

INTERNET ARTICLE

Highveld Secondary claims first prize in NWW Science Schools Groundwater Model Competition

23 March 2022

Highveld Secondary School from Elukwatini in Chief Albert Luthuli Local Municipality scored 94% and claimed the first prize in the 2022 National Water Week (NWW) Science Schools Groundwater Model Competition held at the Lowveld National Botanical Gardens in Mbombela on Tuesday, 22 March 2022.

The competition was part of the National Water Week activities which started from 21 to 27 March 2022 under the theme **“Groundwater – making the invisible, visible”** which highlights the importance of groundwater as an alternative source of water, especially in a water scarce country like South Africa.

Sitintile Secondary School from Kanyamazane in the City of Mbombela took second place with 91% and the third prize went to James Khoza Secondary School from Cunningmore in Bushbuckridge Local Municipality who scored 89%.

The National Water Week Science Schools Competition is an awareness competition involving schools in the Inkomati-Usuthu water management area to develop water ambassadors and entice high school learners into water sector careers. The learners are encouraged to come up with a model addressing issues related to the theme of the year. This year, the schools were expected to develop a groundwater flow and accessibility model to supply water for domestic use. This is in line with theme to use groundwater as an alternative water source.

In his address, Mr Patrick Ntabeni, Director: Water Sector Support in the Mpumalanga Provincial office emphasized the importance of wise water use and the protection of water resources from pollution.

“Today, 22 March is World Water Day which focuses attention on the importance and sustainable management of water resources. Each year, the United Nations Water sets a theme for World Water Day which responds to a current or future challenge. As such, the Department of Water and Sanitation commemorates National Water Week from 21 to 27 March 2022. Through this focus week, as a department we would like to remind the public that South Africa is a water scarce country which makes it crucial to use the available wisely and sparingly to ensure water security for the current and future generations. We also call on the public to protect water resources and prevent their pollution as pollution negatively affects water quality making less water fit for use”, he said.

The Chairperson of the Inkomati-Usuthu Catchment Management (IUCMA) Governing Board, Mr MS Mthembu thanked the partners and sponsors for all the support in making the competition a success.

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“We feel very much honoured as the IUCMA Governing Board to be hosting this prestigious 2022 Water Science Schools Competition event in collaboration with our stakeholders. The board appreciates very much the financial support and good working relationship we have with all our stakeholders”, he said.

The NWW Science Schools competition also showcases one of the best models of Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) as it brings together the public and private sectors for the benefit of the youth and water resources management. The stakeholders in the competition comprises of Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS), Department of Education, Inkomati-Usuthu Catchment Management Agency (IUCMA), Komati Basin Water Authority (KOBWA), South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI), Silulumanzi, Working on Fire, Sappi, Barberton Mines, Nedbank, South African National Parks, Ehlanzeni District Municipality, and including City of Mbombela, Chief Albert Luthuli, Bushbuckridge, Nkomazi and Mkhondo local municipalities.

Themba Khoza