



## water & sanitation

Department:  
Water and Sanitation  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

### MEDIA STATEMENT

#### Let us clean and keep our rivers pollution free for water security

29 June 2018

It is that time of the year, when the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) calls on the public to join it in placing the river health at the top of the developmental agenda. As we celebrate Mandela Month in July, DWS invites members of the public to join in the **“Clear Rivers Campaign”** to clean and clear our water resources of all kinds of pollution under the theme **“Be the Legacy: dedicate 67 minutes to cleaning rivers and stream”**.

South Africa is a water scarce country and one of the driest in the world. The need for water security, particularly in the face of global climate change and a multitude of anthropogenic impacts affecting our rivers, calls for a national and unified approach to protect our rivers, wetlands and broader catchments. In this way all people can benefit from the value added products of healthy rivers and can have access to clean water for basic human needs. It is for this reason that DWS would like to connect South Africans to their sources of water and the natural infrastructure that are crucial for a water secure future. The Department therefore initiated an annual clean-up campaign of our fresh water ecosystems during Mandela Month.

The objective of the Clear Rivers Campaign is to undertake a collaborative effort and engage communities as well as promoting and creating awareness and education on protecting our water resources. Fostering volunteerism among communities is actively encouraged as part of a proactive approach to protecting our rivers, streams, wetlands, and other water ecosystems. The campaign aims to achieve well informed and environmentally conscious communities and pollution free rivers.

The protection of freshwater ecosystems and addressing water security challenges requires the support and collaboration with organised business, corporate sector, civil society, academic institutions, individuals and communities. This can be achieved by responsible citizens and corporate citizens who not only produce products and waste, but who also pay attention to the safe disposal of such products.



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The incorrect disposal of feminine hygiene products, nappies and hazardous industrial waste, which are directly dumped into our rivers, streams, wetlands and other freshwater eco systems, impact on the water quality and water treatment works of municipalities ultimately affecting water security.

Rivers are key assets of the nation. Rivers, dams wetlands and all freshwater ecosystems belong to all of us, therefore we all have the responsibility to play our part in ensuring that the water in our rivers is clean at all times. We have to protect our water resources and conserve the little water available for the benefit of all.

The Clear Rivers Campaign calls on everyone to dedicate their 67 minutes of goodwill activities towards cleaning up streams, wetlands, dams, canals and any freshwater source during this Mandela Month. Everyone is encouraged to participate in cleaning up our water ecosystems to ensure water security for current and future generations. Participate in cleaning your nearby river, stream, wetland or any other freshwater ecosystem in your area or log onto [www.dwa.gov.za](http://www.dwa.gov.za) to see where you can join the Department and its stakeholders.

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