

Integrated Report 2025-2026

BUILDING A FUTURE WHERE SEABIRDS AND PEOPLE
LIVE TOGETHER IN ECOLOGICAL SUSTAINABILITY





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Leadership Message



As I reflect on the past year, I am struck by both the urgency of our work and the extraordinary commitment of the people who make it possible.

There has never been a more critical time for African Penguin conservation. With fewer than 8,000 breeding pairs remaining in South Africa, we are facing the very real prospect that Africa's only penguin could disappear from the wild within our lifetime. This alarming decline is a warning that our marine ecosystems are under increasing pressure. Healthy seabird populations reflect healthy oceans, and their future is inseparable from the health of the marine environment on which they, and we, depend.

SANCCOB has remained steadfast in its mission to conserve South Africa's seabirds through science-led conservation and collaboration. Behind every aspect of SANCCOB's work is a dedicated team of staff, volunteers, and interns. Their expertise, resilience and commitment are the driving force behind SANCCOB's impact.

This year demonstrated both the complexity of the threats facing seabirds and SANCCOB's ability to respond. Our teams continued to provide specialist care to injured, sick, oiled, and abandoned seabirds while maintaining heightened biosecurity measures in response to High Pathogenicity Avian Influenza (HPAI). What began as an emergency response in 2025 became SANCCOB's longest-running disease response, with enhanced quarantine and surveillance measures continuing to date. Responding to HPAI has placed considerable demands on our operations, requiring dedicated quarantine areas and separate teams to minimise the risk of disease transmission while ensuring uninterrupted care for every seabird patient. SANCCOB's response has earned international recognition, with the organisation becoming a trusted source of expertise for the global wildlife rehabilitation community. As HPAI reached Australia and New Zealand, SANCCOB worked alongside conservation partners and rehabilitation organisations, sharing technical knowledge and

practical experience to strengthen preparedness and improve outcomes for affected wildlife.

This year also demonstrated the importance of investing in conservation capacity before a crisis unfolds. Following the opening of SANCCOB's purpose-built Seabird Nursery in July 2025, the first quarter of 2026 recorded the highest number of African Penguin egg admissions in the organisation's history, with 575 eggs admitted in just three months. The expanded nursery enabled our dedicated team to safely accommodate this unprecedented influx, providing specialist artificial incubation and hand-rearing that directly support the recovery of the Critically Endangered African Penguin. Alongside this achievement, 1,217 seabirds, including 850 African Penguins, were successfully rehabilitated and returned to the wild.

SANCCOB also continued to strengthen its position as a global leader in oiled wildlife preparedness and response. During the year, we co-hosted the 15th Effects of Oil on Wildlife Conference in Cape Town, the first time this internationally recognised conference had been held on African soil. The timing was particularly significant, following the 25th anniversary of the *MV Treasure* oil spill, commemorated in June 2025, which remains one of the largest wildlife rescue operations in history. The conference brought together international experts to share knowledge, strengthen collaboration, and advance global preparedness for future wildlife emergencies.

The reporting year also marked an important step forward in SANCCOB's own journey. As we concluded one strategic planning cycle, we began implementing a new five-year strategy in January 2026 that will guide the organisation through the next phase of its development. This strategy recognises that seabird conservation requires strong partnerships, scientific excellence, effective advocacy, adaptive management, organisational sustainability, and meaningful public engagement and support.

None of this would be possible without the unwavering support of our Board of Directors, members, staff, volunteers, interns, partners, and supporters. Conservation is a shared responsibility, and every success achieved by SANCCOB reflects the strength of this support.

While the challenges ahead remain significant, I remain optimistic. The dedication of our people, the quality of our science, the strength of our partnerships and the commitment of our supporters give me confidence that we can continue to make a meaningful difference for South Africa's seabirds.

On behalf of the Board and staff of SANCCOB, thank you for standing with us as we continue building a future where seabirds and people live together in ecological sustainability.

Sincerely,



Natalie Maskell
Chief Executive Officer



Our Mission

To conserve seabirds, the African Penguin being the flagship species of focus.

Our Vision

Building a future where seabirds and people live together in ecological sustainability.

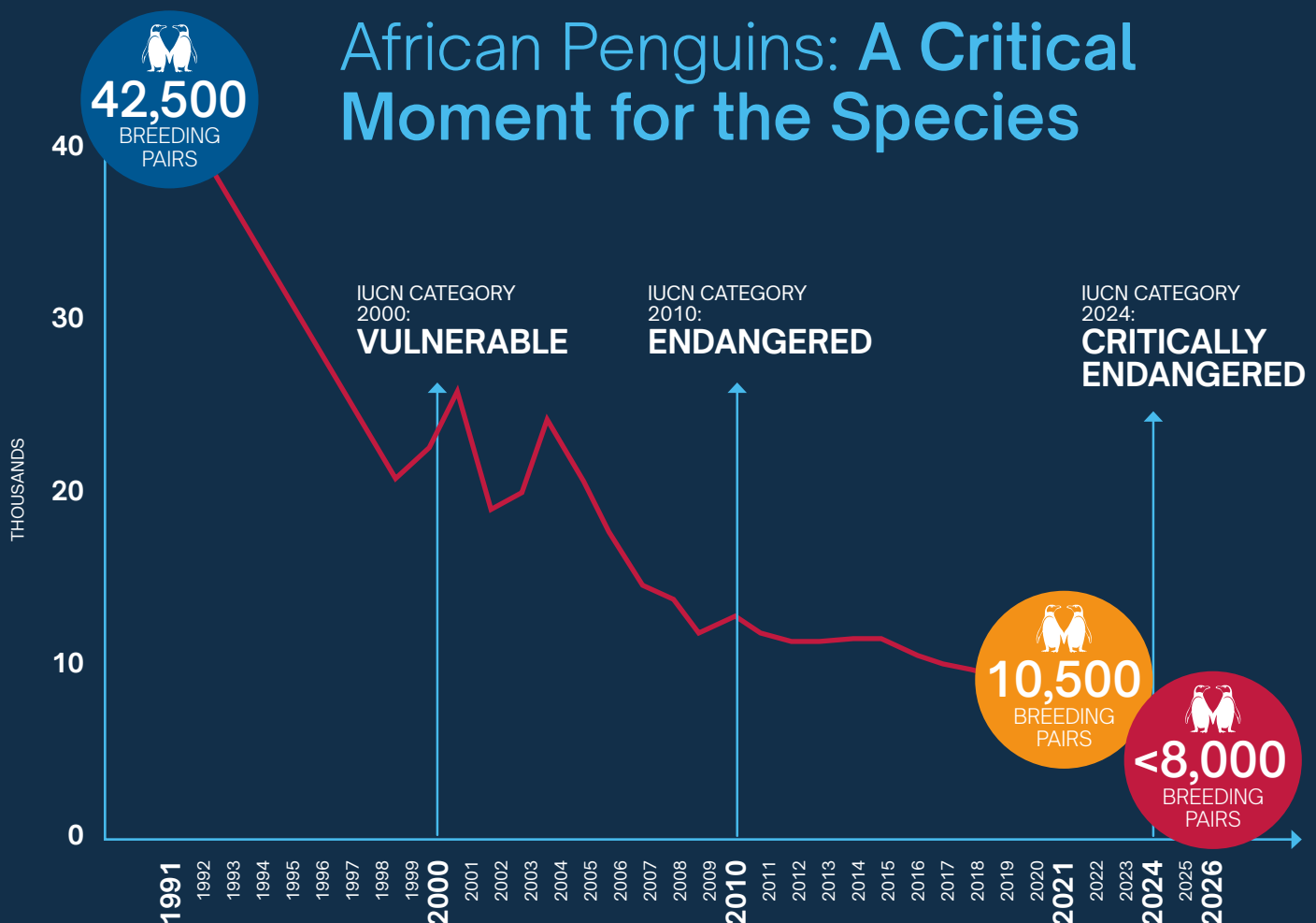
Our Values

Dedication.
Collaboration.
Integrity.

Impact

Contributing to the recovery of seabird populations and the long-term ecological health of the marine ecosystems on which seabirds and people depend.

Seabirds are important indicators of ocean health, and their decline is a warning of the growing pressures facing our marine ecosystems. 2026 marks the first year of SANCCOB's new five-year strategic period, with our work focused on tackling these threats through an integrated approach. From seabird rescue, rehabilitation and chick bolstering to colony-based conservation, research and science, education, advocacy, and emergency preparedness and response, our programmes work together to protect threatened seabirds and the marine ecosystems on which they depend.



Source: IUCN

Threats Facing Seabirds

**Food
availability**

Pollution

Predation

Disease

**Climate
change**

SANCCOB's Programmes

The Seabird Survival Programme

delivers world-class rescue, rehabilitation, veterinary care, artificial incubation and release to threatened seabird species.

Through **the Research and Science Programme**, SANCCOB generates critical data that informs understanding and practical solutions for seabird and ecosystem health.

The Advocacy and Policy Change Programme

ensures that legislation, governance, and conservation policy reflect the mechanisms necessary for seabirds to thrive in the wild.

The Emergency Preparedness and Response Programme

positions SANCCOB as the first line of defence against pollution and environmental disasters, protecting thousands of seabirds when they are most vulnerable.

The Education and Empowerment Programme

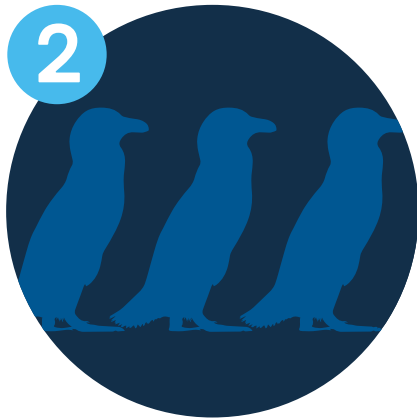
inspires and equips communities, schools, and volunteers to become champions for marine and seabird conservation.

Strategic Objectives

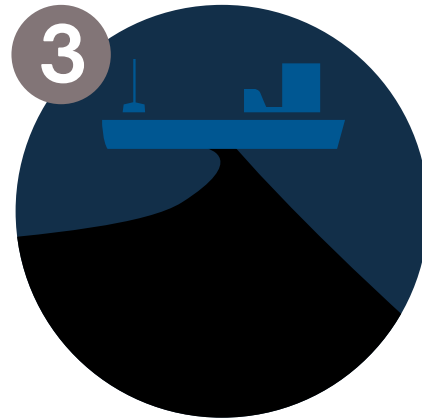
2026-2030



Bolster wild seabird populations via rehabilitation and chick bolstering



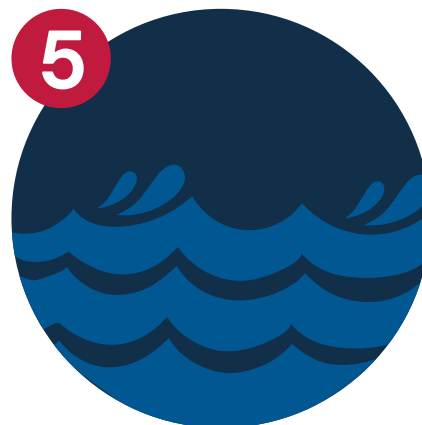
Protect seabird colonies by reducing mortality and increasing breeding success, by preventing and addressing in-colony threats



Prevent and mitigate the effects of pollution on wildlife through oil spill prevention, preparedness and response



Support the Namibian government and stakeholders in the conservation of seabird species



Improve ocean health, including increased food availability for seabirds, contributing to conservation benefits

How **SANCCOB's** programmes work towards fulfilling our **Strategic Objectives**

The Seabird Survival Programme:

Improved survival and breeding success for priority seabirds through effective rehabilitation, chick bolstering and targeted management of threats to breeding colonies.

The Research and Science Programme:

Stronger availability, quality and application of scientific evidence to inform seabird conservation and marine ecosystem management.

The Advocacy and Policy Change Programme:

Strengthened policies, regulations and institutional action and awareness to address priority threats to seabirds and support their conservation through evidence-based management decision making.

The Emergency Preparedness and Response Programme:

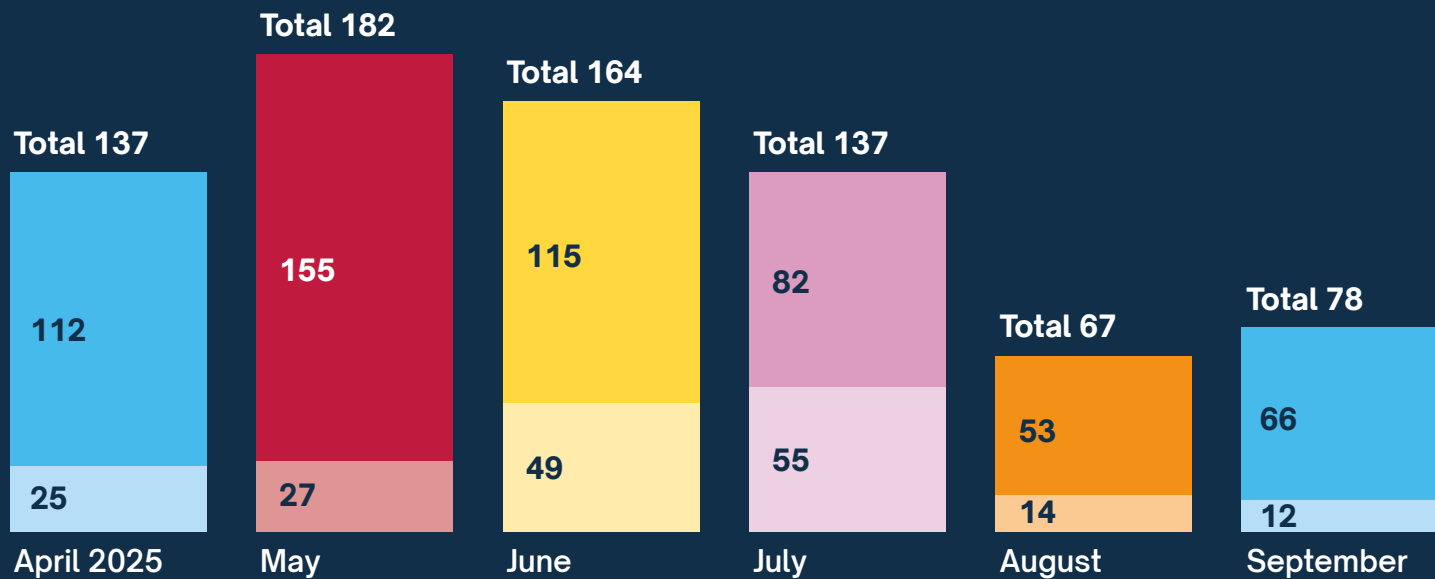
Strengthened capacity and coordination to prevent, prepare for and respond effectively to wildlife emergencies, reducing pollution impacts on seabirds and other effected wildlife.

The Education and Empowerment Programme:

Improved knowledge, skills and meaningful participation among communities, youth, practitioners and other priority audiences in support of seabird conservation.

A Year of Conservation

The reporting year was one of both challenge and progress for SANCCOB, reflecting the increasingly complex realities of seabird conservation. SANCCOB's Year in Conservation captures some of the moments that shaped our work from April 2025 to March 2026.



57 vulnerable Cape Gannet chicks were rescued from the Lambert's Bay breeding colony and admitted to SANCCOB.

Some had been abandoned by their parents, while others were pre-emptively rescued following heavy rainfall, giving these chicks a vital second chance at survival.

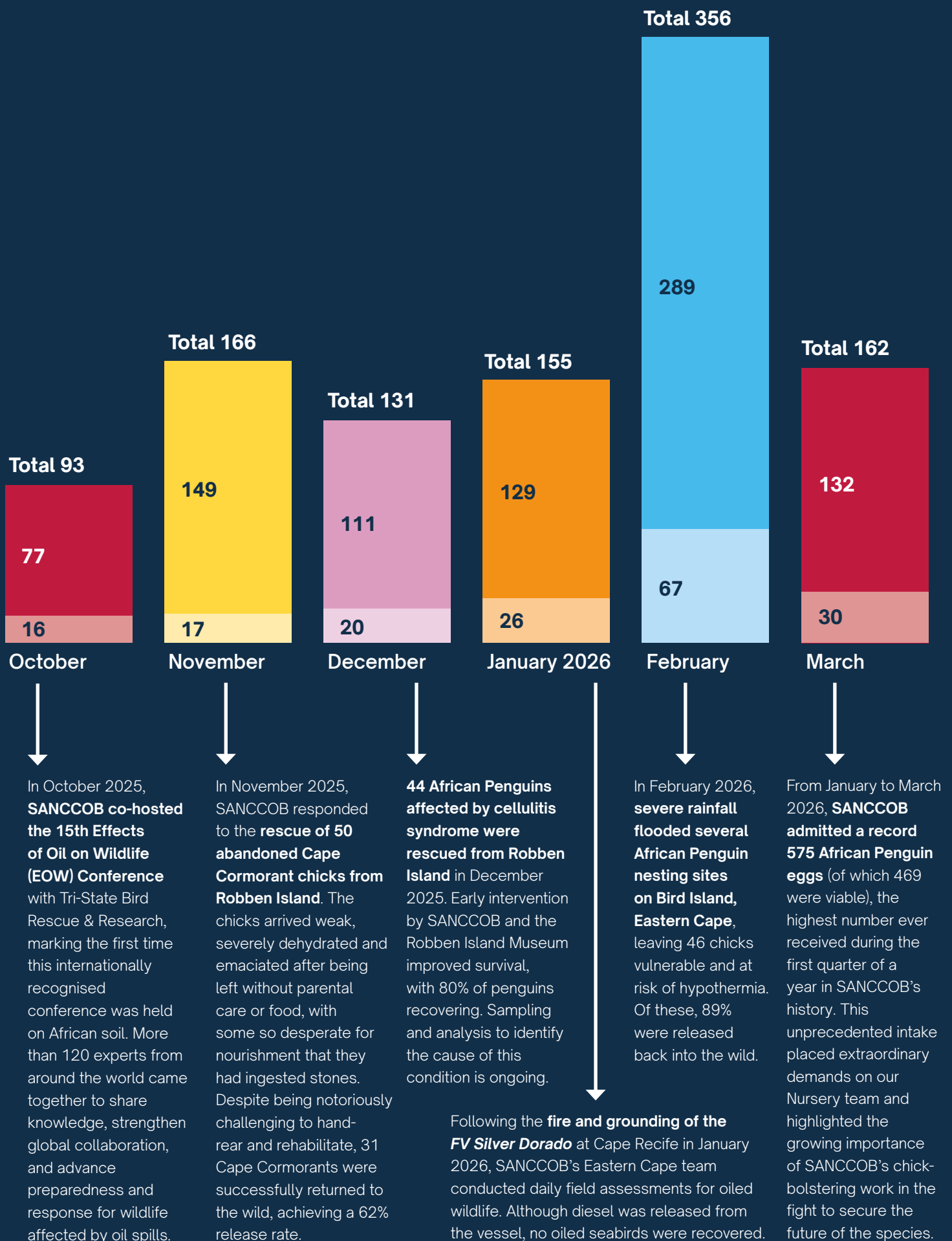


SANCCOB commemorated the **25th anniversary of the MV Treasure oil spill**, one of the largest animal rescue efforts in history. More than 20,000 oiled African Penguins were successfully rehabilitated and released, while nearly 20,000 additional penguins were pre-emptively captured to prevent oil exposure.

An outbreak of **High Pathogenicity Avian Influenza (HPAI)** was detected in mid-July 2025. SANCCOB immediately activated its disease contingency plan, implementing enhanced biosecurity, quarantine and testing protocols to minimise the risk of the virus entering its rehabilitation centres. The outbreak marked the beginning of SANCCOB's longest emergency response to date, which is ongoing at the date of this report.

July 2025 marked a major milestone for SANCCOB with the **opening of the Pamela Isdell Seabird Nursery**, the only dedicated seabird nursery of its kind. Quadrupling SANCCOB's previous nursery in size, the purpose-built facility is equipped with state-of-the-art technology to artificially incubate up to 400 eggs and hand-rear 200 chicks at any one time.





The Seabird Survival Programme

The Seabird Survival Programme is SANCCOB's flagship conservation programme and the frontline response to the threats facing South Africa's seabirds. Delivered in partnership with conservation authorities and government, the Programme provides a coordinated response to implementing the African Penguin Biodiversity Management Plan (AP-BMP) and safeguarding South Africa's most important seabird breeding colonies.

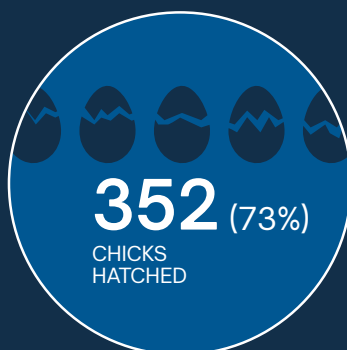
The Programme integrates colony-based conservation and monitoring, specialised veterinary and rehabilitative care, and chick-bolstering interventions to support seabird population recovery.

SANCCOB's Seabird Rangers monitor breeding colonies, respond to emergencies, collect critical scientific data and support the proactive management of disease outbreaks, predation,

food scarcity and extreme weather events. Within SANCCOB's hospitals, every patient receives expert veterinary and rehabilitative care tailored to its individual needs.

SANCCOB is the only organisation globally with a dedicated seabird nursery. Its primary objective is to bolster wild seabird populations through the artificial incubation of abandoned and at-risk eggs and the specialised hand-rearing of chicks, with a particular focus on the Critically Endangered African Penguin. As part of the African Penguin biodiversity management plan endorsed Chick Bolstering Project, these interventions enable viable eggs and chicks that would otherwise be lost from the wild population to be reared and released, directly contributing to African Penguin population recovery while supporting other threatened seabird species.

Statistics: April 2025 - March 2026



Snapshot Highlights

Seabird admissions reflect the significant pressures facing seabirds, with the leading causes including abandonment (15%), predation (14%), injury (12%) and emaciation (10%), alongside chicks hatched at SANCCOB (17%). These cases highlight the diverse threats affecting seabirds along the South African coastline and the broad range of rehabilitation interventions undertaken by SANCCOB.

Beyond SANCCOB's facilities, 11 Seabird Rangers monitor five key seabird colonies, working with conservation authorities to enable frontline monitoring, swift rescue and intervention, to support threatened seabird populations in the wild.

Predation: Responding to a growing threat

During the reporting period, 106 seabirds were admitted to SANCCOB Gqeberha with predation injuries, primarily associated with sharks and seals in Algoa Bay. This included 95 African Penguins and 11 Cape Gannets, rescued from Bird Island by SANCCOB's Seabird Monitors in collaboration with SANParks Rangers.

These injuries can be severe and often require surgery, X-rays and extended rehabilitation. Despite this, 70 of the 106 birds were successfully rehabilitated and released back into the wild – a 66% release rate.



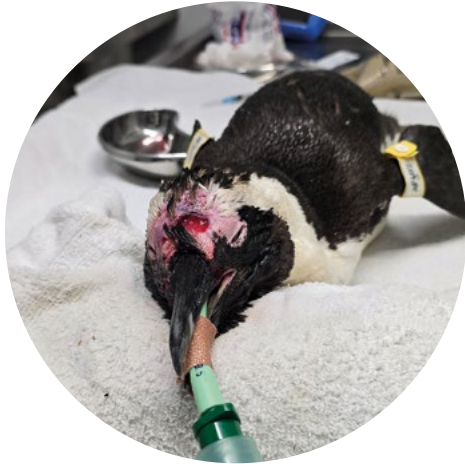
Image: Shark predation wound on an African Penguin

Image: An African Penguin under anaesthetic, just one of our complex cases



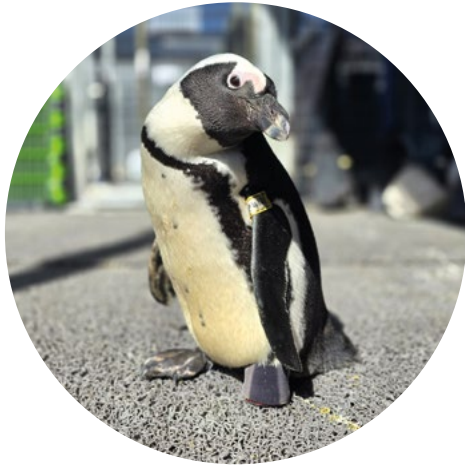
Behind the numbers - a few remarkable cases

During the year, SANCCOB's veterinary and rehabilitation teams cared for seabirds affected by severe injuries, predation, disease, abandonment, emaciation and other debilitating conditions. Interventions ranged from stabilisation and supportive care, to hook removal, blood transfusions, reconstructive surgery and limb amputation. Behind these interventions are individual patients whose recoveries demonstrate both the complexity of seabird medicine and the specialist care required to return compromised seabirds to the wild. Here are a few cases that stood out during the year:



AP402 | Beating the odds, surviving a caracal attack

When AP402 arrived at SANCCOB from Stony Point in July, the African Penguin had a severe puncture wound to the top of its head, with both eyes showing clear signs of infection. The injury was suspected to have resulted from caracal predation, one of the threats faced by penguins breeding at mainland colonies. The wound required specialist veterinary intervention, and by using reconstructive techniques, SANCCOB's veterinary team created a skin flap from the back of the penguin's head to close the wound, giving AP402 the opportunity to heal. This case highlights the level of veterinary expertise required to treat severely injured seabirds, and AP402 was released on 19 August 2025.



AP410 | An exceptional recovery

AP410 arrived from Robben Island in July with severe injuries to its left foot, causing the foot to flip backwards. The veterinary team initially pursued conservative treatment in the hope that the injury could be managed without surgery, but when this proved unsuccessful, a more significant intervention was needed. Following its moult, AP410 underwent a foot amputation in September and remarkably, recovery was rapid. The penguin adapted well following surgery, progressed through rehabilitation and was ultimately returned to the wild on 8 November 2025.



AP509 | Life-saving blood transfusion

When African Penguin AP509 arrived from Simon's Town, the bird was weak, lethargic and severely anaemic. Its condition required an urgent blood transfusion, provided by one of SANCCOB's healthy resident penguins. Within weeks, AP509 had progressed into rehabilitation and was confidently completing hour-long swimming sessions. On 12 November 2025, the penguin was released at Foxy Beach, close to where it had originally been rescued.



AP072 | 154 days from rescue to release

Found on Bird Island (Algoa Bay) on 8 March 2026 after swallowing a fish hook and fishing line, AP072 was admitted to SANCCOB on 14 March 2026 and required emergency surgery to remove the hook lodged in its oesophagus. What followed was an intensive recovery, with SANCCOB's rehabilitation team providing all post-operative care in the absence of an onsite veterinarian. During its recovery, AP072 even completed a full moult, with new feathers growing over the surgical site. After 154 days in SANCCOB's care, AP072 was successfully released back into the wild on 14 August 2026.

Images, top to bottom: AP402 in surgery after caracal attack, AP410 recovering after its foot amputation, AP509 receiving an urgent blood transfusion; AP072 after surgery, during its long stay in SANCCOB's care

The Pamela Isdell Seabird Nursery team working around the clock

SANCCOB's Chick Bolstering Project is a critical component of the African Penguin Biodiversity Management Plan (AP-BMP), South Africa's conservation strategy for the species. Through the rescue and hand-rearing of abandoned and compromised African Penguin chicks, the project directly contributes to efforts to bolster the wild African Penguin population. SANCCOB is proud to be the only organisation in the world undertaking this specialised conservation intervention at this scale.

To strengthen SANCCOB's delivery of AP-BMP, the purpose-built Pamela Isdell Seabird Nursery opened its doors in July 2025, doubling SANCCOB's capacity to care for rescued eggs and chicks through specialised facilities, upgraded equipment and enhanced biosecurity.

This increased capacity proved critical almost immediately. The 2025/26 season saw a record number of African Penguin eggs rescued and admitted for artificial incubation and specialised care.

On admission, every egg is candled to assess viability, after which they are weighed, measured, UV sterilised, and transferred into special egg incubators. Thereafter, temperature and humidity are carefully controlled to support optimal embryonic development. Once hatched, chicks enter an intensive hand-rearing programme involving six feeds every day, alongside regular health checks and weight monitoring.

This extremely labour-intensive process gives viable eggs and vulnerable chicks that would otherwise be lost an opportunity to contribute to the wild population. Since 2006, over 12,000 African Penguin chicks have been admitted, with more than 10,000 fledglings released into the wild, directly contributing to efforts to bolster the wild population of this Critically Endangered species.



Re-establishing an African Penguin colony at De Hoop

Since 2018, BirdLife South Africa, SANCCOB and CapeNature have collaborated to re-establish an African Penguin colony at De Hoop Nature Reserve. Led by BirdLife South Africa, the initiative seeks to create a self-sustaining breeding population in this important area. By 31 March 2026, 333 African Penguin fledglings, all hand-reared at SANCCOB, had been released at the colony, supporting efforts to re-establish and grow the population.

Image, left: Re-establishing the African Penguin colony at De Hoop Nature Reserve

Images, above: The Pamela Isdell Seabird Nursery team, working around the clock



Investing in a more sustainable future

Following the installation of solar infrastructure at SANCCOB's Eastern Cape facility (pictured left) in August 2025, the financial benefits of the investment are already evident. The facility's electricity budget has reduced by approximately 81%, demonstrating the value of investing in renewable energy infrastructure to support the long-term financial and environmental sustainability of SANCCOB's conservation operations. The resulting savings allow more of SANCCOB's resources to be directed towards frontline seabird conservation, rather than utility costs.

Images: SANCCOB Eastern Cape with the installation of carport solar panels

Looking ahead: 2026-2027

As pressures on seabirds continue to intensify, SANCCOB's focus in the year ahead will be on strengthening its capacity to respond both in the wild and within its seabird hospitals. Priorities will include responding to the implications of the recent sardine mortality event and potential impacts on seabird food availability, breeding success, and population recovery, while continuing to work with conservation authorities to strengthen predator management and protection at key seabird colonies.

SANCCOB will also focus on building capacity within the Pamela Isdell Seabird Nursery and expanding the specialist workforce across its seabird hospitals to meet growing rehabilitation and veterinary demands.

Together, these priorities will strengthen SANCCOB's ability to anticipate emerging threats, respond rapidly when seabirds are at risk, and support the long-term recovery of threatened seabird populations.

Building on the successful implementation of solar power at the Eastern Cape facility, SANCCOB will invest in a similar renewable energy system at its Western Cape facility, with construction commencing in late 2026. The investment will further reduce reliance on grid electricity, lower operating costs and strengthen the environmental sustainability of SANCCOB's facilities.

The expansion of SANCCOB's Eastern Cape seabird hospital also remains a strategic priority. Plans are progressing for a purpose-built Intensive Care Unit, surgery, and nursery facility, which will expand specialist veterinary and rehabilitation capacity, improve treatment outcomes and reduce the need to transport sick and injured seabirds to external veterinary service providers for major procedures.

SANCCOB is initiating collaboration with international partners to assess potential HPAI vaccination strategies for vulnerable seabird populations.

The Research and Science Programme

SANCCOB's Research and Science Programme provides the scientific evidence needed to strengthen seabird conservation and improve recovery outcomes. Working across SANCCOB's seabird hospitals and the wild seabird colonies, the programme connects research with practical conservation action and supports advocacy and policy change.

Research focuses on understanding and addressing the pressures facing threatened seabirds, including disease, food scarcity, predation and reproductive success, while evaluating the long-term contribution of rehabilitation and conservation interventions

to wild populations. Key areas include disease surveillance and diagnostics; African Penguin egg incubation and embryonic development; predation at mainland colonies; post-release survival, movement and breeding; and the development of body-condition indicators to better understand the effects of changes in food availability.

Through long-term monitoring, field research, scientific collaboration and the analysis of data generated across SANCCOB's programmes, science informs how SANCCOB cares for individual seabirds today while helping address the threats determining the future of their populations in the wild.

Statistics: April 2025 - March 2026



Snapshot Highlights

Detecting disease, protecting seabirds

SANCCOB's passive disease surveillance programme plays a critical role in detecting, monitoring and understanding emerging health threats to wild seabirds. During the reporting period, this was particularly important in tracking the High Pathogenicity Avian Influenza (HPAI) outbreak, with approximately 2,000 HPAI records reported to the South African national reporting system and 1,094 samples submitted for HPAI testing, including samples from 890 live seabirds and 204 carcasses.

Disease surveillance extends well beyond HPAI. SANCCOB conducted 1,050 post-mortem examinations on seabirds and 107 on eggs, providing valuable insight into causes of mortality and threats ranging from disease and bacterial infection to bee envenomation, predation, fishing-related injuries and road-related deaths. A further 16 histology and 18 microbiology samples supported diagnostic investigations.

Research also focused on the unusual cellulitis syndrome cases affecting African Penguins, with 26 environmental samples tested as SANCCOB worked to investigate potential causes. Together, these diagnostics, post-mortems and field observations provide an important evidence base for identifying emerging threats, strengthening disease surveillance and informing conservation and veterinary responses.



Image: African Penguin eggs being weighed and measured prior to incubation

Giving every egg the best chance

For African Penguin eggs rescued, their history and the conditions they experienced before arriving at SANCCOB are often unknown. Once admitted to SANCCOB's Seabird Nursery and placed in specialised egg incubators, eggs are weighed daily and embryonic development is regularly assessed to give each egg the best possible chance of successfully hatching and producing a healthy chick.

To further optimise incubation and chick rearing protocols, SANCCOB is investigating the conditions that contribute to successful hatching and fledging, comparing Nursery outcomes with those observed in wild populations. Research considers factors including temperature, humidity, eggshell temperature, natural incubation behaviour and microclimates, supported by weather-station data.

SANCCOB is also researching the effects of temperature and UV sterilisation of seabird eggs, and has initiated studies into embryonic staging and egg composition. Together, this research is building

a stronger scientific foundation for continually improving the specialised care of rescued African Penguin eggs and chicks.

Understanding predation in order to protect penguin colonies

Predation is an escalating threat to African Penguins, affecting eggs, chicks and breeding adults both on land and at sea. During the reporting period, predation accounted for 259 African Penguin mortalities, being 14% of all recorded mortalities. Caracal and shark predation are of particular concern, reinforcing the need to better understand and manage predation pressure as part of African Penguin recovery efforts.

At mainland colonies, African Penguins face multiple terrestrial predators. Kelp Gulls predominantly target eggs, mongoose and genets prey on eggs and chicks, while caracals can kill breeding adults. SANCCOB is working with conservation authorities to record and map predation events to identify hotspots, understand spatial and temporal patterns, and assess their impact on colonies over time. Research also considers building a more complete understanding of the pressures African Penguins face across their life cycle.

SANCCOB continues to work closely with conservation authorities, providing the evidence needed to inform adaptive management at affected colonies. By understanding where, when and how predation occurs, SANCCOB is helping translate science into targeted conservation action to protect African Penguins in the wild.



Image: One of many African Penguins admitted to SANCCOB with clear predation wounds

Tracking seabirds beyond release

SANCCOB's responsibility does not end when a rehabilitated seabird returns to the wild. Through long-term post-release monitoring, SANCCOB uses Passive Integrated Transponders (PIT's) for African Penguins, and South African Bird Ringing Unit (SAFRING) leg rings for flying seabirds, to track individuals after release and build an evidence base on their survival, movements and reproductive success.

For African Penguins, approximately 17,000 individuals have been PIT-tagged since 2013, generating over 500,000 re-sightings. Transponder re-sighting data are used in model-based research to estimate and compare the survival of wild-origin, rehabilitated and hand-reared African Penguins. This long-term research has demonstrated that rehabilitated and hand-reared seabirds can survive

successfully after release and contribute to the wild population, providing important evidence of the conservation impact of SANCCOB's interventions. Post-release monitoring also provides valuable information on movement, colony attendance and breeding, helping SANCCOB understand not only whether released seabirds survive, but how they contribute to African Penguin populations over time. This monitoring is particularly valuable at De Hoop Nature Reserve, where 333 SANCCOB-reared African Penguins have been released as of 31 March 2026, as part of efforts to re-establish a breeding colony. Re-sightings provide important evidence on how released seabirds disperse, return to potential breeding sites and contribute to colony establishment, helping inform future African Penguin recovery intervention.



*An emaciated
juvenile penguin
admitted to
SANCCOB*

Understanding the impact of food scarcity on seabirds

Food availability is fundamental to the survival and recovery of threatened seabirds. SANCCOB is developing adult body condition indices for African Penguins and Cormorant species to provide a consistent way of assessing nutritional condition and identifying signs of starvation and emaciation associated with food shortages.

By combining body condition assessments with molecular sexing, SANCCOB can also investigate whether nutritional stress and other threats disproportionately affect males or females, helping to identify potentially important sex-biased impacts on seabird populations.

These data complement wider monitoring of African Penguins and their marine environment, including African Penguin monitoring and fine-scale fish surveys undertaken by BirdLife South Africa around key breeding colonies. By linking seabird body condition with information on prey availability and the monitoring of fishing closures around colonies, this research can help determine where and when food scarcity is affecting seabirds and whether conservation interventions are delivering the intended benefits.

Over time, this evidence will strengthen understanding of the relationship between fish availability, seabird health and population recovery, and contribute to more effective ecosystem-based conservation and fisheries management.

Looking ahead: 2026-2027

SANCCOB will continue to strengthen the research and long-term monitoring that supports evidence-based seabird conservation, while expanding its focus on the key threats driving population decline.

SANCCOB has facilitated the purchase of caracal traps, monitoring cameras and tracking collars at Stony Point to strengthen predator monitoring and support conservation authorities with evidence-based management interventions. SANCCOB has furthermore engaged with conservation authorities regarding shark predation, specifically within areas where activities such as shark cage diving are permitted.

SANCCOB aims to secure multi-year funding to expand dedicated fisheries and marine science capacity, investigating food scarcity, climate-related changes in prey availability, maritime

disturbance, underwater noise and oil-spill risk, while translating research into practical management and policy interventions.

SANCCOB will seek funding for a dedicated Bank Cormorant conservation multi-stakeholder programme, including a range-wide population census across South Africa and Namibia, a bi-national recovery action plan, and research to inform targeted conservation interventions for this Endangered species – this will include DFFE and other conservation partners.

At an international level, SANCCOB will continue to contribute its expertise and strengthen global collaboration through representation at key forums, such as the International Penguin Congress (IPC) and World Seabird Conference (WSC).

The Advocacy and Policy Change Programme

Advocacy and Policy change are critical to the long-term success of seabird conservation because they address the systemic threats that individual rescue and rehabilitation efforts alone cannot solve. For SANCCOB, advocacy ensures that the protection of threatened species, such as the African Penguin, is embedded in law, regulation, and industry practice. This includes influencing decisions on fisheries management, marine spatial planning, and high-risk activities

like ship-to-ship bunkering, all of which directly impact seabird survival. Without strong policies and effective enforcement, conservation gains can be quickly undone by unchecked human activities. By holding decision-makers accountable, advocacy creates an enabling environment where seabirds can recover, ecosystems can function sustainably, and conservation interventions have lasting, population-level impact.

Statistics: April 2025 - March 2026



Snapshot Highlights

Strengthening the African Penguin Biodiversity Management Plan (AP-BMP)

Throughout the reporting period, SANCCOB remained actively engaged in the AP-BMP, contributing technical expertise, reviewing protocols and submitting formal comments on the revised plan circulated by the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE) in February 2026. SANCCOB also contributed to strengthened predator-management guidance and continued to use AP-BMP and partnership platforms to advocate for consistent, evidence-based management across African Penguin colonies.

In 2025, SANCCOB co-authored A Decade of Implementing the Biodiversity Management Plan for African Penguins: Successes, Failures and Lessons Learnt, helping translate more than a decade of conservation experience into evidence to inform future species management. The research identified rehabilitation, predator management and habitat improvement among successful interventions, while highlighting funding, capacity and institutional accountability as continuing constraints.



From national guidelines to action at colonies

SANCCOB worked with conservation authorities to help translate national conservation guidance into practical, colony-specific interventions. This included supporting CapeNature with predator-management approaches at Stony Point and engaging with the City of Cape Town around management of terrestrial predators at mainland colonies. CapeNature also moved to same-day clearance of abandoned and at-risk African Penguin eggs, enabling eggs requiring intervention to enter specialist care sooner. This vital conservation action directly contributed to the historical influx of abandoned and at-risk African Penguin egg admissions in the first quarter of 2026.



Image, left Seabird ranger in African Penguin colony, monitoring nests for egg abandonment

Strengthening cooperative management

Effective African Penguin recovery requires multiple authorities and conservation organisations to work together. During the reporting period, SANCCOB participated in monthly operational meetings for the Simon's Town African Penguin colony alongside the City of Cape Town and SANParks, strengthening coordination around

colony management. Engagement also continued around Robben Island, with discussions focused on improving collaboration and clarifying responsibilities for African Penguin and seabird monitoring between Robben Island Museum, DFFE, SANParks and SANCCOB.

Bringing science into fisheries decisions

SANCCOB continued advocating for African Penguin food requirements to be better reflected in fisheries management. During the reporting period, DFFE Oceans and Coasts began the process of establishing an African Penguin Scientific Working Group, with stakeholders contributing to the development of its terms of

reference and conservation-sector representation. The Working Group provides an important mechanism for strengthening the scientific evidence informing decisions relating to fishing closures around important African Penguin colonies.

Supporting compliance around fishing closures

Securing fishing closures is only meaningful if they are effectively implemented. During the reporting period, SANCCOB continued engaging with government, industry and conservation partners around compliance and enforcement of fishing restrictions around African Penguin

colonies. While NGOs do not hold enforcement authority, compliance monitoring by BirdLife South Africa using Automatic Identification System (AIS) data and Global Fishing Watch data provides an additional evidence-base to support engagement with responsible authorities.

Strengthening seabird conservation in Namibia

SANCCOB continued working with NAMCOB and other partners to strengthen seabird conservation in Namibia, providing support for research, advocacy, policy, oiled-wildlife preparedness and rehabilitation. Key developments included supporting a proposed cooperation agreement between the Namibian Foundation for the Conservation of Seabirds (NAMCOB) and Namibia's Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Land Reform, and developing a Species Action Plan for African Penguins, Cape Gannets, Bank Cormorants and Cape Cormorants.

Image: NAMCOB assistant seabird technician caring for an African Penguin





Strengthening ship-to-ship bunkering regulations

SANCCOB welcomed the introduction of ship-to-ship bunkering regulations by the DFFE. As an important step towards addressing the environmental impacts of bunkering in Algoa Bay, SANCCOB submitted comments on both versions of the draft regulations which were finalised in August 2025. While the final regulations provide some protection, important gaps remain. SANCCOB raised these concerns through radio interviews, LinkedIn posts and a joint media statement with BirdLife South Africa. SANCCOB has been engaging with stakeholders across the bunkering sector to identify practical ways to address the remaining gaps to provide better protection for seabirds, in particular the African Penguin in Algoa Bay.

Looking ahead: 2026-2027

SANCCOB will strengthen its role as a science-led, evidence-based advocate for policy and management changes required to reverse seabird declines and support the recovery of threatened populations. Through this process we have identified four clearly defined priorities that form the organising framework for the Advocacy and Policy Change Programme.

To strengthen conservation policy and implementation, SANCCOB will continue to advance the implementation of national seabird conservation commitments, emphasising the African Penguin Biodiversity Management Plan (AP-BMP). Priorities include supporting defined institutional responsibilities, clear recovery objectives, measurable targets and transparent monitoring of progress. SANCCOB will continue to engage with relevant colony management authorities and conservation partners to strengthen compliance, enforcement and protection of important breeding colonies and habitats.

Scientific evidence to inform policy action will strengthen the connection between research, monitoring, and decision-making by translating scientific findings and operational experience into practical management recommendations. Greater emphasis will be placed on emerging and escalating marine threats, including ship-to-ship bunkering, underwater noise, offshore development, and pollution risk, while continuing to strengthen predator-management approaches at key colonies.

Securing adequate seabird prey availability is critical and requires science-based evidence for targeted fisheries management advocacy that accounts for prey requirements of African Penguins. This priority will promote the integration of sardine and anchovy abundance, distribution, fishing pressure, and penguin foraging data into pro-active management decisions. Through this, SANCCOB will support precautionary and adaptive approaches that respond to changing environmental conditions and assess whether existing measures are contributing to improved prospects for African Penguin recovery.

Nurturing partnerships for coordinated conservation action will continue, where we will seek to deepen existing collaboration between government, research institutions, conservation organisations, and relevant industries. This will prioritise strategic partnerships that support shared evidence, coordinated advocacy and effective implementation of conservation measures. Key engagements will include efforts to reduce fisheries-related seabird mortality and address emerging marine risks, including pollution and shipping incidents.

Together, these priorities aim to strengthen SANCCOB's contribution to evidence-based policy, more effective conservation management and the long-term recovery of seabird populations. Progress will be assessed not only through advocacy activities and policy submissions, but also through demonstrable policy influence, implementation milestones and measurable improvements in conservation practice.

The Emergency Preparedness and Response Programme

SANCCOB was founded in 1968 in response to an oil spill and has since responded to nearly 100 oil pollution incidents. Today, its Emergency Preparedness and Response Programme supports South Africa's readiness to respond to oil spills, disease outbreaks and other marine emergencies affecting seabirds and coastal wildlife.

Working with government, conservation authorities, industry and international partners, SANCCOB contributes to contingency planning, specialist training, equipment readiness, technical advice and response exercises in South Africa and into the wider African region. This experience also enables SANCCOB to contribute to international knowledge-sharing and global best practice.

During the reporting period, SANCCOB responded to oil pollution incidents, including vessel sinkings and groundings, in-port spills and mystery pollutants. SANCCOB also mounted a significant response to the High Pathogenicity Avian Influenza outbreak, strengthening quarantine, testing, surveillance and biosecurity measures in collaboration with conservation partners and authorities.

Statistics: April 2025 - March 2026



OIL SPILL INCIDENTS



SPECIALIST CONSULTANCIES UNDERTAKEN



STAFF TRAINED IN INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM (ICS) - LEVELS 100 AND 200



STAFF TRAINED TO ICS LEVEL 300



STAFF COMPLETED OILED WILDLIFE RESPONSE LEVELS 1 AND 2 TRAINING THROUGH OILED WILDLIFE CARE NETWORK (OWCN) OWCN/MASSEY UNIVERSITY



Snapshot Highlights

The year demonstrated that effective emergency response begins long before a crisis occurs, through preparedness, specialist expertise, strong partnerships and the capacity to act when wildlife is at risk.



Responding when pollution strikes

During the period, SANCCOB responded to nine pollution incidents, including two vessel sinkings, one grounding, four in-port oil spills and two mystery pollutant events. Fortunately, very few oiled seabirds were recovered during these incidents; however, this does not necessarily reflect the full impact on wildlife, as affected seabirds may not always be detected or recovered. Each incident still required trained personnel to search for affected seabirds, liaise with stakeholders and participate in incident management structures. This represents a significant investment in time and resources and reinforces the importance of maintaining a trained, response-ready team.

With support from the Association of Zoos and Aquariums Saving Animals From Extinction (AZA SAFE) Disaster Relief Fund, SANCCOB strengthened South Africa's field response capacity through a dedicated seabird stabilisation trailer (pictured above), completed in October 2025. Designed for rapid deployment during seabird emergencies, the mobile unit enables initial assessment, stabilisation and response coordination closer to an incident, strengthening the critical first stages of care before affected seabirds can be transferred to a rehabilitation facility.

Global expertise, brought together in Cape Town

In October 2025, SANCCOB welcomed the international oiled-wildlife-response community to Cape Town for two major events. SANCCOB hosted the second biannual Global Oiled Wildlife Response System (GOWRS) meeting of the year, including a deployment exercise in West Coast National Park, and co-hosted the Effects of Oil on Wildlife (EOW) Conference with Tri-State Bird Rescue. Together, the events brought more than 120 international specialists together to exchange expertise and strengthen global preparedness for wildlife pollution emergencies.

The conference was held for the first time in Africa, coinciding with the 25th anniversary of the *MV Treasure* oil spill, one of the largest oiled-wildlife responses ever



Image, top of page: Dedicated seabird stabilisation trailer; Image, left: GOWRS Network team members at the second in-person meeting for 2025



Image, above: SANCCOB staff participating in Incident Command System (ICS) 300 table top exercise in 2025; Image, left: EOW Plenary Speaker image

undertaken. After the vessel sank off the Western Cape coast in June 2000, more than 20,000 oiled African Penguins were admitted for rehabilitation, while nearly 20,000 were pre-emptively captured and relocated away from the affected area. A special opening plenary commemorated this response and those who made it possible, while reflecting on advances in wildlife emergency preparedness over the past 25 years. With the African Penguin population now a fraction of what it was in 2000, the anniversary reinforced the continuing importance of preparedness, collaboration and international knowledge-sharing.

Responding to an unprecedented disease emergency

Since July 2025, SANCCOB has sustained its response to High Pathogenicity Avian Influenza, the longest disease emergency in its history. SANCCOB activated its Incident Management System, established temporary quarantine facilities and implemented extensive testing, surveillance and biosecurity measures. With gulls and terns particularly affected, SANCCOB made the difficult decision to temporarily suspend their admission to protect the Critically Endangered and Endangered seabirds already in its care. SANCCOB also played a significant role in monitoring and reporting cases nationally. Through collaboration with local veterinarians and international wildlife health specialists, SANCCOB has contributed to the wider understanding and management of HPAI in wild seabirds and specialist rehabilitation settings as the disease continues to affect wildlife globally.



Two images above: Rescued seabirds showing visible signs of HPAI

Looking ahead: 2026-2027

SANCCOB will build on its established oiled wildlife preparedness and response work by strengthening operational readiness, specialist capacity and collaboration with government, conservation authorities and industry. Key priorities include:

- Establishing permanent quarantine facilities at both SANCCOB centres
- Pre-positioning oiled-wildlife-response equipment along South Africa's coastline
- Growing the national responder network through training and simulation exercises
- Exploring an HPAI vaccination strategy for vulnerable seabirds with international partners
- Continue promoting preparedness within the maritime and energy sector

Image: SANCCOB seabird ranger responding to the HPAI outbreak on Robben Island



The Education and Empowerment Programme

The Education and Empowerment Programme builds both awareness and practical capacity for seabird and marine conservation. Through environmental education, skills development and hands-on conservation experience, SANCCOB engages learners and communities while creating avenues for volunteers, interns and emerging conservation practitioners to develop specialist skills and pursue careers in conservation.

SANCCOB delivers engaging, curriculum-aligned environmental education in schools, at both of our centres and through outreach and digital platforms, with a particular focus on extending access to underserved communities. Guided by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) environmental education principles, programmes connect learning with real-world environmental challenges and encourage greater understanding, participation and stewardship.

Alongside education, practical training and experiential learning are central to the programme. SANCCOB provides a continuum of learning opportunities, from local and international volunteering to structured internships and specialist professional placements, that develop practical skills and create opportunities into seabird and marine conservation. Participants gain hands-on experience alongside SANCCOB's specialist teams in areas including seabird rehabilitation, chick rearing, veterinary care, research and environmental education. These programmes simultaneously strengthen SANCCOB's operational capacity, transfer specialist knowledge and help develop the next generation of conservationists.

Statistics: April 2025 - March 2026



47,570

PEOPLE REACHED THROUGH SANCCOB'S EDUCATION, OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING

21,883

LEARNERS, OF WHOM

6,364

FROM UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES



280

VOLUNTEERS AND INTERNS UPSKILLED FROM

15

DIFFERENT COUNTRIES



23

ZOO AND AQUARIUM PROFESSIONALS HOSTED, STRENGTHENING INTERNATIONAL SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE



150

SCHOOLS AND ORGANISATIONS REACHED



Image: International volunteer assisting with health check of an African Penguin in care

Volunteer and Internship Programmes



Veterinary Experience

Practical exposure to veterinary medicine and clinical care within a specialist seabird rehabilitation environment.

Seabird Rehabilitation

Structured, mentored training in seabird rehabilitation, including handling, feeding and caring for seabirds.



Seabird Nursery and Chick Rearing

Structured, mentored specialist experience in artificial egg incubation, hand-rearing, chick development and nursery care.



Animal Professional Experience

Specialist placements for zoo, aquarium and wildlife professionals to gain practical seabird experience and exchange knowledge with SANCCOB teams.



Local and International Volunteering

Hands-on opportunities to contribute to seabird rehabilitation and SANCCOB's wider conservation activities.



Interns and Volunteers

54

INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEERS

VOLUNTEERS

156

REGULAR LOCAL VOLUNTEERS

28

INTERNATIONAL INTERNS

INTERNS

42

LOCAL INTERNS

Interns' and Volunteers' Countries Of Origin



198
SOUTH AFRICA



27
GERMANY



12
U.S.A.



10
FRANCE



9
U.K.



5
NETHERLANDS



4
SWITZERLAND



3
AUSTRIA



3
BRAZIL



2
BELGIUM



2
CHINA



2
RUSSIA



1
AUSTRALIA



1
DENMARK



1
SPAIN



Image: Staff, interns and
volunteers working together
at SANCCOB

Snapshot Highlights

Expanding access to environmental education

SANCCOB's education and outreach programmes reached 21,883 learners across the Western and Eastern Cape, connecting classroom learning with real-world seabird and marine conservation. Through engaging, curriculum-aligned programmes delivered in schools, at SANCCOB's centres and in coastal communities, learners are encouraged to understand the importance of healthy oceans, the threats facing seabirds and the role they can play in protecting the natural world. Donor support is critical to extending these opportunities to underserved communities, helping remove barriers to participation and ensuring that meaningful environmental education reaches young people who may otherwise have limited access to conservation experiences.

During the reporting period, SANCCOB hosted environmental educational programmes to 150 schools and organisations across both Eastern and Western Cape Provinces.

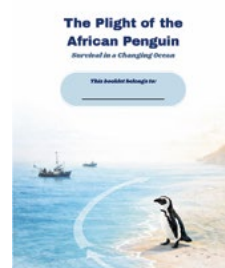
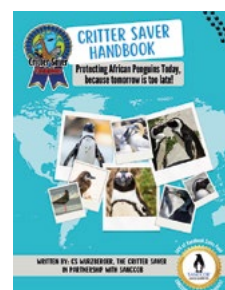
With donor support, SANCCOB developed a 35-page interactive educational booklet for learners aged 10–18, raising awareness of the plight of the African Penguin through engaging topics linked to the school curriculum. Four accompanying classroom posters were also developed to reinforce key messages and encourage learners to take action to protect their local environment. These resources have since been incorporated into SANCCOB's environmental education programmes.

Environmental education without borders

SANCCOB expanded its international education reach through virtual educational tours, creating a high-quality, pre-recorded experience complemented by live Q&A sessions with our Education team. Currently available in English and Afrikaans, the programme is being expanded to include subtitles and content in isiXhosa, isiZulu and German, making SANCCOB's conservation education increasingly accessible to audiences beyond our physical centres.

During the reporting period, SANCCOB hosted 4 virtual tour engagements through these platforms, reaching 231 individuals, enabling learners and audiences beyond South Africa to engage directly with our conservation teams, learn about the challenges facing threatened seabirds and connect with the real-world work being undertaken to protect them.

SANCCOB further strengthened its international environmental education reach through a partnership with the Awesome Animal Academy, a US-based digital education platform focused on inspiring and developing the next generation of animal and conservation professionals. Through its online programmes, the Academy engages young people, educators, families and youth groups, with virtual learning opportunities that can be accessed by participants around the world. Through the partnership, SANCCOB developed digital conservation content for TEAM SANCCOB Saves Seabirds and the Waddle Back to the Wild learning platform, bringing the



African Penguin conservation story to an international online audience. Online field guides, learner worksheets, curriculum-based resources and interactive activities take young people on the journey from penguin rescue and rehabilitation through to release back into the wild, while exploring the threats facing African Penguins and the marine ecosystems on which they depend.

Penguin Palooza: Partnership in action

SANCCOB and CapeNature hosted the annual Penguin Palooza at Stony Point Nature Reserve on 8 November 2025, providing an important platform to showcase the strength of the partnership between the two organisations and their shared commitment to African Penguin recovery. The free community event connected conservation action with public education, bringing people closer to the challenges facing the species and the work underway to protect it.

Interactive conservation activities, community participation and the public release of rehabilitated African Penguins brought the conservation journey to life, while highlighting how SANCCOB's rehabilitation expertise and CapeNature's protected-area management work together to support the species. The event also strengthened local ownership of conservation, demonstrating the important role that communities, conservation organisations and conservation authorities collectively play in securing a future for the African Penguin.

200+ people taking action for our coastline

On Human Rights Day, 21 March 2026, more than 200 volunteers joined forces for a large-scale coastal clean-up on Robben Island. Led by the Department of Cultural Affairs and Sport, the initiative brought SANCCOB together with Robben Island Museum, Coca-Cola Peninsula Beverages, First National Bank and the Two Oceans Aquarium Foundation to remove marine debris and help reduce the risks of entanglement, ingestion and habitat degradation for African Penguins and other seabirds.

Images, top to bottom: A collage on the African Penguin, created by a young learner; Learners from Bonzai Kabega School learning about SANCCOB's work; Penguin Palooza, which highlights the partnership between SANCCOB and CapeNature; Beach clean-up at Robben Island, Human Rights Day 2026





Extraordinary support when it was needed most

The first quarter of 2026 brought a significant influx of African Penguin eggs and chicks into SANCCOB's Seabird Nursery, requiring intensive care and additional hands-on capacity. Our interns and volunteers stepped up alongside our team, while zoo and aquarium partners from around the world generously sent experienced staff to South Africa to provide additional support. Their time, expertise and commitment were invaluable during this demanding period and demonstrated the strength of the global conservation community working together to support African Penguin recovery. From January to March SANCCOB welcomed 39 volunteers and interns from various countries and 5 experienced staff from zoo and aquarium partners dedicated to offering support.



Looking ahead: 2026-2027

Looking ahead, SANCCOB will focus on developing accredited and practical training opportunities in seabird rehabilitation and chick rearing. Furthermore, SANCCOB will deepen partnerships with conservation organisations, academic and training institutions, and other sector stakeholders to expand opportunities for skills development, knowledge exchange and practical experience.

Greater emphasis will also be placed on conservation career pathways, ethical tour-guide training, and strengthening volunteer and internship opportunities, alongside hands-on work-readiness skills. Together, these initiatives will empower young people with relevant skills and experience, strengthen specialist capacity within the conservation sector, and help develop the next generation of conservation practitioners.



Images, from top to bottom: SANCCOB staff and local intern checking a young African Penguin; SANCCOB rehabilitation staff checking the progress of AP410 after its foot amputation; An African Penguin being held during routine feeds

Thank you

A volunteer is someone who freely gives their time, energy, and heart to a cause greater than themselves, expecting nothing in return.

At SANCCOB, our long-term volunteers embody this in everything they do, and their unwavering support has been a lifeline for African Penguins and other seabirds.

From local volunteers who give up their weekends to spend the day caring for our patients in the seabird hospitals, to the drivers who are willing to set off for the Northern Cape in a heartbeat to bring seabirds in need to safety, we thank you.

Our dedicated first responder network, dotted along our shoreline from the Northern Cape to the Eastern Cape border, allows us to respond quickly to seabirds in distress, and without you, we simply could not do what we do. We salute you!

To everyone on standby for emergency response, thank you.

SANCCOB is deeply grateful for the dedicated and ongoing support of our local volunteer network. As the challenges facing African Penguins and other seabirds continue, we are proud to know that we do not face them alone.

Thank you for standing with us, today and in the years ahead.



Business Division

As SANCCOB's conservation work expands, we continue to strengthen the people, systems and structures that make this work possible. SANCCOB now manages income approaching R60 million and employs over 60 people across multiple programmes and locations. During the reporting period, SANCCOB continued to invest in its people, governance, infrastructure, financial sustainability, partnerships, and public profile to support its long-term conservation work.

Snapshot Highlights

Promoting a skilled and supported workforce

SANCCOB continued to invest in building the skilled workforce needed to support its expanding conservation programmes and organisational responsibilities, and during the reporting period, five new staff positions were created. Furthermore, staff retention, workplace culture and professional development remained an important focus. SANCCOB conducts annual workplace culture surveys to better understand staff experiences and identify areas for improvement, which is supported by one-on-one engagements between the Chief Executive Officer and staff. Feedback received informs actions to strengthen staffing capacity, support and professional development opportunities. Furthermore, salary benchmarking and job-grading exercises were also undertaken to assess remuneration against comparable nonprofit organisations in South Africa, supporting SANCCOB's commitment to fair, competitive and responsible remuneration, while also recognising the financial realities of the nonprofit sector.



Images: One team, many roles – a shared commitment to seabird conservation

Building a more robust governance framework

As SANCCOB has grown, strengthening governance has become increasingly important to ensuring appropriate oversight, accountability, risk management, and sustainability. During the reporting period, SANCCOB embarked on a comprehensive governance enhancement programme, supported by an external governance specialist. This included the development of a phased governance framework, the establishment of formal Board committees, a review of SANCCOB's Memorandum of Incorporation and related governance policies, and the development of a Board Charter.

SANCCOB welcomed Vincent Shacks and Tanya Kabalin as Directors on 26 March 2026, and Inge Cilliers stepped down as a Director on 18 June 2026, but continues to support SANCCOB in an advisory capacity.

Three Board committees were established during the 2026-2027 period:

Audit and Risk Committee:

Vernon Boulle (Chairperson of Committee, Treasurer, and Non-Executive Director of Board), Natalie Maskell (Chief Executive Officer and Executive Director), Inge Cilliers (Advisory Board Member), Head of Business Division (vacant at date of report), and Melissa Knott (Head of Resource Development)

Nominations, Remuneration, Ethics and Governance Committee:

Tanya Kabalin (Chairperson of Committee and Non-Executive Director of Board), Natalie Maskell (Chief Executive Officer and Executive Director), Kate Handley (Non-Executive Director), Vernon Boulle (Treasurer and Non-Executive Director), and Head of Business Division (vacant at date of report)

Conservation, Impact and Scientific Advisory Committee:

Dr Samantha Petersen (Chairperson and Non-Executive Director), Natalie Maskell (Chief Executive Officer), Vernon Boulle (Treasurer and Non-Executive Director), Kate Handley (Non-Executive Director), Dr Richard Sherley (Non-Executive Director), Dr Anton Wolfaardt (Non-Executive Director), John Cooper (Non-Executive Director) and Dr Perushan Rajah (Head of Programmes and Impact)

Strengthening compliance

SANCCOB's compliance was strengthened through a comprehensive review of human resources, financial and operational policies. The process incorporated specialist external human resource and industrial relations expertise, with policies updated to strengthen internal controls, support legislative compliance and align organisational practices with best practice.

Strengthening organisational resilience

SANCCOB continues to strengthen its approach to organisational risk through a formal risk register, reviewed annually, alongside continuous management-level monitoring of emerging risks. Material developments are escalated to the Board of Directors as required, ensuring that risk management remains an active management process rather than an annual compliance exercise. This includes considering external risks beyond SANCCOB's immediate control, such as economic pressures, changing regulatory environments, and geopolitical developments.

Diversifying income for long-term sustainability

SANCCOB remains fundamentally donor-funded, making diversification of income critical to long-term conservation delivery. During the reporting period, SANCCOB continued to strengthen existing donor relationships; working with established partners to combine expertise and broaden its approach to collaborative funding opportunities. A growing focus is on securing institutional, multi-year and collaborative funding opportunities.

An important evolution in SANCCOB's funding model is to position projects around the interconnected conservation challenges facing seabirds across the Benguela Current ecosystem, rather than viewing species recovery exclusively through national boundaries.

Growing SANCCOB's brand and public profile

SANCCOB made a significant investment in strengthening its brand equity and public visibility during the reporting period. With *pro bono* specialist support from CARAT and Dentsu South Africa, SANCCOB developed a modernised corporate identity and brand framework, providing the foundation for a redesigned website and new marketing assets, including a future national billboard campaign. During the reporting period, SANCCOB had 589 media mentions, with an estimated media value of R20 million, and a potential audience reach of 38 million viewers. Furthermore, SANCCOB recorded continued growth across its social media communities, with particular focus during the period on strengthening LinkedIn and Instagram as platforms for conservation communication, stakeholder engagement, and organisational positioning. SANCCOB continued to strengthen its digital presence during the reporting period, using social media to raise awareness of seabird conservation, share the impact of our work and connect with supporters in South Africa and internationally. Facebook remained SANCCOB's largest online community, growing by 8.2% to almost 44,000 followers, while generating 3.4-million-page views and more than 180,000 post engagements. Instagram recorded particularly strong growth, increasing its following by 19.8% to more than 20,000, with content reaching more than 850,000 people. SANCCOB also continued to build its presence across LinkedIn, TikTok, YouTube and X, broadening the ways in which we engage different audiences and share our conservation work.

Furthermore, SANCCOB's conservation work received international exposure through its feature in Apple TV's *Born to Be Wild*, which highlighted the dedication of SANCCOB's team and the critical interventions undertaken to safeguard the African Penguin.

Digital impact at a glance



76,700+

Followers across Facebook, Instagram, Tiktok, LinkedIn and X



180,000+

Facebook post engagements

3.4 million

Facebook page views



1,8 million

Instagram profile views

19.8%

growth in Instagram followers



123,000+

TikTok video views

6.75%

TikTok engagement rate



230,000+

LinkedIn post impressions

Financial resilience and investment in conservation infrastructure

SANCCOB continued to maintain a strong financial position, providing the stability needed not only to sustain day-to-day conservation operations, but also to make strategic investments in long-term capacity and resilience. SANCCOB once again received an unqualified external audit opinion from BDO South Africa Incorporated, with no matters reported to management. Total assets increased from R81.9 million on 31 March 2025, to R93.0 million on 31 March 2026, an increase of 13.6%, while total equity increased from R51.7 million to

R63.3 million, an increase of 22.4% over the same period. Importantly, SANCCOB invested significantly in conservation infrastructure. In the Eastern Cape, SANCCOB invested in a solar power system to strengthen energy security at its Gqeberha seabird hospital. In the Western Cape, the opening of the Pamela Isdell Seabird Nursery represented a major investment in the future of the Critically Endangered African Penguin, by significantly strengthening capacity to respond to African Penguin egg and chick abandonment events.

Looking ahead: 2026-2027

Building on the infrastructure developments during 2025-2026, SANCCOB will continue strengthening its facilities during the next reporting period. A new Western Cape solar power system will further strengthen operational resilience while reducing SANCCOB's environmental footprint and recurring electricity costs. SANCCOB is also progressing a major redevelopment of its Eastern Cape clinical infrastructure through a proposed 336m² integrated Seabird Intensive Care Unit, surgical theatre and nursery. This investment will address existing space and clinical limitations, reduce the need to transfer seabirds to external veterinary facilities for major procedures, and improve SANCCOB's ability to respond to increasing admissions, complex predation injuries and chick-abandonment events.



Images: Building the infrastructure needed to support specialist seabird care into the future



Financial Overview

The financial results reflect a 12-month period from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026.
SANCCOB NPC (Registration number: 2001/026273/08)

Annual financial statements for year ended 31 March 2026: Statement of Comprehensive Income

Figures In Rands	12 Months ended 31 March 2026	12 Months ended 31 March 2025
Revenue	40 099 195	36 426 973
Cost of sales	(1 244 680)	(942 786)
Gross profit	38 854 515	35 484 187
Other income	2 559 188	1 706 940
Operating expenses	(33 775 495)	(28 245 958)
Operating profit	7 638 208	8 945 169
Investment revenue	2 003 501	2 253 638
Fair value adjustments	1 928 436	1 497 867
Profit for the year	11 570 145	12 696 674
Other comprehensive income	-	-
Total comprehensive income for the year	11 570 145	12 696 674

Conclusion: The above is an extract of the Statement of Comprehensive Income reflected on page 9 of the audited Annual Financial Statements. The Annual Financial Statements are available on request.

Donors and Partners

R100,000+

- Aachener Tierpark
- Abax Foundation
- ACTIF Foundation
- AMSOL
- ARTIS Royal Zoo
- Association of Zoos and Aquariums (Saving Animals from Extinction)
- Barbara and Edwin Charitable Trust
- Benno, Caroline and Moose
- Briandez Legacy Trust
- Brown, J
- Cheyenne Mountain Zoo
- Cincinnati Zoo
- City of Cape Town - The Mayoral Fund of the Executive Mayor of Cape Town
- Columbus Zoo and Aquarium
- D and R Charitable Global Fund
- Dallas Zoo
- Der Grune Zoo Wuppertal
- Dierenpark Amersfoort Wildlife Fund
- Elizabeth Scarlett Ltd.
- Erlebniswelt Zoo
- Global Humane Conservation Fund
- Hans Hoheisen Charitable Trust
- Igala Holdings (Pty) Ltd.
- International Fund for Animal Welfare (ifaw)
- Isuzu Motors South Africa (Pty) Ltd.
- Jacksonville Zoo
- Kirby Group Engineering
- Kritzinger, E
- Le Pal Nature Foundation
- Little Rock Zoo
- Maryland Zoo
- National Aviary in Pittsburgh
- North Atlantic Trust Co Ltd
- Nussbaum Foundation
- Ripley's Aquarium
- Sandcloud
- SeaWorld and Busch Gardens
- Stekhoven, P
- Stichting Wildlife
- Tencent
- The Holder Family
- The Joan St Leger Lindbergh Charitable Trust
- The Rupert Nature Foundation
- The Sanlam Foundation Trust
- The Spirit Wildlife Foundation
- Toronto Zoo Wildlife Conservancy
- Upstream Technologies South Africa (Pty) Ltd
- Wave Foundation
- Wroclaw Zoo
- WWF South Africa
- Zoo Duisburg GmbH

R50,000 - R99,999

- Albin-Pedrotti Foundation
- Banham Zoo
- California Academy of Sciences/Steinhart Aquarium
- Club Ocean
- Donahue, K
- Euromonitor International (Pty) Ltd.
- Hertfordshire Zoo
- Labia, S
- Lagoon Beach Hotel & Spa
- Lehigh Valley Zoological Society
- Lobaciute, L
- MyDifference
- New England Zoo
- Newall, A
- Océarium du Croisic
- Pairi Daiza Foundation
- Schneier, S
- Silwood Trust
- Spoerry, C
- TourAxis Africa (Pty) Ltd.
- Tulsa Zoo Management Inc
- Witt, T
- Zoo Aquarium de Madrid
- Zoo De La Palmyre
- Zoo De Sables
- Zoo Salzburg

R20,000 - R49,999

- Adventure Aquarium
- African Creative
- African Lynx Travel (Pty) Ltd
- AkibaDreams GmbH
- Alexander, J
- Antwerp Zoo K.M.D.A.
- Arndt, J
- Arzner, M
- Barrable, L
- Birdlife South Africa
- Brevard Zoo
- Chen, J
- City and Atlantic Real Estate cc
- Coca-Cola Peninsula Beverages (Pty) Ltd.
- Columbus AAZK Chapter
- Detroit Zoological Society
- Dietmar, R
- Federation of African Professional Staffing Organisations
- For the Love of Nature
- Gonzalez, C
- Hidden Africa Safari Co Pty (Ltd)
- Ingram, L
- Isa Carstens Academy
- Jotun Paints South Africa (Pty) Ltd
- Kotze, K
- Kyoto Aquarium
- Lisbon Zoo
- Lodz Zoo
- Lomas Wildlife Protection Trust
- Lucy Electric
- Magnetic Hill Park and Zoo
- Mare, E
- Masser, C
- Milnerton High School
- Moody Gardens
- Noakes Charitable Trust
- Northeastern Wisconsin Zoological Society
- OC Hospitality Holdings (Pty) Ltd
- Penguins International
- Policansky Will Trust
- Rathmann, H
- Riverbanks Zoo
- Safari De Peaugres
- Saginaw Children's Zoo
- Sass, G
- Schewitz, A
- Sea Life Paris
- Seekings, J
- Seneca Park Zoo Society
- Somerset College
- Straubing Zoo
- Taigan M-Stretch (Pty) Ltd
- The Exodus Adventure Travels Foundation
- The Memphis Chapter of the American Association of Zoo Keepers
- The President Hotel
- The Royal Portfolio Foundation Trust
- The Spirit Foundation
- The Story Engine Group Inc
- Trusted Utilities (Pty) Ltd
- Vanilla Man CC
- Veilleux, M
- W and J Weise Charitable Trust
- Westphal, A
- Whittall, H
- Zoo Erlebniswelt
- Zoo Hoyerswerde
- Zoologischer Garten Magdeburg

R10,000 - R19,999

- Acoustic Zoo Entertainment (Pty) Ltd
- Animal Survival International
- Basten, B
- Berlin Zoo
- Berry, R
- Cape Bird Club
- Cape Town Concierge
- Clovelly Golf Club
- Cockcroft, H
- Collegiate Junior School for Girls
- De Grendel Wines (Pty) Ltd.
- Druck, J
- Durgapersadh, R
- Eastern Cape Voortrekkers
- ECA Investments (Pty) Ltd
- Edge Asset Management (Pty) Ltd
- FOFX Software Development (Pty) Ltd
- Fretz, E
- Gawlowski, D
- Gerin, J
- Graziano, L
- Hyatt Regency Maui Resort
- Kling, A
- Lucid Architecture CC
- Mec Carat (Pty) Ltd
- Minnaar, N
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