



**EASTERN CAPE PROVINCIAL LEGISLATURE**  
**Democratic Alliance Member of the Provincial Legislature**  
The Hon. Retief Odendaal, MPL.



**Provincial Legislature**  
**Private Bag x0051**  
**Bhisho, 5605**

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**DATE: 26 SEPTEMBER 2019**

**THE PREMIER**  
**HON OSCAR MABUYANE**

Dear Premier

**RE: DECLARATION OF DROUGHT IN THE EASTERN CAPE**

I refer to the aforementioned matter.

As you know, the Eastern Cape is amidst one of the most disastrous droughts in the history of this country. We have had below average rainfall for five years already and unfortunately it would seem that the drought may last much longer than initially thought.

The severity of this drought has brought many farmers, both commercial and emerging, to their knees. Farmers on the Western side of this province continue to buy feed for their livestock on a weekly basis and as a result, in many cases, are facing financial ruin. In some instances farmers have already opted to sell most of their livestock as they simply had no ways and means to buy feed for their livestock.

Against this backdrop the Democratic Alliance is particularly concerned with the fact that the province seems to be making no progress with regards to gazetting a drought declaration.

Notwithstanding the dire situation that most of the farmers on the Western side of the province are finding themselves in, it seems as if it is business as usual for the Eastern Cape Department for Rural Development and Agrarian Reform who does not seem to realise the severity of the situation. Calls to declare the Eastern Cape a disaster area by organised agricultural structures have also unfortunately fallen onto death ears.

You have been quite vocal about your administrations' support for the agricultural industry in the province. Unfortunately, the Department of Rural Development and Agrarian Reform is failing the farmers of our province as they are quite frankly not championing any of the drought related issues.

The first step to ensuring that we have access to much needed financial aid for the province and its farmers is gazetting a drought declaration! Every day that we delay this process is disastrous for the agricultural industry.

It is clear that the matter requires your urgent, personal intervention. As such, I kindly request that you urgently advise both the agricultural industry and the public at large as to how we as a province will deal with the impact of the drought by the end of this month (Monday 30 September 2019).

I await your kind but urgent action in this regard.

**Sincerely,**



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**Retief Odendaal, MPL**

**LLB (NMMU)**

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**CC: MEC RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND AGRARIAN REFORM HON N METH, MPL**

**HEAD OF THE DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND AGRARIAN REFORM  
MR HJ MHLOMI**

**LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION HON N BHANGA, MPL**

**FREEDOM. FAIRNESS. OPPORTUNITY. DIVERSITY.**