



water affairs

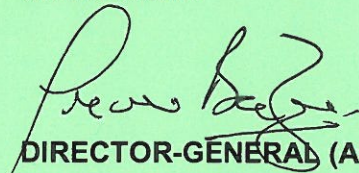
Department:
Water Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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Reference: 2/1/5/1

MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

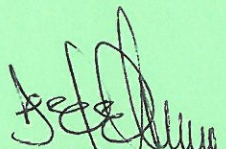
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY: QUESTION 2870 FOR WRITTEN REPLY

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


DIRECTOR-GENERAL (Acting)

DATE: 15/12/2010

DRAFT REPLY APPROVED/AMENDED


MRS BEE MOLEWA, MP
MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

DATE: 2010/12/14

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

FOR WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION NO 2870

DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 15 OCTOBER 2010
(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 31)

2870. Mrs H N Ndude (Cope) to ask the Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs:

- (1) Whether polluted catchment areas affect the value of real estate adjacent to these areas; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so,
- (2) whether her department has identified these areas that have been affected by pollution; if not, why not; if so, what are the (a) names of these areas and (b) further relevant details;
- (3) whether any measures have been put in place to combat pollution in these areas; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details?

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REPLY:

- (1) There is no direct answer to the question as water quality is only one factor contributing to the value of land. For example within a given catchment, some dams may be considered as quite polluted and affected by the influence of urbanization, such as the Hartbeespoort Dam, but then this very same dam is still very popular for property developments because of its proximity to Johannesburg. The Department of Water Affairs (DWA) concentrates on monitoring the quality of water resources and water services and does not get involved in the determination of land value.
- (2)(a) The Department of Water Affairs regularly monitors fresh water systems through various monitoring programmes. These programmes identify areas of risk within all 19 Water Management Areas and levels of the relevant specific factors affecting the quality of water.
- (2)(b) For example, the National Chemical Monitoring Programme (NCMP) provides data and information on the surface inorganic chemical water quality of South Africa's water resources; the National Eutrophication Monitoring Programme (NEMP) reports the trophic status of monitoring sites and related problems, including algal growth, cyanobacterial blooms and excessive aquatic plant growth; the River Health Programme (RHP) serves as a source of information regarding the overall ecological status of river ecosystems in South Africa. Further specific details regarding these programmes are available in reports published by the DWA. While my department continuously monitors river systems (rivers and dams) for signs of pollution, the monitoring programmes do not specifically list portions of land that may be affected by pollution.
- (3) Yes, pollution is combated through various programmes that are in place to cease, modify or control any act or process causing the pollution; comply with any prescribed waste standards or management the practice of such; contain or prevent movement of pollutants; eliminate the source of pollution; remedy the affects of pollution and remedy the effects of any disturbance to the bed or banks of any watercourse. These include the water licensing process that prescribes specific conditions of use in each and every licence. In addition, outflows from all water users are monitored and the necessary steps taken such as the issuing of directives and even legal action when users fail to comply. There are also various specific remediation projects ongoing. Pollution comes from many sources such as diffuse fertilizer runoff from farm land or industrial and domestic detergents, hydrocarbons and other chemicals and a collective approach is needed to improve the situation.

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