

# Deputy Ministers Sotyu and Mahlalela lead Howick Good Green Deeds Awareness Campaign

#### 06 December 2019

Earlier today, 6 December 2019, the Deputy Minister of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries, Ms. Makhotso Sotyu and the Deputy Minister of Tourism, Mr Fish Mahlalela, uMgungundlovu District Mayor, Ms. Thobekelie Maphumulo and uMngeni Local Municipality Mayor Mr Sizwe Sokhela hosted a Good Green Deeds Awareness Campaign, in Howick, KwaZulu-Natal.

The Deputy Ministers handed over the Green Waste Drop-off Facility to the uMngeni Local Municipality, followed by community clean-up activities around the Howick Falls area as part of the Good Green Deeds Programme, as well as a Ministerial Imbizo with the communities of uMgungundlovu District. The Good Green Deeds Programme was launched earlier this year by President Cyril Ramaphosa and through this campaign Government seeks to highlight the importance of active citizenry in the protection of natural resources including tourism sites and the management of pollution.

Howick Falls forms part of the KwaZulu-Natal Midlands Meander Tourist Route and is part of the Umgeni River, of which 7km falls within uMngeni Valley Nature Reserve, 30km away from Pietermaritzburg. This makes this tourist destination a priority area for the Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries and the Department of Tourism as it has environmental challenges which impact directly on the uMngeni River through pollution that flows downstream to the Blue Lagoon Beach in Durban. This also has a negative impact on the Midlands Meander Route which is a priority tourist attraction for the Department of Tourism.

The uMngeni Local Municipality is amongst the municipalities that have benefited from the Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries through its arm of project planning and implementation, Environmental Protection & Infrastructure Programmes (EPIP). The Department funded and implemented two (2) projects within the municipality namely: KZN – the uMgungundlovu Small Recyclers Programme and Composting facility; and the KZN- uMgungundlovu Thuma Mina Good Green Deeds. Both projects fall within the working on waste focus area.

The above mentioned projects are aimed at reducing waste that is destined for the landfill sites through processing of waste into compost using the composting facility. This diversion increases the lifespan of landfill sites, change people's behaviour towards waste and its management as well as keeping the neighbourhood clean through environmental education and awareness, encouraging sorting at source and also creating opportunities for small businesses.

The project commenced with implementation in November 2017 and ended on 31 October 2019. The project was allocated a total budget of twenty-five million rand (R25 000 000.00). The project was implemented in three (3) local municipalities (uMshwathi, uMngeni and Impendle) within the uMgungundlovu District. The project entailed: the construction of two (2) Buy Back Centres in uMshwathi and Impendle municipalities and the construction of the Green Waste Facility in uMngeni Municipality. Labour intensive methods in line with the requirements of Expanded Public Works Programmes (EPWP), were used to execute the project.

From inception to completion, the project has created ninety six (96) work opportunities across all three municipalities of which fifty one (51) are women and sixty six (66) are youth. The following were the deliverables for uMngeni green waste facility: site clearance, construction of green waste facility, bulk

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earthworks, concrete work and retaining wall, diversion of temporary access road and provision of four (4) steel skips.

The project has been practically completed with uMngeni site, having been officially handed over to the Owning Entity (uMngeni Local Municipality) this morning. The project is implemented in all seven (7) local municipalities within uMgungundlovu District, and is aimed at encouraging better environmental management practices through street cleaning, identifying waste hotspots areas, clearing of illegal dumps in open public spaces as well as conducting environmental education and awareness campaigns.

The project commenced in July 2019 and will be completed latest 30 July 2021. Thus far, the project has created one hundred and fifty-four (154) work opportunities with an allocation of twenty-two (22) participants per Local Municipality. Out of participants from uMngeni Municipality, all are youth and seventeen (17) are women.

uMngeni Municipality falls within the green waste belt and green waste has been on the increase in the municipality which posed a challenge. The handover of this facility will add to operational safety at the Curry's Post Landfill Site and also increase its lifespan. The Municipality will collect green waste and transport it to the New England Road Landfill Site in Pietermaritzburg under Msunduzi Municipality where it will be processed as the site is larger and able to process green waste. This includes recycling, remanufacturing and reusing of waste at a larger scale. There will be 10 people employed at this site by the municipality.

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