



**forestry, fisheries  
& the environment**

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

Ref: O2/1/5/2

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

(For written reply)

**QUESTION NO. 949 {NW1192E}**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 11 of 2022**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION: 18 March 2022**

**Ms A M M Weber (DA) to ask the Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment:**

- (1) What (a) has she found happened to the 3 000 tonnes of fish that died and (b) processes will be followed by her department to ensure that the specified ecological area is rehabilitated;
- (2) whether any other dams and/or ecological areas were affected by the effluent of acid water; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, how will the rivers be cleaned from the acid drained water;
- (3) how does her department intend to replace the 23 indigenous fish species that died during the incident?

**949. THE MINISTER OF FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT REPLIES:**

(1) (a)

The incident was managed by the departments of Mineral Resources and Energy (DMRE) and Water and Sanitation (DWS). The two departments were responsible for the management of the disposal of the 3000 tonnes of fish that died.

It is important to note that the DMRE and the DWS are the primary government departments responsible for taking action in relation to this type of incident, both in terms of managing the response to this incident, how the impacts are mitigated as well as in terms of undertaking the

necessary compliance and enforcement activities in respect of the violation of environmental and water laws.

(b)

It is the responsibility of DMRE to ensure that the specified ecological area is rehabilitated. As this incident relates to a mining operation, the DMRE is the legally mandated regulatory authority to hold the mine accountable for the pollution emanating from the operation and to take action in relation to the violation of environmental laws. In 2014, when the "One Environmental System" was implemented, the duty to undertake compliance and enforcement action in response to contraventions of environmental laws relating directly to a mining operation was transferred to the Environmental Mineral Resource Inspectors (EMRI), employed by DMRE.

(2)

As the contamination is causing significant harm to water resources in the area, the DWS also has a mandate to respond as the authority responsible for the administration of the National Water Act 36 of 1998, which regulates the country's freshwater resources, including all watercourses. The DWS also has designated Environmental Management Inspectors (EMIs) whose function it is to undertake compliance and enforcement activities

(3)

It is the responsibility of DWS to ensure that the 23 indigenous species of the fish that died during the incident will be replaced.

**Regards**



**MS B D CREECY, MP  
MINISTER OF FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT**

DATE: 31/3/2022