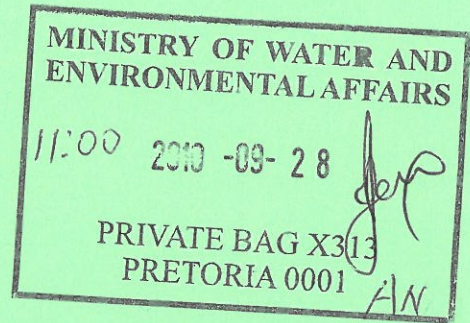




## water affairs

Department:  
Water Affairs  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



Enquiries: Mr M. Matlala  
Telephone: 012 336-7860  
Reference: 2/1/5/1

MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

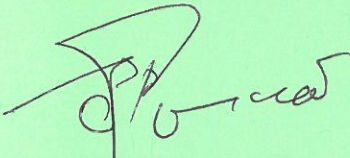
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY: QUESTION 2550 FOR WRITTEN REPLY

A draft reply to the above-mentioned question asked by Mrs H N Ndude (Cope); is attached for your consideration.

  
DIRECTOR-GENERAL (Acting)

DATE: 27/09/10

DRAFT REPLY APPROVED/AMENDED—

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

DATE: 04/10/2010

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

FOR WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION NO 2550

DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 13 SEPTEMBER 2010  
(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 28)

**2550. Mrs H N Ndude (Cope) to ask the Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs:**

Whether her department has supported or initiated any geographical surveys to determine the rate at which groundwater resources are being depleted with a view to ensuring sustainability; if not, why not; if so, (a) when were these surveys conducted, (b) what are the findings of these surveys, (c) who conducted these surveys, (d) which geographical areas were covered by these surveys and (e) how many groundwater explorations were made? NW3180E

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**REPLY:**

- (a) Yes, surveys to determine the rate at which groundwater resources are being depleted have been conducted since the 1930s. This continues to take place as part of the groundwater monitoring network data collection and data & Information report is generated quarterly. The recent report was issued in July 2010 with the next report scheduled to be released at the end of October 2010.
- (b) The National Groundwater Mapping process has identified areas in South Africa where bulk groundwater is abstracted and may pose a long-term sustainable risk especially where drier hydrological cycles manifest. Bulk groundwater abstraction centres have been mapped and an indication of the bulk abstraction rate ( $\text{Mm}^3\cdot\text{yr}^{-1}$ ) is indicated on the Geohydrological Map Series. These abstractions include large irrigation schemes such as the Vivo-Dendron area in Limpopo, Coezersdam-Louwna area in Northern Cape near Vryburg, Leeu-Gamka in Western Cape and the Grootfontein Dolomitic Compartment in North West. In most areas the water level is declining approximately by 0.5 metres per year.
- (c) My Department together with the Water Research Commission (WRC); Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR); Council for Geosciences and Water boards.
- (d) Major aquifer systems such as the Table Mountain Group sandstones, the Dolomitic Water Areas in the Gauteng, Limpopo, Northwest and Northern Cape Provinces and other critical aquifer systems like the vulnerable coastal aquifers along the shorelines is covered by monitoring programme. These monitoring programmes are continuously assessed and expanded to ultimately cover all major and minor aquifer systems.
- (e) Three large scale investigations on the groundwater resources of South Africa have been completed by my Department. These large scale investigations included hydrogeological mapping project completed in 2005; investigations into the dolomitic areas completed in 2006 and assessments, planning and management of ground water completed 2008.

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