Water Security at Local Government Level: What do People Think?

By

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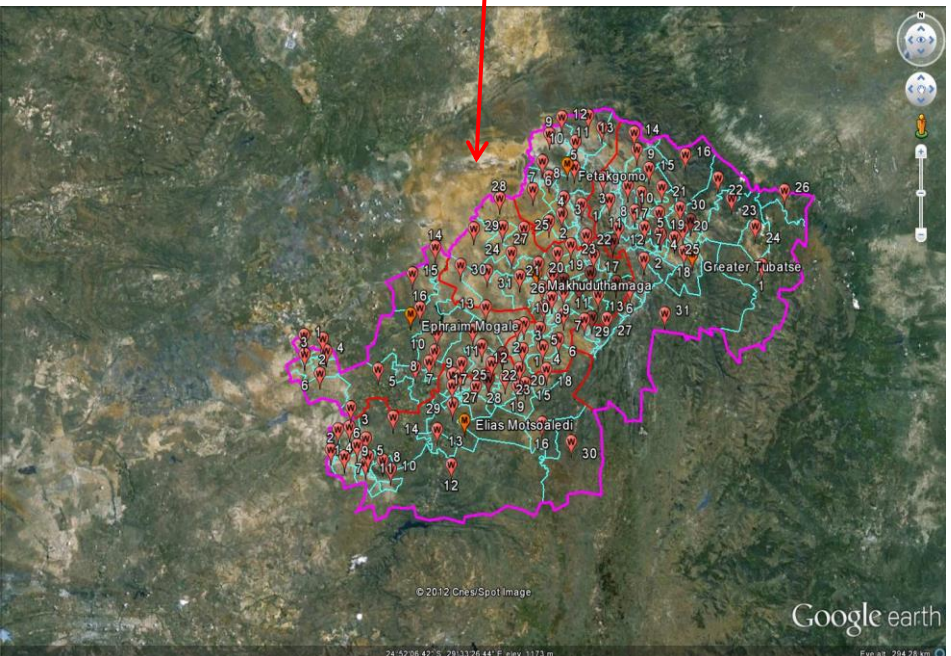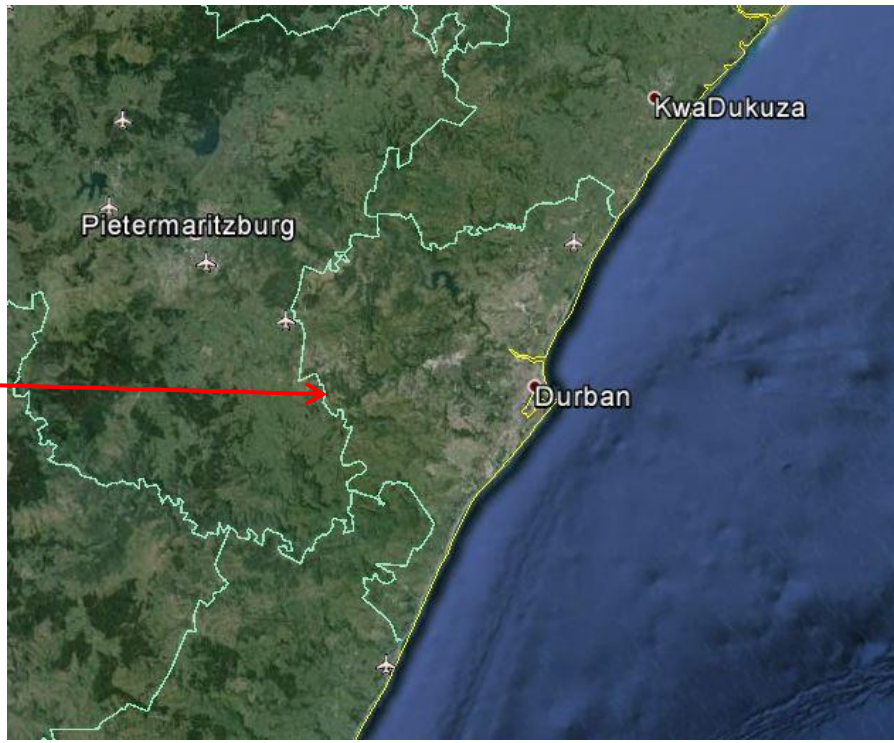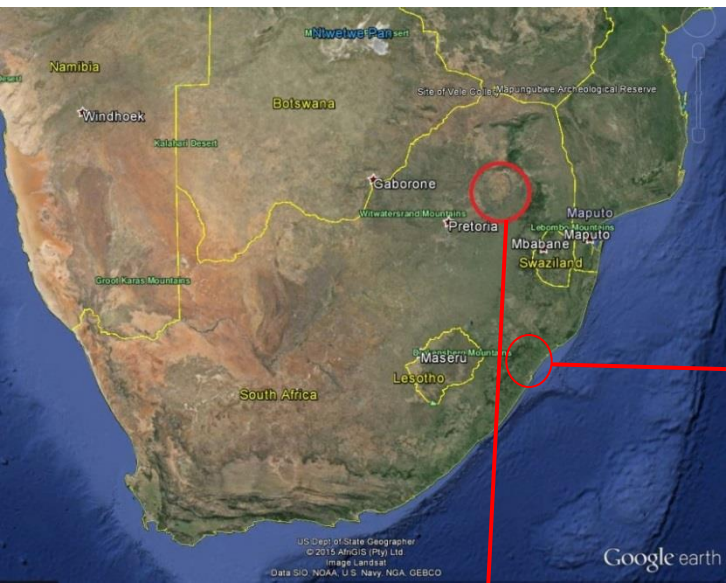**Presented at the Sustainable Water Seminar 2016, CSIR ICC, 2 June 2016**
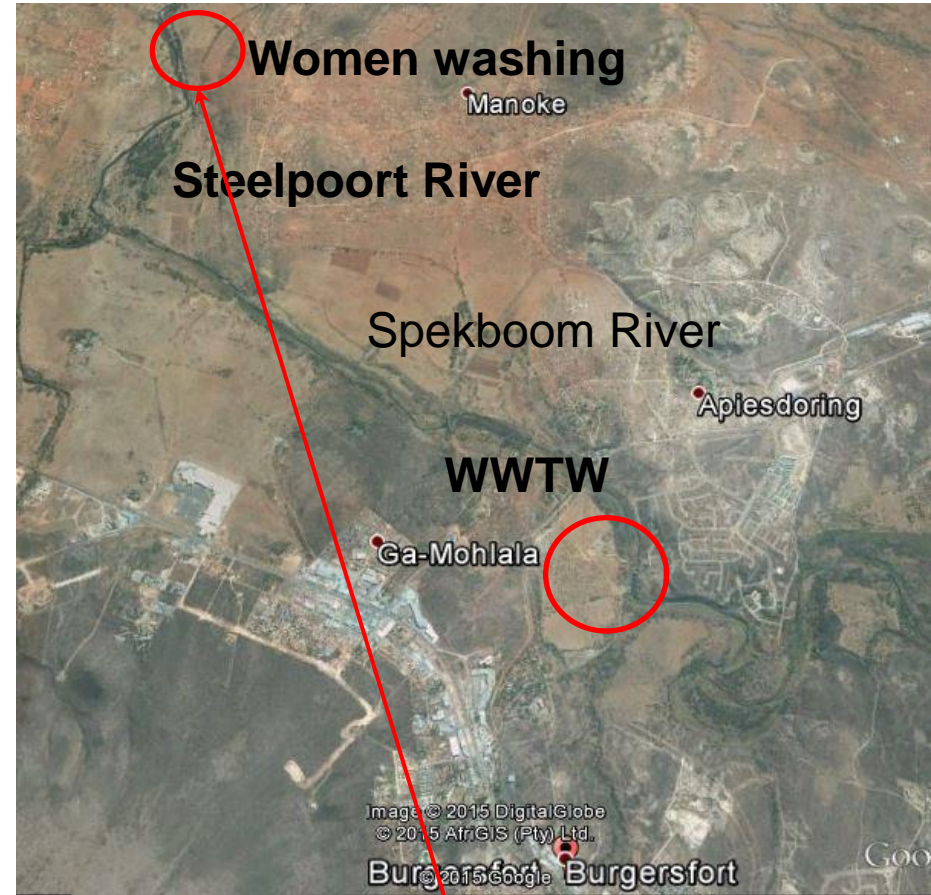
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Outline

- Setting the scene
- Water security: What do People Think?
- To end

Setting the Scene: Sekhukhune and eThekwini

Setting the Scene: Sekhukhune

Women washing

Steelpoort River

Spekboom River

WWTW

Setting the Scene: eThekwini

Water Security: What do People Think?

- UN Water agency's definition of water security.
- Our research project on water security
  - Water security starts and ends with the individual.
  - Sekhukhune and eThekwini
  - Interview stakeholders in industry, government, mining, agriculture and communities.
- Most view it as the availability and quality of water.
- A more nuanced picture is in the offing.
- Mine using bottled water.
- Maintenance of water infrastructure.

Water Security: What do People Think?

- Theft and vandalism has an immediate impact on water security.
- Problem in both municipalities
    - 'No water no farming'
    - Quality – armed robbery at Groblersdal WWTW.
    - Quantity – theft of water pipeline to Motetema – rioting.
- High price of scrap metal is part of the problem.
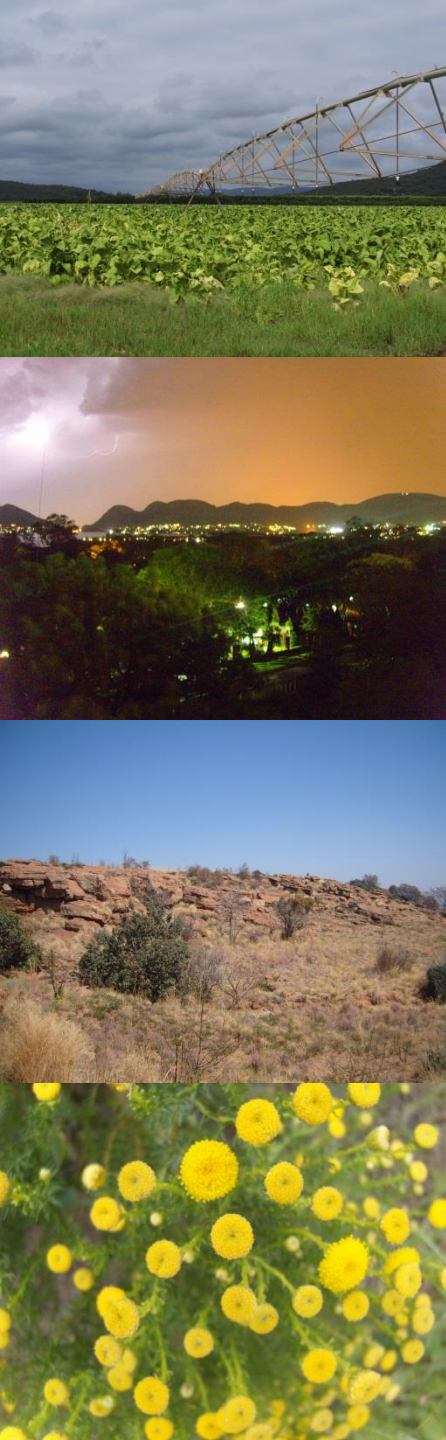- Communities and scientists with solutions

Water Security: What do People Think?

- Water security costs money.
- Water security impacts human health.
- The link between fresh water and the marine environment.

To End

- What people think water security is matters.
- Water security is not an abstract concept defined by international organisations – UN Water.
- Water security is NOT about quantity, quality, availability, reliable supply, water borne diseases…
- Water security is about individuals and the environment they live in – lived experience.
- Water security begins and ends with the individual.
- Water should be defined by individuals and not by scientists only – ownership.
- Scientists can miss the point – research in collaboration with communities can be a rich and rewarding experience.
- Local governments faces many challenges regarding water security.
- The challenges can extent beyond fresh water security to include the marine environment.

Thank you for listening

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