



THE EWT VOICES CONCERN ABOUT NGAKA MODIRI MOLEMA MUNICIPALITY PLANNED WATER WASTE TREATMENT PLANT IN GROOT MARICO

20th March 2013

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As part of the lead up to and celebrations around National Water Week the Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT) has expressed serious concerns about the Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality's proposed construction of an electrical waste water treatment plant in Groot Marico. The potential impacts of the proposed project on surface and groundwater have been vastly underestimated in the Municipality's Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report. Furthermore, this development could jeopardise the flagship status of the Groot Marico River and its farming and traditional communities directly downstream of the proposed development.

"The EWT supports infrastructure development and service delivery to all South Africans and we are cognizant of the need for proper sanitation infrastructure within Reboile Township. The proposed water treatment plant is, however, inappropriate for Reboile Township due to its complex nature and reliance on a continuous power supply. Therefore, we wish to work closely with the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA), Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality, Lesekha Consulting and the affected communities to find sustainable solutions that will serve the long term interest of the environment and communities. South Africa is a water scarce country and it is absolutely crucial that we all do everything in our power to preserve and protect the clean water resources that we still have left," commented Bridget Corrigan, Manager of the EWT's Source to Sea Programme.

"We have requested that the municipality investigates the possibilities of developing a biological treatment plant or individual composting toilets for Reboile. These options are far less costly and require less technical input than mechanical plants and are viable and environmentally friendly alternatives to the waste water treatment plant."

"The Groot Marico river and its catchment have been identified as a National Freshwater Priority Area (NFEPA) by the National Spatial Biodiversity Planning initiative due to the high, aquatic biodiversity, endemic fish species such as the Marico Barb, and a multitude of unique features like the tufa waterfall and the dolomitic eye systems. The river supports many farming and township communities and the potential impacts of the development on already stressed water resources and the abilities of the municipality to manage this infrastructure must be taken into consideration," continued Corrigan.

The EWT coordinated a community tour for the local leaders within the Reboile and Koffiekraal settlements to the source of the Marico River in order to demonstrate the importance of this river system and why it needs to be protected by all of the communities that rely on this precious resource.

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The Endangered Wildlife Trust is a non-profit, public benefit organisation dedicated to conserving species and ecosystems in southern Africa to the benefit of all people.

NPO Number: 015-502, **PBO number:** 930 001 777, **Member of IUCN** - The International Union for Conservation of Nature
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“We visited the Tara Rokpa Buddhist Retreat Centre, where we showed the group a small working biological sewage treatment system and examples of a few composting toilets. We also travelled to Zeerust where we had the opportunity to visit the Zeerust waste water treatment facility and find out how the mechanical system functions. The day was a success and the community leaders were highly impressed by the alternative technologies presented. They insisted that this project be halted and that proper consultations take place,” concluded Corrigan.

The proposed development has been rushed through without sufficient public consultation and comments from the concerned public have not been adequately addressed in the EIA. Therefore, it is the opinion of the EWT that it is essential to investigate other technologies and more appropriate locations for the proposed plant, with the full consultation of all affected communities.

For further information about the Source to Sea Programme please contact Bridget on bridgetc@ewt.org.za. The Source to Sea Healthy Rivers Project is sponsored by the Elizabeth Wakeman Henderson Charitable Foundation and Rand Merchant Bank.

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