



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. 3073 {NW3713E}

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:

Given that a vast number of the marine protected areas (MPAs) are vital fishing areas for indigenous and traditional fishing communities, what (a) procedures are followed in order to consult with communities as part of the process of declaring an area an MPA and (b) criteria are used to determine if an area should be protected?

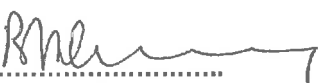
3073. THE MINISTER OF FORESTRY, FISHERIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT REPLIES:

- (a) In order for the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE) to declare marine protected areas (MPAs), it follows procedural public participatory steps that are clearly elucidated in sections 31, 32 and 33 of the National Environmental Management Act, 2003 (Act No. 57 of 2003). The DFFE then drafts regulations of the identified areas and publishes in a gazette, inviting members of the public for comments for a period of 60 days from the date of publication in the *Government Gazette*.

After the 60-day commenting period, the DFFE collates the comments received in a Comments and Response Report to respond and evaluate all the comments. In addition, during the 60-day commenting period, stakeholder engagement meetings are held to present the published declarations and regulations to all relevant stakeholders, including affected communities along

the coast. Moreover, the South African Cabinet has made it compulsory for a socio-economic impact assessment (SEIA) to be conducted to determine the socio-economic impact of any policies and legislations. Therefore, a SEIA is also conducted for the declaration of all MPAs. Upon consideration of all the received comments, amendments are then made to the proposed declaration and the final gazette notices are prepared for the Minister's approval. Furthermore, the DFFE is responsible for conducting roadshows to present the final MPA regulations to all the affected stakeholders and communities. Thereafter declaration notices and regulations are made available to all stakeholders and they are simultaneously appended to the DFFE's website for the general public, affected communities and users of resources in the affected areas.

- (b) Prior to declaring an area as an MPA, the DFFE first consults the affected stakeholders to present the intentions of government to declare that area as an MPA and the rationale behind declaring a particular site as an MPA. Worth mentioning as well is that, over the years, the increasing use of systematic conservation planning for MPA planning has been enabled through advancements in technology and data assimilation. Therefore, the scientific or baseline information to qualify an area to be declared as an MPA is also shared with all the relevant stakeholders. Furthermore, a socio-economic assessment study is conducted in order to determine the impact that the declaration will have on the communities adjacent to the area where there is a proposed MPA.



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

DATE: 20/9/2022