



## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

### **Leading scientists converge to make inputs on the revised Climate Change Strategy**

26 November 2023

The Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS), in collaboration with the International Water Management Institute (IWMI) assembled captains of industry, leading minds and various stakeholders in a hybrid Climate Change and Water Sector Consultation workshop on Friday, 24 November 2023 in Pretoria.

The workshop was aimed at fostering meaningful discussions and collaborative efforts towards sustainable development and climate security in the water sector. Inputs solicited from the consultation will be incorporated into the revised draft Climate Change Strategy. This will be followed by intense consultation with various stakeholders across the country to solicit more inputs to pave way for a development of a strategy that will ensure a climate resilient South Africa.

Speaker after speaker echoed each other's sentiments that the drive for water security calls for a collaborative response from government, civil society organisations, experts, and the private sector. They agreed that a shared global challenge, combined efforts are essential to ensure sustainable water management, improve access, and innovate resilient solutions. This tripartite alliance can drive impactful policies, fund crucial initiatives, and implement effective strategies to secure the world's water future. It is with this in mind that collaboration is critical in moving South Africa towards a more water secure future that in all essence, is the pursuit towards the fundamental preservation of life.

Spearheaded by Dr Gabriel Lekalakala, Specialist Scientist – Directorate Climate Change Analysis at the Department of Water and Sanitation, the consultation delved into two key areas which are namely, Water in National Determined Contributions (NDC) to place water at the heart of development pathways, and drafting the Climate Change Status Quo and National Response Strategy.

"The Water and Sanitation Sector is faced with a wide range of challenges that are further exacerbated by climate change, has severe impact on the water security. The development of response plans such as the draft National Climate Change Response Strategy for the Water and Sanitation Sector together with collaborative and coordinated responses from the sector can contribute towards reducing the potential impacts. The strategy is a blueprint for the sector to use in response to climate change related impacts and requires all hand on deck. Hence, the consultation is to afford the sector players to contribute towards its robustness and all take ownership of it. There will be more consultations more consultation process making use of all available platforms in the coming weeks. Its implementation process will involve awareness drives of the strategy to wider uptake. We encourage all stakeholder to take part in all these processes," said Dr Lekalakala.

Dr Inga Jacobs-Mata, Director of Water, Growth and Inclusion at IWMI led discussions on Climate Change Response Strategy for the Water and Sanitation Sector, as well as developing the NDC Capacity Scorecard.

**WATER IS LIFE – SANITATION IS DIGNITY**

**SOUTH AFRICA IS A WATER-SCARCE COUNTRY**

“Achieving water inclusion is not just a necessity, it is an imperative that requires all of us. This collaboration is vital to address water scarcity, improve water quality, and ensure equitable access. The United Nations' 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 6 - Clean Water and Sanitation, underscore the urgency of this mission not just in South Africa, but globally. By prioritizing water inclusion, we not only contribute to SDG 6 but also lay the foundation for achieving interconnected goals such as eradicating poverty, ensuring good health and well-being, and fostering sustainable communities. The journey to water security is inseparable from the broader pursuit of a sustainable and equitable future for all,” concluded Dr Jacobs-Mata.

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**Issued by the Department of Water & Sanitation**

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