



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

INTERNET ARTICLE

DWS and Dutch Govt making strides to realise access to clean water by 2030

27 November 2019

Efforts to ensure that millions of South Africans have access to clean water were given impetus when the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) and representatives of the Dutch Water Authority (DWA) held a meeting with different stakeholders at the Grootvalley Environmental Centre in Springs in the City of Ekurhuleni, on Wednesday, 27 November 2019.

This is a culmination of an agreement signed between the Department and the Dutch Government which is known as the Blue Deal South Africa. The agreement will ensure 2.5 million South Africans have access to sufficient and clean water by the end of 2030.

Among the various stakeholders that participated in the meeting were the Gauteng Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, Calodex and the Traditional Health Care.

One of the largest tributaries to the Vaal River in Gauteng, the Blesbokspruit has experienced pollution caused by mining activities resulting in the pollution of water by acid mine drainage and ground water of abandoned mines.

It is one of the three catchment areas on which the collaboration seeks to bring water to communities.

Opening the meeting, DWS/Blue Deal South African, Ms Marion Wierda who is a manager at DWA and member of Blue Deal SA program management team, said it was important to show that all the stakeholders in the project worked in a cooperative manner, adding that stakeholders were welcome to put suggestions on the table to achieve the aims of the projects for the coming year.

Ms Wierda said the Review Panel had asked about the details of the specific outcome of the project and how different stakeholders were contributing to the overall outcome of the project.

“This is vital because we are operating within a limited budget. We must therefore be focussed on things that we can achieve,” she said.

Presenting a plan for the Blesbokspruit, Ms Mariska van Rijswijk said in 12 years the Blesbokspruit wetland should be a perfect habitat for all kinds of bird species and ecologically valuable.

“The Blesbokspruit wetland should also be working as an optimal purifier of water and an outstanding example of stakeholder collaboration to contribute fully to clean and fresh water for the water users in the upper Vaal area,” said Ms Van Rijswijk.

She added that the main activities that they would undertake would centre around connecting with the Water Research Commission, setting up of a project team that represents all stakeholders in February next year.



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She further expressed a need to raise political awareness by way of a Memorandum of Understanding early next year and that all that is digitally available by May.

The Blesbokspruit project will be officially launched in 2020.

Hosia Sithole