**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**ORAL REPLY CONVERTED TO WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 4152**

**WEDNESDAY, 16 NOVEMBER 2022**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER [No 46-2022 SIXTH PARLIAMENT]
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**4152. Mr M K Montwedi (EFF) to ask the Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development:**

With reference to the 200 farmers in Kagisano Molopo Local Municipality in the North West that were allocated land in an area of about 300 000 ha in the former South African Development Trust farms, who have been struggling with underground water since they were allocated those farms whereas the former department of Land Affairs commissioned a study that advised the department to provide bulk water services to those farmers around 2004, but nothing has happened thus far, (a) what are the reasons that her department has failed to ensure that bulk water is supplied to the farmers and (b) what was the amount in loss of production as a result of her department’s failure to ensure the provision of bulk water supply to the farmers? **NO5208E**

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

1. The provision of bulk water services is the mandate of the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS). The project for bulk water supply at the time, was initiated by the District Municipality, Department of Water Affairs and their associated water management entities with whom the competence for water management, supply and distribution resides. The Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) however, has a protocol in place with DWS on water for the sector related subject. DALRRD will therefore utilise this existing collaboration mechanism to refer this matter to DWS to look at the bulk water challenges for these producers.

Although water remains a scarce resource in the country and Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati District in particular, it should further be noted that the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development has always ensured that where possible, South African Development Trust farms are not severely affected, through the following interventions:

* Some farmers were drilled boreholes to use underground water in areas where water is available;
* Farmers are continuously encouraged to cooperate with each other to jointly address water scarcity challenge and that had made their farming businesses profitable;
1. There has never been reports of production losses in the area (**cattle production area**) hence a high number of emerging farmers in this district. However, DALRRD will engage DWS, who is mandated for bulk water provision, to determine what can be done to resolve this matter.