



water & sanitation

Department:  
Water and Sanitation  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**OPENING ADDRESS TO THE KINGFISHER CONFERENCE  
BY DEPUTY MINISTER OF WATER AND SANITATION  
MRS PAMELA TSHWETE  
EMPERORS PALACE, BOKSBURG, GAUTENG  
21 NOVEMBER 2016**

Programme Director  
Ambassador of Netherlands  
Acting Director-General and Deputy Directors-General  
Chief Executive Officers of all Water Entities  
Chief Executive Officer of the EWSETA  
South African Local Government Association Representative  
Government Officials  
Water Partners and Ambassadors  
Ladies and Gentlemen

Allow me to greet you all in the name of the Department of Water and Sanitation and Water Sector Partners in South Africa.

Let me also take this opportunity to relay our warm welcome to all our distinguished guests participating in the second Kingfisher workshop.

Without going back much to history I would like to remind all delegates that South Africa and the Netherlands signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in Warsaw on 21 November 2013.

The purpose of the Memorandum of Understanding was to facilitate co-operation in the water sector between the two countries, where the sphere of local government will benefit through training and exchange programmes. Since then, a lot of work has been done.

In 2014, the Water Institute of South Africa (WISA) marked an important milestone in the implementation of this Memorandum, where the Department of Water and Sanitation and the Unie van Waterschappen of Netherlands signed a **Strategic Partnership Framework**.

It was on the basis of this partnership that the Kingfisher programme came into existence, and has proved to be crucial, with a quite evident impact in both governance and technical aspects shared at the level of local government.

Major milestones made to-date include, amongst others, the following:

- The establishment of a Forum of Chief Executive Officers for Catchment Management Agencies and Proto Catchment Management Agencies in July 2015, which meets quarterly;
- Active partnership between the Dutch Regional Water Utilities (DRWU) and our Proto Catchment Management Agencies.

In both relationships, information relating to technical skills on the development of catchment management strategies is shared.

It is in these forums that facilitation for cooperative governance between local government and Catchment Management Agencies is hatched and exchanged to improve water quality through coaching and transfer of skills.

The exchange programmes between Netherlands and South Africa continue to address important issues such as cooperative governance, organizational development, change management, policy initiation, strategy development, financing of water institutions, pricing of water services, strategic partnerships, stakeholder involvement and participation.

These exchange programmes have provided clarity on the challenges faced in the water sector and improved working relationships between partners, which altogether have provided a firm base for work plan 2016 and beyond.

Also important was the Catchment Management Strategy Workshop, which was held in October 2015 and led to recommendations for revising and updating the current strategy guidelines.

These guidelines are now in line with both the National Development Plan (NDP) and the National Water Resource Strategy Two (NWRS2).

This workshop also facilitated the development of catchment management strategies in all seven water management areas in South Africa.

On 17 November 2015, the Dutch Prime Minister, Mr Rutte, attended the South African Cabinet meeting chaired by President Jacob Zuma. The main focus of this meeting was economic development, job creation, capacity building, skills enhancement, good governance and planning for growth.

At the end of that meeting, a strong recommendation was made for extension of the Kingfisher programme so it focuses on other important areas, too.

The new focus of the Kingfisher programme will include improving cooperative governance between Proto Catchment Management Agencies and local government to foster integrated planning. It is also about improving water quality, especially with regard to waste water treatment works.

Also important was the involvement of local government in Catchment Management Forums.

The two countries also agreed to work together and continuously seek new opportunities for possible collaboration in terms of partners and technologies.

Lastly, it was the need to support the development of the water master plan by involving Catchment Management Agencies and local government to link water and sanitation resources and services through the Kingfisher programme.

The development of the master plan requires special capabilities in terms of project management, strategic planning, scenario planning and other appropriate skills.

Consulting, coordinating and creating awareness with communities to achieve mutual benefits remains essential in moving the provision of services to a higher level.

The workshop, which begins today (21 November 2016), will highlight the value of international cooperation in the establishment of Catchment Management Agencies, as well as the impact the Catchment Management Agencies make in improving the status of water resources including water governance and water allocation.

The workshop will also highlight pertinent issues such as; the progress of Catchment Management Agency establishment; and the role Catchment Management Agencies have made in improving the state of water resources in South Africa.

This workshop will also show the added value of bilateral cooperation on water governance in Catchment Management Agency establishment as illustrated by the results of the Kingfisher project.

The two years of cooperation have achieved successful relationship building between different spheres of government, including cooperation between Local government and the Catchment Management Agencies.

Both the private and public sectors have benefited from the Kingfisher cooperation, particularly in the areas of research and development.

In conclusion, ladies and gentlemen, this workshop is yours as delegates.

Let's participate meaningfully and ensure that we contribute to pertinent issues facing our country – such as the need for economic growth, job creation and integrated planning to improve the quality of our water resources through capacity development; and most importantly, good governance.

**I thank you.**