

FISH HOEK VALLEY RATEPAYERS & RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

(Incorporating Fish Hoek, Clovelly and Sun Valley)

P.O. Box 22125, Fish Hoek 7974

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Heritage Western Cape: Conservation Body

**TO: HEAD: COASTAL POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT PROGRAMMES,
DARRYL COLENBRANDER coastal.bylaw@capetown.gov.za**

SUBJECT: COMMENTS ON CITY OF CAPE TOWN'S DRAFT COASTAL BY-LAW 2019 ¹

DUE DATE: 9 SEPTEMBER 2019

1. DISCUSSION

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.² Our comments focus on a growing concern for the all too often poor water quality of False Bay and specifically Fish Hoek Bay. You will be aware of the City's Coastal Pollution Monitoring programme and the measurements that regularly do not meet the DEA National Guidelines. The research into chemical pollutants of Dr Jo Barnes and Professor Leslie Petrik demonstrate clearly that organisms in the marine food web are concentrating pharmaceutical chemicals. We are eating contaminated fish. As these pharmaceuticals are designed to be active at a cellular level and many are also endocrine disruptors, this form of pollution should be even more of a priority to the City than the highly visible impacts of plastic pollution.

We are pleased to note that the Object of By-law includes: "promoting the protection of the natural environment of the coastal zone".

Furthermore, in Section 5: **Duty of care (1)** No person may cause, continue or contribute to an adverse effect on the coastal zone;

Section 7: **Protection of coastal environment**

(4) No person may –

- (a) litter;
- (b) misuse, remove water from or contaminate a water body, water source, water supply or wastewater or any portion thereof;
- (c) drain or redirect water from private land into the coastal zone; or

(5) No person may, without prior written authorisation from the City, in the coastal zone–

- (a) discharge solid, liquid or gaseous pollution;

¹ http://resource.capetown.gov.za/documentcentre/Documents/Bylaws%20and%20policies/Draft_Coastal_Bylaw_2019.pdf

² <http://www.capetown.gov.za/City-Connect/Have-your-say/Issues-open-for-public-comment/draft-coastal-by-law>

- (6) No person may drop, throw, deposit, spill, dump, store or in any other way discard any litter or waste in the coastal zone.

All these sections recognise the need to stop litter and contaminated water from entering the coastal zone, estuaries and the sea. This should also apply to the City's stormwater drains as well as treated and partially treated wastewater effluent. It appears that our wastewater plants are not designed to remove pharmaceutical and other chemicals.

We need the City to prioritise the policing of businesses whose operations repeatedly result in blockages to the sewerage systems. There are known problem areas such as the sewer on Main Road / Clairvoux intersection which blocks regularly and spills into the street and then onto the Kalk Bay harbour beach via the stormwater system. According to the health inspectors, grease from local restaurants is causing the problem. The repeated blockages imply that the responsible City officials are not dealing with the offenders.

In Fish Hoek, the two beach stormwater outfalls and the Silvermine estuary regularly fail the DEA guidelines for water quality. This beach is used all year round for water sport and is an especially popular swimming beach in summer. As such the City needs to prioritise the management of litter onto the beach and install an on-site treatment works to neutralise the chemical and faecal contaminants in the stormwater.

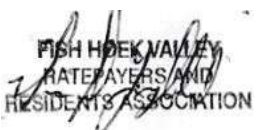
Whilst it is clear that the Coastal by-Law is designed to assist the City in its mandate to protect the coast from actions of the public, the City needs to lead by example and dramatically improve the management of its own coastal outfalls.

Our beach is the heart of our tourism and recreation industry. The successful shark spotter programme acknowledged this. Now the City needs to tackle the less visible but potentially more dangerous chemical and faecal pollutants.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

For the reasons stated above, we recommend that:

- The City locates and corrects all sewage before it enters our stormwater system;
- The City starts using tertiary treatment in our sewage plants; and
- The City's inspectors start fining businesses that are not maintaining their grease traps.

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| DATE | 2 September 2019 |