

Dr Razeena Omar is an accomplished professional who has gained valuable experience within the environmental conservation and education sectors over the past 30 years and achieved great successes in matters related to the protection of the terrestrial, marine and coastal environments.

Dr Omar obtained, from the University of the Western Cape (UWC), a Bachelor in Science degree, a BSc Honors in Zoology, a Higher Diploma in Education and a Masters in Philosophy in Botany. She also completed a Bachelor of Education at the University of Cape Town, and acquired a doctorate from Rhodes University.

She lectured at Hewat Teacher Education College in science, biology and mathematics education, and mentored trainee teachers in nature during field work excursions, during the difficult struggle years in South Africa. In 1997, she left Hewat to join the World Wide Fund for Nature - South Africa (WWF-SA) as the organisation's manager for community conservation. Thereafter she was appointed as an environmental advisor to the National Minister of Education in 1999, where she also directed the National Environmental Education Programme (NEEP) in the ministry. After leaving the ministry in 2003, she took on a role within the South African National Parks, better known as SANParks. Her mandate as executive director for People and Conservation was to establish this theme as one of SANParks' three pillars alongside conservation and tourism.

In 2008, she was appointed as Chief Director: Integrated Coastal Management for the Department of Environmental Affairs (Oceans and Coasts) where she acquired valuable management experience in the marine sector as well as exposure to a variety of key global conservation issues. These include assuming focal point roles at the London Convention and Protocol and the respective Nairobi and Abidjan Conventions.

In January 2014 she went on to start her tenure as Chief Executive Officer or CEO of CapeNature, the public institution tasked with overseeing biodiversity conservation in the Western Cape. Every step in her career has contributed in some way to where she is today. She relentlessly pursues excellence and welcomes any opportunity to advance environmental conservation.

Dr Omar received various awards in recognition of her contribution to conservation and environmental education. These include receiving an award from the University of the Western Cape the Gold Medal Award, and a subsequent lifetime achiever award from the Wildlife and Environmental Society of Southern Africa her contribution to the environment and education over the past 30 years. She also received an outstanding Alumni Award from the University of the Western Cape for her contribution to communities in the areas of Science and Technology.