

DEPARTMENT OF WATER AND SANITATION

NO. 6869

21 November 2025

DEPARTMENT OF WATER AND SANITATION

NATIONAL WATER ACT, 1998

PROPOSED RESERVE DETERMINATION FOR WATER RESOURCES FOR USUTHU-MHLATHUZE CATCHMENTS IN THE INKOMATI-USUTHU AND PONGOLA-MTAMVUNA WATER MANAGEMENT AREAS.

I, **Pemmy Castelina Pamela Majodina**, in terms of section 16(3) of the National Water Act, 1998 (Act No. 36 of 1998), hereby publish, for public comments the proposed Reserve determination for the water resources in the Inkomati-Usuthu and Pongola-Mtamvuna Water Management Areas, as set out in the Schedule.

Any person who wishes to submit comments on the proposed Reserve determination must submit their comments in writing within 60 days from the date of publication of this Notice by-

- (a) Posting such comments to the following address:
Department of Water and Sanitation
Director: Reserve Determination', Attention: Mr Yakeen Atwaru
Ndinaye Building
Private Bag X313
PRETORIA
0001;

OR

- (b) Hand delivering such comments to the following address:
Department of Water and Sanitation
Director: Reserve Determination', Attention: Mr Yakeen Atwaru
Ndinaye Building
178 Francis Baard Street
PRETORIA
0001;

OR

- (c) sending such comments electronically to the following e-mail address:
Email: AtwaruY@dws.gov.za

Comments must be addressed to the Director: Reserve Determination and marked for the attention of Mr Yakeen Atwaru. Comments received after the closing date shall not be considered.



MISS PEMMY C.P. MAJODINA (MP)
MINISTER OF WATER AND SANITATION

DATE: 01-10-2025

SCHEDULE

1. DESCRIPTION OF WATER RESOURCE

(1) The Reserve is determined for all or part of every significant water resource within the catchments of the Usuthu-Mhlathuze, as set out below:

Water Management Areas: Inkomati-Usuthu and Pongola-Mtamvuna

Drainage Region: W Primary Drainage Region

River(s): W1 catchment (main river: Mhlathuze).

W2 catchment (main river: UMfolozi).

W3 catchment (main river: Mkuze).

W4 catchment (main river: Pongola) - part of this catchment area falls within Eswatini.

W5 catchment (main river: Usutu) - much of this catchment falls within Eswatini.

W7 catchment (Kosi Bay and Lake Sibaya).

(2) The Reserve is hereby determined for all or part of the water resource referred to in sub-clause 1.1, which classes have been determined in Government Notice No. 52814 of 06 June 2025.

(3) The Minister has in terms of section 12 of the National Water Act, 1998 (Act No.36 of 1998), prescribed a system for classifying water resources by issuing Government Notice No. R. 810, published in Gazette No. 33541 dated 17 September 2010. In terms of section 16(1) of the Act, the Minister must, as soon as reasonably practicable after the class of all or part of a water resource has been determined, by Notice in the Gazette, determine the Reserve for all or part of that water resource.

(4) The Minister, in terms of section 16(3) of the Act, proposes, for the purpose of section 16(1) of the Act, the following Reserve determination for the water resources of the Usuthu-Mhlathuze catchments in the Inkomati-Usuthu and Pongola-Mtamvuna Water Management Areas.

2. ACRONYMS AND DEFINITIONS

(1) Acronyms used in Annexure A

BHN	Basic Human Needs
BHNR	Basic Human Needs Reserve
EcoSpecs	Ecological Specifications
EIS	Ecological Importance and Sensitivity
EWR	Ecological Water Requirement
EWR_MLF	Ecological Water Requirement_Maintenance Low Flows
WARMS	Water Allocation Registration Management System
GRA II	Groundwater Resource Assessment Phase II
GRDM	Groundwater Resource Directed Measures

MAR	Mean Annual Runoff
MCM	Million Cubic Metres
PES	Present Ecological Status
REC	Recommended Ecological Category
TEC	Targeted Ecological Category
DWS	Department of Water and Sanitation
DWAF	Department of Water Affairs and Forestry
EC	Electrical Conductivity
TIN	Total Inorganic Nitrogen
SRP	Soluble Reactive Phosphorus
RC	Reference Condition
WQU	Water Quality Unit
IUA	Integrated Unit of Analysis
RU	Resource Unit

(2) DEFINITIONS

In this Notice unless the context indicates otherwise –

“**Baseflow**” means a sustained low flow in rivers during dry or fair-weather conditions and includes contribution from delayed interflow and groundwater discharge;

“**EWR**” means Ecological Water Requirements and refers to the flow patterns (magnitude, timing and duration) and water quality needed to maintain a riverine ecosystem in a particular condition;

“**Recharge**” means the addition of water to the zone of saturation, either by downward percolation of precipitation or surface water and/ or the lateral migration of groundwater from adjacent aquifers; and

“**the Act**” means the National Water Act, 1998 (Act No. 36 of 1998).

3. RESERVE DETERMINATION IN TERMS OF SECTION 16(3) OF THE ACT

- (1) The Reserve determination for the quantity component of the Rivers in the Usuthu-Mhlathuze catchment includes the EWR sites as shown in **Table 1** and illustrated in **Figures 1 to 5 of Annexure A**, and the basic human needs are as set out in **Table 2 of Annexure A**.
- (2) The Reserve determination for the quality component of the Rivers at EWR sites in the Usuthu-Mhlathuze catchment is set out in **Tables 3.1 to 3.8 of Annexure A**.
- (3) A summary of the Water Quantity & Quality Reserve for selected Wetlands for the Usuthu-Mhlathuze catchment is set out in **Tables 4.1 to 4.7 of Annexure A**.
- (4) The Reserve determination for the Estuaries in the Usuthu-Mhlathuze catchment is set out in **Tables 5.1** and the Threshold of Potential Concerns (TPC's) associated with each of the ecological specifications are provided in **Table 5.2 to 5.9 of Annexure A**.

- (5) The Reserve determination for the groundwater contribution to the Reserve for Water Quantity for the Usuthu-Mhlathuze catchment is set out in **Table 6.1** of **Annexure A**.
- (6) The Reserve determination for the groundwater contribution to the Reserve for Water Quality for the Usuthu-Mhlathuze catchment is set out in **Tables 7.1 to 7.9** of **Annexure A**.

4. COMMENCEMENT

The Reserve determinations made in this Notice commence on and apply from the date of publication hereof.

The Annexure to this Notice, containing the Reserve determination for the quantity and quality component of the rivers at EWR sites and the extrapolated nodes, estuaries, wetlands, groundwater contribution to the Reserve for water quantity and quality for the Inkomati-Usuthu and Pongola-Mtamvuna Water Management Areas, can be accessed from:

<https://www.dws.gov.za/wem/currentstudies/gazettedreserves.aspx>

or requested from:

Director: Reserve Determination
Attention: Mr. Yakeen Atwaru
Department of Water and Sanitation
Ndinaye Building 5082
178 Francis Baard Street
Private Bag x 313
Pretoria
0001

E-mail: Atwaruy@dws.gov.za