



MEDIA STATEMENT

Spring rains hit the coastal belt of KwaZulu-Natal and Eastern Cape

4 September 2019

Heavy rains along the coastal belt of KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern and Western Cape this week have ushered in the wet summer season following a dry winter spell in most parts of South Africa. The rains are expected to boost dam levels and increase water storage in reservoirs

The South African Weather Services has predicted downpours that will be accompanied by strong winds from the Dolphin Coast in Richards Bay cutting across the South Coast right up to the Garden Route in Southern Cape. It is expected that the intermittent rains will continue until the end of the week, boosting the countries dam levels in the process.

The latest Department of Water and Sanitation weekly report on dam levels shows a steep 10% increase of the water situation in KwaZulu-Natal. In terms of water volumes available in reservoirs the province has replaced Mpumalanga as the second most water-saving region in the country. The report estimates the province's latest water storage at 2 790,9 cubic metres . Dam levels in KwaZulu-Natal are nearly 60% full, almost surpassing figures of the same period last year.

Midmar and Woodstock dams in the Natal Midlands and Giants Castle have passed the 90% mark while the Driel Barrage in uThukela is bursting at the seams. However, at 42,6% the Hazelmere Dam just outside Durban is among the lowest in the province. It is expected to pick up at the end of the current rainfall this weekend.

Western Cape is on a cruise as dam levels hit the 85% mark since the beginning of the winter rainy season in the province. The perennial rains appear to have weighed down the worst drought that pushed the region to the brink of a worst natural disaster in a century. There is a total 1 237,2 cubic metres that is stored in reservoirs in the entire province.

However, Limpopo is having the lowest dam levels in the country and the figures are declining week-on-week. At 55,1%, the province has dropped by almost 15% compared to the corresponding period last year. In Mopani, a citrus farming region that is consider to be the hub of the province's economy, the water situation has reached a crisis point as Tzaneen Dam dropped to an alarming 10,4%. The neighbouring Middel Letaba and Modjadji dams have reached critical proportions as they plummeted to 4,4% and 9,7% respectively.

The situation is considered fairly reasonable in other parts of the province as dams such as Tonteldoos and Magoebaskloof are full to capacity.

Although Mpumalanga remains in the middle scale of the water situation, figures show that the levels are dropping week-on-week. The latest statistics indicate that the province's levels have dropped from 66,2% to 65,2% this week.

Emalahleni Local Municipality is hosting a water summit today to tackle the region's water challenges that continuously bedevil Highveld towns. Coal mines have recently been accused of polluting 90% of groundwater that should be used as an alternative to surface water.





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With its big dams, Free State has successfully stored 12 684,9 cubic metres of water in its reservoirs. The average dam level for the province is estimated at 81%. Gariep and Vanderkloof dams were recorded at 86,6% and 83,6% respectively

End

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