

2011-04-04

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water affairs

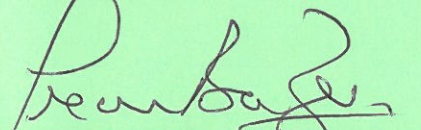
Department:
Water Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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Reference: 2/1/5/1

MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS


NATIONAL ASSEMBLY: QUESTION 690 FOR WRITTEN REPLY

A draft reply to the above-mentioned question asked by Mr E J Marais (DA); is attached for your consideration.


ACTING DIRECTOR-GENERAL

DATE: 1/04/2011

DRAFT REPLY APPROVED/AMENDED


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

DATE: 07.04.2011

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

FOR WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION NO 690

DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 07 MARCH 2011
(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 04)

690. Mr E J Marais (DA) to ask the Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs:

- (1) Whether, with reference to a certain report (details furnished) and in particular the sections dealing with the removal of salt loads from the river systems, affected communities will be compensated for the pollution; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details;
- (2) whether, with reference to the Zwartkrans Compartment which hosts the Cradle of Humankind World Heritage Site (CHWHS) and which is the area currently receiving the decant of acid mine water from the Western Basin, there are any potential impacts on the CHWHS from treatment options that will be pursued; if so, (a) what impacts and (b) how were these impacts determined;
- (3) whether, noting that there is a significant area of land under irrigation using borehole water in the Zwartkrans Compartment, there will be any impact on these users; if not, how was this conclusion reached; if so, what are the relevant details? NW741E

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REPLY:

- (1) No, none of the affected communities will be compensated for the pollution as the State is not responsible for causing the pollution. However, part of the solution will include rehabilitation of impacted water resources and where necessary, sections 19 and 20 of the National Water Act, Act 36 of 1998 will be invoked.
- (2) Yes, whilst the current decant of Acid Mine Drainage has not produced an adverse impact on the CHKWHS (Cradle of Humankind World Heritage Site) the engineering solution being developed is nevertheless expected to have a positive impact on the CHKWHS
 - (2)(a) The treatment options that will be pursued will essentially improve the pH of the decanting water as well as remove heavy metals.
 - (2)(b) The Team of Experts (who prepared the Report on acid mine drainage) concurred that neutralisation of mine water was the most favourable option for the protection of the Zwartkrans Compartment. Neutralisation will also protect ground- and surface water as this process simultaneously removes heavy metals.
- (3) No, the present decant has not produced a decline in the water quality of borehole water in the Zwartkrans Compartment. The quality of borehole water in this Compartment remains within the parameters for drinking class water. This was established through the routine monitoring of borehole water sampled from various locations within the Zwartkrans Compartment.

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