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25 August 2024

## Deputy Minister Swarts to open the National Consultative Workshop on Early Warnings for All in Pretoria

The Deputy Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, Ms. Bernice Swarts, will on Monday, 26 August 2024, address the opening of the National Consultative Workshop on Early Warnings for All (EW4All) in Pretoria.

EW4All is a groundbreaking United Nations (UN) initiative that seeks to ensure that everyone on earth is protected from hazardous weather, water, or climate events through life-saving Early Warning Systems by the end of 2027.

This initiative rests on following four key pillars:

- Disaster Risk Knowledge and Management;
- Detection, Observation, Monitoring, Analysis and Forecasting;
- Warning Dissemination and Communication;
- Preparedness and Response Capabilities

According to the UN, Early Warning Systems have helped decrease the number of deaths and have reduced losses and damages resulting from hazardous weather, water or climate events. However, major gaps still exist, especially in small island developing states and least developed countries.

The workshop, which will be hosted by the South African Weather Service (SAWS), comes as South Africa continues to rank among the Southern African countries that are vulnerable to hazardous weather events including severe floods, droughts, tropical cyclones, storms, and heat waves.

Among the participants at the workshop will be the SAWS; the National Disaster Management Centre; the Departments of Water and Sanitation and Communication and Digital Technologies; the Council for Geoscience; the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa; and provincial, district and local government representatives.

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Company Secretary: Mr Nkululeko Ndebele

Also participating in the programme will be the UN and international organisations active in Early Warning Systems; civil society organizations, including Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) active in early warning services, climate and disaster risk information; and the private sector, including the mobile network operators and the insurance industry.

On the agenda of the three-day workshop are the following:

- The review of the current state of Early Warning Systems in South Africa and the evaluation of the progress in implementing the four pillars of EW4All.
- The exploration of the linkages and alignment among ongoing and upcoming initiatives and the consolidation of key stakeholder commitments to strengthen early warning services.
- The establishment of a national coordination mechanism / affirmation of existing national coordination mechanism to guide efforts to scale-up early warning programming across the four pillars and linking national and local engagement.
- The identification of gaps in national Early Warning Systems, with respect to the minimum core capabilities checklist tool provided by the EW4All initiative.
- The provision of initial inputs towards a multi-year, multi-stakeholder, focused and actionable *EW4All National Roadmap*, around which all actors can marshal resources, technical assistance, and long-term support.

**Members of the media are invited to attend and cover the event as follows:**

**Date:** Monday, 26 August 2024

**Time:** 08H30

**Venue:** Diep In Die Berg, Wapadrand, Pretoria (929 Disselboom Ave, Wapadrand, Pretoria, 0081)

To RSVP, please contact Michael Mokoena on 082 867 5634 / [mmokoena@dffe.gov.za](mailto:mmokoena@dffe.gov.za) or Musiiwa Denga on 068 268 0414 / [Musiiwa.Denga@weathersa.co.za](mailto:Musiiwa.Denga@weathersa.co.za) or Ms Hannelee Doubell at [hannelee.doubell@weathersa.co.za](mailto:hannelee.doubell@weathersa.co.za) or cell number 072 222 6305.

**For media inquiries, please contact** Peter Mbelengwa on 082 611 8197 or Oupa Segalwe (SAWS) on 072 264 3273

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