

**Speaking Notes**  
**National Assembly**

**27 June 2025**



**N Makasi ANC (MP)**

**Portfolio Committee on Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment**

***Budget Vote Debate: Budget Vote 32 (DFFE)***

**[10 Minutes]**

Honourable Chairperson

Honourable Minister and Deputy Ministers

Honourable Members

Fellow South Africans

As this youth month draws to a close, allow me to borrow from the famous words of President Oliver Reginald Tambo and say,

***"A country, a movement, a person that does not value its youth and children does not deserve its future"***

Let this be a stark reminder that the youth of every generation has a mission to fulfil, therefore, it must be valued and empowered.

Honourable members,

The budget is a fundamental instrument and catalyst for change towards the realisation of our developmental agenda. The R9.08 billion allocated to the department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment should be geared towards fulfilling the mandate of the department and its entities in the most efficient and effective manner, notwithstanding fiscal constraints and budget cuts.

While we note that transfers to various entities has declined from R1.88 billion in the 2024/25 financial year to R1.75 billion in 2025/26, representing a 6.9% nominal decrease and an 11.1% real decrease. The expectation still remains, for them to advance their developmental mandate and contribute towards creating a capable, ethical and developmental state.

SOE's play a pivotal role towards employment creation thereby decreasing the poverty and unemployment rate while narrowing the inequality gap.

Honourable chairperson,

According to Stats SA the official unemployment rate in South Africa for the first quarter of 2025 was 32.9%, which represents an increase of 1.0 percentage point from 31.9% in the fourth quarter of 2024. The number of employed individuals decreased by 16.8 million, while

the number of unemployed individuals increased to 8.2 million, majority of whom are youth, aged 15-34 at 46.1%.

More young people must benefit from the maintenance, development, and infrastructure projects that will be undertaken through SAWS, iSimangaliso, SANParks and SANBI, with an allocation of R417.53 million over the medium term.

Fellow South Africans,

In its manifesto, the ANC has identified putting South Africa to work as an apex priority. Targeting to put 2.5 million people to work through public employment programmes that create work opportunities in the public, small businesses and social sectors, over the medium term.

It is against this backdrop, that we support that the departments prioritisation of the following programmes, which will contribute towards the reduction of unemployment to 6 per cent by 2030.

- Climate Change Act (implementation of the Climate Change Act and the cleaning and greening programme).
- Kruger-Kirstenbosch-iSimangaliso Icon Status Strategy (KISS) which aims to transform these iconic sites into world-class destinations that set new standards for conservation, education, and sustainable tourism.
- Fair Industry for Lions, Leopards, Elephants and Rhinos (FILLER) focuses on ensuring a fair and sustainable future for South Africa's iconic wildlife, as well as,
- Fishing for Freedom connects local communities to the ocean economy while promoting marine conservation through the implementation of the Oceans Economy Master Plan.

The revitalisation of the proclaimed fishing harbours also continues to be a priority as a means to create economic opportunities in coastal fishing communities. We welcome the construction of the Boegoebaai Harbour which is geared to support the existing fishing, agriculture, mining, and green hydrogen sectors. This will have a positive impact on job creation, skills development, youth employment, and investment attraction.

That being said, Honourable chairperson,

Allow us to register our disappointment and concern regarding the budget reduction on programme 6: Environmental Programmes, whose purpose is to ensure the implementation of the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP). While the budget for the whole programme increased by 3.9%, after adjusting for inflation, this amount in real terms decreases by 0.7% which culminates to R20.5 million.

We implore on the department to find alternative means to fully fund the expanded public works programme which contributes as a pivotal, and main source of income for many families.

As it relates to waste management, we have noted that limited funds restrict the adoption of advanced waste processing technologies and more research must be developed around the World Bank model that proposes waste management at municipalities as standalone business entities, enabling them to secure capital infrastructure and enhance logistics efficiency.

On small-scale fisheries, it has become glaring that support has been varying, resulting in the 171 cooperatives displaying unequal performance. The ANC supports the committee recommendation to form strategic Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) for the overall success of small-scale fisheries sector.

Honourable members, as I conclude

*We must welcome the allocation of R553.2 million towards the Oceans and Coasts Programme. This programme is responsible for managing the 1.5 million square kilometres of the exclusive economic zone (EEZ), which is crucial for job creation and economic development as part of the ocean's economy.*

The ANC supports this budget vote,

Thank you.