



WP11354

DETERMINATION OF WATER RESOURCE CLASSES, RESERVE AND RESOURCE QUALITY OBJECTIVES (RQOS) FOR THE WATER RESOURCES IN THE KEISKAMMA AND FISH TO TSITSIKAMMA CATCHMENT

TECHNICAL TASK GROUP MEETING: PROPOSED RESOURCE QUALITY OBJECTIVES

**ORGANISATIONS FOR THE K, L, M, N and P CATCHMENTS (Kouga, Groot, Gamtoos, coastal, Swartkops, Sundays, Bushmans, Kariega, Kowie)
- RIVERS AND DAMS ONLY**

**Venue: Dolphins Leap Conference Centre (Gqeberha)
04 June 2025**

Chairperson(s): Ms. Lebogang Matlala (DWS)

Agenda: Annexure I

Attendance List: Annexure II

PowerPoint Presentations: Provided with meeting minutes and provided in link: <https://www.dws.gov.za/wem/WRCS/kft.aspx>

Abbreviations:

DWS	- Department of Water and Sanitation
EWR	- Ecological Water Requirements
IUA	- Integrated Units of Analysis
PES	- Present Ecological State
PSC	- Project Steering Committee
REC	- Recommended Ecological State
RQOs	- Resource Quality Objectives
WUA	- Water Users Association

	DISCUSSION AND DECISIONS	RESPONSES	ACTIONS / MATTERS ARISING
1. Welcome	The Chair, Ms. Lebogang Matlala (DWS) welcomed all attendees and opened the third Keiskamma and Fish to Tsitsikamma Catchment Water Resource Classes, Reserve and RQOs Determination Technical Task Group Meeting.		
2. Attendance/Apologies	<p>Attendees' details were noted in the attendance register.</p> <p>Apologies received for the meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pieter Viljoen (DWS) - Andrew Lucas (DWS) - Cebisa Goboza (DWS) - Onesimo Notobela (Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment) - Cindy Bailey (Nelson Mandela Bay Metro Municipality) - Johan Kotze (Dutoit Agri) - Professor Janine Adams (Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University) - Wentzel Coetzer (Conservation Outcomes) - Bonani Madikizela (Water Research Commission) - Nicky McLeod (Umzimvubu Catchment Partnership Programme) - Dr. Mark Graham (GroundTruth) 	The apologies were noted.	
3. Acceptance of Agenda/ Additions to Agenda	The meeting's agenda was accepted without any changes.		
4. Purpose of the Technical Task Group Meeting	Ms. Lebogang Matlala (DWS) outlined the purpose of the Technical Task Group Meeting. She highlighted that the project is now at the RQO determination phase for the RQOs that will eventually be gazetted. The RQOs are determined from the water resource classes that have been set in the catchment. She noted that the RQOs need to be monitored and complied by to ensure equitable access to resources		

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	and that the resources are used and managed sustainably. Ms. Matlala highlighted that the purpose of the technical task group meetings is to consult with the stakeholders as the users of the resources to ensure that the RQOs are determined, defined and gazetted correctly. Ms. Matlala further noted that the sustainable management and use of the water resource is the responsibility of all stakeholders. All stakeholders (government, municipality, farmers etc.) need to work together to ensure that all water resources are protected and used in a way that will ensure that future generations have access to it, and that all people have access to good quality, clean water.		
5. Technical presentation	<p>Ms. Kylie Farrell (GroundTruth) gave a presentation on the project that outlined the project background (including the study area and the scope), an overview of the Reserve, classification and RQOs. Ms. Farrell and Ms. Retha Stassen (GroundTruth) presented on the rivers and dams results (draft RQOs) for the study in the K, L, M, N and P catchments.</p> <p>[Power point presentation is available online at https://www.dws.gov.za/RDM/WRCS/kft.aspx and provided with the meeting minutes].</p>		
5.1 Background, scope of study and study area	Comments and Questions: N/A	Responses to corresponding issues raised by stakeholders: N/A	
5.2 Overview of Reserve, Classification and RQOs	Comments and Questions: N/A	Responses to corresponding issues raised by stakeholders: N/A	

	DISCUSSION AND DECISIONS	RESPONSES	ACTIONS / MATTERS ARISING
5.3 What are RQOs and their importance?	Comments and Questions: N/A	Responses to corresponding issues raised by stakeholders: N/A	
5.4 Methodology to establish RQOs	Comments and Questions: N/A	Responses to corresponding issues raised by stakeholders: N/A	
6. Presentation of RQO results			
6.1 IUA_P01 and IUA_M01 (rivers and dams only)	P01 N/A M01 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is it the water quality of the Swartkops River that classifies it as a class III Integrated Unit of Analysis (IUA). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ms. Kylie Farrell (GroundTruth) responded noted that when looking at an IUA, all the river resources, the dams, the estuaries, groundwater and wetlands must be considered. She noted that although the river reach that was surveyed was in good condition (it was not too modified, flow and quality were observed to be good), there is illegal sandmining occurring downstream from the EWR site, outside of the Groendal Nature Reserve along the river. The sandmining is causing significant impacts to the health and integrity of the system from a quality and flow perspective. These impacts are subsequently having impacts further downstream on the Swartkops estuary, of which its water quality is further compromised by various dysfunctional wastewater treatment works. All of these factors are cumulative and are taken into consideration when classifying the system, hence the class III classification. 	

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	2. Ms. Reinette Colesky (Gamtoos Water User Association) asked if the reports are available and where they can be accessed.	2. Ms. Kylie Farrell (GroundTruth) confirmed that all reports, except for the Ecological and Socio-economics Consequences Report, are on the DWS website (the website link can be found on the background information document and the meeting minutes that are circulated to stakeholders). This report will be circulated soonest once approved by DWS. The next deliverable will be the Resource Quality Objectives (RQOs) Report which is still being compiled.	
6.2 Discussions and consensus on the proposed RQOs	Comments and Questions:	Responses to corresponding issues raised by stakeholders:	
6.3 IUA_ N01, LN01, L01, KL01 and K01 (rivers and dams only)			
6.4 Discussions and consensus on the proposed RQOs	Comments and Questions: N01 1. Ms. Rienette Colesky (Gamtoos Water Users Association) Asked if the study specifies the Present Ecological State (PES) and the Recommended Ecological State (REC). She asked how water users associations are to report on EWR requirements? If there are issues picked up by the biomonitoring teams, how long would the relevant institution have to go and rectify the issue.	Responses to corresponding issues raised by stakeholders: 1. Ms. Retha Stassen (GroundTruth) responded and noted that the reporting, monitoring and compliance forms the next part of the project and not a part of the current phase of the project. The next phase of the project will include monitoring and some implementation requirements and guidelines to meet the determined RQOs. She also noted that when the study team did the Ecological Water Requirements (EWR), both the PES and REC were determined. Ms. Stassen noted that the socio-economics were also included. Ms. Kylie Farrell (GroundTruth) noted that should there be any changes to	

	DISCUSSION AND DECISIONS	RESPONSES	ACTIONS / MATTERS ARISING
	<p>the PES, REC and/or EWR quantification, these will all be specified and finalised within the final Integrated Report due to be compiled towards the end of this study.</p> <p>LN01</p> <p>N/A</p> <p>L01</p> <p>2. Ms. Ilse Chilton (DWS) asked about the flows before impacts and if the study is working towards ecological restoration.</p> <p>KL 01</p> <p>3. Ms. Rienette Colesky (Gamtoos Water Users Association) asked if the data given excludes the availability of the water from the Kromme River. Ms. Colesky also requested that the reports to be discussed at meetings are provided to stakeholders prior to the meetings.</p>	<p>the PES, REC and/or EWR quantification, these will all be specified and finalised within the final Integrated Report due to be compiled towards the end of this study.</p> <p>2. Ms. Retha Stassen (GroundTruth) responded and noted that flow requirements are based on the flows before impacts. As there are water users, the study then checks the flows against the present day flows and with the present day surveys which are used to determine the PES. The study then determines if the PES needs to be improved or if it may remain as is. Scenarios are used to project future water use. She noted that the study is not working on restoration as such, however, it is working toward an optimum flow regime in which the ecological baseline will thrive or maintained in its current state.</p> <p>3. Ms. Lebogang Matlala (DWS) responded and noted that there was an intention to distribute the report prior to the meeting, however, it will be distributed after the meeting once it has been finalised and approved. Ms. Kylie Farrell (GroundTruth) responded and noted that the EWR report</p>	

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	<p>K01</p> <p>4. Mr. Namile Dweni (DWS) asked if it would be possible to receive a draft of the RQOs to be set soon to allow the monitoring teams to monitor as required.</p> <p>5. Mr. Sifiso Maseko (DWS) responded and noted that they will undertake the annual operating rules analysis later in the year and wanted to know if the EWRs will be available to include. He further responded to Ms Farrell's question and noted that the EWR programme forms a part of the monitoring team's functions. The team monitors the set levels.</p>	<p>and other reports are available on the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) website (link provided in these minutes on the first page and after the agenda).</p> <p>4. Ms. Adaora Okonkwo (DWS) responded and noted that there is a draft gazette in which stakeholders have 60 working days to make comments and recommendations after which the final gazette is released. Ms. Kylie Farrell (GroundTruth) responded noted that the gazetting period/timeline will potentially be brought forward (to approximately October/November 2025), barring that there are no unforeseen project delays going forward.</p> <p>5. Ms. Stassen (GroundTruth) responded to Mr Maseko's question and confirmed that they will be able to use the results from the draft gazette for his annual operating assessment and analysis. Ms. Farrell (GroundTruth) further enquired whether the teams are currently monitoring the operating levels, dam levels, etc.</p>	
7. Next steps for the study: Classification, RQO and Reserve Draft Gazette	<p>Comments and Questions:</p> <p>N/A</p>	<p>Responses to corresponding issues raised by stakeholders:</p> <p>N/A</p>	
8. Closure and thank you	<p>Ms. Matlala thanked all attendees for attending and closed Keiskamma and Fish to Tsitsikamma Water Resource Classes, Reserve and RQOs Determination Technical Task Group Meeting (Day 3 in Gqeberha).</p>		

Signed:

**Professional Service Provider: Dr Mark Graham
(GroundTruth)**

**Chairperson: Ms. Lebogang Betty Matlala
(Department of Water and Sanitation)**



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TECHNICAL TASK GROUP MEETING: PROPOSED RESOURCE QUALITY OBJECTIVES

ORGANISATIONS FOR THE K, L, M, N and P CATCHMENTS (Kouga, Groot, Gamtoos, coastal, Swartkops, Sundays, Bushmans, Kariega, Kowie)

RIVERS AND DAMS ONLY

Date:	4 June 2025
Time:	09h00 – 13h00
Meeting venue:	Dolphins Leap Conference Centre 35 Humewood Road Gqeberha 6013
Chairperson	Ms Lebogang Matlala

Purpose of the Technical Task Group Meeting

The purpose of this focused technical task group meeting with key stakeholders on the project is as follows:

- **Guide Stakeholders Through the RQO Determination Process**
 - Provide a detailed walkthrough of the methodology for establishing Resource Quality Objectives (RQOs), in alignment with Step 6 of the Integrated Framework. This includes defining RQOs with narrative and numerical limits and outlining implementation strategies.
 - Review the steps previously undertaken for the establishment of RQOs (Steps 1 to 5) as per the gazetted process for RQO determination.
- **Evaluate RQOs for Selected Indicators**
 - Summarise and discuss the proposed RQOs for each prioritised Resource Unit (RU) for rivers, wetlands, estuaries, groundwater and major dams within the respective catchment areas. This will involve analysing specific indicators and their relevance to the water resources under consideration.
- **Address Stakeholder Feedback**
 - Provide a platform for stakeholders to raise pressing concerns, ask questions, and seek clarifications regarding the proposed RQOs before they are finalised for gazetting.

Your participation in these discussions is vital to ensuring the comprehensive and effective management of the water resources in these catchments.

AGENDA			
1.	Welcome	09h00 – 09h05	Ms Lebogang Betty Matlala
2.	Attendance/Apologies	09h05 09h10	Ms Lebogang Betty Matlala
3.	Acceptance of Agenda	09h10 – 09h15	All
4.	Purpose of the Technical Task Group Meeting	09h15 – 09h30	Ms Lebogang Betty Matlala
5.	Technical presentation	09h30 – 10h00	Ms Kylie Farrell
5.1	Background, scope of study and study area		
5.2	Overview of Reserve, Classification and RQOs		
5.3	What are RQOs and their importance?		
5.4	Methodology to establish RQOs		
6.	Presentation of RQO results	10h00 – 11h30	PSP Team
6.1	IUA_P01 and IUA_M01 (rivers and dams only)		
6.2	Discussions and consensus on the proposed RQOs		
Tea/coffee break (11H30 – 11H45)			
6.3	IUA_ N01, LN01, L01, KL01 and K01 (rivers and dams only)	11h45 - 12h30	PSP Team
6.4	Discussions and consensus on the proposed RQOs		
7.	Next steps for the study: Classification, RQO and Reserve Draft Gazette	12h30 – 12h50	Ms Adaora Okonkwo
8	Closure and thank you	12h50 – 13h00	Ms Lebogang Betty Matlala
Light lunch break and close			

Website for Reports and Document : <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.

Organisations in Attendance	
Department of Water and Sanitation attendance	
8	Virtual
6	In-person
Stakeholder attendance	
<i>In-Person</i>	
Adv Jaques vd Merwe	Groenewalds
Department of Economic Development, Environmental Affairs and Tourism	Municipal Infrastructure Support Agency (MISA)
Department of Economic Development, Environmental Affairs and Tourism	Gamtoos Water Users Association
Department of Economic Development, Environmental Affairs and Tourism	
Kouga Local Municipality	
Kouga Local Municipality	
<i>Virtual</i>	
Department of Economic Development, Environmental Affairs and Tourism	Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment
Department of Economic Development, Environmental Affairs and Tourism	Department of Mineral Resources and Energy (DMRE)
Department of Economic Development, Environmental Affairs and Tourism	Lower Sundays River WUA
Project team attendance	
GroundTruth	In-person
GroundTruth	In-person
GroundTruth	Virtual