



water affairs

Department:
Water Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MINISTRY OF WATER AND
ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

2010 -08- 13

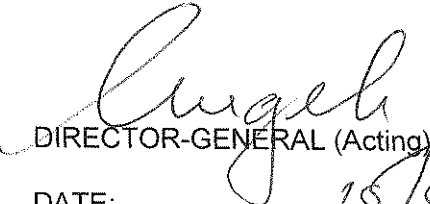
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MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY: QUESTION 2086 FOR WRITTEN REPLY

A draft reply to the above-mentioned question asked by Mr G R Morgan (DA); is attached for your consideration.


DIRECTOR-GENERAL (Acting)

DATE: 15/8/10


DRAFT REPLY APPROVED/AMENDED


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

DATE: 14. 08. 2010

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

FOR WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION NO 2086

DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 06 AUGUST 2010
(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 19)

2086. Mr G R Morgan (DA) to ask the Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs:

- (1) Whether, with reference to her reply to question 1442 on 25 May 2010, any further steps have been taken against the Grootvlei mine for decanting untreated or partially treated water into the adjacent water course; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what steps;
- (2) whether the mine owners will be compelled to remediate the affected Ramsar wetland in the vicinity of the mine; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details;
- (3) whether her department is providing financial assistance to the mine for pumping and treating mine water; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details;
- (4) what is the (a) name and (b) designation of the official that did the inspection at each mine;
- (5) whether there has been any improvement in the quality of the water that is being discharged from the mine; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what are the relevant details?

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REPLY:

- (1) Yes, the matter is with the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) and the South African Police Service (SAPS) Investigating Officer has taken more samples from the partially treated water being pumped and discharged by the Grootvlei Mine as part of the investigations. My Department will be advised as soon as the investigations have been concluded.
- (2) Yes, according to section 19 and 20 of the National Water Act, 1998 (Act No 36 of 1998) and depending on the outcome, the NPA may decide that the mine could be held liable for the remediation of the affected Ramsar Wetland. However, correct procedures would have to be followed to investigate the matter and all the relevant stakeholders need to agree on the remediation process.
- (3) No, my Department is not responsible for providing financial assistance to the mine.
- (4) Below are the names and designations of my Department's officials which conducted the last inspection:
 - Mr Marius Keet: Acting Director: Institutional Establishment,
 - Mr Ephraim Matseba: Deputy Director: Institutional Establishment and
 - Mr Phillimon Khwinana: Assistant Director: Water Quality Management

- (5) No, due to the Mine's financial position, there is insufficient treatment of the effluent thus resulting in non compliance with the discharge standards stipulated in the water use license issued to the Grootvlei Mine. My Department continues to monitor the situation at the Mine as well as in the Blesbok Spruit downstream to the Ramsar Wetland. The findings of the SAPS investigations and the National Prosecuting Authority decision will guide my Department on the way-forward.

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