

## About the Biosphere

Biosphere reserves are territories with beautiful landscapes, a considerable abundance of species of fauna and flora, its unique culture, where harmony between development and the natural surrounding is promoted. They are like laboratories where models of sustainable development, that seek better living conditions based on environmental principles, are tried and proven.

It is a representative example of a world ecosystem, which is judged worth protecting internationally. This world-wide network of protected areas is co-ordinated by UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere program (MAB).

In 2000 the Cape West Coast Biosphere Reserve was designated a Biosphere Reserve by the UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere program. It stretches northward from Diep River in Cape Town, South Africa to the Berg River and covers 378000 hectares of coastal lowland plain.

### Biosphere reserves have three basic functions

#### Conservation

To protect the natural resources (water, air, land, sand, fish, etc.), ecosystems (reefs, fynbos, wetlands), biological abundance (flora and fauna), landscapes and the local culture.

#### Development

To protect social and economical progress, without damaging or depleting the natural resources (sustainable development).

#### Logistical Support

To promote education, investigation, and permanent observation related to the environment and natural resources.

### All biosphere reserves must have three types of zones

- The Core Zone
- The Buffer Zone
- The Transitional Zone



Creative: Nautique Marketing Communications (www.nautique.co.za)

[www.capebiosphere.co.za](http://www.capebiosphere.co.za)

## Cape West Coast Biosphere Reserve Current Projects 2008

**Youth Environmental and Life Skills Educational Project**  
Results: Over 800 children in 2007/8 participated. View Video: <http://www.capebiosphere.co.za/html/Biosphere/environmental.html>

**Delineation of a biodiversity corridor between core zones and contractual agreements for conservation**  
Results: GIS maps with associated key data available for the designated corridor.

**Spatial Development Plan (SDP) for the Cape West Coast Biosphere Reserve**  
Results: 6 partnerships developed through this.

**Trails & Tourism Project**  
Results: 7 tourism products have been identified, amongst others

**Fynbos Rehabilitation Project**  
Results: Three sites rehabilitated (Phase 1) (Renssterveld Reserve, the Groenkloof Reserve, and Ikhwa Tvu)  
(View Video: <http://www.capebiosphere.co.za/html/Biosphere/fynbosrehab.html>)

**Dune Rehabilitation Project**  
**Stewardship Project**  
**Biodiversity Corridor Development**  
**Landcare and Youth Educational Project**

## Must See's and Do's in the Cape West Coast Biosphere Reserve

- Take a cultural tour at Ikhwa Tvu and have lunch at their fantastic restaurant.
- Visit the Fossil Park.
- Go for a game drive at one of the private nature reserves, namely Landsfontein or Buffelsfontein.
- Visit Langebaan Lagoon.
- Have lunch at Gebeek in the West Coast National Park.
- Sky-dive over the R27.
- Sandboard on the dunes at Atlantis.
- Learn to kite-surf at Langebaan & Blouberg.
- Overnight at the Beach Camp in Cape Columbine Nature Reserve.
- Take a 4x4 trip on one of the Darling Farms.
- Visit Evita se Perron and meet Evita Bezuidenhout.
- Take out your binoculars for some world renowned birding.
- Eat crayfish and other fresh seafood in Paternoster.
- Savour the wines on the Darling Wine Route, at one of the five Biodiversity and Wine Initiative recognised, Wine Farms.

## Important Species for the West Coast



Mole Snake



Birds  
Black Harrier (*Circus maurus*). Status: Near Threatened. Endemic to South Africa – with a stronghold in the Strandveld of the West Coast.

**Plants**  
Swartland Granite Renosterfeld. Status: Critically endangered.

**Birds**  
Black Harrier (*Circus maurus*). Status: Near Threatened. Endemic to South Africa – with a stronghold in the Strandveld of the West Coast.

**Amphibians**  
Cape rain frog (*Breviceps gibbosus*). Status: Vulnerable. Only found in Renssterveld and is threatened by the loss of its habitat through agriculture.

**Reptiles**  
Blouberg Dwarf Burrowing Skink (*Scalotes montispectus*). Only three specimens of this species of burrowing reptile have ever been found – two in the Blouberg Conservation Area and one in the West Coast National Park.

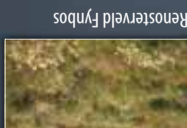
**Mammals**  
Heavy-side Dolphin (*Cephalorhynchus heavysidii*). Status: Data Deficient. This dolphin is restricted to the Benguela Current system and is threatened by overfishing.



Angulate Tortoise



Cape Sugar Bird



Renosterfeld Fynbos

1. The Cape West Coast Biosphere stretches northward from Diep River in Cape Town, South Africa, to the Berg River and covers 378000 hectares (Terrestrial component) of coastal lowland plains, with approximately 50 000 hectares (Marine component) of the marine environment, including the West Coast Marine Protected Area.
2. There are 507 biospheres globally, 65 of them in Africa and 5 in South Africa. The CWCBR is a non-profit organisation.
3. Our Vision: We see the Cape West Coast Biosphere Reserve as the best international example of integrating rapid growth and change with biodiversity conservation, sustainable living and heritage preservation.
4. The marine component comprises the continental shelf, several bays and the Langebaan lagoon (RAMSAR Site), and is part of one of 20 Marine Protected Areas in the country, namely the West Coast Marine Protected Area.
5. The CWCBR is rich in flora with over 1500 species. It falls within the Cape Floristic Region, a biodiversity hotspot and is declared a World Heritage Site.
6. The CWCBR has an extremely rich prehistory, history and culture, implying the preservation of this heritage is a high priority. These include the Khoi San, the West Coast Fishing Culture and paleontological heritage.
7. The main economic drivers of the region are industry, fishing, agriculture and tourism, with industry accounting for 25% of employment.
8. We are the only Biosphere Reserve in the world with a nuclear power station and an oil refinery.
9. The CWCBR contains 1 National Park, 9 Provincial Nature Reserves, 5 Municipal Nature Reserves, 13 Private Reserves, 3 Conservancies, 5 Stewardship Land Reserves, 1 Botanical Garden and 5 Marine Reserves.
10. The Cape Floral Kingdom is a global epicenter of Biodiversity, with 0.4% land surface, there are 9600 plant species, with 5800 endemic. The Amazon in comparison, has 9 million square kilometers, with 850 plant species.
11. We have the first commercial wind farm in South Africa.
12. Our Darling wine region is the first to be a member of the Biodiversity and Wine Initiative in its entirety in South Africa.

## Did you know?