

## **National Water Week and World Water Day make us aware of the pressure on finite water resources**

*Focus on Water-Energy-Food Nexus to address sustainable development*

“South Africa’s National Water Week this year is well planned to fall in line with World Water Day on 22 March. This shows that we are part of the greater water resource cycle.” This is according to **African Utility Week**’s programme director Nicolette Pombo-van Zyl. She continues: “the aim of having a week dedicated to water issues helps each of us become aware of the challenges and change our habits and decisions we make today as they will impact on our water cycle tomorrow.”

Nicolette says South Africa can be very proud of its Blue Drop certification system that motivates municipalities to strive for high quality of drinking water and service delivery. She adds: “however, they can’t do it alone and it is everyone’s responsibility to report problems with water quality, burst pipes and to fix household leaks. A slow dripping tap can waste 20 litres or more a day. During Water Week take part in an exercise to note the reading on your water meter. Then for a period of two hours don’t use any water. Take another reading after the two hours and if there is any change you can now know there is a slow leak or pipe leak somewhere on your property.”

### **Water-Energy-Food Nexus debate for Africa**

During **African Utility Week**’s focused two-day water conference track in May, there is a high-level panel dialogue on the Water-Energy-Food Nexus and realising Africa’s development agenda. The Water-Energy-Food nexus is a visionary method, that originated in Germany, of achieving sustainability by integrated solutions which address the interconnections within the water, energy and food security nexus.

The Water-Energy-Food Nexus panel moderator will be Paul T. Yillia of SE4All, the UN Secretary General’s initiative on sustainable energy for all: “the nexus debate at **African Utility Week** will be specifically about Africa and for Africa. Of course, we shall be discussing a topic of high global significance but the discussion will be tailored specifically to respond to the requirements within the African context. We shall cover such topics as investment opportunities for developing Africa’s water and energy infrastructure, i.e. innovative private sector participation, private public partnerships, etc. and the water and energy linkages with food production systems and improvement of livelihoods. We shall talk about delivering real solutions on the ground, with examples of water/energy/food projects in Africa that have a nexus character build in them. Finally, we will discuss funding mechanisms and provide some examples of global/regional nexus initiatives.”

He continues: “the water-energy concept is an opportunity to do things differently. None of the problems we are facing in Africa can be solved in isolation. It requires people from a variety of backgrounds to come together and work together in search of common solutions.”

### **City of Cape Town**

The City of Cape Town’s Director Water & Sanitation Peter Flower will be part of the panel dialogue: “The impact of climate change is predicted to have significant influence on water supply, energy provision and agriculture. There is the debate around water use for urban areas and to allow people to live dignified and comfortable lives versus agriculture and the need to produce food. While in Cape Town we have been able to minimise the reliance on electricity for operating our water supply infrastructure (due to our topography and design of our water supply system), many of the possible future water supply schemes have high energy requirements.”

Other topics on the water programme include: cherry-picked case studies in water infrastructure and resource development solutions and a debate for and against pre-paid water metering.

Says **African Utility Week**’s programme director Nicolette Pombo-van Zyl: “South Africa is a water stressed country and the flooding we have recently experienced causes more damage than good – dams can’t operate effectively when over capacity and sewerage gets into the system causing water borne disease to spread. Furthermore, water utilities face challenges with future global water consumption increasing at least 20% by 2050 in the agricultural sector alone, raising the pressure on water resources.”

### **Water technology and innovation**

At **African Utility Week** and **Clean Power Africa**, utilities, municipalities and commercial users from all over Africa will meet leading industry suppliers, peers and experts that offer innovative solutions in pumps, valves, water meters, leak detection, waste water treatment, GIS mapping, monitoring and control, water demand management and sanitation. On the expo floor, free energy & water efficiency workshops are presented by the South African Renewable Energy Technology Centre (SARETEC) and the Southern Africa Association for Energy Efficiency.

There is a focus day for specifically addressing water losses and during the site visit, the City of Cape Town will demonstrate its facilities at the Fisantekraal Wastewater and Faure Water Treatment Plant. It features an enhanced control centre system, use of ultraviolet light disinfection technology and the most innovative and up-to-date electrical control and instrumentation technology.

### **About African Utility Week**

The award winning 14<sup>th</sup> **African Utility Week and Clean Power Africa** conference and expo is taking place at the CTICC in Cape Town from 13-14 May 2014. It is attended by more than 5000 power and water professionals from more than 30 African countries and 70 worldwide, at what is the largest utility gathering of its kind on the continent. Discussions, workshops, exhibits and site visits will focus on the industry disciplines of metering, clean power, water, large power users, investment and finance, transmission & distribution, smart grids and generation.

### **Event dates and location:**

Conference and Exhibition (including workshops): 13-14 May 2014

Focus day: 12 May 2014

Site visits: 15 May 2014

Location: CTICC, Cape Town, South Africa

Website: [www.african-utility-week.com](http://www.african-utility-week.com) ; [www.clean-power-africa.com](http://www.clean-power-africa.com)

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### **Notes for Editor**

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