



**water & sanitation**

Department:  
Water and Sanitation  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

## INTERNET ARTICLE

### **South Africa and Swaziland celebrates 25 years of Kobwa**

28 February 2018

The Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) joined forces with the Kingdom of Swaziland and the Republic of Mozambique to celebrate 25 years of trans-boundary water management by the Komati Water Basin Authority (KOBWA) on 27 February 2018 at the Emnotweni Arena in the City of Mbombela in the Mpumalanga Province.

The celebrations were led by the Deputy Minister of Water and Sanitation, Ms Pam Tshwete and the Minister of Mineral Resources and Energy in Swailand, Ms Jabulile Mashwama. Mozambique was represented by the office of the High Commissioner.

The Komati Basin Water Authority (KOBWA) celebrates 25 years of excellent integrated trans-boundary water resource development and management in the Republic of South Africa and the Kingdom of Swaziland. KOBWA is a bi-national cross-border organization formed through the treaty on the development and utilization of water resources of the Komati River Basin signed by the Republic of South Africa and the Kingdom of Swaziland. The party states mandated KOBWA with the development of the Water Management Plan for Phase 1 of the Komati Basin Development Project which included the designing, construction, operating and maintenance of the Driekoppies Dam in South Africa and the Maguga Dam in Swaziland according to policies approved by the Joint Water Commission (JWC).

The KOBWA project has resulted in a number of improved infrastructure projects which has contributed to the socio-economic development of communities, water, food, and energy security of the Komati River Basin for mutual benefit of South Africa, Kingdom of Swaziland and Mozambique.



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In her address, Deputy Minister Tshwete emphasized the importance of continued cooperation as drought is still a challenge. “As we speak, water levels in the Komati basin are low. The drought we are experiencing has taught us some serious lesson in relation to the need of water storage”.

She also alluded to the benefits for the communities in Nkomazi Local Municipality. The communities benefited in terms of infrastructure; such as roads, houses, community halls and the water treatment plant which ensures access to clean potable water to the communities in the surrounding villages around the Driekoppies Dam.

The Deputy Minister further emphasized the importance of operations and maintenance. “Budget for maintenance must always be there all the time. Most projects fail because of the lack of maintenance”, she said.

Minister of Natural Resources and Energy in Swaziland, Ms Jabulile Mashwama emphasized the continued relationships and commitments of the governments in the treaty. She further highlighted the benefits of KOBWA for the development of the socio-economic development of the people of Swaziland. “Through KOBWA, our people have seen improvements in their socio-economic standing through infrastructure like roads, houses, community halls and clinics. The Maguga dam has increased assurance of water supply, especially for the sugar cane industry which has led to increased job opportunities for the local communities”, she said.

The Ministers wished KOBWA a bright future and encouraged that it increases its footprint to be a learning hub for the region and the world.

**Themba Khoza**