



Lessons from the uMngeni in South Africa

Stakeholder Forum C: Decision support systems to prevent water conflicts

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The uMngeni catchment

The uMngeni catchment:

- province of KwaZulu-Natal,
- contributes 30% to the country's GDP,
- covers <5% of the province but supplies water to 42% of the province's population (incl. the economic hub of Durban).



SA's water administration and management:

- organised into primary down to quinary level catchments,
- these are grouped into 9 WMAs,
- each WMA needs to establish a CMA

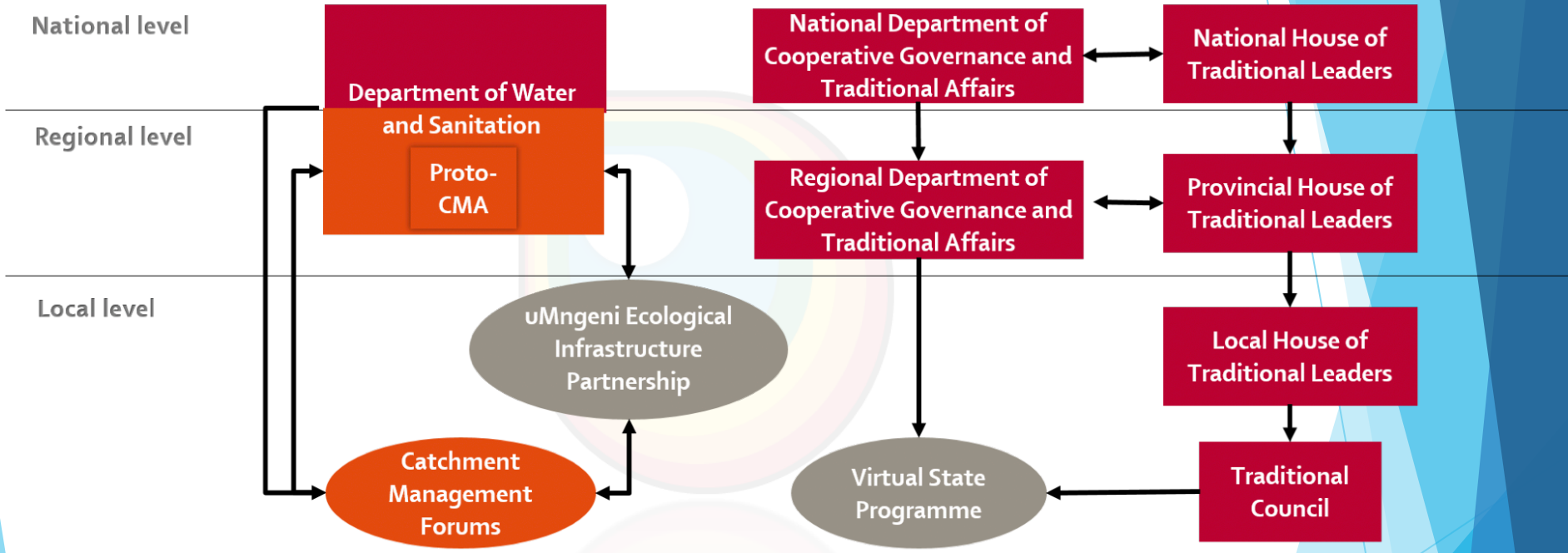
The catchment faces numerous pressures on water quality and quantity and is no longer able to meet the demand for water.

What should be and what is

- ▶ IWRM anchored in the National Water Act of 1998 calls for significant coordination and integration between government and citizens, BUT there is a lack of skills and trust on both sides.
- ▶ Department of Water and Sanitation is only present at National level with satellite offices BUT there is no link to provincial level and its planning.
- ▶ Thus, decentralization efforts through a variety of organisations described in the Act are made; e.g. CMAs BUT these lack implementation.
- ▶ Thus, a hierarchical governance style dominates the governance landscape and is seemingly re-enforced by a lack of trust.

In the uMngeni, many structures are emerging to fill voids of non-implementation.

Example of coordination bodies in the uMngeni



Legend



Network governance
Hierarchical governance



Formal, mandated by legislation
Non-statutory, not mentioned by legislation
Informal

Established relationship
Direction of influence

ANALYSIS

- ▶ The South African IWRM approach has strong network governance structures. Conflict exists within administration as well as between western administration and traditional authority due to their hierarchical governance style. The state is struggling to create synergies between its established role and effective network approaches.
- ▶ In the uMngeni catchment, network governance is evident in several coordinating instruments. These structural coordinating instruments show promise but have several drawbacks.
 - ▶ The absence of traditional governance structures in water governance further exacerbates existing asymmetries in participation and power. Further, land-use matters are not addressed.
 - ▶ It needs coordinating tools and practices besides structures. Well-coordinated procedural aspects of governing, including planning, management and decision-making are needed; for example Catchment Management Strategies designed in hybrid style offer this.

Key Messages


1. Acknowledge governance styles, foster network governance styles, and create linkages between governance styles in order to avoid conflict and achieve implementation.
2. Implementation of IWRM requires careful adaptation of institutions to local conditions, i.e. capacity, culture and governance style. Social capital and network structures offer resources and solutions without which sustainable solutions are not possible.
3. Acknowledge the power of traditional authorities (formal AND informal) and offer appropriate structures which are sensitive to culture for these to engage. Land is key to water security!
4. Anchor such knowledge into governmental procedures and strategies. These can mediate between hierarchical and network governance styles.

Implementation and innovations are to be found beyond the state and its current practices.

GROW

Globale Ressource Wasser

STEER



Thank you



...and have a look at our Briefing Paper 21/2020
*“Coordination Beyond the State to Solve Complex
Water Problems – Insights from South Africa”* on the
DIE website (www.die-gdi.de)