ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING & CLIMATE PROTECTION DEPARTMENT
BIODIVERSITY | CLIMATE | PEOPLE

DMOSS
Local Action for Biodiversity

BIODIVERSITY STEWARDSHIP

CONSERVATION IN PARTNERSHIP WITH LANDOWNERS

WHAT IS BIODIVERSITY STEWARDSHIP?

Biodiversity Stewardship is a voluntary approach of entering into agreements with private and communal landowners to protect and manage land in biodiversity priority areas. It is about promoting collective sharing of responsibility for managing biodiversity, while recognising landowners administrators as the custodians of biodiversity on their land. Biodiversity stewardship is based purely on voluntary commitments from and participation by, landowners or land administrators. It aims to promote conservation and sustainable management of natural resources outside of traditional state-owned protected areas. It is considered aprogressive method for achieving conservation targets and expanding protected areas. Biodiversity stewardship is based on the following principles:

BIODIVERSITY STEWARDSHIP IS BASED ON THE FOLLOWING PRINCIPLES:

- Commitment is voluntary - the final decision on whether to participate or not lies with the landowner or land administrator.
- It is landowner focused - it takes into consideration the perspectives of participating landowners and attempts to support their needs.
- It is focused on conservation priority areas - this ensures that scarce resources are focused on high conservation priority areas as identified by eThekwini Municipality.
- It requires commitment from landowner's - which could be in a form of a legal agreement in order to ensure on-going conservation.
- It requires commitment from eThekwini Municipality - agreements are backed by resources to ensure that sites are supported on an ongoing basis (subject to availability of resources).
- It is about co-operation - partnership is based on mutual trust between all parties involved.

Biodiversity Stewardship represents a shift from'conservation for landowners' to 'conservation in partnership with landowners'

WHAT ARE THE INCENTIVES FOR ENGAGING IN BIODIVERSITY STEWARDSHIP?

Biodiversity stewardship operates on a principle that the incentives and support provided by programmes is proportional to the commitment made by landowner to conservation. Thus Nature Reserve receive the most ubstantial support, followed by Protected Environments. The sourcing and implementation of different incentives is an ongoing process, and since incentive needs differ between landowners, each site will have a unique package developed for it.

Incentives that could be provided include (but are not limited to) receiving technical and extensionsupport through compiling information, general management plans and detailed alien species control plans. Furthermore, the eThekwini Rates Policy provides for rate rebates to landowners that participate in biodiversity conservation subject to certain conditions. For example, areas that are formally proclaimed as Nature Reserves in accordance with the rotected Areas Act, 2003 are excluded from rates. Nature Reserves which are not formally proclaimed may also be excluded from rates, once the owners are in receipt of an environmental certificate (subject to conditions stipulated in the Municipal Rates Policy)

Question and Answers

Does landownership change when you sign a stewardship agreement?

The landowner retains the property ownership.

Who drafts the stewardship agreement?

EThekwini Municipality in consultation with the landowner/landowner representative.

Is it mandatory for participating landowners to rezone the property/portion of the property?

The landowner may be required to consent to rezone/split zone the property depending on the stewardship category.

Who can participate in the stewardship program?

Any landowner can participate provided the site is considered a high conservation priority based on the EMSCA

How will my participation contribute to conservation?

You will contribute towards meeting Provincial and National conservation goals and targets as any land formally committed to conservation can be considered protected and used to calculate areas under protection.

For more information contact:
The eThekwini Municipality Environmental Planning and Climate Protection Department:
031 3117877/6
And see:
/http://www.durban.gov.za/City_Services/development_planning_managementÇ/environmental_planning_climate_protection

WHY DID ETHEKWINI MUNICIPALITY ADOPT BIODIVERSITY STEWARDSHIP?

EThekwini Municipality is situated within the Maputaland-Pondoland-Albany region, one of 35 Global Biodiversity Hotspots. The region is home to more than 7 000 species of vascular plants, 25% of which are endemic to the area. Historical and current development has resulted in the significant loss of highly valued biodiversity. This does not only interfere with natural ecological processes which support the functioning and persistence of these environments, it also directly impacts on ecosystem services that biodiversity provides to the people of eThekwini. Natural areas have a range of values in addition to biodiversity conservation, e.g. they are important sites for education, recreation and spiritual upliftment. Although eThekwini Municipality and partners have secured and currently manage several natural areas within the Municipal Area, most of eThekwini's biodiversity is located within private and communal land ownership. In recognition of this fact, the eThekwini Municipality took a decision to adopt biodiversity stewardship as one of the tools for achieving biodiversity protection, environmental management and climate adaptation.

Biodiversity stewardship seeks to empower, guide and incentivise private and communal landowners and administrators to manage the environmental components of their properties

WHAT DOES ETHEKWINI MUNICIPALITY AIM TO ACHIEVE WITH BIODIVERSITY STEWARDSHIP PROGRAMME?

The eThekwini Municipality aims to:

- Expand eThekwini's biodiversity conservation estate beyond traditional state-owned protected areas by encouraging commitment to good biodiversity management practice on communal and privately owned land.
- Improve eThekwini Municipality's role in environmental protection and management.
- Ensure that private, communal and state owned areas with high biodiversity value receive secure conservation status and are linked to a network of other conservation areas in the landscape.
- Ensure that landowners who commit their properties to a stewardship option are empowered as decision makers and receive appropriate support.

HOW ARE SITES PRIORITIZED?

Biodiversity stewardship is implemented on sites that have been identified as important for biodiversity preservation and ecosystems services provision. It focuses on areas where the greatest biodiversity returns can be achieved with the least amount of resource input. The selection of a Biodiversity Stewardship Project and its category (see next section) is ultimately guided by eThekwini Municipality's Systematic Conservation Assessment (EMSCA). A landowner or land administrator can approach eThekwini Municipality or the eThekwini Municipality can approach the landowner or land administrator to enter into a stewardship agreement. A flexible range of biodiversity agreements is available to support conservation and sustainable resource use.

WHAT ARE THE AVAILABLE STEWARDSHIP OPTIONS?

There are different types of biodiversity stewardship agreements, ranging from non-binding to long-term, formally proclaimed areas in terms of the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act, 2003. The importance of biodiversity is taken into consideration for eligibility for each category. Nature reserves and Protected Environments are the two highest levels of biodiversity stewardship provided for in the Protected Areas Act, 2003. They are managed mainly for biodiversity conservation and they contribute (although ownership does not change) to the provincial and national protected areas targets. These protected areas provide for long-term protection of biodiversity and involve more land-use restrictions compared to other categories. In return support from authorities is greater. Biodiversity Management Agreements, Biodiversity Agreements and Biodiversity Partnership Areas are short-term contracts and are not covered under the Protected Areas Act, 2003. Even though these areas are not included in the national statistics of protected areas, they still contribute to conservation in its broader sense.

Biodiversity importance ↑ Site security ↑ Landowner commitment ↑ Municipality support ↑	Type of agreement	Legal mechanism	Typical contract legnth	Binding on the property	Binding on the landowner
	Nature Reserve	Protected Areas Act 57 of 2003	30-99 years or in perpetuity	Protected Area declaration and title deed restriction	Contact agreement
	Protected Environment	Protected Areas Act 57 of 2003	Minimum of 30 years	Protected Area declaration and title deed restriction	Contact agreement
	Biodiversity Management Agreement	Biodiversity Act 10 of 2004	5-10 years	Not binding	Agreement governed by Biodiversity Act
	biodiversity Agreement	Contract Law	5-10 years	Not binding	Contract agreement
	Biodiversity Partnership Areas	Informal agreement	Not binding	Not binding	Not binding