Local Action for Biodiversity:

Wetlands South Africa

Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality

Local Action for Biodiversity
AN ICLEI – IUCN PROGRAMME

About the Project

The LAB: Wetland SA is being implemented by the ICLEI's Cities Biodiversity Center, which is coordinated by the ICLEI Africa Secretariat.

Through enhanced awareness of wetlands, and the integration of wetlands and biodiversity considerations into local government planning and decision-making, the project will build the capacity of 11 municipalities to prioritise and effectively manage wetlands and biodiversity at the local level. The project will focus on government departments and working with community stakeholders to increase awareness and community buy-in.

Project Outputs

The project has several key outputs that will enhance knowledge and build capacity within each municipality. These include general outputs such as:

- Wetland Report Guidelines
- Wetland Strategy and Action Plan Guidelines
- Wetland Awareness Raising Video
- Local Government Wetland Management Guidelines

And municipality specific output such as:

- Wetland Reports
- Wetland Strategy and Action Plans
- Bankable Project Proposals

For more information, please scan the code to the right, or visit our website here: www.cbc.iclei.org/project/lab-wetlands-sa

About ICLEI

ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability is the leading global network of over 1,500 cities, towns and regions committed to building a sustainable urban future. ICLEI promotes local action for global sustainability, supporting cities to become sustainable, resilient, resource-efficient, biodiverse, and low-carbon.

ICLEI Africa Secretariat is the Sub-Saharan office of ICLEI and serves our local and sub-national government members across the region in line with the ICLEI Strategic Plan. ICLEI Africa also hosts the global ICLEI Cities Biodiversity Center.

Our Partners

Our Funder

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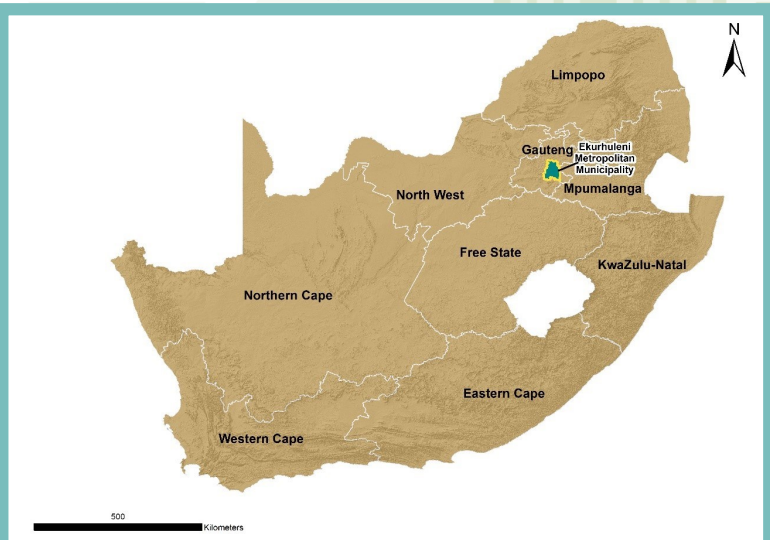
Who we are and what makes us unique?

Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality is located within the 'high-veld' region of the Gauteng Province within South Africa and covers an area of just 1 923 km^2. Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality is home to a high proportion of South Africa's mining activity, heavy industry and commercial enterprise, all of which place high pressure on the natural environment. Despite this, Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality is well-known for its numerous waterbodies including pans, dams, wetlands and streams. These water systems provide critical habitat for a variety of flora and fauna species within the region.



Why wetlands are important to Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality?

The wetlands within Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality are considered to be high-value 'ecological infrastructure', in that they provide vital habitat for flora and fauna, but also provide critical ecosystem services to the municipality. These include:

- Flood reduction and stream-flow regulation
- Water quality improvement
- Biodiversity banks
- Erosion control
- Recreational areas
- Medicinal properties

The wetlands within the municipality also play a pivotal role in disaster risk management as well as reducing the impacts of climate change within the region.

Threats to the Wetlands within Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality

Within Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality, a significant number of the wetlands are threatened. This is largely due to:

- Mining/ Quarrying and other excavations
- Damming river and wetland areas
- Development of drainage channels and diversions
- Agriculture
- Spread of invasive alien plants

Degraded wetlands are unable to function to the same degree as healthy wetlands and as such ecosystem service provision from these wetlands is severely hindered or even lost altogether.

"Wetlands are the most threatened of all of South Africa's ecosystems with 48% of wetland ecosystems being critically endangered."

- South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI), National Biodiversity Assessment, 2011.