



## water & sanitation

Department:  
Water and Sanitation  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

### INTERNET ARTICLE

#### **Water conservation taken to the next level**

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Awareness of the relationship between water resources and ecosystem health has increased recently and there has been a growing focus on how the condition in a river, wetland or coastal zone supports economic development and poverty alleviation.

It is a well-known fact that universal access to sanitation does not mean that everyone must be able to flush but rather that there is universal access to a more appropriate way of treating human waste – faeces and urine.

That is why new ways to meet growing water demands — such as desalination, re-use, replenishment of underground water and transfer between river basins – are being developed to complement conservation methods that have been in use for a long time.

The truth is that population growth including a rise in urbanisation and increased economic activities are key contributors to the growing demand for water.

This is the thinking of all various water stakeholders and the resources technocrats within the Strategic Water Partner Network (SWPN).

Various organisations within this voluntary yet carefully structured SWPN platform have embarked on ground-breaking initiatives which utilise lower quality water in the interest of preserving the country's water resources. Notable amongst these is Khumba Iron Ore's Sishen mine in the Northern Cape which is part of the Anglo American Group.

SWPN is made up of some of South Africa's most forward-thinking corporates along with the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS), municipalities, civil society and other stakeholders. Many of these progressive organisations have taken the lead in developing innovative, water-efficient solutions in the interest of sustainable socio-economic growth for the country.

**Ike Motsapi**