



forestry, fisheries & the environment

Department:
Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

(For written reply)

QUESTION NO. 1538 {NW1862E}

INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 15 of 2022

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Mr M N Paulsen (EFF) to ask the Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment:

Which programmes have been put in place by her department to ensure that the general public moves away from single-use plastic?

1538. THE MINISTER OF FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT REPLIES:

The Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE) has introduced the following to help reduce reliance on single-use plastics:

- a) The Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Regulations were published in *Government Gazette* 43879 (Notice No. 1184) on 5 November 2020 for implementation. The Regulations give effect to sections 18 and 69 of the National Environmental Management: Waste Act, 2008 (Act No. 59 of 2008) (NEM:WA) and apply to some single-use plastic products. They outline a new approach to waste management in South Africa and will contribute significantly to the diversion of some of the listed single-use plastic packaging waste from landfill. The EPR regulations are intended to increase the recycling, reduction, reuse and recovery rates of the listed products, thereby achieving one of the aims of the National Waste Management Strategy.

b) Producers of the following fall under this new EPR policy arrangement:

- Plastic packaging (printed and unprinted):
 - (i) Type 2,4,5 Polyolefin – rigid;
 - (ii) Type 2,4,5 Polyolefin – flexible;
 - (iii) PolyEthylene Terephthalate (PET) – rigid;
 - (iv) PolyEthylene Terephthalate (PET) – flexible/strapping;
 - (v) Polystyrene (including expanded polystyrene protective packaging and high impact polystyrene packaging);
 - (vi) Poly Vinyl Chloride (PVC) (Resin Code 3);
 - (vii) Vinyls (rigid and flexible); and
 - (viii) Other (multilayer plastic packaging, including those with Resin Code 7).

- Single-use plastic products:
 - (i) Films/Flexibles: Agricultural mulch films, garbage bags, pallet wrap;
 - (ii) Injection moulded products: Cups, tubs, cutlery (knives, forks and spoons), stirrers;
 - (iii) Blow moulded products: Bottles, containers, jars;
 - (iv) Extruded products: Straws, sheets; and
 - (v) Thermoformed products: Trays, punnets, cups, various packaging

listed plastic packaging and single-use plastic products are compelled to implement measures to divert waste generated from these products.

c) On 28 January 2021, the Minister published the National Waste Management Strategy (NWMS), 2020, in terms of section 6 of NEM:WA. The strategy is based on the update and revision of the 2011 version and is built on the successes and lessons learnt from the previous strategy. The strategy aims to provide a framework for government policy and strategic interventions for the waste sector and is aligned and responsive to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of Agenda 2030 adopted by all United Nations (UN) member states. It is also aligned and responsive to South Africa's National Development Plan (NDP): Vision 2030, which is our country's specific response to, and integration of the SDGs into our overall socio-economic development plans.

- d) The amended regulations to the Plastic Carrier Bags and Plastic Flat Bags Regulations were gazetted on 7 April 2021 in terms of the National Environmental Management Act, 1998 (Act No. 107 of 1998) (NEMA) and NEM:WA. The amendments focus on promoting a circular economy and ensuring circularity by prescribing the design and setting minimum recycled content in a phased manner starting from 2023 until 2027. The regulations will create a demand for used plastic carrier bags as recyclate, the value of the bags will increase and fewer bags will leak into the environment or enter the municipal landfill waste stream, in other words, bags will have value for collection for recycling. The collection of bags at landfill will also be beneficial as waste collectors can sell these to recyclers.
- e) The DFFE is currently developing the Waste Economy Master Plan, which is intended to provide guidance on interventions that could accelerate the growth of the waste economy in South Africa. The viability of other alternative products, such as biodegradable and compostable plastics, will also be considered in the master plan.

Regards



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MS B D CREECY, MP
MINISTER OF FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT

DATE:13/5/2022.....