



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

INTERNET ARTICLE

VALIDATION & VERIFICATION OF WATER USE IN THE OLIFANTS

08 April 2016

The Department of Water and Sanitation is in the process of validation and verification of water users in the Olifants Catchment Water Management Area to ensure that all available water is accounted for in our water scarce country.

The department engaged water users and interested stakeholders in the Olifants Catchment to ensure that they understand the process and the country's water management strategy, as well as to introduce the appointed consultants who will assist the department in the process, Buhlebuyeza Investments.

Stakeholders in the middle, lower and upper Olifants were engaged through launch information sessions to ensure that all affected stakeholders are engaged and aware of the process. The stakeholder engagements took place from 04 to 08 April 2016.

In terms of Section 3(b) of Regulation 1352 dated 12 November 1999, a person who uses water as contemplated in Section 21 of the National Water Act, 1998 must when called upon by the responsible authority to do so, register the water use. The request for the registration of water use in the Olifants Water Management was published under Notice 32 of the Government Gazette, Number 21969 of 12 January 2001. The registration process required that all water uses, regardless of the legal status thereof, had to be registered. The only registration requirement was that it must be a use that existed, whether lawful or not.

The first step in the process is the validation of water use within the various water management areas. During the validation of water use, various sources of information will be used to determine the preliminary extent and lawfulness of such use and to identify unregistered water use.

The purpose of validation is firstly to determine the extent of water use as it existed during the period 1996 to 1999 (this is referred to as the "qualifying period" in terms of the National Water Act). Secondly, validation is crucial to determine the extent of the present water use and thirdly, the determination of the lawfulness of the uses. Water uses that will be validated



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are (i) the taking of water, (ii) the storing of water and (iii) forestry – stream flow reduction activities. The validation of water use can therefore be described as the internal and “informal” investigations undertaken by the department to determine the extent of water use. The validation of water use is necessary to identify unregistered water use and to check the correctness of registered use for the proper water resource management for the benefit of all.

Verification will therefore confirm the lawfulness of the water uses identified during the validation phase through a formal legal administrative process.

Water users are therefore encouraged to cooperate and participate in the process to ensure that our water resources are well managed in terms of the country’s water resource management strategy.

South Africa’s scarce water resources are under increasing pressure. We will have to use them efficiently, effectively and wisely if we wish to build a sustainable future.

Issued by the Department of Water & Sanitation

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