

MINISTRY OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

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**water affairs**

Department:  
Water Affairs  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY: QUESTION 2355 FOR WRITTEN REPLY

A draft reply to the above-mentioned question asked by Mrs A T Lovemore (DA); is attached for your consideration.

  
DIRECTOR-GENERAL (Acting)

DATE: 9/9/10

  
DRAFT REPLY APPROVED/AMENDED

MS B P SONJICA, MP  
MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

DATE: 11/09/2010

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

FOR WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION NO 2355

DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 30 AUGUST 2010  
(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 25)

**2355. Mrs A T Lovemore (DA) to ask the Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs:**

- (1) With reference to irrigation water allocation, what criteria are applied when assessing applications for water use or transfer of use to ensure that the efficient, sustainable and beneficial use of water in the public interest is promoted in terms of section 2(d) and 27(1)(c) of the National Water Act, Act 36 of 1998;
- (2) how does her department measure (a) the amount of water utilised for irrigation and (b) the efficiency of water use for irrigation;
- (3) whether a documented methodology or framework is used for assessing all irrigation water use applications; if not, (a) why not and (b) how are applications assessed on a predictable, consistent basis in the absence of such a documented framework; if so, what does this framework comprise;
- (4) whether this framework is freely available to all potential applicants; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details?

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**REPLY:**

- (1) When my Department assesses applications for irrigation water use, the following are considered: the
  - hydrology or geo-hydrology of the resource
  - demands on the resource to determine the availability of water
  - impact of the proposed abstraction on the Reserve, both in terms of flow and water quality.

Thereafter, the South African Procedure for estimating irrigation WATER requirements (SAPWAT) is used to determine the best irrigation management practices that could be applied. The variables used to determine this include the:

- amount of water that would be needed by the specific crops;
- area to be irrigated; and
- specific irrigation systems as indicated in a licence application.

In addition, where there is a change in land use my Department also considers the impact of the change in water use.

- (2)(a) My Department measures total water use for irrigation in two ways, namely surveys of total hectares under irrigation (i.e using satellite imagery and orthophotos) and schedules for irrigators associated with irrigation schemes (water user associations or irrigation boards).
- (2)(b) My Department is busy with several initiatives to set water efficiency targets for the irrigation sector.
- (3)(a) Yes, my Department does have a documented licensing process and a set of licensing guidelines.

- (3)(b) The licensing guidelines describe the information required for assessing irrigation applications and the type of assessments to be performed.
- (4) The licensing guidelines are available to the public and can be obtained from my Department on request.

The SAPWAT software is available free of charge from the WRC.

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