

Department, emerging farmers talk water challenges

The Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) has met with young people and emerging farmers to discuss various issues affecting them in the water sector.



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During a seminar held in Pretoria on Friday, issues, including Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), and Water Use Licensing Applications (WULA) were identified as some of the hurdles experienced by both commercial and subsistence farmers.

Tsunduka Khoza, Acting Chief Director: Water Use License Management, urged prospective applicants for water use license to ensure that their license applications are submitted online through Water Use License Application and Authorisation System (e-WULAAS) to assist the department in meeting the 90 days' turnaround time.

Khoza also advised applicants to contain technical documents such as master layout plan, agricultural activity report, methods of irrigation, groundwater report, plough certificate, soil sustainability study, and civil design drawings, to ensure that they are fast-tracked.

"We are in the teething process of implementing the 90 days turnaround time of issuing water use licenses [and] we are confident that with the assistance of Operation Vulindlela from the Presidency, we will be able to issue those licenses within the stipulated time," Khoza said.

The majority of young farmers described the process of acquiring water use license as an excessively complicated administrative procedure which is an obstacle toward their growth and development.

"We can never become commercial farmers without EIA and WULA and those processes are too technical and take a great deal of time," said a livestock farmer from Youth in Agriculture and Rural Development, Kagiso Murwa.

Khoza said the Department of Water and Sanitation acknowledged that agriculture and farming are the main economic drivers in the country and they need adequate water in order to flourish, hence they initiated a conversation with the youth in the sector.

Meanwhile, the DWS has called on all water use license applicants that are experiencing technical challenges to contact e-WULAAS Technical support on 012 336 8840 or e-mail E-WULAASCalls@dws.gov.za

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