



17 December 2019

**CAUTION ADVISED AROUND THE COASTLINE IN THE FACE OF LARGE SWELL AND STRONG WINDS : 18 – 23 DECEMBER 2019**

**The South African Weather Service would like to caution visitors to the South African west and south coasts to be aware of large swell and strong winds from Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> December, persisting until after the weekend.**

A series of cold fronts passing south of South Africa generating large swells will reach the South African coastline from early on Wednesday morning (18<sup>th</sup> December 2019). These long period swells will bring high energy to the coastline, peaking along the Western Cape's west coast and Cape Peninsula regions. High wave energy will move eastwards from there, around the Cape south coast and weakening into the southern reaches of the Eastern Cape.

Long period (powerful) swells of around 19 seconds are likely to be encountered along the west coast from 02h00 on Wednesday morning (18<sup>th</sup> December 2019), spreading around the coastline, reaching the Cape Peninsula by 07h00 and the Cape south coast by midday. In each case, the onset of the long period swell will be followed by a steady increase in wave height. Significant wave heights ranging from 3 - 5 m are expected between the Cape west coast and Cape Peninsula, dropping to around 2 m for the Cape south coast. Slightly further offshore wave heights may exceed 6 m. Wave conditions will be accompanied by strong westerly to north-westerly winds, most notably for the south west coastline. While wave energy should dissipate slightly by Friday evening (20<sup>th</sup> December 2019), another system of powerful swell will reach the coast by the early hours of Saturday morning (21<sup>st</sup> December 2019). In general, hazardous wave and wind conditions are expected to persist until Monday morning (23<sup>rd</sup> December 2019) for most of the Cape west and south coasts.

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Care should be taken to avoid a range of possible impacts associated with these sea conditions. Visitors to the coastline are advised to avoid low lying rocky coastlines and beaches experiencing big waves. Beware of long lulls, followed by sudden large waves. There is a chance of waves breaking over coastal walkways and reaching further up the beaches than normal. Strong winds from the early hours of Wednesday morning (18<sup>th</sup> December 2019), combined with large wave heights are likely to make coastal sea conditions rough. Vessels operating along the South African west, south-west and south coasts should take care.

Coastal users are encouraged to refer to detailed forecasts for specific areas of interest.

Compiled by SAWS Marine Unit

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