

**MEDIA INVITE**  
**DEPUTY MINISTER THOMPSON TO LEAD COMMEMORATION OF WORLD DAY TO COMBAT**  
**DESSERTIFICATION**

The Deputy Minister of Environmental Affairs, Ms Barbra Thompson, will on Friday, 27 June 2014, lead the commemoration of the World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought (WDCD), in Ladybrand, Free State.

Deputy Minister Thompson will be accompanied by the Free State MEC for Agriculture and Rural Development, Ms Mamiki Qabathe and the MEC for Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs, Mr Mosebenzi Zwane.

The WDCD is a United Nations annual event commemorated on 17 June, with an aim to promote public awareness on the issue and the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those countries experiencing serious drought and/or desertification, particularly in Africa.

This year's WDCD will be commemorated under the theme: **'Land Belongs to the Future, Let's Climate Proof It'**. The theme highlights the benefits of mainstreaming sustainable land management policies and practices into our collective response to climate change.

Desertification is land degradation in dry lands that affects biological productivity as well as the livelihoods of millions of people. It is caused by a combination of human and natural factors that contribute to an unsustainable use of natural resources which include soil, water, air, vegetation, solar and wind energy.

Members of the media are invited to attend the event as follows:

Date: 27 June 2014  
Venue: Ladybrand Rugby Stadium, Free State  
Time: 09:00

**ISSUED BY: THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, TOURISM AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS**

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