

# Drought forces Mozambique capital to ration water

Mozambique authorities last week introduced water rationing to more than a million residents in the capital Maputo due to a severe drought.



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The city is cutting the water supply to consumers to just 40% of normal levels, Casimiro Abreu, deputy director of the National Emergency Centre said in a statement. About 1.3-million people in Maputo and its surroundings are affected by the restrictions, raising fears of disease outbreaks.

"Diarrhoeal diseases including cholera are likely to occur in some neighbourhoods where populations will resort to unsafe sources there," said Abreu.

Low rainfall over the past three years has left a dam that supplies the city with most of its water to just 19% of capacity. Meteorologists forecast that the region will receive below-normal rains during the first three months of this year. Southern Africa has experienced a severe drought in recent years, aggravated by the El Nino weather phenomenon.

Cape Town in neighbouring South Africa faces the prospect of having to turn its taps off in early June and now restricts residents to 50 litres per day. The water scarcity has forced South Africa to declare the drought a "national disaster".

Source: AFP

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