

President Ramaphosa celebrates Operation Phakisa: Biodiversity Economy at Vhembe District, Limpopo

20 August 2018

President Cyril Ramaphosa will address the Biodiversity Economy Innovation and People & Parks conferences in Thohoyandou under the theme: “Innovating and Accelerating - with the people, for the people” on Saturday, 25 August 2018.

The Biodiversity Economy Innovation conference will bring together stakeholders from the wildlife industry, academia, traditional leadership and government. The stakeholders will deliberate on innovative ideas that promote sustainable utilisation and conservation of the country’s biological resources.

In 2015, government adopted a Biodiversity Economy Strategy (BES) which seeks to increase the biodiversity contribution to the Gross Domestic Product while conserving the country’s ecosystems. It focuses on enhancing growth in various sectors including wildlife and tourism.

The Strategy was designed to sustainably advance the wildlife and bioprospecting sectors of the economy and secure sustainable livelihoods specifically for rural communities as part of meeting the targets of the National Development Plan.

The conference aims to ensure that the biodiversity economy produces healthy returns on investment. The scope of innovation products in the biodiversity economy include bioprospecting and bio-trade products such as cosmetics and pharmaceutical; wildlife and ecotourism products.

The People and Parks conference takes place biennially, providing a platform for stocktaking on progress being made in addressing land claims around protected areas, and in facilitating the contribution of protected areas to the improvement of rural livelihoods.

President Ramaphosa will go on a walk-about at community projects that form part of the Integrated Rural Development Model and which employ approximately 300 local people. Projects include farming (crop and livestock), agro-processing facilities such as an abattoir for poultry and red meat; a milling plant, tourism and wood crafting facilities. These projects are funded and supported by the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) and the Department of Small Business Development (DSBD).

Details of the events are as follows: Part 1: Presidential Biodiversity Economy Innovation and People & Parks conferences
Date: 25 August 2018
Time:

08:00Venue: Kalahari Waterfront, Thohoyandou

Part 2: Biodiversity Economy Transformation projects visit and Community engagementDate: 25 August 2018Time: 11:00Venue: Theocentric Primary School, Matsila village

Members of the media intending to attend the events are required to send their details including ID / passport numbers on or before Wednesday 22 August 2018 by 17h00 to: Peter Mbelengwa - pmbelengwa@environment.gov.za / 082 611 8197 or Ernest Mulibana – EMulibana@environment.gov.za / 082 263 7372

NB: Members of the media are also requested to present their valid press cards at the point of entry to access the venue.

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