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***PROCEEDINGS OF THE MINI-PLENARY SESSION – NATIONAL ASSEMBLY***

***CHAMBER***

\_\_\_\_

Members of the mini-plenary session met on the virtual

platform at 14:00.

House Chairperson Mr C T Frolick took the Chair and requested

members to observe a moment of silence for prayers or

meditation.

The Chairperson announced that the virtual mini-plenary

sitting constituted a meeting of the National Assembly.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr C T Frolick): Thank you, hon

members. Hon members, before we proceed, I would like to

remind you that the virtual mini-plenary is deemed to be in

the precinct of Parliament and thus constitutes a meeting of

the National Assembly for debating purposes only. In addition

to the Rules of virtual sittings, the Rules of the National



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Assembly including the Rules of debate apply. Members enjoy

the same powers and privileges that apply to a sitting of the

National Assembly. Members should equally note that anything

said on the platform is deemed to have been said in the House

and may be ruled upon.

All members who have logged in shall be considered to be

present and are requested to mute their microphones and only

unmute it when recognised to speak. The microphones are very

sensitive and will pick up any noise which might disturb the

attention of other members. When recognised to speak, please

unmute your microphone and connect your video. Members may

also make use of the icons on the bar at the bottom of their

screen which has the option that allows a member to put up his

or her hand to raise a point of order.

The secretariat will assist in this regard. When using the

virtual system, members are urged to refrain or desist from

unnecessary points of order or interjections. We shall now

proceed to the Order, which is a debate on Vote No 32:

Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment Appropriation Bill. I

will now recognise the Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the

Environment.



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**APPROPRIATION BILL**

Debate on Vote No 32 - Forestry, Fisheries and the

Environment:

The MINISTER OF FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT: Hon

House Chair, our Deputy Minister Ms Makhotso Sotyu, hon

chairperson Ms Faith Muthambi and all committee members,

chairpersons of the entities reporting to our department,

Director-General Ms Nomfundo Tshabalala, chief executive

officers, CEOs, of our public entities, ladies and gentlemen,

good afternoon.

On the night of 11 April, Mrs Thembisa Nomlala an Enviro Champ

from the Quarry Road West informal settlement from the City of

eThekwini, stood waist deep in water clutching her little

grandchild, as she worked to evacuate her fellow residents.

Using information from the satellite linked, flood early

warning system, she and fellow Enviro Champs were able to save

all but one life, as the Palmiet River washed away 450 homes

in her community.



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Her traumatic experience that awful night illustrates the

human tragedy behind the 6th International Panel on Climate

Change report. This three-part document confirms climate

change induced disasters as the most significant threat to

people, economies and the natural world.

The suffering of the residents of the Quarry Road West

informal settlement illustrates the often quoted reality that

women and children in particular, living in conditions of

poverty, are most vulnerable to climate change.

But Mrs Nomlala and her fellow Enviro Champs who belong to the

Transformative Riverine Management Programme, have an

important and powerful message for us: “Vulnerable communities

do not have to be totally powerless in the face of climate

Change”.

Instead, partnerships such as this one, which includes the

City of eThekwini, the community of Quarry Road West, and the

University of KwaZulu-Natal can play in important role in

building climate resilience within vulnerable communities.



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As we face the urgency of the climate crisis, climate

resilience will need to be built across the system and special

attention will need to be paid to particularly vulnerable

individuals, households and communities.

The current work by the Presidential Climate Commission to

support the co-creation a just transition framework for South

Africa emphasises tells us that everyone affected must be part

of developing the solutions; there must be an equitable

distribution of risks and opportunities so that vulnerable

workers and communities do not carry the burden and the

process can only succeed if it helps us with our broader

developmental objectives, namely, economic inclusion,

employment and building a more equitable society.

While we wait for this esteemed House to consider the Climate

Bill, we are putting in place the domestic architecture for

climate change mitigation and adaptation.

In line with our revised Nationally Determined Contribution,

NDC, to reducing green-house gas emissions, we have developed

the Sectoral Emission Targets Framework that outlines emission



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reduction goals for key sectors of the economy. The process of

allocating these will start in this financial year.

Two years ago, Cabinet approved the National Climate Change

Adaptation Strategy. Thus far, we have supported all 44

district municipalities to develop climate change adaptation

strategies. Current work includes support to ensure

integration of climate priorities into the integrated

development plans.

A Presidential Climate Finance Task Team, headed by Mr Daniel

Mminele, is leading a technical team to understand the full

details of an offer by developed countries to mobilise

US$8,5 billion over the next three to five years to support

the implementation of our revised NDC.

Recent media coverage has cast doubt on the Weather Service’s

ability to predict severe weather events and protect our

citizens from the impact of climate change. These reports are

untrue. Weather warnings were issued ahead of the floods from

11-12 April and were updated with the intensity of the weather

event.



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To ensure that despite revenue shortfalls, our forecasting

ability is state of the art. We have allocated the South

African Weather Service an amount of R100 million over three

years to upgrade its infrastructure, starting with R15 million

in the last financial year.

As you are aware, we continue to face severe air pollution in

the three highly industrialised priority areas of Vaal

Triangle, Highveld and the Waterberg-Bojanala areas. The

regulations for implementing and enforcing priority air

quality management plans will be published by the end of this

year.

There are presently 10 appeals against the various decisions

by the department’s National Air Quality Officer in relation

to requests for the suspension and postponement of compliance

with the minimum emission standards and the issuing of a

provisional Atmospheric Emission Licences. While some of the

appeals were granted, others were refused. Due to the complex

and conflicting nature of the issues raised in the appeals

received, I am putting in place process in terms of section

3(a) of National Environmental Management Act to advise me on

the appeals. I have already gazetted invitations for



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nominations for a panel of experts to consider both oral and

written evidence on these critical matters.

Hon members, a year ago I released the High Level Panel Report

which reviewed policies, legislation and practices related to

the management, breeding, hunting, trade and handling of

elephant, lion, leopard and rhino.

In June 2021, the department released a draft policy position

for public comment which covered some of the panel’s key

recommendations. The public comment process solicited over

9 000 comments from widely divergent views.

Accordingly, the department decided to proceed with the

development of a White Paper on the Conservation and

Sustainable use of South Africa’s Biodiversity. The White

Paper will be considered by Cabinet in June, where after it

will be published for public comment. We don’t have to wait

for the White Paper to formalise new approaches and practices

in line with the panel’s recommendations. Certain measures can

proceed now on a mutually agreed basis.



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On the issue of the captive lion industry, I intend to

establish a panel of experts to formulate and oversee

implementation of a voluntary exit strategy for those who wish

to participate. I believe that by engaging and working with

stakeholders, we can develop a voluntary strategy that can

mitigate risks, including the effect on the local economy, job

creation and the welfare and wellbeing of the lions

themselves. This panel will have clearly defined terms of

reference, and tight timelines, so that effect can be given to

the High Level Panel recommendations, and the decision

emanating from the 2018 Parliamentary Colloquium on lions.

South Africa also needs a species recovery plan for white

rhino, which considers the poaching crisis, and the potential

we have to breed of white rhino in controlled environments for

conservation purposes, in support of conserving rhino in

extensive systems. I believe that such a plan can be developed

in partnership with private rhino owners. Having considered

this matter, requested Sanparks to lead the development of

such a recovery plan as a key element of their work in this

financial year.



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Parliament has approved an amendment to the National

Environmental Management Biodiversity Act, which will enable

the development of legislation at national level relating to

the wellbeing of wildlife. We are in the process of

establishing a wildlife welfare forum that will promote

biodiversity conservation and the ecologically sustainable,

responsible and humane use and management of wildlife.

Hon members, I am pleased to announce today that we have

settled 58 out of 66 land claims within protected areas that

were identified for speedy resolution during the 8th People

and Parks Conference held in Limpopo in 2018. My special

appreciation goes to the Land Claims Commission and Minister

Ms Thoko Didiza for her leadership.

Of great concern to me are the unresolved land claims in the

Kruger National Park. I want to commend the board of Sanparks

and the management of the Kruger National Park for the new

energy which is being displayed in meeting with traditional

authorities to conclude the complex land claims in a more

inclusive manner which is of greater benefit to the

communities involved.



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iSimangaliso Wetland Park and Sanparks, earlier this year,

hosted investor conferences to attract private sector

investment in new and existing tourism opportunities. Both

investment conferences come at a crucial time in our country’s

overall Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan in which

tourism recovery and growth features in the top five

priorities together with infrastructure investment and green

economy initiatives. We look forward to the projects

introduced to investors supporting accelerated job creation in

the rural communities bordering our parks where currently few

other opportunities for sustainable livelihoods exist.

In an effort to create more work opportunities for the local

communities living adjacent to our protected areas and support

for small and medium enterprises, this year, the department

will invest more in the protection and conservation of natural

resources. Through a partnership with Sanparks, SA National

Biodiversity Institute, SANBI, and iSimangaliso, we will

create 8 315 work opportunities through our Natural Resource

Management Portfolio aimed at managing invasive species,

restoring degraded dryland areas as well as rehabilitating

degraded wetlands.



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Furthermore, we will create 2 646 more work opportunities in

the protected areas through our Environmental Protection and

Infrastructure Programme, which will upgrade and refurbish

infrastructure in protected areas and botanical gardens.

Hon members, keeping our country clean and ridding our

environment of unwanted and unsightly waste remains an

important part of our commitment to provide a healthy

environment for all.

We have, in the past year, promulgated the regulations on

mandatory extended producer responsibility with the aim to

lessen the burden on landfills. The regulations for organic

waste treatment, and organic waste composting, have also been

published for implementation in order to divert waste away

from landfills and create new industries.

To improve waste management in municipalities, the department

is assisting in the development of their Integrated Waste

Management Plans, and training on sustainable waste management

practices.



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The department is also providing 22 vehicles to 19

municipalities across the country. With a total value of over

R42 million. These vehicles include skip loader trucks, front

end loaders, compactor trucks and other trucks required to

transport waste within these areas.

Through our provincial and municipal support initiative, the

Municipal Cleaning and Greening Programme undertaken in the

past financial year addressed public education and littering

in 36 municipalities across the country. In all, 3000 work

opportunities were created as we improved environmental

health.

Fishers are an important contributor to food security and

local growth. In the past year, we have faced a number of

challenges related to not only the allocation of fishing

rights, but also with regards to the alleged effects of

seismic blasting on the ocean and fishing resources. All of

these are being addressed head-on.

To ensure fishing co-operatives are more sustainable, our

department is developing support programmes in collaboration

with the Department of Small Business Development and a number



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of local municipalities, which this year, will focus on

business acumen, financial management and improvement in value

chain. We will further facilitate the purchasing of fishing

equipment for co-operatives that are in need.

The results of the 2021 Fishing Rights Allocation Process,

FRAP, process were published on the 28th February. We are now

dealing with the appeals. We are appointing an independent

appeals team to advise me as the appeals authority on the

merits of each and every appeal to ensure the process is fair

and is concluded on time. I therefore urge all potential

appellants and interested and affected parties to lodge their

appeals on or before the cut-off time of midnight on 29 May

2022.

The impact of ocean-based seismic surveys on our marine

protected areas and on the fishing industry is a major issue

in the public domain. These surveys have been undertaken along

our coastline since the 1950s, and South Africa has

contributed to the body of foundational science on the issue.

To ensure mitigation measures protect both our ecosystems and

our fishing resources, the department intends to develop a

research programme on seismic surveys and their impacts in our



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local waters. We will start this year by looking back to

determine if there are observable impacts in ocean areas where

seismic surveys have already taken place over the last few

years.

Addressing the poaching of our country’s wildlife and plant

species has been prioritised by government with provinces and

sectors hard hit by these crimes receiving extensive support

from the department. Early in February, we reflected on the

rhino poaching statistics. While we acknowledged the steady

decline in poaching in the Kruger National Park, we also noted

that poaching pressure has shifted across the country and

KwaZulu-Natal has become a key target area.

As a result of the alarming rate of poaching in that province,

key departmental resources have been deployed to actively

support Ezemvelo KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife and the SAPS. This

includes assistance to intelligence gathering and joint

investigations, support to law enforcement officials and joint

operations managers, including the nerve centre in Hluhluwe-

Imfolozi Park which is part of the integrated wildlife zones.



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With regard with the work being done by the priority committee

under Initiative 5 of Operation Phakisa, a key concern remains

the fact that the high demand and high prices paid for

abalone. A similar concern is the continued illegal removal of

West Coast rock lobster from our oceans. Thus the department

continues to focus its enforcement efforts on countering these

illegal activities.

In order to refocus our effort around the management of the

abalone resource and how best to prevent and combat the

illicit trade, the department together with a broad range of

stakeholders will be developing an inclusive and holistic

strategic response and action plan for the prevention and

combatting of trade in illegally harvested abalone.

Let me conclude by thanking our Deputy Minister Ms Makhotso

Sotyu, for her energy and support in all areas of our

department’s work. My sincere thanks go to our Director-

General Ms Nomfundo Tshabalala, for her consistent and

thorough management of the many complex and varied tasks she

leads.



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I express my profound thanks to the team forestry, fisheries

and the environment as well as the board chairpersons, chief

executive officers and managers of our entities for all their

dedication to environmental matters and sustainable use of our

country’s natural resources.

Last but not least, my thanks go to our portfolio committee

led by the indomitable hon Faith Muthambi who always keeping

us on our toes. I thank you.

Ms A F MUTHAMBI: Hon House Chairperson, greetings to you, hon

Minister Creecy, Deputy Minister Sotyu, hon colleagues from

the portfolio committee members, and fellow colleagues, hon

members, the environmental sector family, ladies and

gentlemen, may I take this moment to extend to all of you on

behalf of the Portfolio Committee on Forestry, Fisheries and

Environment a warm welcome to this annual Debate of the Budget

Vote of the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and

Environmental Affairs.

House Chairperson, I would like to start this debate by

thanking all the members of the portfolio committee for their

unwavering commitment to protect our environment for the sake



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of both current and future generations of South Africans and

also to appreciate the support that your office has always

given to us. The integrity of our fellow committee members,

diligence and intellectual vigour and the frankness with which

they participated in the discussions on this budget and

associated annual performance plans of the department and

entities are truly phenomenal and have led to this budget

debate today.

Despite having not worked together with them from the very

start of this Sixth Parliamentary cycle, this being my first

budget debate in the Portfolio Committee on Environment,

Forestry and Fisheries, we have worked exceptionally well as a

committee in the short time we have been there. I have no

reservation in my mind whatsoever that we will continue

working together irrespective of our political affiliations

and emerge as one in the quest of protecting our environment.

We might not always agree on certain details of how certain

things have to be done, such as passing of this budget at the

committee level, but there is much scope for us to agree on

strategic issues pertaining to the environment, because

environmental sustainability benefits us all and environmental



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degradation be it on land, at sea or in the atmosphere costs

us all despite of our political affiliations. You will all

agree with me that the recent catastrophic floods in KwaZulu-

Natal, widely considered as a climate-induced, touched all of

us as South Africans. You could not possibly see those

pictures and the devastation without a deep sense of pain and

compassion arising from within you.

Hon Chairperson, the critical role that this broader

environmental portfolio, comprising fisheries and forestry

plays in our lives is contained in section 24 of our

Constitution, which obliges us all – in civil society and

government – to, “secure ecologically sustainable

development”. The Constitution set in motion a range of

policies and procedures to overthrow improper assumptions that

resources such as plant and animal products and air quality,

among others, will always be available no matter how we live,

produce and consume them.

Similarly, we have viewed our rivers, seas, land and air as

unending sinks for increasing amounts of solid, liquid or

airborne wastes despite the fact that the increasing

degradation of our natural resources clearly indicates these



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sinks can no longer cope. In short, we must protect and in

certain cases improve the quality of our environmental

resources to continue sustaining us both directly. For

example, we need clean air to be alive and fisheries for food,

and indirectly we need our biodiversity to support our tourism

and or hospitality industry that provides us with employment

to contribute towards our poverty alleviation efforts.

Despite this constitutional imperative for sustainable

development and creative body of legislation to achieve this,

our country’s broader environmental sector encompassing

forestry and fisheries resources continue to be subjected to

sustained pressure in the face of diminishing environmental

assets relative to growing competing demands. Global warming

and climate variability, loss of biodiversity,

desertification-led and invasive alien species-related land

degradation, waste pollution and littering, population growth,

urbanization and air pollution, are serious environmental and

resource stressors that need focused and increased resource

commitment.

These problems present a challenge to our government beyond

the jurisdiction of the department. For example, if you look



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at the budget allocation for the department in the 2022/23

financial year it is 0,41% of the overall government

expenditure of R2,16 trillion, down from 0,43% of

R2,02 trillion in 2021. The inflation figures from the SA

Reserve Bank show that the level of funding for the department

has been consistent since 2016/17, with no significant upward

deviation, ranging between 0,40 and 0,45% of the national

expenditure. The seemingly stable trend in the budgeted

expenditure of the department is merely based on nominal

allocations, without giving due consideration to inflation.

Furthermore, the transfer of the Forestry and Fisheries

branches or programmes of the former Department of

Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries to the department,

effective on 01 April 2020, as part of the national macro-

organisation of government, has not improved the overall

budget outlook of the department in a significant manner.

When we look at the department’s level of responsibility for

‘ocean governance and protection services’ over South Africa’s

very large Exclusive Economic Zone, EEZ with an extent of

about 1.5 million square kilometres, more than the land

surface of the country, in light of the current budget, one



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wonders whether the department is properly equipped to execute

these noble tasks on our behalf as a country, let alone the

securing of the integrity of our recently declared Marine

Protected Areas, MPAs.

House Chairperson, I know that Parliament has the power of the

purse and hence we have the ability to amend budgets, which

are tabled in Parliament. However, such an approach would not

be sustainable in the long run. What is more sustainable is

the proper appraisal of the broader environmental sector by

those in our budget committees to make such relevant and

appropriate decisions on funding of this crucial sector.

However, having interacted with you, hon Minister and your

team during the processing of this Budget Vote 32, we are

satisfied that the department is in capable hands, considering

the calibre of the executive management and technical

personnel under your executive leadership and authority, and

also your assurance to the members of the committee that the

Department was working toward the attainment of a clean audit.

We recognise that the Department fulfils its mandate mainly

through policy-making on matters of forestry, fisheries and



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environment, and also through co-ordination and monitoring of

the implementation of national environmental policies,

programmes and legislation with the additional support from

its five entities. These are, iSimangaliso Wetland Park

Authority, the SA National Biodiversity Institute, Sanbi, SA

National Parks, SANParks, the SA Weather Service, Saws, and

Marine Living Resources Fund, MLRF. We considered and

appreciated the purposeful structuring of the department into

nine programmes to ensure the effective achievement of its

constitutional mandate. It is easy to see that the nine

different programmes and their purposes are reflective of the

different focus areas and subsectors of environment

management, which is truly commendable in the light of ongoing

challenges that face all the different aspects of this sector.

Hon Chairperson, our forestry, fisheries and environment are

key to our survival, whichever wat we look at. For example,

the way in which we respond to the threats of climate change

would influence whether we can continue to export our

agricultural produce to our traditional markets up north

without being subjected to carbon border tax adjustments.

Similarly, the way how we manage our biodiversity and maintain

our status as an iconic biodiversity conservation-destination



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country would define whether we continue to receive increasing

numbers of international tourists or not.

We are so linked with the other parts of the world that we

conserve our natural resources not just for ourselves, but for

everybody. The environment does more than just providing raw

materials for economic production or serving as a sink for

pollutants that derive from the various facets of our economic

activity. It is in this regard that we argue that the

contribution of the environment must be holistically evaluated

in deciding the levels of funding for this invaluable sector,

considering the supportive nature of this sector to other

economically viable sectors and also the positive impact that

the environment has on our well-being or health, which is

succinctly stated in section 24(a) of our Constitution.

House Chairperson, having considered the budget and annual

performance plan of the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and

Environment, I conclude my speech by rising on behalf of the

ANC and hopefully on behalf of my very own committee to

support this Budget Vote 32 allocation for the 2022/23

financial year, with the allocation of R8,947 billion, as



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tabled on 23 February 2022. Thank you so much House

Chairperson.

Mr D W BRYANT: Chairperson, six months ago the world met in

Glasgow, Scotland for the 26th United Nations Conference of

the Parties on Climate Change. The conference was held as a

weary and battered international community started to slowly

emerge from the global COVID-19 crisis. Many important

commitments were made at the congress and none more important

for South Africa than the $8,5 billion commitment by the US,

UK, French and German governments to help South Africa

transition away from coal-based power towards cleaner forms of

energy. Six months since this pledge was made, we are facing a

new global crisis following the vicious and unprovoked Russian

attack on Ukraine. This unjust assault on a sovereign nation

has directly impacted the price of energy across the world and

has accelerated a global scramble for additional renewable

energy resources.

South Africa had six months to process the $8,5 billion offer

and should be way ahead of the pack, or so one would assume.

Unfortunately, this is not the case. Our portfolio committee

recently heard that six months later, the government is “still



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analysing the details” of the pledge and is waiting on

guidance from the Cabinet as to whether or not to accept the

assistance. It is worth being reminded that South Africa

remains the world's 12th highest emitter of greenhouse gases,

at least 40% of which are produced by old coal-fired power

stations.

This generous and altruistic offer of assistance will help to

fast-track our just transition towards a greener and more

sustainable future. But it appears that while some Ministers

seem to grasp the challenges we are facing, there are others

who are stuck in the Jurassic period, refusing to accept help

or acknowledge the growing international backlash against

coal-based energy. Last month, over 400 people were killed by

the unprecedented floods in Durban. The rainfall appears to be

between 4% and 8% more intense than normal, and this has been

attributed directly to climate change by leading climate

scientists from the University of Cape Town.

These extreme weather fluctuations are being felt across the

globe. But the impact will be all the more catastrophic for

the developing world. Severe drought events are also

increasing across South Africa, even though they may not be



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attracting the same levels of attention as Cape Town did in

2018 during its drought crisis. Municipalities like

Kgetlengrivier in the North West Province, which has been

facing a day-zero scenario for the past five years with

ongoing water shortages, as a result of poor planning by the

local ANC-controlled government.

The impact of the increased weather fluctuations caused by

climate change will only serve to increase the social

volatility in these already desperate municipalities. It is

now glaringly evident that climate change is not something

that will happen to our kids and our grandkids alone, as

evidenced by the severity of the recent floods and droughts.

Climate change is happening right now. It is vital that we

prioritise the Climate Change Bill, which is now before

Parliament, and ensure that we are able to build climate

change resilience to both mitigation and adaptation strategies

into our integrated government plans going forward.

A key challenge identified during the Durban floods was the

functioning of the early warning systems of the SA Weather

Service, SAWS. Representatives from SAWS have admitted

recently in media reports that their stations are unstable and



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functioned intermittently due to ongoing poor maintenance. We

have heard from SAWS that some warnings were issued prior to

the Durban flood, but it appears that these may not have been

properly communicated to all the parties. Either way, how can

we have confidence in the ability of SAWS to predict large-

scale weather events if, as reported, their stations keep

breaking down?

A significant amount of budget has been allocated for capital

projects in SAWS but it is essential that the maintenance of

the existing stations is urgently prioritised. All indications

are that the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the

Environment is heading for another qualified audit opinion.

The department has not improved the overall quality of

performance reporting and incurred a billion rand of irregular

expenditure. The department continues to both overpay and at

the same time fail to make payments across the board.

Whilst we appreciate that irregular expenditure has been

reported for investigation, we would again call for more

effective consequence management. The people of South Africa

simply deserve better and the officials who perform their

duties negligently, fraudulently or maliciously, must be held



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to account. Rhino numbers in Sanparks managed Kruger Park has

decreased by 75% over the past 10 years under this

administration, and the officials have admitted that these

numbers will likely continue to drop. The cruel illusion of

lower poaching numbers is now likely only due to the fact that

there are so few rhinos left to poach in the park.

The vast majority of the illegally trafficked horn is going to

China, and it is high time that this government increases the

pressure on the Chinese government and compels them to do

their bit to combat the flow of horn into their country.

Sanparks continues to stockpile masses of trimmed horn and

secret caches across the country and we need to know what the

future of these stockpiles is, and whether this stock is being

pilfered. It is important to make special mention of our brave

Sanparks rangers who put their lives on the line every and

form the thin green line in the battle against poaching.

Unfortunately, these anti-poaching teams in the Kruger will

continue to be on the back foot while 87 ranger posts remain

unfilled. The surrounding rural communities are desperate for

jobs and the ongoing vacancies are simply unacceptable.

Sanparks senior management has admitted that they are



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overstretched and do not have the resources at their disposal

to properly protect their animals. The financial hardship and

low morale among the rangers have sadly led to some staff

being lured into working with the poaching syndicates and

recent investigations have exposed sophisticated criminal

networks operating within Sanparks.

The DA continues to call for the proper implementation of

polygraph testing for Sanparks staff to disincentivise rangers

from working with poachers. The CEO of Sanparks remains

suspended on full pay while his internal disciplinary process

drags on. And this must be resolved as a matter of urgency in

the interest of all parties involved.

Many landfill sites across the country remain in terrible

condition with at least four illegal landfills currently being

investigated by the department. There is an urgent need to

prioritise both the approval of new landfills and the

maintenance and improvement of existing landfills across the

country. The government must do better in decreasing the

amount of waste going into landfills by promoting and

facilitating separation at source projects. It is not right

that the private sector continues to import large amounts of



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plastic waste from the Southern African Development Community,

SADC, countries to fill their recycling plants while we

contribute a comparatively small amount.

Plastic waste clogs up our landfills, ends up in oceans and

wetlands and is ingested by wildlife. The government should be

aggressively rolling out recycling initiatives across the

country, and it is high time that we follow the example of

other African countries like Kenya and implement a complete

ban on single-use plastic bags instead of having to continue

to conduct oversight and monitoring of the ineffective Plastic

Bag Tax, which was recently exposed to be dogged by

R10 million in fraudulent activity.

The fallout from the UPL fire that followed the riots last

year, has resulted in the complete devastation of the Umhlanga

Lagoon and its surrounds. The majority of indigenous wildlife

has been killed and it will take many years before any sort of

rehabilitation is possible. The response from the local

municipality was unfortunately woefully inadequate and we

simply cannot allow for this to happen again. It is heartening

to hear that an Action Plan has now been developed to deal

with land invasions in forestry plantations, and this has been



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identified as a significant barrier to improving the forestry

sector. Again, it appears that there is a lack of agreement in

the Cabinet as to who should bear the responsibility to

address certain land invasions and plantations, specifically

in Grabouw in the Western Cape.

Whilst many South Africans struggles with unemployment and

rising inflation, 33 posts have been removed from the forestry

branch, which will make the roll-out of the Forestry Master

Plan more difficult. The forestry sector has the potential to

create many new jobs yet the department appear to have done

away with its ambitious job targets which appears to show that

the potential growth in this sector is still a long way away.

There remains a target to plant 120 000 trees for the coming

year which appears to be setting the department up for failure

when they were only able to plant 40 000 trees in previous

years. How they will now plant three times this with the

limited staff has yet to be seen. The department has shrunk

the budget for the Marine Protected Areas and reduced the

budget of the Monitoring, Control and Surveillance

subprogramme. This will inevitably affect enforcement

operations and it appears that the department is effectively



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giving up on the fight against the poaching of crayfish and

abalone while local communities continue to be wracked by the

impacts of the criminal gangs and drugs associated with

poaching. The results of the long-awaited Fishing Rights

Allocation Process have left much traditional fisherfolk

without any income and no exemptions to continue to fish while

their appeals are being heard. We sincerely hope that the

Minister will take their appeals seriously at the end of this

month, and not leave more families destitute in these

increasingly desperate economic times.

Of all the directorates, biodiversity and conservation are

getting the worst deal. This was supposed to be a priority

area and was originally mentioned as such by the President

during his honeymoon phase, yet it seems the tune has now

changed. We have seen the budget for biodiversity and

conservation being reduced by 14% in 21-22 and now a whopping

58,4% reduction for 22-23. This is a massive blow to our

fragile ecosystems. Finally, the dithering over the future of

the Ezemvelo Estuary Mouth brought many local farmers to the

brink of destitution. And led to land invasions earlier in the

year onto the surrounding park. The government was only saved

by the natural breaching of the mouth which was caused by the



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unprecedented flooding in April. The DA welcomes the steps

taken to finalise and publish the White Paper on Conservation

and the Sustainable Use of Biological Diversity emanating from

the High Level Panel report on the management of lion,

elephant, leopard and rhino. The implementation of the report

has been long outstanding and has caused anxiety and

uncertainty for many, and it is good to see that steps are

being taken to address it.

We would also like to commend the Minister on her conciliatory

approach to issues that involve the communities, particularly

regarding outstanding land claims. And the steps taken to

include the welfare and the wellbeing of the wildlife must

also be commended. While some steps have been taken in the

right direction, the weight of the challenges faced within the

Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment and its

entities are manifold. Real progress will only start to happen

when there is a willingness to address the core issues within

many of the directorates, and an agreement within the Cabinet

on key issues such as climate change, conservation and

biodiversity. We do not have the luxury of time anymore, and

decisive and courageous steps must now be taken by the



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government to pull our environment back from the brink. Thank

you.

Mr M N PAULSEN: House Chairperson, the EFF rejects Budget Vote

32 on Forestry, Fisheries and Environment. Section 2J of the

Marine Living Resources Act, MLRA, states, and I quote:

The need to restructure the fishing industry to address

the historical imbalances and to achieve equity in all

branches of the fishing industry.

Furthermore, section 18(5) of the MLRA states:

In granting any right referred to in subsection 1, the

Minister shall, in order to achieve the objectives

contemplated in section 2, have particular regard to the

need to permit new entrants, particularly those of the

historically disadvantaged sectors of society.

Chairperson, these two sections are the cornerstones for the

transformation of the fishing industry, and enable the

Minister to introduce new entrants into the various fishing

sectors. But yet, existing rights holders from most of the



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basket of species in Fishing Rights Allocation Process, FRAP,

2022 were the usual suspects; I&J, Sea Harvest and Oceana. For

the three of the top high value species, hake deep sea, squid

and south coast rock lobster, there were eight new successful

entrants out of thousands that submitted applications.

Many fishers registered companies that made application for

FRAP 2022 and very few of them had any success. Fishing is

being deliberately moved away from the traditional coastal

communities to service the higher end market. There was a time

when most fish were caught by coastal fishing communities,

where it was not just a livelihood but also a form of

socialisation for those communities. Traditional fishers used

to donate excess fish to orphanages and old age homes. Under

the current government, fishing is now being fully

commercialised, breaking down the social bonds that

traditional fishing communities once had, and stripping these

communities of their livelihoods.

Fishing used to bind our communities together. Coastal fishing

communities are not high-end income communities; they had no

desire to take more than is needed. Species such as crayfish,

abalone and hottentot or cape bream used to be poor men’s



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fish, but due to its popularity among the poor working class,

commercial fishing companies, in collusion with government,

quickly seized the opportunity.

This ANC-led government and all its Ministers responsible for

fishing have prioritised commercial interests and robbed

coastal fishing communities of their livelihoods. In addition

to the species allocated, the department also allows fishing

companies lodged by catchers which could otherwise sustain the

small-scale fishing industry. For example, hake deep sea

trawlers will also catch snoek that could otherwise sustain

all small-scale fishers for two to three years.

The fisheries management branches never delivered services

timeously due to human capacity shortages. The FRAP 2020

became FRAP 2022 and not FRAP 2021, and this is due to the

staff shortages, and the departmental plan shows there will be

a further 36 reduced from the already understaffed branch.

The courts had to instruct the department to create access for

small-scale fishers that were side-lined by the MLRA because

it was so focused on commercial fishers. But we know that it

was not only the ANC that sold-out small-scale fishers, but it



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is a fact that the Congress of South African Trade Unions,

COSATU, was involved in drafting the MLRA.

The ANC and its alliance party as COSATU are responsible for

the poverty, unemployment and inequality small-scale fishers

are suffering. Since 2012 when the Small-scale Fishing Policy

was approved, commercial fishers were allocated fishing rights

three times; 2013, 2015 and 2022 while small-scale fishers are

still waiting for the first fishing rights allocation to be

concluded. The same injustices exist in forestry where smaller

growers and forestry communities were not even considered when

the National Forestry Act was crafted.

House Chairperson, through the Working on Fire programme we

are able to create employment for many more young people, but

because this government does not have capacity, contractors

are taking the bulk of the money through the outsourced

Expanded Public Works Programme.

House Chairperson, when it comes to waste pickers, they are

saving us money at a local government level by collecting and

sorting waste. The money that these municipalities save should

be invested in waste pickers.



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Lastly, House Chairperson, I would like to address this

department’s approach to climate change. If we had a

functional government, we would have proper mitigation

strategies in place that would have saved those more than 400

lives that were lost due to government’s negligence in the

recent floods on the east coast. It is for these reasons that

the EFF rejects this Budget, just like the voters in Phokwane

and Mahikeng overwhelmingly rejected the ANC in the recent

byelections in favour of the EFF. Thank you very much.

Mr N SINGH: Hon House Chairperson, time will not allow me to

reflect on all the programmes that this department is

responsible for. However, let me start by saying that as the

IFP we once again extend our condolences to families of lost

loved ones during the devastating floods in KwaZulu-Natal and

other parts of the country. Our hearts also go out to those

families who are still trying to locate loved ones buried in

tons of debris. Finding these remains will certainly bring

some sort of closure and be of some comfort to them.

House Chairperson, never has it been so imperative that we

take drastic action as a country, region, continent and as one

humanity to mitigate the ever-encroaching disastrous effects



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of climate change. Terms such as deforestation, global

warming, carbon capture and corridors, plastics pollution, the

green economy and sustainable development must become the norm

rather than the exception, and forefront in our minds as we

govern and holistically enact laws and regulation for the

benefit of our present and future generations.

House Chairperson, we recently witnessed the devastation and

tragedy caused by an extreme weather event which has been

directly attributed by scientists as a consequence and effect

of climate change. Such devastation will take years to recover

from, and is compounded by the fact that we remain in the

midst of the current COVID-19 global health crisis. This is

sadly contrasted with extreme water shortages in other parts

of the province and country. For example, the residents in

Bergville situated along the mighty Tugela River have no water

in their taps as the limited resource is being directed to

Johannesburg to Minister Barbara Creecy and others.

We are in a crisis; climate change is real and we are

beginning to see the inconvenient truth that a hotter planet

is a more extreme one and that, if left unchecked, an

unliveable one. According to the World Meteorological



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Organisation, the year 2020 was one of the three warmest years

recoded globally.

What we need is a people-centric approach together with the

requisite enabling legislation and regulation which will be

central towards achieving success. It is imperative therefore

that the long due Climate Change Bill, which is currently

before the portfolio committee, be urgently passed. This Bill

cannot linger in Parliament. Additionally, it is crucial that

all stakeholders be consulted and that the Bill reflects

strong enforcement measures. Above all, we need to ensure

strong consequence management of these legislative tools. We

cannot continue to draft and publish policies and legislation

but fail to properly enforce these measures.

The IFP has repeatedly called for the establishment of

specialist “green” courts to deal with environmental crime as

this remains the only feasible solution to dealing effectively

with criminals and syndicates that target environmental

resources like the rhinos.

UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties, COP26, focussed

on climate change and deforestation and good work was done,



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but this momentum must be continued now more than ever,

despite the hardships and ongoing challenges we are having

because of the impact of COVID-19. Public and private

partnerships will be essential as find sustainable solutions

together as a nation.

Initiatives such as the One Billion Trees for Africa which is

a local community ecosystems restoration action which seeks to

grow indigenous trees and develop non-timber-based products

value chain using integrated agroforestry practices is an

example of what should be happening at community and local

government level, and it has to be assisted by business as

well as provincial and national government. In welcoming this

initiative, one has to be very careful that we do not disrupt

the lives of communities that rely on this land for

agriculture and grazing processes. If one looks at the rest of

Africa and maybe in our own country, there is conflict between

communities and those that are trying to achieve carbon

credits to deforestation.

House Chairperson, it also remains imperative that we place

ourselves upon a net-zero emissions trajectory and commence

establishing sustainable and renewable “green” power sector



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initiatives which will not only ensure power generation

capacity to the ever-increasing demand for supply, but also

reach our off grid rural communities.

Development and climate change ambitions must not be seen as a

zero-sum game where we can have only one or the other, but

rather seen as the two necessary pillars of a sustainable and

renewable future for South Africa.

House Chairperson, lastly, I can see you coming up to me now,

the Paris Agreement highlighted a number of issues, and we

need to make sure that we can implement all these issues. I

also want to say that this department has an extremely

important role to play in the biggest scheme of things. It

needs more money, but for now we will support this Budget.

Thank you very much.

Ms T BREEDT: Chairperson, seven years ago, this department was

apparently a high performing organisation. After its fall from

grace, strides have been made to improve it and its audit

outcomes, but we are not in the clear yet. Especially taking

climate change and the recent KwaZulu-Natal floods into

account, more needs to be done by this department.



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*Afrikaans*:

Ek moet wel byvoeg dat ek hoop het vir hierdie department met

Minister Creecy en haar span aan’t stuur daarvan. Die afgelope

dieselbesoedeling in die Thabo Mofutsanyane en Fezile Dabi

Distrikte in die Vrystaat is ’n bewys van haar êrns oor die

omgewing en daadwerklike optrede om probleme aan te spreek.

*English*:

The budget allocation to the department is 0,41% of the

overall government expenditure. It is down from 0,43% in 2021.

*Afrikaans*:

Hierdie departement het ’n kwynende begroting en dis

kommerwekkend. Ja, hierdie is nie onderwys of gesondheid of

selfs landbou nie. Maar ons gaan moet begin besef dat sonder

die werk wat hierdie departement en sy entiteite vermag, gaan

voedselsekuriteit al hoe verder uit ons bereik wees, ons almal

se gesondheid in gedrang wees en voor ons ons oë uitvee gaan

skole en ons bestaan iets van die verlede wees.

*English*:

Consequently, the Department received a budget allocation of

R8,947 billion for the 2022-23 financial year, which indicates



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a nominal decrease of 1,67%, which translates to over R151

million from the 2021-22 allocation.

In nominal terms, four programmes received an increased

allocation. It is welcomed that Regulatory Compliance and

Sector Monitoring as well as chemicals and waste management

have increased budgets, especially looking at the state of our

municipal landfill sites, as previously mentioned.

Conversely, the reduction of funds affected five programmes:

Oceans and Coasts; Climate Change, Air Quality and Sustainable

Development; Biodiversity and Conservation; Forestry

Management; and Fisheries Management.

*Afrikaans*:

Alhoewel die programme wat verhoogde begrotings ontvang het

belangrik is, en ’n argument uitgemaak kan word dat hulle dit

moet ontvang, kan ons nie ná wat in KwaZulu-Natal gebeur het,

dieselfde kyk na die programme wat verlaagde begrotings

ontvang nie. Ons kan nog minder dit aanvaar in ag genome die

geweldige skade wat aangerig is, die agterstand wat Suid-

Afrika in terme van gereedheid vir rampe en voorbereiding teen

klimaatsverandering het.



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Dit is verder net so belangrik om ons seelewe te bestuur en te

bewaar. Ook om te verseker dat sekere visspesies nie uitsterf

as gevolg van oorvangs daarvan nie. Suid-Afrika kan nie

bekostig om soos ander lande in Afrika, byvoorbeeld Tanzanië

en Zanzibar, ’n bewaringskrisis te beleef as gevolg van

oorvangs en die spandabelrige omgang van ons met ons omgewing

nie.

Ons kan ook wel nie bekostig om van ons riviere te vergeet

nie. Die departement moet kennis neem van die hordes

wanfunksionele rioolaanlegte in munisipaliteite wat tot

rivierbesoedeling lei en dit prioritiseer.

*English*:

Although there is a budget increase to five of the entities

and that is welcomed, it is worrying that the one entity that

has a decreased transfer is the South African Weather Service.

As stated above, we cannot afford to not prioritise our

knowledge of the changing weather patterns in and around South

Africa. We need to prioritise our radar infrastructure for

this.

*Afrikaans*:



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Volgens die kenners gaan die ooste van Suid-Afrika nog meer

ekstreme weersomstandighede in die komende jare ervaar. Ons

het gesien dat die Noord-Kaap van teisterende multi-jaar

droogtes na ’n miggieplaag gaan. Miggieplae word slegs in die

natse weersonstandighede, soos in Skotland, aangetref.

Nelson Mandelabaai in die Oos-Kaap is ‘n paar dae van dag-zero

af, terwyl ander gedeeltes van dieselfde provinsie saam met

KwaZulu-Natal weggespoel het.

*English*:

Ban Ki-Moon, Former Secretary-General of UN once said:

“Climate change is the single greatest threat to a sustainable

future but, at the same time, addressing the climate challenge

presents a golden opportunity to promote prosperity, security

and a brighter future for all.”

*Afrikaans*:

Dit is verder net so kommerwekkend dat biodiversiteit en

bewaring se begroting aan die verklein is, veral aangesien

stropery steeds ’n geweldige probleem is en aandag gaan moet

geniet om die bewaring van ons groot vyf te verseker.



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Ook visseryebestuur wat self ongelooflike uitdagings in terme

van ons seelewe, vissersregte, ensovoorts ervaar gaan in die

toekoms na gekyk moet word.

So kan ons verder ook na die program van Lugkwaliteit en

volhoubare ontwikkeling kyk en moet ons van die afgelope

#DeadlyAir-hofsaak van The Centre for Environmental Rights

teen die departement onthou. Dit sal nie wys wees om nie die

nodige befondsing daar te stel vir lugkwaliteit bestuur nie.

*English*:

But let me conclude, by polluting the oceans, not mitigating

CO2 emissions and destroying our biodiversity, we are killing

our planet. Let us face it, there is no planet B.

Mr W M THRING: Hon House Chairperson, the ACDP asserts that

South Africa is a blessed nation. Together with our human

resource, we are blessed with an abundance of mineral wealth.

We have a coastline of 2 800km, presided over by two great

oceanic systems: a powerful Mozambique current on one side of

the continent and the Benguela current on the other. This

department is the custodian of South Africa’s indigenous,



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woodlands and plantation forest resources which covers over 50

million hectares.

What we must not allow, is for a blessing to become a curse.

The late world renown leader, Dr Myles Munroe, taught that

when God created the earth, the rain was held back because

there was no one to manage it. He further eloquently stated

that what we fail to manage, we will lose.

The ACDP wishes to make it abundantly clear, that if this

department fails to implement fiscal discipline and cost

effectiveness for the common good of all South African

citizens, and fails to manage our state resources effectively,

we will suffer loss.

The department is mandated to give effect to the right of

citizens to an environment that is not harmful to their health

or well-being, and to have the environment protected for the

benefit of present and future generations. Even though the

budget has been decreased by R1,221 billion to R8,716 billion,

this mandate must be respected and taken seriously. Accounting

officers must be held accountable and failed audits, resulting

in irregular, fruitless and wasteful expenditure should never



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be normalised. Where necessary, consequence management must

follow.

The ACDP welcomes the increased budgetary allocation for the

Regulatory Compliance and Sector Monitoring, responsible for

enforcement, compliance, and co-ordination. We must protect

our oceans and coastlands and not allow them to become looting

and toxic waste dumping grounds for foreign nations. We must

preserve all our forests, for in so doing, we protect our

biodiversity. We must protect our air quality and not allow

uncontrolled cloud seeding and weather control experiments

over our skies and neither should industries be allowed to

spew their toxic waste into our rivers and oceans.

As I conclude, we must remember that we will lose what we fail

to manage. Over the last 28 years, under the ruling party,

much has been lost. Now, that needs to be regained. I thank

you.

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr C T Frolick): Thank you, hon member.

Hon members, I will just amend the speaker’s list to allow hon

Holomisa to participate in this debate. Over to you, hon

Holomisa.



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Mr B H HOLOMISA: Thank you, Chairperson, hon Minister, Deputy

Minister and hon members. The UDM supports the budget. The

recent devastating floods in KwaZulu-Natal and other

provinces, has been ascribed to climate change, the problem

the South Africans had to date not taken seriously. Recently,

the Presidential Climate Commission on which I serve, held a

conference at which the public expressed their views. We need

to understand our national interest regarding the energy mix

as countries are using nuclear, coal and renewable energy.

South Africa cannot act in isolation, but must learn from

other countries.

The Cabinet must come clearly regarding our energy mix so that

we can deal with the threats of Eskom’s weaknesses, which is

affecting our economy. While we talk about transition to

renewable energy, we need to consider all factors. Littering

and garbage dumping has unfortunately become an ugly pandemic.

Based on our living spaces, where cattle accidentally urinate

on them, and when it rains, they wash down the storm water

pipes, blocking them to great risk. I recently returned from a

study tour to Kenya with colleagues from other parties.



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I was happy to learn that there are solutions to the scourge

of plastic products, they are much more proactive, and that

is, they have long banned plastic bags and developed

replacements for them. One does not see plastic bags littering

the streets of Nairobi. Plastic water bottles are prohibited

from their national parks, tools which we can consider.

Spatial development is another important issue that needs

collective responsibility.

Our people do not understand the dangers of building their

homes or shacks in a flood lines of the rivers and wetland.

Finally, local environment education needs to be ramped up,

and timeous laws enforcement is critical to prevent disaster.

Climate change is here to stay, and we should encourage our

people to participate in the legislative processes. Thank you.

Ms N GANTSHO: Thank you, hon Chair. Please allow me to do my

speech with my video off because of connectivity. Hon Chair,

Prior to the advent of democracy in our beloved country, the

ANC in 1992 developed six guiding principles that spoke to,

equitable access to environmental resources; sustainable

development, public participation in all planning decisions

which affect the development and management of natural



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resources public right to access to information and the courts

on issues of environmental concern, integrated approach to

environmental issues that relates to all sectors of society;

and lastly, recognition of the integrated nature of the global

environment and the need for international cooperation in

policy making.

Hon Chairperson, in support of this Budget Vote 32, I will

make reference to these guiding principles to indicate that it

is only the ANC that has developed progressive legislation on

the environment and this has benefited any South African,

including some sectors of society hostile to the ANC

transformative agenda. It is the ANC’s policy objective to

develop a framework aimed creating conditions conducive to

sustainable development and this requires that a future growth

strategy is compatible with ecological and human rights

principles, and that growth be geared towards the provision of

basic needs to benefit the whole community.

On Equitable Access to Environmental Resources, South Africa

has the longest coastline on the African continent, and this

provides an opportunity for a substantial development of the

fishing industry. One of the concerns is the removal of many



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traditional fishing communities from access to these

resources. The ANC sees the transformation and its

restructuring of the fishing industry by dismantling large

fishing conglomerates to smaller community based fisheries.

Please note that no one can deny that this is progressive.

The ANC would like to promote the sector expanded

participation in the entire value and supply chain linked to

South Africa’s Ocean Economy priorities, and we have, as the

ANC, noted that, fisheries sector has a great potential to

create much needed job opportunities and livelihood,

especially for the poor and economically marginalised

subsistence fishing communities. In this regard, the

finalisation of the fishing quotas is important to the ANC,

including the development of a Marine Policy that ensures that

the use of South African ships as part of our trade with the

rest of the world.

Hon Chairperson, the intention to provide for the conservation

of the marine ecosystem, the long-term sustainable utilisation

of marine living resources and the orderly access to

exploitation, utilisation and the protection of certain living

marine resources and the exercise of control marine resources



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in a fair and equitable manner to the benefit of all citizens

of South Africa, is found in the Marine Living Resources Act.

This Vote, with its limited total resource allocation of about

R 8 947, 900 billion, will transfer about R 976 814 million to

the Marine Living Resources Fund, and this will create about

1 892 job opportunities, created through the Working for

Fisheries programme.

The Economic Recovery and Reconstruction Plan identifies

aquaculture as one of the important strategic pillars of the

country’s oceans economy. In seeking to unleash this great

potential, the Vote will support, through Operation Phakisa,

about 12 aquaculture catalyst project and conduct six

aquaculture research over the medium-term. Whilst

acknowledging that more can and will be done. It is the

aspiration expressed in the 1955 Freedom Charter that guides

the ANC desire to realise meaningful participation in all

planning decisions which affect the development and management

of the country’s natural resources.

In conclusion, Chairperson, I challenge this Parliament to

dream, and as they dream, I ask of them to recite the

following words by our founding father uMadiba when he said,



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“I dream of our vast deserts, of our forests, of all our great

wilderness and we must never forget that it is our duty to

protect this environment.” I thank you**,** hon Chair**.**

The HOUSE CHAIRPERSON (Mr C T Frolick): Thank you, non hon

member. Hon members, as I invite hon Deputy Minister of

Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, I also invite the hon

Joemat-Pettersson to preside over the remainder of this mini-

plenary.

The DEPUTY MINISTER OF FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND THE

ENVIRONMENT: Hon Chairperson, my hon Minister, Barbara Creecy,

chairperson of the portfolio committee, Ms Faith Muthambi, hon

Members of Parliament, members of the portfolio committee,

management of the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and

Environment led by our Director-General, Director-General, D

G, Ms Nomfundo Tshabalala, all CEOs of the department’s

entities, ladies and gentlemen, I would like to take this

opportunity today to thank all the first responders, community

members, businesses and nongovernment organisations, NGOs, who

have come together in the spirit of ubuntu and worked

tirelessly to help the people of KwaZulu-Natal who were

affected by the recent floods as alluded to by the Minister,



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Barbara Creecy. The extensive damage caused by the masses of

water cemented our need to accept the reality of climate

change, and the critical importance of warnings of possible

extreme weather events, which are expected to become more and

more frequent as the climate continues to change.

Early warnings by the SA Weather Service are important for

communities and structures of government because these ensures

that there is liaison with the disaster management

authorities. This in turn ensures that public and disaster

response units are mobilised on time and influences government

action all the way down to municipal and individual level.

A key aspect of climate change is the reduction of greenhouse

gas emissions and a resulting improvement in our air quality.

As we deal with the effects of climate change, the importance

of equipping our country’s early warnings and weather

prediction systems and air quality monitoring stations is key.

Weather forecasting and air quality monitoring are, but two of

the exciting environment-related sectors in which we can

encourage youth following science-related study paths to

consider as future career choices.



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The second report published as part of the Intergovernmental

Panel on Climate Change’s sixth assessment pointed out that

Africa is already experiencing widespread loss and damage as a

result of human induced climate change. We have seen the

impacts of COVID-19 on the South African and global economy

these past few years, especially job losses and impacts on

households. Unemployment, poverty, inequality and addressing

gender-based violence remain our most pressing issues as we

fight climate change.

In addressing climate change we must not forget the important

role of women and youth, be it within communities or in

leadership roles. In this instance, in February this year, I

had an honour to be the guest speaker at the preparatory event

organised by an NGO Ilitha Labantu in partnership with the

Cape Peninsula University of Technology to flesh out women’s

needs and priorities going into the 66th United Nations

Commission on the Status of Women which took place in New York

in early March. The UN meeting took place under the theme:

Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and

girls in the context of climate change, environmental risk

reduction policies and programmes. While South Africa

continues to show global leadership in our inclusive approach



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to a just transition, the invaluable perspectives offered by

women and the youth on how to address climate change at the

level of policy, in both its development and implementation,

cannot be ignored. Women and girls are effective and powerful

leaders and change-makers for climate adaptation and

mitigation actions. They are involved in sustainability

initiatives around the world and in their communities, while

their leadership results in more effective climate action. It

is therefore important that inclusive economic growth is key

to addressing unemployment, gender equality, health and other

poverty related issues.

We are also promoting integration of gender issues in disaster

resilience-related programmes. This is over and above the

national, provincial and municipal disaster management centres

which primarily support the government’s national climate

change response policy to effectively manage inevitable

climate impacts. This is done through interventions that build

and sustain South Africa’s social, economic and environmental

resilience and emergency response capacity.

Maintaining intact ecosystems and species populations and

ensuring connectivity across landscapes and seascapes is vital



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for preserving adaptive capacity of nature to climate change.

This in turn will enhance human adaptive capacity and

resilience. The importance of the role of healthy ecosystems

and well-functioning ecological infrastructure in assisting us

to adapt to climate change cannot be overemphasised. This is

because healthy ecosystems are better able to cope with

climate change impacts and in turn help people to adapt, while

healthy ecological infrastructure like inland wetlands,

estuaries and coastal dunes are better able to protect built

infrastructure and people from impacts of extreme weather

events. South Africa has already established itself as a

leader in promoting nature-based responses such as ecosystem-

based adaptation and ecosystem-based disaster risk reduction

as part of our national climate change response.

Through the SA National Biodiversity Institute, we are

committed to continuing these efforts. This includes our

efforts to mobilise international climate finance for

ecosystem-based adaptation through a range of collaborations

and multisectoral approaches. These are expected to unlock

significant investments that deliver direct benefits to

vulnerable and unlock the role of the private sector and

catalyse systemic and policy responses that support South



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Africa’s just transition to a climate resilient society, as I

have repeated what the Minister has just said.

Besides floods and other extreme weather events, drought is a

new reality for many communities across our country. During

the recently concluded United Nations Convention to Combat

Desertification, UNCCD, the Conference of the Parties: the

United Nations Framework, Cop 15, in Cote d’Ivoire, the

Abidjan Declaration was adopted on achieving gender equality

for successful land restoration. I participated as a panellist

in the gender caucus to showcase our national efforts to

respond to the UNCCD’s gender action plan and demonstrate the

work being done to mainstream gender at all levels.

The Abidjan Declaration recognises that securing women’s

access to land, control over land and access to finance for

land-based economic activities are central components of

women’s economic empowerment and rights and in generating

opportunities for economic prosperity and independence. I must

we need to congratulate our negotiators from South Africa

which were led by women in order for us to be able to insert

this clause in the Declaration of Abujan. It was not an easy

one.



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We are well aware that women are disproportionately affected

by extreme weather events like droughts as it threatens lives,

livelihoods and food security. South Africa is, thus, one of

the countries that will implement projects and programmes in

response to the Southern African Development Community, SADC,

Drought Resilience Strategy. You will agree with me that it is

imperative that appropriate global attention and action be

focused on drought. South Africa therefore aligns with the

strong message of Africa to Cop 15 which calls for the

strengthening of policy frameworks and instruments to address

drought under the convention.

On 9 December 2002, the heads of state of South Africa,

Mozambique and Zimbabwe signed a treaty establishing the Great

Limpopo Transfrontier Conservation Area. The core cross-border

conservation area comprises of the Limpopo National Park in

Mozambique, the Kruger National Park in South Africa and

Gonarezhou National Park in Zimbabwe. This year in April, I

joined the Ministers of Environment from Mozambique and

Zimbabwe to discuss various issues related to the

collaborative management of this important cross-border

conservation area.



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To mark the 20 years since the signing of this treaty, we

agreed that it is fitting to celebrate this milestone with the

continued rewilding and restoration of this globally important

cross-border conservation landscape. It is through this

partnership that keystone species are being reintroduced to

new and existing conservation areas.

To create a country free of litter and other waste in which we

all recycle, upcycle, reuse or repurpose materials requires a

commitment by all citizens as it has been mentioned by other

members who spoke before me. That is why the stakeholder

engagement sessions that are being held countrywide continue

to be of importance in providing feedback on the progress we

have made in implementing the district development model. As a

district development model cochampion, our Ministry and the

department have spent time with communities of provinces of

the North West and the Free State to discuss service delivery

challenges that exist, particularly waste services as well as

localised procurement and job creation that will promote and

support local businesses and involve local communities.

Besides building awareness about, for example, waste

collection and landfill management, the department is also

handing over waste collection compactor trucks, front end



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loaders and other materials required by municipalities to

improve service delivery across the nine provinces. Thanks to

Mr Creecy who did this sterling job a week ago.

Furthermore, through a number of interventions by the

department, we hope to address challenges through the

provision of the equipment necessary to compact waste at

landfill sites, deliver waste to these sites and to dispose

waste in the correct way as we are preparing to train our

local councillors on how to manage heavy waste at their area.

We hope then, that through the projects being implemented this

year will not only improve municipal waste management, but

also see communities working together to clean their

environment.

The department is also spearheading the implementation of the

commercial forestry masterplan which was approved by Cabinet

in November 2020. The masterplan promotes growth and

investment within the sector to ensure that there is increased

production in forestry areas and creation of jobs. I must also

indicate that most of the communities that are benefiting out

of this implementation of the master plan are the very same



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small scale growers as we are in the process of transferring

plantation B and C into the communities.

The master plan has already realised a significant investment

from the private sector and employment creation. As we are in

the second year of implementation the partners will focus on

addressing barriers to implementation so that implementation

can be accelerated. All key role-players and stakeholders

strive to implement this plan successfully as it will be a

good example of how private sector and government can leverage

each other strengths for the development of the sector. In an

effort to scale up the implementation of the masterplan in the

skills development front, the department intends to establish

formal relations with institutions of higher learning and

there is already a planned engagement with Fort Cox

Agriculture and Forestry Training Institute in the Eastern

Cape to take place late in June this year.

As part of the Presidential tree planting initiative of

planting 10 million trees in five years, the department in

collaboration with other stakeholders has planted a total of

762 000 trees in year one of this initiative. The department

intends to plant 120 000 trees across all nine provinces in



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the current financial year 2022-23. This will be supported by

collaboration with stakeholders in achieving the two million

trees target.

As I conclude, I would like to thank the hon Minister for her

leadership within the forestry, fisheries and environmental

sectors in the past year, the Director-General Ms Nomfundo

Tshabalala and the department for their support. Thank you

very much, team environment and the entities’ CEOs. Thank you

“zimbokoto” [stones]. I thank the hon chairperson, Ms Muthambi

and members of the portfolio committee in particular, for

their robust engagement and guidance. I thank you very much.

Ms T V B MCHUNU: Thank you, hon Acting House Chair and humble

greetings to you, Acting House Chairperson, and greetings to

the Minister, the Deputy Minister, the members of the House

and fellow South African. Hon Acting House Chairperson, this

Vote 32 for the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and

Environment plays a critical role in the growth and the

development of South African economy. The responsibility of

helping to grow and develop our economy is the responsibility

of every South African. It is important to note that despite

our country’s progressive environmental laws there are still



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challenges faced by the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and

Environment. Please note that these are challenges not

failures.

The National Environmental Management Act 107 of 1998,

provides for the establishment of principles for decision-

making on matters affecting the environment through co-

operative environmental governance and procedures. Under

section 33 of the National Environmental Management Act any

person may institute a private prosecuting against the person

if such person has breached or threatens to breach a legal

duty that is consent with the protection of the environment

and where the breach of that duty is an offence.

Hon Acting House Chairperson, one of the challenges facing our

communities is a lack of compliance with our environmental

laws. The lack of legislative compliance by environmental

stakeholders has serious implications for the economy. Our

environment ecosystems play a crucial role in the development

of our economy by supporting revenues, future development

opportunities, livelihoods and sustainable harvest in forestry

and the fisheries sector including the support for the tourism

sector which contributes significantly to the gross domestic



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product, GDP, of our country. We have noticed that there is an

increase in the level of sophistication in transnational

organised environmental crime which undermines good governance

and developmental goals with the environmental sector. This

transnational organise environmental crimes include the

illegal logging, poaching and trafficking of wildlife, illegal

fisheries, mining and dumping of toxic waste, lion bone

trading and rhino horn poaching, water pollution and

harvesting of protected plants and species, air pollution and

illegal waste dumping at local government level.

Programme two of the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and

Environment deals with the regulatory compliance and sector

monitoring and the purpose is to promote the development of

enabling legal regime and licensing authorisation system that

will promote enforcement and compliance and ensure the co-

ordination of sector performance. In order to ensure that

their compliance with our environmental laws within the

fisheries sector, the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and

Environment will conduct over the medium-term a total number

of 6 500 enforcement and compliance inspections within the

fishery sector. The fisheries sector is regulated through the



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National Environmental Management Act and National

Environmental Management Biodiversity Act.

Budget allocation to regulatory compliance and sector

monitoring is R223 million and this allocation increases by

0,8% over the medium-term which is good, hon Acting House

Chair, and an indication that the department is focusing on

this particular challenge. Environmental programmes receive

the biggest allocation of the Budget Vote at R37 408 billion

and over R10 billion over the medium-term.

We support this Budget Vote because it will create about

210 080 much-needed job opportunities through the Expanded

Public Works Programme and inclusive fulltime job equivalent.

The total number is 314 439. One of the areas that need our

special attention is around waste management programme. Most

landfill sites are under municipalities and there are

provincial competencies. It has been reported that close to

100 million tons of municipal commercial and industrial waste

going to landfill site is not productively recycled.

As the ANC we would like to see the support of small emerging

waste recycling businesses to encourage the recycling of



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metal, plastic, rubber and paper in order to significantly

reduce energy consumption in the processing of metals and

publications. Waste recycle represents not only an opportunity

to keep our cities and towns clean, but to create many job

opportunities from much unemployed youth which is one of the

priorities of our government. In conclusion, hon Acting House

Chairperson, I stand on behalf of the ANC and support this

Vote 32 for the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and

Environment. Thank you, Acting House Chair.

Mr A M SHAIK EMAM: Thank you very much, Acting House

Chairperson. Acting House Chairperson, I’ve heard not a while

ago that hon members were speaking about the more inclusive

economy, inclusive economic growth. Now, let me advise this

House first of all that the forestry industry is still in the

hands of the few. The fishing industry right alluded to by my

colleague from the EFF, hon Paulsen, is still in the hands of

a few. Therefore, we cannot talk about inclusive economic

growth in a country that is one of the most unequal societies

in the world. Let me talk particularly about the fishing

industry and what the small-scale fishing community ...

[Inaudible.] particularly those in the ... [Inaudible.] bay

area out there and many other of these fishing seaside resort



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that we have. They are at the mercy of organisations like

Irvin & Johnson, I&J, Sea Harvest and Oceana.

More importantly, Acting House Chairperson, if you notice and

having had many discussions with the small-scale fishing,

particularly those they live of the snoek alone, they tell you

that what the large ... [Inaudible.] are actually driving the

snoek away from the shore so that they are not able to get

there ... [Inaudible.] anywhere near that and that is ...

[Inaudible.] having a devastating effect on them. Therefore,

if we want to talk about economic growth we need to address

the challenges, particularly ... and yes, Minister I know some

work has been done there. It will be highly ... [Inaudible.]

not to admit that. However, a lot more work need to be done.

Let’s talk about the issue of the environment, I’ve repeatedly

raised the concern of the community of Merebank, Lamontville,

Wentworth and all those areas and the high levels of

pollution. We talk about a global warming, is that not the

reason that particular community affected so badly with the

flooding that took place? What are we doing about and ...

[Inaudible.] to see that report that was undertaken by the

University of KwaZulu-Natal addressing the challenges that the



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people face, particularly with tuberculosis, lung cancer and

things as a result of that. I see, Acting House Chairperson,

you are reminding me that is my time. Thank you very much and

... [Interjections.]

Thank you very much for that so that I have one minute to go

on. Therefore, I was talking particularly about the issue of

that particular community and let me tell you the levels of

tuberculosis as ... [Inaudible.] it’s very high ...

[Inaudible.] and I think that matter needs to be addressed.

Our concern ... [Inaudible.] of the Auditor-General’s, AG,

report, particularly on irregular expenditure in terms of the

department, but I have the assurance in terms of the

department, the committee is looking into it and that they are

addressing it. However, you know I think the weakness we have,

Acting House Chairperson, is the fact that there is a

provision to regularise irregular expenditure. Therefore, that

is the reason why ... [Inaudible.] The National Freedom Party

supports the report tabled here. Thank you, Acting House

Chair.

Mr P M P MODISE: Thank you very much, Deputy Chairperson, and

greetings to you and to the Minister, the Deputy Minister and



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the Chairperson of the Portfolio Committee, and fellow South

Africans. The ANC believes that all South Africans at the

present and in future have the right to a safe and a healthy

environment that is enshrined in section 24 of the South

African Constitution. The Constitution mandates this

Parliament to take reasonable legislative and other measures

to prevent pollution, ecological degradation, promote

conservation and secure ecological sustainable development,

and the use of natural resources while promoting justifiable

economic and social development.

I would like to put an emphasis on the promotion of the

development and the use of natural resources in social and

economic development. This becomes extremely important given

the triple challenges of poverty, inequality and unemployment

which our people face on a daily basis. These triple

challenges are the creation of a colonialism and apartheid as

perpetuated by the horrible legacy.

In seeking to eradicate this horrible legacy of colonialism

and apartheid, the ANC speaks of, amongst others, affirmative

action programmes in pursuit of a viable economic development

that ensures that all South Africans have access to natural



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resources required to satisfy their basis needs and to restore

traditional access to natural resources.

It has been argued in the report of the World Commission on

Environment and Development that sustainable development

requires meeting the basic needs of all and extending to all

opportunities to fulfil their aspirations for a better life.

Sustainable development, in the language of the United

Nations, is development that meets a need of the present

without compromising the ability of future generations to meet

their own needs. The purpose of this Budget Vote No 32, is to

leads South Africa’s environmental forestry and fisheries

sectors to achieve sustainable development towards a better

life for all.

In 2021, His Excellency President Ramaphosa, during his Sona,

said to the nation that climate change threatens our

environmental health, socioeconomic development and economic

growth. The ANC remains committed to the Paris Agreement and

to the net-zero carbon emission by the year 2050, and this

Vote No 32 will continue to support equitable transition to a

low carbon economy.



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Through this Vote No 32, the Department of Forestry, Fisheries

and the Environment will commit to the implementation of the

approved low emissions development and growth strategy of the

medium term and will receive allocation of R1,4 billion to

deal with climate change, air quality and sustainable

development. Given the devastating impact of climate change

effects, as the ANC we will exercise oversight on the work of

government on climate change, co-ordinate it through the

Presidential Co-ordinating Commission on Climate Change, PCCC,

tasked with the development of policies on just transition for

the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment.

The Presidential Co-ordinating Commission on Climate Change

was announced by President Ramaphosa during his address to the

nation in 2021 in order to enhance government systems and

capacity by ensuring that climate change is effectively

addressed and mainstreamed in every department as an essential

component of a broader National Development Strategy. Quite

contrary to the claims made by others, the establishment of

the PCCC undermines the work of the Ministries. In fact, the

establishment of the PCCC was recommended by the National

Planning Commission that this should be done under the



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supervision of the President in order to ensure the

mainstreaming of climate change in every department.

The National Development Plan has noted that apart from the

needs of improved disaster risk reduction, South Africa’s

National Climate Change Response White Paper, highlight a ...

[Inaudible] ... of sectors that needs to consider climate

change impact in their planning, namely water, agriculture and

commercial forestry, health, biodiversity and ecosystems and

human settlements in both rural, urban and coastal areas.

In light of the deeply devastating impact of the recent floods

in both KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape, which has resulted

in the loss of over 400 lives, it is important that in dealing

with climate change challenges, government should develop

educational awareness programmes around the Sustainable

Development Goals, also known as the SDGs, especially in the

rural communities.

The ANNC supports Budget Vote No 32 of the Department of

Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment under the stewardship

of the hon Minister Barbara Creecy. This is not in any way

whatsoever misguided, but it is based on a clear conviction



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that this vote has made reasonable allocation of limited

resources towards the achievement of the Medium-Term Strategic

Framework on priority 4, which is the spatial integration,

human settlements and local government. So, the less said by

those who are opposed to this budget, the better. Deputy

Chairperson, I thank you very much.

The ACTING CHAIRPERSON (Ms T M Joemat-Pettersson): Hon

Minister, before you respond, you have an additional three

minutes which you saved when you did your opening address.

Thank you, hon Minister, the opportunity is yours.

The MINISTER OF FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT: Thank

you very much, Acting House Chair. Allow me to start off by

thanking all the hon members for the quality contributions to

our debate today.

I would like to start with the question of the financial

status of our entities. I think that it would be important for

us all to acknowledge that despite the difficulties of the

covid pandemic and the devastating impact that this pandemic

had on tourism and consequent revenues, that all four of our

entities are dependent on, including the weather service,



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which gets its revenues from air traffic. I think that what is

really significant is that none of these entities have had to

approach National Treasury for bailouts. And in this financial

year, none of these entities are tabling deficit budgets. That

doesn’t mean that it hasn’t been tough.

I think that the hon members are fully aware that in 2020, we

had to make departmental transfers to these entities. In 2021,

we had to support applications by these entities to go to

National Treasury and request that infrastructure budgets be

used for operations. In this financial year, although we are

expecting to see greater revenue stability, we are still

having to support all the entities through a range of

different programs including, - as you’ve heard the work we

are doing with ... [Inaudible.] ... to sort out the monitoring

stations to make sure that they are not vandalized, to

relocate them into schools and police stations. But also to

upgrade the forecasting capacity with modern radar technology.

So that we are able to undertake the micro climatic

forecasting which would be expected of any modern weather

forecasting services.



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With regard to fishing, I don’t want at this stage to defend

the Fishing Rights Allocation Process, FRAP, because we are in

the appeal’s phase**.** And I think that it’s very important that

those who have been disappointed and those who disagree with

the allocations are given a proper opportunity to raise all

the issues that they would want to raise in the appeal

process**.** I do however want to say to hon members that this

sector is not without its complexity, given the fact that they

are more than 28 000 formal jobs in the commercial fishing

sector. One, in the current climate also has to look at that

particular issue.

With regard to the small scale sector, I absolutely agree with

hon members who say that it’s taken too long to sort out the

fishing allocation rights in the Western Cape and this year,

it has to be concluded.

But I do think that it’s important to acknowledge the ten

thousand members of small scale co-operatives that we have

already established. The key areas of focus going forward is

first of all, to improve the basket of species. And, one of

the issues that we will come back to when we conclude the FRAP



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process is exactly what is being transferred in terms of

species from the commercial sector to the small scale sector**.**

What we also want to examine together with the small scale

sector, - We are hosting a workshop on this since this concept

of co-management. Because what we understand is that we don’t

set up systems of co-management around particularly high value

species like abalone and West Coast rock lobster. We are not

going to be able to sort out the poaching problem.

With regard to the very ... [Inaudible.] ... issue of rhino

poaching, I think that it’s militarization of the problem is

only successful up to a point. But we have to solve two other

problems in order to find a sustainable solution. The one

problem is the issue of sustainable beneficiation of

communities who live around our protected areas. And I think

that this is why we are so worried about proper settlement of

land claims. And that’s why we also want to ensure that in the

commercialisation strategy of both Isimangaliso Wetland Park

and Sanparks, that there will be proper beneficiation for

local communities. Because this is the only sustainable way of

ensuring that young men in particular are not lured in as the

foot soldiers of these poaching syndicates.



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With regard to demand management, it’s a complex and difficult

issue. There have definitely been programs in this regard in

the past, and I don’t know how successful they would have

been. The major markets are China and Vietnam. I think what we

have managed to do in recent times is to improve our

enforcement co-operation with both of those countries. And

this year and last year, there have been significant successes

in terms of intercepting horn as a result of co-operation with

the enforcement agency in both of these countries**.** I think

that this is an important area where we would want to have

gradual focus going forward.

On the issue of plastic waste, hon members, I agree with you

it’s a huge issue in our country and I know that you’ve had a

very interesting study tour to Kenya. I’m sure in due course

we might well have an opportunity to have a parliamentary

colloquium on this issue so that we can all interrogate what

is going on in our own country and how it compares with good

practice elsewhere. But I do want to say to hon members that

there is no shortcut for dealing with improving waste

management in municipalities.



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In the recent visit I paid to KwaZulu-Natal, KZN, where I was

assisting my colleague with the clean-up of the beaches, the

major problem there was the plastic waste that had washed into

the river systems, and into the oceans and ultimately onto the

beaches. While the organic matter can be dealt with through

normal ecological processes, this plastic waste has to be

collected by hand and it was truly frightening to see the

quantity that it washed down. I do agree with hon members that

this problem has to go and be put back on the drawing board.

And we’ve got to have a lot more attention to it.

Let me say that it’s very heartening to me to see that we have

cross party support for robust action around the climate

crisis. Of course, I’m very much looking forward to your

processing of the climate Bill with speed. I’m glad that we

are all agreed that as we deal with issues of biodiversity and

conservation, we have to also deal with issues of community

beneficiation. Because as the hon Singh pointed out we can’t

have a situation where ambitious international targets for

biodiversity and conservation and real forest station happen

at the extent of local communities and the access to land and

other rural resources.



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The issue raised by a Gantsho of exclusion of traditional

fishing communities from some of the marine protected areas,

is a matter that we have set up a task-team to consider. I

hope in due course we will be resolving that matter in a

mutually satisfactory manner.

Hon members, we can only restate our commitment to continuing

with the very hard work of dealing with irregular expenditure

and the necessary consequence management, so that we can

improve the probity of our department and of our budget. I

think that we all appreciate the fact that we have got

significant scientists and other professionals who give very

good work on the environment. And what we’ve got to fix is the

financial management of the system. That too, I have learned

it doesn’t have quick fixes. But all of us remain committed to

ensuring that there are better outcomes there in the future.

With that said, let me conclude with the words of hon Breedt

she said that and I quote:

These matters of pollution and biodiversity loss and

climate change are fundamental for the wellbeing of

humanity going forward.



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There is indeed no planet to be for any of us. I thank you.

Debate concluded.

The Mini-Plenary session rose at 15:52

