



## **Water Monitoring and Releases Ahead of the Dusi Canoe Marathon**

*Issued by the Corporate Stakeholder Management Unit, Umgeni Water  
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Umgeni Water began water releases from Henley Dam at 08h00 on Wednesday as part of its efforts to assist the Dusi Canoe Marathon, which begins from Camps Drift, Pietermaritzburg, tomorrow. Releases from upstream Henley Dam (this dam has been decommissioned) have the effect of flushing the Msunduzi River system with better quality water, as well as providing the water needed for good paddling.

Henley Dam is currently at 105% and overflowing. This dam is not used for water treatment to potable water.

In least two weeks before the start of the Dusi Canoe Marathon, Umgeni Water increased monitoring of water quality in the Msunduzi River. An additional 11 sampling sites were added to Umgeni Water's routine resting sites, in an endeavour to obtain more information which was shared with various stakeholders, including race organisers, with a view to early detection of problem areas and implementation of remedial or mitigation measures.

The most recent sampling were done on Sunday, 13th February 2022, and Monday, 14th February 2022. Sampling took place jointly with the Duzi-Umgeni Conservation Trust and the results have since been shared with race organisers. As was expected that due to heavy rains of January 2022, some rain earlier this week and broken or blocked sewer problems in the Pietermaritzburg region, pollution load remains high. The analysis shows various degrees of E. coli presence. (E. coli is used as an overall indicator of faecal and related contamination).

The releases from Henley Dam will last 24 hours and are scheduled to end at 08h00 tomorrow (Thursday). Releases from Henley Dam will significantly improve river water quality.

With the inclusion of the 11 additional non-routine evaluation sites in the monitoring programme in the Msunduzi River catchment, this meant that assessment of water quality in the run-up to the Dusi Canoe Marathon had been intensified.

At this stage, Inanda Dam is at 102% and spilling. This has assisted significantly in increasing water resources in the river. A decision will be made tomorrow (Thursday) as to whether a release is required from Inanda Dam.