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MEDIA RELEASE

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City of Windhoek Clarifies 20% Borehole Water Usage Restriction

The City of Windhoek would like to address recent concerns raised in the media regarding the restriction of borehole water usage by industries to 20%. The restriction is part of a broader operational spectrum necessary for ensuring water supply, water security, resource management, and the sustainability of the City of Windhoek to continue serving residents and business activities effectively.

As stipulated in the Local Authority Act 23 of 1992 as amended, the City of Windhoek holds the responsibility of providing water to households and businesses alike. This water is sourced from a three-dam system managed by the Namibia Water Corporation (NamWater). In instances of emergency, unconventional sources such as reclamation and groundwater from the Windhoek Southern Aquifer (WSA) are utilized to supplement the supply.

During the 2015/2016 drought, the City allowed industries to drill boreholes to supplement their water supply. This decision not only ensured the continuation of business activities but also allowed for an assessment of the groundwater potential in the Windhoek northern areas. The success of this initiative led to the establishment of a groundwater quota permitting system for the Windhoek northern aquifer (WNA), regulated by the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform (MAWLR).

Both the WNA and WSA are managed through permits issued by the Ministry and are primarily used to supplement supplies during emergencies. In periods of sufficient supply, the City relies exclusively on NamWater and reclaimed water, utilizing aquifers solely for the maintenance of borehole infrastructure.

The WNA permit system operates similarly, allowing industries to use borehole abstraction to meet their quota during emergencies. Since 2016, even when no savings were required, industries have been issued a base quota to maintain their borehole infrastructure and water treatment installations.

However, some industries have chosen to disregard this operational protocol and rely exclusively on borehole water, neglecting the City's potable water supply. While this has impacted the City's revenue, the City continues to engage industries in constructive dialogue to ensure they recover their infrastructure investment while also contributing to the city's development through regulated self-supply.

Therefore, media reports regarding the City's restrictions on industries fail to fully depict the complexities involved in ensuring water security and the provision of basic services. The issue needs to be viewed within a broader operational framework aimed at ensuring water supply

security, resource management, and sustainability of the local authority to continue to serve its residents and business activities.

While the current water situation warrants concern, key stakeholders, including the City, remain dedicated to implementing measures to mitigate potential challenges.

For more information about this statement, please contact our Corporate Communication Section at Tel.: 061 290 3797 /2044, or email: cowcommunication@windhoekcc.org.na

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