



The silence following the Samancor's Dikwena Chrome spill, outside Brits, Northwest Province, South Africa, is a failure of accountability.

Please Sir, may we
have some....?

A critique on the dams register and call for Tailings Justice

September 2026



Acknowledgements

Thanks to **Riad Laher** and **Shamima Vawda** for support work.

Owe2Green Economy, **Ikemeleng Environmental Development and Justice** and other community activists that helped worked through the understanding the operations of the dam register.

Volunteers **Anga Athabile Ngcebetsa** and **Terrance Ngobeni** assisted in transcribing some media from texts.

Thanks also the **Dam Register Unit, DWS**.

Thanks to **Earthworks** for assisting with their continued solidarity.



Author: Hassen Lorgat

These often-quoted words by Charles Dickens, which he wrote in his book *Oliver Twist*—where a young Oliver, "desperate with hunger, and reckless with misery," is supported by others to go and ask for another bowl of porridge—are apt for this article. South Africa is in the process of employing 10,000 new labour inspectors to police workplaces—a welcome and long-overdue intervention.

Yet the dams that threaten entire communities, holding billions of litres of toxic sludge, are monitored by just a handful of inspectors. This is to be welcomed, but like *Oliver Twist* facing his guardians in front of the porridge pots, we must ask: why urgency here and not elsewhere, which too has been crying out for more?

- Dams are not passive structures. They are immense, permanent, and in many cases here in South Africa include ageing infrastructure that poses two distinct but interlinked hazards: catastrophic downstream flooding in the event of failure, and ongoing on-site risks associated with maintaining deteriorating walls. Climate change compounds both threats—historic designs were never built to withstand the extreme weather events now becoming routine. What was once considered a safety margin is now a liability.
- This report focuses specifically on mine waste dams—tailings storage facilities—which the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) lumps into the same register as conventional water dams. This conflation is misleading and dangerous. Tailings dams are not water reservoirs. They hold toxic by-products of mining: heavy metals, cyanide, and acids. And they fail at rates over a hundred times higher than traditional water dams.
- When they fail—and they do fail, regularly—the consequences are catastrophic:
 1. Structural collapse (liquefaction) unleashes toxic mudflows that consume everything in their path.
 2. Long-term contamination poisons groundwater and rivers with heavy metals for generations.
 3. Ecological devastation destroys plant and animal life and human life, as we have seen in the cases of Brumadinho (Brazil, 2019), Jagersfontein (South Africa, 2022), and most recently in Zambia (2025).

These examples are real and are often seen as abstracts, but the **[videos here](#)** force the reader to keep in mind the real impacts. These call for pro-active action that is wider and deeper and involves the participation of citizens and those likely to be most impacted, to avoid the pending nightmares. It is not if, but when these disasters will happen.

And yet, as this study will show, the regulatory oversight for these facilities is dangerously inadequate—a handful of inspectors are expected to monitor thousands of dams, with virtually no resources, no political backing, and no enforcement teeth.

This is the central contradiction of our time: the state can find 10,000 inspectors for labour compliance, but cannot find a dozen for the infrastructure that could drown or poison entire communities. It can fund enforcement against employers who hire undocumented workers, but it cannot fund enforcement against mining corporations that externalise their toxic waste onto poor communities.

Like Dickens's *Oliver Twist*, we are not asking for extravagance. We are asking for the bare minimum—a fair share of the resources already being deployed elsewhere.

We celebrate the 10,000. But we must ask the harder question: where is the same urgency for dam safety? For environmental enforcement? For the Chapter 9 institutions like the South African Human Rights Commission, the Public Protector, and others that are supposed to hold power to account?

This short study is our attempt to answer that question—and to demand that the answer change.

Inspectors: A New Milestone

We welcome the 10,000 new labour inspectors—and the department elaborated on this employment initiative on its website under the headline, "[Strengthening Enforcement Through Expanded Inspectorate](#)." The Minister expressed deep appreciation for the President's recognition of the department's work in inspection and enforcement.

She described the employment of 10,000 labour inspectors as "a major milestone" and "a boost to our enforcement arm" that would "significantly strengthen our capacity to enforce compliance with labour legislation, protect vulnerable workers, and ensure fair labour practices across all sectors of the economy."

President Cyril Ramaphosa first announced in his State of the Nation Address in February that the government is hiring 10,000 permanent labour inspectors this year to boost the existing 2,300 inspectors—a move welcomed by all. Unions, in particular, were very pleased. COSATU noted that this was an addition to the 20,000 interns employed as inspectors through the Presidential Employment Stimulus on two-year contracts.

Inspections are integral to other systems of accountability. Social justice activists have always believed—and proved in practice—that once we organise, bosses cannot undermine the working class or erode the hard-won rights of employees. These rights are the result of decades of union struggles. So, while the presence of labour inspectors is a useful addition, it is by no means a substitute for grassroots organising.

Secondly, the recent Trump administration's proposal of a 12.5% tariff on South African goods, as part of a Section 301 trade investigation, serves as a wake-up call. It reveals more than it threatens. It exposes the fact that we have not organised ourselves effectively — neither in our unions nor in our communities.

We have dropped the ball to the extent that we now rely on the U.S. administration to point out that we are not doing enough to stop imports made with forced labour, suggesting that foreign producers may be part of illegal supply chains. This proposed tariff would be added on top of existing U.S. duties and is part of a broader action targeting around 60 countries worldwide.

Of course, politics are also at play, and the South African government is correct to push back by asserting that our domestic laws—including the International Trade Administration Act and the Customs and Excise Act—already prohibit forced and prison labour. South Africa has requested a full exemption on key exports such as platinum, vehicles, citrus, wine, and seafood, arguing that there is no evidence these products involve forced labour.

The irony is staring us in the face. The very complainants have denied workers' rights and weakened regulatory bodies in the U.S., yet they are now implying that we are employing slaves here. While they consider our arguments, we must not deny that sweatshops do exist in South Africa—not for Trump's sake, but out of our own commitment to human rights.

The government has also decided on fines for employers who fail to comply. A proposed R100,000 fine is tied to pending legislation. This new law will deem the employment of an undocumented foreign national—at face value—an offence under Section 38 of the Immigration Act 13 of 2002, which can carry penalties including imprisonment. The bill in question is the Employment Services Amendment Bill (B16-2026), currently before Parliament.

It proposes a tiered fine system through the Labour Court for employers who illegally employ foreign nationals. According to reports, the proposed fine schedule is as follows:

- Up to R100,000 for a first offence per undocumented worker.
- Up to R1 million or 10% of annual turnover for repeat or multiple contraventions.

The harm for foreign workers—including refugees and asylum seekers—who must seek employment while in South Africa is equally severe. In South Africa, foreign employees in low-skilled roles like domestic work face significant risks of deportation due to the difficulty of obtaining legal work permits, which often leaves them vulnerable to exploitation and underpayment. Simply put: a job seen as menial must be given to a South African... and if they do not want it, that's it. This is all the result of pressure from those who do not want real regulation but cheap political gains.

To remain compliant, employers are legally required to verify that any foreign national they hire holds a valid passport and a work-authorized visa (such as a permanent residence permit or a Section 22 or 24 refugee permit). There are no exceptions for passports taken away by those with power—formal and informal, state and non-state. Employers must keep copies of these documents and actively monitor their expiration dates to avoid legal liability. This brings into play the state's plans to hire 10,000 new labour inspectors as part of a wider enforcement drive.

Other Burning Concerns

The need for inspectors is a demand that has been pushed by unions for decades, but in this context, it seems to come as a result of—or pressure to—regulate undocumented workers. While this is to be welcomed, we must point out that there is a widespread crisis: weak and underfunded regulatory bodies, and in particular a shortage of inspections to enforce the laws and regulations in our country. I will focus on mining impacts around tailings.

I am bold to say that we have a structural and systemic failure—a factory fault in the legislation that has historically given mine bosses a free hand to profit at the expense of workers and mining communities' health and wellbeing. While unions and organised workers were covered from about 1993, when the Mine Health and Safety Act came into being, mining communities—despite good words from the MHSC—were excluded. Essentially, I assert that mining companies, for centuries, with the complicity of the government, have had the right to externalise their waste upon poor people. Simply put: it is a case of profits over health and wellbeing.

The Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) and Dam Safety and Water Use Licensing
The DWS has two tools that can help us understand the safety of our dams and water and waste in South Africa. Principally these are the Water Use Licence regime and the Dams Register. These points I will touch on below, after confirming that DWS is the department responsible for the regulation of mine waste and tailings. They have over 5,000 dams on their register, including tailings. Their preferred method of regulation is, in part, carrot—self-registration—and, because of infrastructure constraints, a very tiny stick which they have failed to apply.

In all this, we assert that regulation could be improved through the active and principled involvement of citizens—in particular organisations of the affected and their representative organisations—in improving monitoring and compliance. The Safety First Guidelines of Civil Society is a good guide, as it affirms not only participation but also the capacity of such participants in enhancing transparency and accountability. It is a principle that the department acknowledges in theory but finds difficult to implement in practice.

The head of Dam Safety, Engineer Wally Ramokopa, in an interview after the Jagersfontein disaster, appreciated the role of experts but did not fully grasp the role of frontline workers who had sounded the whistle for months before the disaster.

Wally Ramokopa, SABC, 29 April 2023

"We will rely on other stakeholders, such as universities and overseas entities that monitor tailings dam movements worldwide. We are aware of such studies, and some of that information will be used by our forensic investigators to see what movements might have occurred prior to the failure. A tailings dam failure doesn't happen overnight—it is usually a gradual process. Unfortunately, the disaster happened on 11 September 2022, but it must have been monitored by others over time. We will engage stakeholders who have information that can assist us."



The Dam Register and the Challenge of Effective Regulation

Effective regulation stands on three pillars: citizen participation, sound policy, and robust enforcement. Remove any one, and the structure collapses. However, citizen engagement and well-crafted policies are meaningless without adequate resources—particularly funding approved through public budgets. Yet the most persistent weakness remains enforcement, often undermined by a lack of political will that fails to see that quality public services are the key to good, accountable governance.

What we are discussing here is the DWS's responsibility around dam safety in South Africa, which means looking after 5,700 registered dams. We believe that monitoring, to be effective, must be done through direct human inspection at regular intervals, using other tools to assist. However, this remains a significant challenge.

The department has acknowledged a massive backlog in safety reports and has raised serious concerns about the safety of downstream communities. With too few inspectors, the government cannot confirm whether our dams are safe. In a water-scarce country, this should provoke national outrage—not only because we cannot afford to waste water resources, but also because tailings dam failures cause catastrophic loss of life and livelihoods, and damage plant and animal life. To improve transparency and accountability for tailings facilities, the department has used legislation to require dam owners to register their dams, with fines for non-compliance. This "soft-hard" approach, however, has not yielded results. As noted, very few tailings dam owners have actually registered their dams. While the current system does provide a comprehensive list of all dams, we—as community activists—would prefer to see a separate register that clearly highlights the impact of corporations, particularly those in the mining sector.

The DWS does not need advice, but they are aware that tailings dams are a category apart and pose their own problems. Unlike water storage dams, they hold not water but toxins that harm, disfigure, and destroy.

Tailings dams hold dangerous heavy metals like arsenic, lead, cadmium, and mercury from crushed ore. These toxins—along with copper, chromium, and nickel—can leak into water supplies.

The risk, however, is not contained to water, as wind erosion disperses fine, contaminated dust particles containing these metals over vast distances, creating an airborne threat to nearby mine communities. Ultimately, the presence and potential mobilisation of these metals is constant and difficult to manage, but they represent a burning challenge for communities during the life of a mine, and post-mining impacting on rehabilitation and restitution of the land, people, and environmental remediation. These also pose legacies that grow more dangerous with each passing year. And unlike the dams on the Register, tailings facilities are largely invisible to the public, even as they loom over communities.

The Dam Register—and All Its Faultlines

This is a solid legal framework, but enforcement is critically weak, creating a system that exists on paper but fails in practice. The most significant challenge is the human resources and capacity deficit that must be overcome to ensure quality regulation, especially for those without voice. Given that we are a water-scarce country, our management of our resources needs to be jacked up generally—within the threats of climate mismanagement and increasing poverty, inequality, and marginalisation.

In 2022, we learnt that the deficits are systemic and have existed for a long time. Ferial Adam, writing in Daily Maverick, argued that citizen action can pressure authorities through media exposure, protests, and independent water testing. At the national level, the Department of Water and Sanitation must hold local officials accountable, fill skill gaps, and improve financial management. Pollution should carry serious penalties, including jail or fines, but current enforcement is weak.

A key solution is expanding the "Blue Scorpions"—the water-focused enforcement unit—which currently has fewer than 30 inspectors, compared to over 3,000 "Green Scorpions" for environmental crimes. This disparity suggests water offences are not treated as serious crimes, and polluters face few deterrents. Stronger enforcement and higher penalties are essential to end impunity. Citizen action is the key to rescuing South Africa's failing water and sanitation systems.

A GroundUp report addressed specifically to the state of our dams, relying on the standing committee findings (2024), thus:



The DWS is severely understaffed generally, resulting in only four permanent inspectors to oversee over 5,700 registered dams.

- The consequences are obvious: a massive backlog of unprocessed safety reports. In November 2022, the backlog stood at 474 reports, which subsequently grew to 518. A plan to clear the backlog is expected to cost an estimated R7.1 million.
- This enforcement deficit has predictable consequences: overall compliance with mandatory safety reports is a dismal 33%. Municipalities are the worst offenders at 24%, and even the DWS itself manages only 41% compliance for its own dams. These figures are not statistics—they are early warning signs of disaster.

The report did not touch on tailings and mine waste, which I will address further below. These failures have real-world consequences. The collapse of the Riverlands dam wall in August 2024, which left 107 people homeless, was a direct symptom of these regulatory shortcomings. Such incidents highlight the failure of the "soft-hard approach," where fines and directives have proven insufficient to ensure owner registration and compliance. Closely related to the above, the Dam Register strategy is tracked via the Water Use Licence process.

The Second Leg: The Water Use Licence Register (WARMS)

According to the Department of Water and Sanitation, the purpose of the Water Use Licence Register is to track water use. It does this through a national database—the Water Use Authorization and Registration Management System—which enables it to monitor who is using water, where, and for what purpose. Its goal is noble, as it aims to ensure transparency so that communities can monitor water extraction volumes and associated pollution risks. Unlike the Dams Register, WARMS is not publicly accessible.

The Department either withholds the data or cites the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA), which is often incorrectly used to restrict public access. While those requiring bulk water supplies must submit their information through the [e-WULAAS application portal](#), participation remains uneven—particularly among citizens and communities.

Public participation requirements are set out in Section 41(4) of the National Water Act (Act No. 36 of 1998), but these are often not fulfilled, and reports are not made public in the same way as the [Dams Register programme](#). By not being publicly available, this valuable tool does not allow for greater oversight by affected communities through monitoring and direct participation.

Accountability of Water Use Licences: Mining Without a Water Use Licence

Regarding mines operating without a valid water use licence, the Department has confirmed that there is no single, current total number of corporations mining without authorisation.

Critics remain sceptical of these figures, given that in 2019 the Department of Water and Sanitation reported that 115 mines were operating without authorisation across South Africa—this remains the most recent explicit total provided. However, the reply to a parliamentary question put to the Minister in 2025 was unclear, stating only that "there are no mining and petroleum operations that are operating without valid... water-use licences."

What remains unknown is whether this means corporations have come forward in line with legislation to provide proof of compliance. The law is clear: "All applicants... must provide proof of an application for a water use licence."

Over the years, the Centre for Environmental Rights has attempted to track this issue and has helped raise public awareness. In 2023, the Department stated that 76 mines in South Africa were operating without the required water licences in several of the country's largest river systems. These facts are alarming and raise urgent questions about the effectiveness of government regulation of mining operations and the protection of South Africa's water resources.

AfriForum asked at the time: "We also want to know where the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment is in this situation. It is essential that they play a role in ensuring the long-term environmental sustainability of these operations and that they act strictly against any harmful impact that there may be on the environment."

Parliamentary questions are an essential tool of democracy, allowing opposition parties to obtain information from the Department and the Minister. For example, MP S.J. Moore of the Democratic Alliance asked Parliamentary Question NW834, directed to the Minister of Water and Sanitation in April 2026. He asked whether the Minister had begun laying criminal charges against municipal managers personally, following President Ramaphosa's SONA commitment (12 February 2026) to do so. If not, why; if so, what are the details.

As background, the President, concerned about upheaval in municipalities and social protests, introduced a multipronged strategy—massive funding, legal accountability, and structural reforms—to tackle the root causes of service delivery collapse. He now chairs a National Water Crisis Committee, which was set up immediately and allocated R156 billion for water and sanitation infrastructure. He also suggested that criminal charges be pursued against failing municipalities.

The Minister's Written Reply:

The Department of Water and Sanitation has already instituted criminal proceedings against municipalities as institutions for pollution, unlawful water use, and non-compliance with water-use authorisations. These cases are brought against municipalities, with municipal managers representing them as accounting officers. The National Prosecuting Authority decides whether to add personal charges against officials based on evidence from DWS inspectors. Currently, there is only one DWS case in which the NPA has decided to pursue criminal charges against a municipal manager personally. The Department is also pursuing personal liability against another municipal manager through a civil suit.

To strengthen enforcement, the DWS is amending the National Water Act (to insert Section 156A) and the Water Services Act (to insert Section 82A), which will explicitly allow for personal liability of directors and municipal managers. These legal reforms aim to address widespread non-compliance in the water and sanitation sector.

I conclude that the weaknesses of WARMS—in particular, the demand that compliance or non-compliance be made public—warrants further action but will not be further analysed here. I will now turn to examine the lack of compliance as it relates to the Dams Register.

Compliance — It Takes Two to Tango (or More)

Fundamentally, compliance is about political will and resourcing the agency tasked with the work, without fear or favour. As they say, it takes two to tango, but I fear that when it comes to compliance, corporations are not coming to the party. They are not even condemned for their failure to comply. There is no denying that the so-called enabling environment must be set by the state—but not only to ensure the extraction of resources and the repatriation of profits while leaving us with dust and diseases such as asthma and cancers.

Dam owners are directed by law—and therefore social compact with society—to comply with registration. The National Water Act (1998) requires all qualifying dam owners to register their dams within a prescribed period. It delineates a "Dam with a Safety Risk" (Section 117(c)(i)) as one that carries or holds a capacity of 50,000 cubic metres (water or any substance) and has a wall height of 5 metres (vertical difference from lowest downstream ground to crest or top of wall).

After the Jagersfontein tailings disaster (11 September 2022) that killed five people, the problem of enforcement came to the fore. Soon thereafter, the Department of Dam Safety went on a media blitz, encouraging enforcement and threatening fines, including jail time. A media release confirmed that they were:

- Updating the national database of all tailings or mine residue dams meeting safety-risk criteria.

- Calling on mining houses to register unregistered dams immediately to comply.
- Reminding corporations that registration and monitoring are legal requirements under the National Water Act and Dam Safety Regulations.

We have a twin and interrelated problem—symbiotic, perhaps. Owners obliged to auto-report and comply fail to do so, and the enforcers, with the best will in the world, have not found a way to enforce compliance. But it starts with good and workable policies and laws.

The Owners — Not Innocent Victims of Government Bureaucracy

To meet these objectives, the DWS has attempted a few regulatory interventions:

- Approved Professional Persons: The Dam Safety Office relies on external, registered APPs to conduct mandatory safety evaluations every five years. Dam owners are legally responsible for hiring these professionals.
- The Blue Scorpions: They operate as the core regulatory and enforcement unit within the DWS, responsible for policing pollution, investigating illegal water use, and enforcing water and sanitation laws across South Africa. There are currently 145 Blue Scorpions (Environmental Management Inspectors) designated by the Minister of Water and Sanitation.

Note: These do not monitor dams but monitor or demand compliance in cases of mine waste or tailings.

Turn to Tailings

The DWS manager on SABC argued: "So, there may be thousands of tailings dams in South Africa, but many do not meet the registration criteria. We only register those with the capacity to store more than 50,000 cubic metres of water-containing substance. To answer your question: we really don't know how many tailings dams are out there. That's why we are calling on mining houses to come forward. The department will also begin enforcement processes to find those who have not come forward and determine why their dams are not classified. We rely on engineers working for the mines—those with knowledge of dam engineering—to assist in registering these dams."

Lest we hang Ramokopa for saying that "we really don't know how many dams there are," this answer must be located in history, particularly apartheid, where governance was racist and of poor quality. But globally, there is also no consensus on how many tailings dams or storage facilities exist, due to conceptual and definitional problems.

Estimated total globally: 18,000–35,000. Typical estimates are around 30,000, with 50 to 60 per cent active and the rest closed or abandoned.

The [Global Tailings Portal](#), launched in January 2020, is a free, searchable database with detailed information on more than 1,800 mine tailings dams worldwide. The portal was created in response to the Brumadinho disaster (25 January 2019), when a tailings dam collapse in Brazil killed at least 259 people. This followed the 2015 Mariana collapse (19 deaths) and a long history of similar failures. The portal was established to promote transparency, public accountability, and better risk assessment in the mining industry. The total for South Africa is 29. On a map, this is embarrassingly scarce—a reflection of the failure of corporations to comply with the law. These figures are according to what they received from the Department of Mineral Resources.

But as Ramokopa explained on SABC:

"Yes, the department does have the capacity. We have a Water Use Authorisation unit that licences these dams, and we monitor them. We also have a Compliance Monitoring and Enforcement unit that visits mining houses on our register each year. However, there may be others operating illegally because they didn't register. The department is very strong on enforcement, including administrative and criminal action. We have capacity in our regional offices across the country and a database of dams. But again, not all tailings dams meet the requirements."

What Capacity? We extracted from the global database and found that only about 29 out of 337 that were given notice to register actually complied, broken down by province as follows:

- Free State
- Mpumalanga
- Northern Cape
- Limpopo
- KwaZulu-Natal
- Gauteng

So, when the DWS says they have capacity and we find they do not—we have a problem.

Chronic Underfunding of Regulatory Bodies

There must be an acknowledgement that there is a chronic underfunding of regulatory bodies, in particular Chapter 9 bodies like the SAHRC and others, as well as agencies that are supposed to monitor abuses to the environment and our water supplies. Clarity is needed on how the various bodies operate on their own and in other cases how they collaborate with the SAPS and the National Prosecuting Authority.



The Department of Environmental Affairs, in the provinces—including municipal organs of state—employ Environmental Management Inspectorates, a network of environmental enforcement officials from various national, provincial, and municipal government departments created by the National Environmental Management Act of 2008. However, EMIs are not empowered to prosecute cases in court; all cases continue to be handed over to the NPA for prosecution. EMIs therefore work closely with prosecutors countrywide to ensure the successful prosecution of offenders.

Lessons from the 10,000 Labour Inspectors?

Let me turn back to the planned employment of 10,000 labour inspectors to see if we can learn some lessons. COSATU said that these interventions were timely, as they will have "a massive impact in helping to ensure all workers, in particular the vulnerable and unorganised, enjoy their full labour rights and protections. The current 2,300 inspectors is simply inadequate for an economy with more than 17.1 million workers," they said in a media release.

They advised the Department of Employment and Labour to accelerate their efforts to "recruit, appoint, train and deploy these inspectors." They advised that organised labour be engaged with, which could assist to "prioritise high-risk sectors notorious for abusing employees and undermining labour laws," mentioning farm, domestic, construction, hospitality, security, cleaning, and transport workers. Regulating and enforcing mine safety for workers and communities living next to mines do not appear to be part of this effort to bolster enforcement. The enforcement of dam safety and holding defaulters accountable do not appear on the agenda.

I guess that given the intention of workers to protect life and limb, livelihoods, against abuse of workers' pension funds, and sexual harassment of domestic workers by employers—they would have no objection to widening the discourse around the crisis or the shortage of inspectors throughout the governance chain.

Mathew Parks, COSATU's Parliamentary Coordinator, believes the ANC government must continue to invest in quality public services that respect workers' rights and enhance adherence to the rule of law. He added that "the ramping up of the number of labour inspectors from 1,400 in 2020 to the soon-to-be 12,300 permanent and 20,000 contract inspectors validates COSATU's continuous engagements on this burning matter with government."

Conclusion

Whilst we celebrate this first step, we wait to celebrate with you, our leaders, only when we have provided a greater safety net for all our people—a goal that demands we look beyond immediate pressures and confront systemic failures head-on.

All governments, and the South African government in this case, must act timeously in the best interest of the poor, working people, and society at large, beginning with a clear acknowledgment that there is a crisis of regulation, with not sufficient number of capacitated inspectors forming a key part of this deficiency. True compliance and governance require active citizen involvement across all sectors, especially where communities are impacted by corporations, and this engagement must not be limited to responding only to those who organise around hate and bigotry; rather, it must embrace all affected voices.

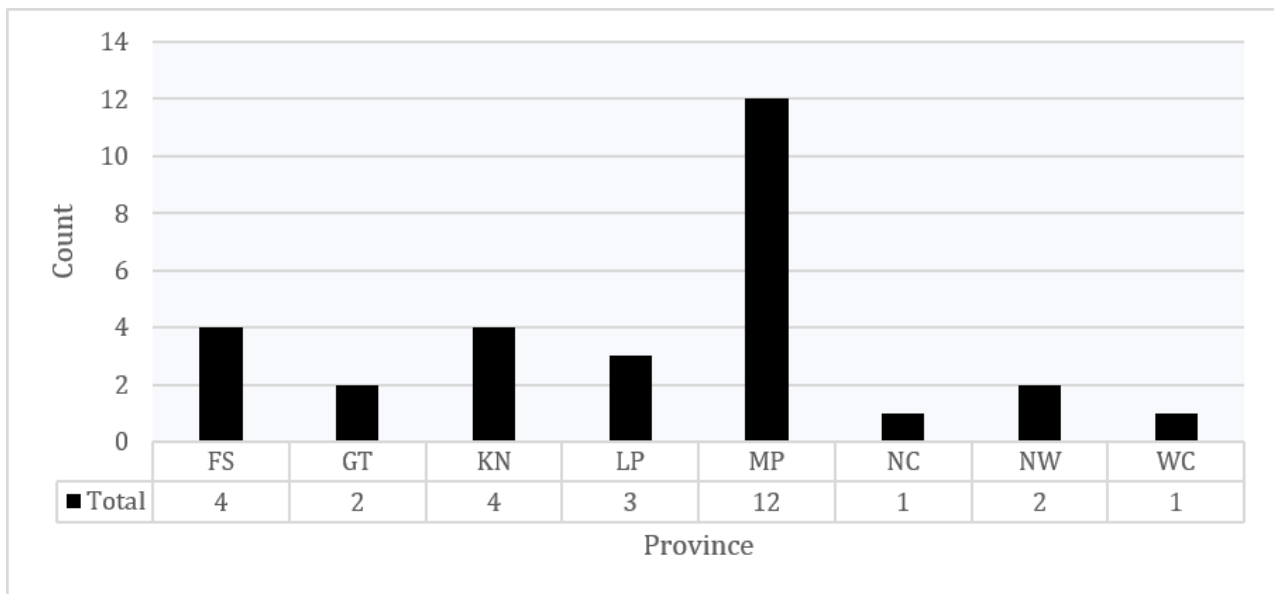
Recommendations

We recommend that the Tailings Dam Register should be a standalone platform, easily observable by the public, and the government must issue retrospective fines to mines that have failed to register, channeling those funds directly into capacitating and supporting civil society regulatory efforts. Finally, we must not forget that for affected communities and frontline workers to become effective allies for accountability, this is a cry to open up this space. As regards the WARMS database, we insist that it be made publicly available, with due consideration given to both the rights of all citizens and the overarching public interest, because transparency is the cornerstone of justice and the only foundation upon which lasting safety can be built.



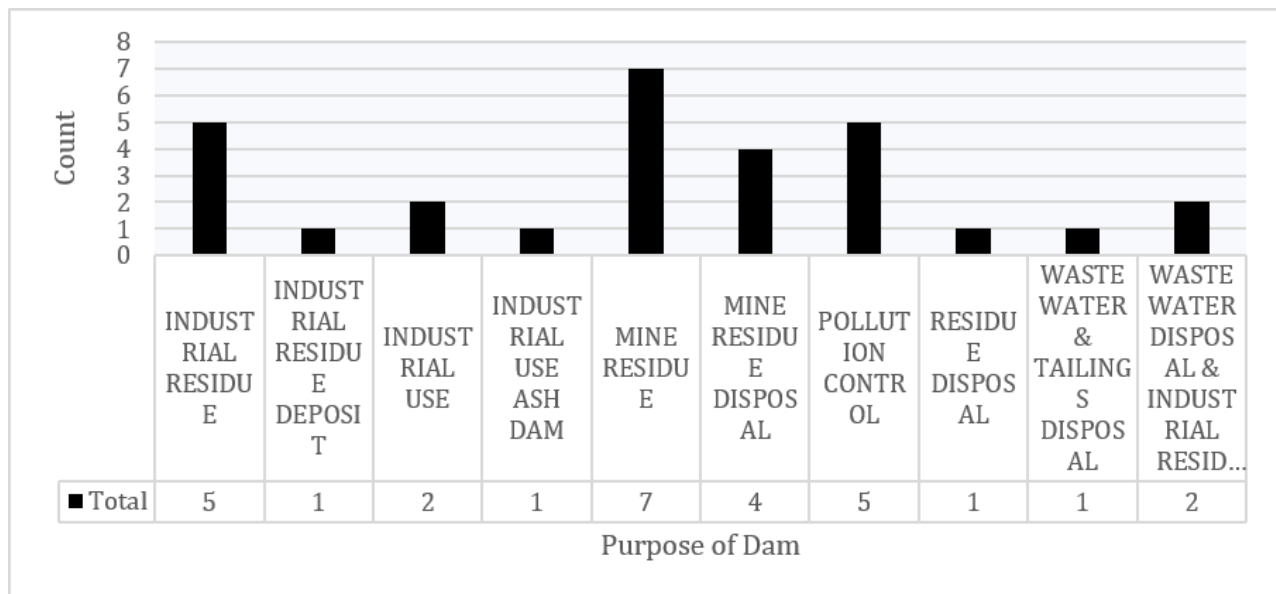
Aftermath of flooding in Jagersfontein in 2022 .
Credit: SABC News

Tailing Dams by Province



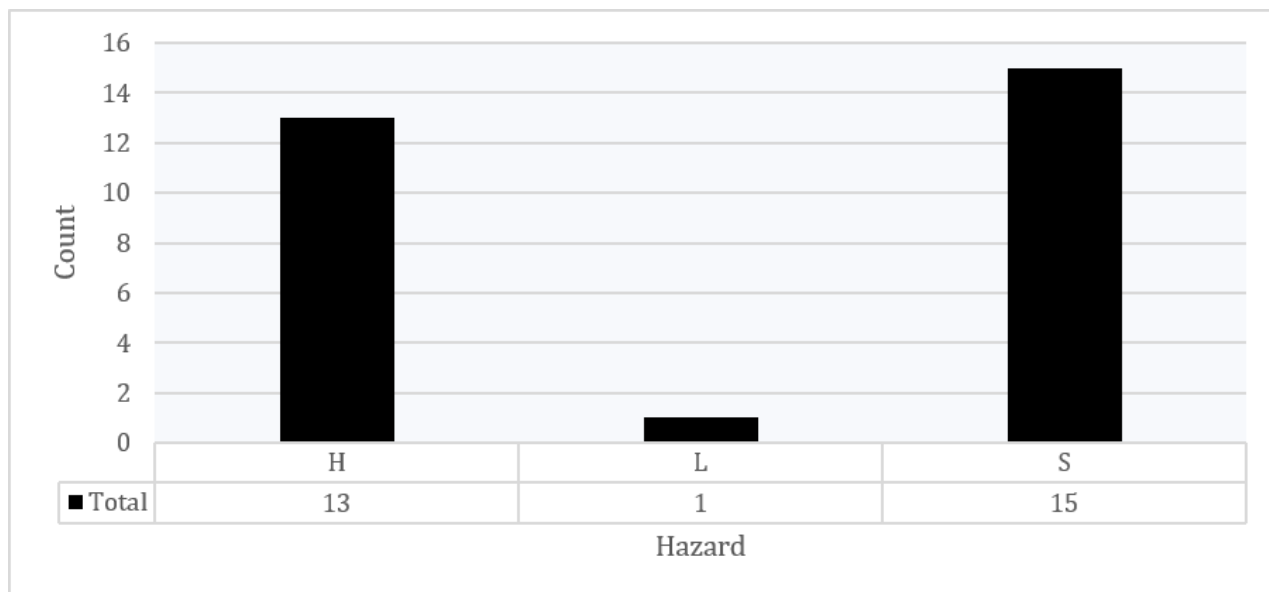
Province	Number of Tailing Dams
Free State	4
Gauteng	2
KwaZulu Natal	4
Limpopo	3
Mpumalanga	12
Northern Cape	1
North West	2
Western Cape	1
Grand Total	29

Purpose of Tailing Dams



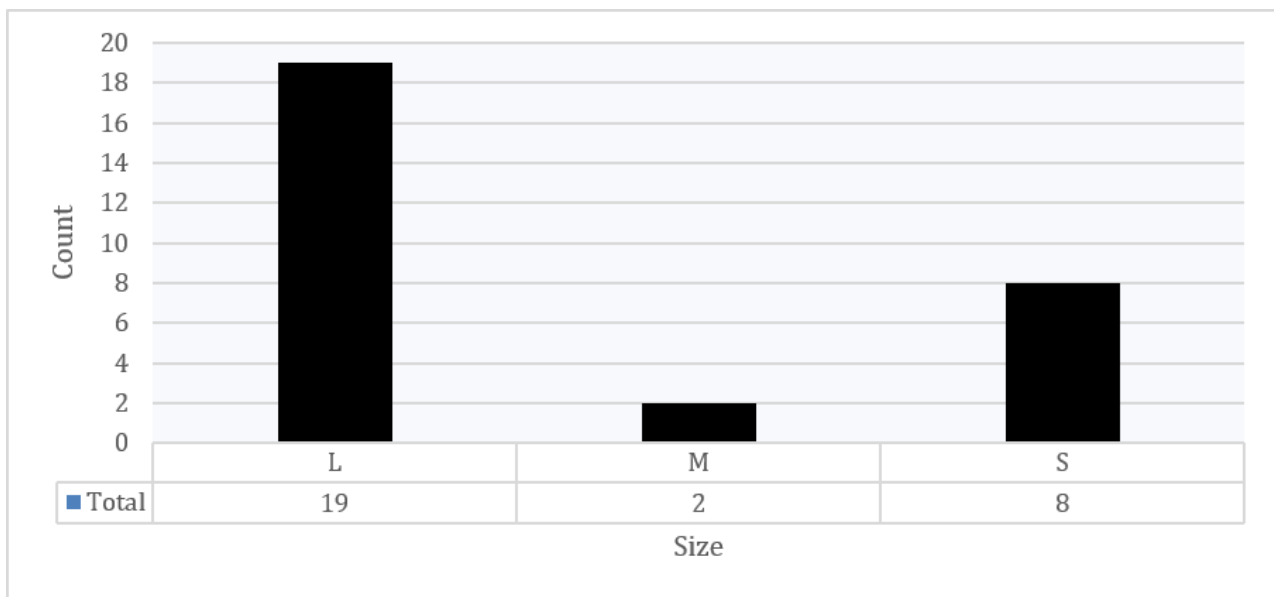
Purpose of Dam	Number of Dams
Industrial residue	5
Industrial residue deposit	1
Industrial use	2
Industrial use ash dam	1
Mine residue	7
Mine residue disposal	4
Pollution control	5
Residue disposal	1
Wastewater & tailings disposal	1
Wastewater disposal & industrial residue	2
Grand Total	29

Level of Hazard of Tailing Dams



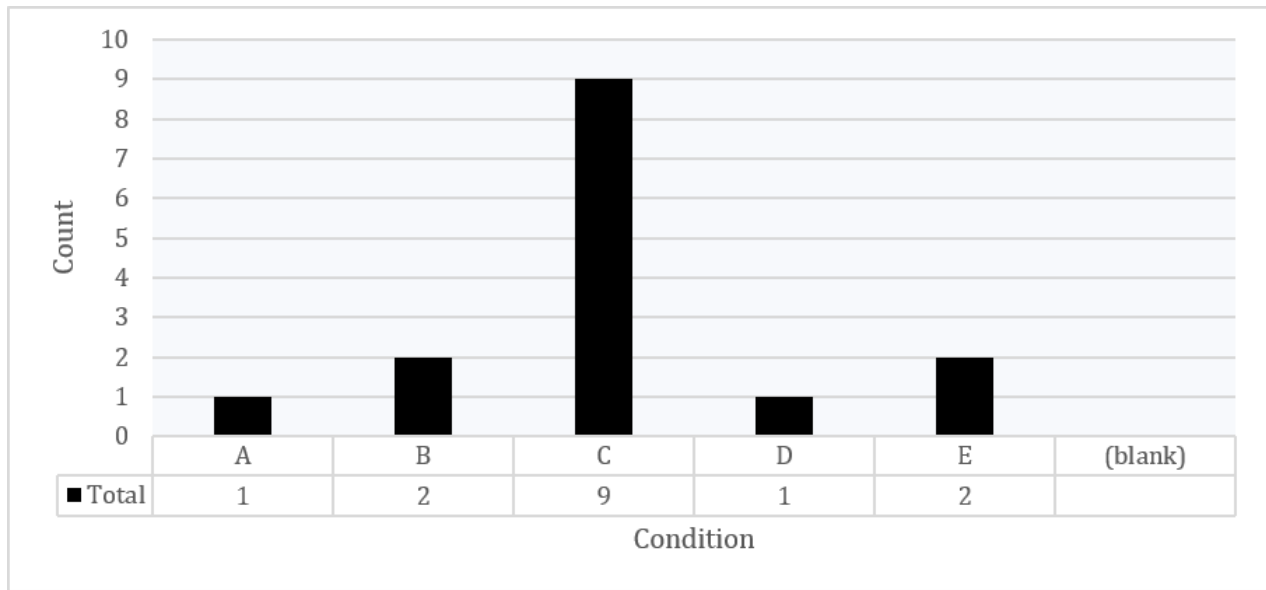
Level of Hazard	Number of Dams
H	13
L	1
S	15
Grand Total	29

Size of Tailing Dams



Size of Dam	Number of Dams
L	19
M	2
S	8
Grand Total	29

Condition of Tailing Dam



Condition of Tailings Dams	Number
A	1
B	2
C	9
D	1
E	2
Grand Total	15

Name Of Dam	Name Of Dam	Province
Premier Mine No.7 Slimes Dam	Premier Mine No.7 Slimes Dam	MP
Arnot Wet Ash Dam	Arnot Wet Ash Dam	MP
Fedmis Gypsum Dam A	Fedmis Gypsum Dam A	LP
Fedmis Gypsum Dam B	Fedmis Gypsum Dam B	LP
Main Return Water Tailings Dam	Main Return Water Tailings Dam	LP
Fine Ash Dam5 Slimes Dam	Fine Ash Dam5 Slimes Dam	MP
Daggafontein Tailings Dam	Daggafontein Tailings Dam	GT
Brakpan Tailings Dam	Brakpan Tailings Dam	GT
Dnc No.7 Mine Slurry Dam No.3	Dnc No.7 Mine Slurry Dam No.3	KN
Dnc No.7 Mine Slurry Dam No.4	Dnc No.7 Mine Slurry Dam No.4	KN
West Complex Storm Water Dam	West Complex Storm Water Dam	FS
Impala Tfs No.4 Dam	Impala Tfs No.4 Dam	NW
Kareerand Tailings Dam	Kareerand Tailings Dam	NW
Slimes Dam Module 1	Slimes Dam Module 1	MP
Slimes Dam Module 2	Slimes Dam Module 2	MP
Booyseendal Platinum Mine Tailings	Booyseendal Platinum Mine Tailings	MP
Residue Dam 3	Residue Dam 3	WC
Fine Ash Dam4 Slimes Dam	Fine Ash Dam4 Slimes Dam	MP
Sezela Clean Water Recovery Plant Dam	Sezela Clean Water Recovery Plant Dam	KN
Cisa Tailings Dam 4	Cisa Tailings Dam 4	KN
Fine Ash Dam 6	Fine Ash Dam 6	MP
Jan Pad Dam	Jan Pad Dam	NC
Grootvlei Ash Dam	Grootvlei Ash Dam	MP
Duvha Ash Dam	Duvha Ash Dam	MP
Bird Park Dam	Bird Park Dam	MP
Camden Power Station Main Ash Dam	Camden Power Station Main Ash Dam	FS
Ftsf Dam	Ftsf Dam	FS
Dam 10	Dam 10	FS
Hendrina Ash Dam 345	Hendrina Ash Dam 345	MP

