



water affairs

Department:  
Water Affairs  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**SPEECH BY MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS, MRS EDNA MOLEWA, AT THE NORTH-WEST PROVINCIAL SERVICE DELIVERY SUMMIT, RUSTENBURG, 04 JULY 2013.**

*Programme Director*

*Premier Modise*

*Kgosi Zibi , Chairperson of the house of traditional leaders, le Magosi otlhe a a leng teng.*

*MECs*

*Mayors*

*Councillors*

*Government Officials*

*Ladies and Gentlemen*

*It is indeed an honour for me to have been invited to be part of this important summit. I have no doubt that it will go a long way to address the service delivery challenges currently experienced in the Province.*

*This summit comes at a time when we have just finalized our National Water Resource Strategy, a strategy that is critical for water security in the country.*

*We are also reviewing our policy and legislation to ensure that it delivers on principles of equity and transformation that this government stands for.*

*We are aware that The North West Province is large and diverse, however, it has very limited water resources, especially in the western part of the province where*

*there are ephemeral rivers and dependence is largely on ground water. We are also aware on concerns raised by some communities about lack of sustainability of water resource. Many of the challenges associated with groundwater sustainability can be attributed to skills required to manage this resource.*

*As a Department we have just completed a ground water strategy for the country and our next step is to implement support mechanism to help municipalities with technical expertise required to manage groundwater. When it comes to sourcing skills, we are also looking sourcing this expertise from countries like Cuba. I have met with the Prime Minister of Cuba and we have agreed in principle that an agreement that will formalize this exchange of expertise will be signed before the end of the year.*

*One of the challenges facing this Province is Effluent return flows from large urban centres that are mainly located the upstream in Gauteng Province. We are aware of the water quality challenges that face municipalities in this regard and we will continue to support municipality in improving their water quality and participate in our Blue Drop and Green Drop programmes.*

*A number of dam remediation programmes also have to be undertaken to improve the water quality, such as the Hartbeespoort and Roodeplaat Dams.*

*The Department has completed the 2013 Green Water Services Audits in the Province to ensure sustainable improvement on management of drinking water and wastewater by the responsible institutions. I will release the report of these Audits next week at the 4<sup>th</sup> Municipal Water Quality Conference to be held in this Province from Monday.*

*The average Provincial Blue Status score increased from 62.25% in 2011 to 78.7% in 2012. Most of the Water Services Authorities in the province showed progress in their 2012 Blue Drop results when compared to 2011. The scores have improved yearly since the first Blue Drop report was released in 2009. This is encouraging indeed.*

*Although the 2012 Blue Drop results for municipal drinking water quality were satisfactory overall, we are concerned about the worst scoring water supply systems in some municipalities in Ngaka Modiri Molema that have received warnings due to the lack of information on the quality of water. In our drive to support municipalities, our learning academy has partnered with the private sector and SETA to train water management experts like mechanical and civil engineers, scientists and process control technicians. In the past we have trained municipal officials in process controlling and it is our intention to look at a well managed plan to deploy more process controllers to municipalities that require support in this area.*

### **Institutional Reform.**

*We all appreciate the role that water boards play in service delivery, and I am pleased that they are featuring very strongly in your programme. However some of our water boards have been experiencing challenges in executing their mandate. There are also parts of the country that are not enjoying the support of these entities. It is for this reason that we have finalised a process that seeks to rationalise all water institution, CMA's and water boards. This is to ensure that there is more effective service delivery, cross subsidisation and general efficient running of the water business. We have rationalised our CMA'S from 19 to 9 and we are proposing that the number of water boards be reduced from 16 to 9 regional entities. I would like to invite all of you to work together with us in ensuring that the institutional reform process leads to real delivery of service to our people.*

### **Powers and Functions.**

*The management and provision of water services functions in the Province rests with the municipalities which are designated Water Services Authorities. There are 11 of these, two of which are District Municipalities, Ngaka Modiri Molema and Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati. The rest are Local Municipalities of Rustenburg, Moses Kotane, Madibeng, Moretele, Kgetlengrivier, Tlokwe, Matlosana, Ventersdorp, and Maquassi Hills.*

*There are challenges that are emanating from allocation of powers and functions between Water Service Authorities and Water Services Providers. In many cases, we have seen how lack of clarity on roles and responsibilities and also capacity issues has compromised service delivery.*

*The problem created by the Water Services Authorities is that they tend to work in isolation attempting to address only their own needs, causing gaps and/or overlaps from a regional/provincial perspective. Taking a more global approach in coordinating the various sources on the other hand ensures optimal source utilisation across borders at the lowest possible cost.*

*My Department is working closely with COGTA in addressing this challenge, however, in the meantime, we remain focussed on providing support to municipalities that require it.*

#### **Municipal Water Infrastructure Grant.**

*As you are aware, the Bojanala Platinum District Municipality has the highest backlog requiring R404,8 million. Ngaka Modiri Molema is second with a backlog worth R273.8 million. Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati District Municipality requires R39.77 million to address its backlog, while for Dr Kenneth Kaunda we need R16.48 million. In other words, we require over R734 million to deal with water backlog in this Province alone. In recognition of this challenge, my Department spearheaded the establishment of a special grant, the Municipal Water Infrastructure Grant.*

*This Grant targets communities without any safe drinking water at all. The intention is to provide interim services to these communities whilst they are waiting for services that are in line with our RDP standards. This grant will also address the challenge we face, the challenge of aging infrastructure. An amount of R6,2 billion over the MTEF has been allocated. The Focus of this grant will be on the 23 District Municipalities identified by our President (cabinet). The North West Province has been allocated a total of R122 million over the MTEF period.*

#### **State of Infrastructure**

*The state of our infrastructure is of concern to all of us. It is for this reason that we have identified creative interventions like the ACIP that seek to help the municipality with the refurbishment of their infrastructure and also implement water conservation measures.*

*Due to poor operation and maintenance of Water Treatment Plants the quality of water resources is negatively impacted because of the poor quality of effluent discharged. This poses health risks to downstream users and increases the costs of treating the raw water to potable supply levels.*

*Illegal water use in the form of abstraction from water resources and illegal connections to municipal systems has a negative impact on water that is available for allocation and inadequate supply of water to consumers in the municipalities. We are intensifying our compliance mechanisms.*

*During 2007, the National Treasury approved the funding of a three year programme to support Water Services Authorities and the water sector to RBIP (Regional Bulk Infrastructure Program). The funding was subsequently extended and it is now considered an on-going programme and not a once-off programme any more. In this Province, the budget allocation over the seven years is just over a billion for this program.*

*We plan to mobilise additional resources by partnering with the private sector and Provincial Government for a successful and speedy implementation of the projects whose target will be in line with the New Growth Path Framework (NGPF).*

*In addition to the current regional bulk projects implemented by the Department, there are projects situated in various District Municipalities that are still under planning. I would like work with the Province and all municipalities to come up with one integrated implementation plan as we have done in Mpumalanga Province.*

*We have also developed a local government support plan that focuses on the prioritised municipalities of Moretele, Moses Kotane, Madibeng, Ventersdorp, Kgetlengrivier, Ngaka Modiri Molema and Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati. The plan is*

*aligned with Local Government Turn Around Strategy (LGTAS) and Municipal Turn Around Strategy (MTAS) with identified water related challenges. The purpose of the intervention is to develop an enabling environment for effective service delivery. The support intervention focuses mainly on finalising the Water Service Authority and WSP contracts, developing water by-laws, water services development plans support, conservation, and water demand management.*

*Lastly, I want to emphasize that besides these interventions, my Department will continue to play its role in compliance monitoring as a regulator. These include the:*

- The collection and analysis of compliance and enforcement data;*
- Providing technical support*
- Improving planning*
- Developing prop poor policy and legal guidance when questions arise as to the interpretation of environmental laws, regulations and policies;*
- Technical assistance to provinces and local governments; and*
- Management and oversight of compliance monitoring enforcement.*

*I wish this Province well its endeavor to improve the lives of its people by improving service delivery.*

*I thank you*