

CapeNature – Stakeholder Engagement Protected Area Management Plan, Cederberg Complex.

The Cederberg Nature Reserve Complex (CNRC) is an amalgamation of three proclaimed protected areas namely the Cederberg Wilderness, Matjies Rivier Nature Reserve and Hexberg State Forest with a combined spatial coverage of 79 735 ha. To comply with the National Environment: Protected Areas Act No. 57 of 2003 (NEM:PA), CapeNature is required to develop management plans for each of these nature reserve clusters. The objective of the CNRC Management Plan is to ensure that the protection, conservation and management of the complex is consistent with the objectives of the NEM: PAA and with the purpose for which it was declared.

In developing the management plan for the Cederberg Nature Reserve Complex, CapeNature is striving to establish biodiversity conservation as the foundation of a sustainable economy by providing access to natural resources, benefits and opportunities for all. However Section 39(3) of the NEM:PA states that when preparing a management plan for a protected area, the management authority concerned must consult municipalities, other organs of state, local communities and other affected parties which have an interest in the area.

CapeNature has used an adaptation of the South African National Parks (SANParks), Stakeholder Participation in Developing Park Management Plans (Spies and Symonds 2011) process for stakeholder participation. This requires the registration of any interested or affected party as a stakeholder and requires that attendance registers for workshops and meetings are kept. Additional individuals, wishing to participate in the process, must register as stakeholders and must be accommodated to ensure that the process is inclusive Cedarberg Conservation Services (t/a FOOTPRINT Environmental Services) (FES) was appointed by CapeNature in December 2011 to manage the stakeholder participation process (SPP) for the CNRC. Due to the December festive season public participation is not recommended at all by the Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning (DEA&DP) : Guidelines on Public Participation (August 2010) and the process was therefore only initiated on the 3rd January 2012 and concluded on the 17th February 2012. This was done to ensure that good practice for public participation was adhered to.