

21. REPORTING

Now that the information has been captured, analysed and meaningful deductions have been made, the next step is to make these available to your target audience. This group of people includes environmental managers and the variety of organisations mentioned in the previous sections.

Reporting should take into account the five key questions:

- \$ What to report - what type of information is relevant to your target audience
- \$ To whom - who is your target audience
- \$ When - how often should reporting be conducted
- \$ How to report - which format to use to ensure that your information is understandable
- \$ Why - ensure that your target audience actually needs the information.

The level of reporting will determine the amount of detail required. RHP reporting may be required at local, regional or national scale, with different prerogatives attached to each (see NAEBP report No 8 for more details). However, at the provincial or catchment level where implementation actually happens, you will mostly be concerned with local and regional reporting. Potential target audiences at the local and regional level include your relevant River Forum, CMAs, government departments and interested and affected parties.

The **presentation**, **format** and **content** of the information should preferably be tailored to suite the nature and background of the target audience to ensure that your audience derives the maximum benefit from your RHP. For example, aquatic scientists and managers who are familiar with the RHP indices, would probably be more interested in the actual results of the indices, while school groups would derive more meaning from synthesised graphical representations of the RHP results. However, there is no fixed recipe for which format to use for which audience. Various options will have to be tried and tested to determine which is the most effective for which audience. Other RHP practitioners should be contacted for guidance on reporting formats and content.

Another important aspect to consider is whether your reporting is to other role-players within the RHP, or whether it is intended for external parties. This will influence the style, composition and presentation of the results. For example, the RHP NCT may require a very different report to say government officials or representatives from industry.

A useful starting point would be to categorise your potential audiences (based on information needs, type of information required and presentation format) into the following three broad groups:

21.1 POTENTIAL AUDIENCES

- \$ Political and administrative - includes national and provincial government department heads
- \$ Operational and managerial - includes directors and senior managers of government departments with an environmental responsibility, national and provincial Parks and Tourism Boards, Water Boards, Local and District Councils, River Forums, CMAs and Industry
- \$ Interested and Affected Parties - local communities, farmers, industry, scientists, conservationists, schools and the media.

See NAEBP report No6 chapter 5 for more details on reporting and target audiences.

21.2 TYPES OF ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTING TO WHICH THE RHP CAN CONTRIBUTE

- \$ State of the Environment reporting - this is becoming increasingly important nationally, provincially and locally. The RHP is ideally suited to making significant contributions to the knowledge of the state of ecological conditions of rivers, as the RHP indices are useful predetermined indicators of ecosystem health.
- \$ State of Rivers reporting - is based on principles of State of the Environment reporting. A report has been produced for the Mpumalanga rivers.
- \$ Environmental reports of the relevant government departments and industries within the catchment.