



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

INTERNET ARTICLE

No water, no future

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Pollution of the country's water resources has a negative impact on the quality of this life-giving means.

This was blatantly made clear by first President of our Democratic South Africa, the late Nelson Mandela, during the World Summit on Sustainable Development held at the Water Dome, Johannesburg in 2002.

Mandela told the world that there is no future for everyone if water is not available. "Amongst the many things I learnt, as a president of our country, was the centrality of water in the social, political and economic affairs of the country, continent and indeed the world.

"I am, therefore, a totally committed "water person," adding that "When I return, as I often do, to the rural village and area of my childhood and youth, the poverty of the people and the devastation of the natural environment painfully strike me. And in that impoverishment of the natural environment, it is the absence of access to clean water that strikes most starkly. That our government has made significant progress in bringing potable water nearer to so many more people than was previously the case, I rate amongst the most important achievements of democracy in our country," he stressed.

Mandela pointed out that governments throughout the world need to put water higher on the political and social agenda. "And I want to call on all of you here to help make water a lead sector of co-operation for development in the world."

As the world celebrates the 100th anniversary of the Mandela Legacy during this month of July, people, especially water users, need to be reminded that pollution of water had negative impact on water quality.

The Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS), spearheads and pilots the Clear Rivers Campaign which, among other things, teaches and also calls on everybody to conserve water and use the resource sparingly, but most importantly, to not pollute this life-giving means.

Pollution takes place either as a point source such as discarding of waste through the end of a pipe, or as a diffuse source whereby fertilisers, herbicides, pesticides, fuel, diesel, oil and other objects find their way into the groundwater source.

It is important to stress that pollution is caused by man. Our activities will always have impacts, but the requirement is that these impacts are minimal, manageable and within acceptable limits. This is according to all relevant environmental legislation, the National Management Act (Act no 107 of 1998, Chapter 7, section 28 and the National Water Act (Act no 36 of 1998, Chapter 3, part 4 section 19. These Acts deal with the prevention of pollution.



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The water sector has made good progress in co-operation towards that objective. Nobody expects everybody to be in agreement on all policies; nobody is forced to do anything they do not want to; but we all realise that we are working in our own different ways towards achieving a common goal – the accessibility of clean and drinkable water to the masses.

Remember – Water is Life.

Ike Motsapi.