



INTERNET ARTICLE

DWS signs a Memorandum of Understanding with Dutch Water Authorities to ensure water security in SA

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On Friday, 01 October 2021, the Gauteng and Free State Provincial Offices of the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Dutch Water Authorities and Ngwathe Local Municipality. The Vredefort Dome World Heritage Site Blue Deal Project was signed in Ngwathe Local Municipality, Parys in the Free State.

The Vredefort Dome project is part of the Blue Deal South Africa Partnership with Netherlands. The cooperation between South African Water Institutions and the Dutch Water Authorities is enshrined in the National Water and Sanitation Master Plan.

The Vredefort Dome Blue Deal Project will improve water quality of the Vaal River in the UNESCO Vredefort Dome Heritage Site and will also optimise the operations of a Waste Treatment Plant in Parys. The envisaged outcomes of the project is to improve water quality of the Vaal River for the 50,000 inhabitants of the Parys area and for the visitors of the natural heritage site of the Vredefort Dome. The downstream population will also benefit from the improved quality of the Vaal as a reliable source for the water services.

Ms M Wierda, Chief Operation Officer (COO) of the Dutch Blue Deal said the Blue Deal Project aims to enhance access to sufficient, clean and safe water for all by 2030 and beyond. It also advocates for cooperation in solving local government level water-related problems.

Speaking during the official signing of the memorandum of Understanding, Ms Wierda reiterated the need for collaborative action in addressing the effects of Climate Change and how it aggravates water scarcity.

She added that the cooperation includes the exchange of views, identifying mutual interests, ensuring involvement of stakeholders and linking up ideas across institutional boundaries.

Dr Tseliso Ntli, Provincial Head of DWS in Free State said South Africa and the Netherlands have a mutual beneficial relationship on water-related matters dating back to more than 15 years.

“It is very important that national and local partners work together in the Vredefort Dome project to achieve its objectives. This project is one of the four Blue Deal South African projects for the period 2019-2021. These projects serves as demonstration projects of the National Water and Sanitation Master Plan and are in line with National Development Plan (NDP) and the Economic Recovery and Stimulus Plan”, said Dr Ntli.

DWS Director: PROTO-CMA in Gauteng, Dr Konanani Khorommbi, said that he is confident that the signing of the MOU will enhance the implementation of the partner’s performance and strategic plans at a local project level.



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“The Blue Deal Project supports the existing activities and aspirations of regional partners and through this approach local initiatives and projects shall benefit from the utilisation, alignment and harmonisation of existing budgets and human resources of all regional parties”, added Dr Khorommbi.

The Executive Mayor of Ngwathe Local Municipality, Councillor Joey Mochela said the need for collaboration in improving water management is more relevant given the current water situation of increase in water related problems across the world. He said there is a great need for knowledge and expertise on how to solve these problems structurally and in a sustainable way

“This partnership between South Africa and the Netherlands has already been proven mutually beneficial. Through sharing experiences and developing joint projects, we can co-create a more water secure future.” said Cllr Joey Mochela, Executive Mayor of the Ngwathe Municipality.

KHULEKANI NGCOBO