



MEDIA LAUNCH OF WATER USER ASSOCIATIONS RESEARCH

The management of water for agriculture is still controlled by white men, whose continued dominance is bound to provoke strife and rebellion in South Africa's rural areas.

This is one of the key findings of a research project into the management and governance of agricultural water in the Olifants-Doorn Water Management area on South Africa's arid, but agriculturally rich, west coast.

The research was commissioned by the Surplus People Project, a non-government organisation that works with small scale farmers and farm workers in the Western and Northern Cape Provinces. SPP will host a formal launch of the research report and a popular booklet based on its findings on Thursday 12 February that is open to the media and public.

According to Herschelle Milford, director of SPP, the research was done in response to the frustration of the rural poor with the slow pace of transformation, despite the stated good intentions of the National Water Act and institutions like Water User Associations. "People are tired and angry. They want to know why they are still at the bottom of the pile. In our view the research points the finger at the neo-liberal approach of the state that always supports commercial agriculture firsts and foremost, despite it being racist and sexist in ownership patterns, exploitative of farm labour, hostile to emerging farmers, and damaging to the environment."