

6. FORMING THE PROVINCIAL IMPLEMENTATION TEAM (PIT)

The RHP requires a team effort to get it up and running provincially. The PIT is *THAT* team of dedicated individuals which drives the RHP programme in your province. It is the “board of directors” of your RHP.

There are no fixed rules concerning the appointment of PIT members or the PIT’s size and composition. However, the PIT should comprise of the major role players and stakeholders in water management in your province. Individual PIT members also have an additional role of garnering support for the programme from their organisations and conveying information to and from the PIT. Hence a good strong and representative PIT is imperative for your RHP to be successful. The PIT should meet regularly to review progress and discuss pertinent issues.

6.1 IDEAL COMPOSITION OF THE PIT

- \$ The RHP champion (leader)
- \$ Other staff from within the Champion’s organisation (environmental officers or aquatic scientists)
- \$ Provincial Environmental Affairs officers
- \$ Regional DWAF representatives
- \$ Representatives from the relevant River Forum or Water Users Association within your Catchment Management Agency
- \$ Water Board representatives
- \$ Environmental officers from industries within the catchment with an interest or impact on rivers within the province
- \$ Staff and students from local universities
- \$ Environmental consultants (if the budget allows!)
- \$ Representatives from environmental NGOs
- \$ Representatives from local communities.

6.2 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PIT

- \$ Implementing the RHP according to available capacity and expertise and provincial requirements
- \$ Researching biomonitoring needs and requirements
- \$ Identifying important rivers for the RHP
- \$ Selecting monitoring and reference sites
- \$ Coordinating the programme and liaising with relevant authorities
- \$ Obtaining support for the RHP from major stakeholders in the province such as government, river fora, industry, NGOs, farmers and local communities
- \$ Securing and attracting funding
- \$ Managing the programme (resources and infrastructure)
- \$ Training of monitoring personnel
- \$ Promoting the RHP in your province/WMA
- \$ Setting of standards of rivers being monitored
- \$ Quality control
- \$ Storage and management of information
- \$ Analysing results and detection of environmental trends
- \$ Disseminating information and reporting to stakeholders, government and CMAs
- \$ Management actions within the catchment
- \$ Communication between RHP initiatives in other provinces.

Based on the above list, it is suggested that clear roles and responsibilities be assigned to each PIT member. In addition, a signed memorandum of understanding between key government departments and other collaborating organisations within the PIT which clearly spells out the roles, functions and responsibilities of each organisation is a useful document for successful RHP implementation. This also assists these government departments in justifying their RHP expenditure to top management and even their auditors.

An alternative to the PIT is the “**community-of-practice**” (**COP**) for co-ordinating collaborative RHP efforts. The COP is a less formal arrangement than the PIT consisting of a guiding team, strategic partners and tactical partners which share resources, expertise and take on set roles and responsibilities (Roux, 2000). The Mpumalanga Parks Board took the COP route to successfully implementing their RHP programme.

NOTE

As with the case of the River Health Champion, the PIT may in the near future become the Water Management Area (WMA) Implementation Team rather than be provincially based. It will probably form part of the Catchment Management Agency Committee.

