

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, WATER AND FORESTRY

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- HONOURABLE SPEAKER
- MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY – MAWF NOTICE OF QUESTIONS: RESPONSES BY JOHN MUTORWA, MP AND MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, WATER AND FORESTRY (MAWF).

Let me provide responses to Questions posed to me by Hon Venaani, last week on 30^{th} March 2015.

A. <u>QUESTION 1: THE UNDERGROUND WATER RESERVOIR IN</u> OHANGWENA REGION KNOWN AS OHANGWENA II AQUIFER

 A Joint Project of the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry and the Germany Geo-Science Agency (BGR) undertook to investigate the groundwater resources in the Cuvelai Basin. The project is being implemented over three phases since 2009. Phase one (2009 – 2011) focused on studies and surveys, as well as planning, as to how the project had to be implemented. Phase two (2012 – 2013) focused on drilling and analysis of the drilling results, while phase three (2014 – 2017) is for consolidation, capacity building and sustainable management of the aquifer.



2. <u>The progress to date is as follows:</u>

- (a) Water of a significant amount is detected in an aquifer (Ohangwena II) below the normal ground water aquifer (Ohangwena I) at a depth of about 350 to 400 m below the surface.
- (b) Water quality west of Eenhana is poor due to high levels of fluoride presence in the water.
- (c) The areas east of Eenhana such as Omundaungilo have better water quality and is already being used at a small scale by NamWater.
- (d) A test well-field is constructed at Ondobe to supply about 800 000 Mm³/a. The infrastructure includes:
 - Production boreholes;
 - Pipelines to convey water to NamWater Schemes;
 - A de-flouridization plant.
- (e) Most of the infrastructure is already in place except the pipelines.
- (f) Production boreholes at Omundaungilo is up and running and the communities as well as government institution in the village are already utilizing the borehole water.
- 3. The estimated cost of the infrastructure development is N\$1 000 000,00.
- 4. The infrastructure stated above are meant for domestic water use only i.e. household use and livestock watering.



- 5. With regard to jobsto be created, the construction works require a limited number of workers expected not to be over two hundred (200). However, more jobs will be created if the irrigation initiative proves to be viable.
- 6. The beneficiary Region or Regions will be determined by the plans that will be put in place after all studies are completed.
- 7. Plan measures and the way forward:
 - (a) The possibility of using water for irrigation is still to be investigated considering the water quality and soil condition in the area.
 - (b) Students from the Polytechnic (Namibian University of Science Technology) and UNAM, as well as young Geohydrologists from the Department of Water Affairs, are being coached and trained by the German Expatriates to build the necessary capacity, in order to be able to manage the groundwater source in the medium and long term time frame, after the Germans Expatriates have left in 2017.
 - (c) Consultations with the Angolan Authorities are almost completed to pave the way for the joint management of the resource, because it is a transboundary groundwater aquifer.

B. <u>QUESTION 2 – ORANGE WATER USE AND AGREEMENT</u>

 The water sharing agreement on the Lower Orange River has been discussed at the Permanent Water Commission (PWC), between Namibia and South Africa for about 20 years. Hitherto, no agreement could be finalized as the two parties cannot as yet, agree on the <u>volume of the free allocation</u> (50 Mm³/a or more) and the principle to arrive at a <u>cost</u> of water used by Namibia (capital and/or operation and maintenance).



- 2. In principle, Namibia wants the Agreement to acknowledge her property rights (natural and historical) to the waters of the Orange-Senqu River (the current use of about 50Mm³/a at no <u>cost</u>). Additional water needs could be met from existing dams in South Africa, for which Namibia has already contributed to capital cost and therefore only operation and maintenance cost be charged <u>on temporary basis</u>, until such time that dam at Noordoewer is developed to further regulate the Orange River for downstream users and the environment.
- 3. As such, the PWC already agreed that the Parties' understanding on the principles of cooperation regarding current and future equitable and reasonable utilisation, joint development and management and the design, construction, operation and maintenance of joint infrastructures in the Lower Orange River, <u>be recorded in the Memorandum of Understanding</u> (MOU). A draft MOU has been finalised and each Party should consider it at Country level, to allow for easy negotiation, on equitable and reasonable use of the Orange Rivers water.
- 4. Namibia, currently uses about 50mm3/a of water from the Orange River and South Africa bout 2000Mm3/a. With the current plans to develop more irrigation schemes (Tandjieskopje) on the Namibia side, that figure of 50 mm³ is certainly expected to increase.
- 5. A Study on the feasibility of the Noordoewer/Vioolsdrift dam is being carried out jointly by Namibia and South Africa, and it is expected to be completed in early 2017, after which, dam design and construction can and should start.
- 6. Thank you very much!

