



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

INTERNET ARTICLE

KZN considers desalination

7 July 2015

The KwaZulu-Natal government is considering desalination as part of its strategy to solve its water challenges. The idea to build a large-scale seawater desalination plant is the first of its kind as smaller plants already exist in South Africa.

Desalination is a process that removes minerals from saline water. More generally, desalination may also refer to the removal of salts from the water making it fit for human consumption. At the moment however details, including building costs, designs, and timelines, are not immediately available.

This comes after the inception of a severe drought in KZN, including the fact that the water levels at dams like Hazelmere are very low. Severe drought has negatively impacted upon the province such that rivers and dams are dry.

KZN initially started with campaigns to bring about community awareness regarding water use, then moved to water rationing and is now faced with the reality of an emergency situation.

CoGTA has said that it will approach National Treasury for funding of the mitigation efforts.

However, concerns have been raised from several quarters that desalination is a very expensive option. There is also the issue that desalination requires and utilizes huge amounts of electricity. This is a critical consideration as South Africa is currently experiencing load shedding and power shortages.

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