

# Minister visits zero emissions base in Antarctica

By Salome Tsoka  
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As the world continues to grapple with the effects of climate change, nations are turning to innovative solutions to reduce their environmental impact. One such solution can be found at the Princess Elisabeth Antarctic Research Station, the first zero emissions research station in Antarctica. The station, operated by the International Polar Foundation under mandate from the Belgian Polar Secretariat, has become a showcase for best practices in the use of renewable energies.

On 09 January 2023, Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, Ms Barbara Creecy, embarked on a four-day visit to the station as a guest of the Government of Belgium. The visit, hosted by both the Belgian government and the International Polar Foundation gave Minister Creecy an opportunity to learn more about the station's pioneering work in reducing its environmental impact on the continent.

This Ministerial visit allowed Minister Creecy to get a better insight on the threats of pollution and research into the human impact on ocean and marine ecosystems threatened by global climate change and earth systems observations. The scientific data collected during these voyages is critical to the understanding of the impacts of climate change and weather information associated with extreme events as well as other things.

During the visit, Minister Creecy also travelled to the Belgian base of the South African Antarctic Programme's Research Station, known as SANAE IV, located in Queen

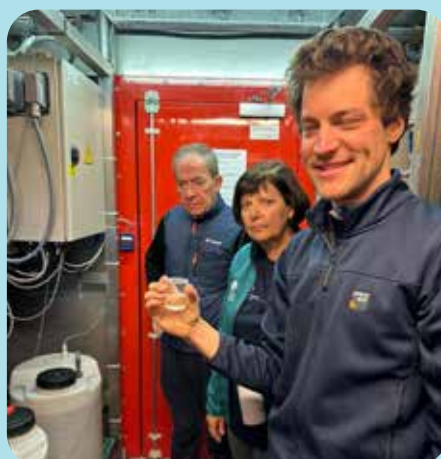
Maud Land where she interacted with the station crew and inspected the facilities used by the South African scientists.

South Africa has a rich history of research and presence in Antarctica with the first Antarctic base, a SANAE I, a Meteorological research station built on a wooden structure in 1961/62. Since then, South Africa has not only maintained an uninterrupted presence on the continent, but has played an active role in the management and conservation of the vast continent and contributed to the pool of scientific knowledge.

The Agulhas II, a South African ship, departed Cape Town in December with the team for 2023, also delivering equipment, supplies and fuel.



**Above:** The Minister inspects the solar installations on the roof of Princess Elisabeth in Antarctica.



**Above:** Minister Creecy conducts a tour of the Princess Elisabeth Zero Emissions Base, including the battery storage unit, Waste Water treatment unit and the research laboratory.



## About the contributor: Salome Tsoka

Ms Salome Tsoka holds a BA Degree in Journalism from the University of Johannesburg and has been writing for as long as she can remember. She is a Senior Communication Officer in the Chief Directorate: Communications at the Department.





**Above:** Minister Creecy with Captain Mdluli and the first officer of the Agulhas II.



**Above:** Minister bids farewell to the Princess Elizabeth base.



**Above:** Minister Creecy visits the Agulhas II ice shelf.



**Above:** The maintenance team in the pump room at the SANAE IV.



**Above:** Minister visits the maintenance team in the pump room at the SANAE IV.



**Above:** The Agulhas II, a South African ship, departed Cape Town in December with the team for 2023 as well as equipment, supplies and fuel.



**Above:** Minister Creecy with the S61, S62 and public works team at SANAE IV.



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