

DWS withdraws controversial water regulations after public outcry

The Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) has announced the withdrawal of the proposed regulations that would have restricted public access and use of government waterworks and surrounding State-owned land for recreational purposes.



Minister Senzo Mchunu provided an update on the various water resource infrastructure projects underway in eThekwinini. Source: x.com

The draft regulations, which were published in the Government Gazette on 24 March 2023, sparked a backlash from various stakeholders and members of the public who enjoy activities such as fishing, boating, camping and hiking on the departmental infrastructures.



New Water Tribunal members appointed

28 Aug 2023



According to the department, the draft regulations were intended to protect the water resources and infrastructure from vandalism, pollution and illegal occupation. However, many critics argued that the regulations were too vague, restrictive and unfair, and that they would have negative impacts on tourism, livelihoods and social cohesion.

The department said in a statement that it decided to withdraw the draft regulations after considering the public comments received during public consultations as well as from written submissions. It added that it will review the draft regulations and reissue them once the process is concluded.

The department also urged the public to continue to use the waterworks and State-owned land responsibly and in accordance with existing laws and policies. It said it will work with relevant stakeholders to ensure the safety and sustainability of the water resources and infrastructure.

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