

# MEDIA RELEASE



*Viva Water Pure and Clean Viva Forests Rich and Green*  
Department of Water Affairs and Forestry - Chief Directorate: Communication  
Services

**AMANZI AYIMPILO – WATER IS LIFE**

**National Water Week 2001**

## **Water is Life**

National Water Week 2001 will be celebrated during 19 – 25 March 2001, a significant week that includes Human Rights Day on 21 March and World Water Day on 22 March.

As custodian of this awareness week, the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry (DWAFF) is encouraging all South Africans to focus on the need to restore and preserve the integrity of our most precious resource, water. We have a responsibility to make sure this scarce resource is managed in an effective and sustainable manner.

To bring this message to all citizens, the Department has launched a national campaign involving national and provincial events as well as a massive awareness campaign. The importance of water as a life-giving resource has been thrust into the forefront over the past few months by the Cholera scourge that is gripping the country. This has highlighted the need for awareness to be raised and for people to be educated about adequate sanitation, health and hygiene.

The slogan for National Water Week 2001 is, therefore, **Amanzi Ayimpilo – water is life.**

We are acutely aware, now more than ever, of the intimate link between water and health and that improved water quality, sanitation and personal hygiene significantly reduce the spread of cholera and many other water-related diseases.

The right of access to sufficient water and the right to an environment that is not harmful to health or well being are protected in our Bill of Rights. The Government is dedicating considerable resources to achieve these rights, but it is a process that requires the commitment of all citizens.

The theme for World Water Day 2001 is “Health a key to prosperity” and the focus is on water and health. The link between water and health presents a unique opportunity to encourage awareness raising activities around water's importance to health in the life of every person on the planet.

Given this background, National Water Week is an important annual event on the calendar of DWAF and the water sector in the country. It affords DWAF and its stakeholders the opportunity to undertake a national awareness programme, focusing on the value of water and the need for sustainable management, as well as:

- Realising the right of all South Africans to have access to water;
- Ensuring the protection of our rivers, streams and wetlands;
- Eradicating water borne diseases (such as Cholera), thereby reducing child mortality;
- Empowering communities, especially women in managing and improving their living conditions; and
- Highlighting the vital interdependence between the economy and our water resources.

National Water Week has grown over the past few years, with a number of national and regional events taking place throughout the country. DWAF will continue on this track of growth in 2001 by engaging in a programme of collaborative, innovative, and exciting activities in which the Department, communities, and stakeholders will participate.

**In conclusion, DWAF would like express appreciation to all our sponsors who supported this year's campaign, namely Eskom who are our corporate sponsor, Pick 'n Pay, Umgeni Water and Reckitt Benckiser (Manufacturers of Jik) our co-sponsors.**

**For more information, please contact:**

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