

# EVENT REPORT

Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e.V.

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## Governing Water Resources in a Time of Drought

### Water Experts Meeting

South Africa is currently experiencing the worst drought in many years, yet our political and economic challenges are still taking precedence. With this backdrop, KAS, in collaboration with its partner, the Centre for Environmental Rights (CER), invited water experts and practitioners to a workshop which focused on the topic 'governing water resources in a time of drought'.

The purpose of the expert meeting was to share information and discuss strategies around developments in water law and governance. The workshop was targeted at experts in the water law and governance sector – from both legal and scientific backgrounds. The key issues which the workshop addressed were:

- Current developments including the possible reconstitution of the Water Tribunal, recent events around the Department of Water & Sanitation's (DWS) compliance monitoring & enforcement activities (addressed by Professor Michael Kidd), the proposed Acid Mine Drainage (AMD) levy and other AMD developments, the coal baseload independent power producer programme, and CER litigation on water and mining in the Mabola case.
- New developments around strategic water source areas, and a campaign for legal protection for no-go areas.

- Discussion around a civil society response regarding the failure of water treatment infrastructure after there was no signs of the 2015 Blue and Green Drop Government Reports that were going to be published in September 2015.

The workshop also identified priorities for 2016, aimed at addressing the key issues mentioned above. Amongst other, it was agreed to establish a Working Group/Study Group on waste water treatment (lead by Victor Munnik), to do more work on the legal protection of strategic water source areas and no-go areas (lead by CER, WWF, CSIR), to create more pressure around Environmental Management Inspector training for Blue Scorpions, to find out what is happening with the National Water Act Amendment Bill and try to influence and to pressure on DMR to amend Technical Regulations for Fracking once DWS's regulations are out.

Given the current described situation, the subject matter of the workshop was chosen wisely given the breadth of the concerns and the water crisis facing South Africa. The group decided on some very ambitious next steps for 2016.