



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES

FOR WRITTEN REPLY

QUESTION NO 442

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(INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO.21 - 2024)

442. Mr K Ceza (Mpumalanga: EFF) to ask the Minister of Water and Sanitation:

What contingency actions has her department taken to anticipate the likelihood of drought in Mpumalanga where water in dams such as (a) Silobela Dam in Carolina, (b) Jericho Dam in Gert Sibande District, (c) Longmere, (d) Klipkopje and (e) Primkop Dams in Ehlanzeni District Municipality are in decline? CW599E

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MINISTER OF WATER AND SANITATION

- (a) The Chief Albert Luthuli Municipality has drilled ten boreholes as a contingency measure to supply water to the community. The Department of Water and Sanitation and the Inkomati-Usuthu Catchment Management Agency conduct weekly monitoring of dam levels in the province. Water resource operating rules have been developed to guide the curtailment of water abstraction during periods of low flow to ensure prolonged water resource availability.
- (b) The Jericho dam is operated as part of an integrated system with the Westoe, Morgenstond and Heyshoop dams. They all connect through a network of pipelines to provide water for strategic water uses such as power generation. While the Jericho dam may exhibit lower volumes, the other large capacity dams Heyshoop and Morgenstond are at 96% and 69% respectively. This is part of an operational arrangement to draw water from Jericho earlier than other dams in order to manage operational costs. DWS is monitoring the performance of these dams against the expected annual natural water availability cycle and has determined that there is sufficient water in the system while calling for responsible water use.

(c-e) The Longmere, Klipkopje and Primkop Dams are operated as one system as they all fall within the same White River system. The operational arrangement allows for the smaller most downstream Primkop dam, currently at 39%, to drop earlier than the two upstream dams Longmere and Klipkopje which are at 75% and 81% respectively. When Primkop reaches 30% it is augmented from the two dams upstream. Due to its small capacity of 1.9 million cubic metres Primkop dam fills up much quicker. With the beginning of the rainy season the dam levels are expected to increase. DWS is closely monitoring the situation and where necessary, the drought operating rules will be implemented but that point has not been reached yet.

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