

DWS kick-starts National Water Month

The Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) will be embarking on advocacy programmes as part of National Water Month.



Image source: Nyau Mmi from [Pexels](#)

Today, 1 March, the department kick-starts National Water Month, which is conceptualised along the annual commemoration of World Water Day.

World Water Day is spearheaded by the United Nations (UN) and is observed on 22 March.

The UN uses World Water Day to focus attention on the global water crisis and raise awareness of the 2.2 billion people living without access to safe water, with the aim of aspiring nations to commit to long-term action.

This is to ensure that everyone in the world has access to safe water by 2030, while not impacting the environment.

World Water Day also brings attention to the importance of freshwater and advocating for the sustainable management of freshwater resources.

This year's Water Day will be observed under the theme, 'Leveraging Water for Peace', which encourages communities and countries to use water as a tool for peace, when cooperating over this precious shared resource.

The theme also highlights that water can spark and intensify conflict when access is denied and usage unfairly shared.

The department said National Water Month will be used to reflect and deliver the department's mandate in response to these challenges, with the strategies to avoid the projected deficit.



DWS withdraws government waterworks draft regulations

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Water and Sanitation Services Policy on privately-owned land

The ministerial launch of the Water and Sanitation Services Policy on privately owned land, scheduled to take place in KwaZulu-Natal, will be the highlight of this year's National Water Month.

"The Minister of Water and Sanitation, Senzo Mchunu, will launch this holistic policy with the intention of unifying and simplifying the provision and regulation of sustainable and equitable water services to residents living on privately-owned land," the department said.

The month-long activities will also see Mchunu visiting Limpopo to assess progress on the Giyani Bulk Water Supply Scheme, which will benefit 24 villages.

This follows his commitment to accelerate the project through, among others, optimisation of the Giyani water treatment works to its original capacity and increase the project scope to ensure 55 villages benefit from the scheme. This is through funds allocated for reticulation and expanding access to yard connections.

To this end, the department said 24 villages are in various stages of construction and some of the villages will soon be receiving water in their taps.

"Minister Mchunu will also meet with his four counterparts from Botswana, Mozambique and Zimbabwe to sign the amendment of the Limpopo Watercourse Commission (LIMCOM) by the four riparian States which share the Limpopo River Basin and use water from the river to support various socio-economic activities, including agriculture, tourism, energy generation, as well as for domestic use.

"The agreement signed in 2003, will be amended to formalise the establishment of the LIMCOM Council of Ministers to be the main policy and decision-making body on transboundary, water resource management issues in the Limpopo River Basin," the department said.

The department has reiterated its call to all South Africans to make a difference by changing the way they use, drink and manage water in their respective lives.

"South Africa is a dry and water-scarce country with an average annual rainfall of 470mm compared to the global annual average of 814mm. Thus, it has limited water availability, which is diminishing compared to other countries," the department

said.

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