

KEY STAKEHOLDERS' VALIDATION WORKSHOP
**BASELINE STUDY ON THE SOURCES OF POLLUTION IN THE MOHOKARE/
 CALEDON RIVER CATCHMENT**

Thursday 25 – Friday 26 March 2021
Southern Sun, Bloemfontein, South Africa

1.0 PRESENT

The following participants from both South Africa and Lesotho attended the Validation Workshop.

Participants Name	Institution/ Country
1. Dr Lira Molapo	Lesotho Water Partnership
2. Mr Tinashe Chizema	DWS – South Africa
3. Ms Bokang Theko	Ministry of Tourism (Environmental Officer Lesotho)
4. Mr Lebohang Maseru	Ministry of Water – Principal Environmental Officer, Lesotho
5. Mr Ntioea Letsapo	Department of Water Affairs, Lesotho
6. Ms Ntsiuoa Phakisa	Department of Water Affairs, Lesotho
7. Mr Jurgo Van Wyk	DWS – South Africa, Water Resources Planning
8. Ms Mamokhetho Nthathakane	National Civil Society Forum, Lesotho
9. Mr Simbotwe Mwiya	Project Coordinator, ORASECOM Secretariat
10. Mr Lenka Thamae	Executive Secretary, ORASECOM Secretariat
11. Ms Naume Kupe	KM and Communications, ORASECOM Secretariat
12. Ms Victoria Qheku	Lesotho Water Partnership
13. Mr Peter Nthathakane	Lesotho Water Commission
14. Mr Michael Ramaano	Env-Water Quality, ORASECOM Secretariat
15. Mr Peloyame Nthatsi	Baseline Consultant, Ethnoserve Consultancy
16. Ms Vuyani Monyake	National Baseline Consultant, Lesotho

2.0 Workshop Opening Session

After the self-introductions and a prayer, the objectives of the workshop were outlined by Mr Ramaano. He indicated that this is a validation workshop for the draft report on the baseline study on sources of pollution on the Mohokare/Caledon River Catchment that is shared by both Lesotho and South Africa. The baseline study started in March 2020 but has been hampered by the COVID-19 pandemic hence the workshop is being held late.

Thus, the reason for the workshop is to look at the draft reports that have been submitted by the consultants, Ethnoserve Consulting, and ensure that they are of the right quality and standard. The Consultants will also present a proposal on the demonstration project that will be done on the Mohokare/ Caledon River Catchment.

3.0 Opening Remarks

- a) The leaders of the two delegations from Lesotho and South Africa (Mr Nthathakane and Chizema respectively), welcomed all to the workshop after the long- time of not having physical meetings due to the COVID-19 pandemic. They highlighted that the project is lagging and there is need to speed up the implementation of the activities to ensure that the benefits are enjoyed by the two riparian countries.
- b) The ORASECOM Executive Secretary, Mr Lenka Thamae thanked the two delegations from the member states for having found it fit to attend this workshop and wished that the deliberations will be fruitful. He highlighted that ORASECOM undertook the TDA process in 2007 which identified several key issues which needed to be addressed to ensure prudent and sustainable water management in the basin. From the issues identified, a priority list was made, and this formed the ORASECOM Strategic Action Programme, parts of which are being funded through this UNDP-GEF SAP Implementation Project.

One of the key issues included poor water quality and pollution within the basin specifically the Mohokare River on the Lesotho side. It was recognised that the textile manufacturing activities were posing serious water quality challenges that needed to be addressed. It is against this background that a demonstration project was included in the UNDP – GEF project leading to the undertaking of the baseline study on sources of pollution in the Mohokare/ Caledon River. The project tries to address a number of issues and it will achieve its objectives. Having said that, he declared the workshop officially opened.

4.0 Overview of the ORASECOM UNDP-GEF SAP Implementation Project – Mr S. Mwiya

The overall objective of this project is the strengthening of joint management capacity for implementation of the basin-wide IWRM Plan and demonstrating environmental and socioeconomic benefits of ecosystem-based approach to water resources management through the implementation of SAP priority actions in the Orange-Senqu River basin.

In line with the objectives, the project has been divided into four (4) components:

Component 1: Institutional and policy reform and technical capacity building towards enhanced transboundary basin planning and joint management.

Component 2: Reducing stress on Water Resources Quality.

Component 3: Addressing Changes to the Hydrological Regime through the source-to-sea application.

Component 4: Addressing Land Degradation through community-based ecosystem management.

The demonstration project on the Sources of pollution on the Mohokare/ Caledon river is under Component 2 on reducing stress on water resources quality. The activity is meant to address pollution challenges on the Mohokare / Caledon river system so that more water is available in the right quality for various uses. Initially the project was only focusing on a portion of the river around the Thetsane industrial area but with the advice of the Lesotho government, this has been expanded to the whole Mohokare/ Caledon River Catchment. This also means that it now has a transboundary aspect to it and this should be visible on the new activities to be undertaken.

5.0 Discussion on presentations

It was highlighted that there is need to address issues of loading (volumes of water discharged) as this will help us understand quantify the level of pollution with the Mohokare system.

The project document only talks of lower Mohokare whilst there are pollution problems upstream that are getting worse by the day. As a result, the focus is no longer on the lower Mohokare but on the whole river system.

It was also highlighted that the documents submitted by the consultants are not in line with what is expected from the consultants engaged. They do not speak to the challenges seen within the catchment nor do they present thorough analysis of the available data regarding water quality. They are meant to analyse water quality challenges in the catchment and then design a demonstration project to address them.

A complaint was also raised that the complete draft report was not shared with the participants before the workshop hence this has limited their ability to review and make meaningful comments.

6.0 Presentation of the draft Report on the Sources of Pollution on the Mohokare/Caledon River Catchment – Ms Vuyani Monyake

A presentation was made by the consultants on the draft report that was before the participants. The presentation, which was basically going through report as there was no powerpoint presentation, covered the following topics being;

- Water quality and river health status
- Legal and institutional framework on pollution and water quality in Lesotho and South Africa
- Proposed demonstration project on the Mohokare/ Caledon river catchment.

Discussions on the draft report

The failure of the consultants to deliver a comprehensive presentation that was not even prepared in advance. The verbal presentation made it difficult to follow the sequencing and analysis undertaken during the exercise. The report was also found to be of a very poor quality as opposed to the inception report that they presented at the start of the project. The report is so poor that it must be rewritten with all the inputs from the participants.

The Consultants should only stick to the Terms of Reference as indicated in the Contract. The other work such as the Sampling Protocol which was not part of the original contract should not be undertaken. This is mainly because the draft sampling is of such low quality that it is not worth spending time revising.

The following actions were to be undertaken by the consultant in order to improve the report;

a) General Outlay of the Report

- The report has a badly written Executive Summary. A lot of the work has to go into ensuring that the executive summary is well written and summaries the key findings of the baselining exercise. As it is, it hardly communicates with the intended target group.
- A good writer should be engaged to improve the overall presentation of the report. Presentation of the report is poor with certain information that could have been presented in a landscape or tabular form being presented in a portrait setting.
- The quality of the maps used in the report is also very poor. Since there is a GIS Specialist in the team, this should be improved.

b) Scope of the Mohokare/Caledon Catchment

- There is need to clearly delineate the geospatial extent of the Mohokare/ Caledon Catchment. This helps the reader to understand the area under consideration in the study.
- Extend the scope beyond the river channel and its banks to include all land uses within the geographical extent of the catchment.

- The contract clearly stipulates that maps showing point and non-point sources should be produced. This has not been done and needs to be undertaken with all sources located and mapped.

c) Legal and Regulatory Review Industrial wastewater

- Include municipal legal regulatory framework in the review.
- Include Water Services Act in the review. Also include the draft revised Water Act to identify if it will address some of the challenges identified in the review.
- The baseline study is of transboundary nature hence it should also include the institutional framework and legal instruments for South Africa.
- The project should present and highlight existing and opportunities for transboundary bilateral cooperation between Lesotho and South Africa on the Mohokare catchment (Free State cooperation with Lesotho)
- Correlator of both countries – regional, transboundary level – streamlining of processes within the Transboundary catchment.
- Link to Mohokare catchment and problems we see - How these apply. Where are the gaps and what can we do to improve? What are the limitations with regards to the municipal regulatory and legal frameworks?

d) Water Quality Management

- The Water Quality component is not informed by any data except the two successive samplings that were carried out. This data from the two successive sampling is highly unreliable and should never be used in isolation. Thus, the Consultants need to get existing data both from RSA and Lesotho and use it to inform this component. It was also noted that most of the write up is similar to an article that which appeared in The Egyptian Journal of Aquatic Research by Peter Chatanga et.al. However, this is not cited in the report.
- Include Lerotholi Polytechnic Water Testing Laboratory and other water testing laboratories in the basic capacity analysis review.
- Include in the report review of RSA Water quality monitoring arrangements.
- Explore collaborations between DWA water quality monitoring and other water testing laboratories.
- Include case studies of best practices (Transboundary monitoring arrangements)
- Review existing transboundary water resources data sharing systems between the two countries. Then decide the capacity constraints that the demonstration project must address.
- How can collaboration be achieved between the two states within the basin in terms of water quality management?

e) Demonstration Project i.e. Activities to be undertaken on the Mohokare/ Caledon Catchment

Submit the narrative/write-up of the powerpoint presentation that was done. This should also include the submissions/inputs made by the workshop participants.

- The objective of the demonstration project objective should include facilitating a process of joint management of Mohokare / Caledon catchment at a functional level among the municipalities and district councils.

- Point sources discharge loading within the Basin – include the narrative on how the Pilot can monitor and aim to determine the Water Resource Quality Objectives for the Catchment.
- Solid waste management is a challenge especially in Lesotho as it is done in an uncoordinated manner. This leads to problems around leachate polluting the water bodies and the groundwater resources. Must establish what can be done to assist the relevant authorities.
- Citizen science – support established groups on both sides of the river to be able to undertake river health monitoring to add value to monitoring efforts.
- Explore the possibility of introducing a pilot project on Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) within the catchment.
- Land use planning or allocation guidelines (Landfills, pit latrine toilets, conservancy tanks, septic tanks, wastewater treatment works, industrial estates etc.)
- Correlation of both countries – regional, transboundary level – streamlining of processes within the Transboundary catchment.
- Office of the Commissioner of Water has revised the Water Act and it includes operational tools that address regulation, licensing of water resources as well as water services regulations. These are all in draft form. There is an urgent need for this to be Enacted by finalising the legal process. The project could facilitate the legal consultation (working session) with the Department of the Ministry of Law and Constitutional Affairs which is responsible for drafting the enactment.
- The Draft Water Quality standards have been developed by the DWA. These need to be adopted for implementation in line with Lesotho laws. The project could also assist with this process.

7.0 Closing of the Validation Workshop

At the end of the workshop, the following were agreed upon by the stakeholders;

- i. That the draft report presented by the Ethnoserve Consulting is not approved as it does not meet the objects of the baseline study as indicated in the contract and inception report.
- ii. As the consultancy has now taken too long and delayed project implementation, the consultant's contract should be extended until the 17th of May 2021. This period should be used to improve the quality of the product to ensure that they meet the objects of the study.
- iii. Ethnoserve Consulting has shown the lack of enthusiasm to satisfactorily complete the project and are not responsive to communications in most instances. If the situation continues, then the national consultant who worked with them should be asked to complete the assignment.

The leaders of the two delegations thanked all for contributing immensely during the two days of the workshop. They expressed hope that the next baseline report will meet all the objects so that actual implementation of the activities can begin.

