**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 1785**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER [No 16 - 2022 SIXTH PARLIAMENT]
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**1785. Mr M S Mabika (DA) to ask the Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development:**

Whether, in anticipation of the disaster and/or loss that the farmers who plant along the Pongola River between the Jozini and Umhlabuyalingana Local Municipalities will surely suffer as a result of the unplanned opening of the Jozini Dam as it is filled to its capacity, any provision will be made to compensate the farmers as they solely depend on the farms for a living; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details? **NW2114E**

**THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, LAND REFORM AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT:**

No. Farmers are encouraged to practice best farming practices and avoid farming in high risk areas such as along the rivers, to prevent and mitigate impacts of disaster risks such as floods.

The dams are monitored by the Department of Water and Sanitation and in cases where they must be opened a communication is made to the communities located downstream. The farming communities are advised to remove the equipment used to collect water when opening of dams is anticipated to avoid losses.

The Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development addresses disasters in line with the Disaster Management Act, 2002 (Act No. 57 of 2002) and the National Disaster Management Framework of 2005 as amended. Farmers who are affected by the impacts of disasters are considered in line with the Disaster Management Act, 2022 (Act No. 57 of 2002) following the assessment of damages, which unfortunately makes no provision for compensation of losses. Additionally, in encouraging good farming practices, farming along the riverbanks is a risk on its own and cannot be supported through disaster relief assistance as it is against the Conservation of Agricultural Resources Act, 1983 (Act No. 43 of 1983). The Farmers are always encouraged to implement risk reduction measures as communicated through monthly advisories.