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Minister Greecy to investigate delay in Public Works stipends

BONUS - RUSTENBURG - The Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, Ms Barbara Creecy, has noted reports regarding the non-payment of stipends for some Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) participants employed by the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE) in various municipalities across the country.

In an effort to address the issue, Minister Creecy has instructed DFFE's senior management to urgently investigate reasons that have led to the delay or non-payment of participants. "The investigation will include engaging the EPWP participants to verify the accuracy of the payment information (copy of ID, banking details) and timesheets. The verification will assist in developing proactive measures to address stipend payment delays and produce a verified list of unpaid participants," said Minister Creecy.

The verification process is scheduled to take place over the next two weeks, after which senior management will report back to the Minister. In the meantime, participants who are yet to be paid are advised to report to the DFFE's Local

Government Support officials based at the respective municipalities for further information on the verification process.

"The purpose of the exercise over the next two weeks is to identify those who have worked but have not been paid so that we can speed up the processing of payments. It is not acceptable that some participants who have given their time and energy to the department have still not been paid for their services," added Minister Creecy.

The Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment has currently created 51 048 jobs as part of the cleaning and greening programme, which renders support to various municipalities across the country through the Extended Public Works Programme.