



MEDIA STATEMENT

DWS celebrates World Water Day with Diplomats in the country

22 March 2018

Today, 22 March South Africa and the rest of the World is celebrating the World Water Day (WWD). Celebrated under the theme “Water for Nature”, explores the nature-based solutions to the water challenges we face in the 21st century”.

In commemorating this important day, the Department of Water and Sanitation, hosted an event to engage Diplomats from various states who are based in South Africa. The aim was to have a frank discussion on the current water challenges faced by the country and appraise them about the initiatives that government has taken to mitigate the effects of the prevailing drought conditions nationally and in the Western Cape in particular.

Alarmingly, we are celebrating this significant day at a time when some pockets of the country are facing severe drought recorded in modern history with Western Cape, Northern Cape and Eastern Cape being declared National Disaster Province as per the Disaster Act of 35.

In a climate change context it has become clear that dry seasons and below average rainfall are the new-norms and South Africa is not an exception to this. During these truly difficult and challenging times the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) operates its water supply systems in such a manner they do not fail.

There is currently a greater reliance on rainfall which brings inadequate rainwater capture in the dams which reduce water security. This greater reliance on rainfall can no longer be sustained. As a way of adapting to the climate change, the government is exploring:

- Desalination of sea water
- Groundwater optimisation
- Water conservation and demand management
- Re-use optimisation

As the national government we believe that strategic public-private partnerships remains key in addressing the water challenges. For this reason we continue to foster dialogue within the sector of how the different players can work together to come up with lasting solutions.

Despite these water challenges, South Africa remains open for business and tourism and we call upon our diplomatic core to consider making solid investments in our country to unlock economic growth and development.



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

As we celebrate WWD, kindly be reminded that South Africa is one of the 30 driest countries, we need to unite South Africa around more efficient use of water in the Western Cape and the country as a whole, given the effects of climate change.

Issued by the Department of Water & Sanitation

For more information contact: Sputnik Ratau on 082 874 2942

For media releases, speeches and news visit the Water & Sanitation portal at:

www.dwa.gov.za