

Review of: "Contextualizing Public Coastal Access Challenges in South Africa, a Review of Best Practices in Selected Countries"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

The article is an interesting read. It is well-written to portray the view of the author to the readership. Beyond Public Coastal Access, the paper is relevant to sustainability and equity. The problems identified are genuine and important. To promote open coastal access, the author identified the South African government's acquisition of coastal assets as one of the solutions. The author identified the Integrated Coastal Management Act 24 of 2008 as one of the steps taken by the South African government to promote public ocean access; this is commendable. While the source of funding for such acquisition is not yet guaranteed, the problem of private individuals' willingness to sell their land to the government must also be addressed. The author needs to provide a recommendation to encourage more private owners to be willing to sell or a scheme to encourage easements.

Here are some suggestions that can be looked into by the author as the solution(s) to some of the identified problems of public coastal access:

1. Government subsidy or tax breaks in locations where the private owners use such facilities for business, such as tourism and recreational centres.
2. In the case of issuing easements, the security and privacy of the landowners must be part of the proposed law and must be guaranteed unambiguously with an action plan in such paperwork.
3. Incentives such as the provision of land in a choice location and generous compensation can help improve the number of willing sellers.
4. Land reclamation and coastal housing projects along the coastline by the government can also give the government the means of promoting equity and open ocean access.
5. Special funds can be created by the government for the acquisition of land from willing sellers.
6. Community funding, such as donations in a trust fund for the acquisition of coastal land from willing sellers, can also be explored.

These suggestions can be modified to fit into the South African reality in the context of the current paper while also projecting a global solution to improve public ocean access.