**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 1028**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER [No 18-2020 SIXTH PARLIAMENT]
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**1028. Ms H S Winkler (DA) to ask the Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development:**

What is the motivation behind the amendment to the Meat Safety Act, Act 40 of 2000, to include threatened species in Schedule 1(2) for slaughter, consumption, sale and export?          **NW1318E​**

**THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, LAND REFORM AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT:**

The Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) initiated and gazetted the draft proposed amendment to Schedule 1 of the Meat Safety Act, 2000 (Act No. 40 of 2000) hereinafter referred to as “the Act”, in order to curb unsustainable wildlife hunting for “bushmeat” and to ensure that where slaughtering or hunting for either consumption, or sale for local or export trade, happens in a regulated environment that would ensure food safety, feed safety and adherence to welfare prescripts.

The Act does not make any decisions on which animals are to be slaughtered but ensures that should an animal listed in the schedule be slaughtered, all requirements stipulated in the Act would have to be complied with.

A decision on which animals can be slaughtered lies outside of the mandate of the Meat Safety Act. Legislation under the Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries, stipulates which wildlife animals are protected and endangered and therefore there is a regulatory framework on how to handle them, including their disposal and slaughter if that becomes a necessity. The slaughter of animals for human and animal consumption, as required under the Meat Safety Act is subject to permissions of relevant other legislation, including conservation, food control, environmental health and animal welfare legislations**.**

There may be instances where endangered animals have to be culled for conservation, animal welfare (e.g. injured), animal health (e.g. having a contagious non-zoonotic disease), environmental concerns (e.g., overgrazing) or other justifiable reasons, in line with provisions of all applicable legislation outside of the Meat Safety Act. In such instances, the products of such a culling operation, if intended for human consumption, would have been regulated under the Meat Safety Act and food hygiene would have been promoted and assured. The Act also controls the importation of meat and therefore the absence of a specific animal on the list; it means that the Meat Safety Act does not apply to meat and meat products of such an animal and therefore the Department does not have any regulatory control at the ports of entry for such products entering the country. In the absence of the listing of an animal under the Act, anyone can import such an animal without having to comply with provisions of the Meat Safety Ac