

R1.3m ploughed into environmentally friendly youth projects

Thirteen youth-led projects are set to benefit from the Driving Force for Change initiative, intended for projects that tackle issues of climate change, waste management and biodiversity loss.



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“This initiative, worth R1.3m, announced on Youth Day this year, responded to the president’s challenge to South Africa’s youth to craft and design programmes that will make the country reach its developmental goals and address the unemployment crisis,” minister of environment, forestry and fisheries, Barbara Creecy said.

On Thursday, 26 November, the minister announced 13 successful projects for the Driving Force for Change initiative at the South African National Biodiversity Institute in Pretoria.

“Today’s initiative intends to translate concepts into bankable business ideas to explore uncharted territories through research and development, to incubate and nurture innovation and technology, to equip our youth with the necessary skills sets and capacity so that their projects have a positive impact on the environment,” Creecy said.

More than 250 applications were received for the initiative, across the four themes - namely, climate change adaptation,

climate change mitigation, biodiversity and ecosystems, and waste management solutions.



Cabinet approves measures to address threatened biodiversity

25 Nov 2020



The Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries set aside a total of R1m to enable the selected youth projects to implement ideas that support young innovators and entrepreneurs who want to create a more environmentally friendly economy and society.

“Our international partners have been generous in providing technical and financial support for our initiative. We have received an additional financial contribution of R300,000 from the British High Commission.

“This has allowed us to increase our number of winners to 13. The German Technical Agency is ready to provide technical support to the project winners and training in business acumen,” said Creecy.

Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan

The department has committed to pursue projects that will contribute towards the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan aimed at stimulating equitable and inclusive growth, said the minister.

“Our recovery programme notes that the pursuit of green industrialisation and a green future is an important intervention to ensure a sustainable solution to climate vulnerability and economic competitiveness.”



Bill promoting transformation in environmental sector before parliament

17 Nov 2020



Through the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan, the department will pursue high-impact priorities which include:

- An infrastructure programme;
- An employment stimulus to create and support jobs, which includes the expansion of natural resource management programmes;
- Immediate steps to achieve energy security, which includes significantly improved investment in renewables and storage technology;
- Measures to deepen local industrialisation and African integration.

“Government, together with Eskom, is currently exploring a proof of concept project to repurpose at least one of Mpumalanga’s aging power stations to give it a new purpose once they are decommissioned.

“Other critical interventions in the green economy include expanding the programme to retrofit public and private buildings and improve energy and water efficiency, support for small grower farmers through PPPs in forestry (including in state plantations), and measures to support the diversion of waste from landfills,” Creecy said.