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# Urgent action required to end plastic pollution

**“Urgent action is required to combat plastic pollution and its detrimental impacts on human health, the economy and the environment,”** said Barbara Creecy, national minister of forestry, fisheries and the environment on her visit to the Kraaifontein and Blackheath recycling plants on world environment day last Monday (5 June).

To this end the national department will, through the expanded public works programme, offer jobs to 2 000 women, youth and persons with disabilities per province to support the cleaning and greening of provincial capitals by assisting in litter picking in prioritised streets; clearing illegal dumps; planting trees and promoting recycling services.

## WASTE MANAGEMENT

“Their efforts are being complimented by the thirty-two (32) waste enterprises that have been supported to increase recycling of construction and demolition waste, plastic, packaging, and other waste streams,” she said.

“Here in the Western Cape we will be focusing on the broader Cape Flats region where many formal and informal settlements have inadequate waste removal and plastic leaches into rivers and eventually into the sea.”

She said the country is faced with significant waste management challenges.

These include poor landfill practices and sporadic household waste collection as

**OVER 2,5 M TONS OF PLASTIC ARE PRODUCED ANNUALLY.**

well as unacceptable levels of illegal dumping in many parts of the country.

The two plants, one in Kraaifontein and the other in Blackheath, are both involved in different aspects of the recycling value chain.

Waste Want in Kraaifontein employs 200 people and diverts 1 000 tons of plastic waste from landfills every month, while CRDC SA RESIN8 in Blackheath Industrial is a site where plastic is mixed and converted into an aggregate modifier for the construction industry. The company currently processes 450 kg of waste a day and aims to reach 610 tons per month when it reaches full production.

## FIGHTING POLLUTION

According to the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) in South Africa, a little over 2,5 million tons of plastic are produced annually.

Last week, at the 2nd Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC2) on Plastic Pollution in Paris, France, a total of 175 nations, including South Africa, reaffirmed their commitment to developing an international legally binding instrument to end plastic pollution, including in the marine environment by the end of 2024.

She called on all citizens to observe Environment Month by finding creative and innovative ways to remove plastic pollution from our communities.

