

# Bojanala supports COP 17 / CMP7



Cllr. Louis Diremelo, Mayor of the Bojanala Platinum District Municipality



Bojanala Platinum District Municipality



**Mathopestad** – While the Republic of South Africa and Africa in general is proud to host the 17 Conference of Parties referred to as COP17 on the 28 November to 9 December 2011 in Durban, Bojanala Platinum District has also been vigorously pursuing tree planting programmes aimed at preserving the environment. Trees play a crucial role in maintaining the environment, protection and conservation of the soil, and also in the water cycle.

Commercial and natural forests provide valuable products that we depend on, such as timber, paper, furniture, fire-wood to keep us warm, or facilitate the cooking of food as well as medical plants. Trees have to maintain a favourable climate, by consuming the carbon dioxide, which is responsible for climate change. They also release oxygen and assist in the cleansing of the atmosphere. Therefore the Bojanala Platinum District Municipality adopted the Greenifying Project in 2010. In that year 800 trees were planted in Mogwase, Unit 8, during the “Arbour Day Celebrations”.

In this current financial year, the District Municipality intend to plant 5000 indigenous trees in Rustenburg, Moses Kotane, Madibeng, Moretele and Kgetleng Rivier, which make up the five municipalities in the District. A total of 800 trees were planted in Mathopestad recently during an event hosted by the Bojanala Platinum District Municipality. A total of 500 of those were indigenous trees while 300 were fruit trees. Among some of the guests invited were Kgosana Seboge, Kgosana Matshite, Rangwane Mathope, Ward Councillor, MMC for Health and Environmental Services, Cllr VP Molotsi and Thami Matshego, Director for Health and Environment Services.

In her keynote address, Cllr Molotsi explained that ahead of the COP 17 conference, Bojanala Platinum District laid the groundwork for the event by hosting a provincial climate summit in August this year. She said, “We co-hosted the provincial climate change summit on the 31 August to 02 September 2011. This was in preparation towards the COP17/CMP7. We went into a vigorous tree planting project in the district as part of carbon sequestration programme. Collectively with all our Local municipalities, we have up to so far planted 27000 trees in the district. Here in Mathopestad, we shall be planting 800 trees, out of which 500 were indigenous and 300 will be fruit trees. As Mathopestad is characterized with low shallow soil and inadequate water supply, care has been taken in identifying indigenous trees species that can withstand drought, grow at a relatively fast rate and low in maintenance. She added that plans were underway to plant 3000 trees before the end of the year throughout the District.

The initiative was taken both as part of the climate change mitigation initiative and biodiversity maintenance and conservation. Through this action the local communities will continue to enjoy the social and economic benefits of biodiversity over time. As a poverty alleviation initiative, a substantial number of labourers have been employed during the roll-out. The contract was awarded to Idea Platform (trees and landscaping service provider) and the Project Team Leader was Mr. Arend van de Wetering, owner of Mirte Indigenous Tree nursery, in De Wildt from where the trees are sourced. Trees are specifically selected for each area as trees have varied adaptability to soil and climatic conditions found in different areas. Rustenburg and the area north of the city are known to have a warm climate

with an average to high rainfall. Mathopestad on the other hand is at a much higher altitude where a great number of our indigenous trees will not survive the cold and frost. Trees have already been delivered in Rustenburg and Mathopestad and planting has already commenced. Tree species planted include; Acacia caffra – Common hook-thorn [Mositsana], Acacia galpinii – Monkey thorn [Mologa], Acacia sieberana – Paper-barked thorn [Mphoka], Acacia xanthophloea – Fever tree [Mooka-kwena], Bolusanthus speciosus – Tree Wisteria [Mogapa], Celtis africana – White stinkwood [Molutu], Combretum erythrophyllum – River bush-willow [Modibo], Erythrina lysistemon – Common coral tree [Mmalê], Kiggelaria africana – Wild peach [Monepenepe], Olea africana – and the Wild olive [Mohlware].



MMC V Molotsi, Health & Environmental Services



Kgosi Mathope

