

CAPACITY BUILDING TRAINING FOR CATCHMENT MENTORS (CHAMPIONS)

INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR IWRM

MODULE 3

SECTION 2: LEARNERS GUIDE

Integrated Water Resources Management

**Strategies, Guidelines and Pilot Implementation in Three Water Management Areas,
South Africa**

Department of Water Affairs and Forestry

South Africa

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The content of this training material is in line SAQA guidelines

THIS WORKBOOK BELONGS TO:

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HOW TO USE THIS MANUAL

This manual provides an introduction and background to the various role-players and their functions in Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) processes. It provides the participants with the necessary information to identify the various role-players, to understand their respective functions and mandates, and to institute these structures. The manual also provides guidelines on the establishment and management of the Catchment Forum.

It is expected of the participants to attend the training sessions and participate in all the exercises. It would be very useful to carefully study the whole manual. You are also welcome to make notes on this manual, as needed, in the wide right margin of each page.

In addition, the results of the various exercises must be verified with the information in this manual.

You must make sure that you understand the work presented in the notes and never hesitate to ask questions.

We hope you will enjoy this course and gain much from it.

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INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR IWRM – MODULE 3

1. INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR IWRM

1.1 WATER MANAGEMENT INSTITUTIONS

The purpose of this unit is to identify the various institutions involved in IWRM and to explain their functions. Attention is also given to the non-statutory institutions and committees involved in the IWRM process. The role of NGOs is also explained.

1.1.1 CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT AGENCIES (CMAS)

ACTIVITY 1

Get to know each other!

In order for learners to get to know each other an “ice-breaker” game will be played. The rules are as follows:

- The learners have 5 minutes to go outside of the classroom and find ANY article that he/she thinks represents them or with which he/she can identify with;
- The learners have to get back and report to the rest of the learners about the item they have found, why they chose that specific item; and also where they come from, the reason they are here, etc.

The water management institutions include the following:

- ❖ Catchment Management Agencies (CMAs);
- ❖ Catchment Management Committees (CMCs);
- ❖ Water User Associations (WUAs); and
- ❖ International Water Management Bodies (IWMDs).

1.1.1.1 Catchment Management Agencies (CMA)

A Catchment Management Agency is a statutory body established in accordance with requirements of the National Water Act and is responsible for the planning, implementation and management of the water resources and other Water Management Institutions in a Water Management Area. The purpose of establishing a Catchment Management Agency is to delegate Water Resources Management to the regional or catchment level and to involve local communities within the framework of the National Water Resource Management Strategy established by the Minister.

The main areas of activities of the Catchment Management Agencies are as follows:

- *Planning and implementation of Water Resources Management within a Water Management Area;*
- *Investigate and advise interested persons on the protection, use, management, conservation and control of water resources;*
- *Develop and give effect to the CMS. This must be compatible with the National Water Resource Management Strategy;*
- *Coordinate activities of water users and Water Management Institutions;*
- *Promote the coordination of the CMS and WSDPs; and*
- *Promote community participation and seek cooperation and agreement on water related matters.*

1.1.1.2 Catchment Management Committees (CMC)

A Catchment Management Committee (although not specified by its name in the Act) is a statutory body that may be established by a Catchment Management Agency or by the Minister acting as a Catchment Management Agency. A Catchment Management Committee would be established to perform specific delegated functions within a specified area, and to broaden the Catchment Management Agency's technical management capacity and/or stakeholder representation. These committees may be technical or advisory in nature for the whole water management area or part thereof and are expected to have a fairly long lifespan.

In order to ensure representation, it is proposed that a Catchment Management Committee should evolve from Catchment Steering Committees (CSCs). The Minister should approve the members of the Catchment Management Committee (or Catchment Management Agency once established) and would function in a similar way to Advisory Committees: Management (see below). The Catchment Management Committee may act as an executive committee for the entire Water management area, or as a consultative committee for individual primary catchments.

The main areas of activity, of the Catchment Management Committee, are specific delegated functions within a defined area (e.g. focusing on a particular water resource management problem in a sub-catchment area.)

1.1.1.3 Water User Associations (WUA)

Water Users Associations operate on a restricted localised level, and are in effect co-operative associations of individual water users who wish to undertake water-related activities for their mutual benefit. Despite the fact that they are regarded as Water Management Institutions, their primary purpose is to serve as institutional mechanisms for combining resources of interested parties rather than to effect water management. A Water Users Association may exercise management powers and duties only if, and to the extent that such powers have been assigned or delegated to it. The Minister of Water Affairs and Forestry establishes or disestablishes Water Users Associations. Usually the establishment of such an association follows a proposal from an interested person/party, but may also be established on the Minister's initiative. Water Users Associations must operate within the framework of national policy and standards, particularly the NWRS.

The Minister may exercise control over them by giving them directives or by temporarily taking over their functions under particular circumstances.

Existing irrigation boards, subterranean water control boards and certain water boards will continue in operation until they are restructured as Water Users Associations.

The main areas of activities of the Catchment Management Agency's are as follows:

- A range of specific assigned or delegated water-related activities on a local scale for the mutual benefit of its members, e.g. management of local water resources infrastructure;
- A number of local Water Resources Management functions such as stream flow reduction; and
- Water Users Associations can represent members with similar user interests e.g. recreational or agriculture use, or be multi-sectoral.

1.1.1.4 International Water Management Bodies (IWMBs)

Where these bodies have been established in internationally shared river basins, the Minister may delegate specific powers to them. These bodies are a vehicle for international cooperation and the development and operation of large international water resource infrastructure (e.g. the Lesotho Highlands Water Project). However, they may be delegated other functions as appropriate.

The main areas of activities of the Catchment Management Agency's relate to a range of specific delegated water-related activities in respect of internationally shared resources and infrastructure.

1.1.2 NON-STATUTORY BODIES AND COMMITTEES

The non-statutory bodies and committees include the following:

- ❖ Catchment Management Forums (CMFs)
- ❖ Catchment Steering Committees (CSCs)
- ❖ Advisory Committees
 - Advisory Committees: Governing Board
 - Advisory Committee: Process (optional)
 - Advisory Committee: Management (optional)

1.1.2.1 Catchment Management Forums (CMFs)

Catchment Management Forums¹ form a link between stakeholders and the Catchment Management Agency and are voluntary, non-statutory participatory associations of stakeholders representing various viewpoints to guarantee stakeholder involvement in the management of water resources at catchment and/or sub-catchment level.

Catchment Management Forums may evolve into more formal representative bodies, such as Catchment Steering Committees or Catchment Management Committees, during the Catchment Management Agency establishment process. They could, however, remain in their early form both during and after Catchment Management Agency establishment, playing a vital communications and/or watchdog role. Although it is stated that a catchment forum may perform Water Resources Management functions (where delegated), its principle motivation is to enable stakeholder participation in Water Resources Management (particularly around the development of a Catchment Management Agency and the establishment of a Catchment Management Agency). Where it is decided to delegate specific functions to a Catchment Management Forum, it will need to be to a specific committee or individual who holds office within the forum, rather than to the forum as a whole.

Catchment Management Forums fulfil a range of functions aimed at enabling stakeholder participation around Water Resources Management and the functioning of Catchment Management Agencies. These functions include

- *Support the Catchment Management Agency by serving as vehicles for consultation on Water Resources Management issues, assisting with the development of Water Resources Management institutional capacity (build capacity around Water Resources Management), playing an institutional coordinating role, and providing support to the Water Resources Management activities;*
- *Play an issue identification, communication, information dissemination and watchdog role; and*
- *Foster cooperative governance (with the focus on Water Management Institution and local government) and promote integrated planning and cooperative resource management.*

1.1.2.2 Catchment Steering Committees (CSCs)

Once the consultation process associated with Catchment Management Agency establishment has progressed, it may be appropriate to create a formal and representative non-statutory, stakeholder body. Such a Committee could evolve from existing structures such as a Catchment Management Forum.

It is the intention that DWAF will co-ordinate these Committees and may contribute, along with water users and stakeholder organisations to their secretarial and financial support. The Catchment Steering Committee will be disestablished once the Catchment Management Agency is established, and some of its members may be appointed to the relevant Catchment Management Committees. Similarly, Catchment Steering Committees will dissolve (or evolve), if a statutory body is established as an interim measure.

¹ DWAF (undated). Establishing a catchment management agency.

Catchment Steering Committees investigate and develop the proposals for establishment of a Catchment Management Agency with DWAF's assistance

1.1.2.3 Advisory Committees (AC)

The Minister may establish Advisory Committees for different purposes and functions and delegate powers to them. These Advisory Committees may be supported administratively by DWAF and may include DWAF officials. Three types of Advisory Committees may be associated with the establishment of Catchment Management Agencies, namely:

➤ **Advisory Committee: Governing Board (Compulsory)**

The Act requires that an Advisory Committee must be established to make recommendations on the composition of the Governing Board of the Catchment Management Agency. This is a fairly small committee (to ensure efficiency) of five to ten partially dedicated people.

The main activity of this Governing Board will be to evaluate the consultation process and consult with stakeholders before making recommendations about representation on the Governing Board.

➤ **Advisory Committee: Process (Optional)**

The Act provides an option to establish a statutory Advisory Committee with the function to develop the necessary capacity as a first step towards establishing a Catchment Management Agency, where capacity is limited.

Provision is made for either:

- A "Reference Group" - a non-statutory group of key stakeholders that would guide, oversee and evaluate the consultation process; or
- A "Process Steering Committee" - an informal structure that would guide the establishment process, consisting of relevant DWAF officials, stakeholders and specialists.

It is anticipated that this Committee would guide, oversee and monitor the consultation and establishment process, and the capacity building process for evolving catchment structures (e.g. Catchment Steering Committees or Management Committees).

➤ **Advisory Committee: Management (Optional)**

In instances when the Catchment Management Agency establishment process has progressed successfully and representative structures have been created, but the necessary resources do not yet exist, an Advisory Committee: Management (10-23 members) may be established.

Depending on local needs, one such committee may be established for the whole Water Management Areas, or a number of Committees for individual primary catchments, possibly with sub-committees for the individual catchments, so as to ensure proper co-ordination between areas. The Minister would appoint the Committee from nominations, adding other members where necessary, being advised by the Advisory Committee: Process if this has been established. The membership requirements for the Advisory Committee: Management are as follows:

- Reflect all relevant local interests: thus the majority of members are local residents and nominated representatives;
- Balance between stakeholders, government and the private sector;
- Adequate expertise to perform functions and to build capacity of local members.

This Advisory Committee (Management) would advise DWAF on the management of the Water Management Area, or parts thereof. Depending on its capacity, it may be delegated appropriate powers and duties at a later stage. These would only be functions that the Minister believes the Advisory Committee is able to perform, rather than the full initial functions of a Catchment Management Agency.

1.1.3 NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS

It is important to note that development agencies and government find themselves in “unrivalled waters” and hence are prone to mistakes, given the ideals and complexity of participatory catchment management. Many communities and stakeholders do not have access to sufficient resources to initiate or perpetuate their involvement. In many cases, the development agencies do not have the institutional structures to manage community initiatives.

NGOs are strongly positioned to engage in activities that are complementary to those of the government as partners in promoting quality of life - including health, welfare and local economic development as well as environmental sustainability. Within the context of the initiation and ongoing functioning and management of Catchment Management Agencies, NGOs may become involved in a number of areas of activity. These include:

- ❖ Awareness Creation and Information Dissemination about issues related to water resource management, catchment management as well as the role and purpose of Catchment Management Agencies.
- ❖ Consultation with stakeholders, in particular with previously disadvantaged and disempowered organisations and individuals such as subsistence farmers, etc.
- ❖ Advocacy and advisory functions to or on behalf of stakeholders with DWAF, the Catchment Management Agency and other organisations
- ❖ Building capacity of stakeholders and groups around Water Resources Management (institutional development), focusing on previously disadvantaged groups
- ❖ Facilitating the participation of stakeholders in the development of a CMS and other Water Resources Management activities and coordinating cooperation between stakeholders
- ❖ Involvement in monitoring of activities related to water resource management and/or assisting communities or stakeholder groups in implementation of appropriate monitoring activities.

The activities described above may be focused towards promoting one or more of the following components related to resource management within a catchment²:

- ❖ **Institutional Development** - In this context, foresees that organised NGOs can assist with the development of institutional capacity within and around the evolving catchments. Activities may include (among other things) the building of awareness, securing stakeholder participation, and promoting capacity building in Water Management Institutions and identifying local water management challenges. If the role is specifically aimed at assisting with and promoting institutional development, this involvement could terminate once the Catchment Management Agency is formally established.
- ❖ **Water Resource Management Consultation** - foresees that, within this context, NGOs will serve primarily as vehicles for consultation in regard to water resource management related issues, primarily as interface between the Catchment Management Agency, other Water Management Institutions and the body of stakeholders. The consultation role might be initiated prior to the full establishment of the Catchment Management Agency, and may in many cases remain a permanent feature of the catchment institutional environment.
- ❖ **Support to Water Resources Management Activities** - NGOs can potentially assist stakeholders, through capacity building and supportive activities, to play a variety of roles in the operations of the Catchment Management Agency, ranging from broad cooperation with Catchment Management Agencies and associated Water Management Institutions, to the management of a number of Catchment Management Agency functions through delegated authorities.
- ❖ **Foster Integrated Planning and Management** - Where NGOs involve stakeholders from a variety of backgrounds, the potential for performing an integrating role is possible. NGOs that act beyond the strict bounds of Water Resources Managements are in a position to promote integration of Water Resources Management planning and management with other relevant activities related to, amongst others, water services (WS), land development and environmental management. In some circumstances, the integration might also include the coordination of regulatory activities among agencies with overlapping resource management responsibilities.

ACTIVITY 2

Group work

Divide into groups of 4

In each group:

- Make a list of the water management institutions.
- Discuss the role and function of each.
- Make a list of the non-statutory bodies and committees.
- Discuss the role and function of each.

Each group must present their finding to the class.

² Based on information derived from the Draft Position Paper on “Roles and Functional Models for Catchment Fora” forming part of the Study to develop Guidelines on the Establishment of Catchment Fora.

1.2 WATER RESOURCES AND WATER SERVICES

The purpose of this unit is to identify the various organisations and institutions involved in water resources and water services. The various functions are explained and the relationships between them indicated.

1.2.1 WATER BOARDS (WB)

Traditionally the primary activity of water boards has been in the **supply of bulk water** to municipalities and other users. A number of the larger boards had, in addition, engaged in fulfilling a varied number of water resource programme activities under separate Acts or where required by DWAF. Subsequent to 1994, water boards have been expected to play an active role as the primary agents of DWAF in the development of (rural) water supply and sanitation services at regional level. This has included the provision of Water Service Provider services to Water Service Authorities as well as a supportive role to local government.

*The main area of activities of **WB** lies in the provision of water services (bulk supply). Additional, secondary activities include water services provision and other activities that do not impact on the ability of a board to fulfil its primary function.*

1.2.2 WATER SERVICE AUTHORITY (WSA)

A Water Service Authority is any municipality, including a district or rural council, constitutionally mandated with **ensuring access to water supply** and sanitation services within its area of jurisdiction. The Water Service Authority has ultimate responsibility for ensuring that end-users have access to water and sanitation within its area of jurisdiction. In addition, it is also mandated with a significant number of responsibilities that may have a direct or indirect impact on water resources.

1.2.3 WATER SERVICES PROVIDERS (WSP)

Water Service Providers are public, private or mixed entities or municipal government itself, **which delivers bulk and/or reticulated water services on behalf of a Water Service Authority**. This may be by the Water Service Authority itself or a separate institutional mechanism such as e.g. a Water Board or a public-private partnership, etc. Service providers range from government departments and municipalities, public corporations, and private sector companies to community-based organisations, and farmers' groups.

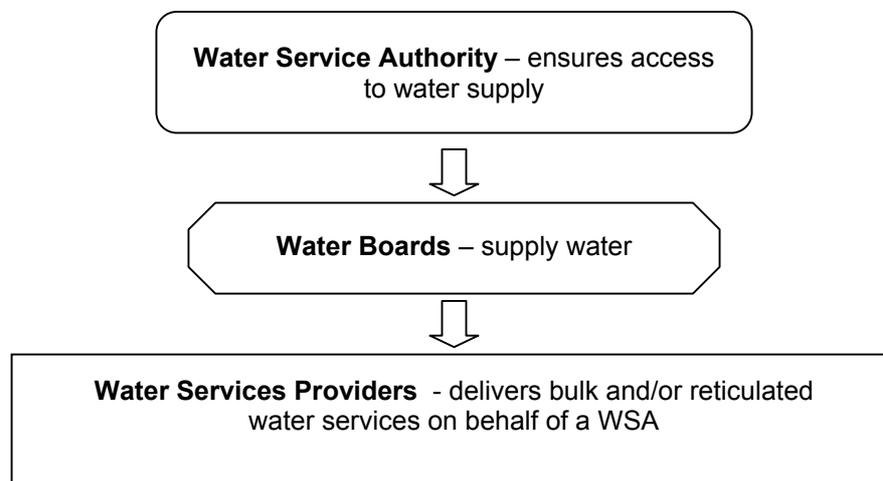
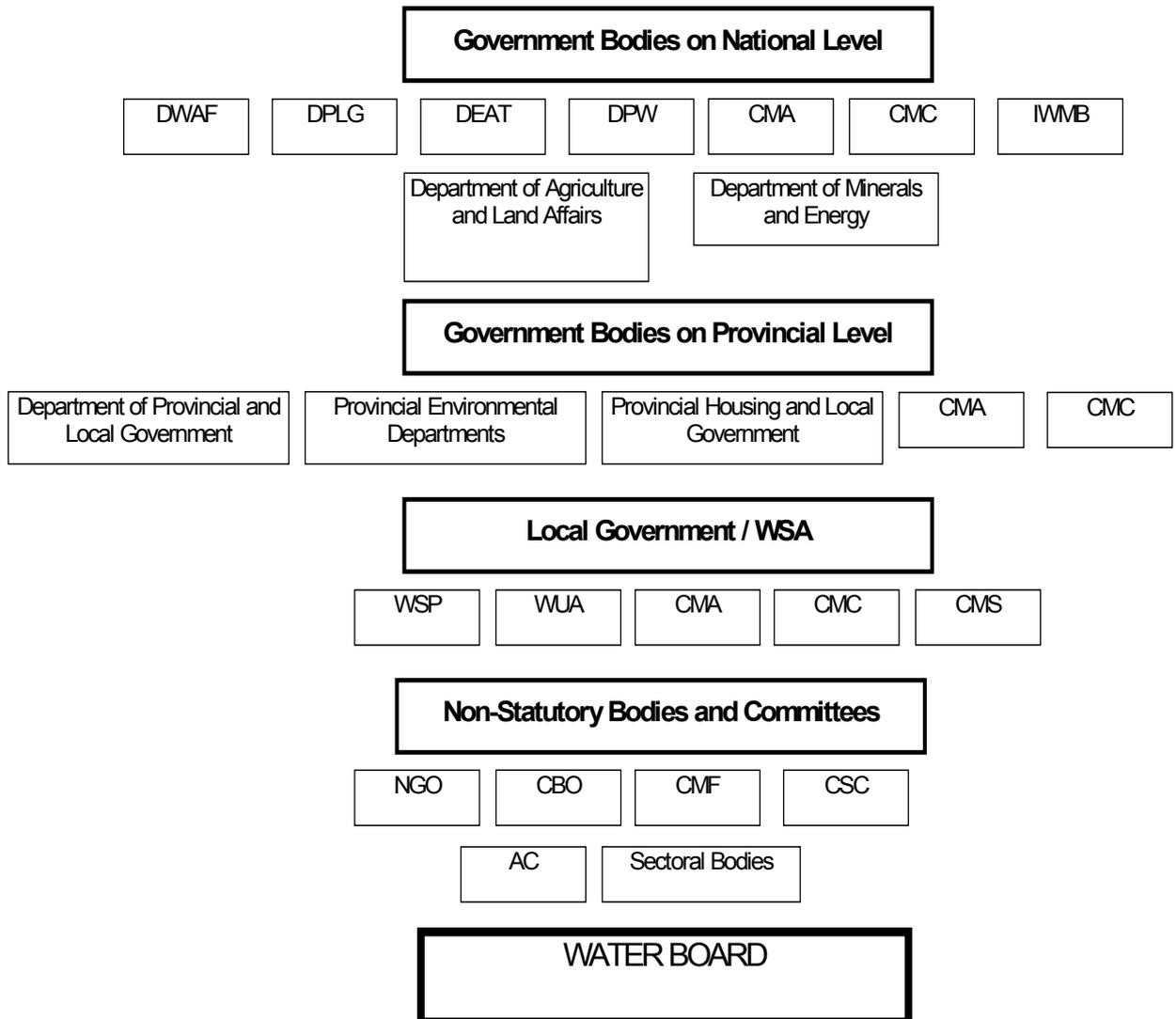


Figure 1: Various Water Management Institutions



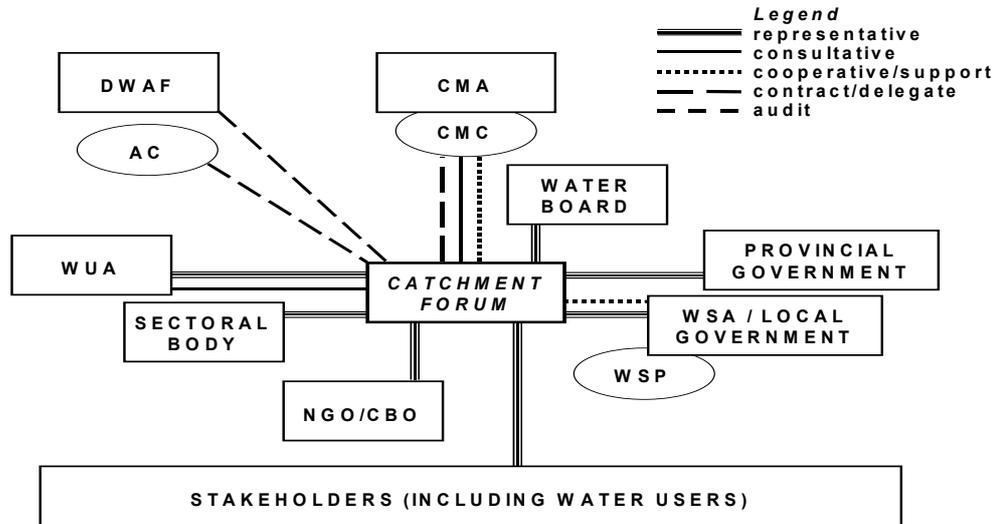
ACTIVITY 3

Group work

Divide into groups of five.

In your groups, using all the information from the previous activities, design your own mind-map, indicating possible links between the relevant institutions.

Figure 2: Relationship of a Catchment Forum with other relevant institutions.



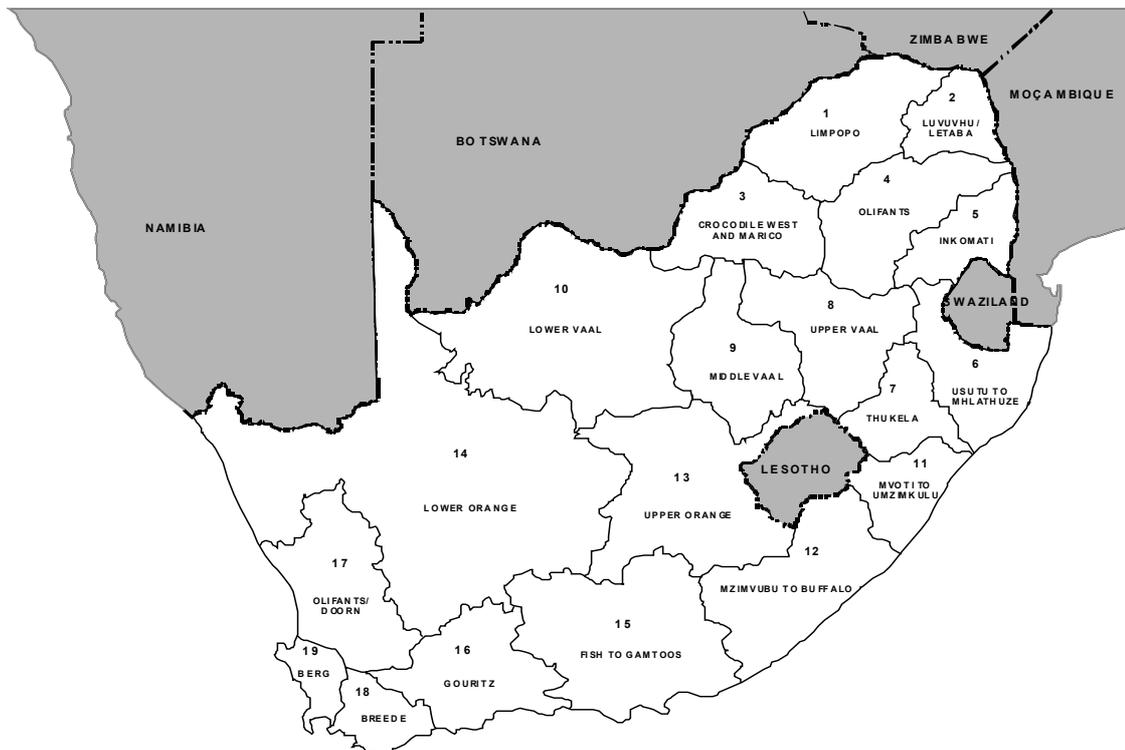
1.3 CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT AGENCY ESTABLISHMENT PROCESS

This unit focuses on explaining the concept of Catchment Management and identifying the role-players involved in this process. This unit also focuses on how to establish a Catchment Management Agency. It also explains the Catchment Management Strategy and the purpose thereof, and the important role that Catchment Management Forums play.

1.3.1 WHAT IS CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT?

The National Water Act recognises “the need for the integrated management of all aspects of water resources and, where appropriate, the delegation of management functions to a regional or catchment level so as to enable everyone to participate”. The need for public participation is also incorporated into the sustainable development principles in the National Environmental Management Act. The National Water Act also requires the establishment of a CMS in each of the 19 Water Management Areas – as shown in the figure below - throughout South Africa that is consistent with the NWRS. The CMS must be developed in consultation with stakeholders in the Water Management Area, while the CMS itself must “enable the public to participate in managing water resources within its water management area”, and “set out the institutions to be established”.

Figure 3: Water Management Areas in South Africa



Catchment forums have been and are being used extensively by DWAF to involve stakeholders in decisions regarding Water Resources Management. Catchment forums are particularly important in the development of the CMS, to address local priority Water Resources Management issues, but also provide a vehicle to facilitate the coordination and/or integration of Water Resources Management with spatial planning and land use management.

An understanding that water is a limited resource, the need to ensure Integrated Water Resources Management and the need to decentralise the management of water drives the progressive development and establishment of Catchment Management Agencies. Maximum efficiency in management is required to achieve the greatest good for people and the environment in a manner that gives a voice to all sections of society. The development of Catchment Management Agencies is practical, sound and in line with international practice and is provided for by the National Water Act. Since the promulgation of this Act, significant work has been undertaken to promote the practical implementation of the imperative to establish such Agencies over time. This includes the ongoing restructuring of DWAF, the development of Policy and Guideline documents as well as a number of additional studies.

1.3.2 CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT AGENCIES

A Catchment Management Agency is a statutory body established in accordance with requirements of the National Water Act and is responsible for the planning, implementation and management of the water resources and other Water Management Institutions in a Water Management Area. The purpose of establishing a Catchment Management Agency is to delegate Water Resources Management to the regional or catchment level and to involve local communities within the framework of the NWRS established by the Minister. This section introduces the broad stakeholder groups and statutory bodies that may be involved in, and outlines the general phases for Catchment Management Agency establishment.

1.3.3 CONTEXT SPECIFIC

Each Catchment Management Agency establishment process begins under different conditions, occurs within a specific context, and faces particular problems. The Act provides for a range of options and institutions that may be employed in the establishment process, driven by local needs. Some steps will take longer in some Water Management Area than in others. Some steps may be omitted where local circumstances are such that the process may proceed efficiently without them. Resource and capacity requirements in a Water Management Area may delay the establishment of a Catchment Management Agency. In this case, preliminary CMSs may be developed by the Minister to fulfil the functions of a Catchment Management Agency before its formal establishment.

1.3.4 ROLE-PLAYERS

The four broad groupings of role-players in the Catchment Management Agency establishment process are as follows:

- ❖ **DWAF** (and particularly the Regional Office) as the *a priori* Catchment Management Agency and the body responsible for ensuring the process meets the requirements of the Act.
- ❖ **Other statutory water institutions** that may play a role in water resources management or water supply within a particular Water Management Area.

- ❖ **Stakeholders and water users** who have an interest in the Water Management Area.
- ❖ **Local, provincial and national government** (and other organs of state) in the Water Management Area with which the Catchment Management Agency will need to encourage cooperative governance

1.3.5 THE ESTABLISHMENT PROCESS

1.3.5.1 *Initiation of Establishment Process*

The process for establishing a Catchment Management Agency needs to be started by one or more committed persons with time, capacity and resources to do so. This may either be DWAF and/or concerned stakeholders or water users. Where stakeholders do not have the resources, they may enlist the help of other parties.

1.3.5.2 *Stakeholder consultation and participation*

Public participation is a key requirement of the Catchment Management Agency establishment process. It should begin immediately after initiation of the establishment of a Catchment Management Agency. Once the Catchment Management Agency is established, representative consultative forums and consultation networks should largely be in place, and participation could be narrowed down to fewer stakeholders, providing they are representative of the broader stakeholder body.

1.3.5.3 *Establishment Investigation and Proposal for a Catchment Management Agency*

In addition to the stakeholder inputs, the establishment process must be supported by information about the focus and viability of a proposed Catchment Management Agency. In most cases, this will involve the development of a proposal for the establishment of a Catchment Management Agency, which is formally submitted to the Minister.

Investigations should address the physical-technical, social, economic-financial and institutional-administrative environments associated with the relevant Water Management Area. In the interests of efficiency, these investigations should be at the broadest level possible which will still provide the required information to evaluate the viability (and potential competency) of a Catchment Management Agency. They should also be based on interpretation of existing information, where possible, rather than the collection of new data.

In most cases, the DWAF Regional Office will take the lead in the investigation to develop the proposal for the establishment of a Catchment Management Agency. However, it is critical that stakeholders are involved.

1.3.5.4 *Interim Management Arrangements*

The proposal to establish the Catchment Management Agency needs to indicate the likely time frame for establishment and any interim arrangements that are required.

- Where the Catchment Management Agency may be established within six to twelve months after the proposal

During this period, existing Catchment Management Forums, Catchment Steering Committees will develop capacity and possibly formalise their representation. It is critical that this momentum must not be lost. During this period DWAF may elect to gradually empower such informal structures by allocating resources to them and/or consulting them on Water Resources Management decisions.

- Where it may take longer to establish the Catchment Management Agency

In some cases, the process may take longer because it is not feasible to carry out the initial *functions* of a Catchment Management Agency due to capacity and other limitations. It may be appropriate for DWAF to establish statutory bodies such as Advisory Committees or Catchment Management Committees in the interim. Certain catchment management functions can then be delegated to these bodies, or to Water Users Associations, provided that their representation has already been established.

Interim arrangements should be avoided in circumstances where they may compromise the autonomy, authority and legitimacy of the Catchment Management Agency once it is established.

1.3.5.5 *Catchment Management Agency Establishment*

There are two parts to the statutory establishment of a Catchment Management Agency, establishing the Catchment Management Agency as a body corporate, and appointing a Governing Board. The two processes of Catchment Management Agency establishment and Governing Board appointment will generally take place simultaneously, although the formal appointment of the Governing Board by the Minister must occur after the Catchment Management Agency has been legally established.

1.3.6 **MODELS OF CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT AGENCY ESTABLISHMENT PROCESS**

This section outlines how the various bodies and institutions can be put to use during the establishment process, in four generic evolutionary stages. These stages, and the statutory and informal relationships between the various bodies, are described in this section. In some Water Management Areas, the Catchment Management Agency establishment process will move sequentially through all four stages. In others, it may bypass or quickly move through one or more stages, depending on local needs and circumstances. Thus, several models can be followed, each with criteria that may govern the evolution from one stage to another.

Throughout the discussion below, an analogy is made between the process for Catchment Management Agency establishment and the process leading to a marriage, with the couple as the stakeholders and DWAF as the parents. The process may go through dating, courtship and/or living together before marriage.

The proposal for a Catchment Management Agency is like talking to the parents about engagement, while the statutory establishment and Advisory Committee: Governing Board phase is like an engagement period, which may happen during any of the pre-marriage Stages.

1.3.6.1 Stage 1: Initiating participation (dating)

The most informal stage during the establishment process is the formation of Catchment Management Forums representing stakeholder interests. This starts the awareness creation and public participation process. The emphasis is on developing a trusting and constructive relationship between DWAF and the stakeholders, and amongst the stakeholders themselves, as well as reaching a common view of the way forward.

Once these relationships and a common view have been developed, and the stakeholders want to formalise the relationships, it may be appropriate to move on to a subsequent stage. However, in situations where these forums provide adequate representation of all stakeholder interests, a proposal can be developed and the Catchment Management Agency established (thus going directly to Stage 4), without going through Stages 2 and 3.

1.3.6.2 Stage 2: Formalising representation (courtship)

As a thorough and inclusive consultation and participation process progresses, stakeholders may feel that it is necessary to create a formal, but non-statutory, relationship. At this stage it is appropriate to create Catchment Steering Committees, which represent all stakeholders in an area and guide the process of establishing a Catchment Management Agency.

The emphasis of this stage is on strengthening relationships between stakeholders and DWAF, and between the stakeholders themselves, and on planning for the future, particularly in terms of the proposal for Catchment Management Agency establishment. Under certain circumstances, Catchment Steering Committees may even advise DWAF on certain catchment management functions, particularly on the CMS.

Typically, these arrangements will suffice until the Catchment Management Agency is established (Stage 4). However, where the process may be delayed due to inadequate resources or capacity, there may be a need to move to some interim management arrangement (Stage 3).

1.3.6.3 Stage 3: Interim management arrangement (living together)

In some Water Management Areas, capacity and resource constraints may cause the establishment of a financially and technically viable Catchment Management Agency to be delayed for some years. Interim management arrangements should only be considered where there is likely to be a considerable delay in the establishment process *and* where a thorough consultation process has been completed.

Although there may be proposals that other Water Management Institutions perform the interim management, the three most probable scenarios at this stage are:

- *A single Advisory Committee:* Management for the entire Water Management Area, which is the culmination of the stakeholder consultation process, and may be associated with a number of non-statutory steering committees for the different catchment areas.

- *A number of Catchment Management Committees* (coordinated by DWAF) representing different catchment areas within a Water Management Area, which evolve from Catchment Steering Committees.
- *A combination of Governing Board and Advisory Committee:* Management as the presence of a Governing Board and/or Advisory Committee: Management is advisable.

These bodies should maintain their relationships with any other catchment structures, particularly Catchment Management Forums, which represent stakeholder interests.

1.3.6.4 Stage 4: The Catchment Management Agency (marriage)

The ultimate goal of the process is the establishment of a Catchment Management Agency, with the appointment of a Governing Board, based on the recommendations of the Advisory Committee: Governing Board. A number of Catchment Management Committees may be established (or adopted from the interim arrangements).

1.3.7 THE CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT STRATEGY (CMS)

The National Water Act requires the establishment of a CMS in each of the 19 Water Management Areas throughout South Africa that is consistent with the NWRS. As one of its initial functions, a Catchment Management Agency must develop a CMS, in consultation with stakeholders within the Water Management Area, which implies an important role for catchment forums, both in terms of developing a common Water Management Area vision and consulting on the details of the strategy. This involves the identification of the Water Resources Management needs and formulation of an appropriate vision for the Water Management Area, as well as the local sub-catchments within the Water Management Area. Water Resources Management activities performed by any Water Management Institution must also be in accordance with these strategies. Having been central to the development of the CMS, the forums should also have a key role in implementing and monitoring the CMS.

The CMS itself must “enable the public to participate in managing water resources within its water management area”, and “set out the institutions to be established”. The CMS provides the framework for management of water resources in a Water Management Area that is consistent with the NWRS. Catchment forums also provide a vehicle for stakeholders to contribute to the process of determining resource directed measures (RDM) to reflect the vision for the relevant water resource, including the water resources class and ecological Reserve.

ACTIVITY 4

Group work

Divide into groups of four.

Each group draw an explanatory flow diagram of the process to set up a Catchment Management Agency and present their information back to the class.

Remember to look at the following:

- The role players
- The establishment process
- The CMS.

ACTIVITY 5

Group work

Go back to your groups.

Now design your own Catchment Management Agency, explaining what steps you would follow, and present this information back to the class.

1.4 A CATCHMENT FORUM

This unit focuses on explaining the need for, and the characteristics of a Catchment Forum. It also indicates the potential roles to be played by a Catchment Forum as well as the area where the Catchment Forum should not be involved. The concept of cooperative management and partnerships is explained in closure.

1.4.1 NEED FOR A CATCHMENT FORUM

With the introduction of integrated water resources management (IWRM), the National Water Act requires a paradigm shift in the way water resources are managed. In particular, this requires:

- ❖ Equity, sustainability and optimal use in the protection, development and utilisation of water resources, as well as the institutions that are established for water resources management.
- ❖ Decentralisation of decision-making through the establishment of catchment based institutions (particularly Catchment Management Agencies), based on a participatory approach to water resources management through the involvement of stakeholders.

This highlights the policy requirement for DWAF and Catchment Management Agency to ensure participation in Water Resources Management. Participation processes can be extremely resource intensive when done on an *ad hoc* basis, as well as posing problems around ensuring adequate capacity to participate in and management of conflict between stakeholders with different interests. Catchment forums provide a potentially efficient and effective way to facilitate the coherent participation of stakeholders with diverse interests.

As one of its initial functions, a Catchment Management Agency must develop a catchment management strategy (CMS), in consultation with stakeholders within the Water Management Area. This involves the identification of the Water Resources Management needs and formulation of an appropriate vision for the Water Management Area, as well as the local sub-catchments within the Water Management Area. Catchment forums also provide a vehicle for stakeholders to contribute to the process of determining resource directed measures (RDM) to reflect the vision for the relevant water resource, including the water resources class and ecological Reserve.

Catchment forums provide the most suitable body to facilitate stakeholder participation in the formulation of this vision, determination of the resource directed measures and the development of a CMS, thereby creating buy-in with the strategies to be implemented. Catchment Management Agencies should therefore make every effort (and may even have an obligation) to drive and/or support the creation and maintenance of catchment forums, in order to give effect to the purpose of the National Water Act in terms of public participation. In fact, catchment forums should be seen as an integral component of the institutional environment of a Catchment Management Agency.

1.4.2 CHARACTER OF A CATCHMENT FORUM

Catchment forums are primarily vehicles for stakeholder involvement in water resources management at a local level, in order to achieve the requirements of decentralisation, participation, equity, sustainability and optimal use, as mentioned above. To this end, catchment forums should:

- Be stakeholder consultative (participatory) bodies,
- Representing multiple (multi-lateral) viewpoints,
- Focus on the interests of the water-sector (particularly water resources management),
- Be organised to operate in a participatory manner, and
- Exist to enable stakeholders to participate to achieve agreed objectives.

Hence catchment forums are organisations that are essentially *interactive* and *multi-stakeholder*, with a primary focus on matters pertaining to the protection, use and management of water resources in a catchment. They should enable the public (anyone) to participate meaningfully in water resources management.

1.4.3 ROLE OF A CATCHMENT FORUM

Although there is a wide range of functions that a catchment forum may perform, forums are most suited to those functions that enable stakeholders to participate in Water Resources Management. Given this, the catchment forums are most suited to play the following generic roles:

- ❖ To facilitate stakeholder consultation and participation around the establishment and functioning of the Catchment Management Agency and to support the development and implementation of the CMS;
- ❖ To develop institutional capacity in the Water Management Area during the period prior to Catchment Management Agency establishment, and possibly the consolidation period following Catchment Management Agency establishment;
- ❖ To promote integrated planning and cooperative resource management between the Catchment Management Agency and other organs of state and role players; and
- ❖ To support the Water Resources Management operation of the Catchment Management Agency, by performing activities and implementing projects under the auspices of the CMS.

Facilitating stakeholder participation in Water Resources Management (particularly around the development of a CMS) is a catchment forum's core role and should be central to its reason for existing. On the other hand, the institutional development, integrated planning and Water Resources Management operation roles may be appropriate for a catchment forum under specific circumstances and at different times during a Catchment Management Agency and forum's evolution.

Catchment forums should support Integrated Water Resources Management. Therefore, although they may be oriented to addressing particular priority Water Resources Management issues within a catchment area, this should be done in a holistic and integrated manner, rather than being sectorally and/or discipline based.

1.4.4 POTENTIAL ROLES OF CATCHMENT FORUMS

1.4.4.1 Roles in support of water resources management

Catchment forums as addressed in these guidelines assume to be established in support of Catchment Management Agency (or DWAF³) and involve the public in Water Resources Management. The primary roles of a catchment forum are related to the way in which the forum may support the Catchment Management Agency, namely:

- *Consultation for Water Resources Management:* Catchment forums are most commonly established as vehicles for consultation around Water Resources Management issues and are the primary interface between the Catchment Management Agency and stakeholders. This consultation and advisory role might be initiated prior to the full establishment of the Catchment Management Agency, but should be a permanent feature of the Catchment Management Agency institutional environment. It particularly involves participation in the development of the CMS and the establishment of the Catchment Management Agency in a Water Management Area, but would also include consultation around a range of Water Resources Management functions of the Catchment Management Agency (or other institutions). All catchment forums (including those with the roles described below) should have this consultative-advisory role.
- *Institutional development:* Catchment forums may assist with the development of Water Resources Management institutional capacity in a Water Management Area. These forums are likely to be a common feature of various Catchment Management Agency establishment processes over the next few years. Here the forums may build awareness, secure stakeholder participation, promote capacity building in water management institutions and identify local water management challenges. The role of institutional development may be terminated when the Catchment Management Agency is formally established, or it may be continued when the Catchment Management Agency becomes fully functional. Water Resources Management and Catchment Management Agencies though temporary are focused, advisory in nature and involved in Catchment Management Agency establishment functions.
- *Institutional coordination:* Catchment forums involve stakeholders from a variety of sectoral backgrounds and may be required to engage issues that are outside the mandate of Water Resources Management. However, catchment forums can play an integrating role, in promoting planning and management (in support of Integrated Water Resources Management), by addressing other issue, such as water services, waste management, integrated environmental management and land development. In some circumstances, the integration may include the coordination of regulatory activities among agencies with overlapping resource management responsibilities, particularly between local authorities and water sector institutions. This role is likely to be permanent and have a broad resources management focus (with Water Resources Management as a point of departure within a catchment area), as well as involving Catchment Management Agency activities, and possibly associated activities of other sectors.

³ The Minister is the Catchment Management Agency until a Catchment Management Agency is established and is functional, which means that the DWAF regional office acts as the Catchment Management Agency in the interim.

- *Support to Water Resources Management activities:* Catchment forums may also get involved in the operations of the Catchment Management Agencies once established, ranging from broad cooperation with Catchment Management Agencies and associated Water Management Institutions to the management (via delegation) of specific Catchment Management Agency functions. The most likely types of activities may include making recommendations on water use authorisation, monitoring water resources and water use, implementing local Water Resources Management projects and mobilising people and resources for Water Resources Management. This requires some formalisation of the forum, to ensure accountability for performing these functions. This role is likely to be permanent (unless tied to specific time-bound functions), focused on Water Resources Management and linked to the Catchment Management Agency.

In practice, a catchment forum will play more than one of these roles (at any one time), particularly as it becomes more established, gains legitimacy and builds capacity.

1.4.4.2 Responsibilities

A catchment forum may have one or more of the following responsibilities in performing these roles, namely to:

- Disseminate information about Water Resources Management in the Water Management Area to the public;
- Consult stakeholders on the formulation of a vision for the water management area (Water Management Area), the development of a CMS or the evolving nature and functions of a Catchment Management Agency;
- Advocate on behalf of stakeholders with DWAF, the Catchment Management Agency and other organisations;
- Build capacity of stakeholders and groups around Water Resources Management (institutional development), focusing on previously disadvantaged groups;
- Facilitate the participation of stakeholders in the development of a CMS and other Water Resources Management activities;
- Foster cooperative governance, particularly between Water Management Institutions and local government;
- Coordinate the strategies and activities of various bodies, to foster cooperation;
- Monitor water resources and/or users to identify problems;
- Advise on Water Resources Management decisions, by making recommendations to the relevant Water Management Institution; and
- Perform Water Resources Management activities (although a forum is not necessarily the most appropriate body for this type of function).

The order in which these responsibilities are presented place increasing organisational and resource demands on the catchment forum and require closer coordination between the forum and other organisations. In all cases, the catchment forum should represent the stakeholders' interests and should avoid becoming a tool for implementing another organisation's agenda. This implies a general resistance to taking on routine technical Water Resources Management functions, rather than coordinating and facilitating the type functions.

The priority for a catchment forum should be in developing and demonstrating its legitimacy, credibility, relationships and capacity, so that it is recognised by other established organisations. This recognition will more than likely result in the forum being requested to perform appropriate Water Resources Management activities, but this has implications in terms of accountability and resources.

1.4.4.3 Possible Non-Water Resources Management Roles

Stakeholders tend to use catchment forums as a vehicle to present general grievances and interests. Managing these diversions is critical to the focus and sustainability of the organisation. It is important, where possible to ensure that the issue is addressed, either through the forum or through associated organisations. Other Water Resources Management-related issues (such as water services, integrated planning and waste management), should be addressed by catchment forums, even though they may be outside the mandate of the Catchment Management Agency.

- **Water services:** refers to the provision of potable water and disposal of wastewater and sewerage, and is governed by the Water Services Act (Act 108 of 1997). A range of water services institutions (WSI) are established to ensure access to water services by all South Africans. The unequal access to water services by disadvantaged communities in many parts of the country, results in water services being raised as a priority issue by many communities at forum meetings. It is difficult to get these communities involved in Water Resources Management issues if they do not have access to water services, but conversely water services and its relationship with Water Resources Management provides an effective means of building capacity in these communities to participate meaningfully.
- **Spatial planning:** is beyond the mandate of Water Resources Management, even though land use has a major impact on water resources. Local government through the Integrated Development Planning (IDP) process, is responsible for municipal spatial planning, and should be engaged by catchment forums (as should Provincial Government for regional planning), particularly where they are active and aware role-players in the forum. The need for these processes to consult stakeholders provides an opportunity for the forums to influence this process and also to foster cooperative governance, as discussed below.
- **Integrated Environmental Management (IEM):** The consultation and decision making process around the environmental consequences of development, is overseen by National and Provincial Departments of Environment. It is possible that catchment forums may become involved in these processes, particularly where the development (including waste management) may have an impact on water resources. This leads towards the integration of natural resource management, but can only be done in the spirit of cooperative governance.

Where a catchment forum becomes involved in non-Water Resources Management activities, care should be taken to maintain the Water Resources Management related activities of the forum.

1.4.4.4 Cooperative governance and partnerships

A catchment forum gains its strength from the stakeholders it represents, rather than statutory powers. This characteristic is even more apparent where the forum becomes involved in water related activities that are outside the mandate of the Catchment Management Agency (or DWAF). Under these circumstances, a catchment forum may become an appropriate vehicle to foster cooperative governance between the Catchment Management Agency, local government, other stakeholder and interest groups, in the interests of integrated management to support Water Resources Management.

However, this implies that the organisations that are represented by the forum are both committed to the aims of the forum and support (and implement) the recommendations the forum makes.

This type of buy-in and support is less likely if the forum is perceived to be an organ of another department or sphere of government. The forum should be formally constituted with clear relationships with the Catchment Management Agency and other organisations, but this does not imply that it should be a statutory body established under the National Water Act. It may then be an effective vehicle to foster cooperative governance around Water Resources Management, focusing on the alignment of Catchment Management Agency policies and strategies with those of other organisations in the Water Management Area. It should also be noted that where the forum is recognised as a legitimate and representative role-player, it potentially has significant influence (or coercion) over other organisations through “peer pressure” and “management by shame”.

ACTIVITY 6

Group work

Break into groups of 5.

In your groups, discuss the role and responsibilities of a catchment forum

1.5 ESTABLISHING A CATCHMENT FORUM

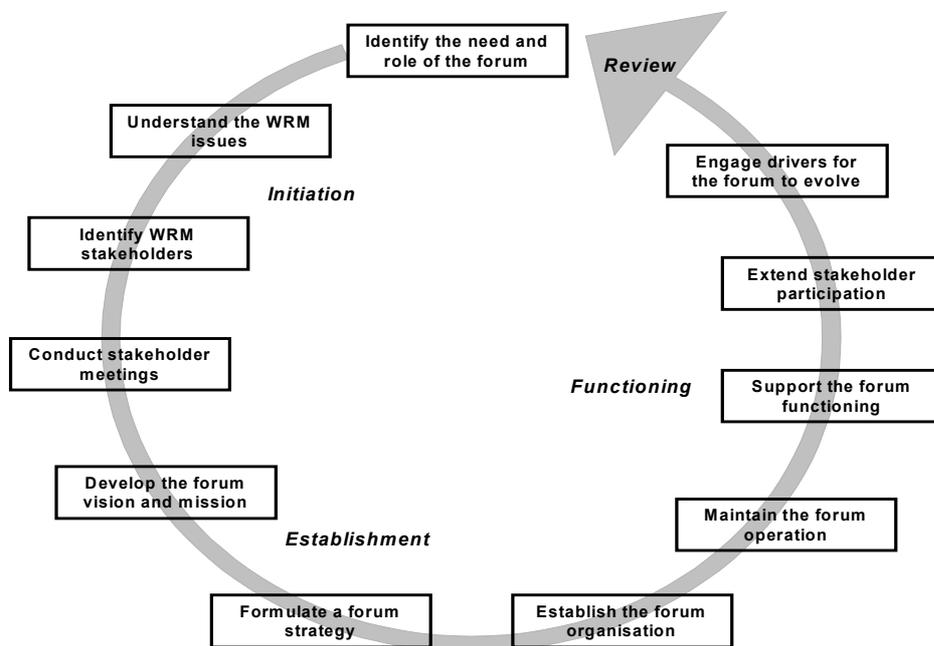
The focus is on the process of establishing a Catchment Forum. It provides a sequence of steps in the process of establishing a Catchment Forum, and indicates what each step entails.

1.5.1 ROADMAP FOR THE PROCESS

Every catchment forum will go through a process of initiation and establishment, followed by a functioning stage of maintenance or operation. In many cases, conditions may change promoting the review and evolution of the catchment forum.

The initiation, establishment, functioning and review of a catchment forum generally follow the steps outlined in the following figure, each of which is described briefly below. It should be highlighted that although these are presented sequentially, in practice they would be implemented iteratively and possibly simultaneously. Furthermore, the time taken to move through this process will vary for different forums, ranging from months to years.

Figure 4: Process roadmap of forum establishment, management and evolution



1.5.2 STEPS IN THE PROCESS

1.5.2.1 Identify the need for the forum

The first step is to identify the need for a catchment forum, particularly from the Water Resources Management or catchment management perspective of the organisation that is initially required to drive the process (generally the Catchment Management Agency or DWAF). Fundamentally, this is related to the need for the Catchment Management Agency/DWAF to involve stakeholders in formulating a vision and associated CMS for sub-catchments within the Water Management Area, as well as the process of establishing the Catchment Management Agency.

1.5.2.2 Understand the Water Resources Management issues

Before embarking on the process of establishing a catchment forum, an assessment should be made of the Water Resources Management issues in the catchment area, in order to understand the appropriate role and nature of the catchment forum, and the probable interest of the stakeholders to participate in the forum. This process relates the preliminary investigations that are required to formulate a catchment vision leading to the development of a CMS and/or establishment of a Catchment Management Agency.

1.5.2.3 Identify Water Resources Management stakeholders

The Water Resources Management assessment should indicate the groups of Water Resources Management related stakeholders that must be included in the process, possibly distinguishing between those that will provide critical inputs to the process and those that are critical to ensure representation of the process and forum. Although catchment forums should continually attempt to extend and mobilise participation, a core of key stakeholders must be identified to begin the process.

1.5.2.4 Conduct stakeholder meetings

Stakeholder groups generally participate with different interests and capacities in a catchment forum. Initially it may be more effective to hold a series of single-interest stakeholder group meetings, at which the need for and possible role of a forum can be presented in a relatively unthreatening environment, based on the Water Resources Management scoping assessment. These meetings should be accompanied by focused capacity building, and where possible matching the capacity of different groups. This should culminate in the first catchment forum meeting attended by all the identified stakeholder groups.

1.5.2.5 Develop the forum vision

Once a representative group of stakeholders have begun meeting, their first task should be to develop the vision, mission, goals and objectives of the forum. This should describe the role of the forum and its relationships with other organisations (i.e. its reason for being), which should provide the core of the forum's terms of reference or statement of intent (which ever the forum feels is most appropriate).

1.5.2.6 Formulate a forum strategy

A vision requires a strategy (i.e. plan of action) that outlines how the forum will achieve the stated objectives, as captured in its roles and responsibilities. This would address both the immediate proposals and future plans, particularly around the functions and activities that the forum intends to perform, as well as the way in which it intends to develop partnerships with other organisations. The strategy should reflect the role/s the forum wishes to perform, but may range from a simple plan of action through to a detailed business plan.

1.5.2.7 Establish the forum organisation

The forum vision and strategy must be given effect through an organisational structure and associated procedures (or systems) for forum functioning/ operation. The intended formal or legal entity for the forum must be created, together with clear rules about the structure and relationships between various committees within the organisation. The vision, strategy and organisational functioning provide the core of a charter or constitution for the forum.

1.5.2.8 Maintain the forum operation

This relates to the ongoing management of the forum, and includes issues around convening and reporting on forum (and committee) meetings, as well as the procedural and structural requirements for performing the forum activities. A critical requirement is the access and management of finances and resources necessary for forum to perform its specified role.

1.5.2.9 Support the forum functioning

Most catchment forums require support from other organisations, in order to perform their intended role. This may range from resources (financial, human and/or infrastructure) to capacity building of forum (and committee) members. These issues should be addressed in the forum strategy, but must be continually sourced as a prerequisite for a sustainable forum.

1.5.2.10 Extend stakeholder participation

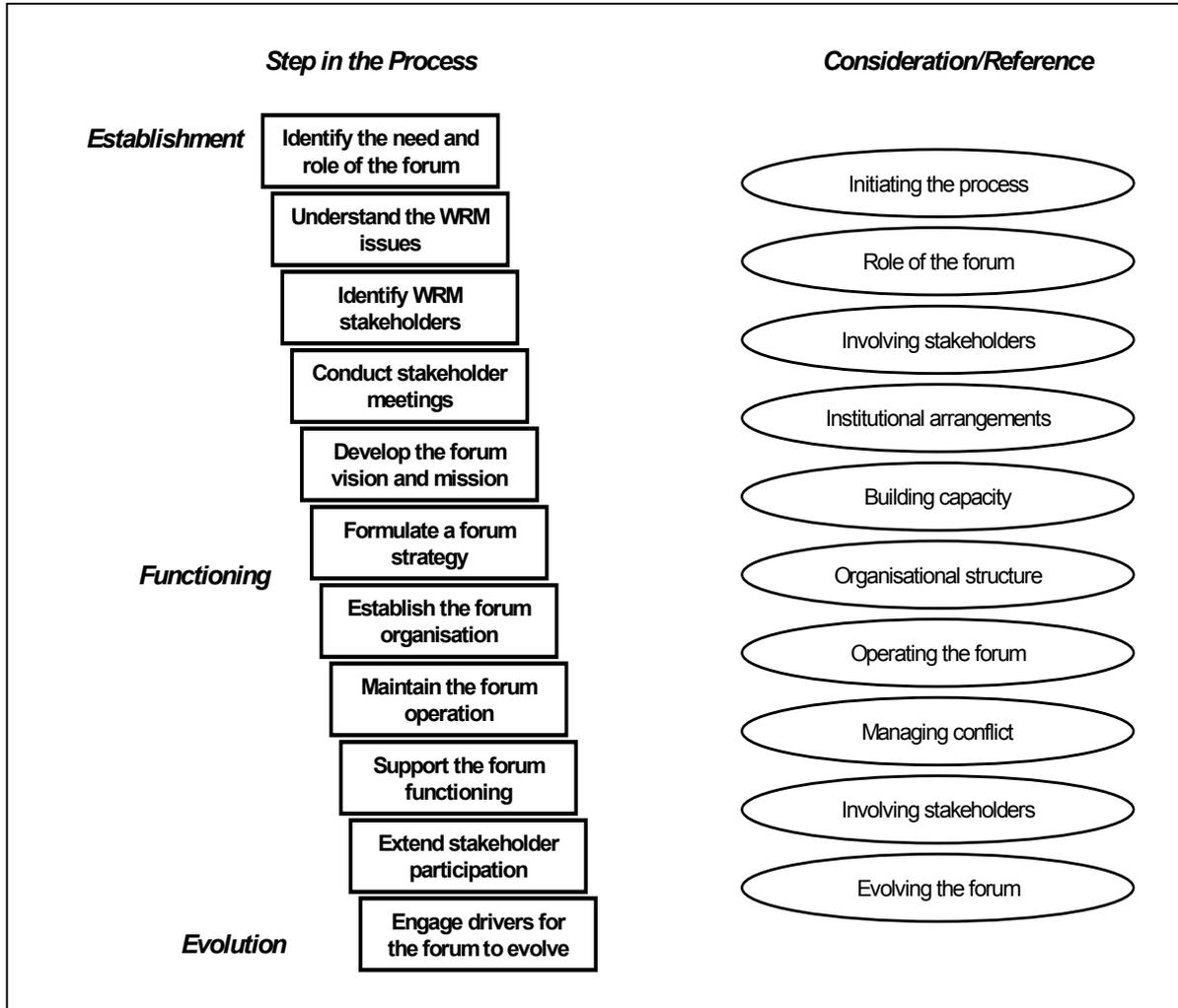
Catchment forums should represent diverse Water Resources Management interests, thereby enabling them to participate in Water Resources Management. This implies that the stakeholder base should be continually and actively expanded, to reflect the focus of the forum's activities, taking account of issues around stakeholder representivity, inclusivity and interest.

1.5.2.11 Engage drivers for forum evolution

At some stage in a forum's life, the institutional environment may change, the drivers for the forum's initial establishment may have been revised and/or new issues arise. This may require the forum to review its achievements and failures, to re-evaluate its role, and possibly evolve to achieve a new role. Once new drivers have been identified, the process (steps) outlined above should be revisited, starting with an understanding of the new Water Resources Management issues and the forum's role, which should lead to a review of stakeholder representation, vision, strategy and ultimately the organisation should reflect this new role.

1.5.2.12 Reference to the Supporting Technical Guidelines

The supporting technical guidelines provide detailed information to support the various steps in the process of forum establishment, functioning and evolution. They are presented according to topic, rather than process, but each topic is more or less relevant at different stages in the development of the forum:



ACTIVITY 7

Group work

Divide into groups of 5. Discuss the process for establishing a catchment forum and design a catchment forum by drawing a flow diagram or mind-map, indicating all the steps. Present your findings to the class.

1.6 RUNNING THE FORUM

This unit focus on the process of managing a forum. It indicates the strategic planning process and explains the reason why Forums should have clear identities and names. It provides practical guidance on members, election of officials and how to structure and conduct Forum meetings.

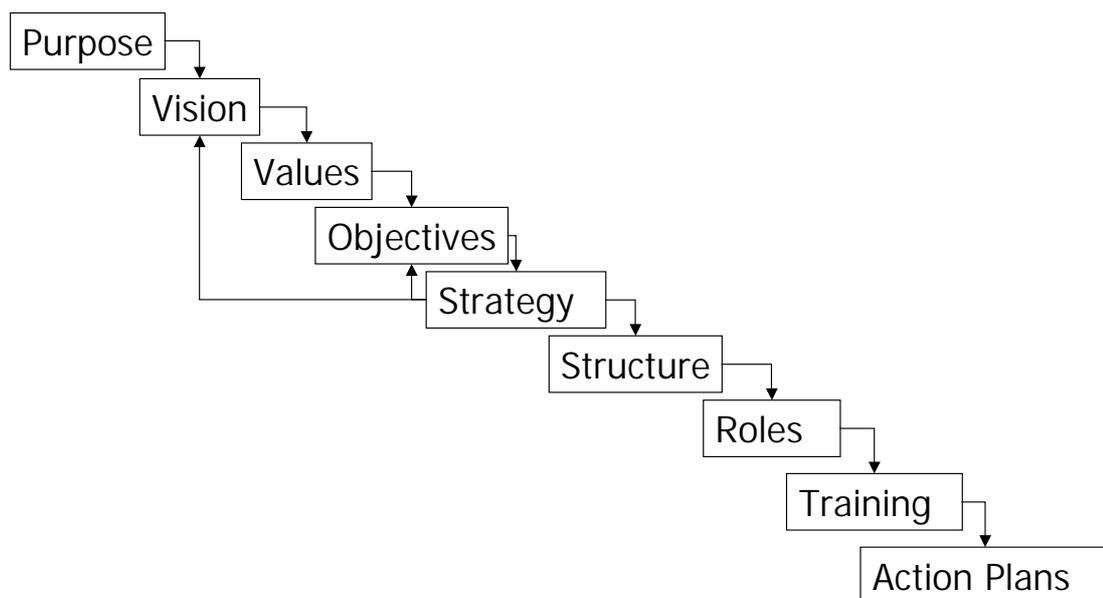
1.6.1 STRUCTURE AS A FOUNDATION FOR OPERATIONS

It is essential for any forum to have clear objectives, with related roles and functions. Further, the structure and organisation of the forum must be appropriate to the job it is undertaking. These issues were discussed above. However, objectives and structure do not ensure success in them-selves. There is a dynamic side to the business of a forum in motivation, relationships, appropriate and accepted ways of doing things (rules and procedures), and an organizational culture and spirit that wins and inspires voluntary participation. These are matters relating to the *running* of the forum, and not simply its organisation. Guidelines in this context are presented below.

1.6.2 STRATEGY AND PLANNING

Strategy and planning are important during the establishment and evolution of a forum, in other words, to facilitate change. However, strategy and planning should become part of the routine operation of a forum, with periodic review and redirection. Strategy and planning may be seen as complex and specialized activities, but in fact the process can be implemented with limited training and in small and relatively informal organizations. The diagram illustrates the steps in a strategic planning process.

Figure 5: Strategic Planning Process



The relevance of the steps to forums is described below:

- ❖ Purpose relates to the role. What role does the forum envisage for itself? How will the role change over time?
- ❖ A vision is a view of what the forum might become over a defined period of time. It should be demanding (a challenge to achieve); directive (sets the direction for change, growth or consolidation); and descriptive (use simple words and large concepts).
- ❖ Values define how the forum wishes to operate. Here it might clarify where it stands on the openness of the forum, on the formality of its structure and operations, and on the balance between consultation and decision-making.
- ❖ Objectives are simply statements of expected achievements leading to the vision. Objectives are typically set and reviewed annually.
- ❖ The strategy describes the manner in which objectives will be realized. For example, the forum vision might be one of becoming a vehicle for cooperative governance and cross-sectoral cooperation. An objective might be to establish a network of local government officials involved in water quality management. The strategy might be to establish informal contact first, and to seek council resolutions thereafter.
- ❖ Structure is the vehicle the forum needs to follow its strategy and to move toward its vision.
- ❖ Roles, training and action plans transform planning and strategy into action. Roles in this context ask who does what. Training deals with the capacity needed to pursue objectives, and action plans are simple roadmaps with timetables and milestones. All too often planning fails to spend time on these important steps. Planning and strategy that are not transformed into action are a waste of time.

Forums will have to consider how and how often they wish to go through strategic planning. Once a year is typical for most organizations. Stable forums may consider a bi-annual cycle. With reference to the process, it is advisable that the forum nominates a small group to lead the process. This group may be the management group, or a special purpose sub-committee. Interactions between the planning group and the plenary are essential. There should be at least two such interactions: the first to debate purpose, vision, values and objectives; the second to test and refine proposals for strategy, structure, roles, training and action.

1.6.3 NAME AND IDENTITY

All forums must have an identity. This should be made clear in the founding documentation of the forum (Charter or Constitution – see Appendix B for a possible outline of a forum constitution), clarifying the legal status of the body, its name, its major goals and objectives, its logo, and its area of operation. Often the area of operation is not clear to members, so it is useful to have a map defining the forum boundary precisely.

1.6.4 MEMBERSHIP

At first glance, the matter of membership appears simple. However there are several considerations to be kept in mind:

- ❖ In the early phases of forum evolution, it is advisable that the forum remains as open as possible. This allows the forum to attract and extend membership, and to become as representative as possible.
- ❖ However, all forums will require a voting process at various times, for example to elect new office bearers, or to adopt a new structure or function. In this context membership has to be clear, in order to determine who has the right to vote.

Against this background, it is advisable to define membership of the forum, and to agree on rights and responsibilities that accompany it. Some of the options are listed below:

- ❖ Mature forums, forums with clearly defined Water Resources Management or cooperative governance functions might structure membership around representation. For example, they might specify that membership will be extended to defined stakeholder groups and organizations. The principle defining membership in this context is stakeholder status.
- ❖ New forums or forums that seek to promote broad participation might pursue representation, but will allow all interested organizations and individuals to become members. In this case, membership might be endowed on anyone prepared to endorse the principles and the objectives of the forum. Some forums simply require commitment to a simple code of practice from members. The principle defining membership here is acceptance of the business of the forum.

Of course it is possible to allow different kinds of membership. A common hybrid allows “corporate” membership for important stakeholder bodies, and “individual” membership for interested parties. It is also important to maintain a register of membership over time, in order to establish continuity as a fundamental principle.

1.6.5 ELECTING OFFICE BEARERS

Forums are in essence participatory and consultative bodies that might adopt other Water Resources Management functions. In this context it is essential that all management positions be filled in a democratic, transparent and accessible manner. The rules underpinning the election of office bearers must be clear and understood by all. The following principles should guide the election process:

- ❖ A process for identifying candidates must be defined. General nominations are requested, but the forum must specify who can be nominated, who can nominate, and how nominations will be received and processed. In the case of who can be nominated, the forum might take the view that all members are eligible for all posts. However, special rules might be applied, especially to senior positions. So, for example, a forum might decide that nominees for the chair ought to have been members for a specified period.
- ❖ The voting process must be unambiguous and fully accepted. The voting rules must specify who can vote, how many votes are allocated to each voter, how voting will be done, what will happen if there is a tie, and who will process the votes. The options for voting are a show of hands at a special meeting, or a secret ballot. The latter might be advisable if there is potential for conflict, or if the forum is large and complex.
- ❖ Terms of office must be clear, together with conditions under which office bearers may resign or be asked to leave.

- ❖ Rigid voting procedures might be relaxed somewhat in the case of support and operational units. One approach might be to nominate and elect leaders for these units, and request the leaders to co-opt members. Another option is to call for volunteers for the units, and to allow them to determine their leadership in a manner appropriate for them. In the case of operational and support units particularly, there should be provision for the co-opting of special members. Highly specialized units might even have to co-opt (or employ) their managers. For example the financial support unit might have to secure the services of an accountant or a bookkeeper.

1.6.6 MEETINGS

All of the structural elements of a forum will hold meetings from time to time. In the case of support and operational units, these meetings will be as required, and might be relatively informal. Management and plenary meetings should be more formally organized, with the following in mind:

- ❖ It is a good idea to publish a year plan with management and plenary meeting dates. This allows participants to diarise the meetings, and for venues and logistical arrangements to be secured.
- ❖ Meeting procedures must be defined in the forum's founding documentation. The definition of procedures should include the number and type of meetings (for example an annual general meeting), the purpose of various meetings, what constitutes a sufficient number, and the manner and timing of document circulation (when must agendas go out, when can minutes be expected?).
- ❖ The forum can also encourage and promote a meeting "culture" according to its own needs. Aspects of the culture might include timekeeping, participation and flexibility around agendas.

Meeting agendas are the business of the forums themselves. However, the following options might be considered in structuring plenary agendas:

- ❖ Allow time for members to raise their issues and to share their news. Some forums have a "news of the day" item.
- ❖ Do not set agendas that rush discussion to the point that stakeholders feel frustrated.
- ❖ Try to include interesting presentations in the agenda, to stimulate interest.
- ❖ Where possible, let forum structures (e.g. operational units) do their own reporting to the plenary. This promotes accountability and broadens participation.

ACTIVITY 8

Group work

Divide into groups of 4.

In your groups, discuss the running of a forum; including the structure, strategy and planning, name and identity, membership, electing office bearers, meetings and everything you think might also be included.