

INTERNET ARTICLE

Minister Mchunu assures the public that there is no water crisis in SA

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Minister Senzo Mchunu has assured South African citizens that there is no water crisis in the country despite it being ranked in the top 30 of the world's driest countries.

Minister Mchunu was speaking during a media briefing on the state of water in the country, this was done as part of World Water Day commemorations on Tuesday, 22 March 2022.

"South Africa is a water scarce country, ranking as the 30th driest country in the world. Since surface water resources are fully allocated, our water supply needs are supplemented by international transfers from the Lesotho Highland Water Transfer Scheme," Minister Mchunu said.

He said that in order to meet the increase in water demand, the Department has gradually increased groundwater use through the groundwater development scheme.

"Groundwater plays an important role in ensuring there is water security in South Africa including contributing approximately 13% of the national total water supply in addition to providing up to 100% of water supply to some areas. It is thus a resource of strategic importance," said Minister Mchunu.

While assuring that the Department is working around the clock to ensure successful completion of bulk water projects and to strengthen co-operation between the public and private sector, he didn't mince his words when addressing stern actions which will be taken against water polluters.

"The Water Quality Management Policies and Strategies for South Africa (2017), identifies pollution from wastewater treatment plants and mine operations as main sources of pollution. We will not hesitate to deal with transgressors in this case," he sternly said.

Minister Mchunu further added that the Department is fast-tracking the activities of the Anti-Pollution Task Team to deal with all water quality pollution problems in the country. The Task Teams addresses matters relating to coordinating and integrating efforts for the management of water resources quality in South Africa.

It will provide high level guidance to ensure protection of water resources and identify remedies to mitigate pollution impacts.

Minister Mchunu was speaking on the sidelines of World Water Day which was themed **"Groundwater– making the invisible, visible."**

He acknowledged that groundwater is a national asset and an integral part of South Africa's water resources which has helped to reduce the backlog for domestic water supply in different parts of the country.

"We do not have a water crisis, what we are experiencing are water management challenges. We are in a situation where water supply exceeds the water demand. We can all play our part to preserve this precious water resource and using it with the outmost care," he pleaded with the public.

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