



water affairs

Department:
Water Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**BUDGET VOTE SPEECH BY MME REJOICE MABUDAFHASI, MP, THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF
WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS,
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES (NCOP)
PARLIAMENT**

11 June 2012

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

INTRODUCTION

Allow me to take you on a journey of how we, as the sector leaders of water and environment are geared to bring forth a better life for all, even beyond the second decade of democracy.

War on Leaks project

Through War on Leaks project we educated water users about the importance of water conservation by doing door to door campaigns, practically fixing leaking taps and toilets in Northern Cape and West Rand. We also created job opportunities for our youth and equipped them with skills that can be used in the job market. These young people are called Water Conservation Warriors. This year, we will implement this project in nine (9) municipalities within the 24 priority district municipalities prioritized by our Cabinet and 300 job opportunities will be created.

Access to clean drinking water

During the National Water Week 2013, we handed over the R18 million Mukula Bulk Water Supply project to the late Chief Takalani and the Mukula community. This project supplies clean drinking water to 17 villages and created 45 job opportunities for local people. Through partnership with the Department of Science and Technology (DST) and Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) we provided water to six villages at Amathole and OR Tambo District municipalities in Eastern Cape. Phase two is currently being undertaken in eleven sites across Limpopo and Mpumalanga Provinces which will reach approximately 25 000 people. The exciting part is that Phase II will also tackle the operations and maintenance of infrastructure which is a national problem.

Public awareness and education

The school based environmental education programme implemented in partnership with the Department of Basic Education continues. In partnership with MTN Foundation we handed over one thousand two hundred (1200) computers with internet connection to sixty (60) schools. Eighty nine (89) bursaries have been awarded to learners who participated in of the 2020 Vision Programme to study water related careers.

The African Youth developed a draft Africa Youth Water Strategy during 2012 Youth Water Summit held in South Africa. The strategy has since been approved by AMCOW.

Kids and Parks programme enabled 4159 learners and 168 educators to access the national parks. We are targeting 5000 learners for this financial year.

We handed over the R28.5 million Environmental Science Education Centre to the University of Limpopo – Turfloop which created 17 job opportunities to locals.

Women Development

We brought rural women on board to prove that natural resources can be managed using indigenous knowledge; it is not only for engineers and scientists.

Through the Adopt a River project, twenty four (24) rivers were cleaned and created 1148 job opportunities for women. Last year I announced that we will put some of these women in our skills development programme to tell a story that says “I was a river cleaner now I am a Scientist”. I am proud to report that forty four (44) women will be awarded bursaries in this financial year to study at Universities and FET Colleges. I also need to appreciate the partnership and support from the Birchwood Hotel who adopted the Modderfontein River in Ekurhuleni.

One hundred and eighty-one (181) women from various municipalities of the Western Cape were trained in plumbing. Two hundred and fourteen women (214) from the nine provinces (9) have been trained as process controllers. Last year we hosted the Women in Environment conference. In this current financial year we will develop the sector gender framework and programme of action.

During Women’s month, we will host a Women Mayor’s dialogue to encourage them to prioritize and champion water conservation, environment, women and youth projects in their respective municipalities.

Working for Water – Eco Furniture Factory

Invasive alien species are a threat to our eco-system; however we reuse them as raw materials to manufacture eco coffins, school desks, garden benches, chess tables, bedroom furniture, walking sticks etc. To date we have established 3 Eco Factories which created a total of 493 job opportunities of which 52% is women and 37% youth. 250 desks from these factories were handed over to Boitumelo High School in Ficksburg, Free State and another 250 to Maatla Primary School in Hoedspruit, Limpopo. We will establish 18 Eco Factories within 3 years which will create 160 job opportunities per factory.

Waste Management

Three Hundred and Seventy Two (372) Councillors from the 9 Provinces have been trained on Environmental Management and Waste Management Planning. This year, the department will undertake a study that will investigate ways of including waste-pickers from the land-fill sites into the formal Waste Management System as a way of creating jobs in waste.

Access and Benefit Sharing

As a signatory to the Nagoya Protocol on Access Benefit Sharing, we have awarded 10 bio-prospecting licences to communities. They are benefitting through the creation of community-based enterprises and the awarding of bursaries to young people to further their education in the biodiversity conservation field.

Transformation of protected areas

Through this programme we facilitated co-management agreements with the Nwanedi land claimants in Limpopo and the Songimvelo Community in Mpumalanga, developed 241 SMMEs and created 5 852 job opportunities. During this financial year we will capacitate 400 beneficiaries on the use of natural resources, particularly the youth, women and people with disabilities.

Greening and open space management

Through our greening and open space management programme we have handed over Eco-Parks in Mdantsane and Duncan villages to the Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality. A total of 186 job opportunities were created during the implementation of this project.

Wetlands

We are making remarkable progress in the protection of the country's wetlands, of which 48% are critically endangered. A total of 540 million Rands have been invested in the rehabilitation of wetlands, providing 12 908 job opportunities.

Marine Protected Areas

In order to protect our vulnerable coastline, last year we developed the Ocean Management Strategy, which will be implemented from this year. South Africa declared the Prince Edward Islands as the first South African Marine Protected Area.

Weather Service

Together with the South African Weather Service, we embarked on severe weather awareness road shows in Limpopo and Northern Cape educating the affected communities about weather issues.

Rural development

We provided support to one thousand five hundred and fifty nine (1 559) Resource Poor Farmers (RPFs) through the provision of irrigation pumps, installation of Hydroponic tanks, water supply and storage, operation and maintenance and subsidies on water use charges. We also provided four thousand and sixty eight (4 068) rainwater harvesting tanks to schools and households.

CONCLUSION

In partnership with Daily Sun newspaper we launched the 5 million water saving tips campaign which is done in a form of a competition. The winners will be awarded bursaries to undergo training at FET Colleges around the country for a basic plumbing course.

We are grateful to all our partners such as the Department of Basic Education, MTN Foundation, Birchwood Hotel, SASOL, WESSA, Water Boards and Rand Water Foundation.

As we celebrate Environmental month which in our country is also celebrated as Youth month, I would like to remind South Africans especially youth about the significance of striving for environmental sustainability.

The need for this is clear in the theme for Environment Month: ***Think, Eat, Save.***

I thank you.