

MEDIA INVITATION
TUESDAY, 01 FEBRUARY 2011

WORLD WETLANDS DAY AND PROJECT HANDOVER

Members of the media are cordially invited to join the Eastern Cape Department of Economic Development and Environmental Affairs (DEDEA) in celebrating the World Wetlands Day at Matatiele Local Municipality, Wilfred Bouwer on Thursday, 03 February 2011.

Wetlands Day is celebrated around the world on the 2nd of February every year and it is instrumental in creating awareness about environmental management and protection of wetlands.

“As South Africa is the signatory of the Ramsar Convention of 1971, the commemoration of this day is imperative to showcase the commitment of the country in implementing sound environmental management and protection,” said Mr Albert Mfenyana, the General Manager, Environmental Management at DEDEA.

The theme for this year’s celebrations is: **“Forest for water and wetlands”**

The department will also be closing the Matatiele Nature Reserve Fencing Project on the same day with the view to initiating and rolling out a full on programme. This is line with the position taken by the department of developing a sub-strategy to re-define the role of biodiversity in economic development and to streamline biodiversity to support related initiatives. “For the past two years we have adopted and aggressively pursued a slogan of “Biodiversity and Rural Economies,” said Mfenyana.

Through this strategy, the department has been aggressively involved in improving partnerships and relations within Municipalities and Private Stakeholders in Land Management. The guiding principles for this strategy have been:

- Focus on Biodiversity Business (income generation from biodiversity) and link this to the Provincial Growth and Development Programme (PGDP) and Local Economic Development (PGDP) strategies.
- Address the demand for land, for tourism and other developments
- Develop tools in support of systematic management of Biodiversity Critical Areas:
Eastern Cape Biodiversity Conservation Plan

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- Implement a capacity building programme for the users of the conservation plan specifically those in provincial and local government. This is to be achieved through both the engagement and involvement of stakeholders
- Proactively engage in co-management initiatives by promoting local partnerships for better land management. Focus on developments around the Communal Land Rights Act in communal areas

The details for the celebration are as follows:

Venue: Wilfred Boucher

Date: Thursday, 03 February 2011

Time: 10h00 – 14h00

Ends....

Note to the editor:

Department of Economic Development and Environmental Affairs (DEDEA):

DEDEA strives for building a province where all her people share the benefits of sound environmental management, sustainable development and economic growth.

DEDEA's mission is to provide strategic leadership in developing a people-centred, equitably shared, green economy through effective programmes, strategic partnerships and responsive services.

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Department of Economic Development and Environmental Affairs (DEDEA)

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