NAMIBIA WATER AND SANITATION
CONFERENCE 2026

CONCEPT NOTE

NAMIBIA WATER AND SANITATION CONFERENCE 2026

Theme: *Building Climate-Resilient Water and Sanitation Systems for Sustainable Development*

1. Background

Water security and sustainable sanitation remain central to Namibia's socio-economic development, public health, environmental sustainability and economic growth. As one of the driest countries in sub-Saharan Africa, Namibia continues to experience increasing pressure on its limited water resources due to climate change, prolonged droughts, rapid urbanisation, population growth, industrial expansion and increasing demand from strategic sectors such as mining, green hydrogen, oil and gas.

Although significant progress has been made in expanding access to safe drinking water and sanitation services, challenges remain in ensuring equitable service delivery, maintaining ageing infrastructure, strengthening institutional coordination, mobilising sustainable financing, improving groundwater management, and addressing sanitation backlogs in both urban and rural areas. Local Authorities and Regional Councils also face growing financial and operational pressures that affect the sustainability of water service delivery.

These challenges require coordinated national action involving all spheres of Government, State-Owned Enterprises, development partners, academia, civil society and the private sector.

The Namibia Water and Sanitation Conference 2026 is therefore proposed as a **national coordination platform** that supports Government's planning, coordination and implementation efforts by bringing together all key stakeholders to review progress, identify implementation challenges, strengthen collaboration and mobilise investments required to accelerate universal access to sustainable water and sanitation services.

2. Rationale

Namibia currently hosts several sector-specific forums and technical engagements addressing aspects of water resource management, water supply, sanitation, environmental sustainability and infrastructure development. However, there is presently no single national platform that brings together all institutions responsible for planning, financing, implementing and regulating water and sanitation services across the country.

The Namibia Water and Sanitation Conference seeks to bridge this gap by creating an annual

national platform that integrates policy dialogue, technical exchange, investment mobilisation and implementation planning.

Unlike traditional conferences that focus primarily on knowledge sharing, this conference will support Government by:

- Reviewing progress against national water and sanitation priorities.
- Identifying implementation bottlenecks affecting service delivery.
- Strengthening coordination among Ministries, Regional Councils, Local Authorities, State-Owned Enterprises and development partners.
- Developing a national pipeline of priority water and sanitation investment projects.
- Promoting public-private partnerships and innovative financing solutions.
- Facilitating evidence-based decision-making through regional reporting and performance reviews.
- Mobilising technical expertise, investment and strategic partnerships to accelerate implementation.

The conference is intended to become an annual implementation support mechanism that complements existing Government coordination structures rather than duplicating them.

3. Alignment with National Development Priorities

The conference directly supports Namibia's national development agenda and contributes towards achieving:

- Vision 2030
- National Development Plan 6 (NDP6)
- Harambee Prosperity Plan priorities relating to infrastructure, resilience and service delivery
- Integrated Water Resources Management objectives
- Sustainable Development Goal 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation)
- SDG 13 (Climate Action) and 6
- African Union Agenda 2063

The conference will further support Government's inter-ministerial coordination processes by providing a structured platform to review implementation progress, strengthen institutional collaboration and identify priority interventions requiring policy attention.

4. Conference Objectives

Overall Objective

To establish a national coordination platform that strengthens planning, implementation, investment mobilisation and partnerships for sustainable and climate-resilient water and sanitation services in Namibia.

Specific Objectives

The conference aims to:

- Review progress towards achieving Namibia's national water and sanitation priorities.
- Identify implementation bottlenecks affecting water supply and sanitation service delivery.
- Strengthen coordination between Government institutions, Regional Councils, Local Authorities, State-Owned Enterprises and development partners.
- Showcase innovative technologies, policies and best practices.

- Promote climate-resilient water infrastructure and sustainable sanitation solutions.
- Mobilise investment and financing for priority water and sanitation projects.
- Strengthen public-private partnerships.
- Promote research, innovation and digital transformation in the sector.
- Develop practical recommendations that support implementation and policy development.

5. Expected Outcomes

The conference is expected to deliver the following strategic outcomes:

- A Conference Communiqué outlining agreed national priorities, actions, responsibilities and implementation commitments.
- A consolidated national pipeline of priority water and sanitation projects.
- Regional investment profiles prepared by Regional Councils and Local Authorities.
- Strengthened coordination between Government institutions and sector stakeholders.
- Increased public-private partnerships and investment commitments.
- Enhanced collaboration between Government, development partners, academia, civil society and industry.
- Policy recommendations to improve implementation of national water and sanitation programmes.
- Greater visibility of innovative technologies and financing mechanisms suitable for Namibia.

6. Conference Themes

The conference programme will include discussions on:

- Water Security and Integrated Water Resources Management
- Climate Change Adaptation and Water Resilience
- Rural Water Supply and Community-Based Water Management
- Urban Water Supply and Municipal Service Delivery
- Municipal Financial Sustainability and Revenue Management
- Sustainable Water Tariffs and Utility Performance
- Sanitation, Hygiene and Public Health
- Wastewater Treatment, Water Reuse and Circular Economy
- Groundwater Development and Management
- Water Infrastructure Planning and Asset Management
- Digital Technologies, Smart Water Systems and Artificial Intelligence
- Climate Finance and Infrastructure Investment
- Public-Private Partnerships
- Water Security for Mining, Green Hydrogen, Oil and Gas
- Water Quality Monitoring
- Water Governance, Policy and Regulation
- Gender, Youth and Social Inclusion
- Capacity Building and Skills Development

7. Regional Participation

Regional Councils and Local Authorities will play a central role in the conference through structured regional presentations using a standard reporting framework.

Each presentation will include:

- Current access to safe drinking water.
- Sanitation coverage.

- Water and sanitation status in schools and health facilities.
- Existing infrastructure.
- Key implementation challenges.
- Priority projects.
- Funding requirements.
- Investment opportunities.
- Opportunities for public-private partnerships.

This standardised approach will support evidence-based discussions and contribute to the development of a national investment pipeline.

8. Target Participants

The conference will bring together representatives from:

- Office of the Prime Minister
- Government Ministries
- Regional Councils
- Local Authorities
- State-Owned Enterprises
- NamWater and other utilities
- Development partners
- Financial institutions
- Private sector companies
- Mining, Green Hydrogen, Oil and Gas industries
- Universities and research institutions
- Engineering consultants
- Professional bodies
- Civil society organisations
- NGOs
- Students and young professionals

9. Conference Format

The conference will comprise:

- Ministerial and keynote addresses
- High-level policy dialogues
- Technical plenary sessions
- Parallel technical sessions
- Regional Council and Local Authority presentations
- Investment and financing forums
- Public-private partnership roundtables
- Research paper presentations
- Innovation and technology exhibitions
- Networking sessions

10. Call for Abstracts

Researchers, practitioners, consultants, students and development partners will be invited to submit abstracts relating to the conference themes.

Accepted papers will be presented during technical sessions and included in the conference proceedings.

11. Exhibition and Sponsorship

An exhibition will showcase technologies, equipment, consulting services, digital innovations and infrastructure solutions supporting Namibia's water and sanitation sector.

Sponsorship opportunities will be offered to Government agencies, development partners and private sector organisations seeking to demonstrate their commitment to sustainable water and sanitation development.

12. Proposed Next Steps

The following activities are proposed:

1. Establish the Conference Steering Committee.
2. Establish Technical Working Groups.
3. Develop the detailed implementation plan and project schedule.
4. Prepare the stakeholder engagement strategy.
5. Finalise the conference programme and thematic streams.
6. Develop sponsorship and partnership packages.
7. Develop standard Regional Council and Local Authority reporting templates.
8. Confirm the conference venue, dates and budget.
9. Launch stakeholder mobilisation and sponsorship campaigns.
10. Finalise communications, registration and logistical arrangements.

13. Conclusion

The Namibia Water and Sanitation Conference 2026 represents an opportunity to institutionalise a national platform for coordination, planning and investment mobilisation in the water and sanitation sector. By bringing together Government, Regional Councils, Local Authorities, State-Owned Enterprises, development partners, industry, academia and civil society, the conference will strengthen implementation of national priorities, improve inter-institutional coordination and catalyse investment in sustainable, climate-resilient water and sanitation infrastructure.

Beyond knowledge sharing, the conference is intended to produce tangible implementation outcomes, including a national investment pipeline, strengthened partnerships, practical policy recommendations and a Conference Communiqué that guides collective action towards achieving universal access to safe water and sanitation in Namibia.