

Wildlife Preparedness & Response Challenges in Africa: A Case Study of Namibia and South Africa



Nicky Stander

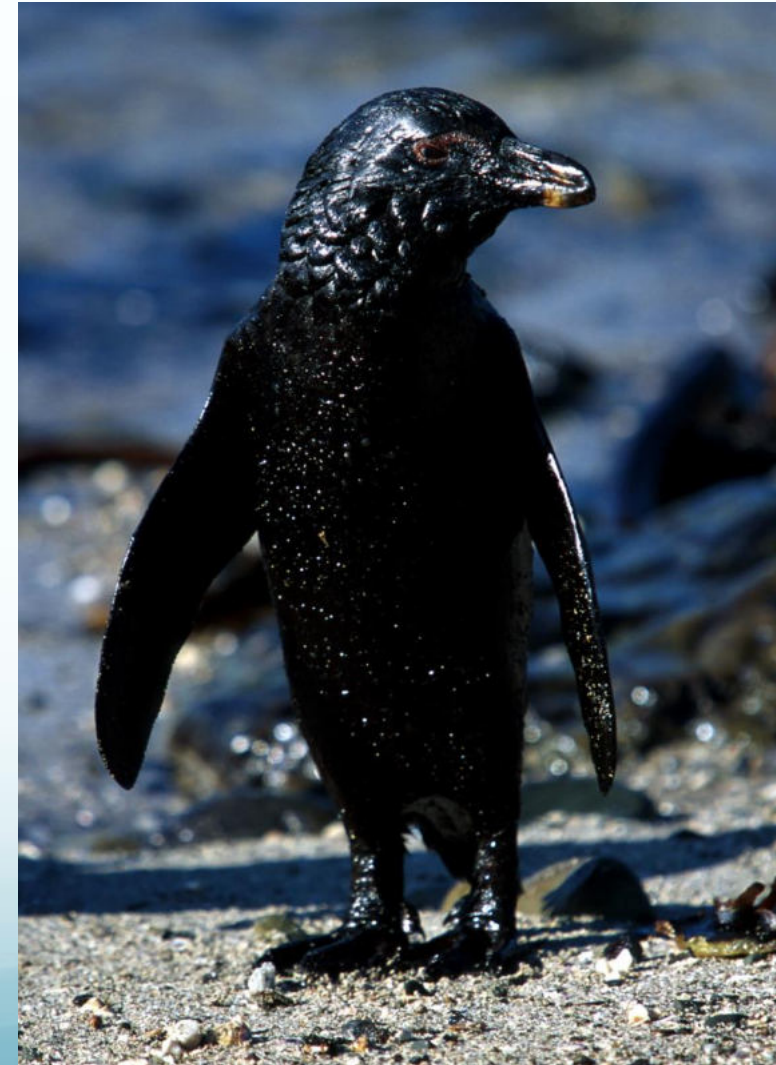
Preparedness &
Response Manager

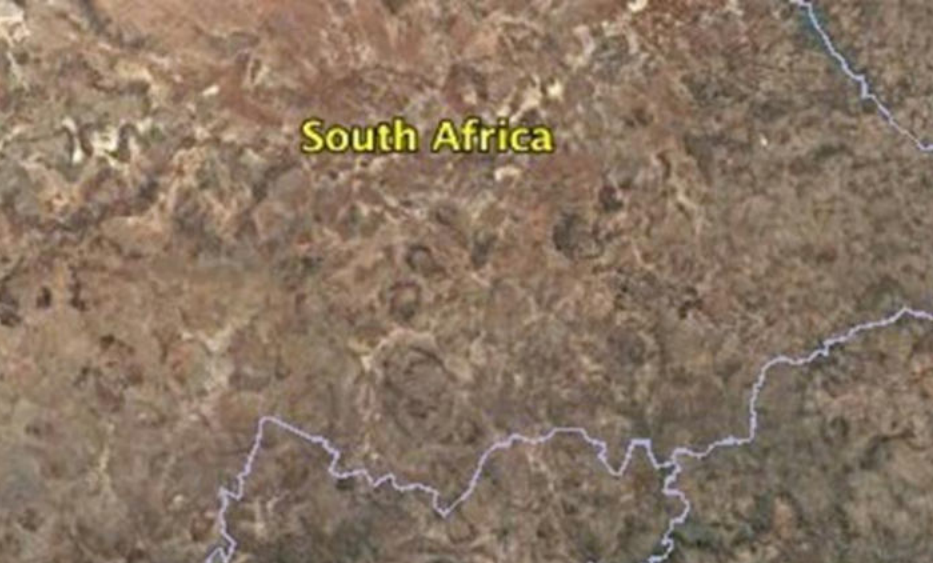
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Presentation Summary

- About SANCCOB's work
- Geographical Area
- Sensitive species at risk / endangered species
- Threats
- Overview of 2009 Namibia spill & SANCCOB's involvement
- Industry & stakeholder association with OWR
- Summary





Google Earth

US Dept of State Geographer
Image Landsat / Copernicus
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Data SIO, NOAA, U.S. Navy, NGA, GEBCO

About the Southern African Foundation for the Conservation of Coastal Birds (SANCCOB)

Rescue, Rehabilitation & Release

- Endangered species conservation
- Chick Bolstering Project
- First Responder Network

Preparedness & Response: oiled seabirds

- Disaster preparedness
- Policy development

Research

- Disease surveillance
- Post-release monitoring
- Population & foraging ecology

Colony Support

- Seabird Rangers
- Training
- Seabird monitoring

Education

- Outreach
- Special Education Needs Schools

Advocacy & Government Assistance

- Fisheries management
- Oiled wildlife preparedness

Integrating oiled wildlife response into mainstream contingency plans

- Improved oiled wildlife preparedness through national legislation
- Listed in the NOSCP as the identified seabird responder by the SA government
- “Draft” National Oiled Marine Wildlife Contingency Plan
- Participation in government exercises and preparedness working groups



transport

Department
Transport
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



South Africa's
National Oil Spill Contingency Plan (NOSCP)
Maritime

Volume 1

Date	(approval date)
Amendment	0

Incident Reporting

**Report any marine oil spill
related incident to:**

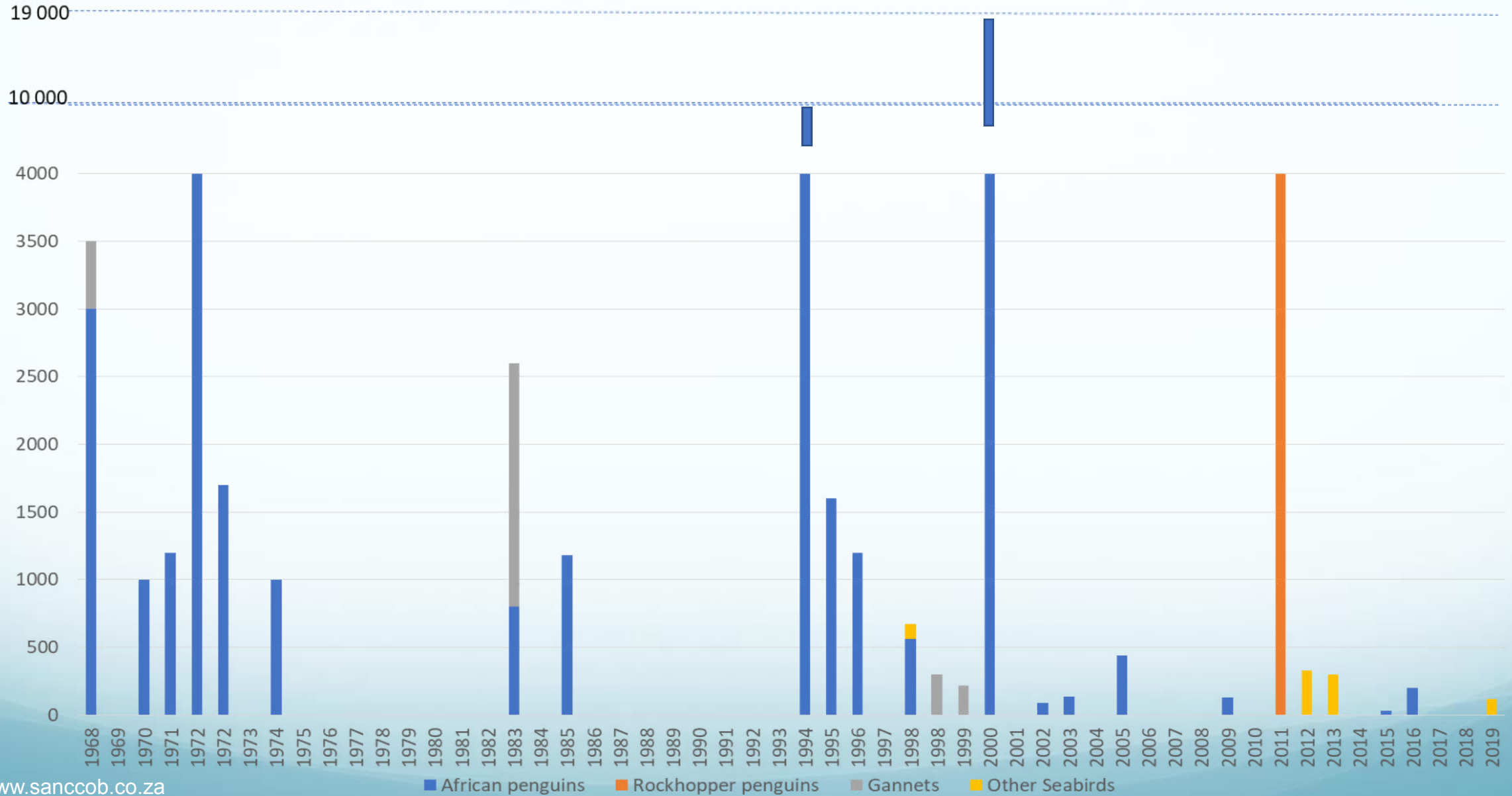
Tel: +27(0)21 938 3300

SANCCOB's role during the *MV Treasure* oil spill

- SANCCOB is the only local capability in South Africa, having responded to every major oil spill affecting seabirds since 1968
- Threatened >40,000 African penguins
- Trusted and solid relationship with local conservation partners and global expertise
- >90% rehabilitated and released



SANCCOB has responded to every major oil spill affecting seabirds along the African coastline since 1968



Impact: Oiled seabird response in South Africa & Namibia

▪ 1968	- <i>Esso Essen</i> tanker	Cape Point	±3,000 seabirds
▪ 1970	- <i>Kazimah</i>	Robben Island	±1,000 African Penguins
▪ 1972	- Tanker collision	Ystervark Point	4,000 seabirds
▪ 1974	- <i>Oriental Pioneer</i>	Struisbaai	thousands of seabirds.
▪ 1983	- <i>Castillo de Belver</i>	Saldanha Bay	1,400 gannets, 800 African Penguins
▪ 1985	- <i>Capodistrias</i>	Cape Recife	±900 African Penguins
▪ 1994	- <i>Apollo Sea</i>	Robben Island	10,000 African Penguins
▪ 1995	- Mystery spill	Dyer Island	1,600 African Penguins
▪ 1996	- <i>MV Cordigliera</i>	Port St Johns	1,200 African Penguins
▪ 1998	- Harbour spill	Cape Town	671 seabirds
▪ 1998	- Mystery spill	Malgas Island	±300 Cape gannets
▪ 1999	- Mystery spill	Malgas Island	±220 Cape gannets
▪ 2000	- <i>MV Treasure</i>	Robben, Dassen	19,000 African Penguins
▪ 2009	- <i>Mystery spill</i>	Namibia	200 African Penguins
▪ 2011	- <i>MS Oliva</i>	Tristan da Cunha	4,000 Rockhopper penguins
▪ 2012	- <i>Seli 1</i> (3yr duration)	Table Bay	326 seabirds
▪ 2013	- <i>Kiani Satu</i>	Buffels Bay	299 seabirds
▪ 2015	- Mystery Spill	Algoa Bay	30 African Penguins
▪ 2016	- STS Bunkering	Algoa Bay	200 African Penguins
▪ 2019	- STS Bunkering	Algoa Bay	120 seabirds



4 people x 4 days

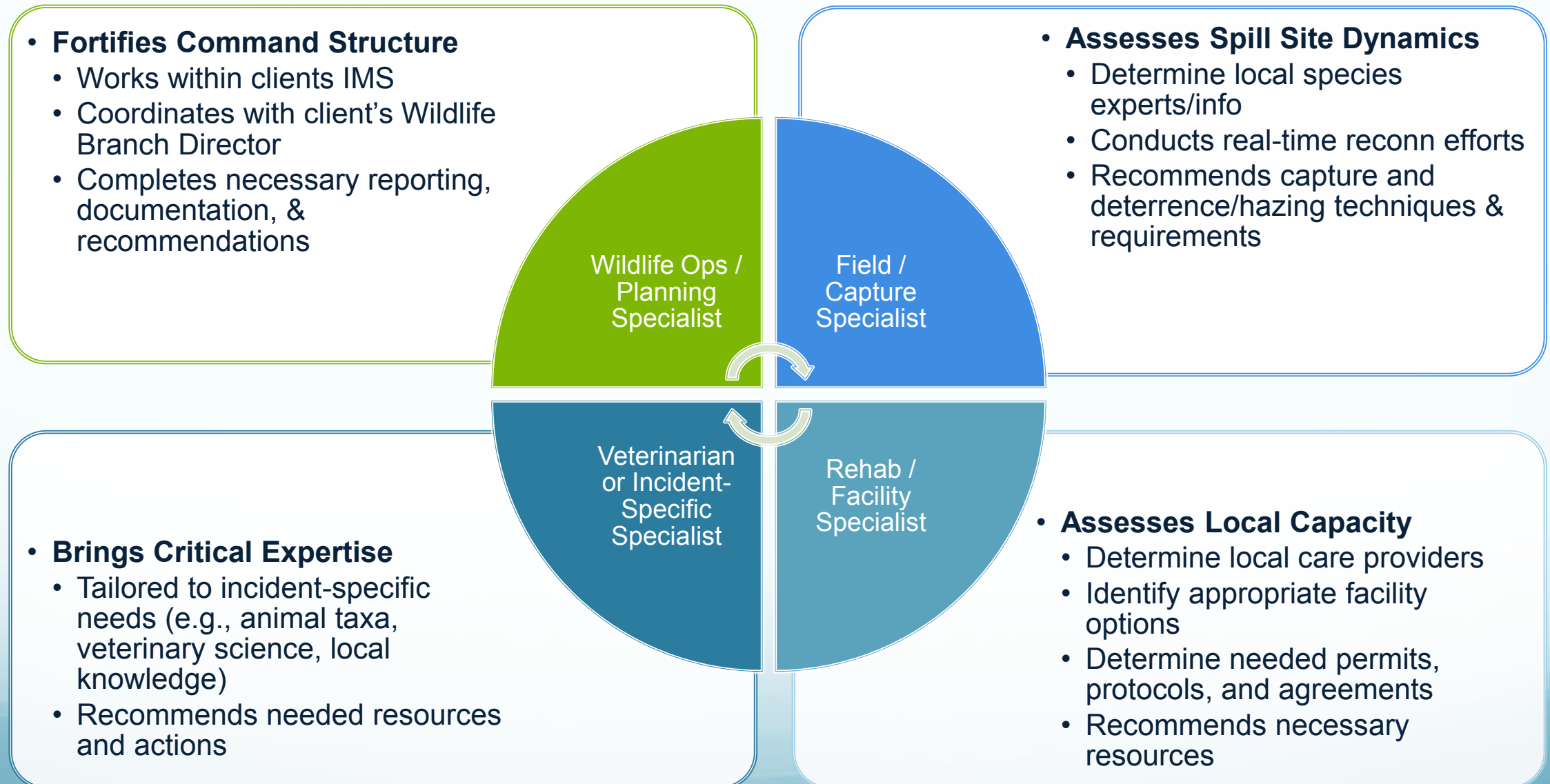
GOWRS Tier 3 Wildlife Assessment Team



- 1. Wildlife Ops/Planning Specialist
- 2. Field/Capture Specialist
- 3. Rehabilitation/Facility Specialist
- 4. Veterinarian or other specialist



GOWRS Assessment Team: Functions



Sensitive species of the Benguela Ecosystem



African penguin



Cape gannet



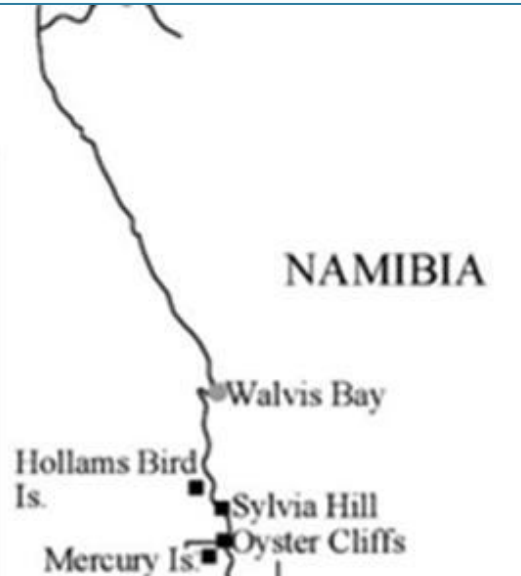
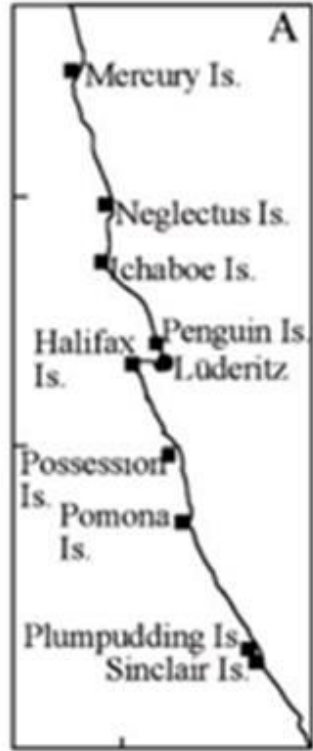
Cape cormorant



Bank cormorant



Damara Tern

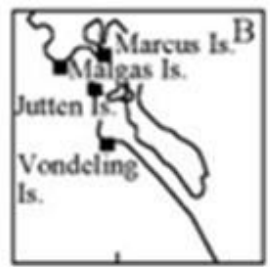
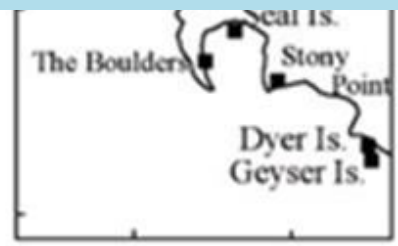


African penguin population:

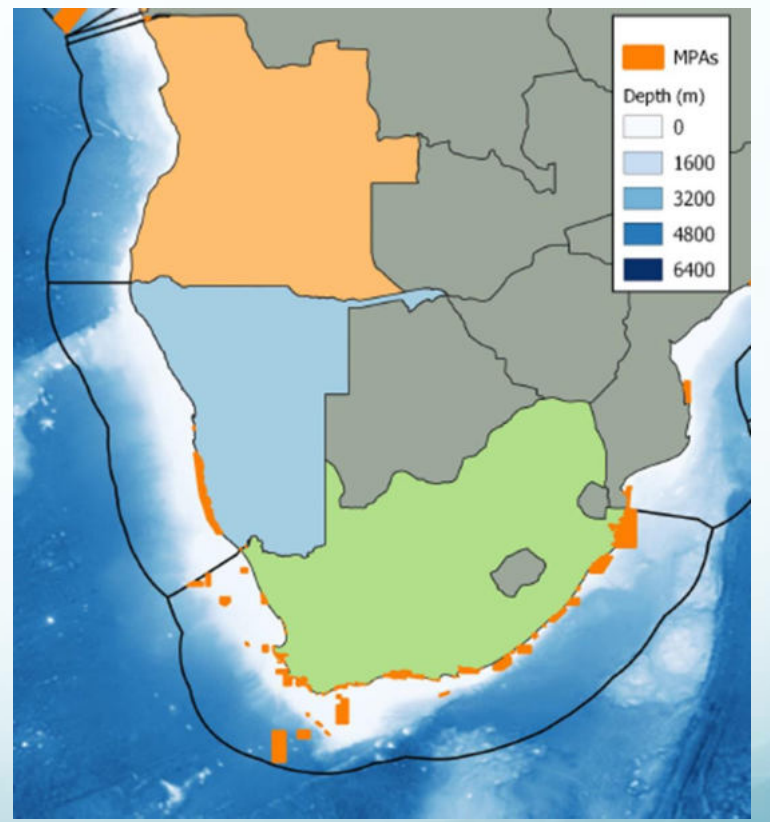
Global: ~ 18 000 bp

Namibia: ~4 143 bp

(MFMR, 2019)



Seabirds are among the most threatened groups of animals



Marine Protected Areas around the Southern African coastline

Loss of Biodiversity Halifax Island, Namibia



1930s Eberlanz Museum, Lüderitz



2004, Jessica Kemper

Threats

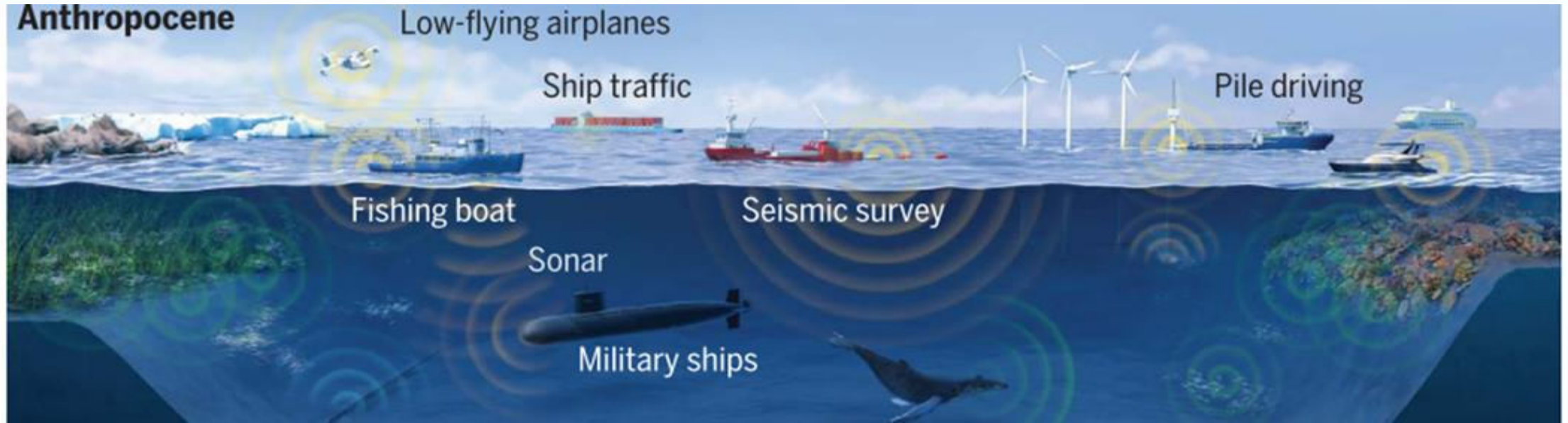
- Lack of food – energy-rich food shortage
- Oil pollution
- Disease
- Oil & Gas exploration
- Mining activities (land & sea)
- Vessel grounding
- Vessel refuelling spill



© Paillette Sylvain
MarineTraffic.com



Threats - Noise



Mechanisms of noise impacts remain untested but may include:

- Impacts on forage fish
- Direct impacts on penguins and other seabirds
- Disruption of at-sea acoustic communication



Oiled wildlife Preparedness & Response Challenges

- ❑ Protection of wildlife is not high on the list of priorities in Namibia & rest of Africa; largely reliant on non-profit organisations for oiled wildlife preparedness & response;
- ❑ Oiled wildlife preparedness and response is not currently regularly funded by government or industry;
- ❑ Lack of Government budget for **preparedness** (equipment, surveillance, training);
- ❑ Economic growth generally takes precedence over nature conservation;
- ❑ Large number of stakeholders and role players often results in lack of coordination;
- ❑ Lack of legislation requiring oiled wildlife contingency planning;

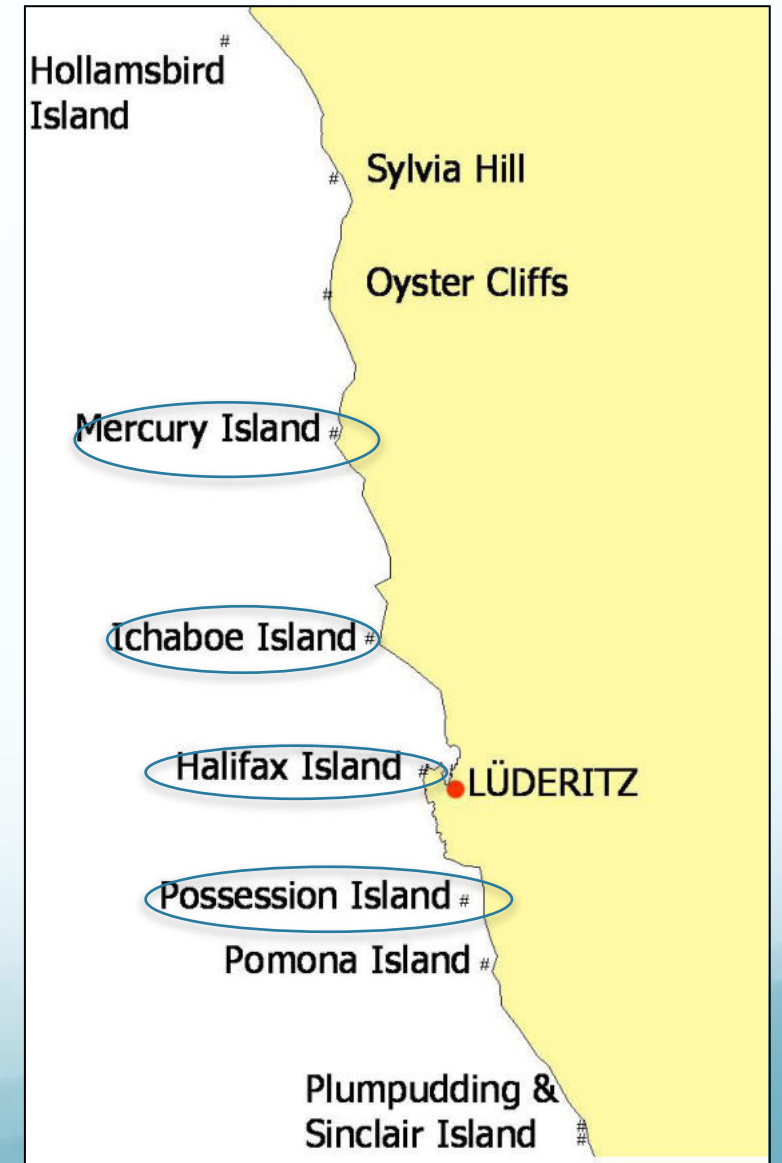
Unidentified oil spill, Lüderitz, 2009

*The oil spill in
April 2009
affected 171
African
penguins over a
distance of
150km*



African penguins – Namibian breeding distribution

- African penguin breeding pairs: 4143 bp
- Breeds at 12 localities in Southern Namibia
- The four main islands support 96% of the population
- Oiled penguins were collected from the four main islands
- All islands are managed by the Ministry Fisheries & Mineral Resources (MFMR)



- 171 oiled penguins were collected from the four main islands, spanning 150km
- 161 of the penguins were taken to Lüderitz
- 10 penguins were cleaned, rehabilitated and released on staffed islands



All penguins were washed in Lüderitz by MFMR staff and volunteers

The situation in 2009...and still today

- MFMR: small rehabilitation facility in Lüderitz
- 1 x enclosure, 1 x pool and a small hospital
- Can handle up to ~30 penguins



Inadequate rehabilitation facilities



- Facilities too small
- Response escalated to Tier 3
- Evacuation of the strongest penguins from Lüderitz to SANCCOB, Cape Town
- The 129 strongest penguins were selected and prepared for the 1300 km journey
- CITES permit = delay!



20 hours and 1300km later...

- All 129 penguins survived the journey
- Most penguins suffered dehydration
- 2 penguins died a few days later
- Post-mortems showed internal bruising / bleeding
- Deaths possibly linked to excessive periods of confinement



Release & Post-release monitoring

- Average time in captivity: 41 days (both in Lüderitz and at SANCCOB)
- 113 penguins released in Cape Town near Robben Island and 39 penguins released near Lüderitz in May/June 2009



Return of the penguins

- By 31 August, 17 penguins and 17 locally released penguins had been re-sighted (21%)
- It took 14 days to cover a distance of 1019 km (~73 km per day)
- 3 previously oiled penguins were breeding in August



Conclusions



1. First trans-boundary evacuation of the species
2. Longest transport (by road) of the species
3. Evacuation successful with few mortalities
 - Strongest penguins only
 - Penguins well prepared
 - Good ventilation
 - Documents in order(no delays at the border)
4. This could not be achieved with other species
5. Lack of preparedness = compromised animal welfare



Positive outcomes

- African penguins returned to their islands in Namibia
- Confirms strong homing behaviour and philopatry of the species
- Prompt actions and collaborative efforts of MFMR and SANCCOB ensured a successful rescue operation



Multi-stakeholder approach – Oiled Wildlife Preparedness

DEBMARINE
NAMIBIA

**SAFE DISASTER RELIEF
PROJECT**
collaborate on cross-border
oiled wildlife preparedness and
response

MARYLAND ZOO

 **NAMDEB**
A NAMIBIA DE BEERS PARTNERSHIP

**ASSOCIATION
OF ZOOS &
AQUARIUMS** | **SAFE**
SAVING ANIMALS
FROM EXTINCTION

 **DEBMARINE
NAMDEB
FOUNDATION**
CREATING A POSITIVE DIAMOND LEGACY

NICE
Namibian Chamber of Environment

REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA
Fisheries and Marine Resources


SANCCOB™
saves seabirds

Why this project is urgent & necessary

- Conservation efforts for the African penguin requires a holistic approach, irrespective of country;
- Current lack of monitoring and interventions by government for Namibia's seabirds;
- Namibia is unprepared for oil spills affecting seabirds (and other wildlife);
- Poor conservation status - Nam AP population: 4143 bp (MFMR, 2019);
- South Africa and Namibia are both party to the Benguela Current Convention;

The Convention is a formal treaty between the governments of Angola, Namibia and South Africa that sets out the countries' intention "to promote a coordinated regional approach to the long-term conservation, protection, rehabilitation, enhancement and sustainable use of the Benguela Current Large Marine Ecosystem, to provide economic, environmental and social benefits."



Industry Assistance



Funded by the Debmarine- Namdeb Foundation (2021):

1. Oiled wildlife response equipment stockpiles – Lüderitz & Oranjemund
2. National contingency planning
3. Training of key personnel: first response techniques and stabilisation



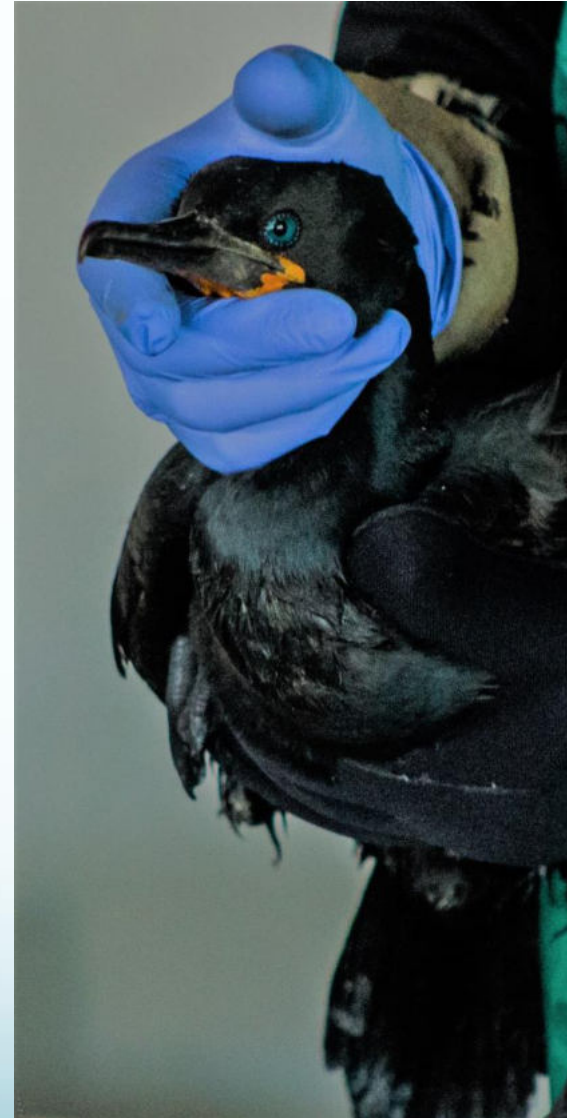
Future plans for Namibian seabird protection

- Establishment of a marine biodiversity organisation: NAMCOB
- Larger rehabilitation facility
- Capacity building
- Strengthen protection of the Namibia Islands MPA
- OWR equipment on the four main seabird islands
- Industry support is key



Summary

- Integrate wildlife issues into all aspects of NOSCP
- Contingency planning – site specific
- Setting objectives for wildlife response
- Training and preparedness
- Familiarisation with roles and responsibilities
- Funding & capacity
- Maintain scarce skills, knowledge & abilities
- Skills transferral and knowledge sharing with the rest of Africa



Thank you joining this wildlife webinar!

