



Leaders in Environmental Management

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## Scarred West Coast dunes cause a stir

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The problem was highlighted by the Cape Argus earlier this year, after a similar aerial inspection arranged by Brendhan Kannemeyer, chairperson of the newly constituted Elands Bay Environment and Development Action Group.

Kannemeyer, a Cape Town businessman and helicopter pilot who also owns a house at Elands Bay, this week flew senior officials from the Marine and Coastal Management of the department of environmental affairs and tourism, CapeNature and the department of public works on an inspection in two helicopters.

Now, a meeting is being scheduled for early next month between all the parties - including police, municipal officials and marine inspectors - to devise a management plan for the Elands Bay-Verlorenvlei area to stop the off-road driving and other problems.

Afterwards, Kannemeyer said the West Coast problems were "vast and highly visible".

"It does make quite an impression from the air, and they (the officials) were quite stunned," he said.

"I think the level of awareness has been raised, which is a very good thing. We will make some good progress for Elands Bay, but the job is far bigger than just here.

"However, if we concentrate on Elands Bay, any management plan that we come up with should apply elsewhere and we should be able to use the model."

One of the officials aboard one of the two choppers was Abeeda Mugjenkar, chief director of compliance in the Marine and Coastal Management branch.

In a subsequent email message to others on the flight, Mugjenkar described it as "certainly the right step in the right direction".

"I believe that we can make inroads into the transgressions which are happening on the coastline. It was comforting to see the extended support from all the role-players."

She proposed hosting a meeting "to plot a compliance strategy", and asked for all pending cases against transgressors to be sent to her office "so that we can attend to it".

Saying that a memorandum should be sent to environment minister Marthinus van Schalkwyk's office, Mugjenkar also pointed out that a communications strategy on the off-road regulations was necessary.

"What we have seen has highlighted the lack of awareness on the coastline versus the wanton disregard for the law - a middle line must be struck."

Mugjenkar also said she would meet all her department's West Coast inspectors soon in order to assess their knowledge of, and ability to respond to, the problem of illegal driving on the coast.