

SESSION 15:

DIVERSIFYING WATER SUPPLY

Chair: Shafick Adams (WRC) | Venue: Boardroom 1

South Africa should diversify its source water supplies to mitigate against water scarcity and provide water to all its citizens. Ideally, a supply strategy should focus on water security and resilience, and not only on cost considerations, assurance of supply and institutional biases to surface water and, in particular dams. This will allow the development of all available sources of water to serve the under-served and mitigate against periods of low water availability. The recent and ongoing droughts laid bare our vulnerabilities in depending on one, or at most, two water-supply options – surface water and groundwater supplies. The situation is even more dire in areas not connected to the bulk water conveyance infrastructure. The WRC has a suite of projects that show the viability of alternatives and underutilised water supply sources, such as untapped groundwater, harvesting rain-, fog- and stormwater, and treatment of poorer water qualities from wastewater plants, mine water, seawater, and brackish/saline groundwater. Coupled with demand-side interventions, South Africa can become significantly water secure and excess water will enhance water, food, land, and energy security. The session will give an overview of the various supply sources and how it affects water security at a variety of scales. Diversification is not only about tapping into new and underutilised reservoirs but also the governance arrangements linked to it – this will be explored too.

PROGRAMME

11:00 – 11:15	Setting the scene	Shafick Adams (WRC)
11:15 – 11:45	Groundwater use and management in South Africa	Fanus Fourie (DWS)
11:45 – 12:15	Stormwater harvesting for cities	John Okedi (UCT)
12:15 – 12:45	Perspectives on desalination	Dawid Bosman (TCTA)
Closing remarks		