



TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE RIETSPRUIT FORUM

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The promulgation of the National Water Act (Act 36 of 1998) has resulted in the establishment of 19 Water Management Areas (WMA's) in South Africa, which will be managed by Catchment Management Agencies (CMA's). The process to establish a CMA for the Upper Vaal WMA has been initiated and considerable progress has been made in this respect. The success of the Upper Vaal CMA, once established, will depend largely on effective communication with all stakeholders in the WMA to formulate and implement a Catchment Management Strategy (CMS). This can only be effectively accomplished through the establishment of Catchment Forums. The Upper Vaal WMA is therefore comprised of thirteen Catchment Forums, of which the Rietspruit Forum (RF) is one.

The Rietspruit Catchment is situated in the south-western part of Gauteng and drains parts of Soweto, Lenasia, Sebokeng and Vanderbijlpark covering an area of approximately 900km². The RF was established in 2001 and is regularly attended by relevant government departments, mines, industries, farmers, local authorities, non-governmental organizations, water service providers and the general public. The RF also has a well-established Forum Management Committee (FMC), which coordinates and manages activities on behalf of the RF. Various Ad-hoc Task Teams have also been established focusing on specific water resource related issues. The participation of all people in the protection, use, development, conservation, management and control of the water resources of the Rietspruit Catchment will be promoted through the RF.

The Terms of Reference for the RF is therefore defined with respect to:

- Purpose of the RF;
- Functions to be performed by the RF;
- Composition and representation on the RF;
- Status of decisions and recommendations;
- Frequency of meetings; and
- Administrative support to the RF.

A Catchment Forum is:

- A group of concerned people who agree, on a voluntary basis, to represent different perspectives of society in the CMA process;
- A formal structure which is related to the CMA;
- A place where co-operative and consultative water resource management can take place;
- A place where participants provide and share information relating to issues of the water environment; and
- A body that has the capacity to make recommendations to the authorities and other Forum management structures on behalf of the broader body of Forum members.

A Catchment Forum is not:

- A pressure group;
- An activist body; or
- A body which can prescribe or dictate certain actions to participants.

1.2 Vision

To strive towards a healthy and safe water environment that is sustainable for all use through proactive stakeholder participation within the Rietspruit Catchment.

1.3 Mission

The RF aims to actively involve all stakeholders in formulating an Integrated Water Management Strategy for the Rietspruit Catchment.

1.4 Purpose of the Forum

The purpose of the RF is to:

- Facilitate and co-ordinate effective Water Resource Management in the Rietspruit Catchment;
- Represent the interests of all parties of the Rietspruit Catchment in the various management structures comprising the Upper Vaal WMA;
- Provide a Forum, where matters of common interest with respect to Water Resource Management in the Rietspruit Catchment, can be discussed; and
- Make recommendations to the authorities and other Forum management structures on behalf of the broader body of Forum members relating to Water Resource Management issues.

1.5 Functions to be Performed by the Forum

The functions of the RF are to:

- Ensure that the membership of the RF reflects a broad range of perspectives from different sectors of society and a wide range of interests;
- Ensure that consultation with the broader base of interested and affected parties is maintained and that they be given the opportunity to comment on the RF's deliberations and recommendations;
- Convene regular meetings and inform Forum members timeously of such arrangements; and
- Start, maintain and promote a program to raise awareness on Water Resource Management and strategies.

2 STRUCTURE OF THE FORUM

The RF shall be constituted of a group of interested and affected parties concerned with water resource management of the Rietspruit Catchment and should reflect the principles of gender equality and representation of the greater population residing within the defined boundaries of the Rietspruit Catchment. Membership of the RF will be inclusive of all individuals, role-players, stakeholders and interested and

affected parties within the Rietspruit Catchment. From this group of people, the RF members shall elect a Chairperson and Vice-chairperson to facilitate Forum meetings.

The RF shall also elect an FMC, which will consist of a Chairperson and Vice-chairperson as well as one person from the RF to represent the relevant water use sectors within the Rietspruit Catchment. The Rietspruit FMC shall be directly responsible to the RF and will be limited to bona fide members of the RF. The Rietspruit FMC will be responsible to (including other aspects):

- Facilitate communication and understanding between all interested and affected parties within the RF and other structures within the Upper Vaal WMA;
- Organise all administrative requirements necessary for the functioning of the RF;
- Oversee, monitor and co-ordinate the activities of the RF; and
- Adhere to the RF Terms of Reference and other relevant procedures.

The Rietspruit FMC will appoint Ad-hoc Task Teams responsible for specific functions. It is envisaged that Ad-hoc Task Teams may be established as the need arises, while existing Ad-hoc Task Teams may be dissolved once their task has been completed. Ad-hoc Task Teams shall be directly responsible to the Rietspruit FMC and will be limited to bona fide members of the Rietspruit FMC.

It is the responsibility of the RF and FMC Chairpersons to represent the RF at the Vaal Barrage Catchment Executive Committee (VBCEC) as and when meetings are held.

Registered RF and FMC members are required to attend all meetings and activities. If the respective member is unable to attend all meetings and activities, a nominated proxy must attend on the member's behalf. Non-attendance by the member, or their respective proxy, is unacceptable and will be recorded as Absent Without Apology in the RF minutes.

3 PERIOD OF APPOINTMENT

The period of appointment to all positions within the RF will be reviewed every two (2) years. However, to ensure continuity, some or all of the elected members of positions within the RF may be asked to serve voluntarily for a longer period.

4 FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS OF THE FORUM

- The RF will meet four (4) times per year to review the activities of the Rietspruit FMC and the various Ad-hoc Task Teams;
- The RF will convene an Open Day every two (2) years; and
- The Rietspruit FMC and Ad-hoc Task Teams will meet on a more frequent basis as deemed necessary.

5 OBSERVER STATUS

The RF will be open for observers to attend and all of its structures are fully transparent. All relevant information will be available to observers. Observers will be permitted to attend RF meetings based on the following conditions:

- Observers must provide seven days advance notification in writing to the Secretary of the RF of the intent to observe a RF meeting;
- Observers will not have the right to cast a vote;
- Should the observer wish to address a specific issue verbally, written submission to do so should accompany the notification forwarded to the Secretary of the RF;
- Observers and members of the RF will not be allowed to make statements to the media on behalf of the RF or any of its members. Only the Chairperson and/or Vice-Chairperson of the RF or FMC will be allowed to make statements to the media; and
- The RF reserves the right to ask observers to excuse themselves from a meeting.

6 STATUS OF DECISIONS

The RF's purpose is to advise, monitor, recommend and make suggestions to the Rietspruit FMC which in turn will be channeled through the FMC to the appropriate CMA structures where final decisions will be taken. It is the Rietspruit FMC's responsibility to give feedback of all relevant decisions to the members of the RF and its structures. The recommendations of the RF and its structures will be by simple majority. Minority views will be recorded. In addition, the RF has the right to take recommendations to the Minister of Water Affairs and Forestry should it be deemed necessary.

7 ADMINISTRATION

7.1 Secretarial Services

It is expected that secretarial services will be provided by the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry to assist the RF in the execution of administrative functions. The Secretary will arrange meetings, prepare documentation and record the proceedings of meetings. However, if this is not possible, then the relevant Chairperson of the RF or Rietspruit FMC should provide the necessary secretarial services.

7.2 Finances

The RF will have the ability to open a bank account in the name of the Rietspruit Catchment Forum. Both the chairpersons of the RF and Rietspruit FMC will have signing rights. The FMC, in coordination with the RF members, will be responsible for the generation and management of funds to sustain the RF. All sectors elected to the Rietspruit FMC will be responsible for contributing towards the sustainability of the RF. An annual budget should be compiled and regular reports submitted to the RF members.

The RF can fund activities as and when its budget allows, and only if the proposed activities are in line with the objectives of the RF.

7.3 Amendments to the Terms of Reference

The following procedure should be adhered to when making amendments to the RF Terms of Reference:

- The proposed change or addition must be submitted to the Rietspruit FMC;
- The submitted document should be circulated to all members of the RF; and
- A majority vote at a RF meeting will secure approval for changes or additions to the RF Terms of Reference.

8 TERMS OF REFERENCE APPROVAL

The RF Terms of Reference is hereby approved, and adopted on behalf of the RF, by the following signatories:

RF Chairperson

Date: _____

Rietspruit FMC Chairperson

Date: _____