



MEDIA STATEMENT

South Africa and Netherlands government improve their working relations in the water sector

28 February 2019

The Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) in partnership with Netherlands Embassy hosted a round table discussion in support of the Blue Deal South Africa Initiative: Clean and sufficient water for all that was held in Waterkloof in Pretoria, yesterday, 27 February 2019.

The round table discussion, held under the theme: **“Tackling water challenges through bilateral partnerships”** was attended by Netherlands Ambassador to South Africa, His Excellency Han Peters, representatives from Netherlands government, senior officials from the Department of Water and Sanitation and Chief Executive of Water Research Commission, Mr Dhesigen Naidoo.

Speaking during the event, Peters the partnership between South African and Netherlands is more critical for both countries to effectively deal with climate change challenges that threaten water security across the globe.

“The need for collaboration in improving water management has never had more relevant given the current situation across the world. This partnership between South Africa and the Netherlands has already been proven mutually beneficial through sharing experiences and developing joint projects, we can co-create a more water secure future,” he said.

Currently, DWS and the Dutch Water Authorities (DWA) are working towards a new **‘Blue Deal Programme’**, while also implementing **‘HydroNET’**: a web-based decision support service that provides intelligent solutions for operational and strategic water management.

Ambassador Peters said, the Dutch Blue Deal Programme (2018- 2030) aims to support Regional and National governments worldwide and to strengthen Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) by enhancing knowledge and expertise, well- functioning organisations and cooperation with key stakeholders. The ambitious goal of the Blue Deal is to assist twenty (20) million people in forty (40) catchment areas around the world to gain access to clean, sufficient and safe water.

DWS Chief Director: Global Cooperation, Ms Nchedi Moripe said the partnership is essential, not only for managing the South African side of the programme but also to create the necessary conditions for the local cooperation to succeed.

“By involving other institutions, like Cooperate Government and Traditional Affairs (COGTA) through **Municipal Infrastructure Support Agent**, South African Local Government Association and Water Research Commission (WRC) create the opportunities for the programme to function as a fly wheel for larger initiatives, innovative approaches,” she said.

The **HydroNET**, is a web-based decision support that provides intelligent solutions for operational and strategic water management. The application provides the Catchment Management Agencies (CMAs) and proto Catchment Management Agencies with easy access to a wealth of essential hydrological and meteorological data. This is a co-creation between the Dutch organization Hydrologic, DWS, South Africa Weather Services, the





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Catchment Management Agencies and the Dutch Water authorities and empowers water decision-makers to use data for decision-making and reduce the risk of a crisis.

It all started in 2012 with the Kingfisher project in which the Dutch Water Authorities cooperate with nine future CMA's in South Africa. Goal of the project is to improve the governance in the field of integrated water management and to share knowledge about the use of smart water management tools.

HydroNet Director, Ms Leanne Reichard said the mission is to empower water managers with smart solutions providing reliable data, simulation models, user- friendly software and in-depth water knowledge.

"All these data and applications come together in the hydronet water control room in which colleagues can customize the information in order to make the right decisions at the right time" she concluded.

End

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