

Speech delivered by Hon Mr Jackson Mthembu, MP, Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Environmental Affairs, on the occasion of the Budget Vote Debate of the Department of Environmental Affairs (Budget Vote 27)

14 May 2015, Parliament

Honourable Chairperson,
Honourable Minister, Ednah Molewa, MP
Honourable Deputy Minister, Barbara Thompson, MP
Honourable Members, especially members of my Portfolio Committee,
The Environmental Sector Fraternity,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Honourable Chair, as we hold this debate, Hon T Bonhomme, a very workaholic member of the Portfolio Committee on Environmental Affairs, is recovering at home after having surgery at a hospital in Durban. We take this opportunity to wish him a speedy recovery. At the onset we wish to express our gratitude to all members from all political parties, who made it their priority to engage with the Department and its Entities Annual Performance Plans, the Budget Allocation for 2015/16.

The Portfolio Committee had four days to undertake this very important Constitutional Task and our report tabled before Parliament through the ATC attests to this oversight work done by all members in this regard.

I secondly wish to thank the Minister, Deputy Minister as well as the DG and the entire department for making themselves available for these engagements. This is an indication of the Department taking its parliamentary obligations seriously and its understanding that indeed they account and are accountable to Parliament.

I lastly wish to thank all our Parliamentary staff for facilitating this engagement with the Department.

It is this ANC unmatched and uncontestable foresight and thought leadership that has always defined our actions and response to matters of the environment. Chairperson, the ANC continued in its environmental policy articulation, to put guiding principles that would underpin adherence to the broad policy statement above. Those principles amongst others committed ANC to sustainable development, equitable access to environmental resources, public participation in all planning decisions which affect the development and management of natural resources, public right of access to information and the courts on issues of environmental concern, an integrated approach to environmental issues that relates to all sectors of society and lastly the recognition by the ANC of the integrated nature of the global environment and the need for international agreement in policy making.

Chairperson the South African Weather Service continues its important work of alerting and warning all of us of severe weather patterns. Their weather stations that are everywhere in our country are very important for our day to day activities, for our aviation and for our various sectors of the economy.

There is also an important need for our Parliament to interact with our communities, particularly our schools and universities on how best and what are our plans to mitigate the negative impacts of climate change. As we prepare to attend COP21 in Paris, amongst the preparations should be public participation by our people on this serious matter that affects their future.

Whilst we will do and we have to do whatever we can to mitigate the effects of Climate Change as a country, the developed world must contribute significantly to the international fund meant to assist

developing countries on mitigation and adaptation. Similarly the developed world must also make available mitigation and adaptation technologies to be used by developing countries like ourselves.

I thank you.

Speech by Honourable S.P Mabilo National Assembly Budget Vote debate Environmental Affairs No 27

14 May 2015

Topic: Oceans, Coastal Management and the Economy

Honourable Chairperson

Honourable Ministers and deputy ministers

Honourable Members

Distinguished guests

Ladies and Gentleman

The Peoples movement, The African National Congress has declared 2015 as the year of the freedom charter and unity in action to advance economic Freedom.

Hon Chairperson; the ANC government has the responsibility to ensure that the right of its entire citizens to an environment that is not harmful to their health, wellbeing and to an environment protected for the benefit of present and future generations, through reasonable Legislative and other measures. The purpose of the oceans and coasts Programme is to promote, manage and provide strategic leadership on Oceans and Coastal conservation in our country.

South Africa's oceans and coasts are priceless assets. Indispensable to life itself, they also contribute significantly to our prosperity and overall quality of life.

The National Coastal Access Strategy was developed to assist coastal Provinces and Municipalities in prioritising some of their coastal access initiatives that needs to be included in Municipal strategic planning documents such as the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) and Spatial Development Framework (SDF), including zoning schemes.

The strategy seeks to address the following key coastal issues: Improve pedestrian access above the high water mark; Improve infrastructure for access; Prevent exclusive use; Address conflicting rights between public interest, private property owners and communal and traditional users; and Minimise adverse impacts on the environment.

The National Coastal Management Programme therefore represents the commitment of the ANC government towards realistic and tangible goals that will benefit the coastal environment and ensure its sustainability.

The national wealth of our country, the heritage of South Africans, shall be restored to the people;

Our oceans are amongst our most precious resources, providing us with nutritious food, recycling our oxygen and helping to keep our climate system in balance. They also offer significant economic opportunities, not just in well-established industries such as fisheries or transport, but also in newer sectors like offshore wind and wave energy generation or blue biotechnology, where innovation can help us meet new demands and sustainably develop available resources.

The National Development Plan identified ocean economy as one of the key drivers to eliminate

poverty and reduce inequality by 2030.

Our president his excellency J.G Zuma in his February state of the nation said the following:

“Our economy needs a major push forward. We would like to share with you our nine point plan to ignite growth and create jobs”.

Operation Phakisa aimed at growing the ocean economy and other sectors.

As the ANC we are certainly delighted and very optimistic about the government's Operation Phakisa initiative, which promotes economic growth and job creation in line with the goals outlined in the National Development Plan. The Operation Phakisa was officially launched by President Jacob Zuma in October 2014, following a six week long intensive and thorough investigation to unlock the potential of South Africa's oceans and their contribution to the country's economy.

The New Growth Path targets five million new jobs from 2010 to 2020. This target will require vigorous action to reduce concentration and diversify the economy, while ensuring adequate infrastructure, skills and appropriate regulatory frameworks. It also requires that the state promotes and supports new and innovative activities that can add value and generate employment on a large scale. We need to ensure growth in the core productive sectors of new areas of economic growth such as the oceans economy, the green economy and shale gas.

The investigation found, amongst others, that South Africa's oceans economy has potential to contribute more than R20 billion to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by 2019 and at least 1 million jobs by 2033.

Opportunities in the Ocean economy:

Shipping and Port Facilities: 80 percent of global trade by volume, and over 70 per cent by value, is carried by sea and handled by ports worldwide. For developing countries, on a national basis, these percentages are typically higher.

Fisheries : Globally 350 million jobs are linked to marine fisheries, with 90% of fishers living in developing countries.

Aquaculture: is the fastest growing global food sector now providing 47% of the fish for human consumption.

Energy: Oil will remain the dominant energy source for many decades to come but the ocean offers enormous potential for the generation of renewable energy such as wind, wave, tidal, biomass, thermal conversion and salinity gradients. Of these the offshore wind energy industry is the most developed of the ocean based energy sources.

Tourism: a major global industry that contributes towards the country's economic growth and GDP. A large portion of global tourism is focused on the marine and coastal environment and it is expected to increase. Cruise tourism is one of the fastest growing sectors in the leisure travel industry.

Biotechnology : The global market for marine biotechnology products and processes is projected to grow to around by 2017. Marine biotech has the potential to address a suite of global challenges such as sustainable food supplies, human health, energy security and environmental remediation.

Submarine mining: the world is gearing up for the exploration and exploitation of mineral deposits on and beneath the sea floor. The International Seabed Authority has developed the Mining Code

regulations to meet these changing circumstances and has commenced issuing licenses for the exploration of the international sea floor.

The Department of Environment Affairs has a key role to play, with other relevant government departments and state entities, work towards the successful implementation of this initiative. Our role in this regard is particularly focused on marine protection services and ocean governance, which entails the protection of the ocean environment from all illegal activities and promotion of its multiple socio-economic benefits. It is therefore pleasing to learn that the Department of Environment Affairs will table an Oceans Bill during the 2015 / 2016 financial year, which certainly paves the way for the promulgation of the necessary legislation that will propel successful implementation of Operation Phakisa. The legislation, once enacted, will provide a clear foundation for marine spatial planning. The Act will not only bring about harmony and integration of the various role players in the ocean space, but also safeguard against any possible compromise of the ocean environment.

Hon Chair, with regards to the continent called Antarctica there are interesting developments that our country as one of the original signatories of the Antarctica Treaty system cannot ignore or disregard. International interest in Antarctica is rising. Major powers have voiced their interest in the continent's resource potential, strongly suggesting the current prohibition of resource exploitation will be revisited after 2048. These developments pose a potential threat to the longevity of the Antarctic Treaty System. Our country must reposition itself to play a strategic role in the Antarctica space, by virtue of its proximity to Antarctica continent.

Currently our country has one base for scientific research and there is a need to invest in more bases. Precisely because countries which are not signatories to the Antarctica treaty system have increase their bases from one to four.

Rona jaaka mokgatlo wa ANC, re a tshepa gore lenaneo la ikonomi ya lewatile le tla tswela batsha ba rona, ga mmogo le basadi moshola, le go nolofatsa maphelo a bone.

Go maleba e bile go matshwanedi go amogela gore mmuso wa batho, o o eteletsweng pele ke ANC o na le dikgatlegelo tsa ba baagi ba AfrikaBorwa ka dinako tsotlhe.

Tokafatso ya ikonomi, go fedisa tlala, lehuma le tshotlego e supa maikaelelo a mmuso warona go fa bagaetsho tlotlo e ba e tlhokang.

Re gatela pele !! Re a tswellelela !! Ga re boele morago!

Mmuso wa Batho o dira go tlala seatla.

E bontsha bo tswere, bokhoni, go tsaya matsapa le go fetola maemo a baagi ba AfrikaBorwa. Ka ga mo wa bagaetsho ba dula ba tshepile mokgatlo wa bone e leng African National Congress, ka tlhase ga bo eteledipele ba ga motletlegi, President Zuma.

President Jacob Zuma at the January NEC Lekgotla in 2013 said "The ANC delivered political freedom and democracy. It must now deliver socio-economic freedom. It must deliver a prosperous society. The ANC is the only organisation that has the political will, expertise, capacity and historical mission to do so"

Lenaneo la ikonomi ya lewatile le bothoka thata. Se se kgonagetse ka ntlha ya puso ya khololosego e e eteletsweng pele ke mokgatlo wa ANC.

Re gatelapele ebile ga re boele morago bagaetsho gonne phokojwe wa morago o bonwa ke dintswa, letsema le thata ka mong wa lona.

Mokgatlo wa ANC o ema nokeng tekanyetso-kabo e ya lefapha.

Ke a leboga!!!!!!!

The ANC support this Budget Vote