INTENTION TO PUBLISH BIOREGIONAL PLANS UNDER SECTION 47(2) AND
SECTION 100(1) OF THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT:
BIODIVERSITY ACT 10 OF 2004

CALL FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS

I, Seaparo Charles Sekoati, MEC for Economic Development, Environment and
Tourism, hereby notify the public of my intention to publish bioregional plans in respect of
the areas of jurisdiction of the Waterberg District municipality and the Mopani District
Municipality and hereby call for public comments w.r.t. the plans.

The relevant draft bioregional plan as well as copies of the official notices as published in
the Provincial Gazette may be obtained from the locations set out in the Schedule.

All written representations must be submitted within 30 (thirty) days of the date of
publication of this notice by means of any of the following methods and for the attention
of Mr. Errol Moeng:

Hand Delivery: Corner of Dorp and Suid streets, Polokwane

Facsimile:

Email: MoengET@ledet.gov.za

SCHEDULE
SANBI Website Address http://bgis.sanbi.org/brp/project.asp
Head Office: Limpopo Department of Economic Development, Environment and
Tourism
Website Address www.ledet.gov.za
Address: Biodiversity Management Directorate, Corner Dorp and Suid streets, Polokwane, 0700

Contact Person: Mr. E. Moeng
Contact Number: 015 295 5637
Executive Summary

This Bioregional Plan covers the Waterberg District located within the Limpopo Province of South Africa. The Waterberg District Municipality is the primary implementing agent of the Bioregional Plan. The spatial component of the Bioregional Plan is based on a provincial systematic biodiversity plan, the Limpopo Conservation Plan version 2 (LCPv2), undertaken by the Limpopo Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism (LEDET).

The purpose of a bioregional plan is to inform land-use planning, environmental assessments and authorisations, and natural resource management, by a range of sectors whose policies and decisions impact on biodiversity. This is done by providing a map of biodiversity priority areas, referred to as Critical Biodiversity Areas (CBAs) and Ecological Support Areas (ESAs), with accompanying land-use planning and decision-making guidelines.

Agriculture, wildlife and mining are important economic sectors in the region, with plans underway to expand the mining industry as part of the Strategic Integrated Project, particularly along the Northern Mineral Belt. Expansion of the mining industry is one of the Strategic Integrated Projects that is being coordinated by the Presidential Infrastructure Co-ordinating Committee, which forms part of the implementation of the National Development Plan. Wildlife breeding has shown massive expansion in the past 5 years. This is strictly an agricultural activity that is having negative impacts on the natural environment. The Growth in the tourism sector is leading to an increase in game farming, tourism facilities, lifestyle estates and golf estates. Consequently, increasing development pressures on biodiversity and the remaining natural ecosystems should be appropriately managed. These factors together make a bioregional plan a useful tool for addressing the need to take biodiversity into account in land-use planning and decision-making, in order to promote sustainable development.

The Waterberg District falls largely within the Savanna biome, with Grassland biome elements located on the higher peaks of the Waterberg. Three endemic and three near-endemic ecosystem types cover 70% of the Waterberg District. Two nationally listed threatened ecosystems are found in the district. Sixty-four plant species of special concern occur in the District. Twenty-two of these species are threatened. It is also home to three Important Bird Areas of South Africa, reflecting a high diversity of bird species and 21 threatened bird species. There are at least 45 mammal species of special concern in the District, of which 15 are threatened. Three reptile species of special concern occur, two of which are threatened. Aquatic systems are equally unique, with 72% of the wetland types and 64% of the river types assessed as threatened, providing habitat for at least three Near Threatened freshwater fish species. The region supports numerous endemic species as well, and its unique topography and varied geology sets it apart from the rest of South Africa.

Land-use patterns indicate that approximately 84.8% of the Waterberg District is natural or near-natural land cover. In terms of non natural land cover categories: 1.3% is urban (62.5% change 2009-2014), 10.9% is under dryland cropping (-5% change 2009-2014); 1.6% is under irrigation cropping (24% change 2009-2014); and, 0.31% is under mining (21% change 2009-2014), making up 13.8% as severely or irreversibly modified. Critical Biodiversity Areas (CBAs) cover 51.0% of the Waterberg District; Ecological Support Areas (ESAs) cover a further 14.8% of the District.
Protected Areas cover 4.2% and Conservation Areas 7.6%. Protected Areas and Conservation Areas together cover 11.4% of the Waterberg District. Protected Areas (excluding Conservation Areas), Critical Biodiversity Area and Ecological Support Areas together cover 70.0% of the Waterberg District.

The spatial component of the Waterberg District Bioregional Plan is based on the Map of Critical Biodiversity Areas and Ecological Support Areas identified and described in the Limpopo Conservation Plan v2 (LCPv2), a provincial systematic biodiversity plan developed by LEDET, and further refined to align with other relevant spatial plans for the District, such as the Waterberg Environmental Management Framework (EMF), the Waterberg Biosphere Reserve and municipal Spatial Development Frameworks (SDFs). The Waterberg District Bioregional Plan is consistent with the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act (No. 10 of 2004), and meets all the requirements of the Guideline Regarding the Determination of Bioregions and the Preparation and Publication of Bioregional Plans (DEAT, 2009). There are many mandatory and recommended users of bioregional plans whose decisions and actions impact on biodiversity. These users include local, provincial and national government departments and authorities; national and provincial conservation authorities; environmental and planning consultants; conservation NGOs; and private and communal landowners.
Table 10. The framework for linking the CBA Map categories to land use planning and decision-making guidelines based on a set of land management objectives for achieving a desired ecological state. Adapted from the guideline for bioregional plans (DEAT, 2009).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CBA Map Category</th>
<th>Land Management Objective</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Protected areas</td>
<td><strong>As per protected area management plan</strong></td>
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| Critical Biodiversity Area 1 (CBA1)    | *Maintain in a natural or near-natural state that maximizes the retention of biodiversity pattern and ecological process:*  
  - Ecosystems and species fully or largely intact and undisturbed  
  - These are areas with high irreplaceability or low flexibility in terms of meeting biodiversity targets. If the biodiversity features targeted in these areas are lost then targets will not be met.  
  - These are biodiversity features or parts of landscapes that are at or passed their limits of acceptable ecological change.                                                                                   |
| Critical Biodiversity Area 2 (CBA2)    | *Maintain in a natural or near-natural state that maximizes the retention of biodiversity pattern and ecological process:*  
  - Ecosystems and species fully or largely intact and undisturbed.  
  - Features with some flexibility in terms of where in the landscape biodiversity targets can be met. There are options for loss of some components of biodiversity in these landscapes without compromising the ability to achieve biodiversity targets, although loss of these sites would require alternative sites to be added to the portfolio of CBAs.  
  - These are biodiversity features or parts of landscapes that are approaching but have not passed their limits of acceptable ecological change.  
  - There are options for loss of some components of biodiversity in these landscapes without compromising the ability to achieve biodiversity targets, although loss of these sites would require alternative sites to be added to the portfolio of CBAs.  
  - These are biodiversity features or parts of landscapes that are approaching but have not passed their limits of acceptable ecological change.                                                                                           |
| Ecological Support Area 1 (ESA1)       | *Maintain in at least a fair ecological condition as ecologically functional landscapes that retain basic natural attributes:*  
  - Ecosystem still in a natural, near-natural or semi-natural state, and has not been previously developed.  
  - Ecosystems moderately to significantly disturbed but still able to maintain basic functionality.  
  - Individual species or other biodiversity indicators may be severely disturbed or reduced.  
  - These are areas with low irreplaceability with respect to biodiversity pattern targets only.                                                                                                                                         |
| Ecological Support Area 2 (ESA2)       | *Maintain as much ecological functionality as possible (generally these areas have been substantially modified):*  
  - Ecosystem *NOT* in a natural, near-natural or semi-natural state, and has been previously developed (e.g. ploughed).                                                                                                                                                                                  |
- Ecosystems significantly disturbed but still able to maintain some ecological functionality.
- Individual species or other biodiversity indicators are severely disturbed, reduced or absent.
- These are areas with low irreplaceability with respect to biodiversity pattern targets only. These areas are required to maintain ecological processes especially landscape connectivity.

| Other Natural Areas & No Natural Remaining | Production landscapes: manage land to optimize sustainable utilization of natural areas. |