



water affairs

Department:
Water Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MINISTRY OF WATER AND
ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

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MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY: QUESTION 1214 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: 22-04-2010


DRAFT REPLY APPROVED/AMENDED


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

DATE: 26. 04 . 2010

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

FOR WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION NO 1214

DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 19 APRIL 2010
(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 10)

1214. Mrs A T Lovemore (DA) to ask the Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs:

- (1) Whether her department (a) monitors and (b) controls the abstraction of groundwater by persons; if not, why not; if so, what are the details regarding the (i) monitoring and (ii) control and (iii) results;
- (2) whether her department has been informed of any negative impacts on surface or ground water availability as a result of uncontrolled groundwater abstraction; if so, what are the details of these effects?

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REPLY:

- (1)(a) Yes, my Department monitors the effect of groundwater abstraction in major aquifer systems by various water users, but is not physically involved in the recording of on site abstraction figures. However, all licensed water users are regulated by water use licensing conditions to record their groundwater abstractions and report that to the local water services authorities or water users associations. In the case of large abstractions by mining houses and industries, abstraction figures are directly reported to my Department's water Information Management System.
- (1)(b)(i) The water use licensing process requires each water user to record its water use in regular intervals. The physical monitoring data from groundwater users are not evaluated by my Department due to the large number of Schedule 1 (domestic/stock watering) and other small water users in the country.
- (1)(b)(ii) Due to the vast number of groundwater abstraction points in South Africa it is not possible for my Department to control these abstractions.
- (1)(b)(iii) The regional impact on groundwater systems is monitored by my Department's national and regional monitoring and evaluation programmes. Should it occur that a specific aquifer system is overused, the abstraction will be curtailed.
- (2) In cases where large volumes of groundwater are abstracted, the impact on local user's groundwater status is reported through the relevant water user associations. Special precautions are enforced by the department to rectify this by (i) sustainable management of the abstraction (irrigation schemes) and (ii) secondary water supplies to the user (mine dewatering). However, there might be several cases not being reported directly to my Department.

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