



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MEDIA STATEMENT

Minister Nkwinti calls on sector stakeholders to create workable solutions to address water and sanitation sector challenges

10 November 2018

The Minister of Water and Sanitation, Mr Gugile Nkwinti, today (Saturday, 10 November 2018), called on all sector stakeholders in the water and sanitation sector to help to find workable solutions to address the service delivery challenges that plague the sector.

Addressing about 450 delegates who included sector leaders, experts, academics and innovators during the Ministerial Interactive Session in Boksburg, Minister Nkwinti lamented the fact that despite so many innovators in the sector, South Africa was still being confronted by many challenges.

The Interactive Session is Minister Nkwinti's response to a number of sector stakeholders and innovators who have inundated his office with offers of solutions to challenges in the sector. The Session will ensure that the sector taps into new local technologies and solutions to ensure that it deals with challenges decisively.

Minister Nkwinti said the country was faced with a serious challenge of capacity and highlighted the spillages in municipalities as examples of a number of critical problems that required attention and innovation.

"Our Waste Water Treatment Works (WWTW) do not have the capacity to cope with the developments that are taking place and hence the question is what is it that technology can do to address these and other problems that we face. So, we have to work together to find innovative solutions," Minister Nkwinti said.

Dr Washington Nyabeze, a well-renowned researcher in the water industry, identified several problems that served as bottlenecks to the delivery of water and sanitation by government. He advised the department to make water accessible to the poor by making it cheap. He said one of the main problems that plague South Africa was the pollution of water and called for the prosecution and imprisonment of culprits.

He said the problems faced by the country on sanitation could be addressed by the decolonisation of the mind-set and a speedy movement towards resilience. The department must accelerate the establishment of water catchment management agencies to address water issues at the local level.

"It is unacceptable that 20 years on we only have two water catchment management institutions", he said.

The department's Deputy Director-General of Special and Strategic Projects, Trevor Balzer, presented the National Water and Sanitation Master Plan that will address the water country's water challenges by 2030 and beyond. The plan has been approved by Cabinet and it was in the process of being addressed through Parliament.

Balzer said there were three million South Africans who still did not have access to drinking water and 14% who lacked proper sanitation.



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He added that “agriculture industry used 61% of water for commercial use and irrigation while municipalities used 27%. South Africa lost about 50% of its wetlands and the state of rivers was appalling.

Minister Nkwinti also emphasised that today’s Session is an opportunity to open doors for new ideas to come forth, as well as to foster collaboration within the sector for the good of the country.

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Issued by the Department of Water & Sanitation

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