**national assembly**

**Question 1264-2019**

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**Internal Question Paper number 20-2019 dated 18 October 2019**

**“mrs D van der Walt (DA): to ask the Minister of Sport, Arts and Culture:**

(1). Whether the Council and/or Chief Executive Officer of the National Museum in Bloemfontein took a decision to phase out the use of Afrikaans at and by the museum; if not, what are the details of all steps taken by the museum to promote Afrikaans; if so, on what statutory grounds was the use of Afrikaans phased out, given that it is the second most spoken language in the Free State;

(2)(a). why is Afrikaans being excluded from the museum’s (i) Culna and (ii) Indago publications and (b) what research was conducted to evaluate the impact of excluding Afrikaans from these publications;

(3)(a). what are the details of the museum’s current language policy and (b) has he found that it complies with the provision of the Use of Official Languages Act, Act 12 of 2012, that there must be a choice of three official languages in which the public must be served officially;

(4). what steps has the museum taken to (a) promote Sesotho as an indigenous language in the museum and (b) establish Sesotho as a scientific language? **NW2476E**

**REPLY:**

1. The Council and or Chief Executive Officer of the National Museum in Bloemfontein has not taken any decision to phase out Afrikaans at the museum. Afrikaans is promoted in line with the Language Policy. The Language Policy of the National Museum in Bloemfontein was published in Government Gazette on 31 March 2015, Gazette No. 38670 following proper processes and has been implemented. Below are extracts from the gazette:

**4*.1. Government reports, documents and official publications intended for public distribution***

a. English will be the language used for government reports and documents.

b. English will be the language used for all documents for public distribution.

***4.2***. ***Communication with the public***

a. The language used when communicating with members of the public, whether for information or official matters, will be in the language that is understood by the majority of the members present, but limited to English, Afrikaans and Sesotho.

b. A member of the public who wishes to receive a service from the National Museum in any language other than that in which the service is provided, may request that this be provided in such official language, limited to English, Afrikaans and Sesotho.

c. If a member of the public is unable to communicate in the three languages contemplated above, the National Museum will make use of the services of an interpreter, including sign language practitioners, taking cognisance of factors such as time, cost and the availability of an interpreter or sign language practitioner.

d. Such requests must be in writing and received by the National Museum at least seven working days prior to the service being required.

(2)(a) The Language policy of the Museum was gazetted on 31 March 2015 Gazette No. 38670 which deals with Museum publications as detailed above.

(i) Culna is a popular scientific publication of the National Museum which is available in hardcopy and online, www.nationalmuseumpublications.co.za.

(ii) Indago is a scientific journal of the Museum which is accredited by the Department of Higher Education and Training. It is available in hardcopy and online, www.nationalmuseumpublications.co.za

(b) The Museum did not commission a formal study to evaluate the impact of excluding Afrikaans or any of the other official languages from any of the publications. However, the Museum did follow a process and also opened up to a formal comment process. In addition the Museum has access to a cache of research done on publications and languages which assists the Museum.

(3)(a) The Museum’s language policy has been published in government gazette

(b) The Museum’s language policy does provide that the public must be served in 3 languages which are English, Afrikaans and Sesotho.

(4)(a) The Museum’s services to the public are conducted in English, Afrikaans and Sesotho.

(b) The Museum has identified Sesotho as a marginalised language and there are plans proposed in the draft Strategic Plan from 20/21 to annually issue a brochure in Sesotho which covers the major scientific research areas of the Museum’s work. Furthermore, the Museum has a mobile Museum which is taken to schools throughout the province and curriculum based lessons are provided in Sesotho where there is a need.