



water affairs

Department:
Water Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Directorate: National Water Resource Planning

Development of a Reconciliation Strategy for the Luvuvhu and Letaba Water Supply System

STUDY STEERING COMMITTEE – MEETING 4

Draft Minutes

DATE: Thursday, 21 November 2013
TIME: 09:00 – 13:20
VENUE: Tzaneen Country Lodge, Tzaneen

1.	WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION	ACTION
	<p><i>The Chairperson and Study Manager, Mr Tendani Nditwani (Department of Water Affairs– DWA) welcomed all members to the fourth meeting of the Study Steering Committee (SSC) for the development of the Luvuvhu and Letaba Water Supply System Reconciliation Strategy (LLRS).</i></p> <p><i>Mr Nditwani thanked all members of the SSC for their attendance and said that it is important that the institutions involved with water planning and key role players meet to discuss the reconciliation of water in this area.</i></p> <p><i>He also announced that Mr Johan van Rooyen and Mr Peter van Niekerk have retired. Mr Ockie van den Berg (DWA) added that the DWA Regional Chief Director, Mr Alson Matukane has resigned and Ms Lucy Kobe was appointed in the position.</i></p> <p><i>(All presentations presented at the meeting will be saved on the DWA web site. Visit the study website http://www.dwa.gov.za/Projects/Luvuvhu/default.aspx for more information.)</i></p>	
2.	ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES	
	<p><i>Appendix A provides a list of attendants and apologies received.</i></p>	
3.	MEETING OBJECTIVES	
	<p><i>Mr Nditwani reiterated the objectives of this study which are to address the growing water demand in the study area, identify serious water problems, identify resource development options, provide reconciliation interventions (structural and administrative/regulatory) and facilitate communication and strengthen the partnership between the DWA and key stakeholders.</i></p> <p><i>He stated the objectives of the meeting and said that the preliminary Reconciliation Strategy focussing on options for the Letaba catchment that is based on the water balances will be presented today. At the next meeting, the options for the Luvuvhu will be presented.</i></p>	
4.	ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA	
	<p><i>The agenda was accepted with additions under item 13 – general.</i></p>	

5.	APPROVAL OF MINUTES	
	<i>The minutes were approved without any changes.</i>	
6.	MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES (SSC 3 ON 31 OCTOBER 2012)	
	<i>There were no matters arising which were not covered by an item on the agenda.</i>	
7.	STATUS AND RECAP SINCE THE PREVIOUS MEETING	
	<i>Mr Tendani Nditwani (DWA) presented the current status of the study. He stated that all final reports are available on the study web site for members to review. He said it is expected that two further SSC meetings will be held in 2014 before the draft Reconciliation Strategy is presented at a public meeting.</i>	
8.	PROGRESS ON STUDY TASKS	
8.1	Overview	
	<i>Mr Manie Maré (Study Team) informed members of the progress made with the various tasks in the study and focussed the information provided on tasks completed and tasks still in progress. He said the study is on time and satisfactory progress is being made.</i>	
8.2	Water Use: Irrigation and afforestation	
	<i>Mr Francois Joubert (Schoeman en Vennote) presented the results of a study on the water use by irrigators and forestry in the study area. Summaries of irrigation areas (including source and representative crop values) and areas of afforestation were provided to the study team for further analysis and inclusion in models.</i>	
	Discussion	
8.2a	<i>Mr Louis van Rooyen (Letaba Water Users Association) wanted to know what exactly an “average crop” represents. Mr Joubert explained that in a specific area a variety of crops are planted (avocados, bananas, citrus, etc.) and that for modelling process each crop could not have been included thus one crop representing a weighted average was used.</i>	
8.2b	<i>Mr Eddie Riddell, KNP asked about the SAPWAT technology used and Mr Joubert responded that other technology exists now but that the DWA pricing strategy specifies that SAPWAT is to be used and through using the SAPWAT model over so many years the model is well understood for its more conservative approach.</i>	
8.2c	<i>Mr Andre Venter (Letaba Water User Association) enquired what the white areas on the maps shown are representative of. Mr Joubert explained that those are non-irrigation areas – thus areas that were regarded not to impact on the water use for this study.</i>	
8.2d	<i>Mr Louis van Rooyen (Letaba Water Users Association) commented that there used to be a control system for afforestation and asked if that was reviewed. Mr Joubert said it was not reviewed and that only existing areas were used as data input.</i>	
8.2e	<i>Mr Dzaga Azwihangwisi (DWA) asked what impact will clamping on unlawful uses by DWA have on the study? Mr Joubert replied that this part of the study only looked at the validation of water use and not at verification. Mr Nditwani (DWA) added that a recommendation of the Reconciliation Strategy could be that unlawful use should be eradicated.</i>	
8.2f	<i>Mr Martinus Gouws (Department of Agriculture, Limpopo) commented that no irrigation could have been recorded in 1998 and 2005 on the government schemes and he asked if that was taken into account. Mr Joubert said that it was considered.</i>	

8.3	Hydrological analysis	
	<p>Mr Bennie Haasbroek provided an overview of the hydrology analysis for the Letaba and Luvuvhu catchments. His presentation informed members on the climatic conditions, the status of impoundments, water and land use, the gauging network, the calibration network and natural runoff distribution. His presentation was concluded with the following key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to the limited rainfall and streamflow data in the East of the catchment, the hydrological data generated for those areas can only be seen as low confidence. • Although about 65% of the resulting Natural MAR in the Letaba catchment is calibrated, the majority of the flow calibrations are dependent on dam balances, which are inaccurate for low flows. • Vondo, Nsami, Damani, Nandoni and Modjadji Dams should be revisited once data is available to provide dam balances. It is very important to start capturing and storing the relevant data. • Basin wide dam surveys should be undertaken – the available information is very old or totally absent. • Continuous water use measurements should be done at Thabina, Damani, Vondo and at weirs in the Luvuvhu, Mutale and Shingwedzi. • On Lower Groot Letaba if possible the Prieska Sluice should be repaired and measurements should resumed. • Automate water use and flow measurements at major dams for accurate data. 	
	Discussion	
8.3a	Mr Andre Venter (Letaba Water User Association) commented that in the presentation many uncertainties were alluded to with regards to unavailability of monitoring data. He suggested that the SSC members recommended that the necessary be done to ensure that monitoring is taking place to such a level that data can be gathered to sufficiently update the hydrology data with regular intervals. Mr Haasbroek commented that the monitoring equipment / structures were washed away during heavy floods and that since the last floods many structures have not yet been replaced/repared.	
8.3b	Mr Louis van Rooyen (Letaba Water Users Association) asked who is responsible for collecting rainfall data. Mr Haasbroek explained that rainfall data are obtained from the SA Weather Services that is part of the Department of Environmental Affairs and that the DWA has rainfall stations at some of their dams. He said that regrettably more rainfall data was available in 1912 than today.	
8.3c	Mr Archinton Thobejane (DWA) said that the issue of monitoring was raised internally at the DWA and a recommendation was made that a study be conducted to review all monitoring stations / equipment at dams, in rivers and for recording rainfall. He added that the Minister asked for infrastructure plans from officials and that the invitation poses a good opportunity to rectify the monitoring situation. Mr Haasbroek commented that user needs should be included with the planning for improved monitoring.	
8.3d	Mr Jakkie Venter (DWA) invited Mr Haasbroek and the team to approach him for information pertaining to the Tzaneen Dam. He said he may also have more updated information with regards to the Albasini canal system. He cautioned the study team about the Albasini system's allocations.	
8.3e	Mr Louis van Rooyen (Letaba Water Users Association) asked where the information presented on groundwater comes from. Mr Francois Joubert (Schoeman and Vennote) responded that it is a combination of registration data and surveys conducted that ended in 2000. He commented that it was found that users only rely on groundwater if other sources are depleted – e.g. during droughts.	
8.3f	Mr Eddie Rindell, KNP asked if an indication can be provided of the natural run-off trend? Mr Haasbroek said that the gauges on the Letaba River were repaired and that the next set of data will be more accurate. He agreed to meet with Mr Ridell to discuss his question in detail as Mr Rindell offered some more information.	
8.3g	Mr Louis van Rooyen (Letaba Water Users Association) asked whether with the construction of Nwamitwa Dam a weir / gauge will not be constructed up and down stream of the Dam. Mr Ockie van den Berg responded positively.	

9.	PRELIMINARY RECONCILIATION STRATEGY	
	<p><i>Mr Pieter van Rooyen (Study Team) presented possible options and different scenarios which will become part of the preliminary reconciliation strategy. His presentation focussed on the preliminary scenarios for the Letaba catchment. In conclusion he said that the following still needs to be done before a final draft Reconciliation Strategy can be compiled for review by the public:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Incorporate comments from SSC members on the information provided thus far.</i> <i>Consider information from the water use validation and verification study as an estimate of possible unlawful water use.</i> <i>Undertake system yield risk analysis and refine balances.</i> <i>Compare development options economically by determining the Unit Reference Values.</i> <i>Develop a preliminary Reconciliation Strategy for Luvuvhu River System.</i> <i>Coordination with the Classification Study.</i> 	
	Discussion	
9a	<i>Mr Andre Venter (Letaba Water Users Association) wanted to know if Scenario 1 as presented provides for the water required for the water use licenses applied for from the Ebenezer Dam? Mr Pieter van Rooyen (WRP) said no, it does not allow for that.</i>	
9b	<i>Ms Mushai Ramusetheli (Polokwane Local Municipality) asked whether the scenarios presented allow for the authorisation of the applied water user licenses for Polokwane. The application for the water use licences was submitted by Lepelle Nothern Water for resources from the Letaba system. Mr Pieter van Rooyen (WRP) explained that the scenarios presented do not include water allocated that was requested as part of the water use licenses which was applied for. He said that the study team cannot recommend that the said license applications be approved as there is not sufficient water in the system and water is required from Ebenezer dam to cascade down to the Tzaneen Dam. If water is transferred for the Polokwane requirements, a great deficit will be experienced.</i>	
9c	<i>Mr HP Chauke (Shingwedzi sub-catchment and Letaba catchment forums) asked if there is sufficient allocation for growth in the mining / industry sector? Mr Pieter van Rooyen (WRP) responded that growth of mines are not included, however sufficient growth was included for the category domestic use as most of the new mining developments will obtain their water through the municipalities.</i>	
9d	<i>Mr Louis van Rooyen (Letaba Water Users Association) enquired why the provision for Ecological Water Requirements (EWRs) was left out on certain of the tributaries. Mr Pieter van Rooyen (WRP) replied that on most of the tributaries the REC EWR are equal to the present day state and that it is on the main stream that the differences are shown. Mr Louis van Rooyen stated that in his mind all rivers should contribute to the EWRs. Mr Pieter van Rooyen said that the next round of scenarios will show a split between the different requirements, including the requirements for EWRs.</i>	
9e	<i>Mr Louis van Rooyen (Letaba Water Users Association) commented that the irrigators have already imposed a stringent operating rule to ensure assurance of supply at about 55%. He said there is no water for any further exports as the system cannot even provide for the needs in its catchment area. If irrigators want higher assurances, they will have smaller allocations.</i>	
9f	<i>Mr Isaac Nyatlo (DWA) asked if the water allocated for urban equals water for domestic use. Mr Pieter van Rooyen (WRP) responded that it is equal and that the full allocation to the irrigation sector was used in the scenarios and he stated that if abstractions are made in excess of the allocations, the available yield will be reduced much sooner and any transfers from the system will also result in a deficit much sooner. He mentioned that all transfer allocations in and out of the system that is currently taking place were considered in the development of the scenarios. He commented that the proposed construction of Nwamitwa Dam provides for sufficient water to allocate for EWRs (Ecological Water Requirements) in the system.</i>	

9g	<i>Mr Archinton Thobejane (DWA) asked whether the information presented at this meeting and eventually the Reconciliation Strategy will feed into the Reconciliation Strategy for the Olifants River system? Mr Tendani Nditwani (DWA) responded that under the item 12 GENERAL it will be explained that the Letaba and Olifants will become one Water Management Area and he added that the information of these Reconciliation Strategies will be linked.</i>	
9h	<i>Mr Andre Venter (Letaba Water Users Association) asked if the yield reflected in the presentations for the Ebenezer Dam is part of the new hydrology results. Mr Bennie Haasbroek said yes, it is indeed part of the new results which were obtained from abstraction details since 1990 and it seems that the self-imposed operating rule does not influence the firm yield of the dam.</i>	
9i	<i>Mr HP Chauke (Shingwedzi sub-catchment and Letaba catchment forums) commented on the spelling of the word Nwamitwa. Mr Ockie van den Berg (DWA) responded that the Department was made aware of a different spelling of the name at the Project Steering Committee meeting held on 31 October 2013 for the Water Resources Classification project for the Letaba catchment; however the authenticity of the suggestion is now being investigated. Mr Tendani Nditwani (DWA) commented that the name has been used as is throughout the studies for the Groot Letaba Water Project (GLEWAP) and Mr Van den Berg added that the Chief who was involved in the GLEWAP study is a Member of Parliament who has never commented on the spelling of the name. Mr Louis van Rooyen commented that a final name for the proposed Nwamitwa Dam will still be chosen and Mr Van den Berg added that the name will be changed once it has been constructed.</i>	
9j	<i>Mr Dzaga Azwihangwisi (DWA) said that the allocations for Dap Naude Dam are different than reflected in the presentation and that the study team should contact him for further discussions.</i>	
10.	LINKAGES WITH OTHER PROCESSES OR INITIATIVES IN THE STUDY AREAS	
10.1	Classification of water resources and the determination of Resource Quality Objectives in the Letaba catchment	
	<i>Mr Rufus Nengovhela (DWA) provided an overview on the status of the classification of water resources and the determination of Resource Quality Objectives in the Letaba catchment. He reminded the members that a Project Steering Committee meeting for the classification study was held on 31 October 2013 where feedback was provided on the Ecological Water Requirements which have been determined, as well as the operational scenarios which were presented. He explained that the operational scenarios were determined by work of this SSC committee and emphasised the linkage between the different DWA studies in the Letaba catchment.</i>	
10.2	Groot Letaba River Water Development Project (GLeWaP)	
	<p><i>Mr Ockie van den Berg (DWA) stated that the Minister of Environmental and Water Affairs approved the implementation of the Groot Letaba Water Development Project (GLeWaP) and a notice in accordance with Section 110 of the National Water Act declaring the Minister's intent to implement the GLeWaP was gazetted on 21 December 2012. The purpose of the project is:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>To meet the projected growing primary water requirements to a 20 year planning horizon at an acceptable assurance of supply in parts of the Mopani District Municipality, and specifically the Greater Tzaneen and Greater Letaba Local Municipalities.</i> <i>To prevent further degradation of the riverine ecosystem by implementing the recently signed-off preliminary Reserve determined in compliance with the National Water Act.</i> <i>To minimize further lowering of the assurance of availability of water supplies to the irrigation sector for the existing development.</i> <i>To make water available for the establishment of resource-poor farmers in the irrigated agriculture sector.</i> 	

	<p><i>The GLeWaP consists of the following infrastructure components:</i></p> <p><i>The raising of the existing Tzaneen Dam by 3m to improve the assurance of supply;</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>A new major storage dam on the Groot Letaba River just downstream of the Nwanedzi River confluence, at the site known as Nwamitwa on Janetsi Farm 463LT (Nwamitwa Dam).</i> <i>Development of bulk potable water supply infrastructure mainly to serve rural communities without adequate water supplies.</i> <p><i>It is envisaged that the first water will be stored in Nwamitwa Dam by 2019.</i></p>	
10.3	Verification and validation	
	<p><i>Mr Andries Munzhedzi (DWA) gave an overview of the background of the project to verify and validate water use in the Letaba and Luvuvhu catchment. He stated progress made thus far with the study as follows:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>It was decided to complete the Validation and Verification for the top 600 users for irrigation and the top 313 users for SFRA (Stream Flow Reducing Activities) before the contract with a professional service provider ends at the end of 2013.</i> <i>80% of the registered volume for irrigation is used by 600 water users.</i> <i>80% of the registered volume SFRA users are used by 313 water users.</i> <p><i>He said that user responses are few and that provides many challenges towards finalising the information for the study. The remaining 20% of the registered volume must still be recalculated, the Existing Lawful Use be determined and the section 35 process completed.</i></p>	
	Discussion	
	<p><i>Mr Andre Venter (Letaba Water Users Association) commented that the contract to the Professional Service Provider ends at the end of 2013 and he said that with the amount of information outstanding the process cannot be completed by the end of 2013. Mr Andries Munzhedzi responded that a submission was made to the DWA Head Office and some feedback should be received soon. He concluded that due to the challenges experienced the contract will not be completed by the end of 2013.</i></p>	
10.4	Continuation of the Olifants River Reconciliation Strategy	
	<p><i>Mr Tendani Nditwani (DWA) gave an overview of the progress made with the maintenance of the Reconciliation Strategy for the Olifants River. He said a strategy was developed and completed in 2012 and is currently in its first phase of implementation and maintenance. The linkages with the Letaba Luvuvhu study were highlighted.</i></p>	
11.	SSC TERMS OF REFERENCE, COMMUNICATION AND MEMBERSHIP	
	<p><i>Members of the SSC were invited to suggest changes to the terms of reference of the SSC and to introduce new members that could be invited to become involved.</i></p>	
12.	GENERAL	
12.1	<p>Catchment Management Agency (CMA)</p> <p><i>Mr Nditwani explained that the country was divided into 19 Water Management Areas (WMAs), but that the arrangement has changed and that 9 WMAs are proposed. With this new arrangement the Luvuvhu catchment will become part of the Limpopo catchment to form a WMA and the Letaba catchment will become part of the Olifants catchment to form a WMA.</i></p>	

12.2	Revision of the Water Policy <i>A draft new Water Policy was published (Government Notice 888 of 2013, in Government Gazette no 36798 dated 20 August 2013) for comment and response from the Minister of Environment and Water Affairs is awaited. The revised draft policy, amongst other, does not allow for water trading between users. The draft policy can be viewed at: http://www.dwa.gov.za/Documents/NWPR.pdf. The objective with the review process is to combine the National Water Act and Water Services Act into one, so that the Department of Water Affairs can manage from source to tap and from tap to source.</i>	
12.2	National Water Resources Strategy (NWRS) <i>The second and supplementary version of the National Water Resources Strategy (NWRS) was published and is available on the DWA web site</i>	
12.3	Pricing of water <i>Pricing of water is under review and announcements on a new process can be expected soon.</i>	
12.4	<i>Operating Rules for the Letaba catchment will be revisited next year. Existing rules will be reviewed and where there are no rules, new arrangements will be suggested. The process will allow for the public to be engaged and feedback will be provided to the members of the SSC.</i>	
	Discussion	
	<i>Mr HP Chauke (Shingwedzi sub-catchment and Letaba catchment forums) appealed for arrangements to transport those who would like to attend the meeting but that do not have transport. Mr Tendani Nditwani (DWA) said that due to economic constraints payment for transport is a challenge. He added that the study team rely on the municipalities and members of the SSC to ensure that they represent stakeholders and that the discussions on the SSC filter through to those that are not able to attend the meetings.</i>	
13.	DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING	
	<i>The next SSC meeting will be taking place in May 2014. A suggested date will be circulated. All members agreed that the next SSC meeting should again be held at Tzaneen Country Lodge as the venue is centrally located.</i>	
14.	WAY FORWARD AND CLOSURE	
	<i>Mr Nditwani ended the proceedings by providing a recap of what was discussed during the meeting. He said that the study team will circulate documentation on a preliminary reconciliation strategy for the Luvuvhu during the first quarter of 2014. He thanked all members on behalf of the DWA for their attendance and contributions towards meeting the objectives of the study.</i>	

Appendix A: Attendnace

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