



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

INTERNET ARTICLE

WRC celebrates water as a Heritage Month issue driving the socio-economy of the country

22 September 2016

In celebration of the Heritage Month, the Water Research Commission (WRC) today held a dialogue to highlight how water is inextricably linked to the socio-economic life of communities and used it to galvanise delegates to employ indigenous ways of coping with the drought that presently grips the country.

Taking place under the theme: “Water, our common culture”, the Khuluma Sizwe Dialogue, which took place in Pretoria, was designed to celebrate heritage and to remind people of its importance in the past, present and future.

WRC Group Executive, Innovative and Impact, Dr Mandla Msibi said water was vital for life and therefore its availability has been a concern for the country throughout the ages, reiterating that the location of homesteads have been largely influenced by the presence of water.

“Whilst we needed to manage our water resources to ensure availability, we have managed water to find protection from its dangers,” said Dr Msibi.

He said the dialogue would therefore draw attention to the space that water has occupied in shaping both our heritage and how we could sustainably use our heritage sites for the benefit of society, economy and the environment.

Dr Msibi related a story of how, when he went to apply for an identity document he was asked what was the river nearest to where he was residing because in the rural areas there were no house addresses.

“This showed me how important the river from which I was drawing water was because by it I could tell where I was staying. This is a simple story but it goes a long way in emphasising the role that our rivers play” he said.

Hosia Sithole