****

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 2659/ NW3143E**

**MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES:**

**Ms Z Jongbloed (DA) to ask the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries:**

**QUESTION**

How (a) successful has his department’s Integrated Fisheries Security Strategy been in containing the poaching of abalone in the Overstrand Local Municipality in the Western Cape and (b) many arrests have been made in this regard since the implementation of the specified strategy?    NW3143E

**REPLY**

1. The Department’s Integrated Fisheries Security Strategy has been substituted with Initiative 5, the Enhanced and Coordinated Enforcement Programme in terms of the Marine Protection Services and Governance LAB of Operation Phakisa. This followed the decision taken by Cabinet which required the development of a more integrated approach for Ocean Governance, including the development of management plans for the Oceans and Coastal Areas.

During the pilot stage of the Enhanced and Coordinated Enforcement Programme the poaching of abalone and other marine resources in the Overstrand Local Municipality in the Western Cape were identified as one of the Key Focus areas and this programme created a platform and provided for an integrated and coordinated approach in addressing indiscriminate fishing practices as well as other illegal activities within the ocean environment through systems, processes and practices that allowed for the detection of infringements and prevention capabilities followed by a co-ordinated and integrated response to deal with these challenges.

Compliance and enforcement activities were increased and the monitoring of associated enforcement activities related to Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (IUU), Boat Based whale watching, White Shark cage diving, illegal activities within Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) and abalone closed areas were successfully addressed. The success of this intergraded approach were echoed during the recent media enquiries in respect of the joint operation in the Overberg where the successes were welcomed requiring which departments were involved, stating that the communities seems to be very happy with the operation with some saying zero incidents of poaching has been reported as a result of more effective and visible policing.

1. Since the implementation of the Pilot of Enhanced and Coordinated Enforcement Programme in the Western Cape 141 Premises were inspected; 201 Harbour & slipways were inspected; 6 Fish Processing Establishments inspected; 246 Vehicles inspected; 683 Vessels/boats inspected.; 20 Roadblocks/VCPs held; 66 Coastal patrols; 4 Observation posts; 106 Fishing permits inspected; 2 Boat Based Whale Watching (BBWW) permits inspected; 19 Fines were issued; and 27 Case dockets opened. During first two quarters of the current financial year more than 12 suspects were arrested in respect of infringements relating to more than 4794 West Coast Rock Lobster; 48160 units of Abalone and 11608 white mussels illegally harvested in the Overberg area.