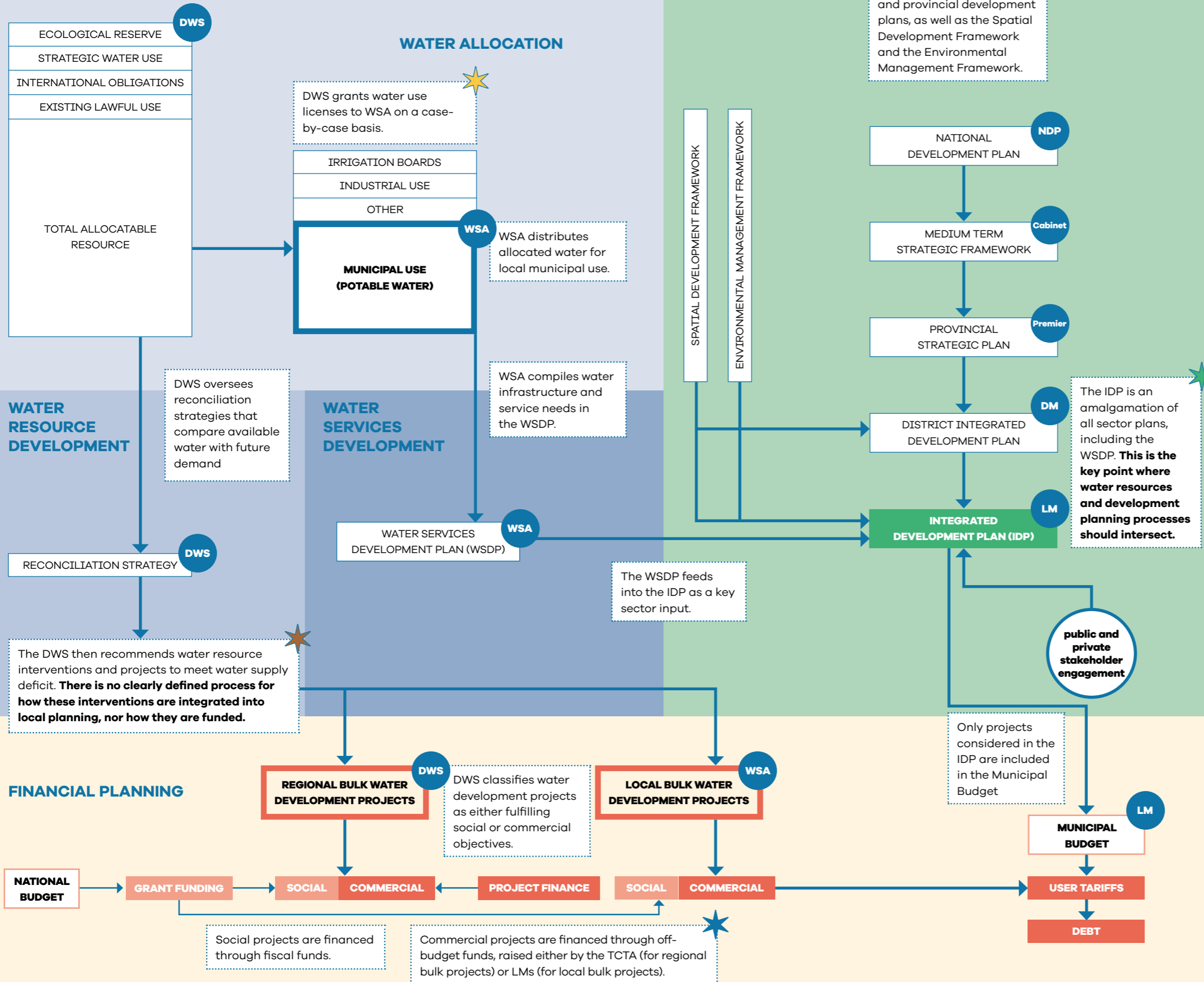


How are water resource and development decisions made in the Berg WMA?

The planning system comprises four relevant planning processes – **development planning, water allocation, water resource development and water services development**. Within these processes, water and economic development are each generally treated as independent variables in the planning of the other.



Which factors are limiting integrated water resource and development planning?

- ★ **Planning processes function in a top-down manner**
National development goals inform local planning but are not necessarily compatible with the local municipality's (LM) available resources, budgets and capacity. There are few feedback loops for LMs to voice their constraints, ask for support or to call for changes in overarching plans and strategies.
- ★ **Projects are assessed on a first-come, first-served basis**
If a water use licence application or an environmental impact assessment meets the required criteria, it cannot be declined in favour of an application, not yet submitted, which may produce a more socially or economically favourable outcome.
- ★ **Water Service Authorities (WSAs) are often unable to develop local water resources due to lack of capacity and resources**
WSAs are responsible for local bulk water resource development, but this is a role that they have struggled to perform. In the absence of a water board or regional water utility, WSAs turn to the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) to solve water supply issues through the development of regional bulk water schemes, which often do not adequately address local water development needs.
- ★ **The IDP is not required to consider water availability and demand, nor does the IDP process demand a discussion of how development will impact natural resources**
The IDP simply includes a recognition of currently available water resources and potential future water availability, as informed by the WSDP. It does not provide meaningful considerations of future water resource or supply interventions, which is often missing in the WSDP. Therefore, high water-demand development is often planned without assessment of available water resources.
- ★ **Municipalities lack the capacity to raise off-budget finance for water infrastructure projects**
Because grant funding from the state is only relevant for water infrastructure projects that fulfil a social objective, if a project is deemed 'commercial' or a mixture of the two, a percentage of the cost will need to be raised by either the Trans-Caledon Tunnel Authority (TCTA) (a public entity responsible for the development of off-budget bulk water infrastructure projects) or the municipality. Local projects typically fall below the TCTA's financing threshold, which means responsibility is often left to the municipality. This presents a major challenge for LMs because they often lack the required capacity and creditworthiness to raise off-budget project finance.