



Department : Water Affairs  
and Forestry

# Integrated Water Resources Management



**Institutional Roles and Linkages: Mvoti - Umzimkulu WMA**  
Executive summary



**DEPARTMENT OF WATER AFFAIRS AND FORESTRY**

**INTEGRATED WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT**

**INSTITUTIONAL ROLES AND LINKAGES  
SITUATIONAL ASSESSMENT: WMA11:  
MVOTI AND MZIMKULU**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

INTEGRATED WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT  
STRATEGIES, GUIDELINES AND PILOT IMPLEMENTATION  
IN THREE WATER MANAGEMENT AREAS, SOUTH AFRICA

**DANIDA**  
FUNDING AGENCY

**Edition 1**

**March 2004**

**TITLE:** INSTITUTIONAL ROLES AND LINKAGES  
SITUATIONAL ASSESSMENT: WMA 11:  
MVOTI AND MZIMKULU

**FUNDING AGENCY:** DANIDA

**CATEGORY:** Situation Assessment

**PURPOSE:** To identify progress in the process towards the establishment of IWRM and to describe the current duties and functions of DWAF and other institutions in the Water Management Area with regards to the management of water resources.

**TARGET GROUP:** DWAF, IWRM Project Consultants and implementers in three water management areas.

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**ENQUIRIES:** Department of Water Affairs and Forestry  
Private Bag X 313  
Pretoria  
0001  
Republic of South Africa

Tel: (012) 336 7500 / +27 12 336 7500  
Fax: (012) 323 0321 / +27 12 323 0321  
Email: [qma@dwaf.pwv.gov.za](mailto:qma@dwaf.pwv.gov.za)  
Website: [www.dwaf.gov.za](http://www.dwaf.gov.za)

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The promulgation of the National Water Act (NWA, Act No. 36 of 1998) set in motion a process of change for the management of water resources in South Africa. A significant aspect of this process is the establishment of water management institutions that will allow water users and interest groups, at regional or catchment levels, to jointly participate in water management decisions toward their sustainable growth and development.

Implementation of the legislation has been ongoing and, at this stage assessment of the processes that have been followed, the successes achieved to date, as well as areas identified for improvement need to be made. Funding from the Royal Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (DANIDA) provided an opportunity to assess the situation in three pilot Water Management Areas in South Africa, while building capacity on integrated water resources management. The three areas were the Crocodile West & Marico, the Mvoti to Mzimkhulu, and the Oliphants-Doorn Water Management Areas. This report specifically focuses on the Mvoti-uMzimkhulu WMA, which is situated on the east coast of South Africa, overlapping parts of the KwaZulu-Natal and Eastern Cape provinces.

The specific purpose of this document is to:

- ✧ Identify progress in the process toward the establishment of IWRM in the Mvoti-Mzimkhulu Water Management Area, and
- ✧ Describe the current duties and functions of DWAF and other water management institutions in the Mvoti-Mzimkhulu WMA with regards to the management of water resources.

This report reflects, at the current time, specific characteristics of the Mvoti-Mzimkhulu Water Management Area in terms of available institutions, their geographic locations, policies governing them, their functions and relationships with other institutions.

By South African standards, the Mvoti-Mzimkhulu Water Management Area is well endowed with water resources and has generally good water quality and water infrastructure, therefore great economic potential. Rivers in this system may be classified into three categories, namely, large rivers rising from the Drakensberg (e.g. *Mkhomazi*, *Mzimkhulu*); medium sized rivers rising from the midlands (e.g. *Mngeni*, *Mvoti*) and several coastal rivers (e.g. *Mdloti*, *Mzimayi*). There is a strong seasonal rainfall pattern in this Water Management Area, with an excess of 80 % rain falling as thunderstorms in summer. Although the Water Management Area is well endowed with water resources, it does experience problems related to water demand during drought seasons. Wilson *et al*, (2000), reports that there is strong empirical evidence to suggest that the Mngeni and Mvoti rivers are experiencing significant water demand related stress. This emphasises the need for proper management of the water resources in this Water Management Area.

Efforts in the Water Management Area to embrace the National Water Act principles for catchment-based water resources management have been through community participative measures, supported by sixteen Catchment Management Fora. Several of these have not developed significantly over this period, and will need future attention. However, in the last four years, the Catchment Management Agency proposal development process, and the institutional development process through the DANIDA-DWAF Integrated Water Resources Management project, have been instrumental in bringing together a wide range of stakeholders on resource management issues.

Other institutional capacity has also been boosted through several interventions associated with the Integrated Water Resources Management project. The Water Management Area is enriched with sixteen irrigation boards, of which at least two are in the process of transformation to Water User Associations but recent communication with the irrigation boards has indicated that there are constraints/delays at national level for reasons unknown to the boards.

A Catchment Management Agency Proposal Development Working Group was established and had a reasonably balanced representation from DWAF, Water Board, District and Local Municipalities, organised business, farmers, Irrigation Boards and water users. The Proposal Development Working Group had systematically facilitated the development of the proposal towards the establishment of the Mvoti to Mzimkhulu Catchment Management Agency over a four-year period. The Catchment Management Agency Proposal Evaluation Committee has since reviewed this proposal and identified that the proposal had met a lot of expectations in line with DWAF policies, but some areas required improvement, including the following:

- ✧ *Stakeholder participation process: Further involvement of local government – including eastern Cape -, rural groups, and previously disadvantage individuals, was deemed necessary. More information was therefore needed with regards to the stakeholder participation process that the Catchment Management Agency needed to take forward, the details of which should be included in the proposal.*
- ✧ *Proposed delegation of functions: The timeframes for delegation were considered to be short. To ensure coordination, a summary is to be compiled regarding the delegation of functions, the timeframes, and the transfer/appointment of staff.*
- ✧ *Financial viability: Aspects of the financial proposal were required to be changed and aligned with the National Pricing Strategy.*
- ✧ *Requirements for a viable Catchment Management Agency: More information was needed to ensure the viability and sustainability of the Catchment Management Agency, the risks and secondment of staff and how these issues were to be addressed. A description of the need for and importance of adequate representation within the CMA structure needed to be set out more clearly.*

The current status is that the Catchment Management Agency establishment proposal has not yet been approved. However, nominations to the Catchment Management Agency Board are anticipated to take place this year, suggesting that approval is anticipated this year.

A number of organisations and institutions - including all three spheres of government - are already actively engaged in aspects of water management in the Mvoti-Mzimkhulu Water Management Area. The roles and functions of these organisations are discussed. It is acknowledged that Integrated Water Resources Management is an evolutionary process and, as such, institutions will evolve over time to adapt their practises to fit into an IWRM framework. The Catchment Management Agency institutional framework is outlined in the Proposal for the establishment of the Mvoti-Mzimkhulu Catchment Management Agency as follows:

- ✧ *The institutional structure will comprise the Water Resource Management Committees, the Catchment Management Agency Governing Board, and Operational and Technical Support (O & TS). Further support for the Catchment Management Agency will come from Water User Associations, Water Boards and other appointed committees.*
- ✧ *The Catchment Management Agency will develop its Operational and Technical Support in a phased manner and examine a range of staffing and outsourcing arrangements in the process. The Catchment Management Agency seeks to adopt all possible delegated and assigned functions as soon as is possible.*
- ✧ *Due to potential lack of capacity, some functions may be outsourced to other water management institutions, within the Water Management Area, that have the necessary capacity.*
- ✧ *The Proposal further discusses the financial and social viability of the proposed Catchment Management Agency.*