**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**SELECT COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS CALLS FOR PROVINCES TO SUBMIT BUSINESS PLANS TIMEOUSLY FOR LAND CARE GRANT**

**Parliament, Thursday, 1 September 2022 –** The Select Committee on Appropriations was briefed by the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) and National Treasury on provincial expenditure on the Land Care Programme Grant.

The grant aims to promote sustainable use and management of natural agricultural resources by encouraging community-based initiatives. The Land Care Grant has an overall budget of R84,9 million for the financial year 2022/23, of which DALRRD has transferred R25,7 million to Free State, Limpopo, KwaZulu-Natal, Northern Cape, North West and Western Cape.

Gauteng was identified as the province that has as underspent the most on its grant allocation. Meanwhile, Treasury said most provinces are still underspending on their grant allocation for weed and invader plant control, erecting fences in grazing and arable land, as well as hectares of land for conservation.

According to National Treasury, KwaZulu-Natal and Western Cape were the only provinces to make significant progress in spending their allocated funds. National Treasury recommended that procurement delays be resolved to ensure goods and services are delivered on time.

The Chairperson of the Select Committee on Appropriations, Ms Dikeledi Mahlangu, said: “We have had concerns as the Appropriations Committee in terms of these delays, but still there are provinces that are still not getting it right and perhaps it’s because there is no consequence management.”

Ms Mahlangu went on to say that if provincial departments are not planning properly, this can cause serious problems, as it could lead to fiscal dumping later on.

The committee also raised concerns about some provinces that are not submitting their business plans timeously. It called for provincial portfolio committees of Agriculture and Finance to monitor and assist departments in planning for the Land Care Grant.

The committee is also concerned about delays in approving business plans in the provinces, as these will impact on service delivery.

**ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS, MS DIKELEDI MAHLANGU.**

For media enquiries or interviews with the Chairperson, please contact the committee’s Media Officer:
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