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**DATE: 30 MAY 2018**

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO. 1493**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION IN INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER: 11 MAY 2018,**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 15 -2018**

**"Ms C King (DA) to ask the Minister of Science and Technology:**

1. What is the total number of hectares of commercial farm land which have been declared as astronomy advantage areas in the Karoo"

NW 1596E

**REPLY:**

(a) The Karoo Central Astronomy Advantage Area declared by the Minister of Science and Technology in 2014 through a public participation process (Government Gazette Number 37434 of 2014, Notice Number 198) in terms of the Astronomy Geographic Advantage Act of 2007, includes 4459 farm portions with a total area of 11,349,628 hectares. This is approximately 30.5% of the entire land in the Northern Cape. Within the declared area, the two most common economic activities taking place on some of these farm portions are renewable energy facilities and sheep farming. Of the 4459 farm portions, 36 have been purchased for the purposes of SKA project roll-out and the total extent of this land is 128,000 hectares, about 1.1% of the declared area.