

Source to Sea River Corridor

The Source to Sea initiative, whereby water quality and quantity is managed so as to support maximum biodiversity while also ensuring optimal utilisation of river corridors for the sustained benefit of all users, is envisaged for a number of river catchments within the Metropole. The project seeks to restore river corridors so that they are ecologically, socially and economically sustainable, enhancing the quality of life for local communities while maximising recreational opportunities and protecting environmental or ecosystem services.

In this way, the project aims to maximise urban natural recreational space, restore degraded natural and open space corridors for biodiversity conservation, improve water quality, link river corridors and catchments via recreational multi-use trails, enhance eco-heritage, provide educational and tourism opportunities and develop both short and long term local employment opportunities.

The Source to Sea project provides an opportunity for the City to grow many of its core functions, positioning the City as an innovative, proactive and leading municipality in the field of integrated urban water management. This initiative ensures capacity for an integrated approach to catchment management, managing river corridors so that the City's urban natural asset base is maintained for both people and nature.

In addition, healthy rivers with good water quality and thriving ecosystems are also valued by communities for cultural and recreational purposes, benefiting local and regional communities through increased sustainability, resource efficiency, positive open spaces and climate change resilience. The Source to Sea project is vital in capacitating communities through partnerships with the City and external stakeholders.

The Source to Sea initiative has several origins and is supported by many organisations. This initiative aims to connect these in a sustainable way. WESSA has contributed substantially to the concept of a south peninsula Source to Sea river corridor, while ICLEI have secured funding for the City's involvement in the UNA Africa four cities programme, of which the Source to Sea project is the primary component, and it is possible that funds would be available in this calendar year for the implementation of the building blocks to get the project started. Civil society impetus and ongoing work of historical catchment management forums have ensured that a huge amount of rehabilitation and river management work has taken place within catchments.

Many river catchments around the Peninsula Mountain Range link mountain fynbos with the low-lying Cape Flats sand fynbos and dune strandveld, and therefore connects the Table Mountain National Park with remnants of critically-endangered vegetation types that still occur in sections of the municipal areas. The Source to Sea initiative has become a high priority as a SANParks - City partnership project. Both authorities recognise the need for co-accountability between the two institutions and the need for a balanced and holistic approach to urban protected areas and riverine systems. This initiative, which is described in ecological, social and economic dimensions, demonstrates potential benefits of the City's co-operation with SANParks on a project-level. Defined in both geographic and metaphorical terms, the Source to Sea corridor connects protected areas under the management of national and local government and integrates communities who have a stake in both.