



## **water & sanitation**

Department:  
Water and Sanitation  
**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

Private Bag X313, Pretoria 0001 / Sedibeng Building, 185 Francis Baard Street, Pretoria  
Tel: 012 336 7500 Fax: 012 323 4470 or 012 326 2715

**Enquiries: Mr L Mabuda Tel: 012 336 8477 Email: MabudaL@dws.gov.za Ref.: 14/16/12/2**

Mr Danie Pienaar  
Acting Managing Executive  
Kruger National Park  
Private Bag X402  
**SKUKUZA**  
1350

Dear Mr Pienaar

### **FOLLOW-UP ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ECOLOGICAL RESERVE AND AUGMENTATION FROM STORAGE FROM DAMS IN THE OLIFANTS RIVER SYSTEM**

I refer to your letter dated 14 June 2016, in which you were requesting the implementation of operating rules study for both the Blyderivierpoort and De Hoop Dams in an effort to meet bulk water requirements for Lepelle Northern Water (LNW) and the Environmental Water Requirements (EWRs) in the Kruger National Park.

Given that the water allocations from the De Hoop Dam are not currently utilized, the possibility to shift some or all of LNW's demand from the Blyde Dam to the De Hoop Dam in order to ensure adequate supply for agricultural sector during 2016-2017 growing season, as well as meet the water requirements for the Maruleng Local Municipality is acceptable, provided that the De Hoop Dam is not drained to a point that the dam starts with low storage after the rainy season. It is therefore recommended that 5 million m<sup>3</sup>/a allocation for Lepelle Northern Water from the Blyderivierpoort Dam be shifted to the De Hoop Dam and that the Integrated Olifants/Blyde operating rules should be implemented to impose restrictions on the remaining demands.

Implementing the Integrated Olifants operating rules and utilising RESLIM-O Decision Support System (DSS) to provide operations support for releases of water from the De Hoop Dam is supported. I would thus request you to share with my Department the results of the technical analysis and plans of the RESLIM-O DSS that you intend to implement to optimise releases from the De Hoop Dam. This will enable my technical staff to provide input and advice regarding implementation of this tool.

Issues raised regarding the hydraulic study to track and monitor slug/controlled releases from the De Hoop Dam down to meet the downstream water requirements for the Kruger National

Park, LNW and International Obligations will be addressed through the Integrated Olifants River System Operating Rule study which my Department has already completed the Terms of Reference (ToR) for. The main objectives of this study are to:

- develop the Integrated System Annual Operating Rules, which will be applied to regulate the systems' water availability so that its distribution can be reconciled with the water demand patterns on the systems;
- improve the efficiency of use of the available resource including the conjunctive use of all resources within a systems context, and detailed information on the timing and location of water requirements;
- Development/calibration of the Decision Support System (DSS); and
- Determination of the state of water resources availability and reconcile these with water demand patterns.

This study therefore aims to enable optimisation of system operation for the Olifants River System in an integrated manner. My Department thus supports the request and cooperation to achieve the implementation of EWR and the efforts by stakeholders to improve the situation particularly the implementation of water restrictions by the Agricultural sector and other key stakeholders is most welcome.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sifiso Mkhize', with a stylized flourish underneath.

**Mr Sifiso Mkhize**  
**ACTING DIRECTOR-GENERAL**  
**DATE: 15/7/16**