

## NATIONAL AQUATIC ECOSYSTEM HEALTH MONITORING PROGRAMME (NAEHMP)

### RHP e-COMMUNICATION

### JUNE 2008 VOLUME



*SASS5 Training offered by Nepid cc*

*Picture by: Dr. Rob Palmer*



**water & forestry**  
Department:  
Water Affairs and Forestry  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



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Visit <http://www.csir.co.za/rhp/ecommunication.html> for more information and  
should you have any comments please send them to: [sekweler@dwaf.gov.za](mailto:sekweler@dwaf.gov.za)*

### ***From the RHP desk***

Tentative dates for the RHP Provincial Champions Symposium have been set, 22 & 23 September, 2008 in Pretoria. This will be confirmed during July. As usual, it is expected from Provincial Champions and other RHP roleplayers to share their experiences and plans with the wider RHP community during the one and half day information session. For more information please contact Ramogale Sekwele (+2712 808 9614 or [sekweler@dwaf.gov.za](mailto:sekweler@dwaf.gov.za))

The CSIR together with DWAF: RQS are continuing updating the RHP website and CSIR transferring the skill to DWAF:RQS on administration of the website. Please assist us in getting things right by sending your comments to Ms Wilma Strydom at: [WStrydom@csir.co.za](mailto:WStrydom@csir.co.za) and or Mr. Lungile Gaulana at: [gaulanal@dwaf.gov.za](mailto:gaulanal@dwaf.gov.za).

The first FETWater Wetlands and Rivers short course was presented at University of Johannesburg 26-30 May 2008 (Module 1) which was very successful (for more please contact Dr. Wynand Vlok: [wynandv@mobileemail.vodafonesa.co.za](mailto:wynandv@mobileemail.vodafonesa.co.za)). The next module will be presented from 1-5 September 2008 (Module 2). These two modules hold credit towards a tutored master's degree in Zoology at UJ. For more information on the courses please contact Tahla Ross (Email: [fetwater@uj.ac.za](mailto:fetwater@uj.ac.za)) or visit: <http://www.uj.ac.za/Default.aspx?alias=www.uj.ac.za/zoology>.

Products of the 3 DWAF:RQS projects, viz, RHP Implementation Manual, National Coverage Phase (Quality Control & Quality Assurance, National Rivers Database and Biomonitoring Course) and the Usutu/Mhlathuze Phase I have been completed and all the products will be available soon.

While other areas of RHP are being capacitated unfortunately others are having members leaving organizations for various reasons. **Ms. Mpumlwana Vuyokazi**, feature on our April RHP e-Communication, of GDACE will be leaving the organization for greener pastures and also **Mr. Madikizela Bonani** who has to date highly contributed to the RHP and several other Programmes in DWAF: RQS, will be leaving the organization to explore "wetter pastures" in DEAT. We would like to express our sincere thanks for the support given, also hope that they will continue the support wherever they will be and wish them the very best of luck in their new ventures.

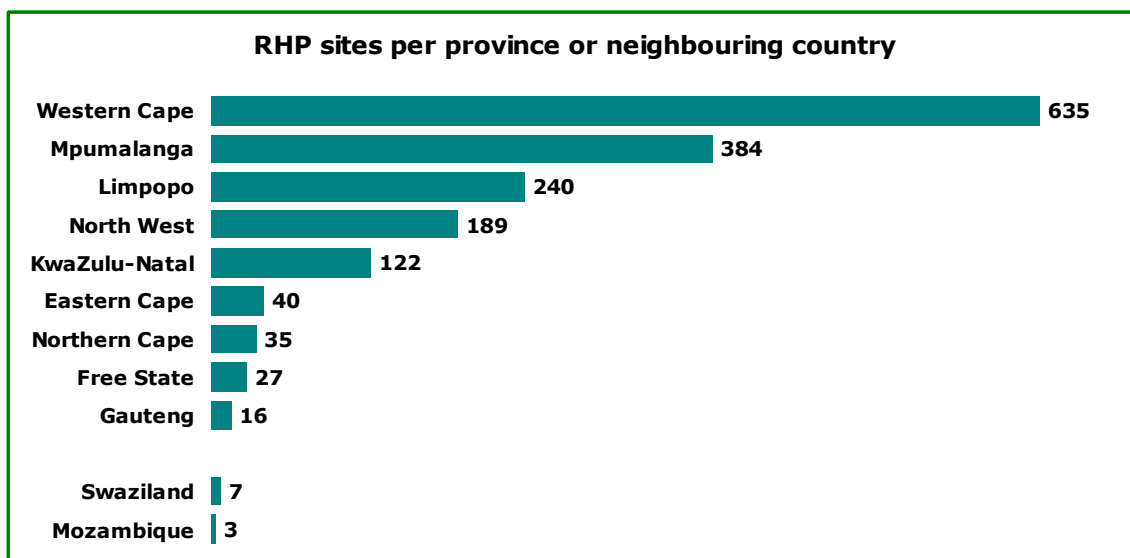
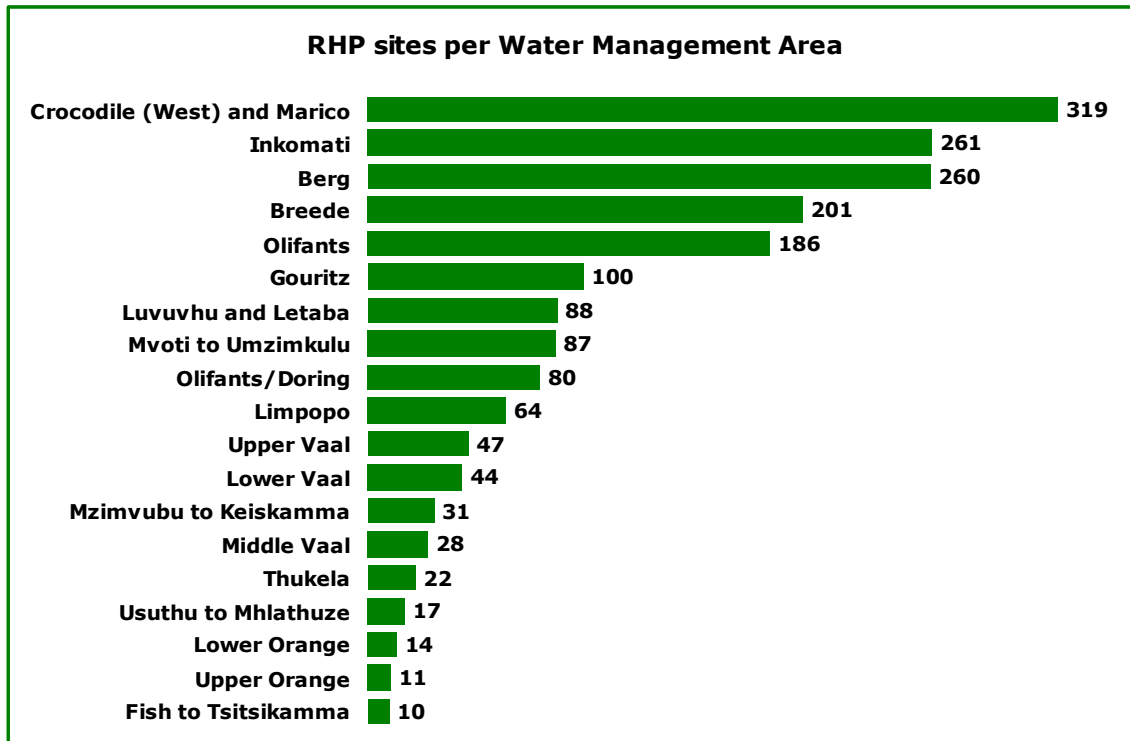
***Special thanks from the RHP Team to you for all contributions made.***

## Readers' column

### Rivers Database – an update

Since the release of Rivers Version 3 in September 2007, many new users have registered and begun using the database. The total number of registered users is now 161. Some updates have been made to improve the efficiency and functionality of the database and these can be installed via the Rivers Client (Open Rivers Client, select Tools/Check for Updates).

### Summary Statistics



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**By Dr Helen Dallas: [Helen.Dallas@uct.ac.za](mailto:Helen.Dallas@uct.ac.za) (National Rivers Administrator)**  
**Wetland IHI Phase II**

DWAF Resource Quality Services (RQS) recently developed the Wetland Index of Habitat Integrity (Wetland IHI), a rapid assessment method that assesses floodplain and channelled valley bottom wetland types. The method was developed for use in the National Aquatic Ecosystem Health Monitoring Programme (NAEHMP). The Phase I product is available from RQS for use and it will be on the RHP website in due course.

The output scores from the WETLAND-IHI model are presented in the standard DWAF A-F Ecological Categories, and provide a score of the Present Ecological State (PES) of the habitat integrity of the wetland system being assessed. The model is composed of four modules. The "Hydrology", "Geomorphology" and "Water Quality" modules all assess the contemporary driving processes behind wetland formation and maintenance. The last module, "Vegetation Alteration", provides an indication of the intensity of land use activities on the wetland surface itself and how these may have modified the condition of the wetland. The integration of the scores from these 4 modules provides an overall PES score for the wetland system being assessed.

This project was the first phase of wetland habitat assessment methods to be developed by DWAF. During Phase II, similar wetland habitat assessment methods will be developed for pans, seepage wetlands and unchannelled valley bottom wetland types. The procurement process for Phase II is currently in progress.

Training on Phase I will be given during the current financial year.

**By Colleen Todd: [toddcc@dwaf.gov.za](mailto:toddcc@dwaf.gov.za) (DWAF:RQS)**

## Provincial Activities

### Eastern Cape

The Eastern Cape Provincial Technical Task Team (PTTT) meeting will take place on the 13<sup>th</sup> of August, 2008. Everyone with close experience of the two WMA, 12 & 15, and or with interest in helping on the establishment of the PTTT is invited to participate somehow to the set meeting. Please communicate your contribution to Ms. Pumza Gaza Lubelwana: [Lubelwp@dwaf.gov.za](mailto:Lubelwp@dwaf.gov.za) and copy Dr. Mandy Uys: [malaughingh2o@icon.co.za](mailto:malaughingh2o@icon.co.za)

For more information contact Kululwa Mkosana at:  
 Tel: +27 43 748 5340  
 Email: [Mkosank@dwaf.gov](mailto:Mkosank@dwaf.gov)

### Free State & Northern Cape

The Free State/Northern Cape Team will be having a joint wetlands and RHP meeting on the 8<sup>th</sup> of July, 2008 in Bloemfontein to give feed back on activities and seed strategic way forward on the wetlands and RHP matters with the two Provinces. The Northern Cape component has successfully sent 4 members, Peter Ramollo (Aquatic Scientist: Department of Tourism, Environment & Conservation [DTEC]), Themba Mathebula (Research Technician: DTEC), Malise Neo (SWPCO:DWAF) & Lebogang Swarathle (WPCO:DWAF) to a South African Scoring System Version 5 (SASS5) training presented by Nepid cc and the team with help from DWAF:RQS has already planned a field trip on the Lower Orange River on the first week of July, to have a look on the sites used before and continue sharpening their skills while collecting valuable data for the RHP and also for biodiversity objectives.

For more information contact Gerda  
 Venter Tel: +2751 405 9201  
 Email: [venter.gerda@dwaf.gov.za](mailto:venter.gerda@dwaf.gov.za)

### KwaZulu Natal

Terms of References have not yet been approved from DWAF:RQS to outsource the RHP implementation in the three WMA of the KZN Province. Once approved, the procurement process will be completed and it is anticipated that a PSP will resume responsibilities in the last quarter of 2008.

The Usutu/Mhlathuze Phase I project has been completed and the product will be available soon.

For more information contact Ramogale Sekwele (DWAF:RQS)  
 Tel: +2712 808 9614;  
 Email: [sekwele@dwaf.gov.za](mailto:sekwele@dwaf.gov.za)

### Mpumalanga

The Mpumalanga Team (DWAF:Nelspruit [DWAF:NLS], Inkomati Catchment Management Agency [CMA] & Mpumalanga Tourism Parks Agency [MTPA]) together with the DWAF:RQS held a meeting to explore the probabilities of compiling an Inkomati State of Rivers Report. The meeting was quite successful and several tasks have been allocated to facilitate the process of compilation of the SoR. DWAF:NLS has nominated Ms. Tolmay Hopkins to fulfil the roles of DWAF on implementation of the RHP in Mpumalanga Province.

For more information contact Johan Engelbrecht Tel: +2713 235 0796 or Email: [jseng@lantic.net](mailto:jseng@lantic.net)

### North West

Monitoring (SASS5, Diatoms) took place at selected sites in the Groot Marico, the Eastern and the Middle



part of the Crocodile (West) Water Management Area. The main aim of the monitoring was to determine the influence of the very high flows in the river that was present since January 2008.

The Ecological Reserve determination process is ongoing in the Crocodile (West) and Marico, assistance with site placement and data was provided to Golder and Associates.

Presentation to Mafikeng District Municipal Portfolio meeting *The River Health Programme (National Aquatic Ecosystem Health Monitoring Programme): What is River Health Programme, North West Rivers: Major impacts and Management- Video.*

Presentation at Sustainable Development and Environment North West Province (SESNW) Seminar, Specialist workshop *Monitoring the state of rivers in the North West Province.*

A very well attended cleanup day and SASS5 demonstration was held at the Molopo River in Mafikeng on 20 May.

Joined SASS5 accreditation with Gauteng Province, was held on 30 May 2008 and a retest scheduled for the 24<sup>th</sup> of July, 2008 at Little Eden.

National Rivers Database access was secured through GDACE and all data collected since June 2007 will be captured to the Database.

For more information contact Hermien Roux Cell: 082 4665966  
Email: [hroux@nwpg.gov.za](mailto:hroux@nwpg.gov.za)

### Western Cape

Adopt-A-River Projects in Western Cape Region (Gouritz WMA) for the news letter: Tweekuilen Project and Eden Municipality Initiatives.

Ms Tovho Nyamande (DWAF: Western Cape) and Ms. Nosiphiwo Ketse (CapeNature) have visited the site during April to witness the success of the projects. Tweekuilen Project

In the Gouritz WMA the community, who also attend the CMA forum, are already busy rehabilitating certain river systems which have been neglected. The Tweekuilen River system for example has been shot off the table by certain rich influential people from Mossel Bay. Never the less the people whom had the vision for the Tweekuilen took the initiative and started the project with some funding from PETROSA.

The people to contact is either Mike Keet (+2744 6911 887/+2783 578 7530) or Tonia Schonken (+2744 695 0647/+2782 328 2848).

Benefits of the project:

At the phase where they already rehabilitated, they constructed a bird watching house, from where they count birds. They have confirmed that most of the bird species have returned after rehabilitation of that phase.

Eden Municipality Initiatives.

Eden Municipality Initiative actually started way back in 2005, and they are still active up to date. They have a fixed schedule to monitor Gwaing River system, where they have identified and established 8 monitoring sites. Ms Emmy Douglas and Mr David Papier from Eden Municipality are coordinating some of the Globe School events. School kids undertakes this monitoring events after school hours as extramural activities.

Some kids were nominated to visit Australia as part of the project on the 08<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> May 2008, where kids will be presenting their projects. Eden Municipality gave us a video clip, showing kids taking initiatives on their projects, coordinating, teaching other new kids on the programme, and inviting and presenting to the mayor on their events.

For more information contact Tovho Nyamande  
Tel: +2721 950 7124;  
Email: [NdiitwT@dwaf.gov.za](mailto:NdiitwT@dwaf.gov.za)

## **NAEHMP events and related**

### **SASS5 Training Course**

Aquatic invertebrates in the Sabie River were once again subject to detailed investigation by the delegates of the annual SASS5 biomonitoring training course, which was held at Sabie on 15-18<sup>th</sup> April 2008.

The course provided practical training in the application of SASS5, including the criteria for selecting SASS5 sampling sites, the sampling protocol, safety precautions, identification and interpretation of SASS5 results. The course would be worth it just for those! The course was attended by 18 enthusiastic delegates from around the country, who were introduced to the diverse and fascinating invertebrates found in the Sabie and Treur Rivers. Delegates were assigned various practical tasks, including an assessment of the ecological impacts of a nearby sawmill on the Sabie River. The course ended with a self-test.



*Aquatic invertebrates in the Sabie River under detailed scrutiny by delegates of the annual SASS5 training course. [Photo: Gerhard Diedericks.]*

**By Dr. Rob Palmer:** [rob@nepid.co.za](mailto:rob@nepid.co.za) (Nepid cc)

### **Gauteng and North West SASS Accreditation**



SASS accreditation in Gauteng is thriving. Three accreditations were planned for 2008, in May, August and November. However, due to demand, an extra accreditation has been planned for 24 July 2008. May 2008 accreditation was conducted successfully at the Elands River RHP monitoring site at Little Eden. Due to the high quality standards set for the accreditation process, majority of candidates still could not make it at this accreditation. August accreditation is fully booked, with a few places still available in November. Thanks to the huge team effort that makes these accreditations so successful and allows Gauteng to accredit as many SASS practitioners as we do.

**By Colleen Todd:** [toddcc@dwaf.gov.za](mailto:toddcc@dwaf.gov.za) (DWAF:RQS)

### **Adopt-a-River Programme**

The Adopt-a-River Programme Phase II is well underway and the draft Inception report has been produced, available on the DWAF website: <http://www.dwaf.gov.za/iwqs/rhp/naehmp.htm>. The national workshop cofunded and organised by DWAF and WRC was held on the 8<sup>th</sup> of May, 2008. The workshop was well attended by various stakeholders and was very successful. Proceedings of the workshop will be made available to everyone interested. The first Project Steering Committee Meeting for this Phase will take place in Pretoria, DWAF:RQS on the 29<sup>th</sup> of July, 2008 followed by the Project Study Team meeting on the 30<sup>th</sup>. A database of stakeholders and potential role players is currently being compiled and should you know of anyone who may benefit and or from whom the project may benefit please forward their contacts to the Project Manager ([sekweler@dwaf.gov.za](mailto:sekweler@dwaf.gov.za)) or Alta Neumann ([Alta.Neumann@shands.co.za](mailto:Alta.Neumann@shands.co.za)).

For more information contact Ramogale Sekwele ([sekweler@dwaf.gov.za](mailto:sekweler@dwaf.gov.za) or 012 808 9614).

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