



Department : Water Affairs
and Forestry

Integrated Water Resources Management



Institutional Roles and Linkages: Olifants - Doorn WMA
Executive summary



DEPARTMENT OF WATER AFFAIRS AND FORESTRY

INTEGRATED WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

**INSTITUTIONAL ROLES AND LINKAGES
SITUATIONAL ASSESSMENT: WMA17:
OLIFANTS - DOORN**

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 17:
OLIFANTS - DOORN

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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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The promulgation of the National Water Act (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 new water management institutions that will allow water users and interest groups to participate in water management and the development of new relationships.

The Royal Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (DANIDA) supported three pilot projects in South Africa with the aim of promoting and building capacity in integrated water resources management (IWRM). One of these areas was the Olifants-Doorn Water Management Area (WMA 17) that lies on the West Coast of South Africa spread across two provincial jurisdictional areas namely the Western Cape and Northern Cape Provinces. The primary goal of the pilot project in WMA 17 was to establish a fully integrated, community and stakeholder driven process toward the establishment of institutions that would implement IWRM in this Water Management Area. The purpose of this document is thus to:

- ✧ Identify progress in the process toward the establishment of IWRM in the Olifants-Doorn catchment, and
- ✧ Describe the current duties and functions of the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry (DWAF) and other water management institutions in the Olifants-Doorn Catchment with regards to the management of water resources.

The Olifants-Doorn Catchment is generally arid with an average rainfall of less than 300 mm/a. There is one major river in the catchment, the Olifants River of which the Doring River is the main tributary. In excess of 90 percent of the water use is for irrigation in the summer months, making bulk water storage an essential component of water resources management. The regional economy is supported largely by agriculture and ecotourism emphasising the need to carefully manage the water resource's competing demand.

The estimated population of this Water Management Area is 267,187 people¹, the majority (> 90 %) of which are Afrikaans speaking. Relatively few people (3.9 %) have been educated beyond grade 12 level posing a challenge when human resources are required for the management of both institutions and water resources. To this end the DANIDA project has implemented several capacity building initiatives. Most people live in either formal or traditional households and have access to a treated water supply water supply (98.7 %). Only 9 percent of the population in this Water Management Area are without sanitation, well below the national average. However one area that should be championed by the newly formed Catchment Management Forums is attention to the provision of education around waste management and/ or improvement in coverage of municipal solid waste services in order to reduce potential impacts on water quality. Currently 41% of households do not have a municipal waste removal services.

The Catchment Management Agency (CMA) proposal development process specifically, and the IWRM institutional development process in general, has been an extremely inclusive and participative process in the Olifants-Doorn WMA over the last three years. Institutional capacity has been boosted through several interventions associated with the IWRM project.

¹ Municipal profiles: Census data: 2001. Not weighted for relative WMA 17 area.

The WMA is now characterised by three fully operational Water User Associations (WUAs), three Irrigations Boards that are in the process of transformation to WUAs and eleven wall-to-wall Catchment Management Forums that represent all stakeholders. A Reference Group was established that was fully representative of the Catchment Management Forums, Water User Associations, Local Government and other government departments. The Reference Group over a two-year period systematically facilitated the development of the proposal toward the establishment of the Olifants-Doorn Catchment Management Agency. The proposal is currently under review by the Minister. Nominations for representation on the Advisory Body was carried out through the Reference Group and currently nominations to the CMA Board are being established through a broad consultation process.

A number of organisations and institutions (including all three spheres of government) are already actively engaged in aspects of water management in the Olifants-Doorn WMA. The roles and functions of these organisations are discussed, however, it is acknowledged that IWRM is a dynamic process as is institutional make-up. All stakeholders appreciate that IWRM is part-and-parcel of sustainable development and requires maintaining a balance between social, economic and environmental processes.

The Proposal for the establishment of the Olifants-Doorn CMA indicates that:

- ✧ The CMA is not intended to be a large organisation, and should adopt a flat management structure with as many of the operational functions as possible being outsourced during the initial phase of the CMA's development.
- ✧ The CMA will not be involved in the operation and maintenance of bulk water schemes or distribution systems. It is envisaged that this will be managed by the WUAs, as it is done at present.
- ✧ Hydrological services should remain a centralised function, preferably as part of the proposed national utility.
- ✧ An evolutionary approach should be adopted for the CMA to take on additional legislated functions.
- ✧ The transition to a fully functional CMA has to be supported by appropriate capacity and/or skills building programmes to include stakeholders from the area.

The Proposal further discusses the financial and social viability of the proposed CMA.

In the preparation of this document and echoed in the CMA establishment proposal it is acknowledged that the future success of IWRM in the Olifants-Doorn catchment hinges on the following risks being addressed:

- ✧ Financial support for the CMA: A Water User charge is to be levied on registered users. The viability of any CMA is therefore highly dependent upon the extent of registration within the WMA, as well as the ability to collect these charges.
- ✧ Continued communication between the CMA and the community: It is proposed that a concerted effort be made to execute an effective public participation process through the forum structure and that continued support be provided to the Forums.
- ✧ That the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders be clearly identified and supported.

1 INTRODUCTION

The promulgation of the National Water Act (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 new water management institutions that will allow water users and interest groups to participate in water management and the development of new relationships. The aim is a more integrated approach between sectors involved in water resources management and those making decisions on land-use activities that may affect the water resources in the catchment.

The rationale behind this new approach is that water is recognised to be a finite, scarce and unevenly distributed resource that needs to be managed in an integrated and participative way, as it affects everyone's lives and the rate of development and progress, or lack thereof. Thus to enable everyone to participate, the National Water Act has delegated water management to a regional or catchment level.

South Africa has been divided into nineteen Water Management Areas (WMAs). Progress towards the establishment of new water management institutions and new relationships between current institutions is currently underway. This often involves large-scale change to the way in which water user and interest groups relate to one another in the management of water resources.

This study looks at IWRM institutional development and roles and responsibilities in one of these water management areas, namely, the Olifants-Doorn Catchment (WMA 17), which lies on the West Coast of South Africa within the Western Cape and Northern Cape Provincial jurisdictions.