

DEDEAT MEDIA RELEASE

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Developing a greener and prosperous Eastern Cape

The Eastern Cape government will be exhibiting their initiatives for the development of a green economic hub at COP 17 in Durban from November 28 until December 9

The Department of Economic Development, Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEDEAT) has developed the Eastern Cape Climate Change Response Strategy (ECCCRS) which forms the basis of understanding the impact of climate change in the province and to pro-actively develop tailored interventions.

This strategy has four categories which underpin the province's response to climate change namely monitoring, mitigation, adaptation and resilience.

Mitigation activities include the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and green energy production (renewable energy and waste sectors). Adaptation activities involve food security, rain water harvesting, small scale renewable energy and waste management systems for rural schools and households (sustainability villages sector).

Resilience building activities look at increasing the capacity of people and ecosystems to reduce emissions and adapt to climate change (ecosystem services and carbon sequestration sector – biodiversity related projects).

COP17, the 17th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the 7th session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties (CMP7) to the Kyoto Protocol will be held in Durban from November 28 until December 9.

The value proposition for COP17 is based on the premise that key to the Eastern Cape Climate Response Strategy, which has been developed, is a pro-active rather than a reactive approach.

Economic Development, Environmental Affairs and Tourism Affairs MEC Mcebisi Jonas says this is underpinned by recent developments in the province to develop the location's capability as the hub of green economy related projects in South Africa.

The proposition also assumes the involvement of all the key agencies tasked to implement the identified interventions which include, but are not limited to, the Eastern Cape Development Corporation (ECD), Coega Industrial Development Zone (Coega IDZ), East London IDZ (ELIDZ) and the Eastern Cape Parks and Tourism Agency (ECPTA).

"COP 17 provides an opportunity for the DEDEAT and related entities, to profile some of the planned interventions as well as some of the key success stories in this regard," said Jonas. Coega which is slowly being viewed as a green energy generation hub, will be showcasing its wind energy generation projects with a combined total of 60 wind turbines, a 13MW solar energy farm and a biofuels project consisting of biomass pellets production.

Coega's counterpart, the East London IDZ will have on display its locally produced Joule prototype electric car which is produced by Optimal Energy.

The East London IDZ will also showcase flat plate solar thermal collectors manufactured by Ikhwezi Solar. Solar thermal collectors are used in conjunction with solar geysers to produce hot water for domestic, commercial and industrial purposes.

From the Eastern Cape Development Corporation, services offered by Integrated Waste Management Services (IWARS) will be on display. This project sets up a facility for effective waste recycling that can feed into a range of value-adding activities by establishing waste recycling infrastructure (including waste production).

Jonas noted that among the critical impacts of this project will be the creation of sustainable employment and new sources of income, the formalisation of waste recycling and an improved environment for citizens.

The Emonti Green Hub, which is essentially a one stop shop to recover resources from waste water, sewerage sludge and the organic fraction of municipal solid waste including garden refuse will also be showcased.

DEDEAT will show its commitment through the Biodiversity rehabilitation and carbon sequestration in the Baviaanskloof and Great Fish River Nature Reserve. The objectives of the project are to restore the biodiversity of the degraded thicket in three project areas such as the Baviaanskloof Nature Reserve, the Addo Elephant National Park and the Great Fish River Nature Reserve all in the Eastern Cape.

All these areas have been degraded significantly by previous farming practices which ran for more than a century. Also in the basket is the Chris Hani Sustainable Villages, which has seen WESSA and Chris Hani Municipal Services Department successfully piloted 3 'sustainable commons' at rural schools in the district. The project involves providing schools with renewable energy, water harvesting and waste water treatment technology to electrify schools, supports the production of organic food gardens and biogas for the schools, feeding scheme and the provision of waste management and sanitation services.

The critical impact of this project is that schools become more sustainable through the provision of basic services the municipality is otherwise struggling to secure.

Another exciting project is the Umngazi Nursery and Farmers Support Centre which promotes sustainable rural communities based on agriculture, forestry and tourism through:

- The provision of training and capacity building;
- Water harvesting development;
- Seedling supply and support for the youth in agriculture;
- And working in partnership with WESSA, Wild Coast Farm and Forest plans to expand their existing nursery.

The programme provides significant adaptation benefits through increased food security and water management at a household level for the rural poor.

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Internal Communication