**ENVIRONMENT, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES COMMITTEE WELCOMES UPDATE ON SUSPENSION OF CEO OF SOUTH AFRICAN WEATHER SERVICE**

Parliament, Tuesday, 3 September 2019 – The Portfolio Committee on Environment, Forestry and Fisheries welcomes the update it received from the South African Weather Services (SAWS) Board on the matter of the suspended chief executive officer.

The committee heard from the Board that the matter has been sitting with SAWS for almost a year, but that it has set aside 23 to 25 September 2019 to deal with the matter, as it has been dragging on for too long.

As much as the committee understands and respects that things should be done within the parameters of the law, it is important to also look at the ramifications of this process, which include the leadership vacuum that has been left by not having a permanent CEO. The committee would therefore like to see this matter resolved speedily so that there is stability at the Weather Service.

The committee also received a briefing from the iSimangaliso Wetland Park on its annual performance plan and strategic plan for 2019/20 to 2023/24. After receiving an invite from the Park to visit the area, the committee has made an undertaking to visit the iSimangaliso Wetland Park to gain a clearer understanding of what is happening there, particularly in relation to the communities living near the park and how they have benefited from this proximity.

iSimangaliso indicated to the committee that local people are employed in the park and small businesses also benefit in terms of development. The committee also wants to understand and appreciate where there is development and any areas of conflict. The committee also wants to understand any sources of conflict and find solutions for them.

ISSUED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMUNICATION SERVICES ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES, MR FIKILE XASA.