



## environmental affairs

Department:  
Environmental Affairs  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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Ref:02/1/5/2

**MINISTER**

**QUESTION NO. 266 FOR ORAL REPLY: NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES**

A draft reply to **Mr L B Gaehler (Eastern Cape: UDM)** to the above-mentioned question is enclosed for your consideration.

**MS NOSIPHO NGCABA  
DIRECTOR-GENERAL**

**DATE:**

**DRAFT REPLY APPROVED/AMENDED**

**NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES**

**(For oral reply)**

**QUESTION NO. 266 {CO387E}**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO.29 of 2017**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION: 10 October 2017**

**Mr L B Gaehler (Eastern Cape: UDM) to ask the Minister of Environmental Affairs:**

- (1) Whether the Government has any plans for the future of the Nduli Nature Reserve in Mthatha; if not, why not; if so, what plans;
- (2) whether any improvement of infrastructure such as paved roads and/or additional wildlife will take place; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details;
- (3) whether the reserve will be retained; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what are the relevant details;

- (4) whether the Government will provide another reserve, in the event of closure; if not, why not; if so, what are the relevant details? CO387E

**266. THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS REPLIES:**

- (1) Nduli Nature Reserve was proclaimed under the Nature Conservation Ordinance (Ordinance 25 of 1965) as a nature reserve and has been managed as such since its proclamation in 1965 under the management of the Eastern Cape Parks and Tourism Agency (ECPTA). The plan is to retain the land for the protection of ecosystems (Mthatha Moist grassland) and also for the provision of an open space for picnicking, hiking and environmental education for locals into the future.
- (2) Infrastructure improvements planned by ECPTA are an Environmental Education Centre, Educational Trails and Upgrading of the picnic site, ablutions, entrance gates and the tourism roads.
- (3) The municipality has approached the ECPTA regarding a proposal to utilise the nature reserve for residential purposes given the housing challenges in the municipality. However the ECPTA indicated its reservations due to the fact that:
1. The Nduli Nature reserve is one of only two provincial nature reserves that protect the Mthatha Moist grassland which is critically endangered, meaning that there is very little of this vegetation type left such that any further land use changes could render it extinct. This is due to the fact that only a very small percentage of this vegetation type is under formal protected areas.
  2. The nature reserve is also a breeding site for the endangered Crowned crane and habitat for endangered cycads.
  3. The Nduli Nature reserve is the only green space for Mthatha that is within walking distance of the city centre. The reserve therefore plays a key role as an eco-recreational facility(picnicking, hiking), serves as a green lung for the town as well as its broader role in climate change mitigation and environmental education.
- (4) There has been no discussion on possible closure of the reserve at this stage.