



## Media Statement

Date: Monday, 18<sup>th</sup> July 2022

To: All Media

### **Magalies Water, Department of Water and Sanitation and Coca-Cola Beverages South Africa Clean the Apies River**

In commemorating the internationally recognized former statesman and South Africa's first democratic president Nelson Mandela, the Apies River in Moretele Local Municipality was a hive of activity. As part of the 2022 Nelson Mandela Day, in which citizens of the world are called upon to show acts of giving and selflessness the Rustenburg-based Water Board, the department responsible for water and sanitation, and Coca-Cola Beverages South Africa (CCBSA), as corporate partners joined hands together with the communities of Moretele in cleaning the water sources which are being used for waste dumping. Leading the activities was the Deputy Minister from the department Dikeledi Magadzi, Magalies Water Acting Chairperson of the interim Board Mr. Itumeleng Mosala, the Executive Mayor of Moretele Local Municipality Councillor George Manyike as well as CCBSA's Nathalie Hendricks.

South Africa being a water-scarce country, continues to be affected by regularized bulk water services which are caused by numerous reasons including, affluent which comes from upstream in the case of rivers as well as incidents of dumping of hazardous materials by both private individuals and companies who through their nature of operations need to dispose of waste materials, albeit in an illegal and unauthorized manner. Speaking on behalf of Magalies Water the Acting Chairperson said, their involvement was from an operational and production perspective "we are here because river and dam pollution affects us directly, to the extent that in certain instances when we implement water supply interruptions it would be as a result of the poor or deteriorating quality of the raw water. This forces us to do a repeat process known as back-washing as the water would not be of a good standard after being treated for the first time. The process is not only tedious but quite expensive as it requires the use of more chemicals" Mosala concluded.



Water and Sanitation Deputy Minister Magadzi said, while this was linked to Nelson Mandela Day, it is also about public education “part of the reason we are here is to clean the river with the communities, but more importantly to educate the public about their collective responsibility as citizens in the country preserving all the available water resources, but also to reinforce the much-needed values around wise water usage” Magadzi reiterated. The Department said it is concerned about the continuing incidents, particularly in the business sector where some companies in manufacturing and processing space continued to use water resources such as rivers and dams as dumpsites at the expense of unsuspecting communities who rely on these water sources for the supply of clean drinking water after it has been treated by water utilities like Magalies Water.

Coca-Cola South Africa said as a bottling and beverage company they are concerned about the conduct of many consumers who discard either empty plastic bottles and cans anywhere at the detriment of the environment which has a long list of benefits to communities Hendricks said “we are here to support this course because littering and pollution has reached unprecedented levels. It cannot be business as usual if indeed we are interested in keeping our environment clean for generations to come. Our biggest plea is that we need to take care of the environment in order for it to take care of us” Hendricks concluded.

Moretele Local Municipality Mayor, said they were humbled by the turn-out from the community members but critically decision by the department, Magalies Water, and the support of Coca-Cola to descend upon the river and educate the public about their role in ensuring that the water supply challenges currently affecting many communities in the province including in Moretele are reduced in any way possible to ensure that the number of people getting clean water continues to grow.

End.

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