

# Green economy to grow SA economy

South Africans must look at waste from an economic perspective as the green economy of the waste sector has the potential to create jobs and empower small, medium and micro-sized enterprises (SMMEs), said President Cyril Ramaphosa on Friday, 8 March, addressing the official launch of the Good Green Deeds campaign at the Sisa Dukashe stadium, Mdantsane, in East London.



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“This is a sector that has the potential to create 69,000 new jobs and empower more SMMEs and cooperatives. The chemicals industry, valued at R426bn, is another growth area,” Ramaphosa said.

The initiative seeks to mobilise all sectors of South Africa to become more environmentally conscious.

Government has through the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC) granted a R14m loan to the Jackson AfriWaste Plastic Palletisation Plant, an organisation that collects, sorts, washes and sanitises plastics for companies that produce products that are made of plastics.

The president visited the plant that is providing financial freedom to its employees through a 15% stake of the company, based in Mdantsane. The plant is one of the Operation Phakisa Chemicals and Waste Economy initiative that was also launched by the president.

## Operation Phakisa Chemicals and Waste Economy

The Operation Phakisa Chemicals and Waste Economy is aimed at unlocking Africa’s largest chemicals industry valued at \$30bn, while reducing environmental footprint.

The Operation Phakisa Chemicals and Waste Economy is anchored by the inputs and contributions of local, provincial and national government and their relevant agencies, business, non-governmental organisations, academia, research institutions including higher learning institutions.

Jackson AfriWaste Plastic Palletisation Plant CEO Phumeza Ceshemba said the company currently employs 17 employees and has about 100 beneficiaries who collect plastic for the plant.

“They are benefiting from the waste because we buy from them, they include the waste pickers, cooperatives and SMMEs,” she said.

General worker Sivenkosi Nazo said she enjoys working at the plant as she is set to benefit from the company through its trust.

“Going to work is a joy as we know that when the company makes money, we also make money. We perform our tasks with enthusiasm because growing the company will also improve our lives,” she said.

Nazo hopes that the company can grow and employ more people to address the challenge of unemployment in the area.

“As a trustee in the company, I will be investing the money I make from the business. I will also use the money to get medical aid and support my family,” she said.

Working at the plant has conscientised her on the importance of recycling.

“When I am walking on the streets and I see plastic I now pick it up. Plastic is gold, it represents money, people should value plastic and it can feed families,” Nazo said.



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## SA pursuing cleaner environment

In line with the objectives of the National Development Plan, South Africa is pursuing a path of development that is low-carbon, inclusive and resilient to the impacts of climate change, said the president.

“Through our National Waste Management Strategy we want to increase the contribution to the green economy of the waste sector,” he said.

The Operation Phakisa on Chemicals and Waste has a number of detailed action plans that need to deliver results by 2023.

“They include increasing the total contribution of the waste economy from R24.3bn to R35.8bn and creating 127,000 new direct and indirect jobs.

“The plans also include providing support to 4,300 SMMEs with 70% targeted at youth and at least 30% targeted at women; and ultimately seeing more than 20 million tonnes of waste diverted from landfill,” the president said.

He said partnerships between government and private sector will be key to the success of the Phakisa initiatives.

“We received pledges from a number of companies outlining their commitment to green economy initiatives. I want to applaud business for having come on board to be part of this campaign and want to encourage those who have not already done so to get in touch,” Ramaphosa said.

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