Durban (South Africa)

The portion of South Africa's coastal zone that forms part of the WIO has the highest percentages of built-up (urban) and cropland (agriculture) landcover of all the countries in the WIO region. Trees make up the highest percentage of landcover in this coastal zone, followed by grassland. South Africa's coastal zone also has the highest proportion of transformed landcover in the WIO region.

The city of Durban is situated in the province of KwaZulu–Natal in South Africa and is the location of the largest port on the east coast of Africa. The city limits are synonymous with the boundaries of the eThekwini municipal area and eThekwini Municipality is the local government responsible for planning and managing the city. The municipal area covers 2,297 square kilometres, of which approximately two-thirds are rural or semi-rural. Significantly, the city is also located in the middle of the Maputo-Pondoland-Albany global biodiversity hotspot one of 34 hotspots worldwide.

According to Debra Roberts and Sean O'Donoghue (2013), Durban has a population of approximately 3.5 million, which represents an increase of 660,000 since the 2001 census. The majority of the city's residents are African (71 per cent). Currently, Durban is South Africa's most impoverished metropolitan area, a fact reflected in figures for 2009, which showed that 41.8 per cent of Durban's residents experienced conditions associated with poverty.

Durban city, as in many coastal cities has environmental challenges that span from the Port activities. Climate change and especially sea-level rise and storm surges, waste management especially solid and liquid effluent, recently in 2019 when it rained, the municipality was plagued by a load of a marine litter carried across by the stormwater among others. With the poverty levels, as indicated above, new methods of city management need to be continuously employed by the municipality to create settlements that are well planned which will enhance the communities living in the municipalities and reduce the impact on the marine environment**.**