



MARCH 2025



# SAVE AFRICAN PENGUINS

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The African Penguin is at risk of going extinct in the wild within the next 10 years. Recent studies show that current conservation measures are not enough to ensure their future. In October 2024, the African Penguin was uplisted to Critically Endangered on the IUCN Red List. With an estimated population of less than 10,000 breeding pairs, these endangered birds — among the smallest of all penguin species — are struggling to survive due to a shortage of their primary food sources. Sardines and anchovy stocks are dwindling as a result of climate change and commercial purse-seine fishing. Food deprivation and starvation is contributing to a dramatic decline in African Penguin numbers.

The current commercial fishery no-take zones in South Africa surround six African Penguin colonies that represent 76% of the global population. These zones have failed to sufficiently protect important foraging areas for the penguins, forcing them to compete with commercial purse seine fisheries for food. Simply put, African Penguins need to eat to survive. If nothing changes, African Penguins could disappear from the wild by 2035.

At its heart, this was a storytelling campaign humanising the penguins to drive public and policy action. We crafted a campaign that made the African Penguin impossible to ignore, building on powerful insights: penguins are monogamous, highly social and integral to South Africa's national identity. By leveraging their lifelong bonds, we reframed conservation into an emotionally charged issue, from Valentine's Day activations ('Penguin Love in Peril') to urgent messaging about their fate.

WATCH THE FILM [HERE](#).







# TOTAL EDITORIAL REACH: 2.2 BILLION

TOTAL PIECES OF COVERAGE: 435

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"The threats facing the African penguin are complex and ongoing – and the order itself requires monitoring, enforcement, and continued cooperation from industry and the government processes which monitor and allocate sardine and anchovy populations for commercial purposes. We must continue to advocate on the basis of our scientific research and implement effective conservation strategies to ensure that African penguins will thrive in the future."

— Nicky Stander, head of conservation  
at SANCCOB

Key mentions:

[BBC](#)

[The Guardian](#)

[Forbes](#)



# KEY DATES IN THE CAMPAIGN

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- **August 2024- Influencer & Partnership Strategy**

Free diver and ocean advocate Zandile Ndhlovu narrated the 'Save African Penguins' film, amplifying reach through her network.

- **September 2024- Public Mobilisation**

Launched Only One petition to drive public awareness.

- **October 2024- Cape Town Event**

We hosted a landmark Cape Town event, bringing together media, conservationists, and decision-makers to escalate political pressure.

- **January 2025- Nationwide Polling Insights**

A nationwide South African poll revealed that 64% of citizens were unaware of the penguin's endangered status, creating a powerful media talking point. This data-driven story was a wake-up call for the nation, sparking widespread coverage in national and regional publications, consumer magazines, and radio shows.

- **March 2025- Court House**

Designed placards and public presence outside of the Pretoria High Court.







# 33,571

people signed the  
Only One petition ahead  
of the March 2025 court  
case.

# 25%

increase in public awareness  
of the African Penguin's  
endangered status.

# 82%

of South Africans polled  
saying they would vote for  
leaders prioritising wildlife  
protection.

"The recent settlement is a step in the right direction and these new, effective measures will help avert a catastrophe for the African penguin. However, continued vigilance is essential. Now that an agreement has been reached, we must ensure these protections are upheld."- Jo Coumbe, communication director at Blue Marine

# SOCIAL MEDIA

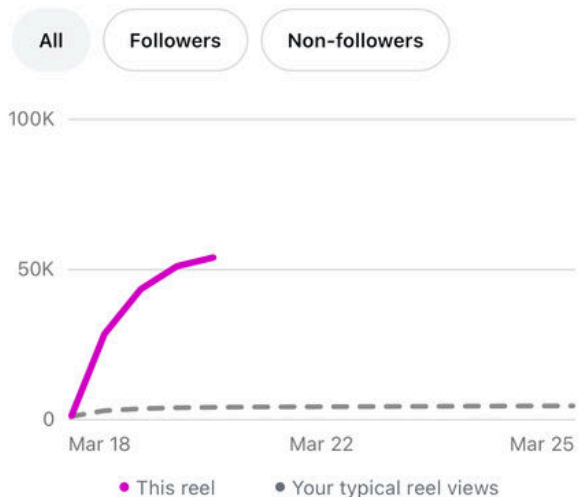
TOTAL INFLUENCER REACH: 2,421,612

ORGANIC BLUE MARINE REACH: 264,136

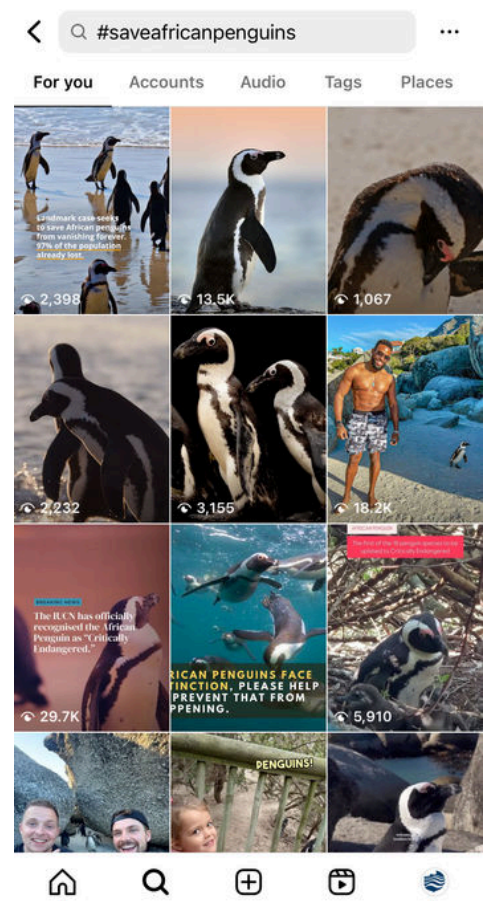
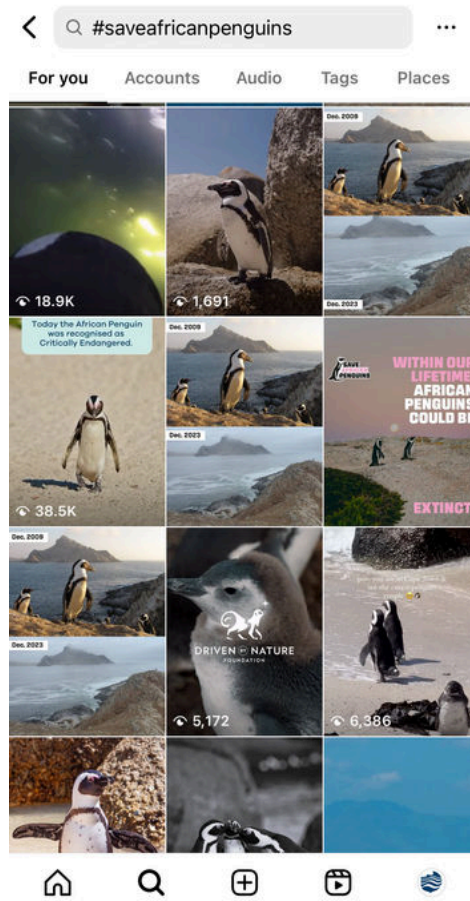
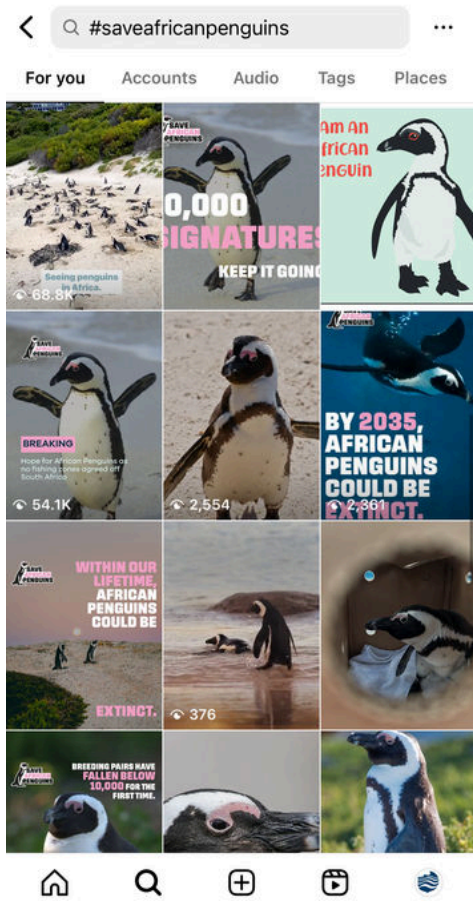
A strategic social media pack made the campaign materials accessible to partners and media, driving consistent messaging across channels.

Key collaborations: SANCOBB, BirdLife South Africa, BirdLife Africa, Zandi, Rassie van der Dussen, Cam Whitnall

## Views over time



Blue Marine's announcement reel recieved over 54,000 views within 48 hours.



# PRESS

## Coverage by Phase

Phase One (October to December 2024)

Total Pieces of Coverage: 111

Total Audience: 1.23B

Phase Two (January and February 2025)

Total Pieces of Coverage: 196

Total Audience: 675M

Phase Three: (March)

Total Pieces of Coverage: 128

Total Audience: 299.9M

## Coverage by Month

October 2024:

Total Pieces of Coverage: 62

Total Audience: 343M

November 2024:

Total Pieces of Coverage: 47

Total Audience: 767M

December 2024:

Total Pieces of Coverage: 3

Total Audience: 122M

January 2025:

Total Pieces of Coverage: 41

Total Audience: 161.4M

February 2025:

Total Pieces of Coverage: 152

Total Audience: 513.7M

March 2025 (to 19.03):

Total Pieces of Coverage: 128

Total Audience: 299.9M



# AREAS PROTECTED

On 18 March 2025 an ambitious settlement agreement proposed by conservationist was agreed to by the fishing industry and approved by the judge. The settlement includes critical protected areas in Dassen Island, Robben Island, Stony Point, Dyer Island, St. Croix Island and Bird Island outlined in the map below.

The South African government will implement closures to commercial fishery around six of the last major breeding colonies of this Critically Endangered species.

The total area of the other closures is 4,027 km sq with an additional 1,041 km sq of partial closure at Dyer Island (the zone where vessels under 26 m can fish).

Read more about the court order [here](#):



**No-take zones for the commercial sardine and anchovy fishery**





