



MEDIA RELEASE  
AUGUST 4, 2023  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Two Oceans Aquarium wants more action to save the African penguin in response to Minister Creecy's announcement**

START The Two Oceans Aquarium would like to share comments from three respected woman who work closely with the marine environment and the #NotOnOurWatch (#NOOW) African penguin campaign - launched at the beginning of this year. These comments are in response to the decision made by Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, Barabara Creecy this morning to maintain some measures of closure of the marine environment surrounding African penguin colonies. Please see below.

#### **Quotes by Dr Judy Mann, executive for strategic projects at the Two Oceans Aquarium Foundation and one of the founders of the #NotOnOurWatch campaign to save African penguins.**

“We welcome the fact that some areas close to penguin breeding colonies will remain closed to fishing and we are aware of the need to balance environmental, community, economic and social needs when it comes to making these decisions. However, the African penguins, which are endemic to southern Africa and create jobs and tourism revenue, may only have 12 short years until there aren't enough breeding pairs in the wild for the survival of the species. We agree with the recognised need for increased collaboration, communication and transparency in research and decision making. The Two Oceans Aquarium Foundation and its partners in the #NotOnOurWatch campaign will now be working harder than ever to support communication and collaboration between all the incredible organisations working towards the survival of the species.”

#### **Quotes by Helen Lockhart, manager of conservation and sustainability at the Two Oceans Aquarium**

“While we're pleased that the minister has taken some steps to protect the African penguin, these steps are unlikely to protect this iconic bird from extinction. Much more work and support is needed - we at the Two Oceans Aquarium will continue to raise awareness and support for the plight of African penguins. We call on all South Africans to make their voices heard by participating in the #NotOnOurWatch campaign's Worldwide Waddle on October 14 and to show that we want greater protection for African penguins and our rich marine heritage”.

#### **Quotes by Shanet Rutgers, senior penguin keeper at the Two Oceans Aquarium**

“The African penguins hold a special place in my heart, and I'm grateful to the minister for taking some steps to protect their homes in the wild. These selected protections go some way to taking seriously the reality that the African penguin will be extinct in 12 years if nothing is done to stop their declining numbers. But my hope is that this is just the beginning. These incredible birds that I work with daily are ambassadors for South Africa and the ocean and we need to urgently find as many ways as possible to ensure their survival. If we truly want to protect them from imminent extinction, we need to implement these initial plans and work toward the next steps. Let's make sure these birds endemic to our coastline will still be here for future generations.”

The Two Oceans Aquarium invites you to make use of the above quotes as comment on the recent decision and welcome any further question you might have.

To follow the #NotOnOurWatch campaign click on this link to the website <https://www.africanpenguins.org/>  
For more information on the campaign you can go to this blog on the Two Oceans Aquarium website <https://www.aquarium.co.za/news/notonourwatch-a-campaign-to-save-the-african-penguin>

## How to support the campaign

- Visit the website [www.africanpenguins.org](http://www.africanpenguins.org)
- Follow on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) and share the #NOOW campaign posts.
- Share your love for penguins by sharing your photos and videos on social media using the hashtags #AfricanPenguin #NOOW.
- Mobilise a #NOOW Penguin Waddle Event at your organisation to celebrate International African Penguin Awareness Day on October 14
- Please contact Dr Judy Mann on email [judy@aquariumfoundation.org.za](mailto:judy@aquariumfoundation.org.za) if you would like to be involved in the #NOOW campaign.

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**Image captions: Here is the link to a selection of images and infographics: <https://we.tl/t-g35w1IRR6o>**

**Please credit images to the relevant photographer – name in file name – Steve Benjamin.**

Steve Benjamin Penguin 9w (1): A close up of two African penguins on the South African coastline, a species declared critically endangered and under risk of extinction.

Steve Benjamin Penguin 16w (2): A pair of African penguins waddling along a beach on the South African coastline.

Steve Benjamin Penguin 19w (3): African penguins from a colony situated on a South African beach welcome the day under the soft light of a sunrise.

Steve Benjamin Penguin 22w (4): An African penguin, endemic to the Southern African coast explores the shallows.

Steve Benjamin Penguin 28w (6): A nesting pair of African penguins. Since 1979, the current breeding population has declined from ~55 200 pairs to a mere ~10 000 breeding pairs in 2021.

Cherry Kearton (1): A comparison photograph of the African penguin population and landscape of Dassen Island in the 1900s.

Christina Hagen (1): A comparison photograph of the African penguin population and landscape of Dassen Island in 2014.

Eberlanz Museum (1): A comparison photograph of the African penguin population and landscape of Halifax Island in the 1930s.

Jessica Kemper (1): A comparison photograph of the African penguin population and landscape of Halifax Island in 2004.

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