

DEPARTMENT OF WATER AND SANITATION

NO. 7862

28 August 2026

NATIONAL WATER ACT, 1998

**PROPOSED WATER RESOURCE CLASSES AND RESOURCE QUALITY
OBJECTIVES FOR THE LOWER ORANGE CATCHMENT**

I, Pemmy Majodina, in my capacity as Minister of Water and Sanitation, and duly authorised in terms of section 13(4) of the National Water Act, 1998 (Act No. 36 of 1998), hereby publish for public comment, the notice on the proposed water resources classes and the associated resource quality objectives, in the Schedule hereto and intended to be issued in terms of section 13(1) of the National Water Act, 1998 (Act No. 36 of 1998).

Any person who wishes to submit written comments in connection with the proposed water resources classes and resource quality objectives is hereby invited to do so within 60 days from the date of publication hereof by -

- (a) Posting such comments to the following address:

Department of Water and Sanitation
Private Bag X 313
Pretoria
0001

or

- (b) Emailing such comments to the following address: Ms Lebogang Matlala

Email: matlala@dws.gov.za

Comments must be addressed to the Director: Water Resource Classification and marked for the attention of Ms Lebogang Matlala. Comments received after the closing date shall not be considered.



MS PEMMY MAJODINA
MINISTER OF WATER AND SANITATION

DATE:

06 - 08 - 2026

SCHEDULE PROPOSED WATER RESOURCE CLASSES AND RESOURCE QUALITY OBJECTIVES FOR THE LOWER ORANGE CATCHMENT

1 DEFINITIONS

In this Schedule any word or expression to which a meaning has been assigned in the Act shall have the meaning so assigned and, unless the context indicates otherwise -

“Class I water resource” means a water resource which is minimally used; and in which the configuration of ecological categories of the water resources within a catchment, results in an overall condition of that water resource that is minimally altered from its pre-development condition, and as defined in the Water Resource Classification System Regulation;

“Class II water resource” means a water resource which is moderately used; and in which the configuration of ecological categories of the water resources within a catchment, results in an overall condition of that water resource that is moderately altered from its pre-development condition and as defined in the Water Resource Classification System Regulation;

“Class III water resource” means a water resource which is heavily used; and in which the configuration of ecological categories of the water resources within a catchment, results in an overall condition of that water resource that is significantly altered from its pre-development condition and as defined in the Water Resource Classification System Regulation;

“Water Resource Classification System” means the Regulations for the Establishment of the Classification System, 2010 as prescribed in Government Notice No. R. 810 of 17 September 2010;

“Ecological category” means the ecological condition of that water resource in terms of the deviation of its biophysical components from a predevelopment condition;

“Ecological water requirements” in relation to a water resource, means the quantity and quality of water of that resource that is required to maintain the said water resource in its assigned ecological category;

“Integrated unit of analysis” means a water resource catchment that incorporates a socio-economic zone, but is defined by a watershed;

“Percentile” means the non-exceedance probability of a set of data *i.e.*, at the 95th percentile, 95 percent of values must be less than or equal to the water quality RQO numerical limit; and at 50th percentile, 50 percent of values must be less than or equal to the water quality RQO numerical limit.

“Present ecological state” means the current health or integrity of various biological attributes of the resource, compared to the natural or close to natural reference conditions;

“Recommended ecological category” means a category indicating the realistically attainable ecological management target for a water resource

“Resource quality objectives” means descriptive qualitative statements and numerical values for the biological, physical, and chemical attributes of the significant water resources throughout the catchments;

“Resource unit” means a basic unit of a water resource to which Resource Quality Objectives will apply;

“Target ecological category” means the ultimate target to achieve a sustainable system both ecologically and economically, considering the present ecological state and recommended ecological category.

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE WATER RESOURCE

- (1) The water resource classes and resource quality objectives are determined for all or part of significant water resources within the Lower Orange Catchment area set out below:

Water Management Area: Vaal-Orange

Drainage Region: C92B, C92C, D41B—D41M, D42, D51- D58, D61, D62, D71, D72, D73, D81, D82, F10, F20, F30, F40, F50, F60A-E

River(s): Lower Orange, Brak, Kuruman, Buffels, Holgat, Swartlintjies, Spoeg, Bitter, Groen, Sout

- (2) The date from which the resource quality objectives (RQOs) will apply shall be the date stipulated in the *Gazette* wherein the final approved RQOs for the Lower Orange catchment in the Vaal-Orange Water Management Area will be published.

3 DETERMINATION OF THE CLASS OF WATER RESOURCE IN TERMS OF SECTION 13(1)(a) OF THE ACT

- (1) The proposed water resource classes per Integrated Unit of Analysis (IUA), which are in accordance with the Water Resource Classification System, for the Lower Orange Catchment are as listed in Table 1 and as illustrated in Figure 1 of Annexure A.
- (2) The IUAs in the Lower Orange Catchment are listed in Table 2 and illustrated in Figure 2 of Annexure A.
- (3) The surface water resource units (RUs) and quaternary catchments are listed in Table 3 and indicated in Figure 3 of Annexure A.
- (4) The groundwater resource units (GRUs) and quaternary catchments are listed in Table 4 and indicated in Figure 4 of Annexure A.
- (5) The priority wetlands are listed in Table 5 and indicated in Figure 5 of Annexure A.
- (6) The catchment estuaries are listed in Table 6 and indicated in Figure 6 of Annexure A.
- (7) A summary of the proposed Water Resource Classes per IUA and Ecological Categories are listed in Table 7 of Annexure A.

4 WATER RESOURCES WITH PROPOSED RESOURCE QUALITY OBJECTIVES DETERMINED

- (1) Table 8 of Annexure A provides:
 - (i) the listed Integrated Unit of Analysis in the Lower Orange for which proposed Resource Quality Objectives have been determined.
 - (ii) the selected Water Resources (Rivers, Wetlands, Groundwater and Estuaries) for which Resource Quality Objectives are presented; and
 - (iii) reference to subsequent tables within the gazette that list the proposed Resource Quality Objectives per selected sub-components (quantity, quality, habitat, biota or groundwater) per Resource Unit.
- (2) Resource quality objectives for rivers per integrated unit of analysis and resource units within the Lower Orange catchment are specified in Tables 9 – 14 of Annexure A.
- (3) Resource quality objectives for priority wetland clusters and systems in selected resource units in the Lower Orange catchment are set out in Table 15 of Annexure A.
- (4) Resource quality objectives for groundwater in priority Groundwater Resource Units are as specified and set out in Tables 17 - 25 of Annexure A.
- (5) Resource quality objectives for Orange Estuary and smaller estuaries are set out in Table 26 - 30 of Annexure A.

The Annexure to this Notice, containing the proposed water resource classes and Resource Quality Objectives, can be accessed from:

<https://www.dws.gov.za/wem/WRCS/lo.aspx>

Or requested from:

Director: Water Resource Classification
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Department of Water and Sanitation
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178 Francis Baard Street
Private Bag x 313
Pretoria
0001
E-mail: matlalal@dws.gov.za