

10

Environmental affairs

■ Introduction

Economic growth and social wellbeing are closely tied to our ability to protect the natural environment. Mining, electricity generation and agriculture are among the economic activities that have a direct impact on the environment, and need to be carried out in a sustainable and responsible manner. When the air, water, soil, flora and fauna are compromised, the effects are primarily felt by poor communities that depend heavily on the natural environment for their livelihoods.

Protecting the environment is also about economic growth and social wellbeing

The effects of climate change on the environment and people are being felt worldwide, and South Africa is not exempt. In recognition of the potential effects of climate change on the environment, towards the end of 2011 South Africa hosted the 17th Conference of the Parties (COP 17) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Durban. At the conference, member countries reached an agreement to work towards a new climate deal to reduce their countries' carbon emissions.

Environmental affairs is concurrently managed and administered by the national Department of Environmental Affairs and the nine provincial departments. All other government departments are also bound constitutionally to ensure that the environment is protected. It is government policy to protect the natural environment and to ensure that economic and social activities are carried out sustainably and responsibly. Provinces implement their own policies as well as those formulated by the national department.

The trends discussed in this chapter illustrate that intergovernmental relations in environmental affairs need to be made more efficient and effective. Due to the cross cutting nature of environmental management issues, it is becoming increasingly important that intergovernmental relations are improved across the different spheres of government.

Intergovernmental relations need to be enhanced in the environmental sector

Legal and policy framework

Everyone has a right to an environment that is protected for posterity

Section 24 of the Bill of Rights in the Constitution states that everyone has a right to an environment that is not harmful to their health or wellbeing, and that is protected presently and for posterity.

Legislative and other measures are in place to prevent pollution and ecological degradation, promote conservation and secure ecologically sustainable development and use of natural resources.

The National Environmental Management Act (1998) provides an overarching framework, supported by other legislation and associated regulations that address biodiversity, protected areas, waste management, coastal management, air quality management, and compliance and enforcement.

The Department of Environmental Affairs is responsible for the co-ordination of Outcome 10: Environmental assets and natural resources that are valued and protected. The sector indirectly contributes to:

- Outcome 4: Decent employment through inclusive economic growth
- Outcome 7: Vibrant, equitable and sustainable rural communities with food security for all
- Outcome 8: Sustainable human settlements and improved quality of household life
- Outcome 9: A responsive, accountable, effective and efficient local government system.

Provincial environmental departments' outputs are aligned with Outcome 10

Provinces have incorporated these objectives into their annual performance plans. The core outputs of provincial environmental departments are directly aligned with national Outcome 10. Departments contribute to Outcome 4 through EPWP initiatives, such as clearing alien invasive species, refurbishing nature reserves, rehabilitating wetlands and implementing green economy projects

To realise Outcome 10, provincial programmes and interventions aim to:

- Reduce greenhouse gases, mitigate the effects of climate change and improve air quality
- Protect marine and terrestrial biodiversity
- Manage pollution and waste management
- Sustainably manage the environment
- Enhance the quality and quantity of water resources
- Monitor and enforce compliance with environmental legislation.

Skills shortage is one of the greatest threats to the environmental sector

One of the biggest threats to provinces' ability to achieve their aims is South Africa's skills shortage. The environmental sector skills plan highlights the urgent need for human capital development to strengthen service delivery at all levels. The number of scientists and technicians in the public sector is relatively small, and many of them move to the private sector. More needs to be done to attract and retain scientists and environmental practitioners in the public service.

Budget and expenditure trends

Before 2008, provincial financial reporting was characterised by budget and programme structures that varied across provinces. A uniform structure, approved in 2008 and revised in 2010, has vastly improved the quality of financial information.

Table 10.1 shows provincial expenditure on environmental affairs over the seven-year period covered by this review.

Table 10.1 Provincial expenditure on environmental affairs by province, 2010/11 – 2016/17

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
R million	Outcome			Outcome	Medium-term estimates		
Eastern Cape	267	264	338	332	355	348	364
Free State	157	197	203	193	243	244	254
Gauteng	158	192	178	198	219	232	238
Kw aZulu-Natal	726	800	921	928	1 052	1 038	1 094
Limpopo	249	223	279	266	292	312	333
Mpumalanga	105	108	80	106	91	97	102
Northern Cape	90	99	103	118	126	130	137
North West	70	71	82	120	205	169	107
Western Cape	300	348	377	412	454	475	500
Total	2 122	2 302	2 561	2 673	3 037	3 044	3 131
Percentage growth (average annual)	2010/11– 2013/14		2013/14– 2014/15		2013/14– 2016/17		
Eastern Cape	7.4%		7.0%		3.1%		
Free State	7.2%		25.6%		9.6%		
Gauteng	7.8%		10.8%		6.4%		
Kw aZulu-Natal	8.5%		13.4%		5.6%		
Limpopo	2.3%		9.8%		7.8%		
Mpumalanga	0.3%		-14.2%		-1.0%		
Northern Cape	9.2%		7.4%		5.2%		
North West	19.7%		69.8%		-3.9%		
Western Cape	11.2%		10.2%		6.7%		
Total	8.0%		13.6%		5.4%		

Source: National Treasury provincial database

From 2010/11 to 2013/14, total provincial expenditure on environmental affairs increased steadily at an annual average rate of 8 per cent. Growth during this period was driven by Northern Cape, North West and Western Cape, with Mpumalanga recording the lowest growth rate of only 0.3 per cent. This is mainly because its budget for operating leases was moved into the Administration programme. The increase in the Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal were due to additional allocations that were earmarked for infrastructure upgrading, including improving the road networks in nature reserves. Expenditure is projected to increase from R2.7 billion in 2013/14 to R3.1 billion in 2016/17, at an annual average rate of 5.4 per cent.

There is substantial growth in the Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal budgets to upgrade infrastructure in reserves

Table 10.2 Provincial expenditure on environmental affairs by economic classification, 2010/11 – 2016/17

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
R million	Outcome			Outcome	Medium-term estimates		
Current payments	1 280	1 363	1 486	1 560	1 747	1 754	1 840
<i>Compensation of employees</i>	834	884	977	1 038	1 189	1 213	1 274
<i>Goods and services</i>	446	478	508	522	557	540	566
Transfers and subsidies	768	846	970	1 038	1 127	1 116	1 175
Payments for capital assets	74	93	105	74	163	174	116
Payments for financial assets	0	1	1	1	1	1	–
Total	2 122	2 302	2 561	2 673	3 037	3 044	3 131
Percentage of total expenditure							
Current payments	60.3%	59.2%	58.0%	58.4%	57.5%	57.6%	58.8%
<i>Compensation of employees</i>	39.3%	38.4%	38.2%	38.8%	39.1%	39.8%	40.7%
<i>Goods and services</i>	21.0%	20.8%	19.8%	19.5%	18.3%	17.7%	18.1%
Transfers and subsidies	36.2%	36.7%	37.9%	38.8%	37.1%	36.7%	37.5%
Payments for capital assets	3.5%	4.0%	4.1%	2.8%	5.4%	5.7%	3.7%
Payments for financial assets	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Percentage growth (average annual)							
	2010/11– 2013/14		2013/14– 2014/15		2013/14– 2016/17		
Current payments	6.8%		12.0%		5.7%		
<i>Compensation of employees</i>	7.6%		14.6%		7.1%		
<i>Goods and services</i>	5.4%		6.8%		2.8%		
Transfers and subsidies	10.6%		8.5%		4.2%		
Payments for capital assets	0.1%		119.8%		16.0%		
Payments for financial assets	13.6%		-6.5%		-100.0%		
Total	8.0%		13.6%		5.4%		

Source: National Treasury provincial database

As Table 10.2 above shows, transfers and subsidies increase as a percentage of total expenditure over the seven year period. These transfers are primarily made up of funds allocated to conservation agencies in KwaZulu-Natal and Western Cape; these organisations carry out a significant portion of conservation-related activities. The transfers grow over the 2014 MTEF, albeit at a slightly lower rate. This is mainly due to the carry-over of road maintenance funding from 2012/13 for Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife.

Although payments for capital assets does not increase in percentage terms between 2010/11 and 2013/14, it does recover quite healthily going forward, mainly because more funds are made available to address infrastructure needs in the various provincial nature reserves.

Trends in the five sector spending programmes are set out below.

Environmental policy, planning and coordination

The Environmental Policy, Planning and Coordination programme ensures that environmental objectives are integrated into planning, including provincial growth and development strategies, local economic development and integrated development plans. The programme includes research, departmental strategy and information management.

Table 10.3 Provincial expenditure on policy coordination and environmental planning by province, 2010/11 – 2016/17

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
R million	Outcome			Outcome	Medium-term estimates		
Eastern Cape	57	31	16	23	23	39	41
Free State	4	3	4	12	4	6	6
Gauteng	10	11	10	17	16	17	17
Kw aZulu-Natal	9	3	3	4	6	6	7
Limpopo	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Mpumalanga	3	1	1	2	3	4	4
Northern Cape	7	8	8	8	10	10	11
North West	7	6	8	8	10	10	11
Western Cape	26	30	35	37	48	45	49
Total	123	94	85	110	118	137	145
Percentage growth (average annual)	2010/11–2013/14		2013/14–2014/15		2013/14–2016/17		
Eastern Cape	-26.1%		-2.0%		21.2%		
Free State	39.5%		-62.8%		-19.4%		
Gauteng	19.3%		-8.6%		-0.7%		
Kw aZulu-Natal	-26.8%		67.5%		22.9%		
Limpopo	0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		
Mpumalanga	-15.8%		87.8%		41.0%		
Northern Cape	3.3%		19.6%		9.5%		
North West	5.6%		17.8%		9.2%		
Western Cape	12.3%		29.8%		10.1%		
Total	-3.8%		7.8%		9.7%		

Source: National Treasury provincial database

Spending on the programme decreased at an average annual rate of 3.8 per cent between 2010/11 and 2013/14, but is projected to grow steadily at an annual average rate of 9.7 per cent from 2013/14 to 2016/17. Spending in Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and Mpumalanga decreased sharply from 2010/11 to 2013/14. In KwaZulu-Natal, where the largest decrease is noted, the allocation in rand terms is not significant in the context of the programme budgets.

Between 2010/11 and 2016/17, with some fairly significant differences provinces spend an average of approximately 4.5 per cent of their total budgets on this programme. Over this time period, Limpopo allocates no funding to the programme, Western Cape allocates around 9 per cent and the other provinces between 2 and 5 per cent.

Uneven spending in policy, planning and coordination may indicate some inefficiency in allocations

Compliance and enforcement

The purpose of the Compliance and Enforcement programme is to establish and run environmental compliance systems, enforce legislation and authorisations, build monitoring and enforcement capacity, and act on reported infringements.

Table 10.4 Provincial expenditure on compliance and enforcement by province, 2010/11 – 2016/17

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
R million	Outcome			Outcome	Medium-term estimates		
Eastern Cape	8	27	37	40	21	18	19
Free State	7	9	9	10	8	9	10
Gauteng	22	26	28	30	35	38	40
Kw aZulu-Natal	48	30	29	32	34	36	38
Limpopo	74	45	50	54	58	63	66
Mpumalanga	–	3	2	2	3	2	2
Northern Cape	4	5	9	10	11	13	14
North West	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Western Cape	10	16	15	17	23	25	27
Total	174	160	178	195	194	206	216
Percentage growth (average annual)	2010/11– 2013/14		2013/14– 2014/15		2013/14– 2016/17		
Eastern Cape	67.5%		-46.7%		-22.3%		
Free State	13.8%		-21.5%		-2.0%		
Gauteng	11.6%		17.8%		10.4%		
Kw aZulu-Natal	-12.5%		6.0%		5.4%		
Limpopo	-10.3%		9.0%		7.3%		
Mpumalanga	0.0%		38.6%		9.2%		
Northern Cape	35.8%		9.4%		10.6%		
North West	0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		
Western Cape	17.8%		35.3%		16.6%		
Total	3.9%		-0.6%		3.4%		

Source: National Treasury provincial database

Compliance and enforcement must be adequately resourced to keep illegal activities in check

Overall spending on this programme increased at an average annual rate of 3.9 per cent between 2010/11 and 2013/14; between 2013/14 and 2016/17, the average annual increase is expected to be a modest 3.4 per cent. North West indicates no growth during this period as it has no allocated budget. This is of concern, because it is under this programme that illegal actions are monitored, investigated and prevented. If resources are not available to support these functions, illegal activities may go unchecked.

Provinces spend around 7.5 per cent of their total budgets on Compliance and Enforcement. Most provinces have allocated between 6 per cent and 9 per cent of their total budget to it, but Mpumalanga and North West have made very small or no allocations. However, as Table 10.5 indicates, they have delivered services under this function. Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo spend more on Compliance and Enforcement than do other provinces. By not allocating adequate budgets to this programme, provinces underestimate the importance of this function and its implications for other functions, such as Environmental Quality Management and Biodiversity Management.

Table 10.5 Number of compliance inspections conducted, 2013/14

Province	2013/14	
	Target	Actual
Eastern Cape	40	99
Free State	60	573
Gauteng	200	221
Kw aZulu-Natal	700	724
Limpopo	5	250
Mpumalanga	50	88
Northern Cape	390	15
North West	1 400	1 111
Western Cape	40	192
Total	2 885	3 273

Source: National Treasury provincial database

A good measure of overall performance in this programme is the number of compliance inspections conducted.

Only Northern Cape and North West under-achieved on their target for these inspections completed in 2013/14. While the other provinces all exceeded their targets, over-achievement was striking in Limpopo, which had a target of 5 compliance inspections and conducted 250. In 2012/13, the province reported no target or delivery against this indicator. North West, which has no budget allocated to this programme, actually conducted 1 111 compliance inspections, the highest amongst all the provinces. Linking financial and non-financial information is challenging, with provinces such as Limpopo and North West showing a mismatch. Although financial reporting has improved, non-financial reporting needs attention.

Seven provinces achieved their target to employ inspectors, but some achievements have been excessive

Environmental quality management

The Environmental Quality Management programme establishes legislation, policies, norms, standards and guidelines for the management of environmental impacts, air quality, and waste and pollution for provincial and local government.

Table 10.6 Provincial expenditure on environmental quality management by province, 2010/11 – 2016/17

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
R million	Outcome			Outcome	Medium-term estimates		
Eastern Cape	5	9	12	13	16	19	20
Free State	5	9	9	7	17	16	17
Gauteng	27	29	27	34	36	38	38
Kw aZulu-Natal	14	28	48	28	46	49	51
Limpopo	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Mpumalanga	19	16	18	16	22	23	24
Northern Cape	9	11	11	10	12	13	14
North West	16	16	19	37	24	25	26
Western Cape	62	63	69	80	86	95	99
Total	159	182	211	224	259	278	291
Percentage growth (average annual)	2010/11– 2013/14		2013/14– 2014/15		2013/14– 2016/17		
Eastern Cape	32.2%		29.0%		16.5%		
Free State	10.4%		131.6%		33.8%		
Gauteng	7.0%		8.6%		4.6%		
Kw aZulu-Natal	24.8%		65.4%		22.3%		
Limpopo	0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		
Mpumalanga	-5.9%		36.2%		14.6%		
Northern Cape	4.3%		24.0%		13.2%		
North West	32.0%		-35.9%		-10.9%		
Western Cape	8.8%		7.0%		7.3%		
Total	12.2%		15.5%		9.0%		

Source: National Treasury provincial database

Overall growth in spending increased healthily at an average annual rate of 12.2 per cent from 2010/11 to 2013/14. Growth from 2013/14 to 2016/17, while slightly lower, is projected to average 9.0 per cent. Free State and KwaZulu-Natal are the largest contributors to the spending growth trend between 2013/14 and 2016/17, while North West records a decrease.

On average, provinces contribute 9.4 per cent of budgets to quality management

Provinces assign an average of 9.4 per cent of their total environmental affairs allocations to environmental quality management. Limpopo is the only province that does not make an allocation to this programme. However, although it did not budget for the programme, it has delivered services that fall within it.

Table 10.7 Number of Environmental impact assessment applications finalised, 2013/14

Province	2013/14	
	Target	Actual
Eastern Cape	130	156
Free State	60	62
Gauteng	340	304
Kw aZulu-Natal	320	299
Limpopo	280	234
Mpumalanga	150	218
Northern Cape	60	31
North West	150	142
Western Cape	800	534
Total	2 290	1 980

Source: National Treasury provincial database

Allocated budgets do not necessarily match the performance of the programmes, highlighting the need to align planning and budgeting so that a clear link between expenditure and performance can be seen. The number of environmental impact assessments finalised within legislated timeframes is an important indicator of a department's capacity to manage environmental impacts. Only Eastern Cape, Free State and Mpumalanga met and exceeded their targets on this indicator. However, although the other provinces under-achieved, with the exception of Western Cape which only reached 67 per cent of its target, the deviations were not very significant.

Allocated budgets do not necessarily match programme performance, indicating a need for better alignment

Biodiversity management

The Biodiversity Management programme promotes the conservation of biodiversity, sustainable use of its components and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits derived from their utilisation including goods and services, and aims to mitigate threats to biodiversity. This programme includes coastal management and absorbs a large proportion of provincial budgets.

Table 10.8 Provincial expenditure on biodiversity management by province, 2010/11 – 2016/17

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
R million	Outcome			Outcome	Medium-term estimates		
Eastern Cape	152	147	195	201	234	218	228
Free State	88	121	117	99	132	127	131
Gauteng	43	61	63	61	74	79	84
Kw aZulu-Natal	558	623	702	726	824	801	844
Limpopo	94	111	121	119	132	138	147
Mpumalanga	–	3	1	2	2	3	3
Northern Cape	19	20	16	26	27	27	28
North West	21	20	22	26	29	30	32
Western Cape	165	198	214	228	240	248	261
Total	1 142	1 304	1 454	1 489	1 695	1 672	1 759
Percentage growth (average annual)	2010/11–2013/14		2013/14–2014/15		2013/14–2016/17		
Eastern Cape	9.7%		16.1%		4.3%		
Free State	3.9%		33.0%		9.9%		
Gauteng	12.3%		21.5%		11.0%		
Kw aZulu-Natal	9.1%		13.6%		5.2%		
Limpopo	2.5%		11.0%		7.3%		
Mpumalanga	0.0%		5.8%		20.0%		
Northern Cape	11.5%		5.9%		3.1%		
North West	7.0%		10.2%		6.8%		
Western Cape	11.4%		5.2%		4.6%		
Total	9.2%		13.8%		5.7%		

Source: National Treasury provincial database

Expenditure on this programme increased at a steady annual average rate of 9.2 per cent from 2010/11 to 2013/14. In percentage terms, Eastern Cape, Gauteng, Northern Cape and Western Cape in particular contributed to the increase. The large increase was due to additional allocations to the Association for Marine and Biological Research and the invasive alien species programme. Overall growth in biodiversity management budgets is

Strong growth in biodiversity management budgets slows to an average 5.7 per cent a year over the medium term

projected to increase at an average annual rate of 5.7 per cent between 2013/14 and 2016/17.

Biodiversity Management accounts for 53 per cent of environmental spending across provinces. Eastern Cape, Free State, KwaZulu-Natal and Western Cape allocate more than 50 per cent of their total budgets to this programme. In Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and Western Cape, a large proportion of the biodiversity budget is made up of transfers to conservation agencies to manage provincial nature reserves, and monitor and enforce regulations. The transfers are also used for research, education and visitor services. North West and Northern Cape allocate 25 per cent or less of their total budgets to this programme. Mpumalanga does not record material expenditure or allocations to this programme because its parks and tourism board has been reallocated to the Economic Development programme.

Table 10.9 Number of provincial protected areas with approved management plans, 2013/14

Province	2013/14	
	Target	Actual
Eastern Cape	4	5
Free State	13	11
Gauteng	6	6
KwaZulu-Natal	–	–
Limpopo	–	–
Mpumalanga	–	4
Northern Cape	10	5
North West	1	–
Western Cape	2	11
Total	36	42

Source: National Treasury provincial database

Table 10.10 Number of hectares under land conservation, 2013/14

Province	2013/14	
	Target	Actual
Eastern Cape	486	46 000
Free State	402 909	390 409
Gauteng	26 109	26 109
KwaZulu-Natal	–	–
Limpopo	–	–
Mpumalanga	–	433 030
Northern Cape	1 751 328	1 334 829
North West	236 194	236 194
Western Cape	4 000	9 339
Total	2 421 026	2 475 910

Source: National Treasury provincial database

The number of provincial protected areas with approved management plans is an important indicator of the extent of oversight. At the end of 2013/14, Eastern Cape, Gauteng, Mpumalanga and Western Cape met or exceeded their targets. KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo are the only provinces that did not plan for or deliver on this indicator, although they have quite significant allocations for this programme. Although Mpumalanga did not plan for this indicator, the province approved four

management plans. It is clear that most provinces are not planning adequately for this indicator, with only Gauteng achieving what it had planned for. Lack of concrete plans will ultimately limit provinces' ability to conserve and manage biodiversity.

Gauteng, North West and Western Cape met or exceeded their targets for the number of hectares under land conservation, while Free State and Northern Cape under-performed. Eastern Cape planned for 486 hectares and delivered 46 000, while Mpumalanga delivered 433 030 hectares against a target of zero. Planning and delivering conservation areas is key to preserving biodiversity. If they are to make an impact, provinces must manage performance in this area more rigorously

Environmental empowerment services

The Environmental Empowerment Services programme empowers communities to develop partnerships with government and other parties interested in promoting environmental and social programmes.

Table 10.11 Provincial expenditure on environmental empowerment services by province, 2010/11 – 2016/17

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
R million	Outcome			Outcome	Medium-term estimates		
Eastern Cape	0	4	7	9	11	8	8
Free State	11	12	15	8	14	13	14
Gauteng	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
KwaZulu-Natal	7	33	31	32	28	29	31
Limpopo	–	–	18	19	20	21	22
Mpumalanga	72	74	48	74	52	56	58
Northern Cape	6	7	9	10	11	10	11
North West	18	19	19	32	118	82	25
Western Cape	1	1	1	1	2	2	2
Total	115	150	148	185	256	222	171
Percentage growth (average annual)	2010/11–2013/14		2013/14–2014/15		2013/14–2016/17		
Eastern Cape	162.7%		20.4%		-2.1%		
Free State	-7.9%		67.6%		18.6%		
Gauteng	0.0%		0.0%		0.0%		
KwaZulu-Natal	64.4%		-13.9%		-1.6%		
Limpopo	0.0%		7.3%		6.2%		
Mpumalanga	0.7%		-29.4%		-7.7%		
Northern Cape	19.8%		16.0%		3.8%		
North West	21.6%		264.9%		-8.8%		
Western Cape	16.4%		60.4%		22.8%		
Total	17.2%		38.2%		-2.7%		

Source: National Treasury provincial database

Between 2010/11 and 2013/14, average annual spending on this programme increased by 17.2 per cent, mainly because the budgets assigned by Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, Northern Cape and North West grew by over 19 per cent. The increased expenditure in KwaZulu-Natal was related to a shift of funds to the Compliance and Enforcement programme and spending pressures relating to the COP 17 conference.

Trends in empowerment services illustrate a disjuncture between planning and budgeting in several provinces

Total spending growth from 2013/14 to 2016/17 decreases at a rate of 2.7 per cent, with Mpumalanga and North West driving the decrease.

Eastern Cape and Western Cape envisage spending a negligible proportion of their total budgets on Environmental Empowerment Services. These provinces, however, indicate that they intend to deliver services under this programme. This indicates a disjuncture between planning and budgeting. Mpumalanga and North West spend the largest percentage of their total budgets on this programme. Gauteng has no allocations to it as these services are undertaken under Corporate Services.

Table 10.12 Number of environmental awareness activities conducted, 2013/14

Province	2013/14	
	Target	Actual
Eastern Cape	25	41
Free State	20	26
Gauteng	2	4
Kw aZulu-Natal	950	967
Limpopo	–	2 232
Mpumalanga	27	8 448
Northern Cape	12	14
North West	6	11
Western Cape	100	14
Total	1 142	11 757

Source: National Treasury provincial database

In 2013/14, seven provinces exceeded their targets for conducting environmental awareness activities, aimed at raising awareness and empowering communities. Although Gauteng did not allocate any funds to this programme, it planned for two activities and conducted four. Limpopo, on the other hand, did allocate funds to this programme, did not plan for any activities but had an achievement of 2 232. There is little doubt that creating awareness of the issues negatively affecting environmental affairs will raise the profile of this sector. From a provincial perspective, provinces must align their planning and budgeting and manage performance to achieve their goals.

■ Medium-term outlook

Climate change strategies

Provinces hosted climate change summits in the run-up to COP 17

Provinces are increasingly aware of climate change and its potential negative effects on the environment and economic development. Eastern Cape, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo, Mpumalanga and Western Cape have climate change vulnerability, adaptation and mitigation strategies in place. The other provinces have not begun the process or are drafting strategies. Provinces hosted climate change summits during 2011 as a lead up to COP 17 to refine their approaches and manage climate change in the future.

Water resources

Gauteng and Northern Cape highlight the challenge of scarce water resources in their budget documents. Provision of clean water is also threatened by acid mine water, mainly affecting Gauteng and parts of North West, Free State and Northern Cape. The main reason that South Africa's water resources are compromised is the degradation of ecosystems and catchment areas. Provinces aim to enhance the quantity and quality of future water supply by maintaining wetlands and catchment areas through the removal of alien invasive species, and by managing pollution and its effects on water systems.

Biodiversity

South Africa has one of the world's highest levels of biodiversity. According to the South African National Biodiversity Institute Assessment report of 2011, the country is home to nearly 10 per cent of the world's plants and about 7 per cent of its reptiles, birds and mammals. Rich and uncompromised biodiversity is the basis for economic growth, supporting industries such as fishing, farming, commercial and non-commercial medicines and tourism. Provinces have made biodiversity management a medium-term priority, aiming to develop policies, market and distribute information to interested parties, map priority habitats and improve capacity to manage this function.

Ambient air quality

Ambient air quality management is a priority for provinces over the medium term. If not monitored and regulated, the air quality in manufacturing and mining areas can be degraded. Mpumalanga and Northern Cape plan to collect data from air quality stations and address air pollution in low-income areas, with a focus on mine dust exposure. North West is in the process of replacing all damaged equipment so that the stations are able to collect reliable data. Western Cape has a comprehensive strategy to address this issue, which includes producing an annual state-of-air-quality report, monitoring ambient air quality at selected locations and setting up a monitoring laboratory.

Conclusion

Environmental management is gaining international prominence. A sustainable and protected environment has benefits for economic development and social wellbeing. As the second largest economy in Africa and one of the world's top 20 greenhouse gas emitters, South Africa will play a major role in global environmental sustainability and responses to climate change.

Structures are in place to draft legislation and formulate policies, norms and standards. Sound policies, however, do not always translate into effective implementation, due to a shortfall in skills and capacity. Provinces that are implementing policies generally perform well, but there is room for improvement.

Provinces that implement environmental policies generally perform well, but there is room for improvement

