



forestry, fisheries & the environment

Department:
Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

(For written reply)

QUESTION NO. 3643 {NW4831E}

INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 41 of 2023

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Mr N G Myburgh (DA) to ask the Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment:

What progress has been made in the development and/or implementation of the National Wetland Inventory?

3643. THE MINISTER OF FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT REPLIES:

The National Wetland Map 5 was published in 2018, and since then South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI) initiated a dedicated Freshwater Biodiversity Programme which is tasked to regularly update this inventory and synthesise new information as studies are undertaken. SANBI is currently in a process of developing the sixth iteration of the National Wetland Map 6, which is aimed to be published in March 2024. The dedicated SANBI National Wetland Inventory Team has systematically put the following in place:

- a framework for improved databasing;
- protocols for standardised data collection and terminology;
- automation of Geographic Information System tasks;
- development of multiple collaborative research partnerships with universities and other institutions;
- and

- convening a monthly working group with relevant provincial conservation agencies and SANParks to work towards an improved inventory, as well as convening a specialist peer review group.

In terms of implementation, the National Wetland Inventory directly informs South Africa's wetland ecosystem status and trends reporting, such as in the National Biodiversity Assessment 2018, State of Environment reporting and reporting on Sustainable Development Goal 6.6.1 (Change in the extent of water-related ecosystems over time).

The information provided by the wetland inventory also makes it possible for a range of assessment, planning and decision-making processes to adequately take wetlands into account. These include:

- Monitoring;
- Wetland rehabilitation and biodiversity offset planning;
- Water resource classification and the determination of Resource Quality Objectives under the National Water Act;
- Regulatory decision-making (for example, water use licences, mining licences and environmental authorisations); and
- Strategic spatial planning (for example, Spatial Development Frameworks, Environmental Management Frameworks Catchment Management Strategies and Protected Area Management planning and expansion strategies).



MS B D CREECY, MP
MINISTER OF FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT
 DATE: 13/11/2023