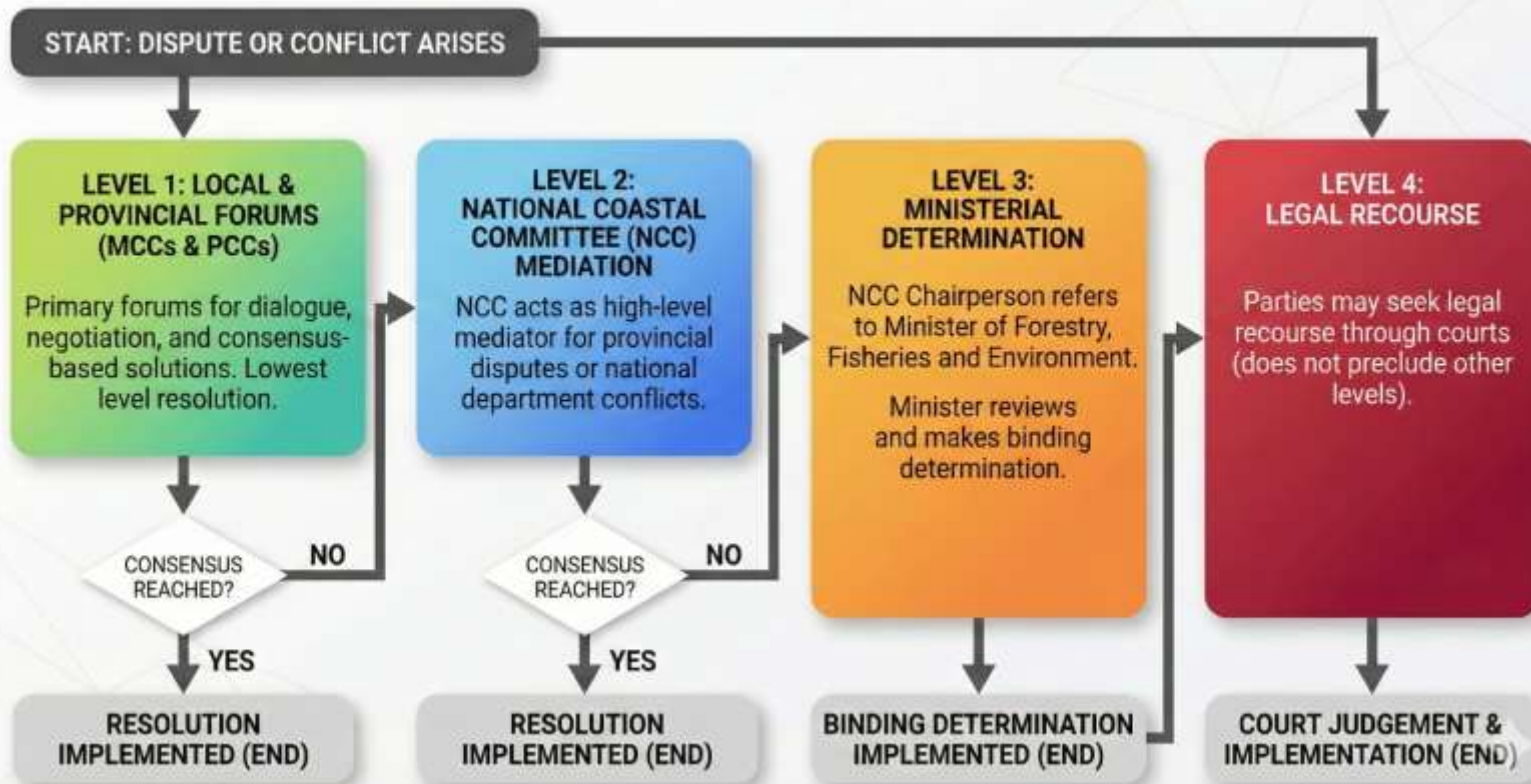
- The Minister, after reviewing the recommendations from the NCC and consulting with any other relevant Ministers, will make a formal determination. This determination will be binding on all organs of state, in line with the principles of intergovernmental relations.

4. Level 4: Legal Recourse:

- This mechanism does not preclude the right of any party to seek legal recourse through the courts as provided for in the Constitution and relevant legislation.



THE CONFLICT RESOLUTION PATHWAY



5.13 National Coastal Financial and Resourcing Strategies

Rationale:

A strategy without a clear plan for its resourcing is merely an aspiration. The successful implementation of this NCMP hinges on securing adequate, sustainable, and well-managed financial and human resources. Acknowledging the severe capacity constraints at the municipal and provincial levels, this NCMP moves beyond simply mandating action and establishes a proactive, multi-faceted strategy for funding and capacitating integrated coastal management across South Africa.

The core principle of this strategy is twofold: **Mainstreaming and Diversifying**.

- **Mainstreaming:** Integrating coastal management into the core budgeting and planning processes of across government levels to secure public funds.
- **Diversifying:** Actively pursuing a range of external and innovative funding sources to supplement the national fiscus and build long-term financial sustainability.

This section provides a framework for a blended finance model to ensure the actions outlined in the National Implementation Plan are adequately resourced.

Pillar 1: Public Sector Funding & Mainstreaming

The primary responsibility for funding mandated government functions lies with the state. The most effective way to secure these funds is to embed coastal management within existing government budgeting cycles.

- **National Level:** The Department of Forestry, Fisheries, and the Environment (DFFE) will ensure that the implementation of its responsibilities under this NCMP is reflected as a dedicated Key Performance Area in its Annual



Performance Plans and is allocated a specific budget through the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF). This includes ring-fenced funding for the **National Capacity Building Strategy** and the **DFFE Municipal Support Unit**.

- **Provincial Level:** Provincial Lead Agencies, through the Provincial Coastal Committees (PCCs), must ensure that the objectives and projects of their Provincial Coastal Management Programmes (PCMPs) are integrated into the Provincial Growth and Development Strategy and receive budgetary allocations from the provincial treasury.
- **Municipal Level (Critical Focus):** The single most important action for municipalities is the statutory integration of their Municipal Coastal Management Programme (MCMP) into their **Integrated Development Plan (IDP)**. Once coastal projects (e.g., infrastructure upgrades, estuary management support) are line items in the IDP, they can be formally included in the municipal budget. Municipalities are also strongly encouraged to leverage existing conditional grants, such as the **Municipal Infrastructure Grant (MIG)** and **Urban Settlements Development Grant (USDG)**, for coastal infrastructure projects that meet the grant criteria.

Pillar 2: International & Donor Funding

South Africa's globally significant coastal biodiversity and its vulnerability to climate change position it to access major international funding mechanisms.

- **Climate Finance:** The DFFE, through its climate change branch, will act as the national coordinating body to develop large-scale, programmatic proposals for submission to international climate funds such as the **Green Climate Fund (GCF)** and the **Adaptation Fund**. These proposals will bundle projects from the NCMP's "Climate Resilience" and "Estuary Management" priorities, focusing



on nature-based solutions and ecosystem-based adaptation.

- **Biodiversity Finance:** DFFE will work with partners like SANBI to access funding from the **Global Environment Facility (GEF)** and other biodiversity-focused funds to support the expansion and effective management of Marine Protected Areas and the conservation of threatened coastal ecosystems.

Pillar 3: Private Sector & Innovative Finance

A "whole-of-society" approach requires leveraging the resources and innovation of the private sector.

- **Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs):** Municipalities and provinces will be encouraged and supported to develop PPPs for the development and/or management of coastal infrastructure that has revenue-generating potential, such as eco-tourism facilities, public launch sites, and recreational amenities.
- **Blue and Green Bonds:** The National Coastal Investment Framework (Chapter 11) will serve as a prospectus to attract large-scale investment. DFFE will work with National Treasury and the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA) to explore the feasibility of issuing national or municipal "Blue Bonds" to finance major coastal resilience and restoration projects.
- **Biodiversity Offsets and Corporate Social Investment (CSI):** Where development impacts are unavoidable, the biodiversity offset system must be strategically used to direct investment into the NCMP's conservation and restoration priorities. The Coastal Stewardship Forum will actively engage with large corporations to channel CSI funding towards high-impact coastal community projects.

Pillar 4: Local Revenue Generation and Cost-Effectiveness

To build long-term sustainability, municipalities must be empowered to generate local revenue and implement cost-effective solutions.

- **Ring-fenced User Fees:** In high-density, high-traffic coastal areas with significant tourism and recreational infrastructure, municipalities are encouraged to develop by-laws for the implementation of user-pays systems (e.g., parking fees, facility access fees). It is critical that these by-laws explicitly **ring-fence all revenue** for the sole purpose of maintaining and upgrading coastal infrastructure and services within that specific management area.
- **Re-investment of Fines:** All fines collected for contraventions of coastal by-laws and regulations should be ring-fenced and re-invested into municipal compliance and enforcement efforts and the rehabilitation of degraded areas.

- **Leveraging EPWP Programmes:** Municipalities must actively partner with national programmes like the **Working for the Coast** initiative. This allows them to achieve key NCMP objectives (e.g., alien clearing, waste removal, access maintenance) while simultaneously creating jobs, using existing national budgets.



5.14 The Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) Lekgotla

The Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) Lekgotla serves as the premier national dialogue platform for coastal governance in South Africa. Established to bridge the gap between science, policy, and practice, the Lekgotla is a government-endorsed forum that brings together all spheres of government (National, Provincial, and Municipal), civil society, academia, and the private sector. It acts as a critical mechanism for achieving the cooperative governance objectives of the ICM Act, ensuring that coastal management is not siloed but integrated across sectors and landscapes. Since its inception, the Lekgotla has evolved from a platform for information exchange into a strategic vehicle for capacity building, resource mobilisation, and the acceleration of climate resilience actions at the local government level.



1. Strategic Evolution of the National Dialogue

The trajectory of the ICM Lekgotla demonstrates a maturing coastal governance landscape in South Africa:

- **2019: Establishing the Science-Policy Interface (Cape Town)** The inaugural Lekgotla, themed *"From Science to Policy and Beyond,"* established the foundation for evidence-based decision-making. It highlighted the necessity of transdisciplinary research to inform policy and emphasised the need to move beyond natural sciences to include social and economic considerations in coastal management.
- **2023: Planning for Climate Change (KwaZulu-Natal)** Themed *"Coastal Planning and Climate Change,"* the second Lekgotla focused on the alignment of provincial and national priority projects. It addressed the urgent need to mainstream climate change into Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) and Spatial Development Frameworks (SDFs), driven by the context of extreme weather events in KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape.
- **2025: From Knowledge to Action (East London)** Marking a strategic pivot, the 2025 Lekgotla focused on *"Empowering Coastal Municipalities for Climate Resilience."* This session moved beyond conceptual discussions to practical implementation, focusing on accessing climate finance (GEF, GCF, and the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage), scaling Nature-based Solutions (NbS), and leveraging the Oceans Economy for local development.

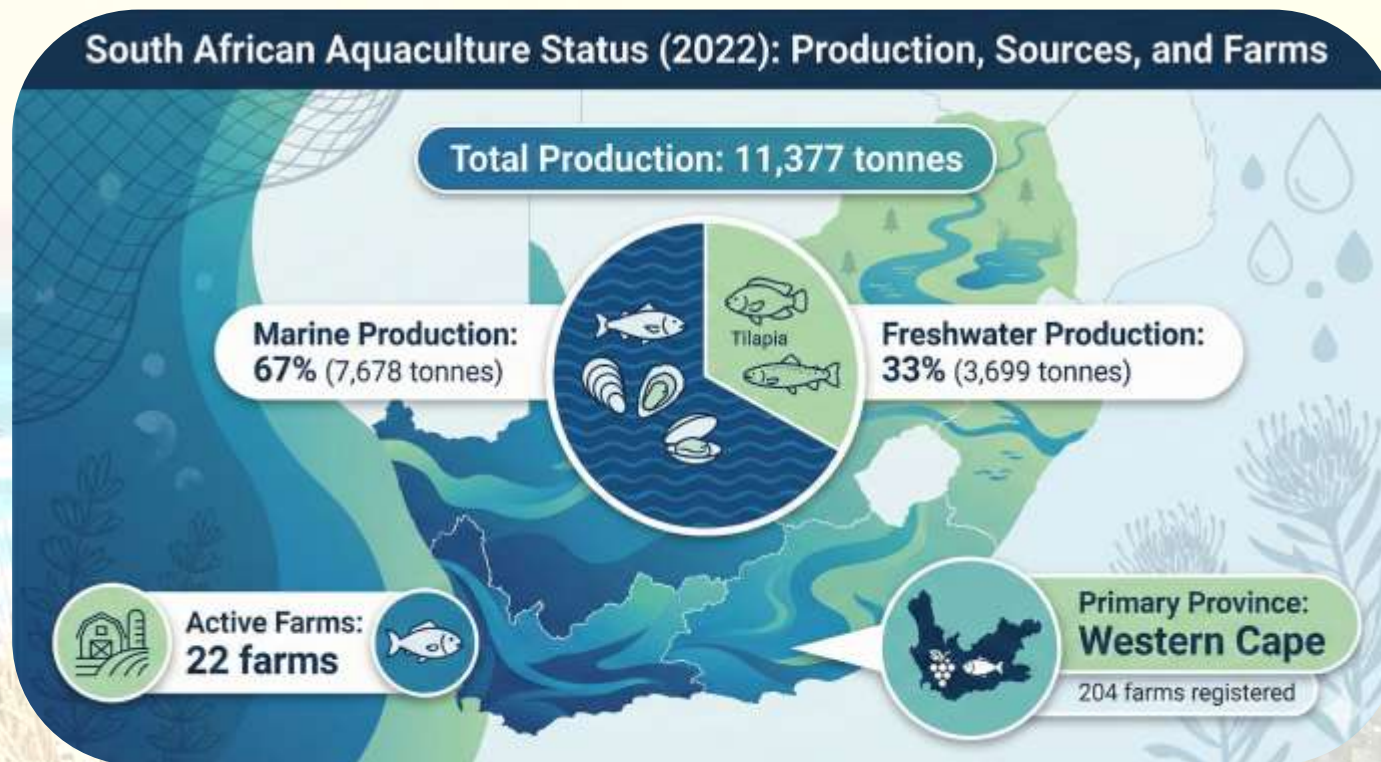


2. The Lekgotla as an Enabler of Governance and Alignment

The ICM Lekgotla strengthens the implementation of the NCMP through specific governance interventions:

- **Intergovernmental Coordination:** The platform addresses the fragmentation of mandates by clarifying roles between environmental, disaster management, and infrastructure sectors. It facilitates the "catchment-to-coast" approach, recognising that upstream activities (such as water quality and waste management) are intrinsic to coastal outcomes.

- **Municipal Empowerment:** Recognising municipalities as the frontline of implementation, the Lekgotla provides direct technical support for developing "bankable" projects. This includes capacity building on the *National Ocean and Coastal Information Management System (OCIMS)* decision-support tools, which are critical for flood hazard assessment and harmful algal bloom monitoring.
- **Policy Harmonisation:** The forum aligns local actions with national frameworks, including the Climate Change Act and the Oceans Economy Master Plan, ensuring that municipal coastal management programmes (MCMs) are not static documents but active drivers of local economic development.



3. Fostering Strategic Partnerships

The Lekgotla has demonstrated that the state cannot manage the coast alone. It has formalised partnerships to leverage resources and technical expertise:

- **Civil Society and Eco-Labelling:** Partnerships with organizations such as WESSA utilise eco-labels (Blue Flag and Green Coast) as enablers for municipal compliance, tourism development, and youth skills development.
- **Community-Based Models:** The platform promotes co-management models, such as the *Siyazama Aquaculture Cooperative* and the *Kouga Special Rate Area (SRA)* model, which demonstrate how public-private-community partnerships can finance and maintain coastal infrastructure.
- **International Finance:** The Lekgotla facilitates direct engagement between South African institutions (DBSA, SANBI) and international funding mechanisms, creating pathways for municipalities to access climate finance for adaptation and loss and damage.

4. Future Directive

Going forward, the ICM Lekgotla will continue to serve as the operational engine for the NCMP's partnership goals. It will focus on:

1. **Institutionalising** the event as a biennial stocktake of the nation's coastal management performance.
2. **Tracking** the implementation of resolutions to ensure accountability.
3. **Scaling** successful pilot projects (such as dune rehabilitation and estuarine restoration) from one municipality to the wider coastal region.



CHAPTER 6: STATE OF THE COAST - A NATIONAL AND PROVINCIAL OVERVIEW

A prerequisite for effective management is a clear and honest assessment of the current state of our coastal resources. This chapter provides a national overview of the status, trends, and pressures facing South Africa's coastal zone. It draws from the latest scientific assessments, including the National Biodiversity Assessment (NBA) 2018, State of the Environment reports, and extensive stakeholder consultations conducted during the review of the previous NCMP. This analysis is presented across three thematic areas—Ecological Health, Socio-Economic Conditions, and Climate Change Vulnerability—followed by specific snapshots for each of the four coastal provinces.

6.1 Ecological Health

The ecological integrity of our coast is the foundation of its value. While pockets of pristine wilderness remain, the overall trend is one of increasing pressure on vital ecosystems.

- **Marine Protected Areas (MPAs):** South Africa has made commendable progress in expanding its MPA network, now covering over 5% of our Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). This network provides critical refuges for marine biodiversity and over-exploited fish stocks.
 - **Successes:** The expansion has significantly increased the protection of offshore ecosystems. Well-managed MPAs like Tsitsikamma and iSimangaliso demonstrate clear benefits for both biodiversity and tourism.
 - **Challenges:** Management effectiveness across the entire network is inconsistent. Offshore compliance and enforcement remain a significant challenge due to vast areas and limited patrol capacity. Furthermore, the socio-economic integration of MPAs with local communities, particularly small-scale fishers, requires substantial improvement to ensure benefit-sharing and reduce conflict.

- **Estuaries:** Our 290 estuaries are the **most threatened and least protected** of our coastal ecosystems. As critical nursery areas for fisheries and buffer zones against coastal storms, their health is disproportionately important to the overall resilience and productivity of the coast.
 - **Status:** The NBA 2018 found that less than 20% of our estuaries are in a good ecological condition (A or B ecological category). A staggering 80% are moderately to critically modified.
 - **Pressures:** The primary threats are poor water quality from agricultural and urban runoff, altered freshwater inflows due to dams and abstraction, physical modification from infrastructure, and inappropriate development within the functional estuarine zone.
- **Biodiversity and Habitats:**
 - **Status:** While overall biodiversity remains high, key indicator species are in decline. The African Penguin is now critically endangered, facing threats from reduced food availability and habitat disturbance. Several linefish species remain over-exploited.
 - **Habitat Loss:** The most significant habitat loss is occurring within the Coastal Protection Zone (CPZ) due to illegal and poorly planned development. Sensitive dune systems, which provide a natural defence against erosion, are being degraded by ribbon development and inappropriate access.

6.2 Socio-Economic Conditions

The coast is a hub of human activity, presenting both immense opportunities and significant management complexities. Recent assessments indicate that South Africa's ocean economy has the potential to contribute between **R129 and R177 billion** to the GDP by 2033. Currently, four key sectors account for 76% of this value: Marine Transport and Manufacturing, Tourism, Offshore Oil and Gas, and Construction. However, realising this potential is contingent upon maintaining the ecological infrastructure that supports these industries.

- **Coastal Access and Livelihoods:** Access to the coast remains a critical issue of social justice.



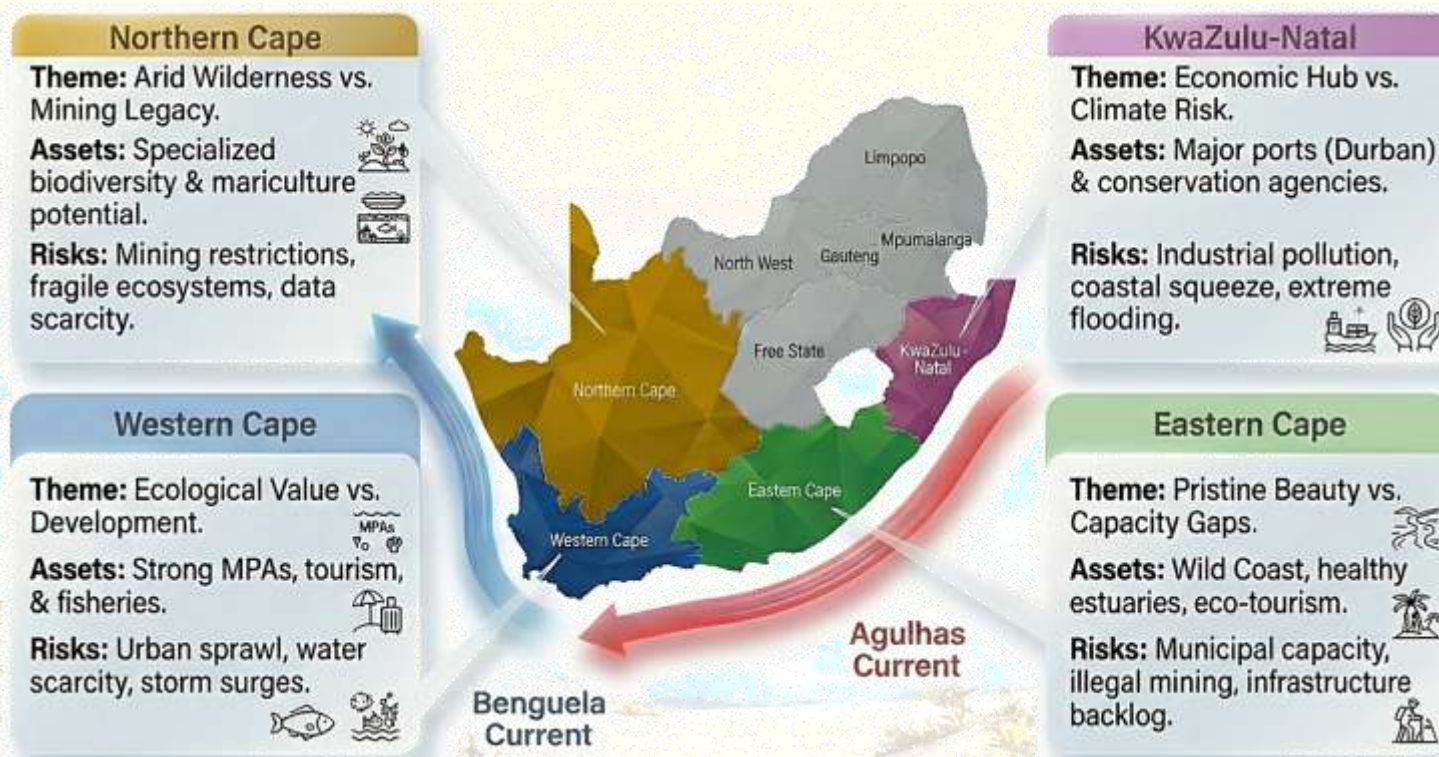
- **Inequity:** While many enjoy recreational access, marginalised communities, particularly small-scale fishers and those in former homeland areas, face significant and sometimes worsening barriers. Privatisation, gated estates, and poorly planned infrastructure often restrict access to historical livelihood areas.
- **Livelihood Dependency:** An estimated 120,000 households are directly dependent on coastal resources for subsistence and small-scale commercial activities. Their livelihoods are directly threatened by ecosystem degradation and lack of secure access.
- **Coastal Economy and Development:**
 - **Economic Driver:** The coastal economy is a vital engine for national growth. However, much of this development is not aligned with principles of sustainability.
 - **Unplanned Development:** Uncontrolled, linear, or "ribbon" development along the coastline is a major concern. It leads to habitat fragmentation, loss of public access, increased vulnerability to coastal hazards, and aesthetic degradation. Many municipalities lack the capacity to enforce land-use regulations effectively within the CPZ.
- **Pollution:**
 - **Land-Based Sources:** Pollution from land-based sources is the single greatest threat to coastal water quality. A significant number of municipal Wastewater Treatment Works (WWTWs) are non-compliant with their discharge standards, releasing poorly treated effluent into rivers and the sea. Agricultural runoff containing pesticides and fertilisers contributes to eutrophication and harmful algal blooms.
 - **Marine Pollution:** Plastic pollution is a pervasive and highly visible problem, impacting biodiversity through entanglement and ingestion. Shipping activities, including the risk of oil spills, remain a constant threat.

6.3 Climate Change Vulnerability

Climate change is an amplifying threat, exacerbating existing pressures on our coastal systems.

- **Sea-Level Rise and Storm Surges:** Coastal communities and critical infrastructure (ports, roads, residential areas) in low-lying areas are increasingly vulnerable. Recent storm events in the Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal have demonstrated the devastating potential of storm surges combined with high tides.

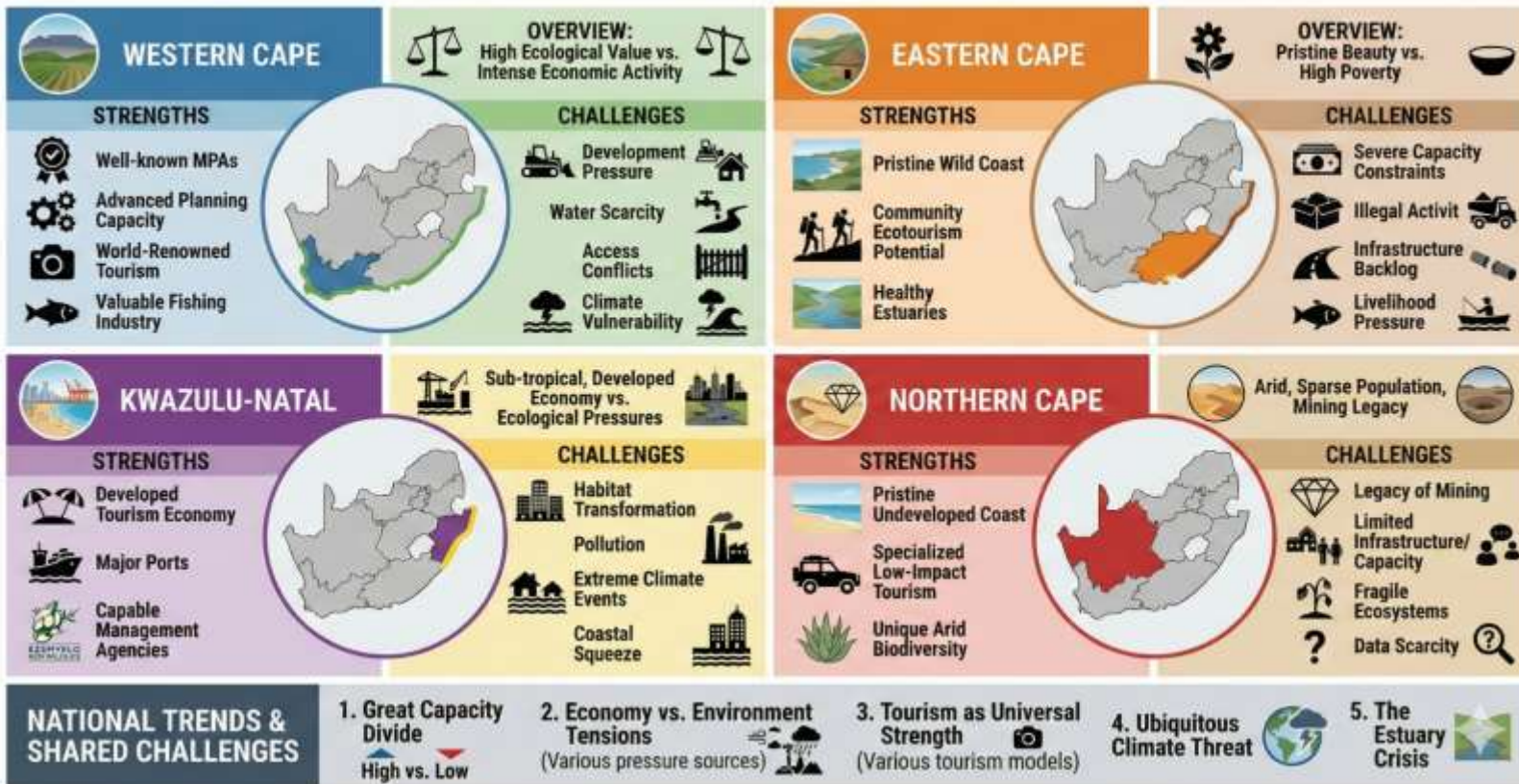
- **Coastal Erosion:** Both natural and anthropogenically-driven coastal erosion is accelerating in many areas, threatening public and private infrastructure. Hard engineering responses (like seawalls) often exacerbate erosion in adjacent areas and are not a sustainable long-term solution.
- **Ocean Warming and Acidification:** These stressors, while less visible, are fundamentally altering our marine ecosystems. Ocean warming is causing shifts in the distribution of marine species, while acidification threatens shell-forming organisms, with potential long-term consequences for fisheries and the marine food web.



6.4 Provincial Snapshots

The national picture is a composite of diverse regional realities. Effective implementation of the NCMP requires a nuanced understanding of the specific context in each of our four coastal provinces.

SOUTH AFRICA'S COASTAL MANAGEMENT: A PROVINCIAL OVERVIEW



6.4.1 NORTHERN CAPE: The Diamond Coast Frontier



Summary

The Northern Cape coastline is defined by a single, dominating characteristic: **Exclusion vs Opportunity**. For over a century, vast stretches of this 313km coastline were closed off to the public due to diamond mining concessions. As mining operations downscale, the province faces the unique challenge of "opening up" a coastline that is historically untouched but ecologically fragile. A coastline defined by contrast: vast, pristine stretches of arid biodiversity meet the intense, localised footprint of the diamond mining industry. The province holds the greatest potential for mariculture and renewable energy but faces unique challenges in public access and infrastructure.

Quick Facts

- **Coastline Length:** ~313 km (Smallest coastal province).
- **Primary Ocean Economy:** Coastal Diamond Mining & Mariculture (Abalone/Oysters).
- **Key Biodiversity Feature:** The **Orange River Mouth** (Ramsar Site) and the **Namaqua Upwelling System** (highly productive fisheries zone).

State of the Coast: Key Themes

1. **Restricted Access:**
 - Large sections of the coast are designated as mining concessions (coffer dams and security zones), making the Northern Cape the most "inaccessible" coastline for the general public.
2. **Mariculture Potential:**

- The cold, nutrient-rich Benguela current offers ideal conditions for high-value aquaculture (Abalone ranching). The report identifies this as the key growth sector for local communities.

3. Mining Legacy:

- Decades of diamond mining have left physical scars (unrehabilitated dumps) and altered shoreline dynamics, particularly near Alexander Bay.

Key Assets & Economic Drivers:

- **Mariculture Potential:** The cold, nutrient-rich Benguela Current provides optimal conditions for high-value aquaculture (abalone and oysters), identified as a critical replacement economy for mining.
- **The Orange River Mouth:** A trans-boundary Ramsar site of international importance, crucial for birdlife and estuarine biodiversity.
- **Wilderness Tourism:** The "undeveloped" nature of the coast offers a unique selling proposition for low-impact, high-value ecotourism (e.g., the Namaqua National Park expansion).

Priority Coastal Issues (The "Red Flags")

- **The "Ghost Town" Syndrome:** As mining houses divest, there is a risk of inheriting infrastructure (towns like Kleinsee and Koingnaas) without the economic base to maintain them.
- **Ecological Scarring:** Decades of cofferdam mining have altered shoreline dynamics and left unrehabilitated legacy sites.
- **Access Paralysis:** Despite the ICM Act, practical access remains difficult due to security zones and a lack of public road infrastructure.
- **Habitat Modification:** Sediment plumes from mining operations smothering nearshore reefs.
- **Marine Pollution:** Ghost fishing gear and plastics accumulating on remote beaches.
- **Capacity:** Municipalities lack the budget and specialised staff to manage vast, remote coastal stretches.

6.4.2 WESTERN CAPE: The High-Value, High-Risk Interface



Summary

The Western Cape represents the highest concentration of coastal economic value in South Africa, managing a delicate balance between a booming coastal real estate/tourism economy and a fragile ecosystem under siege from climate change. It is a coastline under intense pressure from "Coastal Squeeze"—where rapid urban development pushes seaward while rising sea levels push landward. The province has the most advanced coastal planning systems (CMLs) but faces the highest liability from climate-related property damage.

Quick Facts

- **Economic Hub:** Generates the highest coastal tourism revenue in SA.
- **Conservation:** Home to South Africa's premier Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) like De Hoop and Table Mountain.
- **Blue Flag Status:** Historically holds the highest number of accredited beaches, though water quality challenges are rising.

State of the Coast: Key Themes

1. **Coastal Squeeze:**
 - Urban development (Cape Town Metro, Garden Route) has pushed right up to the high-water mark. As sea levels rise, the coast has nowhere to retreat, leading to infrastructure damage during storms.
2. **Estuary Health:**



- Many estuaries (e.g., Berg, Breede) are water-starved due to upstream dams and agriculture, disrupting the breeding cycles of marine fish.

3. **Water Quality Crisis:**

- Aging wastewater treatment plants and marine outfalls (pumping sewage to sea) are a growing concern, affecting marine biodiversity and tourism safety.

Priority Coastal Issues (The "Red Flags")

- **Climate Vulnerability:** The 2024 report highlights the increased frequency of "Cut-off Low" storm systems causing massive coastal erosion.
- **Plastic Pollution:** High levels of macro-plastics found on beaches due to urban runoff.
- **Illegal Harvesting:** Poaching of Abalone and West Coast Rock Lobster remains at crisis levels, threatening stock collapse.



6.4.3 EASTERN CAPE: The Wild Coast



Summary

The Eastern Cape presents a duality: the highly industrialised ports of Gqeberha (Coega IDZ) and East London contrast sharply with the "Wild Coast"—one of the longest continuous stretches of undeveloped coastline in South Africa. The province holds 50% of South Africa's estuaries, making it the national custodian of estuarine biodiversity.

Quick Facts

- **Unique Feature:** The **Wild Coast** – one of the longest continuous stretches of undeveloped coastline in South Africa.
- **Estuaries:** Contains roughly 50% of South Africa's estuaries, many of which are in excellent condition compared to KZN/WC.
- **Key Challenge:** High poverty rates in coastal communities leading to reliance on subsistence harvesting.

Key Assets & Economic Drivers:

- **Estuarine Capital:** With 159 estuaries, the province is the nursery ground for the nation's inshore fisheries.
- **The Wild Coast Brand:** A global tourism asset that requires a delicate balance between infrastructure development (N2 Highway) and wilderness preservation.

- **Industrial Nodes:** The Coega IDZ represents a major node for maritime industry and energy generation.

State of the Coast: Key Themes

1. **Illegal Sand Mining:**

- Unregulated sand mining in coastal dunes (often by criminal syndicates or unpermitted local operators) is destabilising dunes and destroying vegetation.

2. **Subsistence Pressure:**

- Local communities rely heavily on mussels, crayfish, and finfish for food security. "Top-down" regulation often conflicts with customary rights.

3. **Untapped Tourism:**

- The potential for eco-tourism is massive but hindered by a lack of basic infrastructure (roads, sanitation) to get tourists to the remote coast.

The Reality of Loss and Damage: The vulnerability of the province was starkly illustrated between 2023 and 2024. In the Alfred Nzo District, heavy rains washed away critical access roads and low-lying bridges in eMakhwantini and KwaMvawesikela, cutting communities off from essential services. Similarly, Port St Johns experienced repeated flooding events that led to the destruction of coastal schools and the closure of town facilities, highlighting the urgent need for climate-resilient infrastructure maintenance.

Priority Coastal Issues (The "Red Flags")

- **Illegal Sand Mining:** Unregulated sand mining in coastal dunes and rivers is destabilising ecosystems and increasing erosion risk.
- **Unplanned Development:** The proliferation of "illegal cottages" and informal settlements in sensitive coastal zones undermines statutory planning.
- **Governance Gaps:** A disconnect between traditional leadership structures and municipal planning often leads to conflict over land use and access.

- **Alien Invasive Plants:** Coastal dunes are heavily infested with invasive species, outcompeting natural bush.
- **Titanium Mining Threat:** Ongoing tension regarding proposed heavy mineral mining (e.g., Xolobeni) vs eco-tourism.
- **Municipal Capacity:** Many coastal municipalities lack a designated "Coastal Manager" or budget for enforcement.



6.4.4 KWAZULU-NATAL: The Climate Frontline



Summary

KwaZulu-Natal is the "engine room" of the logistics economy (Durban/Richards Bay ports) but is currently in a state of ecological emergency. The 2022 floods exposed the fragility of the coastal system, where the hardening of catchments and the failure of ecological infrastructure led to catastrophic losses.

Quick Facts

- **Economic Powerhouse:** Home to the Ports of Durban (busiest container port) and Richards Bay (coal terminal).
- **Climate Event:** The April 2022 Floods were the most catastrophic recorded coastal disaster in SA history.
- **Biodiversity:** The iSimangaliso Wetland Park (UNESCO World Heritage Site).

State of the Coast: Key Themes

1. The "Brown Tide" (Pollution):

- The collapse of wastewater treatment works during the floods led to critically high E. coli levels, forcing the closure of prime swimming beaches for months and devastating the tourism economy.

2. Erosion & Sand Supply:

- Sand mining in rivers + dams upstream = No sand reaching the beaches.
- KZN beaches are shrinking because the natural replenishment of sand has been cut off, requiring artificial sand pumping (which often fails).

3. Estuary Crisis:

- The 2022 report notes a significant decline in estuary health.

Key Assets & Economic Drivers:

- **Logistics & Trade:** The ports of Durban and Richards Bay handle approximately 50% of South Africa's sea cargo.
- **Subtropical Tourism:** The warm Indian Ocean drives a massive domestic tourism market, contributing significantly to provincial GDP.
- **iSimangaliso Wetland Park:** A UNESCO World Heritage site and a prime example of a conservation-based economy.

Priority Coastal Issues (The "Red Flags")

- **The "Brown Tide":** Widespread failure of sewerage infrastructure has led to chronic E. coli contamination, threatening the tourism economy.
- **Sand Starvation:** Sand mining in rivers and upstream dams has cut off the sediment supply to beaches, accelerating coastal erosion.
- **Climate Vulnerability:** The province is the most exposed to extreme weather events (cut-off lows), necessitating an urgent shift to "managed retreat" and disaster risk reduction.

6.5 The National Overview

A Synoptic Overview: From the Orange River to Ponta do Ouro

Summary

South Africa's 3,592 km coastline is currently at a critical inflection point. We possess world-class environmental legislation (the ICM Act) and a rapidly expanding Marine Protected Area (MPA) network. However, these successes are increasingly undermined by **municipal infrastructure collapse** (sewage/water), **accelerating climate instability** (storms/erosion), and the need for greater coherence in the emerging Blue Economy, where mining, tourism, and conservation interests must still be reconciled.

National Vital Statistics

- **Total Coastline:** 3,592 km (spanning two oceans: Atlantic & Indian).
- **Ocean Territory:** The Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) is larger than the country's landmass.
- **Conservation Status:** ~15% of Ocean territory is protected (MPAs), a significant increase following Operation Phakisa.
- **Economic Contribution:** Coastal resources contribute approx. 35% to national GDP (direct and induced).

The "Three Crises" (National Trends)

1. The Infrastructure Crisis (The "Brown" Tide)

Across all provinces (but most critical in KZN and WC), the interface between land and sea is failing. Wastewater



THE ESTUARY HEALTH BAROMETER: NATIONAL ESTUARY STATUS.



Estuaries are the kidneys of our coast, and they are failing.

Treatment Works (WWTW) are unable to cope with rapid coastal urbanisation and load-shedding.

- *Result:* Widespread E. coli contamination, loss of Blue Flag status in key hubs, and nutrient loading in estuaries causing eutrophication.

2. The Climate "Reality Check"

Climate change is no longer a future prediction; it is a current infrastructure destroyer.

- *East Coast (KZN/EC):* Increased intensity of "Cut-off Lows" causing massive flooding and sedimentation.
- *West/South Coast (WC/NC):* Storm surges and rising sea levels attacking "hardened" coastlines where development prevents natural shoreline retreat (Coastal Squeeze).

3. Blue Economy Coordination Challenges

South Africa is aggressively pursuing "Operation Phakisa" (Ocean Economy), but the sectors are facing complexities.

- **Competing Spatial Demands:** Offshore Oil & Gas exploration and coastal mining (NC/EC) are increasingly facing challenges as regards spatially facilitating access for tourism and the fisheries sectors. Achieving a sustainable spatial balance between extractive activities and conservation remains a key priority.

The "Tale of Two Oceans" (Regional Dynamics)

Feature	West Coast (Atlantic)	East Coast (Indian)
Oceanography	Cold, nutrient-rich (Benguela Current).	Warm, high-energy (Agulhas Current).
Key Economy	Industrial Fishing, Diamond Mining.	Tourism, Ports (Logistics), Sugar.
Key Risk	Water scarcity & Aridity.	Flooding & Water Quality.
Biodiversity	Low diversity, High biomass (Fish stocks).	High diversity (Tropical/Sub-tropical).


Governance: The "Paper vs Practice" Gap

- **Strength:** The *Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) Act* is globally recognised as progressive legislation, prohibiting inappropriate development within the Coastal Protection Zone (CPZ).
- **Weakness:** Implementation at the **Municipal Level** is critically weak. Most coastal municipalities lack the technical capacity (Coastal Engineers/Scientists) and budget to enforce the Act, leading to widespread illegal land use and "ribbon development."



THE FOUR COASTS: DIVERSE ECONOMIES, SHARED VALUE





CHAPTER 7: ANALYSIS OF ORIGINAL NCMP: ACHIEVEMENTS, COMPLEXITIES, AND LESSONS LEARNED

7.1 Introduction and Methodology

The NCMP provides direction and guidance towards a structured and standardised approach to coastal management in South Africa, as an iterative, dynamic process where priorities for coastal management must be periodically evaluated to improve performance and revise strategies. The first NCMP established national priorities and associated management objectives for coastal management coupled with a 5-year implementation plan to ensure tangible delivery of actions for the implementation of national coastal management functions as mandated in the ICM Act.

This chapter provides a detailed, retrospective analysis of the National Management Objectives and Actions outlined in Chapter 6 of the National Coastal Management Programme (2015). The purpose of this review is to honestly assess the degree to which the planned actions were achieved, identify the systemic factors that contributed to successes or failures, and draw clear lessons to inform the current 2026-2031 NCMP.

The assessment of each action is based on a synthesis of information from:

- Subsequent legislative and policy developments (e.g., amendments to the ICM Act).
- The strategic priorities and identified gaps in the new Draft NCMP (2026-2031).
- Feedback and concerns raised by stakeholders during the public consultation process.

- Known national projects and government initiatives (e.g., Operation Phakisa, Green Climate Fund proposals).

The analysis specifically addresses the user's request to identify where actions may have been **combined**, or where implementation was hampered by a lack of **funding/capacity**.

Key for Assessed Achievement Status:

- **Achieved:** The action was largely or fully completed as intended.
- **Partially Achieved:** Significant progress was made, but the action was not fully completed, or the outcome was inconsistent across regions.
- **Ongoing:** The action is continuous by nature and was successfully initiated and maintained.
- **Not Achieved / Stalled:** Little to no progress was made on the action.
- **Superseded / Integrated:** The action was overtaken by or absorbed into a different, often larger, government programme or policy initiative.

7.2 Analysis Tables by Priority Area

Key Actions (as per 2015-2020 NCMP)	Assessed Achievement Status (2020)	Analysis of Implementation & Contributing Factors
Develop criteria for the adjustment of coastal boundaries.	Superseded / Integrated	Synergistic Consolidation: This abstract goal was effectively superseded by the more practical and urgent work on determining the high-water markdetermining the High-Water Mark (HWM) and establishing Coastal Management Lines (CMLs). The focus shifted from developing theoretical criteria to implementing tangible spatial tools.

Regulations pertaining to the reclamation of land from the sea.	Partially Achieved	Legal Complexity & Capacity: While the ICM Act was amended to include specific sections (7B and 7C) on reclamation, the final supporting regulations have been a lengthy and complex process. This highlights a capacity challenge in translating legislative mandates into detailed, legally robust regulations.
Develop norms and standards for coastal management lines (CMLs).	Partially Achieved	Funding & Capacity Gaps: A national standard was not achieved. However, several proactive provinces (notably the Western Cape) and municipalities developed their own CMLs. This demonstrates a key lesson: without dedicated national funding and technical support, implementation becomes fragmented and depends on sub-national capacity.
Regulation on the control of use of vehicles in the coastal area.	Achieved	Clear Success: The Control of Use of Vehicles in the Coastal Area Regulations were successfully promulgated and are actively enforced, representing a clear success in the implementation of a specific regulatory tool.
Prepare a nationally consistent spatial layer of coastal boundaries.	Partially Achieved / Ongoing	Integration into Larger Processes: This work has been substantially advanced but is now integrated into the much larger and more complex frameworks of Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) and the developing Ocean and Coastal Information Management System (OCIMS). The original NCMP action became a component of these bigger initiatives.
Develop guidelines for coastal defence (e.g., environmental engineering).	Not Achieved / Stalled	Funding & Technical Complexity: Developing national guidelines for complex issues like coastal engineering requires significant technical expertise and financial resources that were not allocated. This remains a critical gap, often leading to ad-hoc and potentially harmful local solutions.

Priority 1 - Effective planning for coastal vulnerability to global change

Key Actions (as per 2015-2020 NCMP)	Assessed Achievement Status (2020)	Analysis of Implementation, Contributing Factors, and Lessons Learned
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Develop criteria for the adjustment of coastal boundaries.	Superseded / Integrated	Synergistic Consolidation: This abstract goal was effectively superseded by the more practical and urgent work on determining the High-Water Mark (HWM) and establishing Coastal Management Lines (CMLs). The national focus correctly shifted from developing theoretical criteria to implementing tangible spatial planning tools that define risk and guide development on the ground. Lesson: High-level strategic objectives must be translated into practical, tool-based actions to be effective.
Regulations pertaining to the reclamation of land from the sea.	Partially Achieved	Legal Complexity & Capacity: While the ICM Act was amended in 2014 to include specific and detailed sections (7B and 7C) governing the process for land reclamation, the final supporting regulations have been a lengthy and complex drafting process. This highlights a systemic capacity challenge in translating legislative mandates into detailed, legally robust regulations in a timely manner.
Develop a methodology/norms and standards for the demarcation of the HWM.	Partially Achieved	Inter-departmental Complexity: Significant progress was made, with the Chief Surveyor-General issuing advisory notes on the practical determination of the HWM. However, a single, legally binding national standard was not promulgated. This reflects the deep legal and institutional complexities between DFFE, DLRRD, and municipalities in defining and managing this ambulatory boundary.
Develop norms and standards for coastal management lines (e.g., as influenced by sea-level rise).	Not Achieved (at National Level)	Funding & Capacity Gaps: This critical national action stalled due to a lack of dedicated funding for the intensive scientific modelling and technical work required. In its absence, several proactive provinces (notably the Western Cape) and metropolitan municipalities developed their own CMLs. Lesson: This is a clear example of where a lack of national leadership and resources leads to a fragmented, inconsistent approach, undermining the goal of a uniform standard of coastal resilience.
Regulation on the control of use of vehicles in the coastal area.	Achieved	Clear Success: The Control of Use of Vehicles in the Coastal Area Regulations (ORV Regulations) were successfully promulgated under NEMA in 2014. They are actively enforced by relevant authorities, representing a clear success in the implementation of a specific, targeted regulatory tool to manage a direct pressure on coastal ecosystems.

Regulations for the management of boat launching sites in the coastal zone.	Achieved	Clear Success: The regulations for Public Launch Sites were successfully developed and promulgated under the ICM Act, providing a clear framework for provinces to manage and control these critical access points.
Prepare a nationally consistent spatial layer indicating the boundaries within the coastal zone for national planning.	Partially Achieved / Integrated	Synergistic Consolidation: This work did not proceed as a standalone action but was correctly and logically integrated into the much larger, legally mandated frameworks of Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) and the ongoing development of the Ocean and Coastal Information Management System (OCIMS) . The delivery of a unified spatial layer is now dependent on the timelines of these larger national projects.
Develop norms and standards for modelling of sea-level rise and storm surge projections.	Not Achieved / Stalled	Funding & Technical Specialisation: Similar to the CMLs, this action required highly specialised technical capacity and dedicated funding that was not allocated. While individual research projects (e.g., by the CSIR) have provided valuable data, this was not translated into a national, standardised methodology for use by all municipalities.
Develop guidelines on the development of coastal planning schemes.	Partially Achieved	Capacity & Prioritisation: While some guidance was developed and is available (e.g., through SAWIC), it was not formalised into a comprehensive national guideline series. This reflects a likely prioritisation of more urgent regulatory matters over the development of guidance documents.
Develop guidelines for coastal defence (e.g., environmental engineering approaches).	Not Achieved / Stalled	Funding & Technical Complexity: Developing national guidelines for complex and controversial issues like coastal engineering ("hard defence") requires significant technical expertise, extensive stakeholder consultation, and financial resources that were not allocated. This remains a critical gap, often leading to ad-hoc, inappropriate, and environmentally damaging local solutions to erosion.
Review and revise the water and sediment quality guidelines for the protection of aquatic ecosystems.	Partially Achieved / Ongoing	Institutional Collaboration: This is an ongoing technical process. While some work has been done, a full revision requires deep collaboration between DFFE and the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS). The process is often slow and dependent on the capacity and priorities of both departments, highlighting the challenge of cross-cutting scientific work.

Priority 2: Ensuring equitable public access in the coastal zone

Key Actions (as per 2015-2020 NCMP)	Assessed Achievement Status (2020)	Analysis of Implementation & Contributing Factors
Norms and standards for the establishment and maintenance of coastal public access.	Partially Achieved	Funding & Municipal Capacity: While a national strategy and guidelines were developed, the on-the-ground implementation of maintaining and upgrading access points is a municipal function. As highlighted in public comments, most municipalities lack the dedicated budget and human resources to implement these standards fully.
A national strategy for facilitating coastal public access.	Achieved	Policy Success: The National Strategy for the Facilitation of Coastal Access was successfully developed and serves as a key guiding document. This represents a success in policy formulation.
Develop a national electronic reporting and dissemination system for coastal access.	Not Achieved / Integrated	Synergistic Consolidation: The development of a standalone system was impractical. This objective has been absorbed into the broader development of the OCIMS platform. The delay in OCIMS development has consequently delayed the achievement of this specific action.

Priority 3: Integrating the management of estuaries

Key Actions (as per 2015-2020 NCMP)	Assessed Achievement Status (2020)	Analysis of Implementation & Contributing Factors
Develop and implement a national estuarine management protocol.	Achieved	Clear Success: The National Estuarine Management Protocol was gazetted in 2013 and updated, providing a clear, legally binding framework. This is a major achievement and a cornerstone of modern coastal management in South Africa.

Develop guidelines for the development of Estuary Management Plans (EMPs).	Achieved	Clear Success: Comprehensive guidelines have been developed and are widely used by provinces and municipalities in the drafting of their EMPs.
Develop EMPs for estuaries assigned to national government.	Partially Achieved / Ongoing	Capacity & Inter-departmental Complexity: Progress has been made, but developing and gazetting EMPs is a resource-intensive process requiring extensive stakeholder consultation and coordination (especially with DWS). The process has been slower than anticipated due to these complexities.

Priority 4: Managing pollution in the coastal zone

Key Actions (as per 2015-2020 NCMP)	Assessed Achievement Status (2020)	Analysis of Implementation & Contributing Factors
Develop an assessment framework for coastal waters discharge permits (CWDPs).	Achieved	Clear Success: A framework and permitting system for CWDPs are in place and operational within DFFE, providing a crucial tool for regulating land-based sources of pollution.
Regulations and best practice guidelines for dredging operations.	Not Achieved	Sectoral Complexity: Dredging is primarily managed under the mandate of Transnet National Ports Authority (TNPA) and is also linked to mining regulations (DMRE).
Prepare a National contingency plan for oil spills.	Achieved / Ongoing	Clear Success: The National Oil Spill Contingency Plan exists and is a living document, regularly updated by the Department of Transport and its partners. This is a well-established and functional process.

Priority 5: Establishing coastal monitoring and reporting systems

Key Actions (as per 2015-2020 NCMP)	Assessed Achievement Status (2020)	Analysis of Implementation & Contributing Factors
Develop a national strategy for ocean and coastal monitoring.	Partially Achieved / Integrated	Synergistic Consolidation: This has been integrated into the broader objectives of the OCIMS and the work of SAEON. A single, standalone "strategy" document was less critical than building the actual monitoring platforms and networks.
Develop norms and standards for State of Coast Reporting.	Not Achieved / Stalled	Capacity & Funding: This critical foundational step was not completed. The lack of a clear, standardised set of indicators and reporting formats has been a major reason for the delay in producing the first national State of the Coast Report. This is a key lesson and a major priority for the new NCMP.
Prepare a National State of Coast report.	Not Achieved	Dependency on Other Actions: The failure to produce a national SOC report is a direct consequence of the failure to develop the norms and standards (above) and the complexities of collating data from various under-capacitated sources.

Priorities 6 & 7: Compliance, Enforcement, Information, and Research

Key Actions (as per 2015-2020 NCMP)	Assessed Achievement Status (2020)	Analysis of Implementation & Contributing Factors
Develop a National strategy for oceans and coast compliance and enforcement.	Achieved	Policy Success: The National Environmental Compliance and Enforcement Strategy (NECES) and other strategic documents provide the overarching framework.
Develop regulations for voluntary coastal officers.	Not Achieved / Stalled	Mandate: Coastal provinces are mandated this responsibility in terms of the ICM Act and have the power to develop provincial regulations for voluntary coastal officers.

Prepare a national coastal research plan.	Partially Achieved	Synergistic Consolidation: While a single "plan" was not published, a de facto research agenda has been driven by the NRF, DSI, and key research entities, often in response to emerging needs like the Blue Economy and climate change. The process has been more organic than planned.
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Priorities 8 & 9: Awareness, Education, and Partnerships

Key Actions (as per 2015-2020 NCMP)	Assessed Achievement Status (2020)	Analysis of Implementation & Contributing Factors
Develop a National strategy for awareness, education and training.	Achieved	Policy Success: The CAET Strategy was developed as a comprehensive guiding document.
Develop guidelines for the establishment of coastal committees.	Achieved	Clear Success: Guidelines were developed and have been used to assist in the establishment of PCCs and MCCs.
Establish MoUs with other departments and institutions.	Partially Achieved / Ad-hoc	Institutional Complexity: While collaboration happens on a project basis (e.g., with DWS on estuaries), the formalisation of high-level, overarching MoUs across all relevant sectors has been slow, reflecting the inherent complexities of inter-departmental coordination.

7.3 Successes

The ICM Act has clearly defined roles and responsibilities for national, provincial, and local authorities in managing coastal resources this has assisted in the effective implementation of the NCMP by establishing comprehensive frameworks for coastal management. Significant progress in coastal conservation has been achieved through the creation and management of marine protected areas (MPAs) with the expansion of MPAs along the South African coastline that helped protect marine biodiversity and ecosystems.

Community-driven beach clean-ups, access awareness campaigns, educational programs, and stakeholder forums have fostered greater community involvement in coastal stewardship which has increased public awareness and participation in coastal management activities. The establishment and implementation of coastal management lines and stricter environmental impact assessments (EIAs) for coastal development projects have strengthened coastal planning and development control measures to prevent unsustainable practices. Several regulations have been successfully published and implemented, including those concerning the control of vehicle use in coastal areas and the management of boat launching sites, and regulation on the coastal water discharge, reclamation of land from coastal waters regulations which enhance coastal access and environmental protection.

7.4 Complexities

There have been limited financial and human resources at various levels of government which has led to inconsistent enforcement of regulations and insufficient support for coastal management initiatives. Complex coordination among multiple stakeholders, including government agencies, municipalities, NGOs, and local communities, has resulted in fragmented efforts and overlapping mandates, leading to inefficiencies in the NCMP's implementation.

Increased vulnerability of coastal areas to climate change impacts, such as sea-level rise, coastal erosion, and extreme weather events poses significant threats to coastal infrastructure, habitats, and communities. Insufficient data and monitoring systems to support evidence-based decision-making make it difficult to assess the effectiveness of coastal management interventions and respond to emerging issues. It is important also to understand some of the real complexities (set out below) that are faced when undertaking compliance and enforcement actions in the coastal environment.

- Provincial and local municipalities have not fully implemented the ICM Act, many municipalities lack the necessary technical expertise and trained personnel to conduct thorough inspections. In relation to discharges into coastal waters from Waste Water Treatment Works (WWTWs), key Complexities include:
 - Delays in issuing permits which is mostly due to incomplete applications
 - Inadequate information in permit applications, including missing specialist studies

- Limited capacity to consistently monitor compliance with permits
- Historical discharge issues requiring time to bring polluters into compliance, particularly for essential services like sewage
- Complex compliance pathways for legacy discharges
- It should be noted that collaboration between Coastal Pollution Management and Compliance and Enforcement sectors has improved significantly, with ongoing work to address these Complexities.
- Expansion and declaration of new marine protected areas (MPAs) is taking place but more capacity is needed to undertake compliance and enforcement within these MPAs, particularly those off-shore MPAs;
- There has been a notable increase in unauthorised coastal mining activities, characterised by issues such as unethical practices and misconduct. These activities appear to be influenced by various organised groups within the construction sector.

7.5 Lessons Learned

Successful coastal management requires the active participation of all stakeholders, this assists in building strong partnerships and fostering collaboration. The collaborative efforts between government, NGOs, and local communities have led to more effective conservation and management practices. Dynamic coastal environments require adaptive management practices that incorporate flexibility and continuous learning in responding to coastal issues. Periodic review and adjustment of management plans is crucial to address new complexities and incorporate new knowledge. Enhancing the capacity of institutions involved in coastal management is critical for effective

The Implementation-Impact Challenge

South Africa possesses comprehensive coastal and ocean legislation, including the ICM Act, MSP Act, and Climate Change Act, supported by active programmes across all sectors. However, experience from Operation Phakisa (launched 2014) and subsequent initiatives demonstrates that strong legislation and programme implementation alone do not guarantee socio-economic impact.

The challenge is not a lack of policies or projects, but ensuring that implementation translates to measurable outcomes for coastal communities and ecosystems. Root causes of this gap include:

- Fragmented mandates across government departments, with multiple agencies touching each sector
- Weak inter-ministerial coordination and communication
- Severe capacity constraints at municipal level
- Disconnection between available funding and community-level project access

This Programme therefore emphasises governance reform and coordination mechanisms alongside programmatic interventions. Priority 5 (Effective Governance) focuses on strengthening institutional arrangements, while the separation of compliance and enforcement functions into Priority 8 ensures dedicated attention to operational delivery.

implementation, by offering training programs and allocating resources to improve the skills and capabilities of local authorities and managers.

Coastal management can be improved through the utilisation of technology and innovative solutions such as the use of remote sensing, GIS mapping, and mobile applications for data collection and monitoring. Securing long-term financial sustainability is vital for the success of coastal management programs. Exploring diverse funding sources, including public-private partnerships and international funding mechanisms, to support ongoing and future initiatives such as Green Climate fund initiatives.

The National Coastal Committee should request that the Provincial Coastal Committees (PCCs) provide updates regarding the progress and current status in issuing notices as mandated by the ICM Act.

The implementation of the ICM Act in South Africa requires a focused research expertise to address several critical areas within the current landscape of ocean and coastal management. This need arises from the complexities of managing coastal zones, which are influenced by various environmental, social, and economic factors.

The National Coastal Management Programme has made significant strides in promoting sustainable coastal development and conservation. However, addressing resource constraints, stakeholder coordination, climate change, and data gaps is essential for future success. The lessons learned underscore the importance of stakeholder engagement, adaptive management, institutional capacity building, technological innovation, and sustainable funding in achieving long-term coastal sustainability.

Implementation of the ICM Act has also unearthed areas of the ICM Act that require amendment with lessons learned from implementation and practice. This is being addressed through the NEMA/SEMA rationalisation process.



CHAPTER 8: LINKAGES AND CROSS-CUTTING IMPERATIVES: INTEGRATING COASTAL MANAGEMENT INTO THE NATIONAL AGENDA

8.1 Purpose and Scope

The National Coastal Management Programme (NCMP) is the primary strategic driver for the coastal zone, but it does not operate in isolation. The health, prosperity, and resilience of our coast are influenced by a wide range of national policies, legislative frameworks, and sectoral activities. This chapter addresses these critical **cross-cutting issues**, providing guidance on the essential linkages that must be forged to ensure a truly integrated approach to governance.

Its purpose is to ensure **horizontal integration**, breaking down the silos between the NCMP and other key national mandates. It provides a framework for aligning objectives, coordinating actions, and leveraging synergies to achieve both coastal management goals and broader national development priorities. This chapter is a practical guide for national, provincial, and local authorities on how to ensure that coastal management is embedded in all relevant planning, development, and regulatory processes.

As a developing country, South Africa needs to continuously balance the economic opportunities which our oceans and coast affords us while maintaining its environmental integrity. To achieve a truly integrated approach to managing South Africa's coast, it is essential to recognise and consider the connection between Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) and various other projects and initiatives occurring within the coastal zone. This includes collaboration with different sectors, government departments, institutions, and addressing other



environmental priorities set by the DFFE. A particular focus should be placed on establishing and maintaining networks, partnerships, and agreements, which should be facilitated and coordinated through the institutional mechanisms outlined in the ICM Act. Below are some of the important linkages that need to be established and/or maintained for effective ICM. It is important to note that linkages will change over time with the changing coastal environment, societal needs and the growing economy of South Africa.

8.2 Intergovernmental Coordination and Collaboration

Integrated coastal management (ICM) has been adopted globally in order to standardise policies affecting the coastal zone, planning and co-ordinating approaches. These processes encouraged a common goal for different resource user groups through the co-ordination of policies, sectors, management concerns, development objectives, and political, stakeholder and individual interests. ICM is cross-cutting and affects a lot of governmental regulatory bodies, each with its mandates and roles and responsibilities. Intergovernmental coastal management committees are used to integrate ICM policy for different organisations, ICM can be used to integrate different levels of government and between ministries, helping to set out the mandates of government institutions and clarify jurisdictional boundaries and duties.

The existing structures are the National Coastal Committee, Working Group 7 and the four Provincial Coastal Committees. Also discretionary, there are also currently nine functional Municipal Coastal Committees in South Africa. These committees assist in information gathering, planning and enforcement from different government structures and make more effective use of local knowledge. The main goal is to promote integrated coastal management in South Africa and effective co-operative governance by coordinating the effective implementation of the ICM Act and the National Coastal Management Programme.

The local government plays a vital role in ICM planning and implementation through IDPs and SDFs. IDPs ensure that coastal management is integrated into broader municipal planning and development. This integration helps align coastal management with other municipal priorities, services and enables local governments can secure funding and resources specifically for coastal management initiatives. The SDFs provide a long-term vision for land use and spatial planning within a municipality. They help identify and designate areas for conservation, development, and other uses, ensuring that coastal zones are managed sustainably.

The ICM Act has strived for practical interventions to adapt coastal poverty into sustainable coastal livelihoods and to promote the realisation of the coast as a national asset into practical initiatives that will focus on the previously marginalised groups which involves women and youth. The Expanded Public Works Programmes (EPWP) was initiated in 2003 a national poverty reduction programme, which includes the Working for the Coast Programme which is run by DFFE. These programmes are aimed at creating work opportunities for unemployed and poor people in South Africa through the delivery of public and community services. EPWP is linked with various other national initiatives and policies, including the National Development Plan (NDP) which aims at reducing unemployment to 6% by 2030 and Operation Phakisa that contributes to the ocean economy and environmental conservation. All spheres of government in terms of their normal mandates are involved in the implementation of EPWP programmes.

8.3 Marine Spatial Planning (MSP)

Coastal management should be integrated with marine spatial planning to balance ecological, economic, and social objectives in marine and coastal environments. This ensures that various uses of the coastal and marine environment, such as fishing, tourism, shipping, and conservation, are considered together rather than in isolation. By mapping out where activities can and cannot occur, MSP helps prevent and resolve conflicts among different marine and coastal users. This is essential for maintaining harmony between economic development and environmental protection. MSP promotes the sustainable use of marine resources by ensuring that development does not exceed the ecosystem's capacity. It aligns with the principles of sustainable development by balancing economic growth with the need to protect marine biodiversity and ecosystem services. MSP adopts an ecosystem-based approach, considering the cumulative impacts of human activities on marine ecosystems.

This helps maintain ecosystem health and resilience, which is crucial for the long-term sustainability of marine resources. It supports coastal management by incorporating climate change adaptation strategies. It identifies areas vulnerable to sea-level rise, erosion, and extreme weather events, and recommends measures to mitigate these impacts. Successful MSP involves the participation of all relevant stakeholders, including government agencies, local communities, industry representatives, and non-governmental organisations. This inclusive approach ensures that the planning process is transparent and that the interests of all parties are considered.

The Marine Spatial Planning Framework outlines the principles, objectives, and steps for implementing MSP in the country. It emphasises the need for an integrated approach that aligns with international best practices.

Operation Phakisa which was launched in 2014, aims to unlock the economic potential of South Africa's oceans. It includes MSP as a fundamental component to ensure that economic development activities are sustainably managed.

The Marine Spatial Planning Act is the legislation that provides the legislative basis for MSP in South Africa. It establishes a coordinated approach to planning and managing marine activities and resources, and importantly, mandates certain government departments and functionaries to undertake certain tasks to give effect to MSP in the Republic.

8.4 Monitoring and Research

Regular monitoring of coastal and marine environments helps in detecting changes and trends. This includes monitoring water quality, species populations, habitat conditions, and human activities. Establishing baseline data on coastal ecosystems, biodiversity, and socio-economic conditions is essential. This data provides a reference point for assessing changes and impacts over time. Monitoring results inform management decisions, allowing for adaptive management. This approach ensures that management strategies can be adjusted based on new information and changing conditions. Research helps in developing and analysing different scenarios for coastal development and conservation, aiding in the creation of robust management plans.

Integrating research across disciplines (ecology, oceanography, social sciences) ensures a comprehensive understanding of coastal systems. This holistic view is essential for effective ICM. Involving local communities, industry, and policymakers in research initiatives ensures that the studies address relevant issues and that the results are more likely to be accepted and applied. Engaging the public in monitoring efforts increases data collection capacity and raises awareness about coastal issues. Utilising satellite imagery, drones, and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) enhances the capacity to monitor large and remote areas efficiently. Developing robust data management and sharing platforms ensures that data is accessible to all stakeholders and supports informed decision-making.

The NCMP outlines the strategic priorities for coastal management in South Africa, emphasising the importance of monitoring and research by Chief Directorate Oceans and Coastal Research and Specialist Monitoring Service

The South African Environmental Observation Network (SAEON) conducts long-term environmental monitoring and research, providing valuable data for coastal management. Its Egagasini Node focuses on marine and coastal systems.

The Ocean and Coastal Information Management System (OCIMS) is an integrated platform that provides access to data and information on South Africa's ocean and coastal environments, supporting management and decision-making.

8.5 Climate Change Adaptation

Climate change poses significant threats to coastal regions worldwide, and South Africa is no exception. Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) plays a crucial role in addressing these threats by implementing adaptive strategies that enhance the resilience and sustainability of coastal ecosystems and communities by assessing coastal areas most at risk from sea-level rise, coastal erosion, and extreme weather events. This involves mapping and modelling to predict future impacts. Evaluating the socio-economic vulnerabilities of coastal communities, including their capacity to adapt to changing conditions. Utilising natural ecosystems such as mangroves, salt marshes, and dunes to act as buffers against storm surges and erosion incorporating climate change adaptation measures to address rising sea levels, increased storm frequency, and other climate-related impacts.

Protecting and restoring biodiversity strengthens ecosystem resilience and maintains essential services, with ecological infrastructure providing natural storm protection alongside benefits for fisheries and tourism. Designing and constructing coastal infrastructure to withstand climate impacts, including elevated structures and improved drainage systems. In some cases, relocating infrastructure and communities away from vulnerable coastal areas to safer locations. Implementing policies and regulations that incorporate climate adaptation measures into coastal management plans. Ensuring that climate adaptation is integrated into national and local development plans, disaster risk reduction strategies, and environmental management policies.

Engaging local communities in adaptation planning and decision-making processes to ensure that solutions are locally relevant and supported. Providing education and capacity-building initiatives to improve understanding and preparedness for climate impacts among stakeholders. Establishing monitoring programs to track the effectiveness of adaptation measures and adjust strategies as needed. Continuously collecting data on climate impacts and adaptation outcomes to inform policy and management decisions.

The National Climate Change Response Policy (NCCRP) outlines South Africa's approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, emphasising the importance of integrating adaptation into coastal management.

The Coastal Vulnerability Index (CVI) is used to assess the vulnerability of South African coastal areas to climate change impacts, providing a basis for prioritising adaptation actions.

The National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (NCCAS) serves as South Africa's National Adaptation Plan, outlining the country's approach to climate adaptation. It identifies priority sectors such as water, agriculture, and human settlements, and emphasises the need for coherent action across different levels of government.

The Climate Change Act, 2024 (Act 22 of 2024), establishes a comprehensive framework for the country's climate change response. It is designed to facilitate a coordinated and integrated approach across all levels of government.

Currently, the Climate Change Adaptation Response Plan (CARP) is in draft form, which will build on the foundations laid by the NCCRP. This plan aims to provide more detailed implementation strategies, including:

- **Sector-Specific Adaptation Actions:** Identifying specific actions tailored to various sectors based on their unique vulnerabilities and needs.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation Frameworks:** Establishing systems to monitor progress and evaluate the effectiveness of adaptation measures over time.

Municipalities along the coast are developing and implementing local adaptation plans that address specific climate risks and vulnerabilities.

8.6 Biodiversity Conservation

Protecting coastal and marine biodiversity is crucial for maintaining ecosystem health and supporting livelihoods dependent on these ecosystems. Conservation efforts often focus on critical habitats like mangroves, coral reefs, and estuaries due to their significant ecological roles and vulnerability to human impacts. South Africa has made significant efforts to protect coastal and marine biodiversity through various conservation strategies, particularly focusing on critical habitats. The ICM Act promotes the conservation, sustainable use and protection of estuaries, mangroves and wetlands directly and through the preparation of management plans and the specification of management authorities.

Strategic Rationale:

The NCMP's conservation objectives are a crucial component of South Africa's broader commitment to protecting its unique biodiversity. The management of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), estuaries, and sensitive coastal habitats must be aligned with the national biodiversity agenda to ensure that efforts are strategic, effective, and contribute to meeting our international obligations under the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF).

Key Legislative/Policy Linkages:

- National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act (NEM:BA), 2004
- National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act (NEM:PAA), 2003
- National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP)
- Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF)

Alignment Needs and Synergies:

- **Contribution to National Targets:** Provincial and Municipal CMPs **must** explicitly identify how their actions (e.g., proclaiming local nature reserves, rehabilitating habitats) contribute to the national targets outlined in the NBSAP and the GBF's "30x30" goal.
- **Integrated Protected Area Network:** The management plans for coastal MPAs **must** be developed in coordination with the management plans for adjacent terrestrial protected areas and Estuary Management Plans to ensure ecological connectivity and seamless management across boundaries.
- **Mainstreaming Biodiversity:** The biodiversity sensitivity maps and bioregional plans developed under NEM:BA **must** be a mandatory informant for all coastal development applications and municipal spatial planning, ensuring that development is directed away from critical biodiversity areas.

The ICM Act requires the development of EMPs to ensure the sustainable use and protection of estuarine ecosystems, which are hotspots of biodiversity. A network of MPAs aimed at conserving marine biodiversity and ecosystems has been established and designated under the NEMPAA. These areas are designated to protect critical habitats such as coral reefs, kelp forests, and estuaries. Notable examples include iSimangaliso Wetland Park MPA located in KwaZulu-Natal, Table Mountain National Park MPA along Cape Peninsula and Robben Island MPA situated off the coast of Cape Town to name but a few. In addition to this, Operation Phakisa was launched in 2014 to focus on unlocking the economic potential of South Africa's oceans while ensuring environmental sustainability. It includes initiatives to enhance the management and expansion of MPAs, improve fisheries management, and address marine pollution. Operation Phakisa emphasises continuous monitoring, evaluation, and adaptation of strategies to ensure effectiveness. The initiative has received support from various stakeholders, including government agencies, private sector entities, and civil society organisations.



NORTHERN CAPE: From Diamond Coast to Ocean Basket



The launch of the 30 by 30 initiative under the High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People aims to protect 30% of the world's land and ocean by the year 2030, focusing significantly on coastal systems, including mangroves and estuarine ecosystems. This global conservation effort has garnered support from over 90 countries and is driven by the need to combat biodiversity loss, climate change, and habitat degradation. The coalition aims to accelerate action towards achieving global biodiversity targets set forth in international agreements such as the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). It aligns with the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), which was adopted during COP15 in December 2022. DFFE has made significant progress in implementing several interventions aimed at achieving the 30 by 30 initiative

through stakeholder engagement, policy alignment, increasing protected areas, community involvement, and securing necessary funding to enhance conservation efforts in South Africa.

NEMPAA and the ICM Act are integrated to ensure that conservation measures are effective across different habitats and ecosystems. Operation Phakisa aligns with the objectives of the ICM Act by promoting sustainable economic development while ensuring the protection and conservation of coastal and marine resources. The ICM Act incorporates adaptive management principles, allowing for flexibility and responsiveness to changing environmental conditions and new scientific information.

8.7 Capacity Building and Education and Awareness Campaigns

Capacity building and education and awareness campaigns aim to promote the sustainable use and conservation of coastal and marine resources. These programs are essential in fostering a deeper understanding of coastal ecosystems and the need for their protection. DFFE is involved in coastal management education and awareness, by conducting works, seminars, and public awareness campaigns focused on coastal and marine conservation. These programs often include topics such as pollution control, biodiversity conservation, climate change, coastal access, sustainable use of marine resources and general integrated coastal management.

The provincial local government and, authorities are also running similar initiatives that are aimed at supporting the ICM Act goals by fostering a culture of coastal stewardship and sustainability among South Africans. These programs often include educational campaigns, school programs, and public events designed to increase awareness of coastal issues and promote community involvement in coastal management. These initiatives are not only limited to government organisations, various Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) also contribute to coastal education and awareness efforts. They often collaborate with government agencies to provide training, conduct research, and organise awareness campaigns focused on protecting coastal ecosystems and promoting sustainable use of coastal resources.

8.8 Compliance and Enforcement

The primary role of Compliance and Enforcement is to bring the regulated community into compliance with all the laws and regulations applicable to the coastal environment, specifically the ICM Act. This is achieved by encouraging the regulated community to comply

voluntarily through awareness and educational initiatives and the use of voluntary measures of self and co-regulation. In this regard, the regulated community self-monitors in terms of issued permits or authorisations by conducting the necessary monitoring measures and submits the necessary reports to DFFE and other implementing organs of state for desktop audit reviews to be conducted. There are also established regulatory mechanisms to monitor compliance with issued permits, authorisations and licenses such as responding to reported incidents and complaints and conducting proactive site inspections. Where non-compliances and illegal activities are detected, action is taken against perpetrators through administrative enforcement and/ or criminal enforcement. The following are the main activities that trigger compliance and enforcement action within the coastal environment:

- **Off-Road Driving:** Anyone that drives a vehicle in the coastal zone must be a holder of a permit, unless the driving is identified in the Control of Use of Vehicles in the Coastal Zone Regulations (ORV Regulations) as a permissible use. Compliance monitoring takes place and enforcement action is taken where people are found driving in the coastal zone in contravention of the ORV Regulations. This includes, for example, seizing of vehicles and issuing of admission of guilt fines.
- **Coastal Pollution:** Anyone that discharges effluent originating from a source on land into coastal waters must first obtain a coastal waters discharge permit unless that discharge is permitted in terms of a General Authorisation, both issued in terms of the ICM Act. Anyone who dumps waste or other material at sea must first obtain a dumping permit, also issued in terms of the ICM Act. Incineration, loading, importing or exporting of waste or other material at sea is a prohibited activity. Compliance monitoring is conducted through compliance inspections. Enforcement action is taken against anyone who conducts such activities without a valid permit, in contravention of permit conditions or where prohibited activities are undertaken.
- **Illegal Structures:** Any structure erected on or within the coastal zone which is or is likely to have an adverse effect on the coastal environment or which has been erected or upgraded contrary to the ICM Act or other law, is considered to be unlawful. Enforcement action is taken against the perpetrators by means of the issuance of a repair or removal notice, a coastal protection notice and/or initiating a criminal investigation.
- **Coastal Encroachment and Coastal Access:** Anyone who carries out an activity that is having, or is likely to have, an adverse effect on the rights of natural persons to gain access to, use and enjoy coastal public property is in conflict with the legislation. Enforcement action is taken against anyone who conducts such activities without a valid permit and such person may be issued with a coastal access notice and or be criminally investigated.
- **Illegal Mining in sensitive coastal environments:** Any activity carried out by a person or persons, on or within the coastal zone which is or is likely to have an adverse effect on the coastal environment, such as illegal mining, would be dealt with through enforcement action, could include both administrative notices and criminal enforcement action. These activities contravene multiple pieces of legislation in addition to the ICM Act.

8.9 Climate Change Integration and Cross-Sectoral Alignment

Strategic Rationale: Climate change is the defining cross-cutting challenge of our time. It is not just an environmental issue but a fundamental threat to economic stability, social well-being, and infrastructure along the entire coastline. Simultaneously, the coast is a high-risk area for natural disasters. Integrating coastal management with climate adaptation and disaster risk reduction is therefore not optional; it is essential for building a safe and resilient nation.

Key Legislative/Policy Linkages:

- Climate Change Act, 2024
- National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (NCCAS)
- Disaster Management Act, 2002
- National Disaster Management Framework

Alignment Needs and Synergies:

- **Integration into Spatial Planning:** Provincial and Municipal Spatial Development Frameworks (SDFs) **must** statutorily incorporate the findings of the national Coastal Vulnerability Index (CVI) and the provincially delineated Coastal Management Lines (CMLs). These tools must be used to restrict or prohibit new development in high-risk areas.
- **Alignment of Disaster Plans:** Municipal Disaster Management Plans for all coastal municipalities **must** include a dedicated chapter on coastal-specific risks (e.g., storm surge, coastal erosion, sea-level rise inundation) and detail the early warning systems and evacuation procedures for coastal communities.



- **Nature-Based Solutions:** The NCMP's focus on estuary and dune restoration (Priority 2) must be recognised and leveraged by disaster managers as a primary, cost-effective form of **ecological infrastructure** for coastal defence.
- **Coordinated Response:** The Provincial and Municipal Coastal Committees must establish formal communication protocols with their respective Disaster Management Centres to ensure a coordinated response during extreme weather events.

8.10 Water Security and Source-to-Sea Management

Strategic Rationale:

The health of our estuaries and coastal waters is a direct reflection of the health of our river catchments. Pollution, illegal water abstraction, and altered river flows originating far inland have severe downstream impacts on the coast. A "Source-to-Sea" approach is therefore essential, requiring deep integration between coastal managers and water resource managers.

Key Legislative/Policy Linkages:

- National Water Act, 1998
- National Water Resource Strategy
- Catchment Management Strategies

Alignment Needs and Synergies:

- **Formal Institutional Linkages:** Provincial Coastal Committees **must** include formal representation from the relevant Catchment Management Agencies (CMAs) to ensure that coastal impacts are a central consideration in the development of Catchment Management Strategies.
- **Integrated Water Quality Management:** The setting of water quality objectives for estuaries and coastal waters **must** be a joint process between DFFE and DWS, ensuring that upstream discharge licenses are aligned with downstream ecological requirements.
- **Aligning Estuary and Catchment Plans:** Estuary Management Plans (EMPs) **must** be informed by, and provide input into, the relevant Catchment Management Strategy to ensure that issues like freshwater allocation (the Ecological Reserve) and upstream pollution sources are managed cohesively.

8.11 The Sustainable Blue Economy and National Development

Strategic Rationale:

The NCMP is not solely an environmental protection plan; it is a framework for sustainable development. It must actively enable and guide South Africa's Blue Economy aspirations, ensuring that economic growth is inclusive, equitable, and respects ecological limits.

Key Legislative/Policy Linkages:

- National Development Plan (NDP) 2030
- Operation Phakisa Frameworks
- Marine Spatial Planning Act, 2018

Alignment Needs and Synergies:

- **NCMP as a Blue Economy Enabler:** Provincial and Municipal CMPs **must** identify and map zones for coastal economic development activities (e.g., responsible aquaculture, coastal tourism nodes) within their SDFs, using the NCMP as a guide for sustainable practice.
- **Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) Integration:** The NCMP, through the NCC, will provide formal, directive input into the development of National and Regional Marine Spatial Plans. The CMLs and other coastal management zones must be recognised as foundational layers in all Marine Spatial Plans to ensure a seamless planning interface at the coast.
- **Sustainable Infrastructure:** All major coastal infrastructure projects, particularly those under the national Strategic Integrated Projects (SIPs) framework, **must** undergo a rigorous assessment against the objectives and standards of this NCMP, in addition to standard EIA requirements.

8.12 Land Use Planning and Integrated Service Delivery

Strategic Rationale:

The NCMP must be implemented through the existing machinery of government. The Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act (SPLUMA) and the District Development Model (DDM) are the primary legal and operational frameworks for planning and service delivery in South Africa. Aligning with these frameworks is essential for translating the NCMP's goals into tangible, on-the-ground outcomes.

Key Legislative/Policy Linkages:

- Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act (SPLUMA), 2013

- The District Development Model (DDM)

Alignment Needs and Synergies:

- **Statutory Integration into SDFs and IDPs:** As outlined in section 7.4, the integration of MCMPs into municipal SDFs and IDPs is a **mandatory legal requirement**, not an optional consideration. This ensures that coastal management is budgeted for and central to all municipal activities.
- **DDM as an Implementation Vehicle:** The DDM provides the ideal platform for coordinating the implementation of complex, cross-cutting NCMP projects that involve multiple spheres of government and state entities (e.g., major estuary restoration, development of coastal access infrastructure). Provincial Lead Agencies should ensure that key NCMP priorities are tabled for inclusion in the "One Plan" for each coastal district.



CHAPTER 9: STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR 2026-2031

The National Coastal Management Programme (NCMP) is built around seven interconnected strategic priorities. These priorities are the result of a rigorous analysis of our coastal realities, stakeholder consultations, and scientific assessments. They are designed to focus national effort on the most critical challenges and opportunities, ensuring that our actions are targeted, integrated, and effective. Each priority is underpinned by the constitutional principles of ecological integrity, social equity, and sustainable development.

1. **Equitable Public Access and Livelihoods:** *Securing the coast for all people and their prosperity.*
2. **Estuary Management and Restoration:** *Revitalising the vital arteries of our coastline.*
3. **Climate Resilience and Spatial Planning:** *Planning today for a resilient tomorrow.*
4. **Coastal Pollution Management:** *Turning the tide on pollution for a healthier coast.*
5. **Effective Governance:** *Strengthening the rule of law along our shores.*
6. **Coastal Research and Innovation:** *Harnessing knowledge for better decision-making.*
7. **Awareness, Education, and Partnerships:** *Fostering a national culture of coastal stewardship.*
8. **Mechanisms for Effective Compliance and Enforcement**

EQUITABLE PUBLIC ACCESS AND LIVELIHOODS



Securing the coast for all people and their prosperity.

Focus: Shared access and economic opportunity.

ESTUARY MANAGEMENT AND RESTORATION



Revitalising the vital arteries of our coastline.

Focus: Healing and protecting sensitive ecosystems.

CLIMATE RESILIENCE AND SPATIAL PLANNING



Proactively planning for a resilient tomorrow.

Focus: Adapting to coastal risks and future changes.

COASTAL POLLUTION MANAGEMENT



Turning the tide on pollution for a healthier coast.

Focus: Cleaner oceans through active waste removal.

EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE



Strengthening the rule of law along our shores.

Focus: Robust institutions and clear regulations.

COASTAL RESEARCH AND INNOVATION



Harnessing knowledge for better decision-making.

Focus: Science-driven insights and technological solutions.

AWARENESS, EDUCATION, AND PARTNERSHIPS



Fostering a national culture of coastal stewardship through collective action.

Focus: Community engagement and collaborative efforts.

MECHANISMS FOR EFFECTIVE COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT



Implementing measures to facilitate effective compliance and enforcement.

Focus: Ensuring adherence and oversight.



9.1 Priority 1: Equitable Public Access and Livelihoods

Strategic Rationale: Access to the coast is a constitutional right and essential for livelihoods, recreation, and cultural practices. Historical inequities and unplanned development continue to create physical and economic barriers. This priority seeks to address these injustices and unlock the coast's potential for all, particularly for small-scale fishing communities and marginalised groups whose well-being is intrinsically linked to coastal resources. It moves beyond mere physical access to encompass the fair and sustainable sharing of the benefits that the coast provides.



9.2 Priority 2: Estuary Management and Restoration

Strategic Rationale: Estuaries are our most productive yet most threatened coastal ecosystems. They are critical nursery areas for fisheries, vital biodiversity hotspots, and provide crucial protection against storm surges and coastal flooding. Their degradation, primarily from upstream pollution and altered freshwater flows, represents a significant and escalating ecological and economic liability. This priority focuses on halting their decline through a dual strategy of protecting those that are still healthy and actively restoring those that are degraded.



9.3 Priority 3: Climate Resilience and Spatial Planning

Strategic Rationale: Climate change is no longer a future threat but a present and accelerating reality for South Africa's coast. Rising sea levels, increased storm intensity, and coastal erosion pose significant risks to



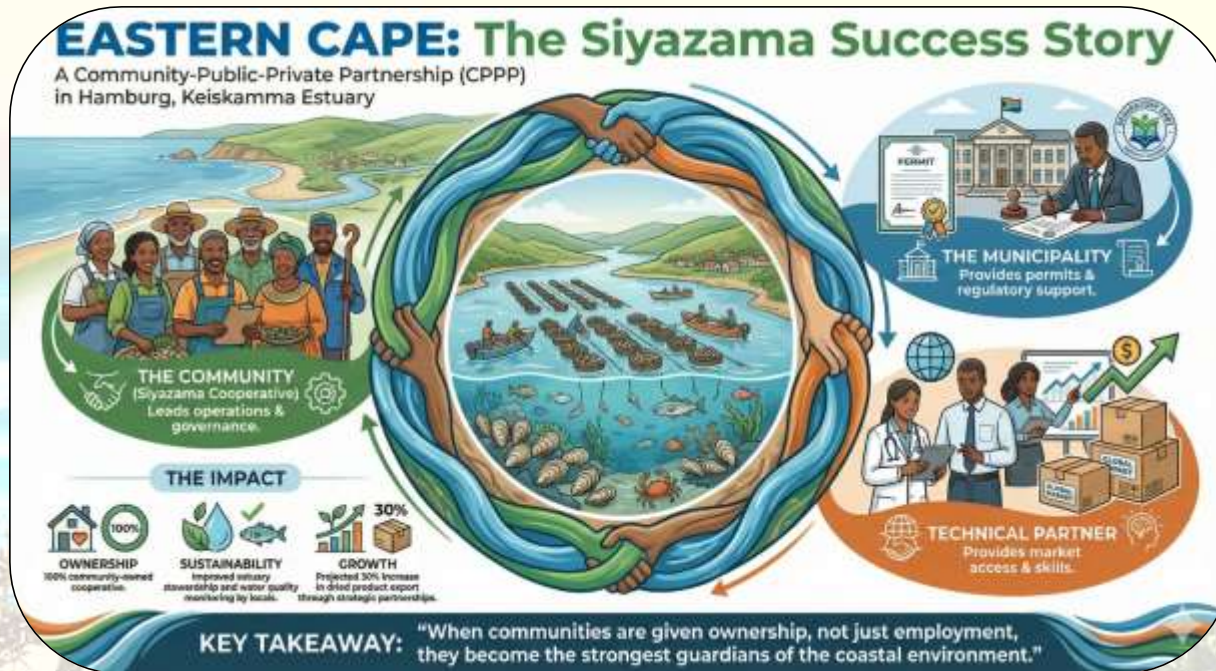
our communities, critical infrastructure, and ecosystems. A reactive, piecemeal approach is insufficient and often leads to mal-adaptation. This priority commits to a proactive, science-based approach, using integrated spatial planning and the establishment of clear development guidelines to build long-term resilience and avoid future losses.





9.4 Priority 4: Coastal Pollution Management

Strategic Rationale: Pollution from land-based sources, marine activities, and legacy sites undermines the health of our coastal waters, threatens marine life, and impacts human health, tourism, and our Blue Economy ambitions. This priority aims to shift from a historically reactive stance to a proactive strategy of prevention, rigorous monitoring, and consistent enforcement. It targets the key sources of pollution, including wastewater, agricultural runoff, industrial effluent, and plastic waste.





9.5 Priority 5: Effective Governance

Strategic Rationale: Strong legislation is ineffective without robust governance structures. Fragmented mandates between government departments and severe capacity constraints at the municipal level undermine all other coastal management efforts. This priority focuses on strengthening institutional arrangements at all levels and clarifying roles and responsibilities to ensure effective coastal management across all spheres of government.



9.6 Priority 6: Coastal Research and Innovation

Strategic Rationale: Effective management must be informed by the best available science and data. Critical gaps remain in our understanding of coastal processes, biodiversity baselines, the socio-economic value of ecosystems, and the long-term impacts of climate change. This priority aims to foster a targeted national research agenda, promote technological innovation in monitoring, and ensure that scientific knowledge is effectively translated into policy and management action.



9.7 Priority 7: Awareness, Education, and Partnerships

Strategic Rationale: Coastal stewardship is a shared responsibility that cannot be achieved by government alone. A well-informed public, engaged civil society, and a responsible private sector are essential partners. This priority focuses on building a national culture of coastal care

Strengthening the Science-Policy Interface

Effective coastal management requires robust mechanisms for translating scientific research into policy and practice. While South Africa has invested significantly in ocean observation and data systems—including the Ocean and Coastal Information Management System (OCIMS)—the science-policy interface remains underdeveloped. Research is not always incorporated from the inception of coastal projects, and management needs do not consistently drive research priorities.

This Programme supports the establishment of a formal science-to-policy forum that brings together government decision-makers, research institutions (NRF, SAEON, CSIR), academia, and sectoral stakeholders. Such a forum would:

- Improve awareness of available decision-support tools
- Enable coordination between data users across sectors
- Ensure research questions align with management priorities
- Support evidence-based policy development and adaptive management

through coordinated education and awareness campaigns. It seeks to formalise and strengthen partnerships between all stakeholders, moving beyond simple consultation to genuine co-management and collective action.



9.8 Priority 8: Mechanisms for Effective Compliance and Enforcement

Strategic Rationale: Inconsistent compliance and enforcement undermine all other coastal management efforts. This priority focuses on ensuring that the laws designed to protect our coast are upheld fairly and effectively.

Spotlight: Source to Sea Programme

The Source to Sea Programme represents an integrated approach to reducing marine pollution from land-based sources. Using a catchment-to-coast methodology, the programme addresses plastic leakage at river and stream pollution hotspots before debris reaches the ocean.

Key elements include:

- Installation of booms at identified pollution hotspots
- Job creation through waste collection and boom maintenance
- Scientific analysis of collected waste to map leakage patterns
- Partnership with private sector (Plastics SA, PETCO) for Extended Producer Responsibility

Currently piloting in five KwaZulu-Natal municipalities with R4 million investment per six-month phase, the programme is positioned for national scaling to 16 coastal municipalities. The sustainability model envisions transition from external funding to municipal co-financing to full municipal ownership.

This programme exemplifies the NCMP's approach to marine pollution: addressing root causes through integrated catchment management, creating employment through environmental programmes, and building partnerships across government, private sector, and civil society.



CHAPTER 10: THE NATIONAL COASTAL IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (2026-2031)

The National Coastal Implementation Plan is the core of the National Coastal Management Programme. It translates the strategic priorities outlined in Chapter 3 into a series of concrete objectives, actions, and measurable indicators. This plan serves as the primary mechanism for coordinating effort, allocating resources, and tracking progress over the next five years. It provides the framework for accountability and ensures that all activities are aligned with the national vision for our coast.

Note: The successful implementation of this plan requires intergovernmental cooperation and commitment from all designated lead and support agencies. Implementation timelines are subject to the finalisation of agreements and resource allocation through the appropriate budgetary processes.

Priority 1: Equitable Public Access and Livelihoods



Goal: To ensure that all South Africans, particularly marginalised and coastal-dependent communities, have safe, equitable, and sustainable access to the opportunities and resources of the coastal zone.

Strategic Objective	Key Actions	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Lead Agency	Support Agencies	Timeline
1.1 Secure and enhance	1.1.1 Conduct a national audit of all existing coastal access points, mapping	National audit completed and database live.	DFFE	Provincial Lead Agencies, SALGA, Municipalities	Q4 2026

physical access points.	them in a publicly accessible GIS database on the OCIMS platform.				
	1.1.2 Develop and gazette national norms and standards for the designation and maintenance of coastal access infrastructure, including universal access design principles.	Norms and Standards gazetted.	DFFE	DPWII, DoT	Q2 2026
	1.1.3 Fund and support municipalities in the formal designation and registration of at least two new public access servitudes per coastal province, focusing on previously disadvantaged areas.	8 new public access servitudes legally registered.	DFFE	Provincial Lead Agencies, Municipalities	Q4 2027
	1.1.4 Implement a phased Municipal Pilot Site Programme for coastal access infrastructure at four priority sites: (a) site suitability and viability assessments (Q4 2026); (b) concept designs and draft spatial plans (Q4 2027); (c) explore infrastructure financing mechanisms (Q2 2028); (d) initiate construction (Q4 2029).	4 pilot site assessments completed; concept designs approved; at least 2 sites under construction by 2029.	DFFE	Municipalities, Provincial Lead Agencies, DBSA, DPWI	Q4 2026 – Q4 2029 (phased)
1.2 Support Sustainable Blue Economy coastal livelihoods.	1.2.1 In partnership with small-scale fisher communities, identify and secure at least 10 priority livelihood-specific access points (including launch sites and post-harvest areas).	10 priority sites identified, co-management plans drafted.	DFFE (Fisheries)	Municipalities, Small-Scale Fishing Co-ops	Q4 2026
	1.2.2 Develop and launch a "Coastal Livelihoods and Blue Economy Support Programme" providing training and resources for coastal communities in	Programme launched; 200 community members trained.	DFFE	Provincial Econ. Dev., SETAs, DSI, Tourism	Ongoing



	sustainable tourism, mariculture, and alien clearing.				
1.3 Uphold Customary and Cultural Access Rights.	1.3.1 Develop a national guideline for the inclusion of customary access rights and traditional ecological knowledge in municipal spatial planning and land-use management schemes.	Guideline developed, workshopped with Traditional Authorities, and published.	DFFE	COGTA, SAHRA, DLRRD National House of Traditional Leaders	Q3 2026

Priority 2: Estuary Management and Restoration

Goal: To protect, manage, and restore the ecological integrity of South Africa's estuaries to ensure they continue to provide their essential ecosystem services, applying a Source-to-Sea management perspective.

Strategic Objective	Key Actions	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Lead Agency	Support Agencies	Timeline
2.1 Strengthen Estuary Governance and Management.	2.1.1 Ensure that an Estuary Management Plan (EMP) is developed and gazetted for 100% of the 43 priority estuaries identified in the National Biodiversity Assessment.	43 EMPs gazetted and under implementation.	DFFE	Provincial Lead Agencies, CMAs, Municipalities, SANBI	Q4 2028
	2.1.2 Establish and support functional multi-stakeholder	43 active forums meeting at least quarterly.	DFFE	Provincial Lead Agencies,	Ongoing

	Estuary Management Forums for all priority estuaries.			Municipalities, Civil Society	
	2.1.3 Develop and pilot at least two Source-to-Sea Management Plans for priority coastal catchments (e.g., uMngeni, Berg) to address cumulative land-based impacts on estuary health.	Two S2S Management Plans developed and adopted by the relevant Catchment Management Agency (CMA) and PCC.	DFFE	CMAs, Provincial Lead Agencies, DALRRD, DWS	Q4 2028
2.2 Restore Degraded Estuaries.	2.2.1 Develop and fund a National Estuary Restoration Programme targeting at least 5 priority degraded estuaries for active rehabilitation.	Restoration programme launched; rehabilitation plans for 5 estuaries under implementation.	DFFE	DWS, Municipalities, Research Institutions	Q2 2026
	2.2.2 Implement a national programme for the removal of legacy solid waste from at least 10 priority estuaries.	10 estuaries cleared of legacy waste.	DFFE (Working for the Coast)	Municipalities, NGOs	Ongoing
2.3 Secure Ecological Water Requirements.	2.3.1 Finalise and gazette the Ecological Water Requirements (Reserve) for all 43 priority estuaries.	Ecological Reserve determined and gazetted for all 43 priority estuaries.	DFFE	DWS, CMAs	Q4 2029



Priority 3: Climate Resilience and Spatial Planning

Goal: To build the resilience of coastal ecosystems and communities to climate change through integrated spatial planning and adaptive management, fully leveraging Marine Spatial Planning.

Strategic Objective	Key Actions	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Lead Agency	Support Agencies	Timeline
3.1 Integrate climate adaptation into all coastal planning.	3.1.1 Finalise and commence implementation of the Climate Change Adaptation Response Plan (CARP) for the coastal zone.	CARP officially adopted and gazetted; Annual progress reports published.	DFFE	Provinces, Municipalities, SAWS	Q4 2025
	3.1.2 Develop and gazette legally binding national norms and standards for coastal management lines (Coastal Management Lines), informed by the latest climate science.	National management line standards gazetted.	DFFE	DLRRD, Provinces	Q2 2027
	3.1.3 Develop and pilot at least two large-scale, nature-based coastal defence projects (e.g., dune restoration, estuary rehabilitation) funded through climate finance mechanisms.	Two pilot projects funded and under implementation.	DFFE	GCF, Private Sector, Municipalities	Q4 2028
3.2 Enhance spatial planning for	3.2.1 Fully align the NCMP with the Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) Framework, ensuring integration between terrestrial and marine planning.	Joint DFFE-MSP working group established; Alignment Protocol published.	DFFE	DoT, DMR, Provinces	Q1 2026

the coastal zone.	3.2.2 Complete the national Coastal Vulnerability Index (CVI) mapping for the entire coastline and integrate it into a publicly accessible decision-support tool.	National CVI map and tool launched on OCIMS.	DFFE	CSIR, Municipalities	Q4 2027
	3.2.3 Develop the Coastal and Marine Atlas as a national decision-support tool: (a) conduct feasibility study and define data architecture (Q2 2027); (b) develop and populate the Atlas, integrated with OCIMS 2.0 (Q4 2028); (c) establish data-sharing protocols and dissemination framework (Q2 2029).	Feasibility study completed; Atlas operational and accessible via OCIMS; data protocols gazetted.	DFFE	SANBI, CSIR, SAEON, SANSA, Provincial Lead Agencies	Q2 2027 – Q2 2029 (phased)
	3.2.4 Develop a concept note and project proposal to explore the Just Energy Transition (JET) climate change initiative for coastal regions, identifying climate-vulnerable coastal communities and potential transition support interventions.	Concept note completed and submitted to the Presidential Climate Commission.	DFFE	DMRE, Presidential Climate Commission, DBSA, National Treasury	Q4 2027

Priority 4: Coastal Pollution Management

Goal: To significantly reduce pollution in the coastal zone to safeguard ecosystem integrity, human health, and the Blue Economy, by moving from a reactive to a proactive strategy of prevention, monitoring, and enforcement.



Strategic Objective	Key Actions	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Lead Agency	Support Agencies	Timeline
4.1 Reduce Land-Based Pollution at Source.	4.1.1 Conduct a national audit of the 50 largest coastal Wastewater Treatment Works (WWTWs) to assess compliance	National audit report published; List of noncompliant WWTWs and required upgrades	DFFE	DWS, SALGA, Municipalities	Q2 2026
	4.1.2 Develop and implement a "National Programme of Action for Combating Plastic Pollution," including support for municipal waste management and Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) schemes.	Programme of Action gazetted; EPR schemes for key plastic packaging formats implemented.	DFFE (Chemicals & Waste)	DTI, COGTA, Plastics SA	Ongoing
	4.1.3 In partnership with DALRRD, develop and pilot best-practice guidelines for reducing agricultural nutrient and pesticide runoff in at least three priority coastal catchments.	Guidelines published; three pilot projects established and showing measurable reduction in nutrient loads.	DFFE	DALRRD, DWS, Agricultural Unions	Q4 2027
4.2 Strengthen Marine	4.2.1 Review and update the National Oil Spill Contingency Plan (NOSCP) to incorporate emerging risks from offshore	Updated NOSCP gazette.	DFFE	DoT, SAMSA, DMR, Industry	Q1 2026



Pollution Control.	oil and gas activities and increased shipping traffic.				
	4.2.2 Develop and gazette national standards for underwater noise pollution, focusing initially on sensitive marine areas and activities like seismic surveys and shipping.	National standards for underwater noise gazetted for public comment.	DFFE	DMR, DoT, Research Institutions	Q4 2028
	4.2.3 Conduct a national assessment to identify hotspots of legacy plastic pollution and "ghost" fishing gear, and implement targeted removal programmes.	National hotspot map published; two large-scale removal projects completed.	DFFE	DFFE (Fisheries), Industry, NGOs	Ongoing

Priority 5: Effective Governance

Goal: To strengthen the rule of law along the coast by ensuring robust institutional arrangements, clarifying mandates, building capacity, and applying implementation consistently and effectively.

Strategic Objective	Key Actions	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Lead Agency	Support Agencies	Timeline
5.1 Enhance Institutional Coordination.	5.1.1 Formalise the mandate and operational procedures of the National Coastal Committee (NCC) and all Provincial Coastal Committees (PCCs) through gazetted Terms of Reference.	ToRs for NCC and all 4 PCCs gazetted.	DFFE	Provincial Lead Agencies	Q4 2026

	5.1.2 Establish and gazette formal Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) between DFFE and key departments (DMR, DWS, DoT, DLRRD, DALRRD) to clarify roles and responsibilities in the coastal zone.	MoUs signed and gazetted with at least three key departments.	DFFE	All relevant National Depts.	Q2 2027
5.2 Build ICM Implementation Capacity.	5.2.1 Develop and deliver an ongoing, accredited training course on ICM Act implementation, covering the legislative framework, roles and responsibilities, permitting processes, compliance, and enforcement. Align with the ICM Capacity Building Curriculum developed through the PROBLUE Co-Design process.	Training curriculum accredited; at least 150 officials (national, provincial, municipal) trained by Q4 2029.	DFFE	PALAMA/NSG, Provincial Lead Agencies, SALGA, World Bank (PROBLUE)	Ongoing (from Q2 2027)
	5.2.2 Develop and deliver an ongoing training course on estuarine management, covering estuary functioning, EMP development and implementation, monitoring protocols, and stakeholder engagement for Estuary Management Forums.	Training curriculum developed; at least 80 estuary practitioners trained by Q4 2029.	DFFE	SAEON, Provincial Lead Agencies, DWS, Research Institutions	Ongoing (from Q4 2027)
	5.2.3 Develop and deliver an ongoing training course on Marine Protected Area governance and management, covering legislative requirements, MPA management plans, zonation, community engagement, and compliance monitoring.	Training curriculum developed; at least 60 MPA managers and officials trained by Q4 2029.	DFFE (Oceans & Coasts)	SANParks, CapeNature, EKZNW, Provincial Lead Agencies	Ongoing (from Q2 2028)

Priority 6: Coastal Research and Innovation

Goal: To build and sustain a robust, coordinated, and accessible knowledge base to support evidence-based decision-making for integrated coastal management.



Strategic Objective	Key Actions	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Lead Agency	Support Agencies	Timeline
6.1 Drive a Targeted National Research Agenda.	6.1.1 Develop and publish a "National Coastal Research Agenda 2025-2030" identifying key research priorities aligned with this NCMP.	Research Agenda published after consultation with stakeholders.	DFFE	DSI, NRF, SANBI, SAEON	Q1 2026
	6.1.2 Establish a dedicated funding stream within the NRF for research projects that directly address the priorities of the National Coastal Research Agenda.	Dedicated funding call issued by NRF.	DFFE	DSI, NRF	Annual
	6.1.3 Commission a comprehensive national study on the economic valuation of coastal ecosystem services and the potential of the sustainable Blue Economy to inform policy, spatial planning, and national accounting.	National economic valuation and Blue Economy potential report published and peer-reviewed.	DFFE (Oceans & Coasts Research)	SANBI, CSIR, World Bank, National Treasury	Q4 2028

6.2 Enhance Monitoring and Data Management.	6.2.1 Launch the next-generation Ocean and Coastal Information Management System (OCIMS 2.0) as the central, open-access portal for all national coastal data.	OCIMS 2.0 launched and fully operational.	DFFE (Oceans & Coasts Research)	DSI, SAEON, SANSA	Q4 2026
	6.2.2 Expand the national estuarine monitoring network to include real-time water quality monitoring in all 43 priority estuaries.	Real-time monitoring systems operational in all 43 priority estuaries.	DFFE	SAEON, CMAs	Q4 2029
6.3 Foster Innovation.	6.3.1 Fund at least three innovation projects focused on developing and applying new technologies (e.g., AI for image analysis, eDNA for biodiversity monitoring, drone surveillance) for coastal management.	Three innovation projects funded and reporting results.	DFFE	DSI, CSIR, SANSA	Q4 2028
6.4 Protect Endangered Coastal and Marine Species.	6.4.1 Develop and adopt management plans for at least two endangered or endemic coastal and marine species: (1) the African penguin (<i>Spheniscus demersus</i>) and (2) coastal shark species, in collaboration with research institutions and conservation agencies.	Two species management plans adopted and under implementation.	DFFE (Biodiversity)	SANParks, BirdLife SA, SANBI, Research Institutions	Q4 2027
	6.4.2 Undertake ongoing marine mammal stranding monitoring and research, maintaining a national stranding database and reporting annually on the number, type, and probable causes of strandings.	Annual stranding report published; national database maintained and accessible.	DFFE (Oceans & Coasts Research)	Iziko Museums, Bayworld, Provincial Authorities, NSRI	Annual
	6.4.3 Continue and expand the national rocky shore monitoring	Annual rocky shore status report published	DFFE (Oceans &	SAEON Universities,	Annual

	programme, reporting annually on the status and trends of rocky intertidal communities as a key indicator of coastal ecosystem health.	as input to the SOC Report.	Coasts),	Research Institutions	
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Priority 7: Awareness, Education, and Partnerships

Goal: To foster a national culture of coastal stewardship through a "whole-of-society" approach that builds awareness, enhances education, and solidifies collaborative partnerships.



Strategic Objective	Key Actions	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Lead Agency	Support Agencies	Timeline
7.1 Build Public Awareness.	7.1.1 Develop and launch a national coastal awareness brand and multi-media campaign (re-imagining "CoastCare") to communicate the value of our coast and the goals of the NCMP.	National brand launched; campaign reaches 5 million South Africans via various media.	DFFE	GCIS, Brand SA, SABC	Q2 2026
	7.1.2 Continue and expand National Marine Week as an annual public awareness event, coordinated nationally by DFFE and delivered in partnership with marine research institutions, aquariums, and coastal municipalities.	National Marine Week held annually with documented participation from all four coastal provinces.	DFFE (Oceans & Coasts)	SAEON, Two Oceans Aquarium, uShaka, Provinces, NGOs	Annual



7.2 Enhance Coastal Education.	7.2.1 In partnership with the DBE, develop and integrate coastal management and ocean literacy modules into the national school curriculum (GET and FET phases).	Curriculum-aligned modules developed and approved by DBE.	DFFE	DBE, SANBI, Two Oceans Aquarium	Q4 2027
	7.2.2 Establish a national coastal management internship and mentorship programme to build the next generation of coastal professionals.	50 interns placed in relevant government and non-government institutions.	DFFE	CATHSSETA, Provinces, Universities	Ongoing
7.3 Formalise Partnerships.	7.3.1 Establish a "National Coastal Stewardship Forum" as a platform for collaboration between government, the private sector, and civil society, focusing on public-private partnerships.	Forum established; meets bi-annually; at least one major public-private partnership launched.	DFFE	Business Unity SA, Major NGOs	Q1 2027

Priority 8: Mechanisms for Effective Compliance and Enforcement

Goal: To strengthen the rule of law along the coast by building a credible, consistent, and effective compliance and enforcement regime that acts as a powerful deterrent to illegal activities and ensures the integrity of the coastal environment.

Strategic Objective	Key Actions	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Lead Agency	Support Agencies	Timeline
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8.1 Enhance Enforcement Capacity and Skills.	8.1.1 Develop and roll out a specialised national training curriculum for all Environmental Management Inspectors (EMIs) operating in the coastal zone, focusing on the ICM Act, case docket preparation, and evidence gathering.	Curriculum accredited; 250 EMIs (national, provincial, municipal) complete the specialised coastal training.	DFFE (Enforcement)	Provincial Lead Agencies, Municipalities, NPA	Ongoing
	8.1.2 Establish and operationalize a national programme for the appointment, training, and management of Voluntary Coastal Officers to act as an auxiliary compliance monitoring force ("eyes and ears").	Programme framework gazetted; 100 Voluntary Coastal Officers trained, badged, and operational in at least 10 coastal municipalities.	DFFE (Enforcement)	Provinces, Municipalities, Civil Society	Q4 2027
8.2 Improve Inter-Agency Coordination and Operations.	8.2.1 Establish a formal National Coastal Enforcement Task Team (as a sub-committee of the NCC) to coordinate joint operations between DFFE, SAPS, NPA, SANDF, DMR, and provincial authorities.	Task Team established with formal ToR; at least four national or provincial joint operations conducted annually.	DFFE (Enforcement)	SAPS, NPA, SANDF, DMR	Q2 2026
	8.2.2 Develop and implement a national strategy to combat illegal sand mining and other illegal coastal developments, including the use of technology (drones, satellite imagery) for surveillance and evidence gathering.	National strategy gazetted; demonstrable reduction in illegal mining hotspots as per the SOC indicator.	DFFE	DMR, SAPS, NPA	Q4 2026

	8.2.3 Convene an annual joint meeting of MINTECH Working Group 4 (Environmental Compliance and Enforcement) and Working Group 7 (Oceans and Coasts) to align compliance priorities with ICM policy objectives. Elevate key outcomes and resolutions to MECs and HODs.	Joint WG4/WG7 meeting held annually; outcomes report submitted to MinMEC/MINTECH.	DFFE	Provincial Lead Agencies, DMR, DWS	Annual (from Q4 2026)
8.3 Strengthen Legal and Administrative Enforcement.	8.3.1 Conduct a full review of the national fine and penalty schedule for contraventions of the ICM Act and its regulations to ensure they serve as an effective deterrent.	Review completed and recommendations for updated penalty schedules submitted to the Minister of Justice.	DFFE (Legal Services)	Dept. of Justice	Q4 2027
	8.3.2 Develop and implement a standardised national template for quarterly reporting of compliance and enforcement activities to the Directorate: ICM, drawing on outputs from existing enforcement databases. Provide consolidated quarterly reports to the Chief Directorate: ICM.	Template developed and adopted; quarterly C&E reports received from all four coastal provinces.	DFFE (Enforcement)	Provincial Lead Agencies, Municipalities	Ongoing (from Q2 2026)
	8.3.3 Conduct an updated Marine Outfall Audit, revisiting the 2016 baseline to assess the current status of all coastal water discharge permits (CWDPs) — including issued, non-issued, and non-compliant permits. Conduct internal	Updated audit report completed; internal alignment on permit conditions achieved; high-level DWS/municipal engagement initiated.	DFFE (Oceans & Coasts)	DWS, Municipalities, WRC	Q4 2027

	alignment engagements on permit conditions and thresholds, and initiate high-level engagement with DWS and local municipalities on WWTW functionality and compliance.				
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CHAPTER 11: STATE OF THE COAST REPORTING: A FRAMEWORK FOR EVIDENCE-BASED MANAGEMENT



11.1 Purpose and Mandate

As mandated by section 93 of the Integrated Coastal Management Act, a regular State of the Coast (SOC) Report is a cornerstone of adaptive and transparent coastal governance. This chapter establishes the framework, indicators, and processes for national SOC reporting.

The purpose of the SOC Report is to provide a comprehensive, scientifically robust assessment of the South African coastal zone. It is not merely a reporting exercise but a critical diagnostic tool designed to:




- Track the **status and trends** of key coastal ecosystems and socio-economic conditions.
- Assess the **pressures** impacting the coastal environment.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of our **management responses** and the implementation of this NCMP.
- Provide the **primary evidence base** for the five-year review and adaptation of the NCMP.
- **Inform** policymakers, managers, stakeholders, and the public, fostering a shared understanding of our coastal challenges and successes.






11.2 Core National Indicators

To ensure consistency and comparability over time, the national SOC reporting will be based on a core set of national indicators. These indicators are directly aligned with the strategic priorities of this NCMP and cover the full spectrum of ecological, social, and governance dimensions. While provinces and municipalities may collect additional local-level data, reporting on these core national indicators is mandatory.

The indicators are grouped by NCMP Priority.

Consolidated List of Core National Indicators for State of the Coast Reporting

Priority Area	Indicator ID	Indicator Name
 Priority 1: Equitable Public Access and Livelihoods	ACC-01	Public Access Provision
	ACC-02	Livelihood Access Security
	LIV-01	Coastal Employment
	LIV-02	Small-Scale Fisher Participation
 Priority 2: Estuary Management and Restoration	EST-01	Estuary Health Index
	EST-02	Estuarine Water Quality
	EST-03	EMP Implementation
	EST-04	Habitat Restoration
 Priority 3: Climate Resilience and Spatial Planning	CLI-01	Coastal Vulnerability & Risk
	CLI-02	Shoreline Stability
	SPA-01	Planning Integration

 Priority 4: Coastal Pollution Management	POL-01	WWTW Compliance
	POL-02	Recreational Water Quality
	POL-03	Plastic Debris Loading
 Priority 5: Effective Governance	GOV-01	Institutional Functionality
 Priority 6: Coastal Research and Innovation	RES-01	Research Alignment
	RES-02	Knowledge Accessibility
	INO-01	Innovation Uptake
 Priority 7: Awareness, Education, and Partnerships	AWA-01	Public Engagement
	EDU-01	Educational Integration
	PAR-01	Partnership Effectiveness
 Priority 8: Mechanisms for Effective Compliance and Enforcement	ENF-01	Coastal Compliance Actions
	ENF-02	ORV Enforcement

11.3 State of the Coast Indicator Tables



Priority 1: Equitable Public Access and Livelihoods

Indicator ID	Indicator Name	Description	Metric	Data Source	Reporting Frequency
ACC-01	Public Access Provision	Tracks the number and distribution of formally designated public access points.	Number of gazetted public access servitudes per district municipality.	Provincial & Municipal Reports	Biennial
ACC-02	Livelihood Access Security	Monitors access for small-scale fishers to priority fishing grounds and launch sites.	Percentage of priority small-scale fishing sites with formal co-management agreements.	DFFE (Fisheries)	Biennial
ACC-03	Coastal Access Points Audit	Measures the number and type of formal access points along the coast, including universal access facilities.	Number and type of gazetted access points per coastal district municipality, including universal access spots.	Provincial Lead Agencies, Municipalities	Biennial
LIV-01	Coastal Employment	Measures the number of direct jobs supported by key coastal sectors.	Number of formal jobs in coastal tourism, fisheries, and mariculture sectors.	Stats SA, Dept. of Tourism	5-Yearly



Priority 2: Estuary Management and Restoration

Indicator ID	Indicator Name	Description	Metric	Data Source	Reporting Frequency
EST-01	Estuary Health Index	A composite index measuring the overall ecological condition of priority estuaries.	Percentage of 43 priority estuaries in a Good (A/B) ecological category.	National Estuary Monitoring Programme	5-Yearly
EST-02	Water Quality	Tracks key water quality parameters within estuaries.	Percentage of monitored estuaries meeting national water quality standards for nutrients and E. coli.	DWS, Municipalities	Biennial
EST-03	EMP Implementation	Monitors the progress of implementing Estuary Management Plans.	Percentage of priority EMPs with an active management forum and annual progress reports submitted.	DFFE, Provincial Lead Agencies	Annual



Priority 3: Climate Resilience and Spatial Planning

Indicator ID	Indicator Name	Description	Metric	Data Source	Reporting Frequency
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CLI-01	Coastal Vulnerability	Tracks the extent of development within high-risk coastal zones.	Hectares of new development approved within the gazetted Coastal Management Line.	Municipal Planning Depts.	Biennial
CLI-02	Shoreline Stability	Monitors changes in the national shoreline position.	Percentage of coastline experiencing net erosion vs accretion.	OCIMS (Satellite Monitoring)	5-Yearly
SPA-01	Planning Integration	Assesses the integration of coastal management into land-use planning.	Percentage of coastal municipalities with formally adopted MCMPs integrated into their IDPs and SDFs.	COGTA, Provincial Lead Agencies	Biennial
SPA-02	Development at Risk	Measures the extent of development occurring within identified coastal risk zones.	Number and value of developments approved within the coastal risk zone (seaward of CMLs).	SANSA, DFFE, Municipalities	Biennial
SPA-03	Coastal Land Use Change	Tracks the transformation of coastal land from one land cover type to another over the reporting period.	Percentage change in land cover categories within 1 km of HWM over 5-year period.	DFFE, SAEON, SANSA	5-Yearly
SPA-04	Coastal Built-Up Area	Measures the degree of pressure from urban development and infrastructure on the coastal zone.	Percentage of land within 1 km of HWM classified as built-up or developed.	SANSA, Municipalities, SAEON	5-Yearly



Priority 4: Coastal Pollution Management

Indicator ID	Indicator Name	Description	Metric	Data Source	Reporting Frequency
POL-01	WWTW Compliance	Tracks the compliance of major coastal wastewater treatment works.	Percentage of the 50 audited coastal WWTWs compliant with their discharge permit conditions.	DWS (Green Drop Report)	Biennial
POL-02	Beach Water Quality	Monitors the suitability of popular recreational beaches for swimming.	Percentage of Blue Flag and other key recreational beaches meeting national guidelines for safe bathing.	WESSA, Municipalities	Annual
POL-03	Plastic Debris	Measures the density of plastic litter on our beaches as an indicator of marine plastic pollution.	Mean number of plastic items per kilometer from annual International Coastal Clean-up surveys.	DFFE, NGOs	Annual
POL-05	Shipping Pollution Incidents	Tracks the annual number of recorded oil and pollutant spills from shipping in the coastal zone.	Number and volume of recorded shipping-related pollution incidents per annum.	DoT, SAMSA, DFFE	Annual



Priority 5: Effective Governance

Indicator ID	Indicator Name	Description	Metric	Data Source	Reporting Frequency
GOV-01	Institutional Functionality	Assesses the operational status of key ICM governance structures.	Percentage of PCCs and MCCs that are formally constituted and meeting at least quarterly.	Provincial & Municipal Reports	Annual
GOV-03	Use of State Land in Coastal Zone	Tracks the types of use and associated proportions of state-owned land within the coastal zone.	Percentage of state-owned coastal land by use category (conservation, leased, vacant, informal settlement, other).	DPWI, DALRRD	5-Yearly
GOV-04	Public Ownership of Coastal Zone	Measures the proportion of publicly owned land within the coastal zone as an indicator of public access potential.	Percentage of land within the Coastal Protection Zone that is publicly owned.	Deeds Office, DALRRD, Municipalities	5-Yearly



Priority 6: Coastal Research and Innovation

Indicator ID	Indicator Name	Description	Metric	Data Source	Reporting Frequency
RES-01	Research Alignment	Tracks the alignment of national research funding with coastal management priorities.	Percentage of NRF's environmental science budget allocated to projects listed in the National Coastal Research Agenda.	NRF, DSI	Biennial
RES-02	Knowledge Accessibility	Measures the availability and use of national coastal data platforms.	Number of unique users and data downloads from the OCIMS 2.0 platform.	DFFE (OCIMS)	Annual
INO-01	Innovation Uptake	Monitors the integration of new technologies into routine coastal management.	Number of provincial or national monitoring programmes that have formally adopted innovative technologies (e.g., drones, eDNA) piloted under the NCMP.	DFFE, Provincial Lead Agencies	5-Yearly

Priority 7: Awareness, Education, and Partnerships

Indicator ID	Indicator Name	Description	Metric	Data Source	Reporting Frequency
AWA-01	Public Engagement	Measures the scale of public participation in national coastal awareness campaigns.	Total number of participants in the annual National Coastal Week and International Coastal Clean-up events.	DFFE, Provincial Reports, NGO partners	Annual

EDU-01	Educational Integration	Tracks the integration of ocean and coastal literacy into the formal education system.	Percentage of school districts in coastal provinces where educators have received training on the new coastal curriculum modules.	DBE	5-Yearly
PAR-01	Partnership Effectiveness	Monitors the functionality and output of key governance and partnership structures.	1. Number of active and functional PCCs and MCCs. 2. Number of formal public-private partnership agreements signed for coastal management projects.	DFFE, Provincial & Municipal Reports	Biennial



Priority 8: Mechanisms for Effective Compliance and Enforcement

Indicator ID	Indicator Name	Description	Metric	Data Source(s)	Reporting Frequency
ENF-01	Coastal Compliance Actions	Tracks the volume and success rate of enforcement actions against priority coastal contraventions.	1. Number of administrative enforcement actions (directives) issued for illegal structures and pollution. 2. Number of criminal dockets opened that proceed to prosecution.	DFFE (NECEIS), NPA	Annual
ENF-02	Reduction in Illegal Structures	Measures the effectiveness of enforcement in halting and reversing illegal development in the Coastal Protection Zone.	Number of illegal structures identified vs number of structures where work was halted or the structure was removed, per coastal province.	Provincial & Municipal Compliance Reports	Biennial

ENF-03	Enforcement Capacity	Measures the human resource capacity dedicated to coastal compliance and enforcement.	Number of fully trained and equipped EMIs whose primary mandate is coastal and marine compliance, per province.	DFFE (Enforcement), Provincial Lead Agencies	
ENF-04	ORV Permits Issued	Tracks the number of Off-Road Vehicle permits issued for use within the coastal zone.	Number of ORV permits issued per annum by permit type and province.	DFFE, Provincial Authorities	Annual





CHAPTER 12: NORMS, STANDARDS, AND THE REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

12.1 Introduction to the Regulatory Framework

While the National Coastal Management Programme (NCMP) sets the overarching strategy and implementation plan for the nation, a range of legally binding norms, standards, and regulations govern the day-to-day activities within the coastal zone. Effective coastal management requires a clear understanding and consistent application of this regulatory landscape.

This chapter serves as a central reference for all coastal managers and stakeholders. It does not replace the original legislation but rather **collates and contextualizes** the key existing regulatory instruments and outlines the national commitment to developing new, targeted norms and standards where gaps exist. The consistent application of these instruments is a cornerstone of achieving the vision and objectives of this NCMP.

12.2 Existing National Norms and Standards Applicable to the Coastal Zone

All activities within the coastal zone must comply with the provisions of the Integrated Coastal Management Act (ICM Act) and its regulations. Furthermore, numerous other national laws establish specific norms and standards that are directly applicable to coastal management. Provincial and municipal authorities are mandated to implement and enforce these standards within their respective jurisdictions.

The following table summarises the most pertinent existing national regulatory instruments. This is not an exhaustive list, and managers must always refer to the latest gazetted versions of the relevant legislation.

Table: Key Existing National Norms, Standards, and Regulations for Coastal Management

Thematic Area	Key Regulatory Instrument(s)	Governing Act	Primary Purpose and Application in the Coastal Zone
Waste Management	National Norms and Standards for the Disposal of Waste to Landfill (2013) National Norms and Standards for the Sorting, Shredding, Grinding, Crushing, Screening or Baling of General Waste (2017)	National Environmental Management: Waste Act, 2008	Prescribes the requirements for the siting, design, and operation of landfill sites, many of which are located in or near the coastal zone, to prevent pollution. Sets standards for waste processing facilities.
Water Quality & Effluent Discharge	National Water Quality Guidelines for Coastal Marine Waters (various volumes) General Authorisations for Water Uses (as per section 39)	National Water Act, 1998	Sets the benchmark concentrations for various substances in coastal waters to protect aquatic ecosystems and support different uses (e.g., recreation). Regulates effluent discharges into water resources that flow to the coast.
	Coastal Waters Discharge Permit (CWDP) Regulations	ICM Act, 2008	Specifically governs the direct discharge of land-based effluent into coastal waters, requiring a permit from the DFFE and setting strict conditions to prevent pollution.
Vehicle Use	Control of Use of Vehicles in the Coastal Area Regulations (2014) ("ORV Regulations")	National Environmental Management Act, 1998	Prohibits the recreational driving of vehicles in the coastal zone except in specifically permitted areas and for defined activities, to protect sensitive dune and beach ecosystems.
Public Launch Sites	Regulations for the Management of Public Launch Sites in the Coastal Zone	ICM Act, 2008	Provides a framework for provinces to designate and manage official boat

			launching sites, regulating their use to ensure safety and minimise environmental impact.
Biodiversity & Protected Areas	Threatened or Protected Species (TOPS) Regulations (2007) Alien and Invasive Species (AIS) Regulations (2020)	National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act, 2004	Prohibits and regulates activities involving listed threatened or protected species found in the coastal zone. Mandates control and eradication measures for listed invasive species that threaten coastal ecosystems.
	Management of Marine Protected Areas Regulations	National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act, 2003	Sets out specific prohibitions and allowable activities within each declared Marine Protected Area (MPA) to achieve their conservation objectives.

12.3 New Norms and Standards to be Developed (2026-2031)

Recognising that significant gaps exist in the current regulatory framework, this NCMP commits to the development and promulgation of a new suite of national norms and standards. This is a key priority to ensure consistent, evidence-based, and legally defensible decision-making across the country.

The development of these instruments is a formal commitment within the National Implementation Plan (Chapter 4). Each will be developed through a rigorous process of scientific assessment, stakeholder consultation, and the legally prescribed regulatory drafting process.

The following national norms and standards are prioritised for development within the lifecycle of this NCMP:

1. Norms and Standards for the Delineation and Management of Coastal Management Lines (Management Lines):

- **Objective:** To provide a scientifically robust and legally defensible methodology for provinces and municipalities to establish coastal management lines that account for climate change projections (sea-level rise and storm surge). This will be the primary instrument to guide development and build resilience in the face of coastal hazards.
- **Lead Action:** As per Action 3.1.2 in the Implementation Plan.

2. Norms and Standards for Coastal Access Infrastructure:

- **Objective:** To prescribe minimum standards for the design, construction, and maintenance of public access infrastructure (e.g., boardwalks, paths, parking). The standards will ensure universal access principles are applied, environmental impacts are minimised, and the infrastructure is resilient to coastal processes.
- **Lead Action:** As per Action 1.1.2 in the Implementation Plan.

3. Norms and Standards for Underwater Noise Pollution:

- **Objective:** To establish acceptable thresholds for anthropogenic underwater noise in the marine environment, particularly in ecologically sensitive areas. This will provide a regulatory basis for assessing the impacts of activities like seismic surveys, shipping, and pile driving.
- **Lead Action:** As per Action 4.2.2 in the Implementation Plan.

12.4 The Role of Provinces and Municipalities in the Regulatory Framework

While the NCMP prioritises the development of national standards to ensure a consistent baseline, provincial and local governments have a critical and complementary role to play.

- **Provincial Standard Setting:**

The ICM Act empowers provinces to act where national standards are absent. This NCMP formally mandates that:

"In areas where national norms and standards have not yet been developed for a pressing provincial coastal management issue, Provincial Coastal Management Programmes must establish provincial norms and standards to address that issue. These provincial standards, developed in consultation with the Minister, will serve as the legally enforceable baseline within that province until such time as national standards are promulgated."

- **Municipal By-Laws:**

Municipalities are responsible for translating national and provincial standards into local-level by-laws for enforcing them.

Municipalities are empowered by the ICM Act (section 50) and other legislation to develop by-laws for a range of coastal management issues, including but not limited to:

- Controlling access to and behaviour at public amenities.

- Managing local pollution sources (e.g., stormwater).
- Regulating activities at beaches and public launch sites.

All municipal by-laws must be consistent with provincial and national legislation and must be aligned with the objectives of the MCMP, PCMP, and this NCMP. The alignment process outlined in Chapter 7 will guide this to ensure a coherent and hierarchical regulatory system. **In terms of section 156(3) of the Constitution, a municipal by-law that conflicts with national or provincial legislation is invalid.** This provision reinforces the principle of cooperative governance by ensuring that all municipal coastal by-laws—including those regulating coastal access, land-use decisions within the Coastal Protection Zone, and local enforcement mechanisms—must remain fully aligned with the ICM Act, the NCMP, and relevant provincial coastal management frameworks. This constitutional clause should guide municipalities when developing or revising their Municipal Coastal Management Programmes (MCMPs), Spatial Development Frameworks (SDFs), and coastal by-laws to avoid inconsistencies and support a coherent national coastal governance system.



CHAPTER 13: GUIDANCE FOR MUNICIPAL IMPLEMENTATION: PATHWAYS TO EFFECTIVE LOCAL COASTAL MANAGEMENT

13.1 Acknowledging the Municipal Challenge

The National Coastal Management Programme (NCMP) recognizes that municipalities are the frontline of coastal management. It is at the local level—in the council chambers, on the beaches, and within the estuaries—that the strategic goals of this programme are translated into tangible reality. We also recognise that coastal municipalities, particularly smaller and rural ones, face significant resource and capacity constraints. The mandates of the Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) Act can seem daunting when faced with competing service delivery priorities, limited budgets, and a shortage of specialised technical skills.

This chapter is therefore not a list of additional mandates. It is a guide designed to support municipalities in fulfilling their crucial role. It provides guidance on a phased approach, leveraging partnerships, and utilising existing frameworks to make integrated coastal management achievable, sustainable, and effective at the local level.

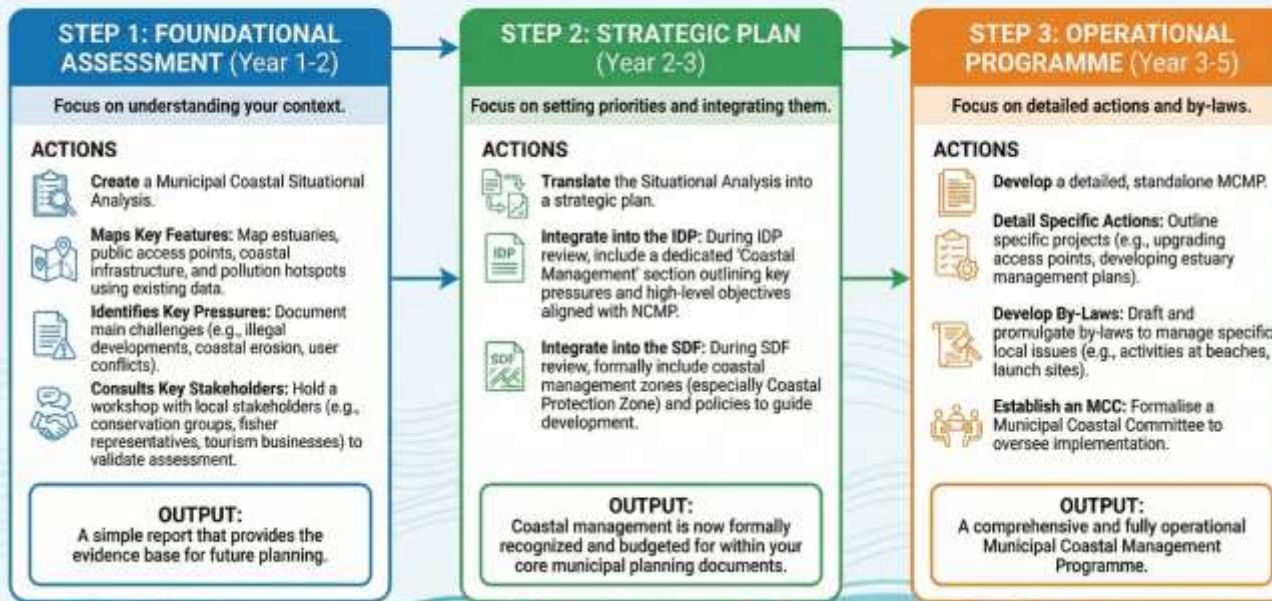
13.2 Cultural Heritage and Community Relationships with the Coast

South Africa's diverse coastal communities maintain varied relationships with the ocean that extend beyond economic considerations. For many communities—particularly in the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal—the ocean holds profound spiritual and cultural significance, serving as a site for traditional practices, ancestral connection, and sustenance fishing that predates formal economic frameworks.

Effective coastal management requires understanding and respecting these relationships. Implementation approaches must:

- Engage traditional leaders who hold authority over much coastal land, ensuring they are informed about and included in legislative and planning processes
- Recognise that building trust is often the prerequisite to economic development—not a parallel process
- Partner with organisations that have established community relationships and cultural understanding
- Balance environmental protection and economic objectives with cultural values and traditional practices

THE 3-STEP PATHWAY TO A MUNICIPAL CMP



13.3 The Phased Approach to Developing a Municipal CMP (MCMP)

Developing a comprehensive Municipal Coastal Management Programme (MCMP) can be resource-intensive. Municipalities are encouraged to adopt a phased, incremental approach. The immediate priority is not to produce a perfect, all-encompassing document, but to begin the process and build momentum over time.

Step 1: The Foundational Assessment (Minimum Requirement)

- **Action:** The first step is to create a **Municipal Coastal Situational Analysis**. This does not need to be a complex, externally commissioned report. It can be an internal document that:
 1. **Maps Key Features:** Using existing data, map the location of your estuaries, key public access points, major coastal infrastructure, and known pollution hotspots.
 2. **Identifies Key Pressures:** Document the main challenges you face (e.g., illegal developments, coastal erosion hotspots, user conflicts at launch sites).
 3. **Consults Key Stakeholders:** Hold a workshop with key local stakeholders (e.g., local conservation groups, small-scale fisher representatives, tourism businesses) to validate your assessment.
- **Output:** A simple report that provides the evidence base for future planning.

Step 2: The Strategic Plan (Integration is Key)

- **Action:** The next step is to translate the Situational Analysis into a strategic plan. Critically, this **should not be created as a separate document initially**. Instead, the objective is to integrate your findings into existing statutory plans:
 1. **Integrate into the IDP:** During the next Integrated Development Plan (IDP) review cycle, ensure that a dedicated section on "Coastal Management" is included. This section should outline the key pressures from your analysis and set high-level objectives that align with the NCMP's priorities.
 2. **Integrate into the SDF:** During the next Spatial Development Framework (SDF) review, ensure that coastal management zones (especially the Coastal Protection Zone) are formally included in your spatial plans, and that policies are added to guide development within these zones.

- **Output:** Coastal management is now formally recognised and budgeted for within your core municipal planning documents.

Step 3: The Operational Programme (Developing the Full MCMP)

- **Action:** Once the strategic foundation is laid in the IDP and SDF, the municipality can develop a more detailed, standalone MCMP. This document will:
 1. **Detail Specific Actions:** Outline the specific projects to be undertaken (e.g., upgrading a specific access point, developing a management plan for a specific estuary).
 2. **Develop By-Laws:** Draft and promulgate by-laws to manage specific local issues (e.g., controlling activities at beaches, managing public launch sites).
 3. **Establish an MCC:** Formalise a Municipal Coastal Committee to oversee implementation.
- **Output:** A comprehensive and fully operational Municipal Coastal Management Programme.

13.4 Leveraging Partnerships and Support

Municipalities are not alone. A key principle of this NCMP is co-operative governance. Municipalities should actively leverage the support available from other spheres of government and civil society.

Key Support Mechanisms:

1. **Provincial Lead Agency:** Your first port of call. The provincial lead agency is mandated to provide technical support, guidance, and assistance in developing your MCMP and aligning it with provincial priorities.
2. **District Municipality:** For smaller local municipalities, the District Municipality can play a crucial coordinating role. Consider developing a **District-level CMP** as a first step, which can provide a strategic framework and shared services for all local municipalities within that district.
3. **The DFFE Municipal Support Unit:** As outlined in this NCMP, a dedicated national unit will be established to provide direct technical assistance, particularly on complex issues like drafting by-laws and accessing climate finance.

4. **Catchment Management Agencies (CMAs):** For issues related to estuary health and water quality, the CMA is a critical partner. They can provide data, technical expertise, and help address upstream sources of pollution.
5. **NGOs, Universities, and Conservancies:** Local civil society organizations are a valuable resource. They can provide data from community-based monitoring, assist with public awareness campaigns, and partner on restoration projects.

13.5 Focusing on High-Impact "Priority Actions"

While the ICM Act contains many mandates, municipalities with limited capacity should focus their initial efforts on a few high-impact areas that address the most pressing local risks and legal requirements.

Recommended Starting Priorities for Municipalities:

- **Coastal Access:**
 - **Action:** Focus on identifying, signposting, and maintaining your **existing** public access points. This is a visible and highly appreciated service to the community.
 - **Guidance:** Use the *National Guideline for the Designation and Management of Coastal Access* as a practical tool.
- **Compliance and Enforcement within the CPZ:**
 - **Action:** Ensure that your building control and land-use management officials are aware of the legal restrictions on development within the Coastal Protection Zone. Preventing illegal structures is far more cost-effective than trying to remove them later.
 - **Guidance:** Partner with the provincial lead agency for training on how to review development applications within the CPZ.
- **Estuary Management:**
 - **Action:** If you have a priority estuary in your jurisdiction, participate actively in the Estuary Management Forum led by the province. Your key role is to ensure that municipal planning (SDFs and zoning) aligns with the objectives of the Estuary Management Plan.

13.6 Integrating Coastal Management into Municipal Planning Instruments

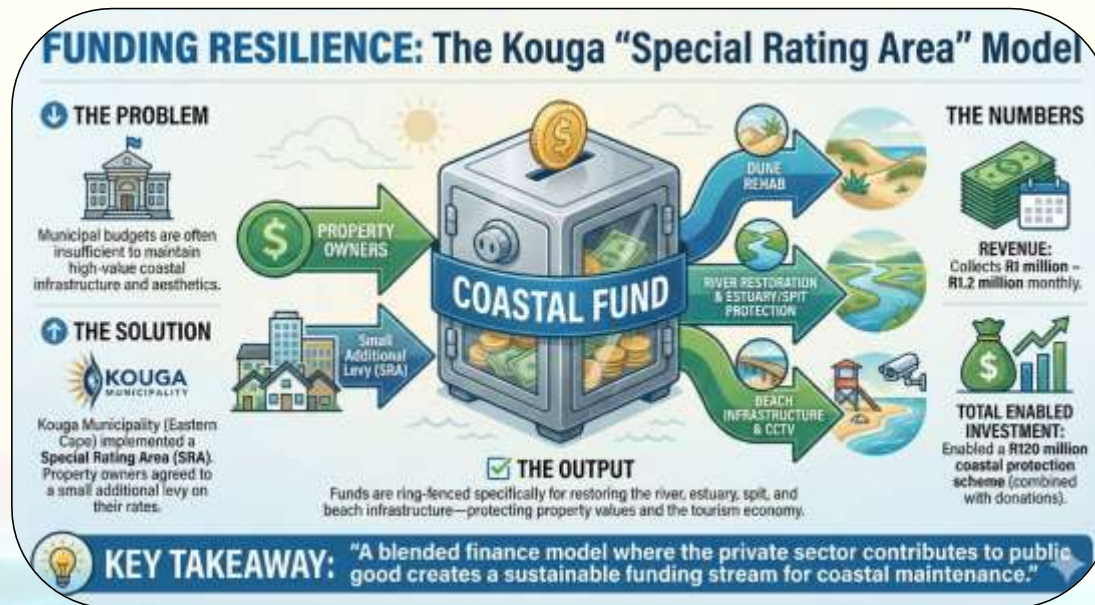
For coastal management to achieve meaningful impact, it must be embedded in municipal Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) and Spatial Development Frameworks (SDFs). Currently, ocean economy priorities are often absent from these foundational planning documents, resulting in coastal management being treated as an 'add-on' rather than an integral part of municipal development.

Key challenges facing coastal municipalities include:

- Limited ocean economy awareness among planning officials
- Technical capacity constraints for coastal project development and proposal writing
- Resource limitations to implement additional coastal responsibilities
- Aging infrastructure (particularly wastewater treatment) affecting coastal water quality

The Municipal Support Unit, in partnership with SALGA and COGTA, will provide:

- Training workshops on incorporating coastal priorities into IDP review cycles
- Technical assistance for developing bankable project proposals that meet international funding requirements
- Templates and guidance documents for coastal sector planning
- Facilitation of joint planning from initial project conception stages



13.7 A Note on Funding

Securing funding is a universal challenge. The most effective strategy is **integration**. By ensuring that coastal management objectives and projects are included in your **Integrated Development Plan (IDP)**, you are making them part of the core, legally mandated planning process that guides all municipal budgeting. A standalone CMP that is not reflected in the IDP is unlikely to be funded. Leverage the support of your province, the DDM framework, and the DFFE to build a strong case for coastal management as an essential component of sustainable service delivery and local economic development.

CHAPTER 14: A NATIONAL COASTAL INVESTMENT FRAMEWORK: SECURING OUR COASTAL FUTURES

14.1 Rationale: Reframing Coastal Management as a National Investment

For too long, coastal management and environmental protection have been perceived as a cost to be borne rather than an investment to be made. This chapter fundamentally reframes that narrative. The National Coastal Management Programme (NCMP) is not an expenditure plan; it is a **Coastal Investment Framework**. Its purpose is to guide strategic investment into one of South Africa's most valuable assets—our coastline—to secure long-term economic resilience, social well-being, and ecological sustainability.

The Proposition

South Africa's coastline functions as a massive, diversified portfolio of natural capital. Like any high-value asset, it requires maintenance (management) to sustain its yield (ecosystem services). For decades, we have deferred this maintenance, treating the coast as an infinite resource. We are now facing the cumulative liabilities of that deferral.

The Balance Sheet Approach

This NCMP proposes a fundamental shift in how we budget for the coast:



International Blue Finance Mechanisms

South Africa has access to several international finance mechanisms for coastal and ocean investments. Understanding these mechanisms is essential for mobilising resources to implement NCMP priorities.

World Bank PROBLUE and BE4RA: The PROBLUE Multi-Donor Trust Fund has invested over \$229 million across 100+ economies since 2018, achieving a remarkable leverage ratio of 1:60—mobilising \$60 in additional investment for every \$1 of PROBLUE funding. South Africa's PROBLUE portfolio exceeds \$1 million until March 2027, supporting technical assistance in areas including seaweed farming, small-scale fisheries, coastal planning, marine spatial planning capacity, and blue finance instrument development. PROBLUE is being succeeded by the Blue Economy for Resilient Africa (BE4RA) programme, which will continue this work with an African regional focus.

Green Climate Fund (GCF): Climate adaptation funding available for coastal resilience projects. DFFE has submitted concept documents for GCF funding to support CARP implementation and ecosystem-based adaptation interventions.

Global Environment Facility (GEF): The GEF 8 Programme supports aquaculture incubator sites across provinces, including hatcheries and research facilities for sector development.

Bilateral Partnerships: South Africa benefits from bilateral cooperation including France (LIMAQUA aquaculture research laboratory, ocean governance dialogue), Norway (NORFUND), and Sweden (SIDA) for de-risking coastal investments.

Addressing the Bankability Gap

A key challenge is ensuring that community-level coastal projects can meet the requirements of institutional investors. Large international funds often struggle to find 'bankable' projects that meet their due diligence requirements, while community enterprises are frequently too small or perceived as too risky for traditional investment. Solutions being explored include aggregation mechanisms to bundle small projects into investable portfolios, blended capital structures to de-risk investments, and Project Finance for Permanence (PFP) models for sustained conservation funding. The Municipal Support Unit will assist coastal municipalities in developing funding proposals that meet international standards.

- **The Asset:** Physical infrastructure (ports, properties) and Ecological Infrastructure (dunes, estuaries, kelp forests).

- **The Liability:** Climate vulnerability (storm surges, sea-level rise) and pollution (sewage, plastics).

- **The Dividend:** Food security, tourism revenue, climate resilience, and social cohesion.

The Cost of Inaction vs The Return on Investment (ROI)

Global analysis by the World Bank and the High-Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy suggests that for every **R1.00** invested in sustainable ocean management, the economy yields approximately **R5.00** in benefits. Conversely, the cost of inaction is escalating. The 2022 KwaZulu-Natal floods demonstrated that the failure to maintain ecological buffers and manage spatial planning results in infrastructure losses running into the billions.

Investment Strategy

This Framework moves the NCMP away from a dependency on fiscal transfers alone. By articulating the "bankability" of coastal resilience—such as the value of dunes in

protecting real estate—we unlock new financing avenues including Green Climate Funds, Blue Bonds, and Public-Private Partnerships. Investing in the coast is not charity; it is an essential strategy for national economic defense.

This chapter outlines the investment thesis for our coast, identifies the key investment priority areas derived from the NCMP's strategic objectives, and details a blended finance model for resourcing this critical national endeavour. It serves as a prospectus for National Treasury, provincial and municipal governments, the private sector, and international partners, demonstrating that investing in the health of our coast is one of the most effective investments we can make in the future of South Africa.

14.2 The Investment Thesis: Value Proposition vs Cost of Inaction

Every investment decision is a calculation of value versus risk. The case for investing in our coast is overwhelmingly clear when viewed through this lens.



THE SOURCE-TO-SEA CONNECTION



The Value Proposition: Our Coast as Productive Natural Capital

The South African coast is not merely a scenic landscape; it is a portfolio of high-performing natural assets that deliver a continuous flow of valuable goods and services.

- **Direct Economic Value:** The coastal economy directly contributes over **R57 billion annually** (2011 UNOPS estimate, adjusted for inflation) and more than 35% of our national GDP through sectors like tourism, maritime transport, fisheries, and real estate.

- **Ecosystem Services:** Our coastal ecosystems provide "free" services that would cost billions to replace with engineered infrastructure. These include:
 - **Coastal Protection:** Dunes, mangroves, and kelp forests act as natural seawalls, protecting tens of billions of Rands worth of public and private infrastructure from storm surges and erosion.
 - **Food Security:** Estuaries and nearshore habitats serve as critical nurseries for commercial and subsistence fisheries, supporting thousands of livelihoods.
 - **Climate Regulation:** Blue Carbon ecosystems like salt marshes and mangroves are incredibly efficient at capturing and storing carbon, contributing to our national climate goals.

The Risk Proposition: The Unacceptable Cost of Inaction

Failing to invest in the management and resilience of our coast is not a saving; it is an active acceptance of future liabilities that will be orders of magnitude higher.

- **Disaster Recovery Costs:** As evidenced by the catastrophic floods in KwaZulu-Natal and storm surge events in the Western Cape, the cost of rebuilding damaged infrastructure and responding to coastal disasters runs into the tens of billions. Global analysis suggests that every **R1 invested in coastal resilience and nature-based solutions can save between R7 and R10** in disaster recovery and economic losses.
- **Degraded Livelihoods and Economic Decline:** The collapse of an estuary, the erosion of a tourist beach, or the decline of a fish stock has direct and devastating impacts on local economies, leading to job losses and increased poverty.
- **Stranded Assets:** Failure to adapt to sea-level rise and coastal erosion will lead to both public and private coastal infrastructure becoming "stranded assets," with their value written down to zero.

14.3 National Investment Priority Areas

This NCMP's eight strategic priorities represent the most critical areas for targeted national investment to enhance the value of our coastal assets and mitigate the risks of inaction.

1. **Investment Pillar 1: Investing in People, Livelihoods, and Equitable Access**

2. **Investment Pillar 2: Investing in Ecological Infrastructure (Estuaries)**
3. **Investment Pillar 3: Investing in Climate Resilience and Risk Reduction**
4. **Investment Pillar 4: Investing in Public and Ecosystem Health (Pollution Control)**
5. **Investment Pillar 5: Investing in a Knowledge-Based Economy (Research & Innovation)**
6. **Investment Pillar 6: Investing in Social Capital and Stewardship (Awareness & Partnerships)**
7. **Investment Pillar 7: Investing in Good Governance**
8. **Investment Pillar 8: Investing in the Rule of Law (Compliance & Enforcement)**

14.4 A Blended Finance and Resourcing Model

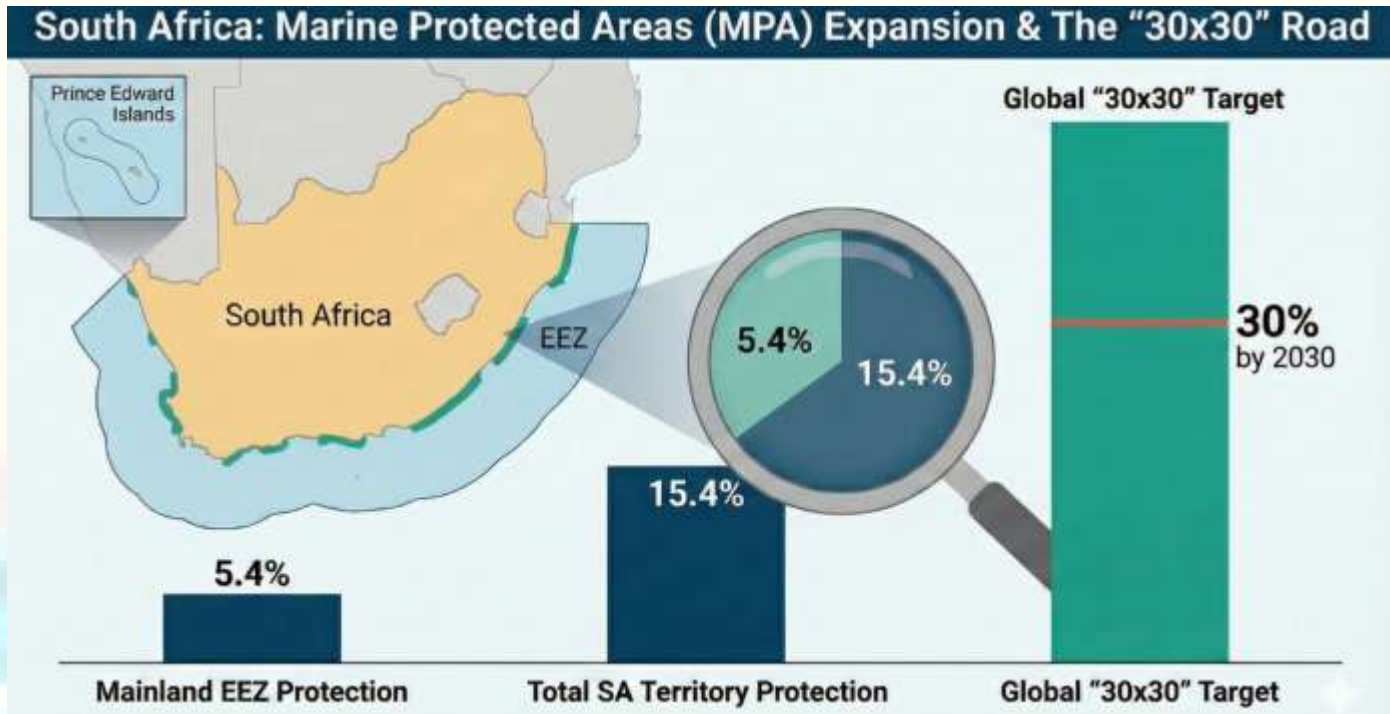
Securing the necessary resources requires a diversified and strategic approach. This NCMP will be funded through a blended finance model that leverages four key pillars.

Pillar 1: Public Sector Funding & Mainstreaming (The Foundation)

- **National Treasury Allocations:** DFFE will motivate for dedicated budget lines within the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) to fund the national-level actions of the NCMP, including the DFFE Municipal Support Unit.
- **Provincial and Municipal Budgets:** The statutory requirement for provinces and municipalities to align their CMPs with their core development plans (PSDFs, IDPs, and SDFs) is the primary mechanism for mainstreaming coastal management into public sector budgeting cycles.

Pillar 2: International & Donor Funding (The Catalyst)

- **Climate Finance:** DFFE will proactively develop large-scale programmatic proposals for submission to international climate funds, including the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and the Adaptation Fund, focusing on nature-based solutions for coastal resilience.
- **Biodiversity Finance:** DFFE will work with partners like SANBI to access funding from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and other biodiversity funds to support MPA expansion and the restoration of critical habitats.



Pillar 3: Private Sector & Innovative Finance (The Multiplier)

- **Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs):** Municipalities will be supported to develop bankable PPPs for revenue-generating coastal infrastructure, such as harbour upgrades, eco-tourism facilities, and recreational nodes.
- **Blue and Green Bonds:** DFFE will work with National Treasury and the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA) to explore the feasibility of issuing national or municipal "Blue Bonds" to finance large-scale, long-term coastal resilience and restoration projects.

- **Biodiversity Offsets:** The national biodiversity offset system will be strategically used to direct investment from developers into the NCMP's conservation and restoration priorities.

Pillar 4: Local Revenue Generation & Cost-Effectiveness (The Sustainability Loop)

- **Ring-fenced User Fees:** Municipalities will be guided on developing legally sound by-laws for user-pays systems in high-use coastal areas, with all revenue explicitly ring-fenced for the maintenance and upgrading of coastal infrastructure.
- **Leveraging EPWP Programmes:** Municipalities will be actively encouraged to partner with national programmes like "Working for the Coast" to achieve NCMP objectives using existing national budgets while creating local employment.

14.5 Governance and Implementation of the Investment Framework

To drive this strategy, a **Coastal Investment Task Team** will be established as a formal sub-committee of the National Coastal Committee (NCC).

- **Composition:** The Task Team will be co-chaired by DFFE and National Treasury and will include senior representatives from COGTA, SALGA, DBSA, and the private sector.
- **Mandate:** The Task Team's primary mandate is to operationalize this Investment Framework by:
 - Identifying and packaging "investable projects" from the NCMP.
 - Actively engaging with potential funders and investors.
 - Developing innovative financial mechanisms.
 - Providing guidance to municipalities on developing bankable project proposals.

14.6 Conclusion: A Call to Invest in South Africa's Coastal Future

The South African coastline is one of our nation's premier investment destinations. It is an asset of immense and growing value, but it faces significant risks that require proactive management. This National Coastal Management Programme provides the blueprint for mitigating those risks and unlocking further sustainable value.

We call upon our partners in government, the private sector, and the international community to join us in this critical endeavour. An investment in our coast is an investment in our economy, in our people, and in a resilient and prosperous future for all South Africans.





CHAPTER 15: CONCLUSIONS

15.1 A Renewed Commitment to South Africa's Coast

The National Coastal Management Programme (NCMP) 2026-2031 represents more than a policy document; it is a renewed national commitment to the stewardship of our most vital natural and economic asset. It provides a comprehensive framework for integrated coastal management, grounded in the constitutional mandate to protect our environment for present and future generations. Drawing lessons from the past and looking squarely at the challenges of the future, this programme charts a clear course towards a healthy, productive, and resilient South African coast that benefits all its people.

15.2 Key Achievements and Progress

The implementation of the previous NCMP has laid a significant foundation upon which this programme builds. Notable progress has been made in several key areas, including:

- The significant **expansion of our Marine Protected Areas network**, increasing the protection of offshore ecosystems.
- The development of **Coastal Management Lines** in multiple provinces, creating a first line of defence against inappropriate development.
- The initiation of **Estuary Management Plans**, providing a structured approach to managing these critical ecosystems.
- **Enhanced public access** to coastal areas through dedicated projects and strategies.
- **Improved coordination** between different spheres of government on coastal matters.



15.3 The 2026-2031 NCMP: A Strategic Evolution

This NCMP is not merely an update but a strategic evolution designed to be more accountable, actionable, and responsive. It addresses the systemic gaps of the past through several key enhancements:

- **A Fully Detailed Implementation Plan:** Moving beyond broad-strokes to provide specific actions, measurable KPIs, designated lead agencies, and firm timelines for all eight national priorities.
- **Dedicated Frameworks for Action:** Introducing new, dedicated chapters to provide clear guidance on **Norms and Standards, Municipal Implementation**, and a **National Coastal Investment Framework**.
- **Integration of Global Best Practices:** Explicitly weaving in the principles of the **Sustainable Blue Economy, Source-to-Sea Management**, and the central role of **Marine Spatial Planning (MSP)**.
- **Robust Governance Mechanisms:** Establishing a formal **National Capacity Building Strategy** to support municipalities and a clear **Conflict Resolution Mechanism** to manage disputes.
- **Commitment to Transparency:** Mandating a comprehensive, five-yearly **State of the Coast Report** with a full suite of defined indicators, all made accessible through a **Digital NCMP Portal**.

15.4 Emerging Complexities and the Path Forward

While this programme provides a robust framework, significant complexities remain. The path forward requires a clear-eyed understanding of the challenges that lie ahead:

- **Climate Change Impacts:** The increasing frequency and intensity of storm events, coupled with sea-level rise, will continue to test our resilience.
- **Development Pressure:** The demand for space and resources in the coastal zone will continue to grow, requiring steadfast and legally defensible planning decisions.
- **Resource Constraints:** Securing the necessary financial and human resources, particularly at the municipal level, will remain a constant challenge requiring innovative and collaborative solutions.
- **Pollution Concerns:** Tackling legacy pollution and addressing new contaminants will require sustained regulatory pressure and investment.

- **Enforcement in Remote Areas:** Ensuring compliance along our vast and often remote coastline remains a significant logistical and capacity challenge.

15.5 Implementation Framework and Success Factors

Success in achieving the NCMP's objectives is not guaranteed; it must be earned through dedicated effort and unwavering commitment. The implementation of this programme is built upon:

- **Sustained political commitment and leadership** at all levels of government.
- **Adequate and sustainable resource allocation**, guided by the National Coastal Investment Framework.
- **Strong institutional coordination** through the NCC, PCCs, and MCCs.
- **Active and meaningful stakeholder participation** from communities, industry, and civil society.
- **Regular monitoring, evaluation, and adaptation** to ensure our strategies remain effective.

15.6 The Way Forward

The path ahead is structured in three clear phases:

1. **Immediate Actions (2025-2026):** The focus will be on establishing the institutional machinery of this NCMP. This includes operationalising the Municipal Support Unit, establishing the Coastal Investment Task Team, gazetting key norms and standards, and initiating priority projects identified in the Implementation Plan.
2. **Medium-Term Goals (2027-2028):** The focus will shift to full operational implementation. This will involve the rollout of the national training programmes, the launch of the Digital NCMP portal, the publication of the first State of the Coast Report, and the execution of major projects.
3. **Long-Term Objectives (2029-2030):** The focus will be on achieving the set targets, optimising management systems based on lessons learned, and initiating the formal review process to prepare for the 2030-2035 NCMP cycle, ensuring a legacy of continuous improvement.

15.7 Final Remarks

The NCMP 2026-2031 provides a comprehensive framework for integrated coastal management in South Africa. Its success depends on the collective effort of all stakeholders - government at all levels, the private sector, civil society, and coastal communities. The programme recognizes that our coast is a national asset that requires careful stewardship to ensure its sustainability for future generations.

Through dedicated implementation of this programme, South Africa can achieve its vision of sustainable coastal development that balances ecological integrity with social and economic development. The next five years are crucial in determining the long-term sustainability of our coastal resources and the communities that depend on them.

As we move forward, the commitment to adaptive management ensures that the programme remains responsive to emerging dynamics while maintaining focus on its core objectives. The success of this programme will be measured not only by the achievement of its specific targets but also by the lasting positive impact it creates for coastal communities and ecosystems. Through continued collaboration, innovation, and dedication to the principles of integrated coastal management, we can ensure that South Africa's coastal zone remains a source of pride, prosperity, and opportunity for all South Africans, now and in the future.

15.8 Our Shared Responsibility: A Call to Action

The successful implementation of this National Coastal Management Programme is not the sole responsibility of the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment. It requires a unified effort, a "whole-of-society" approach that harnesses the unique strengths of every stakeholder. We therefore issue this call to action:

- **To National and Provincial Government:** Your role is to lead, to coordinate, and to empower. Uphold the mandates in this plan, provide the necessary resources, and create the enabling environment for success.
- **To Municipalities:** You are the frontline custodians of our coast. Embrace the guidance in this plan, integrate it into your core IDP and SDF processes, and be the champions of sustainable coastal management in your communities.

- **To Traditional Leaders:** You are the keepers of invaluable knowledge and cultural heritage. We commit to partnering with you as respected authorities in co-governance, ensuring that your wisdom guides our collective stewardship of the coast.
- **To the Private Sector and Industry:** You are the engine of our coastal economy. We call on you to innovate, to adopt sustainable practices, and to partner with us in investing in the long-term health and resilience of the resources upon which your prosperity depends.
- **To Civil Society, NGOs, and Academia:** You are our conscience, our researchers, and our partners on the ground. Hold us accountable, bring us your knowledge, and continue your vital work in mobilising communities and protecting our shared natural heritage.
- **To Every South African:** This coast belongs to you. Be its eyes and ears. Participate in its governance, act as a responsible steward when you visit its shores and help us ensure that this magnificent endowment is protected for all generations to come.





ANNEXURES



ANNEXURE A: CORE STATE OF THE COAST

INDICATORS - METHODOLOGIES AND DETAILS

A.1 Introduction

This annexure provides the detailed technical specifications for the Core National Indicators that will be used for the State of the Coast (SOC) Report. It is intended as a guide for data providers (including national departments, provincial lead agencies, municipalities, and research entities) to ensure that data is collected and submitted in a standardised format, allowing for consistent and comparable national reporting over time. Each indicator is linked to a Strategic Priority of the NCMP.

Priority 1: Equitable Public Access and Livelihoods

Indicator ID	Indicator Name	Metric	Methodology	Data Provider(s)
ACC-01	Public Access Provision	Number of gazetted public access servitudes per district municipality.	Provinces to collate and verify a GIS layer of all legally registered coastal access servitudes from municipal land-use schemes and deeds office records.	Provincial Lead Agencies, Municipalities
ACC-02	Livelihood Access Security	Percentage of priority small-scale fishing sites with formal co-management agreements.	DFFE (Fisheries) to maintain a national register of small-scale fishing co-operatives and track which ones have legally binding co-management agreements that specify access rights.	DFFE (Fisheries)
ACC-03	Coastal Access Points Audit	Number and type of gazetted access points per coastal district municipality, including universal access spots.	Provincial Lead Agencies to maintain a GIS-linked register of all formal coastal access points, classified by type (vehicular, pedestrian, universal access, boat launch). Data to be collated nationally	Provincial Lead Agencies, Municipalities

			via OCIMS and cross-referenced with municipal SDFs.	
LIV-01	Coastal Employment	Number of formal jobs in coastal tourism, fisheries, and mariculture sectors within coastal district municipalities.	Data to be extracted from Stats SA's Quarterly Labour Force Survey, filtered for specified sectors within defined coastal districts.	Stats SA, Dept. of Tourism
LIV-03	Small-Scale Fisheries Permits	Number of small-scale fishing permits issued per annum.	DFFE (Fisheries) to extract annual permit data from the national small-scale fisheries permit database, disaggregated by province, co-operative, and permit type. Cross-reference with registered small-scale fishing co-operatives.	DFFE (Fisheries)

Priority 2: Estuary Management and Restoration

Indicator ID	Indicator Name	Metric	Methodology	Data Provider(s)
EST-01	Estuary Health Index	Percentage of 43 priority estuaries in a Good (A/B) ecological category.	The index is derived from the National Estuary Monitoring Programme, combining data on water quality, habitat integrity, and biological indicators. A full assessment will be conducted for the 5-yearly SOC report.	DFFE, SANBI, DWS
EST-02	Water Quality	Percentage of monitored estuaries meeting national water quality standards for nutrients (nitrates, phosphates) and E. coli.	Based on data from the DWS real-time monitoring network and municipal health monitoring. Assessed against the National Water Quality Guidelines for Coastal Marine Waters.	DWS, Municipalities
EST-03	EMP Implementation	Percentage of priority EMPs with an active management forum	Provincial Lead Agencies to annually audit the functionality of Estuary Management Forums and	Provincial Lead Agencies

		and annual progress reports submitted.	confirm the submission of progress reports to the PCC.	
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Priority 3: Climate Resilience and Spatial Planning

Indicator ID	Indicator Name	Description	Metric	Methodology	Data Source(s)	Reporting Frequency
CLI-01	Coastal Vulnerability & Risk	Tracks the extent of new development being permitted within high-risk coastal zones.	Hectares of new hard infrastructure development approved within the provincially delineated Coastal Management Lines (CMLs).	Municipalities are required to submit spatial data of all new building plan approvals. This data is overlaid with the official provincial CML layer in a GIS to calculate the area of encroachment.	Municipal Planning Depts., Provincial Lead Agencies	Biennial
CLI-02	Shoreline Stability	Monitors long-term changes in the national shoreline position to identify erosion hotspots.	Percentage of the national coastline experiencing net erosion (>1m/year), accretion, or stability.	Analysis of time-series satellite imagery (e.g., Sentinel, Landsat) using a standardised digital shoreline analysis system (DSAS) managed via the OCIMS platform.	OCIMS, SANS, SAEON	5-Yearly
CLI-03	Social Resilience and Adaptive Capacity	Measures the level of preparedness of vulnerable communities for	Percentage of the 10 most vulnerable coastal communities that have a formally adopted Local Adaptation Plan and a	An audit of municipal and district disaster management plans will be conducted to verify the existence and functionality of local plans and systems in	COGTA, Municipal Disaster Management	Biennial

		climate-related coastal hazards.	functional early warning system.	the identified vulnerable communities.		
SPA-01	Planning Integration	Assesses the statutory integration of coastal management into local government land-use planning.	Percentage of coastal municipalities with formally adopted Municipal CMPs that are fully integrated into their IDPs and SDFs.	An audit of all coastal municipal IDPs and SDFs will be conducted by COGTA and SALGA to verify that the MCMP is explicitly referenced and its objectives are reflected in the strategic and spatial plans.	COGTA, Provincial Lead Agencies	Biennial
SPA-02	Development at Risk	Number and value of developments approved within the coastal risk zone (seaward of CMLs).	Municipalities and provinces to report all new development approvals (EIAs and building plans) within the coastal risk zone. SANSA to provide satellite-derived built-environment change detection within 100 m of CMLs. DFFE to collate and analyse.	SANSA, DFFE, Municipalities		Annual
SPA-03	Coastal Land Use Change	Percentage change in land cover categories within 1 km of HWM over 5-year period.	SANSA to provide national land cover datasets (from Sentinel-2 or equivalent) for the coastal strip (1 km inland of HWM). SAEON to analyse change between baseline (2025) and reporting year using standardised land cover	DFFE, SAEON, SANSA		Annual

			classification (SANLC categories).			
SPA-04	Coastal Built-Up Area	Percentage of land within 1 km of HWM classified as built-up or developed.	Derived from the same SANSa land cover datasets as SPA-03. Calculate the proportion of the 1 km coastal buffer classified as 'built-up' or 'urban' per province and nationally. Compare with previous reporting periods.	SANSa, Municipalities, SAEON		

Priority 4: Coastal Pollution Management

Indicator ID	Indicator Name	Description	Metric	Methodology	Data Source(s)	Reporting Frequency
POL-01	WWTW Compliance	Tracks the compliance of major coastal wastewater treatment works as a key land-based pollution source.	Percentage of the 50 audited coastal WWTWs that are compliant with their discharge permit conditions.	Data is sourced directly from the DWS Green Drop Programme's formal audit and assessment process, which measures compliance against legislated standards.	DWS (Green Drop Programme)	Biennial
POL-02	Recreational Water Quality	Monitors the suitability of popular recreational beaches for safe public use.	Percentage of Blue Flag and other key recreational beaches meeting national guidelines for safe bathing (E. coli and Enterococci).	Data is collated from the Blue Flag programme's mandatory monitoring and from municipal health departments' routine beach monitoring programmes.	WESSA, Municipal Health Services	Annual
POL-03	Plastic Debris Loading	Measures the density of plastic litter on our beaches as a national indicator of marine plastic pollution.	Mean number of plastic items per kilometer of coastline, derived from standardised annual International Coastal Clean-up surveys.	Data is collected by coordinators of the International Coastal Clean-up using a standardised methodology and submitted to a central database managed by	DFFE, Plastics SA, NGOs	Annual

				DFFE and NGO partners.		
POL-04	Emerging Pollutants	Provides an early warning on new chemical threats to our coastal ecosystems.	Presence and concentration levels of selected contaminants of emerging concern in the 5 priority estuaries.	Data is generated through the dedicated national research and monitoring programme (Action 4.3.1), using grab samples and passive samplers analysed in accredited laboratories.	WRC, DWS, National Monitoring Programme	5-Yearly
POL-05	Shipping Pollution Incidents	Number and volume of recorded shipping-related pollution incidents per annum.	SAMSA to provide annual data on all reported shipping-related pollution events in South African waters, classified by type (oil, chemical, other), volume, location, and source vessel. Cross-reference with DFFE NOSCP activation records.	DoT, SAMSA, DFFE		

Priority 5: Effective Governance

Indicator ID	Indicator Name	Description	Metric	Methodology	Data Source(s)	Reporting Frequency
GOV-01	Institutional Functionality	Assesses the operational status of key ICM co-	Percentage of Provincial and Municipal Coastal Committees that are formally constituted, meeting at least	Provincial Lead Agencies and Municipalities to submit annual declarations confirming	Provincial & Municipal	Annual

		operative governance structures.	quarterly, and submitting annual reports.	the status and functionality of their committees, supported by meeting minutes.	Reports, DFFE	
GOV-02	Municipal Performance Scorecard	A composite score measuring municipal progress in fulfilling key ICM Act mandates.	The average national score on the "Coastal Management Performance Scorecard," and the number of municipalities achieving "Green" status.	Data is collected from municipalities through a standardised template, verified by Provincial Lead Agencies, and aggregated nationally by DFFE and SALGA to produce the annual scorecard report.	DFFE, SALGA (Annual Scorecard Report)	Annual
GOV-03	Use of State Land in Coastal Zone	Percentage of state-owned coastal land by use category.	DPWI to provide a spatial layer of all state-owned land parcels within the Coastal Protection Zone. Classify each parcel by primary use (conservation, leased commercial, leased residential, vacant, informal settlement, other). Calculate proportions by province.	DPWI, DALRRD		
GOV-04	Public Ownership of Coastal Zone	Percentage of land within the Coastal Protection Zone that is publicly owned.	Deeds Office to provide ownership data for all land parcels within the CPZ. Classify as public (national, provincial, or municipal), private, or communal. Calculate public ownership	Deeds Office, DALRRD, Municipalities		

			percentage by coastal district municipality.			
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Priority 6: Coastal Research and Innovation

Indicator ID	Indicator Name	Description	Metric	Methodology	Data Source(s)	Reporting Frequency
RES-01	Research Alignment	Tracks the alignment of national research funding with defined coastal management priorities.	Percentage of the NRF's environmental science budget that is allocated to projects listed in the National Coastal Research Agenda.	The NRF will conduct an annual keyword analysis of its database of funded projects to determine the percentage of its portfolio that directly addresses the themes outlined in the Research Agenda.	NRF, DSI	Biennial
RES-02	Knowledge Accessibility	Measures the availability and use of national coastal data platforms for decision-making.	Number of unique institutional users (government, academic, private sector) and data downloads from the OCIMS platform.	User analytics will be automatically tracked by the OCIMS platform's back-end system and reported annually.	DFFE (OCIMS)	Annual
RES-03	Knowledge Integration	Tracks the formal integration of traditional knowledge into coastal management.	Number of gazetted EMPs and MPA Management Plans that explicitly incorporate Traditional Ecological Knowledge, co-developed with	A review of all new and revised management plans will be conducted to assess the inclusion of TEK, verified through records of community	DFFE, SANParks, Provincial Conservation Agencies	5-Yearly

			knowledge-holding communities.	consultation and co-development workshops.		
INO-01	Innovation Uptake	Monitors the integration of new technologies into routine coastal management.	Number of provincial or national monitoring programmes that have formally adopted and operationalised innovative technologies piloted under the NCMP.	A survey of all relevant lead agencies and monitoring bodies will be conducted to determine where piloted technologies have been formally incorporated into standard operating procedures.	DFFE, Provincial Lead Agencies	5-Yearly

Priority 7: Awareness, Education, and Partnerships

Indicator ID	Indicator Name	Description	Metric	Methodology	Data Source(s)	Reporting Frequency
AWA-01	Public Engagement	Measures the scale of public participation in national coastal awareness campaigns.	Total number of registered participants in the annual National Coastal Week and International Coastal Clean-up events, per province.	Event coordinators in each province are required to submit standardised event reports, including verified participant numbers, to a central DFFE database.	DFFE, Provincial Reports, NGO partners	Annual
EDU-01	Educational Integration	Tracks the integration of ocean and coastal literacy into the formal education system.	Percentage of school districts in coastal provinces where educators have received formal training on the	Data will be provided by the Department of Basic Education based on their records of professional development and training workshops conducted.	DBE	5-Yearly

			new coastal curriculum modules.			
PAR-01	Partnership Effectiveness	Monitors the functionality and output of key governance and partnership structures.	1. Number of active and functional PCCs and MCCs. 2. Number of formal public-private partnership agreements signed for coastal management projects.	1. Sourced from the GOV-01 indicator. 2. DFFE, in partnership with National Treasury's PPP unit, will maintain a register of all formal PPPs related to coastal management.	DFFE, National Treasury, Provincial & Municipal Reports	Biennial

Priority 8: Mechanisms for Effective Compliance and Enforcement

Indicator ID	Indicator Name	Description	Metric	Methodology	Data Source(s)	Reporting Frequency
ENF-01	Coastal Compliance Actions	Tracks the volume and success rate of enforcement actions against priority coastal contraventions.	1. Number of administrative enforcement actions (directives) issued for illegal structures and pollution. 2. Number of criminal dockets opened that proceed to prosecution.	Data is extracted from the National Environmental Crime Hotline database and the official Environmental Management Inspectorate (EMI) case management system.	DFFE (Enforcement), NPA	Annual
ENF-02	Reduction in Illegal Structures	Measures the effectiveness of enforcement in halting and reversing illegal development in the Coastal Protection Zone.	Number of illegal structures identified vs number of structures where work was halted or the structure was removed, per coastal province.	Provincial & Municipal Compliance Reports	Biennial	

ENF-03	Enforcement Capacity	Measures the human resource capacity dedicated to coastal compliance and enforcement.	Number of fully trained and equipped EMIs whose primary mandate is coastal and marine compliance, per province.	DFFE (Enforcement), Provincial Lead Agencies	Annual	
ENF-04	ORV Permits Issued	Number of ORV permits issued per annum by permit type and province.	DFFE and provincial authorities to extract annual permit data from ORV permitting systems. Disaggregate by permit type (recreational, commercial, exemption), province, and coastal segment. Report refusals and contraventions separately.	DFFE, Provincial Authorities		

ANNEXURE B: KEY LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY LINKAGES

B.1 Introduction

The Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) Act is the primary, but not the only, piece of legislation governing the coastal zone. The NCMP operates within a complex web of environmental, planning, and developmental law. This annexure provides a summary of the key national legislation that has a direct bearing on the implementation of the NCMP, outlining the critical points of intersection. It is intended to guide coastal managers in understanding their full suite of legal mandates and opportunities for integration.

Table: Key Legislative Linkages for Integrated Coastal Management

Act / Policy	Lead Department	Key Intersection with the NCMP	Relevance to NCMP Priority
The Constitution of South Africa, 1996	N/A	Foundation: Section 24 provides the fundamental right to a protected environment and mandates sustainable development, underpinning the entire NCMP.	All Priorities
National Environmental Management Act (NEMA), 1998	DFFE	Framework Act: Establishes the principles for all environmental management, including co-operative governance and the EIA process, which are central to the NCMP.	Priority 3, 5, 7
NEM: Biodiversity Act (NEM:BA), 2004	DFFE	Biodiversity: Provides the legal framework for the National Biodiversity Strategy, bioregional plans, and the management of threatened and invasive species in the coastal zone.	Priority 2, 6
NEM: Protected Areas Act (NEM:PAA), 2003	DFFE	Conservation: Governs the declaration and management of all protected areas, including Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) and coastal reserves.	Priority 2

Marine Spatial Planning Act, 2018	DFFE	Spatial Planning (Sea): The primary tool for managing the ocean space. The NCMP must integrate with MSP to ensure a seamless planning approach across the land-sea interface.	Priority 3
Climate Change Act, 2024	DFFE	Climate Resilience: Provides the legal mandate for the National Adaptation Strategy and requires all organs of state to consider climate change in their planning, directly supporting the NCMP's resilience priority.	Priority 3
National Water Act, 1998	DWS	Water Resources: Governs freshwater flows, water quality, and pollution control in catchments, which are the primary drivers of estuary health. The "Source-to-Sea" approach requires deep integration.	Priority 2, 4
Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act (SPLUMA), 2013	DALRRD	Spatial Planning (Land): The primary legal framework for municipal land-use planning. The integration of MCMPs into IDPs and SDFs under SPLUMA is the key mechanism for local implementation.	Priority 1, 3, 7
Disaster Management Act, 2002	COGTA	Risk Reduction: Provides the framework for managing coastal hazards and disasters. Coastal vulnerability assessments from the NCMP must inform municipal disaster risk reduction plans.	Priority 3
National Development Plan (NDP) 2030	The Presidency	National Strategy: The NCMP's objectives for job creation, poverty alleviation, and sustainable infrastructure directly contribute to the broader goals of the NDP.	Priority 1

ANNEXURE C: SUMMARY OF STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION INPUTS

C.1 Introduction

This National Coastal Management Programme is the product of an extensive and inclusive process of stakeholder consultation. In line with the principles of co-operative governance and participatory democracy, the development of this NCMP was informed by a wide range of voices from across government levels, civil society, the private sector, academia, and coastal communities. This annexure provides a summary of that process to ensure transparency and to acknowledge the valuable contributions of all participants.

C.2 Summary of Key Stakeholder Inputs

The consultation process revealed a strong consensus on several key themes, which have directly shaped the structure and content of this NCMP:

- **A Call for Clarity and Accountability:** Overwhelming feedback that the new NCMP needed a more detailed, measurable, and time-bound Implementation Plan with clear lines of responsibility.
- **The Urgency of Climate Change:** Stakeholders across all provinces highlighted the need for the NCMP to take a more proactive and directive stance on climate change adaptation and coastal resilience.
- **The Plight of Estuaries:** A universal recognition that the degradation of estuaries is a national crisis requiring urgent, coordinated action.
- **Frustration with Municipal Capacity:** A recurring theme of the immense capacity and resource constraints faced by municipalities, and the need for greater national and provincial support.
- **The Need for Better Integration:** Strong calls for breaking down silos and ensuring better alignment between the ICM Act and other key legislation like the NWA, NEM:BA, and the MSP Act.

- **Equity and Social Justice:** Powerful submissions from community and civil society groups emphasised the need to address historical inequities in coastal access and to ensure that marginalised communities are meaningfully included in governance and benefit from the coastal economy.



ANNEXURE D: GUIDE TO DEVELOPING A MUNICIPAL COASTAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME (MCMP)

D.1 Introduction

The Integrated Coastal Management Act (Act No. 24 of 2008) (ICM Act) mandates that all coastal municipalities must prepare and adopt a Municipal Coastal Management Programme (MCMP). This document is not merely a compliance exercise; it is the municipality's primary policy directive for the management of its coastal assets.

An effective MCMP protects the municipality from climate liability, unlocks the economic potential of the Blue Economy, and ensures



equitable access for communities. This guide outlines the statutory process required to develop a legally defensible and bankable MCMP.

D.2 The Six-Phase Development Process

Phase 1: Inception and Preparation

Legal Reference: Section 48 of ICM Act

Before drafting begins, the municipality must establish the governance structures to drive the process.

- **Establish a Steering Committee:** Ideally, this should be the Municipal Coastal Committee (MCC). If an MCC does not exist, establish a task team comprising Town Planning, Infrastructure, Local Economic Development (LED), and Environmental officials.
- **Notify the Province:** Inform the Provincial Lead Agency (PCC) of the intention to prepare an MCMP to ensure alignment and request technical support.
- **Secure Resources:** Allocate budget in the IDP for specialist studies (if required) or identify internal capacity. *Pro-Tip: Use the NCMP Investment Framework to motivate for funding based on risk reduction.*

Phase 2: The Situational Analysis (State of the Coast)

Legal Reference: Section 49(1)(a) & (b)

You cannot manage what you do not measure. This phase assesses the current realities.

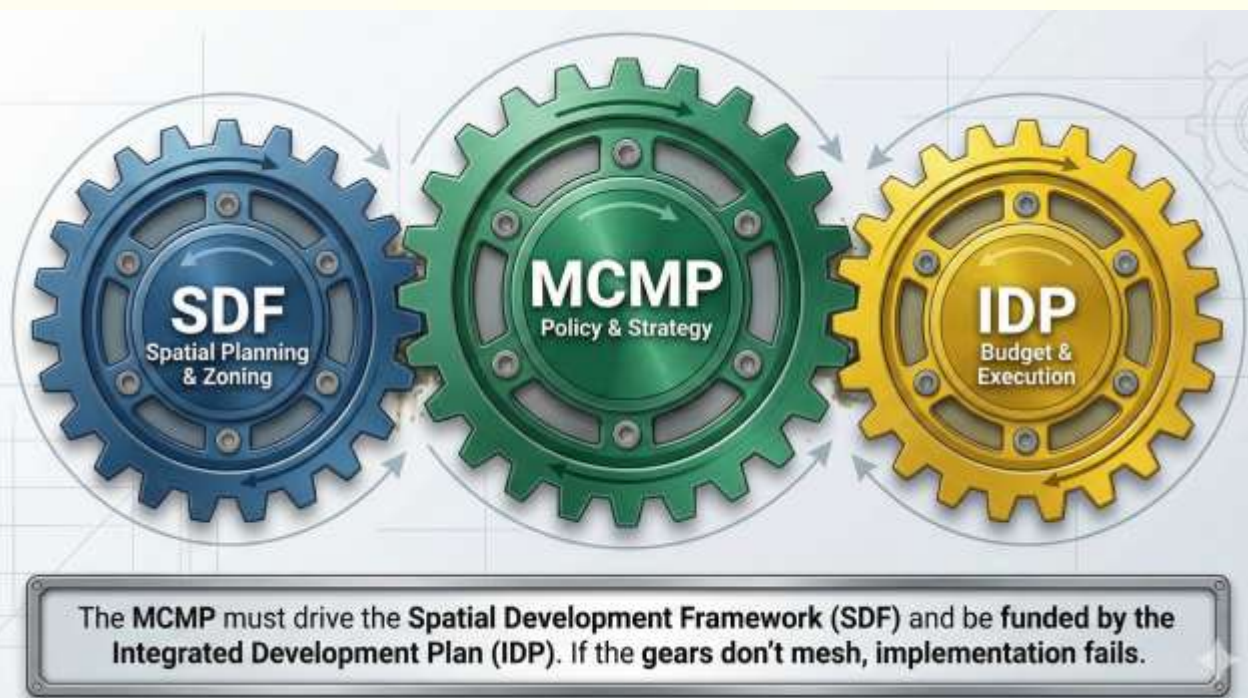
- **Infrastructure Audit:** Map all municipal infrastructure (roads, pipes, boardwalks) located within the Coastal Protection Zone (CPZ).
- **Risk Assessment:** Identify areas vulnerable to erosion, sea-level rise, and storm surges. Use the national Coastal Vulnerability Index (CVI).
- **Asset Inventory:** Catalogue key economic assets (beaches, surf breaks, launch sites) and ecological assets (estuaries, dunes).
- **Socio-Economic Profile:** Identify coastal communities dependent on the coast for livelihoods (e.g., small-scale fishers).

Phase 3: Strategic Planning (Vision and Priorities)

Legal Reference: Section 49(1)(c)

This is the core of the programme. It must align with the National and Provincial CMPs but address local needs.

- **Vision Statement:** Develop a local vision for the coast.
- **Coastal Management Lines (CMLs):** If the Province has determined CMLs, these **must** be mapped into the municipal spatial planning. If not, the municipality should propose management lines based on risk data.
- **Zoning:** Delineate coastal access land and zones for specific uses (e.g., tourism nodes vs conservation zones).
- **Priorities:** Select 3-5 high-impact priorities (e.g., "Restore Blue Flag Status" or "Upgrade Fishing Facilities"). Avoid a laundry list of unfunded mandates.



Phase 4: Public Participation

Legal Reference: Section 53 of ICM Act

Consultation must be meaningful and inclusive.

- **Notice of Intent:** Publish a notice in the Provincial Gazette and local newspapers inviting the public to submit comments.
- **Stakeholder Workshops:** Hold targeted sessions with Ratepayers Associations, Traditional Leaders, fisher cooperatives, and business chambers.
- **Comment Period:** Allow for a minimum of 30 days for written submissions.
- **Response Register:** Maintain a record of how public inputs were incorporated into the final draft.

Phase 5: Adoption and Gazetting

Legal Reference: Section 48

- **Provincial Consistency Check:** Submit the draft MCMP to the MEC (Provincial Lead Agency) for comment to ensure it aligns with the Provincial CMP.
- **Council Adoption:** Present the MCMP to the Municipal Council for formal adoption as a by-law or policy.
- **Gazetting:** Once adopted, publish the final MCMP in the Gazette. It is now a legal instrument.

Phase 6: Implementation and Enforcement

Legal Reference: Section 50

- **By-Laws:** Draft municipal by-laws to enforce the MCMP (e.g., restricting vehicle access, managing encroachment).
- **IDP Integration:** Ensure the "Priority Actions" from Phase 3 are copied directly into the Service Delivery and Budget Implementation Plan (SDBIP) of the IDP.
- **Monitoring:** Report progress to the MCC and the Province annually.

D.3 Critical Success Factors (Global Best Practice)

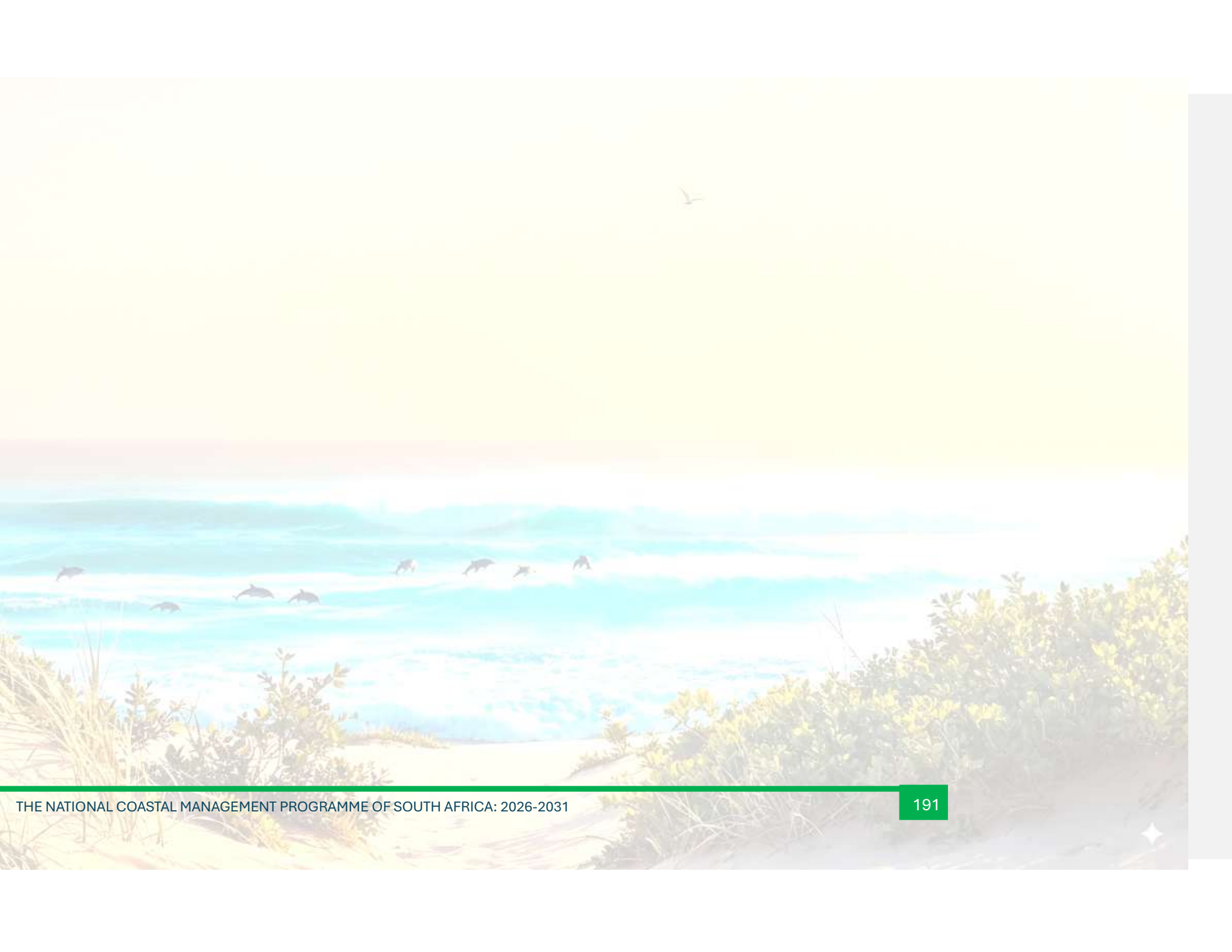
1. **Don't reinvent the wheel:** Use the National Coastal Management Programme as your template.
2. **Focus on "Bankability":** Structure your priority projects so they can attract funding. Instead of "Fix Dune," frame it as "Protect Tourism Infrastructure via Ecological Engineering."
3. **Cross-Departmental Buy-in:** The MCMP cannot sit solely with the Environmental Officer. It must be owned by Engineering and Planning departments.
4. **Data-Driven Decisions:** Use the OCIMS tools (as detailed in Chapter 9) to justify your management lines and risk zones.



A clipboard with a silver clip at the top, containing a checklist of six items. Each item has a green checkmark icon to its left. The first four items are checked, while the last two are not. The text at the bottom of the clipboard reads: "A plan without a budget is just a wish list. Ensure IDP integration."

-  **Steering Committee Established?**
-  **Risk Zones Mapped?**
-  **Public Consulted?**
-  **Aligned with Provincial CMP?**
-  **Included in IDP Budget?**
Highlight this one!
-  **By-laws Gazetted?**

A plan without a budget is just a wish list. Ensure IDP integration.





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