



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. 3072 {NW3712E}

INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 31 of 2022

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

In light of how deep sea mining interferes with the ocean's carbon storage and climate regulation functions, what is the policy position of her department on deep-seabed mining?

3072. THE MINISTER OF FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT REPLIES:

The Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE), together with the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy (DMRE), has a policy framework to provide practical guidance to the mining sector on how to address biodiversity issues in the South African context. The Mining and Biodiversity Guidelines is a tool used to balance economic growth and environmental sustainability. This tool fosters a strong relationship between biodiversity and mining, which will eventually translate into best practice within the mining sector.

The Mining and Biodiversity Guidelines identifies areas with different levels of high risk against mining and categorises priority biodiversity areas that are high risk and sensitive for mining, for example, marine protected areas (MPAs) prohibiting mining and exploration, as per the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act, 2003 (Act No. 57 of 2003) (NEM: PAA). Deep sea mining is prohibited in the areas with a high biodiversity significance, such as heritage sites, declared MPAs and areas zoned for conservation and protection, as articulated in the legislation, such as the World Heritage

Convention Act, 1999 (Act No. 49 of 1999), NEM: PAA, and the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act, 2004 (Act No. 10 of 2004). The National Protected Areas Expansion Strategy is a policy document used by the DFFE to guide protected areas expansion and does not allow mining to take place in critical and sensitive areas as mining activities would compromise the objectives of protecting and conserving these areas. The policy position of the DFFE is a precautionary approach regarding deep sea mining and its impacts.


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

DATE: 20/9/2022
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