

De Lille calls for drought-hit Cape Town to be declared disaster area

Cape Town mayor Patricia de Lille wants the city to be declared a disaster area because of the drought.

By [Aphiwe Deklerk](#) 1 Mar 2017



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De Lille said on Tuesday, 28 February, she had written to local government and environmental affairs MEC Anton Bredell, asking for the declaration so the council could "get assistance to help us manage the water crisis more effectively".

"National government would fund and implement emergency water supply schemes," she said. With the Vaal Dam in Gauteng reaching capacity, she was hoping Water Minister Nomvula Mokonyane could be better able to respond to the city's plight.

If dam levels dipped below 15% - likely to happen in about 10 weeks if there was no significant rainfall - water supplies would be cut off intermittently in some areas, De Lille said.

She said emergency and contingency measures were being taken with dam levels down to 33% on Monday, leaving 121 days of usable water.

"We are looking at implementing emergency schemes using groundwater from the [Table Mountain group aquifer]. [We are also] looking at reusing water from treated wastewater effluent as well as pumping water from the Cape Flats aquifer for drinking," said De Lille.

These schemes were among plans to provide altogether 830-million litres of water a day. They include the R274m Voelmei augmentation scheme to pump excess winter water from the Berg River to Voelmei Dam. Another was to draw up to 100-million litres a day from the Table Mountain aquifer.

De Lille said the city was considering water reuse to provide 220-million litres a day and a R15bn desalination plant to yield 450-million litres a day. Peter Flower, city water and sanitation director, said such a plant could mean a 50% price hike for water.

Source: *BDpro*