



water affairs

Department:  
Water Affairs  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**Budget vote speech for the Departments of Water and Environmental Affairs  
by Mme Rejoice Mabudafhasi, MP, the Deputy Minister of Water and  
Environmental Affairs, National Council of Provinces (NCOP), Parliament**

Honourable Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces(NCOP);  
Honourable Minister, Mme Edna Molewa, MP  
Honourable Chairperson of the Select Committee  
Honourable Members of the Select Committee  
Distinguished Chairpersons and Chief Executives of Public Entities  
Distinguished guests  
Ladies and gentlemen

Water and environment are catalysts to economic growth and development. Our role as a Ministry is to ensure that our country has enough water; environment is protected in order to meet our country's developmental needs. Service delivery is the business of all spheres of government. It is for that reason that the Ministry has identified the water and environmental challenges and hot spot areas affecting water and environment in collaboration with the sector partners in all spheres of government. We are finalising our turn around strategies and plan of action to address the prioritised challenges. We have met with the Premiers, MEC's and Mayors and agreed to establish Task Teams composed of senior officials from our ministry, affected national and provincial departments and municipalities to ensure that the plan of action is implemented and report directly to the Provincial government and to our Ministry. As a Ministry we have adopted hands on approach to support both provincial and local government to ensure that water is provided to

our people and also that environment is protected. We are mobilising community leaders to come on board and participate actively in the management of water and environment, their indigenous knowledge will help us to achieve sustainable water and environment. Water and Environment is everybody's business.

Honourable members allow me to give you an overview of our programmes.

## **LOCAL GOVERNMENT SUPPORT**

We are finalising our local government support plans which will be monitored by the Premiers, MEC's, Mayors and our Ministry. Those plans seek to address major challenges on water and environment challenges. The collaboration with the provincial and local government improved service delivery as we have managed to do interventions which gave us positive results. We have managed to unblock water challenges in Setlagole village in the North West by constructing a borehole water scheme. In Limpopo, Mukula Village we have managed to respond to lack of water supply by rehabilitating the existing boreholes as a short term solution, construction of bulk water scheme have commenced in May this year to be completed in June 2012.

## **Regional Bulk and technical Capacity**

One of the key challenges in the provision of water services is the ageing infrastructure and inadequate technical skills. Through our regional bulk programme we are making a remarkable progress in addressing the infrastructure challenge. Since the inception of regional bulk programme we have created 7221 jobs, 1210 job opportunities are projected for this current financial year. We are also finalising the formulation of Response teams to provide hands on support to municipalities as a way of addressing technical capacity.

## **Waste management for a healthy South Africa**

The improper operation of waste disposal sites and the inadequate refuse collection makes us awake at night. We are supporting municipalities in the development of Integrated Waste Management Plans which will be incorporated into IDPs in order to ensure proper resourcing of the waste services provision. In the current financial year, we will train 450 landfill site managers. We are also supporting municipalities to ensure that refuse collection service is provided adequately to all citizens of our country including the indigent group. We will strengthen the existing initiatives of Buyisa e Bag to create more job opportunities and establish entrepreneurships and that, will realize our vision – “Waste is Wealth”.

We acknowledge that the issue of medical waste needs a multi pronged approach which will involve Department of Health and other sector stakeholders. We will develop a joint programme of action to address this challenge. Our Green Scorpions will deal with the non compliance accordingly.

### **Clean air for a healthy South Africa**

In response to building a healthy South Africa, we will ensure that the air our people breathe does not pose any danger to the health and well-being of our people. We identified the hot spots in our country which include Vaal Triangle and Highveld as priority areas and we also doing the monitoring with Waterberg soon to be declared as a priority area. . The department continues to roll-out the clean fires campaign - Basa Njengo Magogo (BnM)” to reduce air pollution. **Extended Public Works Programme and job creation**

We are implementing Social Responsibility Programme that created 16 840 jobs and accredited training. We have enrolled 480 youth in the Environmental Youth Service. This year, we will create 17 154 work opportunities and enroll 600 young people in our Environmental Youth Service programme. Last year we launched the Buyisela Programme which has an integrated approach that includes greening, waste management, recycling water conservation and rehabilitation of degraded land.Ten municipalities have been identified for this pilot phase. This programme is being implemented in Mthatha, Nkandla, Mantsopa, Bushbuckridge, Butterworth and Thohoyandou and the remaining municipalities will be implemented this year

## **Water conservation**

We are implementing the accelerated community infrastructure programme which we have allocated R83 million in Cape Town, eThekweni, City of Johannesburg and Nelson Mandela Metros to address water conservation and demand management challenges. The intervention focuses leak repairs, pressure management education and awareness and use of effluent to offset demand for potable water.

## **War on Leaks**

We launched the War on Leaks project in Mogale City which aims at educating the water users about the importance of repairing water leaks. The youth educates the communities on fixing leaking taps and toilets thus creating job opportunities and skills development. It has created 146 job opportunities which exposed them to various skills training in Gauteng, Free State, Western Cape and Eastern Cape. In Kwa Zulu Natal, 81 unemployed graduates have been trained in technical skills and employed by the department of water affairs and municipalities.

## **Empowerment of women, youth and marginalised groups**

The Ministry has prioritised the following programmes to empower women, young people and people with disabilities.

## **Adopt a River**

Our rivers are highly polluted with all types of waste and their ecosystems have deteriorated. With thus the launch of Adopt A River project last year which its main objective of is to clean rivers and identify sources of pollution. It has created 595 job opportunities for women and empower them with skills thus making them Water Ambassadors in Limpopo, Eastern Cape, KwaZulu Natal, Western Cape and Free State which were the pilot provinces. We will expand the project to include North West, Mpumalanga, Northern Cape and Gauteng provinces.

## **Women in Environment**

In 2010 we held Women and Environment conference The conference was also used to focus on enhancing the role of South African women in leveraging economic opportunities from ecosystems services. A national women and environment forum

which is composed of representatives from nine provincial forums was inaugurated at the conference. A plan of action was developed and adopted as a roadmap towards the implementation of the projects in the different provinces.

### **Women in Water Awards**

We have also hosted Women in Water Awards. Women developed comprehensive projects proposing solutions on water challenges.

I am also proud to announce that later this year, we will host a conference of African Women in Water and Environment as a build up towards COP 17. This platform will enable women across the continent to share best practice and experiences in the area of water and environment management.

### **Youth development**

2020 Vision Programme is one of our key education initiatives which aims to educate learners from Grade R to 12 about water resource management and water conservation. Curriculum aligned educational resource materials have been developed with the Department of Basic Education and will be piloted in 135 schools.

We are hosting the Youth Summit starting from Saturday 25 – 28 June where we have invited young people and Ministers from SADC region. We are proud of their achievements and we need more young minds to fill the skills gap that we experience in our sectors for both environment and water.

Annually our learners participate in the Stockholm Junior Water Prize. It gives me great joy to announce that Motebele Moshodi won the Stockholm Junior Water Prize in 2005. He joined the Department this year in February as a graduate Trainee. We have also awarded bursaries for learners.

### **Public awareness and education**

We have started with our climate change public awareness campaign aimed at creating awareness about the impact of climate change spearheaded by Indalo Yet under the theme Save Tomorrow, Today. On water conservation we are partnership

with ESKOM on water and energy saving campaign under the theme “know your water”.

## **RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

Through our rural development programme we have provided 5 280 Rainwater Harvesting tanks and created 320 job opportunities for people in rural areas. We have also provided 360 poorly resourced farmers with bulk water distribution, infrastructure for irrigation with subsidies for operations and maintenance costs.

Currently an amount of R11million is invested for the construction of the main irrigation pipeline for Blocusso Trust Project near Upington in Northern Cape Province. The project will benefit 446 farmers.

We also allocated R49 million for Rural Development Programme for small farmers.

### **Improved forecasting and warnings**

South Africa is a country that is prone to weather related disasters that are mostly related to thunderstorms and lightning mostly in KwaZulu-Natal. In addition to the existing meteorological work done by the South African Weather Services, we have started with education and awareness programmes aimed at arming our various communities with needed information on weather predictions and early warning systems.

Honourable Members must have been surprised by recent winter rains which threatened to reach the floods level that we recently experienced. This type of weather pattern was last experienced in 1964 almost 47 years ago. We are proud of the close working relation between our hydrological services and the South African weather service especially in the monitoring of these patterns which inform not only our dam levels but keep us on our toes with regard to our disaster management systems.

### **Giving access and sharing the benefits with our people**

During COP 10 in Nagoya, Japan last year we adopted the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits. Last

year, before the COP, we awarded our first bio-prospecting permit to a pharmaceutical company in the Western Cape in collaboration with the San community in! Khwa Ttu. Collaborations of this nature between indigenous communities and commercial or private parties will focus on enterprise development and sharing with local communities the benefits from indigenous biological resources. We have started engagements with various stakeholders in sharing with them some of the requirements of the regulations governing bio-prospecting in our country.

### **Game farming**

Game farming or wildlife ranching, is an important provider of employment in the provinces of Limpopo, Northern Cape and Mpumalanga, and is a rapidly growing sector in the Eastern Cape. In this financial year 2011/12, we will develop regulations relating to the hunting industry to ensure that a national system is implemented in terms of the regulation of the sector.

### **Expanding our protected areas**

The conservation of biodiversity in our protected areas and national park system is one of the key focus areas of my department. Last year we successfully hosted the fourth People and Parks Conference was in KwaZulu-Natal. Amongst some of the deliverables of this conference was a national co-management framework that was launched to provide a harmonised uniform guideline for conservation authorities and successful restitution claimants.

Whilst in the past communities were excluded from playing a role in protecting the environment, today they are shareholders and play a critical role under co-management agreements in support of rural development objectives of government. Protected areas are already providing vital climate change mitigation and adaptation benefits.

In discharging our responsibility in the management of marine biodiversity, we are also actively and consistently engaging with our regional and international

stakeholders with whom marine ecosystems and species are shared to promote and protect biodiversity.

The use of Marine Protected Areas is working well in the department through collaboration with provincial conservation agencies and local authorities. We will replicate the same model when we declare another Marine Protected Areas in the East London area in this financial year.

In conclusion I would like to announce that

23 700 jobs will be created through various programmes of the Department and that includes military veterans.

I thank you