

DEPARTMENT OF WATER AFFAIRS AND FORESTRY
Recreational Water Use Manual
 Guidelines

Subject:	Administration of Resource Management Plans (RMPs).
Purposes:	To describe the major administration actions that should be accomplished by the Department and relevant authorities in the administration of RMPs in preparing and implementing RMPs.
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1. INTRODUCTION

Ultimately all water resources utilised for recreational purposes should have integrated resource management plans. However, since the preparation and compilation of these plans is complex, involving all stakeholders and requiring DWAF's commitment and guidance, it is imperative that the development of RMPs be scheduled on a priority basis ensuring that plans are compiled for management areas which would benefit from the completion of an RMP.

These benefits can range from biophysical resource protection measures, stimulating regional growth and tourism development, transformation of the water-based recreation economy, to social benefits.

The absence of a RMP at a specific water resource does not imply the absence of control measures through which DWAF can manage the resource. The National Water Act and relevant regulations provide for appropriate authorisation procedure regarding the use of water for recreational purposes when authorisation is required in the absence of RMPs.

Upon deciding to undertake the compilation of a RMP, DWAF must ensure that the necessary budgeting and staff resources are available to assist in the process, as well as ensure that certain procedures and actions are utilised to expedite the completion of the RMP in a timely and organised manner and within approved budgets.

The objective of this chapter is to describe the administrative actions prior to the commencement of the RMP process; during the compilation of the RMP; and upon completion of the RMP.

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1.1 Apportioning Responsibility

Ultimately DWAF is responsible for the compilation of RMPs regarding water and associated state land utilised for recreational purposes. However, DWAF may deem it appropriate to delegate the responsibility to a managing partner, such as a conservation authority, Park and Tourism Board, or water management institution, depending on the terms and conditions of the management agreement.

Within DWAF, the Water Resource Infrastructure Branch is responsible for the compilation of RMPs for Water Resource Infrastructure (WRI). The proto-Catchment Management Agency (CMA) components of Regional Offices are responsible for planning of relevant interventions including the preparation of RMPs for water resources other than WRI.

Irrespective of delegation, all RMPs must be compiled along the guidance provided by DWAF, and be based on the format provided by the Department. All planning must be undertaken in association with stakeholders in an interactive and co-operative manner. For ease of reference, however, DWAF is referred to in this document as the institution having primary responsibility.

Whether the planning process is facilitated by the DWAF, or is delegated to a managing partner, DWAF retain responsibility for the consistency in planning and document preparation.

1.2 Administration Phases

Three levels of administration are required to successfully compile and implement a RMP, namely:

- Preliminary Preparation Phase;
- Compilation Phase; and
- Implementation Phase

The following sections describes the major actions that should be accomplished.

2. PHASE 1: PRELIMINARY PREPARATION

Before DWAF can compile a RMP several administrative actions must be completed, including:

- prioritising management areas;
- defining the management area;
- budget planning;
- personnel impact assessment;
- appointing a Project Officer and Project Team; and
- assessing external assistance requirements and appointment of consultants/facilitators.

2.1 Prioritising RMPs

Since staff and budgets are limited, DWAF must prioritise the development of RMPs to management areas which will have the greatest impact – socially, economically and environmentally.

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The relevant DWAF component tasked with ensuring that the RMPs are completed, is responsible to prioritise and fund the compilation of RMPs based on the following criteria:

- contribution to sustainable and beneficial use of water resource;
- equitable community participation and beneficiation based on transformation of water based recreation industry;
- degree to which needs and requirements of water users can be met in a co-operative manner; and
- contribution to just public administration and service delivery based on the policy regarding the use of water for recreational purposes.

This component must undertake the following steps when prioritising management areas:

- call for proposals from stakeholders requesting RMPs for management areas based on clear qualifying criteria;
- screen proposals against qualifying criteria and compile a short list per water management area and/or region;
- request alignment with Catchment Management Strategies, provincial and local planning frameworks (Integrated Development Plans (IDPs); Strategic Development Frameworks (SDFs); Land Use Management Systems (LUMS); etc.)(and request approval from relevant Municipal Member of Executive Committee);
- compiling priority lists with clarity regarding funds and capacity; and
- compiling a roll-out programme for the compilation of RMPs approved for the Region/CMA area.

After obtaining approval from DWAF's Management the prioritised RMPs can be implemented.

When compiling priority list, aspects which should be addressed include:

- cost-share opportunities for RMP preparation;
- public use/user conflicts;
- economic and social benefits;
- management responsibilities;
- resource protection and conservation benefits; and
- potential transformation opportunities

2.2 Defining the Management Area

RMPs should be developed for water resources that can be considered as individual management areas. These management areas can vary in size and complexity yet, should be manageable units based on a wide variety of topo-cadastral attributes such as:

- boundaries of Government waterwork;
- geomorphologic boundaries such as drainage basins or river sections;
- areas under DWAF or Water Management Institution's (WMI) control; and
- areas with similar management problems or concerns.

Clarity is required regarding the scope of the RMP as opposed to the sphere of influence of the water resource.

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Timing the implementation of RMPs is essential for the attainment of sustainability, since plans which are compiled too early without establishing an understanding regarding the value of recreation within host communities could be seen as a way of sidelining local communities, and plans which are only developed once conflict is prevalent amongst different users could be perceived as re-active rather than pro-active, reflecting negatively on DWAF's commitment to establishing an environment conducive to transformation and the attainment of the objectives of the NWA. Additionally, RMPs that are prepared as mitigation measure for the construction of new government waterworks could be seen as perpetuating riparian rights as well as negating transparency and equitable access. In these circumstances it is advisable that a mitigation plan be compiled to address the impact of development on affected communities and ensure an equal and level playing field for access, use and development post construction.

Once a planning procedure has been initiated it is essential that all stakeholders and participants agree to a time frame regarding the development and compilation of the plan, and that the process facilitator ensures that the timeframes are adhered to as far as possible.

2.3 Budget Planning

It is imperative that all RMP budget planning and requests be initiated following the same procedures that are used for budgeting for other activities.

Costs for the compilation of RMPs can be shared with management partners, and DWAF should seek such alternative sources to expedite the compilation of RMPs.

Costs for the compilation of RMPs are not directly proportional to the size of the water resource, and thus budget estimates should be prepared early so that sufficient funds can be allocated for the duration of the planning process.

Aspects that should be considered when planning a project budget include:

- availability of information (maps; GIS; hydrological; etc.);
- current use levels;
- environmental sensitivities;
- location;
- resources – natural and cultural; and
- level of public involvement, support and understanding and requirements for interpretation and translation of documents.

2.4 Personnel Impact Assessment

Having available budget will not result in the successful compilation of RMPs. DWAF personnel, nationally and regionally play an essential part in the success of the RMP process, providing guidance, experience and project facilitation skills.

Dedicating personnel to RMP planning processes will ensure that DWAF's goals and objectives are attained, and that the planning process is completed within the designated timeframe.

Assessing the impact that RMP planning processes will have on DWAF personnel is essential to ensure that staff can play an active and meaningful role in the RMP process. When assessing the impact on personnel the following must be addressed:

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- description of water management area, responsible office, identified issues and deliverables;
- level and scope of public participation envisaged;
- scope of resource management area;
- involvement of other government departments;
- terms of reference for the project;
- linked processes e.g. environmental impact assessments, public private partnerships, etc.;
- project deliverables;
- staff requirements – expertise, day cost, travel costs, schedule; and
- communication responsibilities.

2.5 Appointing Project Officer and Project Team

To guide the preparation of a RMP, DWAF requires a dedicated Project Officer (PO) as well as a Project Team, consisting of persons from a wide range of disciplines. The Project Officer oversees the entire RMP process to ensure that the RMP complies with DWAF's requirements and standards.

The interdisciplinary team provides inputs as required throughout the planning process covering a wide variety of aspects such as hydrology; social and economic objectives; black economic empowerment; transformation; etc., and should consist of the relevant components that need to be consulted during the compilation of a RMP, or provide technical support and information.

2.6 Assessing External Assistance Required and Appointment of Consultants / Facilitators

An assessment of DWAF's requirements regarding facilitation and consultation must be undertaken. Besides the independence that a project facilitator brings to the process, DWAF can bolster its capacity and skills through the appointment of a facilitator and project consultants.

The independence of the facilitator is important to build trust amongst the stakeholders that DWAF is committed to the planning process, and if necessary the appointment of consultants can ensure that the process is completed efficiently and timeously.

Consultants can be appointed to assist in particular aspects, whereas the facilitator is appointed to assist DWAF throughout the planning process. The process facilitator must ensure that DWAF's requirements are met and that the RMP complies with departmental guidelines.

3. PHASE 2: COMPILATION

After initiating the RMP process several administrative actions must be followed irrespective of who is preparing the plan. These actions should be considered when preparing a time schedule for the RMP process.

Actions include:

- preparation of work plan and schedule;

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- preparation of Public/Stakeholder Involvement Plan;
- consult relevant government departments;
- preparation of stakeholder list;
- Technical Task Team appointment;
- preparation of public notices; newsletters; press releases; and
- printing.

3.1 Preparation of Work Plan and Schedule

A detailed work plan and proposed schedule needs to be prepared to provide DWAF with clarity regarding the scope; duration and purpose of the proposed RMP. A well prepared work plan results in efficiency and effectivity, yet allows for flexibility for change according to specific conditions and issues.

Realistic time schedules should be set for each phase of the compilation, allowing for effective stakeholder involvement, without losing focus of the purpose for initiating the process. If the schedule changes due to unforeseen circumstances, the Work Plan should be modified accordingly, and additional funding may have to be secured.

3.2 Preparation of Public/Stakeholder Involvement Plan

Critical to the success of RMPs is the involvement of all stakeholders during the planning procedure. Often plans merely reflect the ideas and initiatives of planners, yet despite being comprehensive lack the support of stakeholders, since their involvement is not perceived by planners as being important enough. Ensuring that all stakeholders understand the objective of the planning procedure, and requesting their active participation in ensuring that their needs and expectations are addressed in an appropriate and equitable manner, can establish the support necessary for implementation. DWAF's Generic Public Participation Guidelines, September 2001 provide the framework for consultation and review.

Various techniques including public meetings, open days and public review, as well as technical task teams consisting of stakeholder representatives can be utilised during the planning process. Important to the success of the procedure is the choice of technique most appropriate to the stakeholders situation, level of understanding, language and culture.

Merely inviting stakeholders and interested role players to attend public meetings, without providing opportunity for active involvement, and effective contribution, does not equate to public participation. However, if afforded opportunity for effective involvement during the planning process, communities, stakeholders and role players must participate since non-participation can not be used as an excuse for keeping the planning process to ransom.

By involving all stakeholders in the planning process and stressing the importance of community involvement in the planning of water resources for recreational purposes, and establishing an understanding of the plan as a regulatory framework, DWAF will be enabled to illustrate its commitment to supporting and enabling communities to determine the levels of acceptable utilisation of resources which they host.

The goal of the Public/Stakeholder Involvement Plan is to ensure that all stakeholders who could be affected by the RMP can play an active and informed role in the planning procedure, including setting of objectives, identification of concerns, collection of information, discussing of

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alternatives and compilation of the plan. Having the stakeholders' views – comments; concerns; questions – documented throughout the process ensures informed decision-making and accountability regarding the process.

3.3 Consult Relevant Government Departments

An RMP can not attain sustainability if it operates in isolation of other plans. Critical to its success is the degree to which the plan connects to broad framework plans aimed at attaining sustainability, with local plans such as IDPs and SDFs, as well as to detailed development plans where the plan provides policy and strategic inputs.

To ensure that the plan is recognised as a regulatory framework within which the utilisation of water for recreational purposes takes places, it is essential that the plan be promulgated as a regulation in terms of Section 26 of the National Water Act(NWA), 1998 (Act No. 36 of 1998), limiting the manner, purpose and extent to which the water resource can be utilised, as well as the geographic extent of the plan

Critical to the success of a RMP process is the acceptance and support that DWAF can mobilise from other governments in all spheres.

By consulting the relevant local and district municipalities, provincial and national departments and obtaining their commitment to the process prior to engaging other stakeholders in the private and communal sectors, DWAF can ensure that the procedure can be seen or perceived as a Government initiative.

Depending on the degree of involvement and support this alignment could require individual meetings; combined workshops; or a combination of both.

Obtaining full support is essential and will only be seen as such if the necessary approvals or resolutions are in place, and when representatives to the procedure are appointed.

3.4 Preparation of Stakeholder List

Imperative to the RMP procedure is active stakeholder involvement throughout the process. Administratively this requires the preparation of a stakeholder list which should be based on available lists from all relevant government departments; traditional authorities; Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs); Faith Based Organisations (FBOs); parastatal organisations; etc.

The use of chain-referrals and continuous updating of information pertaining to stakeholders can ensure that the stakeholder list is relevant and accurate. Stakeholders must be assured that the stakeholder list can be updated at any time, and that new organisations, structures, individuals and groupings can be included at any point.

3.5 Technical Task Team Appointment

After the initial broad stakeholder workshop it is necessary that DWAF recognise the stakeholders' nomination of Technical Task Team representatives by officially appointing the

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Technical Task Team, clarifying their Terms of Reference and ensuring that they understand their role and function, as well as responsibilities throughout the RMP procedure.

3.6 Authorisation of RMPs

These plans are currently authorised by the relevant Regional Cluster Manager of the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry (DWAF) in terms of Section 113 of the National Water Act (Act No. 36 of 1998).

3.7 Preparation of Public Notices; Newsletters and Press Releases

Utilising press releases in association with public notices and newsletters is an effective way of ensuring that I&APs and stakeholders are informed regarding broad stakeholder meetings, review periods of draft RMPs, and Open Days as they are scheduled. Additional information pertaining to the availability of draft documents for review, progress regarding the process and comments registers, etc. can also be made available utilising these mechanisms.

Flyers, fact sheets and brochures can also be utilised to inform stakeholders about specific aspects of the planning procedure.

The final/approved RMP must be published in the Government Gazette after following the prescribed publication procedure, and this publication should be supported by notices and press releases in newspapers, and popular media.

Prior to any publication an assessment of the language requirements of stakeholders should be undertaken and appropriate media sourced to address this requirement.

3.8 Printing

During the compilation phase of the RMP process the process facilitator should be tasked with the responsibility for printing all documents, notes, Technical Task Team notes, comments register, etc.

However, on completion and approval of the RMP, DWAF should print the final documents ensuring that the documents comply with departmental standards – look, feel, corporate image, etc. Whether this is done by the government printer or by a contracted service provider should be ascertained by DWAF.

4. PHASE 3: IMPLEMENTATION

Upon completion and approval of the RMP certain administrative actions are required to ensure the RMP becomes and remains an effective tool for administering the use of the water resource for recreational purposes, ensuring compliance by the industry utilising the water for recreational purposes, and serve as an accountability tool for communities and stakeholders to ascertain the performance of DWAF or the delegated authority regarding this use.

Administrative actions required during the implementation phase of RMPs include:

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- plan distribution;
- integration of the plan into programmes;
- institutionalisation;
- plan implementation;
- monitoring, review and adjustments; and
- administrative record.

4.1 Plan Distribution

All stakeholders, I&APs, relevant government departments and authorities, must be provided with copies of the approved RMP if the plan is to be effective. All participants to the planning process, as well as the Heads of Departments of relevant government departments should receive copies of the plan, with the directive that the RMP should serve as working document and be used as a decision support tool.

Records must be kept of all recipients of the document so that updated documents can be circulated as and when required. Additionally, an electronic version of the RMP should be available on the DWAF website.

4.2 Integration of the Plan into Programmes

Aligned plans will lead to improved service delivery, necessitating a concerted effort to ensure alignment of plans at national, provincial and local level. Upon approval of a RMP it is essential that the plan be incorporated into the local IDP, SDF and LUMS, through the Intergovernmental Forum established for the specific resource.

4.3 Institutionalisation

To ensure effective implementation of the RMP it is essential that DWAF establishes a WMI based on the recommendations contained in the RMP. This approach will clearly illustrate DWAF's commitment to capacitating and empowering stakeholders through institutionalisation. Only once the plan is approved and the institution established can DWAF expect the attainment of the Department's objective regarding the use of water for recreational purposes.

4.4 Plan Implementation

Once the plan is approved and the institution established it is critical that the implementation of the plan be undertaken based on achievable and manageable objectives and budget.

Optimal implementation will be achievable if the RMP is aligned with other plans of national, provincial and local level, and all relevant authorisations attained.

The responsibility for implementation of the RMP resorts with the local level WMI. Aligning the plan implementation with other government departments will enable commitment by stakeholders towards financial, programme and personnel resources required to make the plan a success.

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4.5 Monitoring, Review and Adjustments¹

The RMP process has an integrated planning component and operational planning component, each with a five (5)-year time frame that is reviewed annually.

4.5.1 Integrated Planning Components

A *RMP* is the primary overarching planning document that describes the administrative and legal framework, contextual background, public participation process followed, vision / mission statements, prioritised management objectives, zoning as well as management policy framework and guidelines. The RMP forms the framework within which all the other planning components are developed. Within the framework of the RMP, the *Master or Zoning Plan* provides a strategic guideline for the utilisation and development of the water resource and water resource infrastructure within the constraints of the receiving environment.

Operational plans, programmes and procedures that support the RMP are either in place or will be compiled where these do not exist.

Operational Planning Components

A 5-year *Strategic Plan (SP)* that operationalises (or actions) the management authority's management objectives and any projects identified in the RMP and Business Plan. The SP is an operational management component that identifies the activities and tasks that need to be undertaken in the achievement of the RMP's objectives and attaches responsibilities, timeframes, budgets and resources to each activity. The SP is a key planning document that also informs the management authority's Annual Budgeting Estimates and provides information for Annual Reports.

With expenditure estimates drawn from the SP a *Business Plan (BP)* will be developed. The BP is primarily aimed at describing the manner in which the RMP are to be financially resourced. It may address issues of operational efficiency and the optimisation of income generation opportunities in order to bridge any possible shortfalls between required operational expenditure and committed budget allocations.

Authorisation of BP

Once the BP has been approved by DWAF, the SP is finalised according to the committed budget allocations and other expected financial income.

RMP Planning & Review

The RMP requires both annual and 5-yearly revisions to ensure that management objectives remain relevant and management actions are continually improved. Figure 1 illustrates the annual and 5-yearly planning and review cycles.

¹ This review framework is based on Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife's approach to Integrated Management Plans prepared in terms of the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act (Act. No. 57 of 2003).

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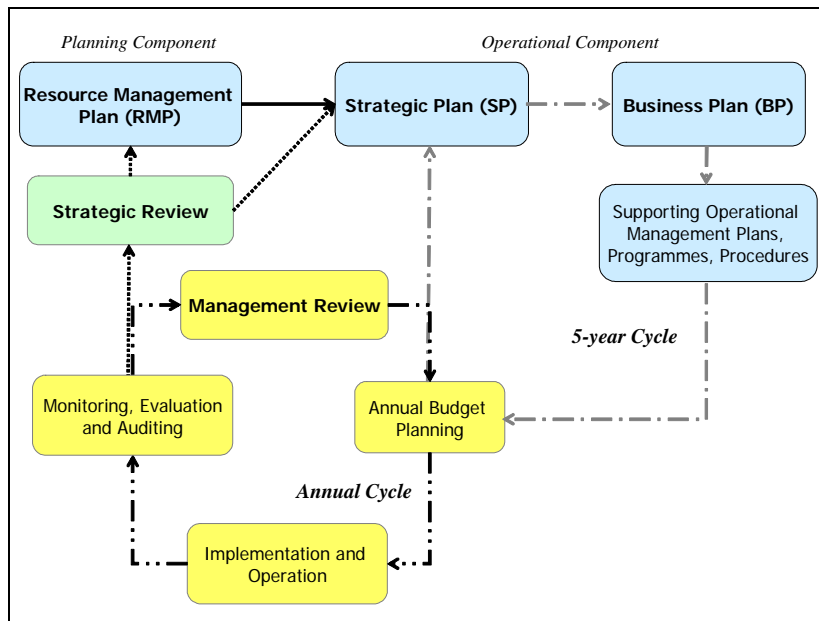


Figure 1: RMP Review Framework

4.6 Administrative Record

Once published in the Government Gazette the RMP is considered an official record and should be properly maintained utilising DWAF's document control system.