



BirdLife South Africa's Policy & Advocacy Programme **FISCAL BENEFITS PROJECT**

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The Fiscal Benefits Project was launched in 2015 with the aim of testing biodiversity tax incentives as a benefit for landowners declaring Protected Areas, through the Biodiversity Stewardship model. The Fiscal Benefits Project began with the achievement of introducing a new tax incentive, section 37D, into the Income Tax Act. S 37D gives landowners a tax deduction for their conservation commitment. It allows the value of a Nature Reserve or National Park to be deducted from taxable income, reducing the tax owed by a landowner.

This tax incentive is a national first and its successful inclusion in a tax return in 2016 creates the first fiscal reward for biodiversity conservation in South Africa. This historic appropriation belongs to one of the Fiscal Benefits Project's pilot sites, where testing of the incentive has taken place. This achievement now paves the way for other privately-owned Protected Areas to receive financial recognition.

The Fiscal Benefits Project is now in the process of mainstreaming the effectiveness of s 37D and working towards introducing tax skills into the conservation sector. Part of this process is the provision of high-level summaries and technical tax overviews. These tax resources do not constitute tax advice and may not be used as such but are intended to provide basic information to implementers, landowners and other vested stakeholders.

BirdLife South Africa's Fiscal Benefits Project is a novel approach to biodiversity finance and leads the way in the use of biodiversity tax incentives. The Project is funded by the Global Environment Fund in partnership with SANBI.