
CHAPTER 4 - COMPLEMENTARY STRATEGIES

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter gives brief descriptions of strategies for -

- **Building capacity and expertise among practitioners in the water sector:** A programme for the water sector in which the Department is playing a leading role in partnership with other role players in the sector.
- **Educating and creating awareness among stakeholders:** Departmental programmes of public consultation, communications and education.
- **Water research:** Water research is commissioned and co-ordinated by the Water Research Commission in close liaison with the Department and other role players in the water sector.

Whilst most of these activities are not specifically required by the Act, they are nonetheless essential for its long-term, sustained implementation. The approaches to capacity building in the water sector, and educating and creating awareness among stakeholders are described at national level, recognising that they will need to be implemented at catchment and local levels in partnership with other government departments and the private sector.

4.2 CAPACITY BUILDING IN THE WATER SECTOR

Strategies to give effect to the provisions of the National Water Act (the Act) will not be effective if there are too few competent people available to implement them.

One reason that the implementation of the Act will take place progressively over time is that South Africa's financial and human resources are, at present inadequate to implement all of its provisions at once across the country. It is imperative to ensure that sufficient capacity is created in the water sector to implement and sustain the implementation of water policy and legislation.

Water resources management is a relatively specialised activity that, as a result of the changes introduced by the Act, now requires competencies in a wider range of disciplines than was previously the case. The training, re-training and development of the potential of people who currently work or will in future work at all levels of all organisations and agencies involved in the water sector is recognised in the National Water Policy as being a critical determinant for the achievement of wise and efficient water resources management in South Africa.

A Water Sector Capacity Building Strategy Task Team has been established to develop a capacity building strategy for the water sector. The Department is playing a prominent role in this initiative. The strategy has the objective of ensuring that, in some reasonable and achievable time frame - a period of 15 years has been suggested - all role players in the South African water sector, including the Local Government and Water Sector Education and Training Authority, will have ensured that the necessary capacity exists in all relevant institutions to fully implement water-related policy and law.

The task team's efforts will centre on meeting the competency needs of the sector. The focus will be on people: the creation and development of the skills, knowledge and attitudes required to support the development of the infrastructure, institutions, knowledge and information management, and financial management necessary to undertake water resources management. There have already been encouraging developments in this regard, with new, specialised courses being offered at post-graduate level at a number of tertiary institutions. The development of high-level post-graduate skills will continue to be supported by the Water Research Commission (see below). In addition, the National Water and Sanitation Training Institute at the University of the North provides a variety of short courses at a range of levels.

Furthermore, in line with the general requirement for national social and economic transformation, all capacity building initiatives must address representivity in terms of race, gender and disability in all water sector institutions. The Department's bursary policy, aimed at assisting students with their studies in selected fields, will continue to focus on achieving improved representivity in the technical disciplines.

An important component of the capacity building strategy will be the promotion of networking among education and training service providers and users. Steps have already been taken in this direction with the development of the Framework Programme for Education and Training in Water^[1], which will provide institutional support and seed funding to encourage the creation of networks to promote effective co-operation between universities, research institutions, and the public and private sectors.

The water sector capacity building strategy will be consistent with capacity building initiatives in other sectors of society via the legislative, institutional and financial framework provided by the South African Qualifications Authority Act, 1995, the Skills Development Act, 1998, and the Skills Development Levies Act, 1999.

4.3 PUBLIC CONSULTATION, EDUCATION AND AWARENESS CREATION

4.3.1 Public consultation

There are a number of sections in the Act^{[[2]} that require formal public consultation on proposed initiatives to implement the Act's provisions. All comments received in response must be taken into consideration.

One of the Act's main objectives is to progressively decentralise the responsibility for water resources management from national to regional institutions, the principal institutions being catchment management agencies (see Part 5 of Chapter 3). These agencies must promote participation by water users and other stakeholders in all aspects of water resources management in their areas of operation.

For water users and stakeholders to effectively contribute to water resources management they need to be aware of the issues and difficulties, and have an understanding of what is required. However, while some water users and stakeholders are often very well informed, others, particularly in poorer, historically disadvantaged communities, may not be able to participate effectively in consultation procedures without additional support. A comprehensive stakeholder analysis, aimed at determining the capacity of users and stakeholders to participate, is therefore a key part of any consultation programme.

The Department will continue to undertake public consultation exercises in a way that enables all stakeholders, particularly those from previously disadvantaged backgrounds, to participate effectively. Help will be offered to ensure that they understand the issues under discussion, and can participate in an informed and meaningful way.

The Department is aware of the danger of stakeholders becoming overloaded by the number and complexity of issues on which they may be consulted. For this reason it is important to encourage the establishment of representative stakeholder groups in each water management area as a focus for all consultation exercises. Non-statutory forums (see Part 5 of Chapter 3) can play an important role in this respect.

The Department has developed guidelines for public participation in water-related issues to ensure a consistent approach throughout the country. It is anticipated that all water management institutions will adopt these guidelines for their consultative processes.

4.3.2 The Water Education Programme

The departmental Water Education Programme (formerly known as the 20/20 Vision for Water Programme) aims to raise awareness among South Africans of water as a scarce and precious resource, and to develop responsible attitudes towards its use and conservation. It has the following objectives -

- Raising the level of understanding of water issues - water literacy - throughout the country.
- Promoting resource conservation among the public.
- Integrating water-related education into the formal curricula of all educational institutions.
- Integrating environmental education into all departmental programmes.
- Establishing partnerships with all stakeholders in the water sector at national and international levels and developing collaborative networks.

Since its inception in 1996 the programme has reached more than 10 000 schools and it is planned to expand its activities to tertiary learning institutions. Learners in schools develop water values and life skills by carrying out projects to investigate how water is used, how waste can be prevented and how to determine if water is fit for human consumption. They are encouraged to share their knowledge and understanding in their communities. The programme works closely with provincial education and environmental authorities to ensure consistency of application and integration with the outcomes-based education system.

4.3.3 Communication

Important sources of information about the Department's intentions and achievements are the Three Year Strategic Plan and the Annual Report, both prepared and published annually in accordance with the requirements of the Public Finance Management Act, 1999.

In addition to these and the formal consultation exercises described above the Department will continue with its extensive communications programme aimed at providing the public with information about the Minister's and the Department's activities, gathering information about public concerns with regard to water and forestry, and obtaining feedback on the Department's performance. Some of the more important initiatives under the programme include the following -

- Community visits - *imbizos* - by the Minister and departmental staff to water schemes and projects. These *ad hoc* visits occur in addition to the regular *imbizos* arranged as part of a government programme.
- Ensuring media coverage of the Minister's budget debates in the National Assembly and the National Council of Provinces. Achievements against legislative mandates and priorities for the future are covered in these debates.
- Regular media briefings by the Minister, including parliamentary media briefings.
- Water Week, celebrated in March of each year, in which topical themes are publicised in the media and at open days at departmental offices throughout the country.
- Publicity, in the form of editorials, advertisements and supplements in the print and electronic media, on water schemes, projects and programmes.

4.4 WATER RESEARCH

The importance of research to water resources management cannot be over-emphasised. Research has been fundamental to understanding South Africa's water resources and has contributed to the development of many of the techniques and tools used for their management. Many of the innovative and internationally applauded provisions in the Act - notably in respect of resource protection - were based on the results of South African research. New challenges in the water sector arise continually and require new understanding and new tools and techniques. To meet these challenges, the Water Research Commission (WRC), a statutory body funded by

a levy on water use, will continue to ensure that the strategic direction of water research in South Africa is attuned to the country's needs.

The WRC is the co-ordinator of water-related research and development in South Africa. Through its funding and networking activities it encourages the development of water-related knowledge and facilitates its dissemination and application. The WRC maintains close ties with the Department and regular liaison and co-ordination meetings between the two organisations ensure that the Department's research needs are known. The Department of Science and Technology and the National Research Foundation are partners with the Department and the WRC in ensuring that approaches to water research are consistent with South Africa's broad policy on science and innovation.

The WRC's approach is to invest in research and development through four water-centred key strategic areas as follows -

- **Water Resource Management**, an integrating key strategic area that considers issues of equity and sustainability in the management of water resources.
- **Water-Linked Ecosystems**, which addresses the protection of water resources.
- **Water Use (Industrial and Domestic) and Waste Management**.
- **Sustainable Water Use for Agriculture**, which address the sustainable use of water in their respective user sectors.

The WRC also invests in the transfer, dissemination and application of knowledge through a fifth key strategic area, **Water-Centred Knowledge**, an integrating key strategic area that addresses the mechanisms needed to ensure the effective dissemination of research results and products to water resources managers and other prospective users in an effective format.

To ensure that research results are also relevant to the broader objectives of water resource management: the relevance and applicability of research in each key strategic area are maximised by addressing the relationships between: water and society; water and the economy; water and health; and water and the environment.

A key crosscutting objective of the WRC is to support the development of human resources in the water sector. Involvement in research is recognised as an important vehicle for building and developing expertise among water resource practitioners. Every research project is therefore required to incorporate a strong element of capacity building, especially among previously disadvantaged individuals. The objective will be to ensure that, at least until 2009, every member of a previously disadvantaged group who qualifies and wishes to do so should be able to obtain sponsorship for post-graduate study through research.

A review will be undertaken of the legislation governing the WRC to ensure consistency with the Public Finance Management Act, as well as the evolving framework for the governance of public institutions in general and publicly funded research in particular.

Notes to Chapter 4

¹ A joint initiative of the Department and the Water Research Commission in collaboration with the United Nations Education, Science and Cultural Organisation and the Flemish Government.

² Requirement to consult: In all cases listed below except in respect of sections 10 and 41 the Act requires that a Notice is published in the *Gazette*, and that other appropriate steps are considered to bring the notice to the attention of interested persons.

Section of the Act	Subject of consultation	Who must consult	With whom
5	Establishment of the National Water Resource Strategy	The Minister	Interested persons
8	Establishment of a Catchment Management Strategy	A catchment management agency	Interested persons
10	Development of a Catchment Management Strategy	A catchment management agency	The Minister, organs of State, interested persons
13	Determination of the class of a water resource and resource quality objectives	The Minister	Interested persons
16	Determination of the Reserve	The Minister	Interested persons
36	Declaration of stream flow reduction activities	The Minister	Interested persons
38	Declaration of controlled activities	The Minister	Interested persons
39	Issuing a general authorisation to use water	A responsible authority	Interested persons
41	A licence application	The applicant	Relevant organs of state, interested persons, the general public
43	Requirement to apply for a licence in terms of a compulsory licensing exercise	A responsible authority	Interested persons
45	A proposed allocation schedule	A responsible authority	Interested persons
56	Establishment of a pricing strategy for water use charges	The Minister	Interested persons
69	Making regulations	The Minister	Interested persons
Regulations must also be tabled in the National Assembly and the National Council of Provinces			
78	Establishment of a catchment management agency, changing its name or its area of jurisdiction	The Minister	Interested persons
88	Disestablishment of a catchment management agency	The Minister	Interested persons
92	The establishment of a water user association (except if there has been sufficient consultation in preparing a submission to establish the association)	The Minister	Interested persons.
96	Disestablishment of a water user association	The Minister	Interested persons
110	A proposal to construct a government waterwork (except in emergency circumstances, and for temporary or minor waterworks)	The Minister	Interested persons
Schedule 3, Item 3	Making rules to regulate water use	A catchment management agency	Interested persons