



**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. 819 {NW919E}**

**INTERNAL QUESTION PAPER NO. 8 of 2023**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION: 10 March 2023**

**Mr N Singh (IFP) to ask the Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment:**

(1) Considering that the Small-scale Fisheries Policy (SSFP) stipulates that small-scale fishing right is the right to catch different species of fish near the shore and such rights are allocated to communities and not to individuals, and noting that the SSFP also states that fishing communities must apply to her to be recognised as small-scale fishing communities and once membership is verified, then the Government will assist to register them as community-based legal entities, how is her department (a) accommodating subsistence fishers who do not form part of a fishing community, other than issuing recreational licensing and (b) assisting members of the communities to acquire the necessary skills to (i) run the legal entities and (ii) serve on co-management structures?

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

(a) The department is in constant communication with the representatives of the subsistence fishers of KwaZulu-Natal (KZN). A task team was established by the Minister to ensure that the department provides information about the small-scale fisheries process and to provide clarity on how the KZN subsistence fishers can be recognised within the current legal framework. Various meetings have taken place with the group to date. From the discussion with the group, it was

explained that additional fishers can be recognised under the small-scale fisheries policy as the definition of small-scale fishing is inclusive of the subsistence fishing. Additionally, the group has been informed that the department will start the process of amending the Marine Living Resources Act, 1998 (Act No. 18 of 1998) (MRLA) during the 2023/24 financial year.

- (b) (i) The department has been facilitating support programs for all small-scale fishing co-operatives with fishing rights. This includes training initiatives focused on basic business acumen, sea safety and financial management. The department has worked with a number of stakeholders such as municipalities, provincial Government departments and the private sector in providing much needed support to the sector. More is required at a continuous pace. It is for this reason that the department has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Department of Small Businesses Development. The purpose of this is to continuously provide the much-needed business and technical support to small-scale fishing co-operatives in order to become fully sustainable. Furthermore, the department is in the process of launching a mentorship program for all small-scale fishing co-operatives wherein each co-operative will be allocated a mentor for a duration of up to 3 years.
- (ii) Regarding the establishment of co-management structures, the department recognises that the establishment of these structures is fundamental to the success of the small-scale fisheries sector. Noting the history and complexities of fishing communities and further noting that South Africa's communities are not homogeneous, the department has launched pilots of co-management structures in the Port St Johns area. The purpose of this is to investigate the best-possible approach and model. Parallel to this, the department is in the process of appointing facilitators that will assist the department to establish co-management structures in all the coastal provinces within the 2023/24 financial year.

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

**DATE:** 17/3/2023