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department of
economic, small business development,
tourism and environmental affairs
FREE STATE PROVINCE

MEDIA STATEMENT

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FREE STATE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT ROAD TO COP 21 IN PARIS

Bloemfontein: More than 150 experts, scientists, academics and activists had an opportunity to exchange views and map the Free State Province position on climate change yesterday at the President Hotel. These delegates came together under the leadership of the Department of Economic, Small Business Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs, MEC Sam Mashinini at the COP 21 Provincial Stakeholder Consultation Workshop.

COP 21 is the annual Conference of Parties which is to review the Convention's implementation. In 2015 COP21, also known as the 2015 Paris Climate Conference, will, for the first time in over 20 years of UN negotiations, aim to achieve a legally binding and universal agreement on climate, with the aim of keeping global warming below 2°C.

All participating countries have to further increase the facilitation of partnerships, bring greater scale to business innovation on climate change and be part of the informed discussion, collaborate through networking and enable innovative partnerships for change to prepare for the COP 21 in December in Paris.

The main topics of the workshop were climate mitigation which is an action taken to permanently eliminate or reduce the long-term risk and hazards of climate change to human life and climate adaptation, the ability of a system to adjust to climate change (including climate variability and extremes) to moderate potential damage, to take advantage of opportunities, or cope with the consequence.

These climate actions are known as countries Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDC). All submitted INDC will be made transparent on whether an ambitious 2015 agreement is realistic and will further form a key input into the negotiation leading towards the 2015 agreement.

Free State Province has made efforts in dealing with climate change and institutionalised mechanisms, to solve these challenges together with communities, businesses, labour, CBOs, traditional leadership and all other interested and affected parties.

In his key note address Honourable MEC Mashinini said "Climate change is an individual responsibility which every individual in the world should take part in, the dumping sites in

the communities, our life styles and contraction sites are affecting climate change. By engaging different stakeholders and government to say let us take part in this difficult issue, beyond this we must go to the ground and do the work. This exercise is therefore an important program which cannot just be a mere act of compliance”.

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**Compiled by: Communication Unit
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