

Ten year plan to chart a way for water security and universal accessibility

The Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) is set to develop and implement a Water and Sanitation Ten-Year (10) - (2015-2025) - as the water and sanitation pillar of the National Development Plan (NDP).

This motion is part of many adopted by the Water and Sanitation Summit conference delegates at Birchwood Hotel in Boksburg, east of Johannesburg last weekend (1-2 August 2014.)

It is envisaged that the planning and adoption of the third National Water Resources Strategy (NWRS3) must ensure South Africa's long term sustainable water security in the wake of climate change and the expanded development needs.

The Water and Sanitation 10 year Plan shall have the following cornerstones: The development of an inclusive, empowering and integrated water and sanitation policy and legislative environment: An innovative and inclusive service delivery model driven by research and technology especially with regards to alternative solutions to ensure universal coverage, and; A novel public-private sector partnership that will both ensure optimum service delivery for all as well as developing a competitive South Africa Water Industry.

The Declaration's preamble reads as follows: "We the delegates congregated at this National Water and Sanitation Summit on the 1st and 2nd August 2014, in the Province of Gauteng; represented by over 400 participants from all nine provinces, key stakeholder groups including civil society, academia, the private sector, all spheres of government, state-owned enterprises and agencies, labour, as well as parliamentary portfolio committees.

Delegates recognise the crucial importance of water security and the integrity of the water resources and that access to water and sanitation is a basic human right, are determined to address water and sanitation challenges collectively and decisively. The summit also recognise the primary challenges facing water and sanitation in South Africa, and acknowledges the need for innovative solutions that will enable us to take a great leap forward as we collaboratively develop a long-term national vision for water and sanitation. Delegates are convinced that the country needs to bring about radical socio-economic transformation in service delivery.

The declaration also acknowledges the importance of doing things differently through communication and partnerships focusing on people-centred solutions; Fully conscious of the need to realize solutions in the identified deliberation areas of: meeting the service delivery challenge, enabling water and sanitation policy, developing and implementing water research, technology and innovation choices, enhancing the state of South Africa's water resources, understanding and defining the role of the private sector, and; therefore resolve to chart a pathway toward national water security and sustainable universal access to water and sanitation services within the longer-term NDP timeframe of 2030.

Ike Motsapi