

### 3. RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

The success of most projects depends on thorough background research and development and a well thought out plan. The RHP is no exception. It should include a literature review and practical assessment of local conditions and organisations which could contribute and benefit from the RHP.

Fortunately, for your review of pertinent literature, there is a large body of RHP scientific research that has been done covering the theoretical (and some practical) aspects of the RHP. The following list of documents and references are a good starting point for research and guidance:

- \$ National Aquatic Ecosystem Biomonitoring Programme (NAEBP) reports, particularly pertinent is NAEBP report series no.6: *Overview of the design process and guidelines for implementation* (Roux, 1997). Appendix A is a comprehensive list of useful reading.
- \$ RHP Newsletters - regular newsletters of the latest developments and news from the national NCC and experiences of other provinces
- \$ Water Research Commission reports
- \$ SA Waterbulletin articles
- \$ SASS4 Manual (Thirion *et. al.*, 1995)
- \$ Scientific articles on indices - especially the Fish Assemblage Integrity Index (FAII) and South African Scoring System (SASS4)
- \$ RHP website: [www.csir.co.za/rhp/](http://www.csir.co.za/rhp/) and [www.riverhealth.co.za](http://www.riverhealth.co.za) (for mini SASS)
- \$ DWAF website: [www-dwaf.pwv.gov.za](http://www-dwaf.pwv.gov.za).

#### **Practical R&D considerations:**

- \$ Your R&D should include an investigation of available resources, expertise and organisations which could play a significant role in your RHP.
- \$ A thorough examination of maps of your area (both 1:250 000 and 1:50 000 scales) is recommended. This will provide valuable information on distances, road and potential access points as well as yielding information on surrounding land-use and developments within river catchments.
- \$ An initial reconnaissance exploration of your area is also an important part of the initial R&D for your programme.
- \$ Further revelations may come to light during public participation which is bound to yield useful information about local conditions (see public participation section).

#### **NOTE:**

Research and development is an ongoing process and should continue even after your initial RHP plan has been formulated and implementation has commenced. R&D is essential to continuous improvement of your RHP.

After doing some initial research, the prospective RHP implementer may feel a bit overwhelmed and possibly a bit daunted. Do not pay homage to these feelings. There are many people out there who are doing it and who are willing to offer support, advice and guidance. They are just a phone call away!