



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. 3028 {NW4095E}

INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 32 of 2023

DATE OF PUBLICATION: 15 September 2023

Ms H S Winkler (DA) to ask the Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment:

Whether she has been informed that Seekoeivlei Nature Reserve, a RAMSAR-designated wetland in the Free State, is being destroyed by sewage spills emanating from the town of Memel under Phumelela Local Municipality; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what steps has her department taken to address this ecocide?

3028. THE MINISTER OF FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT REPLIES:

The Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE) was informed of the sewage which is entering the Seekoeivlei Nature Reserve during the virtual Portfolio Committee meeting on 12 September 2023. Following that meeting, the necessary enquiries were made with the Ramsar Site Management Authority for the Seekoeivlei Nature Reserve, which is the Free State Department of Small Business Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs (DESTEA).

FS DESTEA indicated that in response to the situation it had conducted in-house water tests during May 2023 which were communicated to the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) who then further concluded tests.

The first sampling exercise was undertaken by the DWS on 20 July 2023, and again on 13 August 2023. The DWS Compliance and Enforcement officials confirmed that they are in the process of finalising the investigation report as well as preparing an enforcement notice.

The Honourable Member is advised to pose further questions to the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS).



MS B D CREECY, MP

MINISTER OF FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT

DATE: 26/9/2023