MISSION STATEMENT

The Environmental Management Department aims to:
- Conserve biodiversity and the ecosystem goods and services it provides for the benefit of present and future generations; and
- Plan for mitigation of and adaptation to the impacts of climate change.

CONTACT DETAILS

Environmental Management Department
Second Floor Room 226
166 A E. Masinga Road (formerly Old Fort Rd)
P.O. Box 680
Durban
4000

Tel: +27 31 311 7875
Fax: +27 31 311 7134
Website: http://www.environment.durban.gov.za
WHAT IS BIODIVERSITY?

Biodiversity is the variety of life on Earth. It is the living part of our natural resource base that supplies us with a range of ecosystem goods (like food, medicines and building materials) and services (like water supply, climate regulation and spiritual fulfillment). Maintaining and, where necessary, restoring biodiversity is essential to ensure a good quality of life for our citizens.

South Africa is the third most biodiverse country in the world after Brazil and Indonesia. Conservation International has identified three biodiversity hotspots within South Africa, making it the only country in the world with more than one biodiversity hotspot. Durban is located in the middle of one of these biodiversity hotspots. Durban’s biodiversity includes terrestrial ecosystems (like forests, grasslands and thickets) and aquatic ecosystems (like rivers, coastline and estuaries).

There are over 2000 plant species, 82 terrestrial mammal species, and 380 different species of birds that occur in the municipal area. In addition, there are 69 species of indigenous reptiles, 37 species of frogs and 25 endemic species of invertebrates (butterflies, moths, millipedes, snails and slugs).

The value of the "free" ecosystem goods and services supplied by the biodiversity included in the Durban Metropolitan Open Space System (DMOSS) was conservatively estimated in 2003 to be R 3.1 billion per annum, excluding its contribution to the tourism sector.
WHAT IS CLIMATE CHANGE?

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) defines climate change as a change in climate which is attributed directly or indirectly to human activity that alters the composition of the global atmosphere and which is in addition to natural climate variability over comparable time periods.

Climate Change Adaptation refers to adjustments in natural or human systems in response to actual or expected climatic changes or their effects. Adaptation can moderate the harm or exploit the beneficial opportunities associated with climate change.

Climate Change Mitigation is defined as the measures to reduce greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere, and thus ultimately the magnitude of climate change. These include energy conservation, using renewable energy such as wind or solar energy instead of coal, oil or gas, and planting trees that absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.
THE ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT IS MADE UP OF:

4 BRANCHES

• THE BIODIVERSITY PLANNING BRANCH
• THE BIODIVERSITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT BRANCH
• THE POLICY IMPLEMENTATION BRANCH
• THE CLIMATE PROTECTION BRANCH

In fulfilling its functions, the Environmental Management Department works with many other municipal Departments including Parks, Leisure and Cemeteries, Development Planning, Development Management, Coastal Stormwater and Catchment Management, Coastal and Catchment Policy and the Natural Science Museum. External decision makers and stakeholders are also key to achieving the Environmental Management Department’s mission.
Biodiversity Planning Branch

Purpose
To identify Durban’s important terrestrial, freshwater and marine environments, to protect and manage these environments as part of the Durban Metropolitan Open Space System (DMOSS).

Key Tasks
- To identify those areas that must be secured as part of the Durban Metropolitan Open Space System (DMOSS);
- To develop and implement tools aimed at securing conservation worthy land;
- To develop and implement strategies to deal with specific threats to Durban’s natural environment;
- To report on the State of Biodiversity in Durban;
- To form partnerships with a range of internal and external stakeholders to protect and manage municipal biodiversity and ecosystem goods and services.

Manager: Biodiversity Planning
Richard Bees
Tel: +27 31 311 7877
PURPOSE
To assess the potential impacts of development on the Durban Metropolitan Open Space System (DMOSS) and to initiate biodiversity related enforcement action when needed. To consider the impacts of climate change on development.

KEY TASKS
- To assess and comment on all building plans and planning applications where the proposed development lies within or adjacent to DMOSS or watercourses;
- To assess and comment on all Environmental Impact Assessments and all mining applications that may impact on DMOSS, biodiversity or ecosystem goods and services;
- To assess the impact of climate change on proposed developments;
- To monitor development to ensure that conditions of approval are complied with;
- To ensure enforcement where illegal activities impact negatively on DMOSS, biodiversity, or ecosystem goods and services; and
- To ensure that all municipal development projects comply with National, Provincial and Local environmental legislation and policy.

Manager: Biodiversity Impact Assessment
Penny Croucamp
Tel. +27 31 311 7517
PURPOSE
To ensure that other municipal departments, decision makers and the public consider biodiversity, ecosystem goods and services and climate protection issues in the development of policies, strategies, plans, programmes and projects.

KEY TASKS
- To promote the importance of biodiversity, ecosystem goods and services and climate protection in order to gain administrative, political and public support for the conservation of the natural resource base and the implementation of climate change protection initiatives; and
- To establish appropriate institutional and public programmes, networks and fora related to biodiversity, policy development and advocacy.
Purpose
To oversee the development and implementation of the Municipal Climate Protection Programme. This includes the development and implementation of appropriate mitigation and adaptation strategies and projects.

Key Tasks
- To assess the local impacts of climate change;
- To develop tools that facilitate the incorporation of climate change issues into municipal planning and decision-making;
- To develop and implement appropriate mitigation and adaptation plans and projects; and
- To develop an understanding of climate change and its impacts amongst key city stakeholders.

Manager: Climate Protection
Not yet appointed
Deputy Head: Dr. Debra Roberts
Tel: +27 91 911 7527