

CONSERVATION

Play your part to ensure water for all

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South Africa, being a water-scarce country and one of the 30 driest countries in the world, calls for responsible citizens who always practise water conservation and protect water supply infrastructure to prevent unnecessary loss of precious water, ensuring water security and sustainable and reliable water supply for all.

The rainy season is over in most parts of South Africa, except the Western Cape, where they are receiving rain and experiencing flooding, as was the case in other parts of the country. The heavy rainfall in most parts of the country led to overflowing dams, rivers and streams, which led to the notion that we have enough water.

With the rain gone, it is time to remind each other that South Africa remains a dry and water-scarce country, which calls for every South African to use the available water wisely and sparingly.

Water conservation is vital for ensuring water security for both current and future generations, particularly in a water-scarce country like ours,

where every drop matters. We all need to take responsibility and make water conservation a norm in our communities, as a reliable and sustainable water supply and water security rely on our proactive and responsible actions and behaviour.

Let us learn to practise water conservation at all times: in times of abundance and during droughts. Let us not be forced to use water sparingly and efficiently through water restrictions, but let us work towards avoiding those restrictions by making sure that we do not run out of water by intensifying and always practising water conservation in everything we do.

The dropping water levels in most dams and rivers are a sign and reminder that overflowing dams and rivers do not last forever. It is a call to go back to basics and strengthen water conservation initiatives in our lives. We need to always remember that water is a finite resource, which unfortunately has no substitute.

Water is life and a source of socio-economic development. Without water, we are doomed; therefore, it is important that we take care of the little

we have to ensure that we do not run out of the source of life.

As most parts of the country are in the dry winter season and only the Western Cape is receiving rain at this time, this is a reminder that we must always think about saving for the time of need.

Even though the Western Cape is currently experiencing some flooding, water security is not guaranteed.

Dams and rivers were overflowing in most parts of the country not long ago, but now the water is dwindling, which shows that we must always save for tomorrow. This, then, calls for us to practise water conservation at all times, irrespective of whether there is an abundance or we are facing dire water shortages.

We also must not forget that we are faced with the challenge of climate change, which is associated with extreme weather patterns and negatively affects water security. With climate change comes extreme heat, leading to high evaporation, which leads to high water losses in our water resources. We can't control climate change, but we can mitigate its nega-

tive impact by strengthening our water use efficiency and water conservation initiatives.

Water conservation is everybody's responsibility and business. Everyone has a role to play to ensure water security in our water-scarce country. Let us create a culture of water conservation and always use water wisely and sparingly. Leaks have been identified as a major contributor to water losses, so let us identify and fix leaks in our households and businesses. Let us also report leaks and pipe bursts to the municipalities and push them to fix the challenges in the shortest time to prevent unnecessary loss of precious water.

Working together, we can protect water infrastructure, prevent infrastructure vandalism and unnecessary loss of water, and thereby ensure water security for the current and future generations in our water-scarce country. Let us all be responsible citizens, use water wisely and sparingly, and practise water conservation at all times.

*Khoza writes on behalf of the
Department of Water and Sanitation*