

**BUTTONSHOPE CONSERVANCY TRUST FUND**  
(Master's Reference No. IT 3300/2011)

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8 September 2023

**The Chief Executive Officer**  
**Mpumalanga Tourism & Parks Agency**  
**Nelspruit.**

Dear Sir

**Support for the De Berg Nature Reserve/ Davel Private Nature Reserve to be designated as a Ramsar site/ Wetland of International Importance**

The De Berg Nature Reserve/Davel Private Nature Reserve was declared on 27 January 1965 by publication in the Provincial Gazette. The original declaration comprised of two properties, namely the farm Triangle 72 JT and the farm De Berg 71 JT. The 1,265 ha of the reserve falls entirely within one of two centres of plant endemism, namely the Sekhukhuneland Centre of Plant Endemism (SCPE) and the Lydenburg Centre of Plant Endemism (LCPE). The rugged area remains in a largely pristine or near-pristine state. The property belongs to the Buttonshope Conservancy Trust and is managed on their behalf by the Land Management department of Booyendal Platinum Proprietary Limited ("Booyendal"). The Buttonshope Conservancy Trust is responsible for the management of Booyendal's conservation efforts and biodiversity offset programme.

In terms of the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act, 2003 (Act No. 57 of 2003) the Land Management department of Booyendal will be, in terms of Section 38 (2) (b), assigned as the Management Authority of the De Berg Nature Reserve.

As far as aquatic ecosystems are concerned, the De Berg Nature Reserve falls within the Olifants Water Management Area and specifically quaternary catchments, Groot Dwars Rivier and Everest tributary. The Groot Dwars Rivier is classified as a National Freshwater Ecosystem Priority Area. The Groot Dwars confluence with the Klein Dwars River downstream that flows into the Steelpoort River (close to the town of Steelpoort), which is one of the primary tributaries of the Olifants River.

The De Berg Nature Reserve contains areas of high to very high aquatic biodiversity conservation importance with a high aquatic macroinvertebrate diversity. Fifty-nine (59) diatom species were identified recently at the five sampling sites. The area is an important breeding habitat for the vulnerable Southern Bald Ibis (*Geronticus calvus*).

By being designated as a Ramsar site the De Berg Nature Reserve will gain global recognition and the Buttonshope Conservancy Trust hereby wishes to convey our support for the designation of the De Berg Nature Reserve/Davel Private Nature Reserve as a Wetland of International Importance.

Yours faithfully



A H Coetzee

Trustee

Buttonshope Conservancy Trust