

# INTERNET ARTICLE

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## DWS and IUCMA engages rural learners on water conservation, resource protection and water sector careers

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The Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS), Mpumalanga Provincial Office in partnership with the Inkomati-Usuthu Catchment Management Agency (IUCMA) engaged high school learners on water conservation, water resource management and careers in the water sector from 07 to 12 April 2022.

The water sector awareness campaign engaged the learners of Maqhawuzela, Sisukumile, Highveld and SW Nhlapho high schools in the Chief Albert Luthuli Local Municipality in the Gert Sibande District of the Mpumalanga Province.

Ms Sabo Makgaloa from DWS presented on the Department's school programmes, career opportunities in the sector and the bursaries offered by the Department. She further encouraged the learners to be water ambassadors in their communities. "There are so many career opportunities in the water sector. We need you to close the skills gaps in the sector. We need your innovations to address water and sanitation challenges in your communities and throughout the country, so make good use of the opportunities that come your way. Lastly, always remember that South Africa is a water scarce country, so I want you to become water ambassadors and preach water conservation in your communities to ensure that not a single drop of water is lost for water security for our current and future generations as water has no substitute", she said.

Mr Tony Sibiya and Mr Thabiso Nkosi from the IUCMA presented on the importance of water resource management and resource protection, careers and bursaries offered by the IUCMA. They also spoke of the National Water Week Science Schools Competition and encouraged the learners to participate so as to fully understand the water sector and the opportunities in the sector.

The awareness campaign so informative and the learners showed interest in the career opportunities in the sector as shown by their interactions and engagements with the officials of the institutions even after the formal setting. One of the learners at Sisukumile High School was so interested in the career opportunities presented that he requested a one-on-one engagement with the presenters after the session. "This session was so informative and mind opening. I have learned a lot about different career opportunities and to be honest this is new information to me, and it opens my mind. I humbly request that such session occur frequently to ensure that learners, especially those in the lower grades are exposed to these different career opportunities at an earlier age. This will also motivate them to aim higher. Lastly, I would like to thank you for thinking about us rural communities", said Nkosinathi Mabizela.

Themba Khoza

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