



## 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 2434 FOR WRITTEN REPLY

A draft reply to the above-mentioned question asked by Mr P F Smith (IFP); is attached for your consideration.

DIRECTOR-GENERAL (Acting)

DATE: 22/09/2010

  
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 2434

DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 03 SEPTEMBER 2010  
(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 26)

**2434. Mr P F Smith (IFP) to ask the Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs:**

- (1) Whether the water of the Rietvlei Dam, which spills over into the Hartebeespoort Dam, is polluted with toxic waste, pesticides and heavy metals; if so, what (a) is the impact of this pollution, (b) has been done to identify the sources of the pollutants and (c) has been done to stop further pollution;
- (2) Whether her department has taken legal action against polluters who have been identified; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details;
- (3) what is the effect of this multi-sourced pollution on (a) the quality of the dam's water and (b)(i) fish, (ii) wildlife and (iii) the human population who (aa) consume the fish and (bb) are in contact with the water;
- (4) whether there is a higher than normal (a) mortality of blue kurper (bream) and (b) occurrence of defects such as lesions, deformed head and depigmentation in tough species such as barbel; if so, to what does her department ascribe the phenomena in each case;
- (5) Whether her department initiated a project to catch fish for sale for human consumption in townships; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, why?

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**REPLY:**

- (1) The Rietvlei Dam does not spill directly over into the Hartebeespoort Dam but into the Hennops River which flows into the Hartebeespoort Dam. Based on the raw water quality results provided to my Department by City of Tshwane: Water and Sanitation which was conducted January 2010 and August 2010 from the Rietvlei Dam and upstream catchment, the water quality is not polluted with toxic waste, pesticides and heavy metal.
- (1)(a) Falls away.
- (1)(b) Falls away.
- (1)(c) Falls away
- (2) Falls away.
- (3) Falls away.
- (4) No, my Department is not aware of any seasonal fish kills at the Rietvlei Dam and any occurrence of defects such as referred to by the question. There is an ongoing research on chemicals of concern for endocrine disruptive effect on the fish and other species at the dam as well as in other areas in the country by the WRC. The title of the study is called "The use of sentinel species to determine the endocrine destructive activity in urban nature reserves". The study did not found any abnormalities in fish as the results did not conclusively indicate the effect of the chemical in those organisms.
- (5) No, neither my Department nor the City of Tshwane has initiated a project at the Rietvlei Dam to catch fish for sale and human consumption in the township.

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