

Dti supports small-scale fisheries

PRETORIA: Small-scale fisheries of the West Coast region are poised for economic revitalisation, with the Department of Trade and Industry's support of more than R11million in the sector for the region through its Fishing Cluster Project.

The main goal of the project is to create a viable and sustainable fisheries industry by putting in place a comprehensive package of support measures in order to create jobs and income generating opportunities.

On Friday, 22 March 2013, Trade and Industry Minister Rob Davies and Member of Parliament Freddy Adams handed over fishing boats to the value of R1.6 million to the fishing cooperatives of Ocean View and Masiphumelele, Cape Town in the Western Cape.

"The boats that we are handing over today can enable this community to generate R1.8 million in a year. We want communities to be able to provide for their families and communities.

"Our aim with such projects is also intended to broaden the participation of small-scale fishing communities to higher commercial value activities in the value chain," said Davies on Friday.

Ocean View is part of the Fishing Cluster Project, which is based on a study that was commissioned by the department for the support of the small-scale fisheries. Thus far, 39 cooperatives have been funded to the tune of more than R11million.

Davies said that the provision has enabled the cooperatives to have the much needed asset and capital base to begin trading competitively on the cost and quality of their daily catch.

Chairperson of Sinethemba Fishing, Mancaeta Nkululeko, said the boats they were using before were not safe to go deeper into the sea, and could not carry many people.

"Our lives are now safe with this new boat. We will now go deeper into the sea and catch more fish," he said.

Davies also said another purpose of the Fishing Cluster Project was to assist small businesses, in the form of cooperatives / small-scale fishers, to achieve their maximum productivity in the commercial fishing sector through well-defined value chain clusters.