



To whom it may concern

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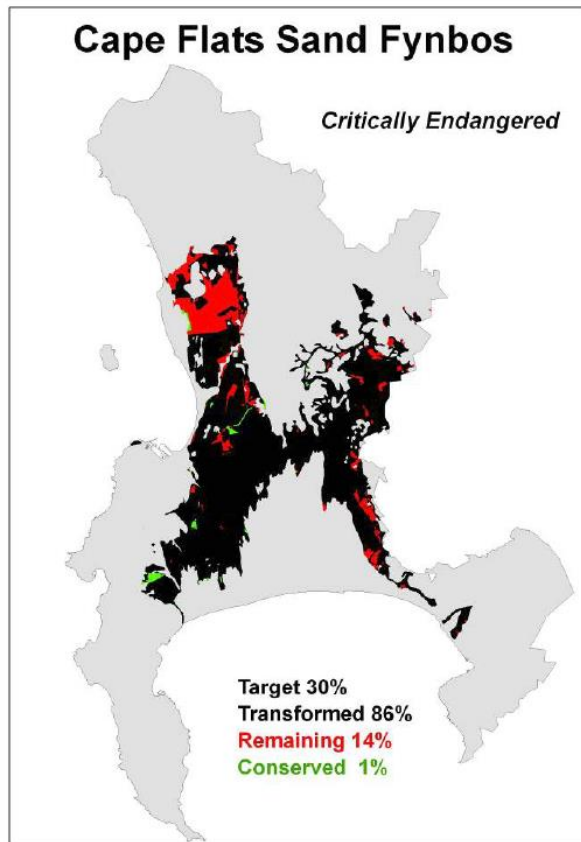
Tokai

Dear Sir / Madam

I write in support of maximizing the conservation of indigenous vegetation and flora in the Tokai area. I have not been involved in the detailed discussions over the past years, or the politics, and so comment entirely from a botanical point of view.

We are obliged, and should, conserve the Cape flora, because (a) it is one of our heritages, (b) it attracts large numbers of tourists, is part of the “package” of wine, scenery and sunshine, (c) as a country we signed the Rio Convention, which places the responsibility to conserve our diversity with us.

The vegetation in the disputed area is classified as “Cape Flats Sand Fynbos”. This used to be widespread around the western base of Table Mountain, with a few outliers further out. It has been almost completely eradicated by urbanization. It has a rich flora, probably close to 1000 species, of which 108 species are Red Listed, and 6 species are extinct in the wild. This is an astonishingly high loss rate, possibly a sad global record. It is evident from the attached map that the situation is worse than appears, as many of the remaining patches are tiny, often enclosed in urban areas, and so difficult to protect.



The Tokai site is obviously central to any attempt to conserve this vegetation and its flora. It backs onto a huge conservation area, there is green belt area in the vicinity, and an intensive management from both public and officialdom is possible. Due to its public accessibility and current popularity as an open-air recreational area, it is also perfectly situated to showcase this vegetation and flora, and be a centre for continuing education and information.

Such a development would also facilitate public use, by (a) removing plantations which could be used to hide illegal activities, (b) removing plantations which are the source of very dangerous, hot fires (eg 2000 and 2015), as compared to the cooler and much less dangerous fynbos fires, (c) provide wonderful sunny walking areas, under the blue skies and famous African sun, and (d) be integrated into the shady picnic area and cool walking routes of the Arboretum.

Replanting this area with alien trees is, from a botanical, conservation and ecological point of view, incomprehensible. Consequently we, the undersigned, strongly support the continuation of the fynbos development.

Yrs



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'H. Peter Linder'.

H. Peter Linder (Professor of Botany, University of Zurich; Honorary Professor, University of Cape Town)