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BUILDING A CULTURE OF APPRECIATING BIODIVERSITY

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The Grasslands Programme hosted an information sharing event with Gauteng provincial and local government officials on available biodiversity and conservation tools to guide land use planning and environmental management in the province. Held during September – heritage month – this event is supporting the building of a culture of appreciating biodiversity.

The workshop was aimed at capacitating provincial and municipal officials prior to Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Open day, which is an annual event where the Gauteng MEC for Agriculture and Rural Development engages with all stakeholders on environment and development issues. The session, titled 'Biodiversity and Impact Management workshop', offered officials the opportunity to be informed of and engage with the amendments to the Gauteng Conservation Plan (version 3.3), draft Bioregional Plans that are in development for Gauteng municipalities, the Gauteng Protected Areas Expansion Strategy, as well as the practicalities e.g. wetland assessment.

Officials were highly appreciative of this engagement and expressed the need for continued collaboration and sharing of information. The newly updated Gauteng Conservation Plan (version 3.3) received largely positive feedback, specifically as a base for issuing common decisions which will minimize conflict when dealing with development applications that need to be evaluated by both province and municipalities.

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