

## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

### **BATSA RECORDS 54.5% DECREASE IN WATER USAGE**

**14 March 2017**

British American Tobacco Southern Africa (BATSA) today said it had decreased its water usage at its major manufacturing facility at Heidelberg by 54.5% since 2011 following a significant programme of internal review and investment, interrogating each stage of the manufacturing process.

Minister of Water and Sanitation, Nomvula Mokonyane, visited the facility today to review the factory's water conservation efforts, accompanied by Adv. Hashatse, Chairperson of Rand Water Board, and Lesedi Municipality Executive Mayor, Councillor Lerato Franscina. The tour was led by Soraya Benchikh, CEO of BAT SA.

The Minister commended BATSA, highlighting that the private sector is fast becoming a reliable partner in water conservation. "This should not just be a courtesy visit, but should result in us sharing best practices and BAT as a private business contributing to the water sector in a positive way", said Minister Mokonyane.

This conservation achievement marks the culmination of a significant programme of internal review and investment focused on conserving water within the manufacturing facility. As part of the water conservation initiative BAT has reduced reliance on municipal water supply through interrogating each stage of the manufacturing process.

To introduce re-use and recycling of water which would have been otherwise destined for disposal, the facility has installed an advanced technology Reverse Osmosis and Ultra Filtration plant, combined with an activated carbon filtration system. This has allowed certain streams of used water to be completely recycled, representing a fundamental change in the way that the factory operates and heralding factory designs of the future.



Beyond recycling of commercial waste streams, the facility has also worked to incorporate rain water and 'grey water' into its water systems, reducing pressure on the municipal water supply and making full use of the resources available.

Soraya Benchikh, CEO of BAT SA, said: "We are pleased that our approach to water conservation in our Heidelberg facility has been recognised by the Minister as an example of responsible business in South Africa. We are passionate about giving back to the communities that we operate in, and our working in partnership with government and the public in water conservation shows what collaboration can achieve. With a water-stressed country such as South Africa, innovation in how we use, reuse and recycle water is critical."

The Heidelberg facility, housed in Lesedi Municipality is the 8<sup>th</sup> largest such facility in the world, accounting for a significant total production for both domestic consumption and export into the wide Southern African region. Minister Mokonyane said that she was particularly impressed by BAT's ability to innovate and adapt to climate change realities. "We are in a company that promotes rain water harvesting. They have been able to bring back 40 million litres of water back into the municipal supply system".

**ENDS**

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