

## UPDATED FAQ – WATER CONSERVATION MEASURES & TOURISM

23 January 2026

### **Is it safe to travel to affected regions at this time?**

Yes. Tourism operations across affected regions remain largely open and operational. Local authorities and tourism businesses are actively managing water resources, and visitors are encouraged to stay informed through official channels and follow guidance provided by their accommodation or tour operator.

In some areas (such as Knysna), local authorities have declared a disaster to mobilise additional water security resources and response planning. This declaration is intended to support resilience and infrastructure interventions, not to signal closure or a visitor ban. Tourism businesses remain open and are working with authorities to manage water use responsibly.

### **Should travellers cancel or postpone their trips?**

There is currently **no official advice to cancel or postpone travel** due to water restrictions. Restrictions are precautionary and aimed at managing supply during hot and dry periods. Travellers with specific concerns should contact their service provider for the most up-to-date, location-specific guidance.

### **Will the visitor experience be affected?**

Most visitors continue to enjoy a high-quality experience. Guests may notice practical water-saving measures such as:

- Shorter showers or low-flow showerheads
- Towel and linen reuse programmes
- Limits on pool top-ups or garden irrigation

These measures are widely used internationally and are designed to conserve water without compromising comfort.

### **Why are there water restrictions?**

Some parts of South Africa are experiencing lower dam levels due to hot, dry summer conditions, which are not unusual for this time of the year. Municipalities have implemented Level 4 restrictions in places like Greater Knysna to help conserve supply and avoid emergency measures. These proactive steps are designed to keep both residents and visitors supplied and safe.

Municipal advisories are primarily issued for **residents** and focus on overall water demand management. Tourism businesses operate within these frameworks while applying practical solutions specific to visitor needs. For travellers, the most relevant guidance comes from their accommodation or tourism provider.

**Knysna municipality has formally declared a local disaster in response to ongoing water supply challenges — what does that mean for travellers?**

In Knysna, the municipality has formally declared a local disaster in response to ongoing water supply challenges, which enables coordinated emergency interventions and resource support. This is a **management and response framework**, not a directive to suspend tourism operations.

The tourism sector has coordinated a joint response focused on responsible water conservation while safeguarding visitor experiences and local livelihoods. Hospitality and tourism businesses are applying practical water-wise measures (e.g., low-flow devices, linen reuse, leak detection) that reduce consumption and contribute to long-term sustainability, without compromising the quality of the visitor experience. Knysna remains open and fully operational, and local stakeholders continue to welcome travellers who engage in simple, considerate water-wise behaviour.

**Will tourists place additional strain on local water resources?**

Tourism water use represents a relatively small portion of overall demand. Visitors play an important role in supporting local economies, and responsible travel is encouraged rather than discouraged. Guests are simply asked to be mindful of water use, as they would in many destinations globally.

**What practical steps can visitors take?**

Visitors can support local water-saving efforts by:

- Keeping showers short
- Avoiding unnecessary towel or linen changes
- Not leaving taps running
- Pack with water conservation in mind – fewer outfit changes
- Reporting leaks or running toilets to accommodation staff
- Following on-site water-saving guidance

These small actions collectively make a meaningful difference.

**Are tourism businesses and attractions still open?**

Yes. The majority of tourism businesses, attractions and restaurants remain open and welcoming. In rare cases, certain tourism activities may be adjusted in line with local advisories. Service providers will communicate any necessary changes directly with guests.

**How can visitors support local communities during their visit?**

By travelling responsibly – conserving water, respecting any local advisories communicated, and supporting local businesses. By doing this, local jobs and economies are sustained during challenging times.

**Where should travellers look for reliable information?**

Travellers should rely on:

- Official municipal channels for broader context
- Their accommodation, tour operator or booking consultant for practical, visit-specific guidance

Relying on verified sources helps avoid unnecessary concern caused by fragmented or unverified information.

**USEFUL CONTACTS:**

**Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality**

[WhatsApp Channel](#)

[Website Alerts](#)

**George Municipality**

[Website](#)

**Knysna Municipality**

[Website](#)

**Mossel Bay Municipality**

[Website](#)

**Mossel Bay Tourism**

[Website](#)

**Knysna Tourism**

[Website](#)

**City of Cape Town**

[Website](#)

You can also follow these contacts on their social media or WhatsApp channels where available.