

SA participates in Cairo Water Week

Water and Sanitation Deputy Minister David Mahlobo will participate in a high-level ministerial panel discussion at the sixth edition of Cairo Water Week (CWW2023) in Cairo, Egypt this week.



Image source: Steve Johnson from [Pexels](#)

The conference, to be held from 29 October to 2 November 2023, is organised by the Egyptian Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation and will be attended by ministers, water experts, stakeholders, and academics from around the world.

Held under the theme: “Action on Water Adaptation for Sustainability”, the conference will focus on fostering cross-sectoral cooperation and present innovative solutions for the sustainable management of water resources.

Over the past five years, Cairo Water Week has evolved into a prominent global platform for addressing pressing water-related challenges.

The Department of Water and Sanitation said through its diverse workshops, seminars, and knowledge exchanges, it has

played a pivotal role in shaping innovative solutions and collaborative strategies to tackle issues such as water scarcity, climate change, and ecosystem resilience.

The Deputy Minister will engage in constructive discussions on vital issues, including policies, strategies, plans, and measures related to water adaptation, to ensure sustainability for the Arab, Mediterranean, African, and worldwide regions.

“Among the issues to be discussed is technologies of reclamation and desalination of water in the African region, which can increase freshwater supplies to areas that are experiencing decreased water supply and water quality,” the department said in a statement.

The department noted that the current installed desalination inventory in South Africa is very modest in comparison to other parts of the world like the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, Australia and the United States of America.

“There are about 33 plants that have been built over several years, with a combined capacity of not exceeding a total of 200 Ml/d to treat various types of waste water, including seawater and mine water for mostly domestic consumption.

“The plant capacities range from 1 kl/d to 47 Ml/d, but the vast majority are smaller than 10 Ml/d and were implemented as emergency drought response projects. Such plants are generally not deemed viable for continued operation when the drought breaks and conditions returned to normal. For comparison some of the new schemes coming up in MENA region are in the order of 600 Ml/day,” the department said.

Mahlobo said South Africa needs to increase projects for the reuse, reclamation, and desalination of seawater to strengthen its water resilience.

This is in line with the country’s National Water and Sanitation Master Plan.

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