**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION 261 / NW282E**

**MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES:**

**Honourable N. Paulsen (EFF) to ask the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries:**

**QUESTION:**

1. (a) How many state-owned forests are there in the country and (b) what is the geographic location of the specified forests;
2. whether any of these forests have been leased out; if so, (a) how many, (b) to whom, (c) for what duration is each lease and (d) what amount are the leaseholders paying for the lease agreements? **NW282E**

**REPLY:**

1. (a) South Africa has five forestry provinces i.e. Eastern Cape, Western Cape, Mpumalanga, Limpopo and KwaZulu-Natal. The Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) indirectly manages 368 505 hectares of State plantations (Category A) through lease agreements signed with four private forestry companies and the South African Forestry Company Ltd (SAFCOL). The Department further directly manages one hundred and nine (109) commercial forest plantations (Category B and C) with the total area of 63 114.21 hectares (ha). The Category B and C plantations are mainly in Limpopo, Mpumalanga, Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal.

(b) The geographic location of the commercial plantations is spread over five different regions namely: Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo, Mpumalanga and North West.

1. Category A plantations with a total of seventy-one (71) state owned plantations (181 185 hectares) are managed by private companies leasing the land from DAFF for a minimum period of 70 years. The companies are MTO Forestry (Pty) Ltd; Amatola Forestry (Pty) Ltd; SiyaQhubeka Forest (Pty) Ltd; and Singisi Forest Products (Pty) Ltd. In addition to this an area of 187 320 hectares is managed by the South African Forestry Company (SAFCOL) which is a State-owned company.
2. Each of these companies pay rental for the use of land. The rental is not fixed; it is based on the rent review that is conducted every five years. Annually, the rental increases by 65% of the Producer Price Index (PPI). The table below illustrates the rental for 2018 and the total amount of rental that has been collected by the Department from the companies.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Forestry package** | **Leaseholder**  | **Lease signed**  | **Extent (ha)** | **Annual rent for 2018** | **Lease rental collected to date**  |
| South and Western Cape | MTO (Pty) Ltd. | 2005 | 57 061(ha) | R 4,866,896 | R 48, 037,968 |
| North Eastern Cape | Amathole (Pty) Ltd | 2005 | 25405(ha) | R 3,384,743 | R 30, 730,312 |
| KwaZulu-Natal  | Siyaqhubeka Forestry (Pty) Ltd | 2001 | 21 956(ha) | R 14,593,243 | R158,577,728 |
| Southern KZN and Northern Eastern Cape | Singisi Forests Products Pty Ltd | 2001 | 76 563(ha) | R 10,842,258 | R136,004,975 |
| Limpopo, Mpumalanga and Northern KwaZulu-Natal  | SAFCOL | 1992 | 187 320 | R 62,846,084 | R 205,884,456 |