iSimangaliso
Wetland Park

World Heritage Convention Act 1999 (Act. No. 49 of 1999)

Proclamation Number 4477 of 2000
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Regulations 1193 dated 24 November 2000

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iSimangaliso Wetland Park Integrated Management Plan (2017 – 2021)

Draft

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ASGISA	Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative – South Africa
BBBEE	Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
COP	Conservation Operational Plan
DC27	uMkhanyakude District Municipality
DC28	uThungulu District Municipality
DEA	Department of Environmental Affairs
DEAT	Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism
DMA	District Management Area
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EKZNW	Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife
EMPr	Environmental Management Programme
EstMP	Estuarine Management Plan
GEAR	Growth, Employment and Redistribution
GGP	Gross Geographic Product
IDMP	Integrated Development Management Plan
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
IMP	Integrated Management Plan
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
LAP	Local Area Plan
LUMS	Land Use Management System
MPA	Marine Protected Area
MTEF	Medium Term Expenditure Framework
NBF	National Biodiversity Framework
NEMA	National Environmental Management Act 107 of 1998
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
PPP	Public Private Partnership
Ramsar Convention	Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Water Fowl Habitat, 1971
RLCC	Regional Land Claims Commission
SAFCOL	South African Forestry Company Limited
SANBI	South African National Biodiversity Institute
SANDF	South African National Defence Force
SDI	Spatial Development Initiative
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SEED	Social Economic Environmental Development Policy
SEMF	Strategic Environmental Management Framework
SME	Small Medium Enterprise

TFCA	Transfrontier Conservation Area
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
UXO	Unexploded Ordinances
World Heritage Convention	Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the Integrated Management Plan

The iSimangaliso Wetland Park occupies an area of approximately 358,534 ha[1] comprising fifteen ecosystems and a number of notable and diverse landscapes (Figure 1 in Appendix 3). In 2000, iSimangaliso was proclaimed a World Heritage site in terms of the World Heritage Convention Act, 1999 (Act 49 of 1999), an Act that incorporated the World Heritage Convention into South African legislation. It is under this Act that the iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority has prepared this Integrated Management Plan (IMP). The IMP is also aligned with related legislation, notably relevant provisions of the Marine Living Resources Act, 1998 (Act 18 of 1998), the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act (Act 10 of 2004), National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act, 2003 (Act 57 of 2003) and the Public Finance Management Act, 1999 (Act 1 of 1999).

The World Heritage Convention Act provides a fundamental commitment to the protection, conservation, preservation and presentation of World Heritage values, with a strong emphasis on local economic development. This balance is appropriate in the South African context in which high levels of poverty necessitate an approach that optimises the economic potential of World Heritage sites without compromising their natural and cultural integrity.

Indeed, in the current context of changing demographics and climate, growing inequalities, diminishing resources, and growing threats to heritage, there is a need to view conservation objectives, including those promoted by the World Heritage Convention, within a broader range of economic, social and environmental values and needs encompassed in the concept of sustainable development. In this regard, State Parties need to establish an appropriate balance between conservation, sustainability and development, so that World Heritage properties can be protected through appropriate activities contributing to the social and economic development, and the quality of life of communities.

However, notably, this balance is not an equal one: in order to ensure World Heritage values are not compromised, conservation objectives need to be foremost, with the emphasis on 'development for conservation'. In this context, economic empowerment and job creation, through appropriate tourism development, are necessary to achieve conservation goals. The purpose of the IMP is to guide this balance.

This IMP is a five year strategic management plan for the period 2017 – 2021. As such, it builds upon the 2011 – 2016 IMP, and strives to integrate conservation, tourism development, and the local economic development of historically disadvantaged communities in and adjacent to iSimangaliso. 361 documents were used to inform the IMP.

[1] This figure includes the 14,200 ha of land owned by SiyaQhubeka Forests (Pty) Ltd that have been incorporated into the Park through a Buffer Zone Incorporation Agreement.

1.2 Enabling Legal Framework

The following body of law provides the framework for the establishment, protection and management of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park:

- World Heritage Convention & Operational Guidelines.
- World Heritage Convention Act, 1999 (Act 49 of 1999).
- Marine Living Resources Act, 1998 (Act 18 of 1998).
- National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act, 2003 (Act 57 of 2003).
- National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act, 2004 (Act 10 of 2004).
- Public Finance Management Act, 1999 (Act 1 of 1999).

The management of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park is further subject to the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act 107 of 1998), the National Water Act, 1998 (Act 36 of 1998), the National Forests Act, 1998 (Act 84 of 1998), the National Heritage Resources Act, 1999 (Act 25 of 1999), the KwaZulu-Natal Heritage Act, 2008 (Act 4 of 2008), the National Environmental Management: Waste Act, 2008 (Act 59 of 2008) and the National Environmental Management: Integrated Coastal Management Act, 2008 (Act 24 of 2008). More information on these Acts and their associated Regulations and Notices is provided in Appendix 2: Legal and institutional framework. In addition, the iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority takes note of, supports, and, where applicable, aligns its activities with national initiatives such as the National Biodiversity Strategic Action Plan, the National Biodiversity Framework and the National Protected Area Expansion Strategy. Figure 2 illustrates the enabling legal framework of the IMP and its relationship to relevant national, provincial, regional and local management and development plans.

1.2.1 World Heritage Convention and Operational Guidelines

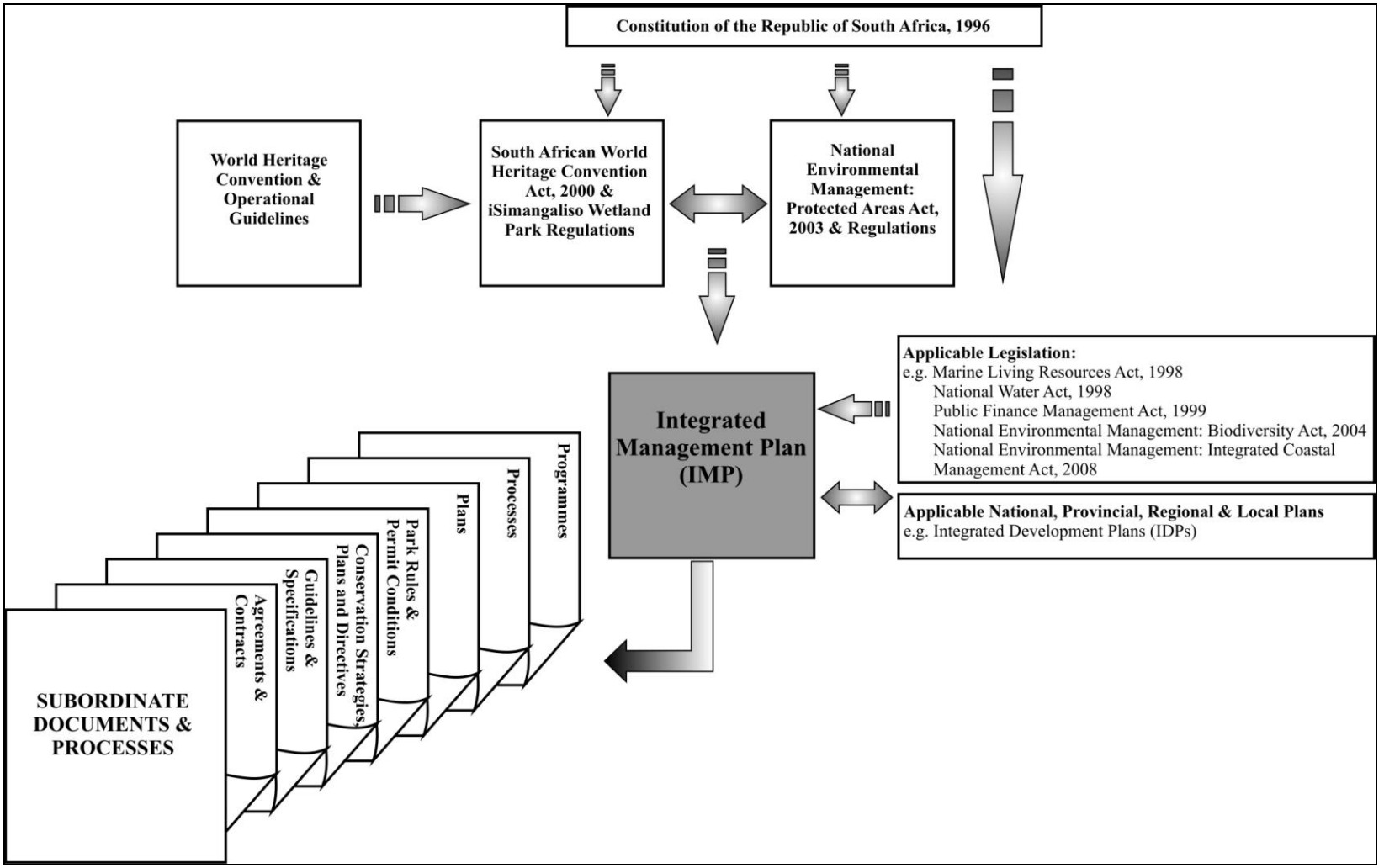
In order to identify, protect, conserve and present the world's irreplaceable natural and cultural heritage, the member states of UNESCO[2] adopted the World Heritage Convention in 1972. While respecting the sovereignty of individual nations, the Convention recognises that people of all nations have an interest in protecting sites of global ecological significance. Signatories to the Convention agree to work together to identify and protect the outstanding natural and cultural heritage sites in their countries.

There are currently 1,031 World Heritage–listed sites. Recognised by the World Heritage Committee as having outstanding universal value, they include 802 cultural, 197 natural and 32 mixed properties in 163 State Parties. Eight of these World Heritage-listed sites are located in South Africa, one of which is the iSimangaliso Wetland Park.

The World Heritage Committee, the main body which oversees the Convention, has developed precise criteria for the inscription of properties onto the World Heritage List and for the provision of international assistance under the World Heritage Fund. These are presented in a document entitled “Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention” (the latest revision was adopted in July 2015).

2 UNESCO is the acronym for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

Figure 2 iSimangaliso Wetland Park IMP in the context of its enabling legislation (and other key legislation and plans)



1.2.2 World Heritage Convention Act, 1999 (Act 49 of 1999)

South Africa signed the World Heritage Convention in 1997 and proceeded to develop national legislation to govern the country's World Heritage sites. The principles and values of the Convention have been incorporated into South African law through the passing of the World Heritage Convention Act, 1999 (Act 49 of 1999). This ensures that national Government has the legal means to discharge its responsibilities under the Convention, and that these sites, along with their tourism potential, are developed in ways that meet the social and development needs of local residents and citizens.

1.2.3 National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act, 2003 (Act 57 of 2003)

As a World Heritage site and protected area, the iSimangaliso Wetland Park is also governed by the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act, 2003 (Act 57 of 2003) which affords additional protection and makes provision for management and IMPs in support of what is provided for in the World Heritage Convention Act. Regulations[3] promulgated under the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act also contain provisions regarding IMPs.

1.2.4 Marine Living Resources Act, 1998 (Act 18 of 1998)

The entire coastline of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park is a proclaimed World Heritage site under the World Heritage Convention Act. Approximately three quarters of this coastline (from Kosi Bay to 1 km south of Cape Vidal) is also proclaimed as two Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) (St Lucia and Maputaland) through Government Notice[4] under the Marine Living Resources Act, 1998 (Act 18 of 1998), which provides specific protection to the marine environment.

The Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) is currently proposing the extension of the MPAs in the iSimangaliso Wetland Park. The proposed extension is currently being publically consulted by DEA, with a closing date of 10 May 2016, and is not included in this IMP. Any changes to the current MPA will be incorporated into the IMP once they have been finalised and gazetted. Until this process is complete, the current provisions for the protection of the marine component of the Park will remain in place, including zonation.

1.2.5 National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act, 2004 (Act 10 of 2004)

The National Biodiversity Act, 2004 (Act 10 of 2004) provides for the management and conservation of South Africa's biodiversity. This includes the protection of specific ecosystems and species, equitable and sustainable use of indigenous biological resources.

3 Government Notice R. 1061 of 28 October 2005: Regulations for the proper administration of special nature reserves, national parks and world heritage sites.

4 Government Notice R. 1429 of 29 December 2000: Declaration of Areas as Marine Protected Areas.

1.2.6 Public Finance Management Act, 1999 (Act 1 of 1999)

As an organ of State, the iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority is subject to the Public Finance Management Act, 1999 (Act 1 of 1999) and Regulations issued in terms of the Act, including Regulations that deal with certain commercial activities (e.g. public private partnerships).

Other legislation relevant to the iSimangaliso Wetland Park is briefly discussed in Appendix 2

1.2.7 Name, Location, Extent and Status of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park

The iSimangaliso Wetland Park is located in the coastal and adjacent inland areas of north-eastern KwaZulu-Natal. The proclamation of iSimangaliso consolidated 16 parcels of previously fragmented land[5] into a single protected area covering approximately 324,441 ha[6] and extending approximately 187 km from Kosi Bay, bordering Mozambique to Maphelane south of St Lucia. In the east, the Park is bordered by the Indian Ocean (the Park boundary runs three nautical miles out to sea and parallels the coast for the Park's entire length - approximately one third of KwaZulu-Natal's coastline). The western boundary ranges from between 1 and 55 km from the coast, incorporating the Lubombo Mountains and narrowing towards the coast in the north and south.

As a World Heritage site, iSimangaliso is an area of exceptional and outstanding universal heritage significance. The natural values include outstanding examples of ecological processes, superlative natural phenomena and scenic beauty, and exceptional biodiversity and numbers of threatened species[7]. Although listed as a World Heritage site on the basis of its natural values, the World Heritage Convention Act obliges the iSimangaliso Authority to present, promote and conserve the cultural heritage of the Park.

A more detailed description of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park is contained in Chapter 2

5 Cape Vidal State Forest, Dukuduku State Forest, Eastern Shores State Forest, False Bay Park, Makasa State Forest, Maphelane Nature Reserve, Maputaland Marine Reserve, uMkhuze Game Reserve, Nyalazi State Forest, Sodwana Bay National Park, Sodwana State Forest (Ozabeni), St. Lucia Game Reserve, St. Lucia Marine Reserve, St. Lucia Park, Coastal Forest Reserve, Lake Sibaya Freshwater Reserve.

6 The area under Park management is larger (358,534 ha) as it includes land incorporated through agreement (see Footnote 1, Section 1.1) and areas ceded to the Park that were previously under commercial forestry plantation management.

7 Justification for Inscription: Criterion (vii): Geographically diverse, the iSimangaliso Wetland Park contains superlative scenic vistas along its 187 km coast. Natural phenomena include shifting salinity states linked to wet and dry climatic cycles. Criterion (ix): The ecological linkages between the five ecosystems found in the iSimangaliso Wetland Park have been a major attraction for research on the geomorphological and biological processes occurring there. Criterion (x): The five ecosystems provide habitat for a significant diversity of African fauna.

The iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority

The Regulations proclaiming the iSimangaliso Wetland Park also established the iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority to manage the site through a Board and executive staff component. The iSimangaliso Authority reports to the National Minister of Environmental Affairs. The Authority's management structure is illustrated in Figure 4.

The Board is responsible for policy formulation and the formal direction of the Executive. The executive staff component, headed by a chief executive officer, is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the iSimangaliso Authority, including relationships with other organisations such as Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife, the KZN Tourism Authority and local government.

Co-operative Governance Agreements

The rights and duties of the iSimangaliso Authority, Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife and the KZN Tourism Authority, with respect to the management and development of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park are regulated through legislation and have been further elaborated through a management agreement signed in August 2001 by these parties. The iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority is the nationally appointed Protected Area Manager and is statutorily authorised to manage the Park and make conservation and management decisions thereto. Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife derives its authority and responsibility through its contract with the iSimangaliso Authority, and operates as its service provider. The agreement specifies that the parties will co-operate in meeting Park management objectives. The rights and duties of the parties to the agreement provide, among others, for the following responsibilities:

The iSimangaliso Authority shall:

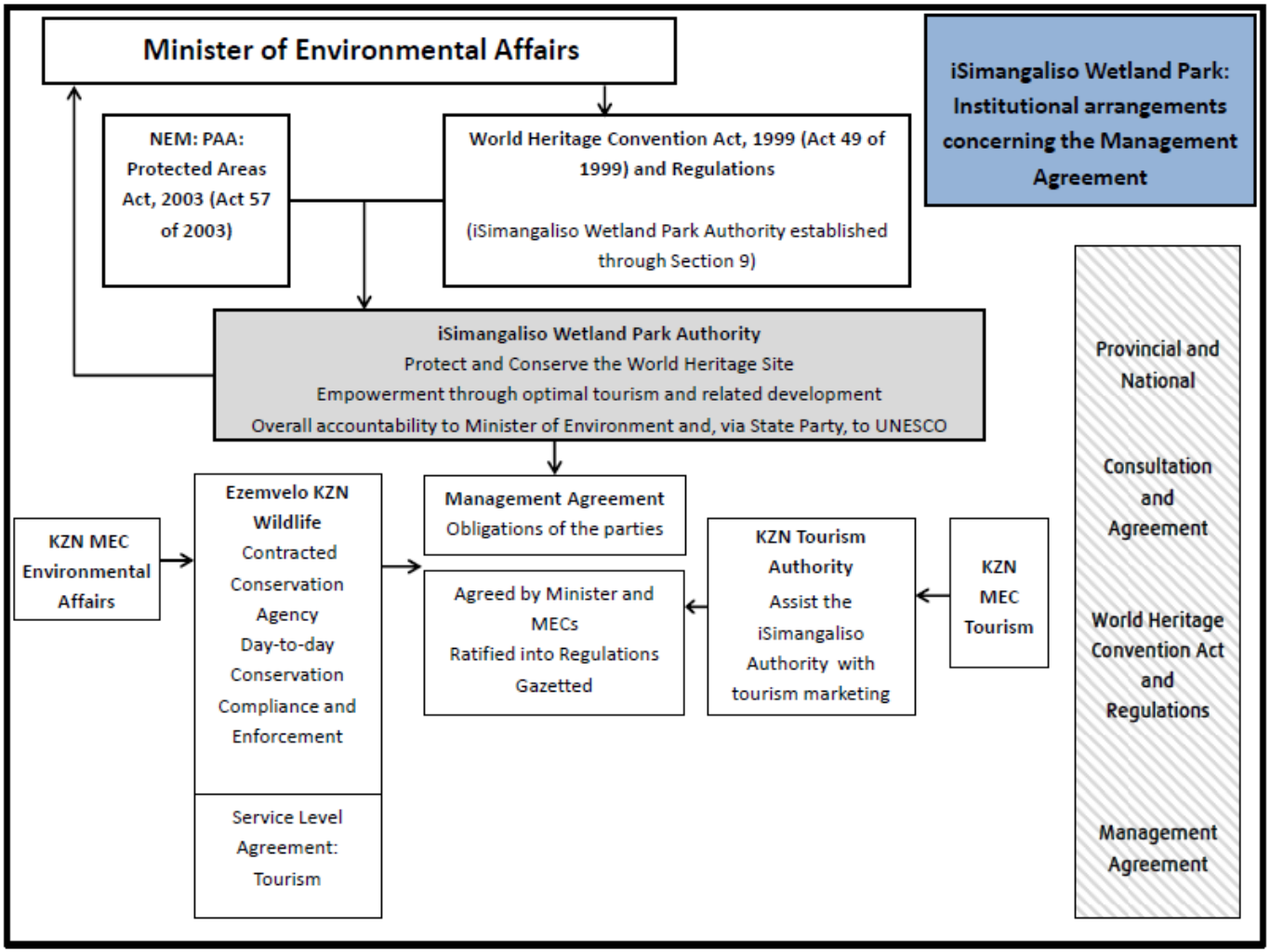
- Develop measures for the environmental and cultural protection of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park and ensure that the values of the World Heritage Convention are given effect. This includes oversight of conservation management in the Park.
- Promote, manage and facilitate tourism and related development in connection with the iSimangaliso Wetland Park.
- Facilitate programmes that encourage job creation.
- Establish and implement the IMP.

Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife shall be responsible for:

- Day to day operational conservation management of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park, including implementation of iSimangaliso policy, policing and law enforcement activities, and assisting the iSimangaliso Authority in compliance monitoring of concessionaires with contractual and statutory obligations.
- Implementation of a Conservation Operational Plan, and regulatory enforcement related to conservation within the iSimangaliso Wetland Park.

The iSimangaliso Authority also has a mandate to enter into co-operative governance agreements with a range of institutions across all spheres of government, including local government, to fulfil its core functions.

Figure 4 iSimangaliso Wetland Park Management Structure



In terms of local government, the iSimangaliso Wetland Park falls within the uMkhanyakude District Municipality (DC27). It neighbours four of the five local municipalities within the uMkhanyakude District Municipality, namely, uMhlabuyalingana, Jozini, The Big Five False Bay and Mtubatuba, and one local municipality within the uThungulu District Municipality (DC28), namely, uMfolozi. Approximately 600,000 people reside on the Park's borders, with approximately 2,000 people living in the Park, excluding Park staff members.

Salient information is provided in Table 1.

Table 1 Details of iSimangaliso

Name	iSimangaliso Wetland Park
Location	KwaZulu-Natal
Extent	358,534 ha
District Municipalities	❖ Umkhanyakude District Municipality ❖ uThungulu District Municipality
Neighbouring Municipalities	❖ Mtubatuba Local Municipality ❖ Big 5 False Bay Local Municipality ❖ Jozini Local Municipality ❖ uMhlabuyalingana Local Municipality ❖ uMfolozi Local Municipality
International Status, Agreements and Obligations	❖ UNESCO World Heritage Convention ❖ Ramsar Convention

1.3 The iSimangaliso Integrated Management Plan (2017 – 2021)

The objective of the IMP is to provide measures to protect and manage the World Heritage site in a manner that is consistent with the objectives and principles of the governing Acts. The IMP presented in this document is, therefore, the statutory decision-making framework that the iSimangaliso Authority will use to develop and manage the Park. This IMP is valid for the next five years and has been developed and adapted from a review of the 2011 – 2016 IMP.

1.3.1 The IMP Process

The final draft of the IMP is the product of a formal process, including public review, and precedes its final adoption by the Minister. The iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority is obliged to review and revise the IMP every five years in accordance with changing circumstances. Annual reviews and planning cycles are taken into account in the revision of the IMP.

1.3.2 Focus of the 2017 – 2021 IMP

The iSimangaliso Wetland Park's vision is to create Africa's greatest conservation-based tourism destination driven by community empowerment. This IMP sets out the strategic direction and drivers for this goal over the next five years, 2017-2021. Our conservation strategy continues to be one of the 'rewilding' of iSimangaliso, which powerfully links conservation to the development and empowerment of local communities.

The Authority's development and empowerment priority is to deliver tourism developments linked to land claimant co-management agreements that create jobs, stimulate economic growth and generate revenue that will contribute towards community empowerment. South Africa's tightening fiscal environment and the global economic slowdown means that this will be challenging. Nonetheless, the economic climate does present opportunities for tourism growth. With the weakening Rand, South Africa is an attractive destination for international visitors, while South Africans look for local holiday destinations as travel abroad becomes more expensive.

A number of licenses for tourism activities will be reserved for community service providers for the lifetime of this IMP. Infrastructure to support continued tourism growth in and around iSimangaliso is an essential part of the strategy for the next five years.

Alongside this, iSimangaliso will continue to implement other programmes that deliver benefits and contribute toward community empowerment.

To this end, iSimangaliso will build on the foundation that has been laid, expanding the reach of existing programmes: sharing of commercial revenue paid to land claim Trusts, equity partnerships in tourism development, enterprise development for local entrepreneurs, job creation through land care and infrastructure, School Awards and Environmental Education programmes providing free access to the Park to young learners, a bursary programme for local students to pursue conservation and tourism–related subjects at tertiary level and training programmes for infrastructure, art, craft and tourism.

Ecosystem restoration is central to the rewilding strategy of the Authority for the next five years, and underpins the development and empowerment agenda. An important focus of this work is the ongoing restoration and monitoring of the Lake St Lucia estuarine system, which is Africa's largest estuary. During the lifetime of the previous IMP, iSimangaliso embarked on one of the largest wetland restoration projects in South Africa. After 50 years of partial separation from the Lake St Lucia system, the uMfolozi River has been re-connected to the estuary, returning its major source of fresh water and re-establishing the dynamic natural processes governing the opening and closing of the estuary mouth.

Another area of rewilding to be guided by this IMP is the restoration of ecological processes, ecosystems and landscapes in order to make them more resilient to threats such as climate change and invasion by alien species.

There is also a human element to iSimangaliso's rewilding strategy. George Monbiot makes a case for the rewilding of human life so that people 'have access to a richer and wilder life of adventure'. For iSimangaliso, restoration and rewilding of the ecosystems means that communities can sustainably participate in the economic and social benefits from the Park. The ecological resilience of the Park will thus go hand–in–hand with more resilient livelihoods for people dependent on it.

In 2001, when elephants returned to the Park, then President Mandela shaped iSimangaliso's vision and practice when he described their return as a "form of restitution…with spiritual dimensions…in a Park that captured a holistic approach to conservation and development."

On-going consultation and dialogue with our co-management partners and other community stakeholders is vitally important. Guided by this IMP, the Authority will implement strategies enabling stakeholders to participate meaningfully in the Park's rewilding, and will continue to prioritise the maintenance of effective relationships with iSimangaliso's neighbours. Experience shows that the time and effort put into creating and maintaining clear channels of communication is an essential investment in conservation.

Indeed, achieving the rewilding vision and strategy set out in this IMP for this unique World Heritage Site depends upon it.

1.3.3 Structure of the IMP

The IMP contains five chapters and two appendices as follows:

- **Chapter 1: Introduction**
  This chapter explains the purpose, structure and focus of the IMP and gives a brief overview of the listing of iSimangaliso as a World Heritage site and the resultant legal framework governing the iSimangaliso Wetland Park.
- **Chapter 2: Overview of iSimangaliso Wetland Park**
  This chapter provides a brief situational overview of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park and the surrounding region in terms of historical, biophysical, socio-economic, infrastructural, and tourism characteristics and context.
- **Chapter 3: Strategic Analysis (2017 – 2021)**
  Chapter 3 discusses the conservation, cultural heritage and economic significance of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park. It also presents the various challenges and threats currently facing the iSimangaliso Wetland Park.
- **Chapter 4: Strategic Plan**
  This chapter discusses the strategic plan for the iSimangaliso Wetland Park. This includes the vision, guiding principles, management goals, the planning cycle and reporting requirements. Lastly, the implementation plan for the 2017 – 2021 period is presented.
- **Chapter 5: iSimangaliso's Environmental Management Framework (Tools for Integrated Environmental Management)**
  This chapter provides a breakdown of iSimangaliso's Environmental Management Framework, particularly the 'Spatial Planning Measures and Controls', 'Policies, Strategies and Plans' and 'General Planning Tools and Controls'.

2. OVERVIEW OF THE iSIMANGALISO WETLAND PARK

This chapter provides a summary overview of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park; additional information can be found in the 2011-2016 IMP.

2.1 Biophysical Environment

2.1.1 Climate

iSimangaliso falls within the subtropical climatic zone of Africa. The summers are hot and the winters mild, with intermittent cold spells. Relative humidity is high, and for much of the year it exceeds 90%. About 60% of the rainfall occurs during the spring and summer months (September to March). Rainfall is, however, temporally and spatially highly variable in a pattern typical of subtropical regions. Cut-off lows regularly cause heavy rainfall. Episodic floods occasionally occur, caused by tropical cyclones moving down the Mozambique Channel. The most notable feature of the rainfall is the steeply declining gradient from the east to the west of the Park. Evaporation rates are high, especially during the drier winter and early spring periods.

2.1.2 Oceanographic Features

The most important large-scale oceanographic feature affecting the coastal environment is the south-flowing Agulhas current which brings warm water from the tropics. The Agulhas current follows the edge of the continental shelf, which is narrow in northern KwaZulu-Natal, flowing relatively close inshore along the coast.

A feature of the coast is the considerable net northward, long-shore transport of sediment (shore-parallel sand-stream), which, together with cross-shelf sand movements, exerts a major influence on intertidal habitats, including the intensive and extensive sand-inundation of rocky shores. The tidal range in the area is of the order of 1.5 – 2 m. The coast is characterised by high-energy waves and large swells predominantly from the south-east (approximately 40% of the year) and easterly onshore swells prevailing for a further 40% of the time (although prolonged north-easterly winds can impose a north-easterly swell direction).

2.1.3 Geomorphology

Three major contiguous geomorphic units are present within the iSimangaliso Wetland Park:

- **The Lubombo Mountains**, which are one of the outstanding geomorphic features of the Park.
- **The coastal plain** with associated lakes and pans interspersed with relict dune cordons.
- **The coast** and its associated in- and off-shore marine and estuarine environments.

2.1.4 Geology and Soils

The Lubombo Mountains are situated on the north-west boundary of iSimangaliso, located at the tectonic contact between two major Precambrian elements: the Kaapvaal Craton to the west (outside the Park) and the north-south trending Mozambique belt to the east (within the Park). The upland sites at the base of the Lubombo Mountains have lithic soils in the west and ferruginous soils in the east. The lower lying areas have calcimorphic soils in the west and vertisols in the east.

On the coastal plain, the rhyolites and basalts to the east and south are unconventionally overlain by three groups of terrestrial and marine sediments (from oldest to youngest):

- **Zululand Group** comprising:
  - Makatini Formation.
  - Mzinene Formation.
  - St Lucia Formation.
- **Maputaland Group** comprising sedimentary rocks (of Neogene and Quaternary age) in the form of relict sandy beach dune ridges, which record a succession of depositional events related to sea level fluctuations. Included in, but not limited to this Group are the:
  - Uloa Formation or 'Pecten Beds'.
  - Port Durnford Formation.

2.1.5 Hydrology and Geohydrology

Hydrology and geohydrology are crucial to understanding the Park's many aquatic habitats. These habitats include major rivers and their floodplains, swamps, coastal lakes and estuaries, and smaller freshwater wetlands and pans which occur throughout the Park. Most of the major hydrological features in the Park are illustrated in Figure 1 (Appendix 3).

A number of rivers flow into the Park, many of them draining into Lake St. Lucia. The uMfolozi and uMkhuze Rivers are the largest of these rivers, both of which have a significant portion of their catchments outside of the Park boundaries. The smaller rivers and streams entering and within the Park are largely seasonal, being reduced to isolated pools during the dry months.

There are two types of coastal lake systems in the Park: estuarine-linked lakes (St Lucia, Kosi and Mgobozeleni) and freshwater lakes (Sibaya, Bhangazi North and Bhangazi South).

- **Lake St Lucia**

  Lake St Lucia is the largest estuarine system on the African continent. Sediment accumulation from river inflow has produced a shallow lake (average depth <1m), in contrast to the deeper coastal lakes of the Sibaya and Kosi systems. Fresh water inputs are derived from stream-flow, rainfall and dune seepage, and these inputs determine salinities in Lake St Lucia. Evaporative water loss exceeds inputs from direct rainfall, even in years of average or above-average precipitation. The uMfolozi River in the south is the major source of fresh water to Lake St Lucia. Although artificially separated from Lake St Lucia since 1952 to prevent the input of suspended sediment into the main St Lucia system, the link between the uMfolozi River and Lake St Lucia was re-established under a new management approach in 2012, and Lake St Lucia and the uMfolozi River mouth have since been managed as one system.

- **Kosi System**

  The Kosi System comprises a chain of several distinct lakes (Amanzimnyama, kuNhlange, kuMpungwini and Makhawulani) and the Kosi Bay Estuary, connected to each other by narrow shallow channels. The system is linked to the sea and the estuary mouth is generally open throughout the year. The drainage system, which sustains the lakes and estuary, is ill-defined because of the numerous pans, swamps and marshes which surround it. There are no large rivers entering the system. The lakes are fed by streams that drain extensive swamp areas in the surrounding catchment and which provide fresh water to the system. There is a salinity gradient from a fresh water state in the south to that of sea water in the estuary.

- **Mgobozeleni**

  Mgobozeleni is the smallest of the three estuarine lake systems, and includes the Mgobozeleni and Shazibe lakes, which are connected via a narrow channel which flows through an extensive swamp forest and reed swamp to the sea at Sodwana.

- **Lake Sibaya, Lake Bhangazi North and Lake Bhangazi South**

  These freshwater lakes are located in areas of low relief in large depressions on the landward side of the coastal dune barrier. They are fed from relatively small catchments, and maintained largely from ground water seepage. The lakes are nutrient-poor because of the predominantly sandy, leached nature of their substrates.

A number of pans and swamps occur throughout the Park. Some of these are part of river and lake systems, while others form as a result of the perched water table.

Two primary porosity aquifers are present on the Maputaland coastal plain, and influence the Park's aquatic habitats. These are:

- The shallow, unconfined aquifer or perched water table in areas of the Park receiving rainfall in excess of 800 mm per annum, and which is present due to the high permeability and infiltration of the KwaMbonambi sand cover of the coastal plain. Due to the high water table (1 – 6 m) this aquifer is fairly extensively exploited.
- The deeper confined aquifer of the Uloa and Mkwelane Formations which holds a significant amount of groundwater. Little is known about how this aquifer is recharged and it is not greatly utilised.

2.1.6 Ecosystems

The fifteen interlinked ecosystems[8] (Figure 5) found in the iSimangaliso Wetland Park provide habitat for a significant diversity of African biota, including a large number of rare, threatened and/or endemic species. These fifteen ecosystems are not unique in and of themselves but their combination within a single protected area is certainly unusual globally and unique in the South African context. The ecosystem can be grouped into three broad biomes[9], namely, marine, terrestrial and aquatic.

- **The marine biome** is characterised by a warm sea, and includes dune, rocky shore, rocky reef, coral reef and pelagic ecosystems. Importantly, iSimangaliso houses the southernmost extension of coral reefs in Africa, submarine canyons and long sandy beaches. Two distinct marine biogeographic regions are represented in the Park with an important break at Cape Vidal:
  - Maputaland Sub-province of the Tropical Indo-West Pacific Province (Cape Vidal Point and northwards to Ponta do Oura). Many of the species in this region are not found elsewhere in South Africa.
  - Natal Sub-province of the Sub-tropical East Coast Province (South of Cape Vidal Point to Cape St Lucia), with many endemic marine species.

- **The terrestrial biome** includes savannah, sand forest, coastal forest and grassland ecosystems. On the eastern shores, sub-tropical forest and grassland dominate. On the western shores, ancient shoreline terraces and dry savannah woodlands, thickets and sand forests occur on the higher lying ground between the coastal plain and the Lubombo Mountains.

- **The aquatic biome** includes wetland, riverine, and freshwater lake systems. The freshwater lake systems consist of three lakes (Sibaya, Bhangazi North and Bhangazi South). The uMkhuze river supports swamp forest and the uMfolozi floodplain contains extensive reed and papyrus wetlands.

- Three distinct ecosystems, viz. beaches, estuaries and swamp forest, cannot be classed as discrete biomes, but are strongly influenced by the dominant features or processes of two or more biomes. The estuaries (Kosi Bay, Mgobozeleni and Lake St Lucia) are shaped by a combination of terrestrial, freshwater, aquatic and marine processes and communities; while beaches and swamp forests are a product of land-sea and land-water interactions, respectively.

The many ecological linkages between these ecosystems have attracted research interest in many geomorphological and biological processes.

8 A biological community of interacting organisms and their physical environment.
9 A large naturally occurring community of flora and fauna occupying a defined habitat.

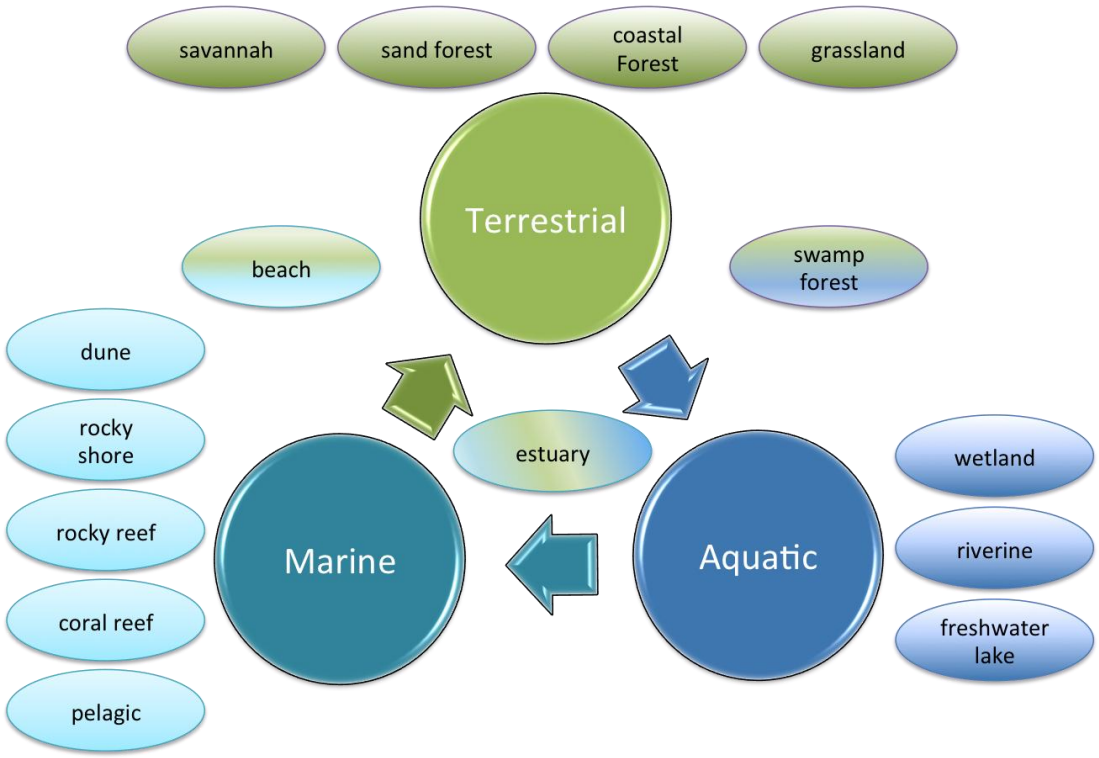


Figure 5 The fifteen interlinking ecosystems of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park

2.1.7 Vegetation

The Park is located at the southern end of the Maputaland Centre[10] of Plant Endemism, part of the Maputaland-Pondoland-Albany biodiversity hotspot. The vegetation types and sub types recognised according to the classification system of Mucina and Rutherford (2006) are listed hereunder.

SAVANNAH BIOME

- Lowveld Bioregion.
  - Southern Lebombo Bushveld (SVI16).
  - Tembe Sandy Bushveld (SVI18).
  - Western Maputaland Sandy Bushveld (SVI19).
  - Western Maputaland Clay Bushveld (SVI20).
  - Makatini Clay Thicket (SVI21).

[10] The core area of the Maputaland Centre is defined as that part of southern Mozambique and north-eastern KwaZulu-Natal bounded by the Nkomati and Limpopo Rivers in the north, the Indian Ocean in the east, the western foothills of the Lebombo Mountains in the west and the St Lucia Estuary in the south.

INDIAN OCEAN COASTAL BELT

- Maputaland Coastal Belt (CB1).
- Maputaland Wooded Grassland (CB2).

FORESTS

- Zonal and Intrazonal Forests.
  - Northern Coastal Forest (FOz7).
  - Sand Forest (FOz8).
- Azonal Forests.
  - Lowveld Riverine Forest (FOa1).
  - Swamp Forest (FOa2).
  - Mangrove Forest (FOa3).

AZONAL VEGETATION

- Seashore Vegetation.
  - Subtropical Seashore Vegetation (AZd4).
- Eastern Strandveld Vegetation.
  - Subtropical Dune Thicket (AZs3).
- Freshwater Wetlands.
  - Subtropical Freshwater Wetlands (AZf6).
- Inland Saline Vegetation.
  - Subtropical Salt Pans (AZi11).

The Park also has a high diversity of marine vegetation.

2.1.8 Fauna

The animals within iSimangaliso can be divided into six groups:

- Invertebrates (Terrestrial and Aquatic).
- Fish.
- Amphibians.
- Reptiles.
- Birds.
- Mammals.

2.2 Socio-Economic Environment

The region surrounding iSimangaliso was previously divided into parcels of the former KwaZulu homeland within the former province of Natal, and different legislation, policies and development parameters applied to each. This contributed to distinct socio-economic and demographic patterns which continue to be reflected in the area. Such patterns include:

- ❖ Land in the former Natal is generally held in terms of freehold tenure and is well developed in terms of physical and economic infrastructure.
- ❖ The former KwaZulu is, in contrast, generally poorly developed and falls under a traditional, communal land tenure system.

Furthermore, large differences exist in access to services between urban and rural areas, with the less developed rural areas experiencing far higher backlogs in the provision of infrastructure and services. It is also evident that while there have been interventions to address infrastructure and service backlogs throughout the area of influence of iSimangaliso, it is likely that there have been more interventions surrounding the southern sections of the Park compared to the more rural northern sections.

The iSimangaliso Wetland Park falls mostly within the uMkhanyakude District Municipality, ranked as the second poorest and most deprived municipality in the country. According to the 2011 national census, the surrounding districts have a population of 676,810. Over 80% of households live below the poverty line and an estimated 13% of the economically active population is formally employed. Of the population's citizens who are 20 years and older, 25.4% have matric and 4.9% have higher education. The unemployment rate is 42.8% and HIV prevalence is between 13 and 15%. Much of Umkhanyakude is characterised by remote but densely settled and poorly serviced communities, and in this context, the following development inputs are urgently needed: poverty alleviation, job creation and local economic development; water and sanitation, electricity, health services, roads and public transport, infrastructure and social services. High dependency ratios, HIV/AIDS prevalence, numbers of orphaned children, unemployment and social grant dependency make for highly vulnerable communities. The social impacts of migrancy remain strong – many households are female-headed, or headed by orphaned children.

In addition, the area has a long history of poverty, neglect and dispossession, stemming as far back as the creation of 'native reserves' during the colonial period, and later, the establishment of ethnic bantustans, or homelands by the Apartheid Government. These periods were attended by widespread and very significant loss of land, and the start of the migrant labour system, through which the absence of men, and their inability to contribute to economic development at home, forced poverty and stagnation upon rural areas.

In efforts to consolidate the homelands of the former Apartheid State, the most recent forced population removals in what was then KwaZulu began in the 1960s, including those of large numbers of farm workers following the abolition of labour tenancy, and persisted up until as recently as 1983. During this period, much land was lost to conservation, military areas, and commercial forestry plantations. Significantly, given the population of KwaZulu–Natal, land allocation has led to small land holdings, and low income generation from agriculture. The acute land degradation in former homeland areas is partly a legacy of the country's Apartheid history, which saw the relocation of subsistence farmers to 'homeland' areas often characterised by low agricultural potential. The Surplus People Project estimates that in Natal between 1948 and 1982, 745,500 people had been removed from their land. As a result, individuals in many of iSimangaliso's neighbouring and land claimant communities are able to clearly recall the trauma of these events.

Against this backdrop of disruption and forced migration, the people living around iSimangaliso adopt complex livelihood strategies, underpinned by networks of migrant labour wage remittances, state welfare support in the form of pensions, child grants and disability grants, and subsistence agriculture and forestry.

Savings groups, kinship networks and communities based on church membership provide avenues through which people access state employment, social security, and possible employment in the mining, agriculture and tourism sectors, amongst others. State investments in local infrastructure and public health, especially in the form of a comprehensive ARV programme, have made a demonstrable difference to people's lives.

The predominant land uses within the municipalities surrounding the Park include: agriculture and commercial timber plantations, conservation/eco-tourism and settlement. The patchwork of land uses in these surrounding areas reflects the long history of dislocation of Black Africans from their land, afforestation for the timber sector, and land given over to conservation. Densifying settlements in former bantustan land now under customary authority can be seen along the edges of the Park.

Post-1994 transformation has introduced further changes in the social conditions of rural people in Umkhanyakude, many of which are strongly related to gender. A recent study of the gendered pattern of migration in rural South Africa shows extraordinarily high levels of mobility in a population of adults living in uMKhanyakude. Over half of female out-migrations were to nearby rural areas and women were seen to undertake more local, shorter-term migration than men and to predominate the rural-rural migration flow.

As a result of their growing participation in the formal economy, women have become increasingly mobile, maintaining social connection to their homes, but living and working elsewhere, with their attendant ability to send remittances home becoming increasingly important. Marriage in Umkhanyakude is also declining, and the custom of women migrating in order to marry may be changing. South Africa's marriage rates are uniquely low in the region and probably declining, and the structure and composition of households are changing. Demographic and Health Surveys for South Africa found that only 34% of women of reproductive age were married in 1998, declining to 28% in 2003. Previous analyses of the population in this area showed that the proportion of those that had never married increased continuously from 2000 to 2006, when 69% of women had never been married. At the same time, women are participating in the labour force in greater numbers than ever before.

Other traditional power relations between men and women are also in flux, as the authority of Chiefs, fathers and husbands to govern the movement of women, and to enforce traditional gender roles and economic activities declines. In the past, women's roles in childcare and farming reduced the likelihood of migration, as did marriage. However, the migrant labour system of the past is thought to have destabilised gender relations, family structures and customary ideas about marriage, while the presence of older women in rural homesteads combined with the absence of older men and husbands, is now facilitating the mobility and independence of working-age women.

2.2.1 Population

Population data for each of the Local Municipalities neighbouring the Park are provided in Table 2.

Table 2 Demographic data for neighbouring Local Municipalities[11]

Local Municipality	District Municipality	Population	Area (km ^{2})	Population Density (No of people/km^2)	Percentage of Population in DC27/DC28	Population Growth Rate (2001 – 2011)
KZ 271: uMhlabuyalingana	DC 27: uMkhanyakude	156,736	3,621	43,29	25,04%	0,9%
KZ 272: Jozini	DC 27: uMkhanyakude	186,502	3,442	54,18	29,80%	0,1%
KZ 273: Big Five/False Bay	DC 27: uMkhanyakude	35,258	2,487	14,18	5,63%	1,1%
KZ 275: Mtubatuba	DC 27: uMkhanyakude	175,425	1,970	89,05	28,03%	1,8%
KZ 281: uMfolozi	DC 28: uThungulu	122,889	1,396	88,00	13,54%	1,4%

2.2.2 Land use

The predominant land uses within the municipalities surrounding the Park include the following:

- Agriculture and commercial timber plantations.
- Conservation/eco-tourism.
- Settlement.
- Subsistence activities (agriculture, harvesting of natural resources).

2.2.3 Regional Infrastructure and Services

Generally, there is unequal provision of services in urban and rural areas, with less developed rural areas experiencing higher backlogs in the provision of infrastructure and services. This is not unique to the areas surrounding iSimangaliso but is common throughout much of South Africa (a legacy of Apartheid is that former homeland areas are less developed). While the current demand for the provision of infrastructure and services exceeds delivery, there have been improvements in the areas surrounding iSimangaliso.

- ***Education facilities***

  There have been improvements in access to education within the broader area surrounding iSimangaliso with the percentage of the population in the uMkhanyakude District Municipality over the age of 20 reporting 'no schooling' dropping from 46.3% in 2001 to 25.3% in 2011. In addition, 81% of the population within the district between the ages of 5 and 24 are currently reported to be attending school. The rate of school attendance in the district is higher than the provincial average of 74%. While these figures indicate that access to education is improving in the areas surrounding the Park, numerous challenges still exist, many of which derive from the legacy of apartheid. Although the distribution of schools correlates with population distribution - the distances to rural schools, teacher pupil ratios, condition of facilities and training of teachers require further attention. Again, this situation is not unique to the communities surrounding the Park but is common to rural and former homeland areas throughout South Africa.

[11] Data are from the 2011 National Census and were accessed from:
Census 2011 Municipal Report – KwaZulu-Natal, Statistics South Africa. Pretoria: Statistics South Africa, 2012.

❖ ***Health facilities***

Table 3 shows the number of households per local municipality within uMkhanyakude with access to a clinic or hospital (a household is considered to have access to a clinic if it is within 10 km of a clinic and access to a hospital if it is within 50 km of a hospital). Primary health-care facilities and services are considered a priority.

Table 3 Healthcare facilities in the uMkhanyakude District Municipality

		No Access				Access			
Local Municipality	Total Households	Clinics	Hospital	Total	%	Clinics	Hospital	Total	%
Hlabisa	54,120	656	958	1,614	3	26,404	26,102	52,506	97
Jozini	60,622	2,750	0	2,750	5	27,561	30,311	57,872	95
Mtubatuba	10,920	334	2,217	2,551	23	5,126	3,243	8,369	77
Big Five False Bay	7,946	1,120	761	1,881	24	2,853	3,212	6,065	76
uMhlabuyalingana	60,866	5,054	0	5,054	8	25,379	30,433	55,812	92

While the figures above show that the majority of households have access to health facilities, most facilities are under-resourced and oversubscribed due to large catchment populations. Access is also difficult due to poor roads and the high cost of transport. In addition, healthcare is also hampered by the intermittent and unreliable water and electricity supply in rural areas and a shortage of doctors. The situation in the Mfolozi Local Municipality (to the south of the Park) is similar, with the majority of homesteads reporting relatively easy access to healthcare services, albeit that there is no hospital within the municipality, the closest being in Hlabisa, Richards Bay and Empangeni.

❖ ***Energy***

Main towns and settlements are supplied by Eskom while programmes are in place to electrify specific facilities such as rural clinics. While power interruptions remain a difficulty, between 2001 and 2011 there was an overall improvement in the percentage of households with access to electricity, with 20.1% reporting access in 2001 and 38.4% reporting access in 2011. In areas without access to electricity, households use a combination of sources including wood, paraffin, candles, batteries and gas. The use of natural resources for cooking, heating and lighting is of concern due to the growing pressure on these natural resources. As already noted, much of the area is made up of scattered rural homesteads, making service provision more difficult.

❖ ***Water and sanitation***

Water resources are limited and thought to be of insufficient capacity to handle future demand. As there is little piped water in the region, the majority of households lack waterborne sewerage systems. Plans are, however, in place to increase bulk supply with one such example being the planned pipeline from Jozini to Mbazwana.

While access to water and sanitation remains a challenge, improvements are evident with an increase from 42.5% of households in 2001 to 61.8% of households in 2011 reported to have access to piped water and an increase from 43.2% of households in 2001 to 81.6% of households in 2011 reporting to have access to sanitation. The unplanned, dispersed nature of rural settlement makes the provision of piped water to individual households difficult and expensive, and most households acquire water from communal standpipes.

- ***Transport***

  The region's road network is poor, and apart from the N2 and R22, roads are poorly maintained. This situation affects the provision of public transport, and limits access to larger towns. Rail use is limited to commodities, and there few commercial flights into the area.

2.2.4 Economic Opportunities (Tourism and Agriculture)

Tourism and agriculture are the two primary and largest economic sectors in the uMkhanyakude District Municipality.

Tourism

The Park provides a variety of products from self-catering camping and cabin facilities to up-market lodge accommodation. For every one bed in the Park there are approximately two beds outside the Park. There are three "high" density nodes in the Park viz., St Lucia, Cape Vidal, and Sodwana. The rest of the Park is zoned for low density development and, in the case of wilderness, no development. There has been a large increase in day-visitor numbers in the last five years. There is, however, a need to redevelop some of the accommodation offered in the Park in order to appeal to a broader market and keep pace with market trends.

The southern section of iSimangaliso alone contributes some 6.8% of KwaZulu-Natal's tourism Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and 0.06% of South Africa's tourism GDP. The Park also supports in excess of 7,000 tourism jobs. Global Insight in its 2011 report asserts that tourism contributed 41% of the GDP within the uMkhanyakude municipal area and records an approximate increase of 4% in the number of bed nights within the municipal area.

Agriculture

Agriculture, both commercial and subsistence, is important in the uMkhanyakude District Municipality in which large numbers of households practice limited homestead-based food production, and commercial agriculture has been identified in the Integrated Development Plan as one of the two main economic sectors.

However, many parts of Umkhanyakude are experiencing the inseparable effects of high HIV prevalence, growing food insecurity, dependence on natural resources, climatic variability and environmental degradation. The convergence of these factors as a driver of the decreasing viability of farming livelihoods is stark, and HIV in particular, has given rise to a category of vulnerable households in which the likelihood of food insecurity has increased. In addition, the Umkhanyakude and Zululand District Municipalities have been highlighted as high-risk areas in terms of their vulnerability to climate change.

The areas in the north of Umkhanyakude and, in particular, the former homeland areas, are characterised by subsistence agricultural activities such as cattle farming, homestead-based food production and small scale sugarcane and cotton production. Studies undertaken in communities bordering the southern sections of the Park found that agricultural production by households ranges from very small scale production of vegetables and chickens, to the cultivation of larger fields away from the homestead, often in floodplains, for market gardening. The basic "food security crops" that are currently being planted in the rural areas of KwaZulu-Natal for subsistence farming are cabbages, sweet potatoes and dryland, rain-fed maize. Many households keep cattle, goats or sheep. The gendered division of labour means that women typically have responsibility for all agricultural activity and small livestock, while men claim authority over cattle. The mild sub-tropical climate allows the cultivation of two to three crops per year.

In the southern sections of the district municipality, agricultural activities are more commercial in nature including sugarcane, pineapple and timber production. The proximity of commercial forestry and sugar processing facilities has created opportunities for out-grower contracts within these industries, including around the borders of the northern sections of the Park. Involvement in this kind of cultivation has grown considerably in this region over the last 30 years. This has resulted in the dedication of more communal land to these cash crops, with households drawing increasingly on social and kin networks for easily exploitable "casual" labour.

Households keep livestock for economic and non-economic purposes. Cattle are an important feature of various rituals, including communication with ancestors, bride wealth (*ilobolo*), and for ploughing, transport, savings, and social status. Livestock continue to prove a marginal asset for some households in times of economic stress, but there is a substantial shift away from cattle, under the authority of older men, towards smaller livestock, over which older women maintain control.

However, agricultural opportunities in the area are limited by various factors, including but not limited to:

- Nutrient poor soils.
- Land tenure insecurity.
- Unfavourable rainfall.
- Lack of water for irrigation.
- Lack of finance for previously disadvantaged farmers.
- Distances from markets.

In general, economic growth in areas surrounding the Park has not kept pace with population growth, resulting in rising unemployment and a decline in real wages over the last 20 years. Findings from a study undertaken by iSimangaliso as part of a GEF Grant in communities bordering the southern sections of the Park show that households are generally dependent on a combination of government welfare grants and income from family members living and working elsewhere.

2.3 Cultural Heritage

iSimangaliso is known to be rich in cultural heritage. The range of cultural heritage resources includes archaeological and palaeontological sites and artefacts, historical buildings and jetties, graves, fish traps, shipwrecks, landscapes and natural features, as well as more intangible resources such as spiritual places, oral traditions and rituals.

- iSimangaliso is the largest protected area of recorded and potential Stone Age and Iron Age sites in South Africa. These sites provide significant evidence of the presence of the ancestors of modern Nguni-language speaking South Africans and provide important insights into how African people adapted socially and culturally in south-east Africa.
- Contemporary sites of historical interest include:
  - Sites which commemorate land claimants' loss of land and subsequent restitution.
  - Remnants from the two World Wars including Catalina Bay on Lake St Lucia, which was used by the Royal Air Force as a flying boat base.
  - Anti-apartheid activist and scholar, David Webster's research camp at KwaDapha.
  - The establishment of an active military site in a conservation area on the Nhlozi Peninsula.
- Important events in the history of the Zulu and Thonga people also took place within or in the immediate surrounds of iSimangaliso. These events include:
  - The earliest recorded instance of purposeful wildlife conservation in the region.
  - The battle of eTshaneni where King Dinizulu defeated Chief Zibhebhu of the Mandhlakazi Clan in the precipitous uMkhuze River Gorge.
  - The assimilation of the Thonga people into the Zulu state with the creation of the Mozambique border during the colonial period.
- iSimangaliso is also significant in that it exhibits many examples of living heritage, which are age-old traditions still being practised today.

2.4 Land Restitution

Currently, all of iSimangaliso is under land claims from neighbouring communities. Most of the communities displaced from areas in what is now iSimangaliso lodged claims in the 1990s. A total of 14 claims have been lodged with the Commission on Restitution of Land Rights[12] and these claims cover the Park in its entirety[13]. The claims and their status are as follows:

- Bhangazi claim on the Eastern Shores of Lake St Lucia (settled in 1999).
- Mabaso claim on Ozabeni (settled in 2002).
- Mbila (Emandleni) claim on Ozabeni (settled in 2002).
- Sokhulu claim on Maphelane (settled in 2007).
- Mdletsheni (Mfusi) claim on False Bay (settled in 2007).
- Makhasa claim on uMkhuze (settled in 2007).
- Mnqcobokazi (Qhubekani) claim on uMkhuze (settled in 2007).
- Nsinde (Silwane) claim on uMkhuze (settled in 2007).
- Jobe claim on uMkhuze (settled in 2007).
- Mbila (Triangle) claim on Sodwana Triangle (not settled).
- Coastal Forest Reserve claim on the Coastal Forest Reserve (not settled).
- Dukuduku claim on Dukuduku Forest and surrounding area (not settled).
- Western Shores claim on the Western Shores of Lake St Lucia (not settled).
- Ngwenya claim on uMkhuze (not settled).

In general, the settled land claims have led to the establishment of claimant community trusts which allow for various benefit sharing opportunities to be established between iSimangaliso and claimant communities.

12 The framework for settling claims in the iSimangaliso Wetland Park is in line with the National Cabinet decision of 2002 regarding the settlement of restitution claims in protected areas, World Heritage sites and state forests. In summary, this framework makes provision for the following:

(a) Land within a protected area can be owned by claimants without physical occupation through the transfer of title with registered notarial deed restrictions.

(b) Continued proclamation of the land for conservation purposes, where the land is used and maintained solely for the purposes of conservation and associated commercial and community activities.

(c) Continued management of the land as part of the national conservation estate by the responsible State conservation agency according to IUCN principles and the requirements of legislation and approved management plans.

(d) Land to remain part of an open ecological system and managed as an integrated part of the protected area of which it formed part before restitution.

(e) Loss of beneficial occupation is compensated through remuneration and provision of a package of benefits from the iSimangaliso Wetland Park that includes revenue sharing, mandatory partner status in tourism developments, access to natural resources, cultural heritage access, education and capacity building, and jobs through land care and infrastructure programmes.

(f) Sustainable partnerships between claimants and managers of protected areas must be established in a way, which facilitates effective biodiversity conservation of the area, including economic viability. These co-management arrangements should enable parks to be managed effectively and efficiently by the State and remain unencumbered by several joint management committees and unwieldy co-management arrangements.

13 Initially, the period to lodge claims was from 1994 to 1998. However, in June 2014, the President announced the re-opening of the land claims process, providing opportunity for communities and individuals who had missed the original land claim deadline to lodge their claims, until June 2019. This will further hamper the resolution of land claims over the Park.

3. STRATEGIC ANALYSIS OF THE iSIMANGALISO WETLAND PARK

3.1 Introduction

The iSimangaliso Wetland Park is one of the world's outstanding natural and cultural treasures, exhibiting outstanding universal values for which the Park is world-renowned. It is recognised as a significant asset locally, nationally and internationally. The World Heritage listing of iSimangaliso confirms the international community's recognition of its significance as an outstanding example of the world's natural heritage. At a national level, iSimangaliso is highly valued because of its unique ecological and cultural assets, and the potential of these to generate tourism development and, hence, to contribute to economic growth and prosperity. At the local level, iSimangaliso has recreational, ecological, economic and cultural significance. One of the key management goals of this IMP is to provide policies, programmes and plans to enhance this potential.

This Chapter explores:

- The significance of iSimangaliso as a natural, cultural and economic asset.
- The threats and constraints affecting its natural, cultural and economic values.

3.2 Significance of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park

This section examines the 'conservation', 'cultural' and 'economic' assets contributing to iSimangaliso's outstanding universal values. This analysis is important as it provides the justification for protecting the Park (Section 3.2), highlights the need to manage threats (Section 3.3) and determines the planning framework (Section 3.4) and management tools required to achieve this protection (Chapter 5).

3.2.1 Conservation Significance

iSimangaliso attained World Heritage listing under not just one criterion (which is all that is necessary to attain listing) but three of the ten criteria:

- Criterion vii: to contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance.
- Criterion ix: to be an outstanding example representing significant on-going ecological and biological processes in the evolution and development of terrestrial, fresh water, coastal and marine ecosystems, and communities of plants and animals.
- Criterion x: to contain the most important and significant natural habitats for in situ conservation of biological diversity, including those containing threatened species of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation.

3.2.1.1 Criterion (vii): Biodiversity and threatened species

The fifteen interlinked ecosystems found in the iSimangaliso Wetland Park provide habitat for a significant diversity of African biota, including a large number of rare, threatened and/or endemic species. These fifteen ecosystems are not unique in and of themselves but their combination within a single protected area is certainly unusual globally and unique in the South African context. The ecosystem can be grouped into three broad biomes[14], namely, marine, terrestrial and aquatic.

- The marine biome is characterised by a warm sea, and includes dune, rocky shore, rocky reef, coral reef and pelagic ecosystems. Importantly, iSimangaliso houses the southernmost extension of coral reefs in Africa, submarine canyons and long sandy beaches. Two distinct marine biogeographic regions are represented in the Park with an important break at Cape Vidal:
  - Maputaland Sub-province of the Tropical Indo-West Pacific Province (Cape Vidal Point and northwards to Ponta do Oura). Many of the species in this region are not found elsewhere in South Africa.
  - Natal Sub-province of the Sub-tropical East Coast Province (South of Cape Vidal Point to Cape St Lucia), with many endemic marine species.
- The terrestrial biome includes savannah, sand forest, coastal forest and grassland ecosystems. On the eastern shores, sub-tropical forest and grassland dominate. On the western shores, ancient shoreline terraces and dry savannah woodlands, thickets and sand forests occur on the higher lying ground between the coastal plain and the Lubombo Mountains.
- The aquatic biome includes wetland, riverine, and freshwater lake systems. The freshwater lake systems consist of three lakes (Sibaya, Bhangazi North and Bhangazi South). The uMkhuze river supports swamp forest and the uMfolozi floodplain contains extensive reed and papyrus wetlands.
- Three distinct ecosystems, i.e. beaches, estuaries and swamp forest cannot be classed as discrete biomes, but are strongly influenced by the dominant features or processes of two or more biomes. The estuaries (Kosi Bay, Mgobozeleni and Lake St Lucia) are shaped by a combination of terrestrial, freshwater, aquatic and marine processes and communities; while beaches and swamp forests are a product of land-sea and land-water interactions, respectively.

The many ecological linkages between these ecosystems have attracted research interest in many geomorphological and biological processes.

The many and diverse ecosystems contained in the Park provide important habitats for a large number of species, including those that are rare, threatened and/or endemic. The species lists for iSimangaliso are the lengthiest in the region and population sizes for most of them are viable. Of the over 6,500 plant and animal species known to occur in the Park[15] , populations of species of conservation importance include 11 species that are endemic to the Park, 56 species endemic to KwaZulu-Natal, and 108 species endemic to South Africa, while

14 A large naturally occurring community of flora and fauna occupying a defined habitat.

15 This total is based on the species checklists contained in the 1999 World Heritage Schedules and the latest figures provided for some of the taxa by the iSimangaliso Wetland Park Rare, Threatened & Endemic Species Project, and includes approximately 2,185 vascular plants, 325 seaweeds, 129 corals, 110 terrestrial mammals, 22 marine mammals, 48 freshwater fish, 212 estuarine fish, 991 marine fish, 525 bird, 128 reptiles, 50 amphibians, 282 butterflies, 52 fruit chafer beetles, 38 dragonflies and damselflies, 228 spiders, 5 scorpions, 812 marine molluscs, 41 terrestrial molluscs and 20 sponges.

467 are listed as threatened in South Africa. While studies on a number of these species are ongoing, in the past little was known about the status and viability of populations of the majority of rare, threatened and endemic species in the Park, particularly the lower vertebrate and invertebrate species.

Furthermore, the Park is situated on the southernmost extremity of the Mozambique coastal plain and, as a result, hosts numerous species not found elsewhere in South Africa. This adds to the value and importance of this unique area from a South African species conservation perspective. The presence of some of these species north of our borders does not detract from the importance of conserving the South African populations, as very little information is generally available on their conservation status and distribution in other parts of southern and central Africa. iSimangaliso is clearly a critical habitat for a range of species from Africa's marine, wetland and savannah environments.

In addition, iSimangaliso contains four Ramsar sites that are recognised for the ecological functions of wetlands and for their economic, cultural, scientific and recreational value (Figure 6 in Appendix 3):

- St Lucia Lake System: Location 27° 37' - 28° 30'S, 32° 22' - 32° 34'E. On the KwaZulu-Natal coast, between the uMfolozi Swamps just south of the uMfolozi River in the south, to the uMkhuze River in the north. The area covered is 155,000 ha. The site was designated on 2 October 1986 (Ramsar Site # 345).
- Turtle Beaches/Coral Reefs of Tongaland: Location 25° 51' - 28° 08'S, 32° 33' - 32° 51'E. On the coast of KwaZulu-Natal, stretching from just south of Cape Vidal northwards to the border of Mozambique. The area covered is 39,500 ha being the area of previous Maputaland MPA. The site was designated on 2 October 1986 (Ramsar Site # 344).
- Kosi Bay Lake System: Location 27° 01'S, 32° 48'E. On the KwaZulu-Natal coast south of Mozambique on the Maputaland Coastal Plain. The area covered is 10,981 ha. The site was designated on 28 June 1991 (Ramsar Site #527).
- Lake Sibaya: Location 27º20'S 032º 38'E. On the KwaZulu-Natal coast, north-west of Sodwana Bay. The area covered is 7,750 ha. The site was designated on 28 June 1991 (Ramsar Site # 528).

The remarkable ecological diversity and significance of iSimangaliso is, therefore, unique, not only on the African continent, but also globally. Available information suggests that no other locality on the globe harbours such a wide range of wetland types in a single protected area. Of the 32 marine/coastal and inland natural wetland forms recognised by the Ramsar Convention, 23 of these forms occur within the Park.

In addition to the values recognised through its World Heritage listing, iSimangaliso attained its high conservation status primarily because of the following factors:

- The Park is one of the last remaining natural areas in the world that still contains much of the original plant and animal species in habitats with exceptional diversity, species richness, and variable and unique geological structure, topography/landscapes, climate and rainfall patterns.
- The Park is located in a transition zone between two biogeographical provinces, and thus protects plant and animal species from both subtropical and tropical Africa.

- ❖ As the Park is the largest protected area in the Maputaland Centre of Endemism[16], it contributes appreciably to the conservation of endemic species, and also to the conservation of a number of taxa occurring at the southernmost extent of their distribution range.
- ❖ The marine ecosystem of the Park, especially the coral reefs, contributes significantly to the rich sub-tidal diversity. More than 325 seaweed species have been recorded representing more than 78% of the total seaweed species for the KwaZulu-Natal coastline. In addition, marine canyons off Sodwana Bay provide habitat for Coelacanths (otherwise in South Africa found only offshore of East London).
- ❖ The Park provides protection for six habitats that are considered to be of global conservation importance. These are:
  - o Marine canyons off Sodwana Bay which provide habitat for Coelacanths.
  - o The nesting beaches for leatherback and loggerhead turtles.
  - o The woodland and thicket vegetation for black rhino and elephant.
  - o The dry sand forests that have exceptionally high species richness.
  - o The extensive and diverse wetland habitat types.
  - o Coral reefs.

The landscapes in the Park are considered unique in terms of variety, origin and exceptional natural beauty. Nowhere else in South Africa, and in few places elsewhere in the world, can such diverse elements be found in such close proximity. The geographic diversity and superlative aesthetic qualities of iSimangaliso include:

- ❖ The clear water of the Indian Ocean with its associated unspoilt sandy beaches, rocky and mixed shores, and rocky and coral reefs.
- ❖ The highest and oldest vegetated (forested) coastal sand dune cordon in the world, which runs uninterrupted throughout the entire length of the Park.
- ❖ The expansive estuarine systems of Lake St Lucia, Lake Mgobozeleni and Kosi Bay with their associated mangrove swamps, salt marshes and reed swamps.
- ❖ The coastal plain mosaic of pans, dry secondary grasslands, waterlogged grasslands, swamp forests, freshwater lakes (including Lake Sibaya, the largest natural freshwater lake in South Africa) and thickets.
- ❖ The flood plains and phragmites/papyrus swamps of the uMkhuze, uMfolozi, Nyalazi and Mzinene Rivers, including the uMkhuze and Nyalazi peat lands.
- ❖ The Lubombo Mountain Range and the deep rocky gorge of the uMkhuze River.
- ❖ The woodland savannahs and sand forests of the higher lying ground between the coastal plain and the Lubombo Mountains.
- ❖ The long natural beaches with their associated dune cordon.
- ❖ Geomorphological features, viz. Ezimbomvini red dunes (Eastern Shores), and the east-west developed dune ridge (berm between Lake Bhangazi South and Mfabeni swamp).

The fascinating geomorphic processes by which this wide variety of scenic landscapes were formed subsequent to the fragmentation of the Gondwana super continent also contribute to the uniqueness of the region, including ecological processes as well as a variety of charismatic mega-faunal species. Examples are:

16 The Maputaland Centre of Endemism is also part of the Maputaland-Pondoland-Albany biodiversity hotspot.

- ❖ The continuous shifts in the biodiversity of Lake St Lucia arising from cyclical changes in the salinity state of the lake, which can range from fresh water to hyper-saline conditions in the space of a few years.
- ❖ The size of Lake St Lucia as the largest estuarine system on the African continent.
- ❖ The nocturnal nesting and subsequent hatching of Leatherback and Loggerhead turtles that occurs during the summer season.
- ❖ Coelacanths within the marine canyons offshore of Sodwana Bay.
- ❖ The abundance of dolphins and the migrating whales and whale sharks close inshore and offshore.
- ❖ The Tewate/Ozabeni Wilderness Area, which is one of the few true wilderness areas in South Africa.
- ❖ Large herds of hippopotamus in the water and on the reed banks of Lake St Lucia.
- ❖ The unspoilt coral reefs that represent the southern-most limit of coral along the African coast, with their spectacular, brightly-coloured life forms. Coral reefs in South Africa are solely confined to the iSimangaliso Marine Protected Area (northern KwaZulu-Natal).
- ❖ Picturesque displays of feeding flamingos, pelicans, waders and other waterfowl can be observed along with breeding colonies of pelicans, yellow-billed storks, herons, Caspian terns, spoonbills and red-winged pratincoles.
- ❖ The basking and nesting sites of the Nile crocodile.
- ❖ Populations of the endangered African wild dog and lions in the uMkhuze section of the Park.
- ❖ African elephants in uMkhuze and the Western Shores of Lake St Lucia.

The geological and palaeontological features of the area include rich Cretaceous and Jurassic deposits with extensive fossil beds. Important geological sites include:

- ❖ The Western Shores of Lake St Lucia, with exposed sedimentary rocks, are rich in well-preserved fossils of marine origin including giant ammonites.
- ❖ More than 100 species of marine fauna are contained in the exposed fossiliferous limestones found at Lister's Point and Hell's Gate on the Nhlozi Peninsula. Of particular importance are the fossilised coral forms that are preserved in their growth positions.
- ❖ Bhangazi berm between Lake Bhangazi and the Mfabeni Swamp.

3.2.1.2 Criterion (ix): Ecological processes

The combination of fluvial, marine and aeolian processes initiated in the early Pleistocene in iSimangaliso has resulted in a variety of landforms that persist to the present day. The transitional geographic location between sub-tropical and tropical Africa and the coastal setting have resulted in exceptional species diversity. Past speciation events in the Maputaland Centre of Endemism are also ongoing and contribute another element to the diversity and interplay of evolutionary processes at work in the Park. In its marine component, the sediments being transported by the Agulhas current are trapped by submarine canyons on the continental shelf allowing for remarkably clear waters for the development of coral reefs. Major floods and coastal storms, events that are regularly experienced in the Park, add further complexity to the interplay of this environmental heterogeneity.

3.2.1.3 Criterion (x): Superlative natural phenomena and scenic beauty

iSimangaliso is geographically diverse with superlative scenic vistas along its 187 km coast. From the clear waters of the Indian Ocean, wide undeveloped sandy beaches, forested dune cordon and mosaic of wetlands, grasslands, forests, lakes and savannah, the iSimangaliso Wetland Park contains exceptional aesthetic qualities. Three natural phenomena are also judged outstanding:

- The shifting salinity states within Lake St Lucia, which are linked to wet and dry climatic cycles, with the lake responding accordingly with shifts from low to hyper-saline states.
- The spectacle of large numbers of nesting turtles on the beaches, the abundance of dolphins and the migration of whales and whale sharks offshore.
- The numbers of waterfowl and large breeding colonies of pelicans, storks, herons and terns.

3.2.2 Cultural Heritage Significance

iSimangaliso is also of cultural and historical significance. There is no single history of the Park; the record is partial and much of the written information is colonial in origin. iSimangaliso is rich in cultural heritage, a creation of the long history of the habitation of the land, extending back to the Stone and Iron Age people through to the most recent forced removal of people from the 1950s to the late 1980s. The latter events are within the living memory of people who were alienated from their land and, therefore, the cultural attributes and meaning of certain sites are of great significance to the land claimants. The range of cultural heritage resources includes archaeological and palaeontological sites and artefacts, historical buildings and jetties, graves, fish traps, shipwrecks, landscapes and natural features, as well as more intangible resources such as places, oral traditions and rituals.

Key cultural heritage resources include:

- iSimangaliso is the largest protected area of recorded and potential Stone Age and Iron Age sites in South Africa. These sites provide significant evidence of the presence of the ancestors of modern Nguni-language speaking South Africans and provide important insights into how African people adapted socially and culturally over time in southeast Africa.
  - Three sites of an early Stone Age culture (between 500,000 and a million years BC) have been found. There is also evidence of Middle and Late Stone Age occupation postdating the last interglacial period (about 110,000 years ago).
  - iSimangaliso is rich in artefacts and other remains of Early Iron Age (250 – 1000 AD) and Late Iron Age (1000 - 1840 AD) settlements. These settlements exploited the peat bog iron ore deposits that occur in the vicinity of Lake St Lucia and other wetlands.
- Recent sites of historical interest include:
  - Sites which commemorate land claimants' loss of land and subsequent restitution.
  - Remnants from the two World Wars including Catalina Bay on Lake St Lucia, which was used by the Royal Air Force as a flying boat base.
  - Anti-apartheid activist and scholar, David Webster's research camp at kwaDapha.
  - The establishment of an active military site in a conservation area at the Nhlozi Peninsula.

- Important events in the history of the Zulu and Thonga people also took place within or in the immediate surrounds of iSimangaliso. These events include:
  - The earliest recorded instance of purposeful wildlife conservation in the region.
  - The battle of eTshaneni where King Dinizulu defeated Chief Zibhebhu of the Mandhlakazi Clan in the precipitous uMkhuze River Gorge.
  - The assimilation of the Thonga people into the Zulu state with the creation of the Mozambique border during the colonial period.
- iSimangaliso is also significant in that it exhibits many examples of living heritage, which are age-old traditions still being practised today. These include oral histories, cultural traditions, land use and resource management practices, and indigenous knowledge systems. An excellent example of this is the on-going fish trapping in Kosi Bay, a site and activity that are protected as living history.

3.2.2.1 'Sense of place'

iSimangaliso is also recognised for its 'sense of place', and is experienced and defended by people and groups of diverse heritage, cultural values and norms. 'Sense of place' is experienced by people in terms of their needs and expectations, and is different for each person.

The St Lucia Mining Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) investigation and subsequent hearings and recommendations of the Review Panel appointed by Government, the participation of the public and orchestration of the debate on the future of the area, effectively set the scene for defining what interpretation should be applied when assessing what 'sense of place' should mean for iSimangaliso.

The Panel said that the area has a unique and special 'sense of place'. This sense that the area is precious was expressed by a diverse range of groups, from learners to conservationists, to the urban middle class, and to the people who were removed from the land. In the evidence before the Panel, the special natural qualities of iSimangaliso's wilderness, and its healing and calming effect on people were mentioned. This is also perceived and experienced as a spiritual relationship based on the significant social and mystical values emanating from many years of ritual and religious activities that took place on the land.

In terms of the above, the 'sense of place' of the Park holds special and unique values to individuals that experience these values personally and differently from one another.

3.2.3 Economic Significance

iSimangaliso is widely regarded as an important economic asset with significant tourism potential.

3.2.3.1 Resource endowment

The rich resource endowment of iSimangaliso fits particularly well with domestic and foreign visitor preferences as determined by various surveys, including those conducted by Satour, the KwaZulu-Natal Tourism Authority and the iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority. When matched with the known interests of tourists to South Africa and KwaZulu-Natal, the Park's natural and cultural assets strongly indicate the potential of iSimangaliso to become a world-class tourism destination.

The tourist attractions within the Park include:

- Spectacular dunes, wetlands, plains and bushveld.
- The coastline and iSimangaliso Marine Protected Area that include the southernmost coral reefs in Africa, coelacanths, dolphins, humpback whales, ragged-tooth sharks, endangered turtles and 991 fish species (399 of which are reef fish).
- Miles of fine beaches with clear warm-water seas.
- Large inland lakes and estuaries.
- Populations of the endangered African wild dog and lions in the uMkhuze section of the Park.
- African elephants in uMkhuze and the Western Shores of Lake St Lucia.
- Rich birdlife, marine life and more than 2,000 plant species.
- A favourable year-round climate.
- A diversity of cultures, languages and customs among the Swazi, Zulu and Thonga people who have coexisted here for centuries.

The region is already a well-known nature-based destination offering established products, such as Phinda and the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park. iSimangaliso can, therefore, build on an established regional profile. Simultaneously, the development and branding of the Park will significantly boost the area's attractiveness as a nature-based tourism destination of international repute.

3.2.3.2 Locational advantages

iSimangaliso is located in a region that is highly accessible by road, rail, air and sea. The N2 corridor provides road and rail links to Durban and Gauteng. Richards Bay acts as a regional entry point via its deep-water port and regular flights to and from Johannesburg. The Lubombo R22 Road, which connects the N2 at Hluhluwe to the Mozambique border at Ponta do Oura, provides tar road access to the formerly inaccessible northern regions of the Park. Once the link to Maputo has been completed as a surfaced road, this will open a new tourist route between Gauteng and the Mpumalanga lowveld via Mozambique and uMkhanyakude to Durban. This will augment the already well-established route that takes visitors from Johannesburg to Cape Town via the Kruger National Park, Swaziland, Durban and the Garden Route (Figure 7 in Appendix 3).

3.2.3.3 Tourism

The iSimangaliso Wetland Park has become an increasingly important natural attraction in KwaZulu-Natal's tourism economy. Recent studies show that the international market now comprises approximately 42% of the tourist market for the Park and that the southern section of the Park alone contributes some 6.8% of KZN's

tourism Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and 0.6% of SA's tourism GDP. These impressive strides can be attributed in no small measure to improvements to day-visitor facilities on the Eastern and Western Shores, St Lucia, and uMkhuze sections of the Park, and the introduction of game that historically occurred in the Park. The day-visitor improvements range from viewing platforms, picnic spots, loop roads, and additional ablution facilities. The new facilities offer access for disabled people. While St Lucia, Cape Vidal, and Sodwana are old favourites for visitors and attract the largest volumes, visitor numbers to uMkhuze have increased with the introduction of lion and wild dog.

The growth in eco-tourism has also been accompanied by a growth in beach tourism. This "high impact" use has placed pressure on a number of nodes in the Park, in particular, St Lucia, Sodwana Bay, Manzengwenya, and Kosi Bay. This has at times led to user-group conflicts, unanticipated environmental pressure, and pressure on existing facilities. Improvements to the Sodwana Bay section of the Park have been planned to address these issues. Similar plans are underway in St Lucia, and will follow in the Coastal Forest Reserve and Kosi Bay sections of the Park.

There is also a need to redevelop accommodation facilities to keep pace with market trends and visitor preferences. This is an important initiative to drive the transformation of the tourism sector. Facilities, existing and new, will include local community equity participation. iSimangaliso is seeking to secure grant funding to finance community equity stakes in these facilities.

The impact of the recession on visitor numbers and revenues has not been quantified at this stage. The tourism funding strategy must also be reviewed following announcements of budget cuts by national government.

3.3 Challenges and threats facing the iSimangaliso Wetland Park

From Section 3.2 it is evident that iSimangaliso has numerous significant attributes. This section explores some of the challenges facing the Park, and threats to its natural values.

3.3.1 Threats to the natural values of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park

Despite its conservation significance, iSimangaliso as an entity, and the biodiversity and ecological processes of the region as a whole, including both terrestrial and marine environments, are under threat.

3.3.1.1 Disruption of terrestrial and wetland processes

The disruption of terrestrial and wetland processes by various forms of land use[17] and land tenure is a major threat to the natural heritage values of iSimangaliso and, thus, to its long-term biodiversity conservation. In addition, inappropriate land use within the Park, such as illegal developments, has led to the fragmentation of areas that are in a natural or near-natural condition, with the potential to hinder the important free movement and migration of indigenous plants and animals in the short to medium-term, and the flow of genetic material in the longer-term. Such movement is essential for species survival and the conservation of biodiversity in general. This threat is becoming progressively more acute as the environment on some land outside the Park continues to degrade.

3.3.1.2 Fishing offtake

Fishing takes place in the Park, including subsistence and limited new entry commercial fishing from Kosi Bay and along the coast towards Mabibi, and recreational fishing in and off shore in designated areas as well as in Kosi and Lake St Lucia. There is also limited commercial fishing and recreational harvesting of mussels and crayfish in the southern part of the Park. Subsistence harvesting of mussels occurs in parts of the Coastal Forest section of the Park and at Maphelane and the adjoining shoreline. Illegal fishing takes place in Lake St Lucia, mainly in the Nkunduzi/Nibela area, and in Kosi Bay. The continued offtake of these resources from a protected area and World Heritage site needs to be carefully managed to promote the sustainability of these resources and, in particular, the protection and conservation of species of conservation concern.

3.3.1.3 Poaching

The bush meat trade is one form of poaching in iSimangaliso, which together with illegal gill netting, is an ongoing conservation management issue dealt with through anti-poaching efforts that include law enforcement and awareness.

iSimangaliso is experiencing increased levels of rhino poaching. The rhino is a critically endangered species facing extinction, and additional measures, such as rhino dehorning, are being implemented alongside anti-poaching activities.

3.3.1.4 Socio-economic environment

As discussed in Chapter 2, the uMkhanyakude region as a whole, and the areas neighbouring the Park in particular, include some of the most impoverished communities in South Africa. Many households rely extensively on natural resources from iSimangaliso for survival, for example, harvesting of reeds and fruit, agriculture and fishing. The depletion and degradation of natural resources in communal areas has meant that there is increasing pressure on the resources inside the Park.

[17] For example, forestry plantations, sugar cane lands and mining in the catchments of major rivers entering iSimangaliso.

For example, Coastal Peat Swamp Forests and the uMkhuze Swamp are under threat from various activities, most notably from cultivation, where swamp farming practices enhance food production capacity in the short-term, but do not promote ecological sustainability or food security in the long-term. This trade-off between short and long term livelihood strategies stems from the conditions of poverty that characterise the lives of 80% of the people living in the area. The need to deliver tangible benefits to local communities is, thus, not only an economic imperative but also conservation imperative.

Furthermore, there is a difference between access to services in urban and rural areas, with the less developed rural areas experiencing far higher backlogs in the provision of infrastructure and services. Overall, however, the area is characterised by the inadequate provision of infrastructure and services, with demand outweighing supply, in particular with respect to: education facilities, health facilities, energy, water and sanitation, transportation, security and recreational facilities.

3.3.1.5 Municipal services (water and waste management)

As with many local government areas throughout South Africa, the provision of municipal services in the uMkhanyakude District Municipality has proven to be a challenge, in particular, the provision of domestic water, waste water treatment services and solid waste handling facilities. This has impacted on the Park and communities surrounding the Park[18] and it is unlikely that the situation will change markedly for the duration of this IMP.

In addition, historical waste disposal practices and unregulated disposal facilities within the Park, including the St Lucia waste site constitute a biodiversity threat to the Park as well detracting from the Park's 'sense of place'. Waste disposal practices need to be managed and aligned with legislative requirements and service delivery provision by local government.

3.3.1.6 Offshore Prospecting, Mining and Hydrocarbon Extraction

Various petroleum, oil, gas and other companies such as Sasol, ExxonMobil, Impact Africa and Silver Wave Energy have been granted licenses to undertake seismic surveys and/or prospecting off the east coast of South Africa. This includes the entire offshore area alongside the Park's coastline. As offshore resource exploitation is not permitted in a Marine Protected Area, exploration is not supported by iSimangaliso.

3.3.1.7 Slow resolution of land claims

As a consequence of the forced displacement and relocation of people during the apartheid era, several claims for land in iSimangaliso were lodged with the Commission on Restitution of Land Rights. People were removed from large areas of the land under claim which were used for commercial timber plantations or for military purposes. Agreements settling nine of the fourteen claims on iSimangaliso (including the areas of the Eastern Shores, Cape Vidal, Sodwana State Forest, uMkhuze, Maphelane and False Bay) have been finalised.

[18] As is evidenced in the town of St Lucia and neighbouring Dukuduku where growth and development have not been matched by the provision of essential services.

The continued slow progress of the settlement of the land claims on the Park as well as the re-opening of the deadline for submission of restitution claims[19], has created uncertainty, and in many cases worsened the relationship between iSimangaliso and the land claimants. Impatience with the slow progress has led to increasing resentment and anger as there are high expectations of delivery of economic benefits from the land. In certain areas, competing land claims have emerged, and with the re-opening of the deadline for submission of claims, it is possible that further conflicts will occur. Conflict over control of resources has emerged in some areas, with concerned groups being established to challenge the power of the community based trusts.

3.3.1.8 Commercial forestry in the zone of influence (buffer zone) and incorporated land

Commercial forestation, comprising alien *Pinus* spp. and *Eucalyptus* spp., has been undertaken in the region for decades (since the mid 1950s). Extensive forestry, which includes both licensed and unauthorised plantations, in the zone of influence continues to have an impact on the lakes and wetlands. The threat of commercial forestation to the environmental sustainability of iSimangaliso has been highlighted on many occasions. The major environmental issues include:

- Due to evapotranspiration, the plantations of pine and eucalyptus trees are significantly reducing fresh water inflows to Lake St Lucia (and other parts of the Park wetland system, in particular, Lake Sibaya and Lake Mgobozeleni) by reducing ground water seepage. A recent hydrological study has shown that eucalyptus trees on the Western Shores have had a significant impact on groundwater levels; lowering the groundwater table between 10 and 16 metres over a period of 13 years within plantations, equating to an average decline of 1 metre per year.
- The out-grower schemes implemented by commercial timber companies on communal land neighbouring the Park are also having an impact on the water resources in the Park. These small woodlots which have mushroomed in the past decade, sometimes encroach on the boundary of the Park and have the same environmental consequences as outlined above.

In addition, where commercial pines and eucalyptus trees have been removed from the Eastern Shores and Western Shores[20], major rehabilitation challenges remain. These include the need for rehabilitation of the clear felled pine/eucalyptus areas to grassland, the prevention of woody plant encroachment, the eradication of invasive alien species and the restoration of landforms where they have been scarred by commercial forestry management tracks and ploughed firebreaks.

On the Western Shores, where commercial plantations managed by Siyaqhubeka Forests are incorporated into the Park[21], the following challenges exist:

19 Initially, the period to lodge claims was from 1994 to 1998. However, in June 2014, the President announced the re-opening of the land claims process, providing opportunity for communities and individuals who had missed the original land claim deadline to lodge their claims, until June 2019.

20 In 1989, a decision was made by Government to phase out the existing 5,000 ha pine plantation in the Eastern Shores State Forest. This was re-confirmed in 2000 when a decision to phase out a further 7,000 ha of pine and eucalyptus plantation on the Western Shores of Lake St Lucia over a five-year period was made. A final agreement to this effect was signed with SAFCOL on the 31 March 2007.

21 14,200 ha of land owned by SiyaQhubeka Forests (Pty) Ltd that has been incorporated into the Park through a Buffer Zone Incorporation Agreement.

- ❖ The stringent fire protection requirements of commercial timber production are inhibiting the application of conservation management burning regimes that are required for the maintenance of biodiversity and ecological processes.
- ❖ Conditions that encourage the rapid invasion of alien plants are being created by reduced veld burning frequencies coupled to the physical disturbance of soils and natural vegetation arising from commercial forestation.

3.3.1.9 Land Use in the Catchments and the Threat to Water Quality

iSimangaliso's catchment extends far beyond the boundaries of its protected area. The main forms of land tenure and land use in this catchment are privately-owned commercial farmland and communally-owned subsistence farmland. In the catchments draining into the Park there is evidence of overgrazing from domestic livestock, while subsistence agriculture and settlement densification are causing soil erosion. The expansion of forestation and sugar cane lands in areas of the catchment well beyond the Park's boundaries also has a significant impact on the hydrology of the lakes and wetlands, and their biodiversity.

Certain practices associated with agriculture, mining and settlement such as the abstraction of water, stream flow reducing activities, the application of inorganic chemicals, contaminated surface water runoff and inadequate treatment of sewage and wastewater also result in reduced volumes of surface- and groundwater entering the Park, and pollution of these waters, affecting water quality and ecosystem functioning.

3.3.1.10 Restoration of the Lake St Lucia System

Lake St Lucia is the largest estuarine system in southern Africa. It is approximately 36,000 ha in extent. Its importance has been internationally recognised through its declaration as a Ramsar site in February 1986 and the iSimangaliso Wetland Park's listing as a World Heritage Site in December 1999. There are five rivers providing freshwater inputs to the Lake St Lucia system. These include the uMkhuze (catchment approximately 6,000 km²), Hluhluwe (catchment approximately 1,000 km²), Mzinene (catchment approximately 800 km²) Nyalazi (catchment approximately 7,000 km²) and the uMfolozi River (catchment approximately 10,000 km²).

The uMfolozi floodplain was modified in the 1900s for sugarcane farming. This modification comprised inter alia the canalisation of the uMfolozi River and the clearing of indigenous wetlands. In the belief that waterborne sediments posed a risk to the lake, the uMfolozi River was partially separated from the Lake St Lucia system in 1952, by artificially breaching the uMfolozi River into the sea near Maphelane and by placing dredge spoil in the mouth of the system to prevent its natural northward migration. This significantly reduced freshwater inflow to Lake St Lucia from the uMfolozi River, its largest source of freshwater supply. These actions also altered the hydrodynamic functioning of the estuary mouth, because, by removing the uMfolozi, the driving force regulating the natural opening and closing of the mouth of the St Lucia estuary was lost.

In 2011/2012, iSimangaliso with Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife launched its publicly consulted management strategy for the Lake St Lucia Estuary: minimum interference, no artificial breaching and the re-establishment of the natural river course. The first action in implementing this new strategy took place in 2012 when a spillway was dug through the dredge spoil to facilitate the flow of the uMfolozi River into the estuary along its natural course.

Scientific investigations undertaken over the past decade, and more recently through an inter-disciplinary study commissioned by iSimangaliso with Global Environment Facility (GEF) funding support, have confirmed that the uMfolozi River plays an important role in driving the mouth dynamics, strongly determining whether the mouth is open or closed. The amount of water in the uMfolozi River, together with surf action and long-shore sediment movement determine both whether the mouth is open or closed, and its position along the 3 km stretch of coastline between Maphelane and St Lucia.

Dredging operations were a key part of the past management approach to partially separate the uMfolozi catchment from the Lake St Lucia system. The dredgers placed a large volume of sand in the river course of the uMfolozi River. The artificially placed sand 'island' is triangular in shape and covers approximately 900,000 m^2. Over time the 'island' has become vegetated with a mix of dune scrub and acacia woodland. A mangrove lined drainage channel marks the site's western and southern boundaries. The land levels vary across the area with a maximum elevation of approximately 12 m above average mean sea level along the north-eastern edge of the site.

The results of the multi-disciplinary studies undertaken to date indicate that the optimal approach to restoring the natural hydrological and ecological functioning of the Lake St Lucia system is to remove as much of the dredge spoil as possible in order to re-establish the remaining portion of the link between the uMfolozi River and Lake St Lucia.

The primary objective of the project is to remove as much of the material forming this island as possible down to mean sea level, starting from the north east (Area A), in order to re-establish the link between the uMfolozi River and the Lake St Lucia estuary. For investigative and project planning purposes, the site has been divided into four areas. The positions of these sections are shown in Figure 8.

The restoration work began in 2016 starting with Section A. The plan is to work from Section A away from the sea in a south-westerly direction into Section B, depending on the availability of funding.

Other restoration actions include the removal of a number of levees constructed on the lower floodplain to prevent uMfolozi water from reaching the St Lucia estuary, and conservation measures to restrict fishing in the mouth of the estuary.

Ongoing monitoring by iSimangaliso of the hydrological, physical and ecological functioning of this important estuary system will continue throughout and after the implementation of the work as part of iSimangaliso's adaptive management process.

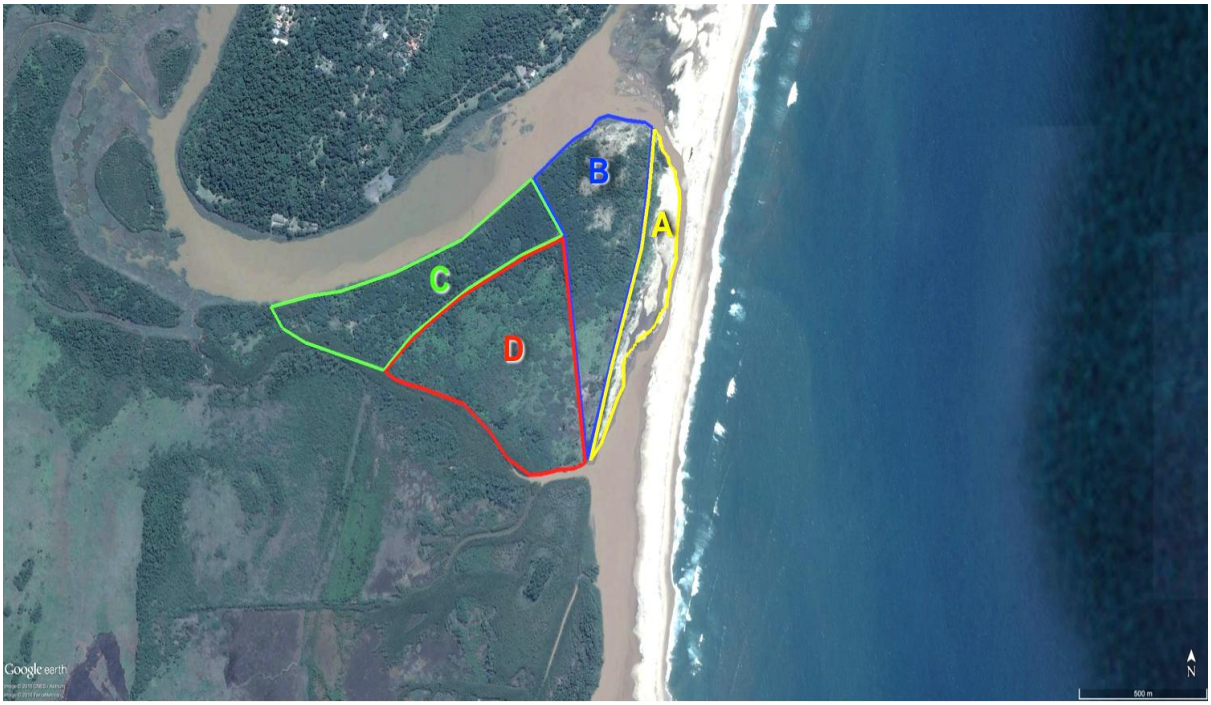


Figure 8 Area to be removed

3.3.1.11 Boundary Encroachment and Uncontrolled Development on the Boundary of the Park

As the Park attracts more tourists, private developments adjacent to the Park are increasing in the form of tourist accommodation such as campsites and small lodges. These are being started by the landowners or occupiers themselves, who live adjacent to or in close proximity to the Park, or by entrepreneurs who get permission to lease stands of Ingonyama Trust land for private residential or commercial (tourism) purposes. This economic opportunity results from a high demand for affordable accommodation for Park visitors and insufficient accommodation available in the Park itself. While it is fulfilling a market niche and attracting more tourists to the Park, there are also negative impacts on the Park, arising from the risks of sub-standard environmental management of these developments, either as a result of lack of knowledge or lack of funds, and exacerbated by a lack of resources in the form of supporting municipal services (e.g. waste and sewage removal). Furthermore, these developments can have negative visual impacts on the Park, which are difficult to prevent or manage if developments do not go through a formal authorisation process with public consultation.

3.3.1.12 Alien invasive species

Alien invasive plants are a threat to biodiversity in the Park and significant resources are required to control infestations on an ongoing basis. As part of the rehabilitation programme for the areas previously under forestry on the Eastern and Western Shores, much work has been done to clear such species, mostly *Chromolaena odorata.* However, alien vegetation clearing programmes are also implemented throughout the Park due to colonisation from outside the Park via wind and water dispersal. The areas adjacent to watercourses are most vulnerable to infestation as are the Park's boundaries where alien invasive plant control on neighbouring land can be lacking.

Land Care and Rehabilitation Programmes have removed 12,000 ha of commercial timber, which has improved ecosystem functioning; rehabilitated 45,000 ha through an alien plant control programme; created new habitats and provided employment for thousands of Park neighbours. As part of the re-development process, considerable investment in tourism and conservation infrastructure has been made.

For example, the land care and infrastructure development programmes have employed community-based contractors creating about 54,378 temporary jobs over the last 15 years (audited figures ending in 2013/2014 financial year) with an average of 3,625 temporary jobs created annually.

Alien plants, both terrestrial species such as *Chromolaena odorata*, and aquatic species such as water hyacinth *Eichhornia crassipes* and *Pistia stratiotes* which proliferate due to eutrophication, can cause biological and chemical changes in the estuaries of the Park. Further, the invasive alien snail *Tarebia granifera* is spreading rapidly through KZN coastal fresh and estuarine waters, and is already present within the water bodies of iSimangaliso. It is unknown as yet what the impact of this invasion will be but eradication of this snail is currently not possible.

3.3.1.13 Unexploded ordinance

The South African National Defence Force (SANDF) operated a Missile Test Range at its military training area at Hell's Gate on the Nhlozi Peninsula, which was closed during the 1990s. From the test range, missiles were fired into the Wilderness area of the Park across Lake St Lucia. Although there have been various clearance exercises, the Department of Defence has not certified that the impact areas are completely clear of Unexploded Ordinances or parts thereof. Figure 9 in Appendix 3 indicates the various impact areas.

3.3.1.14 Infrastructure development

With tourism development there will be the development of a range of infrastructure, from accommodation, to roads, parking areas, gates, etc. The development of this infrastructure presents the possibility of cumulative impacts. There is a need to close some roads within the Park so that access to fragile and significant areas can be better controlled and their conservation enhanced. Conversely, the standard of certain roads will need to be improved so that better tourism facilities and better tourist management are provided at the same time as iSimangaliso and its heritage values are protected.

3.3.1.15 Climate change

The effects of climate change manifesting in more severe weather events increases the risk to ecosystems by exacerbating the effects of other threats described in this chapter. Results from modelling exercises suggest that the effects on water quantity and quality resulting from prolonged periods of drought can have serious consequences for natural ecosystems in the Park as well as the social environment and tourism industry. Conversely, there may be severe rainfall events that affect natural systems (e.g. erosion) and the human environment (flooding, risk to life and infrastructure damages). Furthermore, due to the severity of these rainfall events, water may be unavailable to the environment because of the severe manner in which it will rain and anticipated rapid surface water runoff.

In this regard, it must be noted that South Africa has developed A National Climate Change Response Strategy for the country. This strategy contains priority areas of concern, with the following being of relevance to the iSimangaliso Wetland Park:

- Supporting national objectives and sustainable development.
- Adapting to Climate Change.
- Meeting international obligations.
- The integration of climate change response in government.
- Domestic legal obligations.
- Climate change related education, training, awareness and capacity building.
- Climate change related research, development and demonstration.

To date, the iSimangaliso Wetland Park has implemented various measures in an effort to manage the impacts of climate change. These include:

- The restoration of natural systems in an effort to improve the resilience of the Park (for example, restoration of the Lake St Lucia estuarine system, interconnection of wetlands, and dune rehabilitation at Sodwana and St Lucia).
- The removal of infrastructure situated in vulnerable areas (viz. infrastructure in low lying areas or within the coastal management line).
- Raising of roads to prevent flooding during times of heavy rain.
- Supply of water to dry areas during times of drought.
- This IMP includes a coastal management line (Section 5.2.4) that will guide development.

The Authority will continue to implement measures to manage the effects of climate change as outlined above in relation to the country's climate change response strategy.

3.3.2 Constraints to poverty alleviation and empowerment

3.3.2.1 Regional context

While iSimangaliso is an important economic driver for the region, it is not the economic panacea of common perception. Many people, particularly land claimants and neighbouring communities, have high expectations of the economic opportunities that the Park will generate. Such expectations of a natural asset and of the tourism sector are unrealistic. iSimangaliso is committed to fulfilling its development mandate but cannot singly resolve regional economic issues, including the alleviation of widespread poverty. Multi-level interventions which address the historical under-development of the region are still required.
There have been notable achievements over the years:

- Land Care, Rehabilitation Programmes and infrastructure development have employed community-based contractors creating about 54,378 temporary jobs over the last 15 years (audited figures ending in 2013/2014 financial year) with an average of 3,625 temporary jobs created annually.
- To support sustainable agriculture, the Authority established 40 food gardens around the Park in 2008, working with 900 gardeners, mainly women.
- Co-management agreements with land claimants define beneficiation packages that include annual revenue payments. Over the past six years R 4,438,751 has been paid to land claimant communities.
- Land claimant groups are equity partners in three tourism accommodation facilities that provide for equity shareholding of between 20 and 61 percent. Tourism activity licences are reserved for businesses where at least 70% shareholding is community-owned and actively managed. Training programmes in tourism, hospitality and tour-guiding have included local people. These new partners benefit directly from conservation and, in this way, the Park's outstanding heritage values have become tangible.
- The Craft Programme provides focused support for income generation for local women through capacity building, product development and selling crafts in a range of higher value markets. Beginning in 2000, the programme has supported 24 craft groups.
- The Rural Enterprise Programme provides sub-grants and technical assistance. Thus far, 178 enterprises have participated in the programme and 71 enterprises have received grants to the value of R 6,350,134.
- Since 2010, iSimangaliso had supported 67 young people from land claimant and neighbouring communities to study at tertiary institutions in the fields of conservation and tourism.

Despite these achievements, the region remains poor, and significant additional investment and support is required.

3.3.2.2 Poor historical relationship between communities and conservation

Under the previous government, conservation efforts in the area generally worked to exacerbate the plight of rural residents rather than contribute to economic growth and poverty alleviation. Indeed, large tracts of rural land were given over to the formation of nature reserves managed by conservation and other state agencies that ensured a high level of environmental preservation within the protected areas. Outside the nature reserves, however, land deprivation and systematic underdevelopment caused severe levels of resource degradation and acute poverty among large sections of the population. This co-existence between protected nature reserves on the one hand and degraded human reserves on the other, forms the broad context that characterises underdevelopment in areas surrounding the Park.

Underpinning this situation is the legacy of forced removals. For many people living in the area today, conservation is synonymous with loss of their land and consequent social dislocation. With the loss of land being a bitter living memory for these residents, it is not surprising that there is hostility towards conservation and conservation authorities.

Tensions between impoverished residents and conservation continue to play themselves out and present a significant challenge to iSimangaliso. In this regard, it will be through the delivery of economic benefits, the attaching of values to the aesthetic, cultural, spiritual, social and educational attributes of the Park, and the permitting of sustainable access to natural resources that these tensions will dissipate. In addition, iSimangaliso's efforts to deliver these benefits must be accompanied by service delivery and creation of economic opportunities in the region.

Since the inception of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park, significant resources and effort have been focused on the delivery of social and economic benefits to impoverished neighbouring communities, through various programs. However, unrealistic expectations of delivery and the potential for delivery of benefits poses a key risk for iSimangaliso, as does the difficulty of balancing interests within and between stakeholders groups.

3.3.2.3 Transformation of the tourism sector

Transformation of the economy is a national government objective. iSimangaliso seeks to implement this through inter alia its tourism development programme. This is achieved through many skills development programmes, such as tourism guiding, enterprise development, bursaries, internships as well as its programme of permitting commercial tourism operations in the Park.

Permissions issued to private parties to operate tourism activities or accommodation in the Park have specific requirements in respect of equity participation, job creation, and skills development. iSimangaliso has partnered with community-owned companies for charter fishing, turtle tours, and boat cruises as well as accommodation facilities. In the current economic climate, tourism is an important economic activity for communities in the region.

The basis for issuing permissions (licenses and public private partnership agreements) is based on the PPP regulations in the PFMA. The basic principles include:

- ❖ Transfer of risk, specifically business and environmental risk, to the private sector.
- ❖ Maintenance of public access.
- ❖ Value for money to the Park.
- ❖ Predictable revenue stream for the Park in the form of monthly fees.
- ❖ Promotion of transformation (BEE codes).

Commercial opportunities through land incorporations with neighbours are pursued on the same basis.

3.3.3 Constraints to tourism development

Significant strides have been made in the redevelopment of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park. Certain sections of the Park are less developed than others, particularly the northern reaches. There are specific factors associated with tourism development in Parks that give rise to challenges with tourism development. These are set out in Table 4.

Infrastructure deficits in the area also play a role. For example, the lack of local and regional solid waste disposal facilities, inadequate or non-existent water treatment works, a poor communications network, inadequate water supply, lack of basic facilities such as adequate medical support, and insufficient and inadequate signage.

To make PPP investments more attractive, iSimangaliso:

- ❖ Includes in its contract terms a payment holiday during the EIA and construction periods.
- ❖ Facilitates access to development finance institutions in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding it has concluded with these institutions for Park projects.
- ❖ Provides bulk services to site at its cost, where appropriate.
- ❖ Undertakes many skills training programmes so that prospective investors can draw from a pool of skilled hospitality staff.
- ❖ Implements an extensive marketing programme which has improved the Park's profile as well as visitor numbers.
- ❖ Runs an entrepreneurship programme that supports businesses capable of offering upstream and downstream services to tourism facilities.

Lastly, iSimangaliso has recently embarked on a programme to raise grant funding for the community equity share in PPP investments.

Table 4 Regular Tourism Investments versus Project Area Public Private Partnerships (PPP)

Number	Regular Tourist Accommodation Investment	Tourist Accommodation PPP in a Protected Area
1	**Capital Growth**	
	The investor is able to sell the property at a value that generally exceeds the initial investment	There is no capital growth. The facility automatically reverts to the state without compensation for the improvements effected by the investor. At best, the outgoing Private Party may recoup part of the value of any movables taken over by the new operator
2	**Collateral for Debt Financing**	
	The property can serve as collateral for debt finance, even in the case where the investment is on leasehold property	Collateral for debt financing is limited to the investor's use rights under the agreements, which in financial terms, are very limited. The investor is not able to encumber the Park asset but would have to encumber other assets to secure finance
3	**Risk**	
	The investor assumes the full operational risk, including the risk of bankruptcy. However, the investor may sell the project at any time to mitigate losses or avert bankruptcy. If further capital has to be injected into the project, it may be recovered through future profits and/or capital appreciation	The investor assumes the full operational risk, including the risk of bankruptcy. The investor has no option but to continue to operate the project irrespective of the losses being incurred and the prospects of recovery. If further capital has to be injected into the project, it may never be recouped since the life of the project is finite and there is no capital appreciation
4	**Finance for Land Claimants & Traditional Councils ("Mandatory Partners")**	
	The investor is not required to raise or underwrite any mandatory partner's share of the investment	Protected areas are required to create benefits for mandatory partners in the form of equity amongst other things. Since the mandatory partners have little or no capital or assets, the primary investor must underwrite or guarantee the mandatory partner's equity and share of debt finance, resulting in a disproportionate risk vis-à-vis return on investment
5	**Capital Expenditure & Operating Costs**	
	Capex and operating costs are not impacted by environmental and related factors typical of protected areas	Capex and operational costs are appreciably higher in response to environmental strictures. For example, construction costs are higher because building takes place in remote and/or inaccessible areas; waste must be removed from the Park; specialised plant must be installed to deal with sewage, etc.
6	**Target Market**	
	The investment project typically has access to a variety of markets (leisure, business, etc.), enabling it to diversify its business risk	The investment project is reliant exclusively on the leisure market, which is notoriously fickle and subject to vagaries beyond the investor's control

3.4 Proposed interventions

A summary of the conservation significance of and threats to the Park and the corresponding tourism potential and constraints, potential for and constraints to community benefits and the proposed interventions per Management and Development Block is provided in Table 5 and corresponds geographically to Figure 11*. (The rationale and description of these management and development blocks and sections are explained in Section 5.1.10).*

The link between these threats and proposed interventions and the actions listed in the Implementation Plan (Section 4.6 in Chapter 4) are presented in Table 6.

Table 5 The conservation significance of and threats to the iSimangaliso Wetland Park, and the corresponding tourism potential and constraints, potential for and constraints to community benefits, and proposed interventions (per Management and Development Block)

Section	Conservation Significance	Conservation Threats	Tourism Potential	Tourism Constraints	Community Benefits: Potential	Community Benefits: Constraints	Essential & Desirable Interventions
Management and Development Block A: Southern Sections							
Eastern Shores	❖ High species diversity and exceptionally beautiful and diverse landscapes ❖ Two Ramsar Sites ❖ Source of freshwater for Lake St Lucia ❖ Southern limit of South African coral reefs ❖ Important marine biogeographic region & ecosystem with many endemic species ❖ Abundance of hippos and crocodiles ❖ Elephants and Rhinos (Black and White)	❖ Rocky marine habitats unprotected ❖ Alien plant invasion ❖ Closure of St Lucia estuary mouth ❖ Catchment degradation ❖ Loss of diversity of wildlife ❖ Effects of climate change ❖ Offshore prospecting and the exploitation of resources ❖ Lack of funding for programmes ❖ Service standards need improvement	❖ Spectacular and highly diverse landscapes ❖ Game viewing ❖ Archaeological & historical significance ❖ Opportunity to offer an exceptionally wide variety of tourism & recreational activities/attractions (land, lake & sea-based) ❖ Prime lodge sites ❖ Opportunity to expand day visitor activities to meet growth of St Lucia town ❖ Turtle nesting ❖ Ragged-tooth shark diving ❖ Sporting events (e.g. mountain bike races)	❖ Degraded grasslands and alien vegetation destroys the unique 'sense of place' ❖ Lion absent at present ❖ Service standards need improvement ❖ Effects of climate change ❖ Service standards need improvement	❖ Access for ritual and cultural purposes ❖ Development of a cultural tourism site ❖ Sustainable natural resource use: iNcema ❖ Mandatory partners in tourism accommodation ❖ Land care contractors and temporary employment ❖ Cultural interpretation and naming of infrastructure ❖ Environmental education & interpretation	❖ Land claim settled but high expectations of delivery from tourism ❖ Communities lack tourism business skills	❖ More game species introduced ❖ Upgraded tourist roads and tracks ❖ Rehabilitation and alien clearing ❖ Support to responsible institutions in catchment management ❖ Construction of Park furniture ❖ Tourism activity concessions awarded ❖ Tourism accommodation sites developed ❖ Training and capacity building of community members so that benefits from tourism development are maximized ❖ Environmental education and interpretation provided ❖ Improve the standard of service delivery ❖ Continue fundraising for programmes ❖ Implement applicable actions of the Climate Change Response Strategy ❖ Continue implementing the alien invasive eradication programme

Section	Conservation Significance	Conservation Threats	Tourism Potential	Tourism Constraints	Community Benefits: Potential	Community Benefits: Constraints	Essential & Desirable Interventions
Maphelane Dukuduku Futululu	❖ Important linkage with the Park system ❖ Role of uMfolozi mouth in maintaining the health of the lake system ❖ Catchment role of Dukuduku and Futululu in supplying fresh water to the lake system ❖ Number of rare plant species and habitats ❖ Futululu best remaining example of coastal lowland forests	❖ Settlement in Dukuduku ❖ Reduced water quality due to settlements, waste water discharge, etc. ❖ Negative impact of sugar farming and other cultivation on the uMfolozi floodplain (siltation, closure of mouth, artificial separation of uMfolozi from estuary mouth) ❖ Uncontrolled development on the Park boundary ❖ Effects of climate change ❖ Offshore prospecting and resource exploitation ❖ Lack of funding for programmes ❖ Service standards need improvement	❖ Unspoilt African scenery along the 'Gateway' to the Park ❖ Mosaic of beautiful landscapes ❖ Opportunity for limited community-based tourism in Dukuduku area ❖ Opportunity for 'eco-boat' trails on the uMzunduzi river ❖ Opportunity for guided trails and camping	❖ Maphelane is not accessible by road from the remainder of the Park ❖ The access road from the N2 is not accessible to non-4x4s ❖ Very little large game animals (no Big 5 species) ❖ Difficult to construct tourism roads due to forests and swamps ❖ Unfenced ❖ Uncontrolled settlement in Dukuduku ❖ Effects of climate change ❖ Service standards need improvement	❖ Short term revenue sharing with land claimants ❖ Cultural heritage site ❖ Mandatory partners in tourism accommodation ❖ Sustainable resource use ❖ Community guides for trails and meanders	❖ High expectations and low short-term tourism potential (depends on road construction by the Department of Transport)	❖ Settlement in the Dukuduku forest resolved and formalised to the benefit of the people involved, conservation and tourism ❖ Implementation of the 'mouth solution' as determined in the GEF funded study ❖ Implementation of the Park's Zone of Influence policy ❖ The possible reclamation of the uMfolozi swamps ❖ Training and capacity building of community members so that benefits from tourism development are optimised ❖ Continue fundraising for programmes ❖ Improve the standard of service delivery ❖ Implement applicable actions of the Climate Change Response Strategy

Section	Conservation Significance	Conservation Threats	Tourism Potential	Tourism Constraints	Community Benefits: Potential	Community Benefits: Constraints	Essential & Desirable Interventions
Western Shores	❖ Essential source of fresh water for Lake St Lucia ❖ Extensive area of fresh water wetland habitat ❖ Important source of grazing for hippo ❖ Sharing of costs through land incorporation agreement with SiyaQhubeka Forests ❖ Exposed sedimentary rock rich in marine fossils ❖ Primary habitat for elephants	❖ Pine & eucalyptus plantations that affect the quantity of water entering the lake ❖ Alien vegetation ❖ Slow resolution of land claims ❖ Condition of poverty of neighbouring communities leading to dependence on natural resources ❖ Poaching ❖ Effects of climate change ❖ Lack of funding for programmes ❖ Service standards need improvement ❖ Alien species	❖ Close proximity to St Lucia town ❖ Game viewing, including elephants and rhinos ❖ High carrying capacity for tourist attractions & facilities ❖ Important complementary role to that of the Eastern Shores ❖ Close to N2 and Hluhluwe iMfolozi Park for bus groups	❖ Pine and Eucalyptus plantations affecting views ❖ Slow resolution of land claim leads to uncertainty, investment risk & unclear definition of the beneficiary partners ❖ High cost of road construction ❖ State facilities in poor condition ❖ Limited potable water ❖ Limited accommodation ❖ Effects of climate change	❖ Economic beneficiation package for land claimants ❖ Mandatory partners in tourism accommodation facilities ❖ Land care contractors and temporary employment ❖ Sustainable natural resource use	❖ Slow resolution of the land claim ❖ High and/or unrealistic expectations of delivery from tourism ❖ Communities lack tourism business skills	❖ Land claim speedily resolved by RLCC ❖ Co-management agreement signed with land claimants to determine the economic benefits and access rights ❖ Further construction of roads ❖ Development and redevelopment of tourism accommodation facilities ❖ Continue fundraising for programmes ❖ Improve the standard of service delivery ❖ Implement applicable actions of the Climate Change Response Strategy ❖ Continue implementing the alien invasive eradication programme

Section	Conservation Significance	Conservation Threats	Tourism Potential	Tourism Constraints	Community Benefits: Potential	Community Benefits: Constraints	Essential & Desirable Interventions
Nhlozi Peninsula	❖ Rich marine fossil deposits ❖ Crocodile breeding sites ❖ Priority species present (e.g. black rhino, buffalo and tsessebe)	❖ High risk of creating negative visual impacts (e.g. lights, buildings) ❖ Commercial timber plantations ❖ Alien vegetation ❖ Poaching ❖ Effects of climate change ❖ Lack of funding for programmes ❖ Service standards need improvement ❖ Alien species	❖ Spectacular views ❖ Good game viewing and landscape ❖ Can be stocked ❖ Ideal for concessions with the private sector ❖ Existing airstrip	❖ Slow resolution of land claims ❖ Commercial timber plantations ❖ Strong winds ❖ Limited potable water ❖ Effects of climate change ❖ Lack of accommodation facilities ❖ Possible unexploded ordinance	❖ Economic beneficiation package for land claimants ❖ Mandatory partners in tourism accommodation facilities ❖ Land care contractors and temporary employment ❖ Sustainable natural resource use	❖ Slow resolution of the land claim ❖ High and/or unrealistic expectations of delivery from tourism ❖ Communities lack tourism business skills	❖ Land claim speedily resolved by RLCC ❖ Co-management agreement signed with land claimants to determine the economic benefits and access rights ❖ Lodge and traversing rights are concessioned to the private sector ❖ Continue fundraising for programmes ❖ Improve the standard of service delivery ❖ Implement applicable actions of the Climate Change Response Strategy ❖ Continue implementing the alien invasive eradication programme

Section	Conservation Significance	Conservation Threats	Tourism Potential	Tourism Constraints	Community Benefits: Potential	Community Benefits: Constraints	Essential & Desirable Interventions
False Bay	❖ Sand forests ❖ Suni antelope ❖ Rich marine fossil beds	❖ Linear shape with long boundary ❖ Lack of land linkages with other existing areas of the Park ❖ Unresolved land claims ❖ Resource use pressure (including poaching) ❖ Effects of climate change ❖ Lack of funding for programmes ❖ Service standards need improvement ❖ Alien species	❖ Existing lodges on neighbouring private land ❖ Proximity to the Hluhluwe spine road ❖ Birding opportunities ❖ Sporting opportunities, including mountain biking ❖ Opportunities for school groups (environmental education and training)	❖ Small size ❖ Lack of potable water ❖ Effects of climate change ❖ Service standards need improvement	❖ Economic beneficiation package for land claimants ❖ Mandatory partners in tourism accommodation facilities ❖ Sub-contractors and temporary employment in infrastructure development ❖ Sustainable natural resource use ❖ Percentage of revenue ❖ Environmental education & interpretation	❖ Slow resolution of the land claim ❖ High expectations of delivery from tourism with relatively low potential ❖ Communities lack tourism business skills	❖ Land claim speedily resolved by RLCC ❖ Co-management agreement signed with land claimants to determine the economic benefits and access rights ❖ Environmental Education and Interpretation provided ❖ Continue fundraising for programmes ❖ Improve the standard of service delivery ❖ Implement applicable actions of the Climate Change Response Strategy ❖ Continue implementing the alien invasive eradication programme

Section	Conservation Significance	Conservation Threats	Tourism Potential	Tourism Constraints	Community Benefits: Potential	Community Benefits: Constraints	Essential & Desirable Interventions
Management Block and Development B: Central Sections							
Sodwana State Forest/Ozabeni Sodwana Bay	❖ Unique 'sense of place' ❖ Exceptionally high landscape diversity ❖ Wilderness area ❖ Extensive grassland & wetland habitat ❖ uMkhuze swamp regulates quantity and quality of water into Lake St Lucia ❖ Extensive beaches and forested dunes ❖ Important marine biogeographic region & eco-system with many endemic species ❖ Important wetland habitat ❖ Mgobozeleni estuary is an important nursery area for estuary dependent marine species and lake system hosts many rare, threatened and endemic plant & animal species	❖ Continued destruction of the boundary fence to keep animals in and unauthorised cattle out ❖ Increased farming in and destruction of the uMkhuze swamps ❖ Uncontrolled development on the Park boundary ❖ No co-management agreement with land claimants leads to uncertainty ❖ Spread of alien plants ❖ Unregulated tourism development on the border of the Park ❖ Poaching ❖ Effects of climate change ❖ Offshore prospecting and resource exploitation ❖ Lack of funding for programmes ❖ Service standards need improvement ❖ Alien species	❖ Undiscovered jewel of South Africa ❖ Large, beautiful and diverse with unique combination of land and seascapes ❖ Upmarket intimate lodges ❖ Good landscape for game and bird viewing ❖ Wilderness experience ❖ Spectacular diving sites ❖ Easy access on Hluhluwe spine road and from other areas of the Park ❖ A number of pans known for their diverse and abundant birdlife ❖ Sporting activities/events ❖ Development of a tourism node on the boundary of the Park	❖ Spread of alien plants ❖ Low carrying capacity for tourists (except Sodwana Bay) ❖ No upgraded roads permitted ❖ Wilderness area limits infrastructure development ❖ Limited number and variety of game animals (especially Big 5) stocked at present ❖ Unregulated tourism development on borders of the Park ❖ Poor or no municipal services ❖ Crime ❖ Effects of climate change ❖ Service standards need improvement	❖ Economic beneficiation package for land claimants ❖ Mandatory partners in tourism accommodation facilities ❖ Sub-contractors and temporary employment in infrastructure development ❖ Sustainable natural resource use ❖ Percentage of revenue	❖ No co-management agreement with claimants ❖ High/unrealistic expectations of delivery from tourism ❖ Communities lack tourism business skills	❖ Enter into co-management agreement with land claimants ❖ Stock game as per the game reintroduction policy ❖ Place strict controls on the number and type of lodges & activities ❖ Remove cattle from area ❖ Control alien plants ❖ Negotiate with communities regarding the conservation of the uMkhuze swamps ❖ Implementation of the Park's Zone of Influence policy ❖ Regulate tourism concessions ❖ Long term re-development of Sodwana Bay ❖ Continue fundraising for programmes ❖ Improve the standard of service delivery ❖ Implement applicable actions of the Climate Change Response Strategy ❖ Continue implementing the alien invasive eradication programme

Section	Conservation Significance	Conservation Threats	Tourism Potential	Tourism Constraints	Community Benefits: Potential	Community Benefits: Constraints	Essential & Desirable Interventions
uMkhuze	❖ Different habitat from rest of the Park ❖ More arid and fertile ❖ uMkhuze catchment ❖ Black Rhino ❖ Big Five ❖ African Wild Dog	❖ Extensive use of uMkhuze river & floodplain for agriculture ❖ Unresolved land claims ❖ Poor neighbouring communities reliant on natural resources ❖ Poaching ❖ Effects of climate change ❖ Lack of funding for programmes ❖ Service standards need improvement ❖ Alien species	❖ Long established and well-known reserve ❖ Large variety of game including the Big 5 species ❖ Hluhluwe spine road, Muzi crossing and new entrance will improve access ❖ Self-catering tourism facilities ❖ A number of pans known for their diverse and abundant birdlife	❖ No upmarket lodges for foreign tourists ❖ Poor condition of existing tourism facilities ❖ Effects of climate change ❖ Service standards need improvement	❖ Economic beneficiation package for land claimants ❖ Mandatory partners in tourism accommodation facilities ❖ Sub-contractors and temporary employment in land care & infrastructure development ❖ Sustainable natural resource use ❖ Percentage of revenue ❖ Environmental education & interpretation	❖ Slow resolution of the land claim ❖ High expectations of delivery from tourism with relatively low potential ❖ Communities lack tourism business skills	❖ Land claims speedily resolved by RLCC ❖ Co-management agreement signed with land claimants to determine the economic benefits and access rights ❖ Promote sustainable land use on neighbouring community land ❖ Environmental education and interpretation provided ❖ Continue fundraising for programmes ❖ Improve the standard of service delivery ❖ Implement applicable actions of the Climate Change Response Strategy ❖ Continue implementing the alien invasive eradication programme

Section	Conservation Significance	Conservation Threats	Tourism Potential	Tourism Constraints	Community Benefits: Potential	Community Benefits: Constraints	Essential & Desirable Interventions
Management and Development Block C: Northern Sections (Coastal Forest Reserve)							
Kosi Bay Manzengwenya Lake Sibaya	❖ Highly diverse environment: terrestrial and marine ❖ High species diversity in dune forest habitat ❖ Largest protected area of swamp forest in South Africa ❖ Important wetland linkages with the Park components in the south ❖ Three Ramsar sites ❖ Numerous rare, threatened and endemic species ❖ Lake Sibaya is only permanent source of freshwater in area during dry periods and is important link between the Kosi and St Lucia systems ❖ Kosi is best-preserved estuary in South Africa and important nursery area for estuary-dependent marine species ❖ Cultural heritage significance of the traditional fish traps	❖ Lack of support from local communities ❖ Unresolved land claim ❖ Boundary encroachment and uncontrolled development on the boundary of the Park ❖ Increasing pressure on natural resources (e.g. fish, other marine resources, reeds and hardwood) ❖ Extensive subsistence and commercial agriculture in the swamp forests ❖ Commercial and small grower plantations ❖ Crocodile and hippopotamus populations threatened in Lake Sibaya and Kosi systems ❖ Abstraction of water from Lake Sibaya for surrounding communities ❖ Effects of climate change ❖ Lack of funding for programmes ❖ Poaching ❖ Offshore prospecting and resource exploitation ❖ Alien species ❖ Service standards need improvement	❖ High potential for exclusive marine ecotourism activities ❖ Attractive and intimate marine & ecological sites ❖ Land component also offers a number of ecotourism sites ❖ No fencing and people resident in area which allows for a different type of tourism (limited scope for large game and therefore more freedom to experience area on foot ❖ Cultural tourism ❖ Opportunities ❖ Fish traps (living history) ❖ Opportunity for limited community- based tourism ❖ Turtle tours ❖ Hiking trails ❖ Boating on lakes	❖ Road access is poor ❖ Difficult to obtain security of tenure ❖ Low carrying capacity for tourists ❖ Lack of support from communities ❖ Unresolved land claim ❖ Difficult to provide tourism facilities with services, e.g. potable water, waste facilities (solid and waste water), etc. ❖ Effects of climate change ❖ Service standards need improvement	❖ Economic beneficiation package for land claimants and residents of the Coastal Forest Reserve ❖ Mandatory partners in tourism accommodation facilities ❖ Sustainable natural resource use ❖ Regulated community-based B&Bs and home stays	❖ Unresolved land claim ❖ High expectations of delivery from tourism with relatively low potential ❖ Communities lack tourism business skills	❖ Gain support of communities ❖ Undertake LAPs so that the type of tourism and residential facilities and activities are regulated ❖ Implementation of the Park's Zone of Influence policy ❖ Continue fundraising for programmes ❖ Improve the standard of service delivery ❖ Implement applicable actions of the Climate Change Response Strategy ❖ Continue implementing the alien invasive eradication programme

Neighbouring community land							
Neighbouring community land	❖ Provides corridors between components of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park ❖ uMkhuze swamp acts as a filter for Lake St Lucia ❖ Sand forest is better represented on some communal land than in protected areas ❖ Some game fencing exists ❖ Potential for community conservation areas being incorporated into the Park	❖ Spiralling rural poverty leads to unsustainable land use practices ❖ Negative attitude towards conservation and authorities due to people's loss of land and resources ❖ Uncontrolled developments on the Park boundary	❖ Some prime lodge sites ❖ Growing demand for combining nature and cultural experiences ❖ Growing eco-tourism market seeks facilities that benefit local communities	❖ Communities lack tourism awareness and expertise ❖ Eco-tourists are not attracted to degraded landscapes ❖ Perception of security & safety risks in communal land ❖ Lack of capital and/or investment interest for development of tourism facilities	❖ As for tourism & conservation	❖ As for tourism & conservation	❖ Undertake LAPs with beneficiary communities ❖ Facilitate linkages with relevant government departments for service delivery ❖ Integration of Park planning into municipal IDPs ❖ Implementation of the Park's Zone of Influence policy ❖ Seek international donor funding
Private Land							
Private Land	❖ Important linkage/corridor between the uMkhuze section and other parts of the Park ❖ Large suni population ❖ Rare coastal grasslands on land neighbouring False Bay ❖ More sand forest and palm veld than in protected areas	❖ Wildlife management & tourism objectives may conflict with those of the protected area ❖ Agricultural and peri-urban development ❖ Poaching	❖ Flexibility and risk taking of the private sector ❖ Potential synergy between tourism on private land and tourism in protected areas. Big 5 already stocked on some private land	❖ Much private land is too small to offer competitive tourism products ❖ Many private land owners do not have the expertise or desire to develop & manage tourism products	❖ N/A	N/A	❖ Continue discussing prospects of consolidation with private land owners

Table 6 The link between the threats and proposed interventions, and the actions listed in the Implementation Plan

Analysis of significance, challenge & threat	Action/mitigation (Implementation plan)
Significance	
Conservation significance	Strategic driver 1
Cultural heritage significance	Strategic driver 1
Economic significance	Strategic driver 2; Strategic Driver 4
Challenges and threats	
Threats to natural values	
Disruption of terrestrial and wetland processes	Strategic Driver 1
Fishing offtake	Strategic Driver 1
Poaching	Strategic Driver 1
Socio-economic environment	Strategic Driver 2; Strategic Driver 3
Offshore prospecting, mining and hydrocarbon extraction	Strategic Driver 1
Slow resolution of land claims	Strategic Driver 3
Commercial forestation	Strategic Driver 1
Land use in the catchments	Strategic Driver 1
Restoration of the Lake St Lucia system	Strategic Driver 1, Strategic Driver 6

Analysis of significance, challenge & threat	**Action/mitigation (Implementation plan)**
Boundary encroachment and uncontrolled development on the Park boundary	Strategic Driver 1
Municipal services (water and waste management)	Strategic Driver 1; Strategic Driver 4
Alien invasive species	Strategic Driver 1
Unexploded ordinance	Strategic Driver 1; Strategic Driver 2
Infrastructure development	Strategic Driver 2;
Climate change	Strategic Driver 1; Strategic Driver 5
Constraints to poverty alleviation and empowerment	
Regional context	Strategic Driver 2; Strategic Driver 3
Poor historical relationship between communities and conservation authorities	Strategic Driver 2; Strategic Driver 3; Strategic Driver 5
Transformation of the tourism sector	Strategic Driver 2; Strategic Driver 3
Constraints to tourism development	Strategic Driver 1; Strategic Driver 2

4. POLICY AND STRATEGIC PLANNING FRAMEWORK AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

4.1 Introduction

The World Heritage Convention Act and National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act both require that the IMP contain a co-ordinated policy framework. Closely connected to policy, is strategic planning. Together, they define strategy or direction and provide a deliberate plan of action to guide decisions and achieve desired outcomes.

The policy and strategic planning framework for the Park is determined by legislation[22], and in order to ensure that all obligations are met in a consistent and cohesive way, this framework has been structured in the following logical progression:

- A vision (Section 4.3).
- A mission (Section 4.4).
- Management goals (Section 4.5).
- An implementation plan 2017 – 2021 (Section 4.6) containing:
  - Prioritised interventions.
  - Key strategic drivers.
  - Objectives underpinning each strategic driver.
  - Key actions required to achieve each objective and corresponding timeframes.

There are also a number of subsidiary plans and policies that form part of this framework. These are described in Chapter 5 as they also form part of the suite of Park management tools.

4.2 Planning cycle and reporting requirements

iSimangaliso's planning cycle comprises a number of different types of plans, which are required to be reviewed (evaluated) and reported against at various intervals. The five-year implementation plan contained in this IMP provides the framework for all the planning and implementation on an annual basis. As stated, the preparation of this plan is regulated by the World Heritage Convention Act (WHCA). The World Heritage Convention Act and Public Finance Management Act (PFMA) require a Corporate Strategy/Strategic Plan and an Annual Plan of Operation[23] to be developed and submitted to the Minister for approval. The PFMA requires the strategic plan to cover a three-year period and the WHCA requires it to cover a five-year period. The most restrictive requirement is adopted and a five-year plan is prepared.

The strategic plan takes into consideration inter alia prevailing government priorities, the priorities of the Department of Environmental Affairs, and iSimangaliso's risk assessment.

22 Refer to Chapter 1, Section 1.2 (Enabling Legal Framework) and Figure 2 for a description of the legislation that determines Park policy and planning and how the policy and strategic planning framework, within the ambit of the IMP, fits into the hierarchical structure of the broader legal framework, requiring both vertical integration (i.e. alignment with legislation and policy that has specific bearing to Park management) and horizontal integration (i.e. alignment with national, provincial, regional and local planning outside the Park).

23 The Corporate Strategy meets the Strategic Planning requirements for both the Public Finance Management Act and the World Heritage Convention Act as well as National Treasury frameworks.

The planning timeframes are specified in the PFMA and by the Department of Environmental Affairs. Typically, planning for the following year is undertaken in August of each year, together with a review of the current year's performance. The annual performance plan is approved by the Board, reviewed by the Department of Environmental Affairs and adopted by the Minister. Quarterly progress reports are submitted to DEA. The annual report, which includes the audited annual financial statements and performance report, is tabled by the Minister of Environmental Affairs to Parliament.

The IMP is implemented via the annual plan of operation and incorporated in the strategic plan/corporate strategy. The annual plan of operation refines the IMP with reference to prevailing circumstances. Furthermore, the implementation of the IMP is subject to the availability of resources, including funding and human capacity.

Periodic reporting to the World Heritage Committee on the state of the World Heritage site is also required and undertaken.

4.3 Vision

iSimangaliso's vision is to create Africa's greatest conservation-based tourism destination driven by community empowerment.

4.4 Mission

iSimangaliso's mission is to protect, conserve and present the Wetland Park and its World Heritage values for current and future generations in line with the standards laid down by UNESCO and the World Heritage Convention Act, and to deliver benefits to communities living in and adjacent to the Park by facilitating optimal tourism and related development.

4.5 Management goals

There are four overarching and interdependent management goals for iSimangaliso, which are derived from the World Heritage Convention Act. These are:

1. **Management goal 1:** To protect, conserve, enhance and present the Park's:
    a. World Heritage values (ecological processes; superlative natural phenomena and scenic beauty; and biodiversity and threatened species); and its
    b. Cultural heritage.

2. **Management goal 2:** To promote, manage, oversee, market and facilitate optimal tourism and related development in the Park.

3. **Management goal 3:** To promote the empowerment and development of historically disadvantaged communities in and adjacent to the Park.

4. **Management goal 4:** To ensure that iSimangaliso's operations are properly funded and cost-effectively managed while maintaining an appropriate system of internal control and reporting of accounting, management, and statutory information.

4.6 Implementation plan (2017-2021)

In this section, the five-year implementation plan is defined by identifying strategic drivers, describing the background and strategy guiding implementation, identifying key objectives and actions to support the achievement of the management goals, and setting timeframes over a five-year period. The five-year implementation plan has been developed in response to those factors outlined in Chapter 3 that will either enhance or constrain the achievement of the management goals.

The strategic drivers identified are as follows:

1. Park operations and conservation management.
2. Commercial development (tourism).
3. Empowerment and transformation.
4. Effective corporate governance.
5. Interpretation, presentation and education.
6. Research, monitoring and evaluation.

4.6.1 Detailed implementation plan

Strategic Driver 1: Park Operations and Conservation Management

Background and strategy

Park operations refers to the management of the Park for biodiversity conservation purposes, which includes day to day conservation management of the Park, compliance (awareness and enforcement), environmental management, Park consolidation and expansion, cultural heritage management, infrastructure development, and the management of natural resource use.

Restoration and rehabilitation

This plan outlines the key actions required to protect the World Heritage values (as described in Chapter 2) and mitigate the biodiversity threats and challenges facing the Park (as discussed in Chapter 3). Ongoing work towards the consolidation and rehabilitation of the Park is a key conservation management objective for the next five years. Land care, including the clearing of alien vegetation and rehabilitation of areas and ecological processes are key areas of intervention in the Park. The land care programme will continue to be an important poverty alleviation strategy for the Park, contracting community based SMEs and creating temporary jobs in its alien clearing and rehabilitation work (***refer to Strategic Driver 4: Empowerment and Transformation***). Furthering the work undertaken to rehabilitate the Lake St Lucia system is also an important focus of this five year plan, which includes the removal of as much as possible (funding dependent) of the artificially placed dredge-spoil pile in the mouth of the St Lucia estuary. The implementation of the Zone of Influence policy will also continue as a means of affording an additional layer of protection to the Park's biodiversity and will attempt to address incompatible land uses outside the Park ***(Refer to Chapter 5 for a description of the Zone of Influence).***

Conservation management

In terms of conservation management, the iSimangaliso Authority is responsible for setting conservation policy, for ensuring the World Heritage values are maintained, for complying with national legislation and for assisting the State in fulfilling international obligations (e.g. the Ramsar Convention). Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife is contracted to iSimangaliso to undertake the day-to-day operational aspect of conservation management within the Park. This includes functions such as law enforcement, management of plant and animal species and populations, management of ecosystems and habitats, fire management, water pollution control, soil erosion control, etc. Implementation and oversight of EKZNW's conservation function are guided by the annual Conservation Operational Plan, which includes the strategies, targets, approach, actions and conservation budgets. (***Refer to Chapter 5 for further description of the Conservation Operational Plan***).

Land incorporation

The purpose of consolidation is to establish a fully open and integrated conservation area. Through the WHCA, the legislative, administrative and regulatory frameworks have been put in place to consolidate sixteen parcels of land, which comprise iSimangaliso. Key infrastructure to support consolidation, such as fencing, has been constructed. The preferred method of land incorporation is through contracts with land owners on a 'willing-incorporator' basis in which the land owners retain title to and manage the land but, the land is subject to the provisions of the IMP, the World Heritage Convention Act and other applicable legislation such as the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act. There are a number of key pieces of land that have already been incorporated into the Park (Western Shores), while the incorporation of others remains desirable (e.g. Munyawana and the southern unsettled portion of Nibela Peninsula). The desirability of these areas is not based on size but rather their importance in terms of ecological functioning.

An important conservation initiative is the establishment of a World Heritage site in Mozambique adjacent to the iSimangaliso Wetland Park. This will effectively extend iSimangaliso's World Heritage protection into Mozambique. There are two possible ways in which the site could be listed: (1) as a serial site (adjacent to each other but managed independently); and (2) as an extension of the current World Heritage site.

iSimangaliso will continue to support the establishment of one of South Africa's five Transfrontier Conservation Areas (TFCAs), viz. the Ponto do Oura – Kosi Bay TFCA (Mozambique/South Africa).

Park Infrastructure

During the lifespan of this IMP, annual infrastructure programmes will be implemented. Optimal infrastructure development is the guiding principle and the cost of long-term maintenance is taken into consideration. Infrastructure supports both management activities and tourism development. The location and type of regional and Park infrastructure are based on the zonation plan for the Park ***(Refer to Section 5.1.1 and Figure 10)*** and are subject to iSimangaliso's environmental management system that includes compliance with environmental authorisation legislation. iSimangaliso will issue infrastructure tenders that provide opportunities to SME contractors and create temporary jobs ***(refer to Strategic Driver 4: Empowerment and Transformation)***.

Natural Resource Use

iSimangaliso will continue to provide for the sustainable and wise utilisation of natural resources, provided this use does not degrade the Park's World Heritage values. All use of resources, including consumptive and non-consumptive use, is regulated through the IMP, iSimangaliso's policies and other relevant legislation, such as the issuing of recreational permits issued by DAFF in terms of the Marine Living Resources Act. Aside from the recreational use of the Park, access to resources for subsistence purposes is an important contributor to households' livelihoods. Controlling, monitoring and evaluation of this use are important aspects of managing the sustainable use of living natural resources.

Key Objectives	**1. Key Actions**	**Timeframes**
1.1. To manage the iSimangaliso Wetland Park as one open and integrated ecological area.	1.1.1. Incorporation of additional key ecologically important land into the Park by securing appropriate agreements.	2021
	1.1.2. Support the declaration of a serial World Heritage site in Mozambique that will effectively extend iSimangaliso's World Heritage protection into Mozambique.	2016-2021
1.2. To conserve and maintain the Park's terrestrial, freshwater and marine biodiversity, and ecological processes cost-effectively and in line with international and national best practice.	1.2.1. Oversee the implementation of the Conservation Operational Plan and revise annually.	Annually
	1.2.2. Prepare management plans for key species and ecosystems, including unique and sensitive sites, where necessary.	2021
	1.2.3. Implement measures for the conservation and maintenance of iSimangaliso's World Heritage values, including fire and grassland management.	Ongoing

Key Objectives	1. Key Actions	Timeframes
	1.2.4. Manage and monitor consumptive and non-consumptive recreational and community-based natural resource use.	Ongoing
1.3. To rehabilitate degraded areas and restore ecological functioning within the Park and, in so doing, enhance the World Heritage values.	1.3.1. Implement a land care programme, including the management of alien invasive plants in the Park against an annual plan of operation.	2016-2021
	1.3.2. Rehabilitate degraded habitats and ecosystems through a range of measures including fire and grassland management.	2016-2021
	1.3.3. Implement measures to restore the Lake St Lucia system.	2016-2020
1.4. To protect the World Heritage values of the Park and its boundary, and to minimise internal and external negative impacts on the Park (e.g. loss of biodiversity, catchment degradation, loss of/damage to ecological links, and visual impacts as a result of incompatible land use, unsustainable natural resource use, pollution and unauthorised infrastructure).	1.4.1. Implement an effective compliance system which includes both awareness and law enforcement.	2016-2021
	1.4.2. Establish and maintain co-operative relationships with relevant organs of State and stakeholders, where necessary.	2016-2021
	1.4.3. Implement the Zone of Influence (Buffer Zone) Policy, which stipulates compliance with legal requirements and due process for the authorisation and operation of developments in the Zone of Influence.	2016-2021
	1.4.4. Participate in planning in the Zone of Influence, including through the Municipal IDPs.	Ongoing
	1.4.5. Implement the Estuarine Management Plans for the Kosi Bay Estuary, Mgobozeleni and St Lucia systems.	2016-2021
	1.4.6. Take necessary action against unauthorised developments and activities in the Park and curtail future unauthorised use through effective compliance, the application of relevant legislation and the implementation of Local Area Plans, where appropriate.	2016-2021
	1.4.7. Manage authorised infrastructure and activities within the Park through compliance monitoring as part of an environmental management system.	2016-2021
	1.4.8. Support national, provincial and local disaster management planning for the area.	2016-2021
1.5. To protect and conserve the cultural landscape and heritage of the Park.	1.5.1. Refer to actions in Strategic Driver 5: Interpretation, presentation and Education.	
1.6. To develop and maintain suitable infrastructure for conservation management and tourism development within the Park.	1.6.1. Develop the necessary infrastructure to support conservation management, which includes roads, ranger posts, anti-poaching infrastructure, bomas and fences.	2016-2021

Key Objectives	1. Key Actions	Timeframes
	1.6.2. Optimally develop infrastructure (e.g. roads and tracks, hiking trails, jetties and launch sites) to support tourism development and visitor experience, including Park furniture (e.g. hides, picnic sites, viewpoints, boardwalks, canopy walks, etc.).	2016-2021
	1.6.3. Maintain Park infrastructure in a cost-effective manner and, where appropriate, implement a user-pays system to make provision for the maintenance of infrastructure.	2016-2021

Strategic Driver 2: Commercial Development (Tourism)

Background and strategy

iSimangaliso is a key eco-tourism resource for the uMkhanyakude District, the KwaZulu-Natal Province and South Africa. For the duration of this IMP, iSimangaliso will continue to play an important role in regional economic growth initiatives. It will focus on integrating the Park into the broader region, KwaZulu-Natal and South Africa through the establishment of tourism.

Improve and resource day visitor facilities

iSimangaliso's mandate explicitly includes the facilitation of optimal tourism-based development in the Park. It does so by creating an environment that will encourage the private sector to develop and run tourism facilities, operate tourism activities and provide services that support them. iSimangaliso does not normally itself operate tourist amenities, facilities or activities but may provide (or procure the provision of) tourist support services. In fulfilling these obligations, iSimangaliso seeks to reinforce existing business and to create conditions for the emergence of new products and markets in and around the Park. Tourism development takes place within the zonation plan contained within this IMP and attempts to provide for a diverse product mix in an environmentally sustainable manner.

iSimangaliso has put in place a strategy which:

- Recognises the role of the private sector as the primary provider of capital and expertise in the development and provision of tourism products and services in the Park.
- Fulfils its obligations in terms of equitable public access.

The first is achieved through public private partnerships (PPPs), which are regulated by the Public Finance Management Act's regulations for PPPs. These regulations include, amongst others, the procurement of private investments and services through an open, fair and competitive bidding process. Equitable public access is facilitated through the Park's pricing strategy on entry fees, Park neighbours' access programme, and availability of recreational and educational facilities and activities.

The empowerment and advancement of historically disadvantaged communities, particularly land claimants and communities living in and around the Park, is a key aspect of iSimangaliso's commercialisation strategy. Transformation of the tourism sector in the Park will be achieved through equity partnerships between the private sector and mandatory community partners, job creation and employment equity practices in tourism facilities and activities, and the procurement of goods and services from local entrepreneurs and small businesses. Over the next five years, iSimangaliso will focus on:

- ❖ Facilitating new investment in tourism accommodation facilities where appropriate.
- ❖ Refurbishment and the re-development of existing accommodation facilities, promoting equitable public access.
- ❖ Development of day visitor facilities in the Park, which will support development of overnight facilities outside the Park.
- ❖ Establish tourism activities in the Park.
- ❖ Improve the tourism service standards in the Park.

As part of the transformation of the tourism sector, iSimangaliso will continue to implement a rural enterprise programme aimed at supporting local entrepreneurs and enterprises through training, mentoring, small grants and on-going access to a business hub providing advice and support. (***See Strategic Driver 3: Empowerment and Transformation).***

Key Objectives		Key Actions		Timeframes
2.1	Optimise the Park's revenue generation in an environmentally and commercially sustainable manner that fosters job creation and empowerment.	2.1.1	Diversify tourism product base.	2016-2021
		2.1.2	Improve quality of tourism service in the Park.	2016-2021
2.2	Optimise equity shareholding, job creation and procurement opportunities through commercialisation.	2.2.1	Support the establishment of equity partnerships between private sector operators and mandatory community partners in terms of the co-management agreements.	2018-2021
		2.2.2	Provide support to community based tourism operators through the Rural Enterprise Programme.	2016-2021

Key Objectives	Key Actions	Timeframes
	2.2.3 Implement capacity building programmes for mandatory partners participating in tourism investment projects.	2016-2021
2.3 Promote and market the Park and establish it as a prominent tourism destination.	2.3.1 Implementation of annual marketing and PR programme.	2016-2021
2.4 Promote the regional integration of iSimangaliso's work with South African Tourism and Tourism KwaZulu-Natal.	2.4.1 Create linkages with tourism products and events implemented through other agencies, such as local government and Tourism KwaZulu-Natal.	2016-2021

Strategic Driver 3: Empowerment and Transformation

Background and strategy

Contributing towards the alleviation of poverty is a core function of iSimangaliso and empowerment strategies include ownership, job creation, procurement and training. Empowerment and transformation goals cut across all aspects of the work of iSimangaliso, and are integrated into both Commercial and Park Operations activities ***[See Strategic Driver 1: Park Operations and Conservation Management and Strategic Driver2: Commercial Development].*** The beneficiaries of these activities and programmes are the communities in the area, including land claimant groups.

Transformation of the tourism sector

iSimangaliso is currently implementing a range of strategies to support transformation in the tourism sector in the area and is responsible for assisting beneficiary communities to participate meaningfully in the commercial development of the Park. Tenders for tourism accommodation and activities are evaluated according to a range of criteria, including empowerment. There are a number of ways in which empowerment criteria can be fulfilled. These include:

- Ownership or equity interests for beneficiary communities in the commercial enterprises of the Park.
- Job creation and training for beneficiary communities.
- Procurement of goods and services for tourism enterprises from local communities and SMEs.

New tourism activity concessions are also awarded on the basis of empowerment criteria with a percentage of concessions reserved for community owned businesses. Business support to the community based concessions is provided through the Rural Enterprise Programme.

In addition to these measures to support the entrance of beneficiary community groups into the tourism sector, concession holders are also required to demonstrate their commitment to Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) through implementation of the BBBEE scorecard.

Training and capacity building

Training, capacity building and mentoring activities underpin iSimangaliso's empowerment and transformation programmes. Enhancing skills of beneficiary communities will promote economic activity by improving their access to available jobs, better jobs and higher value markets in the case of entrepreneurs.

Over the past number of years, iSimangaliso has established the following training and capacity building programmes, which will continue to be implemented over the next five years:

- Tourism skills development programme, which includes training in hospitality and guiding.
- Craft development programme focussing on product development with crafters and facilitation of links to high value markets.
- Infrastructure and land care SME development programme, which targets community based contractors that undertake alien clearing, land rehabilitation, infrastructure construction and infrastructure maintenance work.
- Skills based and other relevant training for people employed on infrastructure, and land-and-coast care programmes.
- Higher Education Access Programme that provides bursaries and academic support to students from local communities studying tourism and conservation-related fields in tertiary education institutions.
- Rural enterprise programme **(See Strategic Driver 2: Commercial Development)**.

Consultation with local communities and land claimants

Part of iSimangaliso's transformation strategy is a consultation programme with communities living in and around the Park, and land claimants. Regular meetings with these communities are held and co-management arrangements are entered into where appropriate. Once a land claim is settled by the Department of Rural Development and Land Affairs, iSimangaliso will take responsibility for the implementation of settlement and co-management agreements. iSimangaliso's approach to the settlement of land claims is guided by the National Cabinet Position adopted in 2002 regarding the settlement of restitution claims in protected areas, World Heritage sites and State forests (this position is included in Chapter 2 under footnote 12 in section 2.4).

Key Objectives	Key Actions	Timeframes
3.1 Facilitate the transformation of the tourism sector and support neighbouring communities and land claimants to participate in the commercial development of the Park.	3.1.1 Refer to actions in Strategic Driver 2: Commercial Development 2.	2016 - 2021
3.2 Implement training and capacity building programmes that lead to improved income generation and transformation.	3.2.1 Implement skills development programmes to assist beneficiary communities to find employment in the tourism sector.	2016-2021
	3.2.2 Implement a rural enterprise programme to support conservation compatible entrepreneurs and enterprises.	2016-2021
	3.2.3 Implement the higher education access programme supporting local students to acquire tertiary qualifications in tourism and conservation-related fields.	2016-2021
3.3 Facilitate access to economic benefits for communities living in and around the Park through the construction and maintenance of infrastructure, and through land care programmes.	3.3.1 Provide opportunities for community based contractors (SMEs) and individuals in rehabilitation work, alien plant clearing, coast-care, construction and maintenance of Park infrastructure.	2016-2021
	3.3.2 Provide training, capacity building and mentoring to community based contractors and workers involved in the programmes in 3.3.1 ***[See Strategic Driver 1: Park Operations and Conservation Management].***	2016-2021
3.4 Maintain relationships and implement effective consultation processes with communities living in and around the Park and land claimants.	3.4.1 Implement a programme for communication, consultation and awareness with communities living in and around the Park.	2016-2021
	3.4.2 Conduct information dissemination and conservation awareness programmes with communities living in and around the Park, and land claimants ***[See Strategic Driver 5: Communication, Interpretation and Education].***	Ongoing

Key Objectives	Key Actions	Timeframes
	3.4.3 Develop Local Area Plans with beneficiary communities providing a framework for development within each locality that is founded on relevant legal, social, environmental, institutional, economic and financial parameters ***[See Strategic Driver 4: Corporate Governance].***	2017-2021
3.5 Provide support to land claimants in the settlement of land claims and the implementation of settlement agreements.	3.5.1 Participate in activities that will support the settlement of outstanding land claims on the Park by the Regional Land Claims Commission.	Ongoing
	3.5.2 Implement land claims settlements and co-management agreements in partnership with the Land Claims Trusts.	Ongoing

Strategic Driver 4: Corporate Governance

Background and strategy

Corporate governance is accorded the highest importance by the iSimangaliso Authority. Its Board and staff are required to conduct themselves with integrity and in the best interests of the organisation.

The iSimangaliso Authority's Board believes that the organisation has substantially complied with the Code of Corporate Practices & Conduct set out in the King Report on Corporate Governance for South Africa 2002 (King II Report), the Protocol on Corporate Governance in the Public Sector 2002 and applicable management guidelines set down by UNESCO, and has begun integrating the more salient recommendations of the 2009 King III Report in its governance systems.

The organisational arrangements and systems in place to promote good corporate governance include non-executive directors on the Board, the use of audit, executive and tender committees, and independent (outsourced) internal audits. Detailed financial policies and procedures make it clear that corporate governance and financial control are the responsibilities of every staff member in the organisation.

Roles and Functions

The CEO is the entity's Accounting Authority. The Board of Directors is responsible for the formulation of policy for the Park and for overseeing its implementation. It is also responsible for the adoption of strategic plans, for monitoring operational performance and management, for approving policy and processes to strengthen the integrity of the Park's risk management and internal controls, and for the appointment of the executive staff. The Board has approved a charter that provides guidance to its directors in discharging their duties and responsibilities. The Board carries out a regular self-evaluation.

Remuneration of the directors is prescribed by Treasury. In the case of the current Board, the majority of non-executive directors have elected to work on a *pro bono* basis. The CEO's salary is determined in accordance with DEAT's grading and remuneration policy.

Audit Committee

The audit committee is responsible for overseeing audit functions, internal control and the financial-reporting process. The committee comprises a number of independent members who are qualified chartered accountants. The Chief Financial Officer of the Department of Environmental Affairs and the Auditor-General attend meetings of the audit committee as observers.

Internal Audit

Internal audits provide an independent, objective appraisal of risk-management, governance and internal controls, and identify improvements and corrective actions.

The internal audit function is outsourced. These audits are carried out according to a three-year rolling plan, updated annually, and are based on the risks identified in the risk-management process.

Risk Management

The Board's policy on risk management embraces all significant risks to the iSimangaliso Authority which might undermine its business objectives. In addition to regular reports by the executive, the Board also receives assurance from its internal auditors on risk and internal control.

The Board is of the opinion that appropriate risk-management policies and practices are in place, and that they are complied with. Mechanisms for managing risk include, where appropriate, the transfer of risk to third parties (for example, through public-private partnerships), the maintenance of an appropriate mix of personal insurance and commercial insurance for risks that the organisation retains, internal controls, and business-continuity planning, amongst other things.

Additional information is provided in the Accounting Policies section of the Annual Financial Statements.

Environmental Management

The iSimangaliso Authority and its Board abide by the National Environmental Management Act: Protected Areas Act, and the World Heritage Convention Act, among others. Day to day wildlife and biodiversity management is carried out by Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife in accordance with a management agreement between it and the iSimangaliso Authority, pursuant to the regulations under the World Heritage Convention Act.

The Board believes that its environmental management conforms to international best practice and is adequate to the demands of managing a World Heritage site.

Social Management

The Board has adopted government's broad-based black economic empowerment policies and has implemented a system based on the Department of Trade & Industry's codes and, where appropriate, on the Tourism Charter. Prospective new tourism enterprises in the Park are appraised in terms of a BEE scorecard and are required to include local communities as mandatory equity partners in their operations and preferred service-providers in their procurement plans. The Park also implements community-development programmes as part of its management of social and environmental risk.

Social and Environmental Risk

The Park is situated in an area beset with unemployment and poverty, and people living in and around the Park see it as a direct source of economic benefit as a provider of employment and through the use of its natural resources for income generation and subsistence.

To manage this risk, the iSimangaliso Authority implements special community-development programmes in areas such as craft production, interpretation of culture, tourism training, art, life-skills, HIV/AIDS awareness, and entrepreneurship. It also employs people from neighbouring communities in its construction and land-rehabilitation programmes, and provides alternatives to unsustainable practices with negative ecological impacts.

The iSimangaliso Authority also participates actively in crime-prevention forums in the area.

At a macro-level, the iSimangaliso Authority monitors the impact of climate change on the natural resources in the Park. It has also raised funds for the improvement of the hydrology of Lake St Lucia.

Safety

The iSimangaliso Authority abides by occupational health and safety laws and regulations. Staff and contractors working in the Park are trained to deal with dangerous game and to use and dispose of toxic chemicals, especially in the Park's alien vegetation-clearing programme.

Communication

The Authority engages the public at different levels depending on the issue at hand. The iSimangaliso Authority has a website (www.isimangaliso.com) and publishes regular newsflashes. Public consultations and meetings are held to keep community groups, environmental NGOs, relevant public institutions and private parties informed about the Park, the challenges it faces and its activities. The iSimangaliso Authority also participates in a number of intergovernmental committees and forums. iSimangaliso's neighbouring communities are important stakeholders, especially the beneficiaries of land claims settlements on the iSimangaliso Wetland Park. There is also an equitable access policy that includes pricing strategy on entry fees, the provision of appropriate accommodation types, and recreational facilities and activities such as picnic sites, diving and so on. In addition, iSimangaliso implements special programmes for specific groups (schools, adjacent communities, etc.).

The iSimangaliso Authority recognises its obligation to its national and international stakeholders to protect, conserve and present iSimangaliso's World Heritage values. In this respect, the Authority is committed to engage with stakeholders both proactively and in response to concerns. Also, the iSimangaliso Authority adheres to the participation requirements of various legal processes.

Cooperative governance

iSimangaliso is part of the local government planning framework for the region. To facilitate regional integration, the iSimangaliso Authority participates in municipal planning processes, particularly with regard to Integrated Development Plans. The Park is a relevant authority in its Zone of Influence. The development of regional infrastructure is the responsibility of National, Provincial and Local Government. ***(Refer to Figure 7 in Appendix 3 which shows the Park's conceptual plan of sub-regional tourism flows, development and consolidation)***.

Key Objectives		Key Actions		Timeframes
4.1	Cultivate an environment that will enable iSimangaliso to attract, develop and retain the best people to deliver its mandate.	4.1.1	Implement measures to become an employer of choice.	2016-2021
4.2	Maintain good financial planning and management.	4.2.1	Ensure sound financial planning and management.	2016-2021
		4.2.2	Procure funds from government, public sector and donor funders; and generate own revenue.	2016-2021

Key Objectives		Key Actions		Timeframes
		4.2.3	Comply with Public Finance Management Act, World Heritage Convention Act, and Codes of Good Practice.	As determined by reporting cycle.
		4.2.4	Ensure unqualified audits.	Annually
4.3	Develop an effective policy framework and planning system for management.	4.3.1	Develop and produce 2022-2026 IMP and required subsidiary plans.	2019-2020
		4.3.2	Review and implement policies, programmes, strategies and rules required for Park management.	2016-2021
		4.3.3	Develop and implement a monitoring and evaluation system.	Ongoing
4.4	Establish relationships with institutions and organs of state to help achieve iSimangaliso's goals.	4.4.1	Participate in the planning processes of district and local municipalities, and provincial and national government departments in order to integrate planning.	Ongoing
4.5	Maintain and implement a communication programme.	4.5.1	Communicate information about the Park through newsletters, newsflashes, website, print and other media in both English and Zulu. (*Refer also to action Strategic Driver: Park Operations 1.4.1; Strategic Driver: Commercial Development (Tourism) 2.3.1; Strategic Driver: Empowerment and Transformation 3.4.1 and 3.4.2; Strategic Driver: Park Operations; and Interpretation, Presentation and Education 5.1.1 and 5.2.1).*	Ongoing

Strategic Driver 5: Interpretation, Presentation and Education

Background and strategy

The World Heritage Convention Act obliges iSimangaliso to present and interpret the World Heritage site, particularly the attributes for which it was listed and for which it is considered to be of international significance and value. These include interpretation of the ecological processes; superlative natural phenomena and scenic beauty; and biodiversity and threatened species. Strategies to interpret and disseminate information about the World Heritage site include the development of materials (brochures, booklets), web-based interpretation, a smart phone App and signage. iSimangaliso must also present, promote and conserve the cultural heritage of the area. Interpretation of the cultural landscape is an important task, and includes the documenting of significant sites in the Park, for example, sites on the Eastern Shores have been mapped and interpreted by the Bhangazi Land Claimants. This project will be repeated in other areas of the Park. Other cultural heritage projects include the naming of trees and the development of guidelines to conserve cultural sites.

There are approximately half a million people living around the Park, most of whom have never visited the Park or had a positive educational or recreational experience in it. Many people do not know why iSimangaliso is listed as a World Heritage site. For this reason, iSimangaliso offers an environmental education programme for local schools and community groups. The programme brings Park neighbours into the Park free of charge, allowing them to see for themselves why it is so highly valued, and garnering local support for its continued protection.

The Environmental Education Programme has two components:

- A schools programme.
- An adult environmental education and awareness programme.

Key Objectives	Key Actions	Timeframes
5.1 Implement an environmental education programme.	5.1.1 Obtain funds for the implementation of an environmental education programme.	2016-2021
	5.1.2 Provide for controlled access for visitors to learn about and appreciate iSimangaliso's World Heritage values.	2016-2021

Key Objectives	Key Actions	Timeframes
5.2 Interpret and present iSimangaliso's World Heritage values to its stakeholders.	5.2.1 Develop a spectrum of interpretive materials for Park users.	2016-2019
5.3 To present and interpret the cultural landscape and heritage of the area.	5.3.1 Run projects to interpret and deepen understanding of the area's cultural landscape and heritage.	2016-2021
	5.3.2 Provide access to sites of cultural significance for rituals, ceremonies and festivities.	Ongoing

Strategic Driver 6: Research, Monitoring and Evaluation

Background and strategy

The iSimangaliso Authority recognises the role of research in building knowledge about the Park's ecology and conservation management. The facilitation and promotion of research in the Park provides an opportunity for researchers and research institutions to develop specialist research capacity in their respective fields and which are of value to iSimangaliso.

At present, much of the research conducted in the Park is defined by individual researchers and research teams. External research applications are processed through a research committee comprising iSimangaliso and Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife staff members, assisted when necessary by independent specialists. The committee meets four times a year to consider applications, and to balance pure and applied research efforts in support of both understanding and Park management needs. Researchers are required to sign a contract with iSimangaliso against which compliance is monitored.

In addition, Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife monitor a range of biological and physical/chemical parameters at various sites in the Park in order to inform management, e.g. salinity levels in the lake systems, game counts, etc. This is an essential aspect of Park management and during this IMP, the monitoring system will be reviewed and funding sought for under-resourced monitoring activities.

Key Objectives	Key Actions	Timeframes
6.1 To promote research that is innovative and relevant to the management objectives of the Park and contributes towards the body of knowledge broadly related to conservation and world heritage.	6.1.1 Implement a research framework, including monitoring.	2016-2021
	6.1.2 Process research applications in accordance with Park research authorisation procedures.	2016-2021
	6.1.3 Contract specialists to provide research and advice regarding specific management issues when needed.	As necessary
6.2 To implement a monitoring system of key biological and physical-chemical parameters in order to support conservation management.	6.2.1 Review current monitoring system and identify areas requiring improvement.	2016-2021

4.6.2 Implementation Plan Budget

The table below sets out the budget for the Implementation Plan outlined in this chapter. iSimangaliso receives an allocation for operational costs from the Department of Environmental Affairs. This comprises about 27% of its total budget. The remainder of the budget comes from commercial sources and donor funds.

Table 7 Budget for Implementation Plan

	Strategic Driver 1	Strategic Driver 2	Strategic Driver 3	Strategic Driver 4	Strategic Driver 5	Strategic Driver 6	Total
	Park Operations and Conservation Management	Commercial Development (Tourism)	Empowerment & Transformation	Corporate Governance	Interpretation, Presentation & Education	Research	
Year 1	R 41,225 m	R 20,486 m	R 3,448 m	R 12,157 m	R 1,208 m	R 2,209 m	R 80,733 m
Year 2	R 48,985 m	R 21,719 m	R 3,656 m	R 12,911 m	R 1,468 m	R 2,365 m	R 91,104 m
Year 3	R 52,222 m	R 23,022 m	R 3,875 m	R 13,686 m	R 1,557 m	R 2,531 m	R 96,893 m
Year 4	R 55,658 m	R 24,403 m	R 4,108 m	R 14,507 m	R 1.650 m	R 2,707 m	R 103,033 m
Year 5	R 58,997 m	R 25,868 m	R 4,354 m	R 15,377 m	R 1,749 m	R 2,893 m	R 109,238 m
Total							**R 481,091 m**

It should be noted that this five year budget does not take account of the proposal to extend the Marine Protected Area of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park. In the event that the MPA is promulgated, additional financial resources will be required for MPA management purposes.

5 ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK: TOOLS FOR INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT

Chapter 5 presents a set of spatial planning measures (Section 5.1) (such as zonation and nodal development, including permissible activities, carrying capacities, and development and management blocks); and a number of policies, strategies and plans that further guide and support the management of the Park (Section 5.2), and general planning measures and controls (Section 5.3).

5.1 Spatial Planning Measures and Controls

5.1.1 Zonation

The primary spatial planning measure is the zonation plan (Figure 10 in Appendix 3). This forms the basis for the activities plan, and the setting of nodal types and carrying capacities for each block, sub-zone, facility and activity. Together, these tools determine the setting of limits and form the basis for the enhancement of iSimangaliso's core values.

For management purposes, terrestrial and marine areas in the Park have different zonation. Terrestrial zonation covers terrestrial and aquatic (lakes, rivers and wetland) ecosystems. The marine component is divided into inshore and offshore sub-components. For purposes of Park zonation, "inshore" refers to the area between the vegetation line out to 5 meters depth offshore, and refers to the area where shore based activities can occur. Offshore is defined as the area from the low-water mark to three nautical miles seawards, which is the Park's eastern-most boundary.

The zonation described above is useful for planning and management, but in ecological terms these zonal distinctions have little meaning due to the connectivity between components.

The zones are:

- Terrestrial Component.
  - Wilderness.
  - Restricted.
  - Controlled.
- Marine Component.
  - Wilderness.
  - Sanctuary.
  - Restricted.
  - Controlled.

The terrestrial and marine zones are described in detail in Tables 8 to 14.

Table 8 Wilderness (Terrestrial)

UNMODIFIED NATURAL ENVIRONMENT. Largely equivalent to IUCN Category 1b Protected Area[NOTE 1], but may include areas that are not designated as such, but, nevertheless, have all the attributes and characteristics of true wilderness.

Inherent Attributes/ Characteristics	An area with **no** permanent human settlement, infrastructure, consumptive activities (except for limited traditional resource harvesting) or motorised access and where the landscape bears negligible visual evidence (even to the 'educated eye') of these having occurred in the recent past, including residual effects such as alien plants and soil erosion. Thus, even to the 'educated eye', the area has an inherent pristine appearance and character, or at least the potential of being restored accordingly in the short- to medium-term using the 'minimum tool' principle. It must also be sufficiently unspoilt and of a large enough size to: i Maintain ecological processes with an absolute minimum of management intervention. ii Provide an authentic wilderness experience by being physically, visually and audibly buffered from adjacent areas of human settlement (heightened 'sense of place' and of World Heritage values).
Focal Purpose of Zone[NOTE 2]	i Maintain a scientific benchmark area of biodiversity and ecosystem processes. ii Provide visitors with a wilderness experience (heightened 'sense of place' and of World Heritage values).
Permissible Uses & Activities[NOTE 3]	i Guided wilderness, special interest/educational activities on foot, horseback and non-motorised watercraft within the parameters of other permissible and non-permissible uses and activities. ii Overnight wilderness camping with very limited temporary facilities (e.g. fly camps operated under the 'leave no trace' principle). iii Access to spiritual sites by non-mechanised means. iv Limited traditional subsistence resource harvesting and use using the 'minimum tool' principle under strict regulation and control. v Highly regulated scientific research and monitoring that cannot be carried out elsewhere in the Park. vi Essential management activities and intervention, including law enforcement operations (scheduled patrols and reaction) applying the 'minimum tool' principle and in line with national and international principles of wilderness management. vii Special access, assessed on a case by case basis, and requiring permits.
Non-Permissible Uses & Activities	i Mechanised access other than in exceptional or unavoidable circumstances and emergencies (i.e. the 'minimum tool' principle) and subject to a management plan and approved procedures. ii Motorised visitor activity. iii Consumptive resource utilisation except for limited traditional harvesting and use as defined above under 'permissible uses and activities'. iv Silviculture, agriculture, aquaculture, human settlement, hunting, infrastructure development and mining.
Use Intensity/ Frequency[NOTE 4]	Law enforcement, management, research, monitoring and visitor use strictly limited to: i The principles of 'minimum tool' and 'leave no trace' apply. ii Very low intensity. iii Very low frequency, the emphasis being on transient use only. iv Small group sizes. v Very strict regulation and control over entry.
Development Nodes	i Only Type I Wilderness Tourism Overnight Nodes (e.g. temporary fly and tented camps), Tourism Day Visitor Nodes (e.g. temporary bird hides) and Park Management Nodes (e.g. temporary law-enforcement camps, research hides) permitted. ii Park Management Nodes to follow the same principles as for any visitor use of the area.

Development Restrictions	i Management and tourist roads, other infrastructure (e.g. power lines, water pumps, telephone lines), park signage and buildings (including staff and visitor accommodation) prohibited under all circumstances and without exception. ii Existing management tracks permitted in exceptional circumstances, with the objective to phase them out over time. iii Tourist tracks or use of management tracks by tourists prohibited without exception. iv Fixed campsites prohibited. v Construction of trails and paths prohibited - use must be made of game trails. vi No other developments permitted regardless of type, form or need.

NOTES: TABLE 8: Wilderness (Terrestrial)

NOTE 1: IUCN Category Ib protected areas are usually large unmodified or slightly modified areas, retaining their natural character and influence, without permanent or significant human habitation, which are protected and managed so as to preserve their natural condition.

NOTE 2: A combination of these purposes will reinforce the branding of the Park as a protected area of integrity and quality.

NOTE 3: The impacts of these permissible uses and activities must be managed to a level below the natural dynamics of the system, while maintaining the inherent wilderness experience of the area. All permissible activities are subject to parameters set by legislation and the Permissible Activities Framework [Refer to Section 5.1.8 for more detail].

NOTE 4: Actual density levels, activities and group sizes are specified in the Development Node and Activities Frameworks.

Table 9 Restricted (Terrestrial)

PARTLY MODIFIED NATURAL ENVIRONMENT. Although only partly modified, normally less pristine than a Wilderness area. Also, normally less sensitive to 4x4 vehicle and motorised boat access than a Wilderness area.

Inherent Attributes/ Characteristics	An area that may have some (but limited in extent and impact) tourism and management human settlement, developed infrastructure and/or consumptive activities (e.g. strictly controlled traditional subsistence resource harvesting and use) and some visual evidence (limited in extent and impact but relatively more than that acceptable for Wilderness zones) of their occurrence in the recent past (including residual symptoms such as alien plants and soil erosion). Nevertheless, regardless of whether ongoing or residual, the human-induced modifications to the environment must either pose no significant threats (to cultural resources, ecological processes, biodiversity, landscape quality) or it must be feasible to dispose of them and/or mitigate their negative impacts within a specifiable time frame. Accordingly, to qualify as a restricted zone, the area must have the potential for restoration to a state that the general public and other stakeholders regard, for the most part, as a largely unmodified landscape.
Focal Purpose of Zone	i Conservation of biodiversity and ecological processes. ii Provide visitors with high quality game/landscape viewing and a close to nature overnight experience.
Permissible Uses & Activities NOTE 1	i Hiking. ii Horse riding. iii Cycling. iv Non-motorised water craft (kayaking and canoeing). v Concession 4x4 trails and game drives. vi Concession boat tours (sail boats and motorised). vii Recreational fishing. viii Freshwater diving. ix Swimming (in secured areas). x Motorised and non-motorised special interest/educational activities within the parameters of other permissible and non-permissible uses and activities. xi Overnighting in bush lodges/tented camps and houseboats. xii Regulated 2x4 access to low intensity accommodation and day visitor facilities on designated access corridors. xiii Limited traditional subsistence resource harvesting and use. xiv Scientific research and monitoring. xv Law enforcement patrols and reaction. xvi General management activities and intervention to restore/maintain ecological processes and the unspoilt appearance of the landscape.
Non-Permissible Uses & Activities	i 2x4 vehicles on gravel/surfaced roads except where existing or designated as an access corridor. ii 4x4 vehicle trails and boat trips without the acquisition of a special permit, i.e. concession use. iii Quad bikes and motor cycles except for management purposes. iv Jet skis and private sail boats. v Invertebrate harvesting. vi Commercial fishing. vii Silviculture, aquaculture, agriculture, mining NOTE 2, hunting.NOTE 3 viii No human settlement except for management staff and tourism accommodation facilities in accordance with the Development Node Framework. ix Recreational, sport and leisure activities that are not associated with an outdoor nature experience.
Use Intensity/ FrequencyNOTE 4	Regulated and controlled use of low intensity and moderate frequency. Limited and permit-regulated unguided/self drive activities (e.g. foot, horseback, canoe, motorised boat, 4x4 vehicle trails/trips).

Development Nodes	Only Low Intensity Tourism Overnight Nodes, Tourism Day Visitor Nodes and Park Management Nodes permitted. Where Medium Intensity Tourism Nodes are permitted, this is only for the duration of the activity.
Development Restrictions	i Road network to be restricted to low impact, all weather 4x4 tracks and designated 2x4 access corridors. ii Lodging facilities for visitors and management to be restricted to unobtrusive structures. iii Utility services to be supplied, generated and disposed on-site using eco-friendly and renewable energy technology. No utility services to be supplied from regional bulk supply networks, unless environmentally suitable and compatible with the focal purpose of this zone. iv Appropriate Park signage. v All other types and forms of development, not defined in the Development Node Framework, are prohibited.

NOTES: TABLE 9: Restricted (Terrestrial)

NOTE 1: All permissible activities are subject to the parameters set by legislation and Permissible Activities Framework [Refer to Section 5.1.8 for more detail].

NOTE 2: Mining is not permitted except for the licensed Perlite Mine in the uMkhuze section of the Park.

NOTE 3: Hunting is not permitted except in the uMkhuze Controlled Hunting Area, which is zoned as restricted and where hunting has been allowed since the late 1980s. Consideration may be given to phasing out this activity in the future.

NOTE 4: Actual density levels, activities and group sizes are specified in the Development Node and Activities Frameworks.

Table 10 Controlled (Terrestrial)

MODIFIED NATURAL ENVIRONMENT. Noticeably less pristine than a Restricted Zone and, thus, normally less sensitive to the development of visitor facilities.

Inherent Attributes/ Characteristics	An area in which the landscape and ecological processes may have been noticeably transformed by past or present development (e.g. human settlement, silviculture, agriculture, alien plant invasion and soil erosion) but in which restoration is possible to: i A natural setting that appears largely unmodified. ii A system in which the ecological processes function naturally in many if not all respects. iii A situation in which, as a result of achieving the above, the area could be regarded as partly modified and, hence, could be upgraded to a Restricted Zone. Proactive and responsive interventions may be required indefinitely for the maintenance of the above.
Focal Purpose of Zone	i The restoration and maintenance of natural landscapes and ecological processes. ii Provide nature-based recreational experiences for the full spectrum of potential user groups and market segments.
Permissible Uses & Activities NOTE 1	i Hiking. ii Horse riding. iii Cycling. iv Motorised vessels (concession and self-drive). v Non-motorised water craft. vi 2x4 and 4x4 driving (concession and self-drive). vii Recreational fishing. viii Freshwater diving. ix Swimming (in secured areas). x Motorised and non-motorised special interest/educational trails, tours and activities within the parameters of other permissible and non-permissible uses and activities. xi Overnighting in all types of Park Development Nodes and houseboats. xii Lake ferry shuttle service. xiii Controlled traditional subsistence resource harvesting and use. xiv Human settlement in Special Residential Nodes in the Coastal Forest Reserve section of the Park and as defined in Local Area Plans, with limited non-commercial food gardens (for subsistence purposes and using low technology). xv The quarrying of material from approved borrow pits for road maintenance in the Park. xvi Scientific research and monitoring. xvii Law enforcement patrols and reaction. xviii General management activities and intervention to restore/maintain ecological processes and the unspoilt appearance of the landscape.
Non-Permissible Uses & Activities	i Quad bikes and motor cycles except for management purposes. ii Jet skis and private sail boats. iii Invertebrate harvesting. iv Commercial fishing. v Mining (except for borrow pits used for road maintenance in the Park), silviculture, hunting, commercial agriculture, and aquaculture. vi Human settlement, except for Special Residential Nodes and management staff and tourist accommodation facilities, as described above under 'permissible uses and activities'. vii Supply of water to consumers outside the Park. viii Recreational and leisure activities that are not associated with an outdoor nature-based experience.

Use Intensity/ Frequency[NOTE 2]	Full range of controlled use – very low to high intensities and frequencies but relative to World Heritage status. Distinguished from previous zones by entry/access control mainly through the issue of permits (tickets) at entry gates, as opposed to advance application for individual or concession permits. Also distinguished by the potential to allow a significant level of self-drive game viewing experiences, as opposed to the need to confine activities to guided experiences (as in the previous three zones).
Development Nodes	All Development Nodes are permitted, including Medium and High Intensity Tourism Overnight Nodes, Tourism Day Visitor Nodes, Park Management Nodes and Special Residential Nodes.
Development Restrictions	Despite falling within a Controlled Zone, development must be sensitive, maintain a 'sense of place' and be in keeping with the Park's World Heritage values and status. Development must also adhere to all other environmental specifications and guidelines, including avoidance of sensitive sites. Outside of the Medium and High Intensity Development Nodes, the following development is permitted: i Small, low impact management facilities, bush lodges, hides, permanent campsites, viewpoints, canopy walkways, picnic sites and interpretation displays. ii Comprehensive but environmentally harmonious informative/directional signage. iii Upgraded management and tourist roads (i.e. gravel and hard top). iv Regional supply of utility services but overhead/above ground infrastructure in exceptional cases only (e.g. occurs historically, provides an essential service and is too costly to relocate, bury or substitute with alternative technology).

NOTES: TABLE 10: Controlled (Terrestrial)

NOTE 1: All permissible activities are subject to parameters set by legislation and the Permissible Activities Framework [Refer to Section 5.1.8 for more detail].

NOTE 2: Actual density levels, activities and group sizes are specified in the Development Node and Activities Frameworks.

Table 11 Wilderness (Marine)

UNMODIFIED NATURAL ENVIRONMENT. Largely equivalent to IUCN Category 1b Protected Area[NOTE 1], but may include areas that are not designated as such, but, nevertheless, have all the attributes and characteristics of true wilderness. Similar in principle to a Terrestrial Wilderness Zone.

Inherent Attributes/ Characteristics	A marine area having **no** existing human settlement, infrastructure within it (e.g. buoys, piers, outflow pipes), nor consumptive use of marine resources (e.g. invertebrate harvesting, fishing, etc.), nor activities that cause disturbance to wildlife (e.g. dolphins, birds, crabs) occurring within it, having no adjacent land/sea which has human settlement or infrastructure development, and no access roads/ramps, no parking, no view sites and no picnic areas in the dune cordon alongside it. The adjacent land and seascape bear negligible visual evidence (even to the 'educated eye') of human influence (settlement/infrastructure) in the recent past. Thus, to even the 'educated eye', the area has an inherent pristine appearance and character, or at least the potential of being restored accordingly in the short to medium term with an absolute minimum of intervention. It must also be sufficiently unspoilt and of a large enough size to: i Maintain ecological processes with an absolute minimum of management intervention. ii Provide a high quality wilderness experience by being physically, visually and audibly buffered from adjacent areas of human settlement (heightened 'sense of place' and of World Heritage values).
Focal Purpose of Zone[NOTE 2]	i Maintain an undisturbed pristine benchmark area of biodiversity and ecosystem processes. ii Provide visitors with wilderness/spiritual experiences in a marine environment (heightened 'sense of place' and of World Heritage values).
Permissible Uses & Activities[NOTE 3]	*Inshore:* i Walking on beaches and rocks. ii Swimming and snorkelling. iii Guided wilderness, special interest/educational trails and activities (non-motorised, including on foot, horseback and cycling) within the parameters of other permissible and non-permissible uses and activities. iv Highly regulated scientific research and monitoring that cannot be carried out elsewhere in the Park. v Essential management activities and intervention, including law enforcement operations (scheduled patrols and reaction) applying the 'minimum tool' principle and in line with national and international principles of wilderness management. vi Special access, assessed on a case by case basis, and requiring permits. *Offshore:* i Guided wilderness, special interest/educational activities (non-motorised vessels only) within the parameters of other permissible and non-permissible uses and activities. ii Highly-regulated scientific research, monitoring and World Heritage presentation that cannot be carried out elsewhere in the Park. iii Essential management activities, including law-enforcement operations (scheduled patrol and reaction) applying the 'minimum tool' principle. iv Special access, assessed on a case by case basis, and requiring permits. *Estuarine Lakes:* i Walking on estuary margins. ii Guided wilderness, special interest/educational trails and activities (non-motorised, including on foot, horseback and canoe) within the parameters of other permissible and non-permissible uses and activities. iii Highly regulated scientific research and monitoring that cannot be carried out elsewhere in the Park.

	iv Essential management activities and intervention, including law enforcement operations (scheduled patrols and reaction) applying the 'minimum tool' principle and in line with national and international principles of wilderness management. v Special access, assessed on a case by case basis, and requiring permits.
Non-Permissible Uses & Activities	*Inshore:* i. **All forms of extractive use**, including rock and surf angling, harvesting of intertidal or shallow subtidal organisms, and collection of biota and marine products (e.g. shells, driftwood, rocks, sand). i. Fossicking NOTE 4. i. Beach driving, including management vehicles (except in emergencies). v. Launching of motorised vessels except for management purposes. *Offshore:* i Scuba diving except for highly regulated research, monitoring and World Heritage presentation. ii Kite and wind-surfing. iii Parasailing from boats or use of jet skis. iv **All forms of extractive use**, including all types of fishing, and collection of biota and marine products (e.g. shells, rocks, sand etc.). v Use of motorised vessels except for essential management and research/monitoring and vessels at sea within the 3 nautical mile limit offshore which have the right of passage, but may not be in possession of any marine life or parts thereof, and may not stop for any reason, other than a declared NOTE 5 emergency (e.g. sinking). *Estuarine Lakes* i **All forms of extractive use**, including angling, harvesting of intertidal or shallow subtidal organisms, and collection of biota and marine products (e.g. shells, driftwood, rocks and sand). ii Fossicking NOTE 4. iii Beach driving, including management vehicles (except in emergencies). iv Launching of motorised vessels except for essential management and research/monitoring
Use Intensity/ **Frequency NOTE 6**	Law enforcement, management activities and visitor use strictly limited to: i The principles of 'minimum tool' and 'leave no trace' apply. ii Very low intensity. iii Very low frequency, the emphasis being on transient use only. iv Very small group sizes. v Very strict regulation and control over entry.
Development Nodes	No development or infrastructural facilities (e.g. buoys, beacons) permitted.
Development Restrictions	All types and forms of development prohibited, regardless of circumstances and needs.

NOTES: TABLE 11: Wilderness (Marine)

NOTE 1: IUCN Category Ib protected areas are usually large unmodified or slightly modified areas, retaining their natural character and influence, without permanent or significant human habitation, which are protected and managed so as to preserve their natural condition.

NOTE 2: A combination of these purposes will reinforce the branding of the Park as a protected area of integrity and quality.

NOTE 3: The impacts of these permissible uses and activities must be managed to a level below the natural dynamics of the system, while maintaining the inherent wilderness experience of the area. All permissible activities are subject to the parameters set by legislation and Permissible Activities Framework [Refer to Section 5.1.8 for more detail].

NOTE 4: Fossicking is the activity undertaken by persons, who while walking, actively explore the marine life of the intertidal zone (shore and rock pools) without removing biota in the process.

NOTE 5: A declared emergency means that the appropriate radio communication is had.

NOTE 6: Actual density levels, activities and group sizes are specified in the Development Node and Activities Frameworks.

Table 12 Sanctuary (Marine)

UNMODIFIED NATURAL ENVIRONMENT. Designated Sanctuary to enable the protection of specific attributes of value.

Inherent Attributes/ Characteristics	The primary purpose of a Sanctuary Zone is the protection of a particular species, community, habitat type or ecosystem, also to be used for benchmarking purposes. Inherent attributes/characteristics are also similar to those of a Wilderness area but the area under consideration does not qualify for true wilderness status due to: i Some visual evidence (limited in extent yet discernible to even the general public) of human activities in the recent past, for example, ship wrecks). ii It being too small in size to maintain ecological processes without some ongoing management intervention. iii It not being large enough to be physically, visually and/or audibly buffered from adjacent areas to provide an authentic wilderness experience.
Focal Purpose of Zone[NOTE 1]	i Maintain a scientific benchmark area of biodiversity and ecosystem processes. ii Provide visitors with nature/spiritual/education experiences in a marine environment (heightened 'sense of place' and of World Heritage values).
Permissible Uses & Activities[NOTE 2]	*Inshore:* i Walking on beaches and rocks. ii Swimming and snorkelling. iii Guided special interest/educational activities (non-motorised, including on foot, horseback and cycling) within the parameters of other permissible and non-permissible uses and activities. iv Highly-regulated scientific research and monitoring that cannot be carried out elsewhere in the Park. v Essential management activities and intervention, including law enforcement operations (scheduled patrols and reaction) applying the 'minimum tool' principle. vi Special access, assessed on a case by case basis, and requiring permits. *Offshore:* i Guided special interest/educational activities (non-motorised vessels only) within the parameters of other permissible and non-permissible uses and activities. ii Highly regulated scientific research and monitoring that cannot be performed elsewhere in the Park. iii Essential management activities, including law enforcement operations (scheduled patrol and reaction) applying the 'minimum tool' principle. iv Special access, assessed on a case by case basis, and requiring permits. *Estuarine Lakes* i Walking on estuary margins. ii Guided wilderness, special interest/educational trails and activities (non-motorised, including on foot, horseback and canoe) within the parameters of other permissible and non-permissible uses and activities. iii Highly regulated scientific research and monitoring that cannot be carried out elsewhere in the Park. iv Essential management activities and intervention, including law enforcement operations (scheduled patrols and reaction) applying the 'minimum tool' principle. v Special access, assessed on a case by case basis, and requiring permits.
Non-Permissible Uses & Activities	*Inshore:* i **All forms of extractive use**, including rock and surf angling [NOTE 3], harvesting of intertidal or shallow subtidal organisms, and collection of biota and marine products (e.g. shells, driftwood, rocks, sand).

	ii Fossicking. iii Beach driving except for essential management activities and scientific research and monitoring under special permit. iv Launching of motorised boats except management and scientific research and monitoring vessels. *Offshore.* i Scuba diving except for highly regulated research, monitoring and World Heritage presentation. ii Kite and wind-surfing. iii Parasailing from boats or use of jet skis. iv **All forms of extractive use**, including all types of fishing, and collection of biota and marine products (e.g. shells, rocks, sand etc.). v Use of motorised vessels except for essential management and research/monitoring and vessels at sea within the 3 nautical mile limit offshore which have the right of passage, but may not be in possession of any marine life or parts thereof, and may not stop for any reason, other than a declared[NOTE 4] emergency (e.g. sinking). *Estuarine Lakes* i **All forms of extractive use**, including rock and surf angling [NOTE 3], harvesting of intertidal or shallow subtidal organisms, and collection of biota and marine products (e.g. shells, driftwood, rocks and sand). ii Fossicking. iii Driving except for essential management activities and scientific research and monitoring under special permit. iv Launching of motorised boats except management and scientific research and monitoring vessels.
Use Intensity/ **Frequency[NOTE 5]**	Law enforcement, management, research, monitoring and visitor use strictly limited to: i Very low intensity. ii Very low frequency, the emphasis being on transient use only. iii Small group sizes. iv Special events. v Very strict regulation and control over entry.
Development Nodes	No Development Nodes permitted.
Development Restrictions	All types and forms of development prohibited, regardless of circumstances and needs.

NOTES: TABLE 12: Sanctuary (Marine)

NOTE 1: A combination of these purposes will reinforce the branding of the Park as a protected area of integrity and quality.

NOTE 2: All permissible activities are subject to the parameters set by legislation and Permissible Activities Framework [Refer to Section 5.1.8 for more detail].

NOTE 3: This includes no-take unless for approved research purposes.

NOTE 4: A declared emergency means that the appropriate radio communication is had.

NOTE 5: Actual density levels, activities and group sizes are specified in the Development Node and Activities Frameworks.

Table 13 Restricted (Marine)

PARTLY MODIFIED NATURAL ENVIRONMENT. Although only partly modified, normally less pristine and less sensitive than Wilderness or Sanctuary areas. Similar in principle to a Terrestrial Restricted Zone.

Inherent Attributes/ Characteristics	A marine area that may have some (but limited in extent and impact) adjacent current human settlement, developed infrastructure (e.g. buoys, piers) and/or consumptive activities, (e.g. fishing), management interventions and some visual evidence (limited in extent and impact but relatively more than that acceptable for Sanctuary zones) of their occurrence in the recent past. Nevertheless, regardless of whether current or residual, the human-induced modifications to the environment must either pose no significant threats (to ecological processes, biodiversity and landscape quality) or it is feasible to dispose of or remove them and/or mitigate their negative impacts over time. Accordingly, the area must have the potential for restoration to a state that the general public regards, for the most part, as largely unmodified and/or near-pristine. This may require proactive and responsive management interventions indefinitely for the maintenance of the above.
Focal Purpose of Zone	i Conservation of biodiversity and ecological processes. ii Where applicable, the restoration and maintenance of natural landscapes and ecological processes. iii Provide visitors with a high quality nature-based outdoor experience in a marine environment.

Permissible Uses & Activities NOTE 1	*Inshore:* i Walking on beaches and rocks and fossicking (non-extractive). ii Horse riding. iii Cycling. iv Swimming, snorkelling, surfing, surf-skiing, kite and wind surfing and kayaking. v Recreational NOTE 2 and subsistence rock and surf angling. vi Concession, research, and monitoring and management beach driving only. vii Boat launching at recognised boat-launching sites (concession, research and monitoring and management only). viii Special interest/educational activities within parameters of other permissible and non-permissible uses and activities. ix Restricted subsistence invertebrate harvesting in designated areas. x Scientific research and monitoring with a scientific permit. xi Law enforcement patrols and reaction. xii Management intervention to restore/maintain ecological processes and the unspoilt appearance of the landscape. *Offshore* i Scuba diving. ii Snorkelling. iii Kayaking, surf-skiing, and kite and wind-surfing. iv Use of motorised vessels. v Recreational fishing (pelagic only). NOTE 2 vi Spearfishing (pelagic game fish only). vii Special interest/educational activities within the parameters of other permissible and non-permissible uses and activities. viii Artificial substrates including artificial reefs. ix Research and monitoring with a scientific permit. x Law enforcement patrols and reaction. xi Management intervention to restore/maintain ecological processes and the unspoilt appearance of the landscape. *Estuarine Lakes:* i Walking on estuary margins. ii Boats operating under concessions or licenses, iii Access (including on foot, horseback and canoe) within the parameters of other permissible and non-permissible uses and activities. iv Highly regulated scientific research and monitoring that cannot be carried out elsewhere in the Park. v Essential management activities and interventions, including law enforcement operations (scheduled patrols and reaction) applying the 'minimum tool' principle. vi Special access, assessed on a case by case basis, and requiring permits. vii Launching of boats when the mouth is open.
Non-Permissible Uses & Activities	*Inshore:* i Beach driving except under recreational and educational use permits for concession operators, and authorised management and research, and monitoring vehicles. ii Harvesting of intertidal organisms other than subsistence invertebrate harvesting or under special permit. iii Collection of marine aquarium fish, invertebrates and plants except for educational or scientific purposes, and under special permit. iv Collection of organic (e.g. driftwood, shells) and inorganic (e.g. rocks, sand) materials except for educational or scientific purposes and under special permit. v Commercial fishing. vi Launching from non-recognised sites except under special permit.

	Offshore. vii Fishing for, or being in possession of, bottom fish. viii Chumming or feeding of fish (including sharks). ix Jet skis except for fishing and under special permit. x Parasailing from boats. xi Collection of marine aquarium fish, invertebrates and plants except for educational or scientific purposes and under special permit. xii Use of fish aggregating devices (FADs), anchored or drifting. xiii Commercial fishing. *Estuarine Lakes:* i **All forms of extractive use**, including rock and surf angling NOTE 3, harvesting of intertidal or shallow subtidal organisms, and collection of biota and marine products (e.g. shells, driftwood, rocks and sand). ii Fossicking. iii Driving except for essential management activities and scientific research and monitoring under special permit.
Use Intensity/ **Frequency NOTE 3**	Regulated and controlled use of low and moderate intensity with entry/access restricted to and controlled at entrance gates or other demarcated points of entry.
Development Nodes	Only Low and Medium (temporary) Intensity Tourism Day Visitor Nodes and Park Management Nodes permitted.
Development Restrictions	Only very low key, unobtrusive and low impact development permitted from base of dunes to the low water mark. No development of any type or form permitted from low water mark to outer limit of Marine Reserve, regardless of circumstances or needs. Development from base-of-dune to dune-crest and inland must conform to restrictions laid down for the adjacent Development Node or Terrestrial Zone which, in most instances, will be a Terrestrial Restricted or Controlled Zone.

NOTES: TABLE 13: Restricted (Marine)

NOTE 1: All permissible activities are subject to parameters set by legislation and the Permissible Activities Framework [Refer to Section 5.1.8 for more detail].

NOTE 2: No-take areas will be introduced within restricted zones into the future.

NOTE 3: Actual density levels, activities and group sizes are specified in the Development Node and Activities Frameworks**.**

Table 14 Controlled (Marine)

MODIFIED NATURAL ENVIRONMENT. Noticeably less pristine than a Controlled Pelagic Zone and, thus, normally less sensitive to the development of visitor facilities. Similar in principle to a Terrestrial Controlled Zone.

Inherent Attributes/ Characteristics	A marine area where the seascape, ecosystems and habitats, and ecological processes may have been noticeably transformed by past or present developments (piers, buoys) or human activities (fishing, estuary mouth manipulation) within the area or in the terrestrial area immediately adjacent to it, but with significant interventions over time it could be restored to: i A natural setting that appears to the general public as largely unmodified. ii A system in which the ecological processes function naturally. iii A situation in which, as a combination of achieving the above, the area could be regarded as partly modified and, hence, could be upgraded to a Controlled Pelagic Zone. Proactive and responsive management interventions may be required indefinitely for the maintenance of the above.
Focal Purpose of Zone	i Where applicable, the restoration and maintenance of natural landscapes and ecological processes. ii Provide an affordable, comfortable, informative, safe, enjoyable and sustainable outdoor recreational experience in a relatively-unspoilt marine environment.

Permissible Uses & Activities NOTE 1	*Inshore:* i Walking on beaches and rocks and fossicking. ii Swimming, snorkelling, surfing, surf-skiing, kite and wind surfing and kayaking. iii Horse riding. iv Cycling. v Concession, research and monitoring, and management beach driving only. vi Recreational and subsistence rock and surf angling. vii Boat launching (self and concession) at recognised boat-launching sites. viii Special interest/educational activities within parameters of other permissible and non-permissible uses and activities. ix Controlled subsistence invertebrate harvesting in designated areas. x Research and monitoring with a scientific permit. xi Law enforcement patrols and reaction. xii Management intervention to restore/maintain ecological processes and the unspoilt appearance of the landscape. *Offshore.* i Scuba diving. ii Snorkelling. iii Kayaking, surf-skiing, kite and wind-surfing, and parasailing from boat. iv Use of motorised vessels. v Recreational pelagic fishing (except at 2-mile reef = only in waters > 30 m). vi Spear fishing (except at 2-mile reef = only in waters > 18 m, only pelagic game fish). vii Special interest/educational activities within the parameters of other permissible and non-permissible uses and activities. viii Establishment of artificial substrates including artificial reefs. ix Research and monitoring with a scientific permit. x Law enforcement patrols and reaction. xi Management intervention to restore/maintain ecological processes and the unspoilt appearance of the landscape. *Estuarine Lakes:* i Walking on estuary margins and fossicking. i Concession, research and monitoring, and management beach driving only. ii Recreational and subsistence rock and surf angling. iii Boat launching (self and concession) at recognised boat-launching sites. iv Special interest/educational activities within parameters of other permissible and non-permissible uses and activities. v Controlled subsistence invertebrate harvesting in designated areas. vi Research and monitoring with a scientific permit. vii Law enforcement patrols and reaction. viii Management intervention to restore/maintain ecological processes and the unspoilt appearance of the landscape.
Non-Permissible Uses & Activities	*Inshore.* i Vehicles on the beach except for boat launching purposes at recognised launch sites, and concession beach driving and authorised management and research and monitoring vehicles NOTE 2. ii Launching from non-recognised sites except under special permit. iii Jet skis except under special permit. iv Harvesting of intertidal organisms other than subsistence invertebrate harvesting or under special permit. v Collection of marine aquarium fish, invertebrates and plants except for educational or scientific purposes and under special permit. vi Collection of organic (drift wood, shells) and inorganic (e.g. rocks, sand) materials except for educational or scientific purposes and under special permit.

	vii Commercial fishing. *Offshore.* i Fishing for, or being in possession of, bottom fish[24]. ii Chumming or feeding of fish (including sharks). iii Jet skis except under special permit. iv Collection of marine aquarium fish except for educational or scientific purposes and under special permit. v Use of fish aggregating devices (FADs), anchored or drifting. vi Commercial fishing. *Estuarine Lakes:* i Vehicles on the beach barrier except for boat launching purposes at recognised launch sites, concession beach driving and authorised management and research and monitoring vehicles **NOTE 2**. ii Launching from non-recognised sites except under special permit. iii Jet skis except under special permit. iv Harvesting of intertidal organisms other than subsistence invertebrate harvesting or under special permit. v Collection of marine aquarium fish, invertebrates and plants except for educational or scientific purposes and under special permit. vi Collection of organic (drift wood, shells, etc) and inorganic (e.g. rocks and sand) materials except for educational or scientific purposes and under special permit. vii Commercial fishing.
Use Intensity/ Frequency **NOTE 2**	Regulated and controlled use of moderate intensity and relatively high frequency, with entry/access restricted to and controlled at entrance gates or other demarcated points of entry.
Development Nodes	Only Tourism Day Visitor Nodes and Park Management Nodes permitted.
Development Restrictions	Only very low key, unobtrusive and low impact development permitted from base of dunes to the low water mark. No development of any type or form permitted from the low water mark to the outer limit of the Park boundary (3 nautical miles) regardless of circumstances or needs. Development from base-of-dune to dune-crest and inland must conform to restrictions laid down for the adjacent Development Node or Terrestrial Zone which, in most instances, will be a Terrestrial Controlled Zone.

24 There are a number of reasons why the Authority has taken the decision to prohibit all bottom fishing in the Park. Firstly, the then Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism declared South Africa's line fishery in a state of emergency in 2000 because of the crisis in this fishery (Government Gazette, 29 December 2000 No. 21949, Notice 4727 of 2000). In the Southern African marine line fish status reports, a number of species of commercial and recreational marine fish, including bottom fish species, were considered over exploited and/or collapsed and stock rebuilding is required. Firstly, there is also an extensive body of scientific literature that motivates for protection of reef fish in the iSimangaliso Wetland Park and the Natal Bioregion. Secondly, bottom fish are often highly resident, a key feature that makes these species vulnerable to overexploitation. Thirdly, the area south of Cape Vidal falls in the Natal Bioregion, which up to now has not received adequate protection consistent with the other bioregions in South Africa.

NOTES: TABLE 14: Controlled (Marine)

NOTE 1: All permissible activities are subject to parameters set by legislation and the Permissible Activities Framework [Refer to Section 5.1.8 for more detail].

NOTE 2: In the event of changes to the regulations governing the use of vehicles in the coastal zone, for example, a lessening of current restrictions, iSimangaliso will review its restrictions related to permissible and non-permissible activities in the Marine Controlled Zone, to give equivalent force to the above restrictions that rely significantly on the prohibition of vehicles in the coastal zone.

5.1.2 iSimangaliso Marine Protected Area

As noted in Chapter 1, the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) is currently proposing the extension of the MPAs in the iSimangaliso Wetland Park. Under these proposals, the iSimangaliso MPA will comprise the existing Maputaland and St Lucia MPAs, a south-westward extension of the existing St Lucia MPA to the Cape St Lucia Lighthouse (approximately 12.5 km long and an area of approximately 69.4 km^2) and an offshore extension of all three of the above areas (approximately 49 km by 193 km by 101 km and an area of approximately 14,600.5 km^2). The proposed extension is currently being publically consulted by DEA, with a closing date of 17 May 2016, and is not included in this IMP. Any changes to the current MPA will be incorporated into the IMP once they have been finalised and gazetted by DEA. Until this process is complete, the current provisions for the protection of the marine component of the Park will remain in place, including zonation.

5.1.3 Boat Launch Sites and Controls

In terms of Regulation 7 of the Management of Public Launch Sites in the Coastal Zone (GN 497 of 27 June 2014), a management authority (in this case the iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority) in its Integrated Management Plan shall identify public launch sites within a protected area including those sites which share adjacent common boundaries with a terrestrial protected area.

The following sites within the iSimangaliso Wetland Park have been identified and listed as boat-launching sites, the boundaries, use and usage limitations of which are individually defined in Table 15.

5.1.4 Beach Driving Sites and Controls

The iSimangaliso Wetland Park has designated concession use areas for beach driving and on-beach parking of vehicles. The boundaries and usage limitations are described in Table 16.

5.1.5 Sensitive Areas/Sites

There are a number of sites of special sensitivity, value and interest within the Park that require special protection, for example, Black Rock, Island Rock, certain reefs, various cultural sites, the Park's estuaries, and habitats that support rare, threatened or endemic species. These will be declared **sensitive areas or sites** irrespective of the zone in which they occur and may receive additional zonation affording the same protection as for a sanctuary zone. Alternatively, site-specific management plans will be prepared for the protection and management thereof.

5.1.6 Development Node Framework

Development nodes are a subset of the Park zonation plan that cluster activities and/or facilities. Nodes are intrinsically-attractive locations, with a range of natural, cultural, and/or aesthetic attributes and recreational and/or educational opportunities. Three strategies were considered in the development of nodes, namely; the development of peripheral nodes, i.e. high intensity nodes on the periphery of the protected area; consolidation of existing nodes, and the creation of new development nodes. The categories of development nodes considered appropriate for iSimangaliso include:

Table 15 Boat launch sites and controls

Boat Launch Site Title	Position and Extent	Use	Usage Limitation
Maphelane Self and Concession	Maphelane onramp to 500 m north of the Maphelane onramp	Public and concession use	Maximum of 40 vehicles for launching purposes per day, including concessions
St Lucia Temporary Beach Self and Concession	From the north bank of the Umfolozi River to the end of the St Lucia northern access ramp provided that only a demarcated area of 200 m between these two points can be used at any one time	Public and concession use	Maximum of 40 vehicles for launching purposes per day including concession operators This launch site may only be used during periods when it is dangerous to launch from the St Lucia Ski Boat Club Slipway
St Lucia Estuary Self and Concession	St Lucia Ski Boat Club Slipway to St Lucia Ski Boat Club Slipway	Public and concession use	Maximum of 40 vehicles for launching purposes per day including concession operators
Cape Vidal Self and Concession	Cape Vidal Point Bay to Cape Vidal onramp provided that only a demarcated area of 200 m between these two points can be used at any one time	Public and concession use	Maximum of 40 vehicles for launching, beaching or servicing a vessel per day
Sodwana Bay Self and Concession	Jesser Point to Mgobozeleni Mouth provided that only a demarcated area of 200 m between these two points can be used at any one time	Public and concession use	Maximum of 100 vehicles for launching purposes per day including concession operators. An additional 10 recreational vehicles at any one time for use as service vehicles for the diving and charter fishing[25] operations at Sodwana Bay
Nine-Mile Reef Concession	Nine Mile Point to 800 m north provided that only a demarcated area of 50 m between these two points can be used at any one time	Concession only	Maximum of two vehicles for launching, beaching or servicing a concession vessel per day
Island Rock Concession	Island Rock southern inshore ledge to Manzengwenya Ledge provided that only a demarcated area of 50 m between these two points can be used at any one time	Concession only	Maximum of six vehicles for launching, beaching or servicing a concession vessel per day

25 The term charter fishing means "fishing from a vessel carrying a passenger or passengers for hire that are engaged in recreational fishing".

Boat Launch Site Title	Position and Extent	Use	Usage Limitation
Mabibi Concession	Hulley Point to 800 m north provided that only a demarcated area of 50 m between these two points can be used at any one time	Concession only	Maximum of one vehicle for launching, beaching or servicing a concession vessel per day
Lala Nek Concession	Lala Nek Point to 800 m north of Lala Nek onramp provided that only a demarcated area of 50 m between these two points can be used at any one time	Concession only	Maximum of one vehicle for launching, beaching or servicing a concession vessel at any one time
Rocktail Bay Concession	Rocktail Bay Point to 800 m north provided that only a demarcated area of 50 m between these two points can be used at any one time	Concession only	Maximum of one vehicle for launching, beaching or servicing a concession vessel per day
Bhanga Nek Concession	Botelier Point to 800 m north: provided that only a demarcated area of 50 m between these two points can be used at any one time	Concession only	Maximum of six vehicles for launching, beaching or servicing a concession vessel per day

Table 16 Beach driving controls

Name of Concession Use Area	Physical Boundaries	Use	Maximum Permissible Vehicle Numbers at any one time
Maphelane CUA	Maphelane to Zavini Ledge, access being from the designated Maphelane onramp	Concession operation only. No self driving activity	2 limited concession use vehicles
St Lucia CUA	St Lucia on ramp to 100m south of First Rocks, access being from designated St Lucia beach onramp	Concession operation only. No self driving activity	2 limited concession use vehicles
Cape Vidal North CUA	Cape Vidal onramp to Leven Point, access being from the Cape Vidal beach onramp	Concession operation only. No self driving activity	3 limited concession use vehicles and 3 Turtle concession use vehicles
Sodwana Bay CUA	Adlams Reef to Nine Mile onramp, access being from the designated Sodwana and Nine Mile beach onramps	Concession operation only. No self driving activity	4 limited concession use vehicles and 3 Turtle concession use vehicles
Nine Mile – Rocktail Bay CUA	9 Mile to south of Black Rock, access being from designated beach onramps at Nine Mile, Mabibi, Lalanek, Manzengwenya and Rocktail Bay	Concession operation only. No self driving activity	2 Turtle concession use vehicles
Sodwana Bay Parking Area	Sodwana Bay Beach onramp to 2 km north of Jesser Point, access is only permitted by existing beach onramp	For parking only under strict conditions	200

- ❖ Category A: Tourism Overnight Nodes.
- ❖ Category B: Tourism Day Visitor Nodes.
- ❖ Category C: Park Management Nodes.
- ❖ Category D: Special Residential Nodes[26].
- ❖ Category E: Access Corridors and Nodes.

[26] There is no table for Category D: Special Residential Nodes. These nodes cater for resident communities within the Coastal Forest Reserve section of the Park. Planning criteria and development controls will be formulated with these resident communities during the process to develop Local Area Plans (LAPs). These LAPs will become subsidiary documents to this IMP and are described in more detail in Section 5.2.5.

5.1.7 Visitor carrying capacity

Carrying capacity relates to the maximum number of visitors that can make use of the Park without significantly degrading the environment or detracting from the Park's World Heritage values and visitor experience. The challenge is to achieve a balance between the need to stimulate economic growth by optimising visitor numbers and economic yields to the Park, and safeguarding the Park's World Heritage values. To this end, the Park must develop strategies to mitigate negative impacts from increasing visitor numbers and, also, to manage for infrequent large scale events, such as New Year's Day.

In iSimangaliso, visitor carrying capacity is closely linked to zonation and is determined through a number of interdependent variables, competing objectives, assumptions and value judgements. In addition, strategies to mitigate negative impacts of increasing visitor numbers need to be given prominence (particularly in the marine and estuarine environments) by discouraging demand for extractive use and encouraging non-extractive opportunities/activities.

Carrying capacities have been set for overnight visitors. Table 23 presents the proposed bed numbers per section of the Park. Maximum tourism bed numbers have also been set per development node and are presented in Table 18 of Section 5.1.6 (Development Nodes Framework). However, the final bed numbers per development are subject to zonation (Section 5.1.1 and Figure 10 in Appendix 3) and environmental authorisation based on a mandatory Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).

The specifications (such as intensity and nature of infrastructure/services) for each category of node and the division within each category for the zones identified in Section 5.1.1 are provided in Tables 17 – 22.

Table 17 Category A – Tourism Overnight Nodes (Terrestrial)

TYPE	ZONE	INTENSITY	MAXIMUM TOURISM BEDS PER FACILITY	INFRASTRUCTURE			SERVICES		ACCESS			AUXILIARY INFRASTRUCTURE	EXAMPLES
				TEMP	SEMI PERM	PERM	ON-SITE	EXTERNAL	TRAIL	VEHICLE			
										4x4	2x4		
I	Wilderness	Very low	≤10	•			•		• game trails			None	Fly camp Tented camp
II	Restricted	Low	≤ 50		•	•	•	• under exceptional circumstances only		•	•	Swimming pool Boat launching facilities	Bush lodge Tented camp Education facility
III[29]	Restricted	Medium	≤ 200	•	•		•		•	•	•	None	Events accommodation
IV	Controlled	Very low	≤ 10	•	•		•		•	•	•	None	Trails camp
V	Controlled	Low	≤ 50	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Swimming pool Boat launching facilities	Bush lodge Trails camp Tented camp Campsite Education facility
VI	Controlled	Medium	≤ 200	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Swimming pool Boat launching facilities Sporting facilities Landscaped gardens	Bush resort Boutique hotel Campsite Education facility
VII	Controlled	High I	200 to 500	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Swimming pool Boat launching facilities Sporting facilities Landscaped gardens Commercial (shops, restaurants, etc.)	Resort Campsite Education facility
VIII	Controlled	High II	≤ 500	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Swimming pool Boat launching facilities Sporting facilities. Landscaped gardens Commercial (shops, restaurants, etc.)	Resort Campsite

29 For limited periods of time, i.e. for the duration of the event.

Table 18 Category B – Tourism Day–Visitor Nodes (Terrestrial)

TYPE	ZONE	INTENSITY	MAXIMUM VISITOR NUMBERS PER DAY	INFRASTRUCTURE			SERVICES		ACCESS			EXAMPLES
				TEMP	SEMI PERM	PERM	ON-SITE	EXTERNAL	TRAIL	VEHICLE		
										4x4	2x4	
I	Restricted	Low	≤ 50	•	•	•	•	• under exceptional circumstances only	•	•	•	Events Hides Picnic site View site Formalised parking areas & ablution facilities
II[30]	Restricted	Medium	≤ 200	•	•		•		•	•	•	Event site (including parking & ablution facilities)
III	Controlled	Low	≤ 50	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Events Hide Picnic site View site Boardwalks & elevated walkway Formalised parking areas & ablution facilities
IV	Controlled	Medium	≤ 200	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Events Hide Picnic site View site Boardwalks & elevated walkway Interpretation centre Conference centre Formalised parking & ablution facilities
V	Controlled	High I	200 – 500	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Events Hide Picnic site View site Boardwalks & elevated walkway Interpretation centres Commercial (e.g. shops, restaurants) Sport facilities Formalised parking & ablution facilities

30 For limited periods of time, i.e. for the duration of the event.

TYPE	ZONE	INTENSITY	MAXIMUM VISITOR NUMBERS PER DAY	INFRASTRUCTURE			SERVICES		ACCESS			EXAMPLES
				TEMP	SEMI PERM	PERM	ON-SITE	EXTERNAL	TRAIL	VEHICLE		
										4x4	2x4	
VI[32]	Controlled	High II	> 500	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	Events (including parking & ablution facilities Special holidays (e.g. New Year's Day)

32 This node type pertains to sites such as St Lucia, Cape Vidal and Sodwana which have historically been associated with periods of high intensity use during school holiday periods and public holidays, most notably New Year's Day.

Table 19 Category B – Tourism Day–Visitor Nodes (Marine Inshore)[33]

TYPE	ZONE	INTENSITY	MAXIMUM VISITOR NUMBERS PER DAY	INFRASTRUCTURE			SERVICES	ACCESS					EXAMPLES
				TEMP	SEMI PERM	PERM	ON-SITE	ON FOOT	VEHICLE			BOAT	
									4x4 (beach)	4x4 (inland)	2x4 (inland)		
I	Controlled Pelagic	Low	≤ 50	•	•		•	•	• Concession	•	•	• Concession	Boat launching Beach day visiting Events
II[34]	Controlled Pelagic	Medium	≤ 200[27]	•			• Temporary	•	• Concession	•	•	• Concession	Events
III	Controlled	Medium	≤ 200	•	•	•		•	• Concession	•	•	•	Beach day visiting Boat launching Events
IV	Controlled	High I	≤ 1 500		•	•		•			•	•	Beach day visiting Boat launching Events
V	Controlled	High II	≤ 3000	•	•	•		•			•	•	Beach day visiting Boat launching Events
VI[28]	Controlled	High III	> 3000	•	•	•	• Temporary	•		•	•		Special holidays (e.g. New Year's Day)

33 Marine nodes in Controlled Pelagic and Controlled Zones are serviced by adjoining Terrestrial Nodes (e.g. parking and ablution facilities).

34 For limited periods of time, i.e. for the duration of the event.

27 Except special days at Kosi Mouth and Bhanga.

28 This node type pertains to sites such as St Lucia and Sodwana which have historically been associated with periods of high intensity use on public holidays, most notably New Year's Day.

Table 20 Category C – Park Management Nodes (Terrestrial)

TYPE	ZONE	INTENSITY	STAFF NUMBERS PER FACILITY PER NIGHT	FUNCTIONS	INFRASTRUCTURE			SERVICES		EXAMPLES OF ACCOMMODATION FACILITIES	OTHER INFRASTRUCTURE
					TEMP	SEMI-PERM	PERM	ON-SITE	EXTERNAL		
I	Wilderness	Very low	≤ 12	Management Research and monitoring	•			•		Scout camps Research camps	Hides
II	Restricted	Very low	≤ 12	Management Research and monitoring	•	•		•		Scout camps Research camps	Hides
III	Restricted	Low	≤ 50	Management Research and monitoring	•	•		•	•	Field ranger huts Research camps Staff houses	Hides Bomas Research facilities
IV	Controlled	Low	≤ 50	Management Research and monitoring Administration Technical Accommodation	•	•	•	•	•	Scout camps Research camps Staff houses	Hides Bomas Research facilities Offices Stores Workshops Control gates Staff recreational facilities
V	Controlled	Medium	≤ 200	Management Research and monitoring Administration Technical Accommodation	•	•	•	•	•	Staff houses	Research facilities Hides Bomas Offices Stores Workshops Control gates Staff recreational facilities

Table 21 Category E – Access Corridors and Nodes (Terrestrial)

TYPE	ZONE	MOTORISED ACCESS & ENTRANCE GATES		TYPE OF ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE				LANDING STRIPS/ HELIPADS		LAKE INFRASTRUCTURE (SLIPWAYS & JETTIES)		INFRASTRUCTURE PERMANENCY		
		TOURISM	MANAGEMENT	INFORMAL MANAGEMENT TRACK	FORMALISED TRACK	GRAVEL ROAD	SURFACED ROAD	HELICOPTER	FIXED WING	TOURISM	MANAGEMENT	TEMP	SEMI-PERM	PERM
I	Wilderness		•	•				• emergency only				•		
II	Restricted	•	•	•	•	•	• designated access corridor	• emergency & management only	•	•	•	•	•	•
III	Controlled	•	•	•	•	•	•	• emergency & management only	•	•	•	•	•	•

Table 22 Category E – Access Corridors and Nodes (Marine Inshore)

TYPE	ZONE	TYPE OF ACCESS		BEACH DRIVING[29]			BOAT LAUNCHING SITES				BEACH ON -AND OFF- RAMPS TEMP
		NON-MOTORISED	MOTORISED	CONCESSION	RESEARCH & MONITORING	MANAGEMENT	SELF	CONCESSION	RESEARCH & MONITORING	MANAGEMENT	
I	Wilderness	•	• emergencies only			• emergencies only		• not fixed & non-motorised only	• not fixed	• not fixed & essential management & emergencies	
II	Sanctuary	•	• emergencies only		•	•		• not fixed & non-motorised only	• not fixed	• not fixed & essential management & emergencies	
III	Controlled Pelagic	•	• vehicle or vessel	•	•	•		•	•	•	•
IV	Controlled	•	• vehicle or vessel	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•

29 Recreational/self-driving is prohibited by law.

Table 23 Proposed bed numbers per section of the Park[30]

Section[31]	Proposed Bed Numbers
Maphelane	200
St Lucia	1,600
Eastern Shores	880
Western Shores	1,340
False Bay	160
Ozabeni	160
Sodwana Bay	1,200
uMkhuze	690
Coastal Forest Reserve	1,120
Total	**7,350**

The maximum number of day visitors per day visitor node has been set but the overall carrying capacities for each section of the Park have not yet been determined. This will occur gradually in parallel with the implementation of the Park's phased infrastructure development and various rehabilitation programmes. As demand rises in response to new opportunities, it is possible to control visitor numbers by restricting the number of vehicles allowed through entrance gates[32] and the number of concessions and user permits issued.

Another challenge for Park management is to manage for infrequent large-scale events, such as the tens of thousands of visitors, mainly residents of local communities, who visit the Park on Public Holidays, specifically New Year's Day and predominantly at Sodwana and St Lucia. These sections are both zoned as Controlled and the nodes are classed as High III.

5.1.8 Permissible Activities Framework

The Park can support a broad range of tourism activities. **The activities are strongly linked to zonation and associated typologies, and development nodes and carrying capacities**. Tables 24 and 25 present proposed activities for the Park, and the permissible terrestrial (including lakes and rivers), and marine activities in the various zones. These tables contain a quick reference guide to the permissible activities per zone as given in Tables 8 to 14, and which qualify each activity in keeping with a particular zone's inherent attributes/characteristics and focal purpose. Part of the Activities Framework is the identification of environmental issues and impacts associated with the various permissible activities, which then determine the operational parameters for each activity, complementary to the parameters set by legislation. While the same activity may be allowed in more than one zone, the restrictions pertaining to that activity will differ according to the zone in which it is permitted. The list of permissible activities may be revised from time to time.

30 These figures exclude people living in the Park (staff and local communities).

31 Refer to Figure 11 which illustrates the various sections into which the Park has been divided.

32 For example, there is a daily limit of 120 vehicles that are allowed through the Eastern Shores Gate.

Table 24 Permissible terrestrial tourism activities per zone (subject to respective permits and permit conditions)

TERRESTRIAL ACTIVITIES		ZONATION		
		Wilderness	Restricted	Controlled
Land Activities	Hiking trails (day & overnight)	✓	✓	✓
	Horse trails (day & overnight)	✓	✓	✓
	Cycling	✓	✓	✓
	4x4 trails & game drives (day & overnight)		✓	✓
	2x4 game drives			✓
	Specialist interest/educational trails and tours (e.g. fauna, flora, ecological, cultural, geological, palaeontological, game capture etc.)	✓ non-motorised	✓	✓
	Events (e.g. extreme/survival, team building, sporting, promotional, ceremonial etc.)	✓ non-motorised	✓	✓
Lake and River Activities	Kayaking and canoeing	✓	✓	✓
	Motorised boating		✓	✓
	Sailboat		✓	✓
	Houseboats		✓	✓
	Ferry shuttle service		✓	✓
	Fishing		✓	✓
	Freshwater diving		✓	✓
	Swimming (in secured areas)		✓	✓
	Specialist interest/educational trails and tours (e.g. fauna, flora, ecological, cultural, geological, palaeontological, limnological[33], game capture)	✓ non-motorised	✓	✓
	Events (e.g. extreme/survival, team building, sporting, promotional, ceremonial)	✓ non-motorised	✓	✓

33 Limnology is the study of inland waters (running and standing waters, both fresh and saline), including their biological, physical, chemical, geological and hydrological aspects.

Table 25 Permissible marine and estuarine tourism activities per zone (subject to respective permits and permit conditions)

ACTIVITIES		Wilderness	Sanctuary	Restricted	Controlled
Inshore Activities	Walking on beach and rocks	✓ beach only	✓ beach only	✓	✓
	Fossicking			✓	✓
	Swimming	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Snorkelling	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Surfing	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Recreational rock and surf angling			✓	✓
	Recreational spearfishing (pelagic species)			✓	✓
	Invertebrate harvesting			✓	✓
	Cycling	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Horse trails	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Beach driving			✓	✓
	Boat launching (with use of vehicle)			✓	✓
	Specialist interest/educational trails and tours (e.g. fauna, flora, ecological, cultural)	✓ non-motorised	✓ non-motorised	✓	✓
	Events (e.g. extreme/survival, team building, sporting, promotional, ceremonial)	✓ non-motorised	✓ non-motorised	✓	✓
Offshore Activities	Motorised boating	*	*	✓	✓
	Recreational fishing (pelagic species only)			✓	✓
	Recreational spearfishing (pelagic game species only)			✓	✓
	Scuba diving			✓	✓
	Snorkelling	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Surfing and surf skiing	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Kite and wind surfing			✓	✓
	Parasailing from boat				✓
	Kayaking	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Jet skis			✓ fishing only	✓
	Special interest/educational trails and tours (non-extractive, e.g. whale/dolphin, shark, dive trails etc.)	✓ non-motorised	✓ non-motorised	✓	✓
	Events (e.g. extreme/survival, team building, sporting, promotional, ceremonial etc.)	✓ non-motorised	✓ non-motorised	✓	✓

* Only vessels at sea within the 3 nautical mile limit offshore which have the right of passage, but may not be in possession of any fish or parts thereof, and may not stop for any reason, other than a declared emergency (e.g. sinking).

Permissible aerial activities in the Park are subject to the provisions of the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act, 2003 (Act 57 of 2003) and associated Regulations[34]. No person shall significantly alter or change the 'sense of place' or any environmental, cultural or spiritual value and no person may fly over any part of iSimangaliso below an altitude of 4,100 feet AMSL without prior written permission from the iSimangaliso Authority[35]. Aerial tourism activities in the Park are limited to the use of light aircraft, subject to zonation on the ground. Use of helicopters other than for emergencies or for management purposes is prohibited. Infrastructure associated with aerial activities (landing strips and helicopter pads) is presented in Table 21: Category E – Access Corridors and Nodes (Terrestrial).

5.1.9 Non-Permissible Activities

There are various categories of non-permissible activities in the Park, including those activities that are **not** permitted:

- Under any circumstances (e.g. bottom fishing).
- In certain zones (e.g. no recreational fishing in Wilderness or Sanctuary zones).
- Outside of designated areas within zones (e.g. boat launching only at a recognised site and within a particular area).
- In sensitive areas or sites regardless of the zone (e.g. specific reefs).
- Under certain conditions (e.g. when mouth is closed or in times of drought).
- Outside certain periods (e.g. fishing seasons).
- By users other than those falling within particular user groups (e.g. subsistence fishers).
- Those prohibited by legislation.

This is except for "*any activity carried out lawfully in terms of any agreement which exists when this section takes effect that may continue until the date of termination of such agreement, provided that the agreement may not be extended or varied so as to expire after the original intended expiry date without the consent of the Minister*" (Section 50(4) of the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act, 2003).

Non-permissible activities are listed in Tables 8 to 14. The list of non-permissible activities may be amended at the discretion of the Authority as described in the Permissible Activities Framework above.

5.1.10 Development and Management Blocks

To facilitate prioritising and phasing of development, and devising logistical management support, the various terrestrial and marine areas consolidated in the Park have been grouped into three management and development blocks, within which fall numerous sections (Figure 11 in Appendix 3). The rationale behind these blocks and sections is based on an optimal combination of the following criteria:

- Ease of access by boat or vehicle.
- Conservation and management imperatives.
- Community facilitation.

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34 Government Notice R. 1061 of 28 October 2005: Regulations for the proper administration of special nature reserves, national parks and world heritage sites.

35 Aeronautical Information Circular (AIC) 20.18 dated 06.10.27.

- ❖ Geographic location.
- ❖ Tourism considerations.

On the basis of these criteria, the three development and management blocks and their component sections are:

- ❖ **Block A (St Lucia South)** includes the Eastern Shores, Western Shores, False Bay Park, Maphelane, the Dukuduku, Futululu, and Nyalazi State Forests, part of the iSimangaliso Marine Protected Area, the Nkunduzi, Nibela and Dukuduku communities, and private land between Hluhluwe village and False Bay. The northern boundary of this block is the Mzinene River and the northern shore of Lake St Lucia, including the Nibela Peninsula.
- ❖ **Block B (St Lucia North)** includes Sodwana Bay Park, Sodwana State Forest (Ozabeni), part of the iSimangaliso Marine Protected Area, uMkhuze Game Reserve, private land north of the Mzinene River (including Phinda), communal land between private land and Ozabeni, Mabaso, and the communal land adjoining the western and northern boundaries of uMkhuze Game Reserve.
- ❖ **Block C (Coastal Forest Reserve)** which extends from several kilometres north of Sodwana Bay to the Mozambique border, including Lake Sibaya, Manzengwenya, Kosi Bay and part of the iSimangaliso Marine Protected Area, including the communities of Mabibi, KwaDapha and eNkovukeni.

Included in Blocks A, B and C are parcels of land outside of iSimangaliso which can be described as part of or important to the short-, medium- and long-term vision of the Park.

5.1.11 Zone of Influence (Buffer Zone)

In order to maintain the World Heritage values and status of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park, and meet obligations in terms of the World Heritage Convention Act and the Protected Areas Act, the iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority has an obligation to optimise responsible development that will meaningfully uplift communities and provide sustainable employment to people living in the greater area of influence of iSimangaliso, while also conserving the ecological and cultural integrity of iSimangaliso. To achieve this within the parameters of international best practice, iSimangaliso has delineated a Zone of Influence[36] (including terrestrial, aquatic and marine environments) to protect iSimangaliso from external threats.

The delineation of the Zone of Influence was undertaken in accordance with the provisions of iSimangaliso's approved Working Policy 4: Buffer Zones. This approved policy is a working document and may be updated as new information becomes available. The Zone of Influence is in accordance with the South African Department of Environmental Affairs' Policy and Strategy on Buffer Zones. In a study undertaken by GCS Water and Environmental Consultants (November 2015)[37], the impact of current and proposed developments on the water resources supporting the iSimangaliso World Heritage Site have been assessed, with particular reference to lake ground- and surface-water capture zones.

- ❖ **Sub-Zone 1 relates to a 10 m wide strip of land, 5 m either side of the Park boundary,** in which no land-use is permitted (save for necessary access points and management roads).

36 Previously referred to as a Buffer Zone.

37 GCS Water and Environmental Consultants, 2015. Determining the impact of current and proposed development on the water resources supporting the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (World Heritage Site).

- **Sub-Zone 2 relates to a larger area extending the full length of the Park[38] and delineated on the basis of watersheds and view sheds** (Figure 12: Map in Appendix 3)**,** in which the Park will exercise its rights and responsibilities in the spirit of co-operative governance. This sub-zone includes lake-ground- and surface-water capture zones (Figure 13 in Appendix 3).
- **Sub-Zone 3 relates to rivers (including their catchments) that enter iSimangaliso.** Recognising the strategic and environmental importance of rivers, the Park Authority needs to exercise its influence upstream of where rivers enter the Park, as far as their sources. This area of influence is defined as a strip 30 m in width extending away from the bank on either side of the river. The Park Authority will exercise its influence within this area within the provisions of the Reserve, once the Reserve for each river has been determined by the Department of Water and Sanitation, and subject to available resources.
- **Sub-Zone 4 relates to the 10 km buffer zone set by the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations,** within which certain activities require environmental authorisation following a Basic Assessment process. This includes the marine environment where the buffer zone extends eastwards into the Indian Ocean for 10 km from the Park marine boundary.

Recognising zero land-use within Sub-Zone 1, iSimangaliso proposes four categories of influence in Sub-Zones 2, 3 and 4.

- **Category A.**

  This encompasses development initiatives/events/applications/licensing processes in the Zone of Influence that are regulated in terms of existing legislation. In all such cases, the Constitution and other existing legislation provide for the protection of rights and participative processes in which iSimangaliso will be required to play an active role as a national authority in order to ensure that the interests of iSimangaliso are as fully protected as possible, as enabled by the relevant Acts.

- **Category B.**

  This encompasses development initiatives or activities in the Zone of Influence that are not regulated by existing legislation but which require regulation to protect iSimangaliso. In such cases, the internal processes and procedures governing iSimangaliso's own activities in the Park will also apply to proposed developments, and will be agreed between iSimangaliso and the prospective developer.

38 From the Mozambique/South Africa international border southward to the Cape St. Lucia Lighthouse.

- **Category C.**
  This category covers emergency and disaster situations that might arise in or beyond the Zone of Influence, for example, floods, droughts, wild fires, livestock disease outbreaks (rabies, foot and mouth, etc.), major spillages of fuel, etc. that have the potential of causing damage to iSimangaliso. In these cases, iSimangaliso requires that it be informed of the situation and, in turn, iSimangaliso is required to participate, where possible, in remedial actions. Where possible and practicable, response policies, procedures and actions have been formulated as part of its risk assessment and disaster management planning, and will be updated as needed.

- **Category D.**
  This category covers serious threats such as poaching, violent crime, border tensions etc. in the Zone of Influence that have the potential to damage iSimangaliso's interests. In these cases, iSimangaliso requires that it be informed of the situation and, in turn, iSimangaliso is required to participate, where possible, in preventative and remedial actions. Where possible and practicable, response policies, procedures and actions have been formulated as part of its risk assessment and disaster management planning, and will be updated as needed. This will be supported by capacity building around matters such as poaching, crime, development issues, etc. Furthermore, community based organisations (such as policing forums) will be encouraged to collaborate with iSimangaliso as these can provide effective control and management measures.

For all activities within the zone of influence, the iSimangaliso Authority is the responsible authority and will exercise responsibilities within the ambit of available human and financial resources.

5.2 Policies, strategies and plans

A number of policies, plans and strategies are key to effectively manage the Park and, as such, serve as management tools. These also form part of the policy and strategic planning framework outlined in Chapter 4.

5.2.1 Conservation Operational Plan (COP)

The Conservation Operational Plan (COP) is a statutory requirement and is a subsidiary document to the Integrated Management Plan. The COP is an annual plan of operation prepared by Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife (EKZNW) that takes its direction from the implementation plan in the IMP and flows from Strategic Driver 2 'Park operations and conservation management' ***[See Chapter 4: Policy and strategic planning framework and implementation plan].*** The key objectives and actions outlined for this strategic driver provide the high level direction for intervention. This plan is monitored on an on-going basis, with quarterly reporting by Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife to the iSimangaliso Authority.

5.2.2 Species Management Plans

Various management plans exist for different species within the Park, for example, an Elephant Management Plan, a Rhino Management Plan, a Coelacanth Management Plan, etc. These plans provide guidelines for the management of the particular species taking cognisance of any guidelines provided by the Department of Environmental Affairs and National Norms and Standards. The management plans are updated, if necessary, to reflect changes in the understanding of the management of a certain species.

5.2.3 Estuarine Management Plans

iSimangaliso's Estuary Management Plans (EstMP) have been broadly formulated in compliance with Section 34 of the National Environmental Management: Integrated Coastal Management Act (Act No 24 of 2008) (ICM Act) read with the National Estuarine Management Protocol 2013 (the Protocol), as well as the World Heritage Convention Act (Act No 49 of 1999) (WHC Act), and other relevant material and practical experience relevant to the uniqueness of each estuary.

The EstMPs are subsidiary plans to the IMP. Like the IMP, the EstMPs are high level plans implemented through the annual plan of operation which takes into account prevailing conditions such as availability of financial and human resources.

Lake St Lucia Estuary Management Plan
The main threats that affect the ecological health and integrity of the St Lucia Lake estuary are:

- The limited water inflows from the uMfolozi River due to its partial separation from the estuary consequent on human manipulation to mitigate damage from upstream agricultural practices.
- Direct abstraction from tributary rivers and indirect abstraction of the groundwater feeds affecting the freshwater volumes reaching the estuary associated with activities such as *Eucalyptus* spp. plantations.
- Water quality in tributary rivers.
- Occurrence of alien plant species around the system. For example, the tree *Casuarina equisetifolia* alters dune dynamics and may affect estuary mouth behaviour.
- Occurrence of alien fauna such as the snail, *Tarebia granifera*.
- Climate change specifically El Nino, la nina, sea level rise and temperature changes.

The activities to be implemented under this EstMP fall mainly into the IMP's Park Operations & Conservation Management (1), and Research (6) strategic drivers. The following actions have been prioritised:

- Review and refinement of the zonation of the Lake St Lucia estuarine system in order to better protect sensitive habitats and species, particularly estuarine dependent biota.
- Implementation of the policy of minimum interference in the estuarine system to facilitate as much natural functioning as possible, limiting artificial breaching and then only for ecological reasons.
- Implementation of restoration measures such as the removal of artificially placed dredge spoil and levees.
- Supporting DAFF in the implementation of the small scale fisheries policy through regulation of catches by inter alia the issuing of permits.
- Support DWS in the completion of the reserve determination study for St Lucia Estuary and relevant catchments.
- Support DWS' initiative to manage catchment water use.
- Review of the current monitoring programme, identify areas needing strengthening, including selected physicochemical variables, indicators that reveal the presence of contaminants, and the status of estuarine plants and animals.

Mgobozeleni Estuary Management Plan

The main threats that may affect the ecological health and integrity of the Mgobozeleni Estuary are:

- Artificial breaching and mouth manipulation.
- Direct surface water abstraction and indirect abstraction of the major groundwater feeds affecting the freshwater volumes reaching the estuary, e.g. activities such as *Eucalyptus* spp. plantations affecting ground water recharge required to maintain the water balance of the system.
- Water quality.
- Alien species. Several alien plant species occur around the system and associated with the water body. *Casuarina equisetifolia* alters dune dynamics with the potential to influence estuary mouth dynamics. Animal alien invasive species also occur such as the snail, *Tarebia granifera*.
- Climate change specifically El Nino, la nina, sea level rise and temperature changes.

The activities to be implemented under this EstMP fall mainly into the IMP's Park Operations & Conservation Management (1), and Research (6) strategic drivers. The following actions have been prioritised:

- Review and refinement of the zonation of the Mgobozeleni estuarine system in order to better protect sensitive habitats and species, particularly estuarine dependent biota.
- Implement the policy of minimum interference in the estuarine system, allowing it to function as naturally as possible, with breaching only permitted for ecological reasons.
- Manage catchment water use by applying the outcomes of the ecological reserve study for the Mgobozeleni System.
- Review of the current monitoring programme, identify areas needing strengthening, including selected physicochemical variables, indicators that reveal the presence of contaminants, and the status of estuarine plants and animals.

Kosi Bay Estuary Management Plan

The main threats that may affect the ecological health and integrity of the Kosi Bay Estuary are:

- Over-exploitation of the natural resources, particularly significant declines in estuarine fish populations via the fish traps and recreational fishing, and harvesting of mangrove trees and crabs.
- Direct surface water abstraction and indirect abstraction of the major groundwater feeds affecting the freshwater volumes reaching the estuary, e.g. activities such as *Eucalyptus* spp. plantations affect the ground water recharge required to maintain the water balance of the system.
- Water quality. DDT remains a potential threat still present in the system.
- Habitat loss – loss of threatened swamp forest for unsustainable small scale agriculture.
- Resource utilisation (consumptive) - there is significant exploitation of invertebrate and fish populations as well as a variety of plants.
- Alien species – several alien plant species occur around the system and are associated with the water body. *Casuarina equisetifolia* alters dune dynamics with the potential to influence estuary mouth dynamics. Animal alien invasive species also occur, such as the snail, *Tarebia granifera*.
- Climate change specifically El Nino, la nina, sea level rise and temperature changes.

The activities to be implemented under this EstMP fall mainly into the IMP's Park Operations & Conservation Management (1), and Research (6) strategic drivers. The following actions have been prioritised:

- ❖ Review and refinement of the zonation of the Kosi Bay estuarine lake system.
- ❖ Supporting DAFF in the implementation of the small scale fisheries policy through regulation of catches by inter alia the issuing of permits.
- ❖ Manage catchment water use by applying the outcome of the ecological reserve study for the Kosi Bay Estuary.
- ❖ Review of the current monitoring programme, identify areas needing strengthening, including selected physicochemical variables, indicators that reveal the presence of contaminants, and the status of estuarine plants and animals.

5.2.4 Coastal Management Line

A coastal management line (previously known as a coastal set-back line) means a line determined in accordance with section 25 of the National Environmental Management: Integrated Coastal Management Act, 2008 (Act No. 24 of 2008) (ICMA) in order to demarcate an area within which development will be prohibited or controlled in order to achieve the objects of the Act or coastal management objectives.

The iSimangaliso Wetland Park has an exceptionally beautiful coastline that includes soft beaches, rocky shores and near coast freshwater lake systems. Some of these areas also support a range of recreational and tourism activities. Coastal management focuses on the maintenance of the natural "elasticity" or disturbance regime of the dune system, as well as maintaining prevailing productivity levels.

To this end, iSimangaliso commissioned a scientific study to determine a coastal management line for the Park. The assessment of the coastal cordon adopted a regional approach that examined the coastline holistically along its entire length. This was undertaken according to the following criteria:

- ❖ Types of dune systems and the processes driving them (such as wind, waves and sand availability).
- ❖ Stabilisation or mobilisation areas over the short-, medium- and long-term as envelopes of mobility.
- ❖ Areas where changes are occurring and the identification of the drivers of this change.
- ❖ Development areas where more detailed investigation around the setback line should occur.

The coastal management line is shown in Figure 14 (in Appendix 3). Any proposed developments that potentially infringe this coastal management line will be subjected to the necessary investigations and authorisations as required by relevant legislation.

5.2.5 Local Area Plans (LAPs)

Local Area Plans (LAPs) provide the framework for sustainable local economic development within each locality for specific areas within the Park. Where possible, the LAPs are linked to the surrounding local municipal Integrated Development Plans in order to align development plans between the Park and local government. The purpose of LAPs is to:

- ❖ Provide an acceptable level of protection to the environment and World Heritage values.
- ❖ Provide the basis for co-management between iSimangaliso and land claimants and/or local communities residing[39] in the Park.
- ❖ Provide the technical basis for the implementation of land claim settlements and other area-specific SEED programmes.
- ❖ Enable the tendering of commercial opportunities (both facilities and activities).
- ❖ Serve as the basis for the evaluation of unsolicited bids.
- ❖ Enable the costing of infrastructure development.

The LAPs will include the following:

- ❖ Delineate local development zones and nodes, including residential, tourism, social infrastructure (including schools, retail outlets, health, civic), physical infrastructure (roads, fences, bridges, etc.), and service and cultural areas.
- ❖ Define carrying capacities within zones.
- ❖ Define access routes and circulation.
- ❖ Identify and assess current tourism facilities and activities, and identify future tourism development opportunities.
- ❖ Consideration of 'sense of place' (aesthetics, design and building materials).
- ❖ Determine key environmental (social and biophysical) controls, including carrying capacities.
- ❖ Identify sensitive conservation (natural and cultural) sites.

5.2.6 Transformation and Empowerment Strategy

The transformation and empowerment strategy underpins iSimangaliso's management goals for the alleviation of regional poverty and the empowerment of historically-disadvantaged communities. The programmes implemented through this strategy are financed from a combination of internal and external sources, with core administrative and operating costs funded from the main Park budget. The beneficiaries of the programmes of the iSimangaliso Authority include the land claimants groups, communities living inside the Park and communities living adjacent to the Park.

The transformation and empowerment strategy provides an overview of iSimangaliso's beneficiation programmes, including those concerned with economic transformation and job creation, community-based natural resource use, capacity building, training and equitable access. It also includes the strategies for participation in planning, such as Local Area Plans, and decision-making, such as co-management agreements; and environmental education and awareness programmes. iSimangaliso also implements the iSimangaliso People and Parks Programme[40], which focuses on co-management, community public private partnerships, land reform, conservation, and strengthening and expansion of the Protected areas network.

39 These specific areas within the Park are found within the Coastal Forest Reserve section of the Park, where there are resident communities for example, at KwaDapha, Malangeni, eNkovukeni and Mabibi.

40 The People and Parks Programme was initiated by the iSimangaliso Authority and the University of KwaZulu-Natal, with GTZ and the IUCN in 2003, on the eve of the World Parks Congress at iSimangaliso's Cape Vidal. Since then, the Department of Environmental Affairs has hosted a National People and Parks Programme, which includes annual congresses attended by land claimants and communities neighboring protected areas.

5.2.7 Land claims framework in the iSimangaliso Wetland Park

The framework for settling claims in iSimangaliso is founded on the National Cabinet decision in 2002 regarding the settlement of restitution claims in protected areas, World Heritage sites and State forests. Claimants are awarded title, but no physical occupation is permitted, and title deeds are registered with restrictions on use. Compensation for loss of the use of land is provided for, and development and planning grants are awarded.

This framework makes provision for the following:

- Land within a protected area can be owned by claimants without physical occupation through the transfer of title with registered notarial deed restrictions.
- Continued proclamation of the land for conservation purposes, where the land is used and maintained solely for the purposes of conservation, and associated commercial and community activities.
- Continued management of the land as part of the national conservation estate by the responsible state conservation agency according to IUCN principles, and the requirements of legislation and approved management plans.
- Land is to remain part of an open ecological system and managed as an integrated part of the protected area of which it formed part before restitution.
- Loss of beneficial occupation is compensated for through the payment of a household solatium[41], development and planning grants; and benefits from the iSimangaliso Wetland Park including revenue sharing, mandatory partner status in tourism developments, access to natural resources, cultural heritage access, education, capacity building, and jobs through land care and infrastructure programmes.
- Sustainable partnerships between claimants and managers of protected areas must be established in a way which facilitates effective biodiversity conservation of the area, including economic viability. These co-management arrangements should in no way detract from the State's ability to manage the Park.

Land claims are settled by the Regional Land Claims Commission. After a claim is settled, the iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority and the land claimants enter into a co-management agreement which provides a framework for their relationship. For each settled claim, a benefit package is developed which includes economic, training and job opportunities, equity partnerships in tourism facilities, rights of access, use of natural resources and the establishment of an education trust to educate land claimant youth. The benefits accruing to new land owners through co-management agreements include those associated with the natural resource base as well as those which derive from tourism, infrastructure and local economic development.

Figure 15 provides a schematic representation of the co-management framework for the iSimangaliso Wetland Park, categorising benefits and the nature of involvement in co-management according to asset ownership, asset governance and secondary enterprises:

- *Asset Ownership* refers to formal ownership or equity interests by land claimants in the productive assets of iSimangaliso. This includes equity partnerships in commercial enterprises and revenue sharing, and access to and the use of natural resources.

41 Compensation for non-pecuniary (non-financial) loss, awarded for hardship or pain and suffering, suffered as a result of dispossession.

- *Asset Governance* outlines the involvement of target communities in the core activities of iSimangaliso, including the co-management of the Park and its associated commercial enterprises. It involves the establishment of co-management structures, representation on the Board of the Authority, capacity building initiatives to facilitate the entry of land claimants into formal tourism and conservation management jobs, and mandatory partner status for contracting and job opportunities.
- *Secondary Enterprise* refers to linkages between the economic activities of the Park and suppliers of goods and services from the target community. It also includes benefits from local economic development programmes such as craft.

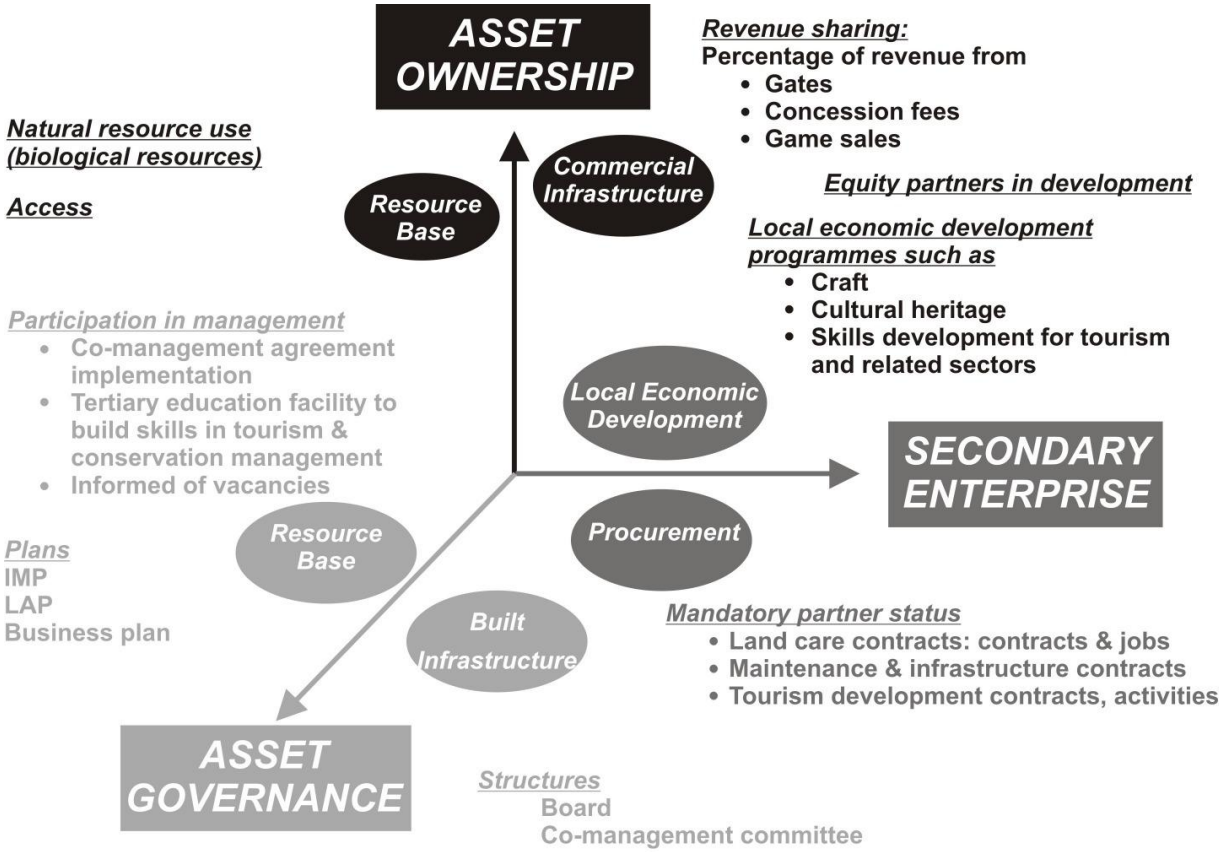

Figure 15 iSimangaliso Wetland Park's co-management framework

The delivery and implementation of the benefit package is co-managed by the Land Claims Trusts and iSimangaliso. The State retains custodianship of the Park and manages it in terms of the World Heritage Convention Act and the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act. Co-management committees are established to oversee the planning and implementation of the beneficiation package. Furthermore, land claimants are represented on the iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority Board.

5.2.8 Tourism Concessioning Policy

Income from tourism has grown 78 times since the establishment of the Park Authority, albeit off a small base. It is an important source of funding for iSimangaliso's operations. For every R 1 of its annual operating allocation from government (MTEF), iSimangaliso generates R 0.63 in commercial revenue. The principles underpinning the policy include (a) improving service delivery to Park users; (b) upgrading selected accommodation facilities to appeal to a broader and more diverse market and keep pace with trends; (c) providing activities and facilities for tour groups and niche groups such as birders; (d) maintaining appropriate levels of public access.

Revenue sources include access fees, PPP fees from accommodation providers, licence fees from tourism activities, events, and filming among others. PPPs and licences are issued via public tender. In circumstances where licenses are not available, operators may procure daily permits to operate and/or host events in the Park. Fees are also generated through land incorporation arrangements.

Tender processes follow the principles set out in the PPP Regulations issued under the PFMA. Daily permits and permits for events, filming and the like are issued on a first come first serve basis. In all cases, applications are assessed against the provisions of the IMP, in particular, zonation, and for possible impacts on the environment and/or World Heritage values. Environmental and World Heritage considerations cannot be compromised in favour of commercialisation.

Commercial rights are issued in such a manner that risk is passed to the private party/operator. The Park's income stream is predictable and as far as possible risk free, iSimangaliso's value for money proposition is met in respect of the particular application, and BEE and more particularly local community participation are optimised.

5.2.9 Land Incorporation Policy

iSimangaliso has developed a working policy to exercise its legislated powers to acquire land, albeit that all acquisitions are voluntary and entail the agreement of all parties. This policy targets land that:

- Enhances the ability of iSimangaliso to discharge its duties in terms of the World Heritage Convention Act, the IMP and other frameworks applicable to the Park.
- Is of high conservation value and/or high historical or cultural value.
- Increases the security of the core Park and World Heritage assets and values.
- Enhances the financial viability of the Park.

If agreed to by the land owner, iSimangaliso may incorporate private, state or communal land into the Park. In such cases, satisfactory contractual agreement would need to be reached between iSimangaliso and the landowner, including provisions relating to:

- Game ownership, liability and management.
- Conservation management.
- Infrastructure development and maintenance.
- Tourism development, traversing rights and marketing.
- Security.

- ❖ Intellectual property rights.
- ❖ Duration.
- ❖ Rights of first refusal for iSimangaliso upon termination of individual agreements.
- ❖ Indemnification of iSimangaliso.

5.2.10 Research, Monitoring and Evaluation

The iSimangaliso Authority recognises the important role that research plays in providing a scientific basis for Park management.

At present, much of the research conducted in the Park is defined by the interests of individual researchers and research teams. External research applications are processed by a research committee composed of iSimangaliso and Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife staff members. Independent specialists are consulted as necessary. In addition, Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife monitors a range of biological and physical/chemical parameters across the Park in order to inform management, for example, salinity levels in the lake systems and game counts. This is an essential aspect of Park management and during this IMP, the monitoring system will be reviewed and funding sought for under-resourced monitoring activities.

5.2.11 Public Participation Strategy

iSimangaliso's public participation strategy is based on informing and consulting stakeholders via a structured process, both proactively and responsively, and using a number of recognised and appropriate communication tools in a manner that is cost effective.

In addition to the various organs of state, including national, provincial and local government mentioned in the preceding chapters and listed in **Appendix 2: Legal and Institutional Framework**, there are numerous other stakeholder groups that have a relationship with the Authority through their association with the Park.

Table 26 categorises these groups of stakeholders and outlines the methods available to consult, communicate and facilitate participation in the iSimangaliso Wetland Park. Methods used will be fit for purpose and subject to available human and financial resources.

Table 26 Categories of groups of stakeholders and methods available to consult, communicate and facilitate participation in the iSimangaliso Wetland Park

Category	Stakeholder	Method of Communication/Consultation	Method of Participation
Local Community (People living within 100 km of the Park who may have limited access to communication technology)	Trusts/Traditional Authorities/Land Claimants/Local Interest Groups (drama, craft, sport)/Church Leaders/Youth/Rural educators & schools/Neighbours	❖ Meetings with leadership ❖ Park Forums ❖ Ongoing area specific meetings, workshops and information sessions ❖ Issue specific information sessions, consultation workshops, public meetings or open days, e.g. IMP ❖ Newspaper adverts for tenders, jobs, programme opportunities, consultation for EIAs, IMP, etc ❖ Environmental ❖ Soccer, netball and cultural events ❖ Mobile phone messaging ❖ Hand delivered or faxed letters ❖ Emails (where access to technology possible) ❖ Social media platforms (where access to technology is possible) ❖ Posters in key social infrastructure positions ❖ Cheque hand over events ❖ Mobile workshops (land claimants, Traditional Authorities, Local Government councillors) ❖ Ongoing regular meetings with land claimants, TAs and	❖ Board representatives e.g. Traditional Authority, Land claimants ❖ Infrastructure Project Liaison Committees ❖ Economic participation including: o Community based contractors o Local services providers e.g. caterers o Jobs (temporary and permanent) o Equity shareholding in tourism facilities o Tourism activity licenses o Participation in skills development and enterprise support programmes o Art & craft development ❖ Sustainable natural resource use ❖ Wilderness Trails (building champions amongst school learners, youth, opinion leaders in community and government) ❖ Training and capacity building: o Leadership development o Co-management

Category	Stakeholder	Method of Communication/Consultation	Method of Participation
		local government councillors ❖ Media coverage (especially print, radio and television) ❖ Attend openings, launches and development events	○ Bursary programme ❖ Participate in sporting events e.g. St Lucia half marathon ❖ Recreational access ❖ Provide comments on Park IMP, EIAs, etc
Local Community (People living within 100 km of the Park who may have greater access to communication technology)	Urban educators and schools/Town Residents/Farmers	❖ Park Forums ❖ Issue specific information sessions, consultation workshops, public meetings or open days, e.g. IMP ❖ Newspaper adverts for tenders, jobs, programme opportunities, consultation for EIAs, IMP, etc ❖ Hand delivered or faxed letters ❖ Emails (where access to technology possible) ❖ Website ❖ Newsflash ❖ Mobile phone messaging ❖ Email communiqué ❖ Social media platforms (where access to technology is possible) ❖ Media coverage (especially print, on-line, radio and television)	❖ School awards ❖ Discounted self-drive trips into the Park for schools ❖ Organised hosted trips into the Park ❖ Wilderness Trails for land claimants (building champions amongst school learners, youth, opinion leaders in community and government) ❖ Participate in sporting events e.g. St Lucia half marathon ❖ Recreational access ❖ Provide comments on Park IMP, EIAs, etc

Category	Stakeholder	Method of Communication/Consultation	Method of Participation
Government	National: Environmental Affairs (DEA); Science & Technology; Water and Sanitation; Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries; Arts and Culture; Tourism Provincial: Co-operative Governance; Department of Economic Development and Tourism; Agriculture and Environment; Education; Human Settlements Local: District and Local Municipalities	❖ Working groups hosted by DEA ❖ Issue specific information sessions, consultation workshops, public meetings or open days, e.g. IMP ❖ Meetings ❖ Newspaper adverts for jobs, programme opportunities, consultation for EIAs, IMP, etc ❖ Emails (where access to technology possible) ❖ Website ❖ Newsflash ❖ Social media platforms (where access to technology is possible) ❖ Media coverage (especially print, on-line, radio and television) ❖ Attend openings, launches and development events	❖ Public entity oversight (DEA): o Board Representation o Budgets, planning, reporting o Parliamentary oversight o Approval of gazetted plans by Minister o Site visits ❖ Alignment with Provincial and National planning and other processes, e.g. participation in the LAAC. ❖ Local Government IDP and IMP alignment ❖ Provide comments on Park IMP, EIAs, etc ❖ Collaborate with agencies like TKZN when marketing or promoting the area
International	IUCN/UNESCO/World Bank/GEF/Ramsar Convention	❖ Meetings and workshops ❖ Website ❖ Newsflash ❖ Social media platforms (where access to technology is possible) ❖ Produce publications ❖ Media (especially on-line)	❖ Reporting as per requirements of International Conventions ❖ Participation in international workshops, meetings and conferences ❖ Site visits ❖ Provide comments on Park IMP, etc

Category	Stakeholder	Method of Communication/Consultation	Method of Participation
Corporate	Existing & Potential Funders/Investor Community	❖ Meetings ❖ Emails (where access to technology possible) ❖ Website ❖ Newsflash ❖ Social media platforms (where access to technology is possible) ❖ Newspaper adverts for tenders, consultation for EIAs, IMP, etc ❖ Media coverage (especially print, on-line, radio and television) ❖ Targeted interaction with potential investors and funders ❖ Attend openings, launches and development events	❖ Board representatives ❖ Economic participation ❖ Investment in commercial activities ❖ Invest in social, conservation and environmental programmes through providing funding and technical expertise ❖ Provide comments on Park IMP, etc
Interest Groups	Environmental/Arts & Culture/NGOs Universities/Academics/Researchers Organised user groups, e.g. recreational fishing	❖ Meetings, including issue & interest group specific ❖ Specialist input ❖ Emails ❖ Website ❖ Newsflash ❖ Social media platforms (where access to technology is possible) ❖ Media coverage (especially print, radio and television) ❖ Attend openings, launches and development events	❖ Board representatives ❖ Undertake research ❖ Mobile workshops and site visits ❖ Attend conferences and seminars to present work on Park ❖ Recreational access ❖ Provide comments on Park IMP, EIAs, etc ❖ Participate in sporting events e.g. St Lucia half marathon

Category	Stakeholder	Method of Communication/Consultation	Method of Participation
Tourism Industry	Industry - SA Express/Tour Operators/Travel Agents Product Owners/Concessionaires (in & around the Park) SA Tourism/KZN Tourism District Tourism Officers/Information Centres	❖ Meetings ❖ Emails ❖ Website ❖ Newsflash ❖ Mobile phone messaging ❖ Social media platforms (where access to technology is possible) ❖ Newspaper adverts for tenders, consultation for EIAs, IMP, etc ❖ Media coverage (especially print, radio and television) ❖ Attend openings, launches and development events ❖ Trade shows and other marketing ❖ Provide information on iSimangaliso, e.g. use of brand, content	❖ Trade shows ❖ Industry visits ❖ Economic participation ❖ Tourism facility concessions ❖ Tourism activity concessions/licenses ❖ Entry permits for day visits ❖ Nature based events e.g. bird counts and birding day ❖ Information seminar series for iSimangaliso licensed tourism holders and concessionaires ❖ Tourism guiding accreditation for iSimangaliso guides ❖ Provide comments on Park IMP, EIAs, etc ❖ Participate in sporting events e.g. St Lucia half marathon
Park Visitors	Locals, tourists, user groups (divers, fishermen, etc)	❖ Emails (where access to technology possible) ❖ Website ❖ Newsflash ❖ Mobile phone messaging ❖ Social media platforms (where access to technology is possible)	❖ Recreational access ❖ Sustainable natural resource use e.g. recreational fishing ❖ Participate in sporting events e.g. St Lucia half marathon, ❖ Provide comments on Park IMP, EIAs, etc.

Category	Stakeholder	Method of Communication/Consultation	Method of Participation
		❖ Adverts ❖ Media coverage (especially print, radio and television) ❖ Signage and interpretive material	
General Public	Local/National/International General public Potential tourists & visitors	❖ Emails (where access to technology possible) ❖ Website ❖ Newsflash ❖ Social media platforms (where access to technology is possible) ❖ Adverts ❖ Media coverage (especially print, radio and television) ❖ Signage and interpretive material	❖ Board representatives ❖ Recreational access ❖ Provide comments on Park IMP, EIAs, etc

5.2.12 Bio-prospecting Policy

All bio-prospecting applications are reviewed on a case by case basis, taking into consideration legal, environmental and economic factors, including whether the Park is the only source of the genetic material world-wide, the material is of global importance and the source is not threatened or damaged by the process. In considering applications for bio-prospecting, the iSimangaliso Authority is guided by Chapter 6 of the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act 10, 2004, and takes cognisance of the importance of benefit sharing for local communities as detailed in the Act.

5.3 General planning tools and controls

Proper management of development and activities within the Park can only be achieved through appropriate planning tools and effective controls. The key tools and controls used for Park management are presented below, many of which have their basis in legislation.

5.3.1 Environmental authorisations

Environmental assessments are an important tool for managing environmental impacts. For certain activities, the National Environmental Management Act requires that environmental authorisation is obtained from the competent authority[42] and the authorisation process and listed activities requiring such authorisation are contained in the EIA Regulations[43]. Depending on the activity, either a Basic Assessment or Scoping and a full Environmental Impact Assessment (which is more in-depth than a Basic Assessment) will be required.

Where such authorisation is not legally required for activities within the Park, the iSimangaliso Authority may require the application of various environmental management tools and certain steps of the EIA process, the minimum of which is the preparation of an Environmental Management Programme (EMPr) (**See Section 5.3.3 - Environmental Management Programmes**). As the management authority in terms of the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act, the iSimangaliso Authority may also impose conditions in addition to (but consistent with) conditions set by other authorities and legislation. Where the Authority is the proponent of an unlisted activity, it conducts an internal scoping, obtains expert opinion as required, and liaises with interested and affected parties where necessary.

5.3.2 Other types of assessments and authorisation requirements

Certain activities may require other authorisations such as those affecting heritage, marine and water resources, and protected species. As for environmental authorisation, the legally prescribed authorisation process will need to be followed and the conditions of authorisation complied with (**See Appendix 2: Legal and Institutional Framework for other applicable legislation**).

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42 For development inside the Park, the National Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) is the competent authority from whom environmental authorisation must be sought.

43 Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, 4 December 2014 (Government Notice R. 982 National Environmental Management Act (107/1998): Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, 2014; Government Notice R. 983 Listing Notice 1: List of activities and competent authorities identified in terms of sections 24 (2) and 24D; Government Notice R. 984 Listing Notice 2: List of activities and competent authorities identified in terms of sections 24 (2) and 24D; Government Notice R. 985 Listing Notice 3: List of activities and competent authorities identified in terms of sections 24 (2) and 24D).

5.3.3 Environmental Management Programmes (EMPrs)

iSimangaliso is responsible for the formulation and implementation of Environmental Management Programmes that are required for all activities within the Park.

The development of an EMPr usually follows the assessment of environmental impacts anticipated during construction (where relevant), operation, decommissioning (where relevant) and maintenance of tourism, management, and residential/subsistence-related infrastructure and activities.
An EMPr must be designed specifically as a tool that achieves, improves and systematically controls environmental performance levels. A crucial part of an EMPr is monitoring, evaluation and audits.

The EMPr, or relevant parts thereof, will form part of the contract between iSimangaliso and contractors, concessionaires or residents. iSimangaliso will monitor compliance with environmental performance according to the requirements of the EMPr. Where responsible for Park infrastructure, activities and maintenance, iSimangaliso will prepare and implement its own EMPrs for environmental management.

5.3.4 Park Rules and the Permit System

The National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act and Regulations[44] provides the framework for the Park's rules and permit system. A number of activities are either prohibited or require prior written consent from the iSimangaliso Authority (in the form of a licence, permit or receipt). In addition, the Authority sets the operational parameters (rules and conditions) related to a particular activity depending on zonation and other planning tools, and these rules and conditions become an inherent part of consent. Periodically, these rules and conditions may be revised subject to approval by iSimangaliso. Rules arising from various other pieces of legislation (e.g. Marine Living Resources Act and National Environmental Management Act) also apply and are incorporated into the Park's rules and conditions.

There are numerous types of permits, each of which contain the rules and conditions relevant to the activity for which the permit is issued. The different permits include:

- ❖ General entrance permits obtained at the entrance gates (which may allow for access to the beach and allow certain marine activities and/or game drives, and other terrestrial activities and use of public facilities, e.g. picnic sites, view sites, hides and board walks. These permits are subject to the general Park rules).
- ❖ Special access permits (e.g. those required for access into Wilderness and Sanctuary zones).
- ❖ Special operating or concession permits that are based on a contract between the concessionaire and the Authority, and which are subject to a number of operational conditions (e.g. accommodation facilities, guided trails, boat tours, etc.).
- ❖ Resource use permits (e.g. fishing licences, harvesting of *incema* grass, etc.).
- ❖ Other permits (e.g. permits for scientific research, special events etc.).

44 No. R. 1061 of 28 October 2005: Regulations for the Proper Administration of Special Nature Reserves, National Parks and World Heritage Sites.

Existing rights within the Park will be upheld in terms of Section 50(4) of the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act which states that *"any activity carried out lawfully in terms of any agreement which exists when this section takes effect may continue until the date of termination of such agreement, provided that the agreement may not be extended or varied so as to expire after the original intended expiry date without the consent of the Minister".*

5.3.5 Tourism Codes of Conduct and Accreditation

In order to maintain and improve the quality of tourism services in the Park and ensure that environmental standards are met, particularly given the Park's World Heritage status, concessionaires will be required to obtain mandatory tourism accreditation from recognised bodies, and to develop specific codes of conduct for themselves, their staff, and their patrons. The Authority may also introduce its own mandatory tourism accreditation programmes. To ensure that service levels and standards are achieved, the Authority will undertake monitoring thereof.

5.3.6 Site Development Guidelines and Specifications

A suite of site planning, design, implementation and management guidelines indicating current best practice and legislative requirements have been prepared for the development of sites. These documents are not definitive and will be progressively reviewed and revised as the phased development of the Park unfolds.

5.3.7 Theming and Branding Guidelines

iSimangaliso's branding reflects the core values of the Park and 'sense of place' (harmonisation of physical development with the natural and cultural landscapes).

These guidelines apply to the use of the Park name and logo by iSimangaliso and third parties, and to infrastructure in relation to signage, street furniture and building guidelines.

The use of the name, other than as a geographic description in a sentence, is regulated by the iSimangaliso Authority. Permission to use the name, logo and brand in any other context must be obtained beforehand in writing from the iSimangaliso Authority.

5.3.8 Financial controls

To ensure cost-effective management of the Park, a number of financial controls are in place within the framework provided by the Public Finance Management Act and World Heritage Convention Act.

APPENDIX 1: CONTRIBUTORS

The following persons contributed to the preparation of the IMP through drafting, expert opinion and review:

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APPENDIX 2: LEGAL AND INSTITUIONAL FRAMEWORK

1 Introduction

This chapter provides a broad background to the legal and institutional framework, which governs and administers the iSimangaliso Wetland Park and its surrounds. There is a focus on key elements and, therefore, the information provided should not be regarded as a definitive treatise[45]. The chapter is structured as follows:

- International agreements (Section 1.2).
- South African legislation, statutory bodies and policy (Section 1.3).
- Other institutions and stakeholders relevant to the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (Section 1.4).

2 International agreements

There are a number of international agreements that are relevant to the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (**Table 1**). Two of the more important agreements to which South Africa is signatory and that have direct implications for the development and management of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park, are the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, 1972 (World Heritage Convention) and the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Water Fowl Habitat, 1971 (RAMSAR).

As signatory to the World Heritage Convention, the South African Government is obliged to do the utmost to ensure *"the identification, protection, conservation and transmission to future generations of the cultural and natural heritage"* of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park. The World Heritage Convention Act was enacted for this purpose. The Convention and the related South African Act are discussed in more detail in ***Chapter 1 (Section 1.2: Enabling legal framework).***

[45] One of the ongoing duties of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority is to seek to simplify the legal regime applicable to the iSimangaliso Wetland Park and have the Park governed by the fewest number of regulatory instruments; provided that the applicable regulatory instruments are of the highest possible legal standing. However, it is recognised that given the complexity of the legal environment, this is a significant undertaking, which requires significant resources and substantial co-operative governance, and which will take time to achieve.

Table 1 Key international agreements that have a direct bearing on the management of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park

Common name of Convention	Full name of Convention and relevance to the iSimangaliso Wetland Park	Convention objectives
World Heritage Convention	Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972) The iSimangaliso Wetland Park is a listed World Heritage Site in terms of this Convention	To establish an effective system of collective identification, protection, and preservation of cultural and natural heritage around the world considered to be of outstanding universal value to humanity; to provide both emergency and long-term protection for monuments, groups of buildings, and sites with historical, aesthetic, archaeological, scientific, ethnological, or anthropological value, as well as outstanding physical, biological, and geological formations, habitats of threatened species of animals and plants, and areas with scientific, conservation, or aesthetic value
Ramsar	Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat (1971) There are four RAMSAR sites located within the iSimangaliso Wetland Park	The conservation and wise use of all wetlands through local, regional and national action and international co-operation, as a contribution towards achieving sustainable development throughout the world
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (1973) There are numerous endangered plant and animal species in the iSimangaliso Wetland Park	To ensure, through international co-operation, that the international trade in species of wild fauna and flora does not threaten survival in the wild of the species concerned, and to protect endangered species from over-exploitation by means of a system of import-export permits issued by a management authority under the advice of a scientific authority
Bonn Convention	Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (1979) There are several migratory species of wild animals in the iSimangaliso Wetland Park	To conserve those species of wild animals that migrate across or outside national boundaries by developing and implementing co-operative agreements, prohibiting the taking of endangered species, conserving habitat, and controlling other adverse factors

Common name of Convention	Full name of Convention and relevance to the iSimangaliso Wetland Park	Convention objectives
UNCLOS	UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (1982) The entire eastern boundary of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park is sea	To establish a comprehensive legal order to promote peaceful uses of the oceans and seas, the equitable and efficient utilisation of their resources, and the study and protection and preservation of the marine environment, as well as to facilitate international navigation; to integrate and balance the right to exploit natural resources with the duty to manage and conserve such resources and to protect and preserve the marine environment; and to provide a comprehensive legal framework for the protection and preservation of the marine environment to be complemented and developed by further legal rules at the global or regional level and national measures
Basel Convention	Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Waste and their Disposal (1989)	To protect human health and the environment from the adverse effects of hazardous and other wastes; to reduce the transboundary movement of hazardous wastes to a minimum, consistent with their environmentally sound management; to dispose of these wastes as close as possible to where they are generated; and to minimise both their quantity and their hazardousness
Convention on Biological Diversity	Convention on Biological Diversity (1992)	The conservation of biological diversity; the sustainable use of its components; and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the utilisation of genetic resources, including by appropriate access to genetic resources and by appropriate transfer of relevant technologies (taking into account all rights over those resources and to technologies), as well as appropriate funding
Cartagena Protocol	Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (2000)	

3 South African legislation, statutory bodies and policy

There is numerous legislation that governs the management of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park. **Tables 2 and 3** list and highlight important aspects of this legislation in relation to environmental and institutional management, respectively. Where changes in legislation occur, the iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority will align itself with new requirements to ensure compliance.

Some Acts in **Table 2**, such as the World Heritage Convention Act, Marine Living Resources Act and National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act, are discussed in more detail in ***Chapter 1 (Section 1.2: Enabling legal framework)***.

The main Acts discussed in this chapter include:

- World Heritage Convention Act, 1999 (Act 49 of 1999).
- National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act 107 of 1998) (NEMA).
- National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act, 2003 (Act 57 of 2003).
- National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act, 2004 (Act 10 of 2004).
- National Heritage Resources Act, 1999 (Act 25 of 1999).
- KwaZulu-Natal Heritage Act, 2008 (Act 4 of 2008).
- National Forests Act, 1998 (Act 84 of 1998).
- National Water Act, 1998 (Act 36 of 1998).
- Marine Living Resources Act, 1998 (Act 18 of 1998).
- Seashore Act, 1935 (Act 21 of 1935).
- Maritime Zone Act, 1994 (Act 15 of 1994).
- National Environmental Management: Integrated Coastal Management Act, 2008 (Act 24 of 2008).
- National Environmental Management: Waste Act, 2008 (Act of 59 2008).

Table 2 Legislation that governs how the iSimangaliso Wetland Park is managed

Act	Objectives, important aspects, associated notices and regulations, and statutory bodies
World Heritage Convention Act, 1999 (Act 49 of 1999)	**Objectives:** To provide for: ❖ The incorporation of the World Heritage Convention into South African law ❖ The enforcement and implementation of the World Heritage Convention in South Africa ❖ The recognition and establishment of World Heritage Sites ❖ The establishment of Authorities and the granting of additional powers to existing organs of state ❖ The powers and duties of such Authorities, especially those safeguarding the integrity of World Heritage Sites; where appropriate, the establishment of Boards and Executive Staff Components of the Authorities ❖ Integrated management plans over World Heritage sites ❖ Land matters in relation to World Heritage sites ❖ Financial, auditing and reporting controls over the Authorities **Relevance to the iSimangaliso Wetland Park:** ❖ The iSimangaliso Wetland Park is proclaimed under this Act and is, therefore, subject to the provisions of this Act and its Regulations **Notices and Regulations:** ❖ Regulations in Connection with the Greater St Lucia Wetland Park (GN. R 1193 in GG 21779 of 24 November 2000) ❖ Establishment of the Greater St Lucia Wetland Park and Authority (GN No. 4477 of 24 November 2000) **Responsible Organs of State:** ❖ The iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority is the management authority established under this Act to manage the iSimangaliso Wetland Park ❖ Department of Environmental Affairs

Act	Objectives, important aspects, associated notices and regulations, and statutory bodies
National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act 107 of 1998)	**Amendment Acts:** ❖ National Environmental Management Act 56 of 2002 ❖ National Environmental Management Act 46 of 2003 ❖ National Environmental Management Amendment Act 8 of 2004 ❖ National Environmental Laws Amendment Act 44 of 2008 ❖ National Environmental Management Amendment Act 62 of 2008 ❖ National Environmental Laws Amendment Act 14 of 2009 ❖ GN 731 in GG 35665 of September 2012 ❖ National Environmental Management Laws Second Amendment Act 30 of 2013 ❖ GN 152 in GG 37401 of 28 February 2014 **Objectives:** ❖ To provide for co-operative environmental governance by establishing principles for decision-making on matters affecting the environment, institutions that will promote co-operative governance and procedures for co-ordinating environmental functions exercised by organs of state **Relevance to the iSimangaliso Wetland Park:** ❖ Although it is framework legislation for environmental protection in South Africa in general, the Act and its Regulations also have application in the iSimangaliso Wetland Park ❖ Some of the key principles include sustainable development, the 'Polluter-pays' Principle, Co-operative governance in environmental management and the equitable distribution of natural resources ❖ Driving in the coastal zone and the launching of boats in the iSimangaliso Wetland Park are regulated under NEMA Regulations ❖ Any activity that is proposed for the iSimangaliso Wetland Park and which is listed in the NEMA EIA Regulations, requires environmental authorisation ❖ Certain activities that fall outside the Park require environmental authorisation prior to their commencement because they fall within the buffer area (defined as the area extending 10 km from the proclaimed boundary of a World Heritage site). This is in addition to any activities triggered by a development in its own right **Notices and Regulations relevant to the iSimangaliso Wetland Park:** ❖ The Control of Vehicles in the Coastal Zone Regulations (GN No. 1399 of 21 December 2001) ❖ Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, 2014 (GN R982 in GG 38282 of 4 December 2014) ❖ Listing Notice 1 (GN R983 in GG 38282 of 4 December 2014) ❖ Listing Notice 2 (GN R984 in GG 38282 of 4 December 2014)

Act	Objectives, important aspects, associated notices and regulations, and statutory bodies
	❖ Listing Notice 3 (GN R985 in GG 38282 of 4 December 2014) ❖ National Exemption Regulations, 2014 (GN 994 in GG 38303 of 8 December 2014) ❖ Regulations relating to the procedure to be followed when oral requests are made in terms of section 30A (GN R310 in GG 38684 of 10 April 2015) **Responsible Organs of State:** ❖ Department of Environmental Affairs

Act	Objectives, important aspects, associated notices and regulations, and statutory bodies
National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act, 2003 (Act 57 of 2003)	**Amendment Acts:** ❖ National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Amendment Act 31 of 2004 ❖ National Environmental Laws Amendment Act 14 of 2009 ❖ National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Amendment Act 15 of 2009 ❖ National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Amendment Act 21 of 2014 **Objectives:** To provide for: ❖ The protection and conservation of ecologically viable areas representative of South Africa's biological diversity and its natural landscapes and seascapes ❖ The establishment of a national register of all national, provincial and local protected areas; for the management of those areas in accordance with national norms and standards ❖ Intergovernmental co-operation and public consultation in matters concerning protected areas ❖ To authorise the declaration of marine protected areas ❖ To provide for the management of marine protected areas **Relevance to the iSimangaliso Wetland Park:** ❖ Defines categories of protected areas that include World Heritage sites ❖ Chapters 1 and 2 (Sections 1 to 16) apply to World Heritage sites as declared through the World Heritage Convention Act – other provisions apply by express or necessary implication ❖ Written permission is required for a person to enter or reside in a nature reserve or World Heritage site ❖ Protected areas declaration (Chapter 3) and Management (Chapter 4) **Notices and Regulations:** ❖ Regulations for the Proper Administration of Special Nature Reserves, National Parks and World Heritage sites (GN R1061 in GG 28181 of 28 October 2005 and amended by GN 622 in GG 37904 of 15 August 2014). ❖ Regulations on the Proper Administration of Nature Reserves, 2012 (GN R99 in GG 35021 of 8 February 2012) **Responsible Organs of State:** ❖ Department of Environmental Affairs

Act	Objectives, important aspects, associated notices and regulations, and statutory bodies
National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act, 2004 (Act 10 of 2004)	**Amendment Acts:** ❖ National Environmental Laws Amendment Act 14 of 2009 ❖ National Environmental Laws Amendment Act 14 of 2013 **Objectives:** To provide for: ❖ The management and conservation of South Africa's biodiversity within the framework of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 ❖ The protection of species and ecosystems that warrant national protection ❖ The sustainable use of indigenous biological resources; the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from bioprospecting involving indigenous biological resources ❖ The establishment and functions of a South African National Biodiversity Institute **Relevance to the iSimangaliso Wetland Park:** ❖ Provides classifications and processes for the sustainable management of biodiversity **Notices and Regulations:** ❖ Publication of Lists of Critically Endangered, Endangered, Vulnerable and Protected Species (GN R151 in GG 29657 of 23 February 2007 and amended by GN R1187 in GG 30568 of 14 December 2007) ❖ Threatened or Protected Species Regulations (GN No. R152 in GG 29657 of 23 February 2007 and amended by GN R69 in GG 30703 of 28 January 2008; GN R209 & 210 in GG 31962 of 27 February 2009; GN 210 in GG 31962 of 27 February 2009 ; GN R576 in GG 34453 of 11 July 2011; GN R614 in GG 35565 of 2 August 2012; and GN R324 in GG 37596 of 29 April 2014) ❖ Norms and Standards for Biodiversity Management Plans for Species (GN in GG 31968 of 2 March 2009) ❖ Alien and Invasive Species Regulations, 2014 (GN R598 in GG 37885 of 1 August 2014) ❖ Alien and Invasive Species List, 2014 (GN 599 in GG 37886 of 1 August 2014) ❖ National List of Ecosystems that are Threatened and in Need of Protection (GN 1002 in GG 34809 of 9 December 2012) ❖ Norms and Standards for Biodiversity Management Plans for Ecosystems (GN 83 in GG 37302 of 7 February 2014) ❖ National Norms and Standards for the Management of Elephants in South Africa (GN 251 in GG 30833 of 29 February 2008) **Responsible Organs of State:** ❖ Department of Environmental Affairs ❖ South African National Biodiversity Institute

Act	Objectives, important aspects, associated notices and regulations, and statutory bodies
KwaZulu-Natal Heritage Act, 2008 (Act 4 of 2008)	**Objectives:** To provide for: ❖ The conservation, protection and administration of both the physical and the living or intangible heritage resources of the Province of KwaZulu-Natal; to establish a statutory Council to administer heritage conservation in the Province; to determine the objects, powers, duties and functions of the Council; to determine the manner in which the Council is to be managed, governed, staffed and financed; to establish Metro and District Heritage Forums to assist the Council in facilitating and ensuring the involvement of local communities in the administration and conservation of heritage in the Province; and to provide for matters connected therewith **Relevance to the iSimangaliso Wetland Park:** ❖ Maintenance, repair and management of historically, culturally and architecturally important sites and structures, and developmental requirements ❖ Permitting for research, exaction or destruction of cultural resources ❖ Provide for the establishment of educational, training, interpretive and tourism-related projects **Responsible Organs of State:** ❖ Amafa aKwaZulu-Natali
National Forests Act, 1998 (Act 84 of 1998)	**Purposes:** ❖ Promote the sustainable management and development of forests for the benefit of all ❖ Create the conditions necessary to restructure forestry in State forests ❖ Provide special measures for the protection of certain forests and trees ❖ Promote the sustainable use of forests for environmental, economic, educational, recreational, cultural, health and spiritual purposes ❖ Promote community forestry ❖ Promote greater participation in all aspects of forestry **Relevance to the iSimangaliso Wetland Park:** ❖ Conservation of State forests and protected species **Responsible Organs of State:** ❖ Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

Act	Objectives, important aspects, associated notices and regulations, and statutory bodies
National Water Act, 1998 (Act 36 of 1998)	**Amendment Acts:** ❖ National Water Amendment Act 45 of 1999 ❖ National Water Amendment Act 27 of 2014 **Purpose:** The purpose of this Act is to ensure that the nation's water resources are protected, used, developed, conserved, managed and controlled in ways which take into account amongst other factors: ❖ Meeting the basic human needs of present and future generations ❖ Promoting equitable access to water ❖ Redressing the results of past racial and gender discrimination ❖ Promoting the efficient, sustainable and beneficial use of water in the public interest ❖ Facilitating social and economic development ❖ Providing for growing demand for water use ❖ Protecting aquatic and associated ecosystems, and their biological diversity ❖ Reducing and preventing pollution, and degradation of water resources ❖ Meeting international obligations ❖ Promoting dam safety and managing floods and droughts, and for achieving this purpose, to establish suitable institutions and to ensure that they have appropriate community, racial and gender representation **Relevance to the iSimangaliso Wetland Park:** ❖ Sustainable protection, use, development and conservation of water resources – including aquatic ecosystems ❖ Defines 11 water uses and provides licensing procedures ❖ Provides for the establishment of catchment management agencies and water user associations for the regulation and protection of water resources by affected parties **Notices and Regulations:** ❖ Revision of General Authorisation in terms of Section 39 of the National Water Act 36 of 1998, Water Uses Section 21 (a) and (b) (GN in GG 26187 of 26 March 2004).

Act	Objectives, important aspects, associated notices and regulations, and statutory bodies
	❖ General authorisation in terms of Section 39 of the National Water Act, 1998 in terms of Section 21 (c) and (i) for the purpose of Rehabilitating a Wetland for Conservation Purposes – Water Uses 21 (c) and (i) (GN 1198 in GG 32805 of 18 December 2009) ❖ Replacement of General Authorisation in terms of Section 39 of the National Water Act, 1998 – Water Uses Section 21 (c) and (i) (GN 1199 in GG 32805 of 18 December 2009) ❖ Revision of General Authorisations in terms of Section 39 of the National Water Act, 1998 – Water Uses Section 21 (e), (f) and (h), (g) and (j) (GN 665 in GG 36820 of 6 September 2013) **Responsible Organs of State:** ❖ Department of Water and Sanitation
Marine Living Resources Act, 1998 (Act 18 of 1998)	**Objectives:** To provide for: ❖ The conservation of the marine ecosystem ❖ The long-term sustainable utilisation of marine living resources ❖ The orderly access to exploitation, utilisation and protection of certain marine living resources ❖ The exercise of control over marine living resources in a fair and equitable manner to the benefit of all the citizens of South Africa **Relevance to the iSimangaliso Wetland Park:** ❖ Conservation of the Marine ecosystem and sustainable utilization of the resources ❖ Protection of every species of sea animal (excluding seals or birds) through prohibition on catching, disturbance or possession – *specific mention is made of the coelacanth in line with its CITES I listing* ❖ Fair and equitable resource allocation with the granting of commercial, recreational and subsistence fishing rights - *Minister may establish zones for exclusive use of subsistence fishers and declare a community to be a fishing community or person to be a subsistence fisher*[46] **Notices and Regulations:** ❖ Declaration of Areas as Marine Protected Areas (GN No. R 1429 of 29 December 2000), viz. the St Lucia and Maputaland MPAs[47] ❖ Coelacanths Government Gazette No. 21948 (29 December 2000, No. R 1428) **Responsible Organs of State:** ❖ Department of Environmental Affairs ❖ Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

[46] The proclamation of the St Lucia and Maputaland Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) effectively prevents fishing and other forms of human disturbance to all living resources, except when these are specifically sanctioned by the Minister (or by delegated authority) in the interests of managing the MPA. These MPAs are zoned to create sanctuary areas and restricted and controlled areas, in order to meet the biodiversity conservation and natural resource management objectives of the Wetland Park. Certain kinds of pelagic fishing are allowed in the restricted areas, but no bottom

Act	Objectives, important aspects, associated notices and regulations, and statutory bodies
Maritime Zone Act, 1994(Act 15 of 1994)	**Important aspects:** ❖ Defines territorial waters and South African jurisdiction over these waters as per UNCLOS
National Environmental Management: Integrated Coastal Management Act, 2008 (Act 24 of 2008)	**Amendment Acts:** ❖ National Environmental Management: Integrated Coastal Management Amendment Act 36 of 2014 **Objectives:** ❖ To determine the coastal zone of the Republic ❖ To provide for the co-ordinated and integrated management of the coastal zone by all spheres of government in accordance with the principles of co-operative governance ❖ To preserve, protect, extend and enhance the status of coastal public property as being held in trust by the State on behalf of all South Africans, including future generations ❖ To secure equitable access to the opportunities and benefits of coastal public property ❖ To give effect to the Republic's obligations in terms of international law regarding coastal management and the marine environment ❖ To establish a system of integrated coastal and estuarine management in the Republic, including norms, standards and policies in order to promote the conservation of the coastal environment and maintain natural attributes of coastal landscapes and seascapes ❖ To ensure that development and the use of natural resources within the coastal zone are socially and economically justifiable and ecologically sustainable ❖ To control dumping at the sea, pollution in the coastal zone, inappropriate development of the coastal environment and other adverse effects on the coastal environment. **Relevance to the iSimangaliso Wetland Park:** ❖ ISimangaliso includes approximately 9% of South Africa's coastline **Notices and Regulations:** ❖ National Estuarine Management Protocol (GN 341 in GG 36432 of 10 May 2013) ❖ Control of Use of Vehicles in the Coastal Area (GN R496 in GG 37761 of 27 June 2014) ❖ Public Launch Site Regulations (GN R497 in GG 37761 of 27 June of 2014) **Responsible Organs of State:**

fishing is allowed in any parts of the MPA. Diving, whether by scuba or submersible craft, within the two MPAs is also controlled by permit. The primary reason for this greater level of control is the protection of the coral reefs, which are sensitive even to diver damage. Following adoption of the IMP and its zonation, including marine zonation, the boundaries, zonation and controls of the MPAs under the Marine Living Resources Act, 1998 will be amended.

47 Which are in the process of being re-gazetted as an extended iSimangaliso Marine Protected Area.

Act	Objectives, important aspects, associated notices and regulations, and statutory bodies
	❖ Department of Environmental Affairs
National Environmental Management: Waste Act, 2008 (Act of 59 2008)	**Amendment Acts:** ❖ National Environmental Laws Amendment Act 14 of 2013 ❖ National Environmental Management: Waste Amendment Act 26 of 2014 ❖ National Environmental Laws Amendment Act 25 of 2014 **Objectives:** ❖ To reform the law regulating waste management in order to protect health and the environment by providing reasonable measures for the prevention of pollution and ecological degradation, and for securing ecologically sustainable development ❖ To provide for institutional arrangements and planning matters ❖ To provide for national norms and standards for regulating the management of waste by all spheres of government and to provide for specific waste management measures ❖ To provide for the licensing and control of waste management activities ❖ To provide for the remediation of contaminated land ❖ To provide for the national waste information system ❖ To provide for compliance and enforcement **Relevance to the iSimangaliso Wetland Park:** ❖ Listed waste activities in the iSimangaliso Wetland Park require authorisation ❖ Management of waste generated by the Park **Notices and Regulations:** ❖ National Domestic Waste Collection Standards (GN 21 in GG 33935 of 21 January of 2011) ❖ National Waste Information Regulations, 2012 (GN R625 in GG 35583 of 13 August 2012) ❖ Waste Classification and Management Regulations, 2013 (GN R634 in GG 36784 of 23 August 2013) ❖ National Norms and Standards for the Assessment of Waste for Landfill Disposal (GN R635 in GG 36784 of 23 August 2013) ❖ National Norms and Standards for Disposal of Waste to Landfill (GN R636 in GG 36784 of 23 August 2013) ❖ List of waste management activities that have, or are likely to have a detrimental effect on the environment (GN 921 in GG 37083 of 29 November 2013 amended by GN 332 in GG 37604 of 2 May 2014 and GN R633 in GG 39020 of 24 July 2015) ❖ National Norms and Standards for the Storage of Waste, 2013 (GN 926 in GG 37088 of 29 November 2013)

Act	Objectives, important aspects, associated notices and regulations, and statutory bodies
	Responsible Organs of State: ❖ Department of Environmental Affairs

Other Acts that relate to the actual functioning of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority and governance include:

- Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act, 1996
- Local Government: Municipal Structures Act, 1998 (Act 117 of 1998)
- Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000)
- Local Government: Municipal Finance Management Act, 2003 (Act 54 of 2003)
- Public Finance Management Act, 1999 (Act 1 of 1999)
- KwaZulu-Natal Ingonyama Trust Amendment Act, 1994 (Act 3 of 1994)
- Restitution of Land Rights Act, 1994 (Act 22 of 1994)Intergovernmental Relations Framework Act, 2005 (Act 13 of 2005)

Relevant information is provided in **Table 3**.

Legislation, as influenced by public perception, may lead to internal policy development within the iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority. In addition, policy development by various external environmental stakeholders may lead to a review of the legislative provisions. Some of the key policies that influence the iSimangaliso Wetland Park and its surrounds include:

- Integrated Environmental Management Guideline Series. DEAT, 1992.
- General Environmental Policy in terms of the Environment Conservation Act, published in GN 449 of 9 May 1994.
- White Paper on Environmental Management, 1997.
- The White Paper for Sustainable Coastal Development in South Africa, 2000.
- National Development Plan 2030, 2012 (NDP).

There are many such policies and it is not the intention of this IMP to list all the policies, regulations and other legal precepts with which the iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority must comply. What is important, therefore, is that the iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority compiles and maintains a comprehensive register of all legal documents that apply to its activities.

Table 3 Legislation that impacts on institutional arrangements associated with the iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority

Act	Objectives and/or important aspects
Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996	❖ Supreme law of the country ❖ s24 environmental right ❖ s195 public administration ❖ Co-operative governance
Local Government: Municipal Structures Act, 1998 (Act 117 of 1998)	❖ Divides South Africa into various local government structures (metropolitan or district and local municipalities), and assigns them powers and functions ❖ The iSimangaliso Wetland Park falls within the Mtubatuba Local Municipality which is under the jurisdiction of the Umkhanyakude District Municipality. The Mtubatuba Local Municipality is responsible for municipal services such as potable water supply and sanitation.
Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000)	❖ Requires the preparation of a long-term Integrated Development Plan (IDP) with a three- to five-year budgeted implementation plan for all services and functions within the area of each local government structure. The IDP is reviewed annually
Local Government: Municipal Finance Management Act, 2003 (Act 54 of 2003)	❖ Provides the procedures and guidance for sound municipal financial management
Public Finance Management Act, 1999 (Act 1 of 1999)	❖ The iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority is subject to the same internal and external conditions, controls and requirements for good public finance administration as other organs of state or public bodies
KwaZulu-Natal Ingonyama Trust Act, 1994 as amended (Act 3 of 1994)	❖ Approximately 18% of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park (south of the Coastal Forest Reserve, including Mabibi and Rocktail Bay) falls under the Ingonyama Trust ❖ Establishes a Board to administer the affairs of the Trust (encumber, pledge, lease, alienate or otherwise dispose of trust land with traditional authority approval) ❖ Board policy to issue only leases for commercial developments based on 2 to 3 year tenure security followed by a 35 year (option to renew) registered bondable lease
Restitution of Land Rights Act, 1994 as amended (Act 22 of 1994) Restitution of Land Rights Amendment Act, 2014 (Act 15 of 2014)	❖ Address rights in land in respect of those persons dispossessed through discriminatory laws ❖ Establish the Land Restitution Commission and appointment of Regional Claims Commissioners

Act	Objectives and/or important aspects
Intergovernmental Relations Framework Act, 2005 (Act 13 of 2005)	❖ Highlights mechanisms to facilitate cooperative governance

4 Other relevant institutions and stakeholder groups

In addition to the various statutory bodies (organs of State) mentioned above, there are numerous other relevant institutions and stakeholders that have a relationship with the iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority:

- Residents and neighbours.
- Traditional Councils.
- User groups (for example, traditional healers, crafters, recreation and sport bodies, and tourists).
- Organised business and business operators, particularly those who rely on the iSimangaliso Wetland Park for revenue.
- Academic institutions (for example, universities, technikons, research bodies, schools and learners).
- Development trusts.
- Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs).
- International conservation bodies.
- Community-Based Organisations.
- Service providers (for example, roads, health, education, water and sanitation, communication and electricity).

APPENDIX 3: MAPS

Please note that Figures 2, 4, 5, 8, 14 and 15 appear in the main text of the Integrated Management Plan.