

# Operation Phakisa making waves in Oceans Economy

**P**RESIDENT Jacob Zuma launched Operation Phakisa: Oceans Economy in July 2014 in Durban as a results-driven approach to development, involving various sectors such as business, labour, academia, civil society, State-owned Entities and Government.

The sectors worked together to develop detailed delivery action plans, set targets and monitor progress on an on-going basis.

Operation Phakisa is an adaptation of the Big Fast Results methodology that was successfully applied by the Malaysian Government in the delivery of its Economic and Government Transformation Programmes.

Two years into its launch, Operation Phakisa Oceans Economy is growing the aquaculture sector, having created 450 direct



jobs and produced 2 000 additional tons of fish. This is a 35% increase for the sector, which has added R500 million to the country's GDP.

The South African government to date has unlocked a total of R17.7 billion in investment through the Operation Phakisa: Oceans Economy process in the five initially

identified areas which are Offshore Oil and Gas, Aquaculture, Marine Manufacturing and Transport, Oceans Governance and Tourism.

The focus in the oceans economy has meant a new wave in aquaculture, making it one of the fastest growing food production sectors.

## FACT BOX

THE Oceans Economy Phakisa focuses on:

- Marine Transport and Manufacturing, led by the Department of Transport;
- Offshore Oil and Gas, led by the Department of Mineral Resources;
- Aquaculture, led by the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries;
- Marine Protection Services and Ocean Governance, led by the Department of Environmental Affairs;
- Small Harbours Development, led by Department of Public Works; and,
- Coastal and Marine Tourism, led by the Department of Tourism.



Captain Tshepo Motloutsi is ready to sail off again into international waters.

By Erica Mathye

A MASTER mariner or captain is the highest qualification for seafarers and enables them to command vessels of up to 3000 tons worldwide.

Recent statistics indicate that women represent only 1-2% of the world's 1.25 million seafarers, however, in March 2016, Pretty Molefe and Tshepo Motloutsi became the first female Master Mariners in South Africa with Captain Them-bela Taboshe joining them later that year.

The three ship captains, who

made history by being the first black African females to do so, are currently working as ship surveyors for the South African Maritime Safety (SAMSA) at the port of Durban, while furthering their academic studies in maritime law.

Captain Pretty Molefe, having matriculated from Isithengile Secondary School in Claremont, did a diploma in Maritime Studies with Durban University of Technology.

In her second year of study, she joined the Maersk Line cadet programme, which she says gave her a foot in the maritime industry.

## First black women as Master Mariners

She qualified as navigation officer in 2009 and then became the Chief Navigation Officer. Following extensive sea time, she achieved her dream of becoming a Master Mariner.

"Being called Captain means that other kids, growing up in townships and rural areas, can pursue careers in the maritime industry.

"It is that real. I am happy that government-wide initiatives such as Operation Phakisa have made it possible for kids from disadvantaged backgrounds to have a future



Captain Pretty Molefe serves as an inspiration to girls to follow in her wake.

in the maritime field and I look forward to going back to sea once, my studies are completed."

Captain Tshepo Motloutsi is from Lebokwagomo in Limpopo and has a national diploma from Durban University of Technology. Having worked with South African Maritime Safety Authority (SAMSA) since 2013, Motloutsi says never to despise small beginnings.

She is currently studying towards a Master of Commerce in Maritime Studies at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

"I started my career as a ship

surveyor, licencing small boats, ships' registry, the accreditation of institutions to run maritime courses and the accreditation of SAMSA approved medical practitioners. My fulfilment in my job comes from meeting people of all races and cultures and learning from them.

"As the Second Navigating Officer for Stolt Tankers, I have commanded a ship as far as the Gulf of Mexico to Japan and Taiwan and from this I have learned patience with the people and patience with myself."

## Oceanography offers exciting career prospects

By Gaopalelwe Moroane

OCEANOGRAPHY or the study of the oceans, offers those with an interest in science, maths and the sea an opportunity to improve our planet through protecting our oceans. Mthuthuzeli Gulekana has been an oceanographer for 13 years and with the Department of Environmental Affairs' Oceans and Coasts for 9 years.

He continuously collects, analyses and interprets data and information in the marine environment in order to monitor and understand how the environment behaves.

The objective is to be able to forecast the patterns and behaviour of the oceans (just as the forecast the daily weather) in order to save lives and property.

"The results of our research are further presented at various platforms to create awareness and

as scientific advice towards certain guidelines, acts and policies.

"To keep up-to-date with the latest discoveries, one needs to attend various forums, conferences, seminars and symposia to present your work and share information and ideas of further developing new methodologies," he explains..

"However, as a government department, we conduct applied research, that is, research that is directed at solving societal problems, such as ensuring that the people know about ocean currents, tides and the quality of seawater in their areas.

"We also seek to understand the role of oceans in climate change and how the oceans regulate global climate and weather patterns.

"The most rewarding part for any oceanographer is knowing that your work is consistently being

used to advance life and it is used as input in socio-economic decisions.

"Furthermore, the information and knowledge we generate helps to create awareness about the various services that the marine environment provides and to encourage sustainable use of the marine environment.

"Ultimately, we exist to research, gather and distribute relevant information in order to save lives and property," concludes Gulekana.

To become an oceanographer, one needs a Matric pass in mathematics, natural sciences and biological sciences. One would then look for a tertiary institution offering marine sciences.

Furthermore, to be a practising oceanographer, one needs to enrol as a member of the South African Council for Natural Scientific Profession.



Minister of Environmental Affairs, Edna Molewa with oceanographer Mthuthuzeli Gulekana.