



Media Statement

Monday, 12 June 2023

To: All Media

### **Claims of Hartbeespoort Dam Draining Untrue as Alleged by Online News Publication**

Magalies Water has noted with discomfiture weekend reports by an online newspaper publication called “*North West Times*” which alleges that as part of Magalies Water’s water resource management implementation plan, which was approved by the Department of Water and Sanitation in addressing water quality challenges in the Crocodile West Catchment which includes the Hartbeespoort Dam will be drained.

In a media statement issued on the 25<sup>th</sup> of May 2023 Magalies Water, confirmed its three-year appointment as an implementing agent on behalf of the department and set out clear plans in remedying the water quality challenges which has beset the Hartbeespoort Dam and surrounding areas, as a result of the negative effects of the Hyacinth. Magalies Water has no plans of draining the Hartbeespoort Dam as alleged, which if was the case would be contrary to the approved water resource management implementation plan.

Magalies Water views the genesis of this media report as reckless, irresponsible, and unethical as in its entirety failed to meet the basic tenets of ethical journalism. There was unnecessary panic from the public, and other media outlets understandably as sustainable of potable water which is of the highest quality in the North West remains a subject of interest among various stakeholders. Neither did the publication afford Magalies Water as an implementing agent on behalf of the department, or the Department of Water and Sanitation itself an opportunity to confirm and or deny these allegations, which have no basis.

We view the publication of the article, as sensationalist with an attempt to cause unwarranted panic without having conducted an investigation and receiving an official response from the authorities. In our interaction with the publication, it has since been revealed that the story, was authorized for publication by the editorial

team, without having verified the allegations, and with no credible source to corroborate the contents which is confirmatory of Magalies Water's stance in respect of substandard journalism practices as demonstrated by the *North West Times*. Further the publication failed to issue a retraction and or an apology, after it failed to produce any evidence to validate its news story, which was shared far-and-wide across various digital media platforms.

We call on the public to exercise calm, as there will be no draining of the Hartbeespoort Dam and Magalies Water's key priority is determining a permanent solution to the Hyacinth challenge in the dam and improving the water quality in the catchment. Magalies Water has begun in earnest with its work on the Crocodile West Catchment, which includes among others investigating and conducting trials on various methods of removing the Hyacinth from the dam (dredging) and not draining the water resource as alleged. The public and media will be updated in due course on the work towards improving water quality in the catchment area including the dam.

End.

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