



INTERNET ARTICLE

DWS signs MoU to improve performance of Wastewater Treatment Plants and to combat pollution of the Crocodile River

10 June 2022

The Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) signed the Blue Deal Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Dutch Water Authorities, Inkomati-Usuthu Catchment Management Agency, Mpumalanga Provincial Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs and several other key role players on Wednesday, 08 June 2022 in Mbombela.

The MoU aims to improve the performance of Wastewater Treatment Plants in order to combat the pollution of the Crocodile River.

This MoU set out ways on how the regional local and provincial Parties will co-operate with each other for the successful implementation of combating the pollution of the Crocodile River in the Inkomati-Usuthu Water Management Area.

Addressing delegates at the signing ceremony, Deputy Minister David Mahlobo stated that he did not attend just to oversee the signing of the MoU but expressed that he expects the parties to compile an action plan and implement it effectively.

“As a Department, we stand firm on the notion of polluter-must-pay. This is as we continue to experience the effects of Climate Change, further affecting our country which is already water scarce,” Deputy Minister Mahlobo said.

He added that in order to ensure accountability of the management of water resource, the Department relaunched the Blue Drop / Green Drop certification to monitor water quality.

“To the municipalities, if the water you are supplying is not of good drinking quality, it has an impact on the health of residents you service which can lead to waterborne diseases. It also has an effect on the environment and the economy. If you pollute water, government must act and we will not hesitate to act harshly,” he sternly said.

Deputy Minister Mahlobo also called on the Department and the Dutch partners not to focus on the Crocodile River alone, but to also look at other rivers in the Mpumalanga Province such as the Olifants, Usuthu and others.

The Chairperson of the Dutch Water Authorities, Mr Hans Schepman alluded on the impact of Climate Change and emphasised the importance of cooperation and working together.

“Climate Change affects all the people of the world. The unique aspect of the Blue Deal is that it runs for twelve years, and we are now left with eight years. The ultimate goal of the programme is to ensure that the Crocodile River regains its former state of being free of pollution,” Schepman said.



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



The Dutch Blue Deal Programme (2018- 2030) supports National and Regional governments worldwide and strengthens Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) by improving knowledge and expertise, enhancing organisational functionality, and increasing cooperation with national and regional key stakeholders.

The goal of the Blue Deal internationally, is to assist twenty (20) million people in forty (40) catchment areas around the world to gain access to clean, sufficient, and safe water.

The MEC for Cooperative Governance & Traditional Affairs (COGTA) in Mpumalanga, Mandla Ndlovu welcomed the initiative and appealed for the inclusion of other rivers and catchments.

“We welcome the initiative to empower municipalities and appeal that it should spread to other rivers and catchments. We also request that the Department assists the province with more resources. If you pollute water, you destroy life. Water is life, please take care of it. Clean water starts with you”, he said.

The Blue Deal MoU also includes the City of Mbombela Local Municipality, Emakhazeni Local Municipality, Nkomazi Local Municipality, South African Local Government Association, Municipal Infrastructure Support Agency, and Mpumalanga Treasury.

Themba Khoza

SOUTH AFRICA IS A WATER SCARCE COUNTRY



Department of Water and Sanitation South Africa



DWS RSA