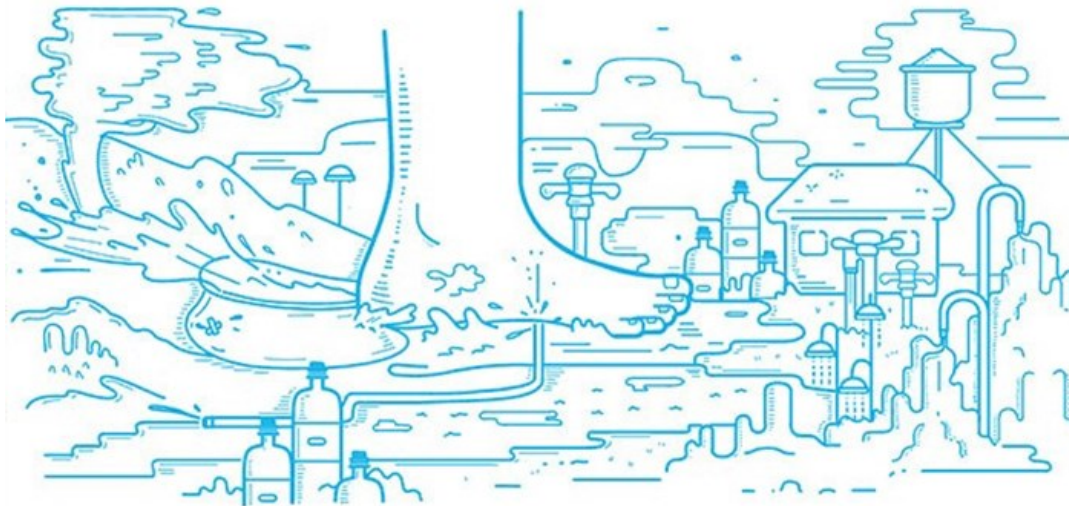


Journey of Water aims to highlight threat to water security

A group of influential young South Africans will be participating in a four-day Journey of Water in KwaZulu-Natal to highlight the threats to South Africa's water security.



The Journey of Water will take them from the central Drakensberg to Pietermaritzburg and starts on Monday, 11 May in the Highmoor reserve, in the central region of the Drakensberg-Maloti Park, at the headwaters of the Mooi and uMngeni rivers. On route to Pietermaritzburg, the 'journey' goes past the Spring Grove, Midmar and Henley dams and through the communities of Mphahlele and Edendale.

The 'journey' ends on Thursday, 14 May at the Natal Canoe Club in Pietermaritzburg, also the starting point for the Dusi Canoe Marathon which each year is bedevilled by water contamination issues. Here they will be welcomed by some of the local paddling community and have a chance to test their arms alongside Dusi champions.

The Journey of Water is a WWF South Africa campaign that highlights the threats to South Africa's water security and showcases what ordinary South Africans are doing about it. It traverses the full range of South Africa's pressing water issues, from catchment protection in water source areas - usually out of sight and out of mind - to the myriad of challenges present in informal settlements.

Key message

This year's Journey of Water takes a literal journey through KwaZulu-Natal to meet experts, local landowners and communities as they follow the waterscapes that bring water to our dams and cities. The key message to South Africans is Water does not come from a tap. In fact, it makes a long and complex journey. This campaign exposes the stories behind that journey.

Among the participants this year are rapper ProVerb, LeadSA's Catherine Constantinides, vocalists Aya Mpama, Nomsa Mazwai and Louise Carver, and presenters Azania Mosaka and Vuyo Ngcukana.

South Africa's water security depends on many of the people that this group will meet, those who live on the front-line trying to resolve issues, protect the living landscape and survive in places where water and sanitation is a daily challenge.

Research by WWF-SA and the CSIR shows that 8% of South Africa's landscape provides half the country's water supply. These water source areas are poorly protected and at risk from degradation and mining. This research has also identified critical water source areas in need of protection. These are national assets that provide for a disproportionate amount of

off for the rest of the country and are generally found in the high-altitude escarpment and Drakensberg mountains which receive the most rainfall.

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