



REPORT TO SUBCOUNCIL
SubCouncils 1 - 21

1. **ITEM NUMBER :** 10SUB070522

2. **SUBJECT**

LIVING ALONGSIDE WILDLIFE PROGRAMME

N3346

ONDERWERP

LIVING ALONGSIDE WILDLIFE-PROGRAM

ISIHLOKO

INKQUBO ENGOKUPHILA NOKUSINGQONGILEYO

3. **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this report is to inform the Subcouncil of the proposed Living Alongside Wildlife Programme (WildCT) and for the Subcouncil to note the proposed public participation plan.

4. **FOR DECISION BY**

For noting

5. **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Cape Town has an exceptionally high diversity of both fauna and flora and the City of Cape Town has a responsibility to conserve its biodiversity for current and future generations. With rapid urbanisation, however, the residents of Cape Town are coming into more frequent and closer contact with wildlife in the urban space. Close proximity to wildlife in the urban space can lead to conflict, which is often exacerbated by human behavior.

Thus, the City is proposing a Living Alongside Wildlife (WildCT) Programme to provide sustainable solutions, provide advice and education and reduce

human wildlife conflict with species such as baboon, caracal and snakes; and to protect species which use gardens as part of their habitat such as the Western Leopard Toad. A draft project charter for the WildCT programme is attached as Annexure A.

A report will be tabled at the SPE portfolio committee on 5 May 2022 for approval of a public participation process associated with the WildCT programme. The proposed public participation plan is attached as Annexure B. This report is for noting by the Subcouncil.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

- a) Subcouncil notes the proposed public participation plan for the Living Alongside Wildlife Programme.

AANBEVELINGS

Daar word aanbeveel dat:

- a) Die subraad kennis neem van die voorgestelde openbaredeelnameplan vir die Living Alongside Wildlife-program.

IZINDULULO

Kundululwe ukuba:

- a) IBhungana maliqwalasele isicwangciso esingentatho nxaxheba yoluntu ngokumalunga neNkqubo engokuPhila nokuSingqongileyo (Living Alongside Wildlife Programme).

7. DISCUSSION/CONTENTS

Cape Town, recognised by the United Nations (UN) as one of the most biodiverse cities in the world, has some of the most unique and endemic flora and fauna on earth. The City of Cape Town (CCT) has a responsibility to conserve its biodiversity for current and future generations. With rapid urbanisation, however, the residents of Cape Town are coming into more frequent and closer contact with wildlife in the urban space and these interactions may not always be positive.

Prior to urbanisation, much of the land was home to many wildlife species, with their natural habitat and food sources. In order to protect Cape Town's biodiversity, the conservation partners in the City developed the Biodiversity Network in collaboration with other stakeholders that prioritises conservation areas to protect both flora and fauna. The CCT manages 21 nature reserves,

most of which are surrounded by urban development. However, as the city grows and the urban edge expands outwards, the resultant fragmentation of these natural areas means that many wildlife species now find themselves either being pushed further away from previously natural spaces, entering the urban space on occasion, or living within the urban space. It is preferable for wild animals to remain in the natural areas within Cape Town where they thrive best and can avoid the potential threats associated with the urban space. While urbanisation is inevitable as the human population increases, the enormous pressure this puts on our wildlife cannot be ignored, especially as it pertains to unavoidable interactions with humans.

Close proximity of wild animals to the urban space often leads to conflict and is exacerbated by human behaviour. CCT has over many years implemented a successful programme (the Urban Baboon Programme, UBP) dealing with the human / baboon conflict on the Cape Peninsula. The UBP has been successful in keeping baboons out of the urban area (town) since 2012 to 2020 for over 98% of the time. It significantly reduced the conflict between humans and baboons, as well as decreased the number of human-induced injuries and fatalities. This programme also supported the 90% increase in the baboon population, where annual counts rose from 248 baboons (2006) to 474 (2022).

Despite the success to date, the programme on the Cape Peninsula has been under immense pressure from some interest groups and residents who are opposed to the methods used including paintball markers, euthanasia and relocation that contributed to the effectiveness of the programme. These groups are also questioning the decision-making processes related to the programme, the City's mandate to implement this programme and decisions concerning specific baboons, among others. Furthermore, some stakeholders are of the view that baboons should not be deterred from entering the urban areas and should be allowed to roam freely.

Importantly, the challenges with the UBP have also highlighted the longstanding governance issues where the City has taken the lead and funded a programme that ultimately, requires the involvement of all three spheres of government, key among which SANParks, CapeNature and the Western Cape Provincial Government. The inability to resolve questions around roles and responsibilities, and mandates between the different spheres of government, have complicated the resolution of key challenges associated with the UBP.

As a result, in April 2021, a report to the Mayoral Committee (MC 10/04/21) outlined the main issues, and resolved to set up a Task Team to review the programme. The review of the programme was also recommended in the last SMF process. The programme has been reviewed from a financial, resource capacity, effectiveness, sustainability and reputational risk. The review concluded that, given the current context and the challenges highlighted above, the UBP is no longer financially viable, effective or sustainable. Continuing with the UBP makes the City vulnerable to litigation.

As a result, in April 2021, a report to the Mayoral Committee (MC 10/04/21) outlined the main issues, and resolved to set up a Task Team to review the programme. The review of the programme was also recommended in the last

Strategic Management Framework (SMF) process. The programme has been reviewed from a financial, resource capacity, effectiveness, sustainability and reputational risk point of view. The review concluded that, given the current context and the challenges highlighted above, the UBP is no longer financially viable, effective or sustainable. Continuing with the UBP makes the City vulnerable to litigation.

It is proposed that the human / baboon conflict aspect be included in a new Living Alongside Wildlife (WildCT) Programme which is to be implemented across the City. The WildCT programme will include all wild life, including baboons, and will be to the benefit of all residents across Cape Town. The proposed project charter is attached as Annexure A.

This programme, led by EMD, focuses on the City's mandate and responsibilities, and is transversal as it involves numerous City line functions, which have been consulted in the development of the programme:

- a. Urban waste Management – wildlife proofing of waste, responsible waste management, waste collections, and law enforcement
- b. Law Enforcement – by-laws
- c. Spatial Planning – new development areas
- d. Development Management - development and building conditions, and enforcement
- e. Property Management – ensuring wildlife proofing of Council leased land
- f. Environmental Health – transfer of diseases from wildlife to humans and vice versa. Support for minimising close contact for certain species.
- g. Urban Mobility – signage, traffic calming, planning for new infrastructure and retrofitting current infrastructure
- h. Environmental Management – overall lead department for the Living Alongside Wildlife Programme
- i. River, Stormwater and Catchment Management – new infrastructure and ensuring environmentally friendly solutions as well as maintenance of existing canals and waterways.
- j. Bulk Water – new infrastructure and management of existing infrastructure.
- k. Recreation and Parks – open space planning and management

This programme focuses on:

- 1) Ensure Cape Town's residents are informed and understand, respect and cherish its precious locally indigenous wildlife
- 2) Keep wildlife "wild" and reduce interaction and conflict with residents
- 3) Work towards unique solutions, in conjunction communities and interest groups, interested and affected parties, to protect and live alongside wildlife

The overarching objectives of the programme are as follows:

- 1) To promote **Sustainable Solutions** in the relationship between humans and wildlife, e.g. promoting strategic fencing where required, signage to inform motorists of wildlife crossings, animal-proof bins, waste minimisation, pesticide minimisation, power line insulation, traffic calming, and alternate power line routing underground.

- 2) To ensure **Wildlife Friendly Sustainable Development**. Liaise with Planning and Building Development Management, Urban Mobility and Energy departments, to ensure that new infrastructure is built in a way that will accommodate wildlife in any specified area. This will include looking at road infrastructure, new built roads, electrical installations and Water and Sanitation infrastructure.
- 3) To coordinate and facilitate **Awareness and Environmental Education campaigns**, including on matters of waste and electricity management. Campaigns will include councillors and community leaders so that they can engage their respective communities. This strategy intends to involve all stakeholders to be part of and included in finding solutions specific to their unique circumstances. These solutions will have a much bigger chance of being effective and supported when the local residents are involved and have contributed to the process. Thus, meetings with the affected communities will be held to discuss sustainable solutions specific to the needs of that particular community. Awareness and education will form part of these engagements. Campaigns will also be done with CCT staff, citizens and schools.
- 4) To support an Animal Welfare NGO via a grant for **injured and distressed wildlife**. It is envisaged that this NGO could work across the metropolitan city and undertake work that the City is not able to do. The City is rich in wildlife which does result in injured animals as a result of conflict with residents as well as road fatalities.
- 5) To **ensure law enforcement** - enforce current by-laws and revise when necessary. This objective will involve working with various City line functions, in particular the City's Law Enforcement and Urban Waste Management in relation to the Integrated Waste Management and the Animal Keeping By-laws.

This programme is concerned with:

- 1) Awareness about living alongside wildlife that occur naturally in Cape Town.
- 2) Wildlife that could cause conflict, including mammals (porcupine, baboon, genet, caracal, mongooses, otter and leopard) and reptiles (snakes).
- 3) Wildlife of conservation significance that use gardens as part of their habitat, e.g. Amphibians (Western Leopard Toad).
- 4) Charismatic wildlife such as chameleons, owls and other birds, frogs and tortoises, which are found in suburban areas.

There will always be a reputational and litigation risk to the City in relation to human / wildlife conflict, as there is no agreement amongst residents, NGOs, research institutions and the authorities on how best to avoid conflict between wildlife and the urban environment. WildCT programme aims to reduce the risk of litigation, finding solutions by working with and involving communities in matters that affect them directly, sharing the responsibility with residents and interest groups, address animal welfare issues, address education and waste issues.

A report is to be tabled at the SPE portfolio committee on 5 May 2022 for approval of the public participation process (Annexure B – public participation plan). This report is for noting.

7.1. **Constitutional and Policy Implications**

This report has no constitutional or policy implications. The report does align with Environmental Strategy and the Local Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan.

7.2. **Sustainability implications**

Does the activity in this report have any sustainability implications for the City?	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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7.2.1 This report has positive implications for sustainability of wildlife conservation in the City.

7.2.2 This report aligns with the Environmental Strategy, as it seeks to protect biodiversity.

7.3. **Legal Implications**

There are no legal implications.

7.4. **Staff Implications**

Does your report impact on staff resources or result in any additional staffing resources being required?

No ☒

Yes ☐

7.5. **POPIA Compliance**

☒ It is confirmed that this report has been checked and considered for POPIA Compliance.

7.6 **Other Services Consulted**

In the drafting of the Living Alongside Wildlife Programme, the following directorates / departments / branches were consulted:

Urban waste Management; Law Enforcement; Spatial Planning; Development Management; Property Management; Environmental

Health; Urban Mobility Environmental Management; River, Stormwater and Catchment Management; Bulk Water; and Recreation and Parks.

ANNEXURES

Annexure A: Living Alongside Wildlife Charter

Annexure B: public participation plan

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Comment:

ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Erika Naude

NAME

DATE