

# Weskus Tourism Visitor Trends

January–December 2023

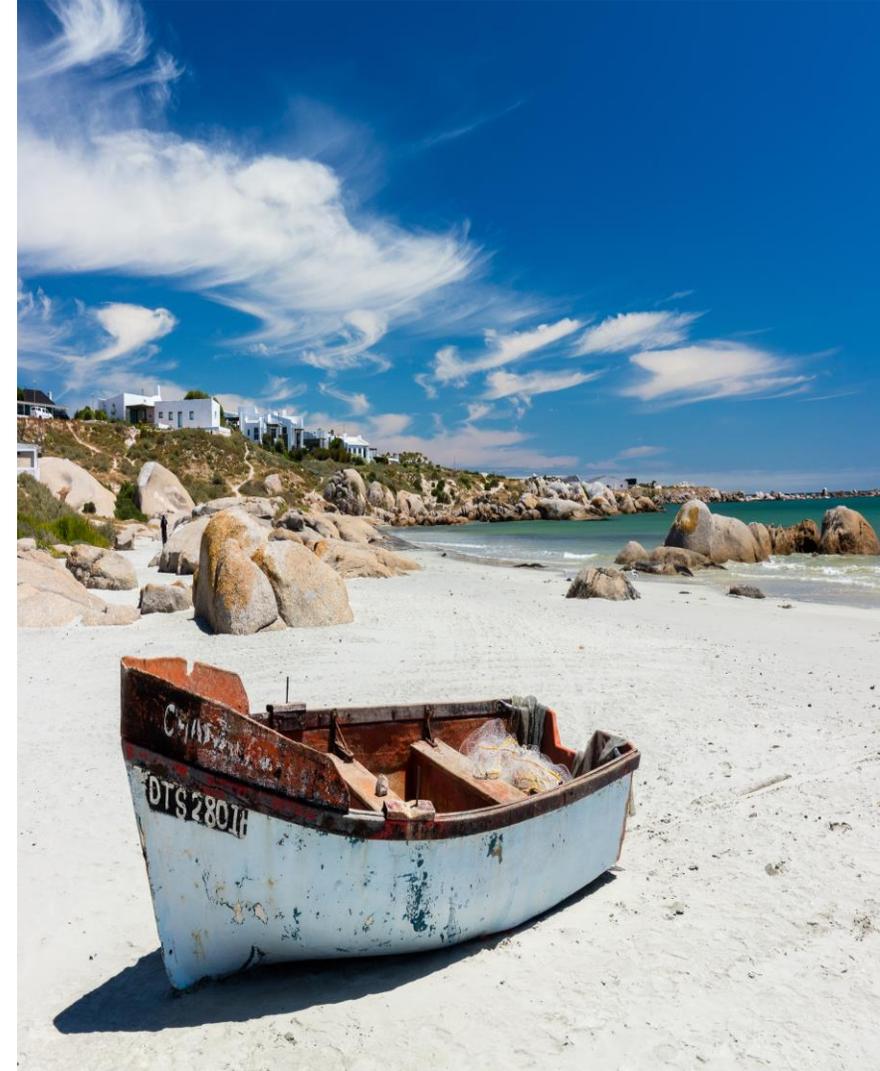


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# 1. Executive Summary

- The period highlighted in this report (Jan–Dec 2023) indicates that the largest proportion of travellers to the Weskus originated from the domestic market (62.1%), in particular from within the Western Cape province (77.3%). The overseas market accounted for 37.9% of visitors during the period, with Germany, the United Kingdom and Netherlands in the top three positions.
- Close to 90% of visitors travelled to the Weskus for holiday purposes, 2.1% travelled for business and an additional 2.1% visited friends and family.
- Some 70.3% of visitors took day trips to the Weskus while 29.7% of tourists stayed overnight. Regarding the length of overnight stays, one and two nights were the most popular choices. Visitors were mainly in the age groups of 36–50 and 51–70 years, and the largest proportion of visitors travelled to the region in pairs or on their own.
- The West Coast National Park welcomed 177 351 visitors between January and December 2023, which represents a 67.3% recovery rate when compared to Jan–Dec 2019. August was the best performing month during the period under review, accounting for the highest volume of visitors (36 098) in 2023 and recovered fully in relation to the same period in 2019 (109.4%). Following August, December recorded the second highest number of visitors (30 564) and nearly fully recovered, reaching 91.7% of pre-pandemic levels.
- !Khwa ttu welcomed a total of 22 402 visitors between January and December 2023. This number represented an increase of 24.3% when compared to the same period in 2022. In relation to the same period in 2019, !Khwa ttu recovered fully across all the months apart from March and September, which demonstrated a 95.1% and 94.2% recovery rate, respectively.
- Collectively, the six Cape Nature reserves based in the Weskus region welcomed a total of 44 942 visitors between January and December 2023. This number represented an increase of 8.5% when compared to the same period in 2022. For the year 2023, the best performing reserve with respect to visitor volume was Cederberg-Algeria, Bird Island and Majiesrivier. In relation to the same period in 2019, Bird Island and Groot Winterhoek Wilderness Area recovered fully in the year 2023.



# 2. Methodology and Sample Size

This report provides an overview of the tourism trends and patterns in the Weskus region. The findings will illustrate key visitor trends obtained from the regional visitor tracking surveys.

Responses to the regional visitor tracking surveys are used as a proxy to indicate the key trends in the Western Cape and the various regions. It is important to note that absolute figures cannot be determined from these surveys, as the survey responses are a sample of the tourists visiting the various tourism offices across the Western Cape and would thus represent a sample of the visitors. Therefore, where statistically relevant absolute numbers may be given, however, a share is provided to indicate the trend. This is based on international best practice in the use of surveys within the tourism industry for determining key trends.

**Definition: Visitor** - Any person travelling to a place other than his/her usual environment for less than 12 months and whose main purpose for the travel is other than the exercise of an activity to be remunerated for at the place visited.

Between January and December 2023, a total of 3 119 responses to the regional visitor tracking surveys were received from the various tourism offices in the Weskus. This can be seen in Table 1.

**Table 1: Number of Surveys by Weskus Town**

Weskus Town	No. of Surveys (Jan–Dec 2023)
Darling	689
Malmesbury	476
Piketberg	171
Riebeeck Valley	272
Vredendal	97
Clanwilliam	61
Lambert's Bay	295
Porterville	103
Veldriff	275
Yzerfontein	680
<b>Total</b>	<b>3 119</b>



# Weskus Visitor Trends & Patterns

Wesgro Primary Research: Regional Visitor Tracking Surveys  
Review Period: January–December 2023

# 3. Weskus Visitor Trends & Patterns

- The domestic market accounted for the largest share of respondents who visited the region (62.1%) between January and December 2023, while the overseas market made up 37.9% of visitors. This can be seen in Figure 1.
- Figure 2 shows that 36.2% of overseas travellers to the Weskus originated from Germany. The UK, which attracted 13.0% of visitors, and the Netherlands, with 5.6% of visitors, followed as the second and third top overseas source markets to the region.
- The largest share of domestic travellers to the region originated from the Western Cape (77.3%), confirming that the Weskus is a popular tourism destination for local visitors. This can be seen in Figure 3. Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal and the Northern Cape ranked as the other leading source provinces during this period.

FIGURE 1: OVERSEAS AND DOMESTIC VISITORS, JAN-DEC 2023

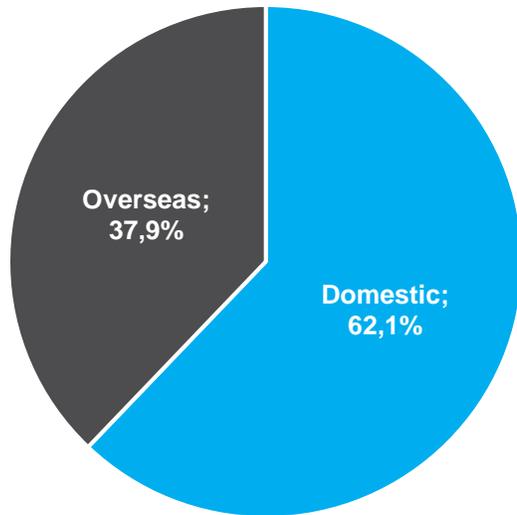


FIGURE 2: ORIGIN OF OVERSEAS VISITORS, JAN-DEC 2023

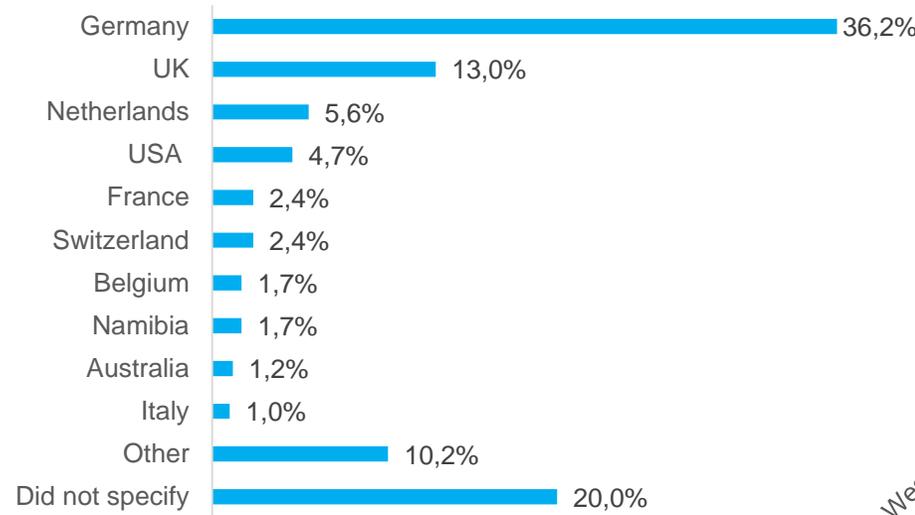
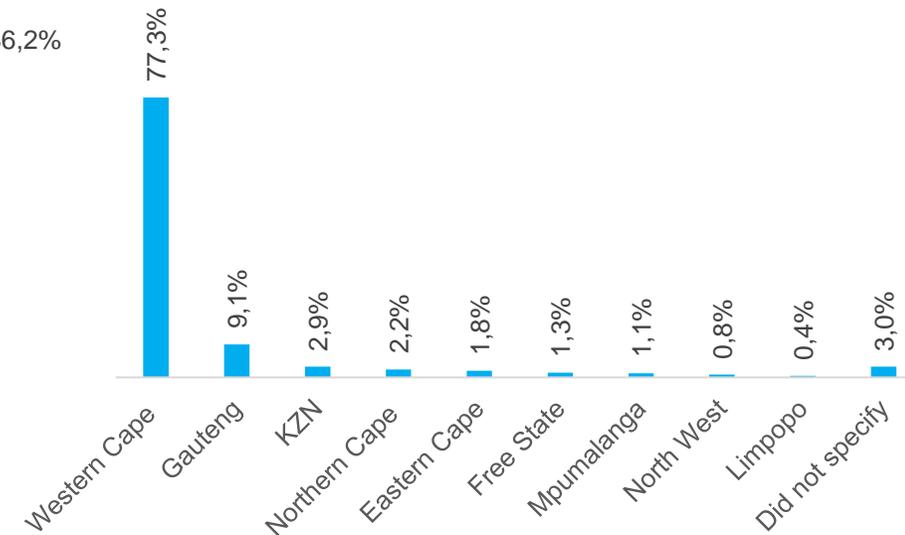


FIGURE 3: ORIGIN OF DOMESTIC VISITORS, JAN-DEC 2023



# 3. Weskus Visitor Trends & Patterns

FIGURE 4: AGE GROUP OF VISITORS

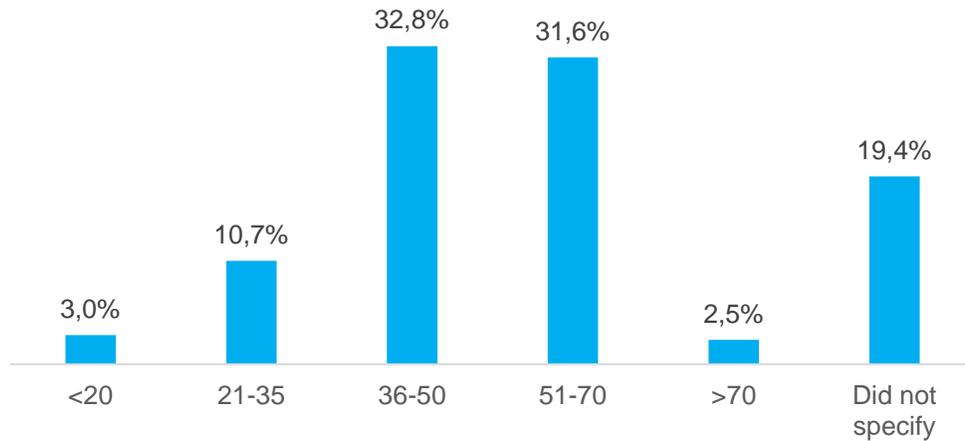
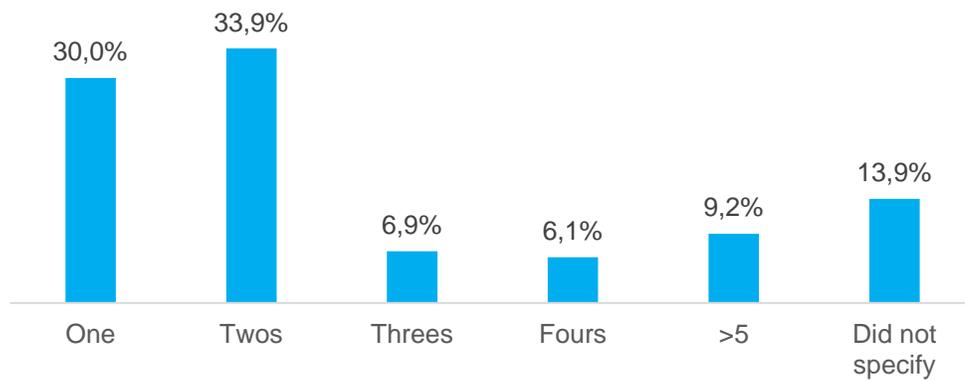
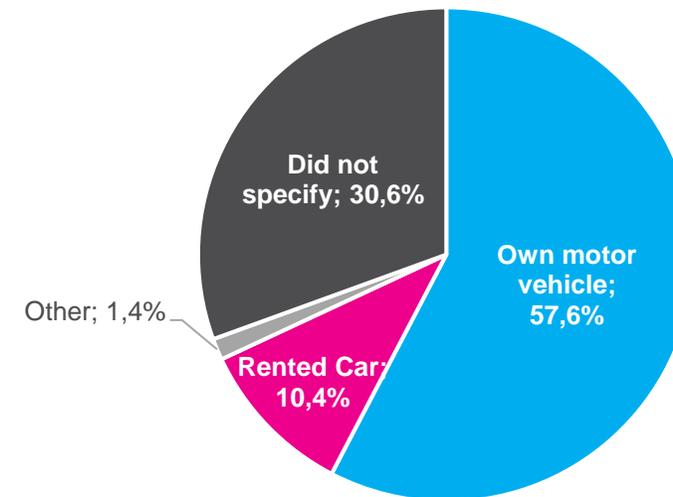


FIGURE 5: TRAVEL GROUP SIZE



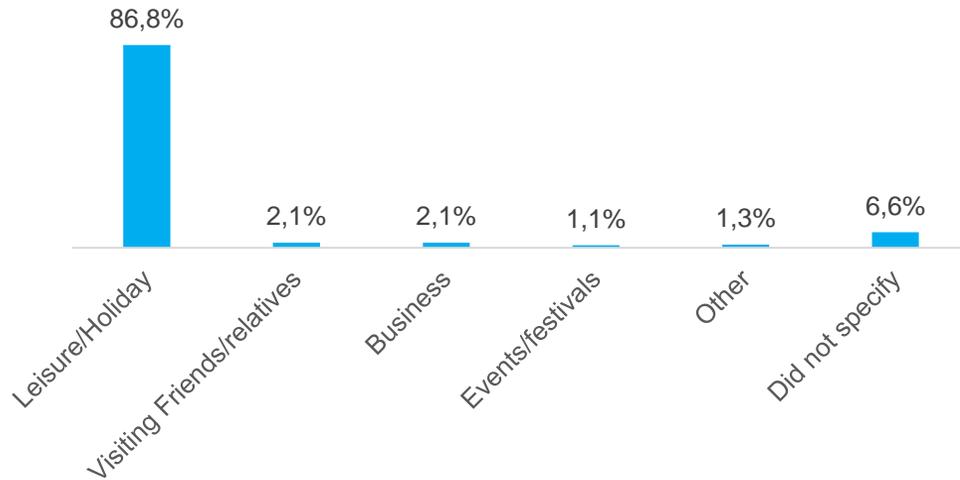
- Figure 4 shows that the Weskus was mainly visited by those in the age groups 36–50 and 51–70 years, ranked as the most popular amongst visitors to the Weskus.
- The largest proportion of visitors travelled to the region in pairs or on their own, followed by 9.2% who travelled in groups of five or more. This can be seen in Figure 5.
- Nearly two thirds of visitors (57.6%) preferred to use their own mode of transport, as indicated in Figure 6. This is largely due to the dominant share of local visitors (77.3%) to the region. Rented cars (used by 10.4% of visitors) was the second most popular form of transport. Additional transport options found in the “other” category included tour buses, long-distance buses, mini-bus taxis, motorbikes, shuttle services and metered taxis.

FIGURE 6: MODE OF TRANSPORT



# 3. Weskus Visitor Trends & Patterns

FIGURE 7: MAIN PURPOSE OF VISIT

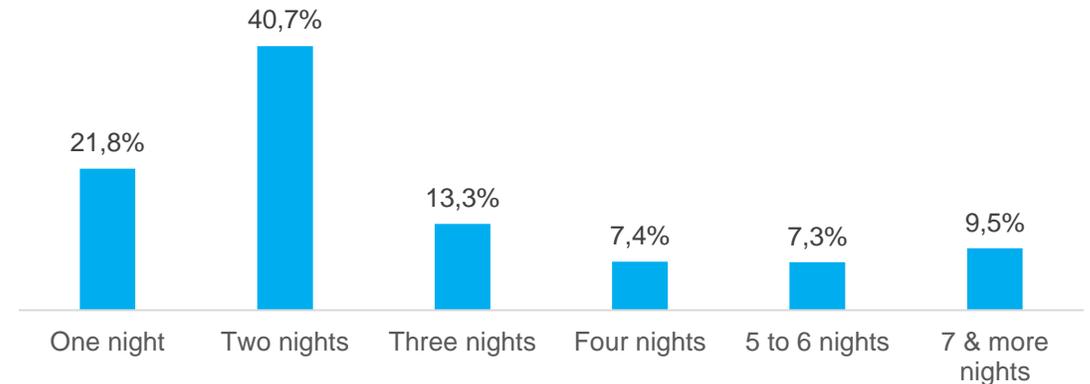


- Close to 90% of visitors travelled to the Weskus for holiday purposes and around 2.1% for business and visiting friends and relatives, respectively, as shown in Figure 7.
- Figure 8 illustrates that around 70.3% of visitors took day trips to the Weskus, whereas 29.7% stayed overnight. Of those who indicated overnight stays, two nights were the most popular, with 40.7% of visitors staying for this length of time.
- Figure 9 also shows that 21.8% stayed in the region for one night, and 13.3% visited for three nights.

FIGURE 8: OVERNIGHT AND DAY VISITORS

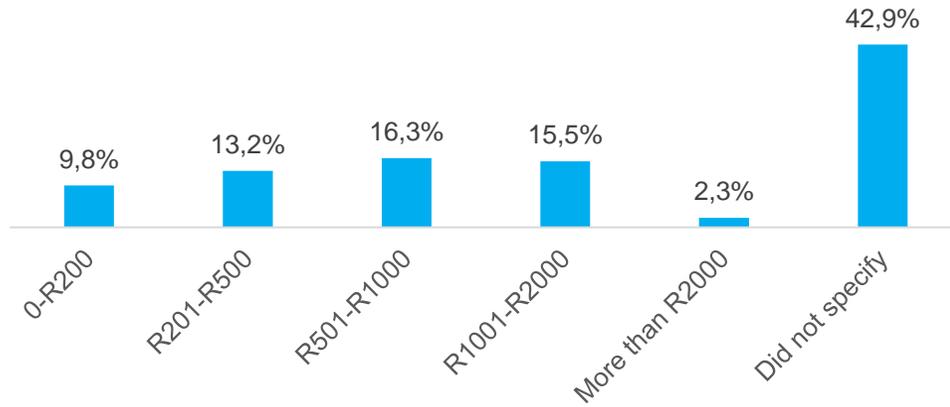


FIGURE 9: AVERAGE LENGTH OF STAY



# 3. Weskus Visitor Trends & Patterns

FIGURE 10: AVERAGE DAILY SPEND



- Figure 10 shows that around 16.3% of visitors to the Weskus spent between R501 and R1000 per day in the region, followed by 15.5% who indicated an average expenditure of R1001-R2000. Some 42.9% of respondents did not specify their average daily spend.

- In Figure 11, one sees that visitor information centres ranked as the top information source, used by 16.1% of visitors during this period. A total of 12.9% of visitors cited the internet as their main tool for information, while 12.2% obtained information through word of mouth.

- When observing the top activities undertaken in the region, 20% of visitors explored the region through scenic drives, 14% embarked on wine tasting tours, 9% participated in the local culture/heritage and 7% of visitors respectively enjoyed the region’s shopping and cuisine offering. This can be seen in Figure 12.

FIGURE 11: TOP INFORMATION SOURCES

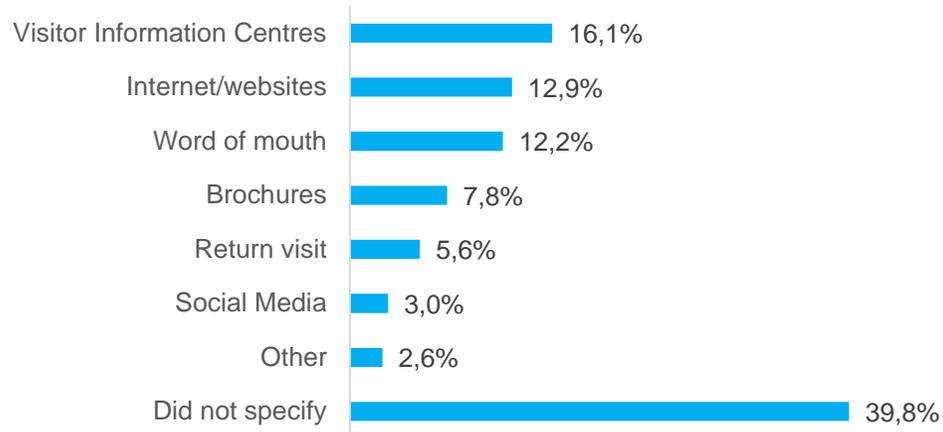
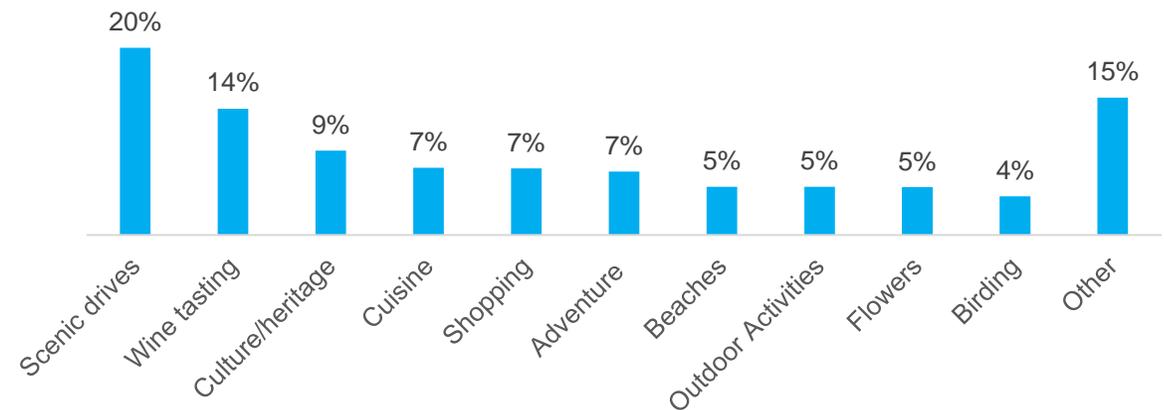


FIGURE 12: TOP ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN IN THE WESKUS



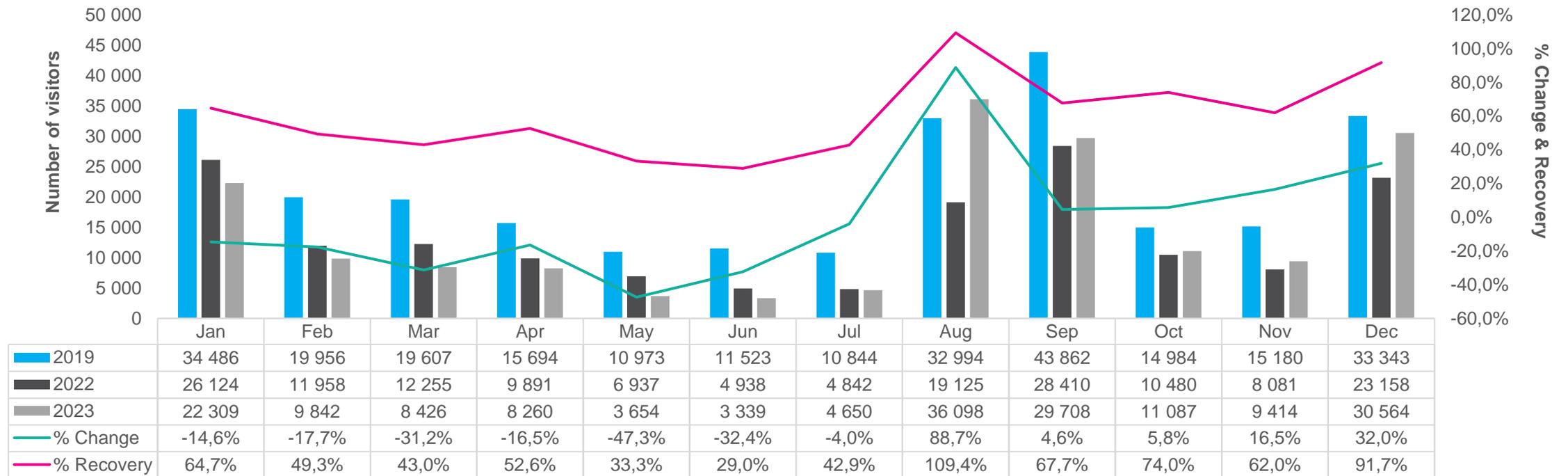
# Performance of Weskus Attractions

Period of Review: January–December 2023

# 4. Weskus Attractions

- The West Coast National Park welcomed **177 351** visitors between January and December 2023, which represents a 67.3% recovery rate when compared to January to December 2019. This is illustrated in Figure 13.
- August was the best performing month during the period under review, accounting for the highest volume of visitors (36 098) in 2023 and recovered fully in relation to the same period in 2019 (109.4%). The strong performance during August could likely be attributed to the annual flower season which peak between August and September. Following August, December recorded the second highest number of visitors (30 564) and nearly fully recovered, reaching 91.7% of pre-pandemic levels.

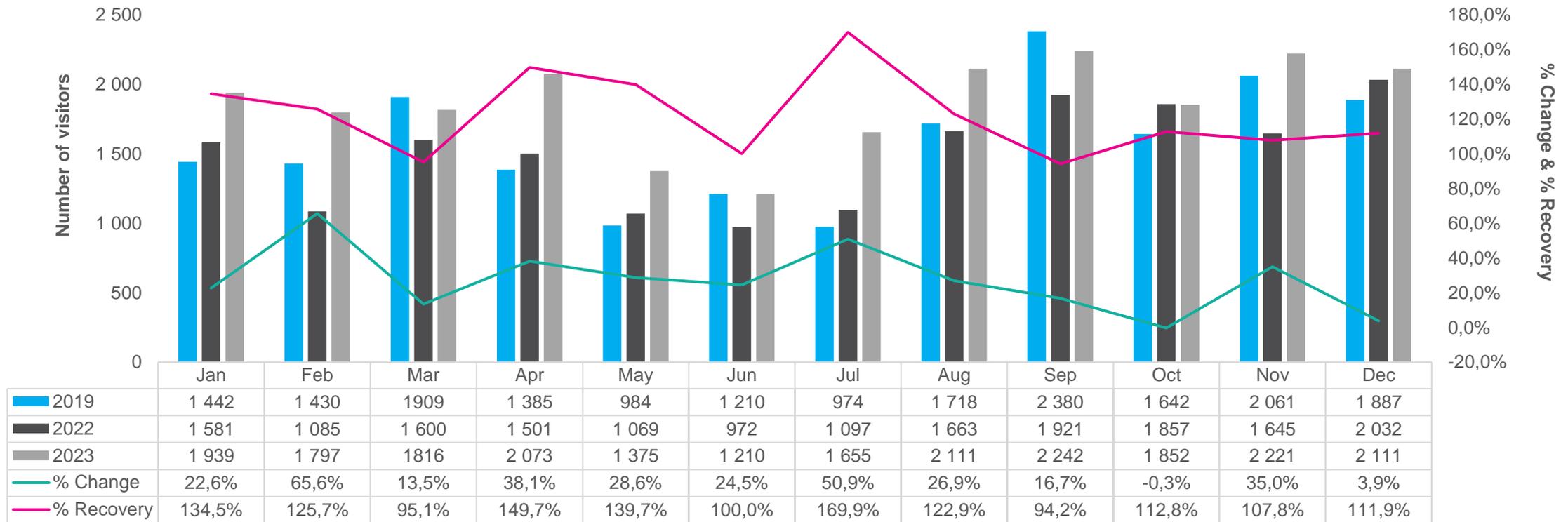
Figure 13: West Coast National Park: Jan–Dec 2019–2023



# 4. Weskus Attractions Continued:

- !Khwa ttu welcomed a total of **22 402** visitors between January and December 2023, as can be observed in Figure 14. This number represented an increase of 24.3% when compared to the same period in 2022. In relation to the same period in 2019, !Khwa ttu recovered fully across all the months apart from March and September, which demonstrated a 95.1% and 94.2% recovery rate, respectively.

Figure 14: !Khwa ttu: Jan–Dec 2019–2023

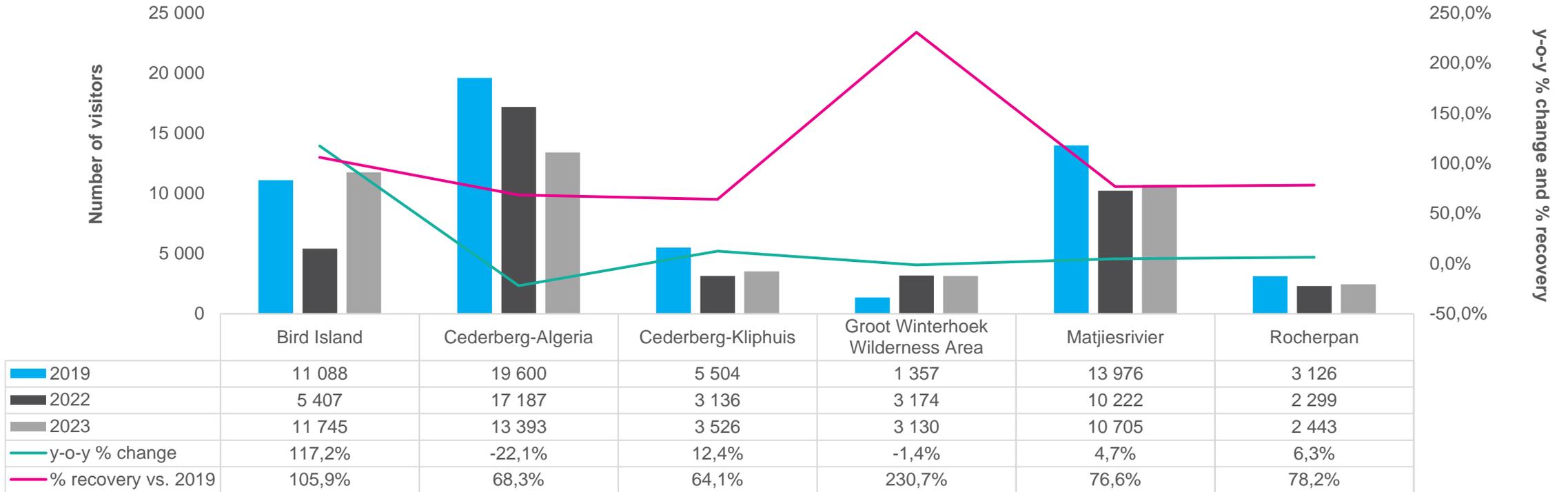


Source: !Khwa ttu, 2024

# 4. Weskus Attractions Continued:

- Collectively, the six Cape Nature reserves based in the Weskus region welcomed a total of **44 942** visitors between January and December 2023, as can be observed in Figure 15. This number represented an increase of 8.5% when compared to the same period in 2022. For the year 2023, the best performing reserve with respect to visitor volume was Cederberg-Algeria, Bird Island and Majiesrivier. In relation to the same period in 2019, Bird Island and Groot Winterhoek Wilderness Area recovered fully in the year 2023.

Figure 15: Performance of Cape Nature Reserves in the Weskus: Jan–Dec 2019–2023



# 5. Acknowledgements

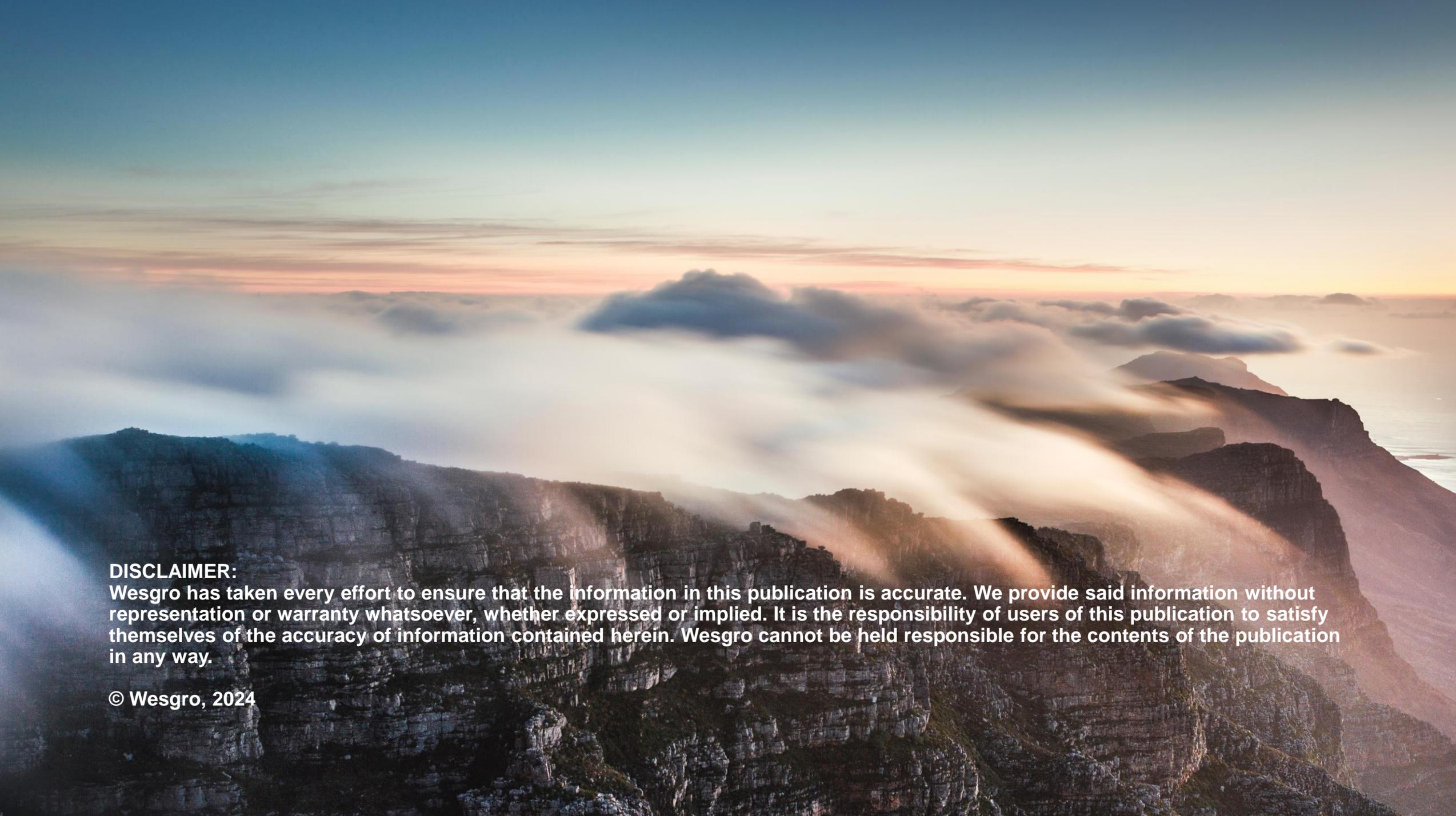
Acknowledgements and many thanks go to the West Coast District Municipality and the following tourism offices for supplying the data which made this publication possible, and whose continued and unwavering support will sustain the forthcoming issues.

## **The participating local tourism offices in the Weskus:**

Darling Tourism  
Piketberg Tourism  
Porterville Tourism  
Velddrif Tourism  
Vredendal Tourism  
Yzerfontein Tourism  
Lamberts Bay Tourism  
Riebeeck Valley Tourism  
Clanwilliam Tourism and  
Malmesbury Tourism.

## **The participating attractions in the Weskus:**

West Coast National Park  
!Khwa ttu  
Bird Island Nature Reserve  
Cederberg-Algeria Nature Reserve  
Cederberg-Kliphuis Nature Reserve  
Groot Winterhoek Wilderness Area  
Matjiesrivier Nature Reserve and  
Rocherpan Nature Reserve.



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