



## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT TOOLKIT

This Toolkit aims to provide a standardised and coherent approach to land use terminology and concepts across the Northern Cape Province. Recognizing the need for a unified understanding of key terms, this toolkit supports the Northern Cape's spatial planning and land use management by aligning provincial, district, and municipal perspectives. This harmonization of definitions ensures clarity and consistency across various levels of spatial frameworks, enhancing collaborative planning and informed decision-making.

### TOOLKIT INTENT

The toolkit's primary goals are to:

- Develop and promote clear definitions for essential land use concepts, such as Spatial Transformation, Smart City Development, Provincial Interest, and Catalytic Projects.
- Guide newer initiatives and development areas, including Green Hydrogen Development, Fracking, Renewable Energy Infrastructure, Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Stations, and Rural Development.
- Define terms related to Settlement Clustering, Urban and Rural Nodes, and related growth strategies to support strategic planning and alignment with the PSDF objectives.
- Align land use activities with Northern Cape's key development priorities, including spatial transformation, environmental sustainability, and economic growth.
- Ensure that stakeholders at all levels understand and consistently apply terms and concepts, fostering clearer communication in planning and project implementation.

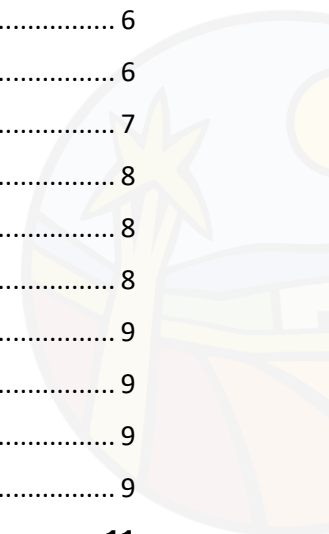
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# 1 INTRODUCTION

The Northern Cape Province, characterized by its vast landscapes and rich tapestry of natural resources, stands as a unique region within South Africa. It boasts abundant renewable energy potential, extensive agricultural lands, significant mineral deposits, diverse tourism attractions, and vital conservation areas. The province's developmental focus encompasses Renewable Energy Development, Intensive Agriculture, Mining, Tourism, and Conservation.

The Northern Cape Provincial Spatial Development Framework (PSDF) serves as a strategic guide to harmonize land use planning and development across these sectors, ensuring sustainable growth that aligns with both provincial priorities and national legislation.

This Toolkit is developed to provide comprehensive guidance on land use concepts and terminology specifically relevant to the Northern Cape Province. By standardizing these terms, the toolkit ensures clarity and consistency across provincial, district, and municipal levels, facilitating effective communication and collaboration among stakeholders involved in spatial planning and land use management.

## 1.1 GENERAL TERMINOLOGY

### 1.1.1 SPATIAL TRANSFORMATION

Spatial Transformation refers to the fundamental reorganization and restructuring of settlements and economic activities to address the segregated spatial patterns established during colonial and apartheid eras. This process aims to correct the inefficiencies, injustices, and inequalities in access to land, infrastructure, housing, and economic opportunities, and to prevent the resurgence of spatial inequality based on class or income.

#### In the context of the Northern Cape, Spatial Transformation involves:

- The transformation seeks to dismantle the inherited spatial segregation, ensuring that towns and cities are **more integrated and inclusive**. This includes providing proximity to employment and economic opportunities for previously disadvantaged communities, thereby **reducing travel distances and costs**, and fostering equitable access to housing and infrastructure.
- Spatial Transformation in the Northern Cape also focuses on **equitable access to government services and social amenities**, ensuring that infrastructure and services are distributed across regions in a manner that promotes fairness and inclusivity. This includes investments in health, education, transport, and other essential services in previously underserved areas.
- A key component of spatial transformation in the Northern Cape is the measurement and evaluation of spatial targeting initiatives, where **government funds and resources are directed to transform previously neglected or economically underperforming areas**. Spatial transformation assesses how effectively these funds are allocated, with a focus on improving the sustainability and economic viability of these areas to create long-term positive outcomes.
- The critical outcome of spatial transformation is the creation of inclusive towns and cities, where all residents, regardless of income or background, **have equitable access to opportunities, services, and public spaces**. This promotes social cohesion and reduces the disparities between wealthy and marginalized areas.

**In summary, Spatial Transformation in the Northern Cape is about creating a more just, equitable, and sustainable spatial structure that enhances connectivity, accessibility, and opportunity for all communities, ensuring that historical spatial inequalities are effectively addressed and not perpetuated in new forms.**



### 1.1.2 CATALYTIC PROJECTS

Catalytic Projects refer to strategic, large-scale initiatives designed to create significant and transformative impacts on regional economies, spatial structure, and social conditions. These projects are prioritized within the Northern Cape's Provincial Spatial Development Framework (PSDF) as essential tools for advancing the provincial vision of sustainable growth, economic resilience, and improved quality of life. Catalytic Projects align with the Northern Cape's Growth and Development Plan Vision 2040, targeting specific development priorities such as job creation, infrastructure expansion, and environmental sustainability.

#### Characteristics of Catalytic Projects:

Catalytic Projects are selected for their potential to create substantial ripple effects, driving economic and social growth. They are typically distinguished by:

- Projects of a scale and scope that contribute meaningfully to economic growth, social investment, and spatial transformation within the province.
- The capacity to catalyse further development and attract additional investments, thereby amplifying their initial impact.
- The ability to activate upstream and downstream economic and social activities, significantly influencing spatial form, enhancing land values, and creating job opportunities.
- Projects contribute to the achievement of strategic provincial goals, including poverty reduction, employment, and inclusive growth.

#### Selection Criteria for Catalytic Projects:

Catalytic Projects in the PSDF are evaluated and prioritized based on their ability to:

- Align with the Provincial Growth and Development Strategy (PGDS) and PSDF, and contribute to spatial goals like densification, infill development, and multi-purpose land use.
- Positively affect land parcels, support sustainable settlement patterns, and enhance accessibility and infrastructure connectivity.
- Protect sensitive agricultural and natural areas, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and integrate sustainable practices into project design and execution.
- Boost economic and social investment within targeted regions, elevating the province's comparative advantage and economic potential.
- Providing significant social value, creating jobs, improving access to essential services, and addressing socio-economic disparities.

#### Governance and Implementation of Catalytic Projects:

The successful implementation of Catalytic Projects in the Northern Cape requires an integrated governance framework that aligns with the 7th Administration's Medium-Term Development Plan (MTDP) 2024-2029. This approach emphasizes a collaborative model that includes joint planning, budgeting, and service delivery across government entities and stakeholders.

**The institutionalized Provincial Governance, Coordination, and Service Delivery Model (aligned with the District Development Model) will serve as the mechanism for overseeing these projects. Key steps in the Catalytic Project registration and prioritization process include:**

- Project owners apply for registration with the Provincial Advisory Committee (PAC).
- The Provincial Advisory Committee (PAC) assesses the project through a project assessment model (Northern Cape Planning System - NCPS), evaluating it against criteria like strategic alignment, desirability, and vulnerability.
- The PAC submits performance assessments and recommendations to the Provincial Executive Council (ESCO), which endorses



Catalytic Projects for inclusion in the Provincial Growth and Development Plan (PGDP) and subsequent spatial representation in the Provincial Spatial Development Framework (PSDF).

- Approved projects are added to the PGDP and PSDF and monitored for progress and impact, with performance outcomes reported periodically to ensure alignment with provincial goals through the NCPS.

Catalytic Projects within the PSDF act as high-impact initiatives that embody the provincial vision, promote spatial equity and stimulate sustainable development across the Northern Cape. By focusing on projects that meet multiple strategic objectives, the province ensures that its development efforts drive inclusive growth and long-term prosperity for its residents.

### 1.1.3 MATTERS OF PROVINCIAL INTEREST

In the context of land use and spatial planning, "Matters of Provincial Interest" refers to specific areas and development concerns that hold particular significance at the provincial level. These matters are designated by provincial legislation to guide municipalities in land use decisions that impact broader provincial objectives, ensuring that key areas of importance are managed with a coordinated and sustainable approach. Section 12 of the Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act (SPLUMA) provides the foundation for provinces to set guidelines and requirements in these areas, allowing provincial governments to influence municipal land use planning in ways that align with overarching provincial priorities.

Provincial interests are identified within the Provincial Spatial Development Framework (PSDF), which serves as a strategic tool for provinces to outline critical land use considerations that need to be integrated into local planning. **The PSDF includes provisions such as:**

- A clear **spatial development vision** for the province, providing municipalities with **direction on provincial priorities and goals**.

- A framework that identifies growth areas and economic focal points, supporting municipalities in aligning with the provincial growth trajectory.
- Guidelines on managing the transition between rural and urban areas, particularly where development pressures affect provincial resources like agricultural land and conservation areas.
- : Specific areas identified for their agricultural potential, tourism significance, heritage value, environmental sensitivity, industrial development potential, or housing and urban development needs.

### Examples of Provincial Interests

Matters of Provincial Interest can encompass several key areas:

- Protecting high-potential agricultural land and promoting sustainable agricultural practices.
- Preserving cultural and natural heritage sites that contribute to the provincial tourism industry.
- Safeguarding ecologically sensitive areas, including wetlands, protected landscapes, and biodiversity hotspots.
- Managing areas with potential for industrial expansion and urban growth to align with the province's economic strategy.

### Provincial Oversight and Municipal Accountability:

**The PSDF mandates that municipalities incorporate provincial interests into their planning frameworks, with provincial legislation serving as a guide for implementing these interests at the municipal level.** This approach supports a coherent land use strategy across municipalities, allowing for conflict resolution when municipal plans do not align with provincial goals.

**The Municipal Systems Act (MSA) further establishes the framework for municipalities to align with provincial planning guidelines, strengthening accountability and enhancing collaboration between municipal and provincial spheres.**



## Balancing Provincial and Municipal Authority

While municipalities **hold primary authority over land use planning**, provincial governments can influence this process through other constitutionally assigned competencies such as agriculture, environment, and nature conservation. However, provincial intervention should be limited to significant matters of provincial interest to prevent excessive interference in municipal planning. This balanced approach respects the autonomy of municipalities while ensuring that critical provincial priorities are maintained.

### Legislative Frameworks and Conflict Avoidance:

Provincial legislation (*in this case referring to the Provincial SPLUM (Bill/Act)*), developed in alignment with national laws, provides clarity on areas where provincial interests intersect with municipal planning authority. To avoid conflicts, provincial governments are advised to avoid overstepping into detailed micro-management of municipal land use. Section 146 of the Constitution allows for a resolution mechanism when provincial and national legislation conflict, though the preferred approach is proactive alignment to prevent fragmentation.

### Application Process and Decision-Making:

Provincial interest in land use applications can follow one of several pathways, including:

- The **municipality forwards applications affecting provincial interests** to the provincial government, which makes the final decision.
- **The applicant submits separate applications to the municipality and the province<sup>1</sup>**, each assessing the application based on its respective mandates.

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<sup>1</sup> Reference is made here to the circulation of such an application to the **Provincial Advisory Committee** as established under the Northern Cape SPLUM (Bill/Act)

- The municipality reviews the application **first**; if approved, **provincial approval is required** for the aspect of provincial interest, thus creating an integrated approval process.

Matters of Provincial Interest ensure that development decisions contribute to the broader goals of sustainable growth, resource conservation, and economic development within the province.

By establishing clear guidelines for provincial interests in alignment with SPLUMA, MSA, and relevant provincial laws, the Northern Cape PSDF empowers municipalities to implement land use decisions that respect **both local needs and provincial priorities**, ultimately promoting a balanced approach to development across the province.

## 1.2 RENEWABLE ENERGY

### 1.2.1 RENEWABLE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT

Renewable Energy Development refers to the establishment and use of infrastructure that generates electricity and heat from renewable sources, including solar, wind, ocean, hydropower, biomass, geothermal resources, biofuels, and hydrogen derived from renewable resources. In the context of the Northern Cape's vast renewable energy potential, such development must carefully consider the efficient use of water resources, the impacts of climate change, and the broader environmental implications. Renewable energy projects should prioritize the use of advanced and appropriate technology to minimize their ecological footprint.

Renewable Energy Development will not be permitted within SPC A (Core Conservation Areas) to preserve critical ecological zones. However, it may be accommodated in SPC B areas, but only **under stringent conditions** that require comprehensive and often costly environmental studies to assess and mitigate potential impacts. In other Spatial Planning Categories (SPCs),



renewable energy projects may be supported, though with less rigid land use change requirements, **ensuring that any development remains aligned with the overall environmental and spatial goals** of the Northern Cape PSDF.

### 1.2.2 GREEN HYDROGEN

Green Hydrogen Development (GHD) refers to the production of hydrogen using renewable energy sources, particularly through water electrolysis powered by solar, wind, or other green energy technologies. This process splits water molecules into hydrogen and oxygen without emitting carbon dioxide, making green hydrogen a crucial component in achieving global net-zero emissions and supporting the transition to a sustainable energy economy. As a clean, storable, and flexible energy carrier, green hydrogen is considered a viable replacement for fossil fuels, particularly in energy-intensive industries, transportation, and energy storage applications.

The Northern Cape, with its abundant solar and wind resources, is ideally positioned to become a leader in green hydrogen production. The region's vast non-arable land, ample sunlight, and proximity to ports for export make it a strategic location for large-scale green hydrogen projects. These projects align with the Northern Cape's Provincial Spatial Development Framework (PSDF), supporting the province's economic growth, industrial development, and environmental sustainability goals.

**Several acts and policies guide the green hydrogen sector in South Africa and address regulatory needs:**

- National Energy Act & Integrated Energy Plan (IEP): The IEP mentions hydrogen as an alternative energy carrier, with provisions for renewable energy alignment, though updates to the policy are required to address the growing green hydrogen sector.
- Electricity Regulations Act & Integrated Resource Plan (IRP): These regulations support the integration of renewable energy, essential for electrolysis in green hydrogen hubs.

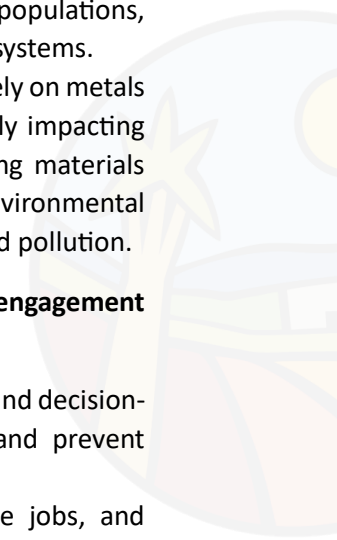
- Environmental Legislation (NEMA, Biodiversity Act, and Air Quality Act): Guides sustainable practices in land, air, and biodiversity impacts, crucial for renewable energy infrastructure associated with green hydrogen.

**Green hydrogen production has significant land use, water resource, and ecological implications:**

- Establishing green hydrogen plants, along with necessary renewable energy sources like solar and wind, requires large tracts of land. This can lead to competition for space, particularly in densely populated or ecologically sensitive areas.
- GHD requires substantial freshwater resources. In water-scarce regions, this may strain existing supplies and potentially lead to conflicts over water use.
- Renewable energy plants have ecological footprints, including potential impacts on local biodiversity, wildlife habitats, and water bodies. For example, wind turbines can affect bird populations, while solar farms may alter land use patterns and ecosystems.
- Green hydrogen and renewable energy technologies rely on metals and minerals that require intensive mining, potentially impacting land use, water resources, and ecosystems. Extracting materials like platinum, iridium, and copper can have environmental repercussions, including greenhouse gas emissions and pollution.

**For GHD to be sustainable and equitable, community engagement and socio-economic impacts must be considered:**

- Local communities should be involved in the planning and decision-making process to ensure fair land use practices and prevent displacement or loss of access to traditional lands.
- GHD projects can stimulate local economies, create jobs, and support regional development; however, there is a need for training programs to ensure local workforce readiness.



- With potential water scarcity, strategies must be in place to prevent GHD activities from compromising community access to essential water resources.

Green Hydrogen Development offers the Northern Cape a significant opportunity to lead in clean energy innovation, contributing to South Africa's energy transition and economic growth goals. **However, implementing GHD requires careful planning and alignment with environmental, water, and land use regulations to ensure that development is sustainable and inclusive.**

## 1.3 SETTLEMENT DEVELOPMENT

### 1.3.1 SMART CITIES AND SMART DEVELOPMENT

Smart Cities and Smart Development in the Northern Cape refer to the strategic use of technology, data, and innovation to drive more efficient, sustainable, and inclusive urban and rural development. While Smart Cities are often associated with urban areas, in the Northern Cape, the concept extends beyond cities to enable the transformation of towns and rural communities, addressing the unique challenges of this vast and sparsely populated province.

**In the Northern Cape, Smart Development involves:**

- Converting existing public facilities like libraries into Smart Centres that provide Wi-Fi access and digital tools to support e-learning initiatives and community services.
- Implementing smart water and electricity metering systems to improve resource management, particularly in areas where water scarcity and energy challenges are prevalent.
- Adopting green technologies to address climate change adaptation, such as renewable energy solutions (e.g., solar), rainwater harvesting systems, and conservation-focused infrastructure.

- Enhancing governance and communication through the use of spatial planning systems allows for better coordination, data-driven decision-making, and efficient delivery of basic services in both urban and rural areas.
- Supporting off-grid and remote towns by integrating sustainable, low-maintenance infrastructure and services that reduce reliance on central grids while promoting self-sufficiency.

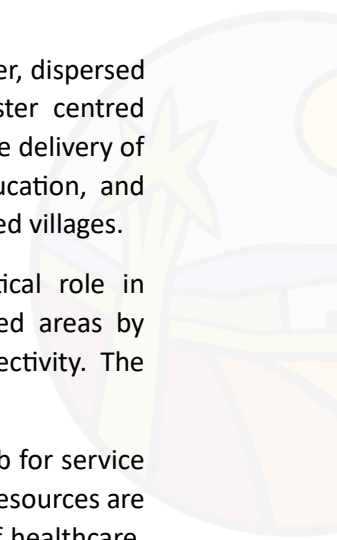
In addition, Smart Cities in the Northern Cape are envisioned as hubs for technological infrastructure, such as 5G networks, which will enable digital connectivity, attract investment, and improve the quality of life for residents. The ultimate goal is to create a sustainable environment where technology enhances service delivery, empowers communities, and fosters resilience in the face of environmental and social challenges, ensuring long-term sustainability for both urban centres and rural communities in the province.

### 1.3.2 SETTLEMENT CLUSTERING

Settlement Clustering refers to the strategic grouping of smaller, dispersed rural villages into a larger, functional rural settlement cluster centred around a rural node. This node serves as the focal point for the delivery of essential socio-economic services, including healthcare, education, and economic infrastructure, which are otherwise limited in isolated villages.

In the Northern Cape, Settlement Clustering plays a critical role in addressing the challenges of remote and sparsely populated areas by enhancing access to services and improving regional connectivity. The clustering approach involves:

- A rural node is identified within the cluster as the hub for service delivery. This node becomes the central point where resources are concentrated, allowing for more efficient provision of healthcare, schools, roads, and other critical infrastructure. This approach helps minimize the cost of providing services to scattered settlements.





- To ensure the success of settlement clusters, road networks and transport infrastructure must be improved, with priority given to upgrading access routes to the central rural node. This strengthens the connection between the villages in the cluster and improves access to regional and provincial services.
- The rural node becomes the key point for socio-economic investment, offering opportunities for local economic development, market access, and improved quality of life for residents in the clustered settlements. The clustering approach allows for a more coordinated and sustainable development strategy, where services and facilities can be better utilized by a larger population.

In the Northern Cape, where many rural communities face isolation and limited access to services, Settlement Clustering is essential to ensure that resources are concentrated in strategic locations. This enhances the viability of rural living, fosters stronger connections to regional economic hubs, and supports the long-term sustainability of rural areas across the province.

## 1.4 RURAL DEVELOPMENT

### 1.4.1 RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Rural Development in the Northern Cape refers to a strategic and planned process aimed at improving the quality of life and economic well-being of people in remote towns, villages, and communal settlements. Given the distinct and diverse geographic, cultural, and historic regions of the province—including Bushmanland, Namaqualand, and the Kalahari—rural development efforts must account for these unique characteristics to ensure sustainable and inclusive growth.

**In the Northern Cape, Rural Development focuses on:**

- Interventions must address the complexities of land ownership, particularly in areas under Traditional Leadership, Communal

Settlements, and Traditional and Khoi-San Leadership (TRANCRAA), where communal land rights are prevalent. Ensuring equitable land reform and secure land tenure is vital for fostering sustainable agricultural, residential, and business development.

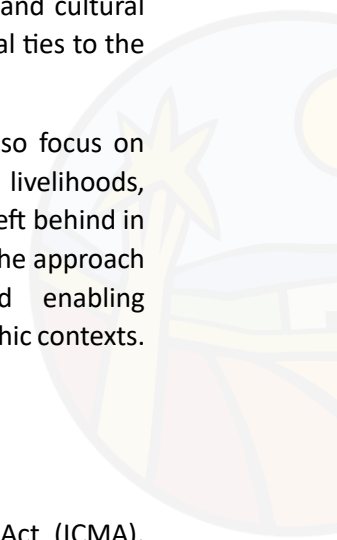
- Remote and isolated towns and villages require targeted investments in the provision, maintenance, and upgrading of basic infrastructure such as roads, water supply, electricity, sanitation, and ICT networks. Additionally, access to essential social services, including healthcare, education, and housing, must be prioritized to reduce inequality and improve living conditions in rural areas.
- Recognizing the economic diversity across the province's regions, Rural Development in the Northern Cape promotes tailored economic activities that reflect the strengths of each area. For instance, promoting ecotourism in the culturally rich Namaqualand and Bushmanland, supporting agri-business in communal farming areas, and fostering renewable energy development in the Kalahari. The process also seeks to support heritage and cultural preservation, recognizing the province's deep historical ties to the San and Nama peoples.

Rural Development initiatives in the Northern Cape must also focus on bridging the urban-rural divide by creating sustainable livelihoods, improving connectivity, and ensuring that rural areas are not left behind in the broader provincial and national development strategies. The approach emphasizes building resilience, reducing poverty, and enabling communities to thrive within their unique cultural and geographic contexts.

## 1.5 OCEANS ECONOMY

### 1.5.1 COASTAL MANAGEMENT

Under section 25 of the Integrated Coastal Management Act (ICMA), Coastal Management Lines (CMLs) are regulatory boundaries established to manage development within coastal zones. Originally known as 'Coastal Setbacks,' CMLs have been defined technically to mitigate risks and address



environmental sensitivities in the coastal zone. The primary objectives of CMLs are:

- **To protect coastal public property**, safeguard private property, and ensure public safety.
- **To preserve the coastal protection zone** and the aesthetic and ecological value of the coastal environment.

#### **Climate Change Adaptation:**

CMLs play a crucial role in proactive planning for climate change impacts, as they help quantify coastal risks and establish guidelines for future development. This approach aims to accommodate and respond to sea-level rise, coastal erosion, and other climate-related events.

#### **Estuarine Functional Zone (EFZ)**

The Estuarine Functional Zone (EFZ) represents the most dynamic portion of an estuary, typically extending to a 5-meter contour line around an estuarine area. The EFZ is a critical buffer zone, providing resilience to estuarine systems by accommodating expansion within the floodplain during flood events, storm surges, and sea-level rise. This zone:

- Allows for the natural movement and sedimentary processes of the estuary.
- Protects areas where fringe vegetation contributes nutrients and detritus to the estuarine ecosystem.
- Provides refuge areas for species affected by flooding or high tides.

#### **Development Restrictions:**

Development within the EFZ is generally discouraged. Preserving this zone aligns to maintain natural estuarine functions and buffer communities and ecosystems from climate impacts.

#### **High-Water Mark (HWM) and Coastal Public Property (CPP)**

The High-Water Mark (HWM) is a demarcation used to define the boundary between coastal public property (CPP) and private or other land. According to the ICMA, CPP encompasses land seaward of the HWM, making it public land with stringent restrictions on development and usage.

#### **Management Implications:**

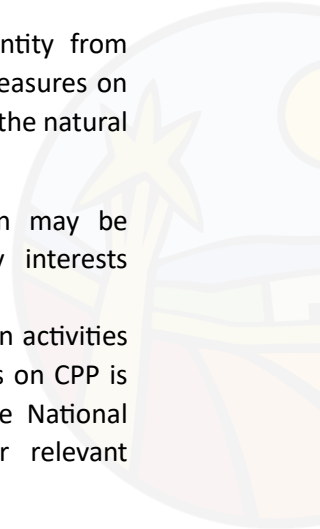
- The HWM is essential for land management along the coastal municipalities, delineating areas where public access and environmental protection take precedence over private development.
- Any land below the HWM is classified as CPP, with development limitations in place to protect this critical area.
- Reference to the Advisory Note from the Office of Chief Surveyor-General is recommended for precise mapping and alignment with regulatory guidelines.

#### **Erosion and Accretion Management**

ICMA, specifically section 15, prohibits any individual or entity from constructing or demanding erosion or accretion prevention measures on CPP or adjacent coastal land. This restriction serves to maintain the natural processes of coastal zones and mitigate environmental damage.

- **Exceptions:** Erosion protection or bank stabilization may be considered in exceptional cases where community interests (including flora and fauna) justify such measures.
- **Prohibited Activities:** Erecting structures or engaging in activities aimed at altering natural erosion or accretion patterns on CPP is restricted, except as explicitly provided by ICMA, the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA), or other relevant legislation.

#### **Community and Ecological Interest:**



Any consideration for erosion control must prioritize the interests of the entire community, including preserving the natural habitats of coastal fauna and flora.

Establishing clear guidelines on terms such as Coastal Management Lines, Estuarine Functional Zones, High-Water Marks, and rules on erosion and accretion, supports the sustainable management of the Northern Cape's coastal areas. This ensures that development, conservation, and climate adaptation efforts in these sensitive areas align with legislative requirements and best practices for environmental protection.

## 2 CONCLUSION

This Toolkit is a vital resource designed to support sustainable and balanced land use management across this diverse and resource-rich province. By standardising key concepts and terminologies—such as Spatial Transformation, Catalytic Projects, Matters of Provincial Interest, and Green Hydrogen Development—the Toolkit provides a unified language for provincial, district, and municipal planning efforts. This consistency ensures that all stakeholders, from government agencies to private sector partners and community groups, can collaborate effectively in shaping a future that aligns with both provincial priorities and national goals.



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