

Chapter 3: Environmental issues

This report uses an issues-based framework to report on the current state of the environment in the Eastern Cape Province. An environmental issue is described as a topic of strategic concern that will influence the environmental sustainability of the Province (Muller *et al.*, 2003a). It is important to realise that not all issues are considered equally important at any given moment, and that the issues being considered may change in both character and importance over time (DEAT, 2001).

The environmental issues presented in this report have been grouped into different categories called 'themes'. Each theme forms a separate chapter in the report in order to simplify the reporting process and reduce the number of chapters in the report. There are eight themes presented in this SOE report:

- Atmosphere & climate;
- Biodiversity;
- Environmental management;
- Freshwater;
- Human settlements;
- Land;
- Marine and coast; and
- Poverty.

A summary of the environmental issues considered in this report are presented in Figure 3.1. These issues were derived from consultation with a wide range of stakeholders in the Eastern Cape Province (Muller *et al.*, 2003a).

This list of issues was then used to derive indicators for monitoring and reporting on the various thematic chapters within this report (Muller *et al.*, 2003b). Not all issues have indicators associated with them, as some indicators address multiple issues, and some issues do not warrant being address by provincial-level indicators.

AIR QUALITY	BIODIVERSITY	HUMAN SETTLEMENTS	ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Climate change Cumulative impacts Growth in air traffic demand Health impacts Inadequate waste disposal Incineration of medical waste Increasing development Need for strategic planning Poor air quality Proximity of residential areas to sources Various sources of pollution Waste minimisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Afforestation Bio-prospecting Desertification and climate change Habitat change, loss & fragmentation Increasing industrialisation Introduction of exotic flora and fauna Loss of biodiversity Spread of alien & invasive species Strategic conservation of biodiversity Endangered species trade, Resource value Unsustainable resource use Veld fires 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sewage effluent disposal into rivers Inadequate waste collection Inadequate waste site management Inadequate road maintenance Inadequate waste minimisation Increasing industrialisation & pollution Informal housing developments Predominantly rural population Promotion of clean technologies Provision of infrastructure Provision of services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alignment of planning processes Appropriate allocation of funding Crime and corruption Education, awareness & communication Enforcement of legislation Inadequate waste minimisation Increasing industrialisation and development Institutional capacity Integrated Environmental Management ISO certification of local authorities Joint initiatives
FRESHWATER	LAND	MARINE AND COAST	POVERTY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Declining resource quality Eutrophication Habitat change Implementation of CMA's Loss of biodiversity Non-compliance of sewage works Over-abstraction of surface & groundwater Pollution into surface & groundwater Resource use and exploitation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agricultural encroachment Land tenure, land access & land jurisdiction Land use change Decreasing natural vegetation Land degradation, Desertification Illegal use of land Land reform process Overgrazing and overstocking Soil erosion and soil quality The use of herbicides and pesticides Uncoordinated land use planning Unsustainable development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change in land use Development pressures Ineffective community involvement Lack of strategic planning Loss of biodiversity Marine pollution Resource use and exploitation Ribbon development along the coast Threats to the marine & coastal environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reliance on natural resources State of former homeland areas Inadequate expenditure of annual budgets Increasing urbanisation Widespread poverty, High unemployment Lack of formal housing Low literacy rate, low formal education Predominantly rural, young population Migration of population to other provinces Incidence of disease Skewed economic distribution Strong, diverse economy

Figure 3.1: Environmental themes and issues addressed in the 2004 Eastern Cape State of the Environment Report