



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



MEDIA STATEMENT

DWS calls on public to keep rivers clean to honour Madiba

05 July 2021

The Department of Water and Sanitation has called on South Africans to honour the late state President Nelson Mandela during Nelson Mandela month by heeding its call of preventing the pollution of freshwater resources by cleaning up streams, wetlands, dams, canals and any freshwater source.

This comes as the Department kick-starts its annual Clear Rivers campaign which serves as a call to action for ordinary members of the public to play an active role in cleaning up water resources.

The Department's spokesperson Sputnik Ratau said the campaign also aims to actively engage communities on the significance of protecting the health of rivers

"What we ultimately aim to achieve is to foster volunteerism among communities as a proactive approach to protecting our rivers, streams, wetlands and other water ecosystems," Ratau said.

Initiated in 2016 by the Department together with business and civil society, the campaign coincides with Nelson Mandela Month which encourages individual acts of kindness aimed to make an imprint and change the world around them.

"It is for this reason that as a Department, we are calling on everyone to dedicate their 67 minutes of goodwill activities towards cleaning up water sources," he said."

Ratau added that the Department is cognisant that the national COVID-19 regulations will not allow people to go out in numbers to conduct such clean-ups. "We therefore urge for people to do the little changes. Stop polluting streams by unlawfully dumping used disposable nappies," he said.

He further added that the benefits of healthy rivers are tantamount to the nation's health and economy.

"Communities benefit from clean and healthy rivers. Clean and fresh water assists communities in their daily activities including consumption, cooking and washing," he said.

Adding to this, benefits of healthy rivers also assists the country's economy as different types of plants grow in and on the banks of our rivers. Some of the plants provide communities with building materials such as roofing for huts and or houses.

Communities also use reeds and other wetland vegetation to make baskets, mats, curtain blinds and handbags, thus encouraging economic activity.

The Department has urged members of the public to report pollution of rivers and fresh water ecosystems to the DWS Hotline on 0800 200 200.



Department of Water and Sanitation South Africa



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