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Vulnerable species and habitats in Table Mountain National Park Afrotemperate Forest

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Table Mountain National Park (TMNP) is situated in the Western Cape of South Africa. The National Park is a Natural World Heritage Site in an 'urban' protected area, surrounded by the city of Cape Town and the ocean. TMNP's primary focus is to manage areas of nationally and internationally important biodiversity, scenic resources, and cultural heritage. TMNP boasts a diverse array of ecosystems, including the critically important Afrotemperate forest situated in the Newlands section of TMNP. The strategic goal of the Newlands Forest restoration plan is to restore functional ecosystems and contribute to the conservation of Afrotemperate forest. The Afrotemperate forests of TMNP are home to the Critically Endangered Table Mountain Ghost Frog (*Heleophryne rosei*), a species highly localized and faced with significant threats from habitat fragmentation and degradation. A few plant taxa in this forest type include *Podocarpus latifolius*, *Cassine peragua*, *Ilex mitis*, *Rapanea melanophloeos*, *Ocotea bullata* (Endangered), *Kiggelaria africana* and *Cunonia capensis*. Small remnants of Afrotemperate forest remain in TMNP and are heavily targeted by groups/individuals that harvest bark from trees for selling and/or traditional medicinal purposes. The older and bigger trees are bark-stripped and damaged to the extent that they will not survive. *Rapanea melanophloeos* and *Ocotea bullata* are trees favoured for traditional medicinal purposes and these species are among the older and bigger trees in the forest. As forest patch sizes decrease, the risks of losing forest structure and species increase. To restore these ecosystems, the TMNP teams and some volunteer groups conduct ecological restoration actions, and passive and non-passive interventions are monitored to determine success and understand future actions needed. This presentation will show the work being done in TMNP and the lessons learnt in the restoration of Afrotemperate forests in an urban protected area.