



## water affairs

Department:  
Water Affairs  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MINISTRY OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

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2011-09-21

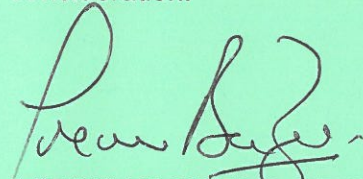
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Enquiries: Mr H Smit  
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Reference: 6/2/2/6

### MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

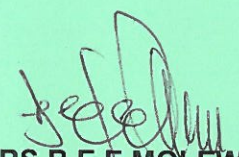
### NATIONAL ASSEMBLY: QUESTION 2458 FOR WRITTEN REPLY

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

  
ACTING DIRECTOR-GENERAL

DATE: 20/09/2011

DRAFT REPLY APPROVED/AMENDED

  
MRS B E E MOLEWA, MP  
MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

DATE: 20/11/09/24

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

FOR WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION NO. 2458

DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 2 SEPTEMBER 2011  
(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 27)

**2458. Mr G R Morgan (DA) to ask the Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs:**

- (1) Whether there was any significant fish kill in the Vaal Dam between 1 August 2011 and 25 August 2011; if not, how was this conclusion reached; if so, what are the relevant details;
- (2) whether the cause of the fish kill has been investigated; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details;
- (3) whether any actions are being taken to ensure that a similar situation does not recur; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what are the relevant details?

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**REPLY:**

- (1) No fish kill in the Vaal Dam had been reported to the Department between 1 August 2011 and 25 August 2011. However, a fish kill that occurred downstream of the dam wall was reported to the Department on 29 August 2011. An inspection to ascertain the extent of the problem was conducted on 30 August 2011.
- (2) Regarding the reported fish kill mentioned above, water samples were taken in the vicinity of the fish kill and the results indicated that the water was not polluted. I would like to advise the honourable member that fish kills take place due to both natural and human-induced causes. Mortality from natural causes is the largest single cause of death of individual fish. Factors that have been identified in natural fish kills include oxygen depletion, sudden or excessive temperature changes and salinity changes.
- (3) Yes, the Department is monitoring the water resources of the Vaal River on a monthly basis to ensure that any non-compliance in the system is detected at an early stage. Furthermore, a river health assessment study was finalised by the Department in November 2010. One of the findings is that most of the fish kills in the Vaal River are caused by chronic stress conditions due to sustained lower oxygen concentrations, which is a result of natural variations.

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