



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MEDIA STATEMENT

Minister Nkwinti met with SBDM municipalities to address water challenges

9 July 2018

The Minister of Water and Sanitation, Mr. Gugile Nkwinti met with the Executive Mayor of Sarah Baartman District Municipality (SBDM) Cllr. Eunice Kekana and the Executive Mayor of Nelson Mandela Bay Metropolitan Municipality (NMBMM) Cllr. Athol Trollip in Port Elizabeth today to discuss water and sanitation challenges in their respective areas. This meeting coincides with the beginning of Imbizo Focus Week from today and will run until 15 July 2018. These two municipalities have been badly affected by the current drought.

Since Sarah Baartman District Municipality is one of the major agricultural regions in the country, the drought extends beyond the basic provision of water and has the possibility to have large economic effects on the country. The Executive Mayor of Sarah Baartman District Municipality, Cllr Kekana, presented the current water and sanitation status within the district. Some of the challenges include vandalism of infrastructure, water losses and ageing infrastructure.

NMBMM Executive Mayor Trollip mentioned that the Nooitgedacht water project has been a great boost to the Nelson Mandela Bay Metropolitan Municipality. Further, he mentioned that there are 48 000 households that don't have water meters which makes it difficult for the municipality to measure water usage and adhere to water restrictions. The Nelson Mandela Bay Metropolitan Municipality will be putting measures in place to address this issue.

The meeting included technical discussions regarding water supply, infrastructure maintenance and development, institutional support and recruitment of skilled as well as capable workers within local municipalities. Minister Nkwinti urged municipalities to reassess the capabilities of their workforce especially in areas such as engineering, etc.

Some of the projects underway in Sarah Baartman District include:

- Upgrading of water mains and valves in Kouga,
- James Kleinhans bulk water supply in Makana, and
- Ndlambe Dam bulk water supply



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The decreasing dam levels throughout Sarah Baartman District Municipality impact on the water supply to Nelson Mandela Bay Metropolitan Municipality as the municipality relies on water sourced from these municipalities. In this regard, the Department of Water and Sanitation has advised the Nelson Mandela Bay Metropolitan Municipality to further increase water restrictions from 25 to 30 percent.

Minister Nkwinti stated that the Nooitgedacht water project should be prioritized to address water challenges in these areas. He also mentioned that desalination and usage of ground water would be imperative in future water saving initiatives as there is insufficient rain due to climate change.

All community members including those residing in the surrounding areas should assist the municipalities by using water sparingly and use grey water where possible as well as report water leaks timeously.

End

Issued by the Department of Water & Sanitation

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