

ANNEXURE Z

Executive summary: Western Cape Water Resilience Strategy (2025–2035)

1. Overview

The Western Cape Water Resilience Strategy (WCWRS) (2025–2035) provides a provincial framework to strengthen water security and resilience in the Western Cape in response to climate variability and change, rising demand, infrastructure constraints, and capacity challenges across spheres of government.

2. Vision

“To futureproof the Western Cape by ensuring water security and equitable access to water that meets the needs of all users.”

3. Rationale and key risks

The strategy highlights key risks to water security, including:

Climate change and ecological degradation are affecting freshwater systems.

Demand exceeding available supply system capacity.

Under-performing or ageing infrastructure, including vulnerabilities linked to power supply disruptions.

Governance, coordination and capacity constraints that limit effective planning, compliance and delivery.

These risks can translate into water quantity and quality failures, over-abstraction, ecosystem pollution, and increased conflict over water allocation and use.

4. Principles guiding implementation

Six principles guide implementation:

Equity and access.

Resource stewardship.

Responsible water resource management and use.

Sufficient water for growth.

Governance and accountability.

Policy coherence and innovation.

5. Strategic focus areas

The WCWRS is structured around four focus areas (non-hierarchical):

- Water Conservation and Demand Management (WCDM) – the first line of defence through efficiency in behaviour, infrastructure and planning.
- Water Augmentation – diversification of supply sources to reduce reliance on single sources and strengthen resilience.
- Infrastructure Management, Development and Maintenance – lifecycle asset management and the integration of ecological (nature-based) infrastructure.
- Governance – strengthened coordination and capacity to enable service delivery, growth and social justice.

6. Headline 2035 outcome targets

Key outcome targets for 2035 include:

6.1 Water conservation and demand management (WCDM)

Reduce provincial water demand by 40 million m³ per year.

Reduce municipal water losses to 15%.

Reduce average residential consumption to 160 liters per capita per day (ℓ/c/d).

6.2 Water augmentation

Secure an additional 310 million m³ per year of water.

Ensure 100% of municipalities have diversified water supply sources.

6.3 Infrastructure planning and asset management

Ensure 100% of municipalities have updated water master plans.

Ensure 100% of municipalities have updated asset management plans.

Ensure 100% of urban residents have access to safely managed water.

6.4 Governance and performance standards

80% of municipalities achieve ≥95% Green Drop by 2035.

80% of water supply systems achieve ≥95% Blue Drop by 2035.

80% of municipalities obtain No Drop certification by 2035.

Reduce average municipal non-revenue water (NRW) to <25% across the province.

Update and enforce water and sanitation bylaws (including tariffs and restrictions) aligned to the WCWRS by 2035.

Update statutory documents across Water Services Authorities (e.g., WSDPs, water-use licensing documentation) by 2035.

7. Implementation approach

The strategy emphasises customised, cost-effective interventions tailored to local supply and demand realities. It promotes proactive disaster risk mitigation, early warning and improved coordination. Implementation is supported through an associated Implementation Plan and is to

be reviewed at least every five years. Funding mobilisation is expected through multiple mechanisms and partnerships, including green and water bonds.

8. Relevance to Swellendam Municipality

For municipal alignment and oversight, Council should note the practical emphasis on:

Reducing losses and NRW through active network management, maintenance prioritisation and enforcement.

Planning for supply diversification (e.g., groundwater, reuse/recycling where feasible, and alternative harvesting options).

Maintaining credible, updated water master planning and asset management as the basis for funded delivery.

Strengthening bylaws, tariffs and restriction regimes to ensure enforceability and compliance outcomes.

Source document: Western Cape Government – Department of Local Government. Western Cape Water Resilience Strategy: Future-proofing our water supply