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**SUBMISSIONS TO PUBLIC HEARINGS ON THE MARINE LIVING RESOURCES  
AMENDMENT BILL – M MOSS**

Dear Chairperson

I would like to thank the chairperson of the Portfolio committee of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries for affording me the opportunity to make this presentation here today. It is always a great privilege to me to be part of the struggle of the poor coastal communities.

As a person who was born in Saldanha, it is obvious that I shall not only have an interest in the fishing industry in general, but in the plight of the ordinary, indigenous, artisanal and small scale fisher folk in particular.

We were all taught to fish from very small on the shore by catching fish in the pool and on the rocks and more people became involved in the harvesting of the marine resources and a new unfortunate new phenomena crept in. Things such as overfishing and poaching for commercial purposes and by the big companies became the order of the day. Add to it climate change and global warming. The government implemented new policies which were meant to preserve the resource.

These policies benefited only the commercial and big businesses. The poor coastal communities had to do with interim relief for eight years and could only harvest fish for a certain period of the year. Many fishers were also excluded and the poverty levels increased.

I need to say that I was a member of parliament during this time and served in the Portfolio Committee of Environment and Tourism. I was also part and parcel of the group of people who worked on the small scale fishing policy. I am equally happy today to say that as a human rights activist in the fishing industry that I am proud of the enormous progress made under the Leadership of Minister Tina Joemat Petterson and Portfolio Committee Chairperson Lulu Johnson. Acting Deputy Director General Desmond Stevens also need special mentioning.

In the late 1960's when I got some understanding that it was the marine resources from the sea that fed them and made it possible to make a living, access to sea was an issue. It was like the Bible says, do not give a person a fish, but teach the person to catch a fish. We were all taught to fish from very small on the shore by catching fish in the pools and on the rocks and graduated to become fully fledged fishermen.

There was abundance of fish and we used to share it with our families and the whole communities. By exchanging our fish with people who would come from the inland towns like Paarl, Ceres and Worcester, we were also engaged in some kind of

business. They would give us fruits and vegetables in return. It was something to look forward to and we learned some entrepreneurial skills.

There was an abundance of fish until meat became either too scarce and too expensive. Fish also became a more sought after delicacy and because it was also very cheap. Other people also discovered very late that fish is also good for one's health and the demand for it increased. Ons ry nie meer snoek koppe en kyte verniet nie. Daar is ook nie meer 'n visgat waar jy kan vis gaan haal nie.

Since the overwhelming majority of the role players who participated yesterday and today support the amendments. I want to add my voice and say now is the time to pass amendments and ensure a better deal for coastal communities. We need the MANDJIE (some call it the TROLLIE) to implement it not soon, but now!!! The indigenous knowledge of our people needs to be part and parcel of the final decisions of the scientists. Financial resources similar to the Land Bank and development training need to be available for the Small Scale Fishers. All labour legislation like the Labour Relations Act and the Basic Conditions Employment Act need to be applicable to all fishers.

Finally Chairperson, since fishing is the most dangerous job on earth and a fisherman drowning at sea has become an "accepted and unnoticed" norm, the COIDA legislation must also be applicable to fishing workers.

Viva to the passing of the Legislation of the Marine Living Resources Amendment Bill.

I thank you

**Maxwell Moss**