



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Development of the Limpopo Water Management (WMA) Area North Reconciliation Strategy

Study Steering Committee (SSC) meeting No. 1: Minutes

Held at The Protea Ranch, Polokwane at 09:00 on Wednesday, 18 February 2015.

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION	ACTION
<p>The Chairperson of the meeting, Mr Tendani Nditwani (Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS)) welcomed all to the inaugural meeting of the Study Steering Committee (SSC) for the study to develop a Reconciliation Strategy for the parts of the Limpopo Water Management Area (WMA) North.</p> <p>He explained that the study will cover the northern parts of the WMA - the Matlabas, Mokolo, Lephalala, Mogalakwena, Sand and Nzhelele/Nwanedzi catchments. The other catchments of the newly demarcated (2012) Limpopo WMA for example the Luvuvhu and the Crocodile West/Marico have already been addressed in other Reconciliation Strategies, which were developed when these catchments were part of other WMAs as per the previous (2004) demarcation of WMAs.</p> <p>Mr Nditwani referred members to the information packages and noted that the information was emailed to all members and that it will soon be available of the DWS web site.</p>	
2. ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES	
<p>Members introduced themselves. Appendix A lists all members who attended and those who apologised.</p>	
3. ACCEPTANCE OF THE AGENDA	
<p>The agenda was accepted without any additions.</p>	
4. OVERVIEW OF THE LIMPOPO WMA NORTH	
<p>Mr Nditwani briefly presented an overview and background on the Limpopo Water Management Area (WMA) North.</p>	

<i>Discussion:</i>	
(a) Mr Ockie van den Berg (DWS) noted that there is an existing transfer from the Crocodile West catchment that provides water to Mookgophong which was not on the slides presented.	
(b) Mr Phile van Zyl (ZZ2 and Vhembe Mineral Resources Stakeholder Forum) commented that potential for economic development was mentioned however the potential for agricultural or irrigation development has not been mentioned. Mr Tendani Nditwani (DWS) explained that the development of a reconciliation strategy for the study area is at its very beginning, and potential for any development has to be analysed in the context of its feasibility and available water resources. During the course of the study consideration will be given to all future needs from all sectors taking into account that the area has limited water resources, the competition is high for the available water and that cognisance has to be taken of national and provincial planning perspectives. The potential for the development of further surface water resources is very limited.	
(c) Mr Pieter de Witt (Limpopo Department of Agriculture) asked whether there are plans to recharge groundwater in future. Mr Tendani Nditwani (DWS) referred to the groundwater presentation and briefly responded that groundwater recharge is an option being investigated.	
(d) Mr Tabatso Mabitsele (Limpopo Office of the Premier) mentioned that extensive use of groundwater may have further environmental impacts. He asked that the potential environmental impact due to groundwater use be investigated. He added that groundwater in the study area is polluted and asked how the existing pollution can be mitigated. He concluded to say that in the study area the three main sectors which will require water is agriculture, tourism and mining.	
(e) Mr Julius Mashaphu (Limpopo Department of Rural Development and Land Reform) commented that the mining sector use water extensively and asked how such used water can be re-used. He added that wastage of irrigation water should also be curbed and that water conservation by all sectors is critical.	
(f) Dr Pieter du Toit (Eco-Industrial Solutions (Pty) Ltd) asked if the DWS has any plans to augment water in the study area from other areas such as Zimbabwe? Mr Tendani Nditwani (DWS) explained that the objective of the reconciliation strategy is to look at current and future water balances and then to investigate options such as possible augmentations. Water transfers will be one of the options to investigate. He added that studies are being done to investigate the feasibility of transfers from Zimbabwe and as far as the Zambezi River.	
(g) Ms Mariette Liefferink (Federation for Sustainable Development (FSE)) noted some of the constraints experienced in the Limpopo WMA (e.g. villages without water supply, that the ecological reserve is under stress) and asked whether the SSC can consider placing a moratorium on water use for any new developments such as mining. Mr Tendani Nditwani (DWS) said that the SSC represents all sectors and exists to make recommendations on future water use.	

5. WHY IS THE DWS DEVELOPING RECONCILIATION STRATEGY	
Mr Nditwani briefly presented the process of the DWS Reconciliations Strategies for RSA and on the Limpopo Water Management Area (WMA) North.	
<i>Discussion:</i>	
(a) Dr Pieter du Toit (Eco-Industrial Solutions (Pty) Ltd) enquired whether the SSC will have access to the parallel studies and those programmes that have links to the reconciliation study. Mr Tendani Nditwani (DWS) explained that the results of parallel studies (e.g. Classification of Water Resources) would feed directly into this study. This team will use the outcome of the study on the validation of water use to analyse water requirements for the reconciliation strategy. Dr du Toit was invited to contact Mr Nditwani if he needs some specific information.	
6. APPROACH TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE LIMPOPO WMA NORTH RECONCILIATION STRATEGY	
6.1 SCOPE OF STUDY	
Ms Hermien Pieterse (Study Team) presented an overview of study tasks and the proposed programme.	
6.2 GROUNDWATER	
Mr Neels Sonnekus (Study Team) presented the current state of groundwater in the study area and he detailed the steps which will be followed in the assessment of the geohydrology for the study.	
6.3 HYDROLOGY	
Mr Gerald de Jager (Study Team) gave a brief overview of the proposed hydrology assessment that has commenced for the study.	
<i>Discussion:</i>	
(a) Ms Mariette Liefferink (FSE) asked whether precipitation and evaporation rates are determined as part of the study. Mr Gerald de Jager (Study Team) responded positively and explained how the information will be incorporated into the model that was developed for the study.	
(b) Mr Cobus Bron (Coal of Africa) enquired whether this study will investigate neighbouring catchments and neighbouring countries? Mr Gerald de Jager (Study Team) explained that neighbouring catchments have been analysed to the same level of detail which will be used for this study. Certain relevant aspects concerning neighbouring countries are investigated, e.g. run-off data from Botswana.	

(c) Mr KhathuTshikolomo (Limpopo Department of Agriculture) wanted to know whether the relationship between groundwater and surface water is investigated? Mr Gerald de Jager (Study Team) explained that numerical data describing relationship between groundwater and surface water is not available at this time ,however data such as the recharge rates, the demand on groundwater and surface water is available and with that information the relationship will be determined.	
(d) Mr Benson Neswiswi (DWS) enquired whether climate change impacts will be investigated. Mr Gerald de Jager (Study Team) noted his experience with regards to the potential impact of climate change on surface water and said that the preliminary results show that the South Western sides will get dryer, and North Eastern sides probably wetter, with more variability in rainfall patterns. The study team will not investigate potential effects of climate change however; their analyses and reports will take cognisance of the potential of climate change effects.	
(e) Mr Ockie van den Berg (DWS) indicated on a map that Polokwane is located in the upper part of the very dry Sand River catchment and explained that Polokwane as a growing city needs transfers of water from other catchments as its local resources (rainfall, groundwater) are very limited.	
6.4 CURRENT AND FUTURE WATER REQUIREMENTS	
Mr Gerald de Jager (Study Team) provided background on current water requirements.	
<i>Discussion:</i>	
(a) Mr Phile van Zyl (ZZ2 and Vhembe Mineral Resources Stakeholder Forum) reiterated the question earlier asked why the anticipated future agriculture or irrigation demands not shown in the presentation? He asked whether the future demands are not known, not recognised or whether the DWS and the study team was still awaiting the sector to state their case. Mr Gerald de Jager (Study Team) invited the sector to state their case and emphasized that all sectors would still be liaised with in terms of their current and future water requirements and plans. Mr Van Zyl said that there is likely a decline in water use allocated for irrigation due to increase in efficiency and improved technology. He asked that food requirements for the future be included.	Study team to include future food requirements. Study team to liaise with all sectors with regards to the future water requirements.
(b) Ms Mariette Liefferink (FSE) asked if in the development of strategy relevant DWS directorates, other government departments and non-government organisations would participate? She enquired whether the strategy would influence compliance and the issuing of licenses as licences influences water use and availability. Mr Tendani Nditwani (DWS) referred members to the list of stakeholders who were invited to become part of the SSC. He emphasized that the DWS wishes to have all relevant institutions, departments and organisations participating towards reaching the goals and objectives set for the development of the Reconciliation Strategy. Mr Nditwani invited members to nominate additional participants. He explained that the strategy (once developed) would assist those who have to issues licences.	

6.4.2 Coal of Africa	
Mr Cobus Bronn discussed the future development of mines in the Makhado area.	
<i>Discussion:</i>	
(a) Ms Mariette Liefferink (FSE) stated that as per the presentation mining makes a huge contribution to the GDP, however mining's impact on the country's water resources is great. According to international research, mining is the second largest contributor to water pollution. She appealed to mines to make financial provisions for the lifetime of the impacts. She explained that a closed circuit water use system deprives the natural system of run-offs and water for the Ecological Reserve. Mr Cobus Bronn (Coal of Africa) responded that the coal mining industry has improved its environmental practices significantly with the introduction of clean technology. The mining industry acknowledges that it is a potential polluter and is much more sensitive in terms of its design and processing due to the lessons that it had to learn. Coal of Africa makes financial provision as required by the legislative framework in which it operates.	
(b) Ms Mariette Liefferink (FSE) asked if the Closure Certificate for the Vele Colliery is available for review to assess potential risks. Mr Cobus Bronn (Coal of Africa) stated that Vele Colliery is only in a care and maintenance phase and has not applied for closure. The mine applied for the required amendments to its current authorisations for the construction and modification to the current processing plant and will commence operations once the authorisations are issued.	
(c) Mr Paul Herbst (DWS) requested Coal of Africa to highlight their Water Conservation and Water Demand Management (WC/WDM) initiatives. He added that the DWS promote a zero discharge policy since 1991 to minimise the impact on the environment. He said other arrangements are in place to obtain and maintain sufficient water for the Ecological Reserve. Mr Cobus Bronn responded by stating that CoAL has adopted a zero discharge policy and is therefore aligned with DWS's policy. Mr Bronn also made reference to various water conservation measures that have been implemented at its Vele Colliery and the same to be implemented at its Makhado project.	
(d) Mr Phile van Zyl (ZZ2 and Vhembe Mineral Resources Stakeholder Forum) said that water users have a competitive interest in the water available in this area and therefore all sectors should have the opportunity to present their current and future plans and requirements. Mr Tendani Nditwani (DWS) said the point will be considered.	
6.5 WATER QUALITY	
Ms Ayesha Laher (Study Team) presented an overview of the water quality aspect of the study.	
<i>Discussion:</i>	

<p>(a) Ms Mariette Liefferink (FSE) requested that information from reports compiled by the CSIR (Peter Ashton), Water Research Commission and the Humans Rights Commission be used. She asked whether the assessment will also use local knowledge and involvement of local people? Ms Ayesha Laher (Study Team) responded that any information with regards to water quality in the study area will be considered.</p>	
<p>(b) Ms Mariette Liefferink (FSE) asked whether the water resources in the study area have been classified and the resource quality objectives been set? Ms Shane Naidoo (DWS) said that resource quality objectives for Limpopo have not yet been determined, however the Management Classes were determined for the Crocodile West/ Marico WMA and the process to determine the water quality objectives will commence soon. This process will also include the Matlabas catchment. It is anticipated that the process to determine Management Classes and water resource quality objectives for the rest of the Limpopo WMA North will start soon in 2015.</p>	
<p>(c) Ms Mariette Liefferink (FSE) asked whether pollution sources can be identified, the risks quantified and what the mitigation measures would be to rehabilitate the polluted resources. Ms Ayesha Laher (Study Team) reported that the water quality assessment has just commenced and the objective of the assessment would be to identify the pollution sources, to quantify potential risk and propose mitigation measures.</p>	
<p>6.6 OPPORTUNITIES FOR WATER RE-USE</p>	
<p>Ms Ayesha Laher (Study Team) presented potential opportunities that exist for the re-use of water in the study area.</p>	
<p><i>Discussion:</i></p>	
<p>(a) Ms Mariette Liefferink (FSE) noted that the re-use of sewage effluent has been investigated, however she asked whether any investigation has been conducted in terms of the re-use of Acid Mine Drainage (AMD). Ms Ayesha Laher (Study Team) said that the re-use of AMD has been investigated and it is technically possible, however it is very expensive and may not be feasible due to high cost.</p>	
<p>6.7 PRELIMINARY INTERVENTIONS</p>	
<p>Mr Hermien Pieterse (Study Team) presented the preliminary management and infrastructure development interventions, which would be further investigated as part of the study.</p>	
<p><i>Discussion:</i></p>	

<p>(a) Ms Mariette Liefferink (FSE) mentioned that she observed that this strategy proposes very high- level interventions. She asked what about Section 19 of the National Water Act that refers to the “polluter pays principle”. Mr Tendani Nditwani (DWS) referred to the objectives of the study that proposes the development of a Reconciliation Strategy. He explained that the next phase of the study would be to implement the strategy and that it would then be the responsibility of all sectors to address pollution and the mitigation thereof.</p>	
<p>(b) Dr KhathuTshikolomo (Limpopo Department of Agriculture) asked whether the study would assess the levels of siltation in dams and the loss of water in the conveyance system. Ms Hermien Pieterse (Study Team) responded that when feasibility studies are conducted for infrastructure, siltation levels are investigated. Water losses of all kinds will be assessed as part of the Water Conservation and Water Demand Management (WC/WDM) assessment.</p>	
<p>6.8 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT</p>	
<p>Ms Anelle Lötter (Study Team) provided an overview of the proposed stakeholder engagement for the study and highlighted the different levels, proposed activities and time line for engagements.</p>	
<p>7. FUNCTIONS OF THE STUDY STEERING COMMITTEE (SSC): ESTABLISHMENT, FUNCTIONS AND ROLES</p>	
<p>Mr Tendani Nditwani (DWS) referred stakeholders to the Draft Terms of Reference for the SSC that was distributed before the meeting. He presented the functions, suggested roles and responsibilities of the SSC. He also provided the proposed membership list and invited participants to provide their comments and inputs to the Study Team.</p>	<p>All members to send their comments on the SSC Draft Terms of Reference to the Study Team</p>
<p>8. GENERAL</p>	
<p>(a) Ms Mariette Liefferink (FSE) asked whether academic institutions, Civil Society and NGOs can participate in the SSC. Mr Tendani Nditwani (DWS) responded that participation by all sectors is welcome. He explained that a wide group of interested persons are being informed of the study but not all of them are necessarily members of the SSC. He asked that if any SSC member would like to add to the stakeholder list or to the list of SSC members, their contact details should be sent to the Study Team.</p>	<p>All to forward contact details of additional stakeholders or proposed SSC members to the Study Team.</p>

9. WAY FORWARD	
<p>Mr Tendani Nditwani (DWS) summarised the next steps and the way forward as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Proceedings of the meeting (minutes) will be compiled and distributed to all SSC members for their comments and inputs.• Comments on the SSC membership will be appreciated.• Meetings with specific stakeholders to discuss technical matters will be held if required.	
10. DATE FOR NEXT MEETING	
<p>Members of the SSC proposed that the second meeting of the SSC be held on Tuesday, 18 August 2015 in Lephalale.</p>	
11. CLOSURE	
<p>Mr Tendani Nditwani (DWS) thanked all participants for their attendance. The meeting was closed at 14:00.</p>	