



CITY OF CAPE TOWN
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GUIDELINES FOR CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT FORUMS IN CAPE TOWN

Guiding the Transition to a Water-sensitive City

Making progress possible. Together.

GUIDELINES FOR CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT FORUMS IN CAPE TOWN
Guiding the Transition to a Water-sensitive City | 2024

Please note:

These guidelines are not intended to be prescriptive. Instead, the principles contained in this document are meant to guide the establishment and management of Catchment Management Forums (CMFs) to help to collectively improve the state of the catchments and waterways of City of Cape Town (CCT).

Although every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy and quality of the information in this document, CCT cannot be held responsible, nor will it be liable, for any errors or omissions. In case of a conflict of information contained herein, relevant legislation and approved national and CCT policies and by-laws will take precedence.

These guidelines have been produced in collaboration between CCT's Catchment, Stormwater and River Management Branch of the Water and Sanitation Directorate, the Environmental Management Department and the Economic Development Partnership.

Unless otherwise acknowledged, all photos are credited to CCT.

Any comments, suggestions or updates should be emailed to water@capetown.gov.za.

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ABBREVIATIONS

BOCMA	Breede-Olifants Catchment Management Agency
CID	City Improvement District
CCT	City of Cape Town
CMA	Catchment Management Agency
CMF	Catchment Management Forum
CMP	Catchment Management Plan
CSRM	Catchment, Stormwater and River Management Branch
DEA&DP	Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning (Provincial)
DWS	Department of Water and Sanitation (National)
E&HM	Environment and Heritage Management Branch
LUW	Liveable Urban Waterway
MMP	Maintenance Management Plan
NPO	Non-profit organisation
PASAP	Pollution Abatement Strategy and Action Plan
PAAC	Protected Areas Advisory Committee
WSC	Water-sensitive city

KEY DEFINITIONS

BOX 1: WHAT IS A CATCHMENT?

A catchment is an area where the landscape collects water. The outer edge of a catchment is always the highest point (the catchment boundary), and gravity causes all rain and run-off in the catchment to run downhill, where it naturally collects in a stormwater system or watercourse and eventually flows out to the sea. Catchments can include urban, peri-urban, agricultural and natural areas, each with different land uses and activities that affect the quality and flow of water.

In Cape Town, many catchments are urbanised; for example, the Salt catchment with an extensive coverage of roads, paving, buildings and hard surfaces. Some catchments are less developed, and contain extensive natural areas; for example, the Silvermine catchment that has most of its area in the Table Mountain National Park. Generally, waterways will reflect the state of the catchment, and require ongoing efforts to manage, maintain and rehabilitate them.

FIGURE 1: Schematic representation of a catchment



CATCHMENT, STORMWATER AND RIVER MANAGEMENT (CSRM): The branch in CCT's Water and Sanitation Directorate responsible for the hydrological management of catchments and the maintenance and rehabilitation of rivers.

CLIMATE-RESILIENT: The ability of individuals, communities, institutions, businesses and systems to anticipate, prepare for and respond to hazardous events, trends or disturbances related to climate.

ECOSYSTEM: A community of living organisms in conjunction with the non-living components of their environment, interacting as a system.

ECOSYSTEM SERVICES: The many and varied benefits to people that derive from the natural environment and from healthy ecosystems. These include provisioning, regulating, supporting and cultural services.

HYDROLOGY: The study of the distribution and movement of water both on and below the earth's surface, as well as the impact of human activity on water availability and quality.

LIVEABLE URBAN WATERWAY (LUW): A waterway that accommodates flooding, has acceptable water quality, has a functioning ecology, is connected to the water table and floodplains, connects communities, and provides multiple ecosystem services and economic and social benefits.

The LUW Programme rehabilitates waterways using water-sensitive design, nature-based solutions and green infrastructure.

MAINTENANCE MANAGEMENT PLAN (MMP): A waterway, site or area-specific plan compiled for watercourses to guide maintenance interventions.

PARTNERING: The process of building a sustained long-term relationship founded on trust, collaboration and mutual accountability.

POLLUTION ABATEMENT STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN (PASAP): A plan that identifies pollution sources and defines the actions and interventions required to reduce, eliminate or manage these.

REHABILITATION: Actions aimed at improving some of the natural function(s) and value of ecosystems that human activities have degraded.

RESILIENCE: The capacity of individuals, communities, institutions, businesses and systems to survive, adapt and grow, regardless of the chronic stresses and acute shocks they experience.

RIVER CORRIDOR PLAN: A holistic and integrated plan for a river and its adjacent corridor that considers hydrology, geomorphology, water quality, environmental and amenity needs; and which defines the interventions required to meet rehabilitation objectives.

STORMWATER: Water resulting from natural precipitation and/or the accumulation of this, including groundwater and spring water ordinarily conveyed by the stormwater management system, but excluding water in the potable water or sewerage reticulation system.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT SYSTEM: The constructed and natural facilities used or required for the management, collection, conveyance, temporary storage, control, monitoring, treatment, use and disposal of stormwater. These facilities include pipes, culverts, waterways, watercourses and their associated floodplains, whether over or under public or privately owned land.

STORMWATER MASTERPLAN: A holistic and forward-thinking strategy that outlines the long-term vision and actions necessary to manage stormwater systems and improve water quality and quantity in the catchment.

WATER-SENSITIVE CITY (WSC): A liveable city that gives due prominence to water in the design of urban areas, serves as a water supply catchment with a range of diverse water resources, provides ecosystem services and a healthy natural environment, and has water-sensitive communities who are water wise and engaged in water-related decision-making.

WATERCOURSE (OR WATERWAY): A collective general term used to describe any river, stream, channel, canal, vlei, wetland or dam in which water flows regularly or intermittently. It also includes the bed and the banks of these systems.

WETLAND: Areas of land that are either seasonally or permanently covered with shallow water – salt, fresh or both – and that typically support vegetation adapted to life in water-saturated soils.

VLEI: The South African term used to describe a wetland.



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 SETTING THE SCENE

Cape Town is blessed with an incredible natural heritage of waterways, including rivers, streams, channels, canals, vleis, wetlands and dams, as well as springs and groundwater resources. The city is divided into numerous main drainage catchments (see Figure 2), each containing various waterways that comprise the natural and constructed stormwater management systems. These systems are essential to the municipality, providing a critical stormwater drainage function, attenuating flood water, improving stormwater runoff quality, and can enhance the quality of citizens' lives and the space around them. However, many of these systems are in a poor condition. They have been altered over many years, and most are now ecologically degraded and polluted, and are not seen as safe. In addition, flooding is a very real issue faced by many communities. These negative impacts often affect Cape Town's most vulnerable communities the most.

The City of Cape Town (CCT) has developed several ambitious strategies to improve the situation:

- ➔ **The Water Strategy:** Cape Town aims to become a water-sensitive city by 2040, with waterways that are healthy, accessible, inclusive and safe, where river corridors are restored, aquifers are recharged and waterways improve the quality of life for the communities through which they flow.
- ➔ **The Resilience Strategy:** Cape Town's urban systems will be future proofed, with healthy, safe and productive urban waterways which produce multiple resilience dividends, including flood attenuation, new work and recreation opportunities, improved water quality and crime reduction.
- ➔ **The Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan:** Cape Town aims to become a climate-resilient city that proactively addresses climate hazards such as flooding.
- ➔ **The Environmental Strategy:** Ecosystems will be protected and rehabilitated so that they can continue to provide vital services to Cape Town.

The Water Strategy principle 'work together and across boundaries' notes that:

'A collaborative and partnering approach across neighbourhood, catchment, physical, economic and political boundaries is necessary to build a more resilient future and to address the challenges at the appropriate scale ...'

BOX 2: CCT STRATEGIES

Links to the [Water Strategy](#), [Resilience Strategy](#), [Climate Change Strategy](#), [Climate Change Action Plan](#) and [Environmental Strategy](#).

CCT's CSRM Branch of the Water and Sanitation Directorate is responsible for catchment management and the maintenance and rehabilitation of waterways. It does this in partnership with other CCT departments, including Urban Waste Management, Road Infrastructure Management, Environmental Management, Recreation and Parks, and others.

1.2 WHY ESTABLISH A CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT FORUM (CMF)?

To overcome the challenges inherited from our past and to shape a collective, sustainable future as envisioned in the various CCT strategies, it is essential to recognise the complex and interwoven nature of the issues at hand.

CCT cannot do this alone. It needs to partner and collaborate with all relevant stakeholders – using a whole-of-society approach – as it addresses the complex challenges in its catchments.

CCT recognises that it needs a coordinated and collaborative management approach that includes a representative voice of the local community.

To achieve this balance, CCT is committed to supporting multi-stakeholder CMFs. These CMFs exist to support integrated catchment management at a local level, which addresses the various complex challenges focusing on water quality, flooding, amenity/recreation and ecosystem health in the catchment.

1.3 WHAT IS THIS GUIDE FOR AND WHO SHOULD READ IT?

This guideline document provides an overview of what CMFs are and how to work with them to strengthen catchment management at a local level. It is aimed at people who are active in CMFs and those interested in establishing a new CMF.

Contexts are different across Cape Town, and so no two CMFs will be the same. CMFs need to be locally relevant, adaptive, issue-driven and responsive to their unique challenges. It is important that CMF members draw what is appropriate from these guidelines based on the needs of the catchment, and that this is done collectively with other CMF members.

By participating in CMFs, members contribute to a collaborative effort that transcends siloed working, promoting integration and cooperation within and across institutions and sectors. This is a chance to shape a water-sensitive Cape Town where healthy, accessible and safe waterways improve the quality of life for all communities.

Join the movement in revitalising and rehabilitating our catchments to create a more inclusive city. Your involvement is crucial. Let's work together to make a lasting impact!

BOX 3: HISTORY OF CMFs IN CAPE TOWN

CMFs have existed for 25 years. This table reflects the history of CMFs in Cape Town :

TABLE 1: History of CMFs in Cape Town

CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT FORUM	ESTABLISHMENT AND OPERATION TIMELINES	STATUS
Sand River	Active since 1999	ACTIVE
Hout Bay River	Active since 1999	ACTIVE
Lourens River	Active since 2023	ACTIVE
Zeekoe	Active in 1999, re-established 2024	ACTIVE
Diep River	Active in 1999, re-established 2024	ACTIVE
Soet River	Established in 2024	ACTIVE
Eerste/Kuils River	Active in 1999, and 2013-2022, re-established in 2025	ACTIVE
Wildevölvlei/Noordhoek	Active in 1999	INACTIVE
Salt River	Active in 1999	INACTIVE

FIGURE 2: Map of catchment areas





2. PURPOSE AND MANDATE

2.1 WHAT IS A CMF?

A CMF is unique in that it allows civil society and other non-governmental stakeholders to regularly meet with representatives from national, provincial and local government departments to take a collaborative approach to managing a catchment.

A CMF:

- ➔ Is established at the catchment level.
- ➔ Includes representatives of all relevant stakeholder groups in a catchment.
- ➔ Includes non-government and government stakeholders.
- ➔ Is a platform for sharing different stakeholders' perspectives.
- ➔ Is locally relevant, adaptive and issue-driven.
- ➔ Is results-orientated in terms of finding real solutions to challenges.
- ➔ Is non-statutory and voluntary.
- ➔ Empowers communities to contribute to managing the catchment, specifically water quality, flooding and aquatic ecosystem health.

2.2 WHAT IS THE SCOPE OF A CMF?

A CMF serves multiple purposes. As a forum, it has five distinct roles: informative, advisory, operational, oversight and advocacy. These roles are described here.

- ➔ **Informative:** Proactively and timeously sharing up-to-date information that increases an awareness of the challenges a catchment faces and its solutions, as well as relevant policies, directives, plans and projects so that these can shape the catchment's activities, objectives and goals
- ➔ **Advisory:** Supporting cooperative and constructive dialogue between non-government and government stakeholders
- ➔ **Operational:** Directly involving non-government stakeholders in catchment management activities, either independently or as partners
- ➔ **Oversight:** Ensuring mutual accountability on defined and agreed-upon activities, objectives and goals

- ➔ **Advocacy:** Representing and amplifying the collective voice of the catchment stakeholders on issues related to water quality, flooding and aquatic ecosystem health and using this to influence decision-making

Each catchment area should have its own CMF. However, one CMF may serve several small independent, adjacent catchments.

CMFs can tackle a variety of issues related to stormwater management systems such as pollution, flooding and aquatic ecosystem health; and they can also support awareness raising and education and contribute to long-term planning. This multiple focus allows CMFs to resolve complex and long-term challenges that hinder the catchment's health, resilience and sustainability.

2.3 WHAT IS OUTSIDE THE SCOPE OF A CMF?

There are activities outside the scope of a CMF. For instance, CMFs cannot influence or control other service delivery issues relating to, for example, housing, education, roads, public open space, safety or health unless these services directly intersect with and affect water quality, flooding, amenity/recreation and ecosystem health. The focus must be on catchments and their stormwater management systems.

CMFs are not commercial platforms where businesses can market or sell their catchment management solutions.

2.4 WHAT IS THE MANDATE OF A CMF?

At a national policy level (for example through the National Water Act and National Water Resource Strategy 3rd Edition), CMFs are envisaged to support Catchment Management Agencies (CMAs) and localise integrated water resource management. Although CMFs exist in policy, there has been a delayed roll-out of CMAs nationally that has affected the establishment and effectiveness of CMFs.

Water resource management is a national competence, with overlapping mandates at the municipal and provincial level. This enables – but does not mandate – different spheres of government to play a role in establishing and operating CMFs. CCT has taken the opportunity of driving the establishment of municipal-level CMFs.

At present there is no formal relationship between the CMFs in Cape Town and the Breede-Olifants CMA (BOCMA). The intention is to foster a relationship between them based on cooperation and collaboration.

BOX 4: WHAT IS A CMA?

South Africa is divided into six water management areas. Each of these areas are to be managed by a CMA, which, according to the National Water Act, Act 36 of 1998, ‘will conduct the protection, use, development, conservation, management and control of water resources’. CMAs therefore undertake the critical role of advising on and coordinating water resource management at a regional level.

CCT falls under the jurisdiction of the Breede-Olifants CMA (see Figure 3), which was formally established in 2022, with its head office in Worcester. The CMA is a national Department of Water and Sanitation function.

FIGURE 3: Map showing the BOCMA area and provincial boundaries

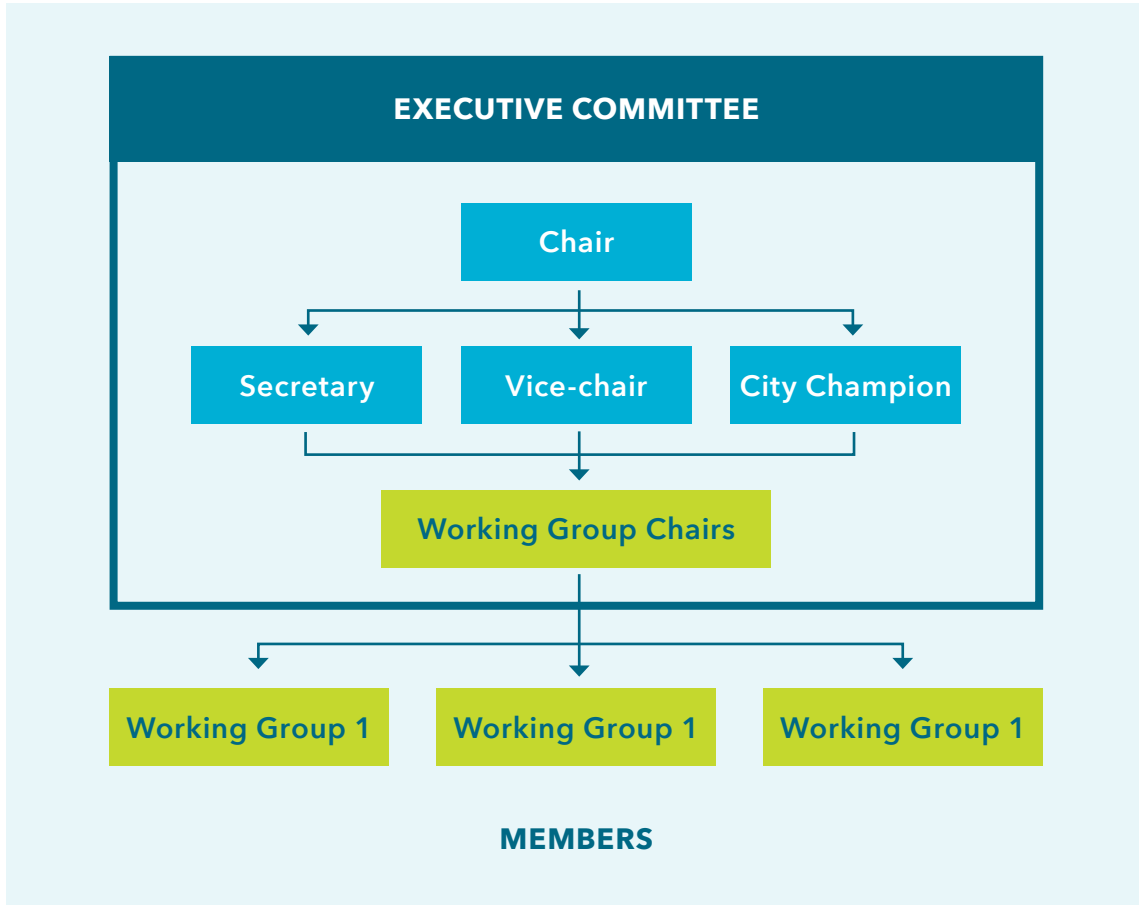


3. GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE AND STAKEHOLDER INTERACTION

3.1 HOW IS A CMF STRUCTURED?

Figure 4 depicts the typical structure of a CMF. CMF members can hold CMF leadership roles that include the chair, vice-chair, CCT champion, secretary, working group leads and general roles as part of the working groups or general membership.

FIGURE 4: Typical structure of a CMF



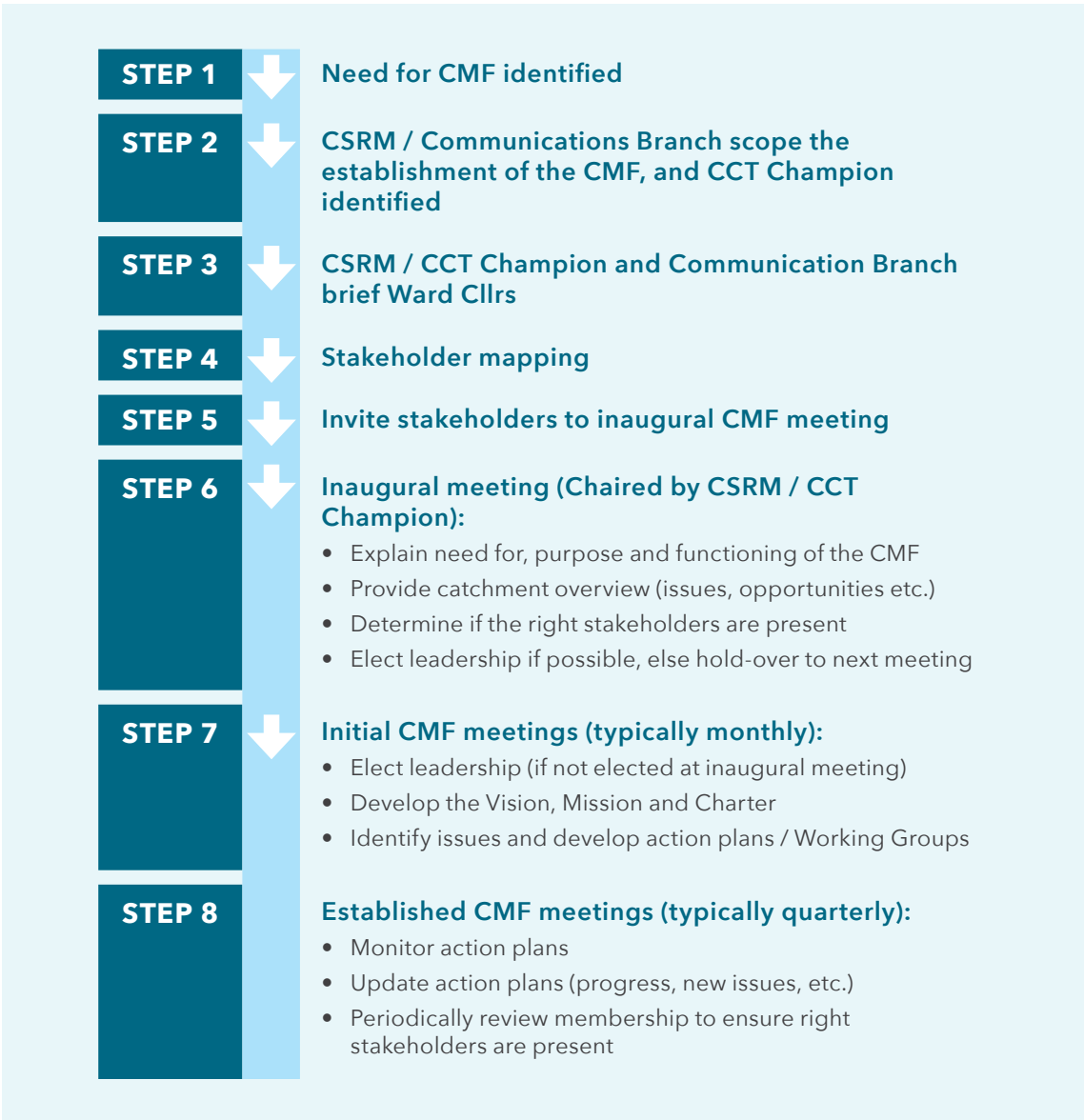
Any organisation, government department or public representative with an interest or mandate in a catchment area can participate as a member of a CMF. This includes civil society, the private sector, local councillors, other established groups and all spheres of government.

3.2 HOW DOES ONE ESTABLISH A CMF?

A CMF is initiated when a critical mass of stakeholders, including government and non-government representatives in a catchment, come together and agree to establish a forum. At a minimum, the CMF members will elect (through a voting process) a chair, a vice-chair and a secretariat, who are not government officials or politicians. They will also designate a CCT champion (a CCT official). Government officials and politicians do not have voting rights.

A CMF is deemed to be established when the four key CMF leadership roles, (see Figure 4), are elected and designated. Subsequently, CMF members will collectively decide on priorities and can establish working groups to address these.

FIGURE 5: Steps to follow when establishing a CMF



3.3 WHO IS INVOLVED AND WHAT IS THEIR ROLE?

There are different roles in a CMF. The CSRM Branch in CCT is responsible for catchment management and the maintenance and rehabilitation of waterways. The CSRM Branch is therefore a key stakeholder in the establishment and ongoing management of CMFs within CCT.

The CMF's effective functioning is driven by a collaborative relationship between the chair and the CCT champion.

Table 1 describes the main roles and their responsibilities in CMFs. The table includes a detailed description of each role, membership type and responsibility.

TABLE 2: Typical roles and their responsibilities in a CMF

ROLE	RESPONSIBILITY
Chair (civil society member)	Chairs the CMF meeting, actively monitors and follows up with the appropriate CCT officials to ensure catchment challenges are prioritised and resolved, formulates the agenda, coordinates the shared vision and priorities of the forum, and works collaboratively with CCT champion.
Vice-chair (civil society member)	Supports the chair, and shares the responsibility of the chair.
CCT champion (CCT official)	Most likely from the CSRM Branch (but not necessarily), they serve as the CCT focal point and connection between the CMF and other CCT officials. Responsible for working collaboratively with CCT officials and the CMF.
Secretary	Coordinates CMF meetings, minutes the meetings and provides administrative support support such as document management.
CCT officials	Responsible for resolving issues related to their mandate; reports back to the CMF. These individuals must have the appropriate level of authority in their departments, and must actively contribute to CMF meetings, as their involvement is crucial to the success of the CMF.
Working group lead (civil society member)	Coordinates the activities of the working group, actively monitors and follows up with the appropriate CCT officials to ensure working group issues are prioritised and resolved. Works closely with the CCT champion to identify and engage other relevant CCT officials.
Working group member	Actively supports the working group lead and contributes to ensuring that the issues are prioritised and resolved.
CMF member	Actively attends CMF meetings, appoints the CMF leadership, raises issues from their local communities and constituents, shares feedback and contributes to the shared vision and plan for the catchment.

3.3.1 Member capabilities

CMF members need a range of skills related to catchment management. Members with technical expertise and specialist knowledge, such as in hydrology, engineering, aquatic ecology, conservation, resource economics and social science, will offer valuable capabilities to the CMF. However, members with other skills are also valued and will be able to meaningfully contribute to the CMF. Above all, the most important requirement is to have a personal dedication to the state of the catchment and be able to mobilise action in communities. In addition, organisational, leadership, social skills and emotional intelligence are essential for CMF leadership roles.

BOX 5: RECOMMENDED CRITERIA FOR THE CMF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

- ➔ Demonstrable knowledge of catchment management and its value, in particular the catchment for which they would chair the CMF
- ➔ Availability and commitment to dedicate sufficient time to the role and the responsibilities that come with the role
- ➔ Strong cooperative governance skills and experience
- ➔ Excellent social and interpersonal skills
- ➔ Comprehensive understanding of the scope and objectives of a CMF

When establishing a CMF, it is crucial to understand who the key CCT stakeholders are. CCT has a broad mandate for service delivery, which means that numerous departments may need to be involved to support effective catchment management. These could include:

- ➔ **Water and Sanitation Directorate:**
 - CSRM
 - Communication and Partnerships
 - Reticulation
 - Water Pollution Control
 - Wastewater
 - Informal Settlements Basic Services
 - Scientific Services
 - Water Demand Management
- ➔ **Spatial Planning and Environment Directorate:**
 - Environmental Management
 - Urban Planning and Design
- ➔ **Community Services and Health Directorate:**
 - Recreation and Parks
 - City Health

- ➔ **Urban Waste Management Directorate:**
 - Waste Services
 - Public Empowerment and Development
 - Integrated Waste Planning
- ➔ **Urban Mobility Directorate:**
 - Road Infrastructure Management
- ➔ **Future Planning and Resilience Directorate:**
 - Risk and Resilience
- ➔ **Human Settlements Directorate:**
 - Human Settlements Planning
 - Informal Settlements
- ➔ **Safety and Security Directorate:**
 - Disaster Risk Management

In addition to CCT officials representing the above departments, the CMF should include elected ward councillors and the subcouncil managers from the wards in the catchment. Elected councillors who hold a portfolio, such as the Mayoral Committee Members for Water and Sanitation or Spatial Planning and Environment, may also want to participate. However, it is important that the CMF does not become a political forum; its focus needs to remain on addressing the catchment challenges.

As CMF issues and challenges emerge or change over time, CCT departments involved in the CMF may need to adapt accordingly. Departments do not need to be permanent members of the CMF and can be engaged on particular issues as needed.

The success of a CMF will depend on how well these stakeholders collaborate.

BOX 6: BUILDING TRUST

Building a cooperative and trust-based environment from a low-trust position requires consistent transparency, open communication and shared accountability.

It is important to openly acknowledge any historical and current challenges in the CMF. CMF members are more than the institution they represent; each person is first an individual, before the role they fulfil in that organisation. Recognising this helps in assigning accountability and building trust on a personal level.

CMF members who demonstrate commitment to building and fostering relationships between members, and who actively work on addressing issues, enable accountability and trust to grow. Clear roles and responsibilities for all members fosters mutual accountability and builds credibility over time.

Sustaining trust also depends on demonstrating long-term commitment through clear resourcing and sustainability plans for the CMF. When key individuals leave, a strong succession plan is needed to ensure continuity and to embed trust and cooperation in the forum's processes rather than rely solely on personal relationships.

3.4 HOW DO CMFs OPERATE IN PRACTICE?

The CMF leadership and members can decide the frequency of meetings, and this will vary from forum to forum depending on the catchment-specific issues. Initially, monthly meetings may be required to firmly establish the CMF, its vision, mission and charter. Thereafter, meetings can typically be held quarterly or at intervals determined appropriate by the Chair, based on inputs by the members.

The regular meetings, like CMF or working group meetings, should follow predetermined and agreed-upon agendas. These agendas should include an assessment of progress on action items and allocate time to deal with matters that arise. However, other meetings may be specific and ad hoc, and should be adapted to suit the purpose of convening the attendees. Minutes should be kept for all meetings, and be available to all CMF members.

3.4.1 How does one ensure that all voices are represented in CMFs?

Ensuring a balance of stakeholders in a CMF is crucial for effective and equitable catchment management. The CMF leadership must actively demonstrate their commitment to equity and inclusion by making a concerted effort to include voices that are often missing from discussions on catchment issues. This involves acknowledging and addressing historical inequalities and fostering an environment where all participants can contribute equally. To do this, the CMF leadership should consider ways of supporting people to attend and participate, such as having meetings in readily accessible and safe places, and at times that are suitable for all to attend. Holding meetings on weekends or rotating the meeting locations to different parts of the catchment can make participation more feasible for a wider range of stakeholders, ensuring broader and more inclusive engagement.

This is integrally linked to the process of getting to know one's catchment, as detailed in section 4.1. The leadership and all members must clearly understand how their catchment is represented and ensure that all voices are included in development processes. This approach fosters inclusivity and enhances the effectiveness of catchment management, leading to healthier and more resilient systems.

3.4.2 Collaboration and mutual accountability

To ensure the effectiveness of CMFs, it is essential to foster a safe, collaborative and mutually accountable partnership between the government and non-government CMF members. This cooperative approach will help to navigate any challenging conversations, and requires continuous time, effort and commitment from all members.

The best way to create cohesion in a CMF is to dedicate time to collaboratively establishing a vision and mission, which will be included in a charter (see Developing a charter).

These will serve as the unifying force that aligns diverse stakeholders towards a common purpose, and will guide CMFs in decision-making. They help to foster effective collaboration, build trust and promote shared ownership in the catchment. The vision and mission will also guide the identification and prioritisation of issues, help to manage expectations and encourage collaborative action among members.

Each CMF should define and agree on principles for working together. These principles could include:

- ➔ **Inclusivity:** Including diverse perspectives and expertise
- ➔ **Respect:** Honouring others' views, inputs and expertise
- ➔ **Transparency:** Maintaining open communication and demonstrating transparency in decision-making
- ➔ **Collaboration:** Fostering a collaborative environment by inviting all members to contribute and work towards common goals

- ➔ **Mutual accountability:** Holding members accountable for their responsibilities and deliverables
- ➔ **Innovation:** Encouraging innovative solutions and best practices
- ➔ **Systems thinking:** Approaching challenges holistically, aiming for sustainable, long-term benefits and addressing root causes
- ➔ **Continuous improvement:** Committing to ongoing learning and growth by reflecting on past efforts, making necessary adjustments and striving for incremental progress over time

BOX 7: DEVELOPING A CHARTER

A charter is a document that is reached by agreement between different people participating in achieving a particular vision. For a CMF, this is a working document that must contain the basis of how the CMF is structured and how it will function. It is an important document in a multiple-stakeholder environment where there may not always be agreement. It can help to minimise conflict and disputes and can assist to facilitate discussions and important decisions that need to be taken. A typical charter will have the following contents:

1. Name and identity of the forum
2. Vision, mission and objectives of the forum
3. Functions of the forum
4. Area of jurisdiction or operation
5. Structure of the forum
6. Membership of the forum
7. Rights and responsibilities of members
8. Office bearers and their roles and responsibilities
9. Composition and reporting lines of management structures
10. Operating procedures, including dispute resolution
11. Sources of funding
12. Reporting and accountability
13. Relationships with other structures

For more information on developing a CMF charter, consult [AWARD's Catchment Management Forums: A Guideline for Developing Charters of Agreement](#).

3.4.3 Managing conflict of interest

All members must disclose possible conflicts of interest, which occur when an individual's personal interests – such as financial gain or self-promotion – compromise or appear to compromise their impartiality and integrity in a professional setting. All members are responsible for ensuring that the CMF remains a trustworthy and impartial platform.

To this end, it is recommended that all members declare any financial interests, professional affiliations or personal relationships that may influence their participation in the forum. Members should refrain from using the platform for personal promotion or financial gain, and all discussions should remain focused on the collective interests of the CMF. Where a potential conflict of interest arises, members should recuse themselves from decision-making processes related to the matter.

3.4.4 What resources are available to CMFs?

The most significant resources available to CMFs are people's time and in-kind contributions. CCT can invite members to meetings and provide a venue. However, due to strict procurement, supply chain and financial policies, CCT is unable to provide direct financial support to the CMF, including transport and refreshments.

For catchment management activities to be considered for municipal funding, they must be clearly articulated in an established plan, such as a Catchment Management Plan (CMP) (see section 4.2.1), an MMP, a PASAP or a Stormwater Masterplan. Once these plans are adopted by CCT, it becomes possible to advocate for budget allocation following municipal processes. However, it is important to note that a priority in the catchment may not be a CCT-wide priority, and resources may be allocated to another catchment.

Resources can be sourced from other CMF members or obtained through fundraising. CMFs could also seek funding by registering as a non-profit organisation (NPO) or collaborating with existing NPOs and the private sector with similar interests. This approach would allow them to apply for grants and donor-funded opportunities (see Fundraising by friends groups and other conservation organisations).

Even if CMFs receive separate funding, they may not undertake activities or work in waterways without the correct permissions and agreements in place (see Authorisation for activities in waterways).

BOX 8: FUNDRAISING BY FRIENDS GROUPS AND OTHER CONSERVATION ORGANISATIONS

Some friends groups and conservation organisations have raised funds for catchment and waterway-related work. These include the [Friends of the Liesbeek](#), [Friends of Silvermine Nature Area](#), [Mosselbank River Conservation Team](#), [Friends of Constantia Valley Green Belts](#), [Zandvlei Trust](#), [Water and Environment Society of Southern Africa](#) and [Nature Connect](#). These groups are registered NPOs. They are able to raise money and receive donations, including tax-deductible donations, from individuals, organisations and businesses. They have used this money to carry out a range of impactful projects in their areas. Ideally, these friends groups and conservation organisations are represented in the CMF.

In addition, CCT at times may make Grants-in-Aid budget available to fund projects that benefit the community and assist CCT in realising its goals and objectives, as set out by the Integrated Development Plan (see the criteria and application process on the [Grant-Aid Website](#)).

BOX 9: AUTHORISATION FOR ACTIVITIES IN WATERWAYS

Water resource management is regulated by various laws, and it is important to remember that no one has the immediate right to do anything in a waterway, even if it flows through one's private land. Some activities as listed in the National Water Act and the National Environmental Management Act may require permissions and authorisations from one or more local, provincial or national departments.

Anyone planning to undertake any activity that falls within, or would affect, a waterway, should check with the provincial Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning (DEA&DP) and the National Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) to determine if an application or authorisation is required. The CCT CSRM Branch and/or the Environmental and Heritage Management (E&HM) Branch could also provide advice on this issue. The CCT also has a Stormwater by-law and various Policies that govern stormwater management in Cape Town.

For more information on development in or next to a watercourse, consult the CCT [Green Infrastructure Programme, Best Practice Guidelines for Urban Watercourses](#).

3.4.5 Sustaining CMFs

Sustaining CMFs presents numerous challenges, and requires dedicated effort from all members. Continuous engagement is critical for maintaining momentum, tackling long-term issues, and fostering community cohesion and trust. However, active participation, especially from resource-constrained community members and time-constrained government officials, can be challenging due to the substantial time and energy required. This can detract from addressing the catchment challenges.

Some suggestions for ensuring continuous operations and sustainability include:

- ➔ Focusing efforts on one or two high-priority issues requiring urgent attention first and not trying to address everything immediately
- ➔ Learning by doing, and sharing success stories, thereby encouraging participation and inspiring the next generation of active citizens
- ➔ Active succession planning
- ➔ Raising awareness to broaden engagement in CMFs and related initiatives
- ➔ Exploring funding opportunities for participation costs, including transport, catering and venue costs, and funding the secretariat function, if these are not provided in kind
- ➔ Incorporating regular reflection sessions to assess progress, capture learnings and adjust strategies accordingly
- ➔ Facilitating knowledge exchange between CMFs to learn from each other's successes and challenges, fostering collective improvement and innovation

3.4.6 Documentation and record keeping

Once the forum is established, all documentation must be filed, all meetings minuted and records of decisions kept for accountability purposes. The secretariat takes on the responsibility of ensuring that these records are kept up to date in a central, accessible location.



4. ADDRESSING CHALLENGES AND ISSUES IN THE CATCHMENT

4.1 GET TO KNOW WHO IS WORKING IN THE CATCHMENT

When establishing, growing and sustaining CMFs, it is essential to understand how others may also be working towards similar objectives. For example, in a catchment, there may be a Protected Area Advisory Committee (PAAC) responsible for the nature reserve, a City Improvement District (CID) or friends groups focusing on parks, green belts and open spaces. In addition, schools or education programmes may also be present along the waterways and be interested in the health and well-being of the rivers. It is imperative that any CMF align with and build on these initiatives rather than compete with them, either for resources or for volunteers' time.

A CMF has a vital role in ongoing work in a catchment, and members should feel that their input is valuable. They should be encouraged to raise concerns even if they disagree with 'the experts'.

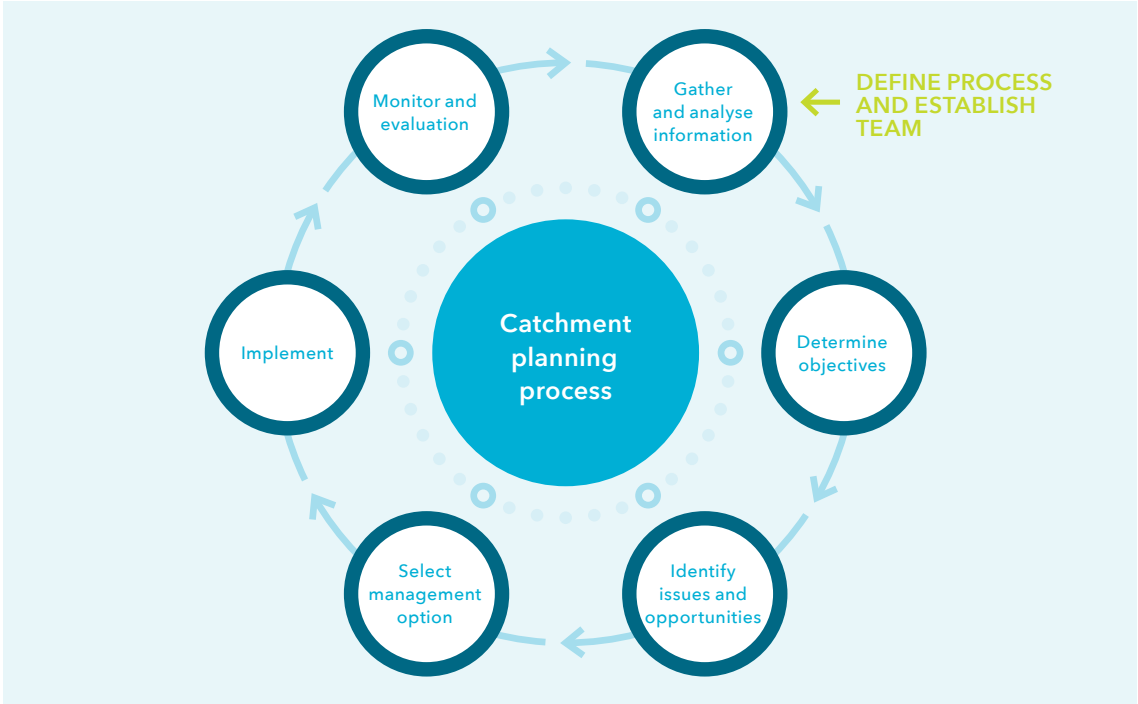
It is important for the CMF leadership to map stakeholders in the catchment. The following steps are key to this process:

1. Working with the CCT champion to identify the boundaries of the catchment
2. Meeting with the ward councillors and subcouncil manager to identify stakeholders in the catchment, and adding them to the stakeholder database
3. Meeting with identified stakeholders to understand their needs and plans in the catchment, and asking these stakeholders if they know of others who should be involved
4. Marking on a map where the stakeholders operate or live; in areas where no stakeholders have been identified, community safety groups or ratepayers organisations, friends groups or community leaders can help to identify key stakeholders
5. Working with the CCT champion to identify key CCT officials across various departments who work in the catchment
6. Meeting regularly with all stakeholders during recurring or specific ad hoc meetings as needed
7. Continuously updating the stakeholder database and map

4.2 THE CATCHMENT PLANNING PROCESS

A catchment's challenges are complex and require a systems-based approach to understand and resolve them. A planning process is needed to do this effectively and in a coordinated manner. Figure 6 illustrates a typical catchment planning process.

FIGURE 6: Schematic showing the catchment planning process



CMFs can be used as a management tool, as part of the planning cycle. They can be used to monitor longer-term progress towards achieving a CMF's goals, objectives and vision, typically for a five-year period. CMPs include an overview of a catchment's stormwater management systems and infrastructure, identify challenges and opportunities, prioritise management actions to address key challenges, and list actions for monitoring and tracking progress.

It is essential to include all key stakeholders responsible for collectively resolving the challenges in the design and development of a CMP, and the CMF can play a vital role in this process.

The CMP should be developed to align with and feed into the broader business and sectoral plans of CCT departments, and support the vision for maintaining healthy and climate-resilient catchments and a water-sensitive city.

4.3 WHAT KEY CHALLENGES DO CMFs FOCUS ON?

CMFs generally focus on the stormwater management systems, and tackle issues affecting a catchment's water quality, flooding, amenity / recreation and aquatic ecology. These include maintenance of the stormwater management systems, flooding, pollution, invasive alien plants, development and land-use changes, and ecosystem health.

- ⊕ **Stormwater management system:** Designed to prevent neighbourhoods from becoming waterlogged, stormwater systems can become blocked, which can lead to localised flooding. Effective maintenance activities are required, and the MMP will be a key management tool in this regard. In heavy storms, waterways overflow and cause more widespread flooding, causing damage to homes and infrastructure. It is important to understand where the flood risk is in a catchment and to put measures in place to manage this. The CMP and the Stormwater Masterplan will be key management tools in this regard.
- ⊕ **Pollution:** Pollution results from illegal dumping and littering, inadequate waste collection, industrial, commercial and farming activities, overflowing sewer pump stations and sewer reticulation systems, discharges from wastewater treatment plants, sediment and run-off from

roads, agricultural areas and construction sites. This affects water quality, posing health risks to people and the environment. It is important to understand where the pollution risk is in a catchment and to take action to manage this. The CMP and the PASAP will be key management tools in this regard.

- ➔ **Invasive alien plants:** Both indigenous and exotic plants grow in and adjacent to waterways and require regular management to keep them under control, especially those species that become invasive. If not controlled, these plants have an impact on the flow and quality of the water. Effective maintenance activities are required, and the MMP will be a key management tool to address this.
- ➔ **Development and land uses:** Rapid urban growth and certain land uses can affect water quality and increase stormwater run-off, putting pressure on stormwater management systems. It is important to understand how development, and current and future land use is having an impact on the health of the catchment and waterways, and to put measures in place to manage this. The CMP, Stormwater Masterplan, spatial plans and development management policies will be key management tools in this regard.
- ➔ **Ecosystem health:** Urbanisation and development affect ecosystems, threatening many of Cape Town's natural environments. Waterway corridors provide a unique opportunity to rehabilitate ecosystems, improve their ecosystem services, reconnect people with nature and restore a more natural water cycle in the catchment, thereby creating liveable urban waterways. The CMP, River Corridor Plans and the Biodiversity Spatial Plan will be key management tools in this regard.

BOX 10: CCT SPATIAL PLANS

The District Plans are medium-term (10-year) plans that aim to guide spatial development processes and land-use management in each of the districts. The plans are informed by the city-wide Cape Town Spatial Development Framework and aim to do the following:

- ➔ Provide direction for the desired nature and form of development in the district.
- ➔ Assist in providing a guide to land use and environmental decision-making processes.
- ➔ Provide a spatial informant to strategic public and private investment initiatives.
- ➔ Inform the development of priorities for more detailed local area planning.
- ➔ Note that in some cases, catchment boundaries cross spatial planning boundaries so one would need to read the respective District Plan.

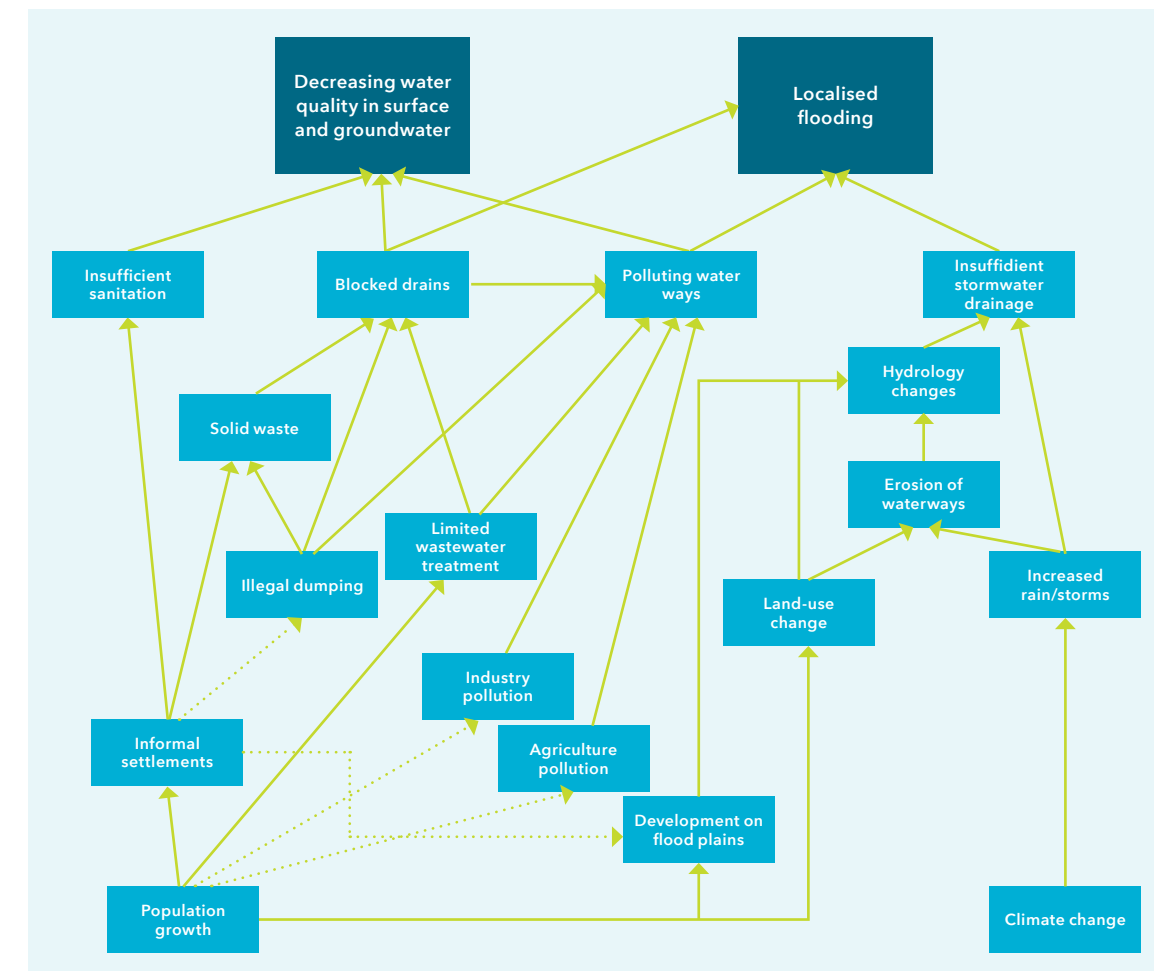
The most up-to-date documents can be found [here](#).

4.4 HOW ARE PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED?

It is important to remember that immediate challenges raised by CMFs might only be symptoms of deeper issues. Members need to work collaboratively to identify and understand the root causes of these problems so as to find the most effective long-term solutions. This process involves mapping potential causes and tracing how these issues emerge.

For example, a water quality problem may stem from inadequate sanitation services, illegal dumping or sedimentation in the waterways. Figure 7 illustrates some interconnected causes of water quality and flooding in a catchment. A systems map (sometimes called a causal loop diagram) to analyse this issue can be created by starting with the presenting problem (dark-blue in Figure 7) and asking, 'What is this problem caused by?' This will bring to light a number of new problems. The same question can then be asked for each of these, and for further problems identified in this way, until there is a 'map' that represents the root cause and pathways of the core problem being investigated.

FIGURE 7: Schematic representation of a system map to identify the root causes (light-blue blocks) of identified challenges (dark-blue blocks)



It can be helpful to get out into the catchment and walk the waterways when it is safe to do so. By inspecting the state and condition of the stormwater management system, one can identify issues and better understand them in the local context. The CMF leadership should facilitate such site visits as required.

Some issues will be complex and may require specialist investigations, condition assessments or studies to identify and develop solutions. These activities should be identified in the respective plans.

4.5 HOW ARE THESE KEY CHALLENGES ADDRESSED?

When an immediate service delivery issue is identified, such as a blocked drain, property flooding or pollution, the first step is to submit a C3 service request to CCT. A C3 service request is a mechanism for citizens to report service delivery issues. This can be done using the CCT [website](#) or call centre at [0860 103 089](#) or one of the other channels listed [here](#).

If the issue is outside the scope of the CMF, i.e. not related to the stormwater management system, water quality, flooding or aquatic ecosystem health, it would need to be escalated through the ward councillor and subcouncil manager.

Generally, most issues related to water quality, flooding and aquatic ecosystem health in catchments can be addressed through the CMF. Depending on the nature and complexity of the problem, and which CCT department is responsible, the CMF should follow a slightly different pathway towards

resolving the issue. Some issues will be complex and may require specialist studies to develop solutions. These activities should be identified in the respective plans.

These are some recommendations for CMFs to bear in mind when tackling challenges:

- ➔ Focus on one or two issues to solve first; do not try to address everything immediately.
- ➔ Start small and learn by doing. Doing so will build confidence, momentum and support for the future.
- ➔ Look beyond the symptoms of the issue and try to address the root cause of the problem. (This can be difficult, especially when the root cause is outside of the control of the CMF or, in some cases, even the authorities.)
- ➔ Bear in mind that sometimes the most effective interventions involve people, awareness-building and education rather than large-scale construction projects requiring significant budgets.
- ➔ Be mindful that some complex issues may take years to solve and may require significant resources and perseverance.
- ➔ Having a well-developed plan with a long-term perspective is essential. This helps to ensure sustained focus and provides a road map for tackling complex challenges over time.

4.6 REFLECTION AND ADAPTATION

It is important to include a session at CMF meetings to reflect on the plan and to adapt it as necessary; it is recommended that this be done at least annually or more regularly if appropriate. Consideration should be given to appointing a volunteer or service provider to write up case studies as lessons to be shared. Every three or four years, the CMF may also consider a deeper evaluation, assessing its longer-term successes, lessons and impact. These lessons should then be integrated back into the planning cycle. The CCT [Liveable Urban Waterways Case Studies Compendium](#) is an example of what can be celebrated.

5. USEFUL RESOURCES

5.1 DOCUMENTS

[AWARD: A guideline for developing Charters of Agreement \(2014\)](#)

[Green Infrastructure Programme, Best Practice Guidelines: Urban Watercourses \(2022\)](#)

[Cape Town's Liveable Urban Waterways: A Compendium of Case Studies \(2022\)](#)

[Water Research Commission: How to establish and run a Catchment Management Forum \(CMF\) \(2018\)](#)

[Water & Sanitation Customer Service Charter](#)

[Cape Town's Water Strategy: Our Shared Water Future](#)

[City of Cape Town Climate Change Strategy](#)

[City of Cape Town Climate Change Action Plan](#)

[Environmental Strategy for the City of Cape Town](#)

[Cape Town Resilience Strategy](#)

[Stormwater By-law](#)

[Floodplain and River Corridor Management Policy](#)

[Management of Urban Stormwater Impacts Policy](#)

5.2 WEBSITES

[C3 Service Requests website](#)

[CCT Think Water web page](#)

[CCT Rivers and Wetlands web page](#)

[CCT Our Stormwater System webpage](#)

[CCT Environmental Management Department web page](#)

[CCT Climate Change web page](#)

[CCT Green Infrastructure Programme web page](#)

[CCT Liveable Urban Waterway Programme web page](#)

[BOCMA website](#)

[DWS CMA webpage](#)

5.3 CONTACTS

Water and Sanitation Directorate Catchment, Stormwater and River Management Branch:

- Call: 021 400 1205
- Email: water@capetown.gov.za

Environmental Management Department:

- Call: 021 444 2357
- Email: enviro@capetown.gov.za

National Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS):

- Call: 021 941 6100

National Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE):

- Environmental crime hotline: 0800 205 005

Provincial Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning (DEA&DP):

- Call: 021 483 4091
- Email: enquiries.eadp@westerncape.gov.za





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