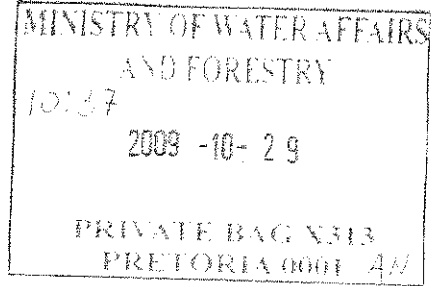




water affairs

Department:
Water Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

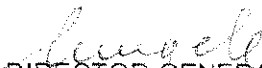


Enquiries: H Smit
Telephone: 012-392-1302
Reference: 6/2/2/6

MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY: QUESTION 1900 FOR WRITTEN REPLY

A draft reply to the above-mentioned question asked by Mr M Waters (DA), is attached for your consideration, please.


DIRECTOR-GENERAL (Acting)

DATE: 29.10.2009

DRAFT REPLY APPROVED/AMENDED


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

DATE: 29/10/2009

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

FOR WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION NO 1900

DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 23 OCTOBER 2009
(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO 22)

1900. Mr M Waters (DA) to ask the Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs:

- (1) Whether the Swartspruit in the Kempton Park area has been tested for pollution; if not, (a) why not and (b) when will it be done; if so, (i) when was the last test conducted and (ii) what were the findings;
- (2) Whether any action has been taken against the (a) local authority and (b) local business for polluting the Swartspruit; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details?

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REPLY:

- (1) Yes, there is a monitoring programme that has been implemented since 1980 for the Swartspruit/ Rietvlei River (a tributary of the Hennops River). One monitoring point is located upstream of the Hartebeesfontein Waste Water Treatment Works (WWTW) along the Bapsfontein Road and the other is downstream of the WWTW along the Witkoppies dirt road. The water samples thereof are collected monthly and are analysed by an accredited laboratory for physical, chemical and microbiological constituents.

(1)(i) The latest set of samples was taken on 08 October 2009.

(1)(ii) The results are still pending however from the previous samples; My Department has identified worrying outbursts of pollution upstream of our Hartebeesfontein WWTW monitoring point. The water quality of the Swartspruit indicated an increase in sewage related pollutants (i.e. Total Suspended Solids, Total Dissolved Solids, Nitrates, Sulphates, E-coli and Faecal coliforms). The main source of the pollutants is sewage spills and malfunctioning of oil traps from industries in the Swartspruit Catchment.

(2)(a) Yes, a contravention notice was issued to the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality on 14 October 2009 to cease, modify or control any act or process causing pollution to the Swartspruit. The municipality replied on 23 October 2009 indicating the exposed sewer pipe. The pollution has been contained however; the impact thereof had not been remedied.

The Municipality has since applied for a water use authorisation to rehabilitate and stabilise the banks of the upper Swartspruit. This would include protecting the river banks, installing storm water management structures (attenuation dams) to protect the infrastructure and cleaning the affected portion of the river. The pollution problems will be addressed during the rehabilitation process.

(2)(b) According to the by-laws it is the municipality's responsibility to ensure that the industrial pollution as well as storm water is properly managed. Officials from Ekurhuleni Municipality regularly visit the industries along the upper Swartspruit to monitor compliance thereof. My Department as the custodian of Water Resource has engaged with municipalities, including Ekurhuleni, through the Hennops River Forum to identify the sources of pollution and urge their prompt response where incidents occur.

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