



**Keiskamma and Fish to Tsitsikamma Water Resource Classes, Reserve and RQOs Determination Hybrid Public Meeting**  
**Venue: Kelway Hotel, Gqeberha**  
**12 February 2026**

**Chairperson:** Ms. Ndileka Mohapi (DWS)  
**Agenda:** Annexure I  
**Attendance List:** Annexure II

**Abbreviations:**

- DWS - Department of Water and Sanitation
- DFFE - Department of Forestry, Fisheries and Environment
- EWR - Ecological Water Requirements
- GW - Ground Water
- RQOs - Resource Quality Objectives
- RU - Resource Units

	<b>DISCUSSION AND DECISIONS</b>	<b>RESPONSES TO ISSUES DISCUSSED</b>
<b>Welcome and introduction</b>	<p>The Chair, Ms. Ndileka Mohapi (DWS), welcomed all attendees and opened the Public meeting for the determination of Water Resource Classes, the Reserve and Resource Quality Objectives in the Keiskamma and Fish to Tsitsikamma Catchments</p> <p>Ms Mohapi noted that agenda and background information document had been shared ahead of the meeting and requested:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approval for recording the meeting.</li> <li>• Participants to introduce themselves when asking questions.</li> </ul>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participants to sign in on the chat with name, organisation and email address for record of those who joined virtually.</li> </ul>	
<b>Attendance and apologies</b>	<p>Apologies were noted for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mahashe Matome (DWS)</li> <li>- Heidi Jane Hawkins (Conservation Outcomes)</li> <li>- Dayalan Govender</li> <li>- Sandra Mutangadura (MISA)</li> <li>- Sinovuyo Mantashe(KSD)</li> <li>- Nanilethu Mvumvu</li> <li>- Joyce Loza (Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife)</li> <li>- Charles de Kock (Kouga Municipality)</li> <li>- Jackie Jay (DFFE)</li> <li>- Johan v d Mescht (Zutari)</li> <li>- Rob Featherstone</li> <li>- Fanus Fourie (DWS)</li> <li>- Barbara Weston (DWS)</li> <li>- Mathew Hills (Mandela Metro)</li> <li>- Phelisa Kwetani (Great Kei Local Municipality)</li> </ul>	
<b>Approval and additions to the agenda</b>	<p>The move for the adoption of the agenda was by Ms Mandy Miller and this was seconded by Ms Reinette Colesky.</p>	
<b>Purpose of the meeting and stakeholder involvement</b>	<p>Ms. Mohapi highlighted the purpose of the meeting and the importance of the contributions of stakeholders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inform and brief stakeholders on the progress, methodology and key outcomes of the Department of Water and Sanitation's study to determine the proposed Water Resource Classes, the Reserve and Resource Quality Objectives (RQOs) for the Keiskamma and Fish to Tsitsikamma catchments;</li> <li>Present the draft Water Resource Classes and associated RQOs for water resources within the study</li> </ul>	

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	<p>area. An example will be provided for the Swartkops systems;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain the technical basis and rationale underpinning the proposed classifications, Reserve determinations and RQOs;</li> <li>• Highlight the implications of the proposed measures for the protection, use and long-term management of surface water and groundwater resources;</li> <li>• Provide a formal platform for stakeholder engagement, allowing interested and affected parties to seek clarification, raise questions and submit informed comments; and</li> <li>• Invite stakeholder input on the draft surface water and groundwater Reserve gazette template and the Water Resource Classes and RQO gazette template, prior to their finalisation and publication in the Government Gazette as legally binding documents.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Presentation by the Department of Water and Sanitation</b></p>	<p>Mr. Lawrence Mulangaphuma (DWS) presented the background of the study.</p> <p>[Power point presentation is available online at <a href="https://www.dws.gov.za/RDM/WRCS/default.aspx">https://www.dws.gov.za/RDM/WRCS/default.aspx</a> and provided with the meeting minutes].</p> <p>In his presentation, Mr. Mulangaphuma highlighted the legal mandate, definitions, study process, study area, stakeholder engagement process and communication methods, progress and contact details for the study.</p>	
	<p><b>Comments and Questions:</b></p>	<p><b>Responses:</b></p>
<p><b>Presentations by GroundTruth Project Team</b></p>	<p>Ms. Kylie Farrell presented the study area and approach, summary of surface water, groundwater and socio-economic status quo, delineation of integrated units of analysis (IUAs), and priority resource units (RUs), focussing on the middle to</p>	

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	<p>western area of study area specifically for the Gqeberha stakeholder workshop.</p> <p>Technical presentations (rivers, wetlands, estuaries and groundwater) were then made by the project team on issues relating to Reserve Determination for Water Resources, Water Resource Classes, Proposed Resource Quality Objectives, and example of what you will see in the Draft Gazette for Reserve, Classes and RQOs.</p> <p>[Power point presentation is available online at <a href="https://www.dws.gov.za/RDM/WRCS/default.aspx">https://www.dws.gov.za/RDM/WRCS/default.aspx</a> and provided with the meeting minutes].</p>	
<p><u>Estuaries</u></p>	<p>Mr Gary Koekemoer mentioned that he didn't see the analysis for Swartkops and Sundays estuaries as there is a lot of information available and wondered how this was included in the study. Furthermore, he enquired where the study documents can be accessed.</p>	<p>Ms van Niekerk explained that the team did not repeat the study at Swartkops, as a comprehensive WRC study had been undertaken approximately two years earlier. Several team members had been involved in that study, and extensive data were already available. This information was recognised as important and was therefore incorporated into the current study.</p> <p>She further noted that a detailed study was not conducted at the Sundays Estuary, as a major study had been completed shortly before the estuary was incorporated into the Addo Elephant National Park. Instead, a smaller follow-up assessment was undertaken to identify any changes since the previous study. The findings informed revisions to the condition scores and updated the information from the earlier Sundays study.</p> <p>Ms Mohapi confirmed that the website where the project documents can be accessed is included on the agenda for stakeholders' reference.</p>

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		Ms Mohapi suggested discussion over tea break that followed.
	Ms Mohapi asked if there were any representatives from municipalities participating in the workshop as they are critical stakeholders but appear to me missing. There were no responses.	
<u>Wetlands:</u>	<p>Mr Sizwe Mkhulise referred to the presenter’s comments regarding developments in wetlands as a threat and highlighted that the persistent discharge of sewage into these systems is also a major and ongoing concern. He noted that this not only compromises the ecological health of the wetlands but also poses risks to the communities who rely on and use these systems.</p> <p>He emphasised that the Chatty River Complex is a key system of particular interest and asked what specific nature-based solutions or green engineering interventions—similar to those referenced for the Motherwell Canal—had been proposed that could potentially be applied within the Chatty River Complex.</p>	<p>Mr Ellery responded that there had not been sufficient time to identify specific interventions. However, he noted that there were clear opportunities to explore sustainable urban drainage systems, similar to those implemented at the Motherwell Canal. These could include extensive reed beds and swales to trap and slow down runoff from the catchment before it enters the wetland, thereby enhancing the wetland’s buffering capacity and, in turn, improving protection for the downstream estuary.</p> <p>Ms Mohapi added that this highlighted the importance of having all stakeholders in one forum, so that everyone is aware of one another’s roles and actions, particularly in implementing identified solutions. She emphasised that some interventions relate directly to urban planning, which is why local councils and municipalities are critical stakeholders who need to participate in these meetings and give due attention to the findings of such studies.</p>
	Mr Gary Koekemoer asked whose jurisdiction is it for the management of resources such as Chatty River Complex?	Mr Andrew Lucas responded that the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) is the custodian of all water resources. However, where a water resource falls within a municipal boundary, local authorities also have a clear interest and responsibility. He noted that streams form the building blocks of all water resources and, in the case of the Chatty River Complex, these streams are receiving effluent loads from treatment works, which must be addressed.

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		<p>He further indicated that he was interested in whether there was any risk of erosion resulting from slow leakages from the treatment works. Even if erosion was not occurring, he acknowledged that the discharge posed a threat to the river system and was unacceptable. He confirmed that the Department would take the matter forward, particularly given the increasing concern that sewerage is being lost within the system and not reaching the treatment works, and may ultimately be entering the Chatty River. The Department would therefore engage with the Nelson Mandela Municipality on this issue.</p> <p>Ms Farrell reminded stakeholders of the earlier slide on the Sustainable Development Goals, specifically Goal 17, which emphasises partnerships. She highlighted that while government departments have key responsibilities, it is equally important for all stakeholders to collaborate in identifying and implementing solutions.</p>
<p><u>RQOs</u></p>	<p>Gary Koekemoer enquired on what about monitoring micro plastics and PFAs?</p>	<p>Dr Mark Graham stated that the level of analysis required is highly sophisticated and that there is currently very limited capacity within the country to undertake such work comprehensively. As a result, the recommendations put forward represent a practical compromise based on what is presently feasible.</p> <p>He emphasised that this does not preclude revisiting specific areas in future, particularly where hotspots or emerging issues are identified. However, the intention was to avoid proposing a set of Resource Quality Objectives (RQOs) that would be unachievable or impossible to monitor from the outset.</p> <p>He added that there is a need to strengthen both institutional and technical capacity to enable more</p>

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		<p>advanced monitoring over time, recognising that additional dimensions still require investigation. Furthermore, historical data for much of the system were either unavailable or contained significant gaps. Nonetheless, progress is being made in this direction, and it is hoped that improved monitoring will support more refined analyses in the future.</p>
<p><u>Final comments and questions</u></p>	<p>Ms Mohapi explained that the project team presented an overview of the different scenarios, outlining the potential consequences associated with each option. They then described the process followed to determine the proposed water resource classes and the corresponding Resource Quality Objectives (RQOs). Examples were also provided to illustrate how the RQOs would appear within the gazette template.</p> <p>She clarified that the targets differ and that RQOs do not form part of licence conditions. Licence conditions set specific parameters that water users are required to comply with. In contrast, RQOs are intended to guide the Department of Water and Sanitation, including Mr Andrew Lucas and his team, in undertaking effective monitoring to ensure that cumulative impacts align with what was anticipated.</p> <p>Mr Sizwe Mkhulise noted that the Groendal Nature Reserve affords a degree of formal protection. However, he sought clarity on whether there is specific focus on management aspects such as fire management, control of alien invasive plants, public awareness and information dissemination, as well as erosion control measures.</p>	<p>Dr Graham responded that these issues had been discussed to some extent, particularly in relation to understanding where water demand within the catchment originates, such as from agriculture and irrigation. He noted that it has long been recognised that alien invasive plants can consume significant volumes of water, and that their impact on water availability is not negligible.</p> <p>However, he explained that addressing alien invasive plant management falls beyond the specific scope of the current project. Rather, it is more appropriately dealt</p>

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		<p>with at a broader catchment level, where the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE) can implement targeted alien vegetation control programmes as part of its mandate. He emphasised that such interventions are critical for improving catchment health and enhancing overall water resource sustainability.</p>
	<p>Mr Frikkie Rossouw noted that he was previously involved in the management of the Baviaanskloof catchment area under the former Department of Water Affairs and Forestry. He explained that the Eastern Cape Parks and Tourism Agency (ECPA) is now the management authority. In his view, the management focus has since shifted, with greater emphasis placed on biodiversity conservation as well as on safeguarding water production through improved catchment management practices.</p>	<p>Dr Graham responded that this cross-sector integration is critical. He emphasised the importance of recognising how catchment-based management activities—such as biodiversity conservation and land management—directly influence the condition and sustainability of water resources. He noted that aligning these efforts is essential to ensure that ecological objectives and water resource protection are effectively integrated.</p>
	<p>Mr Ncamile Dweni enquired on what the difference was between the Recommended Ecological Condition (REC) and the Target Ecological Condition (TEC).</p>	<p>Ms Retha Stassen responded that the PES represents the current condition of a water resource, while the REC defines the desired future condition determined during the classification process to balance ecological protection and socio-economic needs. The REC informs the setting of the Ecological Reserve and Resource Quality Objectives and therefore serves as the management target. During scenario and consequence assessments, various development or operating scenarios are modelled to determine the ecological outcomes that would realistically result; this outcome is referred to as the TEC. Where modelling indicates that the REC cannot be achieved under a particular scenario, a trade-off analysis is required to evaluate ecological losses against socio-economic benefits and to explore alternative operating strategies. If no feasible adjustments allow the REC to be met, a formal and defensible decision-making process may be required to revise the REC to align with</p>

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	<p>Mr Gary Koekemoer raised two questions. Firstly, he noted that approximately 50% of the city’s potable water supply is sourced from the river via the Fish Transfer Tunnel, which he understood to be in urgent need of maintenance. He expressed concern that if the tunnel were to fail, it could jeopardise half of the city’s water supply. He therefore asked whether such infrastructure risks are assessed as part of this process.</p> <p>Secondly, referring to Lara’s presentation, he sought clarification on the discussion around sewer systems and recycling. In particular, he asked for further explanation on the linkages with the estuary and whether any saltwater barriers are in place.</p>	<p>the achievable TEC, subject to appropriate stakeholder engagement and regulatory approval.</p> <p>Mr Graham added that Mr Koekemoer’s point raised an important dimension: while approximately 50% of the city’s water supply comes through the transfer system, a similar proportion is reportedly lost through leaks. He noted that this highlights another critical aspect of water resource management—namely, how efficiently the available water is being managed and conserved.</p> <p>Ms van Niekerk responded to the questions regarding wastewater and the estuary. She explained that although the wastewater treatment works are located further upstream, the discharge volumes are sufficiently high to influence conditions within the estuary. All three treatment works assessed were found to have an impact on the estuary, as they are not situated far upstream along the river.</p> <p>During engagements with the Metro, Matthew Hill confirmed that the Metro’s master plan includes the intention to decommission one of the smaller treatment works. There are also longer-term plans to upgrade and expand some of the larger wastewater transfer systems. Ms van Niekerk emphasised that the recommendations made in this study were not developed in isolation, but rather build on existing municipal plans and align with the Department’s mandate to promote wastewater recycling and reuse.</p> <p>However, she noted that the Swartkops system supports a wide range of users, including tourism, subsistence fishing, cultural activities and religious practices. For these reasons, improving water quality in the Swartkops</p>

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		<p>Estuary is critical. While it would be ideal to eliminate all effluent discharges, this is not currently practical. She also acknowledged that treated effluent can, in some respects, contribute to maintaining water levels within the system. Nevertheless, the recommendations place pressure on the city to improve the operation and management of its wastewater treatment works.</p> <p>Mr Andrew Lucas added that the Department’s Infrastructure Branch conducts annual audits and has identified the need for repairs to the Sundays Transfer Tunnel. He noted that the tunnel itself falls under the jurisdiction of the Free State, and that annual reports on the transfer system are prepared and submitted. The Department is fully aware of the tunnel’s importance to water supply in the Eastern Cape and monitors the system accordingly.</p>
<b>Way forward</b>	<p>Mr Yakeen Atwaru (DWS) reported that the study had been underpinned by a robust stakeholder engagement process, which has now been successfully concluded. He noted that this meeting marked the end of the technical phase of the study and that the process would now move into the gazetting phase.</p> <p>He explained that the proposed management classes and Resource Quality Objectives (RQOs) would first be gazetted for a 60-day public comment period. Mr Atwaru encouraged all stakeholders to make use of this opportunity to submit comments on the Gazette.</p> <p>Following the 60-day comment period, all submissions would be captured and presented to the Minister. Once the Minister is satisfied that the Department has adequately addressed the comments and concerns raised, approval will be granted for the</p>	

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	<p>final gazetting of the classes and RQOs. This will subsequently be followed by a similar gazetting process for the Reserve.</p> <p>Mr Atwaru reminded stakeholders that the link to the presentations and supporting documents had been shared in the meeting chat and is also available in the agenda document. He encouraged stakeholders to review the technical information carefully to inform their submissions.</p> <p>He concluded by quoting a proverb that reflects the principle of intergenerational equity: “We did not inherit our water from our ancestors; we are borrowing it from our children.”</p>	
<b>Closure</b>	<p>The Chair, Ms. Mohapi closed the second Keiskamma and Fish to Tsitsikamma Water Resource Classes, Reserve and RQOs Determination Public Meeting by thanking all attendees for their contributions.</p>	<p>Mr Graham thanked the DWS for their guidance and support to the project team during the study. He also thanked the whole project team for their commitment to the long project. He also thanked stakeholders for their contributions.</p>

## Annexure I: AGENDA



**water & sanitation**

Department:  
Water and Sanitation  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**Determination of water resource Classes, Reserve and Resource Quality Objectives (RQOs) for the water resources in the Keiskamma and Fish to Tsitsikamma catchment (WP11354)**

### PUBLIC MEETING: GQEBERHA

Date	12 February 2026	
Venue	Kelway Hotel, Gqeberha	
Platform	In person	
Time	08h45 for 09h00 to 13h00	
Chairperson	Ms Ndileka Mohapi	
<b>PURPOSE OF THE PUBLIC MEETING</b>		
<p>The purpose of the public meeting is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inform and brief stakeholders on the progress, methodology and key outcomes of the Department of Water and Sanitation's study to determine the proposed Water Resource Classes, the Reserve and Resource Quality Objectives (RQOs) for the Keiskamma and Fish to Tsitsikamma catchments;</li> <li>Present the draft Water Resource Classes and associated RQOs for water resources within the study area. An example will be provided for the Swartkops Systems.</li> <li>Explain the technical basis and rationale underpinning the proposed classifications, Reserve determinations and RQOs;</li> <li>Highlight the implications of the proposed measures for the protection, use and long-term management of surface water and groundwater resources;</li> <li>Provide a formal platform for stakeholder engagement, allowing interested and affected parties to seek clarification, raise questions and submit informed comments; and</li> <li>Invite stakeholder input on the draft surface water and groundwater Reserve gazette template and the Water Resource Classes and RQO gazette template, prior to their finalisation and publication in the Government Gazette as legally binding documents.</li> </ul>		
<b>AGENDA</b>		
08h45	<i>Registration</i>	
09h00	<b>1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION</b>	Chair
09h20	<b>2. ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES</b>	
09h30	<b>3. APPROVAL AND ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA</b>	
09h35	<b>4. PURPOSE OF THE MEETING AND STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT</b>	
09h45	<b>5. BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY</b>	Mr Lawrence Mulangaphuma
10h00	<b>6. PRESENTATION BY GROUNDTRUTH</b>	GroundTruth
	<i>Study Area and Approach</i>	
	<i>Status Quo Summary</i>	
	<i>Final Integrated Units of Analysis and priority Resource Units</i>	

10h45	<b>Tea break</b>	
11h00	<b>7. PRESENTATION BY GROUNDTRUTH: <i>continues</i></b>	GroundTruth
	<i>Reserve Determination for Water Resources (IUA_M01 – Swartkop Systems)</i>	
	<i>Water Resource Classes (IUA_M01 – Swartkop Systems)</i>	
	<i>Proposed Resource Quality Objectives (IUA_M01 – Swartkop Systems)</i>	
	<i>Example of what you will see in the Draft Gazette for Reserve, Classes and RQOs</i>	
12h30	<b>8. DISCUSSIONS</b>	All
12h45	<b>9. WAY FORWARD</b>	Ms Lebogang Matlala
12h55	<b>10. CLOSURE</b>	Chair
13h00	<b>Lunch</b>	

Background Information Document (BID) and reports are on the DWS website:  
<https://www.dws.gov.za/RDM/WRCS/kft.aspx>

**Annexure II: ATTENDANCE LIST**

**PLEASE NOTE** – personal information has been redacted from the attendance list below in line with the Protection of Personal Information Act No 4 of 2013, (POPIA), which came into effect on 1 July 2021.

<b>Organisations in Attendance</b>	
<b>In Person</b>	<b>Virtual</b>
Department of Water and Sanitation	DWS
Economic Development, Environmental Affairs and Tourism	Economic Development, Environmental Affairs and Tourism
Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality	DWS Eastern Cape
Agri Eastern Cape	Lower Sundays River Water Users' Association
Wilderness Foundation Africa / WESSA	Umzimvubu Catchment Partnership
Gamtoos Water	Nelson Mandela Bay Business Chamber
GroundTruth	GroundTruth
Mandy Miller Attorneys	
Kouga Local Municipality	
Eastern Cape Department of Agriculture	
Eastern Cape Parks and Tourism Agency	
Mzimvubu-Tsitsikamma Catchment Management Agency	