

DEA launches gender mainstreaming in environment strategy

Deputy Minister of Environmental Affairs Barbara Thomson officially launched the Strategy toward Gender Mainstreaming in the Environment Sector 2016 - 2021 at the seventh Women in Environment Conference in Kimberly on Thursday, 25 August 2016.



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The strategy aims to serve as a tool to enhance compliance with national gender priorities. It aims to provide a framework and strategic direction for gender mainstreaming, as well as outlining funding opportunities in the environment sector.

Addressing the two-day conference, held under the theme, “Gender Mainstreaming in the Environment Sector”, Thomson encouraged women in all walks of life, particularly in the environment sector, to be actively involved in various initiatives that promote environmental protection for the benefit of current and future generations.

Strengthening gender mainstreaming

The United Nations (UN) Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) describes gender mainstreaming as: “The process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women’s as well as men’s concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetrated.”

“With this strategy, we will ensure that initiatives in the environment sector are designed to support the creation of policies and programmes that strengthen gender mainstreaming. We will ensure gender analyses and mainstreaming during the development and/or implementation of projects to include a gender lens and perspective into the whole project cycle management. This is a strategy to empower women in the environment sector to play a meaningful role,” said Thomson.

The strategy understands that women remain an integral part of government’s environment programmes and their participation is critical in ensuring inclusiveness in environmental planning and decision-making.

It also argues that women are often at the receiving end of abject poverty due to our historical past that entrenched patriarchal attitudes which excluded women from active participation in the broader economy and it is through this forum that women could emerge as primary beneficiaries of opportunities created in the environment sector.

Empowering women in the sector

The Women in Environment Conference brought together various stakeholders in the environment sector, with a specific objective of empowering the women in the sector. It is also a platform for women to renew its commitment to take into account principles of gender equality in employment practices, policies, programmes and service delivery.

The Conference takes place during South Africa's national Women's Month, which is marked to recognise and celebrate the role women played in the country's struggle towards the attainment of the democratic freedom.

To access the Strategy toward Gender Mainstreaming in the Environment Sector 2016 – 2021, [click here](#).

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