



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Directorate: National Water Planning

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

STUDY STEERING COMMITTEE – MEETING 5

Draft Minutes

DATE: Friday, 20 June 2014
TIME: 09:00 – 13:00
VENUE: Tzaneen Country Lodge, Tzaneen

| 1. | WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION | ACTION |
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| | <p>The Chairperson and Study Manager, Mr Tendani Nditwani (Department: of Water and Sanitation (DWS)) welcomed all members to the fifth meeting of the Study Steering Committee (SSC) for the development of the Luvuvhu and Letaba Water Supply System Reconciliation Strategy (LLRS).</p> <p>He advised all members of the committee that this meeting was the last meeting of the SSC since the work of the committee is nearing its end with the completion of the proposed Reconciliation Strategy. He also made members aware of the new demarcation of Water Management Areas (WMAs) and said that in future the Letaba catchment will be part of the Olifants WMA and the Luvuvhu catchment will be part of the Limpopo WMA. He assured the meeting that these new arrangements will not have an impact on the finalisation of the strategy.</p> <p>Mr Nditwani also reminded members of the department's name change – from the Department: of Water Affairs to the Department: of Water and Sanitation (DWS). Although the departmental logo has not changed <u>yet</u>, the new name is in use and the inclusion of sanitation services is being internalised <u>d</u> within the department.</p> <p>Mr Nditwani thanked all members of the SSC for their attendance and invited contribution to the compilation of the proposed strategy which is in the last stages of its development. He mentioned that the study will be followed up by a maintenance study which will assist to implement the recommendations of the Reconciliation Strategy.</p> <p>(All presentations presented at the meeting will be saved on the DWS web site. Visit the study website http://www.dwa.gov.za/Projects/Luvuvhu/default.aspx for more information.)</p> | |
| 2. | ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES | |
| | Appendix A provides a list of attendants and apologies received. | |
| 3. | MEETING OBJECTIVES | |
| | <p>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 DWS and key stakeholders.</p> <p>He stated that after the finalisation of the Reconciliation Strategy a continuation study (<u>also</u> known as a maintenance study) will commence and the identified measures will be implemented as part of the <u>maintenance study</u>. <u>and that further Stakeholder participation in the Strategy Steering Committee</u> will be required for <u>this the continuation taskstudy</u>.</p> <p>Mr Nditwani asked all members to focus on the main objective of this meeting – to discuss the proposed Reconciliation Strategy. He said that the proposed strategy as presented at the meeting will be compiled in a document and that this report will be sent to all members of the</p> | |

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| | SSC committee for review and comment. | |
| 4. | ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA | |
| | The agenda was accepted. | |
| 5. | APPROVAL OF MINUTES | |
| | The minutes were approved with the correction of a few spelling errors and typographical changes. | |
| 6. | MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES (SSC 4 ON 21 November 2013) | |
| | There were no matters arising which were not covered by an item on the agenda. | |
| 7. | STATUS AND RECAP SINCE THE PREVIOUS MEETING | |
| | Mr Tendani Nditwani (DWS) presented the history and the milestones reached in this study, the steps taken thus far as well as an overview of the progress made. He reminded stakeholders that this was the last SSC meeting and that comments from all are welcome in the finalisation of the strategy. | |
| 8. | PROGRESS ON STUDY TASKS | |
| 8.1 | Overview | |
| | Mr Manie Maré (Study Team) informed members of the progress made with the various tasks in the study and focussed on tasks completed and tasks still in progress. He said the study is on time and that satisfactory progress is being made. He presented a list of all the available reports and reminded members that the draft reports were sent to them for their comments. Reports can also be accessed on the web site. | |
| 9. | PROPOSED RECONCILIATION STRATEGY | |
| | Mr Pieter van Rooyen and Mr Manie Maré (Study Team members) presented the proposed Reconciliation Strategy for the Letaba Luvuvhu and Mutale catchments covering the following points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water requirement scenarios • Yield analysis • Options for reconciliation • Water balance individual dams/systems • Reconciliation scenarios • Proposed Reconciliation Strategy • Recommendations | |
| | Discussion | |
| 9a | Mr Pieter de Witt (Limpopo Department of Agriculture) asked if the irrigation demand for from the Middel Letaba Dam is included in the calculations presented. Mr Pieter van Rooyen (Study Team) responded by saying that the balances that which were presented incorporate a small volume for irrigation. He further mentioned that the presented results show that all the available water from Middle Letaba Dam is needed for current and future domestic supply. Mr Ockie van den Berg (DWS) confirmed that there is limited water available in the Middle Letaba and Nsami dams to meet domestic water needs. He referred to an application for a proposed irrigation project that was not accepted due to the limited-insufficient water available in the system. | |
| 9b | Mr Pieter de Witt (Limpopo Department of Agriculture) mentioned that the Limpopo Department of Agriculture has recently done a groundwater study and enquired whether the desktop study done by the Study Team correlates with that information? Mr Pieter van Rooyen responded that Mr Karim Sami (member of the Study Team) has the information on groundwater irrigation use and that with the completion of the validation study in the area the information may be different change . Comments on the new information will be requested. | |
| 9c | Mr Toni Muller (Polokwane Local Municipality) commented that the understanding is that there is no more available water for the municipality's requirements, however the municipality is advised that available water from Dap Naudé Dam and Ebenezer Dam is not fully used. The municipality | |

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| | <p>has difficulty to understand the presentation delivered by the Study Team and the numbers presented in comparison to the information that was received from another consultant. Mr Pieter van Rooyen and Mr Manie Maré (Study Team members) explained that the dams cannot be viewed in isolation as it is part of the greater Letaba River system. The abstraction of water at these dams is already at their maximum. If it seems (from the figures presented) that there is some water available <u>in dam storage</u>, the <u>this</u> water is used for downstream support. Mr Louis van Rooyen (Letaba Water User Association) cautioned that the operating rules for each dam and the system should be considered as it provides certain assurances. He said that one user sector should not be restricted to the advantage of another sector user. He stated that the requirements of Polokwane and other users cannot be supported with the resources of the Ebenezer Dam. He asked that this be stated clearly in the proposed Reconciliation Strategy.</p> | |
| 9d | <p>Mr Pieter de Witt (Limpopo Department of Agriculture) referred to the information presented on the Magoebaskloof and Vergelegen balance with regards to the unused irrigation allocation and the requirements for domestic use. He said that what was presented shows additional water available for domestic use; however it seems that the water is taken from the irrigation allocation to farmers. He asked whether the additional water required for domestic use cannot rather be taken from the Tzaneen Dam or Nwamitwa Dam? Mr Pieter van Rooyen (Study Team) explained that the information presented shows results of what could happen if a certain scenario is followed – therefore it is a tool to assist decision-making. Mr De Witt said that his department has reservations with this specific information, and would request that a broader base approach is followed.</p> | |
| 9e | <p>Mr JP Shilowa (Greater Tzaneen Municipality) noted that the municipality has a challenge to support all the water demands in the municipal area. He said that the municipality has applied for additional water from the Tzaneen and Ebenezer Dams. The municipality would like to understand what resources are available to them to enable future planning. Mr Pieter van Rooyen (Study Team) responded that water was allowed to meet the growth expected in the Tzaneen municipal area. He said that a report with the information on demand and return flows was compiled and will be sent to the municipality for comments. Mr Van Rooyen invited Mr Shilowa to contact him for further discussions. Mr Louis van Rooyen (Letaba Water User Association) stated that additional burden cannot be placed on the resources of the Magoebaskloof Dam.</p> <p>Mr Andries Munzhedzi (DWS) explained that the water allocation to the Tzaneen municipality was done in the middle 1980's and since then the municipality has expanded its footprint over many private properties which it has bought. He said many of these properties had water allocations and he suggested to the municipality to investigate which of the properties bought after the 1980's had irrigation rights. Mr Pieter van Rooyen (Study Team) cautioned that irrigation rights cannot just be transferred to domestic needs as the level of assurance is different <u>(domestic water supply has higher assurance)</u> – therefore the volumes cannot of water for <u>irrigation must just be converted to equivalent volumes for domestic supply</u>.</p> | |
| 9f | <p>Mr Andrew Mongwe (Letaba Water User Association) said that the emerging farmers downstream of the Eiland holiday resort do not have water. Mr Pieter van Rooyen (Study Team) said that the water requirements for emerging farmers have been included in the balances and form part of the operating rule (policy). He added that in some cases the existing water allocations to emerging farmers are currently not used.</p> | |
| 9g | <p>Mr Willem du Toit (DWS) said that groundwater in the Letaba catchment is increasingly seen to be an option for utilisation, however he cautioned against the high levels of nitrogen in the groundwater in some areas, which he believes is caused by the impacts of poor sanitation on <u>surface ground and surface</u> water. He said that people should <u>guard-protect</u> their water resources against pollution and that treatment of water comes at a great cost. Mr Manie Maré (Study Team) responded that the groundwater specialist included the water resources and volumes of potential potable resources which could be harvested, by taking into account the water quality.</p> | |
| 9h | <p>Mr MJ Mahwasane (Vhembe District Municipality) said that there is a demand for water from agriculture in the Nandoni Dam area as well as for the domestic sector along the road to Punda Maria. He said that irrigation over the past two to three years in the Vondo Dam area is taking place and the full water allocation to that sector is being used. He asked that the town of Makhado be shown on the maps when the Nandoni Dam area is discussed, as the agriculture and other sectors are active in Makhado. He proposed that the construction of the proposed Rambuda Dam <u>(on the Mutale River)</u> should start sooner <u>rather</u> than later, as it will assist with the growing irrigation needs in the area of the proposed dam. Mr Andries Munzhedzi (DWS) reported that the Makhuvha community also requested a water allocation from the Vondo Dam</p> | |

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| | and asked whether their need cannot be included for the proposed yield potentially from Rambuda Dam. Mr Manie Maré (Study Team) said that the proposed dam (Rambuda) is upstream of the community and that if the downstream (alternative dam)(Tswera) is build, pumping water upstream may be too costly. Mr Pieter de Witt (Limpopo Department of Agriculture) said for the Tshiombo scheme the planting of one crop for the whole season is planned, however if assurance of supply can be somewhat higher, two crops per season can be planted. Mr Tendani Nditwani (DWS) added that sufficient information is required to be able to motivate the construction of a dam in the Mutale River. It is therefore very important that the Vhembe municipality and the Tribal Council provide the previously requested details on the planned future developments within the Mutale area to serve as motivation for a possible dam to be considered in the Mutale River system. | |
| 9i | Mr Pieter de Witt (Limpopo Department of Agriculture) said that the allocation from Nandoni Dam for irrigation will easily be taken up. Mr Manie Maré (Study Team) responded that this information was included in the current water balance prepared for Nandoni Dam. | |
| 9j | Mr Ockie van den Berg (DWS) commented that he is concerned about the proposed dams on the Mutale system as DWS has done studies in the past and the construction of a dam in the system then did not seem feasible. Mr Manie Maré (Study Team) responded that the Study Team is aware of the feasibility study that was done, but commented that the updated hydrology shows potential for higher flows and related yields, therefore making the option more feasible. He added that the previous studies showed there are foundation difficulties at the proposed Rambuda Dam and only a relative small dam can be constructed. He said the recommendation is to rather construct one dam in the system, which then could be the Tswera Dam just downstream that does not have foundation problems. | |
| 9k | Mr Witek Jewezki-Jezewski (DWS) cautioned that the Paswane and Xikundu dam options may <u>will</u> have serious environmental impacts as information is available on the Xikundu weir where a fish ladder already had to be constructed to ensure free movement of fish species. Mr Manie Maré (Study Team) confirmed that for this reason, these two options were not included in the proposed strategy, although they both produce high yields with low URVs. | |
| 9l | Mr Louis van Rooyen (Letaba Water User Association) asked what in the proposed strategy has been earmarked for international commitments. Mr Manie Maré responded that the calculations presented do not include any international commitments as such. Releases for environmental purposes were however included and should cover part of the international commitments. Mr Tendani Nditwani (DWS) confirmed and commented that international obligations still have to be negotiated and it is only South Africa that regards environmental flows. He stated that there are no agreements in the specific flows that should cross the border for international obligations. Mr Louis van Rooyen requested that the statement that no international obligations have been included in the proposed strategy be stated clearly. | |
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| 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 | |
| | Mr Rufus Nengovhela (DWS) presented an overview on the status of the classification of water resources and the determination of Resource Quality Objectives in the Letaba catchment. This study is reaching its conclusion and the results of the process were presented at a public meeting on 12 June 2014. The proposed Management Classes and Resource Quality Objectives will in due course be gazetted for further public review and comment. | |
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| 10.2 | Groot Letaba River Water Development Project (GLEWaP) | |
| | Mr Ockie van den Berg (DWS) reported that the position of the Project Manager for the project to raise the Tzaneen Dam wall is vacant and he is not sure when the position will be filled. He stated that the activities such as the design of the dam wall are underway even in the absence of a Project Manager. The Department of Water and Sanitation is responsible for the hydrological calculations and the building of the physical model which will be tested at the Department's laboratory by early July 2014. Mr van den Berg said that the Environmental Management Programme (EMPR) for the construction of the Nwamitwa Dam was resubmitted to the Department of Environmental Affairs and that the Department of Water and Sanitation is awaiting approval. He explained that the | |

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| | <p>approval of the EMPR is required for the geotechnical investigations to be conducted. The results of the geotechnical investigations inform the dam design. Tenders will shortly be advertised for the geotechnical work. All activities related to the geotechnical work will be planned in advance with the landowners.</p> <p>In terms of land procurement the department had to do several calculations to determine the back-water line. Mr van den Berg said that a land evaluator will be appointed towards the end of 2014. Consultation with land owners will take place in preparation for this step.</p> <p>A stakeholder meeting was held in April 2014 and issues such as the proposed venue of the construction camp, principles of employment and the project charter were discussed.</p> <p>He also said that the use of surface- and groundwater conjunctively will be investigated in more detail. He said that the feasibility study is underway to-for drilling and connecting wells to the proposed infrastructure that-which is part of the Nwamitwa project-Project and to look-investigate at artificial recharge of the groundwater sources. He noted that the focus will be more on passive recharge. He said the field work will start soon. The institutional arrangements with regards to the usage of the groundwater resources will be part of the work done for the feasibility study. He mentioned that the institutional arrangements are critical for the longer term success of such projects.</p> | |
| | Discussion | |
| 10.2 a | <p>Mr JP Shilowa (Greater Tzaneen Municipality) asked when will the construction of the Tzaneen Dam wall raising start? Mr Ockie van den Berg (DWS) responded that May 2014 was the starting date, but it has passed. He said that he is not sure-certain of what the new proposed starting date is. He said, as previously discussed, the water level of the dam will have to be lowered (to about 60% capacity) for the construction process and that will be communicated to downstream water users and landowners in time.</p> | |
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| 10.3 | Verification and validation | |
| | <p>Mr Andries Munzhedzi (DWS) gave an overview of the background of the project to verify and validate water use in the Letaba and Luvuvhu catchment. He stated a number of challenges that were faced with this project, among others the number of Return-to-Sender envelopes that the Department received back. He said the professional services provider's contract ends in December 2014 and that Departmental personnel are also being trained to further the work involved in the process of verification and validation. Mr Munzhedzi also said that it is proposed that when the contract term is completed to align the outstanding work with the process for the Olifants Water Management Area.</p> | |
| | Discussion | |
| 10.3 a | <p>Mr Louis van Rooyen (Letaba Water User Association) and Mr André Venter (Letaba Water User Association) noted that they received invoices from the DWS for water used, however no further communication from the DWS in terms of the verification and registration process. Mr van Rooyen mentioned that he visited the Department's Polokwane office to try to find out where the information is held up. Mr Andries Munzhedzi (DWS) responded that most of the communication is sent from Mr Venter and he requested Mr Van Rooyen to take up the matter with Mr Venter.</p> | |
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| 10.4 | Continuation of the Olifants River Reconciliation Strategy | |
| | <p>Mr Tendani Nditwani (DWS) presented the progress made with the maintenance of the Reconciliation Strategy for the Olifants River. He noted that a Reconciliation Strategy for the Olifants Water Management Area was developed and completed in 2012 and is currently in its first phase of implementation and maintenance. Mr Nditwani highlighted the fact that the Letaba catchment is to become part of the Olifants Water Management Area and therefore it is important that the Letaba stakeholders understand the linkage between these two catchments.</p> | |
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| 10.5 | Operating Rules for the Letaba Luvuvhu Water Supply System | |
| | <p>Mr Isaac Nyatlo (DWS) presented the need and mandate to develop and use operating rules to manage water resources (dams / groundwater schemes / both systems). He noted that the work done in this study will form the basis of developing the rules. He reported that the Terms of References for the Letaba and Luvuvhu River systems have been approved and that the procurement processes are underway. The Terms of Reference for the Annual Operating Rules for the Olifants River system is in the process of being approved.</p> | |

Comment [n1]: It cannot possibly be Mr André Venter of LWUA. Would it be Mr Jakkie Venter of DWS?

Comment [n2]: It cannot possibly be Mr André Venter of LWUA. Would it be Mr Jakkie Venter of DWS?

Comment [n3]: ToR for the Luvuvhu and Letaba Water Supply System Annual Operating Rules

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| 11. | GENERAL | |
| | <p>Mr Shilowa, (Greater Tzaneen Municipality) asked whether Tzaneen can be assisted with funding to comply to the required Water Conservation and Water Demand Management (WC/WDM) measures? Mr Tendani Nditwani (DWS) responded that funding of this maybe available on funding grants such as the Municipal Infrastructure Grant (MIG) etc. but this has to be investigated. Mr Isaac Nyatlo (DWS) advised that the municipality should keep the proposed funds to be spent on WC/WDM on the municipal budget. Mr Andries Munzhedzi (DWS) mentioned that the DWS has a budget towards water use efficiency at their national office. Mr Shilowa was advised to speak to a DWS official after the meeting.</p> | |
| 12. | DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING | |
| | <p>Mr Tendani Nditwani (DWS) explained that this meeting was the last Strategy Steering Committee (SSC) meeting for the development of the Reconciliation Strategy. A public meeting will be held towards the end of 2014 to present the final preliminary strategy to stakeholders. SSC members will also be notified of the date and venue of the public meeting.</p> <p>For the next phase of the study – the <u>maintenance continuation</u> phase, the Department will procure the services of a Professional Service Provider (PSP). A Strategy Steering Committee (SSC) will be established to guide the <u>maintenance continuation</u> phase and to ensure that the recommendations of the Reconciliation Strategy are implemented. Stakeholders will be contacted by the PSP for the <u>maintenance continuation</u> phase for the reconvening of the SSC. This <u>may-is likely-likely to</u> take place in September 2015.</p> | |
| 13. | WAY FORWARD AND CLOSURE | |
| | <p>Mr Tendani Nditwani (DWS) clarified that the comments from SSC members will be incorporated in terms of the finalisation of the preliminary Reconciliation Strategy. The strategy document will be made available for further comments before it is presented to the public towards the end of 2014.</p> <p>The following recommendations were made for follow-up work and future studies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider information from the water use validation and verification study as an estimate of possible unlawful water use. Commission Classification study on the Luvuvhu and Mutale rivers. Commission Feasibility studies on groundwater development in relevant areas. Continuous integration between Water Balances and water supply planning to water services schemes <p>Mr Nditwani thanked members of the SSC for their contributions and assistance in the development of the <u>proposed Luvuvhu and Letaba Water Supply System</u> Reconciliation Strategy.</p> | |

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Appendix A: List of Attendants

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