

National Assembly question: Question NW 734E

Mr S C Motau (DA) to ask the Minister of Energy:

- (1) Whether, with reference to her reply to question 875 on 29 April 2010, Eskom has informed her of the decision regarding the town of Thyspunt in the Eastern Cape being used as the site for Eskom's planned pressurised water reactor (PWR); if so, what are the relevant details; if not,
- (2) Whether any other site has been (a) proposed, (b) considered and (c) chosen; if not, why not, in each case; if so, which site in each case;
- (3) Whether she has been informed of stakeholders who claim that Thyspunt has been selected and is being prepared as a site; if so, what will she tell such stakeholders in order to clarify the situation; if not,
- (4) Whether she will (a) investigate these claims and (b) address the stakeholders in order to clarify the situation? NW734E

REPLY

- (1) Eskom has published its request for authorisation to site a nuclear power plant at Thyspunt. This was done through the draft Environmental Impact Report of the Nuclear-1 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), submitted in February 2010. No decision has been communicated.
- (2)
 - a. During the EIA process Eskom proposed several sites – namely Thyspunt in the Eastern Cape, Bantamsklip in the Western Cape, Duynefontein next to Koeberg, Schulpfontein and Brazil on the Northern Cape Coast.
 - b. During the EIA process Eskom considered the five sites – namely Thyspunt in the Eastern Cape, Bantamsklip in the Western Cape, Duynefontein next to Koeberg, Schulpfontein and Brazil on the Northern Cape Coast.

c. No final site has been chosen but Eskom selected the Thyspunt site for a full EIA and the reasons are given in the EIA documentation available on the Eskom website. To quote, the factors selected as most important are:

- Transmission integration factors;
- Seismic suitability of the sites;
- Impacts on dune geomorphology;
- Impacts on wetlands;
- Impacts on vertebrate fauna;
- Impacts on invertebrate fauna; and
- Economic impacts.

(3) I have been informed of the stakeholders who claim that the Thyspunt site has been selected. Officials from my Department were at the Thyspunt site and neighbouring St Francis Bay with the Select Committee on Economic Development on 22 February 2011. The message was clearly delivered that the draft Integrated Resource Plan has not been approved yet and therefore no decision from Government has been made regarding a nuclear procurement go-ahead and therefore no decision on the Thyspunt site has been made.

(4)

- a. No investigation is necessary as no record of decision has been issued by the Department of Environmental Affairs on the Eskom EIA.
- b. As part of our public engagement programme, the communities living around existing nuclear installations sites are engaged on different matters. The same will be true for communities living around prospective sites for nuclear installations. The engagement of the Select Committee on Economic Affairs with the community of Thyspunt was part of government's engagement with the community.