



water affairs

Department:
Water Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



EdST

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Reference: 2/1/5/1

MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY: QUESTION 97 FOR WRITTEN REPLY

A draft reply to the above question asked by Mr N D du Toit (DA) is attached for your consideration.

Attached is question 3406 for reference.

W. S. Molewa
DIRECTOR-GENERAL

DATE: 21/02/2012

DRAFT REPLY APPROVED/AMENDED

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

DATE: 20/02/12

Envel - Verify if this does not include the (A2N) recent case

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

FOR WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION NO 97

DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 09 February 2012
(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 01)

97. Mr N D du Toit (DA) to ask the Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs:

- (1) Whether, with reference to her reply to lapsed question 3406 on 31 January 2011, there have been any further progress by the Water Research Commission on the occurrence of beta-N-methylamino-L-alanine (BMAA) in our water bodies; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details;
- (2) since her specified reply, (a) how many cases of (i) human and (ii) animal poisoning as a result of contact with cyanobacteria have been recorded and (b) where have these cases been recorded?

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REPLY:

- (1) Yes, there is progress on the development of methodologies for the detection of beta-N-methylamino-L-alanine (BMAA) in our water bodies. The following reports on the developed methodologies are available on the WRC website:
 - "Improved sensitivity using liquid chromatography mass spectrometry (LC-MS) for detection of propyl chloroformate derivatised β -N-methylamino-L-alanine (BMAA) in cyanobacteria". Authors: Esterhuizen-Londt M; Downing S; Downing TG; (2011/04/14); Research Report No. 1719/1/10 Water SA Manuscript.
 - "Solid phase extraction of β -N-methylamino-L-alanine (BMAA) from South African water supplies". Authors: Esterhuizen-Londt M; Downing S; Downing TG; (2011/10/26); Water SA Manuscript.
- (2)(a)(i) Since the specified reply, there has not been any report to suggest or confirm human poisoning due to cyanobacteria.
- (2)(a)(ii) Since the specified reply, there has not been any report to suggest or confirm animal poisoning due to cyanobacteria.
- (2)(b) Not applicable.

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