

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**(For written reply)**

**QUESTION NO. 313 {NW1279E}**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 6 of 2019**

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**Ms H S Winkler (DA) to ask the Minister of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries:**

(1) (a) On what scientific data did her department rely when setting its quotas for octopus fishing in South African waters;

(b) on what date was the scientific data collected; and

(c) who collected the data

(2) Whether her department appointed any independent observers to attest to the accuracy and veracity of the scientific data; if not, (a) why not and (b) what is the position in this regard; if so, what are the relevant details?

**313. THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES REPLIES:**

The purpose of the exploratory fishery is to gain scientific knowledge regarding octopus harvesting in various areas in terms of catch, effort, as well as seasonal trends and gear efficiency.

1. The purpose of the exploratory fishery is to gain scientific knowledge regarding octopus harvesting in various areas in terms of catch, effort, as well as seasonal trends and gear efficiency.No quota has been set for octopus fishing in South African waters. The octopus fishery is managed by effort (number of pots).

Effort for this fishery was determined and set below the sustainable levels based on data collected through a desktop study prior to the establishment of the exploratory phase of the fishery.

(b) The desktop studies were conducted in 2003 and 2004 prior to the first phase of the experimental fishery and were further inferred by a PhD thesis titled: **A Development and Management Framework for a New Octopus Vulgaris Fishery in South Africa**, which was published by Ané Oosthuizen of Rhodes University. The study focussed on the first phase of the theoretical framework and protocol and was implemented by using a proposed octopus pot fishery in South Africa as a case study.

This was followed by a scientific paper in 2004 titled **Economic Feasibility of an Experimental Octopus Fishery in South Africa** which was published in the South African Journal of Science 100(11). The Study generated baseline information necessary in the design of the experimental fishery, giving guidelines as to which vessels, fishing gear and markets would be most feasible. The proposed fishery, gear and vessel type, fishing techniques and expected catch rates were described, the results of market research were also outlined, as well as the estimated cost of fishing.

(c) The data was collected by Departmental officials.

(2) No. The infromation was considered was information that was available in the reports and published works from a variety of sources. With regard to the long-term future of whether or not the Department plans to set up a permanent octopus fishery, we have instructed our marine scientists to urgently review all existing scientific data to inform the way forward with regard to this fishery. This process must be complete within this financial year.

**Regards**



**MS BARBARA CREECY, MP**

**MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES**

**DATE: 02/08/2019**