



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MEDIA STATEMENT

DWS presents an update on the Water & Sanitation Master Plan at the Portfolio Committee

29 August 2018

A delegation of the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) led by Minister Gugile Nkwinti and the Acting Director-General, Ms. Deborah Mochotlhi, today made a presentation to the Portfolio Committee on Water and Sanitation. The presentation was based on the update on the National Water & Sanitation Master Plan (NWSMP).

On opening the meeting, the Chairperson Mr. Mlungisi Johnson, raised the fact that there is a need to explore a mixture of energy supply for the water and sanitation installations, including alternative energy. This emanated from the matter surrounding the Rand Water Eikenhof Pump Station being affected by the recent fire at one of the ESKOM installations.

He also suggested that there might be a need to regard water infrastructure country-wide as National Key Points, to which point Minister Nkwinti responded that the President had already been engaged on the matter and had responded positively to the suggestion. The Chairperson also encouraged the DWS to impress upon Rand Water the need for a criminal case to be instituted, considering the possibility of sabotage, such that an investigation could possibly be undertaken by the Police.

Minister Nkwinti made that point that, “based on the experience of the strike at Amathole, it seems that vandalism has become a standard practice. I have decided to meet with shop stewards of all labour formations within the DWS in the nearest future, to raise the issue of safety and optimal operation of water and sanitation infrastructure. The meeting must speak to challenges of security at all water and sanitation installations”.

On presenting the Master Plan, the Acting Director-General and Deputy Director-General of Special Projects Trevor Balzer, indicated that the main objective of the Master Plan is alignment of water and sanitation plans and bills including issues of reticulation. It was imperative for all role players to be aware of what happens nationally; that it is important for National Treasury to understand from day one which major infrastructure development will impact on which local infrastructure; that available major infrastructure needs to latch onto local infrastructure; and to align infrastructure projects to ensure that the un-served also receive attention.

A crucial part of the the Master Plan points out the priority actions required until 2030 and beyond to ensure water security and equitable access to water and sanitation services for all in RSA. The Master Plan was developed in partnership with all relevant organs of state and water sector stakeholders, to give effect to local, national, regional, continental and international water and sanitation delivery targets and commitments.

It is meant to ensure integrated planning and development across the entire water value chain, and in effects supports the recommendations from Cabinet Lekgotla on Inter-Ministerial Task Team on Basic Services strategy, e.g. with a focus on misalignment where bulk infrastructure has been provided without provision made for reticulation (Lekgotla Recommendation 4).



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As this is not a DWS Master Plan but a National Master Plan that involves and includes other stakeholders, a number of events were crucial leading to inputs by various bodies. These include the 3rd Annual Water Stewardship Event: Municipal Water Infrastructure Financing; SANCOLD; NSBA Breakfast Seminar; Water Infrastructure Summit; Wetlands Seminar, and Eskom and Sasol workshop.

Some Government structures also engaged include FOSAD: Social Protection, Community and Human Development (SPCHD) Cluster, FOSAD: ESEID Cluster, ESEID Cabinet Committee, national departments, professional bodies, civil groups, business associations and academic institutions. Entities included WRC, TCTA, CMA, SALGA, and CSIR.

At the moment all planned and unforeseen engagements were achieved; the draft NW&SMP was submitted to Minister in March 2018 for approval before Cabinet process; it was presented to FOSAD: SPCHD on 14 March 2018 and FOSAD: ESEID on 12 April 2018. On 27 June 2018 the NW&SMP was presented to Cabinet and was supported. Cabinet also approved that a Phakisa can be held to support the Plan. A draft of Volume 3 (Schedule of Actions) was developed, and a Cabinet request regarding a presentation "The impact of Water on the Economy" is also being addressed.

At the end of the presentation the NW&SMP was generally well received and supported. The Portfolio Committee members duly raised a number of questions and issues which were ably responded to by Minister Nkwinti, ADG Mochotlhi and DDG Balzer. Whilst the process is ongoing and will be enriched by further engagements and inputs, it was regarded as a blueprint that will guide the provision of water and sanitation services going forward, whilst being guided by the ideals of the NDP, the UN SDGs (SDG 6), and the AU Agenda 2063.

At the close of the meeting, Minister Nkwinti remarked that, "The Plan is close to embarking on the Phakisa process; hopefully by end 2018, or Feb 2019".

The Acting DG said that while the Plan is to guide the country towards provision, funding for the sector is critical; that there is a need to engage the financial sector and persuade funding towards the sector to be different; that even the set aside gets hampered by the lack of funding.

"In the end, water security also speaks to "fit for use", and this is impacted upon by water quality, especially resulting from WWTW malfunction and other pollution activities", said the Acting DG.

End

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