

Foreword

Mpumalanga is a province endowed with abundant natural beauty and is rich in natural resources. Our province is the primary producer of the countries energy requirements by means of coal-fired power generation, contains a large proportion of the countries high potential agricultural land and a high percentage of plantation forestry. Mpumalanga has many important conservation areas and attracts numerous local and foreign tourists each year.

The need for rapid economic growth, job creation and poverty alleviation in our province will place growing pressures on our environment. It is critical that we manage the development of this province in a sustainable fashion in order to ensure that we do not lose our precious natural assets, and that our health and well-being is maintained, whilst that of future generations is not jeopardised.

Access to timely and reliable information on the environment will greatly enhance our ability to deal with environmental challenges. This report on the state of the environment of the Mpumalanga province provides an overview of the comprehensive 2003 Mpumalanga State of the Environment Report, that is available on CD-Rom as well as on the internet, and summarises the main causes of environmental change and how we are responding to it.

The National Environmental Management Act ensures that government makes available information on the state of the environment to the public and indeed this report is a step towards ensuring that the province meets this obligation to its people.



A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several loops and a trailing line.

Candith Mashego-Dlamini

MEC: Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Environment

