

# Masibekela Recreational Park officially launched

The Masibekela Recreational Park in Masibekela Village, Nkomazi Local Municipality in Mpumalanga has been launched.



Image source: [www.mylowveld.com](http://www.mylowveld.com)

The Masibekela Recreational Project falls within the greening and open space management focus area. The objective of open space management amongst other things is to establish eco-friendly open spaces that are safe, attractively designed, well managed for the benefit of all communities as well as promoting maximum use of alternative energy sources, green infrastructure and ecosystem services as well as ensuring that children and young people enjoy the play and leisure.

The project has created work opportunities for 45 local people, of which 23 were women, 18 youths and one person living with disability. The beneficiaries of the project have received training opportunities equipping them with the necessary skill that will enable them to find employment in other work environments on exit from the projects.

Moreover, the project has contributed to the development of local small business enterprises. Such small businesses have been used in providing services in provision of protective clothing, provision of training, materials and equipment.

## Eco-friendly spaces

Speaking at the opening ceremony, the Deputy Minister of Environmental Affairs, Barbara Thomson, told the community that the department had heeded the call to fight the ongoing challenge of unemployment in the country. "The Masibekela Recreational project that we are launching today falls within the Greening and Open Space Management focus area. The main objective of the open space management, amongst other things, is to establish eco-friendly open spaces that are safe, attractively designed, well managed for the benefit of all our communities.

"Furthermore, the project aims to promote the maximum use of alternative energy sources, green infrastructure and ecosystem services as well as ensuring that our children and young people enjoy play time and leisure. In our pledge to move this province forward, the department has invested a total funding of over R140m for 15 projects across the province in 2014. An additional R345m was invested in the new funding cycle of 2014. As a result a total of 2,163 jobs have been created, as well as important environmental protection and conservation infrastructure has been built," she said.

The Department of Environmental Affairs through its Environmental Protection and Infrastructure Programme is funding the implementation of environmental projects in Mpumalanga Province aimed at the alleviation of poverty and improvement of lives while protecting the natural resources.