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Piet Retief Cycad

Taxonomy

Scientific Name	Encephalartos lebomboensis I.Verd.
Higher Classification	Gymnosperms
Family	ZAMIACEAE
Synonyms	Encephalartos sp.nov. 'Piet Retiefii'
Common Names	Broodboom (a), Cycad (e), Piet Retief Cycad (e), Piet Retief-broodboom

National Status

Status and Criteria	Endangered A2acd; B1ab(ii,iii,iv,v)+2ab(ii,iii,iv,v)
Assessment Date	2009/10/31
Assessor(s)	J.S. Donaldson
Justification	This is a popular species among collectors and the population has declined by at least 50% in the past years (three generations). The subpopulation on Mananga Mount has been particularly affected by collecting. EOO 450 km ² and AOO km ² , with fewer than five remaining locations. Some authors regard the true <i>E. lebomboensis</i> as having a narrower distribution, which if correct, would result in a classification of Critically Endangered (CR).

Distribution

Endemism	Not endemic to South Africa
Provincial distribution	KwaZulu-Natal, Mpumalanga
Range	Lebombo Mountains of southern Mpumalanga, Swaziland and Mozambique as well as north-eastern KwaZulu-Natal.

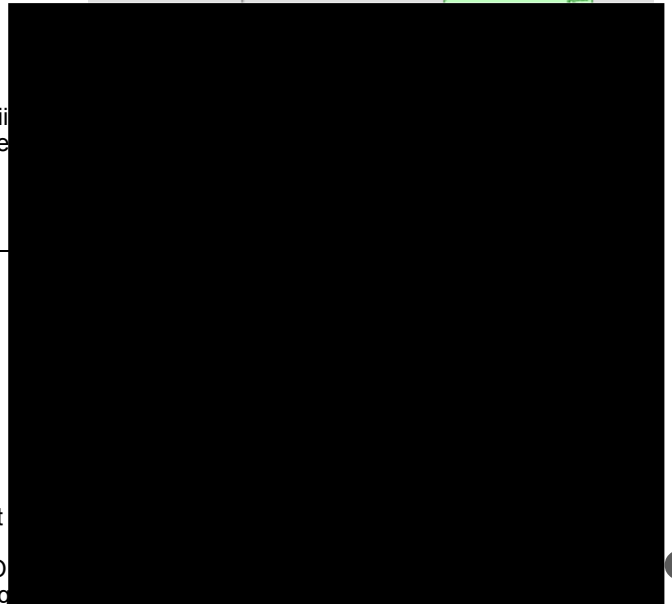
Habitat and Ecology

Major system	Terrestrial
Major habitats	Lebombo Summit Sourveld, Southern Lebombo Bushveld, Swaziland Sour Bushveld, Ithala Quartzite Sourveld, Paulpietersburg Moist Grassland
Description	Cliffs and rocky ravines in savanna and grassland.

Threats

E. lebomboensis is threatened due to over-collecting as a result of poaching and as a result of expanding agricultural activities. Plants are also used in traditional medicine.

Population



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Some subpopulations have declined substantially due to collecting, and based on these subpopulations it is estimated that overall decline exceeds 50%. There are approximately 2000 plants in KwaZulu-Natal and about 5000 plants in total remaining in the wild.

Population trend Decreasing

Conservation

Plants are protected in two nature reserves, one in Mpumalanga and the other in Swaziland.

Notes

The exact status of *E. lebomboensis* depends on how the species is defined. Some sources (P. Hurter) regard only the populations at Mananga and northern Swaziland as true *E. lebomboensis*, in which case it may qualify as CR. If populations in northern KwaZulu-Natal are included, the species is less threatened. The current assessment is based on the wider distribution.

Assessment History

Taxon assessed	Status and Criteria	Citation/Red List version
Encephalartos lebomboensis	EN A2acd; B1ab(ii,iii,iv,v)+2ab(ii,iii,iv,v)	Raimondo et al. (2009)
I.Verd.		
Encephalartos lebomboensis	VU B1B2ce	Scott-Shaw (1999)
I.Verd.		
Encephalartos lebomboensis	Vulnerable	Hilton-Taylor (1996)
I.Verd.		
Encephalartos lebomboensis	Rare	Hall et al. (1980)
I.Verd.		

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Citation

Donaldson, J.S. 2009. *Encephalartos lebomboensis*
I. Verd. National Assessment: Red List of South African
Plants version 2020.1. Accessed on 2021/10/15

 [Comment on this assessment](#)

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