**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTION FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NUMBER:** **4194 [NW5260E]**

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**4194. Dr D T George (DA) to ask the Minister of Finance:**

Whether, with regard to the Agri-Parks Initiative, where 44 Agri-parks were established by the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development, the National Treasury will undertake a (a) policy review and (b) financial cost benefit analysis of the specified initiative; if not, (i) why not and (ii) what action will be taken to hold those responsible for the initiative accountable; if so, what are the relevant details? NW5260E

**REPLY**

The Agri-Parks Initiative falls under the domain of the Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development and not the Minister of Finance. I will, however, deal with some of your queries as related to the National Treasury.

1. According to the Department of Agriculture Land Reform and Rural Development, Agri-Parks entails the creation of a nexus of rural agricultural businesses across South Africa to serve as primary vehicles of agrarian transformation and comprehensive rural development in order to:
	* Enhance agricultural production and efficiency;
	* Promote household food security and national food sovereignty;
	* Engender agrarian transformation through rural enterprise development and employment creation; and
2. The AgriParks therefore aims to grow rural economies by facilitating the efficient movement of rural produce to markets. They support smallholder farmers by providing capacity building, mentorship, farm infrastructure, extension services, and the production and mechanisation inputs.

At conception the department has committed R2 billion per annum (this was part of the existing budget and no specific budget line was established for Agri Parks), for establishing and operationalising the Agri-Parks in all 44 Municipal Districts. However, this has been scaled down to 9 Agri-Parks.

Agri-Parks programme does not have a specific dedicated programme and budget item in the department, but is implemented through all the departmental programmes.

To maximise value for money and address inefficiencies in departmental spending, the department is embarking on the review of programmes, with Rural Infrastructure Programme as the first programme to be selected.

National Treasury does not intend to do a policy review. The programme falls under the oversight of Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development, the department is therefore mandated to undertake a policy review and financial cost benefit.