

## DEPARTMENT OF SPORTS, ARTS AND CULTURE

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AN AGENCY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF SPORTS, ARTS AND CULTURE

## SOUTH AFRICAN HERITAGE RESOURCES AGENCY

## DECLARATION OF THE GATS RIVER FOSSIL SITE, NIEU-BETHESDA, EASTERN CAPE AS A NATIONAL HERITAGE SITE

By virtue of the powers vested in the South African Heritage Resources Agency (SAHRA), in terms of section 27 (5) of the National Heritage Resources Act (No. 25 of 1999), SAHRA hereby declares the Gats River Fossil Site, situated on Remainder Erf 1, Nieu-Bethesda, Eastern Cape as a National Heritage Site.

**Statement of Significance**

*“The Gats River Fossil Site, in the riverbed at Nieu Bethesda, where rocks of the late Permian Dicynodont Assemblage Zone of the Karoo Supergroup are well exposed, has yielded numerous important fossils, in particular fossils of mammal-like reptiles (therapsids). These fossils represent an evolutionary stage when reptilian and mammalian lineages split, giving rise to the ancestors of mammals, and the remote ancestors of humankind. Fossil taxa that have been collected from the site include Youngina capensis, Dicynodon leoniceps, Oudenodon baini, Cynosaurus kitching, Ictidosuchops intermedius, Theriognathus, and Procynosuchus delaharpeae*

*This site already serves as an educational experience for locals, the growing number of visitors to the town as well as geology and palaeontology students that include this site in their field trips due to its potential of easily finding new significant fossils and understanding palaeoenvironmental features.”*

**Schedule**

The demarcation of the sites is as follows:

Site Name	Erf No / Farm	Province	Nearest Town	Municipality		Survey Diagram	Deed
				Local	District		
Gats River Fossil Site	Re/Erf 1	Eastern Cape	Nieu-Bethesda	Dr Beyers Naude Local Municipality	Sarah Baartman District Municipality	A/10/1858	15159/1968

Coordinates:

Site Name	Point	Latitude	Longitude
Gats River Fossil Site	A	-31.867788968337948	24.550475562127083
	B	-31.867398811504813	24.55136939930902
	C	-31.86759813096288	24.551958632758563
	D	-31.870146837524516	24.552687684314783
	E	-31.87035463245605	24.55232315853668
	F	-31.868832205670483	24.55045558811184



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