



**REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA**

---

**MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, WATER AND FORESTRY**

---

Tel. :( 061) 208 7719/7604  
Fax: (061) 2087767  
Enquiries: Jona Musheko

**Office of the Permanent Secretary**  
Divisions: Public Relations  
Private Bag 13184, **Windhoek**

29 January 2018

**RESPONSES TO THE NEW ERA QUESTIONS**

**1. What is the current situation of water in Namibia?**

It can be described as manageable but yet demanding in terms of ensuring availability of the required quantity and quality. The fact that we have late rains this year requires alternative plans to be in place in case poor rainfall is experienced during the remaining period of the rain season. The ground water levels have dropped but only a few boreholes are reported to have dried up unlike the previous two to three years. The surface water sources (Rivers) such as Kavango and Orange are quite low but the prospects looks good which is true with the dams as well. Most of them have not reached critical points like last year.

**2. What percentage does the Central Areas of Namibia currently have from Swakoppoort, Von Bach and Omatako dams?**

These are the current levels:

<b>NAME OF RESERVOIR</b>	<b>Present Volume (Mm<sup>3</sup>)</b>	<b>Present % of Full Capacity</b>
SWAKOPPOORT DAM	25.037	39.4
VON BACH DAM	26.627	56.0
OMATAKO DAM	0.000	0.0

**3. Does government guarantee both households and industries not to be concerned in terms of water shortage?**

Water is a natural resource that depends on weather patterns and/or prevailing climatic conditions. As such, it is not easy for GRN to predict the amount of rain the country will receive to replenish the country's water sources. Needless to say, GRN cannot definitively guarantee or tell both industries and households not to be concerned in terms of water shortages.

However, Government is fully committed to serve the nation as stated in the NDP5 as well.

Since 2016, the Government has been working around the clock through the established Cabinet Committee on Water Security and the Technical Committee of Experts to secure security of water supply. It is therefore doing everything possible to ensure that all households in Namibia as well as the industries have water to survive. Namibia being a very dry country depends on annual replenishments from rain. This means, if no sufficient rain is received, water resources i.e. rivers, dams and/or ground water aquifers could be very low or even run dry.

**4. What is government doing in order to ensure that what was experienced over the past year does not repeat itself?**

Plans are being implemented ranging from upgrading water transfer schemes such as Karst to Windhoek, development of new schemes such as the expansion of the Windhoek aquifer (drilling of numerous boreholes in Windhoek), feasibility studies for major projects such as Kavango link and coastal water supply and the implementation of trans-boundary water projects such as Kunene trans-boundary water supply project and the Stampriet ground water project. The GRN has also committed to drilling of boreholes and laying of pipelines in the northern part of the country, depending on availability of funds.

**5. Last year, the Ministry of Agriculture's augmentation study indicated that the only water supply options available for Central Regions are Kavango River abstraction and desalinated water from the Coast. Are these options still viable and do they still stand and if so, how far are these projections?**

Yes, they are still valid and the studies are still on-going. These are both large projects and require detailed studies because they have international implications. For Okavango link, the technical studies are completed but the environmental impact assessment studies are yet to be completed. The study for the coastal water supplies funded by KfW to the tune of €1.3 billion, is at its infant stage. It was advertised, the pre-qualification of bids was completed, and the next step is to request for the detailed proposals from the shortlisted bidders.

**6. Are there plans to buy the Areva desalination plant for about N\$3 billion totally scrapped out?**

The government considers every available option. The outcome of the coastal water supply studies will tell whether it is a viable option or not. Please take note that GRN is not aware of such a figure of N\$3 Billion and cannot therefore comment on it.

**7. Government was pushing for the completion of Neckartal Dam and it was envisaged the date of completion was supposed to be around December 2017. How far this project before Namibians could reap the fruits and why was the Dam not completed as envisaged?**

The completion of the Neckartal dam was supposed to be March 2017, but was initially postponed to December 2017 and currently it is estimated to be completed by June or latest October 2018. The delays in completing the construction of the dam was mainly caused by court challenges at the start of the project, delays in payments due to budgetary constraints and weather conditions that hampered work during the rainy season. After the completion of Phase II of the project more fruits will come from irrigation schemes and its associated social and financial benefits. Those will only be realized after the irrigation scheme is developed. Preparatory work in that regards has started leading to the design of the scheme. The December target could not be met and it is not always easy to be spot on with the dates for large projects such as Neckartal Dam.

Percy W. Misika

**Permanent Secretary**