



**MINISTER
FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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03 August 2022

Hon A.D. Maleka, MP

Chairperson: Select Committee on Petitions Executive Undertakings

PO Box 15, Cape Town

8000

Dear Honourable Chairperson

Re: Undertakings made at the NCOP plenary 09 March 2021

During the sitting of 09 March 2021 session: Responding to supplementary questions to question 8 and 13 respectively, the Minister made the following undertakings:

- (a) Question 8 pertaining to the aquaculture Sector contribution to job creation, the Minister made the following undertakings:

"We are engaged in first of all trying to unlock new markets for our aquaculture products particularly in the European Union through our multilateral trade relations."

Response

- A) An assessment has been done on the readiness of South Africa aquaculture products to meet the export requirement of the European Union (EU). The recommendations of the study have been noted and are being addressed by the Department and other relevant government entities.
- B) Formal application has been made with the EU to request export of mussels and abalone to the EU. There are ongoing engagements with the EU to assess readiness of the local aquaculture products in



terms of meeting their requirements. However, the EU has indicated that they have a backlog to undertake physical audits due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which is a requirement for listing of new products within the EU. Once the backlog of member states has been addressed they will prioritise South Africa's audits. Timeframes to this process are entirely dependent on the EU.

"We have ongoing negotiation with the Chinese government to relist the oyster species."

Response

Numerous engagements occurred with relevant competent authorities in China, the SA embassy in China, the National Regulator for Compulsory Specifications (NRCS), DIRCO and the DTIC to address the re-listing of oysters. Finally, after technical report on the specific species name and description by DFFE and intervention by the NRCS and DIRCO, the species was re-listed by the Chinese government in September 2021. Companies have been exporting to China since September 2021.

We are trying to reduce red tape and allow the abalone products to be sold in the local markets."

Response

The DFFE reduced the red tape by granting a blanket one year approval to allow abalone farming sector to enable the sale of abalone on the local market with conditions. Following the initial piloting and information derived from industry which indicated a positive impact of the initial exemption on the local market, a new exemption was granted in 8th November 2021 for another year.

"We are also conducting feasibility studies on acceptance of saving locally produced aquaculture products such tilapia and catfish in residential institutions such correctional facilities."

Response

The trial on feasibility study on acceptance of locally produced catfish was piloted in 2021 at the Kirkwood correctional facility in the Eastern Cape with positive feedback and results received from Department of Correctional Services. The tilapia trial is planned for August 2022 in Gauteng.

- (b) Question 13 pertaining to the implementation of recommendations of Panel of Experts for the Conservation and Management of sharks, the Minister made the following undertakings:

“The full draft action table which encompasses all of these recommendations will be implemented in full in the 2021-22 financial year.”

Response

A detailed roadmap for Priority 1 actions, with timeframes and responsibilities, has been developed.

“We do need to look at our Operation Phakisa 5 programmes and how these can be excluded to protecting our shark species.”

Response

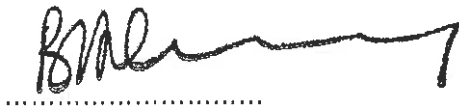
Operation Phakisa 5 (now constituted as the Natjoints Priority Committee on Marine and Ocean Crime) focuses on a range of risks within the marine environment, including the illegal harvesting of marine resources, illicit economy, inclusive of illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing and associated transnational crime, drug and other commodity smuggling, CITES and Wildlife issues, sand mining and adherence to the correct environmental procedures by vessels and controlling authorities, inclusive of waste management, effluent and industrial discharges. Based on information received, planned operations have looked at certain compliance and enforcement operations and activities on shark species and there have been a number of criminal cases emanating from operations that focused on illegal activities involving shark fins. In line with the Implementation Plan for the NPOA (as discussed below) this programme will be requested to increase the number of operations targeting the protection of shark species.

“I think what’s really important here is that we are working on mainstreaming these recommendations into the annual performance (APP) of the Department as a whole and into the oceans and coasts branch and fisheries branch.”

Response

The Fisheries Branch has included the National Plan of Action on Sharks (NPOA) in the APP of the Branch/Department. The target for the 2022/2023 financial year is to have the NPOA for sharks Implementation Plan approved. The Q1 and Q2 were to develop the detailed roadmap to deliver milestones for individual actions. These are on track.

Regards



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MS. BARBARA CREECY, MP

MINISTER OF FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT

DATE 05/08/2022