

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR A SOLICITED WRC PROJECT**

**Theme:** Water Availability

**Title:** Review, develop and test comprehensive training material focused on RDM determination methods.

**ToR:**

### **1. Rationale for the Study**

The DWS, in consultation with the WRC, agreed on the urgent need for an immediate review of the resource-directed measures, and to develop intensive, user-friendly training material with a particular focus on capacity building, both internally and externally. This should minimise or remove reliance on individuals and instead be based on accepted methods, procedures and manuals that any trained practitioner or manager can use. The shortfalls identified during the review of the 2014 PES/EIS project, completed in March 2026, underscore this need. The PES/EIS studies demonstrated the need to update, consolidate and standardise the resource-directed measures (RDM) determination methods so that there is a single source of reference. Currently, practitioners draw on different manuals of their choice, which creates a significant risk should the DWS be challenged in court. It is critical that a trained junior expert can use the material and reach the same conclusion as established experts. Therefore, the training material should focus on the RDM processes and procedures and, where possible, be aligned with active studies. The target audience includes ecologists, DWS staff, and interested stakeholders involved in the protection of aquatic ecosystems.

### **2. Main Objective**

The overall aim of the call is to produce trained managers and practitioners through standardised RDM training material that is gazetted and/or approved. Over the last two decades, the implementation of RDM processes for water allocation, balancing human and environmental flow needs in the context of water required for economic development, has limited opportunities for youth, particularly those from previously disadvantaged backgrounds and new recruits.

#### *Specific Objectives*

- Conduct an analysis of all existing RDM methods and procedures through a national and international literature review, including the current state of knowledge on environmental flow requirements.
- Review and develop robust, reliable and user-friendly RDM training materials that are less dependent on expert knowledge, while retaining indigenous and/or local knowledge.
- Conduct detailed and focused training for DWS staff managing the RDM processes, practitioners, and other interested stakeholders, ideally leading to a certificate of competence issued by the trainers.
- Ensure that the training covers all stages of the RDM process, from start to finish, and is based on both theory and practical field application.

### **3. Deliverables**

The following are the expected deliverables from the project:

1. A state-of-knowledge review of RDM determination methods in South Africa and internationally.
2. A compendium of RDM determination material approved by the DWS for application across the country and in transboundary contexts, with relevance for Africa and beyond.
3. Trained DWS staff managing the RDM processes, practitioners, and other interested stakeholders, with certificates of competence issued.

**Budget:** R1 500 000

**Year 1:** R200 000

**Duration:** 3 years