



INTERNET ARTICLE

Progress towards full functioning of the Catchment Management Areas (CMAs)

04 June 2015

The Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) has a mandate to establish the Catchment Management Agencies (CMAs). They are to be established in terms of section 78(1) of the National Water Act (Act No. 36 of 1998).

The purpose of CMAs is to delegate water resource management to the catchment level and to involve local communities in the decision-making process. Water resource management is the foundation for both growth and development. It has to be managed properly to ensure socio-economic growth into the future.

Outlining the progress on the CMAs implantation status during the Water and Sanitation Sector Leadership Group engagement, DDG for Water Sector Regulation Mr. A. Singh said “the establishment of all nine CMAs is intended to be completed by 2016/17”. He said that the process has been delayed by various challenges which were dealt with swiftly and accurately.

According to the progress statistics, from March to July 2012 the establishment of nine CMAs and public consultation was approved. Also during that period a notice for public comment was published. In October 2013 to February 2015, five CMAs have been established and gazetted for public comment. These are Inkomati-Usuthu, Breede-Gouritz, Limpopo North West, Pongola UMzimkhulu, and Olifants CMAs. The Vaal CMA has been gazetted for public comment.

In April 2015, the Acting CEOs for Proto CMAs were appointed and it is projected that by same time in 2016, all CMAs will be fully operational. They will fully take their roles which includes management of water resources in a defined Water Management Area and co-ordination of functions of other institutions involved in water related matters.

Once operational, they will be fully functioning and responsible authorities. They will develop relationships and legitimacy. These include development and maintenance of stakeholder structures and engagements. They will be advising and supporting water use license applicants on the process and requirements.



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During the engagement, functions that will be retained by DWS were also highlighted. Long term retained functions include development, revision and amendment of policies and legislations. National water resource planning and reconciliation of supply will also remain under DWS.

Mr. Singh also pointed out that there is also a plan on change management and communication. "Communication and Change Management Plans have been developed to ensure smooth transition", he said. Change Agents together with Change Management or Human Resource and Communication have been identified and will conduct readiness assessment in all the provincial offices.

There will also be a continuous communication with staff regarding the progress of the process. This will be done via brochures and the departmental newsletter.

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