

## MEDIA STATEMENT

### MEC KONTSIWE WELCOMES THE GAZETTED NAME CHANGES THAT INCLUDES FORT BEAUFORT TO KWA-MAQOMA

**Attention: News Editors / Journalists / Press Members**

**Date: 16 March 2023**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

The Department of Sport, Recreation, Arts and Culture (DSRAC) MEC, Nonceba Kontsiwe has welcomed the publication of local geographical name changes by the former Minister of Sport, Arts and Culture Nathi Mthethwa in the Government Gazette on 10 March 2022.

The gazette contains three name changes from two towns and a village, under three district municipalities, which includes Fort Beaufort to Kwa-Maqoma.

The changes of place names come after the pronouncement by the Eastern Cape Premier Oscar Lubabalo Mabuyane, in his State of the Province Address. Where he highlighted that “the province, under social cohesion this year would be commemorating the Frontier Wars in a bid to celebrate the heroic efforts of traditional leaders who fought relentlessly against colonisers to protect our land”.

In welcoming the name changes MEC Kontsiwe said “This is a step in the right direction in reconciling our ugly past. The renaming of Fort Beaufort to KwaMaqoma in a year where we commemorate 150 years of Chief Maqoma’s death is of significant meaning. The town was previously named after Duke of Beaufort, father of Lord Charles Henry Somerset who was the first British governor of the Cape Colony from 1814 to 1826. Now the town is named after a Xhosa Chief who was a commander of many gallant warriors who played a key role in the wars of dispossession. These changes come as we celebrate human rights month and tell a story of triumph over adversity. They are a product of consultations which is really democracy at play.”



The purpose of the standardization process is to transform the cultural heritage landscape through the process of name change, to heal the nation, promote nation building and foster social cohesion.

Gazetting of geographical name change could not come at a better time when the country celebrates Heritage Month in September, to mark our nation's diverse cultures and heritage. The changing of names forms part of the government's programme to transform the country's cultural landscape.

The gazetting of the name changes follows a long process of public consultations by the Eastern Cape Geographic Names Committee (ECPGNC) that started as far back as 2018. The proposed names were tabled, public comments were invited, and ECPGNC utilized mainstream media including the Harldland local newspaper, the Daily Dispatch, and Isolezwe to invite people to participate in the public hearings.

All the proposed names originated from the affected communities through open, transparent and participatory public consultation process. Communities were the ones that came up with the names and the Department and the ECPGNC created a conducive environment for the proposed names changes to be discussed and agreed upon. The names can be based on a historical event, the role played by an individual or any other historical reason that the community sees fit. Communities and individuals were given an opportunity to comment or object to the name changes, and the objections that were received were responded to at length.

Section 10 (3) of the South African Geographical Names Act, 1998 provides that "Any person or body dissatisfied with a geographical name approved by the Minister of Sport, Arts and Culture may, within one month from the date of publication of the geographical name in the Gazette, lodge a complaint in writing to the Minister". Furthermore, Section 10(4) of the Act further state that "the Minister may refer the complaint to the Council for advice whether or not to reject or amend a geographical name so approved".

Below is the list of names gazetted by former Minister Mthethwa:

| NO. | NEW NAME  | PROVINCE     | LOCAL MUNICIPALITY                | DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY          | FEATURE |
|-----|-----------|--------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------|
| 1.  | KwaMaqoma | Eastern Cape | Raymond Mhlaba Local Municipality | Amathole District Municipality | Town    |



|    |  |              |                               |                                      |         |
|----|--|--------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------|
|    | (name change from Fort Beaufort)           |              |                               |                                      |         |
| 2. | Ben Mbizweni (name change from Brooksnek)  | Eastern Cape | Umzimvubu Local Municipality  | Alfred Nzo District Municipality     | Village |
| 3. | KwaNojoli (name change from Somerset East) | Eastern Cape | Blue Crane Local Municipality | Sarah Baartman District Municipality | Town    |

The gazette can be accessed on: [Government Printing Works \(gpwonline.co.za\)](http://gpwonline.co.za).

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