



## water & sanitation

Department:  
Water and Sanitation  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

### INTERNET ARTICLE

#### **DWS hosted a roundtable discussion on Water Pollution**

28 August 2018

On Tuesday, 28 August 2018, the Department of Water and Sanitation – together with the Water Research Commission – hosted a roundtable discussion aimed at preventing water pollution while also crafting control strategies. The roundtable discussion was inspired by the 2018 theme for the United World Environment Day on beating plastic pollution – which goes beyond just plastic pollution to tackle even broader issues, such as pollution of water resources.

Opening the discussion, the Chief Operation Officer, Ms Nthabiseng Fundakubi, explained the importance of the discussion, saying that it aimed to stimulate and share experiences on approaches currently implemented by different government departments to prevent and control water pollution.

She added that this would help policy implementers share different perspectives on existing regulatory tools, while strengthening the intervention support programme on water quality management.

Ms Fundakubi said South Africa is facing a multi-faceted water challenge, which – if not addressed effectively – has a potential to significantly limit economic growth, especially considering the levels of water scarcity in the country.

She said these discussions would also expand the network of water quality management champions, and provide an opportunity for creating meaningful collaborations within government to maximise impact.

“Pollution means the direct or indirect alteration of the physical, chemical or biological properties of a water resource to make it less fit for any beneficial purpose for which it may be used,” said Ms Fundakubi.

She said: “Pollution prevention is part of protecting our water resources, particularly where water resources may become polluted or have become polluted as a result of land activities.”

Mr Marius Keet, from Integrated Water Quality Management, said water quality management in South Africa, previously uniform effluent standards approach using the general and special effluent standards and currently receiving water quality objectives approach focussing on the fundamental water quality management goals.

“The strengthening of the water quality management function, by assigning and coordinating appropriate roles and responsibilities to all in the sector towards implementing various measures and associated actions, will also improve our information management system, and thus enable a more integrated approach in water quality management,” said Mr Keet.

**Khulekani Ngcobo**