

# Lesotho Highlands Water Project to be fast-tracked

The ministries of water in both South Africa and Lesotho have agreed to fast-track phase two of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project (LHWP) to ensure security of supply to the Integrated Vaal River System (IVRS). The LHWP entails harnessing the waters of the Orange-Senqu River in the Lesotho highlands through the construction of a series of dams for the mutual benefit of the two countries.



This follows a meeting between minister Senzo Mchunu, deputy minister Dikeledi Magadzi and minister Kemiso Mosenene from Lesotho to discuss matters relating to challenges hindering the completion of the project, while agreeing on solutions to fast-track its completion. The meeting took place in Pretoria late last week.

Phase one of the LHWP was completed in 2003 and phase two is presently underway.



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Wendell Roelf 26 May 2021



“South Africa is a water-scarce country, therefore, the completion of phase two of the project has to be fast-tracked in order to augment the IVRS,” said Mchunu. The project, the minister said, should be successfully done by 2027 or earlier.



Meanwhile, the Lesotho Highlands Water Commission committed to deliver a quality project within the set timeframe and budget allocated.

The water transfer component of phase two of the LHWP comprises an approximately 165m-high concrete-faced rockfill dam at Polihali, downstream of the confluence of the Khubelu and Senqu (Orange) Rivers and an approximately 38km-long concrete-lined gravity tunnel connecting the Polihali reservoir to the Katse reservoir.

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