





Department: Water Affairs **REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA** 

## **RICHARDS BAY RECONCILIATION STRATEGY: MEETING 2**

## Minutes of the Study Stakeholder Meeting held on 06 February 2014 @ 10h30 at the office of Mhlatuze Water in Richards Bay

Item			Action
1.	WELCOME		
	Mr Niel van Wyk welcomed everybody to the second meeting of the Richards Bay Reconciliation Strategy Study. He asked all attendees to introduce themselves to the rest of the committee.		
2.	ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES		
2.1	Attendance		
	Mr Niel van Wyk	DWA: NWRP (East)	NvW
	Ms Zimkitha Peteni-Kave	DWA: NWRP (East)	ZP
	Mr Kobus Bester	D: OA	KB
	Mr Pieter Viljoen	D: WRPS	PV
	Mr Geert Grobler	W/R Planning Systems	GG
	Mr Celiwe Ntuli	D: WRPS	CN
	Mr Norman Ward	DWA: CE: KZN Region	NW
	Ms Angela Masefield	D: Water Regulation and Use	AM
	Mr Gibson Gumede Sc. Water Regulation & Use		IG
	Mr Sizwe Madlala DWA: KZN		SM
	Mr Thinus Potgieter	Thinus Potgieter     Mhlathuze Water	
	Ms Zama Zuma Mhlathuze Water		ZZ
	Mr Sagran Govindasamy	Tongaat-Hulett Sugar	SG
	Mr Johan Jacobs	RBM	JJ
	Ms Zodwa Mbuli	Mondi Richards Bay	ZM
	Mr Dinesh Moodley	Tronox	DM
	Mr Kalvin Govender	RBM	KG
	Ms Nelisa Dladla	RBM	ND
	Mr Erik van der Berg	Aurecon	EvdB
	Ms Ceridwen Salisbury	Aurecon	CS
2.2	Apologies		
	Mr Paul Herbst		
	Mr Beason Mwaka	D: WRPS	
	Mr Peter Ramsay	KBM	
	Mr Mpho Mothon	RBM	
	Ms Michelle Boshoff	RBM	
3.	ADOPTION OF AGENDA		
	The discussions of project management were deferred.		

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4.	BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY					
4.1	Background					
	NvW, the Department of Water Affairs (DWA) study representative, provided some background to the study and recapped the substance of the DWA presentation from the inception meeting:					
	<ul> <li>DWA is carrying out reconciliation strategy studies for the larger towns and cities in South Africa, some of which have been completed.</li> <li>In addition, overviews of water situations for towns outside the metropolitan areas are being compiled, the so-called 'All Towns' studies.</li> <li>Richards Bay, being a strategic industrial area, requires water augmentation options to accommodate future expansion.</li> <li>Although there is currently adequate water supply to meet requirements, it is necessary to identify the future augmentation options.</li> <li>The broader context must be borne in mind; that the area is not in isolation – for example taking into account other interests on the Thukela and Mfolozi rivers.</li> <li>Some distribution problems and shortages are being experienced in the area.</li> </ul>					
4.2	Study Objectives					
	EvdB summarised the study objectives, which are:					
	<ul> <li>To develop a strategy to ensure reconciliation of future water requirements within the uMhlatuze Local Municipality area with available supply up to 2040.</li> <li>That options available for addressing increasing water requirements be identified.</li> <li>That the study is to be completed by October 2015.</li> </ul>					
	EvdB noted that Aurecon has been appointed to support DWA in the development of the Strategy. The Strategy will be developed in close cooperation with Mhlathuze Water, uMhlatuze Local Municipality and local stakeholders. At the conclusion of the study recommendations will be made for further studies or other actions and a maintenance plan will be put in place to monitor the situation and to provide revision where necessary.					
5.	RELEVANT ONGOING OR PREVIOUS STUDIES					
	EvdB gave a brief outline of other relevant studies and indicated that sourcing of the reports and information of such studies are in progress.					
5.1	Mhlathuze Water Availability Assessment Study (MWAAS), including updated system modelling					
	This study has the most updated detailed hydrology and system information for the Mhlathuze region. The water balance will be based on this information.					
5.2	Ongoing Classification Study					
	Clarity is required on the state and progress of this study.					
5.3	Ongoing All Towns support study					
	This study could form the existing baseline study for the area. It provides information about the water balance, schemes and options for future supply. The quality of the information may however need to be improved.					
5.4	Ongoing Verification and Validation study/ Compulsory Licensing					
	This study is concerned with the determination of current water allocations and the reallocation to more suitable quantities, as well as the licensing of companies for water allocations. NW indicated that he could provide this document. a draft of which has been					

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	published. NvW noted that the catchment is over-allocated, but that the allocations are under-utilised – one of the purposes of this study is to correct these allocations to realistic quantities. It was noted that the study is continuing, despite having been suspended for some time. Further clarification regarding this study is required.			
5.5	Northern KwaZulu-Natal Water Resources study including the Mfolozi catchment			
	This study has not commenced as yet, and may in fact use information from the Reconciliation Strategy Study rather than vice versa.			
5.6	Groundwater resource assessments			
	The groundwater sub-consultant, Geomeasure, will source this information. It was noted that the municipality does abstract groundwater. Many groundwater users are not registered, and the rectification of this is in part the reason for the compulsory licensing process. Groundwater users are required to register their use.	Geome asure		
	NvW noted that it is preferable to move away from the use of groundwater in this area, as some lakes are fed by groundwater, and the mechanism of groundwater movement is often not fully understood. The issue of groundwater management is important but may not be addressed in this study.			
5.7	uMhlathuze Municipality Water Efficiency Plan			
	In the event that it is not possible to source this Plan, Aurecon will liaise with stakeholders to obtain efficiency plans for all the major water users, so that a composite efficiency plan for the area can be compiled. JJ of RBM indicated that a visit by Aurecon to RBM to establish their water requirements and potential expansion would be welcomed. NW indicated that he would be interested in taking part. Such a visit will be arranged.	CS		
5.8	Other relevant studies or information			
	Studies concerning the Reserve will be added to the list of references.			
	Other studies provided in the TOR and listed in the agenda for this meeting are also in the process of being sourced.			
	It was noted that information relating to the water conservation and demand management in Richards Bay and City of uMhlathuze may be sourced from Michael Singh in the regional office of DWA.	CS		
	It was noted that the Assessment of Lawfulness of Registered Water Use in the Mhlathuze Catchment (2005) may also be sourced in the regional office of DWA.	CS		
6.	DISCUSSION ON STUDY TASKS AND RELEVANT ISSUES			
6.1	Inception			
а	Draft Inception Report			
	This draft report has effectively been completed and will be distributed to all stakeholders for comment.	EvdB/ all		
	It contains the background to and need for the study, objectives, timeline and study area (that is, municipality and supply area). These areas will be defined and it will be identified if areas need to be expanded.			
b	Need for a visit to the study area			
	In order to get a better understanding of the study area and to collect information on water use, predicted requirements etc., a visit to the area will be undertaken by the study team within the next month or so (March). This will encompass some of the smaller towns included in the study area (Empangeni, Ngwelezana, Nseleni, Esikhaweni) as well as visits to major water users such as RBM and Mondi, and to the municipality.	CS		

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6.2	Water Requirements	
а	Urban/ Industrial	
	The study will explore how the industries may expand, and different future water requirements scenarios will be developed.	
	PV noted that in the determination of water requirements it is not only the volumes that are relevant, but also the water qualities required. Some industries have varying requirements of quality, and this may impact the potential viability of, for example, re-use as an option. In response to this and other comments it is being considered whether it would be useful to sub-divide the water quality requirements for industry into more than one tier.	
	NW mentioned that there is prospecting for an iron ore mine in the catchment in progress. If this should proceed there would be a high water requirement. NvW noted that this would not be in the study area, but might still have an impact. It was mentioned that the person to follow up with would be Ashley Starkey.	EvdB
b	Irrigation	
	It had been thought that some of the allocations for irrigation might be available for reallocation, but should a high-growth scenario be anticipated, this would not be likely. Some changes to land-use are being planned in Empangeni that might affect groundwater, and although this reconciliation strategy study may not include that level of detail, it is useful to have an understanding of the dynamics of the area.	
6.3	Water Availability	
	It is necessary to acquire and make operational the Water Resources Planning Model configured for the MWAAS. The potential for groundwater use needs to be revisited and a water balance compiled.	
	NvW noted that the MWAAS study does not provide a full understanding of the groundwater situation and that there needs to be a better understanding. This will involve recommendation and advice from groundwater consultants rather than more research, as far as this project is concerned.	
6.4	Interventions Evaluation	
	Interventions will include both supply-side and demand-side options. Supply interventions include augmentation from the Thukela River by increasing the current transfer, and the possibility of an increased transfer from the Mfolozi River, which required an improved understanding.	
	The potential that exists for a second water transfer scheme from the lower Thukela River, along the coast, into the Mhlathuze River catchment, was discussed. Mhlathuze Water holds an unexercised licence for abstraction, from the Thukela River at Mandini, which may be curtailed by DWA, if not fully utilised by 2015. NW noted that there is interest to move the point of abstraction for this allocation to the Middledrift Weir.	
	Groundwater needs to be further investigated, as discussed above, and re-use likewise. Re-use is increasingly important, especially when conventional interventions become limited. The potential needs to be identified and the cost evaluated. NvW noted that the cost differential between re-use and conventional interventions is decreasing as the development of surface water becomes more expensive.	
	Demand interventions include a variety of actions associated with reduced requirements. Efficiency plans and implementation thereof by users will be explored.	
	It is planned that all interventions will be evaluated to a comparable basis, associated yields or water saved will be determined, environmental constraints taken into account, and time frames established.	

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6.5	Scenario evaluation and Strategy development		
	Requirements and demand/supply options will be combined in different scenarios to meet potential future requirements and strategies would be developed to meet such requirements. The scenarios will include different combinations of interventions.		
	Different scenarios will be developed to evaluate options, and the findings of the scenarios evaluation will be made available for comment. From the scenarios, it will be determined what measures need to be taken now and what later.		
	Supply interventions will be evaluated in the Water Resources Planning Model to determine their various yields.		
6.6	Value of Water assessment		
	EvdB explained that this would entail the assessment of the financial and social value of water. This varies depending to industry type and how they use it.		
	NvW explained that this was a means of comparing the use of water in different industries, e.g. water used in industrial processes vs. water used for irrigation. After some discussion, there was agreement that this type of exercise had often been done and that the same answers could be expected, adding little value to the study. One of the adjustments could now be that that more emphasis would be placed on the social value in rural areas. It was noted that the Mfolozi could now be regarded a more desirable water source than the Mhlathuze		
	NvW further noted that the TOR was compiled a long time ago, and that the value that this task would add to the study should be reconsidered. The consultant team was asked to review this and to make a recommendation on an alternative approach. He further asked meeting attendees to consider other approaches that could add value to the study.	All	
6.7	Resource classification review		
	EvdB explained that the Institute of Natural Resources was included in the team to undertake a review of resource classification of water quantity and quality of the lower Mhlatuze River. NvW asked that an amendment be made to some of the wording under this task in the draft Inception Report.		
6.8	Reconciliation Strategy Report		
	It was explained that the Strategy Report will contain a summary of the tasks undertaken, as well as an action plan with time frames and responsibilities, and will be disseminated for comments before finalisation. NvW noted that it is important to consider the total water supply situation, although not necessarily in great detail.		
6.9	Stakeholder Participation		
	It was reported that the database of stakeholders is being updated from existing databases. The study team would also be responsible for providing technical input and responses to stakeholder enquiries during the study. Two newsletters will be compiled and disseminated to stakeholders during the study.		
	It was reported that engagement will be with the Mhlathuze Catchment Management Forum, as well as focussed liaison with specific key stakeholders. NW suggested that it might be possible to have a combined meeting with the different forums, giving adequate notice and specifically inviting stakeholders to the Forum meetings. This was regarded as a more effective approach than holding general public participation meetings. Progress updates would be given to the Forum.		
	PV suggested that the Sea Outfall Pipeline Forum also be involved, as they have an interest in the area. It however seemed that the Forum had been inactive for some time.		
	It was noted that the Mhlathuze Catchment Forum will have a meeting around the 19 <sup>th</sup>		

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	February and that it would be useful to make them aware of an information meeting, so that they have adequate notice. Jay Reddy at the DWA regional office could be contacted in this regard by the Stakeholder Process sub-consultant.	
	AM would help to ensure that the municipality is involved, possibly setting up a special meeting for this project. TP noted that as a significant stakeholder it is important that the municipality is involved in the study.	AM
7.	STUDY STAKEHOLDERS MEETINGS	
	These meetings would be held at approximately 2½-monthly intervals. Their purpose is to report on progress and to invite input and comments. NvW asked that relevant sections of the draft Inception Report be distributed amongst the stakeholders for comment.	EvdB
8.	GENERAL	
8.1	Re-use as an intervention	
	GG asked that further investigation be done to establish the costs of reuse for industry, taking into account improved processes.	
8.2	Contacts at various Stakeholders	
	SG of Tongaat-Hulett Sugar confirmed that he is the contact person at the Felixton Mill.	
	It was noted that groundwater studies are available from Prof. Bruce Kelbe at the University of Zululand.	
	The contact person at RBM is Michelle Boshoff.	
	The contact person at Tronox (formerly Exxaro) is Marius Vlok (035 340 8144)	
8.3	Quality	
	PV noted that the quality of water for re-use does not necessarily have to be high (for example, for irrigation uses). This means that the cost of re-use cannot be reduced to a single figure. Also, if treatment is to a high standard (tertiary treatment may be required in future), it might as well be re-used.	
	EvdB noted that a breakdown of their water quality requirements, where applicable, will be asked from major users.	
8.4	General Remarks	
	NW noted that it is important to know how quickly interventions can be implemented in case of a sudden demand.	
	Regarding the training of individuals in reconciliation strategy techniques, it was noted that this may be incorporated into a 'workshop' on 'semi-technical' aspects of reconciliation strategy. It was asked that suitable individuals be nominated for such training.	
9.	NEXT MEETING	
	The next study stakeholder meeting will take place on Tuesday, 20 May at 10h30 at the offices of the uMhlatuze Local Municipality, pending the consent of the municipality. It may be possible to combine this with the meeting for the conclusion of the water requirements task.	
10.	CLOSURE	
	The meeting was closed and all were thanked for their attendance.	

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