



International Ocean Institute
Southern Africa



6 June 2024

Dear Stakeholder

INVITATION TO ONLINE INFORMATION SESSION AND REGISTRATION AS INTERESTED AND AFFECTED PARTY FOR BENGUELA MUDS AND CAPE CANYON MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

International Ocean Institute – Southern Africa in association with EcoAfrica Environmental Consultants has been tasked by the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and Environment with developing Management Plans for the **Benguela Muds and Cape Canyon Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)**, located offshore of the Cape West Coast.

Both MPAs were proclaimed in 2019 in terms of sections 48A(2) and 86(1)(a), (b), (c) and (d) of the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act, 2003 (Act No. 57 of 2003), in Notice R 762 of Government Gazette 42479.

The Cape Canyon MPA lies almost directly west of Cape Columbine about 19 km offshore, in the 200 – 400 m depth range. It has an area of 583 km² and provides protection to part of a critically endangered canyon ecosystem that is not protected elsewhere and is trawled over most of its extent.

The Benguela Muds MPA lies almost directly west of Cape Columbine about 97 km offshore, in the 350 – 400 m depth range. It is one of the smallest MPAs with an area of only 92 km² and provides protection to part of a critically endangered mud ecosystem.

We are inviting you to attend an **online information session** on **27 June 2024** from **10am – 12pm**. This session will provide more detailed information on the two MPAs as well as an outline of the envisaged public consultation process.

Please confirm your participation in the online information session by 19 June 2024. If you are unable to attend but would like to participate in a sectoral, online consultation/s – tentatively scheduled for July 2024 – please indicate this in your email response.

We are also compiling a List of Registered Stakeholders (I&APs) who want to be involved in the PPP as well as providing inputs into the draft Management Plans. The Stakeholder Registration Form is attached to this letter.

The Stakeholder Registration Form should be submitted as soon as possible, but no later than 12 July 2024. **Please note that there will be an in-person Stakeholder Workshop in September.**

Please respond to Nosipho Tyagana at nosipho@ecoafrika.co.za and Hayley Rodkin at hayley@ecoafrika.co.za.

Regards

Nosipho Tyagana