



## water & sanitation

Department:  
Water and Sanitation  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

### INTERNET ARTICLE

#### **First High Level Panel on Water consultation aims to realise SDG goals**

31 May 2017

The Global Water Partnership Southern Africa (GWP) kicked off the first Valuing Water Regional Consultation of the United Nations' High Level Panel on Water which it hopes would be a catalyst for other regions towards job creation and implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The consultation, which is the first of six global regional consultations valuing water, took place on Tuesday, 30 May 2017, at the Birchwood Hotel in Boksburg, City of the Ekurhuleni.

Welcoming the delegates, Director-General of Water and Sanitation, Dan Mashitisho, said consultation was part of the roll out of the High Level Panel on Water that should assist in realising that globally there exist a need to change the way water is viewed if the targets of sustainable development agenda were to be achieved.

"Following our consultation today, other regional stakeholders meeting will build on our achievements of this first consultation in South Africa, with other consultations set to be hosted in in Mexico, Peru, Tajikistan and Bangladesh," Mashitisho said.

Mashitisho expressed gratitude that GWP has established the African Coordination in Pretoria, saying this will help give an opportunity for them to enhance the South to South cooperation on pertinent water issues with other African countries.

He said: "As a member of BRICS (Brazil, Russian, India, China and South Africa), we will use this opportunity to scale up international cooperation and knowledge exchange on water security within African and other regions of the world."

In a speech delivered by the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) Minister, Faith Muthambi on behalf of the Minister Nomvula Mokonyane, Muthambi conveyed appreciation for the consultation that would change the narrative and the approach of the Water Sector Globally.

She said this provided an opportunity to engage and contribute to the respective and very different policy perspectives on valuing water - a subject that requires interactive political and national positions.

"I appreciate your consideration to seek political input and direction in this important initiative that will give a policy perspective, including participation and engagements with, water experts, funders, investors, researchers, academics and industry in the category of bulk water users," Muthambi said.

She also thanked the GWP for partnering with the Department of Water and Sanitation to host this important consultation meeting.

Muthambi said it was critical and important for the region to participate inclusively in support of eleven Heads of State, who are panel members of the High Level Panel on Water. She added that the panel presents a unique political opportunity to solicit a buy in and express



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how such principles on valuing water could contribute positively to respective regions and Member States management of this valuable resource.

“Our gathering here today creates a platform for the representatives of different governments and organizations to share national perspectives and positions on this important issue that talks to our different policy positions and legislative imperatives. That aspect should be considered in decision making on this critical topic called Valuing Water” Muthambi said.

Special advisor of World Bank Group, Professor Patrick Verkooijen, thanked South Africa for hosting the regional consultation panel, saying this was a testimony to the country's (and Minister Mokonyane's) leadership on this agenda.

He said: “Water requires holistic and inclusive approaches in addition to engagement and commitment from all sectors of society. It is also worth noting that strong political leadership is necessary to raise water awareness among other political leaders, including Heads of State.”

**Hosia Sithole**