

PRESS REPORT FOR GANSBAAI COURANT

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Estuaries – in need of our attention

Cabinet approved the National Estuarine Management Protocol for public comment on May 4, 2012. The comment deadline of June 4, 2012 has passed without the topic drawing much attention, even though estuaries are important entities in terms of their economic and ecological value. An estuary is a complex environment where a river flows into the sea. These waters act as a nursery for marine fish and crustaceans; they provide food for a wide variety of birds and mammals; and they offer the perfect setting for recreational activities for locals and tourist alike. There are more than 250 estuaries along the South African coast line. Three large estuaries are located within the Overstrand Municipality: the Bot River, Klein River and Uilenkraals estuaries. At present, it is difficult to manage these water bodies properly, since their jurisdiction falls under a number of different government agencies, which adds to their complexity. The protocol mentioned as well as other local initiatives are being developed in an effort to better manage these valuable resources. However, these efforts need the active involvement of people on the ground – and that's us!

Written by Susanne Fuchs on behalf of the Pearly Beach Conservancy.

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