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Urgent Accountability Needed WAPFSA Challenges Authorities on the Kogelfontein Wildlife Centre

Wildlife Animal Protection Forum South Africa

The [Wildlife Animal Protection Forum South Africa](#) (WAPFSA) is a national alliance and collaborative network of South African non-governmental organisations representing the interests of wild animals and their natural environments. Our members bring expertise in science, conservation, environmental protection, law, animal welfare and rights, social justice and public advocacy. We engage government, industry and communities through research, policy and legislative submissions, advocacy, monitoring, investigation and collaborative legal interventions. Our work promotes ethical and compassionate conservation, humane coexistence and the recognition that biodiversity protection, animal well-being and social justice are interconnected.

Continued Condemnation of Plans to Relocate Cape Peninsula Baboons to Captivity

The capture and permanent relocation of the baboons from the Seaforth and Waterfall troops in Simon's Town is being driven by the [Cape Peninsula Baboon Management Joint Task Team \(CPBMJTT\)](#) comprising the City of Cape Town, SANParks and CapeNature supported by their consultant experts including Professor Justin O Riain, Dr Esme Beamish and Dr Joselyn Mornile.

WAPFSA has, from the onset, strongly [condemned](#) the various published plans to either kill or to relocate Cape Peninsula baboons to permanent captivity. We have labelled the current plan a [false dichotomy](#), a functional extirpation, and a grotesque reminder of South Africa's terrible past.

WAPFSA explicitly [rejects](#) the choice presented by authorities, that the baboons must either be permanently caged or killed as a completely constructed false dilemma. We maintain that opposing both options is perfectly consistent because viable, non-lethal, free-ranging [coexistence alternatives](#) have not been fully or fairly assessed. We will continue to insist that these options are rigorously debated and trialled.

WAPFSA is paying close attention to how the City of Cape Town is reacting, to the mounting public scrutiny and criticism from investigative journalists and civic groups over their policies aimed at fast-tracking large-scale property developments. Local residents' associations, environmental advocates, and civic coalitions contend that the municipality is rushing major approvals. They argue this happens at the expense of environmental protections, resource management, and heritage preservation. Meanwhile, city officials defend these fast-tracked initiatives as essential mechanisms for economic growth, infrastructure expansion, and spatial integration. The management of urban baboon populations in municipalities, such as the City of Cape Town and the Overstrand Municipality, is a complex issue driven by competing priorities. The debate centres on balancing the protection of a native species with the economic and infrastructural demands of expanding urban centres.

Nowhere is this competition for land more fierce than on the Cape Peninsula. The conflict between high-end residential and commercial expansion and local chacma baboons in Simon's Town stems from a systemic failure and lack of political will to integrate wildlife-proof infrastructure into new developments and urban management.

The rhetoric that the Simon's Town baboon troops, specifically the Waterfall and Seaforth troops, offer no ecological or genetic value is heavily disputed by conservation biologists, geneticists, and environmental organizations. Presented by city authorities and their consultant experts as a humane alternative to culling, their latest proposal involves capturing and relocating the Waterfall and Seaforth baboons to a purpose-built enclosure at Kogelfontein. This strategy is facing heavy criticism for prioritising urban expansion and expensive property development over natural habitat preservation.

A WAPFSA member and others have submitted several requests to various government authorities using the Promotion of Access to Information Act regarding the Waterfall and Seaforth baboons, and the construction and permitting of the so called urban wild life centre at Kogelfontein.

While these PAIA processes are underway, WAPFSA continues to welcome, and encourage voluntary transparency in response to our questions listed below:

Important Practical Questions Raised About the Wildlife Centre at Kogelfontein

1. The original phased Action Plan involving Plateau Road was publicly announced and published by the Cape Peninsula Baboon Management Joint Task Team (CPBMJTT) in November 2025. However, the updated, plan to use the Kogelfontein location in Scarborough was, to the best of our knowledge, bypassed administratively and not formally published for public comment before being adopted in mid-2026.

WAPFSA is therefore requesting the documented plan and robust public participation process undertaken for the enactment of the Revised Finalised Action Plan.

2. The City of Cape Town municipality tender process does not skip standard legal frameworks for a "special project". Instead, municipal procurement must comply with the Municipal Finance Management Act (MFMA) and the City's own Supply Chain Management (SCM) Policy.

When a project is considered complex, high-value, or unique (often what is meant by a "special project"), specific legal deviations, alternative mechanisms, or stricter procurement steps are activated. For complex, innovative, or specialized "special projects" where the municipality cannot initially draft precise technical specifications, the City may use a two-stage bidding system:

Stage 1 (Technical Proposal): Bidders submit purely technical, unpriced proposals detailing their methodology, engineering capabilities, or architectural concepts. The City evaluates these to see who meets the functionality thresholds.

Stage 2 (Financial Offer): Bidders who passed Stage 1 are invited to submit specific commercial pricing and final technical bids based on the refined project specifications.

WAPFSA is requesting confirmation, and the specific details, of the City of Cape Town tender process for the construction of the wildlife centre which has been built at the city owned property at Kogelfontein in Scarborough.

3. Under South African municipal law, specifically Clause 329 of the City of Cape Town's Supply Chain Management (SCM) Policy and Section 36 of the Municipal Supply Chain Management Regulations, the City Manager has the authority to dispense with official competitive bidding processes under exceptional circumstances.

A standard municipal tender process can take many months to advertise, evaluate, and award. To bypass this for immediate construction, the City would have to invoke a formal SCM deviation based on specific criteria.

The City has consistently, and in our opinion, erroneously argued that the intensifying human-baboon conflict in the Southern Peninsula, specifically involving the Waterfall and Seaforth troops, presents an urgent risk to both public safety and animal welfare. If the situation were officially classified as an emergency or an immediate ecological crisis, a deviation would allow the direct appointment of contractors.

WAPFSA notes with concern that PAIA records have revealed that as of late September 2026, CapeNature had not yet finalized or completed the official permit applications required for the project, leading critics to question how R10 million in municipal funds could be deployed ahead of final legal approvals.

WAPFSA is therefore requesting full transparency regarding the motivation for entire project, based at Kogelfontein including the regulatory authorization chain.

4. Perhaps the City of Cape Town has diverted funding for the construction of this wildlife centre, sanctuary or zoo by allocating grant funding, or additional grant funding, in terms of their MoA with Shark Spotters, for the roll-out for infrastructure to establish hard boundaries between natural areas and the urban environment.

WAPFSA is requesting confirmation and all details of the grant funding by the City of Cape Town to Shark Spotters since the formalisation of their MoA.

5. The [City of Cape Town](#) strictly requires Non-Profit Organisations (NPOs) to submit financial records to receive or maintain funding. Under South African municipal regulations and the City's own [Grants-in-Aid Policy](#), the exact financial documentation required depends entirely on the size of the grant.

WAPFSA is requesting confirmation all details, the financial documents, audited and otherwise of Shark Spotters as presented to the City of Cape Town since the formalisation of the MoA.

6. Is there a legal requirement to carry out an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) before a zoo or sanctuary for wild animals can be built in Scarborough in the Western Cape? To the best of our knowledge, under South Africa's National Environmental Management Act (NEMA), undertaking specific "listed activities" without prior Environmental Authorisation could be problematic.

WAPFSA is requesting a response to this important question and the details of the EIA from the City of Cape Town and CapeNature to include the following:

- 6.1 Scarborough directly borders the Table Mountain National Park, which is a proclaimed protected area. Under NEMA's Listing Notice 3, any development, infrastructure construction, or clearance of indigenous vegetation within a protected area or its immediate buffer zone automatically triggers a mandatory Basic Assessment EIA process.
- 6.2 Establishing a zoo or sanctuary requires converting natural [coastal fynbos](#) or open space into an intensive facility. Developing infrastructure to concentrate, feed, or confine wild animals commercially often [triggers Listing Notice 1](#) thresholds.

8. To the best of knowledge, and information, the land in Scarborough upon which the wildlife zoo or sanctuary has been constructed must be correctly zoned and requires a formal land-use application in addition, under South African law, you must appoint a registered Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP) certified by the Environmental Assessment Practitioners Association of South Africa (EAPASA). Only a registered EAP can legally prepare, investigate, or submit official environmental documents.

WAPFSA is requesting all the relevant EIA documents from the Western Cape Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning (DEA&DP).

9. A Wild Animal Captivity Permit is required from CapeNature under the Nature Conservation Ordinance to legally hold captive any wild or exotic animals in captivity.

WAPFSA is requesting a copy of the inspection report from CapeNature of suitability of the property prior to the commencement of construction, as well as a copy of the signed plans by CapeNature prior to commencement of the R10 million structure.

10. The practical execution involves removing the animals from their free-ranging habitat and moving them into long-term captive confinement. The [Cape Baboon Partnership](#) is tasked with whole-troop trapping. The Seaforth troop 16 baboons and the Waterfall troop 42 baboons will allegedly be systematically captured.

WAPFSA is requesting a copy of the approved plan signed off by the NSPCA and a copy of the necessary permits from CapeNature. In addition WAPFSA has requested copies of the process whereby these experts have been appointed, and the costs involved.

11. The primary vegetation type in Scarborough is Peninsula Sandstone Fynbos. Fynbos grows in highly nutrient-poor, acidic soils. While wild chacma baboons are highly adapted to eating specific parts of it such as restio seeds, bulbs, and proteas, this vegetation is filled with tannins and heavy "do not eat me" chemical defences. In a natural state, a troop requires massive, open home ranges to wander miles daily just to harvest enough calories.

WAPFSA is requesting a copy of the professional report by an independent primatologist and or zoologist and independent ecologist experts not linked to, or paid for their professional services by the [Cape Peninsula Baboon Management Joint Task Team \(CPBMJTT\)](#).

12. A healthy, wild baboon troop moves across a home range spanning hundreds or thousands of hectares to prevent overexploiting local plants. Compressing 60 baboons into a localized, fenced sanctuary means they would completely strip the palatable natural bulbs, shoots, and roots within days.

WAPFSA is requesting a copy of the professional report by an independent primatologist and or zoologist and ecologist not linked to or paid for by the [Cape Peninsula Baboon Management Joint Task Team \(CPBMJTT\)](#)

13. Scientific research by Hoffman and O'Riain document that wild Peninsula baboons naturally traverse 1.8 to 6.5 kilometres daily, managing home ranges that extend up to 38 square kilometres (3,800 hectares).

Confining wide-ranging troops to a fraction of a percent of their natural territory strips them of environmental complexity and foraging autonomy. Critics point out that international guidelines, such as those from the Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries (GFAS), were

designed for rehab or captive-bred animals not intact, free-ranging wild troops with intricate social structures.

Forcing healthy, wild-caught primates into permanent captivity is expected to cause severe long-term psychological distress, social disruption, and behavioural abnormalities such as stress-induced aggression or repetitive self-harm.

WAPFSA is requesting copies of reports obtained from independent zoologists primatologists, qualified animal behaviour experts obtained by [Cape Peninsula Baboon Management Joint Task Team \(CPBMJTT\)](#) prior to commencing with the plan to capture and permanently hold captive 60 baboons.

14. A permit or operating license for a zoo or sanctuary cannot legally or safely be produced if there is no proper plan in case of a fire. Operating a captive wildlife facility involves strict intersectional compliance between environmental conservation authorities who issue the biodiversity and wildlife captivity permits and local municipal authorities, who enforce national building and fire safety codes. If a facility lacks an approved fire plan, the issuing of permits is blocked, delayed, or subject to immediate cancellation.

Under National Building Regulations and municipal fire brigade by-laws, any public or commercial structure hosting animals and people must strictly comply with life safety codes. A local fire department must inspect the site and issue a Fire Safety Clearance Certificate.

WAPFSA is requesting a copy of the plan, signed off by independent primatologists and or zoologists, the NSPCA and the relevant fire department for the safe evacuation of the 60 baboons in the case of a fire and the wild life centre at Kogelfontein.

15. Legislation such as the Nature Conservation Ordinances, the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act (NEMBA), and the Animal Protection Act 71 of 1962 focuses on physical infrastructure, enclosure adequacy, species protection status, and immediate animal welfare. In many instances, authorities issue a Certificate of Adequate Enclosure or a captivity permit if the land, fencing, and safety measures meet physical specifications, without requiring a multi-year business or financial solvency forecast. Current statutory frameworks generally lack a mandatory requirement for applicants to prove long-term endowment, trust funds, or guaranteed operational budgets to sustain the animal for its entire natural life. The City of Cape Town has agreed to fund the facility for three years.

The potential death or culling of Cape Peninsula baboons due to funding deficits poses a severe reputational risk to the [City of Cape Town](#), [CapeNature](#), and [SANParks](#) by directly undermining their positioning as sustainable custodians of a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Shifting from humane, proactive coexistence measures such as baboon-proof waste management and non-lethal field ranging to lethal elimination methods because of administrative or financial disputes signals a fundamental breakdown in environmental governance and ethical accountability.

This failure triggers intense local and international public backlash, sparking legal interventions from animal welfare groups and highly damaging media scrutiny that exposes structural friction between municipal authorities and conservation agencies. Ultimately, allowing a genetically distinct, native wildlife population to be culled as a matter of convenience or budget failure degrades the eco-tourism brand of the region, transforming the Cape from a celebrated global model of biodiversity into an example of regulatory neglect.

WAPFSA is requesting a copy of the decision making process and the final authorisation from the CEO of CapeNature, SANParks the Mayor of Cape Town, the Premier of the Western Cape agreeing to funding the wildlife centre and the expert care of the baboons at Kogelfontein for a period of thirty to forty-five years, the average life span of a baboon in captivity.

If there is a political transition, or a change in governance or municipal administration. A new ruling party could vote to reduce the facility's operational funding in the next municipal budget cycle, effectively starving the project. WAPFSA is requesting a copy of the decision making process and final authorisation that safe guards the baboons expert care and welfare for the a period of thirty to forty-five years, the average life span of a baboon in captivity. Please also provide the financial break-down of the project costs for this project for the next few decades.

16. Baboons are intelligent, highly social primates used to ranging over vast territories. Seeing or hearing free-ranging troops outside the fence while they are trapped inside can trigger intense frustration, pacing, and severe anxiety. Captive baboons recognize their lost freedom and frequently try to break out. Welfare groups and conservationists warn that animals in this situation often injure or kill themselves trying to scale or force electric and physical barriers to rejoin free troops or escape the confinement.

WAPFSA is requesting a copy of the independent study carried out by qualified expert animal behavioural experts where wild baboons have been captured and held permanently captive in a location where wild, free ranging baboons will be visible to them.

BACKGROUND ACCOUNTABILITY

Cape Peninsula Baboon Strategic Management Plan

Cape Peninsula Baboon Strategic Management Plan is the official name given for the collaborative drafting, public participation, and implementation framework for managing chacma baboon populations across the Cape Peninsula. The process was coordinated by the Cape Peninsula Baboon Management Joint Task Team (CPBMJTT).

It is important to note that on the 31 March 2023 WAPFSA [explicitly called](#) upon the Joint Management Committee (JMC) and relevant regulatory bodies, to put a hold on irreversible decisions and investigate whether all legally required administrative steps and public participation obligations were bypassed or violated during this process.

WAPFSA [placed on record](#) that there were transparency and accountability concerns as stakeholders were not provided with the Terms of Reference of the CPBMJTT or the Memorandum of Agreement between the three parties. These are essential documents to verify policy, budget, or resources, amongst other things, from and between the three spheres of government involved. In addition, stakeholders were never informed of the criteria for the selection of the members of the CPBMJTT and had no opportunity to comment on such criteria.

WAPFSA highlighted concerns from several organisations regarding the legitimacy of the BSMP process, with expressing the opinion that the process entirely flawed and unlawful. WAPFSA requested a formal investigation by the JMC to verify whether all statutory and procedural steps were strictly followed.

The Cape Peninsula Baboon Management Joint Task Team

The Cape Peninsula Baboon Management Joint Task Team (CPBMJTT) is a tripartite authority comprising of [SANParks](#) (South African National Parks), [CapeNature](#), and the [City of Cape Town](#). They were tasked with developing and implementing the 10 year Cape Peninsula Baboon Strategic Management Plan (2023/24–2033/34) for the sustainable management of the Peninsula's Chacma baboon population. All final management decisions regarding the Cape Peninsula's baboon population are made by this executive governing, and decision-making body.

Cape Peninsula Baboon Advisory Group

In February 2025 the CPBMJTT hosted the inaugural meeting of the Cape Peninsula Baboon Advisory Group. The [Cape Peninsula Baboon Advisory Group](#) (CPBAG) members have a direct interest in baboon management on the Cape Peninsula, they represent their respective communities, academic and research institutions, and organisations. The purpose of the CPBAG is to advise the CPBMJTT on achieving the intended outcomes as stipulated in the CPBSMP; support its implementation on a local area level; ensure ongoing and constructive engagement between the constituencies and the CPBMJTT; and assist in developing strategic partnerships with stakeholders..

Shark Spotters

In a [statement](#), the Cape Peninsula Baboon Management Joint Task Team (CPBMJTT), announced a proposed partnership with Shark Spotters stating that they were the most suitable mechanism to support the implementation of the Baboon Strategic Management Plan. There was not a dedicated, separate public tender or public consultation process specifically for selecting and appointing Shark Spotters as the operational partner.

[Shark Spotters](#) is a registered Non-Profit Organisation (NPO) and Public Benefit Organisation (PBO). Because they operate as a co-funded partnership rather than a commercial service provider, [municipalities](#) utilize grant-funding mechanisms rather than commercial procurement tenders. This allows [authorities](#) to allocate grant funding directly through an MoA/MoU to fulfil specialized human-wildlife conflict and environmental safety goals.

The [City of Cape Town's Mayoral committee supported](#) a proposed Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) with the Shark Spotters to assist with the implementation of the Cape Peninsula Baboon Strategic Management Plan. The plan envisions a sustainable and wild baboon population living in natural landscapes on the Cape Peninsula, with community partnerships and local solutions as being key to keep baboons wild and reduce human-baboon conflict.

The public statements explicitly highlights that Shark Spotters, as an NPO, can receive grant funding from a CPBMJTT partner. Additionally, they are eligible to secure funding, sponsorships, and donations from affected communities, local businesses, the general public, and various local, national, and international organisations dedicated to baboon management.

According to the [statement](#), the City through the proposed MoA aims to contribute R9m in grant funding to Shark Spotters in the current financial year, R12m in 2025-2026 and R12m in 2026-2027.

In terms of the proposed MoA between the City and the Shark Spotters, the grant funding will be available for the following outcomes, amongst others:

- Employment of a field manager and baboon ranger services for stipulated baboon troops, from sunrise to sunset.
- Assist in the roll-out of an infrastructure programme to establish hard boundaries between natural areas and the urban environment where suitable.
- Implement a baboon population research programme and employ a baboon researcher.
- Acquire and maintain the required operational infrastructure and technology to ensure an effective and efficient programme.
- Actively engage animal welfare groups, non-governmental organisations, residents associations, authorities (NGOs), scientists and academic institutions.
- Ensure ongoing and regular public updates through the relevant media channels that have been established by the Shark Spotting Programme, and develop new channels as needed.
- Respond to reported baboon incidents.
- Develop, drive and engage public education and awareness programmes around baboons and the BSMP.
- Submit monthly operating reports and an annual report.
- Submit an annual baboon management research report.

The City of Cape Town and the Shark Spotters signed the MoA on the 20 December 2024 following engagements between SANParks, CapeNature and the City of Cape Town. CPBMJTT parties will pursue individual engagements with the Shark Spotters to support the implementation of the Baboon Strategic Management Plan.

Shark Spotters took over full operational coordination of the baboon ranger programme starting March 1, 2025 following a transition period from NCC Environmental Services. Baboon management operates as a separate division within the organization, ensuring existing shark safety beach operations continue without disruption.

Announcement of Proposed Removal and Culling of 121 Chacma Baboons

The Cape Peninsula Baboon Management Joint Task Team announced a draft plan and proposal to remove or cull of 121 baboons whom they described as five splinter troops in June 2025. The task team comprising the City of Cape Town, SANParks, and CapeNature first briefed the Cape Peninsula Baboon Advisory Group (CPBAG) before public statements.

WAPFSA Cease and Desist Halt all Plans to Remove or Cull Baboons

On the 2nd June 2025 The Wildlife Animal Protection Forum of South Africa (WAPFSA), backed by 34 animal welfare and environmental groups, issued an urgent Cease and Desist letter on June 2, 2025, demanding that the Cape Peninsula Baboon Management Joint Task Team immediately halt all plans to remove or cull chacma baboons on the Cape Peninsula. This included forty-two baboons from Waterfall, sixteen baboons from Seaforth, forty-one baboons from Constantia One, eighteen baboons from Constantia Two and four baboons known as the Da Gama Creamies.

WAPFSA demands included immediately freezing all proposals and operations aimed at capturing, relocating, or euthanizing or culling these baboons. The overhauling outdated, lethal, and pain-aversion management frameworks in favour of ethical, science-based, and compassionate coexistence models. Focusing public resources on root-cause interventions such as baboon-proof waste/bins, proper fencing, and enforcement of local bylaws rather than captive confinement or culling. Cease operating in administrative isolation or secrecy; comply with procedural fairness such as Promotion of Administrative Justice Act / PAJA principles and engaging transparently with recognized animal welfare authorities, independent scientists, and key stakeholders including the SPCA and advisory groups.

Science Washing

Similar to "greenwashing," this occurs when an organization or government entity strategically highlights technical data or recruits specific scientists to validate a pre-determined policy. By framing a highly emotional or ethically contentious issue, such as the culling of a baboon troop, as a purely scientific necessity, officials attempt to invalidate public emotion as "uninformed" or "irrational"

Esme Beamish, representing the Institute for Communities and Wildlife in Africa ([iCWild](#)), on the Cape Peninsula Baboon Advisory Group (CPBAG), directly advises and supports the Cape Peninsula Baboon Management Joint Task Team.

Esme Beamish completed her MSc on Cape Peninsula baboon population dynamics under Professor Justin O'Riain, Beamish provides scientific data, population counts, and behavioural assessments that inform or defend decisions made by the baboon technical and management teams.

In September 2025, Esme Beamish published a highly debated article in the [Daily Maverick](#) attempting to ease public outrage over a controversial plan by Cape Town authorities to remove 121 baboons spanning five habituated troops. rather than smoothing things over, Beamish's article sparked swift pushback from animal welfare advocates, residents, and other scientists.

A formal [scientific and ethical rebuttal](#) published later that month targeted her statistics directly. Opponents noted that according to the official Urban Baboon Programme census, only about 489 baboons lived along the urban borders. Wiping out 121 individuals from that specific group would slash their population to around 368 representing a severe, localized decline rather than a sustainable reduction.

A highly [controversial](#) and much criticised Op-Ed published on 9 October 2026 in the [Daily Maverick](#) titled "Baboons have revealed their hand, and that's why a sanctuary is the best option." written by Professor Justin O'Riain, the Director of the Institute for Communities and Wildlife in Africa at UCT. The emotional narrative structure sparked immediate, fierce backlash from animal welfare activists, conservation groups, and local residents.

The Finalised CPBMJTT Action Plan 2025

The finalized Baboon Management Action Plan was adopted on November 20, 2025, which was a significant shift from the Joint Task Team's (CPBMJTT) original, highly controversial draft plan proposed earlier that year.

The action plan's core elements confirmed that four baboon troops will be removed from urban areas. The Seaforth troop, with about 16 baboons, according to the [2024 population census](#), will be captured and relocated to a newly established sanctuary by February 2026, with all healthy males vasectomised.

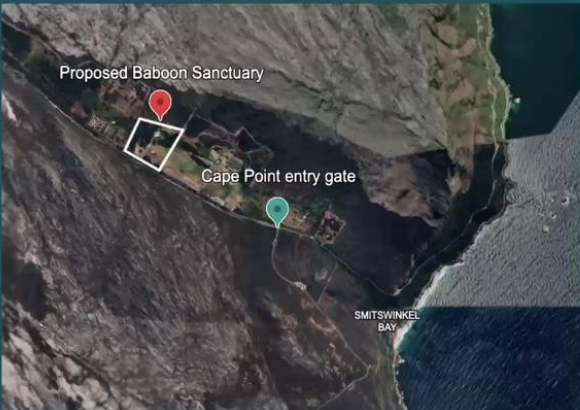
A R10 million “sanctuary” that will be built on privately owned land includes 12 months of operational funding. The sanctuary will comprise two 1.5ha enclosures, which would be the size of one-and-a-half rugby fields, built on a 10.45ha piece of privately owned land situated along Plateau Road, which is less than 2km from the Cape Point Nature Reserve gate. If successful, the Waterfall troop, with about 42 baboons, according to the 2024 population census, will follow by September 2026.

Representatives from WAPFSA and the Advisory Group the CPBAG resigned and walked out at the meeting where the finalised Action Plan was announced, after expressing frustration with the Cape Peninsula Baboon Management Joint Task Team (CPBMJTT). Lynda Silk, chairperson of the Cape Peninsula Civil Conservation (CPCC), criticized authorities because the final [Cape Peninsula Baboon Management Joint Task Team Action Plan](#) was released to the media and public on November 20, 2025, before it was shared with the Cape Peninsula Baboon Advisory Group (CPBAG) members.

Revised Final Action Plan

When the plan was publicly announced in November 2025, the proposed facility on private land near Plateau Road was described as a baboon sanctuary. The proposal was presented as a staged process, with Seaforth to be relocated first and the facility assessed before the proposal proceeded further.

Peninsula Sanctuary Proposed Location



Farm No: RE/1049 **Farm Size:** 10.45 Ha

LANDOWNER: David Edgar

MOTIVATION FOR PROVIDING LAND: supporter of Peninsula conservation efforts and finding sustainable non-lethal solutions to baboon conflict.

CURRENT USE: Coffee shop with a few free-ranging livestock for public viewing

CURRENT ZONING: Agricultural – consent use (not rezoning) required for an "Animal Care Facility" and "Tourism Facility". These have previously been approved for the neighbouring Ostrich Farm.

ADVANTAGES OF LOCATION:

- Appropriate baboon habitat
- Directly on the existing tourist route
 - Less than 2km from Cape Point gate
 - Direct neighbours with the Ostrich Farm – successful tourist facility with tour busses regularly stopping



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Seaforth Troop: Phase One

- A partnership between the Cape Baboon Partnership and a private landowner in Plateau Road will be formalised for the establishment of a purpose-built peninsula baboon sanctuary
- All necessary permits and captive animal management plans from CapeNature will be applied for in place.
- A first trial enclosure of minimum size 1.5 hectares will be built on the land at Plateau Road.
- Seaforth Troop will be cage trapped by Cape Baboon Partnership and all animals will be given a veterinary-led health assessment.
- All healthy males will be vasectomised.
- All healthy animals will be moved and released into the trial enclosure at the peninsula sanctuary
- At between three and six months a formal assessment of the success of the trial based on the globally set Welfare Assessment will be conducted.
- In parallel the process to design and build the second enclosure will be initiated.
- Estimated timeframe – February/March 2026



Waterfall Troop: Phase Two

- Following the confirmation of the success of the Seaforth troop at the peninsula sanctuary, and Environmental Authorisation (if required), enclosures two will be built.
- Waterfall troop to be cage trapped by Cape Baboon Partnership and all animals will be given a veterinary-led health assessment.
- All healthy males will be vasectomised.
- All healthy animals will be moved and released into the peninsula sanctuary on Plateau Road.
- Estimated time frame: June/July 2026

FUNDING

- *City will give once off R10 million grant to Cape Baboon Partnership to build enclosures and cover costs of running the sanctuary for 12 months after which it must become self sustaining through tourism, donor funding etc.*



Cape Baboon Partnership

According to their website, the [Shark Spotters](#), under the banner of the [Cape Baboon Partnership](#), have taken over some operational responsibilities, including:

- the provision of baboon rangers,
- managing the Baboon Hotline, and
- community liaison and education – on the Cape Peninsula.

Their tasks include, among others:

- Employing field management and baboon ranger services for stipulated baboon troops
- Assisting in the roll-out of an infrastructure programme to establish hard boundaries between natural areas and the urban environment where suitable
- Implementing a baboon population research programme and employing a baboon researcher
- Acquiring and maintaining the required operational infrastructure and technology to ensure an effective and efficient programme
- Actively engaging animal welfare groups, non-governmental organisations, residents' associations, authorities, scientists and academic institutions
- Ensuring ongoing and regular public updates via the relevant media channels that have been established in support of the Cape Baboon Partnership
- Responding to reported baboon incidents
- Developing, driving and engaging public education and awareness programmes around baboons and the Cape Peninsula Baboon Strategic Management Plan
- Submitting monthly operating reports and an annual report
- Submitting an annual baboon management research report

Amended Final Baboon Action Plan The Kogelfontein Urban Wildlife Centre

In the June 2026 [Amended Final Baboon Action Plan](#), which we have not had sight of but investigative journalists have referred to, the terminology and destination of the “sanctuary” changed.

Kogelfontein, is described as a R10 million Urban Wildlife Centre that will accommodate both the Seaforth and Waterfall troops in two enclosures. Both troops will be captured, healthy males will be vasectomised, and healthy animals permanently moved into two enclosures. There will be no breeding, no additional baboons, and no release back into the wild.

Conservation and civic groups note that the direct move to a permanent, City funded municipal facility bypassed the previously outlined private land trial and formal EIA steps, leading to legal and procedural challenges over unconsulted plan deviations.

Lack of Transparency and Accountability

Public trust is earned through transparency; every South African citizen has a right to the truth and the evidence behind official decisions. The tension surrounding baboon management on the Cape Peninsula has escalated significantly, with transparency and accountability emerging as central flashpoints for residents in Simon's Town, Scarborough, and surrounding communities.

The Cape Peninsula Baboon Management Joint Task Team composed of the has faced heavy criticism from residents, welfare organizations, and civic groups. A major source of frustration is that critical decisions, such as the Amended Final Baboon Action Plan, have repeatedly been announced to the media or via social media updates before meaningful consultation with local community advisory groups could occur.

On the 14 September 2026 the [Cape Baboon Partnership Facebook post](#):

“WHY HAVE WE NOT SHARED ANYTHING ABOUT THE SANCTUARY YET?”

The Cape Town Urban Wildlife Centre, at Kogelfontein, near Scarborough, has been purpose-built to house the Waterfall and Seaforth baboon troops when they are removed from Simon’s Town, as per the Cape Peninsula Baboon Management Action Plan of 2025.

The establishment of the Centre has generated significant public interest, strong emotions and several relevant and important questions from residents, organisations and advocacy groups. We chose not to formally share detailed plans on the Centre until the proposed management plan (needed for a Wild Animal Captivity Permit) was reviewed by CapeNature and feedback provided. This was to avoid publishing details that might later need to change, and to ensure that our plans were aligned with best practice before they were shared publicly. In the absence of the final documentation, we have made efforts to ensure transparency by responding directly to queries where possible, as well as taking interested members of the public on tours of the Centre to see the facility firsthand.

The permit is now in the final stages of review, placing us in a better position to publicly answer questions about the Urban Wildlife Centre. In the coming days and weeks, we aim to answer as many of the questions and concerns that have been raised as possible through our social media pages, providing clarity on the Cape Town Urban Wildlife Centre’s purpose, operation and role within the broader Cape Peninsula baboon management programme.”

A media [report](#) published on 18 September 2026, confirmed that a R10 million wildlife centre, the Cape Town Urban Wildlife Centre, at Kogelfontein would be constructed on city-owned land, situated near Scarborough. The media report confirmed that the City of Cape Town is funding the centre, including its operating costs for a four years, although in a more recent report that figure has been reduced to three years.

According to the same [report](#) Authorities said the troops spend significant periods in urban areas, exposing them to risks including vehicle collisions, shootings, dog attacks and processed human food. The Joint Task Team said repeated management efforts had failed to reduce the time they spend in Simon’s Town.

The relocation forms part of the Cape Peninsula Baboon Strategic Management Plan and a subsequent Action Plan approved by SANParks, CapeNature and the City in November 2025. The baboons, according to the media [report](#), will be captured and undergo veterinary health assessments before being moved. Healthy males will be vasectomised as part of the population-management programme. The troops will remain separate and intact to preserve their social structures.

By utilizing City-owned land at Kogelfontein, we assume that the City of Cape Town has direct control and funding of the facility and operating budget. On the 4 October 2026, an article was [published](#) stating that the City of Cape Town has committed R33 million over three financial years to baboon management. The same [article](#) states that a separate City announcement lists an amount of R15 million for Shark Spotters, but the journalist confirms that it is unclear whether this amount is included in the original commitment, a revised allocation or something else.

In order to foster institutional trust, South African citizens have an inherent right to access the factual evidence and truth underpinning all public decisions

This letter is signed by the following members of WAPFSA:

Michele Pickover Executive Director **EMS Foundation**
Megan Carr Founder **Rhinos in Africa**
Ross Harvey Director of Research and Programmes at **Good Governance Africa**
Cormac Cullinan Founder **Wild Law Institute**
Chad Cupido Executive Officer **Beauty Without Cruelty**
Vishwas Satgar Founder and Chair **Co-Operative and Policy Alternative Centre**
Charles Simane **Communications Climate Justice Charter Movement**
Wynter Worsthorne Founder **Animal Talk Africa**
Stefania Falcon Founder **Future for Wildlife**
Luana Pasanisi Founder **Green Group Simonstown**
Guy Jennings Consultant **Wild Africa Fund Southern Africa**
Linda Tucker Founder and CEO **Global White Lion Protection Trust**
Vivien Law Founder **Ancient Earth Farm**
Kirsten Youens Chief Executive **AllRise Attorneys for Climate and Environmental Justice**
Francesca deGasparis Exec. Director **South African Faith Communities Environmental Institute**
Sairusha Govindsamy Youth Activist Network **African Climate Alliance**
Smaragda Louw Founder Director **Ban Animal Trading**
Stephen Munro and Samantha Dewhirst , Directors **Centre for Animal Rehabilitation and Education**
Pete Oxford and Rene Bishch Founders **Betty's Bay Baboon Action Group**
Cora Bailey Founder **Community Led Animal Welfare**
Mphatheleni Makaulule Director **Dzomo La Mupo**
Liezl Smith Chairperson **Kogelberg Villages Environmental Trustees**
Jabu Myeni Founder **Gifted for Good**
Les Mitchell Director **Institute for Critical Animal Studies**
Janet Solomon Founder **Oceans Not Oil**
Carol Booth Co-Founder **Monkey Helpline**
Liz Cornwall and Catherine Nyquist Co-Founders **Panthera Africa Big Cat Sanctuary**
Lex Abnett Director **Southern African Fight for Rhinos**
Dave Du Toit Founder **Vervet Monkey Foundation**

14 October 2026

Yours Sincerely,



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