



**water affairs**

Department:  
Water Affairs  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



International Conference on  
Fresh Water Governance  
For Sustainable Development

**5-7 November 2012**



**Conference messages:**  
What should we be taking to the world?

# CONSENSUS: WATER GOVERNANCE IS ABOUT PEOPLE

Water management is a traditionally technical field but water management involves people and should be driven into development debate and plans

“Water is indispensable for survival, but it is sometimes destructive in tropical storms and tsunamis” Prof Mazrui.

For example “irrigation is not about pipes, canals and dams, it is about people. It is only about pipes, canals and dams in as far as the pipes, canals and dams address the needs of the people”

(Extract from presentation by Dr Everisto Mapedza)

# REMEMBERING MRS MKWANAZI

Water resources are a critical enabler, or constraint, for most economic activities and social needs so water governance is about development and people – hence it is about EQUITY.

While serving the needs of big business, the mines, the farmers, our systems must ensure that Mrs Mkwanzazi just down the road here is able to access water for productive and domestic purposes, that she has access to sustainable sanitation services, that she has access to a road and transport services to get her produce to market, and that she can make a living that enables her to feed and educate her family, and to live with dignity.

(Extract from the opening remarks )

“Improved understanding of freshwater governance at various levels of scale including the regional, basin, national and sub-national levels”

# MAIN MESSAGES

- Legislation, regulation, rights and accountability (2,5,9 and special sessions)
- The markers of good governance (3, 6, 12, 15, 16 and special sessions)
- Multi-level, multi-sectoral and transboundary governance and adaptive management (4, 7, 8, 11, 14 and special sessions)
- Tools for implementation (10, 13, 16 and special sessions)

# LEGISLATION, REGULATION, RIGHTS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- Implementation of the laws (Good laws are meaningless if they are not implemented)
  - Redefine a new path for implementing the laws where they exist
  - Move from analysis paralysis and set clear priorities for action at all levels
  - Accelerate implementation by focusing on improving access to information and justice processes, and establishing effective dispute resolution mechanisms
  - Dedicated and long-term leadership is critical for implementation of legislation to avoid loss of memory and skills

# LEGISLATION, REGULATION, RIGHTS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- Strong and self-sufficient institutions (e.g. CMAs) for vertical and horizontal governance and accountability
  - With clear legal mandate
  - With ability to connect levels of governance i.e. national and provincial levels, etc..
  - Existing both within the State and civil society
- Capacity development on water integrity and accountability (busting corruption) targeting both public officials and civil society because the responsibility for addressing unethical practices is quite distributed (All actors must play their part)
  - While government has a key role to lead the way (because political resolve is needed to make accountability and enforcement systems work in practice), citizens should be encouraged to firstly obey the law, secondly to demand accountability and exercise their right not become complicit to improper practices through inaction.

# LEGISLATION, REGULATION, RIGHTS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- Addressing unlawful use of water through extensive awareness creation; and a less complex administrative process (supported by legislation) for determining the lawfulness (or otherwise) of a water use activity
- Development of effective tools, guidance and mechanisms for regulation and accountability developed to strengthen the ability of regulators to set targets for correcting the illegal activity and rehabilitate the resultant impacts of the transgression

# MARKERS OF GOOD GOVERNANCE

- Need to move from state-centric view of water governance to broader and participatory or polycentric governance where the human element plays a bigger role. There is need establish who the actors are, what makes them act and what the consequences of such actions are; and then establish what brings change in the society.

# MARKERS OF GOOD GOVERNANCE

- Stakeholder/multi-stakeholder platforms and involvement in water resources management: State institutions should take a leading role in stakeholder involvement in water resources management. This could be achieved by establishing (with speed) effective catchment management agencies with clear roles and functions; establishing other effective stakeholder forums; ensuring financial sufficiency and institutional viability, and ensuring that neutral and unbiased facilitators are available where there is need to build consensus amongst stakeholder groups.

# MARKERS OF GOOD GOVERNANCE

- **Effective and mutually beneficial partnerships** should be established between rural and disadvantaged communities and other actors (state, private sector, civil society) taking due cognizance of the power and accountabilities of the partners involved. The partnerships should benefits for poor and disadvantaged partners; give decision making powers to the poor and disadvantaged partners; offer employment opportunities, and be built on transparency.

# MARKERS OF GOOD GOVERNANCE

- **Relationship building** is a key ingredient to good governance and in developing governance indicators, there is need to add specific indicators that measure the strength of relationship built at all levels. This should look at relationships between different actors including relationships between men and women
- **Provision of non-tangible emotional benefits (hope and promise)** - water practitioners should have a paradigm shift and start using emotion-driven parameters, i.e. the existence of hope and promise, as a more appropriate indicator for good water governance especially in situation where the benefits are long term. Pro-poor justice is not only achieved by distributing tangible benefits.

# MARKERS OF GOOD GOVERNANCE

- Focus on provision and uptake of data and information, through more investment in R&D and ensuring a strong link between research and policy making
- Effective mechanisms for greater scrutiny of activities - rewarding good behaviour and punishing bad behaviour

# MULTI-LEVEL, MULTI-SECTORAL AND TRANSBOUNDARY GOVERNANCE AND ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

- Improve co-operative governance of shared river basins using IWRM strategies/plans as an important starting point i.e. built on credible and agreed information as well as effective communication channels, participation, mutual trust, shared vision/ objectives, and agreed water resources development and management interventions and plans.
- **Understanding integration – sectoral and regional.** Water affects many sectors and cannot be looked at in isolation. Water allocation alone cannot do it but integration with land use and agriculture is key. Regional integration remains cardinal and the areas of cooperation with neighbours regarding water scarcity must be understood

# MULTI-LEVEL, MULTI-SECTORAL AND TRANSBOUNDARY GOVERNANCE AND ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

- **Strengthen institutions** for multi-level, multi-sectoral, transboundary governance and stakeholder engagement e.g. River basin organizations
- Developing a suite of **win-win benefit sharing** projects as incentives for sustainable cooperation between states
- **Developing effective mechanisms for decentralised management (such as Water Users Associations)** that take into consideration awareness creation, communication and information sharing, voluntary compliance mechanisms; administrative responsibility and bureaucratic inertia; conflict resolution mechanisms and the integration of traditional models

# MULTI-LEVEL, MULTI-SECTORAL AND TRANSBOUNDARY GOVERNANCE AND ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

- **Strengthen integration across sectors** – understand the nexus between water, energy, food, health, climate, etc.
- **Improving water governance in a rural context** based on a clear understanding of the social and traditional complexities and challenges including inadequate capacity, lack of clear access rights, gender dynamics, and customary common property rules.

# TOOLS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- Establish a system of benchmarking water governance and performance across countries to track progress. Benchmark responsiveness, rule of law, accountability, participation (including gender) and transparency
- Develop and implement tools for spatial planning to understand the complexities and improve integration in water resource management
- Need for data and information management tools such as simple Decision Support Systems to support effective governance

# TOOLS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- Strengthen capacity building in water governance to enable sound management and use of water resources. Lessons learnt suggest that the building of water governance capacity requires longer term time frameworks
- Use the ecosystems approach to be able to understand the hidden ecological demand for water

When all is said and done.....

## REMEMBER MRS MKWANAZI

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