



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

INTERNET ARTICLE

Water sector stakeholders respond to Minister Nkwinti's call to find solutions

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About 450 stakeholders from different aspects of the water and sanitation sector responded positively to the call by Minister of Water and Sanitation, Mr Gugile Nkwinti to carve out much-needed solutions to the problems that are facing the sector.

The stakeholders gathered at the Birchwood Hotel on Saturday, 10 November 2018, to map out a way to deal with challenges that affect the sector during the Ministerial Consultative Session.

Outlining the purpose of the Interactive Session, Minister Nkwinti told delegates, who included sector leaders, experts, academics and innovators, that despite so many stakeholders and innovators in the sector, South Africa was still being confronted by many challenges.

Minister Nkwinti said the country was faced with a serious challenge of capacity and highlighted the spillages in municipalities as examples of a number of critical problems that required attention and innovation.

The Interactive Session was a response to the Minister Nkwinti's call to a number of sector stakeholders and innovators who have inundated his office with offers of solutions to challenges in the sector.

"Our Waste Water Treatment Works (WWTW) do not have the capacity to cope with the developments that are taking place and hence the question is what is it that technology can do to address these and other problems that we face. So, we have to work together to find innovative solutions," Minister Nkwinti said.

National Assembly's Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee on Water and Sanitation, Mr Lulu Johnson, lauded the Consultative Session, saying it was a forum to provide an opportunity to stakeholders, including service providers and innovators to bring to the attention of government what they could do.

"This is so that we do not only get to hear about these (innovations) out of the country but having to make use of these innovations and advancements in science," said Mr Johnson

He said as Parliament's Committee on Water and Sanitation they have long been talking about all sorts of innovations and technological advancements, emphasising that in their view the innovations were aimed at bringing about a cost-effective way of producing water and bringing about sustainable sanitation solutions.

He said: "The role that the private sector plays must be about seeking at all times partnership with government in the name of all of us being bound by one objective, which is to bring a better life for our people with a very economical way of doing so.

The brick and mortar way of doing so, Mr Johnson said, may just be a thing of the past given the innovations that we have and the advancement in the technology and science.



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Dr Washington Nyabeze, a well-renowned researcher in the water industry, identified several problems that served as bottlenecks to the delivery of water and sanitation by government. He advised the department to make water accessible to the poor by making it cheap. He said one of the main problems that plague South Africa was the pollution of water and called for the prosecution and imprisonment of culprits.

He said the problems faced by the country on sanitation could be addressed by the decolonisation of the mind-set and a speedy movement towards resilience. The department must accelerate the establishment of water catchment management agencies to address water issues at the local level.

Minister Nkwinti also emphasised that the Consultative Session was a way to open doors for new ideas to come forth, as well as to foster collaboration within the sector for the good of the country.

Hosia Sithole