

THE WATER RESEARCH COMMISSION LIMPOPO PROVINCIAL PARTNERSHIP ROADSHOW



CONCEPT NOTE

THE WATER RESEARCH COMMISSION LIMPOPO PROVINCIAL PARTNERSHIP ROADSHOW

Strengthening water and sanitation resilience through research & innovation

Partner Institutions

Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS), CoGTA, SALGA, Office of the Premier and Lepelle Northern Water, Award and Tsogang Water and Sanitation WISA and IMESA

[Click here](#) to register

Dates: 1– 2 September 2025

Venue: Thohoyandou, University of Venda, Research Conference Centre (in person)

1. Background

The Water Research Commission (WRC) has approved a strategy focused on a stakeholder-centric approach to drive innovation, climate resilience, and adaptation in South Africa's water sector. To achieve these outcomes, the WRC must undertake impactful stakeholder engagement by establishing communication channels for information sharing; Actively listening to feedback and suggestions and building relationships and fostering collaborative problem-solving. This approach underpins the WRC's provincial stakeholder engagement plan, which shifts from a traditional top-down research prioritization model to a bottom-up approach centred on stakeholders expressed needs.

Limpopo Province has been prioritized due to its water scarcity, poor water and sanitation delivery, and vulnerability to climate change. The province relies heavily on groundwater for domestic and industrial use, while major industries like mining and agriculture exacerbate pressure on surface and groundwater resources. Mining and agriculture are the key economic sectors in Limpopo province.

The WRC emphasizes forward-looking solutions that integrate climate adaptation and diversified approaches to balance water supply and demand. By strengthening partnerships with Limpopo's institutions and stakeholders, the WRC aims to catalyze sustainable change, use research-based solutions to address water and sanitation challenges.

On 1–2 September 2025, the WRC will host a Provincial Stakeholder Engagement in partnership with key stakeholders in the province.

2. Event Aims:

- Announce strategic interventions to accelerate improvements in water services, research, and development.
- Share knowledge on key needs identified during pre-engagement consultations.
- Collaborate with Limpopo partners on innovations and knowledge products to enhance service delivery.
- This engagement serves as a platform to empower municipalities with research-based tools developed through research.

3. Identified Needs and Challenges

Stakeholder consultations highlighted severe water and sanitation challenges in Limpopo: Deteriorating drinking water quality and high losses due to aging infrastructure, theft, vandalism. Climate vulnerability is marked by a lack of forecasting tools and unsustainable groundwater use. Sanitation management is poor, with inadequate sludge/wastewater management leading to non-compliance. Critically, infrastructure is insufficient for universal access, compounded by weak governance: municipal non-compliance, poor operation & maintenance, ineffective water conservation, and low revenue collection. A fundamental shortage of skilled personnel underpins many of these issues.

3.1 Suggested water and sanitation innovations

- Water leaks
- Smart water management tech
- Sludge Management
- Sanitation
- Digital Water solutions
- Agriculture

3.2 RDI research areas

- Water Governance - Skills Audit
- Climate Change and Sustainable solutions
- Water quality – emerging contaminants
- Climate Smart agriculture
- Groundwater management
- Wastewater Management/ Mine & industry

3.3 Stakeholder and Communications

- Media management support
- Event management
- Stakeholder Management
- Partnerships and Business Development

THE WATER RESEARCH COMMISSION LIMPOPO PROVINCIAL PARTNERSHIP ROADSHOW

Strengthening water and sanitation resilience through research & innovation

Dates: 1– 2 September 2025
Venue: University of Venda, RCC Building

Chairperson: Board Member, Water Research Commission

Day 1

Time	Session 1	
Plenary		
ACCELERATING CHANGE THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS		
08:00-09:00	Registration refreshments (tea/coffee)	
09:00-09:10	Welcome Remarks UNIVEN	University rep.
09:10-09:20	Opening Remarks WRC	Dr Jennifer Molwantwa, CEO, WRC
09:20-09:40	Stakeholder Engagement & WRC RDI Interventions in Limpopo Province	Dr Stanley Liphadzi, WRC Executive RDI, WRC
09:40-09:50	Remarks by DWS Limpopo Regional Office	Ms Lucy Kobe, DWS Regional Office
09:50-10:00	Water and Sanitation Research programmes at UNIVEN	Prof Natasha
10:00-10:10	The importance of research and innovation for institutions – addressing water and wastewater management challenges in Limpopo	Dr Cornelius Ruiters, Lepelle Northern Water
10:10-10:30	Keynote Address: Office of Premier -The State of Water in Limpopo	Limpopo Office of the Premier (tbc)
10:30-10:45	Tea Break	
Session 2		
Plenary		
ANNOUNCEMENT OF PARTNERSHIPS TO BE ESTABLISHED IN THE PROVINCE FOR SUSTAINABILITY OF WATER AND SANITATION SERVICES		
Facilitator: Dr Mamohloding Maahlo, Head: Partnerships and Business Development, WRC		
10:45 -11:00	WRC partnerships and activities implemented in Limpopo	Introduction by Facilitator
11:00 -11:10	Strengthening technical capabilities within SA municipalities - improving operations for water services (green drop, blue drop, and no drop)	WISA
11:10 -11:20	Strengthening technical capacity for water and sanitation in SA municipalities	Mr Avhatakali Cedric Mphagi, IMESA
11:20 -11:25	Remarks by local partner NGOs in Limpopo	Mr Derick Du Toit, Award Mr Kenny Phasha, Tsogang Water & Sanitation
11:25 -11:30	Remarks by Letaba Estates and Pesico	Letaba Estates Rep. PepsiCo Rep.

11:30 -11:45	Interactive session with participants	All
11:45:13:00	Lunch	
Session 3 KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER WORKSHOPS – PLENARY SESSION Facilitator: UNIVEN		
13:00 -13:15	Improving efficiency in the delivery of water and sanitation services through reform (revenue collection, tariffing, and asset management)	Mr Jay Bhagwan, WRC Snr RM, WRC
13:15-13:30	Water quality management and its significance-water reuse and recycling and contaminants	Dr Nonhlanhla Kalebaila, WRC
13:30-13:45	Planning and decision support tools for adaptation and resilience including groundwater management.	Dr Brilliant Petja, WRC
13:45-14:00	Building resilience in agriculture sector through Water-Energy Food Nexus approaches: Linking with Agricultural Colleges, TVET Colleges and FET initiatives.	Prof Sylvester Mpandeli, WRC
14:00-14:15	Water use and management in the mining and industrial sector	Dr John Zvimba, WRC
14:15-14:30	Sanitation Options for sustainable access	Mr Phillip Majeke, WRC
14:30-14:45	Filling gaps in scarce skills for water governance research and development	Mr John Dini, WRC
14:45-15:00	Interactive session with participants	All
	Closure and networking (tea and coffee)	

AN INNOVATION DRIVEN WATER SECTOR

Date: 02 September 2025

Venue: UNIVEN, RCC Building

Day 2

Chairperson: DWS Regional Office

TIME	DESCRIPTION	PARTICIPANT
SESSION 1		
Opening Plenary: An Innovation Driven Water Sector		
08:00–09:00	Registration and refreshments	All
09:00–09:10	Welcome remarks	Chairperson
09:10–09:30	WRC Overview – Innovations portfolio, Multiple Water Use Services (MUS and Giyani Local Scale Climate, Resilience Programme	Dr Valerie Naidoon, Advisory Services, WRC
09:10–09:30	Public sector uptake of Water and Sanitation Innovations: What does this mean in the context of the PFMA?	Mr Phillip Majeke, WRC
09:30–09:40	Rural water governance: what are the options and Supported self-supply: empowering committees to be Involved – Giyani Case study	Mr Derick Du Toit, Award

09:40–09:50	Pour Flush Sanitation - Ga-Moela Village, Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality Case study	Mr Kenny Phasha, Tsogang Water and Sanitation
09:50–10:00	Interactive session with participants	All
10:00 -10:30	Tea Break	
	SESSION 2	
	Innovations Pitch	
10:30 – 10:45	HydroBLU –a data driven borehole placement system	HydroBLU
10:45 – 11:00	Non-Revenue Portal - a solution for	Mr Phillip Majeke, WRC
11:00 – 11:15	Aquatrip for non-revenue water – a solution for water losses	Aquatrip
11:15 – 11:35	Sand Water Extraction – solution for increasing water supply	SWE
11:35 – 11:45	Research, Innovations and Intellectual Property	Mr Thabo Mthombeni, IP Manager, WRC
11:45 – 12:00	Interactive session with participants	All
12:00-13:15		
Lunch Break		
TOOLS FOR MANAGING FLOODS FOR NON-TECHNICAL MUNICIPAL OFFICIALS – IMESA		
Facilitator: IMESA		
13:15-13:30	Introduction of IMESA - Partnership and Business Development	Dr Mamohloding Maahlo, WRC
13:30 -14:40	What is a flood?	Prof J. Du Plessis, IMESA
	Factors that influence flooding	
	Risks associated with floods	
	Legal responsibilities of municipalities and importance of careful planning	
15:45-16:00	Interactive session with participants	
16:00-16:05	Conclusion	
16:05-16:10	Closing remarks & Closing	WRC/ IMESA