

THE STATUS OF CONSERVATION IN THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

A South African contribution to Section CT (Conservation of Terrestrial Communities) of the IBP (International Biological Programme)

CONTENTS

Introduction	1
Survey to determine the adequacy of existing conserved areas in relation to vegetation types. A preliminary report	3
Survey of the adequacy of existing conserved areas in relation to wild animal species	39
An evaluation of the conservation status of aquatic biotopes	71
Register of permanent conservation areas in South and South West Africa (August 1973)	85

Introduction

In South Africa the first conservation areas to be created were those set aside for large game animals. Later, reserves were created around scenic features, to conserve vegetation features and to protect vulnerable catchment areas. The CT programme has provided a much needed opportunity to review conservation needs in South Africa from a much wider point of view. The effectiveness of present conservation has been reviewed in regard to vegetation types, in regard to large mammals (as well as certain other vertebrates) and, in Project Aqua, in regard to inland aquatic habitats.

The information collated in these surveys will be forwarded to the Nature Conservancy in London for computer storage at the Biological Records Centre, Monks Wood Experimental Station, together with data on IBP areas elsewhere in the world.

While the investigations reported on here were stimulated by the international programme, and while the findings are undoubtedly of international importance, emphasis here was on national rather than international needs. What emerges therefore, is a plan of action for implementation by all the conservation authorities concerned and a need to co-ordinate this implementation at a national level.

If successful, this programme may well prove to be the most lasting result of South Africa's participation in the International Biological Programme.

S.S. du Plessis
SOUTH AFRICAN CT CONVENER