



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

KEY NOTE ADDRESS FOR MINISTER NOMVULA MOKONYANE DURING THE HLPW VALUING WATER INITIATIVE REGIONAL CONSULTATION WORKSHOP ON 30 MAY 2017 DURING THE HIGH LEVEL PANEL DISCUSSION

"Different Policy Perspectives of Valuing Water"

Esteemed Moderator,
Cabinet Ministers,

Dr Oyun Sanjaasuren, Chair of the Global Water Partnership Organization

Dr Akinwumi Adesina, President of the African Development Bank

Dr Stergomena Lawrence Tax, SADC Executive Secretary

Mr Zeph Ndlovu, President, South African Chamber of Commerce and Industry and

Mr Mike Teke, President, South African Chamber of Mines

Mr Dhesigen Naidoo, Chief Executive-Water Research Commission

Ladies and gentlemen

Moderator, allow me at the onset to register my appreciation of this consultation that will change the narrative and the approach of the Water Sector Globally, as we all have an opportunity to engage and contribute our 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 that will give a policy perspective, including participation and engagements with, water expects, funders, investors, researchers, academics and industry in the category of bulk water users. I must also thank the Global Water Partnership (GWP) for partnering with the department to host this important consultation meeting.

It is therefore critical and important for the region to participate in this inclusive process in support of the eleven Head of States, Panel Members of the High Level Panel on Water, which presents a unique political opportunity to solicit buy in and express how such principles on Valuing Water could contribute positively to the 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 should be considered in decision making on this critical topic on Valuing Water.

It is my submission that we engage honestly on these initiative, while raising awareness on harmful impacts of illegal usage of water and violation of laws,

regulations and legislations to ensure that no one is left behind in the decisions that will come out of this process. I noted the activities that took place yesterday focussing on the regional consultations on the Global Water Partnership work and assessing the impact of the programmes in our region.

I must mention that having looked at the 12th Global Water partnership objectives that were set for the day one consultation process, I am very confident that if the world could deal with such matters in a responsible and considerate approach that ensures that we do not have events, and talk shows but intimate discussions that includes:

- Report progress on governance and work programme implementation in the region,
- Present the Change Agenda-Water, Jobs, Industrialisation & SDGs implementation,
- Present and seek input in the Global Water Partnership Africa programme portfolio including climate resilience, SDGs, Water-Energy-Food nexus and integrated urban water change Agenda towards Water, Jobs, Industrialisation infrastructure development and SDGs as our main objective.

The HLPW Panel members have the same vision agreed to, and endorsed in the Action Plan, comprising of Panel Initiatives that includes Valuing Water, which is quite a highly political, socially charges, and economically inclined in nature. It is therefore important and imperative that we engage in this process in a manner that considers the different challenges that countries face that include,

- Current levels of access to clean water the region,
- Current Value (Monitory) attached to water as a critical resource,
- The Policy perspective in the region,
- Equity and User requirements,
- Legislative imperatives and government obligations

These challenges will be the contributing and determining factors in deciding on the Principles of Valuing Water that we envisage at the end of the process

In my presentation of the Department's Budget Vote to Parliament last week, I emphasised on the importance and the links between our the National Development plan (NDP), the Constitution, African Union's Agenda 2063 and the United Nation's 2030 Agenda (SDGs) and our commitment to work with all Stakeholders at a Multi-lateral and Bi-lateral platforms to implement these visions adopted by our Head of States.

Engaging on this initiative is therefore critical as we have to find workable position within the region without compromising our policies where valuing water plays a prominent and important role on our service delivery obligations as our constitution stipulates that water is a human right, while in many countries water is a commodity

paid for by all users, even if it is declared a human right. South Africa is one of the few countries that have imbedded the right to water in its Constitution. The right to clean water is therefore an obligation for government to ensure access at different levels of affordability and requirement that includes;

- Indigent Communities, rural and informal settlements,
- Metropolitan Municipalities
- Industry, Mining and beverage companies
- Agriculture other bulk water users.

The above impacts on the valuing water -Water pricing has become political. Failure of public provision results in high private cost. Businesses recognise the importance of pricing and want to see water priced for sustainability.

SA must ensure this issue is captured – the strong linkages between sustainable finance, governance and performance -as we have indigenous communities that rely on our scarce water resources whether they can pay for clean water or not. Water Infrastructure is thus important as a solution, including the forging of partnerships such as the Strategic Water Partners Network (SWPN), a partnership forged with the aim of closing the water gap projected for South Africa between water demand and supply by 2030.

Water gaps can refer to both water quality and quantity, with water quantity being regional or seasonal. South Africa's Strategic Water Partnership Network (SWPN), which is a working model of Public-Private Partnership (Bulk water users from industry, infrastructure developers, water utilities and operators, technology providers, financiers and investors), and other stakeholders (civil society, international organizations, development agencies, and experts) was implemented in partnership with the Water Resource Group (WRG). We acknowledge and encourage the contributions of this partnership that ensure sustainability towards water security, and water resources management.

I therefore urge the participants to engage on the zero or draft document on Valuing Water Principles to ensure outcomes that will positively contribute to the work of our governments.

I thank you