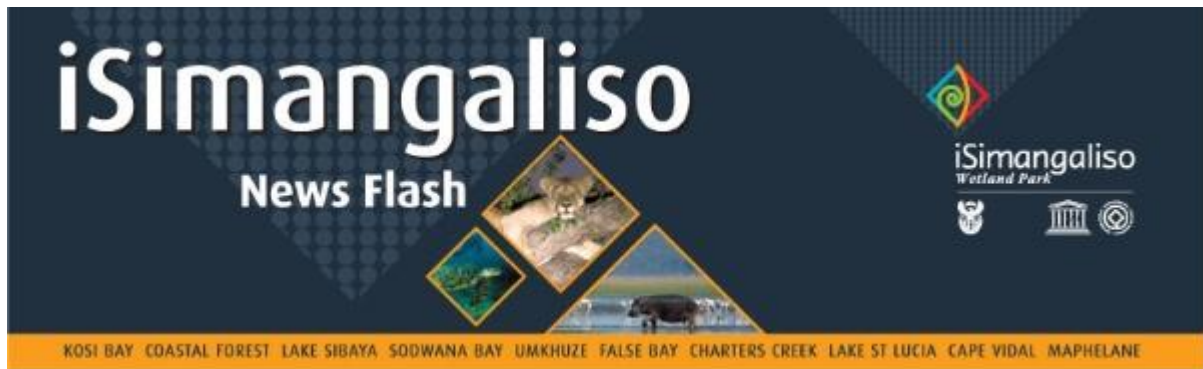




**22 August 2026**

## **iSIMANGALISO HOLDS AN URGENT MEETING WITH AMAKHOSI OVER OZABENI LAND INVASION MATTER**

On Saturday (22 August 2026) at Hluhluwe, the iSimangaliso Board Chairperson Ms Thulile Sosibo and the CEO Mr Sibusiso Bukhosini led a special meeting to brief Amakhosi about the recent developments and the arrest of about 50 people who defied the Court Order by trespassing in Ozabeni Section of the Park and engaged in prohibited activities in the park.

Blocking of the main artery road R22 by the protestors in Ozabeni this past Wednesday is another concern that was raised in the meeting as it affects critical essential services such as the ambulances that uses this road for emergencies, socio-economic activities, and it connects Durban with Maputo commercial activities.



*Picture: Amakhosi and District Mayor of uMkhanyakude*

The Amakhosi learned with surprise that contrary to the picture being drawn by the perpetrators of the illegal invasion, the statistics presented in the meeting by the CEO of iSimangaliso Mr Bukhosini clearly paints a different picture. Various opportunities have been directed to the local community of kwaMbila such as business opportunities, bursaries, and jobs. Mr Bukhosini explained that the land issue remains a contentious matter in that area, emanating from the historical apartheid background. A matter which is under the competency of Land Commissioner and is being addressed at that level as per the laws of the country.

Another question on the table was whether it would not be possible for iSimangaliso to drop the charges to pave a way for the release of the arrested people. The legal advisor present at the meeting explained that even if iSimangaliso wanted to do so it would not be possible because the matter is beyond the hands of iSimangaliso now. Those who have been arrested have been arrested for being in contempt of the court by not adhering to the Court order prohibiting anyone from cutting the fence, unlawful invasion

and engaging in illegal activities in a protected area. The truth is that more people might still be arrested if they continue engaging in unlawful activities in the Park.



*Meeting Co-chairs: Inkosi Nxumalo and iSimangaliso Board Chair Ms Sosibo*

In the true spirit of leadership, Amakhosi resolved that they are going to put their heads together and collectively work together to find ways to resolve this challenge urgently. The Amakhosi are a critical stakeholder in the running of iSimangaliso hence there are standing quarterly meetings of Amakhosi and iSimangaliso where in Amakhosi are briefed about the matters in iSimangaliso and get to provide guidance.

Amongst the attendees of the meeting was the District Mayor of uMkhanyakude Honourable Mdaka who representing Local Government sector, Ms Sosibo - iSimangaliso Board Chair and Board members who reports to the Minister, Mr Zibani Ncube - Chairperson of People and Parks and his committee, an official structure representing Land Claimants and broad neighbouring communities.

-End-

### **Statement issued by iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority**

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