

## **Media Statement**

### **For immediate release**

**Date: 07 July 2016**

### **TCTA hosts stakeholders at AMD (Acid Mine Drainage) Western Basin**

Thursday, 30<sup>th</sup> June 2016, saw the visit to the Acid Mine Drainage (AMD) Western Basin by Federation for Sustainable Environment (FSE) accompanied by international guests from the University of Michigan in the United States of America (USA) and the University of Hong Kong.

This was an educational excursion which was aimed at comparing the challenges and solutions to AMD globally.

The Trans-Caledon Tunnel Authority (TCTA) Executive Manager for Project Management and Implementation, Johann Claassens, said “an issue as complex and controversial as the AMD requires that we open our doors to differing voices in order to give ourselves an opportunity to learn as we move forward”.

“TCTA has been giving a number of stakeholders an opportunity to visit our AMD sites over the years, a move which has paid off by giving us a platform for dialogue and engagement. We welcome all stakeholders who have an interest in seeing how we are tackling the challenge of AMD”, said Claassens.

Commenting on the Western Basin AMD plant, CEO of FSE, Mariette Liefferink, said, “I am particularly encouraged by the efforts which have been made to manage the Acid Mine Drainage challenge within the Witwatersrand Goldfields. It is also heartening to note that the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) has recently mandated TCTA to implement the long-term solution to AMD”.

There are three basins in the Witwatersrand Goldfields: the *Western, Central and Eastern* basins. The risks related to these Basins differ from one basin to another. The short-term intervention to AMD was aimed at maintaining the Environmental Critical Levels (ECLs), thereby reducing environmental risks like the contamination of ground water, flooding of underground infrastructure, increased seismic activity, and ecological impact on major river systems.

The long-term solution approach to AMD is aimed at transforming AMD into fully treated water, thereby substantially increasing water supply to the Vaal River System and meeting the water needs of South Africa's economic hub. The solution will ensure further treatment by removing sulphates and producing water for industrial or potable use. This process will, therefore, turn the AMD problem into a long-term sustainable solution by producing safe water.

"Up until the AMD project, TCTA's work had been solely focused on the implementation and funding of dam and water transfer infrastructure projects as well as advising the DWS and the Minister on a number of specific areas", said Claassens.

End.

Notes for the Editor

*TCTA was originally established as a special purpose vehicle to fulfil South Africa's Treaty obligations in respect of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project.*

*The TCTA is an organ of state that is managed under the Minister of Water and Sanitation. The name Trans-Caledon derives from the Caledon River. The river marks a border between South Africa and Lesotho and it also flows in both countries.*

*Since its original inception in 1986 the TCTA has financed and implemented several mega bulk raw water projects throughout the country as well as given advisory services on some.*

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