



MEDIA STATEMENT

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7 March 2018

South Africa's dams have this week improved by a fraction of a percent (.2%) compared to their levels last week, a weekly report released by the Department of Water and Sanitation indicated yesterday. The levels went up from 63,2 percent to 63,4 percent.

The drought-stricken Western Cape maintains the lowest dam levels in the country at 25,5 percent, having dropped from 26,1 percent last week. Despite the scarcity of rain, Gauteng has the highest dam levels at 92,8 percent, followed by Mpumalanga at 77,9 percent and Northern Cape at 67,9 percent.

The dire water situation in Western Cape has prompted various municipalities to impose stringent water restrictions to cope with acute water shortages. Last month the City of Cape Town introduced Level 6B water restrictions, leaving its citizens with minimum water for basic use, including cooking, drinking and washing. Western Cape is a winter rainfall region and it is expected that some rains will start coming as early as April. Measures taken to obviate the desperate situation in the province have started to bear fruit; these include curtailment and restrictions.

Meanwhile, the Department of Water and Sanitation has embarked on various steps to alleviate the situation in the province. Among others, the department has intensified its water conservation campaign and is helping the City of Cape Town to drill ground water from the Table Mountain Group Aquifer. Currently, a team from the department is hard at work together with other partners like Operation SA to raise awareness on issues of water conservation and wise use of water.

Another province that has been a source of concern is the Eastern Cape. There has been insufficient recovery of the resource during most of the summer though there now seems to be a steady recovery from the drought in some areas, with Gcuwa Dam in Butterworth reportedly 100 percent full this week. Recently the situation in Butterworth was truly concerning as recovery of its main sources was insufficient. It was feared that the area might end up in a worse situation than Cape Town is in right now.

In North West, Molatedi Dam is at 39,1 percent, a slight decrease from 39,7% last week. The Crocodile West system which has six dams serving mainly Tshwane, Madibeng and Rustenburg, is at 88,0 percent this week. The system was recorded at 80,9 percent in the same period last year.

In the Free State the Bloemfontein System, with 4 dams serving mainly Mangaung, decreased by 1,4% from 37,7% to 36,3%. The system was at 33,5% during the same time last year.

The levels in Limpopo remain static at 67,9 percent; Northern Cape has sufficient water in storage with the average dam levels at 72,2 percent this week. KwaZulu-Natal is hovering



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around 59,2 percent and with the predicted rains in parts of the province it is likely to increase in the next few weeks.

As usual, smaller dams fill up quicker as most of them are bursting at the seams at the average 102 percent. The following dams paint a good picture of dam levels across the country:

- Umtata Dam, Eastern Cape: 100 percent
- Mabeleni Dam, Eastern Cape, 100 percent
- Boegoeberg Dam, Northern Cape; 106 percent
- Vondo Dam Limpopo; 102 percent
- Tzaneen Dam, Limpopo; 104,2 percent
- Douglas Storage Weir, Northern Cape; 103 percent

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