

Media release

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## **R2,7 billion Vaal Pipeline ready for water delivery**

Minister of Water Affairs and Forestry Mrs. Lindiwe Hendricks today (Wednesday 01 April ) hosted an event to celebrate the achievement of significant milestones with the implementation of the R2,7 billion Vaal River Eastern Subsystem Augmentation Project (VRESAP), that will secure water delivery to the Eskom power stations and to SASOL industries located in the Mpumalanga Highveld.

The celebration of the completion of the pipeline contract for delivery of water to the Eskom Power Stations and to SASOL in the Mpumalanga took place at the Vaal Marina. It was attended by senior officials from Eskom and SASOL.

Cabinet approved the construction of the pipeline in 2004. The growing water demands of Sasol and Eskom in the Mpumalanga Highveld region necessitated the implementation of the scheme to transfer water via a 115 kilometer pipeline from the Vaal Dam to the diversion structure near Knoppiesfontein and from there water flows via pipelines into storage dams used by Eskom and SASOL near Secunda. The Project will increase the water availability in this sub-system of the Vaal River System by 160 million cubic meters per annum.

The communities residing along the route of the pipeline have also benefited from the project. Many previously unemployed adults and youths at Vaal Marina and in the area of Charl Cilliers, situated along the pipeline route about 30 km south of SASOL's plant outside Secunda, were employed on the project and where required, received training.

Delivering her key note address, Minister Hendricks said she was encouraged by the fact that women had also benefited from the project. Six women-owned emerging companies from Mpumalanga, Rustenburg, Pretoria, Soweto and the Johannesburg East Rand, were trained to install air valve chambers. (NB. Please check correctness of origin of these companies. They don't seem right!)

"In addition this project contributed significantly to the achievement of Government's objectives for promoting Broad Black Based Economic Empowerment. As done successfully on the recently inaugurated Berg Water Project socio-economic policies were implemented to maximise employment, procurement and training opportunities for local communities", said Hendricks. A total of 1685 jobs were created on the project and at least 1 315 of staff were sourced from the local community.

Other achievements of VRESAP include the rescuing of endangered plants, rehabilitating roads, dust control and rehabilitating working areas and quarries.

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