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Economic Development, Environment,
Conservation and Tourism
North West Provincial Government
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



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Building a North West Province That Works For All

MEC Lenkopane tables the budget to drive economic growth, environmental sustainability, and tourism development in North West



The North West Department of Economic Development, Environment, Conservation and Tourism (DEDECT) has tabled a R1.056 billion Budget Vote for the 2026/27 financial year, outlining a programme aimed at driving economic growth, strengthening governance, rebuilding public entities and expanding development opportunities across the province.

Presenting the Department's Budget Vote before the North West Provincial Legislature, MEC Bitsa Lenkopane, said the allocation is intended to support economic recovery, environmental sustainability, tourism development, enterprise support, and institutional reform.

"This is a budget for reform, renewal, and the future prosperity of our province. It is a budget designed to unlock investment, create jobs, strengthen governance, and expand opportunities for the people of the North West," said MEC Lenkopane.

The allocation will be spread across the Department's seven programmes and will fund interventions to improve governance, support economic growth, strengthen environmental management, assist small enterprises, and reposition public entities to play a more meaningful developmental role.

A key focus of the 2026/27 Budget Vote is the stabilisation and rebuilding of the Department's State-Owned Entities (SOEs), many of which continue to face the effects of historical governance failures, financial distress, litigation, ageing infrastructure, and long-standing debt obligations.

MEC Lenkopane said the Department inherited entities burdened by deep-rooted institutional and financial challenges that had accumulated over more than a decade, with resources increasingly diverted from development priorities towards debt servicing, legal disputes and compensation costs.

To address these challenges, the Department has prioritised the appointment of substantive boards across its entities to strengthen oversight, accountability and strategic leadership. Turnaround strategies, organisational reviews, service delivery improvement plans, revenue enhancement programmes and governance reforms are also being implemented to place the entities on a more sustainable footing.

The North West Development Corporation (NWDC) remains the most financially distressed entity in the Department's portfolio, carrying historical municipal debt of more than R212 million, alongside significant contingent liabilities and a growing burden of unlettable and vandalised properties. MEC Lenkopane said the situation requires bold institutional reform to reposition the Corporation to fulfil its economic development mandate.

The MEC also highlighted progress at the North West Parks and Tourism Board (NWPTB), which has faced legacy liabilities, governance weaknesses, and operational inefficiencies. She said strengthened governance and tighter financial controls are beginning to yield measurable improvements in revenue generation, commercialisation, and operational performance.

As part of the Environmental Services budget of R440.4 million, the Department will transfer R242.4 million to the North West Parks and Tourism Board to support conservation, tourism development and institutional recovery.

A central part of the Board's turnaround strategy has been the restoration of financial sustainability through improved governance, stronger financial controls, technology-driven revenue systems, and the commercialisation of tourism and conservation assets.

Among the gains recorded is the implementation of revised gate tariffs and an automated gate management system across provincial reserves. According to the Department, the measures have strengthened revenue collection, improved visitor management and reduced opportunities for revenue leakage.

Revenue from gate fees increased from R14.8 million in 2024/25 to R23.6 million in 2025/26, while concession revenue rose from R56.9 million to R75.2 million over the same period. Combined, the reforms generated an additional R27.1 million in revenue during the year under review.

MEC Lenkopane said the improved financial performance has enabled the Board to strengthen its financial position and increase salaries for employees at the NWPTB and the Game Lodges and Resorts division without requiring a government bailout.

The MEC also raised concern over the living conditions of game rangers stationed in conservation areas, describing the matter as an urgent priority. She has directed the Board to assess ranger accommodation and related living conditions as part of efforts to ensure safe, dignified, and suitable living and working environments for frontline conservation staff.

She said the 2026/27 Budget Vote reflects its commitment to rebuilding institutions, restoring accountability, and ensuring that public resources are used to drive growth, job creation, and sustainable development in the province.

While acknowledging that years of institutional decline cannot be reversed overnight, MEC Lenkopane said that government is laying a firm foundation for long-term sustainability, reform, and improved service delivery.

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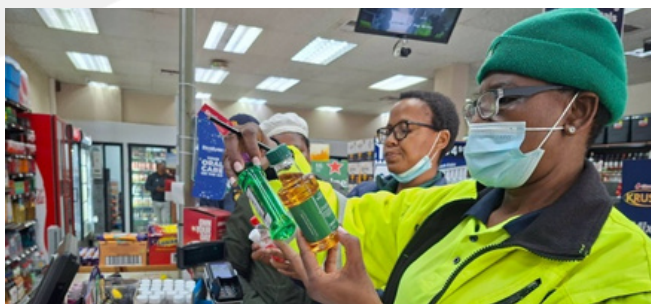
DEDECT Thuntsha Lerole Business Inspection targets Madibeng



The DEDECT business compliance inspection team, in collaboration with the National Department of Agriculture, the Department of Employment and Labour, the Department of Home Affairs, NWGB, SAPS, Bojanala District Municipality Environmental Health Inspectors, and Madibeng Local Municipality conducted a business compliance inspection in Brits CBD and Oukasie Township on 18 June 2026.

The multi-stakeholder operation aimed to enforce compliance with various pieces of legislation regulating the business sector and to ensure that businesses operate within the prescribed legal framework.

DEDECT Liquor Inspectors, working together with product inspectors from the National Department of Agriculture, placed a concerted efforts on alcohol products as regulated under the Liquor Product Act 60 of 1989 as amended. The inspection assessed whether alcohol products sold at liquor outlets, particularly bottle stores, complied with product labelling requirements, particularly valid batch codes and A-numbers.



Batch codes are used to trace a product's manufacturing and expiry dates, while A-numbers identify the responsible seller or producer without the need for full address details on the label.

During the inspections, 53,1 liters of alcohol products, including nondurable sachets amounting to R13 305 were found to be non-compliant due to expired or invalid batch codes, indicating that manufacturers may have failed to renew their registrations. Inspectors issued notices of non-compliance and will conduct further investigations. Should it be confirmed that the product owners failed to renew their registration with the National Department of Agriculture, the identified products will be confiscated and condemned.

Liquor inspectors noted positive compliance among liquor outlets regarding licence renewals, with all 10 inspected establishments found to be compliant in this regard. Only minor transgressions were identified relating to the display of liquor licences, renewal receipts, and the formal appointment of managers, despite businesses possessing the required documentation in line with the North West Liquor Licensing Act, 2016.

A total of 13 shops in Oukasie were also inspected for compliance with the Consumer Protection Act. Violations recorded included non-compliance with Section 23 of the Act, which deals with the disclosure of prices for goods and services. Compliance notices were issued to all affected businesses.

Additional non-compliance issues included hygiene and public health hazards. Illicit food products were confiscated and safely disposed of and the fines issued by Municipality Environmental Health Practitioners for various offences amounted to R60 500.

The Department of Employment and Labour also identified serious labour-related violations. Two undocumented foreign nationals were taken in for verification of documents, while two employers from five inspected shops were charged for multiple offences, including failure to provide employment contracts, non-issuance of payslips, failure to register employees with UIF and COIDA, and underpayment in contravention of the National Minimum Wage Act.

Celebrating Youth in Mining and Engineering Maintenance



Mapula Molope, the dynamic Managing Director of M Cubic Trading (Pty) Ltd

As part of Youth Month celebrations, we shine the spotlight on Mapula Molope, the dynamic Managing Director of M Cubic Trading (Pty) Ltd, a 100% black youth and female-owned enterprise making significant strides in the mining, engineering, and civil construction sectors.

Based in Moruleng, with its workshop situated at Bodirelo Industrial in Mogwase, M Cubic Trading has grown into a professionally managed company employing 51 skilled personnel, including boilermakers, fitters, welders, and other technical specialists. The company specializes in plant maintenance, mobile sandblasting, steelwork, fabrication, and engineering services that support the mining and industrial sectors.

Over the years, M Cubic Trading has successfully provided services to prominent mining operations such as Pilanesberg Platinum Mines, Siyanda Bakgatla Platinum Mine, and is currently rendering services at Thutse Chrome Mine.

In January 2026, the company received much-needed financial support through the DEDECT Empowerment Fund, which enabled the purchase of a lathe machine - a precision engineering tool used to shape, cut, drill, and manufacture metal components by rotating materials against cutting tools. It is essential in producing and repairing machine parts, shafts, bolts, and other components used in mining and industrial operations.

The acquisition of this critical equipment has significantly enhanced the company's production capacity, improved service delivery, and enabled it to expand its client base. Today, M Cubic Trading serves clients including Sun City and PPC Dwaalboom, while actively pursuing opportunities with institutions such as Valterra Mine and several lodges within the Pilanesberg Game Reserve.

Reflecting on the company's journey, Mapula Molope says that access to funding and market penetration have been among the greatest challenges faced by the business.



“As a young black female entrepreneur operating within the mining industry, securing funding and accessing markets have been our biggest obstacles. However, the support received through the DEDECT Empowerment Fund, together with partnerships with institutions such as the OBPI Incubator, has enabled us to strengthen our operations, create employment opportunities, and position ourselves for sustainable growth. We are now seeing doors open that will contribute meaningfully to local economic development and industrial growth within the province,” said Molope.

M Cubic Trading continues to demonstrate how youth-owned enterprises can play a meaningful role in driving economic transformation, job creation, and industrial development in the North West Province.

North West Department of Economic Development Intensifies Legislative Reforms to Strengthen Consumer Protection and Regulate Gambling



**NORTH WEST PROVINCIAL
CONSUMER AFFAIRS
COURT**

The North West Department of Economic Development, Environment, Conservation and Tourism (DEDECT) is making significant progress in strengthening legislative measures aimed at addressing non-compliance within the consumer affairs and gambling industries in the province.

The Department has finalised key processes in the development of the North West Consumer Affairs Amendment Bill and the Gambling Amendment Bill, both of which are designed to combat unregulated betting activities, curb illegal operations, and enhance the protection of consumers and lawful traders within the retail market.

These Bills have now reached an advanced legislative stage, having been adopted by the North West Provincial Legislature during a recent sitting of the House. In line with Section 121 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, the Bills have been submitted to the Premier for assent into law.

The legislative process has been comprehensive and inclusive, involving extensive public participation, stakeholder engagements, and roundtable discussions. These engagements were critical in ensuring alignment between provincial policy frameworks and national legislation, particularly in strengthening enforcement mechanisms against illegal trading and unlawful gambling activities.

Once enacted, the amended legislation will significantly reinforce the province's regulatory capacity. Key provisions include the strengthening of the Consumer Court by expanding its mandate and authority to ensure faster and more effective dispute resolution in consumer matters.

In addition, the legislation provides for the establishment of a dedicated inspectorate unit responsible for monitoring compliance within the market.

This unit will be empowered to conduct inspections, enforce regulatory requirements, and issue administrative fines where non-compliance is identified.

The amendments will further strengthen the Department's investigative capacity, enabling more robust enforcement action against unlawful business practices and ensuring a fair, transparent, and compliant economic environment.

In relation to the Gambling Amendment Bill, the proposed reforms seek to modernise the regulatory framework by providing for online remote gambling, strengthening administrative enforcement against illegal gambling, and aligning the Act with Constitutional Court rulings on previously unconstitutional provisions. The amendments will empower inspectors with stronger enforcement tools, reduce reliance on external law enforcement and costly private investigators, and introduce administrative penalties similar to those applied in traffic enforcement systems.

Furthermore, the legislation will update key regulations to include structured fine schedules for illegal gambling offences, refine definitions, improve gambling levy collection mechanisms, and ensure the regulatory system keeps pace with industry developments to enhance overall effectiveness in the Province.

DEDECT and NWGB Empower Youth at Orbit TVET College Through Consumer and Entrepreneurship Workshop



The DEDECT, together with its entity, the NWGB, conducted an educational workshop at Orbit TVET College in Brits on 17 June 2026. The workshop focused on departmental services, including consumer rights and responsibilities, business regulation (gambling, liquor and other businesses), and entrepreneurship opportunities.

The workshop forms part of the Accelerated Service Delivery Programme – Thuntsha Lerole, and targeted young people as they prepare to enter the labour market and pursue entrepreneurship, equipping them with knowledge to make informed financial and consumer decisions.

Students were empowered on their rights and responsibilities under the Consumer Protection Act and informed about the free services offered by the Consumer Protection Office, which operates across all district offices of DEDECT. They were also informed about the existence of the North West Consumer Affairs Court, situated at the DEDECT Head Office in Mmabatho, which adjudicates disputes between consumers and businesses, safeguards consumer rights, and promotes compliance with the Consumer Protection Act and the National Credit Act.

As potential future entrepreneurs, the students also received information on business regulations and support opportunities available in the department. The session highlighted the importance of complying with legislation governing the business sector, including the registration of businesses under the North West Business Licensing Act, 2016. Participants were advised on the importance of formalising their business ventures, as that is important for qualifying for government support programmes, such as empowerment funds and other business development initiatives.

Attendees were further cautioned about the dangers of irresponsible gambling and liquor abuse, which contribute to social challenges such as school dropouts, gender-based violence, financial hardship, and family instability.

Through these workshops, DEDECT and the NWGB continue to promote informed decision-making, responsible consumer behaviour, regulatory compliance, responsible gambling and liquor consumption, and support for registered businesses that contribute positively to economic development (levy) and Corporate Social Responsibility.

Queries relating to liquor businesses may be directed to LiquorregulationDEDECT@nwpg.gov.za, while illegal gambling activities can be reported to ceo@nwgb.co.za, telephonically on 018 384 3215, or via WhatsApp on 072 334 2468.

DEDECT Leads GBVF Awareness and Social Responsibility Outreach in Kgakala Village



DEDECT, through its Liquor Regulation Unit, conducted a Social Responsibility Outreach Programme in Kgakala Village, Leeudoringstad on 12 June 2026. The initiative took place as a form of a community walk against Gender-Based Violence and Femicide (GBVF), during which GBVF awareness messages painted at three local taverns were unveiled.

The walk brought together community members, tavern owners, and social workers from the Kgakala Crisis Centre, who carried placards bearing anti-GBVF messages. The initiative sought to raise awareness about the scourge of gender-based violence while promoting social cohesion and community responsibility.

As part of its Social Responsibility Programme, the Department encourages liquor traders to play a meaningful role in supporting and uplifting the communities in which they operate, particularly those affected by various socio-economic challenges. The programme also seeks to raise awareness about responsible liquor trading and the harmful effects of alcohol abuse on individuals, families, and communities.

DEDECT will continue rolling out social responsibility initiatives across the province and urges liquor traders to contribute positively to community development. The outreach programme further highlighted the critical role that local businesses, particularly licensed liquor outlets, can play in combating social ills such as gender-based violence.

By transforming tavern spaces into platforms for awareness, the Department aims to foster safer social environments and encourage behavioural change at community level. The painted GBVF messages serve as constant reminders to patrons about the importance of respect, accountability, and non-violence.

Community members who participated in the walk expressed appreciation for the initiative, noting that such visible and collaborative efforts help break the silence around GBVF and encourage victims to seek support. Social workers from the Kgakala Crisis Centre also engaged with residents, providing information on available support services, counselling, and reporting mechanisms for survivors of abuse.

The Department reiterated that responsible liquor trading goes beyond compliance with regulatory requirements; it also includes contributing to the wellbeing of communities. Tavern owners were encouraged to adopt practices that discourage harmful behaviour, support awareness campaigns, and partner with government and civil society in promoting safer communities.

Through initiatives like these, DEDECT continues to strengthen partnerships with stakeholders at grassroots level, ensuring that social responsibility becomes an integral part of economic activity. The programme aligns with broader government efforts to eradicate GBVF, promote public safety, and build resilient communities grounded in respect and shared responsibility.

DEDECT Strengthens Tourism Service Excellence Through Customer Care Training in Rustenburg



The Department's Tourism Sector Transformation and Education Unit conducted customer care training to empower members of Rustenburg Adventures, Tourism and Accommodation (RATA) association, along with other accommodation establishments within the Rustenburg Local Municipality, at Grand Comfort Guest Lodge in Rustenburg on 17 June 2026.

According to Mr George Masomako from DEDECT, this 2-day training programme, taking place from 17–18 June 2026, forms part of the department's broader strategy to strengthen service excellence and tourism safety within the North West Province's tourism sector. The programme focused on equipping participants with the necessary skills to deliver professional and high-quality service, with emphasis on key customer care elements such as treating customers with respect, maintaining service standards, and effectively handling complaints and incidents. These are critical skills in enhancing visitor satisfaction and building customer loyalty.

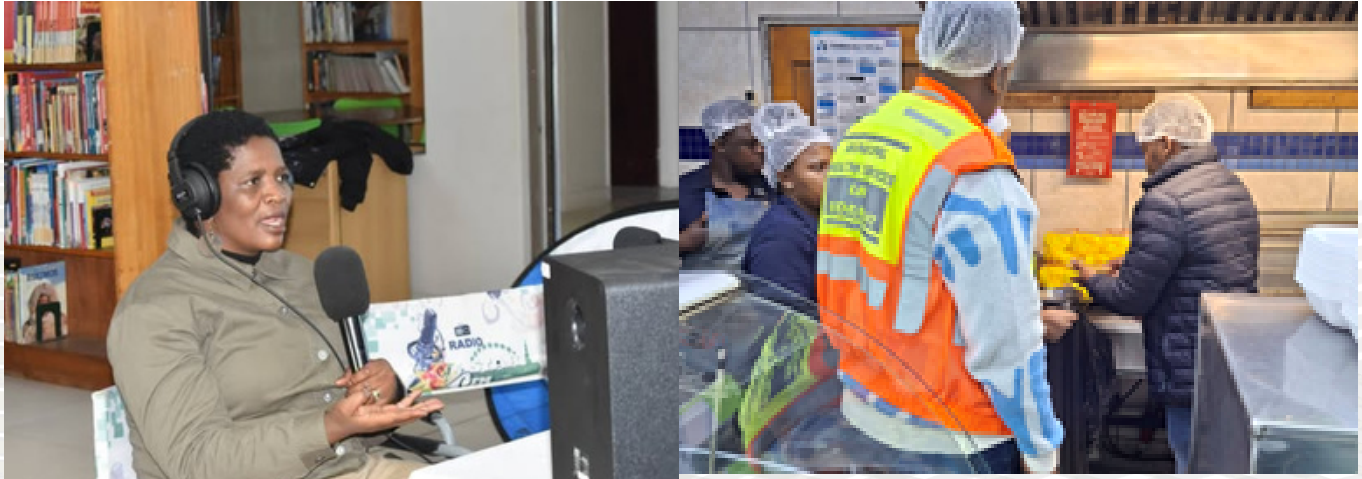
The training programme will also be rolled out to other district municipalities across the province in the coming months. In addition, the department's tourism officials continued with tourism inspections and awareness

campaigns within the Madibeng Local Municipality to ensure compliance with the Tourism Act 3 of 2014, as well as to assess adherence to the Tourist Guide Code of Conduct and Ethics.

The team further assessed establishments' compliance with the Tourism Grading Council of South Africa (TGCSA) standards at various game farms and adventure tourism establishments they visited within the municipality, which include LA Joya Lodge, Cheetah Game Lodge, Ditholo Resort, and Glen Afric Country Lodge.

The inspection programme forms part of the Department's ongoing commitment to enhancing the quality, safety, and global competitiveness of the province's tourism sector. By combining capacity-building initiatives such as customer care training with compliance monitoring and awareness campaigns, DEDECT continues to support tourism operators in delivering exceptional visitor experiences while upholding industry standards. These coordinated efforts contribute to positioning the North West Province as a preferred and trusted tourism destination, while promoting sustainable growth and professionalism within the sector.

Thuntsha Lerole accelerated service delivery programme: Rustenburg Local Municipality



The Department of Economic Development, Environment, Conservation and Tourism (DEDECT) led by MEC Bitsa Lenkopane, through its Consumer Affairs Office, conducted compliance inspections at 15 businesses and tuck shops in Monakato Village within the Rustenburg Local Municipality on 5 June 2026.

Of these, nine (9) establishments were found compliant with Section 23 of the relevant consumer protection legislation, which requires clear disclosure of prices of goods or services. Five (5) establishments were found non-compliant with the same provision. Compliance notices were issued to all non-compliant businesses, granting them a period of 30 days to rectify the identified contraventions. A follow-up inspection will be conducted to ensure adherence.

The DEDECT Liquor Regulation Unit conducted inspections to enforce compliance with the Liquor Act, 2016 (Act No. 6 of 2016) and other applicable legislative frameworks governing the liquor industry. Key areas of focus included Educating liquor traders on event permit requirements in terms of the North West Liquor Licensing Act (NWLLA) 06/2016. Raising awareness on consumer rights, responsible gambling, and the prevention of underage drinking.

Identified Challenges were Liquor traders hosting events without following the correct permitting processes, non-compliance with conditions attached to liquor licenses and sale of illicit alcohol. Multi-disciplinary enforcement inspections conducted in collaboration with the South African Police Service (SAPS) Commercial Crime Unit and the South African Revenue Service (SARS) Economic Activity Unit. Issuance of J534 forms and compliance notices.

A total of 14 liquor outlets were inspected. Eleven (11) outlets were found compliant, while three (3) were non-compliant. Compliance notices were issued to all non-compliant outlets, which will be revisited in due course. Notably, no significant challenges were encountered during the inspection.

Approximately 12 participants attended a workshop facilitated by the South African Bureau of Standards (SABS). The workshop focused on how the SABS assists manufacturers in producing higher-quality products suitable for larger markets. The presentation highlighted the South African National Standard (SANS) system, which ensures quality, safety, and compatibility across all manufacturing industries, including construction and electrical fields. Additionally, the SABS provided guidance on product packaging, labelling, and testing requirements.

The Business Licensing Unit conducted an educational awareness session on the North West Business Licensing Act, reaching 61 community members.

Catering equipment was officially handed over to CDM Confectioners Pty Ltd. Furthermore, oversight visits and aftercare inspections were conducted for funded enterprises requiring additional support, including advanced equipment to enhance business operations.

The Thuntsha Lerole Accelerated Service Delivery Programme continues to make significant strides in ensuring regulatory compliance, consumer protection, and enterprise development across Rustenburg Local Municipality. Ongoing monitoring and follow-up inspections remain key to sustaining these outcomes.

New USave Development in Makhubung Signals Boost for Township Economy



Departmental Spokesperson Mr Jerry Matebesi addressed the gathering highlighting that investments of this nature serve as key drivers of local economic development

DEDECT participated in the pre-opening engagement of a new USave store and a retail park in Makhubung, Mahikeng on 3 June 2026. Departmental Spokesperson Mr. Jerry Matebesi joined Dupret properties together with MMC Lucas Motlhabane of Mahikeng Local Municipality, local traditional leadership, community stakeholders, and representatives from National Empowerment Fund and Shoprite Holdings.

Mr Ducky Mantsi the visionary entrepreneur behind Dupret properties constructed the first phase of the complex which now houses Usave. Through financial support from the National Empowerment Fund and Standard bank, and partnerships with DEDECT and Mahikeng local municipality, Mr. Mantsi hopes to create a thriving local economy and highlighted the significance of the Makhubung USave Complex in driving township economic growth. Mr Mantsi further noted that “more is expected in the future,” underscoring the potential for continued investment and development within the area.

Addressing stakeholders during the engagement, Departmental Spokesperson Mr Jerry Matebesi highlighted that investments of this nature serve as key drivers of local economic development and contribute meaningfully towards building sustainable and self-reliant communities.



The engagement marked an important milestone in advancing inclusive economic growth and expanding access to retail services within rural communities. This investment reflects growing confidence in township and village economies and reinforces ongoing efforts to stimulate sustainable economic activity at a local level.

The new development is expected to generate both direct and indirect employment opportunities, while also creating an enabling space for local suppliers, small businesses, informal traders, and emerging enterprises to participate more actively in the broader economy.

DFFE and DEDECT Intervene in Ditsobotla Waste Management Crisis



DEDECT, through its Environmental Services Directorate, participated in a briefing on the state of waste disposal facilities during an oversight visit to Ditsobotla Local Municipality on 1 June 2026. The engagement formed part of ongoing efforts to assess compliance with waste management legislation and identify urgent interventions required to address environmental challenges within the municipality.

The briefing was led by Deputy Minister Bernice Swarts of the Department of Forestry, Fisheries, and the Environment (DFFE) and attended by the Acting Mayor of Ditsobotla Local Municipality, Cllr Thapelo Schemo, together with senior officials from national, provincial, and local government.

The oversight visit highlighted significant waste management challenges, including non-compliance at landfill sites, widespread illegal dumping, and environmental degradation. Concern was raised over the condition of the existing illegal Lichtenburg landfill site, which is situated near residential communities and a wetland ecosystem. The site lacks critical infrastructure and operational controls, including fencing, signage, access control measures, security personnel, ablution facilities, a guardhouse, and proper waste compaction practices. The uncontrolled burning of waste and windblown litter further compounds the environmental risks.

The municipality is also grappling with 187 illegal dumping hotspots and currently has no formal programme for managing illegal dumping sites. In addition, the municipality does not have a waste transfer station, is not reporting to the National Waste Information System, and has not established a Landfill Monitoring Committee to oversee compliance and operational standards. These shortcomings place the facility in contravention of the National Environmental Management: Waste Act, 2008 (Act No. 59 of 2008).

In response to the findings, Deputy Minister Swarts announced the closure of the non-compliant landfill site, citing the serious risks that uncontrolled waste disposal poses to public health, environmental sustainability, worker safety, and economic development. She stressed that poor waste management practices undermine air quality and the well-being of surrounding communities and cannot be allowed to persist.

The Deputy Minister further directed that corrective measures be implemented by 5 June 2026:

- 1) Ditsobotla LM to enter into an MOU with Business Forum by 05/06/2026
- 2) Ditsobotla LM to identify an alternative site to be licensed as a Waste disposal site by 05/06/2026
- 3) Ditsobotla LM to ensure registration of all the reclaimers at the Disposal Sites
- 4) DEDECT and DFFE must compile a report and submit it by 05/06/2026
- 5) National Cabinet Representative (NCR) must involve the department of Social development to attend to issues relating minors that were found at the Lichtenburg Waste Disposal Site by 05/ 06/ 2026.

The Deputy Minister directed that the Lichtenburg Waste Disposal Site be closed since it had now encroached on a wetland and a community settlement.

The visit forms part of a follow-up intervention arising from the Deputy President's Service Delivery Outreach Programme held in Ditsobotla Local Municipality on 7 May 2026, where concerns were raised about the deteriorating state of waste management services in the area.

DEDECT welcomes court sentence of pangolin traffickers to eight years' direct imprisonment

The North West Department of Economic Development, Environment, Conservation and Tourism (DEDECT) has welcomed the sentencing of two wildlife traffickers to eight years' direct imprisonment for the illegal possession and trafficking of a pangolin, one of the world's most threatened and heavily trafficked species. The sentencing, handed down by the Molopo Regional Court in Mahikeng on 26 May 2026, is being regarded as a significant victory in the fight against wildlife crime and environmental exploitation in the North West Province.

The matter emanates from a successful multi-disciplinary sting operation conducted on 02 June 2023 by the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation (Hawks), Crime Intelligence Unit, the Biodiversity Enforcement Unit from DEDECT, and the African Pangolin Working Group. Law enforcement authorities acted swiftly following tip-off about four suspects travelling from Vryburg to Mahikeng with the intention of selling a live pangolin. The suspects were intercepted and arrested at a Caltex garage near Montshioa Stad, where a sub-adult female Temminck's pangolin was rescued from the illegal wildlife trade.

The accused appeared before the Molopo Magistrate's Court on 05 June 2023, after which the matter was transferred to the Regional Court on 10 November 2023 following the conclusion of investigations. On 26 May 2026, charges against Daniel Tlhosane and Kagiso Seolonyane were withdrawn, while Ralph Tlhorise France and Edward Phiri were found guilty and sentenced to eight years' direct imprisonment. The court further declared both accused unfit to possess firearms.

The rescued pangolin was admitted to the Johannesburg Wildlife Veterinary Hospital for urgent treatment and rehabilitation. Veterinary experts described her condition as one of the worst ever encountered in a pangolin rescued from the illegal wildlife trade. Tragically, further examination revealed that she was pregnant. Unfortunately, both the mother pangolin and her unborn offspring succumbed to their injuries only five days after rescue.

A pangolin is listed as a vulnerable species in terms of South Africa's Protected Species List and is protected under the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act (Act 10 of 2004). Section 57(1) of the Act prohibits any person from carrying out a restricted activity involving a listed threatened or protected species without a valid permit.



In addition, pangolins are listed under Appendix I of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), which prohibits international commercial trade in the species. South African CITES Regulations further prohibit the possession, sale, display, or transportation of illegally acquired specimens.

The Department has identified increasing incidents of pangolin poaching and illicit trade in the Ngaka Modiri Molema and Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati District Municipalities. The illegal trade is largely attributed to the district's proximity to Botswana and the porosity of South Africa's borders. Pangolins are primarily targeted for their scales, which are falsely believed to possess medicinal value in some traditional practices.

MEC for Economic Development, Environment, Conservation and Tourism, Bitsa Lenkopane, commended the sterling work of State Advocate Bennie Kalakgosi, as well as all law enforcement agencies, biodiversity enforcement officers, veterinarians, and conservation partners involved in ensuring the successful prosecution of the case. The MEC also acknowledged the invaluable support provided by the Johannesburg Wildlife Veterinary Hospital in caring for the rescued pangolin.

"This sentence sends a strong message that wildlife crime is a serious offence with devastating environmental consequences. The commitment and perseverance demonstrated by investigators and environmental officials throughout this lengthy process reflect the importance of protecting our biodiversity and preserving endangered species for future generations. Every operation, every investigation, and every successful prosecution strengthen our collective fight against illegal wildlife trafficking," said MEC Lenkopane.

The Department further calls on communities to work closely with law enforcement authorities by reporting suspicious activities linked to wildlife trafficking, illegal hunting, and the unlawful possession or trade of protected species.

MEC Lenkopane Strengthens Partnership with Barolong Boo Ratshidi to Advance Heritage, Tourism and Economic Development



MEC Bitsa Lenkopane today had an engagement with Kgosi Jeff Montshioa of the Barolong Boo Ratshidi Traditional Council at Kgotla Ya Ratshidi in Mahikeng, as part of the Department's ongoing commitment to strengthening relations with Traditional Authorities and enhancing collaboration on key economic development, environmental management, biodiversity conservation, and community empowerment programmes within the province.

The engagement discussed a number of programmes of mutual interest between government and the Traditional Authority, including plans for further development of tourism attractions, the benefits of environmental programmes such as the Matlakala Ke Zaka Campaign (waste management and related opportunities), issues of compliance with liquor regulations in the community, as well as hunting permits as the province enters the hunting season.

The delegation also deliberated on upcoming Tourism Month activities, and incorporating the Barolong Boo Ratshidi Jubilee Celebration to ensure an integrated marketing approach for the North West Province as a tourism destination. MEC Lenkopane further noted that the Department must work with the Traditional Authority to package the rich history of the Barolong and incorporate it into the broader marketing package of the province, particularly as the Ngaka Modiri Molema District is strongly positioned for culture and heritage tourism.

The MEC was accompanied by the Departmental Executive Management as well as the NWDC Acting CEO, Mr Moagi Mahapa. During the engagement, the MEC also reflected on preparations towards the celebration of the Silver Jubilee of the Barolong Boo Ratshidi Kingdom, which will take place during Tourism Month in September 2026. This historic milestone presents a unique opportunity to showcase the rich cultural heritage, traditions, history and indigenous knowledge systems of the Barolong.

The Department will collaborate closely with the Traditional Council to position the Silver Jubilee celebrations as a flagship cultural and heritage tourism event within the province. In addition, the Department will work with the Traditional Council and other stakeholders to explore the formal recognition and promotion of the Barolong cultural landscape and corridor as a tourism destination.

Through these partnerships, the Department aims to expand heritage routes, strengthen cultural profiling initiatives, and unlock community-led tourism opportunities that celebrate and preserve the rich history, culture and traditions of the people of the North West Province, while contributing to inclusive economic growth and sustainable development.

MEC Lenkopane Empowers Youth at Bophirima Mini Convention in Ganyesa



MEC Bitsa Lenkopane addressed the Bophirima Youth Mini Convention in Ganyesa on 24 May 2026, at the Church of Christ Assemblies, which brought together community youth for a session designed to foster socio economic growth and personal development.

MEC was speaking directly with youth, emphasising that the current economic environment requires strong character, discipline, and reliability. "The provincial economy will thrive only when its youngest citizens choose to dominate their environments with positive values," said MEC Lenkopane.

To ensure youth entrepreneurs can meaningfully contribute to the province's future, MEC Lenkopane gave an overview of several departmental focus areas, including entrepreneurship training, skills development, and youth economic empowerment initiatives.

Encouraging youth to take advantage of these and other opportunities available to them, MEC called on youth to master new technologies, stay in school, and build personal discipline.

MEC Lenkopane further indicated that government programmes aren't just for those in urban areas, noting that they are designed to reach rural communities where untapped entrepreneurship potential resides. To truly unlock this growth, the MEC challenged young people to step up their civic participation by understanding the policies and economic trends that shape their province.

"The goal is to produce a generation of diverse leaders, from environmental scientists to tourism entrepreneurs, who are prepared to take ownership of the North West's economic future," concluded the MEC.

DEDECT Empowers Schools in Mahikeng Through Environmental Club Support



DEDECT, through the Environmental Services Unit together with its Out-of-School Environmental Club members, continued its programme of supporting and empowering Schools' Environmental Clubs for their environmental stewardship on 22 May at Masutlhe Village, Mahikeng, as part of the Thuntsha Lerole Programme.

DEDECT donated 40 citrus fruit trees to Maano Secondary School to support and encourage the outstanding work being done by the school's Environmental Club in expanding its citrus orchard. The departmental team, accompanied by the Office of the Premier, was also highly impressed by the school's dedication and efforts in developing what they described as one of the largest and most impressive vegetable gardens they had ever seen as part of an extracurricular school activity.

The garden produces a variety of vegetables, which the school can sell to the community to generate income, while also contributing to the school's feeding scheme. The initiative also serves as a foundation for practical lessons in Agricultural Science subject. Additionally, it introduces learners to entrepreneurial opportunities within the agricultural and environmental sectors, inspiring youth employment.

In recognition of the school's outstanding work, the department further donated and planted 10 shade trees at the school. The principal had previously requested the trees, noting that they would also help provide shade for teachers' vehicles.

The team commended the good work being done by Maano Secondary School under the leadership of Principal Esther Sealetsa, together with the learners involved in maintaining and growing the school garden and citrus orchard.

The DEDECT Thuntsha Lerole Programme also saw Mailakgang Primary School in Masutlhe receiving donations of 4 wheelie bins, 4 heavy-duty bulk bags, refuse bags, litter picker tongs, gloves, and dust masks to strengthen and support the work of the school's Environmental Club.

These initiatives form part of DEDECT's ongoing commitment to promoting environmental awareness, sustainable development, and active community participation among learners, while encouraging schools to play a meaningful role in protecting and preserving the environment for future generations.

North West Shines as Sun City Wins Casino of the Year Award



“When Sun City wins, the North West Province wins, and ultimately our people and communities benefit. This recognition confirms the important role played by the Department in maintaining regulatory standards, integrity, compliance, and responsible gaming within the industry, while also showcasing the contribution of the tourism sector towards economic growth and employment creation.”

DEDECT as the regulator of the gambling industry in the province through its entity, the North West Gambling Board (NWGB), led by MEC Bitsa Lenkopane, joined Sun City CEO Brette Hoppe, staff and stakeholders, in celebrating Sun City’s achievement of being named “Casino of the Year” at the 2026 iGaming Afrika Summit Awards.

Congratulating Sun City on the prestigious recognition, MEC Lenkopane said the award reflects the dedication, professionalism, and teamwork demonstrated by the entire Sun City workforce.

“This achievement belongs not only to the management of Sun City but

also to the frontline staff, hospitality workers, technical teams, security personnel, cleaners, gaming officials, entertainers, and every individual whose hard work contributed to this recognition. Through your excellence and commitment, you have positioned Sun City and the entire North West Province as a world-class destination.” said MEC Lenkopane.

The MEC further emphasised that the award demonstrates the importance of collaboration between government, regulators, and the private sector in driving economic growth, tourism development, and job creation in the province.

MEC Lenkopane added that the government remains committed to strengthening partnerships with all stakeholders in order to attract investment, conferences, tourism activities, and employment opportunities to the province.

“We will continue working closely with the private sector to unlock opportunities, grow tourism, and ensure that our people are skilled and empowered to participate meaningfully in the economy. The North West Province is proud of Sun City and this remarkable global achievement” concluded MEC Lenkopane.

iGaming Afrika Summit Awards aim to recognize the companies and individuals shaping Africa's gaming industry, focusing on product innovation, user experience, corporate social responsibility (CSR), and industry compliance.



Three Arrested for Illegal Warthog Hunting in Kraaipan Village

ZERO TOLERANCE ON ILLEGAL HUNTING



The North West Department of Economic Development, Environment, Conservation and Tourism (DEDECT), working together with the South African Police Service (SAPS), the National Council of Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (NSPCA), and local farmers, has arrested three male suspects for the illegal hunting of warthogs with dogs in Kraaipan village near Atamelang, recently.

The arrests were made during a joint law enforcement operation led by the Department's Biodiversity Enforcement Unit targeting illegal hunting in the area. The suspects were allegedly discovered using dogs to hunt warthogs, a prohibited practice under the Transvaal Nature Conservation Ordinance 12 of 1983.

Authorities confirmed that the suspects are facing charges for illegal hunting of wildlife, with further charges of cruelty and improper treatment of animals under the Animal Protection Act 71 of 1962 for alleged cruelty and improper treatment of animals. During the operation, officials confiscated two warthog carcasses believed to have been hunted illegally, three dogs allegedly used during the hunting activity, and a Ford Ranger bakkie.

Hunting equipment used by perpetrators, including a net, a spade, and an iron rod, was also seized as evidence. The suspects appeared before the Atamelang Magistrate's Court, and the matter was postponed to 17 June 2026 for further investigation.

MEC for Economic Development, Environment, Conservation and Tourism, Bitsa Lenkopane, strongly condemned the illegal hunting of wildlife, describing the practice as cruel, unlawful and harmful to the province's biodiversity.

"Wildlife forms an important part of our environmental heritage and biodiversity economy. Illegal hunting activities not only threaten our ecosystems but also undermine conservation efforts aimed at protecting species for future generations. We will continue working closely with law enforcement agencies to ensure that those involved in environmental crimes face the full might of the law", said MEC Lenkopane.

The department has noted with serious concern the growing trend of illegal doghunting activities within the Tswaing Local Municipality, where such practices are increasingly being turned into organised competitions involving youth. These illegal activities often result in the trespassing of private farming properties and place significant pressure on wildlife populations and surrounding ecosystems.

While the use of dogs for hunting may have historical and cultural roots, it is illegal when it violates environmental and animal protection legislation when conducted unlawfully. The Department views illegal hunting with dogs as a brutal, unsustainable act that threatens wildlife conservation. Offenders found contravening environmental laws will face the full might of the law.

The department is calling on communities to work closely with law enforcement authorities to combat illegal hunting and other environmental issues as part of protecting the province's biodiversity and natural heritage.

DEDECT INTENSIFIES PROVINCIAL CRACKDOWN ON ILLEGAL DUMPING AND MUNICIPAL NON-COMPLIANCE

The North West Department of Economic Development, Environment, Conservation and Tourism (DEDECT), under the leadership of MEC Bitsa Lenkopane, has intensified its environmental compliance and enforcement programme aimed at addressing illegal dumping, non-compliant landfill sites, environmental pollution, and municipal failure to enforce waste management bylaws across the Province.

This forms part of the Department's declared 18-day provincial environmental compliance marathon, which has already commenced in the Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati District Municipality, where environmental compliance inspections and assessments are currently underway.

To date, between two and three municipalities within the district have already been covered, with multiple illegal dumping hotspots, non-compliant waste sites, and areas of environmental concern identified for further intervention and enforcement action.

The programme focuses not only on municipal compliance, but also on the responsibilities of citizens, businesses, and communities in curbing illegal dumping and protecting the environment.

The Department has observed with serious concern the continued deterioration of waste management systems in certain municipalities, the uncontrolled growth of illegal dumping sites, and the increasing environmental and public health risks associated with these practices.

Of particular concern is the direct linkage between unmanaged waste sites, rodent infestation, flies, and harmful organisms that contaminate communities, shops, storage facilities, and food handling areas, contributing to food safety risks and incidents of food poisoning.

Illegal dumping and poor waste management practices are further contributing to environmental degradation, pollution, and climate change pressures, while undermining the constitutional right of communities to a clean and healthy environment.

The Department reiterates that municipalities have a direct legal responsibility to implement and enforce waste management bylaws, maintain compliant landfill operations, and ensure proper waste disposal systems within their jurisdictions.

MEC Lenkopane has instructed the Department to strengthen inspections, compliance monitoring, and enforcement measures in terms of the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA) and the National Environmental Management: Waste Act.

The Department will intensify:

- Environmental compliance inspections;
- Enforcement of landfill licensing conditions;
- Monitoring of municipal waste management systems;
- Identification of illegal dumping hotspots;
- Compliance verification against Integrated Waste Management Plans;
- Issuing of directives and compliance notices; and
- Recommendations for enforcement action where violations persist.

Municipalities found to be operating unlawful or non-compliant landfill sites, or municipalities failing to act against illegal dumping and environmental pollution, may face consequences in terms of environmental legislation.

"The Province is entering a new phase of environmental enforcement and accountability. The culture of neglect, uncontrolled dumping, and failure to enforce bylaws cannot continue," said MEC Lenkopane.

The MEC further emphasised that while DEDECT remains committed to providing Intergovernmental Relations support, technical assistance, and environmental compliance guidance to municipalities, this support must not be interpreted as a substitute for municipal accountability.

"The Department will support municipalities where support is required, but municipalities must execute their constitutional and legislative responsibilities. Where there is continued disregard for environmental compliance obligations, the Department will not hesitate to act within the provisions of the law", said MEC Lenkopane.

The Department confirmed that the 18-day compliance marathon will continue across other districts of the Province as part of a broader environmental compliance, public awareness, and waste management intervention programme under the "Matlakala ke Zaka" campaign.

Communities are encouraged to work together with government in reporting illegal dumping activities and protecting the environment for present and future generations.



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MEC BITSA LENKOPANE

Municipal Wastewater & Waste Management Community Guide



A SIMPLIFIED GUIDE FOR MUNICIPALITIES AND COMMUNITIES ON LAWFUL
WASTEWATER, SEWER, AND SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

1. ENGLISH



WHAT MUNICIPALITIES MUST PROVIDE: Municipalities must provide lawful sewer disposal systems, wastewater treatment plants, licensed landfill sites, public drop-off points, and waste collection services.

WHAT COMMUNITIES MUST KNOW: Communities must know where to dispose sewer waste, household waste, recyclables, and hazardous waste. Illegal dumping into rivers, open spaces, or storm water drains is prohibited.

MUNICIPAL RESPONSIBILITIES: Municipalities must communicate waste collection schedules, approved dumping points, and environmental health risks through radio, ward councillors, schools, and community meetings.

WASTE PROCESSING AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES: Waste should also be processed through recycling, composting, and waste-to-energy projects to create jobs and protect the environment.

2. AFRIKAANS



WAT MUNISIPALITEITE MOET VOORSIEN: Munisipaliteite moet wettige rioolverwyderingstelsels, afvalwaterbehandelingsaanlegte, gelisensieerde stortingsterreine en afvalversamelingsdienste voorsien.

WAT GEMEENSAPPE MOET WEET: Gemeenskappe moet weet waar rioolafval, huishoudelike afval en herwinbare materiaal gestort mag word. Onwettige storting in riviere of oop ruimtes is verbode.

MUNISIPALE VERE: Antwoordelikhed Munisipaliteite moet inwoners inlig oor afvalverwyderingskedules, goedgekeurde stortingsterreine en omgewingsgesondheidsrisiko's.

AFVALVERWERKING EN EKONOMIESE GELEENTHEDE: Afval moet deur herwinning, komposering en afval-tot-energie projekte verwerk word om werk te skep en die omgewing te beskerm.

3. SETSWANA



SE BOMMASEPALA BA TSHWANETSENG GO NNA LE SONA: Bommasepala ba tshwanetse go nna le mafelo a a letleletsweng a go tshololelang sewer waste, wastewater treatment plants, landfill sites le ditirelo tsa go tsaya matlakala.

SE BAAGI BA TSHWANETSENG GO SE ITSE: Baagi ba tshwanetse go itse gore sewer waste, matlakala a mo magaeng le dilo tse di ka recyclewang di isiwa kae. Go latlhela matlakala mo dinokeng kgotsa mo mafelong a a sa letlelelwang go thibetswe.

MAIKARABELO A BOMMASEPALA: Bommasepala ba tshwanetse go itsise baagi ka malatsi a go tsaya matlakala, mafelo a a amogetsweng le dikotsi tsa tikologo le botsogo.

WASTE PROCESSING LE DITSHONO TSA IKONOMI: Matlakala a tshwanetse go dirisiwa gape ka recycling, composting le waste-to-energy projects go tlhola ditiro le go sireletsa tikologo.

KEY MESSAGE: Clean communities depend on lawful waste disposal, environmental compliance, and cooperation between municipalities and residents.



BUILDING A
NORTH WEST PROVINCE
THAT WORKS

DEDECT MEC Calls for Strategic Partnerships to Drive Economic Diversification in North West North West



MEC for Economic Development, Environment, Conservation and Tourism, Bitsa Lenkopane, addressed an impactful session at a Mining Sector Collaboration dialogue taking place at Sibanye Conference Center in Mooi-nooi on 7 May 2026. The session focused on bringing together mining houses and stakeholders, towards sustainable partnerships, enhanced growth and opportunities for collaboration in the province.

MEC Lenkopane addressed the delegation of mining houses, presenting an overview of strategic investments and partnerships within North West. The presentation focused on longterm sustainability, which requires a deliberate transition toward a more balanced and integrated economy. MEC noted that mining remains the dominant economic contributor, particularly within the Bojanala District. Tourism continues to expand due to strong conservation assets, while agriculture provides an important foundation for rural livelihoods. However, the MEC cautioned that “despite the strengths, these sectors are not yet sufficiently integrated or scaled.

MEC further emphasised that the opportunity lies in scaling, connecting, and industrialising these sectors into a unified regional economy capable of sustaining communities beyond mining. To realise this vision, the province, through the Department of Economic Development, Environment, Conservation and Tourism, will implement a structured approach anchored in ring-fenced Special Purpose Vehicles (SPVs). These will be supported by key institutions, including the North West Parks and Tourism Board and the North West Development Corporation.

The SPVs will be project-specific, commercially structured, and fully ring-fenced to protect investor capital and ensure transparency.

Within this model, government will contribute land, existing tourism assets, development rights, and facilitation support. Communities will participate through land ownership, while mining houses and private investors will join as equity partners. To ensure operational efficiency and sustainability, experienced private sector operators will be appointed to manage and run these projects, driving both performance and returns.

This framework establishes a balanced partnership model where government provides structure and assets, communities benefit through ownership, and investors contribute capital and expertise. As part of this approach, MEC Lenkopane invited mining houses to partner with the province as equity investors in these structured SPVs. Priority investment also included other areas of collaboration including tourism, hospitality, agriculture, agroprocessing, corporate investment, logistics and skill development.

On the sidelines of the mining session, the MEC also engaged with stakeholders behind a proposed steam train initiative for the Hartbeespoort area. During the engagement, the team presented their concept to introduce a heritage steam train experience as a distinctive transport and tourism attraction. The initiative envisions offering scenic journeys around Hartbeespoort, enhancing the area’s appeal while contributing to the North West Province’s reputation as a unique and preferred tourism destination.

Through these initiatives, the North West Province demonstrates its readiness for coordinated, partnership-driven growth, anchored on a sustainable economy that creates long-term, shared value for all stakeholders, extending well beyond the mining.

DEDECT and BankSETA Launch Joint Initiative Programme to Empower Youth and Women



DEDECT in partnership with BankSETA, is empowering youth and women through a six-month Joint Venture Creation Training Programme in Jouberton, Klerksdorp. The programme, which began in May 2026, is designed to equip participants with practical skills to start, manage, and sustain their own businesses, and will be followed by a structured incubation and support phase.

As part of its commitment to enterprise development, the department will provide start-up capital of R10 000 per initiative, coupled with ongoing monitoring and evaluation to ensure sustainability. Through the Youth and Enterprise Acceleration Initiative (YAEI), implemented with the North West Innovation and Entrepreneurship Hub, entrepreneurs are being supported to transition from business ideas to viable enterprises that address real socio-economic challenges.

The newly formed ventures will participate in district and provincial pitching platforms during the North West Zenzele Youth Entrepreneurship Tour, scheduled for 5–7 August 2026. In addition to financial support, participants will gain access to the Flexi Hub platform, which will assist them with business operations, financial management, and funding application processes.



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Department inducts new Liquor Regulations & North West Gambling Board Members



The North West Department of Economic Development, Environment, Conservation and Tourism (DEDECT) led by MEC Bitsa Lenkopane in collaboration with its entity, the North West Gambling Board is hosting a two-day induction programme for newly appointed and sworn-in Board Members. The programme is taking place at Reja Botlhe Guest House in Vryburg and Tuscany Guest House, within the Dr Ruth Segomotso Mompati District Municipality.

This induction marks a critical step in strengthening governance, accountability, and effective oversight within the province's gambling and liquor sectors. It equips Board Members with the necessary legislative and strategic frameworks to execute their roles with integrity and diligence. The programme also includes comprehensive presentations on key regulatory instruments, such as the North West Gambling Act (Act 2 of 2001) and the North West Liquor Authority Licensing Act (2016), as well as essential governance frameworks like the Minimum Information Security Standards (MISS).

MEC Bitsa Lenkopane together with Head of Department Mr Relebohile Mofokane, CEO of North West Gambling Board Mr Boitumelo Qalinge and the newly appointed Board Members of Liquor and Gambling conducted a compliance inspection in Ganyesa as part of the induction.

The inspection is also joined by the department's Environmental unit, SAPS, Home Affairs Immigration, Consumer Affairs and Municipal Health and Safety Officers.

Through this initiative, the Department reaffirms its commitment to transparent regulation, strengthened compliance, and responsible revenue management within the gambling and liquor industries. The session will conclude with a walkabout of local gambling outlets as part of ongoing oversight and stakeholder engagement.

MEC BITSA LENKOPANE HAILS MDS AGRICULTURAL EXPO AS A TRUE VILLAGE ECONOMY IN ACTION



Morokweng Village – The MEC for Economic Development, Environment, Conservation and Tourism, Bitsa Lenkopane, has commended the MDS Agricultural Expo as a strong demonstration of village economic participation, local economic impact, and a clear return on government investment in enterprise development and market creation.

The MEC was addressing the three-day Expo that brought together farmers, entrepreneurs, financial institutions, researchers, learners, and international participants — including delegates from Botswana in Morokweng village in the Kagisano-Molopo. The MEC was happy that the Expo has indeed created a vibrant and integrated economic platform for the participants.

Village Economy in Action

“I have seen it happening — and it is no longer just a concept. This Expo stands out as a true example of a village economy in action, where production, trade, services, and participation are taking place in one space”, said MEC Lenkopane.

Participants included livestock farmers, youth and women entrepreneurs involved in agro-processing, textiles and pharmaceutical-related products, as well as service providers such as water drilling enterprises.

Participants included livestock farmers, youth and women entrepreneurs involved in agro-processing, textiles and pharmaceutical-related products, as well as service providers such as water drilling enterprises.

Financial institutions, including ABSA, provided funding solutions, while the Agricultural Research Council engaged stakeholders on research aimed at practical application.

The Expo also included a career exhibition component, exposing learners to opportunities in agriculture and related sectors.

“the initiative demonstrates that when government fulfils its mandate — facilitating enterprise development, creating markets, and mobilising people — the impact is clear” MEC Lenkopane says.

The Expo reflected government’s role in supporting SMMEs, creating market access, promoting self-employment, and enabling job creation.

Approximately 22 guest houses were fully booked, with demand extending to nearby towns such as Vryburg.

Approximately 22 guest houses were fully booked, with demand extending to nearby towns such as Vryburg.

“This confirms that platforms like these stimulate the broader local economy — from accommodation and transport to small business activity” said MEC Lenkopane.

The Department will promote climate-smart agriculture and stakeholder engagement to address changing weather patterns.

Molopo Game Reserve Development

The MEC said the Molopo Game Reserve will be developed as a Biodiversity Economic Hub integrating agriculture, tourism, and conservation. The Department has published the Hunting regulations as the hunting season is about begin. More hunting activities are expected at the Reserve in the region that specializes in plains game hunting within the Kalahari habitat, with species available including gemsbok, eland, kudu, red hartebeest, blue wildebeest, zebra, springbok, duiker, and steenbok

Delegates from Botswana were recognised as strategic partners in strengthening cross-border trade, export opportunities, and programme exchange.

“What we have seen here is real economic participation. Our task now is to organise, support, and scale this impact so that our people fully benefit from the economy,” concluded MEC Lenkopane.

MEDIA STATEMENT - NORTH WEST PROVINCE UNLOCKS BIODIVERSITY ECONOMY WITH GAZETTING OF 2026 HUNTING REGULATIONS

North-West, South Africa

North West Hunting Regulations, 2026

Provincial Notice 1401 of 2026

4 May 2026



Mahikeng – In a decisive move to strengthen environmental governance, unlock economic opportunities, and enhance revenue generation, the MEC for Economic Development, Environment, Conservation and Tourism, Hon. Bitsa Lenkopane, will officially publish the North West Hunting Regulations, 2026 in the Provincial Gazette on 4 May 2026.

This milestone follows the conclusion of all required processes, with the regulations already submitted to Government Printing Works for publication. The Department will further communicate the details through various media platforms, including newspapers and stakeholder engagements, where the full implications and operational details will be unpacked.

The gazettement of these regulations marks a new era for the Province—one that balances sustainable environmental management with economic growth, while providing long-awaited regulatory certainty to the wildlife and hunting industry.

DRIVING ECONOMIC GROWTH THROUGH THE BIODIVERSITY ECONOMY

The 2026 Hunting Regulations are a strategic instrument aimed at unlocking the economic potential of the wildlife sector, enhancing investor confidence, creating structured revenue streams, and supporting growth in game farming, eco-tourism, and hunting industries.

INCLUSIVE PARTICIPATION AND COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

The regulations recognise the critical role of traditional leaders, communal landowners, private operators, and local communities. This ensures inclusive participation and economic opportunities, particularly in rural areas.

MODERNISING SERVICE DELIVERY: DIGITAL PERMIT SYSTEM

The regulations build on the Online Electronic Biodiversity Permit System. Training has been conducted with stakeholders and businesses. The system allows real-time reporting of challenges.

A System Testing and Support Committee will be announced to ensure efficient, reliable, and uninterrupted service.

REGULATORY CERTAINTY AND EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE

The Province will establish clear hunting seasons, quotas, and compliance mechanisms, ensuring responsible and sustainable utilisation of wildlife resources.

CALL TO ACTION

All stakeholders are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the regulations and participate in upcoming engagements.

DEDECT Welcomes Easigas Clean Cooking Initiative to Boost Energy Access and Economic Growth



The North West Department of Economic Development, Environment, Conservation and Tourism (DEDECT) has welcomed the Easigas Clean Cooking Initiative (ECCI 2030) in Mogwase, Moses Kotane Local Municipality, as a key investment that promotes economic growth, environmental sustainability, and energy security. The opening ceremony for the initiative took place in Mogwase on 28 April 2026.

Speaking on behalf of the MEC, Head of Department Mr Relebohile Mofokane said the project demonstrates how reliable energy access can reduce energy poverty, improve community wellbeing, and unlock economic opportunities. He highlighted that clean-burning LPG offers a safer, more efficient alternative to hazardous traditional fuels for households, businesses, and industry.

The department noted that the women-led LPG bulk facility and its last-mile distribution network will strengthen local supply chains, create jobs, and support enterprise development, particularly for women and youth. The project is also expected to boost the regional economy and aligns with industrial development goals linked to the Bojanala Platinum Special Economic Zone.



DEDECT further emphasised that affordable and reliable energy is essential for attracting investment, industrialisation, and business growth. At household level, the initiative is expected to improve health and safety while reducing the burden of fuel collection and inefficient cooking methods, especially in rural and peri-urban communities.

The department commended Easigas, Amani Africa, Hakem Energies, the National Department of Electricity and Energy, and partners for advancing clean energy infrastructure and reaffirmed the importance of strong public-private partnerships in driving inclusive development.



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Department of Economic Development, Environment,
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Editor: Zia Cassim

Compiling & Sub-editor: Tshepiso Matlhoko

Contributors:

Tiro Appolos

Seloane Seleka

Mpumi Mashike

Amantle Kepadisa

Keamogetse Mokoneng

Beauty Khambule

Rebabaletswe Tshwene

Design & Layout

Kaone Maphangela and

Obakeng Mashishi