



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

INTERNET ARTICLE

Eco-schools encourages responsible use of natural resources

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Geared towards saving water and beautifying their immediate environment, going green has become the new normal for the eco-schools that are participating in the Department of Water and Sanitation's National Baswa le Meetse Competition.

The competition took place in at the Benoni Lakes Conference Centre from 11-12 July 2017.

Schools from the nine provinces displayed how they were embracing the concept of eco-school, which is meant to transform the school's environment by adopting innovative ways of conserving water and making them environmentally-friendly spaces.

Showcasing the work undertaken by her school, Tshidi Kale of Mmulakgoro Primary School in the Free State, said before being part of the eco-schools her school faced a number of challenges. These included poor drainage system that created flooding in the school yard, lack of storage of water for the school grounds and toilets and no food garden.

Kale said since becoming part of the eco-school they have made significant strides towards making their school an ideal place of learning, citing the greening project at as doing exceptionally well.

She said: "Although we have no food garden at the moment because of the fire that destroyed our tunnels, we use water can to irrigate and only use grey water to do so in winter. Our school only has indigenous trees which help in saving water."

To counter water wastage, Kale said the school kept water in each classroom for drinking and washing hands, adding that they also ensure that taps and toilets were not leaking.

Dan Mokhotsi from Pitso Tolo Primary School in the North West said his province was declared a disaster area in 2016 and most areas depended on ground water as a source of drinking and irrigation. He said the disaster led to loss in vegetation.

"There is a challenge of water availability in our village, where communities rely on communal taps or ground water which is sometimes not suitable for consumption. Due to this most learners are absent from school because of not being able to bath or wash uniform," said Mokhotsi.

He said despite this challenge his school has made visible changes by adopting the eco-school code, greening the environment by means of a food garden and encourage healthy eating.

Mokhotsi said the principal motive for his school to be part of the eco-schools was to ensure that learners had access to sufficient food as the purchase of vegetable took a chunk of the school's funds.

Other primary schools that showcased their work are Pula-Madibogo from Limpopo, Luytenville from the Eastern Cape, Bonamelo from Gauteng, Isagontle from the Northern



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Cape, Mhlosheni from Mpumalanga, Sombongangani from KwaZulu-Natal and Liwa from the Western Cape.

The winners in the eco-schools are:

Position 1: KwaZulu-Natal with 365 points.

Position 2: Northern Cape with 336 points.

Position 3: Free State with 318 points.

Hosia Sithole