



APPENDIX G OF THE 2025 ACTION PLAN SANCTUARIES AS A MANAGEMENT METHOD

THE CAPE PENINSULA BABOON MANAGEMENT JOINT TASK TEAM

v.1
FINAL
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G1 DEFINITION

In terms of this document, 'sanctuary' will refer to the permanent housing of baboons in a captive facility which provides humane care for animals in a non-exploitative environment for the rest of their natural lives, with no efforts to release them back to the wild (Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries, 2024).

G2 RATIONALE

Sanctuaries typically focus on the rescue of animals from various challenging circumstances including injury, neglect, abuse and exploitation. Sanctuaries are intended to provide a safe and nurturing environment for these animals. Over the last several decades as human encroachment and environmental degradation increasingly threaten wildlife, there has been a global increase in the establishment of animal sanctuaries, particularly for primate species in Africa (Schoene & Brend, 2002).

G3 A SANCTUARY TO REDUCE NEGATIVE INTERACTIONS AND CONFLICT AMONGST STAKEHOLDERS

It is a very common refrain amongst members of the public that troops of baboons on the Peninsula which routinely enter urban areas and cause damage to property in addition to suffering injuries and death, should be permanently removed without harming the individual(s) involved. Thus, the capture and transport of individuals to a captive care facility has been repeatedly proposed by the public as a management option, particularly as an alternative to lethal management.

Can removal to a sanctuary reduce negative interactions?

The capture and removal of an entire troop may provide long term relief from negative interactions with baboons. However, this is only possible when the troop was living in a geographically isolated area with no immediately neighbouring troops. Historically (1980s/90s) troops were removed from the City bowl, Chapman's Peak Drive, Kalk Bay and Kommetjie. No troops have returned to the first three areas but a splinter from the neighbouring Da Gama troop re-established in the Kommetjie area. All negative interactions were eliminated for >30 years so far in areas where the removed troops had no neighbouring troops. The removal of troop(s) through placement in a captive facility may therefore be successful in reducing or eliminating negative interactions, however robust preventative measures (e.g. baboon-proof strategic fencing) must be applied post-removal to prevent the situation from recurring.

G4 KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Due to risk of disease transmission, extreme habituation to humans and transformed landscapes, absence of genetic benefit and lack of available natural land, these baboons would not be suitable for release back into the wild and would remain in captivity for the remainder of their lives. The movement of baboons, a species abundant throughout South Africa and listed as 'least concern' according to the IUCN (Sithaldeen, 2019), to a captive facility for the remainder of their lives is not based in the principles of conservation, as it does not contribute to species survival or biodiversity.

Rather such a relocation would be done based on the concept of "right to life", a principle central to the field of individual animal rights.

G5 ETHICAL CONCERNS

There is a worldwide trend towards recognizing animal sentience and their right to life, leading to a reduction in traditional lethal management for damage causing individuals. Despite this trend, there is little research on whether the non-lethal alternatives are more effective or produce better welfare outcomes for the animals in question. Relocating baboons to a sanctuary is predicted to result in severe welfare impacts associated with group capture, sedation, transport over long distance, release and adjustment to a new environment (Caspers, 2025). Importantly, these negative welfare implications are predicted to be far greater in totality than group capture and humane euthanasia (Caspers, 2025). Additionally, there are significant ethical and welfare considerations to placing wild baboons into captivity for life as it can restrict natural behaviours and instincts (e.g., male dispersal, rearing offspring), lead to stress and abnormal behaviour, both of which can pose physical and psychological health problems.

G6 SANCTUARY REQUIREMENTS

- Capture, transport and relocation require compliance with applicable local, provincial and national legislation, and permitting with the relevant provincial authority. The relocation of Cape Peninsula baboons outside of the Western Cape province is unsupported by receiving provincial conservation authorities as the species is of 'least concern' so their relocation does not contribute to species survival or biodiversity, and the baboons will be living in captivity. The facility must therefore be located within the Western Cape province.
- Each baboon will be sedated and physically examined prior to relocation. A veterinarian will be required to assess each individual for obvious signs of poor condition or disease that may warrant humane euthanasia, provide appropriate immunizations and treatments, and contraception or sterilization as breeding in the sanctuary will not be permitted.
- The facility must have enough space and resources to house, feed and provide excellent care for baboons for the remainder of their lives (~30 years for an infant/juvenile).
- The baboons would be required to be housed in semi-wild enclosures. Semi-wild enclosures are defined as a section of natural landscape enclosed by baboon-proof perimeter fencing. These semi-wild enclosures should be no smaller than 1 hectare per 10 baboons. The enclosures must provide natural vegetation, water resources, hiding areas, shelter and adequate sleeping structures.
- The sanctuary should follow the General Animal, and Old-World Monkey Standards established by the Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries as these specifications represent the current gold standard for sanctuary facilities worldwide (Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries, 2025).
- The facility must be managed by staff with knowledge of baboon behaviour and an expert understanding of the requirements of their captive care.

G7 COSTS

	Estimated Cost*
<p>Startup Fees</p> <p>Fencing of two 3 ha, two 2 ha, and 1 ha enclosures, building of sleeping platforms, shelters, access roads, water supply, clinic equipment, feeding preparation room, etc.</p>	R10,000,000.00
<p>Monthly Fees</p> <p>Staff salaries, running costs, fencing maintenance, veterinary costs, insurance, etc.</p>	R210,000.00

*Based on estimated quotes from existing primate sanctuaries in South Africa.

NB: These costs assume expansion of an existing facility. The establishment of a new facility would need to include the cost of purchasing a suitable property.

G8 REFERENCES

Caspers, C. (2025). Conflict and coexistence: an assessment of welfare outcomes for the methods used to manage chacma baboon (*Papio ursinus*) on the Cape Peninsula, South Africa [MSc thesis, University of Cape Town].

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Sithaldeen, R. (2019). *Papio ursinus* (errata version published in 2020). *The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species* 2019: e.T16022A168568698. <https://dx.doi.org/10.2305/IUCN.UK.2019-3.RLTS.T16022A168568698.en>.