



### INTERNET ARTICLE

## WSLG partners put urgency in the realisation of Sustainable Development Goals 6

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A sense of urgency emerged among various partners in the Water Sector Leadership Group (WSLG) who met in Pretoria recently to discuss ways of fast-tracking the implementation of service delivery in order to meet the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goal 6 by 2030.

Various water experts from the Department of Water and Sanitation, water entities and civil society met in Pretoria last week to outline the best ways of coping with the looming deadline put by the United Nations on the implementation of SDG 6 by all the countries 12 years from now.

The delegates agreed on the urgency of their tasks and said it was important to co-operate on various matters such as water use and scarcity, waste water and water quality, co-operation and participation on sanitation and hygiene, drinking water and ecosystem.

Participants came from, among others; the Water Research Commission, Water Entities, Council for the Scientific Research Institute (CSIR), South African Water Caucus, National Business Initiative, Stats SA, Strategic Water Partners Network (SWPN), Trans-Caledon Tunnel Authority and catchment management agencies (CMAs).

A departmental Sustainable Development Goal Working Group was established to continue the work of WSLG through 11 task teams that will divide work according to their expertise. SDG 6 contains 6 targets and two sub-targets, all of which are focused directly on water services – including sanitation – and water resource management that must be achieved by 2030.

The first target stipulated under SDG 6 is to achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all. Secondly, the target aims to achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation; hygiene for all citizens and end the practice of open defecation. Another target is to increase water-use efficiency across all sectors, to ensure sustainable withdrawals and supply of fresh water, and to address water scarcity.

Addressing delegates, DWS' Deputy Director-General for Strategic and Emergency Projects, Trevor Balzer, said the National Water and Sanitation Master Plan points out the priority actions required for 2030 and beyond to ensure water security and equitable access to water and sanitation services for South Africans.

"It was developed in partnership with all relevant organs of state and water sector stakeholders to give effect to local, regional, national, continental and international water and sanitation delivery targets and commitments. Furthermore, the objective was to ensure integrated planning and development across the entire water value chain", Balzer said.

DWS's Chief Water Resources Planner, Tendani Nditwani, said South Africa is facing increasing water demands to meet the needs of a rapidly growing and urbanising population, changing lifestyles, and economic growth. At the same time, climate change is driving the country towards a warmer and drier future, with predicted longer and more extreme droughts, and more intense floods. Climate change means that there will be less water available to meet water needs.



## water & sanitation

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He said achieving water security in South Africa requires a new normal: a significant paradigm shift that:

- recognises the limitations of water availability
- addresses the real value of water
- ensures equitable access to limited water resources
- delivers reliable water and sanitation services to all
- focuses on demand management and alternative sources of water
- considers the impacts of climate change and
- addresses declining raw water quality.

To achieve this, decision-making will be based on sound evidence, supported by rigorous research, innovation and appropriate technology development.

The water sector will enforce regulation through accountable and effective leadership, to ensure that the water sector meets the requirements of a current and future South Africa and that demand is brought in line with available water supply.

Implementation of this plan will enable South Africa to become more resilient to climate change and the increasing intensity of droughts and floods, while meeting the water needs of a growing population and economy.

Ms Deborah Mochotlhi, DWS' Acting Director-General, appealed to delegates that they be ready for the uptake of advanced technology and innovation.

“The uptake of new technologies towards an enabling environment for innovation and thus aggressively industrialise the water and sanitation sector, is among key strategic actions for achieving SDG 6 by 2030 and beyond”, Mochotlhi said.

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