

Minister drives Thuma Mina call for a cleaner SA

Molewa urges South Africans to heed President's call in environment sector



Minister of Environmental Affairs Edna Molewa participates in a clean-up operation as part of a campaign to encourage all South Africans to do their part to combat plastic pollution, including sustainable recycling options.

Minister of the Department Environmental Affairs (DEA) Edna Molewa encouraged South Africans to exercise small consumer actions such as avoiding single-use plastic goods to assist in eradicating plastic pollution in the country.

Responding to the Presidential Thuma-Mina initiative, the department will be launching the Keep South Africa Clean campaign to mobilise each citizen to become environmentally conscious. "We want to see a South

Africa free of litter and illegal dumping. The main purpose of this campaign is to change attitudes and behaviour towards waste, and enable people to take responsibility for keeping their communities clean," said Molewa.

Marking this year's international World Environment Day themed "Beating Plastic Pollution", governments, industries, communities and citizens are urged to unite in exploring sustainable alternatives to speedily reduce the production and excessive use of single-use plastic products.

Her call comes after the department's budget vote speech last month, where minimising plastic pollution was prioritised.

Out of a range of measures to curb plastic pollution, the department was in consultation with the cosmetics industry as part of an attempt to phase out the use of microbeads in the production of cosmetics.

"Plastic pollution is particularly insidious because once plastics enter the environment, they do not biodegrade, they simply break down into smaller pieces over time," the minister said.

The DEA is looking to introduce a range of measures to curb plastic pollution.

These will be aligned with recommendations of a plastic material flow study undertaken by the department. The study, in line with the resolutions taken at the UN General Assembly (Unga) and the UN Environmental Assembly (Unea), showed that only 21% of plastic waste is recycled. It recommended among

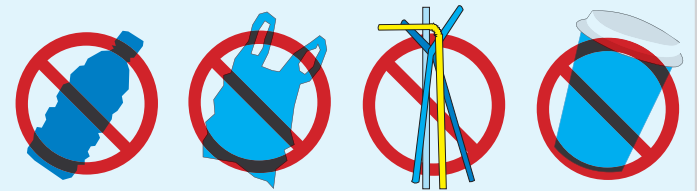
other issues, that plastic must be collected and removed at source.

The DEA, the Department of Trade and Industry and its agencies, the South African Bureau of Standards, the National Regulator for Compulsory Specifications and the National Treasury will be reviewing the implementation of the country's plastic bag policies.

However, the department will continue to work with the packaging sector – paper, glass, plastic and metal – to increase over and above 58% the amount of waste diverted from landfills.

"This has a detrimental effect on our environment, more so once this pollution enters our oceans and endangers marine life and fragile marine ecosystems," said the minister.

#BeatPlasticPollution



How you can help?



Carry a reusable water bottle



Bring your own shopping bag



Skip the plastic produce bags



No to disposable straws and cutlery



Pack lunches in reusable containers



Bring your own cup

THUMA MINA FOR A GREENER, CLEANER SA

Read more to find out how you can make a positive difference to our environment. www.environment.gov.za call centre: 086 111 2468



environmental affairs
Department:
Environmental Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



WORLD
ENVIRONMENT
DAY



Thuma Mina - Green Deeds

Projects support the environment

By **Sandra Luiz**

To mark World Environment Day earlier this month, Minister of Environmental Affairs Edna Molewa announced the launch of the Thuma Mina - Green Goods Deeds, in response to the Presidential Thuma-Mina initiative.

The campaign aims at changing attitudes and behaviour towards waste and environment in general and to unify all citizens to take responsibility for keeping their communities clean.

Molewa said the Phakisa waste economy, which is led by her department and the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, has potential to address poverty alleviation, inequality and create jobs.

The department manages several programmes aimed at waste minimisation through the 4 Rs - recovery, reduce, reuse and recycling.

The Recycling Enterprise Support Programme (RESP) was one such programme that was in line with the objectives of the national waste management strategy. Through the programme, the department provides developmental funding for projects in the form of start-up grants. These projects are either start-up or pre-existing enterprises which include buy-back centres, material recovery facilities, construction and demolishing solutions as well as plastic palletisation



Circular Economy in Action: Environmental Affairs Director-General Nosipho Ngcaba led recent the public hearings on the Waste Tyre Management Plans, which are part of government's response to bringing industries on board with managing the waste which they create, while ensuring sustainable jobs are created

plants.

The RESP programme was allocated a budget of R194 million over a three-year period and has now made a material

impact to the lives of 12 black-owned management enterprises.

"President Ramaphosa has through the Thuma Mina Initiative, affirmed the need for us to take charge of our own destinies as citizens; and I encourage all sectors of society to join hands with us to keep SA clean," said Molewa.

In response to the Presidential Thuma-Mina initiative, the department will also be launching the Keep South Africa Clean campaign, to mobilise citizens to become environmentally conscious.

Meanwhile, the country had adopted the entire month of June to heighten awareness of environmental issues since it marked the World Environment Day, which is commemorated annually on June 5 (??). World Oceans Day and the World Day to Combat Desertification are also celebrated in the same month.



Workers from The Coast Project contribute by removing litter, including harmful plastic, from our beaches as they try to cover the entire coastline. / TSHEGO LETSHWITI

Focus on tackling plastic pollution

SA launches anti-litter campaigns

By **Sandra Luiz**

Marine pollution is now considered to be in the same league as some of the world's most pressing environmental challenges such as climate change. Over 300million tons of plastic litters the oceans, with an average of 8million tons added each year.

This year's World Oceans Day focuses on plastic pollution, in particular, marine pollution, which is also the biggest challenge in South Africa as over 80% of all marine litter is composed of plastic.

According to a 2015 international research, SA's oceans have between 90 000 and 250 000 tons of litter each year, which harms marine life.

Challenges in plastic litter:

- **Communities do not have the facilities or means to dispose of waste. Communities need to be taught that wealth can be earned from waste. It is important to educate communities living near rivers.**

- **56% of SA's waste is mis-managed.**

- **Roughly, only 20% of used plastics in SA are recycled. Municipalities and communities must commit to improve the recycling rate.**

Plastic recycling:

- * **Working for the Coast Project removes litter and plastic from SA's beaches.**

- 2. The annual International Coastal Clean-up raises public awareness and encourages litter collection**

- 3. Carefully sort your waste as only 21% of plastic waste is recycled.**

- 4. The Cosmetics, Toiletries and Fragrance Association of SA will voluntary phase out plastic microbeads found in cosmetics.**

Deputy Minister welcomes Unilever's sustainable packaging commitment



Deputy Minister of Environmental Affairs Barbara Thomson at the launch of Unilever's Biomass Boiler

Firm commended for its 'green' move

By **Sandra Luiz**

Deputy Minister of Environmental Affairs Barbara Thomson has commended consumer goods company Unilever for

their commitment to ensuring sustainability forms part of their business, after they unveiled the new Biomass Boiler in Durban.

The new environmentally-friendly Biomass Boiler, which was launched as part of World Environment Day (WED), uses sustainable fuel to reduce their electricity consumptions and

carbon dioxide by 30%.

The R50million boiler was unveiled at Unilever's Maydon Wharf Factory, after the signing of the sustainable packaging commitment, which resonates with the WED theme - Beat Plastic Pollution.

"I wish to commend our host, Unilever, for their commitment

to make sustainability an integral part of how they conduct their business. We appreciate their vision to grow their business with the need for a smaller environmental footprint and greater positive social impact," Thomson said.

The boiler is fuelled by wood-

en pallets, waste wood and off-cuts from local manufacturers.

In a South African study of debris sampled along the country's coastline, plastic items were found to be comprising 99% of coastal litter, the minister explained. The Durban harbour, which was buzzing with colourful crabs and creatures, was in 2017 found with not a single crab in the section of mangroves.

"The reason? The biologically rich environment has been smothered by a thick layer of plastic and other litter. Furthermore, recent studies by biology students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal found that several species of juvenile fish off the Durban coastline were growing more slowly and dying more frequently from eating microplastics.

"The crucial point about these findings is that if we do not do something urgently, the mountain of plastic waste will continue to grow, resulting in a permanent contamination of marine ecosystems and our natural environment."

Focus on marine life and ecosystem crisis needed as plastic waste clogs our oceans

By **Sandra Luiz**

On the occasion of World Ocean's Day, Minister of Environmental Affairs Edna Molewa has urged South Africans to keep the country's oceans and water systems clean and litter-free to fight marine pollution.

World Oceans Day is celebrated annually on June 8, after it was officially recognised by the United Nations in 2008.

This year's theme is "Prevent plastic pollution and encourage solutions for a healthy ocean", as plastic is a worldwide problem affecting human health, marine and wildlife, and costs millions in wasted resources and revenue.

Research conducted in 2015 found that between 90 000 and 250 000 tons of litter enter the country's oceans each year. To curb this, the department is engaging with key stakeholders to improve the collection of litter in areas within catchments, to prevent it from reaching the sea.

This includes the Source-2-Sea campaign, to be launched soon, to increase activities such as community-based waste-sorting and recycling. A National Pollution Laboratory has been established at the Walter Sisulu University in Eastern Cape, which will monitor water quality along the country's coastline.

"It is important to tackle the



World Oceans Day: our waters choking on litter

The country faces a huge problem of pollution which poses a threat to marine life and the entire ecosystem.

problem of marine litter. Plastic products pollute our oceans, endanger marine life and threaten human health. We need to limit the use of plastic in our everyday lives and watch out on how we dispose of it," Molewa said.

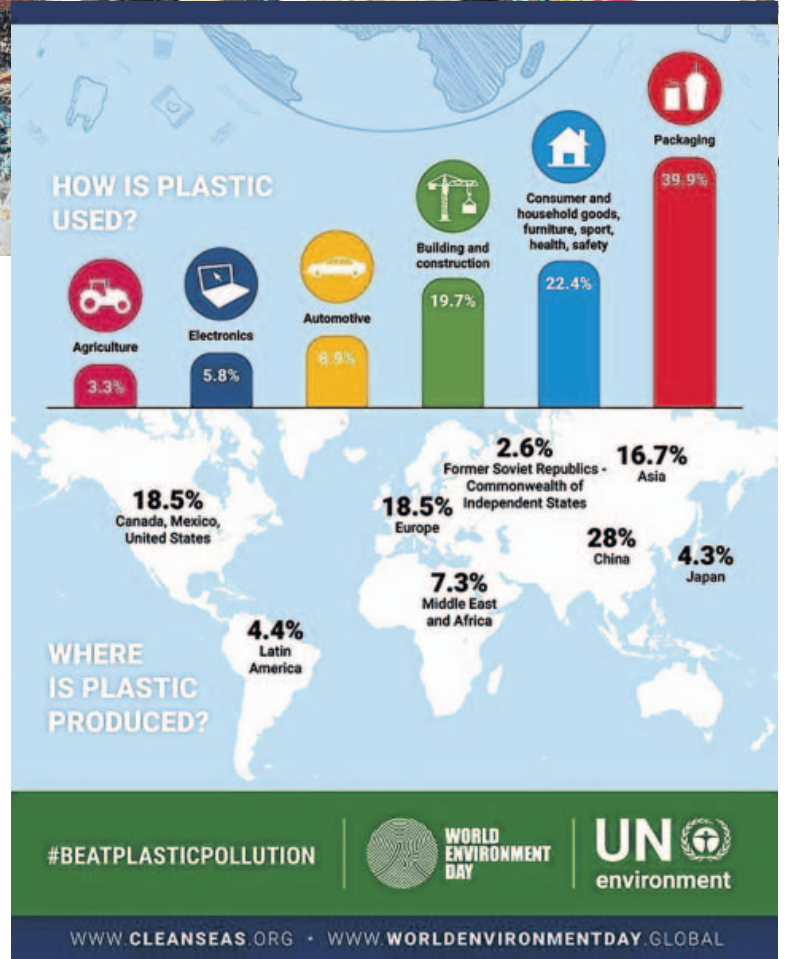
Globally, plastic and synthetic materials constitute most of marine litter that cause the most problems for marine life.

SA is a maritime nation surrounded by the Atlantic, Indian and Southern Oceans, which offer a resource-rich and biologically diverse environment.

About 40% of SA's population lives within 100km of the coastline and rely on coastal resources for commercial purposes, food,

recreation and transport.

But to realise the full socioeconomic potential of ocean resources, it is important to strengthen management efforts to control negative human impacts on the ocean.



SA Agulhas II open day: spotlight on research

Department's work in oceans and coastal environment comes to light

By **Tshego Letshwiti**

Every year the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) hosts about 2 000 people at its SA Agulhas II open day.

This year it was Durban's turn to explore the state-of-the-art research and polar vessel at the Port of Durban.

The day gave the public an opportunity to walk around the ship and learn about the DEA's work in the oceans and coastal environment.

For more than 50 years, South Africa has maintained a presence in the Antarctic and Subantarctic by establishing permanent research bases on Marion Island, Gough Island and in Antarctica.

Having a year-round presence in these remote locations enables researchers to conduct seasonal data analysis on various disciplines, allowing a better understanding of ecosystem behaviour and functioning of the earth system.

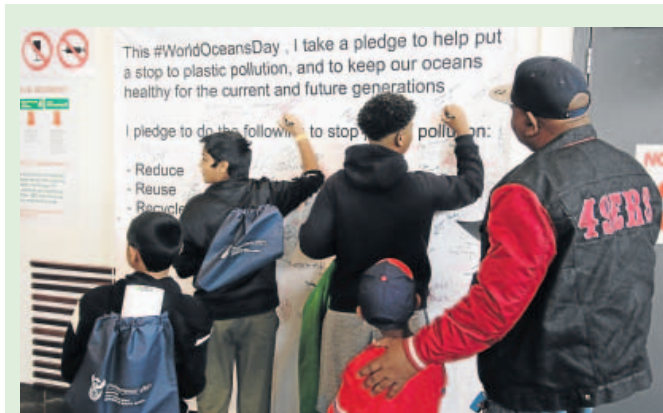
The Southern Ocean on the doorstep of South Africa is a key resource in understanding

the balance of earth, ocean and atmosphere interactions. South Africa, through various institutions of higher learning and international collaborations, has gathered extensive data on the Southern Ocean and the resources therein.

The studies in Antarctica, Subantarctic and the Southern Ocean have produced numerous national and international research publications in areas such as ocean biogeochemistry, ornithology, geology, zoology, botany, meteorology and space science.

The weather systems of South Africa originate in the Southern Ocean, and having weather stations at these remote sites allows the South African Weather Service to forecast severe weather and destructive events.

Antarctica and the Subantarctic present opportunities for people with technical expertise to support the expedition teams by ensuring optimal operation of communications and power-generation systems.



Members of the public sign their pledge to do their bit to stop plastic pollution.



The Ski-Monkey is a deep-sea camera system which captures video and picture footage of the sea floor.



DEA's science manager Mthuthuzeli Gulekana shows how the CTD instrument functions.

All aboard the DEA's research vessel

World Oceans Day experience

By **Gaopalelwe Moroane** and **Tshego Letshwiti**

As part of World Oceans Day, the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) held exhibits at the Durban Harbour and on its research vessel, the SA Agulhas II, from June 8-9.

The event was observed under the theme: Preventing Plastic Pollution and Encouraging Solutions for a Healthy Ocean.

"It is important to remember that we need to tackle the problem of marine litter at source," said DEA Minister Edna Molewa.

The SA Agulhas II was built in 2012 and was designed to be an ice-breaking scientific research vessel and to supply South African research stations in the Antarctic and Marion and Gough Islands.



The IIOE Expedition team aboard the SA Agulhas II after arriving in Tanzania.

SA's IIOE2 voyage set to enhance research and training

Expedition is a voyage of scientific discovery for SA

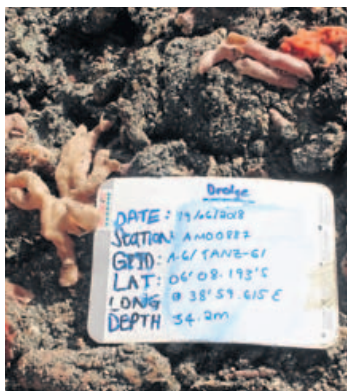
By **Tshego Letshwiti**

The Department of Environmental Affairs' (DEA) research and polar vessel, the SA Agulhas II, has entered into its second year of participating in the International Indian Ocean Expedition (IIOE2), as part of SA's training and capacity building voyage.

On board are DEA research staff and trainee participants from Tanzania, Comoros, Kenya, Madagascar, Congo, Zimbabwe and Mozambique.

The second voyage started on June 10 and will end on July 13, where a total of 46 stations (stops made to assess the ocean and its inhabitants) will be completed at the end of the research cruise, having covered.

The IIOE2 is a multi-national programme of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) which emphasises the need to research



The contents from a Dredge, used to sample the sea floor.

the Indian Ocean and its influence on the climate and its marine ecosystem.

The IOC recognised that there was a persistent lack of basic long-term environmental information in the Indian Ocean, particularly for developing countries surrounding the Indian Ocean. As a result, the IOC decided to declare the beginning of the IIOE2, 50 years after the first IIOE.

The data collection will cover physics, chemistry, plankton, biodiversity, large animals such as whales and seabirds as

well as geology, which will place developing countries of the Indian Oceans in a better position to conserve the integrity of its oceans.

Observers search for whales, sharks, turtles and marine birds as environmental sampling continues.

This is an equally important exercise as generated data, whether it be diversity or abundance, can be used in the ecosystem level management approach; and will help in getting a holistic view of ecosystems.

The IIOEII voyage is amongst the initial steps taken towards a region wide co-ordinated research effort which is aimed at better conservation management of common species between the Indian Ocean nations in Africa. One such species is the migratory humpback whale, which occurs in the waters of Tanzania, Comoros, SA and many other islands

SA has also committed to this very important initiative with research voyages in our own waters of the Indian Ocean.



DEA researchers with a North-West University trainee sampling the seawater.



Samples of dissolved oxygen, alkalinity, nutrients and chlorophyll being taken.

Students receive assistance from DEA bursary

Department initiative bridges gap

By **Nonkululeko Mazibuko**

According to a September report by Statistics South Africa, there are 10million South Africans between the ages of 15 and 24, 54% of whom are unemployed.

Once they have completed their studies, the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) bursary holders are given the opportunity to serve through the department's internship programme for a maximum of two years.

The DEA internship programme is in line with Department of Public Service & Administration's initiative established in 2002, which seeks to bridge the gap between academic study and



Since the inception of the bursary programme at the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) in 2004, an average 30 students have been awarded bursaries.

workplace performance.

Bursary recipients Thandekile Khumalo and Chulumanco Myataza share how the DEA bursary has affected their careers.

Khumalo said: "I received the bursary in 2013 while I was doing my second year at university,

and now I have completed my studies in Community and Development Studies at the University of KwaZulu-Natal."

She was a Stakeholder Engagement and Public Awareness intern.

"The DEA bursary lifted a huge weight in terms of tuition

fees, as I was working part time to cover my tuition and other expenses," she said.

Mr Myataza is working as an intern in the Biodiversity and Conservation Branch under the subdirectorates of Transfrontier Protected Areas, that monitors compliance within transfrontier

conservation areas. The DEA's bursary programme opens each year before the end of October. The internship for the year 2018/2019 is advertised between November and December.

For more information and application forms, visit: www.environment.gov.za



Chulumanco Myataza, is also a DEA bursar



Thandekile Khumalo, 2013 DEA bursar



The IIOE Expedition team aboard the SA Agulhas II after arriving in Tanzania.

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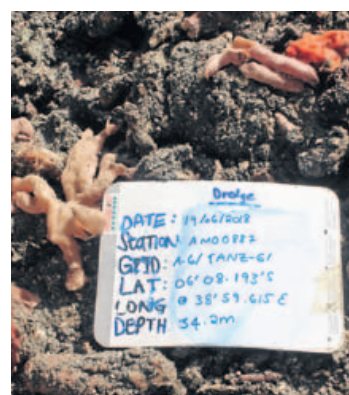
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Trainees from Tanzania and the University of Fort Hare with their trainer examine some of the samples found after the Dredge was sent out.



DEA researchers with a North-West University trainee sampling the seawater.



Samples of dissolved oxygen, alkalinity, nutrients and chlorophyll being taken.

The joy of being an offshore ecologist

By **Gaopalewe Moroane**

Every June 8 the world celebrates World Oceans Day.

The day is meant to promote conservation at sea through "preventing plastic pollution and encouraging solutions for a healthy ocean".

We interviewed offshore ecologist Zoleka Filander of the Department of Environmental Affairs about her career and what a career in ecology entails.

What education requirements and licences are needed for your career?

A three-year degree is the first step in providing the fundamentals needed. A one-year honours degree introduces you to research methods, which assist in constructing an experimental or applied research question. My appointment with the Department of Environmental Affairs required an honours degree in marine sciences and to be registered with the South African Council for Natural Science.

I, however, also had a master's degree when I was appointed by the department. This qualification focuses on marine taxonomy [the classification and naming of species]. Such a two-year [senior] degree – if undertaken full time – expands on the research skills



Zoleka Filander

introduced through an honours degree.

How long have you been an offshore ecologist?

I have been working for the department since 2014.

What inspired you to venture into this career path?

I ended up in the career by pure chance. I wanted to be a medical doctor. Fortunately I didn't get accepted at medical school so I resorted to biological sciences.

What are your duties?

I develop projects which feed into prudent management of marine resources, which involves weeks on cruises performing analyses,

interpreting data and advising stakeholders.

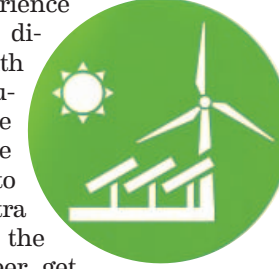
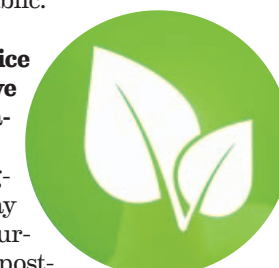
What is the most rewarding and challenging part of what you do?

I will start with one specific challenge, which is to have several days, and sometimes months, away from my son and husband.

The rewarding part of my job is capturing the beauty of the ocean floor and sharing the images with not just my family but with the public.

What advice would you give an aspiring marine scientist?

As challenging as it may seem to be furthering your post-graduate studies, do it because you won't regret such a decision. Such an educational experience opens a new dimension with better opportunities. A degree gives you the opportunity to apply, but extra skills get you the job. So volunteer, get your diver's licence and learn to swim – now.



Plenty of careers in environment to choose from

You can qualify via degree or diploma

By **Sandra Luiz**

The environment is filled with exciting, interesting and satisfying career choices stretching across a wide range of fields and disciplines. A career in the environment sector is rewarding as you can contribute to the conservation and maintenance of essential life systems necessary for human survival.

Since the government has put environmental legislation in place and called for more innovation, there is a nationwide need for environmentally trained professionals to reverse environmental deterioration.

Where do I start?

For a career in the sector, you need to study certain subjects in Grade 12 which tailor to the specific career you have in mind. The relevant Grade 12 subjects include:

- Mathematics
- Biology
- Physical sciences
- English and/or
- Geography.

and rural development – BA degree with subjects such as anthropology, development studies, geography and environmental studies.

- Environmental educators – HDipEd, with subjects such as geography or biology. Formal environmental education courses pursued at postgraduate level
- Environmental lawyers – LLB degree with environmental law as a major subject.
- Environmental journalists – journalism degree or diploma.
- Cultural resource specialists – BA degree with subjects such as archaeology, anthropology, political and social studies or social history.
- Eco-tourism specialists – Tourism degree or diploma with environmental interest

Environmental science careers require a science degree at a university or relevant diploma from a university of technology.

Subjects in natural sciences may include:

Zoology; botany; ecology. These generally lead to a career path in biodiversity, conservation and may also lead to a career in environmental management.

Career path qualification:

- Environmental impact assessment and environmental management – BSc degree in natural sciences, with post-graduate courses in environmental management.
- Landscape architect – Landscape architect degree at the University of Pretoria or the University of Cape Town
- Nature conservation – university of technology diploma in nature conservation or BSc degree with subjects such as zoology, botany, ecology.
- Specialist scientists in biodiversity, for example marine biologist, zoologist, ecologist – postgraduate degrees in zoology, botany and ecology, specialising in particular fields of interest.
- Waste managers and pollution controllers – BSc degree with subjects such as maths, physics, chemistry, climatology; university of technology diploma or degree in environmental science or engineering.
- Environmental engineers – civil engineering degree or B Tech degree in civil engineering.

Subjects may include:

- Anthropology; archaeology; development studies; geography and environmental studies; law (environmental); journalism (environmental); education (environmental).
- Careers in this field are centred around humans and their relations with the environment, and ways of making these relations beneficial to both people and the environment.
- **Career path qualification:**
 - Community conservation

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Thandekile Khumalo, 2013 DEA bursar



Deputy Minister reaffirms anti-desertification goals

Securing arable land for food production is one of the major concerns in government's mission to reverse desertification.

Invest in the future of land by protecting it now, warns Thomson

In celebration of World Day to Combat Desertification, Deputy Minister of Environmental Affairs Barbara Thomson has urged citizens to steer clear of unsustainable land use practices and invest in the future of land.

Recently addressing parliament during the department's budget vote speech, Thomson said the country was committed to meeting goals for land degradation neutrality (LDN) as agreed by parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification.

"Through the LDN targets, South Africa aims to achieve a balance between anticipated land degradation and planned positive actions in order to achieve, at least, a position of no net loss of healthy and productive land while neutrality is the minimum objective," Thomson said.

"We will work with our scientific institutions and part-

ners to clarify the links between land degradation and migration versus land degradation and instability and security."

"Equally important is our preparedness to confirm the goal on land degradation neutrality in relation to other sustainable development goals on water, food and poverty."

According to the 2015 Economics of Land Degradation report, the annual loss of 75 billion tons of soil from arable land will cost \$400-billion (about R5.4-trillion) a year globally, while taking action against soil erosion over 105 million hectares will save up to \$62.4-billion in net present value over the next 15 years.

But enhancing carbon stocks through agricultural soils alone can create potential value on the carbon market from \$96 to \$480-billion annually. Productive and healthy land can bring not only environmental and social solutions, but also economic gain.

Sustainable land management (SLM) practices, measures or initiatives, is a wise investment for economic growth that does not compromise resilient livelihoods.

"It is also a key to safeguard-



Deputy Minister of Environmental Affairs Barbara Thomson.

/RUSSELL ROBERTS

ing and managing the quality of the land by balancing its biological and economic potential," Thomson said.

"Moreover, land plays a vital role in linking multiple sustainable development goals by harnessing synergies while minimising potential conflicts and trade-offs.

SLM can give tremendous momentum to positive change."

Investing in land for sustainable production



Most rural communities experience challenges brought by severe temperatures and drought.

The World Day to Combat Desertification (WDCD) is an annual celebration aimed at promoting public awareness on desertification, land and degradation and drought sustainable development (DLDD) and the effects of drought, and a reminder that DLDD can be tackled and solutions are possible.

This year's theme, "Land has true value. Invest in it", calls upon producers, consumers, communities and policy makers, to utilise land in a sustainable manner.

The 2018 WDCD focuses on raising awareness on the importance of investing on land, its benefits and the role it plays in everyday lives. It reminds the world that land is a tangible valuable asset.

What are the key messages for the 2018 World Day to Combat Desertification?

- Farmers should be encouraged to invest in smart agriculture that leads to higher yields and a reduction in inputs.
- Policy-makers and land managers should support bio-economy by investing in new and traditional sustainable land management technologies and processes.
- Consumers should spend their money on organic and

fairly traded products to avoid land degradation.

- Call for the inclusion of land and soil and their significance in food security into national climate change adaptation policies.

- Changes in behaviour and adoption of efficient planning and practices can provide sufficient land resources and sustainable livelihoods.

Since land is being used as infinite resource, it contributes to the livelihood, a role which is often ignored. This negligence threatens food and water supply, biodiversity and even human security.

Short-sighted economic gains, such as unsustainable agriculture, unplanned urban sprawl and over-consumption, lead to unsustainable land use, which causes degradation and loss of critical ecosystem services.

Due to this, consumption of the planet's natural reserves has doubled in the last 30 years, with a third of the Earth's land already severely degraded, meaning choices made today about the land will determine its future development for sustainable growth.

Drought is another negative factor in some of the provinces. But by safeguarding life on land, there is true value on it.



Land care and unemployment amongst poor and unskilled South Africans, are amongst the matters addressed by government's cross-cutting Expanded Public Works Programme

Young ones learn about conservation



Sello Phuroe explained to learners about careers available in the environment sector and creating awareness of environmental issues at the South African Children's Book Fair at Ticketpro Dome in Randburg. Learners were intrigued by different national parks and botanical gardens that can be explored through SANParks and SANBI. Parents and teachers also gained insight into what the DEA does and how they can work together to spread awareness on environmental issues. Learners from different schools around Gauteng learnt about conserving the environment and their roles therein.

/VERONICA MAHLABA



Empowerment in education

Deputy Minister of Environmental Affairs Barbara Thomson handed over school uniforms to underprivileged learners from 12 different schools as part of Youth Month celebrations in Pietermaritzburg on June 18. Image by Veronica Mahlaba





A metal sculpture of Nelson Mandela at the site where he was arrested in 1962 by the apartheid government.



Minister of Environmental Affairs Edna Molewa participates in a clean-up operation as part of a campaign to encourage South Africans to do their part in conserving the environment and combating pollution.



Deputy Minister of Environmental Affairs Barbara Thomson and Chemical Waste Management Deputy Director-General Mark Gordon pick up litter as part of the Mandela centenary celebrations. /ZIBUSE NDLOVU

Mandela legacy lives on in 'green' initiative



The late icon's 100-year celebrations to also commit to conservation

Minister of Environmental Affairs Edna Molewa had committed to advancing policies to protect the environment in commemoration of 100 years since the birth of the father of the nation, the late Nelson Mandela.

The centenary celebrations, themed "Be the legacy", aimed to promote Mandela's ethos of unity despite race, orientation and gender. The celebrations coincide with the centenary celebrations of the late stalwart and struggle icon Albertina Sisulu.

Before addressing the 2018/2019 budget for the department, the minister acknowledged the milestones in the country's political life.

"This year marks the centenaries of two titans of the liberation movement. Nelson Mandela and Mama Albertina Sisulu. Tata Mandela's love for nature was well-known, and it is in his honour that we commit ourselves to advance policies to conserve our environment," Molewa said.

In August last year, an inter-ministerial committee was established to plan for celebrations of the Mandela centenary, working in close collaboration with the Nelson Mandela Foundation.

As the country celebrates the icon, government has urged South Africans to "Be the legacy" as the intention of the

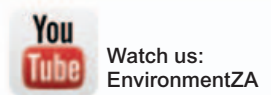
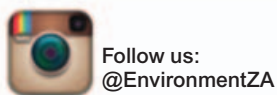
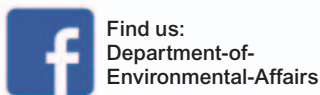
theme is to foreground characteristics and values which Mandela was renowned for across the world: integrity, passion, service, transparency, respect and transformation.

"These stalwarts will forever be remembered for their contribution to our liberation and beyond," Molewa said.

The celebrations will extend across the continent and the world. Speaking at the unveiling of the Unilever Sustainable Packaging Commitment earlier this month, Deputy Minister of Environmental Affairs Barbara Thomson said citizens should continue to build a society envisaged by Mandela.

"The 100-year anniversary of the lives of these two remarkable people is an opportunity to recommit ourselves to their principles by building the nation we envisioned at the start of our democracy; a non-racial, non-sexist and democratic country built on the principle of environmental sustainability," Thomson said.

Meanwhile, South Africans are encouraged to take part in the upcoming Mandela Day, on the late icon's birthday July 18, to exhibit their respective initiatives inspired by the values of the global icon.



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