



20 August 2025

Dear Members,

### **AgriSA Participation in Annual Raw Water Tariff Consultations**

AgriSA wishes to inform its affiliated members of our active participation in the Department of Water and Sanitation's (DWS) annual raw water tariff consultation held on 19 August 2025. Representing AgriSA at this critical engagement were Mr. Laubscher Coetzee (Chairman of the Natural Resources Centre of Excellence), Mr. Hannes de Wet (Deputy Chair), and Mr. Janse Rabie (Legal and Policy Executive).

The consultation forms part of DWS's annual review process for raw water tariffs, as guided by the 2007 Raw Water Pricing Strategy. This strategy outlines the principles for cost recovery, equity, and sustainability in water resource management. It distinguishes between capital charges (for infrastructure development), operational and maintenance costs, and resource management charges, with specific provisions for the agricultural sector.

Key elements of the tariff determination process include:

- **Cost Reflectivity:** Tariffs must reflect actual service delivery and infrastructure reliability, avoiding blanket increases that do not correspond to expenditure or performance.
- **Differentiation by User Category:** Agricultural users are assessed separately, with consideration for water quality, geographic location, and economic viability.
- **Support for Resource-Poor Farmers:** The strategy provides for allowances and reduced charges to promote inclusive access and transformation.
- **Affordability and Food Security:** AgriSA emphasized that tariff increases must not compromise the competitiveness of farming operations or rural employment.

AgriSA reiterated its commitment to lawful water use, efficiency, and pollution prevention, while raising concerns about deteriorating raw water quality due to municipal failures and the anticipated implementation of waste discharge charges. We called for clarity on methodology and proportionality and urged DWS to ensure that agriculture is not unfairly penalized for systemic issues beyond its control.

We commend DWS for its transparency and stakeholder engagement, and reaffirm our readiness to collaborate on sustainable, equitable water governance. Members are encouraged to engage with their local water institutions and provide input into ongoing consultations, particularly given the fact that as from 2026, raw water costs will be determined in accordance with a revised (2024) raw water pricing strategy.

Yours sincerely,

AgriSA Natural Resources Centre of Excellence