



## **water & sanitation**

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

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Advocate Stefanie Fick  
Organisation Undoing Tax Abuse  
Building 4, Boskruin Village Office Park  
Cnr President Fouché & Hawken Road  
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Dear Advocate Fick

### **POLLUTION AND DEGRADATION OF THE DIEP RIVER CATCHMENT AND THE MILNERTON LAGOON**

We refer to the above matter and the complaint received by the Department of Water and Sanitation (the Department) from OUTA on 23 July 2021 regarding the pollution and degradation of the Diep River catchment and the Milnerton Lagoon.

The Department is aware of the pollution along the Diep River catchment and Milnerton Lagoon. There are many contributing factors to the pollution in the area – it is the Potsdam WWTW as well as the formal, informal and industrial waste that flows into the Diep River.

The Department has taken administrative enforcement against the City of Cape Town (City), and has ensured that the City improves its compliance with water use licence conditions as well as technical requirements relating to its management of Potsdam WWTW and Theo Marais Pump Station.

Along with our administrative enforcement measures, the Department has also worked collaboratively with the City to ensure the upgrading of WWTW operations and related infrastructure.

The Department is aware of the City efforts to deal with the various sources of pollution and agrees that an integrated approach is required whereby the City is working with informal and formal residents, business and industry in the area to reduce pollution in the broader catchment area.



**NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN**  
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This Department along with the City, the Western Cape Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning (DEA&DP) and the national Department of Forestry, Fisheries and Environment (DFFE) have established a Potsdam WWTW / Diep River pollution monitoring task team. The aim of the task team is to ensure that all available information is co-ordinated to enable close and continuous monitoring of the situation and to reduce and optimally manage the risks associated with pollution of the Diep River and ultimately the Milnerton Lagoon.

The task team has thus far embarked on a joint inspections of potential polluters in the upper regions of the Diep River, with the aim of mapping out pollution hotspots and establish a more holistic monitoring programme that is inclusive of, not only Potsdam WWTW but all potential pollution sources.

The City has started taking daily sampling analysis of all discharge points from the Potsdam WWTW and these are submitted to the Task Team as part of monthly reporting. The results are being collated and along with the report will be reviewed by the joint task team on a monthly basis for identification of further required interventions. The joint task team will now be part of the engagements with the City and OUTA in your monthly meetings, starting from 5 August 2021, to ensure that all concerns are addressed and that progress is achieved.

This Task team will be active until related rivers are effectively monitored and improvement is noted. The Department would like to thank you for raising your concerns and your proactive efforts toward a common goal – ensuring the effective management towards the sustainability of our water resources.

Yours sincerely



**Ms Deborah Mochotlhi**  
**ACTING DIRECTOR-GENERAL**  
DATE: 02/09/2021