

As part of its War on Waste campaign, the Deputy Minister of Environmental Affairs (DEA), Barbara Thomson handed over 15 recycling trolleys to the South African Waste Pickers Association in Mooi River and a Kia bakkie to Songimvelo Recyclers in Msunduzi, KwaZulu-Natal on 20 and 22 April 2017.

Speaking at both the events, Deputy Minister Thomson highlighted the importance of supporting waste management initiatives, as they contribute to job creation and improving the quality of life for all.

“Recycling has enormous economic potential. Conservative estimates put the financial value of the formal South African waste sector at R15 billion. It is time that we wake up to this economic potential of recycling.

Referring to the job creation opportunities in the sector, the Deputy Minister called on local businesses and entrepreneurs to explore the economic opportunities provided through waste recycling.

“Let us involve our youth and women in such interventions as they are most affected by unemployment and poverty.”

Songimvelo Recyclers employs vagrants and unemployed youth to collect recyclable material for recycling within the city.

“They have played a role in cleaning the streets of Msunduzi by collecting recyclable material and disposing of it at landfill sites,” said Msunduzi Mayor, Councillor Themba Njilo.

Councillor Njilo said the clean-up initiative by Songimvelo

# War on Waste continues



Recycling trolleys handed over by Deputy Minister Thomson to waste collectors in Mooi River. Deputy Minister Thomson and Msunduzi Mayor, Councillor Themba Njilo handing over bakkie keys to Songimvelo Recyclers in Msunduzi. PHOTO: ZIBUSE NDLOVU

Recyclers and tools donated by the DEA would help transform the city.

“This is a dream come true for the city to take on a clean-up initiative. We’ve already started the cleaning process beginning at the

Ematsheni area and clearing up the streets.”

The DEA, in partnership with the Department of Public Service and Administration through its Tirelo Boshu Programme provided

the means to purchase a vehicle for Songimvelo Recyclers.

The vehicle is fitted with a customised trailer to increase the capacity to transport recyclable materials, and Songimvelo Recy-

clers founder, Hugo Ngcobo, said the donation came in handy, as it will assist them with their recycling business.

“Upon receiving a truck, we managed to keep Pietermaritzburg clean by opening up a mobile buy-back centre in the city and we also go around the city and buy recyclables in kilograms from the ordinary people who simply participate in the recycling,” Ngcobo said.

His co-founder, Ivan Khumalo, added lack of employment influenced their decision to start the company to ensure they turn waste into money.

The South African Waste Pickers Association, Groundwork and Petco are among the organisations that have partnered with the DEA to support emerging waste pickers.

Sibusiso Dladla, a founder of Mooi River recycling corporative said the trolleys handed over to waste pickers would make their work easy.

“We are thrilled to receive these trolleys and we hope that others who are doing the same work will be encouraged from what we have achieved and strive to do more,” said Dladla.

“The waste pickers in Mooi River in the past have converted retail store trolleys into convenient modes of transport to move the collected waste material to buy-back centres with ease.

“As a recycling corporative we want to grow, be able to create decent jobs, maybe in future be able to manufacture and produce products that people can buy,” concluded Dladla.