

MEDIA STATEMENT: KZN COGTA WELCOMES DECLARATION OF NATIONAL DROUGHT DISASTER

KZN Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (Cogta) has broadly welcomed today's declaration of drought experienced across several provinces in South Africa as a national state of disaster by Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs Minister, Dr Zweli Mkhize.

"This is a fair assessment of situation in KZN which was the first province to be affected by severe drought in 2014 and where, despite some improvement due to strict water supply management and water conservation efforts by municipalities, dam levels remain low," said KZN MEC for Cogta Nomusa Dube-Ncube.

The national Minister of Cogta has the legal authority in terms of the Disaster Management Act of 2002 to declare a national state of disaster when circumstances in several provinces simultaneously warrant it. Today's declaration of national disaster is in line with section 27(1) of the Act.

"We expect today's declaration of national disaster to bolster the arrangements that have already been put in place in KZN by the provincial and local governments. We also expect to benefit from national contingency arrangements and additional relief funding for drought-stricken areas," said Dube-Ncube.

For its part, KZN Cogta will continue to mobilise resources, both technical and financial, to alleviate drought conditions in the province. The department will also continue to appeal to municipalities, in conjunction with the private sector, NGOs and communities, to implement water conservation measures.

"We are also thinking long-term and implementing far-reaching solutions, such as water-harvesting and desalination, that will augment KZN's future drought resilience in the face of climate change. Drought is here to stay and we as consumers of water services have to find ways to adjust," said Dube-Ncube.

For more information, contact: KZN Cogta spokesperson Lennox Mabaso, 082 884 2403

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Ends.