



**the dteea**

The Department of  
Tourism, Environmental and Economic Affairs  
FREE STATE PROVINCE

## **GAME AUCTION**

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VENUE: WILLIM PPRETORIUSO NATURE RESERVE  
DATE: 3 APRIL 2009**

Programme director

Ladies and gentlemen good morning

We are once again gathered here to participate in one of the highlights of the calendar of events in this Province. Surely it feels good and it makes perfect sense to be part of arguably the biggest, the oldest and the best Game Auction in this country. Since its inception, about 23 years ago, this auction has been able to attract not only South African buyers but international buyers as well.

Of importance to us however is the extent to which this important activity contributes to the general wellbeing of the inhabitants of this province. We have to evaluate how this important economic activity assist us in dealing with the central and most pressing challenges our country faces, which are unemployment, poverty and inequality.

We have identified the game industry as one of the key economic drivers to help stimulate the economy of the province. Handled and managed with care, this industry has a huge potential and should be treated as such. We can not and should not miss the opportunity or even more, the responsibility of ensuring that what ever the outcome or objective with this activity is influenced by a national need to create a mixed economy where the state, private capital, cooperative and other forms of social ownership complement each other in an integrated way to eliminate poverty and foster shared economic growth.

Our objective is to create a thriving and integrated economy which draws on the creativity and skills that our whole population can offer. This we believe will bring us closer to realizing true economic progress of the poor and the changing of economic landscape in this country.

At present the Free State has game population of 26706 which include among others, black wildebeest, blesbuck, buffalo and burchell's zebra. This biological stock is valued at

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around R30 million. This is the state asset which should be leveraged to the best interest of the inhabitants of this province. We have to double our efforts towards our objective of establishing black game farmers. As part of department's initiative to transform game industry, emphasis is put on those previously disadvantaged individuals. We call upon established game farmers to take up a patriotic challenge of helping in establishing black farmers and mentoring them. To date, 3 black-owned game farms have been established in Smithfield, Tweespruit and Paul Roux.

This government undertakes to invest in this project not only by donating game but also by ensuring that funds are made available for this capital intensive industry. We know that the acquisition of land is a major stumbling block which we are prepared to eliminate. Your challenge therefore goes far beyond just bidding for the best game but also covers your responsibility as a citizen of this country to help fellow country men towards economic prosperity.

In our 2007 budget vote we proclaimed that in addition to the current game donation programs, the department was developing a policy which will guide the loan of valuable species of game, such as buffalo, to newly established black farmers. This loan scheme is further aimed at providing emerging game farmers with the means by which they can obtain valuable and costly game species which would otherwise be out of reach.

We are presenting this opportunity to those interested in venturing in this industry to present compelling cases that would convince the department that they deservedly so, have to be considered for assistance to venture in this industry.

We know as well as you know that the industry has the highest yield in profits. The four year old white rhino sold for R255 000 as well as the buffalo sold for R120 000 in the last auction is evidence that the investor confidence in this industry is high and will guarantee high returns. Of course our game fetches such good prices because our nature conservation and breeding programmes are among the most respected around the country.

Apart from revenue collection the auction also contributes to job creation. No less than 24 people have been employed during the run-up towards this auction. As you might have noticed, a number of SMMEs are also provided with a unique opportunity to showcase their wares for cash sales or placement of orders. Please support them.

We are also grateful that this auction is also used by many as a chance to spend time with their families as they come as spectators and buyers. It is also one of tourism and economic spin-offs of the province and it is indeed our belief that most of attendees present here will revisit Willem Pretorius for vacation purposes.

To those who would be participating in the marathon and mountain bike race tomorrow, we appreciate your contribution to the success of this event and hope that you will find

the delight of your lives and derive some self fulfilment in realizing how your help will better the lives of others who may not necessarily have the privilege to help themselves.

As we are getting ready to host the epic 2009 Confederations Cup as well as the 2010 FIFA World Cup, let's make the most of the greatest opportunities envisaged to be brought by these two spectacular events and make sure that we warmly welcome the visitors to our shores.

Ladies and gentlemen, since the new dawn of democracy, our country has realised so much that should really make us proud of being part of its history. To make sure that our country continues to prosper, we would like to appeal to all compatriots to exercise their democratic right to vote as this, will definitely contribute towards a presumably blissful future for all South Africans. So let's all brace ourselves for the 22<sup>nd</sup> of April and cast our votes for parties of our choice.

To buyers, distinguished guests, spectators, SMME's, ladies and gentlemen, on behalf of the Department of Tourism, Environmental and Economic Affairs as well as the Free State Provincial government, let me take this opportunity to declare the auction officially open and once again welcome all our guests to this prestigious auction projected to be remarkable as ever.

I thank you!