

Address by President Cyril Ramaphosa at the launch of the Ha Matsila Development Trust Project, Vhembe District Municipality, Limpopo

25 August 2018

Programme Director,
Premier of Limpopo, Mr Chupu Stanley Mathabatha,
Minister of Environmental Affairs, Dr Edna Molewa,
Minister of Tourism, Mr Derek Hanekom,
Minister of Small Business Development, Ms Lindiwe Zulu,
Deputy Ministers and MECs
Khosikhulu ya lushaka lwa Vhavenda vho Toni Mphephu Ramabulana,
Vho Thovhele na Mahosi othe,
Members of the community,

Ndi masiari, Avuxeni.

I wish you all a very good afternoon,

Our government is working hard to ensure that all our communities benefit from our country's rich and diverse biological resources.

Our land has an abundance of different varieties of plants and animals, which serve as a source of natural products, including cosmetics and medicines.

They also provide a great foundation for expanding eco-tourism in the country.

Eco-tourism can be used to promote the economic development and empowerment of local communities.

It can help to ensure that people living adjacent to protected areas or

who live in areas of high biodiversity benefit from the significant growth in tourists visiting the country.

Namusi ndi divha la u pembela.

Ndi divha line ra khou ita misumbedzo ya thema mveledziso dza mihasho yo fhambananaho ya muvhuso washu.

Pulani ya thema mveledziso ya lushaka (National Development Plan) i khou shumana na u lulamisa dzikhaedu tharu dzi katelaho u shaea ha mishumo, thambulo na usa vha na ndinganelo yo teaho.

Ri khou bvela phanda na u shumisana na zwiimiswa kha u wana ndila dzo khetheyaho dzine dzanga shumiswa kha zwikhala zwa mveledziso ya ikonomi yapo.

Ikonomi ya bayodaivesithi i disa tshikhala tsho khetheyaho kha ndisedzo ya tshihadu ya mveledziso ya ikonomi ya vhupo ha mahayani.

Ndi kha vhupo ha mahayani hune zwiko zwa mupo zwodalesa hone.

Ndi kha vhupo honovhu ha mahayani hune lushaka lwa vha na ndivho ya maitele a zwakale musi zwi tshida kha kushumisele kwa miri yo fhambananaho.

Hezwi zwothe zwikhou itwelwa uri ri kone u swikelela na u kovhana mitshelo i bvaho kha u shumisa zwiko zwa sialala.

U swikelela izwo zwi do toda tshipida tshiswa tsha vhuledzani vhukati ha vhadzulapo, indasitiri na muvhuso.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

At present there are more than 9,000 wildlife ranches in South Africa.

Commercial wildlife ranches cover 17% of the country's landmass, with an estimated 20 million head of game.

The wildlife sector has experienced noticeable growth over the years, making it a sector open to expansion, particularly among previously disadvantaged individuals.

However, entry into the wildlife sector is hindered by barriers such as insufficient finance, inefficient land use, a lack of skills and experience, poor access to markets and the lack of infrastructure development support for entrepreneurs.

Overcoming these barriers requires coordinated efforts from government, the private sector and communities.

As part of its contribution, SANParks has undertaken to donate 3,000 head of game to emerging wildlife farmers in the next three years.

Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife pledged to donate 1,200 head of game over four years, and the Eastern Cape Parks and Tourism Agency promised to donate 1,500 animals in support of transformation over the next five years.

The Limpopo Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism has also pledged to donate 1,000 animals to communities as part of the government support framework.

The Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Authority has pledged 80 head of game per year.

On behalf of the private sector, Wildlife Ranching South Africa has committed to assist in unlocking socio-economic opportunities and to support the successful implementation of land reform and wildlife

economy initiatives.

These opportunities need to be developed alongside the acceleration of land reform, which is crucial for inclusive economic growth.

It is therefore a great pleasure to use this occasion to hand over title deeds and financial compensation to communities who have successfully claimed their land.

We will be handing over a cheque to the value of R168 million to the Mphaphuli Traditional Authority for phase 1 of their claim.

This claim covers a large part of Thohoyandou town, including the Venda University of Technology and the Thohoyandou Botanical Garden.

The Botanical Garden will continue to be operated for conservation purposes by the South African National Biodiversity Institute for the benefit of the entire nation, although the economic spin-offs will accrue to the successful land claimants.

We are also handing over a cheque of R77.3 million to the Gomondwane community in respect of their Kruger National Park land claim.

This is in addition to the claim settled in 2016.

We are handing over title deeds to the Mooke community from the North West and Makhasa and Mqobokazi communities from KwaZulu-Natal.

With the launch of this project today, we celebrate an integrated economic model which is led and implemented by the community.

What makes this venture work is the dedication of all those involved to uplifting this poverty-stricken area north of the Soutpansberg.

I would like to commend the Ha-Matsila community and the Matsila Royal Household for establishing the Matsila Community Development Trust in 2007.

Through its Enterprise Incubator Programme, the Department of Small Business Development has approved eight projects since 2016 to the value of R45 million for the construction of shared economic infrastructure.

Completed projects include the Matsila Shared Economic Infrastructure Facility and Matsila Incubator.

In addition, the Limpopo Wildlife Business Incubator has secured funding for the first wildlife incubation programme in the country amounting to R8 million.

Community members have also been involved in a volunteer programme to clean the Tshikali River, while efforts are being made to eradicate invasive and alien species in 1,000 ha of land, prevent and control erosion, and to restore degraded and over-grazed land.

A fully-fledged land user incentive program has been initiated and funded by the Department of Environmental Affairs for three years, employing 250 local people from 10 different villages belonging to Venda and Tsonga communities.

The Trust was recently assisted by the Department of Environmental Affairs with infrastructure funding to establish a 300 ha game farm for breeding high value species.

Over and above the Matsila development, government has planned

investments in the broader Vhembe and Mopani areas, in the Mphaphuli, Mutele, Mhinga, Mphephu, Mabunda and Mahumani communities.

The planned investment of R200 million will provide additional opportunities for comprehensive rural development and sound environmental management.

Ventures such as this not only boost the local economy, but also contribute to the upliftment of adjacent communities.

The initiatives demonstrated today will be replicated around the country as part of the nodal approach to development.

This requires a partnership among government, the private sector and communities.

Through this work, we will realise the great potential of our natural resources and the boundless abilities of our people.

For centuries, our people have gotten what they need from the land.

Through such initiatives, we can ensure that they continue to do so far into the future.

I thank you.