



Speech by Anton Bredell
Minister of Local Government Environmental Affairs and Development Planning
On the Occasion of the 2018 Budget Speech
Vote: 9
on 27 March 2018

Honorable Speaker

Honorable Premier of the Western Cape

Provincial Cabinet Colleagues and members of the Parliament

The Head of the Department and the CEO for CapeNature

Invited Guests,

Colleagues and friends,

Good Afternoon

As a department with a broad mandate that includes the environment and development planning, the past few years has become increasingly difficult under prevailing environmental conditions.

We are sitting in the middle of a once in 400-year drought and the impact has been devastating, particularly in the agriculture sector.

Despite the workload increasing and the pressure mounting, we see that budgets for this vital area of government keeps getting sliced thinner and thinner.

As an example I would like to highlight one statistic from the Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning:

Under current budgetary constraints and conditions, the department currently has 544 approved positions on the organogram.

Because of funding constraints and frozen posts, 180 of those posts are currently vacant.

And there is no money available to appoint more staff.

The result is that our work is constrained to some extent.

Despite that constraint, the department has met all its targets in the past year and the continued output by the department remains world class.

Agbare Speaker

Die verlamme droogte bly bo aan ons gedagtes soos wat ons hier vergader.

Die droogte en die gepaardgaande ramp is harde houe wat ons vat, waarvoor ons nie gevra het nie maar wat ons bestuur so goed ons kan. As provinsie het ons geen rol by die uitrol van water infrastruktuur nie. Dit is n nasionale regerings verantwoordelikheid en dit maak my bang as ek moet kyk na wat ons nasionale kollegas sê en doen wat betref nuwe water projekte vir ons provinsie.

Want daar is op die oomblik bykans geen nuwe werklike projekte aan die gang of beplan vir langtermyn watersekerheid in die Wes-Kaap nie.

Ten spyte van die langdurige droogte wat ons tans ervaar.

Die enigste groot projek waaraan meer as R2 miljard reeds spandeer is - die verhoging van die Clanwilliam damwal - is gestaak en gaan nie langer voort nie.

Ons moet vra wat aan die gang is in die nasionale departement en ons moet begin gesels oor die werklikheid van water en die bestuur daarvan op provinsiale vlak.

Dit is internasionale beste praktyk dat waterbeplanning en ontwikkelingsbeplanning geïntegreer word en dat water op provinsiale vlak bestuur word met gepaardgaande begrotings.

Dit is nie tans die situasie in Suid-Afrika nie.

Ook nie hier in die Wes-Kaap nie, waar ons watersake grootliks deur amptenare in Pretoria bestuur moet word met min kennis van die provinsiese algehele ontwikkelingsdoelstellings en behoeftes.

Ek wil die gesprek begin met die nuwe nasionale minister in die portefeulje en met ander nasionale regeringsvennote om te kyk na die moontlikheid om water oor te neem as 'n provinsiale mandaat.

Ons moet meer beheer kan hê oor ons eie toekoms ook in dié opsig.

Ons is hoopvol op 'n goeie reënval seisoen in die komende wintermaande maar daar is nog niks konkreets om aan vas te hou nie. Daarom doen ons 'n beroep om die gemeenskap om saam te werk en water te bespaar om te verseker ons bereik die 2019 seisoen met water nog in ons stelsel beskikbaar.

Madam Speaker,

Vote 9 (nine) for the Department Environmental Affairs and Development Planning amounts to a total budget for the year of R604 million.

Fifty percent of that amount is allocated to CapeNature – the Western Cape Government's custodian of biodiversity in the province.

I want to touch on budgetary challenges and note that in the 2017 adjustment budgets, Vote 9's allocation was reduced by R38.8 million as part of the provincial government's reprioritizing of budgets to tackle the impact of the ongoing drought disaster.

Madam Speaker

The priority spending areas for this department over the upcoming MTEF period includes an amount of R41 million that has been prioritized for drought management and water security initiatives.

The Current drought has put the spotlight on the importance of water security. Ongoing focus and awareness around water planning and management in the province is crucial.

In this regard we are proud of our achievements with projects in the Berg River Catchment areas and the plan to roll out the project to the Breede River kicked off in the last year.

Amongst others, this work speaks to:

- promoting sustainable land-use practices across all sectors,
- Reducing the impact of agriculture on the Breede River's water quality to acceptable levels and to promote sustainable agriculture.
- Enhancing the rehabilitation of alien plant cleared areas.

The departments ongoing **climate change response plans** have been allocated R22,8 million over the MTEF period.

Current climate change initiatives being driven by the province include assessments of the Economic Risk and Opportunities of Climate Resilient Investment in the WC as well as ongoing municipal Support to the five District Municipalities to enable them to develop and implement a climate change response strategy for each district in the province.

Madam Speaker

The Green Economy falls under PSG1 and also contributes to PSG4 which speaks to enabling a resilient, sustainable, quality and inclusive living environment.

One of the exciting initiatives in further developing the Green economy includes a project called the *Waste-Preneur* programme.

Through this program, the department aims to support formal and informal resource collectors through the development of a business diagnostic tool.

This is to be complemented by a Waste economy support programme presently undergoing service provider procurement.

Agbare Speaker

Programme wat kyk na afval en vullis in ons Provinsie gaan al meer belangrik word want die volgende krisis in die Wes-Kaap naas die heersende water krisis gaan 'n vullis krisis word.

Ons is besig om uit plek uit te raak regoor die provinsie vir die storting van vullis.

Daar is 'n dringende gesprek wat benodig gaan word rondom wat ons met ons toenemende volumes vullis gaan doen.

Om aan te hou om soveel te begrawe gaan nie veel langer 'n volhoubare opsie wees nie.

Alternatiewe opsies sluit in reuse herwinnings en verbrandingsaanlegte.

Dit gaan egter gepaard met sy eie uitdagings soos die koste om dit te ontwikkel en om die gemeenskap te kry om daarop in te koop.

Ek wil nietemin, hierdie geleentheid gebruik om 'n beroep te doen op u en die publiek om – buiten water en krag besparings en nuwe denke daar rondom – om ook dieselfde gedragsveranderinge te begin doen vir vullis en herwinning.

Van my kant af het ek die departement gevra om ondersoek in te stel rondom die uitbreiding van herwinningsfasiliteite en die bekamping van afvalplastiek in die provinsie.

Ons wil onder meer 'n beroep doen op groot besighede wat groot volumes plastiek en papier gebruik om saam met ons in ons munisipaliteite te werk aan die ontwikkeling van grootskaalse herwinningsprojekte.

Dit is ons visie om in elke dorp en stad in die Wes-Kaap 'n groot herwinningsfasiliteit te hê.

Ons wil en moet 'n kultuur van herwinning begin ontwikkel.

In dié opsig ondersoek ek ook tans die plastieksak en plastiek strooitjie probleem. Ek wil my nasionale kollegas vra waarheen gaan die plastiek sak heffing?

Ons neem kennis dis in die jongste nasionale begroting weer met 50% verhoog.

Ons wil van daardie geld omhein sien met die uitsluitlike doel dat dit gebruik moet word vir die doel waarvoor dit ingestel is - die skep van n herwinningsfunksie in die provinsie om van die afval ontslae te raak.

Ek hoop ons Nasionale Kollegas sal dit oorweeg om 'n deel van dié geld aan ons te voorsien sodat ons 'n projek kan begin om die probleem behoorlik aan te spreek.

Indien ons nie groter samewerking en antwoorde kry nie - sal ons moet ons opsies oorweeg.

Dit kan insluit die ondersoek na die moontlikheid om n algehele verbod te plaas op produkte soos plastieksakke en plastiekstrooitjies in die Weskaap.

Ek wil terloops besighede soos die Ocean Basket Franchise, gelukwens met hul besluit om weg te doen met plastiek strooitjies en ons wil andere aanmoedig om soortgelyke besluite te neem.

Speaker

Oor die MTEF periode sal R79 miljoen gebruik word om verder uit te brei aan die bestaande en hoogs suksesvolle RSEP en VPUU projekte in die Weskaap.

Die bestaande drie verkose dorpe in die RSEP program sal binnekort die bestaande opgraderings in hul gemeenskappe in terme van die RSEP program voltooi.

The 2018/19 financial year should see the RSEP Phase 2 in full swing and being landed in all seven new municipalities.

A number of infrastructure projects should commence in these municipalities. However, the focus is on “change of mind sets” and insights into how municipalities can plan towns differently with a planning-led approach and also to address the spatial realities of the South African past more coherently.

It will also be about planning better with other line departments, specifically the social cluster. Work in collaboration with PSG 3 should come to fruition.

The existing three RSEP municipalities should be near completion of their projects in the originally selected towns of Vredenburg, Malmesbury and Worcester.

This financial year a Organisation Development investigation for the institutionalisation of the RSEP program into the Department will be initiated.

In terms of the VPUU, the programme is nearing an end as the main thrust of the programme ends in June 2018. However, some possible exchange rate gains on the remaining funds from the German Development Bank may provide opportunities for additional projects being considered beyond June 2018.

Agbare Speaker

As dit kom by die CapeNature begroting vir die jaar wat voorlê,

Is die teiken om R401 miljoen te bestee. Die grootste deel hiervan word toegedeel deur die provinsiale tesourie maar die res sal ingevorder word deur dienste soos oornag akkomodasie in reservate aan toeriste te verhuur.

CapeNature se prioriteit bestedingsareas in die komende jare sluit in tegnologiese opgraderings van inligtingstelsels met die oog daarop om meer doeltreffendheid te berwerkstellig.

Eco toerisme bly 'n top prioriteit en dit is veral 'n riem onder die hart om te sien hoe beleggings in infrastruktuur by CapeNature oorde oor die afgelope paar jaar vrugte afwerp.

Reservate soos Cederberg, Kogelberg, Rocherpan en Grootvadersbosch is besonder gewild en lewer 'n groot bydrae aan die inkomste strome van Cape Nature.

Kogelberg byvoorbeeld se besettingsyfer is 87% - 'n uitstekende prestasie.

Madam Speaker

CapeNature is committed and will continue to focus on invasive alien plant clearing efforts in the Mountain Catchment Areas.

In the past three financial years CapeNature has cleared out more than 250 000 hectares of alien vegetation in its nature reserves. These efforts will be up-scaled in priority areas to ensure maximum water reaches our dams.

In addition to providing millions of litres of more water to our strained systems, these clearing initiatives also create valuable employment opportunities for SMMEs and people, often located in remote and rural areas.

CapeNature manages about 6% of the total surface area of the Western Cape Province with large parts of it encompassing the high yielding water catchment areas.

These vast areas are prioritized and cleared of alien vegetation according to an integrated strategy, as resource constraints does not allow us to clear the invaded areas at the required rate.

As additional funding becomes available more opportunities will be created to upscale operations and employ more people in this regard.

Agbare Speaker

Die departement en CapeNature se amptenare het weer oor die afgelope jaar uitstekende werk onder toenemende druk verrig.

Die departement het weer 'n skoon oudit behaal, dit is nou reeds meer as tienjaar wat die departement dit vermag en ek wil vir die Hoof van die Departement, Piet van Zyl gelukwens.

Capenature het ook in die jongste boekjaar 'n skoonoudit verkry, 'n verbetering op die vorige jaar se ongekwalifiseerde oudit.

Dr Razeena Omar, ook aan u geluk!

Met dié woorde sluit ek af.

Ek dank u.

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