

Environment Quarterly

Kwartaalike Omgewingsverslag • Tikologo ka Kotara • Mupo nga Kotara



**Trees are SA's
valuable treasures**
**Women's relationship
with the environment**



environment, forestry
& fisheries

Department:
Environment, Forestry and Fisheries
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



**STAY
SAFE**

PROTECT SOUTH AFRICA

TOGETHER WE CAN BEAT THE CORONAVIRUS

2020 environment CALENDAR



JANUARY

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02 February
02 March
21 March
23 March
22 April

World Wetlands Day
World Wildlife Day
International Day of Forests
World Meteorological Day
Earth Day

MAY

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JULY

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AUGUST

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17 May
22 May
05 June
08 June

World Migratory Bird Day
International Day for Biological Diversity
World Environment Day
World Oceans Day

17 June
18 July
31 July
31 Aug - 04 Sep

Desertification and Drought Day
Nelson Mandela Day
World Ranger Day
Arbour Week

SEPTEMBER

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DECEMBER

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16 September
19 September
07 - 11 September
21 November

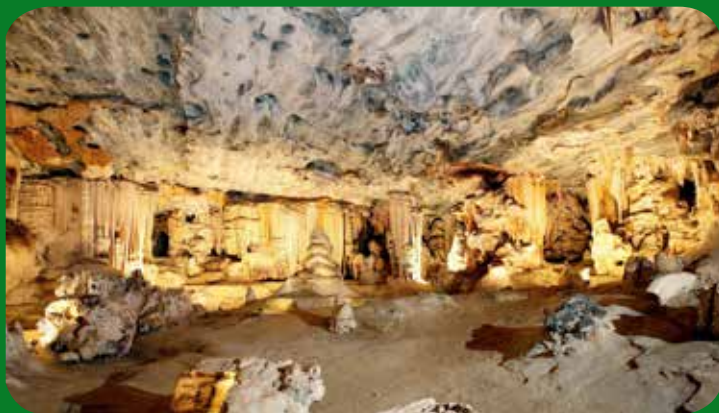
International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer
International Coastal Clean-up Day
South African National Parks Week
World Fisheries Day

Cover story

10 Trees are SA's valuable treasures

Features

- 3 Poster: Biological diversity
- 4 Women's relationship with the environment
- 6 Poster: Alien and Invasive Species
- 7 Esther gives old furniture new life
- 8 Women in forestry encouraged to mentor each other
- 9 Poster: Reduce, Re-use, Recycle, Recover
- 12 Deputy Minister donates eco-desks for Mandela day
- 13 Poster: World migratory bird day
- 14 Community urged to strive for a greener environment
- 15 Minister acknowledges recyclers in Linbro Park
- 16 Minister talks solutions for plastics in SA
- 17 Enforcing waste management compliance still an issue
- 18 Biodiversity Indaba advances accountability
- 19 Rangers praised for holding down the fort during corona
- 20 Awards set to celebrate young beacons of hope
- 23 Poster: Climate change impacts could be disastrous for water security
- 24 Local scientist to co-lead UN's oceans programme
- 25 Cabinet approves waste and emissions management plans
- 26 Poster: Save our waters from aquatic invaders



About the back cover image

The Congo Caves are located in Precambrian limestones at the foothills of the Swartberg range near the town of Oudtshoorn, in the Western Cape Province of South Africa. The principal cave is one of the country's finest, best known, and most popular tourist caves and attracts many visitors from overseas. Cave paintings and artifacts indicate that the caves were in use throughout prehistory over a long period during the Middle and Later Stone Ages



To use this QR code conveniently you must have a smartphone equipped with a camera and a QR code reader/scanner application feature.





Dear Valued Stakeholder

It is my pleasure to welcome you to our second edition of Environment Quarterly for this financial year. It really feels like yesterday when the previous financial year was coming to an end, yet here we are, already halfway into the 20/21 financial year.

Time is flying by and we are excited to be bringing you the latest and exciting updates and activities within the Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries and other sector partners.

Nelson Mandela Day this year came while the country was under strict lockdown regulations and the covid-19 pandemic was at its peak. In response to the Nelson Mandela Foundation's call for every South African to be an active citizen in the communities, both Minister Barbara Creecy and Deputy Minister Ms Makhotso Sotyú led various activities

Mandela Day activities in the Western Cape and Free State, respectively.

In August every year, South Africa commemorates Women's Month as a tribute to the women who marched to the Union Buildings on 9 August 1956 in protest against the extension of Pass Laws to women. The Department also dedicated the month of August to celebrate and honour the sacrifices, hard work and the change that women are making in the environment sector.

The month of September marked National Arbor Month, which was this year launched in Thaba Nchu, Free state under the theme Forests and Biodiversity by Deputy Minister Ms Makhotso Sotyú. Arbor Month is aimed at creating awareness about the benefits and importance of trees and forests in the daily lives of South Africans. The Deputy Minister additionally led several activities with local and provincial government in Limpopo, Gauteng and the Northern Cape.

Clean-up and Recycle Week is also celebrated in September with the main aim of raising awareness through different activities and mediums to communities about the benefits of keeping the environment clean and diverting their waste away from the landfill sites through innovative means.

Minister Creecy was at the forefront of another clean up in Johannesburg at Linbro Park Landfill Site together with the Mayor of Johannesburg. The Minister took the week-long programme to Kwazulu-Natal where

she, together with the KZN province, led International Coastal Clean-Up Campaign in Amazimtoti in partnership with Plastic SA and Coca Cola.

It has been a fruitful quarter for the Department amid the global COVID-19 challenges. One of the highlights during the month of September was the approval by Cabinet of the National Waste Management Strategy 2020. The Strategy is aimed at promoting the waste hierarchy and circular economy principles, while achieving both socio-economic benefits and the reduction of negative environmental impacts.

The waste management sector has strong potential to innovate and improve socio-economic conditions and contribute to sustainable development and resource use. And in re-emphasizing these messages, the Department hosted a virtual annual Waste Khoro aimed at discussing the direction the country is taking to upscale the circular economy to better manage waste. Additionally, we hosted the Circular Economy Dialogue to raise awareness on environment and climate impact of waste.

Let me not give out too much information and give you an opportunity to read more about how this quarter has been.

Until next time, remember to keep our environment clean – always!

Albi Modise

Head of Communications & Advocacy

Meet our team

Head of Communications and Advocacy
Albi Modise

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Tshego Letshwiti

BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

Did you know?

South Africa has an incredible wealth of plant species, with **20 401** plant species found within our borders.



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Women's relationship with the environment

By Erica Mathye
Images by Eleanor Momberg

Working in the environment is love; it is the determination to make something happen. When the environment is hurt, we all get hurt.

Women are critical managers of the environment and its natural resources. In many communities around the world, women are responsible for managing the water resources, wood and fuel stores as well as forests and agricultural terrain. In South Africa, particularly among the Balobedu people in the Limpopo Province, a Rain Queen exists who is believed to have special powers, including the ability to control clouds and rainfall. Women are making a mark and proving that there is space in the environment for everyone.

Women and environmental rights

According to the South African Constitution, everyone has the right to an environment that is not harmful to their wellbeing. Seeing that women and small children are the most victims of devastating events such as climate change, government has the responsibility to make laws that prevent pollution and damage to the environment, promote conservation, and balance economic, social and environmental development.

To learn more about environmental rights, please visit <https://www.environment.gov.za>.

Women and environmental protection

Today, women are joining previously male-dominated fields in record numbers. They are in charge. They are no longer restricted to just cooking, cleaning and looking after small children at home. The risks taken by the brave women of 1956 have led to change and progress among the women of today. Studies show that including women in leadership and conservation yields better results. Apart from women earning their own income which improves their living conditions, women working in the environment are exposed to new information about nature conservation and the various animal and plant species in the environment.

They learn about ways in which they can play a part in combatting the impacts of phenomenon such as climate change and global warming, and are in turn able to pass on the knowledge to their families and communities.

Government has prioritized women empowerment by employing women in leadership and a number of its flagship programmes including the Expanded Public Works programme. The Working for Wetlands project, the Working on Fire Programme and the Black Mambas (park rangers) are just some of the programmes introduced and run by government, and this department in particular, that are defying traditional perceptions that only strong, bulky people can work in these fields. On a daily basis, these women put on working boots and overalls to put out fires, fight dangerous and armed poachers or rehabilitate our land using labour intensive methods. They use traditionally 'male' equipment such as spades and wheelbarrows to rehabilitate wetlands in the construction of gabions

Projects such as the Karoo Catch in the Eastern Cape employs over 100 women in catfish farming, empowering them with skills development and income-earning.

Women in natural resource management

The Natural Resource Management Programme is seeking to establish 17 Value-added Industry Eco-Furniture Factories across the country, in partnership with the Economic Development Department.

Each factory is making products that help to address the needs of Government, with an initial focus on school desks and benches. The products are made from wood and invasive alien plants cleared as part of the Working for Water programme.





Above: Women can take up opportunities as waste recyclers.

Women in waste management

Women are able to secure decent work in waste. Women are involved in the collection and recycling of waste. With more plastic ending up in landfills and the natural environment, the Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries supports self-starters in the waste sector.

There is wealth in waste and women can take up opportunities as waste recyclers and turn waste into valuable products. Recycling uses up fewer resources, saves money, uses less energy and results in less pollution.

Women in biodiversity and conservation

South Africa has a wide variety of plants and animals. It is the third most mega-diverse country in the world. One out of every ten species on the planet is found right here in South Africa. Bioprospecting is the process of searching for and using parts of living things to make commercial products. Many women have entered the bioprospecting market and are taking advantage of the opportunities that exist in this market by manufacturing and exporting delicious teas, foods and hair products using natural products such as the moringa plant and others.

The Black Mambas are entrusted with the responsibility of looking after our nature and conservation, particularly rhino poaching along the Kruger National Park. This fierce all-female team wears uniform on a daily basis to face treacherous terrains and armed poachers. In previous interviews with this magazine, the women commented that they went into the programme because it gives them the opportunity to work with the environment and protect it from harm.

Right: Felicia Mokgakane is a member of the all-female anti-rhino poaching Black Mambas group. In 2015, the group won a top environmental award called Champions of the Earth. Felicia travelled for the first time outside South Africa to receive the award in the United States of America.

Approximately one hundred jobs are created per factory, when fully operational, within the framework of the Expanded Public Works Programme, in this process. These jobs are focusing on the marginalized, in terms of race, gender, disability and age.

Women in aquaculture

Aquaculture is the farming of aquatic animals and plants, especially fish, shell fish and seaweed in natural or controlled marine or freshwater environments. Projects such as the Karoo Katch project introduce and upskill women and youths in jobs such as catfish farming. With the global demand for fish products projected to grow by 47% by 2030, the aquaculture sector is positioned well to attract more female employees in working at and running these aquaculture farms. In February this year, environmental authorisation for the proposed sea-based aquaculture development zone in Algoa Bay in the Eastern Cape was granted by the Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries. Granting environmental authorisation for this development unlocks the aquaculture potential of the Eastern Cape.

Women in oceans and coasts

South Africa has a coastline of over 2 500 km. Oceans are an essential source of food, feeding millions of people the world over. Earlier this year, Minister Creecy handed over fishing permits to small-scale fishers in the Eastern Cape.

Women make up a significant part of small-scale fishers. They fish to put food on the table and for commercial purposes. The Working for the Coast programme, run by this department, also employs particularly young women to ensure waste collection along our coastal lines and keeping our beaches clean.



About the contributor: Erica Mathye

Erica Mathye is the Deputy-Director: Editorial Services in the Chief Directorate: Communications. Before joining the department in 2015, she worked as a Chief Copy Editor for various magazine titles.



Alien and Invasive Species

How much do you know?

Alien Invasive Species (AIS) are plants, animals, pathogens and other organisms that are exotic, non-indigenous or non-native to an ecosystem, and which may cause economic or environmental harm or adversely affect human health. They spread aggressively, and which threaten indigenous ecosystem functioning and biodiversity. In South Africa, AIS are regulated through the National Environmental Management Biodiversity Act, 2004 (Act No. 10 of 2004) (NEMBA) and its associated AIS Regulations, which were gazetted on 1 August 2014 and became law on 1 October 2014.

What is in the Regulations?

The AIS Regulations list 4 different categories of invasive species that must be managed, controlled or eradicated from areas where they may cause harm to biodiversity, human health, agriculture and economy.

Four categories of invasive species:

Category 1a: Invasive species which must be combatted and eradicated. Any form of trade or planting is strictly prohibited.

Category 1b: Invasive species which must be controlled and where possible, removed and destroyed. Any form or trade or planting is strictly prohibited

Category 2: Invasive species, or species deemed to be potentially invasive, in which a permit is required to carry out a restricted activity. Category 2 species include commercially import species such as pine, wattle and gum trees.

Category 3: Invasive species which may remain in prescribed areas or provinces. Further planting, propagation or trade, is however prohibited.

Permits information: Category 2 Invasive species

A permit is required to carry out restricted activities with Category 2 listed invasive species.

Download permit applications from:
www.environment.gov.za – Search AIS Permit Application form

Fees to be paid when applying for a permit:

- Importing into the country - R200
- All restricted activities - R100
- Renewal of permit - R50
- Appeals - R50

For more information or to notify the department of the occurrence of listed invasive species on your land:

E-mail – AIScompliance@environment.gov.za
Tel – (012) 3999679 or (021)4412816/2789

PERMIT APPLICATIONS CAN BE SUBMITTED BY:

HAND DELIVERY: Issuing Authority: Biosecurity Directorate, 14 Loop Street (4th Floor), Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries, Cape Town, 8001.

POST: Issuing Authority: Biosecurity Directorate, Private Bag X 4390, Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries, Cape Town, 8000.

E-MAIL: AISpermits@environment.gov.za

FAX: 086 604 4080 | **TELEPHONE :** 021 441 2812/2748/2717/2726



Burmese Python



Silver carp



Coypu



Water lettuce

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Esther gives old furniture new life

By Salome Tsoka



Above: Ms Esther Zanazo in her working apron ready to repurpose old furniture.

A journey that started two years ago while renovating her home, has led the owner of Fuzile Enterprises Ms Esther Zanazo down an environmentally conscious path which has seen her establish her own recycling and repurposing business.

“We are involved in the restoration and upcycling of different kinds of furniture. Our work involves a lot of wood work, repairs, chalk painting and repurposing. Depending on the piece we are working on and the amount of work required, we can either repurpose an old product into a new piece of furniture or give it new life with undercoating, priming or a set of different colours of chalk painting and stencil designs,” says Esther.

Inspired by Sweden’s ReTuna which is the world’s first Recycling Gallery and mall where many of the products sold are sustainably produced, recycled and reused, Ms Zanazo says she hopes to recreate the same experience in South Africa.

“Within the next five years, I would like my business to replicate what the Swedish are doing and I would like to advocate for people to follow in these footsteps so they can also look into repurposing in their own corners.”

“There is so much that can be repurposed here. We can easily have a mall similar to ReTuna. There are a number of people repurposing different things from their own corners around the country. Now, imagine if we had a place dedicated to doing just that here? Our people would be able to see that this is not a dirty job but that there is a lot that can be done using old stuff,” she said.

Ms Zanazo currently runs her day-to-day business on her own but employs a part-time upholster and is also mentoring a young man in the business.

“Within the next five years, I would like my business to replicate what the Swedish are doing and I would like to advocate for people to follow in these footsteps so they can also look into repurposing in their own corners. This will not only benefit my business but the youth and ultimately the environment,” she said.



Above: An old tables repurposed by Ms Zanazo and her team.



About the contributor: Salome Tsoka

Ms Salome Tsoka holds a BA Degree in Journalism from the University of Johannesburg and has been writing for as long as she can remember. She is a Senior Communication Officer in the Chief Directorate: Communications at the Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries.

Women in forestry encouraged to mentor each other

By Veronica Mahlaba
Images by Makhosazana Mavimbela

Women in forestry have been encouraged to mentor each other by the Deputy Minister of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries, Ms Makhotso Soty. This came during a webinar hosted by the Forest Sector Charter Council in partnership with the forestry sector on 28 August 2020.

The Deputy Minister said female foresters demonstrate that forestry is an appropriate career choice for women. "Mentors or role models have been incredibly important in supporting and encouraging women in forestry," she said.

The webinar was convened under the theme: **Celebrating and acknowledging the contribution of women in the forestry sector.** The theme aimed to encourage all women in South Africa, especially girl children to take up careers in the Forest Sector, to prepare and to take up opportunities in the scope of senior positions, owning businesses, board participation, schooling and further education.

The following were the key issues addressed:

- Progress made by women in the sector over the last two decades
- Forestry through the eyes of the women who are passionate about the sector
- Forestry in 2020 – how the sector has encouraged gender transformation
- Elevating the next generation of females in the forestry sector

During their presentations, some women foresters noted that the industry was still very much male-dominated and that there was insufficient knowledge among women about forestry careers.

The Executive Director: Forest Sector Charter Council, Ms Khosi Mavimbela said there needs to be more creative ways to attract younger generations.

"We need to see more women come into the sector and we also need to work on ways of retaining them," she said.

President of the Stellenbosch Toastmasters Club, Ms Zimbili Sibiya appealed to the sector to really engage more with learners in high school and universities as most of them only ever stumble upon forestry as a field of study during bursary programmes. She explained that many students are not aware of the diverse career opportunities that exist in forestry and that more guidance and awareness was necessary for women to grow in these fields.

When wrapping up, Deputy Minister Soty highlighted that the country has a National Strategic Plan, clearly defined in Acts such as the Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment as Amended (B-BBEE), which aims to promote women's economic inclusion, among other things. "As a woman one should locate herself in the strategic plan and offer a contribution," she said.



About the contributor: Veronica Mahlaba

Ms Veronica Mahlaba is a Senior Communication Officer at the Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries serving under the Communications Chief Directorate. Ms Mahlaba has experience as a Lecturer in the Media Studies Department at a private college.



**REDUCE
RE-USE
RECYCLE
RECOVER**

4 great ways
YOU can eliminate waste
protect your environment!

What is Waste?

Waste is anything we throw away or get rid of that doesn't get used.



How can you help?

You can help by learning about and practicing the four R's of waste management: Reduce, Re-use, Recycle and Recover! Practicing all four of these activities every day is not only important for a healthy environment, but it can also be fun too.



Reduce

A key part of waste "reduction" is "conservation" - using natural resources wisely, and using less than usual in order avoid waste.

Re-use

You can "re-use" materials in their original form instead of throwing them away, or pass those materials on to others who could use them too!

Recycle

Your recycling mission is not impossible! In fact, it is very simple: Don't throw away anything that can be recycled!

Recover

Convert waste into resources (such as electricity, heat, compost and fuel) through thermal and biological means.



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Trees are SA's valuable treasures

By Salome Tsoka

The Deputy Minister of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries Ms Makhotsu Sotyu in partnership with Total South Africa led the annual national Arbor Month Campaign around the country under the theme "Forests and Biodiversity" to signify the importance of protecting and conserving our biodiversity as the backbone of our economy and livelihoods.



Above: Deputy Minister Sotyu along with MEC for Environmental Affairs and Nature Conservation and Agriculture Ms Mase Manopole and Sol Plaatjie Municipality Mayor Mr Patrick Mabilo plant a tree during the Kimberly Arbor Month Campaign activities.



Above: Deputy Minister Sotyu donated 150 eco school desks, garden tools and sanitary towels to the Zingisa Primary School in Kimberly.

Launched in Thaba Nchu, Free State on 01 September 2020, the campaign saw Deputy Minister Sotyu work with local and provincial government in the Free State, Limpopo, Gauteng and the Northern Cape to raise awareness about the importance of trees and forests as natural resources. During the campaign, Deputy Minister Sotyu highlighted that trees contribute significantly to the environment and people's livelihoods.

"Trees and their products are among South Africa's most valuable national treasures and play an important and diverse role in the national economy. People in both rural and urban settings are becoming increasingly knowledgeable and sensitive about trees and forests, resulting in a greater awareness of the maintenance and preservation of this rich heritage," she said.

Speaking at the Arbor Month Campaign closure in Kimberly in the Northern Cape, Total South Africa's Corporate Affairs Manager Ms Anne-Mpho Siaga said that environmental and social responsibility is at the core of their business and that they are proud of the partnership with the department which spans over 16 years.

"We remain committed to being a partner on this Arbor Month campaign which not only spreads awareness on the protection and conservation of our green environment but also aims to encourage society to preserve the country's green heritage," she said.

Over 15 000 South Africans have succumbed to complications stemming from Covid-19 related complications to date including over 200 healthcare workers who have been at the frontlines of the battle with the virus from the very beginning. During the national Arbor Month campaign, the Department coordinated activities with a focus on establishing remembrance

parks and commemorative tree planting in the Free State, Limpopo, Gauteng and the Northern Cape provinces to pay tribute to frontline workers and people who have succumbed to Covid-19.

Deputy Minister Sotyu also donated garden tools, trees, vegetable seeds, skip bins to local municipalities in the various provinces as part of the greening of settlements campaign objective. She also donated 150 eco school desks to Zingisa Primary School in Galeshwe in Kimberly, Northern Cape.

The National Arbor Month campaign also included community outreaches to raise awareness about waste management as part of the Department's Good Green Deeds programme. The programme aims to change attitudes and behaviour towards waste and enable people to take responsibility for keeping their communities clean. It promotes separation of waste at source and encourage everyone to reduce, re-use, recycle and recover waste at their households.



Above: Donated trees in Thaba Nchu, Free State would be planted during the course of Arbor Month with the help of EPWP workers.

In pictures: Arbor Month Celebrations

By Salome Tsoka

Thaba Nchu, Free State



Above: Deputy Minister Soty handed over 28 skip bins to the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality.



Above: A number of trees were planted at the white karee tree at the Regional Park in Thaba Nchu as well as at the Hill Site View Township in Bloemfontein.



Above: Deputy Minister Soty together with provincial and local government leaders unveil the plaque at the Remembrance Garden in Thaba Nchu, Free State.

Johannesburg, Gauteng



Above: Johannesburg MMC: Community Development, Ms Margaret Sheron Arnolds unveiled the Remembrance Garden and plaque on behalf of the Deputy Minister during the National Arbor Month campaign held in Joubert Park in Johannesburg.



Above: The Working on Fire team took part in the National Arbor Month campaign held in Joubert Park in Johannesburg.

Kimberly, Northern Cape



Above: Deputy Minister Soty, MEC, Mayor and Total South Africa handed over garden tools to the local ward councillor of the Mathibe Park.

Deputy Minister donates eco-desks for Mandela Day

By Veronica Mahlaba



Above: Deputy Minister Soty and the Mayor of Mantsopa Local Municipality, Cllr Mamsie Tsoene handing over eco-desks and other essential items to Ladybrand Public Primary School.



Above: The Principal of Ladybrand Public Primary School, Mr Wetes welcomes garden tools donated by DEFF from the Deputy Minister.

To celebrate Nelson Mandela International Day, the Deputy Minister of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries, Ms Makhotso Soty took action by donating 250 eco-desks to Ladybrand Public Primary School and Manyatseng Primary School in Ladybrand, Free State on 17 July 2020.

The desks were sourced from the Department's Eco-Furniture Programme which uses the biomass of invasive alien plants to craft the products required by government, thereby creating work opportunities for the unemployed as part of the Expanded Public Works Programme.

This year's Mandela Day came as communities and economies around the world are affected by the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic, causing new social and economic challenges

while threatening to reverse the gains made by the democratic government. The Deputy Minister also donated school shoes, bags, jojo tanks, garden tools, sanitizers and face masks during her visit.

She also headed to Manyatseng Old Age Home where she handed-over 50 blankets, groceries, sanitizers, vegetables seeds and garden tools.

The DM said she was in Ladybrand in response to the call by the Nelson Mandela Foundation for all citizens to be active in communities. "The learners and elders in our communities are at a high risk of contracting the coronavirus and should be assisted as much as possible for them to live and perform efficiently during these hard times. We can do this individually or as part of one of the millions of groups getting together to start initiatives around delivering food parcels, making masks and protective gear, teaching online or making donations towards these efforts," she said.

The Covid-19 Regulations including screening, social distancing, sanitising were observed during the Deputy Minister's visit.



Above: Learners who are back at school kept to social distance regulations.





World Migratory Bird Day

Common Swift
Apus apus



*From the
Emperor's
Summer Place,
Beijing to
Table
Mountain,
Cape Town.*

#BirdsConnectOurWorld
#JourneyOfTheFlyways
#BirdsKnowNoBorders

10 October 2020



**environment, forestry
& fisheries**

Department:
Environment, Forestry and Fisheries
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



Community urged to strive for a greener environment

By Veronica Mahlaba



Above: Deputy Minister Sotyú also handed over 290 eco-school desks, school shoes for identified indigent learners, sanitary towels, sanitisers, wheelie bins and gardening tools at Kolokoshani and Ratshikwekwete Secondary Schools.



Above: The 500 trees will be planted by the community members who will be identified by the Nesengani Royal Council and employed on a part-time basis.

The Deputy Minister of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries, Ms Makhotsó Sotyú together with His Royal Highness, Vho-Thovhele FD Nesengani urged the community of Vuwani to strive for a greener environment. This was during a clean-up held in Vuwani, Limpopo on 18 September 2020.

The clean up coincides with the National Clean-up and Recycle SA Week. "The aim of this week is to increase awareness about the social, environmental and economic benefits of recycling.

During this time, we encourage communities, schools and businesses to clean-up the areas where they work, live and play by collecting the litter and ensuring that it gets recycled," said Deputy Minister Sotyú.

She also made a call to all South Africans to plant indigenous trees as a practical and symbolic gesture of sustainable environmental management as part of National Arbor Month. The Deputy Minister also mobilised 500 trees to be planted in the Vuwani area.

In his address, His Royal Highness, Vho-Thovhele FD Nesengani was thankful to the Department for visiting Vuwani. He expressed that it was the first time that his area has been visited by a national political head. "We are grateful for your presence and showing the community that we matter. Our cries were heard by you. We are happy that our schools have received desks and other valuables that will assist the learners and teachers during this difficult time we are facing as a country and the world at large."



Minister acknowledges recyclers in Linbro Park

By Tshegofatso Ndhlovu



Above: Minister Barbara Creecy and Executive Mayor of Johannesburg, Councillor Geoff Makhubo handing out a certificate to a representative from Twanani Co-operative.



Above: A representative from Shomang Sebezani Environmental Co-operative receiving a certificate of appreciation.

The Minister of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries, Ms Barbara Creecy together with the Executive Mayor of Johannesburg, Councillor Geoff Makhubo (Cllr) hosted a certificate awarding ceremony at the Linbro Park landfill site in Johannesburg on 18 September 2020.

The ceremony was hosted in celebration of National Recycling Week with the aim of acknowledging co-operatives that are championing the separation of waste at source programme while also helping the City of Johannesburg and Pikitup to divert waste away from their landfill sites.

Minister Creecy said she was glad that the ceremony is being hosted a week after the revised National Waste Management Plan Strategy 2020 was approved. "As

we honour these six co-operatives today, we can also celebrate the fact that cabinet approved the National Waste Management Plan Strategy last week. This is worth celebrating because it acknowledges the work that all of these co-operatives do and it acknowledges the fact that waste is a resource," said the Minister.

Speaking on the importance of the work that the co-operatives do, the Executive Mayor of Johannesburg, Cllr Geoff Makhubo said he appreciated the fact that the work done by the co-operatives uplifts the communities that they are based in. "It brings me joy to witness the impact that these co-operatives have in the township of Alexandra. They have not only educated the community about the importance of recycling, but they have also inspired the youth to keep their community clean," explained Cllr Makhubo.



Above: Volunteers from the Shumang Sebezani Environmental Co-operative welcoming the Minister in song.

Minister talks solutions for plastic in SA

By Gaopalelwe Moroane

The Minister of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries, Barbara Creecy led International Coastal Clean-up Day (ICCD) activities, under the slogan Ending the Flow of Trash at the Source", in Amanzimtoti, Durban on 19 September 2020.

"The Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries acknowledges growing attention being placed on the problem of plastic pollution, and the effort that is being taken by private sector, government, civil society and academia to address waste management in the country," said the Minister.

As part of the day's activities, Minister also launched the Inkwazi Isu Project which involved the handover of an Umborg vehicle from Coca-Cola to CleanSurf in Amazimtoti. The vehicle will help in picking up small pieces of litter and plastic along our beaches.

"The Inkwazi Isu Project will be a good platform to bring together key stakeholders such as businesses, plastic industries, civil society, non-governmental organizations and government to work towards promoting the recycling economy and to implement locally tailored solutions towards a circular economy for plastics in South Africa," said Minister Creecy.

The department also hosted clean-up activities in KwaZulu-Natal Province including Durban Harbour and Blue Lagoon beach in partnership with stakeholders such as Durban Solid Waste, Working for the Coast members and students from the Mangosuthu University of Technology.

"Through joint participation in clean-up initiatives and several pollution-related events, it has been evident that marine litter originates from a variety of land-based sources," said Minister Creecy.

International Coastal Clean-up Day is the world's largest volunteer clean-up event of its kind, which enables scientists to gather valuable data on the extent of marine pollution.

The event has been held internationally each year since 1986, when people head to the beaches and begin removing debris and rubbish from shorelines, waterways, and the oceans. The ICC initiative worldwide remains the largest volunteer environmental data-gathering effort and clean-up event of coastal and underwater areas to date.



Above: ICCD participants alongside the waste collected at the Durban Harbour.

Below: Minister Barbara Creecy hands over keys to the Umborg vehicle, donated by Coca-Cola to the CleanSurf Project.



Enforcing waste management compliance still an issue

By Salome Tsoka



“More needs to be done to support municipalities to comply with landfill infrastructure standards, improve the number of households that have weekly waste collection, and actively promote waste diversion from landfilling.”

Above: Minister Barbara Creecy delivered the keynote address at the virtual Waste Khoro conference which was part of the Department’s recycling week activities.

Hundreds of Waste Management Officers gathered for the annual Waste Khoro which took place virtually under the theme “The Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) for South Africa’s circular waste economy” found that the enforcement of waste management compliance was still an issue.

Hosted on 17 September 2020 as part of the Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries’ recycling week activities, the virtual event gave waste management officers an opportunity to discuss the current challenges and advances in waste management globally where many highlighted that the enforcement of compliance in waste management was difficult.

In delivering the keynote address, Minister of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries, Ms Barbara Creecy stressed that the compliance of waste management cannot rest on national government alone but rather that all three spheres of government need to enforce compliance of waste management and support municipalities.

“More needs to be done to support municipalities to comply with landfill infrastructure standards, improve the number of households that have weekly waste collection, and actively promote waste diversion from landfilling.”

“In this regard all of you gathered here today have an important role to play. We need to set attainable targets, we need to enhance training, we need to battle non-compliance, and consequences for non-compliance and we need to work across all levels of government to support resource mobilisation and actively build partnerships with the private sector,” Minister Creecy said. In presenting the Free State provincial waste report, the Department of Small Business Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs’ Director of Environmental Empowerment Services Mr John Kesi echoed the sentiments of other presenters and indicated that compliance was still an issue in the Free State as well.

“Compliance is still an issue however, its one which is a work in progress with the aid of the national department. We need to determine whether we need more landfill sites or more industries to curb the waste value chain of waste in the environment,” Mr Kesi said.

The virtual event follows Cabinet’s approval of the National Waste Management Strategy (NWMS) 2020 which is aimed at promoting the waste hierarchy and circular economy principles, while achieving both socio-economic benefits and the reduction of negative environmental impacts.

Significant strategic shifts from the 2011 strategy made in the NWMS 2020 included amongst other things addressing the role of waste pickers and the informal sector in the circular economy, promoting approaches to the design of products and packaging that reduce waste or encourage reuse, repair and preparation for recycling, support markets for source separated recyclables and addressing the skills gap within the sector.

Last year, the three-day Waste Khoro conference held in Kimberly in the Northern Cape brought together the relevant role players to streamline the coordination of waste management initiatives which are currently being undertaken in the country.

Waste Management Officers at this year’s Waste Khoro have resolved to amongst other things increase compliance and enforcement capacity to administer the Waste Act and its associated regulations as well as for the promotion of compliance initiatives to be prioritised to regularise facilities. They have also resolved to ensure that commitments in the NWMS 2020 will be achieved, acceleration of the prosecution of waste management offences will be done while also increasing the education and awareness of waste management issues.



Biodiversity Indaba advances accountability

By Tshegofatso Ndhlovu
Images By SANBI

The Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries virtually hosted The 5th Annual Biodiversity Research and Evidence Indaba from 08-09 September 2020. The Indaba is a conference organised by the Department's Biodiversity and Conservation branch to update the annual implementation plan and revision of the National Biodiversity Research and Evidence Strategy (NBRES) and advance the science policy interface. Due to the current global coronavirus pandemic, the conference had to be hosted virtually with delegates joining in from all around the world.

The Indaba was hosted under the theme: Ecological Restoration and Scientific Capacity for the Post 2020 Agenda. The theme focused on supporting the post 2020 biodiversity framework, examining the scientific capacity which has been highlighted by the present global crisis of the coronavirus pandemic where limited evidence base, data, information and knowledge, lack of capacity constrains the biodiversity sector's potential to respond sufficiently to such crises and future crisis.

Speaking about the importance of the Indaba, Deputy Director-General: Biodiversity and Conservation, Mr Shonisani Munzhedzi said there is a lot of value in having such engagements as they ensure that the public collaborates with policy makers in making decisions that impact biodiversity and our environment as a whole. "As policy makers, it is highly imperative that we have collective discussions and have meaningful conversations such as this one with the public, as these discussions not only inform the lives we live today but shape up the right decisions that advance the principles of accountability in brokering the necessary and appropriate knowledge that can both honour and transcend our diversity whilst sustainably managing our environment," said Mr Munzhedzi.

Outlining the United Nation's Decade on Ecosystem restoration, Head of Nature for Climate Branch at The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Mr Tim Christophersen explained the role that humans play in the UN Decade.

"The vision for the Decade is the restoration of the relationship between humans and nature by increasing the area of healthy ecosystems and by putting a stop to their loss and degradation. The restoration of damaged ecosystems is an efficient and cost-effective way for people to work together with nature to address the most pressing challenges humanity is facing today, an example being the current Coronavirus disease global pandemic," he explained.

The theme focused on supporting the post 2020 biodiversity framework, examining the scientific capacity which has been highlighted by the present global crisis of the coronavirus pandemic where limited evidence base, data, information and knowledge, lack of capacity constrains the biodiversity sector's potential to respond sufficiently to such crises and future crisis.

Professor Karen O'Brien from the University of Oslo said that transformative change does not have to only come from scientists and researchers.

"Every human being has the ability to unleash the capacity that is needed to bring about the kind of change that is needed to transform and restore our ecosystems," she said.



Rangers praised for holding down the fort during Corona

By Zibuse Ndlovu
Images by Salome Tsoka



Above: The Minister of Environment, Forestry, and Fisheries, Ms Barbara Creecy during the 2019 World Ranger Day celebration at the Kruger National Parks.

To mark World Ranger Day on 31 July 2020, the Minister of Environment, Forestry, and Fisheries, Ms Barbara Creecy paid tribute to game rangers who have dedicated their lives, even during the COVID-19 pandemic, to protecting South Africa's wildlife and natural heritage.

"Our rangers have remained at the forefront of the battle against poaching, despite the National Lockdown, contributing to the decrease in poaching. In this time, rangers have had to face not only the threats posed by

poachers, but they, and their families, have also had to deal with the danger of contracting Covid-19," said the Minister.

According to the 2020 National Rhino Poaching Statistics released by the Department, poaching has decreased by almost 53% in the first six months of 2020, with 166 animals being killed for their horns across the country since the beginning of the year. During the first six months of 2019, 316 rhino were poached in South Africa. "After a decade of implementing various strategies, and campaigning against ever increasing rhino poaching by local poachers recruited and managed by crime syndicates, efforts are paying off, and we have been able to arrest the escalation of rhino losses," said Minister Creecy.

Between the start of the Lockdown on 27 March 2020 until the end of June 2020, 46 rhino were poached across the country. Of these, 14 rhino were poached during April, 13 in May and 19 in June. In the Kruger National Park, 88 rhino were poached in the first six months of 2020. As the lockdown restrictions have gradually been lifted so the rhino poaching incidents have slowly increased.

"The dedication of essential staff, particularly our rangers, during this time is to be commended. Your hard work, and the support of your families, has not gone unnoticed," said the Minister.



Awards set to celebrate young beacons of hope

By Inside Education
Images by Lionesses of Africa

Young men and women seen as beacons of hope in their communities were celebrated in the annual 100 South African Shining Stars Awards hosted by Inside Education, a digital educational news publication.

The 100 South African Shining Stars project is aimed at honouring the youth between the ages of 18 and 35, who are excelling in their respective fields and a team of high-profile judges select 100 top nominees across all the 9 provinces and all sectors to form part of the 100 South African Shining Stars

This year, the Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries was for the first time involved in this youth development project and recognised the finalists under the Environment Category.

The financial support provided by the department has ensured that the positive contribution made by these unsung heroes in their respective communities throughout the country, received the necessary exposure on national television, digital publications and social media.

ENVIRONMENT SHINING STARS

Thapelo Phiri, Gauteng

Thapelo Phiri from Gauteng's West Rand has made it his mission in life to fight against food insecurity. He is currently focusing on mitigating climate change in agriculture and improving food security with his Organic fertilizer, Dijo Tsa Mobu.

His product has been described as the future of agriculture, as it sustains the soil's organic matter, which allows it to produce crops for longer periods without any negative effects. Phiri believes solving the food issue is one of the biggest ways to contribute to humanity. He is the SADC region's first representative at Youth for Global Change, where he focuses specifically on food security.

Phiri believes solutions to some of the world's biggest problems can best be solved through innovation and entrepreneurship. As such he is also the founder of a Non Profit Organisation where his focus is on entrepreneurship and education for rural and township youth.



Above: Mr Thapelo Phiri is one of earth's "groundkeepers". As an organic fertiliser specialist, he helps crop farmers get the most out of the land they farm on.

Natania Botha, Gauteng

Natania Botha is a passionate human with a distinctive love for the environment. She serves as the head of membership for the Wildlife and Environment society of South Africa (WESSA).

Botha works alongside members of underprivileged communities to stress the importance of waste recycling and maintaining a healthy environment. She serves these communities by building vegetable gardens and executing community clean-ups.

Botha's commitment and passion for social and environmental change has taken her to the smallest of communities in South Africa, as well as International platforms including the United Nations. She was selected as one of 300 youth leaders to participate in the United Nations Environment Programme's Africa Youth conference hosted in Kenya.



Above: Ms Natania Botha is an Environmental, Climate & Human Rights Activist

Abueng Leepile, North West

Abueng Leepile grew up in a village called Madibe-a-Makgabana situated on the outskirts of Mahikeng in the North West province.

She followed her passion for farming and founded Bokamoso Abu farms. What drove Leepile to pursue her interests in agriculture was the need to ensure food security in South Africa. She currently grows crops such as butternut, beetroot, peppers and chillies and has hopes of branching into livestock farming as well. She says her journey as a female entrepreneur has been challenging, especially in a field known to be male dominated. She believes there is an urgent need for more young people to involve themselves in farming.

"After some research and realization that the average farmer in South Africa is 62 years old meaning within the next 20 years, more than half of all the farmers in South Africa will be too old to work, retired or will be deceased," Leepile says.

"This helps me to act on my passion of farming in order to produce food for our communities, country and outside our borders," she adds. She says her journey in farming has taken resilience, determination and the support of her family.



Above: Ms Abueng Leepile is an agricultural entrepreneur hailing from the North West Province.

Akhona Xotyeni, Eastern Cape

Akhona Xotyeni is a youth activist, humanitarian and environmentalist from King William's Town in the Eastern Cape. She is currently studying towards her Masters in Environmental Management at Stellenbosch University.

She describes herself as a "natural born leader" who has been advocating for youth and community development at grassroots, nationally and at an international level.

Xotyeni believes environmental justice is a human right and therefore advocates for effective policy implementation on the matter.

She is also a volunteer at the South African Institute of International Affairs where she assists with designing and implementing youth programmes around climate action, education and awareness.

She was recently invited to participate in Parliament's climate change debate and has had the opportunity to represent South African as a panellist at the PAGE Ministerial Conference in 2019, the 2019 EU-S.A. Climate Action Summit and the 2020 EU Climate Change Roundtable Debate.

Her ultimate goal is to use her voice to advocate for youth and community development, as well as to hold global leaders accountable in order to ensure a safe and healthy planet for future generations.



Above: Akhona Xotyeni is a young environmental activist who advocates for youth and community development at grassroots, national and international levels.

Asiphe Makhumalo Cosa, Western Cape

Asiphe Makhumalo Cosa from Kayamandi township in Stellenbosch has been lauded for bringing awareness on the importance of water preservation in her community.

In a province that faced a huge water crisis just two years ago, Cosa's education campaigns help people understand where they fit within the water consumption cycle.

"Her water education campaigns and commitment into the disadvantaged communities has brought a perspective for us to recognize that water knows no boundaries. It flows throughout the world and connects everyone...therefore we should use it wisely and save our natural resource," says community member Zikhona Mani who nominated Cosa to be recognised as a South African Shining Star.

Cosa also runs her own plumbing company and is known to provide her services for free to those who are needy within her community. Locals also celebrate her for being a change driver who advocates for quality service delivery in Kayamandi.



Above: Ms Asiphe Makhumalo Cosa from Kayamandi township in Stellenbosch has been lauded for raising awareness about the importance of saving water.

Siyabonga Tshabalala, Mpumalanga

Siyabonga Tshabalala from Steenbok Village in Mpumalanga seeks to address social and environmental issues through green businesses and innovative projects.

He owns a recycling company called 'Siyabuddy Recycling and Waste Management' which seeks to create a culture of recycling within communities, reduce the contamination of rivers, promote climate change awareness and protect the sustainable use of land.

Through his company Tshabalala has diverted more than 4000 tonnes of waste from communities to landfills. His company also provides employment to 15 young people and creates over 1033 indirect jobs by working with waste pickers who sell recyclable material.

Through buying material from local waste pickers in Mpumalanga's Nkomazi region, Siyabuddy is estimated to pump back R95 000 into the region's economy monthly.

Tshabalala's company has collected numerous awards and accolades for its environmental work.



Above: Mr Siyabonga Tshabalala is the founder of Siyabuddy Recycling and Waste Management.



Above: Siyabuddy announced winner of World Export Development Forum 2019 Young Social Entrepreneurs pitching competition



Above: Siyabuddy's vision is to enhance environmental conservation by addressing social issues.

Margo Adonis, Western Cape

Margo Adonis is an environmental activist who believes water is a human right and that, equally, people have a responsibility to use water in a conscientious manner.

Adonis is a community leader taking a stand on environmental issues and combating climate change through environmental education projects and campaigns within communities and schools throughout the Western Cape.

Her projects include beach clean-ups, health and hygiene drives and eco club visits to schools, among others.

During the 2018 water crisis in the Western Cape, Adonis held a water awareness drive at primary schools in Saldanha Bay, Western Cape, where she emphasised the importance of respecting water and had young people sign a pledge to abide by water conservation efforts.

She is described as someone who is passionate about youth empowerment and uses all opportunities granted to her to ensure she reaches her full potential as a young leader.



Above: Ms Margo Adonis always says that, "greening the future minds is greening our world's".

CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS COULD BE DISASTROUS FOR WATER SECURITY



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Local scientist to co-lead UN's oceans programme

By Gaopalelwe Moroane
Image by Tshego Letshwiti



Above: Dr Riaan Cedras delivers a presentation as part of the Second International Indian Ocean Expedition aboard the department's SA Agulhas.

Dr Riaan Cedras, a marine biologist, will be representing South Africa during the United Nations Decade of Ocean Sciences International Programme to help achieve greater sustainability of the world's oceans.

Dr Cedras grew up in Lavender Hill in the Cape Flats, where as he puts it, "survival was more key than academics."

Unlike his peers at the time, Dr Cedras says he was fortunate to have his father around who contributed to his interest in ocean life. "My dad showed me the trade of understanding when the fish are biting and where to find them which today is known as indigenous knowledge. I guess these life skills have prevailed in my current career endeavours as a marine biologist and strengthened my understanding of society and environmental needs."

In his current capacity as the chair of the Western Indian Ocean (WIO) Early Career Scientists Network, Dr Cedras' focus is on capacity and human skills building initiatives which promote and support the research of early careers of young African researchers in the WIO region. This role has led to Dr Cedras' involvement as co-lead in the UN Decade of Ocean Sciences Early Career Ocean professional group.

"We are divided into task teams, the Network of Networks task team will guide and bring together the collective efforts of the global Early Career Ocean Professionals

community to tackle the sustainability of our ocean for the next 10 years."

"This is going to be a challenging task as global circumstances change from year to year coupled with the recent experience of the global pandemic. This means that I should remain steadfast regardless of the challenges that may arise, with the hope of achieving the Science we need for the ocean we want," he adds. Dr Cedras started his marine biology journey in 2007, conducting research in the open ocean aboard a research vessel in the Benguela Current. "We were investigating the life of the mysterious "bearded" goby in the ocean deep. I had no clue what was going on then but over the years, I participated in more ocean cruises as a plankton researcher."

In 2017 and 2018 as part of the Second International Indian Ocean Expedition, IIOE-2, Dr Cedras was part of the team that conducted a survey in the Indian Ocean off the coast of Tanzania collecting all types of biological and physical information about our oceans. "It was a great experience to get in contact with other cultures and I enjoyed working with local and international scientists."

Asked what is the most rewarding and challenging part of his career, Dr Cedras' response is simple, "People". Adding that, "Not everyone comes from the same background as you so I always take caution in how I engage with others, with the greatest respect. The ocean is complex to understand and trying to piece the puzzle of our ocean systems together requires all hands on deck." Dr Cedras' advice to those who are interested in pursuing a career in the ocean space is to do their research thoroughly. "The internet is a great source of information in getting to understand the life of a marine biologist."

He also advises aspiring "ocean pioneers" to volunteer in aquatic programmes be they fresh or salt water. "This will open doors of possibility in exploring the oceans. Most importantly, pay attention to our national marine week. It is during this time that you get access to marine biologists in the field, and you might even get to visit the SA Agulhas II in the dock. Visiting resource centres will also help in your journey towards becoming a marine biologist working in the big blue ocean," he adds.



About the contributor: Gaopalelwe Moroane

Ms Gaopalelwe Moroane is the Assistant Director in the Chief Directorate: Communications at the Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries, in Cape Town. She joined the department in 2012 as an intern after completing her studies at Rhodes University.

Cabinet approves waste and emissions management plans

By Zibuse Ndlovu

Images by Brian Chapole



Above: In terms of Waste Minimisation, the aim is to prevent waste. Where waste cannot be prevented, 40% should be diverted from landfill within 5 years through reuse, recycling, recovery and alternative waste treatment; 25% of waste reduction in waste generation; and 20% waste reused in the economic value chain.

Above: Various strategies, policies and sector plans have been developed for individual sectors of the economy, which will all contribute to driving emission reductions

Cabinet has approved three key actions that will contribute to an environment that is not only healthy for all South Africans, but also able to contribute effectively to sustainable economic development and job creation.

During its meeting on 9 September, Cabinet approved the Presidential Climate Change Coordinating Commission (PCCCC) to coordinate and oversee the just transition. Also approved was South Africa's Low Emissions Development Strategy and the revised National Waste Management Strategy (NWMS) 2020. In her address during the Circular Economy Webinar held on 14 September 2020 to celebrate South Africa's Recycling Week, Minister of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries, Ms Barbara Creecy said government has aligned policy and strategy with the circular economy concept. "National Waste Management Strategy 2020 is aimed at promoting the waste hierarchy and circular economy principles, while achieving both socio-economic benefits and the reduction of negative environmental impacts," said Minister Creecy.

The National Waste Management Strategy provides government policy and strategic interventions for the waste sector and is aligned and responsive to the Sustainable Development Goals of Agenda 2030 adopted by all United Nations member States.

This year, the Department embarked on an extensive consultation process to initiate Extended Producer Responsibility for paper and packaging; electrical and electronic equipment, and lighting.

"This will make a significant contribution in the diversion of waste from landfilling, thereby increasing the recycling rate to achieve the objectives of the National Waste Management Strategy. This programme will ensure that waste pickers are fully integrated in the recycling value chain," said the Minister.

The NWMS 2020 is broadly focused on preventing waste and diverting waste from landfill by leveraging the concept of the Circular Economy to drive sustainable, inclusive economic growth and development in the waste sector, while reducing the social and environmental impacts of waste. Its implementation plan will create jobs in the waste sector and increase awareness and compliance around waste.

Among the significant strategic shifts from the 2011 strategy in the NWMS 2020 include addressing the role of waste pickers and the informal sector in the Circular Economy, promoting product design packaging that reduces waste or encourages reuse, repair and preparation for recycling, and support markets for source separated recyclables. NWMS 2020 also investigates potential regulatory or economic interventions to increase participation rates in residential

separation at source programmes, alongside investing in the economies associated with transporting of recyclables to waste processing facilities and addressing the skills gaps within the sector.

"Effective and Sustainable Waste Services would see all South Africans living in clean communities with waste services that are well managed and financially sustainable. Waste Awareness and Compliance is aimed at creating a culture of compliance with zero tolerance of pollution, litter and illegal dumping," said the Minister.

South Africa's Low Emissions Development Strategy (LEDS), also approved by Cabinet, will be deposited with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Secretariat. This is further to the country's NDC deposited with the UNFCCC ahead of the signing of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change in which countries committed to limited the increase in global average temperatures to below 1.5oC above pre-industrial levels.

"Depositing the LEDS with the UNFCCC will communicate the country's needs and priorities so that developed countries who want to support implementation efforts through finance, technology or capacity building are assured that South Africa has a plan to reduce its emissions," said Minister Creecy.

SAVE OUR WATERS FROM AQUATIC INVADERS

South Africa's water resources are being invaded by a range of water weeds. Terrestrial invasive plants such as pines, gums, hakeas and wattle consume larger quantities of water and so reduce water availability, but our water resources are also being invaded by a wide range of invasive aquatic plant species. These plants mostly came into the country through the ornamental garden and aquarium trade where they are used to decorate and plant garden ponds, fish ponds and aquariums. Species like water hyacinth, water lettuce, salvinia, parrot's feather, and hydrilla invades our rivers, wetlands and dams.

Aquatic invasive species

- Pose a significant threat to agriculture, the environment, tourism, economy and/or human health.
- Due to their aggressive growth, they choke out indigenous vegetation thus reducing biodiversity.
- Can cause rivers to dry up completely, if left to spread and grow.
- Have a negative impact on water quality as they tend to form dense mats that reduce water flow and oxygen in the water.
- Restrict the use of boats for fishing and river transport.
- Prevent sunlight from penetrating the water which affects the entire food chain by causing the deterioration of aquatic biodiversity and providing breeding sites for mosquitoes and snails that carry diseases such as malaria and bilharzia.

DID YOU KNOW?

One thing that many people are aware of is that Mosquitos are the deadliest animals. Because they transmit the deadly single-celled parasite which causes Malaria. Most people probably wouldn't believe it if they heard that snails kill around 200,000 people every year, making them the second deadliest creature on the planet after mosquitos.

This means Malaria is still the most socioeconomically devastating parasitic disease. So the next question you must be asking yourself is how snails come second? Well, similar to mosquitoes snails also transmit a deadly parasite: A parasitic flatworm which causes Schistosomiasis, which is the second most deadly parasitic disease in the world.



National Environmental Management Biodiversity Act (2004): Alien and Invasive Species Regulations are aimed at mitigating the destructive and negative impacts of such invasive species through an informed policy framework and management plan, which in turn, will free up water resources to the benefit of agriculture and other equally important industries as well as for human use.

AQUATIC INVASIVE PLANTS IMPACT EVERYONE

All South Africans – everyone from any sector including agriculture, private and communal land owners, forestry, manufacturers and mines – are responsible to look after our water resources. It is essential that everyone who utilises water and benefits from its use plays a part to conserve our waters from aquatic invaders.



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The aquatic invaders depicted below are commonly found in fish ponds, aquariums and waterways such as rivers and dams. These invaders have major impacts on aquatic ecosystems. According to the Alien and Invasive Species Regulations, Category 1a species must be eradicated; and Category 1b species must be controlled and, where possible, be removed or destroyed.



Parrot's feather
(*Myriophyllum aquaticum*)
Category: 1b



Water hyacinth
(*Eichhornia crassipes*)
Category: 1b



Hydrilla (*Hydrilla verticillata*)
Category: 1a



Water lettuce (*Pistia stratiotes*)
Category: 1b



Salvinia (*Salvinia molesta*)
Category: 1b



Dense waterweed (*Egeria densa*)
Category: 1b

Reducing risks

Aquatic invasive species can be introduced accidentally or intentionally into South African waters by human activities. They can establish themselves in our waters and spread rapidly when they don't face natural predators or competitors. In recent years, the introduction and spread of aquatic invasive species has been much more rapid because of globalisation, including increased international shipping and travel. Prevention is the most efficient and cost-effective method of dealing with aquatic invasive species, including managing the pathways that they travel along to enter and spread in our waters.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON ALIEN AND INVASIVE
SPECIES IN SOUTH AFRICA: CONTACT THE DEPARTMENT OF
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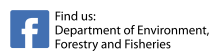
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Cango Caves, Western Cape (Photo by Atitpics.com)

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