



## INTERNET ARTICLE

### Water Quality and Water Quality Management Challenges in South Africa

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South African water is of good quality but there are major concerns in maintaining a consistent and sustained process.

This is according to the findings of a workshop held in Pretoria recently to identify and uproot causes leading to poor water quality.

The workshop was held at the Protea Hotel in Centurion, Pretoria recently.

The workshop, titled 'Developing Integrated Water Quality Management Strategies,' dug deep to find the factors that normally leads to our water being declared bad.

Some of the issues tackled included: Identifying and describing the water quality concerns; Review the geographic extent of the issues; High level prioritisation of the issues; Identifying root causes of priority issues; and Identify and describe future trends and their water impacts.

Water quality issues that nullify our water quality status are Salinisation; Nutrient enrichment and eutrophication; Acidification & acid mine drainage; Erosion and sedimentation; Urban runoff pollution, litter and solid waste; Microbial pollution, waterborne pathogens and human health; Agrochemicals and toxic substances; Dissolved oxygen and organic pollution; Trace metals; Hydrocarbon pollution; Thermal pollution; Nanoparticles and Radioactivity.

During a swot analysis it was discovered that the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) strength is the department is well placed and has all the necessary knowhow including abilities to rid all the negative perceptions about our water being of poor quality.

Some of the weaknesses recorded included the following: Slow implementation of National Water Resources Strategy (NWRS); Failure to implement Water Demand and Conservation Strategy (WDCS); inadequate implementation of sound policies and strategies; Slow CMA establishment processes until recently; insufficient succession planning and gaps created by loss of both experienced and recently trained staff. And; Lack of a customer service orientation in some regional offices.

It was also noted that DWS currently does not have active contracts with a number of private laboratories. Inadequate delegations within DWS with regard to WQ - suppresses innovation. Poor staff morale, leading to decreasing productivity, and there is also long delays in decision-making at most senior levels in DWS.